

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

No matter where you are located, I hope you, all our members and friends with your families are keeping well and coping with the Coronavirus restrictions. Some of us are more fortunate living with less onerous restrictions than others. Our particular concern is for our Victorian folk who are in lock down until at least 26 October. Please look after yourselves.

On Sunday 9th August 2020, Phil Ainsworth and Mike Griffin attended the Kokoda Day Memorial Service to commemorate the 78th Anniversary of the Defence of Kokoda (8-10 August, 1942) by 39th Battalion AIF at the Indooroopilly/Sherwood RSL, Brisbane. This well attended service was followed by a light luncheon in the RSL premises.

The 15th August 1945 was VJ day, the surrender of the Japanese ending WW2 and victory in the Pacific. The Queensland Government hosted a 75th Anniversary Commemorative Service at Brisbane's Cenotaph with the Governor of Queensland presenting the Commemorative address. Attendance was strictly by invitation. Dignitaries present were the Governor of Qld, the Premier of Qld, the Lord Mayor of Brisbane and senior representative of all the security services, military and civilian. Phil Ainsworth laid a wreath in remembrance of the service and sacrifice of NGVR, ANGAU and PIR soldiers during the Pacific War.

Campbell gave the commemorative address and PNGAA representative, Andrea Williams thanked and farewelled the guests. Michael White said the Ode and laid a wreath on behalf of our Association. Distinguished guests included the High Commissioners for Britain, India and PNG and senior representatives from Australia's Army, Navy and Air Force. The attendance of the Federation Flag Party and the band, bugler and vocalist from RMC, Duntroon added significantly to the occasion. PNGAA is thanked for arranging this ceremony with the AWM. A similar service was held in Rabaul at the same time.



UK High Commissioner Mrs Vicki Treadwell CMG, General Angus Campbell AO, DSC, Colonel Mark Goina, Military Attaché, PNG High Commission and Michael White.

No one was able to attend this year's Battle for Australia (BFA) commemorative service at Chermiside Wednesday 2nd September. Phil Ainsworth, a BFA committee member, was to attend but at the last moment was unable. Attendance was restricted. The Governor was the keynote speaker.

On 6th September 2020 Member Michael White represented us at the 75th Anniversary Ceremony in recognition of the surrender of the Japanese Forces in Rabaul Harbour and the sinking of the Montevideo Maru. The Ceremony was held at the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Memorial, AWM, Canberra followed by a luncheon at Rydges' Hotel. Attendance was restricted to 25. The AWM Director, Mr Matt Anderson welcomed the guests, the Chief of Australian Defence, General Angus

Many customers were pleased to see us running the sausage sizzle on 6th September after Bunnings Oxley gave us the opportunity to raise funds for our Museum. On behalf of members I thank Paul Brown, Colin Gould, Kieran Nelson, Mike Griffin and Peter Rogers Jnr for manning the facility all day. Although takings were more modest than usual, it was expected given the coronavirus restrictions. Thank you Paul Brown and Colin Gould for your initiative in arranging this with Bunnings Oxley.

Since last issue there has been two deaths: Captain Russell Stanford Ames OAM, ASM died in Tasmania on 23 August 2020. Russell was attached to the University Regiment from 1972; and Norm Harold Furness OAM (VX23557), passed away on 31 August

2020 in Melbourne aged 96. Norm was the last survivor of the 2/22 Battalion in Rabaul in 1942. More details will be available in the next issue.

There is no Open Brisbane Day this year. The Museum is open from 10am to 1pm on the first Saturday of each month for the public, otherwise by appointment. Our webmaster Trevor Connell and Bob Collins are continually enhancing our website www.pngvr.weebly.com. Hundreds of photographs taken by Snappy Tom have been added and assistance to include names is sought. Kieran Nelson our Treasurer and Facebook administrator continues to keep you up to date with regular postings of events and activities. Contact Kieran if you are aware of or wish a relevant matter to be posted on our face book. Please diary our AGM for 10am Saturday 24th October 2020 at our Museum, Wacol. It will be followed by a free bar-b-que. All are welcome- break your lock down habits, come and have a good chat!

Phil Ainsworth, September 2020

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William Ludwick MacGowan**NG180**

The following are extracts from the Diary of William MacGowan typed by one of his Grandchildren Annette Raff. The full diary runs to 80 typed pages, hence the need for extracts. (Cont)

Fri 6th Feb. (Past Jacquinot Bay, Waterfall Bay Sawmill and at Cutarp)Whilst engaged on this task we were interrupted by a hail from a small island lying less than one quarter mile off shore, and saw that three Europeans were endeavouring to attract our attention. The launch was pushed off and we reached the island in a few minutes. There we found Dr Fisher, Clem Knight and George Greathead, They had spent the night on the island after losing their canoe on the reef. It was learnt that Fisher had been with an NGVR Unit at the time of the landing, and, following the withdrawal he had escaped to the hills where Knight awaited him with equipment and food ready for their trek. Greathead had joined them somewhere on the track.....Our party now consisted of a total of nine. The unexpected increase in our party now presented new problems, and it was seen at once that if we were to join forces, our present launch would be too small for the whole party. It had been learnt by McMahon that another and larger launch had been concealed by natives up out of the creeks in the vicinity of Palmal Plantation.....

