

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

As we review 2018, the Association can be proud of its achievements accomplished during its busy year of commemorative activities, the ongoing maintenance of our respected Military Museum, the continued publication of six issues per annum of our popular newsletter and strong supportive roles of our website and face book. This success has been due to the dedication on your management committee Bob Collins, Colin Gould, Douglas NG, Kieran Nelson, Paul Brown, Mike Griffin, Tony Boulter, Peter Rogers DFC and Peter Rogers. Trevor Connell who manages our website must be included in this group. Craig Ray our honorary solicitor is part of our committee. I thank you for your past and present commitment to our Association.

Our Patron Major General John Pearn continues to provide engaged support and encouragement to us through his standing in the community, his many connections with kindred organisations and his presence at our events. Thank you Sir.

A very successful Association AGM with nearly 50 members and friends in attendance was held at our Museum on Saturday 27 October. A free BBQ followed. All officer bearers of the previous year were re-elected unopposed and our Patron and Honorary Solicitor were appointed by acclamation. Additionally Ron MacDonald, a chaplain of the Salvation Army was appointed Honorary Chaplain for the Association. You will be introduced to Ron in the following newsletters.

Two presentations of the Patron's Award were made, the recipients being Peter

Rogers for his outstanding practical support to the Association's events and the museum and Pattie Gould, wife of our Secretary for her continuing support during the 26 years service of our Secretary.

My full report which I submitted at the AGM is available on our website and Facebook. The Association's 2018 activities were reported in our 2018 issues of our newsletter, website and face book.

Sadly I must advise the death of member Major Tony Milan who died 14 November in south west NSW. Tony's funeral service was held Friday 23 November at Shepparton, Victoria. Tony was a member of PNGVR from mid 1950s until late 1960s. He was a long standing member of the Association and always attended events when he was able. I quote a recent email from his son Scott, "Tony's service in PNGVR was really important to him and even in his last few days he was able to identify colleagues in pictures from Company exercises so we're appreciative of the long term comradeship and friendships made." His vale and eulogy will be recorded in the next issue of Harim Tok Tok.

2019 will be the 80th Anniversary of the formation of NGVR. A brief summary of NGVR's history may be read on page 13 of this issue.

Member Jesse Chee is arranging an A Company PNGVR (Lae) reunion in August 2019 on the Sunshine Coast. Please contact Jesse direct on 07 5514 6108 or jmchee@gmail.com if you are

interested in attending or assisting in the arrangements. We will keep you posted as the arrangements progress.

Our Association is also a member of the Battle for Australia Association (Queensland) which will hold its 2019 BFA commemoration service at the Milne Bay Research Library premises in Kittyhawk Avenue, Chermside, Brisbane at 9.30 am, Wednesday 4 September, followed by a free light luncheon. This is a significant event and is usually attended by the Governor of Queensland.

A project for 2019 is to ensure all the names of NGVR soldiers who died during the Pacific war are on the Honour Wall in the AWM. Any member who would like to undertake this task for the Association, please contact p.ainsworth@kingco.com.au

On behalf of members, I thank the committee members for their unswerving work and support throughout 2018. As this is the last issue of Harim Tok Tok for 2018, I extend to you and your families my very best wishes for Christmas and New Year.

Phil Ainsworth, November 2018

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William Alfred Griffiths

NG 2440 NGX 428

29.8.1912 – 27.11.1993

During the depression I was working an alluvial tin lease a few miles above the township of Branhholme on the North East Coast of Tasmania. I played Football with the local team, and went into Wood Cutting Contests during the summer. I sold my Tin Mining Lease to a Syndicate in Launceston, and then took on any sort of work that came along.

1937

A chap came along soliciting for miners to go to New Guinea to work in the Gold Mines at Edie Creek. I accepted the job he offered. On arriving in Wau, I went up the mountain to a mine in Edie Creek and began working underground.

There was a miner who had a gold claim below where I was working who has a glass eye. He would take it out each time he went to Wau, and place it on a tree stump, and tell his boys it would watch them while he was away, and would tell him when he came back if they had worked or not while he was away. This worked for some time quite well, as he could naturally tell by the amount of ground shifted.



Water sluice operating at Edie Creek

Then one day he went away, and on returning the glass eye was smashed to smithereens on the tree stump. So he walked over to the tree stump, picked up the broken pieces and put his hand in his pocket, and pulled out a spare eye he had with him. He lined up his natives telling them "debil debil (devil) from this eye, come to me while in Wau, and say you no work, so broken eye bring me new eye, because yu kilim old pella eye pinis." after that he had no more trouble or bright stunts from the natives.

Wood Chops at Wau. 1938/9

I went down to Wau to cut in a wood chop one weekend, I was amazed at the number of aircraft landing and taking off, Wau was like a hub of a wheel in those days, delivering



DH37
purchased by
Guinea Gold in
1937 capable
of carrying 600
lbs (272) kg



Gold dredge at Bulolo

foodstuffs and mining gear and mail to the miners and others fossicking for gold, they would deliver from three miles, to five miles out of Wau.

I followed the wood chopping contests from Edie Creek, Kaindi, and Wau anywhere there was a cut going on. The miners would bet on us and run sweeps, I won £191 in prize money one weekend; I won nearly everything that was on the go. I was in pretty good nick, for three years I held the standing block championships in 10,12,13, and 14" blocks. In 1938 I won the standing and underhand wood cut championships in Morobe Goldfields. It did not do me much good, as I was giving away 30 seconds to the limit man, and would cut light blazes to try to win for those that had backed me, even the natives would bet with Twist tobacco and beetle nut.

Women and Children Evacuated

My wife Ivy and the children had arrived in Edie Creek in 1941 and in February 1942 the order came for them to be evacuated to Australia via Port Moresby, so I took them down to Wau and



Edie Creek

they went out in Junkers 31 aircraft. Ivy wrote immediately they arrived in Australia but it took some months for the letter to reach me. They had changed planes in Port Moresby, landed at Cairns that afternoon and were put on a train to Brisbane for

three days and nights. The authorities found her a house in Manly (Qld) for 15/- (\$1.50) per week.

Wau and Edie Creek Bombed and I join the NGVR

In February 1942 the Japanese bombed Wau, Bulolo and Edie Creek. One morning the house boy came tearing into the house roaring out "Planti Balus's on top" I dashed out side and could see seven Mitsubishi bombers flying over with the red ball on their wings showing plainly in the early morning sun. I ran up the hill to the mining engineer's place, and I woke him up in time to see them turning around and head back towards us. We got down into a small well in his yard, as the bombs began to fall all-round us. After they went we surveyed the damage - five houses had copped direct hits. All I had in the world to wear was the pyjamas and slippers I had on so the engineer gave me a pair of native work short's and shirt and mining boots.

I arrived in Wau at four o'clock as a civilian and at half past four I was on my way down to Bulolo as a soldier. I was given an old Light Horse Bandolier and 100 rounds of old Mark 6 ammunition. After salvaging what we could from the ruins, which was not much, we were told to go around the remaining houses and collect all foodstuffs and native rations, and bring them down to Wau. After delivering the rations and stuff we were told to report to the Wau Hospital, for a medical. So I reported to the hospital and had a paper put in front of me, and was told to "Sign here!"

We were bombed at Bulolo and Bulwa and carried out some basic training but one of our tasks was to stop natives who were deserting and carrying firearms with them.

Next day we were put on the remains of the Bulolo aerodrome as a sentry. Everything went well although you could not tell who was a civilian and who was a soldier unless you saw a person with a 303 rifle - he must be a soldier if he has a rifle. You see we all wore our own peacetime clothes, some had pith helmets, straw hats, caps and some had the slouch hat. Well guard duties were still being carried out.

8.2.1942... Approx 10 o'clock that morning the Jap's flew over in seven airplanes and bombed us, and the next day bombed us again.



Our Officer Commanding, decided upon having spotting activities, so the spotters could warn the valley in plenty of time to conceal any movement which may be going on, such as movement of men, stores, and the evacuees who were still in the valley.

10.2.1942... The enemy bombed Wau doing slight damage and no casualties; the next day was quiet as far as enemy movement was concerned.

12.2.1942... We were bombed again. We were very busy making feed dumps in the bush for the purpose of having a reserve, as the Jap's were trying to destroy Wau, Bulolo, and Bulwa. We would soon go hungry, for we were cut off from the outside world.

17.2.1942... I had been on the airstrip at Bulwa that morning, the Japs came over strafing, and later that afternoon Jap's came over again and bombed us.

I spent some 8 weeks at a high point overlooking the Huon Gulf half way between Lae and Salamaua, but just too far away to distinguish exactly what the Jap was doing in either town. All we could see and report were aircraft and ship movements.

24.2.1942... An officer, seven other ranks and myself were rehearsing putting on a mock demolition stunt so we would know what our duty should be if the enemy penetrated into the Bulolo Valley. We were progressing in fine style when we reached the store and apparently the fellows working in the store and workshop had not been notified of the mock stunt. We rushed in one door and practiced what we were supposed to do if things came to the worst. All the natives and whites, dashed out the back door shouting out "Go for your lives! It is all up!". 21/2 hours later the chaps came back with a sheepish grin.

