



# Harim Tok Tok

PAPUA NEW GUINEA VOLUNTEER RIFLES EX-MEMBERS ASSOCIATION Inc.

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## PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

The past two years have played havoc with our activities. Now that we are learning to live with coronavirus, and hopefully all are fully vaccinated, our Association's activities will return to normal. I also hope the recent huge rain event down the eastern board did not affect you. If it did, you have my sympathy and I trust you received the assistance necessary to recover and resume your normal life.

Last year in volume 127, I mentioned that the name of the nearby Boundary Road, Wacol bridge was to be called the Frank Holland MBE bridge. The official bridge naming ceremony was held on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> February at the bridge, which was followed by a morning tea in Everyman's Hut. This successful event is written up on page 15.

The Association's Brisbane Anzac Day March and Reunion will be held on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> April. The details about the March and Reunion are on the attached page to this newsletter. Importantly, should you require a jeep ride for the march, please advise the Secretary by Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March.

Please diary our annual Montevideo Maru Memorial Service which will be held at 10am on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> July at the Brisbane Cenotaph. This will be the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the sinking of the Montevideo and the loss of 1,054 Australian POW's and civilian internees, the worst Australian Maritime tragedy. Thirty-six NGVR soldiers were lost on the ship. This is a public commemorative service so please invite your family and others to attend this important event.

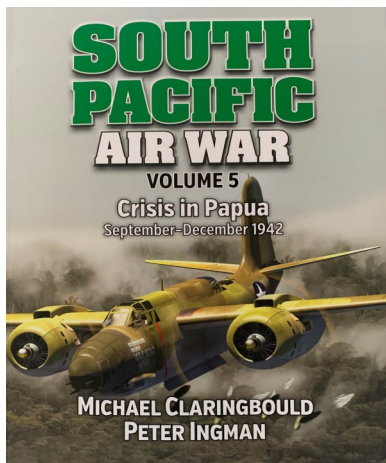
The story of the Japanese invasion of Rabaul and New Guinea Islands and its aftermath is not well known Australia-wide. I encourage members and friends to approach their community whichever way they are able, by giving talks in schools and churches and through your local political representatives, to tell them about this story, the only time Australian homes have

been invaded in what was then Australian Mandated Territory.

For our members and friends in Sydney, Canberra and surrounds, an 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Service for the civilians and military personnel lost in Rabaul and the Montevideo Maru will be held at the Australian War Memorial at 11am 1<sup>st</sup> July. A luncheon will follow. Details of this service and luncheon may be viewed on the reverse side of the attached sheet with our Anzac Day information.

Since the February edition, I sadly report the death of two of our members, Jack Hobbins and Evan Wham, and Thelma, the wife of member John Batze. The vales of Jack and Evan are on pages 18 and 19. Thelma died 28<sup>th</sup> February and her funeral was held 4<sup>th</sup> March in Beenleigh, south of Brisbane. Our thoughts are with the three families.

Volume 5 of Michael Claringbould and Peter Ingman's series about the South Pacific Air War has been published. It covers the developing crisis in Papua and in the Solomon Island from September to December 1942. The first four volumes chronicled the first 9 months of the Pacific War in the air. The strategic picture had changed by early September. The Japanese continued their march over the Stanley Range to Port Moresby while the battle for Guadalcanal raged. A strengthened US 5<sup>th</sup> Air Force supported by the RAAF took



the fight to the Japanese in Rabaul and the Solomons. Japanese air reinforcements poured in, mainly to support the critically important Guadalcanal campaign, where the Japanese sustained massive losses. By early December IJAAF reinforcements again began arriving in Rabaul. This is an important read to understand this aspect of the Pacific War.

I look forward to seeing many of our members and friends on Anzac Day. It is our most important event of the year. On the day our thoughts will be shared with those who cannot attend or live away from Brisbane. If you are able, please attend your local Anzac Day service.

Phil Ainsworth, March 2022

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## It just shows you my luck, or whatever you like to call it Barney Cain's escape from Rabaul

29 Oct 2020 by Claire Hunter

When Barney Cain heard Japanese bombers flying over Rabaul, he thought he was going to die.

"I was actually in hospital there with malaria when the first Japanese Kawanishi bombers came over and bombed us," he said.

"I thought they were going to drop right on us ... right on my head ... but they didn't.

"It just shows you my luck, or whatever you like to call it."

When the Japanese landed at Rabaul on 23 January 1942, the small Australian garrison was quickly overwhelmed and most of its troops, including six army nurses, were captured. About 400 troops, including Barney, evaded capture.

"By that time we were running from the Japanese and you had one thing on your mind – feet, do your duty."

Barney spent the next three and a half months evading the Japanese, crossing rivers, and trekking through the rugged mountains and jungles of New Britain in a desperate attempt to escape.

A few years earlier, he'd been a teenager playing football and cricket at Rye on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula. His great-grandfather was one of Rye's early settlers, and Barney was born at the home his grandfather built on the family property, 'White Cliffs'.

He was working as a farm labourer and playing football for Sorrento when he enlisted during the Second World War. He smiles when asked why he decided to join up. Because I was an idiot," he said, laughing.

"I was going to join after the footy season in 1940, but I was playing football, and I hurt a muscle in my leg. I couldn't kick right footed – and I'm a right footer – so I decided then that if I couldn't play footy, I was going to join the army. I went and joined up at Melbourne Town Hall sometime in late May, and I passed all the medicals and everything, but I was only 19 at the time, so I had to go and get my parents' permission.

"My father was in World War I and lost an eye on the Western Front in France. He was in the army in the Second World War too – one of the volunteers – and he signed it immediately, but my mother didn't want to sign it. I don't blame her – she had more brains than the two of us – but anyhow, it was signed, and that was it."



He reported to the Brighton Drill Hall at 9 am on 6 June 1940 – his 20th birthday – and was sworn in at Royal Park. Having volunteered to join the 17th Anti-Tank Battery, he was sent to New Britain with Lark Force in April 1941. He was there when the Japanese began bombing Rabaul on 4 January 1942.

Air raids continued almost daily until the 5,000-strong Japanese invasion force entered the harbour and landed at Blanche Bay in the early hours of 23 January 1942.

The 1,400-strong Lark Force was under-resourced and under-prepared, and could only offer token resistance. The town was captured in just a few hours, and more than 800 members of Lark Force were taken prisoner by the Japanese.

Barney was one of the lucky ones. Having just rejoined his unit after being discharged from hospital the week before, he escaped to the south side of the island.

"I was a driver for a Lieutenant who was in charge of one of the Troops," Barney said. We were down near the Vulcan, a volcano that went up in 1937, when the Japanese landed. They landed in the dark, just down from us, at about 3 o'clock in the morning, and when it just came daylight, he said to me, 'You'd better take the ute up to the top.' It was steep and slippery, and we didn't know what had happened up there, so I went up there to have a look, but he never turned up.

"Eventually, some of the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles came up the hill, and I asked them where the anti-tank blokes were. They said, 'There's no one there,' so eventually we put them on a truck and we landed at what we called the Upper Drome.

"That's where everybody was heading, and there was an officer there – Mad Mick – screaming out. He was the 2/22nd major, and he was yelling, 'It's all over, it's every man for himself,' which was great news to us; we'd had orders – you fight to the last, there's no surrender, and all this."

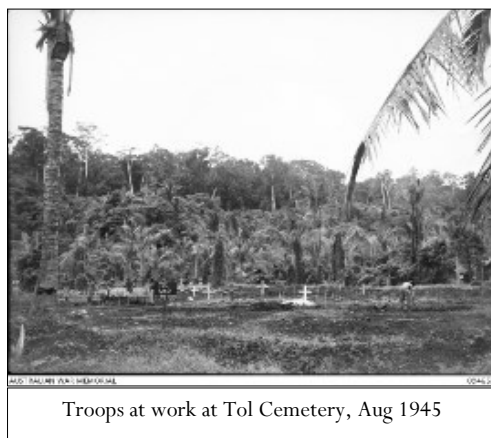
In the ensuing days, groups from the 2/22nd Battalion, ranging from company-strength down to pairs and individuals, desperately tried to escape along New Britain's north and south coasts. Some found small boats and got away under their own auspices, while others were picked up by larger vessels operating from New Guinea.

"We were strafed and everything trying to get out," Barney said. "We finished up at Malaguna, but that was as far as we could get, so from there, we headed across the [Bainings] Mountains to Adler Bay on the south side of the island. I finished up at Tol Plantation, and I was there when the Japs landed there too." 160 Australians would be massacred at Tol, their bodies left in the jungle.

Barney remembers the moment the Japanese arrived as if it was yesterday. "There were a lot of troops there, all in these small parties, and a Major Bill Owen was organising to get everyone over to the other side of the river," he said. "The natives were going to ferry us across in canoes, and around the corner came these barges.

"Someone said, 'They've come to rescue us,' but I had a pair of binoculars, and I won't tell you what I said first. "I said, 'No, they're Japanese,' and they let us know then. Boom, boom, boom. They started firing – I think they were mortars – and it scattered the natives, so they abandoned us, and took off in the canoes."

Men were captured as they tried to escape from the plantation, others were captured when they were unable to cross the rivers in the area, and at least one group surrendered. The prisoners of war were tied together in groups of two or three. They were asked in sign language by the Japanese if they preferred to be shot or bayoneted and were then taken into the jungle where they were shot, bayoneted or burnt alive.



Troops at work at Tol Cemetery, Aug 1945

Barney's party had managed to escape when the Japanese arrived. "There were about 16 in my party, and half of them took off, and headed up river," he said. "We were held up for a while, and when we started off, I saw a track leading off the main track that I was

going up. I headed down there, and here's the canoes."

Using the canoes, the men made it across the river, and were walking across an open area when they saw two barges leaving from the other side of Wide Bay. "There were only about eight of us left by then, and one of the other blokes said, 'They're taking prisoners back to Rabaul,' and then – boom, boom, again – they shot at us," he said. "They were not taking prisoners back; they were heading over to our side, but then they swung off, and headed off further up the bay, so we took off up into the hills and stayed there overnight.

The next day, we came out, and we headed off, but we never saw a Jap or anything. We made sure we didn't. "The Japs were patrolling in that area, and any noises we heard, we got out of the road, and headed up in to the hills. They could have been Jap troops, or not, but they'd been into the village there, and the villagers didn't want to have one bit to do with us."

The men pushed on to a village where the villagers sheltered them for the night, and eventually made it to Palmalmal, Jacquinot Bay. Father Ted Harris, a Roman Catholic priest who ran the Palmalmal Catholic Mission, did everything he could to help the



Father Ted Harris at Palmalmal wharf. He was later executed by the Japanese.

Australian troops who stumbled in from the jungle, giving them food, shelter and medicine as they hid from the Japanese at the Drina and Wunung plantations.

Barney and his mates tried to push on further, but were forced to return to Drina River when they got to a river they couldn't cross.

He remembers seeing Bill Cook, a private from Campsie, who had been bayoneted 11 times during the Tol Plantation massacre. He had been stabbed five times, his hands tied behind his back, and survived by holding his breath and pretending to be dead. When he could hold his breath no longer, a Japanese soldier heard him, and stabbed him a further six times. The last thrust went

through his ear and into his mouth. As he lay there, he heard the last two men being shot. When the Japanese finally left, he untied the cloth that had connected him to his dead mates with his teeth and staggered towards the sea. He walked in the water to avoid leaving a trail of blood and was found the next morning by a small party of soldiers with Lark Force area commander Colonel John Scanlon who dressed his wounds.

By April 1942, 156 Australian soldiers and civilians had escaped to the Palmalmal area after fleeing Rabaul. They were eventually rescued and evacuated to Port Moresby on board *HMAS Laurabada*.

"The Japs had started to build up in front of us at Gasmata, so we were blocked; we couldn't go any further, and we couldn't go back – we were stuck there," Barney said. "And that's where they were trying to get in touch with Moresby. They had a wireless, but they couldn't reach Moresby with it.

"Some of the other blokes had got off on the north side of the island, but we were stuck on the south side. Two Australians – I think they were officers – and two natives volunteered, and came across in a yacht and found us, or found the Palmalmal area.

"There were quite a few of us, and they sent back word of how many troops were there, and they sent the *Laurabada* to come and pick us up."

His body wracked with malaria and dysentery, Barney walked from Drina River back to Palmalmal to board the *Laurabada*.

"I reckon I had at most a fortnight to live, but I made it back to Palmalmal, and we got on that boat, and we landed in Moresby," Barney said.