Sat 7th Feb. My observations of the behaviour of the natives under bombing attack, and conversations with Police boys on the track, led me to believe that the natives would have proved a loyal and valuable asset to our forces, and in jungle warfare to be more of a match for the Japanese than has been proved the case with our own troops..... By dark our newly equipped boat was finally ready for sea, and here McMahon displayed his wizard with the engine, one of those cranky contraptions of bits and pieces. Its idiosyncrasies, although unknown to him, were quickly mastered, and in spite of the self-starter being out of action, he soon had it running.....

Sun 8th Feb. Dawn found us well off shore and drifting seawards. While McMahon, Duncan and Chambers worked frantically on the engine, the remainder of the party took to the oars and managed to keep her head to the wind, and we gradually edged shoreward. Soon after dawn the engine was restarted and we immediately made for a likely looking inlet, and tied up at a Plantation jetty. The jetty screened the launch from seaward, but there appeared to be no better concealment against observation from the air, so we proceeded to cover the vessel with leaves and branches.....Whilst ashore, the usual Jap reconnaissance plane paid us a visit, but continued on to the South, apparently without noticing our presence.....Reluctantly at 11pm we cast off and crossing the bar at the South of the inlet were soon again plunging in the heavy seas.....The engine failed several times during the night and finally at about 3am it was decided to seek shelter in the lee of the capes.....

Mon 9th Feb. Fulleborn Harbour.We were still anxious to discover if our first objective, Lindenhafen, had yet been occupied by the enemy, so Knight and Fisher went off

on reconnaissance in a small native canoe.....The remainder of the party turned to engine overhaul, general cleaning, sorting of stores, cooking and concealment of the launch from aerial observation. A reconnaissance plane was heard overhead about midday, but owing to the dense overhanging bush we did not sight it. Knight and Fisher returned during the afternoon and reported that they had been unsuccessful in locating any native villages, from which it had been hoped information could have been obtained.....

Tues 10th Feb. The last quarter of the moon was well up when we left the bank at about 2am and proceeded slowly to the mouth of the river, where careful and strenuous poling was necessary in order to prevent us running aground at the narrow entrance. Once over the bar the full force of the sea hit us and after rounding the east point it was seen that it would be hazardous if not impossible to proceed against that strong head wind. We turned about and after some difficulty managed to anchor in the lee of the point of Cape Schirlitz, where we stayed for the remainder of the night. We were now approaching dangerous territory and it was more than ever necessary to restrict our movement to the hours of darkness, so there was no alternative but to return up the river to our hiding place of the day before.....We were approaching the river mouth for a last look around before moving up to our concealed backwater for the day, when Earley remarked that on entering Fulleborn Harbour, he had not noted a cluster of islands which now appeared against the morning sky on the horizon to the South-east. We were all gazing intently in the direction of the mysterious islands. I had just brought the telescope into focus when a puff of smoke was seen to rise from the largest shape, and I immediately identified the apparitions as an aircraft carrier and escorting warships. Six planes were seen to take off in rapid succession, and we made a mad effort to turn our boat about and move it into the tree covered swamp lying behind the sand spit at the river mouth.....We had no sooner got the boat under cover than the planes roared over on their way inland.....

Wed 11th Feb.The considerable enemy offshore activity which we had encountered during the last 24 hours indicated that the occupation of Lindenhafen may have been effected, so it was necessary to proceed with caution. McMahon decided to approach Lindenhafen on foot and reconnoitre, in this venture he was accompanied by Fisher and Knight. Dusk was falling before we heard the signal shots which had been decided upon for their return. Taking the launch to the pick-up point McMahon was found alone on the bank. He was dead tired and had an interesting story to tell.....It was suggested that the catholic priest at Lindenhafen was of German nationality and was strongly pro-Nazi. The natives reported that the priest had instructed them to be in readiness for a Jap landing. Two Japanese warships were reported to be lying of the harbour, and by means of planes the Japanese were attempting to blitz George Mitchell out of the hills behind Lindenhafen and Gasmata, where he was operating a portable wireless transmitter, and was in direct communication with Fortress Signals Moresby. It was planes engaged on this mission which we had encountered taking off the carrier at Fulleborn Harbour the morning of the previous day.....Fisher and Knight had been left to assemble and locate food and benzine supplies, whilst McMahon had returned to

bring the launch to the spot arranged.....Muffling the exhaust with a loose jam tin and old copra sacks, we now cautiously approached the entrance to the harbour.....Speed and noise were reduced to a minimumHalf an hour's fast, silent and hot work and we were ready to push off with three 45 gallon drums of fuel, a miscellaneous collection of paints and brushes and our water tanks full.