27.2.1942... we were bombed again, natives set fire to a miner's house across the river from us. We surround them and punished them for it the following day

Next morning 3 Zero fighter planes came over strafing us and shooting us up in general. We jumped down into a dugout where they had a World War 1 old Vickers machine-gun,

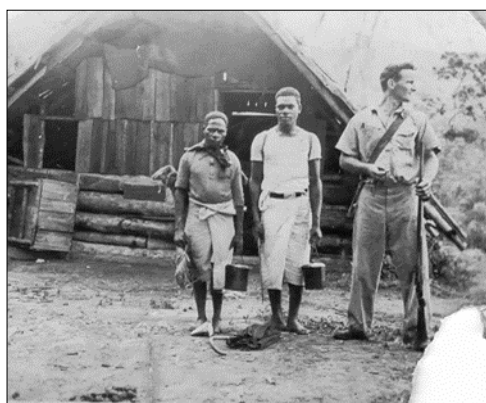
28.2.42

I then was sent to Zenag to establish a series of camouflaged staging camps down to the Markham River and then patrolled from Sunshine to Mumeng, again to halt natives trying to get home as they really had no hope of making home which in some cases were hundreds of miles away. I had three Police Bois with me.

It is 12 miles out and 12 miles back, I walked 24 miles seven days a week, for five months, I was in excellent physical condition and could out walk most of the fellows here.

At this stage my clothes were in such a state that I had to repair them with copper wire as I had no needle and cotton.

Together with Mark Schultz we then took several canoe loads of



Bill in NGVR uniform with Tekei and one other

food from Tsili-tsili down the Markham River to Nadzab. There was a lot of Japanese aircraft activity over the Markham so we hid under the vegetables in the canoes as the aircraft flew overhead.

We were on very short rations these days, and I was

allowed half a cup of rice per day and nothing else to go with it, so was pleased to get out in the bush. My bois and I could get papaya, sweet potato, taro, tapioca, cucumber, bananas etc. I had camped below an old German mission one night and set off in the morning with a mob of runways I had picked up the day before. A dog fight was above us in the clouds, then suddenly a plane came spinning down out of the clouds. I could see the red ball on the wing, so I knew he was a Jap. He hit the side of a 10,000 ft peak - hell it was quick- then suddenly it was all over.

I arrived in Bulolo one morning after walking all-night with a mob of runways and had just settled the natives down in a compound. I was about to have some breakfast when the Japanese bombed us.

Two of us NGVR and some police bois were sent out to investigate rumours that some runaway bois were living with the villagers on the lower Watut River. We arrived just in time to see the first village preparing a feast. They had a live pig tied to a pole and two natives were slowly turning the live pig singeing the bristles off over a roaring fire. The men folk were dancing around the fire in a big circle, and the louder the poor pig squealed, the louder the beetle nut chewing natives sang and danced. Beetle nut and lime has the same effect on them as beer has on us. The pig gave up the ghost - they kept on dancing until the pig was cooked- and then some of the natives broke off to feast on sweet potato and cooked pig. When they had eaten they resumed dancing, and others who had been dancing broke off and had their share. We went through another five small villages, but found no runaways, so after two day's returned to Bulolo.

My next job was to go to Tsili-tsili with Mark Schultz (NGVR) to collect vegetables and deliver them to Nadzab in the Markham Valley. We were really surprised how little the natives worked in this region. They would sharpen a stick, stab it in the ground, put a sweet potato vine in the hole and stomp on it with their heel and make another hole, and do the same again. 20 or 30 of them would plant over an acre in half a day, and then move on to another place and plant again. Mark and I left Tsili Tsili the next morning after the raid, with native canoes and about 80 native paddlers, the canoes loaded with stores and supplies for Nadzab.

Next morning after a night in the bush we located the camp. I was dressed down for travelling down the Markham in daylight. I said, "I am new to the area and could have missed a landing spot in the dark".

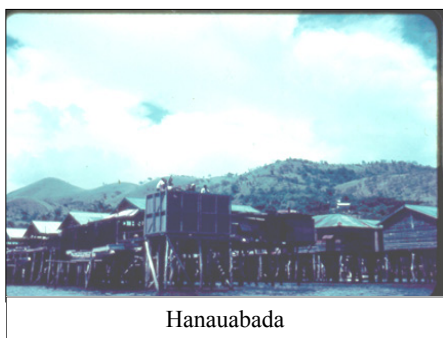
So after a bite to eat and swapping what news we had, a patrol came in which had been out since dawn and had ran into a Japanese patrol on the Heath's plantation.

Trusty Tekiel is still with me. He was my house boi in Edie Creek and has generally remained with me since.

Evacuation from Garaina and return to Australia with Malaria

By this time the 2/5th Independent Company had arrived in Wau and our patrols after that were conducted mostly with a mixture of NGVR and 2/5th men.

On one patrol we came across a number of Tolai natives from Rabaul who had been impressed by the Japanese and taken to Buna as forced labour. They had deserted and it was decided to get them to Port Moresby where their information on the Japanese might be useful. We got to Garaina and they were taken out by light aircraft when I came down with malaria and was evacuated also.



Hanauabada

From Port Moresby I was taken by Hospital Ship to Brisbane and then to Toowoomba. After recovering I was given 30 days leave and went to Brisbane and spent the time with Ivy and the children at Manly.

On return from leave I was in Adelaide St, Brisbane, one morning when the malaria returned. I sat on the footpath shivering and shaking when two Military Policemen started giving me a bad time, believing me to be drunk and telling me to move on or else. Fortunately a civilian policeman came along and realised I had malaria so I ended up in Greenslopes Hospital for treatment. After that I went to Sellheim near Charters Towers for recuperation before returning to Port Moresby by ship. At Sellheim I was advised I had been promoted to Corporal.

Return to New Guinea and Transfer to ANGAU (Australia New Guinea Administration Unit)

Immediately on landing at Moresby I was taken in a barge across the Bay to Hanauabada where ANGAU headquarters was located. Here I was told that NGVR had been disbanded and I had been transferred to ANGAU. On arrival at ANGAU headquarters I found out I had been promoted to Sergeant.

At Port Moresby I was again joined by my faithful house boy Tekiel who had stayed with me all the time in NGVR. Somehow he knew that I was coming back to Port Moresby.

I was posted to Bulldog and when I arrived at Yule Island we were held up for 3 days by bad weather but then made it to Moviavi Mission, where the mosquitoes were the size of a fighter planes – you almost had to go to ground when you heard them coming – and after that the leeches came in for what was left behind, and then to Bulldog about 70 miles up the Lakekamu River.

The Bulldog Road was being constructed as a means of getting supplies and troops across from the Southern side to Papua to New Guinea as the Japanese held all the mainland ports in New Guinea and air supply to Wau / Bulolo was subject to interference from the weather and the Japanese.

The Kukukuku natives along the road were becoming a major problem at this stage as they had developed stealing items to a fine art. They could move through the bush at will without being seen and had a reputation for their fierce treatment of anyone they took a dislike to. They were real head hunters who have had no or very little contact with white man. I have watched them come into my camp and pick up nails with their toes as they are trying to talk a sign language to you – these natives can use their toes better than we could use our fingers, I was wondering why some of the meris were wearing a skull tied around their shoulders on vine, and, from what I could make out from them in sign language and a smattering of Pidgin English, wearing a skull was proof the women were widows. The tribes have a series of gardens planted around the ranges and continually moved from one garden into the next as they eat and replant – they hunt and fish an area until they come around the next time.

My job was mainly the supervision of native labour as the

Australian Engineers given the task of building the road operated the limited mechanical equipment we had and also set the explosives for blasting of the roadway through the rocky areas. However the going through the mountainous, jungle clad country was tough and mechanical equipment difficult to get operational, so most of the work was done by native labour, supervised by ANGAU personnel.

The road was opened on 22nd August 1943 when a procession of 15 jeeps towing trailers drove from Bulldog to Wau. Unfortunately for the road the 7th and 9th Australian Divisions took Lae and Salamaua in September 1943 and the great harbour at Finschhafen later that month. By October Finschhafen was in operation as an allied port.

For my work on the Bulldog Road I was promoted to Warrant Officer Class 11 (WO11).

Back to the Wau/Bulolo Markham River Area

A few weeks before the Bulldog Road was finished I was moved over to Wau to commence clearing the Wau to Bulolo road of land slides, fallen trees and making the road trafficable. It only took a week to do the job, then I was sent 45 miles down Wampit River, where earlier I had built a series of camouflaged camps in daily stages down to the Markham River, so I am back in my old stamping ground again.

Road making here was a cake walk to what the Wau Bulldog road had been. We slipped through these river flats like nobody's business, and moved camp three times to do 12 miles of completed road 15 ft wide. Then an order came for me to cross the Markham River and meet up with our troops around Nadzab area, and be of general use and assist them in anyway I could. I crossed the river by a punt rigged to a wire which our fellows had built and used earlier in peacetime.

I could not say it was a brilliant and happy crossing, and did not know what was going on. We were in Japanese territory, and also I did not know of any troops in this region. After managing to get my 78 boys over a half mile wide river during the night, we went to sleep in the bush. We were awakened by the sound of aircraft coming over. There were quite a number of them. I recognised our planes and American planes then higher up were the fighter planes protecting the lower transport planes, and all of a sudden parachutes began opening and fellows came floating down. American Marines, and Australians began taking up positions as gear and supplies were dropped from the aircraft.

I realise now why everything had been so secretive – they did not want any leakage at this stage. As gear and equipment came down, mechanics and engineers also had to jump, and began assembling dozers, Jeeps, trucks, and graders and lots of other machinery. They became very busy laying mesh for runways for aircraft to land and take off. By next morning close on two miles of airstrip had been laid, and was ready for planes to arrive from Port Moresby and Townsville. From here to Lae is approximately 35 miles by bush track. The push is on good and proper to recapture Lae on the coast.

