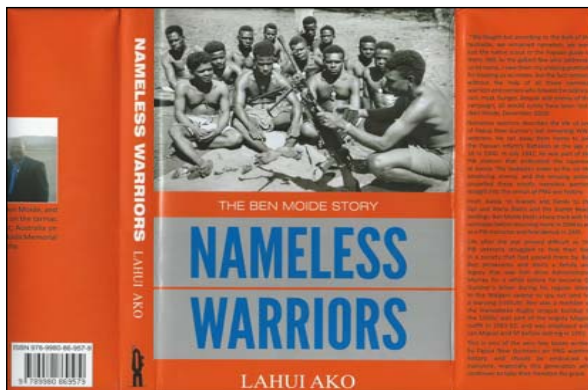


PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

Our Anzac Day march in Brisbane was well received by the public and our reunion in Brisbane was most successful, full story with photographs on pages 14 and 15. I watched the march on TV and was unable to attend the reunion as I was recovering from a skin graft on my shin.

The A Company reunion held in Caloundra just prior to Anzac Day was enjoyed by those who attended, see story and photos on page 13.

The Lions Club of Inala hosted its annual Anzac Day ceremony in ISA Memorial Park Inala. A part of this service was the unveiling of the John Holland memorial plaque commemorating John's PNGVR service and his community service in establishing the NGVR Memorial Museum in the former army camp at Wacol. The Premier and MP for Inala Anastacia Palaszczuk said Mr Holland was greatly missed in the veteran community and the Inala Electorate. Councillor Charles Strunk with BCC support made ready the plaque for the unveiling. The photograph shows John's plaque on the memorial cairn.



The photograph is of the cover sleeve of a recently published book in PNG, **Nameless Warriors, the Ben Moide Story** by Lahui Ako. Ben was a member of PIB and PNGVR. If anyone has this book, please provide our editor with a review for our newsletter.

The Australians of Chinese Heritage War Memorial Committee (AOCHWMC) invites our members to attend its 10th anniversary rededication ceremony to Australians of Chinese Heritage War Memorial at Sunnybank RSL(19 Gager Street, Sunnybank) at 4pm Saturday 6 July 2019 and afterwards, for a charge of \$60 pp or \$600 per table, at 6pm Parkland Chinese Restaurant (Shop38, Sunny Park Shopping Centre, Sunnybank) for the annual fundraising dinner for Australians of Chinese Heritage War Memorial Bursaries. Please RSVP by 30 June to svp.sunnybankrsl@gmail.com and/or our Doug Ng douglasng@inet.net.au.

Our annual Montevideo Maru Memorial Service will be held in the WW2 section of the Hall of Memories in the understorey of the Brisbane Cenotaph at 9.45 am for a 10 am start, Monday 1 July 2019. Dress will be Anzac Day dress. To my knowledge this is the only national memorial Service for those 1054 Australian POWs and civilian internees lost on the Montevideo Maru when it was sunk early 1 July 1942 by a US submarine off Luzon Island, Philippines. Please invite your relatives and friends to this solemn service . The dress for members is our Anzac Day dress with large medals. A morning tea will follow with details advised at the service. The new location for the service was caused by further refurbishment of our usual Hall of Memories and the noise of business day traffic on Ann Street in front of the Cenotaph. Additionally, the Adina Hotel , our usual morning tea venue is under new management and presently being refurbished.

The 77th Anniversary commemorating the sinking of the Montevideo Maru will be acknowledged at the Last Post Ceremony at the AWM at 5pm 1 July 2019. This year the AWM will highlight Private Lloyd Sylvester Sibraa NX34251 of the 1st Independent Company. Dress for members attending is Anzac Day dress with medals. Our Association will lay a wreath. PNGAA is arranging a luncheon on Sunday 30th June in Canberra for family and friends, the details of which are to be finalised. If you wish to attend contact John Reeves 0448 483 932 or neradaq@gmail.com .

The annual Light Horse shoot at Fassifern Rifle Club, Boonah , Queensland will be held Sunday 30th June. We are lining up a formidable team this year so contact Ian Thompson at ianoil@hotmail.com . Ian is also proposing a practice shoot at Belmont prior. You can borrow a rifle from Ian if you do not have a .303 rifle with open sights.

Please check the function dates on the rear page and diary them. Public openings of the Museum are the first Saturdays of the month from 10am to 1pm, members and friends are welcome – come along and have a cuppa.

Members are also invited to attend committee meetings, the next being Saturday 15th June. Bring along your luncheon and have a chat afterwards.

Phil Ainsworth, May 2019

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**Rev. August P. H. FREUND
WO 2 P446
MISSIONARY TURNS SPY**

The following story is taken from the Rev Freund's book "Missionary turns Spy" published in 1989. I have chosen to tell the story in his own words as some of the phrases, if told in the 'third person', would not be so descriptive or telling.

I went to primary school at Mount Mary, a one teacher school about 15 miles west of Morgan in South Australia. Before I was 14 I passed my qualifying examinations but neither my parents or I gave any thought to a secondary education. I stayed at home and worked with father at farming, caring for sheep, horses and cattle, doing road work, building and cutting and carting firewood for Adelaide to the local railway siding.



Rev A.H.P. Freund

I received my secondary education and my training for the Lutheran ministry at Concordia College and Seminary in Unley, Adelaide. I graduated at the end of 1933, and in Jan 1934 I became pastor of a field with 14 preaching places covering a large part of Eyre Peninsula, South Australia. I married Dora Ey on 6 Apr that year and we settled down to a busy life travelling to and from the preaching places and visiting our members.

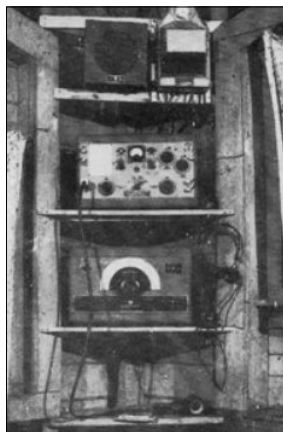
Not long after I entered the ministry the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia (E.L.C.A.) commenced to carry out missionary work in New Guinea. The plan was to go into an area in which no Christian denomination was working, namely far up the Sepik River.

Shortly before Christmas 1935 I left Brisbane together with F.W. Noack, Vic Neumann and Gerry Noack, my wife remaining in Australia for the time being. When we arrived in New Guinea early in 1936 Lutheran Mission Finschhafen offered to cede to us their work in the Siassi Islands, off the west end of New Britain, and sell us the buildings and cattle on the mission station, *Awelkon*, on Rooke the largest of the 27 islands that form the Siassi Group. It was considered that, without any previous experience in New Guinea, conditions far up the Sepik River would have been too difficult. After orientation and some delays, Fred and Gerry Noack

and my wife, who had also come to New Guinea and I settled down at *Awelkon* just before Christmas, 1936.

As soon as possible we had to get a launch and a larger vessel for our Island work. In the meantime Bill Money and Charlie Reynolds who owned *Gizarum* plantation and did a monthly run with their vessel to Finschhafen and Salamaua assisted by carrying our stores and mail. In late 1937 we obtained the launch *Umboi* a 23 tonner. In 1938 the Church purchased *Gizarum* and Vic Neumann and Gerry Noack took over its running.

I become a Coastwatcher



In 1940 Lieutenant-Commander Eric Feldt arrived to interview me and requested that I become a Coastwatcher. Feldt knew New Guinea well and knew the places where it would be valuable to have someone with a radio to report the movements of ships and aircraft. He knew that *Awelkon*, 1,700 ft above sea level had a complete view of Vitiaz Strait. In fine weather we could also see right over to the New Guinea mainland. I pointed out that normally clergymen do not take part in such activities, but, since there were special circumstances, and I was the only white man living in *Awelkon* I was

willing to do what he wanted. I was advised that a radio specialist was in New Guinea installing radios at various locations and he would install one for me in due course.

In Nov 1940 I took my wife and two baby sons to Madang where she had to have surgery. The renowned Lutheran Mission doctor, Theodor Braun, operated but advised me to take her to Australia for specialist treatment. This I did and while I was away Feldt's specialist, Dave Laws, installed a Teleradio 3B at *Awelkon* and left instructions for coding and decoding the Playfair system as well as silhouettes of Japanese ships and aircraft. My callsign was VLD6.

In May 1941 my wife and sons returned from Australia.