Thu 12th Feb. Returning the way we had come, our destination was again the river at the head of Fulleborn Harbour.....Everyone was dead tired but elated at the success of the venture, credit for which must be given to McMahon, Fisher and Knight for their excellent reconnaissance.....Sun-up saw deck house and awning stripped, and the hull washed ready for painting. A good camouflage grey was made up with a mixture of white, yellow and black, and painting went ahead continuously in four brush shifts. In view of the unreliability of our engine, Chambers commenced the preparation of a jury mast and sail.after the stowing and loading of our three large new drums of fuel, which, with the one already on deck, gave us little free board.....At 6.30pm we cast off, and had barely cleared the mouth of the river, when the long grey silhouette of an armed cruiser slid into view as it passed and continued across the mouth of the bay. It was a close brush but our newly acquired paint, and the dark background of the land into which we merged, apparently did the trick as we were not sighted.....Spray and waves broke over our stern and I began to have misgivings. By this time I had a moment to think of a pair of khaki shorts which I had left drying on the awning, they were gone with the wind, and I was left to finish the voyage in cotton underpants.....The course set was due South by our compass. McMahon Duncan, Chambers and myself took alternate tricks at the wheel. Fisher, Knight and Slater displayed signs of sea sickness, but all hands kept at it as well as they were able, and there was certainly plenty to do. Refilling fuel tanks, bailing, pumping, running the engine, keeping watch and steering—all these tasks gave us little time to think of any danger. In fact, about midnight, we passed within yards of the dark outlines of two warships steaming north, and we had to thank the noise of the gale for drowning the sound of our exhaust. A few miles further on, the engine spluttered and died, and our boat turned beam on to the waves and wallowed in a sickening manner. Those of us who were not already seasick now began to feel the qualms, and the reeking fumes of burning oil from the red hot engine just about finished us off.....The engine trouble was located, as anticipated, in the fuel supply, which by now consisted largely of salt water, much of which had entered the tank during each refill. The tank was drained and refilled and all supply pipes checked over and within an hour we were again following the waves which raced ahead of us.....

Sat 14th Feb. Dawn revealed that we had already passed an island or two, now some miles astern, and it was decided to anchor under the lee of the nearest until the sea had quietened, and there endeavour to procure water, fresh food and rest..... Sim SimAfter anchoring everyone made for the shore.....Since late on the previous night I had been feeling considerably worse and found that I was now unable to leave the launch, so remained aboard, only requesting that some fresh water be brought back for me. Our ship's supply had by now been reduced to a few cupfuls of rusty sediment in the bottom of the

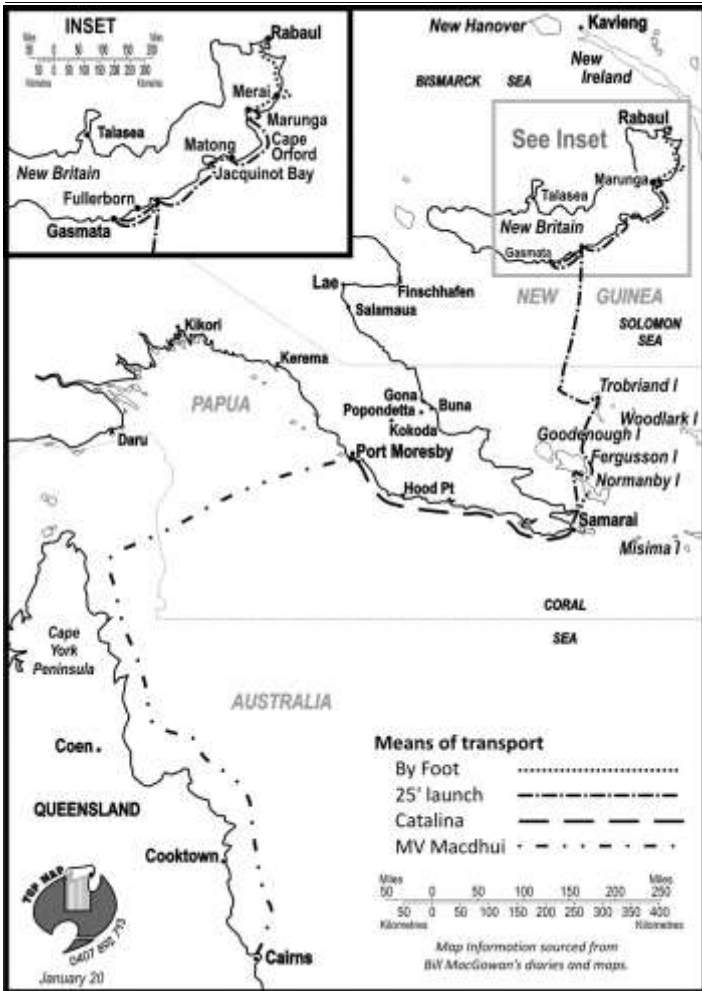
tank..... there was no fresh water on the island and we would get no water until one of the larger islands was reached. I did get some relief by consuming the milk from a few of the very poor looking coconuts, which was the only edible article the island seemed to offer.....Our launch had virtually limped to its present anchorage. A broken gudgeon pin or bushing was suspected, and a complete overhaul was essential before attempting to continue our voyage.