On the advance to Lae we came to a banana plantation, and a



Bill and Ivy whilst on leave

small village where the natives were just returning from where they had been hiding while the fight was going on. We gave them some picks and shovels and told them to bury a few dead Jap's near the village, and when they finished, to bring back the tools



and we would give them some rice and bully beef. Away they went to do the job, we thought they would be back in two or three hours at the most - came midday no sign of them - come dark still no sign of them. It was well after dark when Tekiel came in to tell me the bush natives brought back the picks and shovels and wanted rice and meat. As no lights or fires were allowed it was a bit awkward sorting the rations out in the dark, but we managed anyway. I asked what took them so long to bury the dead Japanese, as it was not a big job, and they said they would have been back long ago, but for one fellow they had trouble with - every time they threw him in the hole that they had dug for him, he crawled out, and they would throw him in again, and he would crawl out again. It was getting dark, and the next time he crawled out they got stuck into him with a tomahawk and machete, this time he stayed there so they finished the job and bought the tools back.

Further along the track some natives came and told us they were having a lean time as the Japs had taken all their food, and had taken the best meris from the villages to work for the Japs in Lae. I could see the Japanese had turned a good percentage of natives against them. This was a good thing for us as we would send them in to gather information, and they would not hesitate as they had developed a hatred for the Japanese, and wanted to even up the score a bit for the treatment that had been dished out to them by the Japs. Some of the information they gathered proved valuable.

Leave in Australia and back to New Guinea

I was then sent south to Australia on leave This time I was taken back to Nadzab to get a plane and five hours later I was in Townsville. While refuelling was in progress I had a bite to eat in a canteen then boarded the plane again to fly to Brisbane. As the plane was taking off the pilot aborted take-off as one motor was on fire. After a three-hour delay while a new motor was fitted we went on to Brisbane, arriving at two o'clock in the morning. I finished my leave then back to Lae, Ivy and Bill whilst on leave stayed the one night then on to Finschhafen.

The Australian 9th Division had landed at Finschhafen and by now its huge harbour was up and running with the Americans having brought in a huge floating workshop as well as heavy construction equipment to turn Finschhafen into a major Allied base.

We were coming back to Dreger a few days later in a truck. As we came to a cross-road where the American Negroes were doing point duty, there was a dogfight overhead. A Jap plane came crashing down, the pilot bailed out but the Parachute did not open. He fell into a swamp a few hundred yards off the road. The two black military policeman forgot the traffic and went over to where the enemy pilot hit the swamps. When we arrived there was only a portion of his parachute sticking out of the ooze and mire, and the two black policemen standing there with their Carbines pointed at the parachute and yelling out "Don't move guy or I shoot!" The Japanese had only fallen 8000 ft without a parachute, so there was not much chance of him moving - it was really laughable - but one had to be careful as these guys were really trigger-happy.

On my way along the coast to where the trail begins to climb up into the foothills, I passed some infantry flushing out some Japs in tunnels with flame throwers, Other troops were making a push on the Sattelberg track which goes up the range to the Sattelberg Mission. It was at the mission station, 24th November 1943 that this Sergeant Tom Derrick won the Victoria Cross.

After climbing up into the hills for two days, I came upon an

abandoned mission station which apparently had not been used for some considerable time. Some of the outbuildings had been burnt down, and next day I came to a village where they told me there had been no Japs around for two moons. I went as far as the next village which is over the crest on the Lae side of the range. I was making camp at night and began to shiver and shake - I must have lapsed into a coma as the sun was setting, when I woke up the sun was rising. I said to the bois "I must have slept well last night" they told me that I had been asleep for four days with 'sik belong nat-nat' (malaria).

The villagers made chicken broth for me and bought some bark from a tree which tasted like Quinine, I used it quite a few times after wards. We had no Quinine supplies since the Japanese took the Indonesian Islands.

Here I met up with Mark Shultz again. After a long chat we went to an American canteen for something to eat, as it was well past our lunchtime. I drove the jeep down to the floating workshop nearby. Mark and I were shown all over the thing, it was like a gigantic ship with different decks and lathes, and ever so much machinery and gear, crew's quarters at the rear, a boiler room, and what looked like a generator room to drive the machines, and also the mess room between decks, it was terrific.

I lived well while attached to the Americans, bacon and eggs for breakfast, steak or roast vegetables for dinner, together with some cans of beer, and a three-course meal for tea. The Americans had boxing on at night, live shows and movies. One night I was invited to an Officer's Mess for tea. I had drank some of their Rose brand Kentucky whisky and American beer just before the meal which was excellent - canned Turkey and vegetables. The captain who invited me for tea said to the Cook bring that Turkey for the Aussie to see, he bought in a tin with canned frog legs on it - I did not make the door when it came up.

Next Stop Saidor

I had made myself very comfortable at Finschhafen but then came those bloody movement orders - "report in the morning to small ships wharf, before 0800 with 70 of my natives for movement up the coast," no idea where.

The boats set out with a number of other sea craft of all shapes and sizes, I do not know how far up the coast we travelled, but during the latter part of the afternoon the boats turned to shore, the bombers came over with fighters covering them, at one time the bombers would be so high all that could be seen of the them were the vapour trails.

There were two of us with the natives, we were told to start making camp as soon as we got ashore - we got ashore with some Marines. My mate and I were told of a deserted village a bit further on, so we walked a mile and-a-half to the old village and began to rebuild their huts. As night began to fall no Americans showed up, so Ned went back to find out where they were, the American Captain told me they had established a beach head with the perimeter half a mile from the beach, and we were a mile past their front line. We soon made it back into their perimeter. The landing at Saidor was made to cut off the main body of Japanese moving from Finschhafen to Madang. My job was principally to carry out liaison duties with the local natives and ensure that they had sufficient to eat after their Japanese occupation.

At one stage I was sent out with three police bois and five other bois to quell a war between two rival tribes, who were having a fight over some land. We came on them a good day's walk away. As we approached they stopped shooting arrows at a one other and as we passed, they began again. These fights would sometimes go on for weeks, and no one would get hurt,

sometimes one would get wounded with an arrow, but not often. I made them come to agreement over the land and left them.

Service at Madang

It was goodbye Saidor and new horizons. I was beginning to get fed up with army life, and bloody Japs by now. Got to Madang and next morning I was transported to ANGAU depot from the aerodrome, meeting up with an Australian fellow. I knew him in Wau before the hostilities began.

I was sent a further 17 miles up the coast to Millilat and had the job with my natives of helping sappers construct bailey barges over streams and gullies. Just off the road that we were constructing was a Zero which had crashed, the dead pilot still in it, and a bit further on was an abandoned Jap fighter airstrip with damage planes strewn about.

A few of us found a Japanese barge sunk in a small bay. At low tide it was out of the water, so collecting a heap of 44 gallon petrol drums we attached them all around the barge until it floated, then got the Americans to bring us a welding plant and weld a patch over the shell holes in the bottom. They welded it and did up the motor for us, so then we were using it to get to and from work with the natives, instead of the American's coming three miles over and back twice each day. Not long after three fellows came up from Headquarters saying the barge was wanted back at Headquarters and we had to hand it over at once - I felt like sinking it again. So not to be out done we got hold of a couple of outriggers from the coastal boys and built a platform across them. The American workshop across the bay was good enough to give us an outboard motor for it. We eventually got it working, and on Sundays would cruise around the local islands exploring. We found some of the Japanese camps on some of them, with gramophones and Japanese records. We took them back to our camp and played some of them - they were horrible to listen to so we gave them to the local villagers for grass skirts which we traded to the Americans for a couple of cases of Rum.

To be Continued. This is a condensed version of Bill's life taken from Bill's detailed memoirs by Bob Collins.



My wife called on her way home from work and asked me to run her some hot water and not to forget the bubbles. Hope she'll be happy—she is so sweet - love her to bits.

STAFF CADET CASEY

Many years ago, in the past history of the Royal Military College, Duntroon, there was a staff cadet called Casey.

Staff Cadet Casey was a member of Fourth Class and prior to a particular Christmas leave he was skylarking around, finally managing to get himself locked in a broom cupboard.

Casey was not missed from the leave draft, thus remaining in the cupboard until the corps returned for duty in the new year.

Staff Cadet Casey's skeleton was found, however, his ghost still haunts the corridors and cavities of the college.

He will never graduate but, to appease his spirit, he is present at each graduation ball.

Casey's skeleton is lodged inside a glass locker at the Cadets Mess, along with his parade boots and 'Blues' cap.

WOI C.J. Jobson, former RSM Ceremonial and Protocol, ADF



NUSHIP SYDNEY LAUNCHED

Australia's third and final Air Warfare Destroyer was launched today.

The Royal Australian Navy's newest ship was launched during a ceremony at Osborne Naval Shipyard in Adelaide.

Hobart-class NUSHIP Sydney carries a proud name and will be a significant warfighting enhancement to Australia's fleet.

Air Warfare Destroyers like NUSHIP Sydney use a combination of global and Australian technology, to provide defence to a task group from air, surface and submarine threats.

They are the first Australian ships equipped with the US Aegis weapon system, which significantly enhances Navy war fighting capability and allows them to work more closely with our allies than ever before.

Chief of Navy Vice Admiral Tim Barrett said the launching of NUSHIP Sydney was a significant milestone for industry and Defence.