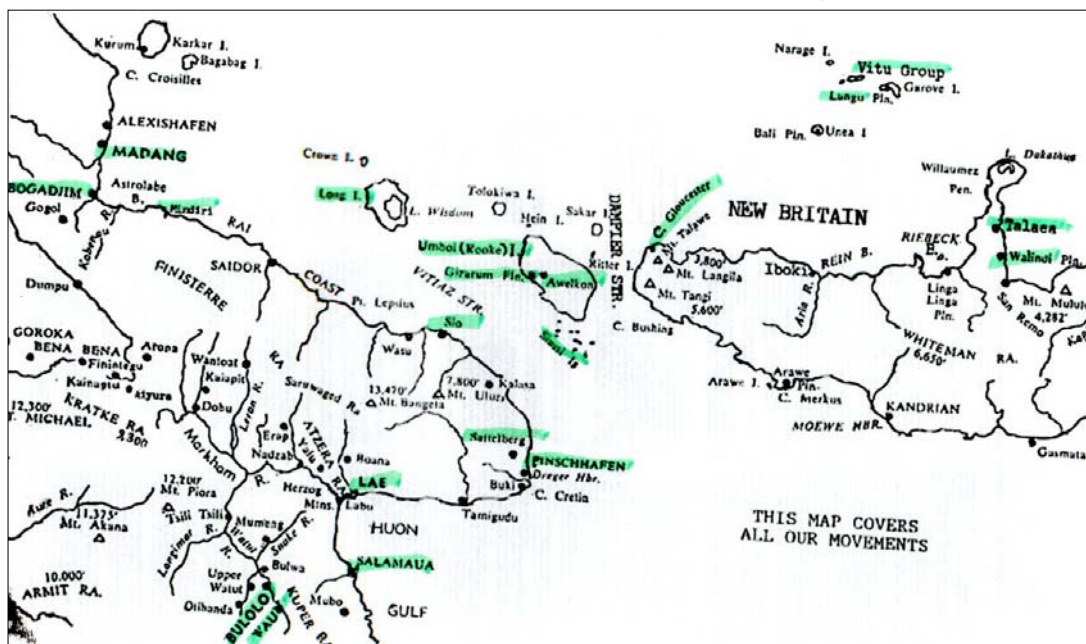
Women and Children evacuated

Early in December 1941 I was given an evacuation order for women and children whilst in Salamaua on a normal monthly visit. We were not keen for them to go as we did not envisage how quickly the Japanese advance would be, but on Christmas

Day 1941 I watched them take off in a little Dragon Rapide aircraft from Salamaua for Port Moresby thence onwards to Australia.

Work continued amid uncertainty

It was difficult to continue normal work but I kept busy with running our Trade Store, taking over the medical duties from my wife, teaching students from distant islands and continue my missionary work. On 10 Jan I coded my first Coastwatcher's message, reporting a Japanese reconnaissance plane. I had employed a retired native policeman to watch at night



for lights at sea or unusual noises.

Air Raids

On 21 Jan I switched the receiver on and heard Lloyd Pursehouse, District Officer at Finschhafen, report a large flight of planes passing over in the direction of Lae, so Lae, Salamaua, Bulolo and Wau were to be bombed. At the same time Madang reported air raids. Pilot Ray Parer was just coming in to land at Salamaua and his plane was shot up and he was killed.

People on the mainland had the chance to move inland if the Japs came, but we on Rooke Island had nowhere to go. We then discussed these events carefully and held a secret vote as to whether to GO or STAY. When we counted the votes we had three STAY votes. Had we known then what we learned later about Japanese brutality to civilians and even to missionaries, our vote might not have been so 'brave'.

On 23 Jan VJZ Rabaul went off the air and this was a big indicator that something had happened, but what? We didn't find out the facts of the invasion for weeks later.

Into the Army

Suddenly everything changed. On 16 Feb I was on the radio to Pursehouse at Finschhafen and received an order "Go Butibam tonight", Butibam is a village near Lae so it was his cryptic way or ordering me to go to Lae.

We reached Finschhafen at 8am next morning and found Bill Money in charge of the *Gnair* with a group of NGVR (New Guinea Volunteer Rifles) men ready to come and get us if we had disobeyed the order. We left the *Umboi* at Finschhafen and went on the *Gnair* to Lae that night. There was something near hysteria at Lae at the time. All businesses and public utilities had ceased functioning and all older men had been evacuated.

Soon Capt Simpson, the Officer of the N.G.V.R. came and explained that conscription was in force and he had to conscript Vic and Pat. He turned to me saying "I know you are a clergyman and I cannot conscript you. But I also know you are a Coast-watcher and you have a Teleradio. I have no radio so I would like you to join and be my radio operator."

H'mmmm! After a bit of thought I said "OK! Let's go".

Lloyd Pursehouse had ordered the evacuation of all white people from Finschhafen. There were Germans, Americans and Australians, all Mission staff workers. They left for Lae on the *Bavaria* that night.

At Voco Point Capt. Simpson swore us into the Army. When the *Bavaria* returned its two Lutheran Missionary crew Dolph Obst and Dave Rohrlach were also conscripted. So five Lutheran Missionaries joined the army in one day. By the way New Guinea must be the only place possible to become a "Volunteer Rifleman" by conscription. There had been no medical, no identification tags and no uniforms. We were however given 303 rifles from the disbanded native police (don't know what became of mine. I must have left it somewhere.)

I wrote a letter to my wife telling her what had happened—it got through.

The *Bavaria* returned to Finschhafen that night with Vic, Pat, Pursehouse, 'Blue' Harris and myself as passengers.

Next day the Anglican Mission launch arrived from Gasmata on New Britain, bringing Wing-Commander Lerew (CO of the RAAF contingent in Rabaul) and the *Iboki* went past with 12 men who also had escaped from New Britain.

Information about these escapes reached Australian news broadcasters who didn't care whose lives they endangered, or didn't have the intelligence to see that the Japs, who were eagerly moni-

toring Australian news sessions, would possibly kill the missionaries. The Rev John Barge who brought Wing Commander Lerew to Finschhafen was taken away by the Japs on his return to his mission and was never seen again.

I collected the Teleradio and we eventually made our way back to Lae where I accompanied Capt. Simpson in the launch *Lolobu* to NGVR outposts at the Buangs and Sugarloaf as well as Salamaua.

Rescue Mission to New Britain

Following the debacle that followed the Japanese invasion of Rabaul hundreds of soldiers streamed down the North and South Coasts of New Britain. During their time in Rabaul they had never been instructed in how to live off the land and no provision had been made in advance for food dumps etc in the event of the evacuation of Rabaul.

At the Talasea District Office J.K. McCarthy, ADO, accompanied by native police and carriers, set out to contact any escaping parties he could and urge them to work their way towards Talasea. He travelled hundreds of miles on foot and canoe with his police scouting around to find small parties of survivors.

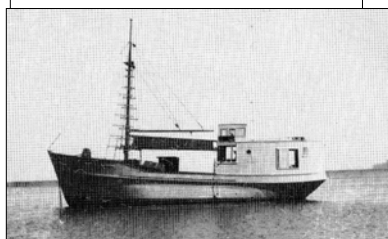
In all this he was ably assisted by a number of old residents such as Ken Douglas, Rod Marsland, Frank Holland, Bert Olander and Lincoln Bell. McCarthy informed Moresby of the situation, what his plans were, and what he was doing. His plan was officially approved and he was given complete command of operations.

It was to assist in this evacuation that we were sent over to New Britain. G.C. (Blue) Harris was placed in charge of the small ship expedition which has been variously described as "The little Dunkirk of New Britain", "The Harris Navy", or "The NGVR Navy".

Of the three vessels which left Finschhafen that night, the largest was the *Bavaria* the 45 ton schooner of the Lutheran Mission, Finschhafen, manned by her peace time skipper Adolph (Dolph) Obst (later killed by the Japs at Cape Gloucester) with Dave Rohrlach, Bert Gazard and



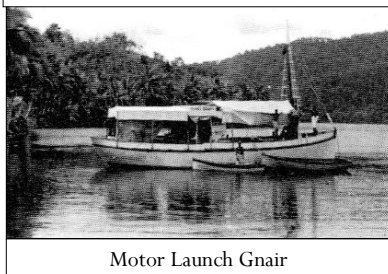
Mission Schooner Bavaria



T.S.M.V. Umboi



Mission Vessel Totol



Motor Launch Gnair

Harley Armitstead, members of the NGVR.

Then there was our vessel, the 23 ton *Umboi* also run by her peace time mission personnel Vic Neumann and the writer as well as Jack Goad and 'Blue' Harris, both NGVR. Harris had decided to make this his 'flagship'.

Finally there was the *Gnair* of about 16 tons. Her crew were Bill Money, Gus Keuster and 'Sno' Blackley, all NGVR from Lae. Bill Money was a WW1 veteran who had held the rank of Captain.

From Madang came the fourth vessel, the 35 ton *Total* belonging to Lutheran Mission, Madang. Unlike the rest of us her skipper Ted Radke was not even in the Army, yet he gladly came. He was accompanied by Madang NGVR men Bob Emery, Andy Smith and Ron Chugg. Almost two years later Ted Radke lost his life as a prisoner of the Japanese when a ship, carrying white prisoners towards Aitape, was machine-gunned by an American bomber.