Sun 15th Feb.The weather was now easing and it was decided to complete the engine overhaul and push straight on to Goodenough Island in the south Trobriands.....

Mon 15th Feb. On attempting to start the engine in the morning it was found that the ignition had been accidentally left switched on overnight and the battery was dead flat. There was no means of recharging the battery and this unfortunate happening meant the end of further progress in the launch.....but cranking was continued in the forlorn hope that it might be started. At last all were exhausted and Fisher and Knight decided to proceed to Losula by native canoe and obtain assistance.....Sometime after midnight I heard the sound of another approaching launch and the bump as it ran alongside and made fast. I was too far gone to take part in the proceedings but learnt afterwards that Fisher and his party had reached Losula, and had there found a newly arrived party of soldiers who had escaped from New Britain in a launch which had left Wide Bay the day following our departure. Whilst the soldiers rested, the launch had been brought over to us by one of their party with the object of towing us to Losula where McMahon had discovered a battery charging outfit.

Tues 17th Feb.By the time I was well enough to take an intelligent interest in my surroundings, I found that we were anchored at the jetty at Losula. The soldiers, in their launch, had already departed South for Samarai, taking with them Chambers and Duncan who were to return with the launch if in the meantime we had not succeeded in starting our own craft.....they had told members of our party that the Japanese had landed at Tol the day following our departure, and had bayoneted some of the Australian troops who had surrendered there. We did not attach much credence to this statement and accepted it as a rather improbable rumour (foolishly believing at the time that the Japanese could not be so barbaric. The shocking truth of the massacre was not revealed until two badly wounded Australian survivors of the massacre reached safety on 4th February).

About Thur 19th Feb The condition of some members of the party was now so serious that early medical attention and proper food was urgently required. It was therefore decided not to wait further for the return of the soldiers' launch. An old whale boat had been found at the station.....All was ready for a start on the evening of the second day.....We pushed off but it was not long before we realised the difficulty of manipulating the makeshift sails without the assistance of the natives.



appearance, began to grow.

Struck by this sight, Canadian Doctor Lt Col John McCrea, wrote of what he saw, giving rise to the poem now read at almost every remembrance service in the country: "In Flanders Fields".

Inspired by the poem, American academic Moina Michael, began to make and sell red silk poppies to commemorate those who had died in the war.

Then, in 1921, the British Legion formed, and ordered nine million poppies to be sold on November 11 that year to help veterans' causes.

Unsurprisingly, the poppies sold out immediately, raising over £106,000 for the charity.

The following year a factory employing disabled ex-servicemen was set up, and from here the poppies were put into full production.

Today, the poppy remains the symbol of remembrance, with the British Legion's poppy appeal continuing to raise millions to help veterans and current servicemen and women across the UK.

Source. Internet—Forces Network



Wed 25th Feb.Arrived East Cape. They gave us leg of pork and a bottle of whisky.....On to Samarai in evening after learning that a plane could pick us up.....Had meal with troops at Samarai, slept at hospital and embarked next morning.

Fri 27th Feb. Plane circled overhead at dawn and landed at Samarai.After two hours flying landed Port Moresby, met by Dr Brennan on jetty and sent immediately to Military Hospital. First decent food and sleep since leaving Put Put.

Bill MacGowan eventually departed Port Moresby for Cairns on the Burns Philp ship "Machdui". En route the ship had one aircraft alert but arrived safely.

Bill eventually died from what is thought to have been the effects of the cerebral malaria contracted during his escape which brought on a massive stroke at the age of 51.

Thank you Kerry Glover for the map.

Remembrance Day: The Story Of The Poppy

Much of the fighting in the First World War took place in the once peaceful and beautiful countryside of Western Europe.

Landscapes, villages and lives were destroyed - torn to pieces by the shelling which took place over the four years of conflict.

The once beautiful countryside was transformed into bleak and barren fields of mud where no sign of life could be found.

But, it was in one such seemingly-lifeless field that bright red "Flanders" poppies, surprisingly resilient for their delicate

Victoria Cross for Australia awarded to Edward (Teddy) Sheean

After a 32-year campaign, Tasmanian sailor Teddy Sheean has been recognised with Australia's highest award for servicemen and women.

Edward "Teddy" Sheean, VC (28 Dec 1923 – 1 Dec 1942) was a sailor in the Royal Australian Navy during the Second World War. Sheean was employed as a farm labourer when he enlisted in the Royal Australian Naval Reserve in April 1941. Following training at HMAS Derwent and the Flinders Naval Depot, he



was posted to Sydney, where he joined the newly commissioned corvette HMAS *Armidale* in June 1942. Sheean served aboard *Armidale* as she initially took part in escort duties along the eastern Australian coast and in New Guinea waters, before he transferred with the ship to Darwin in October, where *Armidale* was given the task of assisting Australian operations in Timor.