"As Sydney floats clear of her synchro lift, she will continue her journey towards decades of service to the nation," Vice Admiral Tim Barrett said at the launch ceremony.

"In the past three years we have seen the launch of the first two Air Warfare Destroyers – HMAS Hobart and NUSHIP Brisbane – and with the launch today of Sydney, the class is now complete.

"They are powerful, elegant new warships that will serve Australia as a key part of our fleet for decades to come – a fleet that will be strong, agile, intelligent, and lethal."

NUSHIP Sydney will continue her fitting out before she commences sea trials next year.

Source. Contact Newsletter 67 (May '18)

SIR JOHN MONASH CENTRE

The Sir John Monash Centre tells Australia's story of the Western Front in the words of those who served. Set on the grounds of the Villers-Bretonneux Military Cemetery in northern France, and adjacent to the Australian National Memorial, the Sir John Monash Centre is the hub of the Australian Remembrance Trail along the Western Front, and establishes a lasting international legacy of Australia's Centenary of Anzac 2014-2018.

This cutting-edge multimedia centre reveals the Australian



Western Front experience through a series of interactive media installations and immersive experiences. The S J M C App, downloaded on each visitor's personal mobile device, acts as a 'virtual tour guide' over the Villers-Bretonneux Military Cemetery, the Australian National Memorial and the Sir John Monash Centre.



The experience is designed so visitors gain a better understanding of the journey of ordinary Australians — told in their own voices through letters, diaries and life-size images — and connect with the places they fought and died. A visit to the Sir John Monash Centre will be a moving experience that leaves a lasting impression.

The Sir John Monash Centre was officially opened on 24 April 2018.

Aust Govt Veterans Affairs Website.

If solicitors are debarred and clergymen defrocked, then doesn't it follow that electricians can be delighted, musicians denoted, cowboys deranged, models deposed, tree surgeons debarked and dry cleaners depressed?

Paul Edward MASON (1901–1972)

by James Griffin

Paul Edward Allen Mason (1901-1972), planter and coastwatcher, was born on 30 April 1901 in North Sydney, third child of Frederick Mason (formerly Mikkelsen), a Danish-born master mariner, and his native-born wife Margaret, née Robinson, who had been widowed before she married Frederick. The family was contented and domesticated, principled but not overtly religious, and valued practical skills such as sailing and horse-riding. Paul briefly attended Fort Street Boys' High School and was afterwards a keen but cursory autodidact (self-taught person). With his father disabled, he left in January 1916 for the Shortland Islands, British Solomon Islands Protectorate, to ease the family burden and to assist his half-brother Tommy, a trader.

An unprepossessing, short, bespectacled youth, with fair, tousled hair and somewhat prominent teeth, Mason intrepidly managed labour-lines of recently contacted warriors. He returned home in 1919 to help his family work an orchard at Penrith, but the tropics lured him again. In 1925 he accepted a job managing Inus plantation on Bougainville, after his predecessor had been hacked to death by labourers. He tramped the island to recruit workers, picking up unrivalled knowledge of the terrain and familiarity with custom. A relieving manager and inspector for Associated Plantations Ltd (which owned Inus), he became an expert navigator. Before World War II, however, he was regarded as an ill-kempt, unlettered eccentric, most genial but gauche and shy and distinguished only by navigational and ingenious mechanical skills, particularly with wireless.

Consequently he was invited to join Eric Feldt's coastwatching team. Although Mason was scoffed at for military service—'overage, undersized, slightly deaf, a bit short-sighted', with a



malaria-induced slight impediment in his speech—he remained on Bougainville in 1942 after most officials and planters had scuttled. To safeguard him in the event of capture, he was made petty officer, Royal Australian Naval Volunteer Reserve. He was told to create observation posts behind Kieta, and then inland from Buin in the south.

With forces of the United States of America poised to invade Guadalcanal, Mason and Jack Read (his fellow coastwatcher in the north) were ordered to report all enemy aircraft and ships proceeding south-east. On 7 August Mason's celebrated signal, 'Twenty-four bombers headed yours', brought disaster to the Japanese as American fighters swooped on them. Only one Japanese aircraft returned. Unsuspecting until too late why such losses continued, the Japanese had their air cover destroyed. 'Tokyo Express' warships steaming down the Solomons 'Slot' subsequently encountered a similar reception. (Fleet) Admiral William Halsey, U.S. Navy, said that the coastwatchers 'saved Guadalcanal' and Guadalcanal 'saved the South Pacific'. In November Mason was promoted sub lieutenant and learned that he had won the U.S. Distinguished Service Cross.

Eventually alert to the danger that Europeans posed on Bougainville, the Japanese moved to corral them. A squad of local 'Black Dogs', under Japanese command, harried Mason's party as he fled northwards, eventually reaching Read at Aravia after a gruelling trek through mountainous jungle. Mason arrived with merely 'what he stood up in—shorts and singlet—plus haversack and revolver at belt; and barefooted', wrote an admiring Read. Only his audacity and his rapport with villagers had saved him.

Fresh instructions came to set up another station in the south. Mason wanted to go alone: he was exasperated by soldiers whom he regarded as inexperienced and less resourceful—and he was exhilarated by his own unanticipated physical and moral fibre in spite of age and infirmities. But Read insisted that he be accompanied. In June 1943 Mason's men were ambushed en route and had to flee. An epic climb over the 5000-ft (1500 m) Keriaka plateau saved them. By July U.S. submarines had evacuated the remaining Europeans, with the coastwatchers the last to leave. From Sydney, Mason returned to duty in late November. He was selected to take a party of Black scouts to Treasury Island, a hazardous and unsuccessful sally from which he contracted near-fatal pneumonia. He was invalided to Australia in March 1944. In Bougainville villages, rumours spread that he was dead.

Mason's unexpected return in November 1944 impressed locals, wavering in their opposition to the Japanese, with his possible indestructibility. He recruited a small partisan band which terrorized the enemy and was credited with a record body count of 2288. Always he put his scouts' welfare before his own. His daring rescues were notable for the care taken of former prisoners, especially missionaries, and the lack of vindictiveness towards collaborators. His continued wrangling with headquarters over supplies and the deficiencies of regular soldiers probably led to his transfer home in May 1945 before final victory. He was awarded the D.S.C. In December 1951 he was promoted lieutenant commander, R.A.N.V.R. (Special Branch), a matter of deep pride to him.

After the war Mason grew into a self-confident celebrity. On 13 November 1947 at Rabaul he married Noelle Evelyn Taylor, a 30-year-old arts graduate in psychology and a journalist. He returned to Inus. Associated Plantations had rewarded him with shares. The plantation flourished with his recruitment of labour from the Highlands, where he and his wife founded a retail enterprise, Buka Stores, and the Chimbu Lodge. Becoming a spokesman for his 'Cinderella district', he sat on its advisory council and wrote articles for Pacific Islands Monthly. In 1961 he stood successfully for the Territory's reconstructed Legislative Council in order to oppose the emergence of political parties which he thought undemocratic. Although listened to respectfully, he was a political nonentity. By 1972 he had accepted the inevitability of early national independence, but feared the outcome.

While not a flag-waver, Mason belonged to the Imperial Service Club, Sydney, and the New Guinea branch of the Returned Sailors', Soldiers' and Airmen's Imperial League of Australia. He died on 31 December 1972 at Greenslopes, Brisbane, and was cremated; his wife, daughter and son survived him. Appropriately for a non-dogmatic Christian, panegyrics were delivered by both Methodist and Catholic clergymen. The Australian War Memorial, Canberra, holds his portrait by Olive Kroening. For the Catalina pilots who had supplied him, Mason 'represented the upper limit of continuous bravery' and was 'their No 1 hero of World War II'.

This article was published in Australian Dictionary of Biography, Volume 15, (MUP), 2000.

The above is one of a series of articles on persons who played a substantial role in Papua and New Guinea development over the years



Junyo Maru, 1933.

THE SINKING OF PRISONER OF WAR TRANSPORT SHIPS IN THE FAR EAST

THE SINKING OF THE JUNYO MARU ON 18 SEPTEMBER 1944 WAS ONE OF THE DEADLIEST MARITIME DISASTERS OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR, KILLING OVER 5,000 POWS AND ROMUSHAS.

Between 12 and 18 September 1944, Allied forces sank three Japanese steamships that were carrying supplies to support the Japanese war effort. But unknown to the Allies at the time, these ships were also carrying Allied prisoners of war (POWs) and Javanese slave labourers (romushas). The Allies sank other POW transport ships during September 1944, but the sinking of the Kachidoki Maru and the Rakuyo Maru on 12 September led to the first eyewitness accounts being given by former POWs to Allied administrations about conditions in camps on the Thailand-Burma railway, whilst the sinking of the Junyo Maru on 18 September was one of the deadliest maritime disasters of the Second World War. The two sinkings, only six days apart, resulted in the deaths of over 7,000 men.

The Kachidoki Maru was the largest of these steamships at

over 500 feet long and more than 10,000 tons. She was torpedoed, along with the Rakuyo Maru, on 12 September 1944 by US submarines whilst en route to mainland Japan from Singapore. The Junyo Maru, the smallest steamship at 400 feet long and 5,000 tons, was torpedoed by a British submarine on 18 September off the western coast of Sumatra. When these steamships were sunk, the prisoners and slave labourers on board were all either returning from, or journeying to, the railways upon which they had been designated to work.