In case disaster should overtake us, a few more vessels were kept standing by at various points. There was the Govt vessel *Thesis* in charge of Gerry Keogh (killed in air operations in 1943), another Govt vessel *Nereus* in charge of 'Jock' Laird and finally the *Winnon* in charge of her owner Chue Leong and Alan Strachan.

Each vessel also had its native boat's crew. These natives deserve special praise for their courage and faithfulness.

On the *Umboi* I installed the AWA Teleradio 3B. The other vessels carried receivers only, although Ron Chugg had his Morse transmitter on the *Total*.

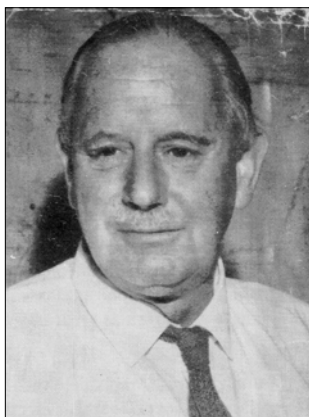
While I was making shelves in the cramped cabin Dolph, Dave and Vic got the idea that our boats needed camouflage paint as they were white with a little trim of blue. The mission supply house at Finschhafen always carried a stock of paint so the men opened a number of one gallon tins and mixed a little of each. Then the boat crews had a gala day just slapping paint on in small and larger patches. After this the vessels looked ghastly but were not so conspicuous any more.

We all met at Rooke Island on 5 March to co-ordinate plans and arrange emergency procedures and next day we were in the Cape Gloucester area. Each of the four vessels went into a different anchorage for the day. Our instructions had been to travel only by night and hide by day. Mangrove creeks made the hiding of the vessels reasonably easy but the plan to travel by night was impossible owing to numerous reefs.

Harris, Blackley, Goad and I took the Teleradio off the *Umboi* together with rice, other foodstuffs and medical supplies and crossed the Talasea Peninsula to *Walindi* Plantation by a rough inland track which the locals told us was a short cut. It takes 8 or 9 carriers to transport the Teleradio with batteries, battery charger, fuel, aerial etc and if travelling long distances the carriers need to alternate so up to 18 carriers were involved. We had arranged each day for a noon listening and the first time I switched the Teleradio on came the message from Pursehouse "Harristown and Penglaiseville gone". This was part of our code so that anyone listening in would not understand—Harris had been stationed at Lae so 'Harristown' meant Lae, Penglaise had been District Officer at Salamaua so the message meant that both Lae and Salamaua had been occupied by the Japanese.

A vital part of our plan was to take the troops to Lae and move them overland to Wau, from where they could be flown to Moresby, so this was a big setback to our plan.

Walindi



NGX258 Maj. J.K. McCarthy

At *Walindi* we found McCarthy and a few others, including two of the soldiers who were in fairly good condition and whose task it was to attend to the welfare of the men as they came through. I admired McCarthy for the calm, incisive way he reflected on the many unknown factors facing us. His own safety and well-being was a minor consideration for him. Most of the troops were in pitiable condition. Seven weeks of privation in the jungle had treated them cruelly. All at least had shorts to wear, although tattered and dirty, and some had boots. A large proportion had sores and ulcers. Weakness from

hunger and disease, particularly dysentery, was almost universal, and worst of all was the total despair of a large proportion.

McCarthy then did another trip up the coast to hurry the troops through, taking his Teleradio and his New Guinean operator, Nelson Tokodoro. Goad and I remained at *Walindi* to keep in radio touch with him and pass information and instructions on to the various parts of our organisations westward. He was only to call in an emergency so I spent most of my days in the radio hut waiting for a call and making brief contact with Moresby.

About this time we heard Pursehouse's last message from Finschhafen. He announced "The Japs are about to land. Two cruisers are standing off shore. Their barges are coming in. I'm pulling all the switches. Cheerio."

Things were really moving at *Walindi* now. Parties were arriving daily, and after crossing the Talasea Peninsula were taken to the *Umboi* to *Iboki* Plantation where the *Bavaria* and the *Total* were now hidden.

By Sun 15 Mar the last batch arrived at *Walindi*. Among them was the Rev Roger Brown, one of the only two Methodist Missionaries from the north coast of New Britain to escape from the Japs.

The *Gnair* and Lincoln Bell's *Aussie* brought the sick and others unfit to walk, and took them around the end of the Peninsula and on to *Iboki* Plantation.

On 16 Mar we pulled out of *Walindi*. Goad and I dismantled the Teleradio and got carriers so we were the last to leave.

Iboki

The scene here was full of activity with about 250 troops to care for and feed. Several bullocks had been shot and groups of men had been all over the place, grilling, boiling or frying the beef. An ample stock of wheatmeal was available and this was eaten with the beef. Here Mrs Gladys Baker, who owned and managed *Langu* Plantation in the Witu Group took charge of the sick and what a great job she did. She was a trained nurse and stayed on after the evacuation order was issued.

The original plan was to take the troops to Lae and then for them to walk to Wau was out with the Japs at Lae so we discussed taking them to Bogadjim, south of Madang, and get them to walk nearly 200 miles to Wau. This was discarded as many were not in a good enough physical or physiological condition to survive that trek.

The Burns Philp coastal trading vessel *Lakatoi*, about 300 tons, was at the wharf in Peterhafen in the Witu Group about 60 miles north of *Iboki*. But to try to slip her through to Australia with Jap aircraft everywhere, seemed a hopeless plan. An appeal to Moresby to send a couple of flying boats was rejected, so McCarthy

decided to on a bold attempt to sail the *Lakatoi* through to Australia. The risk was tremendous but the desperate position demanded taking risks.

The cargo of copra was dropped overboard and some copra bags were filled with sand both to be used as ballast and in the event of a fire. With her maximum speed of 12 knots *Lakatoi* could not get through the danger area of the Vitiaz Straits in the 12 hours of darkness so those of us experienced in that area advised McCarthy to run to Luther Anchorage at the north end of Rooke (Umboi) Island the first night and hide

there next day. Then leave about 4pm for the run through the Strait.



M.V. Lakatoi

The *Bavaria* was stripped completely. It was decided to leave her as bluff in place of the *Lakatoi*. Jap planes had circled the *Lakatoi* regularly and we hoped that when this

happened again the airmen might think it was the *Lakatoi*. Extremely wishful thinking. As it happened the *Lakatoi* with 214 soldiers and civilians reached Cairns.

Dispersal of the Rescue Party

The personnel of the *Total* had no difficulty in returning to Madang where Mr Radke resumed his missionary duties.

Jack Goad was the only one from Lae who decided to risk the trip on the *Lakatoi*.

Harris, Neumann, Obst and I decided to return to the mainland and establish a Coastwatch post on the North Coast somewhere.

Some decided neither to return to New Guinea nor go on the *Lakatoi*. They got the little *Gnair* ready, with the intention of making for Australia. They felt that she had more chance of getting through than the larger ship. Bill money, Gus Kuester, Dave Rohrlach, Bert Gazard, Harley Armitstead and 'Sno' Blackley made up the party. They slipped out of the harbour about half an hour before the *Lakatoi* and did make it to Australia, although they landed at Cooktown instead of Cairns.

Lincoln Bell remained on *Witu*. After a while, seeing that no Japs came to get the *Lakatoi*, he tried to run the *Bavaria* over to New Britain. On the way a propeller shaft bearing melted, so he burnt her.

We left on the *Umboi* soon after *Total* and covered the 140 miles to Rooke by next afternoon and went to *Barium* village to check whether there were Japs about. On being assured that there were none we soon settled in at *Gizarum* on 23 Mar. One of the first things I did was set up the Teleradio and ask for news about the *Lakatoi*. In due time we were told that she had arrived at Cairns on 28 Mar.

Whilst on Rooke we re-installed the motor we had taken out of the *Awelkon* as well as carrying out many other repairs to make her seaworthy again.

Refutation of Slander

If it were not for the despicable stories that were published in newspapers at the time I would not say what I am going to emphasise now.

5 of the 16 men and 4 vessels in the main little flotilla that went over from the mainland to assist in that rescue were from the Lutheran Mission. Our boats, our supplies and our own selves were readily placed in the service of our country. As far as I can gather I am the only ordained clergyman of



any denomination in the New Guinea Territory area who joined the forces as private in the Army. Yet, while we were risking our lives to save our fellow Australians, there were correspondents who could find nothing better to do than spread vicious and totally false reports accusing Australian and American Lutheran mission workers of disloyalty.