"We got on the *Macdhui*, which was a boat that used to do the island trade, [to go to Townsville and I had a pair of shorts on, and that was all I had. I had no boots, and we got on, and – dong, dong, dong, dong – everybody started heading for the dining room. It was the bell for dressing for



The *Laurabada* arriving in Port Moresby

dinner, but we'd been three months in the jungle in the same clothes all the time, or what was left of them.

"We hadn't had a feed in months,

and they plonked a loaf of bread on the table for the steward to open. When they came back, we asked if we could have another loaf of bread to eat, and the steward said, 'You're lucky, there's roast turkey tonight.' "We had roast turkey with all the trimmings and everything, and of course, you eat and eat and eat, but it's not very good for you when you put that much food in because your stomach is only that small, so I gave that away, and I didn't eat like that for the rest of the trip."

Barney went on to serve with the 2/4th Battalion during the Aitape-Wewak campaign. Three of his younger siblings also served during the war: his brother Jimmy served with him in the 2/4th Battalion until he was struck down by Dengue fever; his sister Sally served as a corporal in Signals; and his brother Mick served as a postmaster in the air force.

Barney was in Wewak when he was told he was going home. He remembers walking out of Melbourne's Flinders Street Station in August 1945 to learn that the war was over. "It was 9 o'clock in the morning and an elderly lady came up to me, and threw her arms around me, and said, 'It's all over.'

"I thought, 'Geez, she's started early this morning,' and the next minute there were hundreds of them out there – the war was finished."

Barney returned to his family in Rye, and met his wife Betty on a double date with his cousin. They were married on 26 April 1947. They had three children – Barney, Dennis and Jeffrey – and spent time in Queensland before returning to Cain Road in Rye where they lived for almost 30 years.

Today, Barney still lives independently, enjoys dabbling in new technology, and likes to swing a golf club from time to time. He celebrated his 100th birthday earlier this year and has seven grandchildren, 12 great grandchildren and one great-great grandchild.

"People say, 'I was that scared,' but I can't say I was ever really scared," he said. "You get revved up a bit, and ... you get to the point when you are ill, and you are that crook, that you start to worry a bit whether you are going to make



it or not, but I couldn't say I was ever that scared...

"It's weird, but you get to the stage that you are just accepting of it – I might get killed tomorrow – and I'd say the big majority of blokes were like that. As a unit, you depend on one another for your whole life, and if you don't work together, there's every chance you are going to die."

Barney will never forget those who helped him during his three and a half months evading

the Japanese in the mountains and jungles of New Britain. Father Harris, the man who had helped so many at Pal Mal Mal, was later taken by the Japanese and executed at sea. His body was dumped overboard and eventually washed up on the shore. The Japanese would not allow the locals to bury his body which eventually washed out to sea. A memorial, provided by grateful survivors of the 2/22nd Battalion, was erected on the beach after the war with the simple inscription: "I was sick and you visited me."

More than 75 years after the end of the war, Barney remembers it all, including his army number –VX30679. He still has his dog tags, and gets emotional talking about his mates, and how young they all were.

"There's no way you would have got me to tell you all this after the war," he said. "I didn't talk about it up until recently, but I think it probably helps to get things off your chest, doesn't it?"

"I always thought of my mother afterwards. They were informed that I was missing-in-action, and well, my father was in World War I, so naturally, he knew straight away what that meant, and then they said I was missing for three months; he thought I was dead."

Today, Barney is known for his witty one-liners and his home-made bread. Looking back, he still considers himself fortunate; fortunate to have survived the three and a half months in the mountains and jungles of New Britain, fortunate to have married the love of his life, and fortunate to have had a sense of humour and zest for life that helped him through it all.

"I'd tried too hard to stay alive," he said. "You're not going to waste it, are you?"

*Australian War Memorial Web site*

Paddy asks, "Mick, how did you get on at the faith healer meeting last night ?

Mick replies, "He was absolute shite. Even the fella in the wheelchair got up and walked out!"

### Royal Australian Infantry Corps

The Royal Australian Infantry Corps (RA Inf) is the parent corps for all infantry regiments in the Australian Army.

The role of infantry is to seek out and close with the enemy, to kill or capture him, to seize and hold ground and to repel attack by day or night, regardless of season, weather or terrain.

As its role implies, infantry is the major combat element of



the Army. This role demands high standards of mental and physical toughness, esprit de corps, battle craft and determination from soldiers, and doubly so from officers who are expected to lead from the front.

Major components of the Royal Australian Infantry Corps include the battalions of the Royal Australian Regiment, and the six state-based Army Reserve infantry regiments. The corps also includes the regional surveillance and special forces units.

The corps was established on 14 December 1948, with its Royal Corps status conferred by His Majesty King George VI. At her coronation in 1953, Queen Elizabeth II became the Colonel-in-Chief of the corps.

*Army web site*

### Royal Australian Navy Beach Commando

The RAN Beach Commando was formed in January 1944. Their task was to accompany army units during the initial stages of a beach assault, they would conduct reconnaissance of the beach head, sign post the area, coordinate landing craft and beach traffic and communicate with the naval vessels offshore. The assault on Tarakan, Operation Oboe One, was the units first action and detachments supported the subsequent Australian landings at Brunei, Labuan and Balikpapan.

In April 1945, Beach Commando B under Commander B. G. B. Morris, RANVR, went into action in the Battle of Tarakan, supporting the Army's 26th Infantry Brigade and 2nd Beach Group. Two beach commandos were killed and two wounded. Morris was awarded the U.S. Bronze Star for his role in the Tarakan Landings.

Beach Commandos A and C, under Lieutenant Commander R. McKaige D.S.C., RANVR, took part in the 9th Division and 1st Beach Group's landings at Brunei and Labuan.

Beach Commandos B and D participated in the 7th Division and 2nd Beach Group's landings in the Battle of Balikpapan.

*James Thewlis. Australian Military History*

*Ed Note. For the landings in New Guinea the beach parties were trained by and under command of the US Army. They consisted of*

1. Someone who knew the area and people.
2. a qualified signaller
3. an Army man who provided necessary Army information.
4. a Medical assistant
5. someone with knowledge of beach landing requirements.



A member of Beach Commando B during the first phase of the landing on Tarakan Island in April 1945

*These units were formed after the US experience of beach landings in the Solomon Islands. Frank Wilson, ex NGVR and then a Lt Platoon Commander with the 2/15th Bn, 20th Brigade, 9th Division, trained with such a group which would be used for the landings at Madang. As it happened Madang was taken by land forces and his group was never used.*

An Australian left wing politician, an Australian TV reporter and an Australian Special Forces soldier were captured by ISIS. They were, as usual, sentenced to death by beheading. Unexpectedly, the ISIS leader said they could have one last wish each, before the sentence was carried out. The politician asked to hear a rendering of Advance Australia Fair.

The reporter asked that the beheading be televised so that even when he was dead his face would be on TV.

The trooper asked to be kicked in the bum three times. His wish was carried out first, and as the last kick landed, the trooper pulled a hidden 9mm pistol out of his smock, shot three terrorists dead, grabbed one of their fallen AK47's and shot dead the rest of the terrorists.

The other two prisoners were amazed, and asked why he requested to be kicked three times before drawing the gun. "Because, said the trooper, when we get back to Australia I don't want you pair saying it was an unprovoked attack!"

### 860284 Lt. William L Bickerton (Bill)

I first arrived in TPNG in September 1956 as a national serviceman (NS7278 – Recruit Mechanical Engineer) on board HMAS Fremantle, naval minesweeper. We went ashore in Port Moresby, Lae and HMAS Lorengau (Manus island) which was still operating as an Australian Naval base. We were accommodated at the naval base for a couple of nights and were given fresh food and fruit, did some shopping for native artefacts and played Aussie rules football against a shore based team.

I did my recruit training at *HMAS Leeuwin* in Fremantle, Western Australia. We did 6 months full time, 20 weeks of which was at sea and we were then required to do 5 years of reserves.

During my time at sea we sailed from Fremantle to Wyndham, Darwin, Thursday Islands, Great Barrier Reef to tow a naval tug off the reef, Pt. Moresby, China Straits/Milne Bay, Lae, Lorengau, Borneo and then back to Fremantle. During this time the war in the Suez Canal broke out and we started steaming to the Middle East. We got to Borneo and it was all over so we returned home via Darwin and the north west coast.

In those early days there were huge quantities of war surplus equipment visible everywhere we went and in Lorengau, Manus Island, there were many, many sunken ships and landing craft visible in Seeadler harbour. This area is adjacent to Los Negros, an area of importance in the history of our Regiment.

Shortly after being stood down after our full time service at sea the Navy decided to disband the National Service system. There were 60 men in my intake (Blaxland Intake) and 30 of us served on *HMAS Fremantle* and 30 on *HMAS Junee*. However we were still obliged to complete our 5 years reserve but there was no time limit on when we did it. I was considering joining the Navy full time as I had been selected during the intake to train as a pilot in the Fleet Air arm if I joined up but I decided to complete my Apprenticeship first, which I did in 1960. I travelled for a while and then decided to go back to TPNG as a tradesman with the Commonwealth Dept of Works. The Navy agreed to allow me to leave Australia on the condition that I served my reserve time with the CMF unit in TPNG. I don't remember exactly when I contacted PNGVR to complete my service but it would have been in 1963 or early 64 after discussion with Major Alf Clarke who I worked with at Commonwealth Department of Works (CDW).

I arrived back in Port Moresby with my new wife, Sylvia Margaret on 16th December 1962 and was employed by Comworks as a tradesman at the four mile workshops. We were allocated a small house in Stores road after living for some time at a place called the Bamford Hometel at Ela beach on the cliff directly above the Ela Beach RSL club.



18 y.o. National Serviceman  
Bill Bickerton.

I joined PNGVR and paraded at Murray Barracks. The PNGVR drill hall became my second home although this did at times cause some friction with my wife. Whilst Sylvia accompanied me to any functions she was never very keen on my involvement with the Army although I continued as a reserve soldier for almost another 20 years. I found that PNGVR was something that I was very keen to pursue and I guess that is the reason that I quickly rose through the ranks of L/Cpl, Cpl and Sergeant.

Those early days were most exciting and we undertook many, many exercises in Papua, patrolling in the Brown River area, Milne bay and down into the gulf areas.

The Milne bay exercise was an interesting one. I knew the area very well as by this time I was a Senior Technical Officer with Comworks in the Hydro Electric department. I often flew into the area and did low level "recces" into the river headwaters areas before hiking into those places on foot, often for 2 or 3 weeks at a time. Our exercise was against a company of PIR soldiers. Because of my knowledge of the area we blew them away well and truly and hopped back for our Caribou pick up in good time.

Rex Ingram was a family friend from home in Western Australia and our parents had known one another since they were teenagers. Rex and I went to school together. He was a pilot flying Caribous with the RAAF out of Port Moresby. Sgt Jim McKinley and I had been trained as Loadmasters for Caribou and C130 aircraft so when the Milne Bay exercise was planned by Capt Stuart Jay and Major Alf Clarke I was assigned as Loadmaster to get the troops on board 3 Caribous. Rex asked me to load myself onto his plane which I did and straight after take off he kicked his co-pilot out and I went up front and he allowed me to fly the plane – exciting stuff.

Another aeroplane story was when Jim and I were assigned as Loadmasters on a C130 that was flying from POM to Kainantu with some earth moving equipment and trucks on board to re-grade the airstrip. When we arrived amidst huge clouds of dust and gravel spraying everywhere we taxied into the parking bay and opened the rear doors and rolled out a grader and 2 trucks. Obviously the town council had drummed up the locals because there were literally hundreds of people around the airstrip perimeter. In unison they started loosely shaking their hand at the wrist and chanting AAAAAIIIEEEE in a thunderous roar. Amazing stuff.

However that was nothing compared with the roar of the Pilot some 1 or 2 hours later. After the plane was unloaded and cleaned up and secured it was parked nose outwards in the small unsealed parking area. We all then adjourned up the hill to the pub where we were to stay the night. The (old - since burnt out) Kainantu Inn looked straight down onto the airstrip. We were still on our first beer when suddenly someone yelled out "shit the plane is moving" and sure enough it ever so slowly rolled backwards until the underside of the tail came to rest against the embankment. We had a further 48 hours there before another plane came in for us and I understand that it was a couple of weeks before the C130 was declared safe to fly out of Kainantu.

In 1966 my wife and 1 year old daughter Caron had to return to Australia for almost 12 months for personal reasons. At that time I was a platoon sergeant with PNGVR. I initially trans-

ferred to 16 Battalion Royal West Australian Regiment, Cameron Highlanders so I wore a kilt while I was with them. Within 3 months I had applied and been accepted into the Western Command Officer Training Unit at Karrakatta barracks. During the next 9 months I trained and qualified in all subjects for first appointment except I had to do my TEWT. (Training Exercise Without Troops) Officer Cadets wore an Officers cap and white bands on our epaulettes. Sylvia and Caron and I returned to TPNG late in 1966 and I immediately resumed my posting with PNGVR.