On 1 Dec 1942 *Armidale* was attacked by a party of five Japanese bombers; the explosives, however, fell wide of their target. At 13:58, *Armidale* reported

that she was under attack from "nine bombers, four fighters" over the Arafura Sea. Strafed by the attacking aircraft. Sheean—after assisting to free a life-raft—was hit by two bullets from one of the aircraft, wounding him in the chest and back. Scrambling across the deck, he strapped himself into the aft Oerlikon 20 mm cannon and began shooting at the fighters in an effort to protect some of the sailors already in the sea. Subject to the fire from Sheean's Oerlikon, the Japanese aircraft were kept at bay and were unable to effectively strafe those in the water.

With *Armidale* rapidly sinking, Sheean continued to fire and managed to shoot down one of the Japanese bombers. He damaged a further two aircraft before *Armidale's* stern was engulfed by the sea. Despite this, Sheean maintained his fire as the water rose above his feet, and remained firing as he "disappeared beneath the waves". Sheean's crewmates later testified to witnessing tracers rising from beneath the water's surface as Sheean was dragged under. He was posthumously Mentioned in Despatches.

A campaign to have him awarded the Victoria Cross commenced in the 1980's—without success until now. A number of panels investigated whether Sheehan should be awarded the Victoria Cross but each resulted in the negative, with the findings that he might have been recommended for either the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal or the Distinguished Service Medal instead, but neither medal could be awarded posthumously in 1942.

On 1 May 1999, the submarine *HMAS Sheean* was launched by Ivy Hayes—sister of Teddy Sheean—named in the ordinary seaman's honour. *Sheean* was subsequently commissioned into the Royal Australian Navy on 23 February 2001, and was the first Royal Australian Navy vessel to be named in honour of a naval rating.

On 10 August 2020, Prime Minister Morrison accepted the findings of another panel and recommended the Queen posthumously award Sheean the Victoria Cross for Australia. The Queen approved the award on 12 August.

This is the only Victoria Cross awarded to anyone from the RAN.

Wikipedia.



Kiap in 1972

This photo illustrates an important kiap action which took place at Minj, a sub-district centre in the Mid-Wahgi section of the Western Highlands, just three years before Independence.

The foreground shows a row of four backs. Working left to right these belong to Koilmal who was front man for the Kambiliika clan, a Tangilka leader called Muga, myself and the Mid-Wahgi's Assistant District Commissioner, Ian Douglas. The centre piece is a large pile of flammable material, the fire that has just been lit at its base, and the throng of local people that is watching. The Kambilikas and Tangilikas had been fighting since the murder of a Kambiliika immediately before the pivotal 1972 elections.

Normal life had ground to halt and after jailing perhaps 80

Guys I need your help.
I'm in the middle of an argument with my wife and she's just told me I'm right.
What the hell do I do next?

warriors, roughly an equal number from each side, the Tangilikas had decided they wanted to formalise a truce at which each clan publicly burned their weapons. I did the outside work. I'm in working clothes and looking scruffy because I'd slept in them at Muga's village the previous night. Ian is deliberately in casual clothes because he had not wanted to add to the tension, when each of these warring clans arrived at the venue carrying their spears, bows and arrows, by wearing a more formal outfit.

A more detailed description of this event, and its build up, dominates one of the chapters in "The Northumbrian Kiap". It is an instructive and revealing account of how pre-Independence kiap government could still be effective but at the same time outlines why contemporary influences signalled it could no longer be as successful as it had been.

You can find out more by clicking on to www.rforster.com or going to Amazon through <https://rforster.com/shop/northumbrian-kiap/>.



TSMV Bulolo at Lae post war.

Steamer's big role in D-Day.

It was undoubtedly the most audacious but successful military enterprise in all history.

"Operation Overlord", the Allied invasion of Europe 76 years ago is universally understood as D-Day, though it was an event years in planning and with a further year before conclusion.

The man credited with its successful execution was US General Dwight D. Eisenhower, later his nation's President.

It was not just a physical invasion but a complex operation of many parts, including some based on lessons learned at Gallipoli 29 years before. Strategists and tacticians teach attacking fixed defenders needs a numerical superiority of at least three to one.

They also teach those attacking require logistic support of at least seven for every combat soldier. Add to this equation naval and air support and the bill is even larger.

Preparing for such an undertaking would have been quite obvious. There was an even more remarkable effort to conceal, even deceive the Axis forces of the intent, timing and the actual location of any potential invasion.

Hitler's allies were unaware how effectively and swiftly their supposedly secure communications were being intercepted, decrypted and analysed, and allied advantage the extent of which is still being revealed.

While the Germans had anticipated several possible invasion

points, the Allies conducted a clever deception plan to divert Axis forces from the intended target, which was Normandy in south-west France.