Mindiri and Madang

On Easter Monday we left for the mainland in the *Um-*

boi and *Awelkon* calling in at the Lutheran Mission at *Ulap*, near *Sio*, on our way to *Mindiri* and Madang. *Mindiri* had a well sheltered anchorage, although somewhat confined. I had a look around the bombed and deserted Madang. Rather eerie!

What were we trying to achieve at *Mindiri*? When you don't know what the enemy is up to you can't make plans. So our main duty at this time was to wait. We did not know that the Japs were in no hurry to come to Madang, before they were beaten in the Coral Sea Battle and the Kokoda Trail.

Harris had moved about 2 miles away to where Andy Smith had his plantation *Yaula* and Dolph stayed with me at *Mindiri*.

One day a puzzling message came for Harris from Moresby "Do you have Neumann, Obst and Freund serving in your group? If so supply full names." When Vic and I eventually reached Australia we found out what this meant. We had joined the Army at Lae and our wives expected that they would receive allotments from the Army. When none came they enquired. They were told that our names were nowhere in Army records. Apparently when we had been sworn in at Lae Capt. Simpson had not sent our papers on at once and 18 days later when the Japs overran Lae our papers were apparently left behind in the hurried retreat.

But on the basis of our wives enquiries The Army sought and found us. Soon we were informed of our Army numbers. Instead of NGVR numbers, which we would have got if our papers had been sent on from Lae, we now had Papuan numbers. I became P446. What's more it did not take long and we were informed that we had been promoted to Sergeant, and to top it off, we soon became Warrant Officers Class 2. I understand that this is the normal rank for specialists.

My father died in South Australia on 11 June. Later I learned that he was longing for me to come home before he died but it was not to be. I arrived home just a year later.

One day Dolph happened to be out when along came his previous very good, reliable boss boi from the plantation at Finschhafen, Sepik, who was trying to walk back to his home on the Sepik River. The big news for us was that the Japs had never landed at Finschhafen. Their landing barges were moving in when suddenly they returned to their ships, and the flotilla left for Lae. Sepik told Dolph that the Mission supply house at Finschhafen was intact with all it contained, that Missionary Adolph Wagner was busy working at the Heldsbach Seminary, and that Pursehouse and the soldiers whom Rev Moore had

brought over from New Britain were living in a village back in the interior of the Huon Peninsula.

Harris was informed and took action immediately and he and Dolph left for Finschhafen on 26 May on the *Awelkon*.

Some weeks prior to this the voice section of my transmitter stopped functioning so I had to use the Morse key for transmitting. I was very slow and must say that the operator at Moresby must be classified as the most patient and dedicated man I have ever had to deal with as eventually he got used to my imperfections.

When Harris and Dolph arrived at Finschhafen they caught up with Dave Laws, the AWA expert who had been installing the Teleradio equipment for Coastwatchers. He was in Rabaul when the Japs invaded but managed to reach the South Coast of New Britain where he and a few troops found a damaged pinnacle, managed to get it going and had made it to the mainland. Laws found and repaired the Teleradio that Pursehouse had 'smashed' and Harris found out where Pursehouse and his party were and sent out a messenger for them to come in.

The Adolph Wagner Story

After WW2 began in Europe most of the German Staff Members of the Lutheran Mission, Finschhafen were taken to Australia for internment. Wagner was allowed to stay at his post as he was trying, singlehandedly, to keep the training of teachers going at Heldsbach. He figured that in due time all Missionaries would be taken away and then it would be disastrous, if the war came to Finschhafen, if no Missionaries were left to support and advise and calm the natives and explain what was happening.

So when the *Gnair* arrived with NGVR soldiers at Finschhafen to take all the Missionaries to Lae for movement on to Australia he quickly grabbed some food and clothes, quickly saddled his horse and went into hiding. Both he and his brother had been born at Wareo, north of Finschhafen, and grew up with the native children and learnt all their customs and superstitions. He knew that in the Wareo area there was a cave in which an evil spirit allegedly lived and no native would go near that cave. Since he went there at night nobody saw where he went. He hid there until a half-hearted search for him had finished and the *Gnair* left for Lae, he quietly returned to Heldsbach and resumed teaching. Normally it is absolutely impossible for any white man to hide from the natives. Adolph must be the only one who has ever done it.

Wagner's evasion of internment was, naturally, interpreted by soldiers and war correspondents as a move to help the Japs. I believe it came into the "Lutheran Missionary leads the Japs up the Markham Valley toward Wau" hysterics in Australian newspapers at the time. Their pitiful lack of insight completely prevented them from understanding that a dedicated Missionary, such as Wagner was, would do what he did solely for the welfare of the natives and as a service to God.

In due course the Japanese killed Wagner because he fearlessly admonished them over their cruel treatment of the natives. That's the price he paid for his dedication to duty. And he was fully prepared to pay that price, I know, for when we were coastwatching in the Finschhafen area, I had to spend three nights at Heldsbach and he and I had a frank discussion about his motives. Harris also thoroughly investigated Wagner's situation and motives with the result that he sent a signal to the authorities at Moresby stressing that Wagner was an effective, pacifying, reassuring influence on the natives and he should be officially left there. The authorities accepted this recommendation.

To be Continued.

THE CATAFALQUE PARTY

A catafalque is a raised structure supporting a stand, upon which a coffin is placed for display before the burial; people may then file past and pay their last respects to the deceased. In times gone by a watch or vigil was mounted around the coffin to ensure that the body was not interfered with when it lay in State.

Today vigils, or catafalque parties, are mounted as a sign of respect around personages as they lie in State and around memorials on occasions of remembrance such as ANZAC Day (it could be said that a memorial is a "symbolic coffin" for those who have fallen).

As with funerals and gun carriages the origin of the tradition of resting on reversed arms is lost in time. Its symbolism is, however, the same. It was used by a Commonwealth soldier at the execution of King Charles 1 in 1649 (the soldier was duly punished for his symbolic gesture towards the King's death) and it is recorded that at the funeral for Marlborough, in 1722, the troops carried out a formal reverse arms drill which was especially invented for the service, as a unique sign of respect to the great soldier.

The modern trend of sticking rifles upside down into the ground as a temporary memorial to a fallen soldier, with a helmet or hat over the butt, originated with the introduction of tanks during the Great War (WW1).

When a soldier fell during an advance his mates would pick up the rifle and stick it into the ground by the bayonet as a marker to indicate to the tank crew that a wounded or dead soldier lay there. In this way the armoured vehicles would not accidentally run over the body.

WO1 C.J. Dobson, former RSM Ceremonial ADHQ

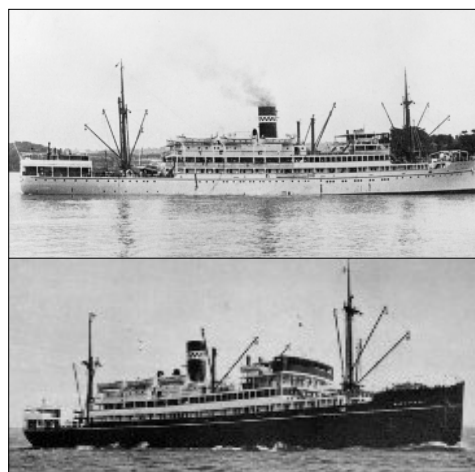
If people from Poland are called Poles, then why aren't people from Holland called Holes?

M.V. 'Machdui'

In December 1862 James and John Burns arrived in Brisbane, Australia. In 1865 they started a shop in the Gympie goldfields and within 10 years they had moved to Townsville and started a shipping service to Brisbane and Sydney. In 1876 they set up an office in Sydney and in 1883 Burns, Philp and Company was started. Soon, the new company was running various merchant operations and shipping right across the western Pacific Ocean.

Burns, Philp became the most famous company in the Pacific area. As well as running all the major shipping routes between Australia and its neighbours, it also ran a huge network

of integrated industries, shops and hardware. It also owned at one time the ship *Star of Russia* which is now wrecked in Port Vila Harbour in Vanuatu. Burns Philp went out of existence on 20 December 2006 when all its shares were purchased by Rank Group

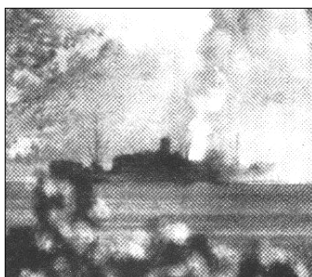


Australia Pty Ltd. A terrible end to a one time brilliant Australian co.

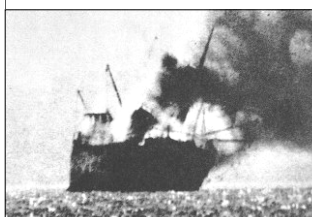
In February 1929 Burns Philp Company came to an agreement for a five year mail contract for the Pacific Islands with the Australian Government. This took effect in April 1929

On 23 December 1930, the *MV Macdhui* was launched at the Clyde River shipyards of Barclay, Curle and Company, Scotstoun, Glasgow. Like virtually all the ships built for the Burns Philp fleet, the new vessel was given a name starting with M and containing 7 letters (*Malabar*, *Morinda* ;later *Montoro*, *Malaita*, for example). Presumably the ship was named after the Scottish mountain, Ben Macdhui, perhaps where James Burns came from. The ship carried 138 passengers in two, three and four-berth cabins.

