

Mine workers and horse at Adit

## Dear Rosie... By Lori Weissbach

And so begins many of the more than 1300 letters of appreciation and 'Thank-You' to the Princeton Elks Club. During the Second World War the Elks Club started a Smoke Fund, collecting money to help buy Canadian cigarettes for the servicemen overseas. This was quite the undertaking as the lists we have indicate that 340 men were receiving cigarettes. 195 men from Princeton and the remaining 135 were from Keremeos/Cawston, Hedley, Nickel Plate, Copper Mountain, Allenby, Coalmont and Tulameen. In total 260 men wrote letters back home to thank the Elks Club for their regular shipments of cigarettes. Starting with a few letters in 1940, the bulk of letters came in during 1942, 1943 and 1944.

The Elks Club members in charge of the Smoke Fund were Archie McCrum, George Schisler, Stan Schisler, Tug Wilson and T.O. Lessard. Mr. Lessard was the owner of the Pool Hall and all of the letters were addressed to him. His nickname was "Rosie"....therefore the "Dear Rosie" that started at the top of each letter.

Some of the men wrote only one letter, while others seem to have written a letter every couple of months. A few have written about 25-30 letters during their stay overseas.

The Princeton Museum volunteers have sorted, photographed and made lists of all the Thank-You letters and cards. They are now in the process of having the letters and envelopes inserted into clear

archive sleeves and filed according to the name of the individual who wrote them.

Eventually a list of the names will be made public so that if family members wish to view these letters, they can easily do so. The volunteers hope to have the sorting finished before the end of August.

Look for future updates in this Newsletter.

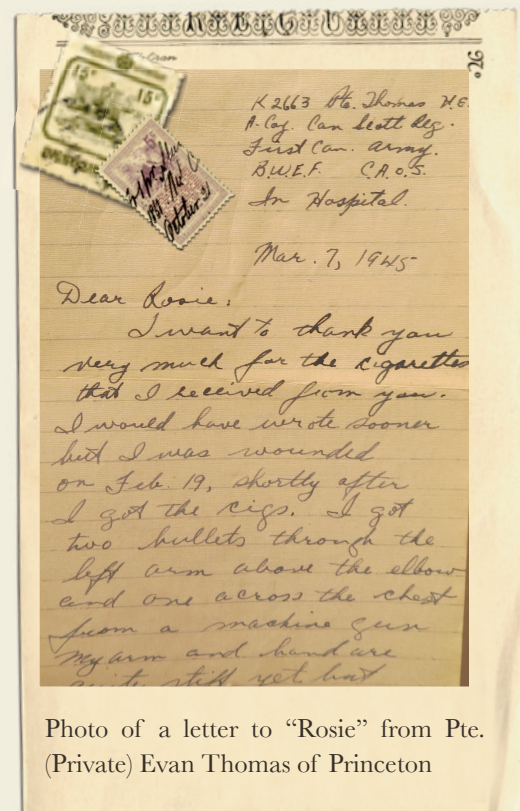


Photo of a letter to "Rosie" from Pte. (Private) Evan Thomas of Princeton