By that time Support Company had been formed, based in Port Moresby and I was assigned as acting Platoon Commander pending my first appointment.

I did my TEWT under direction of Captain Bob Harvey-Hall on a feature on the Lae to Nadzab road where Richard Kelliher won his VC in September 1942. This exercise was successful and I received my appointment and promotion to full Lieutenant shortly afterwards.

After integration of the unit we had a full complement of Assault Pioneers, Sgt Noel Smith was the Assault Pioneer Sgt and Cpl Jim Van Der Veen was a section Commander as was Cpl Meseko Dula.

We were extremely fortunate in that we were immediately provided with a complete Assault Pioneer kit with chain saws, petrol driven drill breaker, a huge quantity of rope, pulleys, blocks, hand tools, inflatable boat, consumables, water treatment equipment including an inflatable "S" tank and a demolition kit. Thereafter the pioneer Platoon was always busy carrying out interesting projects which in many cases contributed to the welfare of several rural communities.

In 1967 I took a contingent of 5 Pioneers to Holdsworthy School of Engineering centre near Sydney and all of them qualified in many aspects of our job including mine laying and lifting, flame thrower, demolitions, use of pioneer tools, building helicopter pads, bush airstrips, bridge building, water and sanitation etc etc. Thereafter PNGVR was self sufficient in these important areas and we always were able to provide potable water, clean living conditions, demolition of wartime UXB's and provide training to Infantry soldiers on mine warfare and the likes. A hugely gratifying job. The instructors at Holdsworthy were very envious of our equipment as most reserve units in Australia had only been supplied with the very basics and they had severe restrictions on their engineering activities and what they could do with the equipment. We had none of that. Thank God for PNGVR. RSM Colin Lee encouraged me every inch of the way and we became firm friends as I did a lot that normally I may have hesitated to do without his authority - for example destruction of large caches of Japanese and Australian wartime ordnance.

That trip to Australia was like being in another Army. Firstly the 6 of us fronted up to SSgt Roy Milne at Murray Barracks Q store to be fitted out with winter uniforms. I then had a couple of sessions with our Brothers to show them how to wear this bulky hot clothing - for which they were most grateful when we got to Sydney I might add. We flew to Sydney and arrived in the late afternoon. I had been told that Army transport would meet us and to report to the Army reporting desk at the airport. The Sgt there knew nothing about us so believe it or not we finished up with all 6 of us in a stretch limo, arriving at the gates of Holdsworthy much to the amazement of the camp guards. I did not see much of the guys during our two weeks there as we did different courses and I was accommodated at the Officers Mess but we did have 2 nights out at the end, before flying back to Port Moresby. We booked into a hotel in King's Cross and really showed our PNG friends a bit of Australian night life, drank some cold beer and had a great time together. Nobody wanted to go home. These fellows formed the basis of a very formidable engineering team for the remainder of our time with the unit.

*Thanks Bill.*

The doctor that had been seeing an 80-year-old woman for most of her life finally retired At her next checkup, the new doctor told her to bring a list of all the medicines that had been prescribed for her. As the doctor was looking through these, his eyes grew wide as he realized Grandma had a prescription for birth control pills.

"Mrs. Smith, do you realize these are BIRTH CONTROL pills?"  
"Yes, they help me sleep at night."

"Mrs. Smith, I assure you there is absolutely NOTHING in these that could possibly help you sleep!"

The old lady reached out and patted the young Doctor's knee ... "Yes, dear, I know that. But every morning, I grind one up and mix it in the glass of orange juice that my 16 year old granddaughter drinks. and believe me, it definitely helps me sleep at night."

You gotta Love Grandmas!

### Reginald Roy Rattey, VC. by Anthony Staunton

Reginald Roy Rattey (1917-1986), soldier, was born on 28 March 1917 at Barmedman, New South Wales, third of seven children of Lutheran parents Johannes Albert Rattey, a farmer, and his wife Elizabeth Annie, née Damschke. Educated at Bellarwi Public School, Reginald enjoyed playing cricket, football and tennis. He worked on his father's farm and as a miner, and served with a part-time Militia unit, the 21st Light Horse Regiment. Mobilised for full-time service on 24 September 1941, the regiment was later designated the 21st Reconnaissance Battalion. On 10 July 1942 Rattey volunteered for the Australian Imperial Force, joining the Queensland Lines of Communication Area. A year later he transferred to the 3rd Division Carrier Company and in September 1943 was sent to New Guinea, where he became an acting corporal. When he returned to Australia in April 1944, his rank of corporal was confirmed and in June he joined the 25th Infantry Battalion that was posted to New Guinea in July.



In Bougainville from November, the battalion saw action at several locations and from 19 March to 5 April 1945 was involved in bitter fighting for Slater's Knoll, adjacent to the Puriata River. On 22 March, supported by air strikes and artillery fire, the battalion attacked entrenched Japanese positions but enemy fire halted the advance. Rattey, having decided that a bold rush offered the best prospect of success, led his section forward firing a Bren gun from the hip until he was on top of the nearest Japanese weapon pit. He flung in a grenade and silenced the position. Then, using the same tactics, he silenced two more weapon pits. A short time later the advance was once more held up and Rattey, still carrying his Bren gun, again ran straight towards the Japanese machine gun post killing one man, wounding another and putting the rest to flight. Two days later he was promoted to acting sergeant and in July was awarded the Victoria Cross. Following hospitalisation with malaria, he arrived back in Australia in October. He was discharged at the end of the month on compassionate grounds.

After touring New South Wales promoting the Australian Comforts Fund 'Salute to Valour' drive for donations, Rattey was granted a 2400 acre (971-ha) lease fronting Lake Cowal, near West Wyalong, where he established a sheep, cattle and wheat property. In 1946 King George VI presented him with his VC at Buckingham Palace when, as a member of the Australian contingent for the Victory March, Rattey visited Lon-

don. He again travelled to London in 1953 as part of the Australian contingent for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. On 13 March 1948 at the Presbyterian Pioneer Memorial Church, West Wyalong, he had married Emily Joyce Café (d.1954). He married Aileen Theresa Delaney at St Mary's Catholic Church, West Wyalong, on 11 January 1955. In 1956 the people of West Wyalong raised money for airfares for him and his wife, so that they could attend the VC centenary celebrations in London.

Hard-working, cheerful and modest, Rattey was regarded as a hero by the local community and a street was named after him. Ill health eventually forced him to sell his farm and he moved into town. Survived by his wife, their son and three daughters and the daughter of his first marriage, he died of chronic obstructive airways disease on 10 January 1986 at West Wyalong and was buried in the local cemetery. His portrait by Harold Abbott is held by the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.

*This article was published in Australian Dictionary of Biography, Volume 18, (MUP), 2012*

**This was the first VC awarded on Bougainville.**

*Editor's note. When I worked in West Wyalong in the mid 1970's Reg was well known for his liking of Tiger snakes of which there were numerous around his property at Lake Cowal. Visitors were prohibited from killing any.*

**We are not ageing. We are just ripening to perfection.**

### Into Battle With The NGVR

*Ed. This is typical of what was written after WW11. There are numerous errors and exaggerations in the article e.g. 1,500 Japanese killed in the attack on Rabaul. Nowhere that number were killed. However the article typifies stories that were published post war.*

In the vernacular of New Guinea, the war-lords of Australia seem to have had a 'cross'\* on the NGVR: it is at present practically impossible to get any official record of their service. Their exploits then must be pieced together from accounts of individual members who are apt to recount the lighter side of NGVR experience rather than the heroic.

But perhaps this, in its way, is fitting. In peace, to have pretensions of being an Empire Builder was looked upon as the acme of bumptiousness and fatuity. In war, the New Guinea men joined the NGVR in order to give the enemy something to think about, not because they fancied themselves as regimental heroes.

In recent issues of "PIM," there has been published the story of the Morobe detachment of the NGVR, behind Salamaua and in the Morobe-Wau area in the early days of the Japanese war. It is written amusingly, lightly, as though the whole affair were a large-scale expedition after rabbits. But it would be silly to be fooled by that. The conquest of the mountains of Morobe is a battle in itself: if there were humour it was because the men chose to look for that angle in the grim-est of situations.

Although on the whole, the NGVR was a Cinderella unit, its exploits did not go altogether unrecorded even in the darker days of 1942.

In an article in the Melbourne "Herald," in October, 1942, tribute was paid to the men who "fought the first offensive battle in the Pacific." The men, the article stated, were drawn from all walks of life—doctors, planters, mining men, business men—they had been on the job and in constant contact with the Japanese since the previous January.

Concerning the Morobe company: "On June 29, in the darkness, the company



Rabaul recruits in the early days of the Unit. Dress was nondescript but hearts were keen.

raided Salamaua. Seventy-four men took part and every man had thoroughly planned and practised his individual job—even to the number of steps to be taken to reach a particular house with which he had to deal. "The Japanese were taken completely by surprise. Armed lightly with tommy-guns, grenades and stick bombs and with mortars for support, the NGVR crept out of the jungle and struck. The Japanese did not know from where they would be hit next."

In their trek across country, after the raid, the men had to scale peaks 8,000 feet high. The Rabaul unit of the Rifles had been in action five months before that—gloriously, but tragically. The story of the unpreparedness of Rabaul to meet the Japanese threat has been told many times in these pages. But, briefly, it may be said that although AIF units had been garrisoning the town for many months, and the Australian authorities had had ample warning of the impending invasion, little was done either to evacuate civilian men or prepare the troops for meeting the enemy.

Rabaul had its first raid on January 4, 1942, and by the 20th of that month it was evident that a full-scale invasion was only a matter of days, if not hours. While a state of complete confusion prevailed, some civilians escaped southward and westward into the jungles of New Britain. On January 22, the 22nd Battalion, AIF, and the 72 members of the NGVR (about 200 troops altogether) took up their positions on the beach between Vulcan Island (a volcanic cone upthrust in the 1937 eruptions) and Raluana Point. There in the dawn they waited until the Japanese landing barges were almost at point-blank range and then they poured into the enemy a ceaseless stream of machine-gun and mortar fire. Numbers of Japs were mown down but they came on fanatically although many who leaped into the water to wade ashore were caught in the submerged barbed wire entanglements that had been laid. Still they came on, those behind seizing the dead bodies of their comrades and using them as a bridge across the wire. It was estimated, at the time, that 1,500 Japs were killed in this engagement.

But Jap landings were also taking place elsewhere, where there was no resistance, and full daylight showed the invaders ashore at many points. More and more barges were coming ashore at Rualana also, and by noon the Australians had been driven from their positions and retired into the jungle. There attempts were made to reform them, to escape, but generally it became a case of every man for himself.

Of the 72 Riflemen in this engagement, only seven escaped and after guiding parties of AIF troops through the jungle, reached Australia. The rest were either killed during the fighting, were subsequently murdered by the Japs or became prisoners of war and, with the exception of one or two, who reached Japan, perished in the "Montevideo Maru" when they were being transferred to Japan in June the same year.

The actions in Rabaul and around Salamaua were fought as units but there were, as well, dozens of men who belonged to the Rifles and who acted individually or as small patrols strik-



ing at the Japs when and where they found them. With civil government gone they assumed responsibility for several thousand indentured labourers unable to re-turn to their homes. These became the army of carriers needed for supplies.

Their exploits in those early months of confusion were singularly unrewarded —the many decorations which were awarded these men were awarded after they had been absorbed in other units and the NGVR had been disbanded.

It is believed that the total roll of the NGVR was over 600. But it was largely from the early recruits to the organisation that the first New Guinea contingents of the AIF were recruited and probably every name on the list will never now be recorded.

In April, 1943, it was decided by the powers-that-be that the NGVR would be disbanded. At that time there were some 300 surviving members, and strong efforts were made to maintain the identity of the unit. But in vain. The gentlemen who ran things had no sentimental regard for the NGVR and most of its remaining members were distributed throughout ANGAU and carried on to do valuable service in that organisation.

Few of the NGVR's exploits were performed under the eyes of newspaper correspondents and they received little publicity in Australia. It was hoped, during the years when the Pacific Territories Association still flourished, that after the war some fitting memorial to New Guinea's own Volunteers would be established.

The war is over and nothing has been done . . . except, indirectly, in the New Guinea Memorial Scholarship Fund, established by the New Guinea women of Melbourne. This certainly has received the support of all sections of the New Guinea community.

*Pacific Islands Monthly. Oct 1947.*



The Wau Section of NGVR.