At 8 pm on Saturday 19 June 1937 the *Macdhui* left Lae for Madang. Shortly after 1 am on Monday 20 June 1937, the *Macdhui* was six miles from Fortification Point. Two fires



The 2nd hit went through the boat deck on the starboard side.



Another bomb hit the poop deck, killed the gun crew and rendered the steering gear useless.



Because of the intensity of the fire the vessel starts to sink and the Captain heads for shallow water.



The dying *Macdhui*, abandoned now by its remaining crew, starts to settle on the bottom.

broke out, the first in an oil bunker adjacent to the engine. This spread to the cargo in Hold 1. Twenty eight "whites" and 115 "natives" were ordered into the lifeboats which were rowed to a safe distance from the ship.

At 2 am on Monday 21 June 1937 the passengers were transferred to the *Neptuna* which had arrived on the scene. On Tuesday 22 June 1937 she towed the ship to Salamaua. A survey of the vessel was carried out and some repairs undertaken here. The ship then sailed under her own power arriving in Sydney on 9 July 1937.

The *Macdhui* was repaired at the Cockatoo Island Dockyard, going back into service on 28 August 1937. In 1938 a new ship, the *MV Bulolo* joined the *Macdhui* on the Papua and New Guinea run.

Even after the start of the Pacific War, the *Macdhui* continued on the run. In December 1941, the *Macdhui*, together with *Neptuna*, evacuated civilians from Manila in the Philippines (and perhaps Darwin in the Northern Territory) back to Port Moresby in Papua and then went onto Rabaul in New Guinea where she evacuated women and children. By this time she had been painted grey Together with the *Neptuna*, *Katoomba* and *Zealandia*, the *Macdhui* carried evacuees south to Australia.

Soon after, the ship was taken over by the Australian Government for transporting troops and supplies from Australia to the New Guinea campaign. On



some runs, the *Macdhui* only travelled as far as Townsville, taking evacuees to Australia and troops and supplies to Port Moresby. It apparently included over 400 survivors from ships sunk by German raiders

near Kavieng, New Ireland.

On 15 June 1942. the *Macdhui* berthed at Port Moresby's wharf and started unloading cargo. At 6 am on 17 June 1942, the ship was moved to an anchorage in the harbour despite the cargo not being totally discharged.

On 18 June 1942, Japanese bombers came, the air raid alarm sounding at 10:05 am. The *Macdhui* was back on the move but the planes dropped 68 bombs of which 4 hit the ship. One of these hit the poop deck, killing the gun crew and making steering impossible as the equipment was severely damaged. One bomb landed in the number three hold, causing the aviation fuel to explode and start fires. The other direct hits were on the Bridge and Boat Deck. The explosions had damaged the water lines and this meant that the fire crews could not fight the fires.

The ship was doomed, on fire and sinking. It had a heavy list to port and so Captain Campbell directed the ship towards shore, as difficult as this was with the damage to the steering gear. He gave the order to abandon ship. 10 out of 77 crew had been killed plus five gun crew killed, said to be from the 39th Bn.

The ship came to rest about 750 metres off shore and about 1.3 km south-east of Tatana Island and off Elavala village on the mainland. The ship did not completely sink, the water being too shallow, but it rolled almost completely over on her port side. The bell of the ship was salvaged and used by the Royal Australian Air Force Marine Section and the other bell was found in 1946 by Chaplain Samuel Ramsden, RAAF, also of St Johns Church, Port Moresby. The bell is still in use in the church today

The wreck is in shallow water and today the wreck is a visible reminder of World War II and the attacks on Port Moresby.

*Edited from Michael McFadyen's Internet Scuba Diving Site
Photos from the AWM*

A woman and a man are lying in bed next to each other when her phone rings.

She picks up, the man looks over at her and listens. She is speaking in a cheery voice, "Hi, I'm so glad you called. Really? That's wonderful.

I'm so happy for you. That sounds terrific. Great! Thanks. Okay. Bye."

She hangs up, and the man asks, "Who was that?" "Oh, she replies, "that was my husband telling me about the great time he's having on his golf trip with you."

\$660 million Shoalwater Bay works contracted

Laing O'Rourke has been chosen as the Managing Contractor for the Australian-Singapore Military Training Initiative (ASMTI) facilities project works at Shoalwater Bay Training Area (SWBTA).

Assistant Minister for Defence David Fawcett said this announcement was a win for Rockhampton and the Shoalwater



L/Cpl Lance Gagliardi, 7 RAR, on exercise with Singaporean soldiers, Shoalwater Bay, 2017.

Bay region.

"Injecting up to \$660 million into the regional economy over a five-year period, the project will deliver enhanced military training areas to the Australian Defence Force while fostering Australia's close relationship with the Singaporean Armed Forces (SAF)," Minister Fawcett said.

"The construction work, to commence by the end of 2019, will bring significant economic opportunities to the region, create local jobs and investment, and support local industry near the SWBTA.

"Laing O'Rourke has developed an extensive Local Industry Capability Plan to ensure local businesses can take advantage of the opportunities arising from this project.

"There will be opportunities for industry in the initial facilities and infrastructure construction on the expanded training area, as well as ongoing support for the ADF and SAF.

"Over the life of the ASMTI, there will be an injection of approximately \$2 billion into Queensland's regional economies, including an estimated \$50 million spent annually during the construction phase."

Contact Newsletter 77



1944. Butibum River north of Lae. The 1966 PNGVR Annual Camp (aka The Wet Camp) was held on the banks of the Butibum and the wet season lived up to its name.

I've reached an age where my train of thought often leaves the station without me.



Bomana War Cemetery, Port Moresby, before completion, 1949.

Col K.J. Murray collection.

Below. Bomana War Cemetery today.



The Indigenous Sisters

This follows the article on Sister Bernice Twohill which appeared in HTT Vol 115.

In October 1942 all the missionaries were brought into the prison camp at Vunapope and the Japanese declared that the local Sisters were now "free from the slavery of their European masters". The invaders magnanimously declared that these indigenous Sisters could now go wherever they liked. Far from rejoicing at their newfound "freedom" the Sisters lamented at being separated from their spiritual Mothers and Fathers. Nothing could be done for them by the missionaries; their residence had already been taken over by the Japanese. In any case the invaders would not allow these women to remain with the rest of the mission.

Bishop Scharmach gave them permission to swap their habits for secular clothes and told them to go home if they wanted to. None did. They insisted on remaining together as a group and, to the fury of the Japanese, they continued to wear the habit. They made for the village of Takabur, 8 miles away from the mission at Vunapope. Here was the novitiate of their convent where their Mother Superior and an elderly Father Zwinge, their Spiritual Director, also resided. This was all right for a few days until the Japs arrived to transport the Father and two European Sisters to the prison compound at Vunapope, again leaving the local Sisters stranded.

Before leaving, Father Zwinge appointed Sister Cecilia their Superioress. The Japs sneered at the nuns' distress then ordered them to evacuate the buildings immediately, the church included. They had nowhere to go now, so they took shelter in banana groves. There were 45 indigenous Sisters in all.

Some local boys, students of a disbanded teacher training college had built themselves houses and gardens about 20 miles away. They heard about the Sisters' plight and came to their



rescue, building them houses and air raid shelters. The Japanese had not given the Sisters any rations but they soon established gardens and became self supporting under the guidance of Sister Cecilia.

They met regularly for prayer and on Sundays they walked 8 miles each way to Vunapope. They continued to do this for 2 years and would bring food to the starving missionaries imprisoned in the compound. Two of the Sisters were killed by bombs and two more died of illness.

After Vunapope was destroyed and the missionaries were moved to Ramale, the indigenous Sisters transferred themselves to the same area. The students again erected houses for them and new air raid shelters, and planted new gardens. When one of the nuns, Sister Theresia, was accused of disparaging remark about the Japs, all the sisters were assembled and the alleged culprit was tortured all night with bayonets and other humiliations. Sister Cecilia refused to leave her and tried to protect her with her own body. When the Japs threatened to kill Sister Theresia, all the Sisters promptly begged to be killed in her place. As a result the other Sisters were subjected to the bamboo torture. This involved them being ordered to form lines and kneel down. A long piece of bamboo was lain across their legs and two local police boys were forced to stand on each end to weigh it down. This appalling mass torture continued until 4 in the morning, after which the nuns were released. Seeing that it achieved nothing, the Japs finally gave up torturing them, but they would have been killed had the Japanese discovered the aid they were bringing to the missionaries.