More than 1,300 POWs were packed on board the Rakuyo Maru and a further 900 onto the Kachidoki Maru at the docks at Keppel Harbour, Singapore, on 6 September 1944. These men had laboured on the Thailand-Burma railway - a 250-mile construction project upon which the POWs had been forced to work since June 1942. Approximately 100,000 romushas and 12,000 POWs lost their lives as a result of the brutal conditions under which they were forced to work. Although the main construction work on the railway had been completed by October 1943, the men were still suffering from the effects of severe malnutrition and tropical diseases such as malaria, dysentery and beri-beri. In this condition, those who were to be transported from Singapore to jobs elsewhere were crammed into the holds of the ships with the hatches closed - 'a layer of men lying shoulder to shoulder' recalled Australian private Philip Beilby - with a shelf above them to contain another layer of men. Rudimentary toilet facilities - boxes over the side of the deck - were at their disposal.

The Rakuyo Maru and Kachidoki Maru set sail on 6 September as part of convoy HI-72 bound for Japan. As well as POWs, the ships were carrying important supplies for the Japanese war effort, including oil, rubber and bauxite, making the convoy a target for Allied attacks. Japanese troops and POWs alike had their concerns about whether they would make the journey safely. Other transport ships had already been lost including the Lisbon Maru on 1 October 1942, the Suez Maru on 29 November 1943, the Harugiku Maru on 26 June 1944 and the Koshu Maru on 4 August 1944. In total, 23 ships transporting POWs are thought to have been sunk by Allied forces during the conflict in the Far East, with the loss of nearly 11,000 POWs and thousands of romushas.

Upon boarding the Rakuyo Maru, and to help quell the concerns of their comrades, some Australian POWs drew upon their experiences of the sinking of the HMAS Perth during the Battle of the Sunda Strait at the end of February 1942. As they were packed into the hold, they gave advice to fellow POWs on what to do in the event of a sinking. Lying 'gazing out to sea talking to each other', the men were also concerned with practical matters - the sort of work that they might be required to undertake in Japan (the rumour was that it would be coal mining, of which nobody had any experience), and the little that they possessed in the way of personal belongings. They did not have much in the way of clothing either, and during the last two years' captivity had become accustomed to a climate different from the one they expected to encounter in Japan. They wondered how well they would adjust, given the stresses that they had already endured. Any amount of time that the POWs were allowed out of the hold onto the deck was precious; this brought each man a chance to breathe some fresh air, instead of the stifling stench of the dysentery-ridden hold, and to move his stiff, cramped limbs.

At 5.00am on 12 September, six days into the voyage, torpedoes from USS Sealion hit the Rakuyo Maru. Rivers of fire were blazing in the sea from the convoy's oil tankers that had been hit earlier in the night, but the men knew that they needed to abandon ship. There were very few lifejackets and the Japanese had commandeered the lifeboats. POWs threw anything in the water that would float - pieces of wood, rubber - remembering to collect water bottles before they jumped. The crude oil made the men vomit as they ingested it and it burned - as the salt water



did - when it made contact with fissures and ulcers on their skin. But the oil also created a thick greasy coating that those who spent several days at sea believed gave them some additional protection from the harsh sun during the day and the bitter wind at night. Surviving men would watch from the water, trying to avoid the pull from the ship as the Rakuyo Maru sank the following afternoon.

At 10.40pm on 12 September, USS Pampanito torpedoed the Kachidoki Maru. She sank much quicker than the Rakuyo Maru - within minutes, rather than hours. The 900 men on board had to jump into the sea in the dark of night. The stronger swimmers tried to help those that they could hear struggling around them. 'But', remembered Thomas Pounder, a gunner with the Royal Artillery, despite his confidence in the water, 'when I hit the water, I went right down...it seemed as though somebody wrapped a rug right round me, I couldn't move'. Having struggled to reach the surface and being pushed away from a lifeboat by Japanese guards, Pounder eventually managed to climb onto a bamboo raft where he would spend the rest of the night. As day broke, he looked for the man who had been his best friend through their time on the Thailand-Burma railway, and who had been next to him on the ship. But they had been separated and Pounder's mate was among the 400 men who lost their lives in the sinking of the Kachidoki Maru that night. Japanese ships returned the following morning to pick up the surviving men. Along with over 500 other POWs, Pounder was transferred to the Kibitsu Maru, upon which the rescued men would continue their journey to mainland Japan. Here they remained in captivity until the end of the war.

For the survivors of the Rakuyo Maru torpedoing, it would be three, four and - for a small number of men including Philip Beilby - six days before they were rescued from the sea by the same Allied submarines that had sunk the convoy. Those days at sea were spent 'absolutely famished for water, the mouth dries up and your tongue sticks to the roof of your mouth', all the while staring out at 'pure and crystalline-looking' salt water. For the first couple of days the men tried to maintain their morale by singing songs to pass the time, but the sun's glare off the water became 'unbearable', the oil in the eyes burned, the salt water ulcers caused 'itchy patches' and the skin peeled away. Hallucinations caused some men to swim out to ships that were not there - and drown as a result. Others died of thirst, became aggressive, or simply went 'crazy'. The men had jumped from the Rakuyo Maru feeling free because their captors and the bayonets were no longer around them, 'but you're not free really because the bottom of the sea is calling you'.

USS Pampanito and USS Sealion had continued to patrol the area in the South China Sea following the attack on the convoy. After three days the submarine crews spotted wreckage and debris with men floating on rafts: 'We couldn't recognize them' reported Lieutenant Commander Davis, Executive Officer on the Pampanito, 'They were all hollering and screaming at the top of their voices... They were very hard to handle, they were just covered with a heavy oil, all over their bodies, their hands, and we had a devil of a time trying to get them on board, they were slick, couldn't pick them up. They were quite weak and they couldn't help themselves very much... I remember the first one that came up - he actually kissed the man as he pulled him up on deck, he was so happy to get on there. They were quite in a state of hysteria, they had practically given up when they finally got picked up by us'. Lieutenant Commander Landon Davis's full account of rescue is available on the San Francisco Maritime National Park Association's website, as is remarkable edited film footage of the rescue of 157 POWs from the Rakuyo Maru sinking, filmed using the USS Pampanito's periscope

cameras. The original film footage is preserved within US National Archives.

A typhoon would hamper the search, but for three days the submarines - with assistance from USS Barb and Queenfish - continued to pull the men from the sea. A small number would die in the days following their rescue, but the former POWs from the Rakuyo Maru were eventually repatriated to Australia and Britain. Whilst on board the submarines, the former POWs heard news of the war's progress, and provided their own intelligence to military personnel on conditions in the Far East. The rescued men were full of praise for the submarine crews and the care that they provided for the survivors before they arrived at a medical base in Saipan.

Source. PNGAA website. Article by Dr Lizzie Oliver with quotes from the Imperial War Museum.

A man was dining alone in a fancy restaurant and there was a gorgeous redhead, also alone, sitting at the next table.. He had been checking her out since he sat down, but lacked the nerve to talk with her.

Suddenly she sneezed, and her glass eye came flying out of its socket towards the man. He reflexively reached out, grabbed it out of the air, and handed it back.

'Oh my, I am so sorry,' the woman said, as she popped her eye back in place. 'Let me buy your dinner to make it up to you.'

They enjoyed a wonderful dinner together, and afterwards they went to the theatre followed by drinks... They talked, they laughed, she shared her deepest dreams and he shared his.

She listened to him with interest.

After paying for everything, she asked him if he would like to come to her place for a nightcap and stay for breakfast. They had a wonderful, wonderful time..

The next morning, she cooked a gourmet meal with all the trimmings. The guy was amazed. Everything had been so incredible!

'You know,' he said, 'you are the perfect woman.. Are you this nice to every guy you meet?'

'No,' she replies. . .

'You just happened to catch my eye.'

HELICOPTER FLIGHT VIETNAM GETS UNIT CITATION FOR GALLANTRY

Royal Australian Navy Helicopter Flight Vietnam (HFV) will be recognised by the Unit Citation for Gallantry.

Minister for Defence Personnel Darren Chester made the announcement today.

He said the outstanding service of the pilots and the maintenance and support personnel during RANHFV's deployment in South Vietnam from October 1967 to June 1971 was worthy of the Citation.



"In 1967, a detachment of the Navy's Fleet Air Arm was integrated with the US Army 135th Assault Helicopter Company," Mr Chester said.

"The newly established RAN Helicopter Flight Vietnam flew helicopters in both utility and gunship configurations.

"In addition to their usual duties, a significant number of the maintenance and support personnel also worked as aircrew and door-gunners, and ensured the security of their bases.

"RANHFV did extraordinarily dangerous work and spent most days flying combat assault missions, with the expectation of coming under fire on every second sortie."

The recommendation for the RAN Helicopter Flight Vietnam to be awarded the Unit Citation for Gallantry was accepted by Governor General Sir Peter Cosgrove following an inquiry by the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal.

Veterans of the RAN Helicopter Flight Vietnam are encouraged to apply for the Unit Citation for Gallantry through a Department

of Defence Medals on-line application form here – though this announcement isn't actually listed at time of publication.

Family members of deceased veterans are also encouraged to apply to receive the insignia.

An event will be held later in the year for recipients to receive their awards.

The ubiquitous Bell UH-1 Iroquois helicopter is still arguably the most instantly recognisable symbol of the Vietnam War. Images of the 'helicopter war' feature prominently in books, films and documentaries.

Not so widely known is the role that was played by personnel of the RAN's Fleet Air Arm (FAA), in a war that was heavily dependent on tactical air movement of combat troops, supplies and equipment in what were eventually called air-mobile operations.