**51FNQR's new boat unveiled**

A new regional support craft destined for Army's 51st Far North Queensland Regiment (51FNQR) is undergoing sea trials in Yamba on NSW north coast, as boat manufacturer Yamba Welding & Engineering (YWE) prepares to hand over the craft to the ADF later this month.

Heralding a new maritime capability for the Regional Force Surveillance Group (RFSG) fleet, the 12.5m Naiad is designed for a number of mission sets, including boosting Army's sovereign border protection activities in north Queensland.

This new watercraft is sister vessel to a series of Australian Border Force (ABF) Naiads that were delivered by YWE in 2019 for use in a variety of Australian coastal regions as part of Operation Sovereign Borders. It will also join an 11.3m

Naiad in operation on Thursday Island by Queensland Police.

The regional support craft will provide a spectrum of marine support operations to Regional Force Surveillance Units (RFSU) including search, rescue and recovery (SAR), casualty evacuation (CASEVAC), stores and equipment transfer, community engagement and surveillance.

A key capability of this vessel is its performance and handling in complex bodies of water and highly variable maritime conditions, as it facilitates personnel movement within the Torres Strait and Cape York area of operations, enabling engagement with local communities and other government agencies.

Managing Director of The Whiskey Project Group, parent company of Naiad and YWE Darren Schuback said that for more than 20 years, Australia and New Zealand's coast guard, rescue, patrol and Defence agencies have relied on Naiad's performance and handling in some of the world's most challenging maritime conditions.

"The recent extreme weather events experienced in northern NSW provided opportunity for the Naiad to demonstrate its performance and handling in elevated sea states, with sea trial operations undertaken in up to Sea State 5," Mr Schuback said.



Federal Member for Page, Kevin Hogan praised the development and local manufacture of the Naiad in Yamba. "It is a

testament to the capability of our region, that this vessel is made here in Yamba by skilled local professionals is to be used in a national capacity. In addition to national defence recognition, the production of the regional support craft is a welcome boost to our community, creating jobs and bolstering the local economy".

Mr Schuback said that as an Australian Defence industry business Whiskey Project Group was proud to deliver a 100% sovereign capability advantage to Army.

"We are delighted to demonstrate how all of Australia benefits when the solution is a superior-performing vessel, built from the ground up, right here in Australia. It benefits our regional Torres Strait neighbours and far-north Queensland communities, it benefits the regiment, it benefits Operation Sovereign Borders and it benefits Australia's maritime industry, our manufacturing skills, training and employment. But most importantly, it benefits the end user who receives a fit-for-purpose vessel that will enhance their ability to safely undertake the variety of maritime missions they perform each day."

The regional support craft will be based on Thursday Island, a remote locality that influenced a number of key capability requirements including stability, safety, consistent performance and handling in difficult sea states, and the necessity for the vessel to operate on diesel fuel.

To best meet the performance capability requirements of the vessel with a diesel fuel system, Army selected COX CXO300 outboards – a new generation of diesel power which is a lightweight and robust marine propulsion option that requires 25% less fuel than an equivalent gasoline outboard but offers 650Nm of engine torque.

The first of their type in Australia, these COX diesel outboards are designed to last three times longer than a gasoline equivalent, and combine exceptional performance with the reassurance of proven V8 diesel technology.

A spokesperson from Power Equipment Pty Ltd said the CXO300 diesel outboard had been designed and built specifically for marine use – the first of its kind.

Contact [AirLandandSea.com](http://AirLandandSea.com)



You never realise how anti-social you are until there is a pandemic and your life doesn't really change that much.

**Navy service a source of pride for Manus village**

Able Seaman Duncan Stemp said his recent return to his birthplace on Manus Island, Papua New Guinea, as a Royal Australian Navy sailor was one of the proudest days of his life.

While some of his extended family have served in the PNG Defence Force, he is the first to serve in the Australian Defence Force – and his relatives couldn't be happier. "They were super proud of me," Able Seaman Stemp said. "I hadn't been back on Manus for 12 years, so when my family learned that I was a communications and information systems operator in the Australian Navy, it was the talk of the village."

His parents moved from Manus Island to the small town of Julatten in the Atherton Tablelands region of Far North Queensland in 2002. Able Seaman Stemp went to Mossman State High School, where he excelled at rugby league and soccer, making it to state level in the latter.

He was also able to retain his cultural traditions, joining the Cairns-based Manus Island Traditional Dancing Group and regularly performing at events. However, it was his love of playing around with and fixing computers that led him to complete a Diploma in IT through North Queensland TAFE and then join the Navy.



"When I was younger, I would often see the Navy hydrographic ships in and around Cairns, but

I never thought at the time that I would join Navy myself," Able Seaman Stemp said. "However, after studying information technology and networking at TAFE, I needed a way to gain experience and the Navy offered that, along with a lifestyle that appealed to me."

Able Seaman Stemp was recently posted to *HMAS Anzac*. He currently is on his first deployment, which is taking him to South-East Asia and the north-east Indian Ocean.

"I'm getting a lot of on-the-job experience in a variety of roles, providing IT support and helping to troubleshoot the network when there is a technical issue," he said. "It's a challenging role but it's giving me new skills and experience."

While he has ambitions to move into new roles in networking and cyber security, Able Seaman Stemp also has big ambitions in soccer with Defence. "One of my dreams is to play soccer for Defence at the top level. "I've had a few trial games," he said.

*Contact—ADF People No 6*

**WWII plane crash artefacts finally returned home to families after 75-year-long mystery**

The Catalina A24-50, 'flying boat' took off from Cairns on September 2, 1943 on a sea-mining mission to Sorong Harbour in what is now Papua, Indonesia.

It, along with the 10 men on board, disappeared that night.

Early reports suggested the aircraft had probably struck one of the mountains, especially as bad weather had been reported; but as no wreckage was found, despite extensive searches, uncertainty, hope, and speculation remained.

In 2018 a group of forestry workers in a remote region of Pa-



pua, north-west of FakFak, discovered what appeared to be the wreckage of the plane.

This was later confirmed by the Royal Australian Air Force when images of the plane were sent back to Australia, and, in July 2019, a team of Australian and Indonesian defence and military personnel set off on a recovery mission.

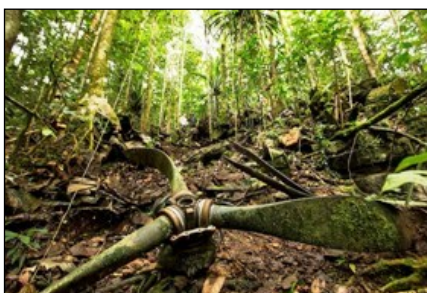
In a ceremony in Cairns yesterday, the deaths of the 10 men were commemorated and some of the artefacts from the site were returned to their families.

**The recovery**

The deputy director of Historic Unrecovered War Casualties Wing Commander Grant Kelly said it was a privilege to be able to provide this kind of closure to families.

"Not many people get to give good news like this to families that provide a measurable change to their lives," he said.

Commander Kelly said he spent several days at the crash site to help with the recovery in 2019.



He said unlike other sites he had visited, the Catalina site had large pieces like wings and engines remaining. "[They] were recognisable and just made it so much more evocative and real," Commander Kelly said.

He said the artefacts brought back included part of the plane's fin, with its serial number still painted on.

It will go to the Australian War Memorial.

Other more personal items, like the two dog tags uncovered, will be returned to family members. "I've spoken to families and it's brought them together and that's a pretty special thing to be able to do," Commander Kelly said.

*ABC News July 2021.*



Catalinas were commonly used by the RAAF in missions across the Pacific.

Exercise makes you look better naked. So does wine.  
Your choice.

### Stretcher Bearers

The role of the stretcher-bearers who carried the wounded from the battlefield has often gone unrecognised. It has been suggested that it has been one of the most overlooked roles in the entire war. It became obvious, to the British, that this old way of dealing with the injured simply would not work. A new bearer corps was quickly recruited and trained, becoming the forerunner of today's paramedics.

Stretcher-bearers had a dual role in the First World War, rescuing wounded so they would survive and fight another day and bringing in those near death who would never return.

The status of stretcher-bearers and respect for their powers of endurance rose steadily during the war – the use of battalion bandsmen generally ceased after mid-1916 – and bearers were selected “for their physique and guts.”



Casualties among the stretcher-bearers themselves, as they collected the wounded, were often very heavy.

The survival of wounded soldiers was very often determined by the first aid given by bearers, they contributed to victory by maintaining morale of the healthy, who were reassured that if they were wounded someone would risk all to save them.

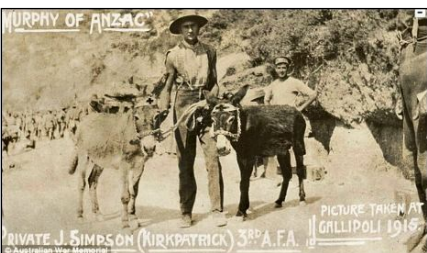
Once they found a wounded man, the bearers' work had only just begun. If they got lucky they could load up their casualty and make it back to the relative safety of the trench. But if the shellfire or rifle fire was heavy, they would look for the nearest deep shell-hole or whatever other cover they could find.

Here, pinned down by snipers, artillery or both, they would have to administer any treatment they could. When they judged the risk to have lessened sufficiently, they would set out with their heavy load. Inevitably, though, dealing first hand with the butchery of war took its toll.

Irish born sleeper cutter and 16th Battalion scout Martin O'Meara was awarded the Victoria Cross in 1916 for carrying in at least 20 casualties, under intense fire, from no man's land at Mouquet Farm. Three times wounded; he survived the war but spent his last 16 years in a Perth mental hospital.

Powerfully-built Cooma blacksmith's striker Ernie Corey was decorated four times for saving lives. With stretcher-bearers in short supply at Queant, in 1917, the 55th Battalion private volunteered to help and spent 17 hours non-stop retrieving the wounded.

John Simpson was to become Australia's most famous, and best-loved military hero. In Perth on 23rd August 1914, Jack was chosen as a field ambulance stretcher bearer. This job was only given to strong men so it seems that his work as a stoker in the Merchant Marine had prepared him well for his exceptional place in history. From then on he became a part of the scene at Gallipoli walking next to his donkey, forever singing and whistling as he held on to his wounded passengers, seem-



ingly completely fatalistic and scornful of the extreme danger. Sadly, Colonel Howse VC, had given faulty instructions to the junior officer preparing Simpson's citation. He was recommended under the wrong category of heroism and consequently his VC request was denied.

The stretcher-bearers developed a manner that transcended the chaos around them. They learnt to keep people calm just by the sound of their voices and by their own confidence and their own dedication. That's a very considerable skill. It's difficult to write about in a medical journal, but keeping somebody on as low a painkiller as possible is a life-saving skill. It's one that these men – who didn't come from medical-school backgrounds, they were generally working-class men – learnt.

The doctors to whom they delivered the patients quickly recognised this and the weekly training sessions became a two-way exchange. Doctors would show stretcher-bearers medical techniques and the bearers would in turn teach the doctors how to coach a patient through without morphine. The number and severity of war injuries will differ and depend on the nature, severity and duration of the conflict. Ready availability of First Aid is of vital importance and the lack of it can have serious effect on troop morale.

It is well known that if a member of an advancing army is injured during combat the other soldiers must proceed and not render help. The application of First Aid is the duty of the stretcher bearers. The stretcher bearers during the First and Second World Wars were usually recruited from military bands and other volunteers as determined by the recruiting or army officers. Their responsibility was to administer first aid and transfer the injured to the Regimental Aid Post. It was customary to have four bearers attached to a company and the RAP site was close to the combat zone, sometimes in the reserve trenches. The Commander or the Company doctor chose the site protected from enemy fire. In France where injuries were numerous some injured had to wait before retrieval.

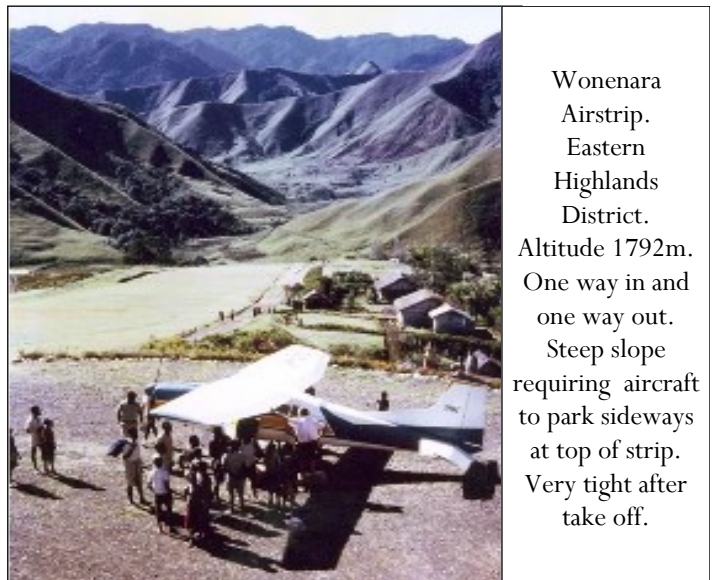
The bearers administered first aid, applied dressings, pain relief and splints. They then decided whether the injured could walk or be carried or required a stretcher. The aim was to arrive at the RAP as soon as possible. The responsibility of the Stretcher Bearers stopped here. Any further transport and treatment was taken over by the Field Ambulance.