Throughout the missionaries' internment the indigenous Sisters kept them supplied with extra food: bananas, tapioca roots, sweet potatoes and other vegetables. Regardless of the risk of cruel reprisals, they would carry these foods down the sheer side of the canyon to deliver it to their starving colleagues. They were forbidden by the Japanese to talk to any of the missionaries at any time, and they were not allowed by them to take part in a Mass though they continued their daily prayers. By sign language the Bishop would give them his blessing and General Absolution and the group of Sisters continued to come every Sunday and stand within sight, but not sound, of their colleagues.

*From an interview
Friday October 13th, 2000
at the Convent of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Sydney
Article taken from the website "Prisoner Missionaries of Vunapope—
Angell Productions.*

Australia to buy armed Reaper drones

General Atomics MQ-9 Reaper has been selected as the system that best meets the capability requirements for Australia's first armed remotely piloted aircraft system.

The actual model, capabilities and cost of the platform are yet to be negotiated.

The government will now request pricing and availability data from the United States on Reaper variants to support future



decision-making on the acquisition.

Minister for Defence Christopher Pyne said the medium-altitude, long-endurance aircraft can be integrated within the Australian Defence Force and would be fully interoperable with our allies.

"These new aircraft will provide enhanced firepower and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance support to a range of missions," Minister Pyne said.

"Medium-altitude, long-endurance, remotely piloted aircraft have a far greater range than smaller remotely piloted aircraft and can continuously observe an area of interest for much longer than manned reconnaissance aircraft.

"Remotely piloted aircraft allow military commanders to make more informed decisions faster while providing the option to conduct strike and reconnaissance operations without risking the safety of aircrew.

"The aircraft will be used to watch and protect ADF and coalition land forces," and, unable to resist the PR BS, the minister also said the lethally armed tank-killing drone "will provide reconnaissance support for search-and-rescue, humanitarian-assistance and disaster-relief operations".

Minister for Defence Industry Steve Ciobo said the project would provide opportunities for Australian industry with associated infrastructure development and sustainment activities.

"General Atomics, as the original equipment manufacturer of the Reaper, has partnered with a large number of Australian companies who provide a range of innovative sensor, communication, manufacturing and life-cycle support capabilities," Minister Ciobo said.

"This is a great opportunity for Australian industry and demonstrates Australia's world-class capability to support cutting-edge technologies."

I was testing the children in my Sunday school class to see if they understood the concept of getting to heaven. I asked them, "If I sold my house and my car, had a big garage sale and gave all my money to the church, Would that get me into heaven?"

"NO!" the children answered.

"If I cleaned the church every day, mowed the yard, and kept everything neat and tidy, would that get me into Heaven?"

Again, the answer was, "NO!"

By now I was starting to smile. Hey, this was fun! "Well, then, if I was kind to animals and gave candy to all the children, and loved my husband, would that get me into Heaven?" I asked them again.

Again, they all answered, "NO!"

I was just bursting with pride for them. "Well," I continued, "then how can I get into Heaven?"

A five year old boy shouted out, "YOU GOTTA BE DEAD."

Australian manufacturer of advanced carbon-fibre composites Quickstep was quick to congratulate the General Atomics-led project team.

Source Contact Newsletter 81.

At one point during a game, the coach called one of his 9-year-old baseball players aside, and asked, "Do you understand what cooperation is? What a team is?" "Yes, coach", replied the little boy. "Do you understand what matters are whether we win or lose together as a team?" The little boy nodded in the affirmative. "So," the coach continued, "I'm sure you know, when an out is called, you shouldn't argue, curse the umpire, or call him an asshole. Do you understand all that?" Again, the little boy nodded in the affirmative. The coach continued, "And when I take you out of the game so that another boy gets a chance to play, it's not a dumb-ass decision or that the coach is a shithead is it?" "No, coach." "Good!", said the coach. "Now go over there and explain all that to your grandmother!"

HMAS "Una"

29 November 1914

HMAS 'Una' became the first Australian warship to carry aircraft when she transported two aircraft, and their pilots, from Sydney to New Guinea. The aircraft were not used because the German forces surrendered before their arrival.

The 'Una' started life as a German steam boat name 'Komet' and was one of the spoils of initial months of World War 1 against the German New Guinea colonies in 1914. Built in 1911 as the Government yacht for the colonies, 'Komet' was commissioned into the Imperial Navy just prior to the outbreak of the Great War in 1914.

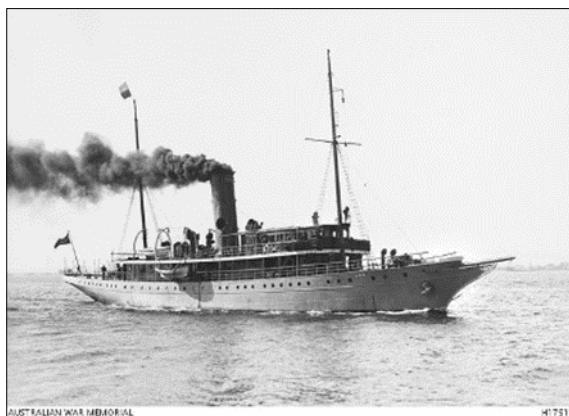
The 977-ton German government steam yacht KGS 'Komet' was built in Bremerhaven in 1911. It was sent to German New Guinea (Kaiser Wilhelmsland) as an administrative vessel for the German protectorate and was based at Rabaul, New Britain. The yacht was finely fitted out for senior German staff who undertook regular inspection trips of German holdings. The acronym 'KGS' stands for Kaiserliches Gouvernement Schiff (Imperial Government Ship).

War was declared in August 1914, finding 'Komet' at Morobe, New Guinea. It had transported the Acting German governor, Dr Eduard Haber, for an inspection. 'Komet' had narrowly avoided interception by the Australian Squadron and was able to sail to New Britain, landing Haber at Herbertshohe, near Rabaul.

Haber put 'Komet' at the disposal of Admiral von Spee's German fleet where it was used as a supply vessel to the auxiliary cruiser 'Prinz Eitel Friedrich' until late September, 1914. Rabaul was captured by Australian forces, and because of other British ships in the vicinity, 'Komet' sought refuge at a far location on the north coast of New Britain, west of Willaumez Peninsula – which became unofficially known as 'Komethafen' (Komet Harbour).

The ship's presence was reported to the Australian administrator in Rabaul, and at dawn on 11 October 1914, HMAS 'Nusa', an armed German steam yacht which had been captured from the Germans some weeks earlier, surprised and captured the 'Komet'. It is said that 'Komet's' captain was interrupted during his morning shave by Australians boarding his ship! The crew of five Germans and 52 local sailors were removed, and the yacht sent to Garden Island in Sydney for refitting.

'Komet' had been quite sumptuously fitted out, including a



fine galley and a ward-room used by the ship's officers and guests. A full silver service made by Wilkens of Bremen was

in use in the dining room and bits of it were souvenired by the Australians. The Australian War Memorial has some of the silver cutlery and we recently acquired this silver teapot. A soup ladle – also in silver – is on display in the Navy gallery.

'Komet' was renamed 'Una' and commissioned as an HMA Ship. Her armament comprised three BL 4 inch Mark VIIIs, arranged with one gun on the foc'sle, with the other two sited on the quarter-deck. She has been described as a sloop and also a gunboat, but whatever her designation she was a workhorse during her time with Grey Funnel Line. The name chosen was a good one, but not actually the proper one for the message to be given. She was meant to signify that she was the first of many, and as such the name *Primo* would have been appropriate. As it was, *Una* was properly translated as 'the only one'.

After refit, the yacht served in the Royal Australian Navy as the patrol boat HMAS 'Una', commencing duties with the RAN in the New Guinea area, on a truly flag showing exercise. It was reasoned that seeing as the ship was well known by the natives in the islands as a German ship, she would have a great impact when she turned up wearing the White Ensign.

In the post-war period the 'Una' served in the islands until 1924, when it was privately sold and renamed 'Akuna' and became a pilot vessel under the Port Phillip Pilots' Association in Melbourne. Under this name it served with the RAN during WWII as an examination vessel until late 1943, when it was returned to pilotage duties. The 'Komet / Una / Akuna' was finally broken up in the 1950s but parts of it remain – the teak was used for the deck of Captain John Walker's 'Windsong IV' of Victoria – to remind us of all Australians who have served and died in all wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations.

Source Naval Assn of Australia



Japanese Naval HQ Rabaul, 1965, Photo K.V. Jones When exploring this in 1964 the item that stood out was the way the Japanese made use of the huge mirror on the roof to plan their operations. Ed.

Two blondes at a gas station:

Blonde 1 "These prices are awful. They just keep going higher!"

