

WHEN FRIENDSHIP CONQUERS ALL

Early on a windy winter morning, the need of a friend in trouble was on my mind. As dawn lit the Eastern sky, the gentle cacophony of the morning flights of birds sounded through the air. The freedom enjoyed as they sometimes splash down in the waterway girding Halcyon Greens is absolute; we take their freedom and mobility for granted. The power of flight to go where and when they please, facing few threats, gave me joy.

My thoughts at this idyllic time turned to a friend who faces severe difficulties with his leg. I was reminded of a photograph I first came upon long ago. Something from that image had seared in my memory; I was not sure what it was at the time, but now its time had come. Find it again I must. So I searched until I found it.



The human spirit is an amazing commodity, no matter what the circumstances. In the eyes of these two young men I found what I was looking for - devotion, determination, hope, mateship, resilience - attributes decent, central to the human psyche.

Here was one man making sure a cobbler would get to the ceremony where all paid homage to those who hadn't made it. The able young digger probably thought nothing about going to where his friend was recuperating to ensure he got to the parade. No transport? No problem. A band of brothers, they

were devoted to each other; having been through something we cannot comprehend. Neither dwelled on the tragedy or the pain, they were determined to get to where they had to be. And little would stand in their way.

The hope for a future – any sort of future – shines in the eye contact with the police officer. Perhaps one's thought: "One day when I am old enough I'll be a police officer like you; I can do it with some help" exchanged silently with a 'Thanks Aussie; pass this way unimpeded; front row for you'.

No load is too great to bear; we just DON'T leave our mates behind; someone needs a hand, its there. The Australian way. The real need on the day was to pay respect to those no longer able to march. Nothing was going to stop this young man, resilience would ensure that he got where he needed to be, and a mate gave him the power, using two legs where once there were four.

So too, were we recently reminded of this priceless mindset still evident among us, with a street of homeowners. Selfless attributes displayed where mates assembled to master the necessities of self-help and mutual dependence should the need arise; neighbourly assets defying the placement of a price tag upon them.

My friend, and others like him among us, must face what fate may serve up. And they can do so by relishing in the warmth, comfort and assurance that, like others before us, they won't be without succour when it is needed.