Between 1967 and 1971 the Royal Australian Navy Helicopter Flight Vietnam (RANHFV), was fully integrated with the US Army 135th Assault Helicopter Company (AHC) flying Iroquois helicopters in both the utility and gun-ship configurations.

As a result of this unique relationship between the RAN and the US Army, the unit was officially designated 'EMU', for Experimental Military Unit. This was fitting, given that the EMU is a native Australian bird, yet amusing at the same time because of the Emu's inability to fly. The unit later designed its own unique badge and adopted the unofficial motto 'get the bloody job done'. In keeping with Australian Naval tradition many of the aviators also grew beards to distinguish themselves as sailors in a predominantly army environment.

The 135th AHC was initially based at Vung Tau and comprised two troop lift platoons, each with eleven UH-1Ds, a gun-ship platoon with eight UH-1Cs, a maintenance platoon with a single UH-1D and a headquarters platoon. Six of the gun-ships were equipped with mini guns, rockets and machine guns. The remaining two were fitted with the XM-5 40mm grenade-launcher system, rockets and machine guns.

The role of 135th AHC was to provide tactical air movement of combat troops, supplies and equipment in air-mobile operations. This included augmentation of army medical services, search and rescue and the provision of a command and control aircraft capability.

Source Contact Newsletter 68. (June '18)

Statistics on sanity indicate that one of every four persons is suffering from some sort of mental illness. Think of your three best friends. If they're OK.....(Then it's you)

Diplomacy is the art of telling people to go to hell in such a way that they ask for directions. Winston Churchill.

THE AFP DO HAVE A SENSE OF HUMOUR

The following appeared on Facebook from the AFP.

Here's a story about a time we found something fishy – let's mullet over.

One man thought he had the op-perch-tuna-ty to make a few clams.



Things were going swimmingly – until authorities found two containers of fish with a little extra on the side...

59 kilograms of cocaine, worth a few squid on the streets: about \$20.6 million.

He thought he cod have got away with it, until the AFP con-fish-cated it, and yesterday we arrested him – got him hook, line and sinker.

The AFP is the arch nemo-sis of all criminals.



7TH BRIGADE TESTS ITS NEW TANKS ON 'DIAMOND STRIKE'

Exercise Diamond Strike 2018 is an Australian Army live-fire combined-arms training activity conducted in Shoalwater Bay on the central-Queensland coast as a lead up to Exercise Hamel 2018.

Exercise Diamond Strike 2018 is one of a series of land and sea exercises involving the Royal Australian Navy, the Australian Army and the Royal Australian Air Force – and incorporating US Marines from Marine Rotational Force-Darwin.

This year's Exercise Diamond Strike 2018 was conducted predominately by units from the Australian Army's Brisbane-based 7th Combat Brigade, which is a multi-role formation consisting of infantry, armour, engineers, signals and logistics elements.

The 7th Combat Brigade was supported by a company of United States Marines from the Marine Rotational Force-Darwin and units from 16th Aviation Brigade and 17th Combat Service Support Brigade.

This exercise ensures these Army elements are ready for potential future deployments.



A heavy focus for Exercise Diamond Strike 2018 was on technological advancements such as the implementation of digitisation as a means of improving situational awareness, speed of decision-making and rates of execution, particularly in a contested electromagnetic-spectrum environments.

Digitisation helps in commanding armoured vehicles that are travelling and fighting at high speed, and more accurately targeting artillery rounds.

Exercise Diamond Strike 2018 was the first time the 7th Combat Brigade has used their recently acquired M1A1 Abrams main battle tanks during combined-arms training and live fire.

Contact Newsletter 69.



BOOK LAUNCH—THE BULLDOG TRACK

On 1 Aug author of the above book Peter Phelps gave a talk on the book at Garden City Library, Mt Gravatt, Brisbane attended by the Assns Paul Brown and Kieran Nelson.

The book describes the journey his Grandfather and a group took over the Bulldog Track to escape the Japanese after they had bombed Wau and Bulolo.

The above photo shows Kieran and Paul talking with the author.

The following is a review of that book.

Book Review

'The Bulldog Track' by Peter Phelps Reviewed by Lt Col Alistair Pope, psc, CM (Retired) Published by Hachette Australia Published 2018. 276 pages, ISBN 978 0 7336-3977-7

Prologue

This is very much a family story spun around a major incident in the lives of those involved during the opening stages of WW2 in PNG. Therefore, it has an 'up close and personal' description of one family's life in the 1930's and at the other end of the scale it takes in how the Japanese invasion of New Guinea affected those living there at that time. The author describes the book as 'A grandson's story of an ordinary man's war and survival on the other Kokoda trail'. All very true, so it makes for light reading, but it should not be read as a historical account of the war.

Australian Family Life

One of the themes that flips backwards and forwards throughout the book is the story of life for families in Sydney. Peter inserts the thoughts and attitudes of the civilians in Sydney to fill in the blanks, so some poetic license appears to creep in in places. When writing a family history this is not unusual. However, some 'facts' appear to be stretched. For

instance, he mentions that his grandfather tried to enlist in the AIF in 1914 at the age of sixteen (Page 2 with his photograph in uniform on Page 166). However, 'his mother, Margaret, hauled him out of the recruiting office ...' – and quite right too! I have no quarrel with the veracity of this story, nor with those who chose not to enlist in the all-volunteer AIF in WWI, but if this happened as stated in 1914, then in 1916 he would not have needed parental consent for a second attempt to enlist. So, nice photo of grandad in a soldier's uniform, but he was never a soldier.

There are other impressions and quoted opinions of people expecting the Japanese to attack Sydney (which they did in a minor way), of the fear and the effect the war was having on the civilian populations. Good, light reading for the most part.

New Guinea and the Bulldog Track

I have never traversed the Bulldog Track, but I have walked Kokoda, so although I cannot compare the two it seems gratuitous to add that the Bulldog Track was 'Longer, higher, steeper, wetter, colder and rougher than Kokoda.' Curiously, the quote is attributed to Peter Ryan in the book (though I am fairly certain Ryan said no such thing) and then to Osmar White in the podcast I listened to. There is no attribution in Wikipedia. This is a game of 'mine is bigger than yours' I played in school, but rarely since. Anyway, who judged the Bulldog to be the more challenging? One was a track men just traversed and the other was one many hundreds of men fought and died on in real battles along the Kokoda Track

There is another small annoyance on Page 18 as Peter describes the discomfort of the furnace-like working conditions in Bulolo in which most days were muggy with a temperature range of 20°C - 30°C. Peter unhelpfully explains this is 86°F - 104°F. Actually, it is a very comfortable 68°F - 86°F, and quite idyllic.

When the Japanese invaded and captured the coastal towns it was recognised that Bulolo and Wau were probable targets for occupation. Poor planning by the Government stranded over 200 miners when their transport planes were destroyed on the ground. The only way out was to cross the central mountain chain to the southern coast. Firstly, those volunteers fit enough were enlisted into the NGVR. They would remain behind and fight the Japanese, while the rest would make their way out via the Bulldog Track. Thus, it was the unwell and unfit who would make the arduous crossing.

Setting off in groups of twenty or so, they were led by their admirable native guides and carriers. They paced themselves, but as all tracks in PNG are hard and unforgiving the norm was that they were soon a permanent state of semi-exhaustion. One very sick man in their party died and was buried along the way. Although written in the style of a diary (with some short scraps included that were written at the time) it is hard to determine exactly how long the crossing took as dates are rare. As best I can determine the crossing took between 17-21 days. Once on the flatlands they then had to trek about 60 miles (96km) along the coast by canoe and walking. The author estimates their total journey took almost three months. This is quite possible as it appears they spent some time resting and recovering at a Missionary outpost on Yule Island.

Epilogue

Tom Phelps made it home to Sydney after having been 'missing' for five months and got on with his life. It was certainly an epic journey and Peter Phelps is a good storyteller who has produced an enjoyable 'holiday' read that makes the most of their escape. After they were bombed at Bulolo the trek across the Bulldog Track involved no hair-

raising close calls and no heroic actions. Just the hard slog of crossing inhospitable terrain that had been rarely seen by any Europeans before. The real heroes were those in the NGVR and the Brigades who spent the next two years fighting and defeating the Japanese invaders.

Research Notes Peter Phelps Podcast Interview

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=the+bulldog+track+ww2&view=detail&mid=418D7992A4C90ED85775418D7992A4C90ED85775&FORM=VIRE> Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bulldog_Track Kokoda Treks: <https://www.kokodatreks.com/treks/our-treks/charlies-premium-kokoda-campaign-trek/> Wikipedia Kokoda: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kokoda_Track Wikipedia Bulolo: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bulolo> Wau: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wau,_Papua_New_Guinea

Captain Oliver Woodward CMG MC and 2 Bars 8/10/1885—24/8/1966

There is a large granite WWI Memorial "gate" in the grounds of the Port Moresby Remembrance Park on Healy Road between Ela Beach and the Koki Markets. PNG Remembrance Day is held there each year. There are 129 names of Papuan residents who enlisted for active service during WWI engraved in the granite columns. A name not on this list is Oliver Woodward MC who was in Papua when WWI started though he did not enlist in the AIF until he was living in NSW.

Captain Oliver Woodward was in charge of the 1st Australian Tunnelling Company and he was responsible for detonating two massive explosive charges under the Messines Ridge on 7 June 1917. The Ridge was held by the Germans. This Australian war history has been dramatized in the Australian film, *Beneath Hill 60*. Also, Will Davies has written a book, *Beneath Hill 60*, in 2010 about this history and Oliver Woodward's life.