Mark Johnson's "*Stretcher-bearers: Saving Australians from Gallipoli to Kokoda*" is a compelling read.

Australian Corps commander Sir John Monash said:

"There was no finer example of individual self-sacrifice, for the benefit of comrades, than the stretcher-bearer service..."

Gareth McCray OAM.



Wonenara Airstrip. Eastern Highlands District. Altitude 1792m. One way in and one way out. Steep slope requiring aircraft to park sideways at top of strip. Very tight after take off.

### Why Ethel Changed Motels.

Ethel checked into a motel on her 65th birthday, she was lonely, a little depressed at her advancing age so decided to risk an adventure.

She thought, "I'll call one of those men you see advertised in phone books for escorts and sensual massages."

She looked through the phone book, found a full page ad for a guy calling himself Tender Tony a very handsome man with assorted physical skills flexing in the photo.

He had all the right muscles in all the right places, thick wavy hair, long powerful legs, dazzling smile, six pack abs and she felt quite certain she could bounce a dime off his well-oiled buns.

She figured, what the heck, nobody will ever know. I'll give him a call.

"Good evening, ma'am, how may I help you?"

Oh my, he sounded sooo sexy!

Afraid she would lose her nerve if she hesitated, so she rushed right in ...

"I hear you give a great massage. I'd like you to come to my motel room and give me one. No, wait, should be straight with you. I'm in town all alone and what I really want is sex. I want it hot, and I want it now.

Bring implements, toys, everything you've got in your bag of tricks. We'll go at it all night - tie me up, cover me in chocolate syrup and whipped cream, anything and everything, I'm ready! Now how does that sound?

He said, "That sounds absolutely fantastic, but you need to press 9 for an outside line."

### Lithgow Small Arms Factory

In 1838 four United States Navy Men-of-War sailed into Sydney Harbour overnight unannounced and unexpected. This alarmed Sydney Town greatly and alerted the Colonies to their defencelessness against invasion.

The 1854 Crimean War and the "inevitable invasion" by Russia spurred the population into actively forming volunteer military groups. Upon British Forces withdrawal from Australia in 1870 the units were placed under the control of their colonial governments and were supplied with whatever weapons their government determined.

Ties to England were strong and military expeditions were sent to various overseas conflicts to aid the Mother Country. It was a significant achievement in 1900 when the South Australian warship "*Protector*" sailed to China to assist in quelling the Boxer Rebellion. *Protector's* Engineering Officer William Clarkson was later instrumental in the foundation of the Lithgow Small Arms Factory.

The first Federal battalion of Australian soldiers sailed to South Africa in 1901 to fight in the Boer War joining the colonial troops who were already serving there. Because many of these troops arrived with different equipment to that used by the British, supply of ammunition and field repair of weapons quickly became an issue, restricting their capabilities in battle.

The South African campaign made it blatantly apparent that Australia's isolation from its armament source could lead to serious problems in future conflicts. After federation of the states and establishment of the Commonwealth in 1901 the new Government faced responsibility for the country's defence. The Government resolved to make Australia independent of British munitions and armament supplies. In 1907 the decision was made to establish a factory for the manufacture of small arms in Australia.

In 1908 the Commonwealth Government announced plans to build a small arms factory in Lithgow. The decision was favoured due to Lithgow's proximity to essential resources such as power, steel, transport, etc, as well as the security benefits afforded by the seclusion provided by the mountains. It is likely that Joseph Cook, formerly a Lithgow coal miner, and at that time, the Federal Minister of Defence, was influential in lobby-

ing for the positioning of the factory in his home town.

Six men were sent to the United States of America to the firm of Pratt and Whitney to learn how to make rifles. In December of 1909 Mr F.R. Ratcliffe of Pratt and Whitney arrived in Australia to assist in the planning of the factory.

On 10 January 1910, the site of the factory was inspected by Lord Kitchener and was officially opened on 8 June 1912 with Mr. A.C. Wright as the first manager of the factory.

Many of the materials required by the factory were supplied from other industries in Lithgow. Steel required for the production of guns, for example, was in part supplied by the Hoskins Brothers. Electrical power was initially generated on the site but was later obtained from the NSW Railways' Power Plant.

Increasing demands were placed on the factory during the first World War with production doubling and then later redoubling. The production of Lee-Enfield .303 rifles increased during this time from 15,000 per year to 80,000 per year. Over the period of the two world wars a total of 640,000 .303 rifles were made at the Small Arms Factory to assist the war effort (Brown 1989, p.86)

At the end of World War I, production began to decrease due to the decreased demand for armaments. As a result, the Armaments Factory began to diversify its production to include stream-lined wires and metal aircraft engine parts. By 1931 more than half of the factory's production was linked to sound projection and sheep shearing machinery, Vickers Machine guns were also produced on site (Lithgow Public School 1947).

In the years before World War II items such as golf clubs, handcuffs, rifles and machine guns were made at the factory. When the war in Europe broke, production of armaments was again increased with the production of the Bren Machine Gun. This led to considerable increases in employment at the factory.

A large forge and die sinking shop were constructed, reputedly the largest in the southern hemisphere, and new laboratories, boiler rooms and heat equipment were also introduced. The workforce at this time rose to 12,000 with the inclusion of increased shift work. This included 6,000 in Lithgow as well as an additional 6,000 in feeder factories established at Orange, Bathurst, Young, Forbes, Wellington, Cowra, Dubbo, Parkes, Portland and Mudgee to assist the Lithgow operations.

The Small Arms Factory was one of the major employers in Lithgow for some time and as a result of the rising work force during World War II a suburb known as Littleton was established with 'Duration Cottages' to house both workers and their families. An additional railway station at Coerwull was also established to facilitate commuter travel from the Blue Mountains' towns.

The history of the Lithgow Small Arms Factory is about people – their aspirations, disappointments, and achievements, the economic and social hardships endured, the influence of our British heritage on Australia in the early 1900s, and sheer human stubbornness.

It is also about the introduction of new technologies into the emerging new nation. The Lithgow Factory was Australia's first high precision mass production facility.

This museum, located on the original Commonwealth Small Arms Factory site, houses a fascinating collection that showcases the industrial heritage of our nation, and the finest firearms display in the Southern Hemisphere.

World War I, 1914 – 1918 Between August 1913 and July 1918 almost 100,000 Short Magazine Lee-Enfield rifles and accessories were produced at Lithgow. The factory initially manufactured Short, Magazine, Lee-Enfield Mk III rifles (and bayonets thereof) for the Australian military during World War

1. During World War 11 production expanded to include Vickers machine guns, Bren Guns, and, post-WW2, branched out into sporting goods (including civilian firearms and golf clubs), tools, sewing machines, (from the mid-1950s) the F1 submachine gun, L1A1 Self Loading Rifle, KAL1 General Purpose Infantry Rifle prototype and similar products. The Small Arms Factory at Lithgow was known to produce their single shot models 1A and 1B as well as their model 12 repeater under the Slazenger brand during the 1960s. The factory was first 'corporatized' as Australian Defence Industries by the Hawke Government, then later sold in 2006. ADI Lithgow is now owned by Thales Australia and continues to manufacture the F88 Aussteyr rifle and F89 Minimi currently used by the Australian military.

Today the Lithgow Small Arms Factory Museum's extensive and significant archival collection is a national treasure which should be preserved for current and future generations. It documents the history of the Lithgow Small Arms Factory and its role in pioneering precision manufacturing in Australia. It is the only collection of its kind and provides the history of Australia's primary ordnance/ weapons production facility from the early 1900s through to the 1980s. It is especially important for the period leading up to and during the two world wars. The Factory's history is a reminder of our nation's struggles, response, and achievements in those times of adversity.

There are some 30,000 to 35,000 records from 1910 to 1986. These include employee records, machine tool periodicals and catalogues, engineering books, photographic material (negatives/prints/film), blueprints, plans, drawings/sketches, newspaper clippings, posters, factory administration records, diaries, technical specifications and cartoons.

Lithgow Small Arms Factory was more than just a factory. It engendered a sense of belonging and community. It was a model for regional development. It displayed



The Lithgow Small Arms Factory

inventiveness and awe-inspiring achievements. The wide variety of archival materials, together with an array of machine tools and the industrial premises in which they are housed, provide living proof of one of Australia's iconic industrial establishments.

*Gareth McCray OAM—ANZAC Military Memories.*

**A National Serviceman with PNGVR, 1968 to 1971  
(by Geoff Atkinson, 2 Lt, A Coy)**

*As a National Serviceman I fulfilled the first half of my obligation with RAE in Victoria and the second half with PNGVR in Port Moresby and Lae.*

I Joined the Citizen Military Forces in Yallourn, Victoria in March 1965 as a sapper in the Royal Australian Engineers. On 10 September 1965 my marble was drawn out of the barrel for the second National Service intake. Because I was in the CMF I had the choice of fulfilling my obligation as a National Serviceman by serving in the CMF for 6 years or serving 2 years as a fulltime soldier. At the time the trauma that the Vietnam war was to cause was not evident and I nearly opted for the 2 years. I chose the CMF because I had just met a wonderful girl



'A' Coy officers and NCO's – Annual Camp, Igam Barracks 1970.  
Front. Jess Hansford, Laurie Kelly, Peter Barlow.  
Centre. Spike Welsby, Mal Zimmerman, Vagi, Geoff Atkinson, Mike Ahmat, Sausi, Eladona, Bill Bell, Noel Serafini.  
Back ?, ?, John Carroll, ???

that I did not want to lose (we married in 1968 and have just celebrated our 53th anniversary). I was also halfway through a traineeship program with my employer that I did not want to delay. In hindsight I made the right choice. My chances of going to the Vietnam war would have been extremely high.

On the completion of my traineeship as a Civil Design Draftsman I gained a position with the Department of Works in Port Moresby in February 1968. Because I was a National Serviceman with an obligation to remain efficient in the CMF it was necessary for me to transfer to the only CMF unit in PNG, the PNGVR (RA Inf). I left Australia as a Corporal and because of my service with the RAE I was assigned to the Pioneer Platoon, Support Company. My Platoon Commander was Lt Bill Bickerton.

In the RAE I had some training in infantry tactics which I thought was rather good, but this training was nothing like the vigorous effort put into the training by PNGVR. I will never forget the first weekend of infantry tactics in an area outside Port Moresby. I was not climatized and did not realise the importance of water discipline. My water was gone by mid-afternoon on the first day. I should have checked earlier when a resupply would be due. I naturally perspire a lot and I remember that my greens were soaking wet with perspiration, top to bottom. Bill noticed my predicament and asked if I was OK and did I want to be pulled back to recover and rest. Being new to the company, I did not want to give in and admit that I may have had a problem, so I insisted that I was OK and wanted to push on. I was young and stupid because heat stroke and heat exhaustion can be dangerous. I have never been so thirsty in all my life. I was lucky that I was fit, and I managed to survive the weekend. My wife came to pick me up on Sunday afternoon and walked straight past me. She did not recognise me because she said I looked like someone that had been in a concentration camp. When I got home, I sat under a cold shower for ages. I had lost 2 stone over the weekend. A valuable lesson learnt the hard way. I also gained an appreciation of what it meant to be tactical for 24hrs: enemy ambushes, setting up an overnight harbour with foxholes, machine gun positions, stand-too, sentry rotations, perimeter and communication vines, hygiene, meals rotation for the section, etc. And of course, the inevitable enemy attack during the night. I realised I had commenced a steep learning curve of what it meant to be an infantry soldier. In my RAE unit we were never tactical overnight.

Support Company paraded at Murray Barracks on Tuesday nights with weekend bivouacs once a month. Bill also planned extra weekend bivouacs for his Pioneer Platoon. I remember watercraft training and the construction of a crossing over a creek for vehicle access to a local village.

As part of Support Company, I attended the annual camps in Lae at Igam Barracks as a Corporal in 1968 and as a Sergeant in 1969. If I had known how great the Sergeants mess was, I would have made every effort to be promoted to that rank much earlier. The 1969 camp was special with the battalion being presented with our Queen's and Regimental colours.