Allied planners created a whole phantom army commanded by US General George S Patton, including radio traffic and vehicle movement. The Germans were deceived into believing this mythical force from its location in northern England and Scotland would be the main invasion force across the Pas de Calais. Instead the real force was being concentrated in southern ports including Portsmouth to land in Normandy.

Massive flexible pipelines were developed to pump fuel from England under the ocean to replenish units in France. Huge caissons were built to create an artificial harbour through which subsequent forces could be landed and resupplied after the main seaborne invasion.

Paratroops were planned to be delivered by air or landed by gliders behind the German front lines. Thousands of troops, tanks and vehicles were concentrated in southern England.

Never an astute strategist, Hitler was convinced the Allies would cross the English Channel at its narrowest point and refused to position forces at other possible invasion points.

Australia played a minimal role, mainly aircrew, some naval personnel and military observers who were sent for experience before possible invasion of Japan.

There was, however, a North Queensland connection. The former Burns Philp passenger, cargo and mail steamer MV *Bulolo*, which sailed between Papua New Guinea and Australia played a prominent role.

Sold to the Admiralty in 1944, it was converted as HMS *Bulolo* to be a command ship. In this role it hosted the command element at Gold beach, one of the five landing places in Normandy.

Post-war *Bulolo* returned to its PNG-Pacific-Australia service until sold for scrap in 1968. Its critical wartime service never fully known by its many passengers.

This article first appeared in the Townsville Bulletin.



Before Workplace Health & Safety. Moving equipment during the construction of the Snowy Mountains Scheme.

Army Banner returns home

The Army Banner used from March 10, 2001, until February 20, 2019, was laid up in September during a parade and ceremony at the Soldiers' Chapel of the Army Recruit Training Centre – Kapooka.

RSM 1RTB WO1 Simon Thompson said the banner was laid up in the most fitting place possible – the home of the soldier. “When one reflects upon the global events that have occurred since 2001, the contribution and sacrifice Army has made over this period; this banner is more than just a symbolic gift from a government – it is our history,” WO1 Thompson said. “It is very special, and it demanded a final resting place befitting its historical significance in an atmosphere of veneration where Australia’s newest soldiers have opportunity to view it.

“Unlike Navy and Air Force, the Australian Army has no flag as



such, rather, our emblem is the Army Banner. “So given the period of history during which this red cloth was the Army Banner, it’s very special, and that’s why we’re proud to have it here at Kapooka.

“You could say it’s come home.” CA Lt-Gen Rick Burr said the ceremony was important to recognise the history and traditions represented by the banner.

“I can think of no more appropriate place to lay up the retired Army Banner than here at Kapooka, the home of the soldier,” Lt-Gen Burr said. “The Banner represents the history and contributions of our people, from our beginning in 1901 through to today.

“We acknowledge our history that has set the foundation for our people to lead, inspire and make a difference. “The Banner also embodies our Army values of courage, initiative, respect and teamwork. Recruits who go through training at Kapooka will now have a visual reminder of our extensive history and traditions.” The Army Banner is never destroyed or disposed of. As part of historic military tradition the Banner is laid up during a military ceremony and then displayed in a sacred or public place.

The Australian Army, on the occasion of its 118th birthday on March 1, received a new Banner to replace the retiring Banner.

The new Banner was presented to the Army on behalf of the nation by then Governor General Gen (retd) Sir Peter Cosgrove and Cpl Dan Keighran, VC, in a ceremony at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

Army Newspaper 1452



Kanabea airstrip PNG. Central Province. Altitude 4000+ ft. (1000 -m) Airstrip opened when a Catholic Mission opened at Kanabea in 1966. Since then 2 priests and 2 lay missionaries have been killed whilst landing on the airstrip.

At my funeral take the bouquet off the casket and throw it into the crowd to see who’s next.

Five male two female new clearance divers graduate

Seven sailors have graduated from the clearance-diving course – one of the toughest courses Navy has to offer – at the Australian Defence Force Diving School at HMAS Penguin.

Commander Australian Fleet Rear Admiral Jonathan Mead welcomed the Navy’s newest Clearance Divers, which included the first two female sailors to graduate from the course.

Addressing the graduates as head of the clearance-diving community, Rear Admiral Mead congratulated the class on their achievement and said it was one of the most exciting times to be a clearance diver.

"You may, in the course of your careers, take part in day- and night-diving operations, in depths of more than 50 metres," Rear Admiral Mead said.

"You may undertake airborne insertion and extraction, expeditionary reconnaissance and support operations in the maritime environment.

"This requires special skills, mental fortitude and a level of fitness – attributes that you all possess and I congratulate you on your achievement."

One graduate, Seaman Clearance Diver Abby, said graduating was a proud and exciting moment.

"The course has been challenging and I've loved the camaraderie with the other participants, but now I'm looking forward to getting on with the job," she said.

Dux of the course Seaman Clearance Diver Kaine said he was happy that all of the hard work had paid off.

"I'm going to enjoy our final time together but I'm now looking forward to putting the skills I've learned into practice and joining Clearance Dive Team Four," Kaine said.