Oliver Woodward was selected by the Mount Morgan Gold Mining Company to supervise operations when their new copper mines opened in Papua in January 1914. The mine Woodward was at was located at Laloki, about 37 kilometres southeast of Port Moresby. When war broke out with Germany, Woodward was still in Papua working for the Mount Morgan Gold Mining Company. German New Guinea was very close by. He had to act quickly to look after the 200 indentured Papuan mine workers and dispose of the mining company assets. Woodward then wanted to return to Australia.

The government authorities at Port Moresby were fearful that the German fleet would arrive any minute. So a home defence unit was formed. All able bodied men were called to defend the town. Oliver Woodward volunteered on the condition that when the opportunity arose for him to return to Queensland he could be honourably discharged. The home defence force placed the letters AC, for Armed Constabulary, on their shoulders and then went to guard the radio station and patrol the beaches. Of course with only one ancient cannon they stood little chance of success if the might of the German Navy arrived.

In late August two war ships were spotted on the horizon. Fortunately for Woodward and the other residents in Port

Moresby the ships were not German. In fact, the ships were the Royal Australian Navy ships, HMAS Australia and HMAS Encounter, which were on their way to Rabaul to capture the German garrison and the radio station at Bitapaka. The next day (17 August 1914) Woodward was able to obtain a discharge from the Armed Constabulary and he boarded the Matunga which sailed through the night from Port Moresby to Cooktown.



Hill 60, Ypres, Belgium, 1st Aust Tunnelling Coy Memorial

With his mining skills Oliver Woodward thought he would make a greater contribution to the war effort by continuing in the mines in Australia and produce the copper greatly needed in the war. The turning point came when he received a telegram on 21 August 1915 saying that his cousin, Major Moffat Reid, had died at Gallipoli. He took a train to Sydney and enlisted in the AIF. Woodward soon afterwards joined the new Australian Mining Battalion. And as they say the rest is history.

Source: Beneath Hill 60 by Will Davies. Random House Australia. North Sydney

Thanks to the people who walked into my life and made it better. And thanks to those who walked out and made it amazing.

Exercise 'Steele Tuff' 2108

9 RQR held their annual Exercise "Steele Tuff" on 7/8/9 Sep. Assn members Peter Rogers DFC, Gerry McGrade, Jesse Chee and Bob Collins attended on Sunday to present Medals to the winning Section.



This award is keenly contested and this year 7 Sections took part. The winning section, commanded by Cpl Bambrick came from A Coy, based at Caboolture. Other members of the section were.

- L/Cpl S. Boyle
- Pte. D. Wicks
- Pte W. Det Foy
- Pte G. Murphy
- Pte M. Trembath
- Pte L. Hamilton
- Pte S. Westerweller

The training staff at 9 RQR, under the direction of the CO Lt Col Andrew Kirby and the RSM WO1 Scott Warby had set a



challenging programme consisting of:-

- Equipment selection for the Ex. (extremely important as the sections had gruelling exercises to complete and the range of equipment and weapons available was extensive).
- Live firing on the 25 metre and 100 m range with all weapons.
- Proficiency on the Weapon Training Simulation System.
- Conduct in the Urban Operation Training Facility
- A navigation course.
- Medical Stand with a Medical incident.
- Operations in the Night Training Facility.
- Skill in Communications
- Section movement over the Obstacle Course
- General Military Knowledge written quiz.



Maj. Peter Rogers DFC (Retd) giving an address at the medal presentation.

The Army Reserve units now have a high priority on the issue of new weapons and equipment and 9 RQR has received a number of the new EF Steyr rifles on the same

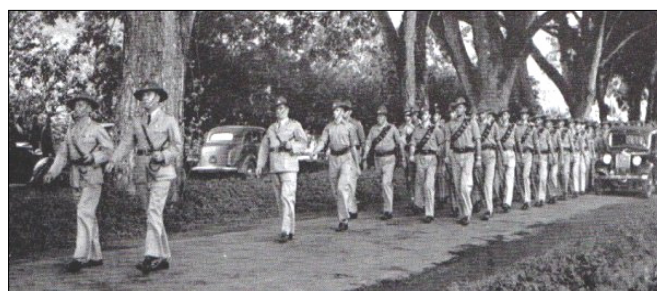
scale as Regular Battalions.

Overall it was a pleasure to be able to observe the skills and equipment of a modern Reserve Unit and our Assn members were impressed at the high standard of training.

2019 The 80th Anniversary of the Formation of The New Guinea Volunteer Rifles (NGVR)

The NGVR was the first Military Unit raised outside Australia after World War 1 and it was raised in the Mandated Territory of New Guinea which, by agreement with the League of Nations, it was prohibited from establishing Military Bases but was charged with protecting New Guinea from external attack. On 8th September, 1939, Lt Col John Walstab, DSO. VD. Who was Superintendent of the Territory of New Guinea Police Force was instructed to raise the Unit with an initial establishment of 21 Officers and 450 Other Ranks. Volunteers were attested at Rabaul, Kokopo, Salamaua, Wau, Bulolo and Madang. They were unpaid volunteers and their uniforms were tailored by the local Chinese tailors.

The NGVR Volunteers were men who were working in New Guinea at the time and consisted of a wide variety of occupations – miners, police, planters, geologists, Administration personnel, solicitors, bankers etc. Their



July 1940. NGVR's first ceremonial march down

training was very basic and in many cases because of shift work in their civilian occupations could not be carried out together. Their equipment was rudimentary and of World War 1 vintage with the Government of the day more concerned with the War in Europe and Africa.

Indigenous New Guineans were officially excluded from the NGVR as were Asians and Malays, but this policy was not always followed. In Wau two Chinese were recruited and in Rabaul some 30 Chinese, with the support of the local members of NGVR, formed a Medical Support Unit, called the Chinese Auxiliary Ambulance Detachment (CAAD), and supplied their own uniform. They were trained by qualified Medical personnel attached to NGVR. Some members of the CAAD saw service during the Japanese invasion of Rabaul.

When the Japanese invasion of Rabaul occurred in January, 1942, NGVR manned defensive positions on Simpson Harbour and in the debacle that followed some 80 NGVR men were killed either in the invasion itself, the Toll Massacre that followed or the sinking of the "Montevideo Maru", an unmarked Japanese freighter carrying some 1053 Australian POW's and civilians off the coast of the Philippines.

The occupation of Rabaul and New Britain left the NGVR as the only Military Unit on the mainland of New Guinea. They had small detachments at Madang, Lae, Salamaua, Wau and Bulolo. They assisted in the evacuation of civilians from those centres and maintained wireless contact with HQ 8 Brigade in Port Moresby giving details of Japanese shipping and troop movements and aircraft movements towards Port Moresby which was invaluable as an early warning. Some members of the NGVR also voluntarily assisted in the evacuation of hundreds of Military personnel from the New



Two blokes living in the Australian outback saw a couple of jobs advertised by the Queen of England. She was looking for footmen, to walk beside her carriage.

They applied and were very happy to be flown to London for an interview with Her Majesty.

She says to them: "Because my footmen must wear long white stockings, I must see your ankles to be sure they are not swollen or misshapen."

After they show her their ankles, the Queen says: "It is also important that you don't have knobby knees, so I need to see your knees too." Once she has seen their knees, she says: "Now everything appears to be in shape, so I just need to see your testimonials."

Nine years later, when the pair are finally released from prison, one of the blokes says to the other:

"I reckon, if we just had a bit more education we would have got that job!"

Britain Island, now under Japanese control.

After the Japanese landed at Lae and Salamaua NGVR withdrew into the Markham Valley and the hinterland between Salamaua and Wau/Bulolo and maintained a watching and harassing brief. Raids were carried out on Salamaua and Heath's Plantation in the Markham Valley. By their actions the NGVR denied the Japanese the important goldfields of Wau/Bulolo and access over the Bulldog Track to the coast of Papua by which they could have attacked Port Moresby.



The NGVR Vickers Machine Gun Platoon, Wau. The photo was taken and developed by a soldier with no photographic experience with what equipment he could scrounge. The spots are original.

NGVR operated with no air support, no modern infantry weapons, no ration or ammunition supply system and with their medical support only what they could provide themselves until the arrival of men from the 2/1st Independent Company and the 2/5th Independent Company which resulted in the formation of "Kanga Force". In the words of the Australian War History "They had done this within a spidery organisation and largely through their own ability to improvise; through knowledge, experience and common sense which had to serve instead of the benefits of training; through individual courage and patient watchfulness instead of as part of an integrated machine. Now they were able to take their part in a more ambitious organisation".

Officially NGVR was disbanded in April, 1943 and their members transferred to units where their New Guinea experience and knowledge of how to handle indigenous people could be utilised. Most went into the Australian New Guinea Administration Unit (ANGAU), although others were transferred to Signal Units, Small Ship Units, Allied Intelligence Bureau etc. Those posted to ANGAU carried out a variety of roles; maintaining carrier lines for forward supply to the fighting troops; supervising indigenous labour lines building airstrips, unloading ships etc; maintaining law and order in vast, basically uncontrolled areas of New Guinea; carrying out medical and census patrols formerly carried out by the Civil Administration; acting as guides on 'biscuit bombers'; and working with US and Australian forces as required. Strangely enough several individuals remained posted to NGVR until their discharge at the end of the War.