My civilian employment took me to Lae in early 1970 where I worked in the construction office of the Department of Works. I therefore transferred to A Company located at their drill hall in town. Peter Barlow worked with me in the drawing office at work. Peter was also the CSM of A Company. The company were short of officers, so Maj. Laurie Kelly (OC) had his Sergeants acting as Platoon Commanders. I commanded 3 Platoon with Sgt Mike Ahmat and Sgt Mal Zimmerman (two very efficient leaders), commanding the other two. I attended the annual camp at Igam Barracks in August 1970 as a Sergeant. This was the best job I had while in the army. I was Platoon Commander but living in the Sergeants Mess. RSM Col Lee was mess president. Under Laurie's command with Capt. Jes Hansford as 2IC, A Company won the shield, cup, and sword at this camp.

While serving with Support Company I was encouraged to study for and sit exams for my commission. I commenced them while with Support Company and completed them while with A Company. I was appointed to 2 Lieutenant, A Company in October 1970. Unfortunately, I did not attend an annual camp as an officer because my civilian employment took me back to Australia in June 1971, a few months prior to our camp.

I transferred to HQ 16 Construction Regiment, RAE, Melbourne. I had completed the necessary period of alternative service in the CMF as a National Serviceman. Higher priorities than the army were becoming important. I was consolidating my civilian career, buying a house and our first child was on the way. I did not receive a uniform with the RAE and I lost interest in continuing with my army service. I was granted 6 months leave in October 1971 and I transferred to the Reserve CMF (RA Inf) Southern Command in April 1972. I was eligible to remain in the reserve CMF for 2 years and at the end of that time I was retired from the army.

Lifelong benefits are gained by personnel who serve in our military. Looking back, I gained so much from the army. I gained leadership skills, communication skills, team building skills and networking, all contributing to my personal development, including a new-found confidence and pride of achievement. I espe-



Annual Camp, Igam Barracks 1970  
 Front L-R Sgt Zimmerman, Sgt Atkinson, Sgt Ahmat  
 Rear L-R CSM Barlow, Maj Kelly, Capt Hansford

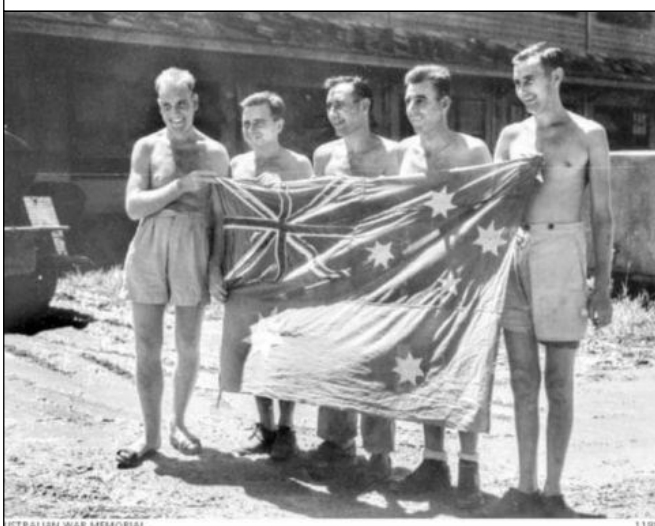
cially thank PNGVR for this and I am very proud to have been part of it.

I have been a member of the Ellenbrook RSL sub-branch in Perth for a few years and have been educating them with the history of NGVR/PNGVR.

Thanks Geoff.



Patrol boxes being carried in the Highlands of PNG, 1960's



Australian Ex POWs from Saigon with an Australian Flag Made from mosquito net, handkerchiefs and red body belts. The flag was made by Gunner L. Peade, 2/15 Aust Field Regiment, Private W. J. Stevens, 2/19 Aust Inf Bn, Driver G. Woolley, 2/3 Aust Motor Amb Convoy, Driver R. Taylor, 2/3 Aust Motor Amb Convoy , and Driver L. L. Chapman, 2/2 Aust Mt Company  
 AWM. WW11 photo.

When a child says "Daddy! I want Mummy" -  
 That's the kid version of "I'd like to speak to your supervisor"

## Did you Know! Facts on Vietnam War.

1. Estimated overall casualties	5,773,190
2. Estimated Dead	2,122,244
3. Dust-off Missions	500,000
4. Patients air-lifted from battlefields	900,000
5. Assassinations (South Vietnam)	36,725
6. Abductions (South Vietnam)	58,499
7. Estimated South Vietnamese citizens Killed	587,000
8. South Vietnam Military personnel Killed	220,357
9. Defoliants used (US Gallons)	19,000,000
10. Area sprayed (acres)	3,500,000
11. Helicopters Used	12,000
12. Helicopters Downed (Enemy ground fire)	4,865
13. Average age of World War 2 Soldier	26
14. Average age of Australian Soldier in Vietnam	20
15. Americans Killed	58,169
16. Australians Killed	504
17. Americans killed less than 20 years old	11,464
18. Americans severely disabled	75,000
19. Amputations and crippling wounds were 300% higher than WW2.	
20. Ammunition expended each month (tons)	71,000
21. Average of Artillery rounds expended each day in Vietnam	10,000
22. The number of men who registered for National service in Australia, Of these 63,000 were called up, and 18,000 went to Vietnam	804,000
23. The US Air Force missions over Vietnam	1,899,688
24. Total tonnage of bombs dropped by US Air Force	6,727,084
25. During WW2 the Bomb tonnage dropped on Germany	2,700,000
26. Fixed Wing Aircraft lost in Vietnam	3,750
27. The US airmen lost in Vietnam	8,040
28. B52's Bombers lost in Enemy Action in Vietnam	18
29. B52's Bombers Lost due to mid air collisions and other accidents	13
30. The number of Field Rations consumed each month in Vietnam	10,000,000
31. Litres of petroleum products consumed each month	303,000,000

The Infantry Soldier in the South West Pacific in WW2 saw an average of 40 days in combat in four years. The Australian Infantry Soldier in Vietnam saw an average of 314 days in the bush in one year.

In Vietnam the avg time elapsed between being wounded and being in Hospital was 1 Hour. The Percentage of those seriously wounded and saved was 82%. The Percentage of those wounded who died after reaching Hospital was 2.5%.

**LEST WE FORGET**

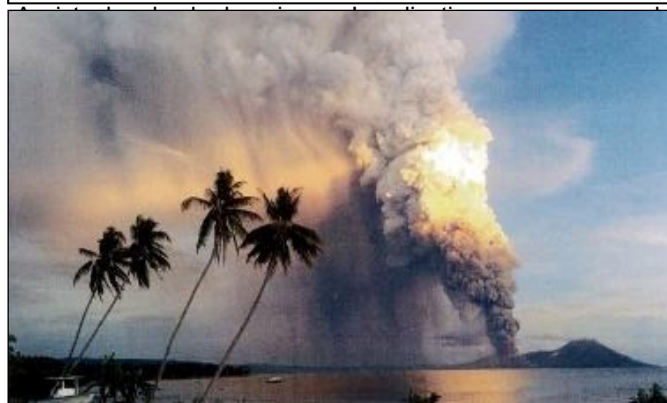


Photo of Mt Tavorvur, at Rabaul Harbour, taken on 10 September 2014, 12 days after the August eruption, by John Meyers of Maryborough, Qld. John was in a group commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the AN&MEF attack casualties and those on the submarine AE 1

To me "Drinking Responsibly" means "Don't spill it"

### Role Dream Come True

When Cpl Kbora Ali first encountered blue-clad UNICEF workers handing out school supplies, she saw a future role for herself.

Her family fled Afghanistan to Pakistan when she was two, but they didn't reach Australia until she was nine.

"We'd always refer to UNICEF as the 'Australians' or the 'foreign people' who've come to help us," Cpl Ali said.

"But as I got older, I realised where they were from."

Almost 20 years and an Australian Army career - later, Cpl Ali will don a blue shirt as a UNICEF Young Ambassador.

"People tend to say they're 'living the dream' loosely, but when you actually get to live it, it's a phenomenal feeling. Especially when it's something you've wanted to do for so long," she said.

After excelling in school, Cpl Ali joined the Army as a Gap Year in 2016.

"We had to flee our motherland. Australia welcomed us and now we're citizens and as citizens, we have a duty to do what we can," she said.

Normally an Army clerk, she recently worked as an interpreter on Op COVID-19 Assist helping members of the Hazara community evacuated from Afghanistan last year.

"When you come to a foreign country, you always look for a familiar face or someone who can understand you," she said.

"There was a girl I was crying with on the phone because we both had a similar journey."

Cpl Ali came to prominence when she was featured in the Australian Womens Weekly and on SBS as the first Afghan woman to join the Australian Army.



"I think a lot of them knew who I was because of the SBS interview. They never questioned the role I was in. They'd say, 'Oh, I know about you!'"

Cpl Ali repeatedly checked the UNICEF website, waiting for Young Ambassador applications to open.

Not being able to sleep one night while on Op COVID-19 Assist, she checked again, saw applications were open and spent the next day applying.

Their role is to meet children, find out what matters to young people, then raise their issues with Australia's key leaders in Canberra.

The program started in November last year, with face-to-face training beginning in February.

Army Newspaper 1504.

### Bridge Naming Ceremony

Some 2 years ago your Committee received a letter from the Local Council asking if we had any suggestions for the bridge recently built over Bullock Head Creek near the Museum Precinct connecting the two sections of Boundary Road. The Association wrote back suggesting the bridge be named the **Frank Holland MBE Bridge** and on Saturday 19th February a bridge naming ceremony was held at the bridge followed by a morning tea at the Everyman's Hut at the Museum Precinct.

Lt. Frank Holland MBE enlisted in PNGVR when it was formed in Rabaul in 1951 and for a period was OC B Coy. He received his MBE for his actions after the Japanese landings in New Britain in 1942 when he crossed the Island from North to South, bringing back with him 23 survivors who had made their way down the South Coast of New Britain after the debacle at Rabaul. They then moved in stages down the North Coast and left the Witu Islands on the *Lakatoi* eventually arriving in Cairns in March 1942. Frank then joined the Army, was posted to Z Special Unit and served overseas in Timor behind Japanese lines and then in Borneo. A summary of his actions is told in HTT Vol 130.

Jamboree Council were the hosts of the function and those attending included several members from the Council and the neighbouring Council (commences just across the road), members of the Holland family and a number of Association members.

A story board has been erected on one side of the bridge and the ceremony was held there. Councillor Sarah Hutton welcomed all those present, particularly the Holland family and went on to speak on the importance of the bridge connecting Boundary Road and the importance to the community of the Association Museum.

Association Patron, Maj Gen John Pearn AO. RFD. responded giving a brief praise of Lt Frank Holland and then Councillor



Assn members and dignitaries at the Naming Ceremony. Gerry McGrade, Bob Collins, Councillor Charles Strunk, Kerry Glover, Maj Gen John Pearn AO. RFD., John Kerr, Councillor Sarah Hutton, John Batze, Alex Garlin (NSAAQ), Kieran Nelson, Ian Thompson, Mal Zimmerman.

Hutton requested Maj Gen Pearn and Assn Vice President, Bob Collins, to unveil the bridge name and story board. (Association President Phil Ainsworth was absent at a funeral in Central Qld.) Following that everyone moved back to the Everyman's Hut to enjoy morning tea. While that was in progress Councillor Hutton spoke further regarding the importance of the Museum and precinct, Maj Gen Pearn spoke further re the Association and Bob Collins gave an address on the life of Frank Holland MBE, Coastwatcher, Commando and PNGVR member ( a copy of that address is on the Association web site). Councillor Charles Strunk from the Forest Lake Ward (the Museum Precinct has bounced between the two Wards in the past) also spoke.

Grandchildren of Frank Holland then spoke on their recollections of Frank and how much the act of naming the bridge after him meant to the family. It was clear from their recollections that the day was extremely significant for the family.

Overall it was a wonderful day to see one of our Association members remembered in that way and the Association gives sincere thanks to Councillor Hutton and her assistants for their very professional approach to the ceremony and those from the Association involved in the preparation of the ceremony. Treasurer Kieran Nelson was the Association contact point with Council for the ceremony.

The Story Board reads "Erected in memory of Lt. Frank Holland for his distinguished service to Australia and Papua New Guinea in World War 11 including his rescuing of survivors of Lark Force and civilians after the occupation of Rabaul on 23rd January 1942 (for which he was awarded the MBE) and



The Holland family under the story board. Kneeling Alaynah Prasad, Penny del Castillo. Next row. Susie Prasad, Tammy Wells, Louise & Sophie Clayton, Alyssa Crowther Back Row. John Kerr, Amanda Crowther, Jodie Clayton, Joshua & Lyell Crowther, Jessica Harrington



...serving in Z Special Force behind enemy lines in Timor and Borneo. After World War 11 he assisted in the reconstruction of the Gazelle Peninsular, provided witness testimony at the Toll Massacre War Crimes Trial and was a founding member of the Papua New Guinea Volunteer Rifles in Rabaul.