Australian Clearance Dive Team Four is based at HMAS Stirling in Western Australia.

Warrant Officer of the Navy Deb Butterworth said the course was widely acknowledged as the hardest initial course in the Navy and, as such, was supported by senior officers on graduation day.

Over the 60-week course, students learned basic seamanship, small arms, mine counter measures, underwater damage repair, expeditionary reconnaissance and clearance, and explosive ordnance disposal.

Trained in the disposal of explosive ordnance above and below the waterline, the new graduates will be posted to a variety of major and minor fleet units as well as clearance diving teams.

Officer in charge of the ADF Diving School Commander Ryan Kelly said it had been a high-tempo year for the school as it graduated 17 new clearance divers in total in 2019.

In addition, the school passed eight intermediate clearance divers, four advanced clearance divers, and six mine-warfare and clearance-diving officers.

Commander Kelly also congratulated the seven-member cohort from Basic Clearance Diving Course 87.

"We recognise the achievements of the seven sailors graduating from clearance-diver initial employment training, including the first two female graduates.

"This is one of the toughest [courses] in the Australian Defence Force, demanding mental and physical resilience, cognitive ability, maturity and exceptional fitness," he said.

Contact Newsletter 109.



Nadzab Wakes Again to Sound of Bomb Blasts.

New Guinea Times Courier, Lae, New Guinea, 9 March, 1960.

The quietness of famous Nadzab airstrip was shattered last Thursday morning when nine 1,000 lb. Japanese bombs were exploded together

A bright orange ball of fire. . . tons of rock, bitumen and iron hurled into the air ... a roar echoed in the hills . . . and a heavy umbrella-cloud hung over the tired and vine-clad battle ground.

It was a little noise compared to those gaunt days of 17 years ago, but just sufficient to awaken an unforgettable saga of heroism and sacrifice.

The nine bombs were uncovered by clearing operations about four miles from Lae last week.

Evidently the Japanese had dumped the bombs there rather hastily, for they were without fuses and it was not a recognised dump spot.

The bombs were loaded on to an army truck under the supervision of bomb disposal expert Corporal Alan Brown and driven out to the fighter strip at Nadzab.

Nadzab . . . which saw as much action during the war as any other in the Territory.



Alan Brown at the bottom of the crater which was 25 ft in diameter and 15 feet deep.

Nadzab . . . which in September 1943 reverberated to the joyful sound of General MacArthur's Superfortress followed by 96 transports carrying American paratroopers, and behind them more transport planes with Australian artillerymen. Above them buzzed nearly 150 fighters.

Nadzab . . . they came from Tsili Tsili. from Wau, from Port Moresby, by air and on foot.

It was an epic story, not often told and now not often remembered.

Today the same wisps of white clouds float above the green serrated hills. The air is still, rarely broken by even a bird cry. Trucks pass on the way to Erap plantations, lifting dry dust.

But the bitumen strip is still as solid as the day it was built . . . just one or two pot holes. And the vines have crept a little closer across the fighter dispersal roads. The white landing paint still gleams brightly . . .

On any day the visitor to Nadzab would find it easy to recall the war years. But on Thursday then the silence was shattered by that familiar bomb

burst, the remembrance was easier.



Cpl (later Sgt) Alan Brown was the father of our Museum Curator Paul Brown who served in PNGVR as a Cpl.

Modified craft boosts capability

Trials to transport an M1A1 Abrams and large vehicle loads ashore near Townsville have been successfully completed using one of HMAS Canberra's landing craft.

The trials were conducted at the end of July with 3 Bde, 2 Cav Regt and 3CSSB. The landing craft's engine room had been modified to increase its carrying capacity from 38 tonnes to more than 60 tonnes, allowing the landing craft to carry the Army's heavy tracked vehicles.

Amphibious System Program Office Director Capt Brad Smith said the activity was a culmination of work by a dedicated and integrated team of people from Defence and industry. "These groups combined to fully realise and unlock the capability of the landing helicopter dock landing craft," Capt Smith said.

Work to enable the trial included the design and installation of an additional watertight bulkhead in the engine room, as well as scale modelling and testing of the landing craft in various sea states. This provided the quantitative evidence and confidence needed to progress to the sea phase trials. The trial focused on landing and recovering both the M1A1 main battle tank and the M88A2 recovery vehicle from the landing craft to a beach.

Army's 45M heavy recovery vehicle (42 tonne) and the HX77 heavy utility truck (33.5 tonne) were also tested. Over two days, load trials were completed using all the vehicles, operating to and from the beach in ocean conditions up to sea state three.

Director RAN Test and Evaluation Authority Capt David Frost attributed the success of the trials to a team effort. "The focus and professionalism of numerous people across Navy and Army has resulted in a significant capability enhancement for the ADF and we look forward to building on this capability as we mature the Maritime Warfare Centre," Capt Frost said.

Army Newspaper 1448



A light landing craft transports an M1A1 Abrahams to land as part of load trials.