Blonde 2 "It doesn't affect me at all; I always put in just \$20 worth."

Big Boys Toys

One evening, shortly after the honeymoon, Tom was working on his Harley motorcycle in the garage. His wife was standing there by the bench watching him.

After a long period of silence she finally said, "Honey, I've just been thinking, now that we're married, maybe it's time you quit spending so much of your time out here in your garage."

You probably should consider selling your Harley and all that welding equipment; they take up so much of your time. And that gun collection and fishing gear, they just take up so much space.

And you know the sailboat is such an ongoing expense; and you hardly use it.

I also think you should lose all those stupid model airplanes and your home brewing equipment..."

And what's the use of that vintage hot rod sports car?

Tom got a horrified look on his face.

She noticed and said, "Darling, what's wrong?"

He replied, "There for a minute, you were starting to sound like my ex-wife."

"Ex-wife!?" she shouted, "YOU NEVER TOLD ME YOU WERE MARRIED BEFORE!"

Tom replied, "I wasn't..."

Darwin's Submarine - The Imperial Japanese Navy's I-124

Outside Darwin's harbour, an enormous Japanese submarine still lies with her 80-man crew on board. Today, the 20th January, is the anniversary of her sinking in 1942.

She is part of the secret history of the assaults on northern Australia. The aircraft carriers of the famous February 1942 strike were not the first major attack on the Australian landmass. They were the second strike – the first attempt to close down the northern port was made a month earlier with a submarine squadron.

In January 1942 four giant vessels of the Sixth Submarine Squadron's Imperial Japanese Navy were deployed to northern Australian waters. Darwin was a harbour of considerable strategic importance. Sweeping south after the assault on Pearl Harbour, and carrying all before them, the Japanese knew the deployment of any Allied warships or aircraft from the northern port would be a dangerous attack on their right flank as they drove east to secure New Guinea.

Built by Kawasaki Heavy Industries, the four submarines of the Sixth Submarine Squadron were armed with twelve torpedoes in four 21-inch bow tubes and a foredeck 5.5-inch gun. They carried 42 mines, launched through torpedo doors in the stern. Under the leadership of Commander Endo, they made their way south, and deployed quietly around Bathurst and Melville Island.

On the morning of 20 January one of the submarines attacked the US Navy fleet oiler USS *Trinity* with three torpedoes. As the torpedoes were seen the USS *Alden* turned and launched depth charges. The response was unsuccessful, and the destroyer lost the contact and broke off the attack.

Later the Australian corvette *Deloraine* was searching near the scene with sonar. The Bathurst-class vessel was a newly launched ship, and her first action was nearly her last. *Deloraine* was ambushed by the *I-124*. Frank Marsh, a stoker on the vessel, remembered seeing: "...the trail of the torpedo which missed our stern so closely that the wake thrown up by the propellers actually caused the torpedo to come out of the raised sea surface."

The torpedo streaked towards the corvette. *Deloraine* turned right inside the torpedo's course. It missed the ship's stern by metres. Then she charged straight down the weapon's track. An attack commenced with patterns of depth charges exploding astern of the warship as she wheeled and swooped as directed by her sonar. Then a *Deloraine* bridge lookout reported the submarine was breaking the surface, and abruptly the conning tower was seen ahead.

Deloraine powered towards her enemy, and this time the depth

charge explosion caught the submarine as it dived. Soon sonar confirmed it as motionless on the seabed. The boat's captain, his division commander, and 78 others were dead or trapped on board.

Later the boom defence vessel HMAS *Kookaburra* was deployed to the site, and Australian divers attempted to find *I-124*. They were unsuccessful, and engaged the help of divers from the American submarine repair ship USS *Holland*.

The divers found the submarine, several nautical miles south of Bathurst Island, with hatch gaskets blown out, suggesting the stern sections were flooded. The Allies were interested in recovery: taking the submarine's codebooks would be a great intelligence coup. Secretly the Navy began to make arrangements for recovery, moving personnel and equipment to Darwin in preparation. But three weeks later Darwin was struck a shattering blow by the same carrier task force that had devastated Pearl Harbor. It was now too dangerous to attempt recovery.

However, the submarine was not to quietly lie in her grave. Controversy was the *I-124* companion for the next 50 years. Strange stories and theories surround the wreck. One sought to connect the *I-124* with a supposed Japanese submarine working with the German armed raider *Kormoran* which sank HMAS *Sydney* in November 1941. Michael Montgomery, in "Who Sank The Sydney?" suggested a submarine was refuelling or re-arming *Kormoran* when the *Sydney* was sighted, dived to escape detection, and torpedoed the Australian cruiser, winning the battle for the raider. Other stories say that a seaplane was sighted in the vicinity of the battle: many Japanese boats did carry folding planes in hangars on the foredeck. Suggestions have been made that a second submarine wreck – which some claim lies nearby – could be that alleged helper of the *Kormoran*; other stories have the *I-124* itself involved as the Japanese submarine.

More than one source suggests codebooks were indeed recovered from the *I-124*, helping to win the Pacific war. Ed Drea in MacArthur's *Ultra* wrote: "Shortly after the outbreak of the Pacific War, US Navy divers had salvaged the Japanese Navy's Water Transport "S" codebooks from a submarine that had been sunk off Darwin Australia in January 1942. With these documents in hand, navy cryptanalysts were able to read Japanese naval shipping messages..."



I-124
with
aerials up

In the 1950s the daughter of the sub's commander, Atsuko Kishigami, began a campaign to have the submarine raised and its entombed bodies returned to Japan. The Japanese Fujita Salvage Company, then in Darwin salvaging the wrecks of ships still lying in the harbour, made a brief investigation into the proposal, before it was decided the costs were prohibitive.

In 1972 local salvage operators Sid Hawks, Harry Baxter, George Tyers and John Chadderton began preliminary salvage work on the submarine with three vessels. But ownership disputes arose between Baxter and the remaining three, including shots fired, and after a split the potential salvors were denied rights by the Federal Government and warned off the site.

In 1976 Harry Baxter tried new recovery attempts, claiming his salvage attempts had penetrated the hull. By this time he had probably removed items from the exterior. He was warned off again and in a fit of pique went out with explosives to destroy the submarine. In November 1984 Navy divers from HMAS Curlew carried out descents to the boat to verify its condition: they reported the conning tower had been damaged, but the casing appeared undamaged and sealed.

In 1989 the research vessel *Flamingo Bay*, captained by David Tomlinson, sent down a Remote Operated Vehicle: an unmanned mini-submarine equipped with a TV camera. The ROV sent back pictures of the *I-124's* conning tower, still upright but with a list to one side. With personnel from NT and WA museums involved, the *Flamingo Bay* operation hoped to dive the submarine for research purposes, but the project was eventually cancelled due to political considerations.

Stories about *I-124* continued to re-appear. Claims that a valuable cargo of mercury was present on board appeared in the media. Baxter continued to make claims about the submarine, saying he had "been arrested by ASIO." His stories appeared in the popular magazine *Australasian Post*, stating that he had been visited by a Japanese ambassador from Washington, who was worried about the "ship's safe." Baxter died a little while later, taking any secrets to the grave.

In February 2017 the 80 men entombed in the submarine were commemorated in Darwin's Parliament House.

The unveiling of a plaque, to be later installed on Casuarina Cliffs, was undertaken by the Japanese Ambassador to Australia; federal Senator Nigel Scullion, and the Chief Minister of the NT, together with the President of the Australian-Japanese Association (NT).

I-124 still lies outside Darwin today. Strangely, she is less known to Australians than the three midget submarines which attacked Sydney Harbour also in 1942. But *I-124* remains one of the country's most interesting stories of the country at war: a tale of bravery on both sides, loss, and an insight into the secret war fought in Australia's north.

Dr Tom Lewis OAM is a military historian. One of his books is Darwin's Submarine I-124, published by Avonmore. He served in the Royal Australian Navy, retiring as a lieutenant-commander. This source Navy Daily Jan 2017. With Thanks to Maxwell Hayes.



A Number 77 Squadron F/A-18A Hornet departs Nellis Air Force Base on an Exercise Red Flag 19-1 mission.

RAAF deploys for Ex Red Flag 19-1

The Royal Australian Air Force has deployed more than 370 personnel and eight aircraft to participate in the world's most complex air warfare training at Exercise Red Flag Nellis 19-1 in the United States.

Air Commander Australia Air Vice-Marshal Steve Robertson said there were a number of benefits of Australia participating in the exercise.

"Royal Australian Air Force will train with the United States Air Force, United States Navy and the Royal Air Force in a complex reconstruction of a modern battlespace," Air Vice-Marshal Robertson said.

"Up to six F/A-18A Classic Hornets from Number 77 Squadron, one E-7A Wedgetail Airborne Early Warning and Control aircraft from Number 2 Squadron and one AP-3C (Electronic Warfare) Orion aircraft from Number 10 Squadron have flown over for the exercise.