The National Servicemen's' Heritage Precinct was opened at 907 Boundary Road, Richlands, on part of the former Army Camp in February 2006. This precinct also houses the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles and Papua New Guinea Volunteer Rifles ex-members Association and its Museum to which Frank was a valued member and major contributor of documents and memorabilia."



The Holland family sharing their recollections of Frank Holland MBE in the Everyman's Hut.

**Our People Making a Difference in PNG**

At the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact the world, the ADF continues to assist Papua New Guinean specialists to deliver vaccination awareness, education, training and assistance to the community.

Deployed on Operation Papua New Guinea Assist, ADF planning teams have been in country since May 2021 and received a boost in October when they received additional ADF personnel to extend support already in place with the PNG Defence Force and Provincial Health Authorities.

Task Group Commander Cmdr Matt Cumow RAN said the 25-member task group had been working hard to improve vaccination outcomes for the PNGDF and people of PNG.

"The vaccination training teams are providing direct support to PNGDF regimental aid posts across the country, including at Moem Barracks, Wewak, Igam Barracks, Lae and in and around Port Moresby," Cmdr Cumow said.

"They have been advising, assisting and delivering training to their PNGDF colleagues and providing operational and logistical support to the vaccination rollout.

"The planning contingent has reinforced the excellent work of the previous planners and continues to support the provincial health authorities in Western and Morobe provinces.

"The task group has been engaging, developing relationships and then providing direct support to the provincial awareness, education and vaccination campaigns, including health, logistics and operational planning."

Part of the planning involved the delivery of UNICEF-supplied special refrigerators, purpose-built to store vaccinations at the recommended temperature.

ADF operations and logistics planner Capt Nathanael Ken-

neddy said the delivery and installation of a fridge generated huge excitement from both the health care workers and the local population.

"Our role included transporting the fridge and solar panels to Mumeng Health Centre, approximately two hours south-west of Lae," Capt Kennedy said.

"Typically, these remote areas suffer from either unreliable electricity, or limited stock of gas and kerosene due to logistical reasons, cost, or both.

"These solar-powered vaccination fridges will ensure the vaccinations are reliably kept at the recommended storage temperature."

Capt Kennedy said the supply route in some parts had been washed away by heavy rain and required some skilled navigation and driving from the team.

"Once in Mumeng, we were able to assist in the movement of the fridge into the health centre and then began community engagement with the locals," he said.

"At one stage there were nearly 70 people crowded around the health centre who had come from all around to see what was happening, all very excited to have photos taken with the ADF and PNGDF, in a COVID-safe manner of course.

"Most of these locals have been told fond stories by their grandfathers about Australian soldiers in PNG during the Second World War, and so to be part of that continuing story of the bond between Australia and PNG makes me feel very proud."

For Cmdr Cumow, a focal point has been leading what he described as a dedicated and professional task group.

"A key highlight has been seeing the many outlines and plans come to fruition, resulting in real awareness, education, vaccination and health outcomes for the people of PNG," he said.

"The work the task group has achieved has, and continues to, save lives and protect families and communities.

"The people of PNG are strong, they are resilient and they work through times of crisis in a unique PNG way.

"I have been immersed in and developed a deep respect and love for PNG culture and believe I will carry that with me from now on."

*Army Newspaper 1505*



Soldiers assist with the delivery of a solar-powered vaccination fridge to Mumeng Health Centre in Morobe Province.

Women are like fine wine  
They start out fresh fruity and intoxicating to the mind,  
and then turn full bodied with age  
until they go all sour and vinegary  
and give you a headache.



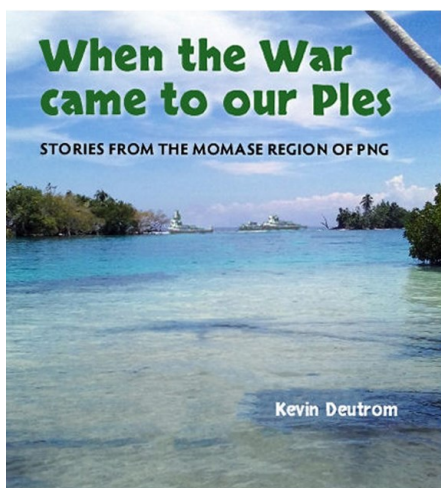
## WHEN THE WAR CAME TO OUR PLES

### SOME STORIES FROM THE MOMASE REGION OF PNG

Victor Kevin Deutrom : Self Published 2021 (Book 428 pages)

When war zones are on the lands of indigenous subsistence farmers, the impact on the inhabitants is disastrous. The village people are like pawns.

Stories of this impact are revealed in a series of interviews collected during 1988-1990 mainly from men of the Madang, Morobe and East Sepik Provinces of Papua New Guinea, who could still remember the conditions in the villages and towns during the Japanese invasion of 1942-45. Kevin has done much research and also experienced living in PNG during the 1970s and 80s.



Stories are headed by a photo of the interviewee then an oral history of when they fled from the Japanese. Later they were forced into work gangs where some men were selected to

work for the Japanese because of their local knowledge, language or usefulness to control the locals. Mention is made of British Indian Army POWs who were captured in Malaya and Singapore by the Japanese and used as forced labour.

The stories cover the period of departure of the Australian expats, the bombing, invasion and occupation by the Japanese, the American/Australian bombings, complete destruction of villages and food gardens and later restoration.

This unique and thought-provoking record of recollections from a PNG perspective complements the well-known publications concerning WW11 and makes enthralling reading.

Book cost \$25.00 (plus \$10.00 postage within Aust)

Glen Woodward. Adelaide

Contact - author via email [vzeal17@gmail.com](mailto:vzeal17@gmail.com)

A distraught senior citizen phoned her doctor's office. "Is it true," she wanted to know, "That the medication you prescribed has to be taken for the rest of my life?" "Yes, I'm afraid so," the doctor told her.

There was a moment of silence before the senior lady replied, "I'm wondering, then, just how serious is my condition because this prescription is marked 'NO REPEATS'."

### Naming of Goroka

When the sound of the name Koloka or Koroka first fell on European ears they heard it as Garoka, a name which seems to have been used since the police post was opened by McWilliam in 1938. ADO Bill Kyle referred to it in a 1939 report: "From Kainantu, to Bena Bena, and thence to Garoka, the road is excellent and is in progress."

In the Allied Geographical Section's Terrain Study of the Madang District dated 6 August, 1943, it is named and described as follows:

"Garoka: New station. Three hours west from Bena Bena on the Chimbu track. Had a Warrant Officer of Police in charge, but was usually run in conjunction with Bena Bena. A small drome is near the station building."

On 23 April 1947 Jim Taylor wrote to DDA .Director Jones:

"Authority and approval is sought to change the spelling of GAROKA to GOROKA which is as near correct phonetically as it is possible with our present system of spelling Perhaps you , would be pleased to recommend to His Honour the Administrator that he give his approval, and cause a notice to be published in the Gazette for general information."

Jones was pleased , apparently, and Goroka became the accepted name. There has been some speculation among Europeans as to whether the village word Koloka had any specific meaning. In Gahuku the suffix Ka means 'Place' - Humilaveka, as mentioned previously, means 'the red clay of men place or 'the red clay place inhabited by people'. However, Asarozuha elders claim that Koloka is the expression used to describe the sunrise. "It means 'the dawn has come', they say. Robert Cleland, who was a patrol officer stationed Goroka in 1953 was told by Gorokans that the word signified 'the place where you walk about as the dawn breaks'. The old people recall that while Jim Taylor was District Officer he conducted a 'competition' among the local clans to suggest names for the new town. Two Asarozuha men are said to have proposed Goroka/Koroka, and Taylor awarded them the prize. This belief of the people that Jim Taylor involved them in decision making fits in with the general impression one has of him as a skilful and sensitive administrator. He may well have decided that Goroka was the best name for the town, but he allowed the original owners to feel that they had a decisive part in its selection.

From A HISTORY OF CONTACT AND CHANGE IN THE GOROKA VALLEY, CENTRAL HIGHLANDS OF NEW GUINEA, 1934- 1949 by Peter M Munster's Thesis for Degree of Doctor of Philosophy



### University of Goroka 2022.

The University of Goroka (UOG) is the third largest of the six universities in Papua New Guinea (PNG), and is by far the largest teacher education institution. The University was formed in 1997 from two faculties of the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG), Goroka Teacher's College (GTC) and the Faculty of Education.

In 1995, the Goroka Campus of UPNG enrolled its first Bachelor of Education (BEd) intake. Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE), BEd Honours and Master of Education (MEd) degree students were admitted in subsequent years. The Government of Papua New Guinea declared the University of Goroka to be a fully-fledged University in 1997 by an Act of Parliament (UOG Act, 1997).

UOG also runs a consulting arm, 'UniGor Consultancy Limited', with projects of nearly 7 million kina .

UOG has 4,000+ students and its graduation ceremonies can be spectacular with a number of both students and staff in traditional costume.

Next page Photos from 2021 Graduation Ceremony



Above L. Simbu lecturer. R. Kerowagi graduate  
Below L. Goroka graduate & Academic. . R. Huli graduate



**VALE: Rfn Evan WHAM**  
860127 21.1.1942 - 17.2.2022

Evan was born in Rockhampton. In 1947 the family relocated to Cairns until 1954 and then moved to Longreach where he finished schooling. In 1958 Evan moved to Brisbane to join the CBA .

In 1961 he was transferred to Madang where he joined the PNGVR. In subsequent years he returned to PNG with the Commonwealth Bank and served in a number of areas.

Evan took up running and after his last posting in PNG joined the Brisbane Hash Harriers. While he was with them

he took running seriously and was able to complete a Marathon in under 3 hours. Together with a friend, Peter Roush, he participated in International marathons in the Antarctic, The Great Wall Marathon in China and the Ultra Marathon, 92km, in Cape Town, South Africa, the Mt Kilimanjaro marathon in Tanzania, Africa, and Mt Everest Base Camp marathon and the Kokoda Ultra Marathon, 92km with an overall elevation rise of 6,500 metres, but up and down hills along the Trail



to achieve that.  
Evan stayed with the CBA until he took a redundancy offer when he was approx. 50 yrs old. He was frequently recalled back when needed.  
Evan bought a unit in Mooloolaba and purchased a stake in KBH ( A strata management company) He worked in the business as office manager for many years. He gave up working approx. 6 years ago when he developed Crohn's Disease and his health deteriorated rapidly after that.  
For a number of years he attended an informal gathering of ex PNGVR people held annually at Maroochydore.

**LEST WE FORGET**

*Both Evan and Jack Hobbins are in the photo of 7 PI C Coy PNGVR Madang on page 19.*

**VALE: Cpl John (Jack) Joseph HOBBS**  
859993 25.11.1934—7.2.2022

Jack was born at Hurstville, Sydney, and went to school at Hurstville Technical Junior School. He obtained his Intermediate Certificate in 1949.

When he left school he had a number of jobs locally before working for a number of years in Tasmania then on the construction of Tinaroo Dam, in the Atherton Tableland in the mid 1950's until completion of the dam in 1958.



Jack and Judy Hobbins. Dining Night Victoria Barracks, 2008

He then moved to PNG working for New Guinea Company (W.R. Carpenter) in their Import/Export Dept in Madang in 1960.

He joined the PNGVR in Madang and served there until he was transferred with New Guinea Company as Manager of their Goroka Branch in 1962, transferring then to HQ C Coy PNGVR, Goroka. He attended the 1960 and 1962 Annual Camps of PNGVR, but had to miss the 1961 Annual Camp because of Company Policy. Both Jack and Percy Neville, who was a member of PNGVR also, worked for New Guinea Company in Madang but only one could attend annual camp—so Jack and Percy took turns. In 1962 Jack was awarded Best Rifle Shot C Coy. He was promoted to Corporal in 1962 after attending the NCO Promotion Course in Port Moresby.

Jack married Judy McBurney, receptionist at the Goroka Hotel, in Goroka on 23 Nov 62 with the reception held at the Goroka Hotel.