Very few people in Australia were aware of NGVR or what its members had achieved in its brief history. Its members were strong individuals who had chosen to go to New Guinea to work prior to World War 11 and when faced with the Japanese threat did not shrink from the task ahead of them.

Their individual War experiences are varied and in the main very different from those of the standard Australian Regimental soldier.



Some of those who manned the Museum during Brisbane Open Day Bob Collins, Paul Brown, Tony Boulter, Mike Griffin, Peter Rogers (the younger), Colin Gould MBE, Peter Rogers DFC. Absent Douglas Ng and Kieran Nelson.

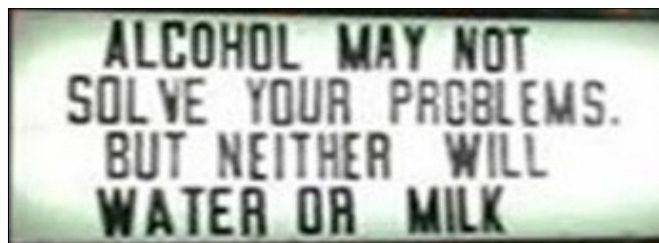
Brisbane Open House

On 13/14 Oct the Museum was open each day for Brisbane Open House weekend when museums, historic houses, buildings, gardens etc are open to the public.

The weekend was a very wet and miserable one however we were delighted to have visitors of 129 over the weekend.

Brisbane Open House is advertised widely, has a web site and prints numerous booklets, so it was an ideal opportunity to have the museum included in the advertising. Most of the visitors were totally unaware of the existence of the museum but many went away with the promise of returning with friends or groups in the future.

The Museum Curators are always looking for assistance with events such as this. If you can assist please contact Paul Brown or Colin Gould (Details on P.16) to have your name added to the list.



Association Annual General Meeting.

43 Members and friends attended the AGM of the Association held at the Museum at Wacol on Sat 27 Oct.

The Assn Patron, Maj Gen John Pearn, AO. RFD. Presented his Patron's Medal to Peter Rogers (the younger) for his continuing strong support of the museum and museum functions., and also to Patti Gould, wife of our Assn Secretary, for her assistance



Phil Ainsworth, Maj Gen John Pearn AO RFD, Patti and Colin Gould with Patti's Patron's Medal.

and support to Colin during the years he has carried on the arduous position of Secretary over the past 26 years.

Various reports were tabled. The President's report covered the wide range of activities



carried out by the Assn over the year and his full report can be viewed on our web site www.pngvr.weebly.com and on our Facebook page.



Maj Gen John Pearn, AO, RFD, presents Peter Rogers with his Patron's Medal

The existing Committee was elected again for the coming year and we also had the pleasure of the Rev Ron MacDonald accepting the position of Honorary Padre for the Assn.

It has been some years since we had an Honorary Chaplain. Ray's details can be found on P.16. Ray is the live in caretaker for the Salvation Army Brisbane HQ.

The AGM was followed by a BBQ luncheon provided by the Assn and cooked by brothers Peter Andrew and Rogers (grandchildren of NGVR veteran 'Horrie' Harris).

Overall a very enjoyable function.

Informal get together for Barry Wright's 86th Birthday

Over a number of days towards the end of October an informal get together was held at Jimboomba to celebrate Barry Wright's 86th birthday.



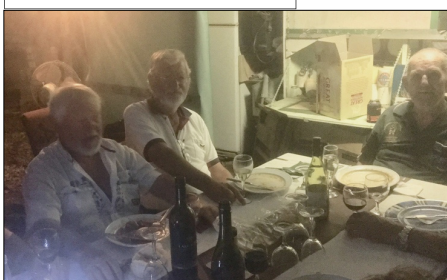
Barry Wright and Norm Mundy at the AGM.

Barry was one of the original members when the Assn was formed and served on the Committee for a number of years. His full military history was told in HTT Vols 107 & 108.

Assn members who attended over several days included Norm Mundy, Kerry Glover and wife Elaine, Leigh Eastwood, Ian Thompson, Glen O'Brien and Bob Collins.

Assn President Phil Ainsworth and Andrea Williams, former President of the PNGAA. Ted and Heather

McAllan, who hosted our Field Dinners for some years, and Jim and Tracee Trammel, who were regular attendees at the Field Dinners also attended the informal evening meal on the Friday night.



Ian Thompson, Bernard Daniels and Barry at the Dinner



Kassam Pass. Constructed in the 1960's this was the first road into the PNG Highlands. Photo Bruce O'Reilly. (In 1964 I drove my new long wheel base Land Rover from Lae to Goroka via Kassam. Ed.)



WO1 RJC Jones Csc

WO1 Richard Jones

WO1 R.J.C. Jones Csc, son of member Brian Jones has now served in the Australian Army for 33 years. At present he is on assigned tasks for 6-8 weeks SW Pacific area, most probably Solomons.

Richard, whilst serving in PNG, produced a small book on the Lae War Cemetery, and Commonwealth War Cemeteries which was given to VIP visitors to the Lae War Cemetery. Extracts from the book are contained in HTT Vols 72, 73.

VALE. Stephen J. Creevey T/Sgt 159803

Stephen Creevey's death was in the Qld RSL News in October, 2018.

He is named in the History of PNGVR as having attended NCO promotion courses from 1957 to 1962 as a member of Admin Coy, PNGVR, Port Moresby.

He was a member of the Kingaroy/Memerambi RSL Sub Branch.

If anyone can provide more information it will be included in a future issue of HTT.

LEST WE FORGET

VALE. Arthur George North 159361

Served in PNGVR from Nov 1951 to Mar 1952.

PNGVR: A History states "The CO PNGVR over the Christmas period in 1951 led a party of PNGVR and Civilians and a woman over the Kokoda Track. Prior to this walk, no white man, except Patrol Officers had walked the historic Track since WWII. It was physically hard but a satisfactory experience since the Track had not been kept open and its condition was bad. The party had to use machetes in many places and took six and one quarter days to complete the trek. (Pacific Islands Monthly)

Arthur North was a member of this party.

If anyone can provide more information it will be included in a future issue of HTT.

LEST WE FORGET





MERRY CHRISTMAS

AND

A HAPPY AND HEALTHY YEAR IN 2019

FROM PRESIDENT, PHIL AINSWORTH,

AND YOUR ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

We need to have more details of the following people who deposited directly into NGVR/PNGVR Association account. 10001128. Details such as Christian and Surnames and what the money is for would be good.

Notations appearing on our Bank Statements:-

- 14/6/18. Direct Credit 128594. Lenore. Membership fee \$30
- 18/6/18 Cash Dep Branch Blackwood \$30
- 5/7/18 Direct Credit 185074 Bendigo Bank PNGVR \$30

I have tried telepathy— it just doesn't work.

Frustrated Association Treasurer.

BUNNINGS BBQ

On Sat 29th December The Association has been given the privilege of carrying out an all day BBQ at Bunnings, Oxley, a Brisbane suburb. These BBQs are the major source of funding for your Museum. This being the Christmas Holidays a number of regulars who normally work on the day cannot be present and **the Association is seeking assistance from members and friends who can be there on the day.**

There are normally a morning and afternoon shift but your assistance at any time is appreciated. Contact Paul Brown or Colin Gould whose details are opposite.

FUNCTION DATES

Sat 23 Feb Tentative Committee meeting at Museum followed by BYO lunch.

MUSEUM EVENTS

Sat 1 Dec. Museum open to the public 10am to 1pm.

Sun 9 Dec. NASHO Xmas party on site. **NO** Assn functions. Museum closed.

Sat 6 Jan. Museum closed



NATIONAL MEDALS
Pty Ltd



REPLICA MEDALS OR MOUNTING OF MEDALS

A reliable source for medal work is National Medals, natmedals@bigpond.com, Ph 07 3871 0600 Ask for Greg Faux, mobile 0419 196 172. Located at 13/200 Moggill Road, Taringa, Brisbane, 4066

New Guinea Volunteer Rifles and Papua New Guinea Volunteer Rifles Ex Members Association Inc,

Includes former members of the PIR, PIB and NGIB.

For correspondence contact Secretary, Colin Gould, email pngvr@optusnet.com.au, phone 0424 562 030 (The Secretary, P O Box 885, Park Ridge, Qld, 4125)

For Military Museum enquires contact Colin Gould email pngvr@optusnet.com.au, phone 0424 562 030 or

Paul Brown email paulbrown475@gmail.com, Phone 0402 644 181

(NGVR/PNGVR Military Museum, Corner Boundary Road & Fulcrum Street, Wacol, Qld, 4076)

Membership fee payments to Treasurer, Doug Ng, email douglasng@inet.net.au, phone 0413 014 422

(NGVR & PNGVR Ex-members Association : BSB: 064006 - A/C: 10001126)

Website Master: Trevor Connell email trevor.connell@internode.on.net, phone 0409 690 590

www.pngvr.weebly.com (all back copies of HTT may be obtained from our website)

Facebook Master: Kieran Nelson, email kierannelson@bigpond.com, phone 0412 236 013

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ngvrandonpngvrarmymuseum/>

Harim Tok Tok Editor: Bob Collins, email collins@bigpond.com, phone 0413 831 397

President: Email p.ainsworth@kingco.com.au to get on members electronic distribution including Harim Tok Tok (you will receive it in colour, earlier and can adjust the print size to suit)

Padre. Rev Ron MacDonald. Phone 0407 008 624 email ron.macdonald@aue.salvationarmy.org



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