"Air Force personnel will deploy to support the aircraft, operate an Australian Task Group Headquarters, augment the Combined Air Operations Centre with our coalition partners, provide cyber capabilities, and establish a Control and Reporting Centre.

"Not only are we learning from our partners and how we can best operate with each other, we are continuing our strong relationships that will enhance and strengthen our coalition into the future."

Exercise Red Flag series is hosted by the USAF 414th Combat Training Squadron, and is held several times a year with a number of domestic and international participants.

Exercise Red Flag was established in 1975, with Australia being a regular participant since 1980.

Red Flag 19-1 runs from 22 January to 15 February 2019 at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, USA.

Contact Newsletter

From Don Lawie

My daughter Marion arranged for us to attend the Centenary of Armistice at the WM on 11 November. An estimated 12,000 people attended on a bright clear sunny day. I was more impressed by the expertise of the Army Band than the Federation Guard, good though they were.



Don at the Plaque shown next page

The ceremony was well received by the people and we had some interesting chats afterwards. It was my first visit to Canberra since about 1963 and we managed to see most of the sights as well as spending much time in the AWM. Staff there were more than helpful, looked up the site of the NGVR plaque and printed a map, then came outside with me to make sure that I found it.

I attended the Last Post ceremony at the AWM on



four consecutive days; very impressive. I stopped playing bagpipes two years ago, after 60 years, since my PD fingers would not do as I wished. (you will understand very well). I approached an AWM official re the piper that they use for the Last Post, and explained my situation. He said that if I

can re-learn to play The Lament and have a video made of me doing so, to send it down and they will evaluate the quality of my playing and if good enough they will make a place for me to play at the Last Post. That is a major incentive to me ; I played at the evening ceremony at the Menin Gate, with the buglers, in 1997, I also played at Lone Pine and at the various battlefields where my father fought in WW1. If I can perform at the AWM it would cap a long career in piping , but moreover I reckon that it would make Parkinson history. I have been practicing assiduously and I have hopes that I can do it. Getting my long-unused pipes working again is a problem, and I have gone back to basic learning to recover my finger flexibility. It is a long road yet but I reckon that I can do it

Greetings to all. Don



Airbus confirms bid for Special Forces helicopter needs

Airbus Australia Pacific Managing Director Andrew Mathewson today confirmed that Airbus had recently responded to a Commonwealth of Australia request for information for a four-tonne-class, rapidly deployable, multi-role helicopter for Australian Special Forces.

"The Airbus H145M helicopter is the military version of the H145 – the most advanced member of Airbus' multi-purpose twin-engine category," Mr Mathewson said.

"It is based on a commercial off-the-shelf platform with military-specific modifications and is an operationally proven, affordable and low-risk option for Australia

"The H145M program and systems are based close to five million hours of flying experience with the H145 family of aircraft which has over 1300 units in service today.

"Airbus Australia Pacific's response includes selected industry partners and the provision of training, maintenance, logistics and engineering activities.

"A comprehensive transfer of technology and skills will make Airbus Australia Pacific a regional centre able to proactively support Australian operational needs, and export this knowledge back into the wider H145M community."

Mr Mathewson said that other strengths of the Airbus H145M included:

- Excellent access and cabin space
- Compact footprint for maximum agility
- Excellent hot and high flight performance
- Airbus Helionix cockpit which reduces pilot workload and allows greater situational awareness

Full multi-role capability allowing support to missions including aerial assault, aerial fire support, attack, ISTAR, CASEVAC and general utility tasks

High availability; reliable and robust systems; a small logistic footprint; proven by operations in similar configuration, roles and environment, and

High rotor clearance and shrouded Fenestron for operations close to obstacles.

"Airbus stands ready to respond to the next stage in the tender process," Mr Mathewson added.

Contact Newsletter 89.



John Wood, Gordon Robertson, Tony Boulter, Jessie Chee, Mal Zimmermann, Les McAndrew, Phil Ainsworth, Laurie Kelly, Gill Harvey-Hall, Mostlyn Milfull, Frank Cleal

A Coy reunion Caloundra

On 23rd April 15 members and wives of A Coy PNGVR plus Assn President Phil Ainsworth attended an A Coy reunion at the Caloundra RSL.

Unfortunately longstanding A Coy Commander Maj Bob Harvey-Hall's illness meant he was unable to attend. He did however forward the address he intended to deliver and this was read by Phil Ainsworth. This address gives a history of A Coy PNGVR and is available both on our Website and our Museum page on Facebook.

Lr Col Laurie Kelly (Retd) travelled from Newcastle to attend the reunion.

Another photo next page.





John Wood, Lenore McAndrew, Gordon Robertson, Tony Boulter, Jessie Chee, Mary-Ellen Chee, Mal Zimmermann, Les McAndrew, Phil Ainsworth, Kinnie Robertson, Gill Harvey-Hall, Laurie Kelly, Marie Zimmermann, Mostlyn Milfull, Frank Cleal.

Anzac Day Brisbane.

22 members and 4 relatives marched with 6 members and carers in jeeps. Unfortunately the band in front was a school band and more suited to a boogie-woogie or rap group—it could never be described as a marching band so keeping step was very much a guess, however that probably suits our marching given our age.

47 members and friends signed the register at the reception. The food was excellent and the toasts went off well. The attendance of 47 at the reception shows our diminishing numbers at functions such as this. Relative numbers have been - 2015—80, 2016—65, 2017—69, 2018—63. Lt Col Laurie Kelly travelled from Newcastle and Michael White and Charles Nelson from Canberra.

Thank you to Colin Gould for his organisation and Paul Brown for bringing in the flags, banner and other Q Store items.



Rowena Langan, Kieran Nelson, Charles Nelson, John McGrath



Simon Hui, Martin O'Sullivan, Ian Thompson, John Christopher



Mal Zimmerman, Les McAndrew, Marie Zimmerman, Gordon Robertson, Kinnie Robertson.



Anzac Day Brisbane



Joe Hall riding in style.



Roy Edward's son and Grandson, Michael White (who came from Canberra for the day) and Gil Harvey-

Hall. Roy's grandson is a serving member of the ADF.



Anzac Day Sydney

Known faces in photo from left are: Ross Johnson(5), Mike Leask (6), Andrea Williams (8), Warren Martin (9), Fred Kaad OBE (wheelchair,10), Gaynor Kadd (12) and Peter Leyden.



Anzac Day Wewak Hill



. Anzac Day Rabaul.
Gerry McGrade and daughter
Susie



Ross Johnson, Tony ?, Mike Leask & son, Fred Kaad OBE,
Peter Leyden.



Dawn Service Rabaul

Photo BJ Photography



Anzac Day Tin Can Bay. Tom Kelly, 2nd A.I.F – NX193711. Sgt. PNGVR 1/59454 1952-60 with son Cpl Tom Kelly 108 Field Workshops Coy, 11 CSSB who has served for 37 years. L. daughter Sharon Kelly, grand-daughter Caitlin Dudley & daughter Claire de Cloque.



Dawn Service Mooloolaba. Crowd estimated about 6/7,000. Committee Member Peter Rogers DFC has been Guest speaker at this Dawn Service for the last 10 years.

My super power is holding onto junk for years and throwing it away a week before I need it.

I am starting to think I will never be old enough to know better.

Your Committee

Patron. Maj. Gen. John Pearn AO. RFD.
President. Phil Ainsworth Contact details P16.
Vice President. Bob Collins do.
Secretary. Colin Gould do.
Treasurer. Douglas Ng do.
Committee.
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 Peter Rogers (The younger) Ph. 0405 639 358

FUNCTION DATES

Sat 1 Jun 10am-1pm.

Museum open day; members & visitors welcome; come along & have a cuppa.

Sat 15 Jun 10am

Committee Meeting. Members welcome.

Mon 1 Jul 10am.

Montevideo Maru Service Hall of Memories, Brisbane, followed by morning tea.

Sat 6 Jul 10am-1pm.

Museum open day; members & visitors welcome; come along & have a cuppa.

Sat 7 Sep.

Commemorative Church Service, Information addresses, Luncheon at the Wacol Precinct, Chapel, Everyman's Hut, Museum. Further details at a later stage

NORTH QLD

Sun 11 Aug. V.P. Service Rocky Creek Memorial Park.

Sun 18 Aug. Vietnam Vets Day. Most RSL Sub Branches in area conduct services

Mon 11 Nov. Remembrance Day. Most RSL Sub Branches in area conduct services.



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 Web: www.jrmedals.com.au
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New Guinea Volunteer Rifles and Papua New Guinea Volunteer Rifles Ex Members Association Inc,

Includes former members of the PIR, PIB and NGIB.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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