In late 1963 Jack resigned from New Guinea Coy to work for B.J.. Back in Madang, then Needham & Co. In 1968 he worked



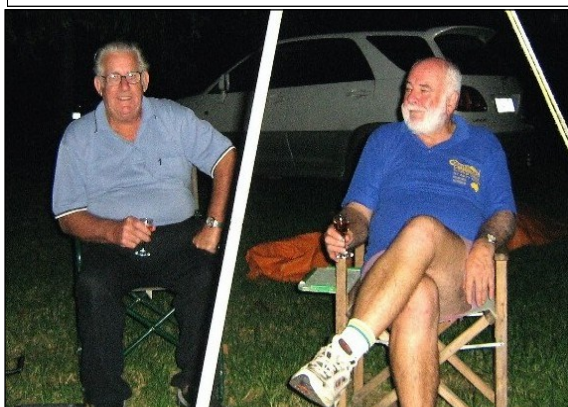
7 Pl, C Coy, PNGVR, Madang. Dec 1961.  
 Back. Sgt 'Mac' Farland, Sgt Lionel Fox, ?, Cpl Bill Honisett, Cpl Brian Andrew, Cpl Bill Smith. Centre. Pte Eugene Leuwen, ?, Pte Jack Hobbins, ?, ?.  
 Front. Pte Bob Collins, Pte Mick Brown, 2Lt Ron Strand, Cpl Percy Neville, ?, Pte Evan Wham.  
 Depot boi in front.

for Brian Heagney, a highly successful Trade Store proprietor in the Central and Western Highlands—he was based at Kagamuga Airport, the airport for Mt Hagen, as Merchandising Manager for Heagney's huge and expanding Trade Store enterprise.

When they left PNG in 1972 they purchased a general store in Clayfield, Brisbane, with a house attached to the shop and he and Judy ran this together. He sold that and moved out to a similar arrangement at Lindum, another Brisbane suburb. On the sale of that he worked for Barry and Roberts, a large Brisbane Merchant Chain, at Morningside and then their main Brisbane Office.

In 1979 he and Judy moved to Urbenville, Northern NSW, where they had purchased another general store with house attached, until they eventually sold in 1984 and for the next several years he and Judy cared for his father at Old Erawal Bay in the Shoalhaven District of NSW.

He then retired to Aldavilla, outside Kempsey, Central Coast NSW, and in 2004 moved into a Retirement Village at Kingscliffe on the Northern NSW Coast.



Jack Hobbins and Bob Collins relaxing after dinner on a Camp at Kooralbyn.

After they had spent some time looking after his ailing father at Jervis Bay, south of Sydney.

During the time from New Guinea Company in Goroka to his store at Urbenville Jack ran an SP Bookmaking enterprise on the side. When he sold the shop at Urbenville the purchaser was horrified at the SP operation and, to his financial cost, refused to take it over.

In 2011 Jack was nominated by the Kingscliff RSL Sub Branch for the Tweed Shire Council Australia Day Awards for his services to the RSL, particularly in the raising of funds and sales of badges for ANZAC and Remembrance Days.

After retiring to Kingscliffe Jack was close enough to participate in camping trips conducted by a number of ex PNGVR chaps for a week twice annually. He will be remembered from these camps as one who was never short of a story. He and Judy also participated in the PNGVR dinners, both formal and field dinners.

Judy predeceased him in 2018 and son Charles and wife Rosie spent the last two years as Jack's carer after he was too ill to move outside without a carer.

**LEST WE FORGET**

**Did you know?**

In the past, war ships carried iron cannons, which required cannon balls nearby. The cannon balls were stored in a square pyramid with one ball on top, resting on four, resting on nine, which rested on sixteen. In order to prevent the sixteen balls from rolling away, a metal plate called a monkey with sixteen round indentations was secured near the cannon.



Jack on his 86th Birthday



**How dangerous is that?  
Sandals on a bike?...**

**BREAKING NEWS:**  
In a shock move, English Cricket Board have announced tennis World No.1 Novak Djokovic as temporary batting coach.  
"We acknowledge he doesn't have a background in our sport but we couldn't overlook the fact it took Australia two weeks to get him out."

As iron rusts quickly, the plate was made of brass. Whilst the rusting problem may have been solved, brass contracts much more and quicker than iron in cold weather. As a consequence, when the temperature was extremely cold, the brass



indentations would shrink and the cannon balls would roll off the monkey. The temperature was therefore cold enough to "freeze the balls off a brass monkey."

And all this time you thought that was just a vulgar expression ?

*Internet—Grammar Monster*

One of the Museum's major fund raising sources has been put on hold temporarily. Bunnings, Oxley, suffered major damage during the recent rains and flooding in S.E. Qld.

Our Association was due to hold a Sausage Sizzle on Sunday 27th March but this has now been cancelled and the Museum Curator, Paul Brown, advised that it could be up to 3 month before the store is up and running again.

The Museum could have expected to raise somewhere between \$700—\$1,000 on a Sunday Sausage Sizzle.

The cost of postage for Harim Tok Tok to be forwarded to members is a large part of the Association expenditure. Postage has now risen to \$2.20 per issue. To assist in reducing Association costs it is requested that anyone who can receive Harim Tok Tok by email do so.

The benefits are:-

1. You receive Harim Tok Tok in colour.
2. It is easy to enlarge the font size of the print for reading on the computer and give you a clearer read.
3. If you wish a permanent copy you can run a colour copy off.
4. The funds saved can be utilised for the funding of the Museum which is one of our major assets.

If you wish to do this please contact Phil Ainsworth or Colin Gould—details in next column.

The Association would like to thank King & Co Property consultants for its continuing support, including the printing of this edition, together with the past 75 issues of Harim Tok Tok. Its contribution is much appreciated.

**JR Medals**  
John & Vanessa Roxburgh  
Ph: 0466 633 273  
Loc: 71 Pontiac Circuit, Warner, QLD  
Web: [www.jrmedals.com.au](http://www.jrmedals.com.au)  
email: [info@jrmedals.com.au](mailto:info@jrmedals.com.au)  
15% Discount for all PNGVR members

**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](mailto:pngvr@optusnet.com.au), phone 0424 562 030 (The Secretary, P O Box 885, Park Ridge, Qld, 4125)

**For Military Museum enquires contact** Paul Brown email [paulbrown475@gmail.com](mailto:paulbrown475@gmail.com). Phone 0402 644 181 or Colin Gould email [pngvr@optusnet.com.au](mailto:pngvr@optusnet.com.au), phone 0424 562 030

(NGVR/PNGVR Military Museum, 1007 Boundary Road, Wacol, Qld, 4076)

**Membership fee payments to Treasurer,** Kieran Nelson email [kierannelson@bigpond.com](mailto:kierannelson@bigpond.com) Phone 0412 236 013

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

**Website Master:** Trevor Connell email [trevor.connell@internode.on.net](mailto:trevor.connell@internode.on.net), phone 0409 690 590

[www.pngvr.weebly.com](http://www.pngvr.weebly.com) (all back copies of HTT may be obtained from our website)

**Facebook Master:** Kieran Nelson, email [kierannelson@bigpond.com](mailto:kierannelson@bigpond.com), phone 0412 236 013

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

**Harim Tok Tok Editor:** Bob Collins, email [bob-collins@bigpond.com](mailto:bob-collins@bigpond.com), phone 0413 831 397

**President:** Email [p.ainsworth@kingco.com.au](mailto: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)

**Chaplain.** Rev Ron MacDonald. Phone 0407 008 624 email [Cheryl.ron@gmail.com](mailto:Cheryl.ron@gmail.com)

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**FUNCTION DATES**

**Sat 19 Mar**  
Museum visit by 219 Air Force Cadets  
1-3pm

**Sat 2 Apr Sat 7 May**  
Museum open 10am—1pm.

**Sat 9 Apr Sat 11 June**  
Executive C'tee Mtg - Museum 10 a.m.  
Members always welcome. BYO lunch

**Mon 25 April ANZAC DAY**  
See separate instructions.  
Jeep requirements to Colin Gould by Friday  
26 March.

**Fri 1 July**  
**Montevideo Maru Memorial Service**  
Brisbane Cenotaph—Details to follow



# 80th Anniversary Commemorative Service & Dinner

Friday, 1 July 2022, Canberra

Papua New Guinea Association of Australia Inc.  
Rabaul & Montevideo Maru Group

Family and friends all welcome

## 80th Anniversary Commemorative Service

Friday, 1 July 2022 at 11.30 am

Australian War Memorial, Canberra, ACT

RSVP: 8 June 2022—80th Anniversary Service at AWM

Book through the following link

<https://www.trybooking.com/BXXTY>

or place your camera on the following QR code:



## 80th Anniversary Commemorative Dinner

Friday, 1 July 2022 at 6.00 pm

Rydges Canberra, 17 Canberra Avenue,  
Forrest, Canberra ACT 2603

Cost: \$100.00—Cocktails in Wellington Room followed  
by 2-course dinner in the Forrest Suite.

Payment will confirm booking.

All drinks to be purchased on the night.

Parking available at \$15.00 or street parking.

RSVP: 8 June 2022—80th Anniversary Dinner

Book through the following link

<https://www.trybooking.com/BXXTS>

or place your camera on the following QR code:



Please email the  
Event Organiser at  
[admin@memorial.org.au](mailto:admin@memorial.org.au)  
to advise of your booking  
for the 80th Anniversary  
Service and to provide the  
following information:



- Full name of each person who wishes to attend
- Age of each person who wishes to attend (optional but helpful)
- Any mobility issues
- Full postal address, phone number (mobile and home) and email of each person who wishes to attend
- The relationship, if any, of the person to the events of 1942
- Any other people you are travelling with
- Even if you do not have all this information at this stage, please tell us what you can.

Any queries or for further information, please contact the

Event Organiser: [admin@memorial.org.au](mailto:admin@memorial.org.au)

[www.pngaa.org](http://www.pngaa.org)—[www.montevideo-maru.org](http://www.montevideo-maru.org)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RabaulAndMontevideoMaruSociety>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/PNGAA>

Note that it is free to join Rydges discount program 'Priority Guest Rewards', which provides discounts for accommodation and dining.



# ANZAC DAY 2022 BRISBANE MARCH WARNING ORDERS

March to commence:	10.00 am Monday 25 April (Regardless of the weather)
Overall order of march:	There will be a total of 100 Units marching in the Brisbane Parade in 2022 NAVY leading followed by <b>ARMY</b> followed by AIR FORCE then ALLIED Units
NGVR / PNGVR	<b>Position Number: 51 ( Group 5)</b> Behind 49th Battalion and in front of PIB/NGIB/HQ PIR Association.
NGVR / PNGVR	Form up in <b>GEORGE STREET</b> between <b>CHARLOTTE &amp; MARGARET STREET</b> <b>BY 10.30 AM</b> The March commences at 10.00 am Look for our banner and position number . It is <u>estimated</u> that we will step off somewhere around 10.30 am ( NB Be prepared for any last minute changes) Parade Marshalls and the information tent will be available in Queens Park near the Casino for March programs.
Jeep loading point:	A buggy shuttle service will operate from Queen Street in the vicinity of Eagle Lane where veteran's can be dropped off by family or taxi's. A buggy will then take members requiring Jeep transport to the actual march jeep loading point— Queen Street (Commonwealth Bank corner of Edward Street, adjacent to Post Office Square.
Dress	PNGVR Anzac Day dress with full size medals and name badge, or sports jacket, trousers, white shirt and tie. Berets or hats should be worn. Please, no jeans or shorts .
"Eyes Left"	There are 2 'eyes left' - one at the saluting dais in King George Square and one at ANZAC Square.
	<b><i>NB : TO SPEED UP ENTRY AT THE HOTEL DOOR (RE Corona Virus Rules) Please let Colin or Paul know if you are attending the reception so we can provide an advance prepared list of members &amp; guests attending the Hotel .</i></b>
POST MARCH RECEPTION	<b>Stock Exchange Hotel</b> —crn Edward and Charlotte Streets. Enter via ground floor In Charlotte Street from approximately 11.15 am. <b>Fees: \$15-00 adult payable at the door—<u>exact change please.</u></b>  <u>This is for limited light hot &amp; cold finger food, tea and coffee .</u> There is also hot counter meals available at the hotel at hotel prices.  <u>The Bar will operate as a <b>CASH ONLY</b> bar for all drinks for the duration of the function</u> hence the reduction in the entry fee to \$15 pp  The Hotel will open to the general public at 1.00 pm.
The Kieran Nelson Banking Corporation	Will be open until <b>12.30 pm</b> for payment of any membership fees and 'donations'.
Paul Brown's Trade Store & Book library	Will be open until <b>12.30 pm</b> for Q Store items and books— "Keepers of the Gate" and "PNGVR—A History" etc
	<i>Your Executive Committee looks forward to meeting you all again on ANZAC Day. Where ever you are, best wishes for ANZAC Day 2022</i>  <i>Regards P Ainsworth - President</i>