I only do what the voices in my wife's head tell her to tell me to do.

Citroën Sabotaged Wartime Nazi Truck Production in a Simple and Brilliant Way

2019 was the 100th anniversary of Citroën.

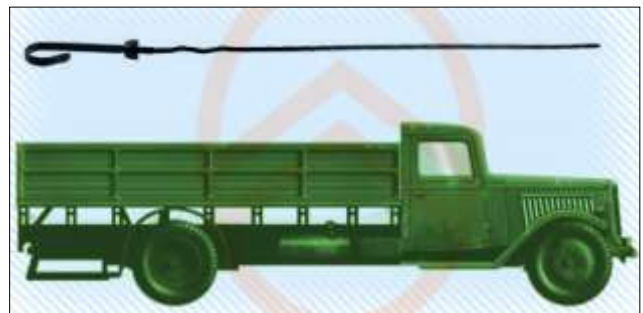
When the Germans occupied France in 1940, they started sweeping the large factories, shutting down those that couldn't be useful, while forcing the rest to build equipment for them. Citroën had to build trucks. Obviously, they could not refuse but Pierre-Jules Boulanger (PJB), chairman of the Citroën at the time, hatched a brilliant plan to mess things up for the Nazis.

The details of Boulanger's plan were revealed in John Reynold's book "Citroën 2CV". Monsieur Pierre-Jules instructed workers to set about building trucks like the T45 and told them to set the oil level indicator a little higher than it should be, so that it would show more oil than it actually contained and the trucks would constantly run on low levels of oil. The German mechanics couldn't know that because the notch kept telling them the oil level was spot-on. Eventually, this would make the trucks come to an unexpected halt, leaving the Germans stranded.

It was obviously almost impossible to know there was something wrong with the trucks until they actually did go wrong, and when they did realize, it was too late.

More significantly for the future of the company, during the Occupation PJB pointedly ignored Nazi orders for Citroën to stop working on their own stuff. Citroën designers met in secret to develop at least two designs that would not only boost the company's postwar fortunes, but which would be good for France as a whole.

Sources—Jalopink.com drivetribe.com.



Củ Chi tunnels

The tunnels of Củ Chi are an immense network of connecting tunnels located in the Củ Chi District of Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon), Vietnam, and are part of a much larger network of tunnels that underlie much of the country. The Củ Chi tunnels were the location of several military campaigns during the Vietnam War, and were the Viet Cong's base of operations for the Tết Offensive in 1968.

The tunnels were used by Viet Cong soldiers as hiding spots during combat, as well as serving as communication and supply routes, hospitals, food and weapon caches and living quarters for numerous North Vietnamese fighters. The tunnel systems were of great importance to the Viet Cong in their resistance to American forces, and helped to counter the growing American military effort.

U.S. campaigns against the tunnels.

The tunnels of Củ Chi did not go unnoticed by U.S. officials. They recognized the advantages that the Viet Cong held with the tunnels, and accordingly launched several major campaigns to search out and destroy the tunnel system. Among the most important of these were *Operation Crimp* and *Operation Cedar Falls*.

Operation Crimp began on January 7, 1966, with B-52 bombers dropping 30-ton loads of high explosive onto the region of Củ Chi, effectively turning the once lush jungle into a pockmarked moonscape. Eight thousand troops from the U.S. 1st Infantry Division, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, and the 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment combed the region looking for any clues of PLAF activity.

The operation did not bring about the desired success; for instance, on occasions when troops found a tunnel, they would often underestimate its size. Rarely would anyone be sent in to search the tunnels, as it was so hazardous. The tunnels were often rigged with explosive booby traps or punji stick pits. The two main responses in dealing with a tunnel opening were to flush the entrance with gas, water or hot tar to force the Viet Cong soldiers into the open, or to toss a few grenades down the



A trap door on the jungle floor leads down into the Củ Chi tunnels. Closed and camouflaged, it is almost undetectable.



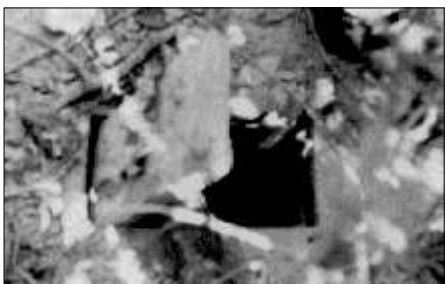
hole and "crimp" off the opening. This approach proved ineffective due to the design of the tunnels and the strategic use of trap doors and air filtration systems.

However, an Australian specialist engineering troop, 3 Field Troop, under the command of Captain Sandy MacGregor did venture into the tunnels which they searched exhaustively for four days, finding ammunition, radio equipment, medical supplies and food as well as signs of considerable Viet Cong presence. One of their

number, Corporal Bob Bowtell, died when he became trapped in a tunnel that turned out to be a dead end. However the Australians pressed on and revealed, for the first time, the immense military significance of the tunnels. At an international press conference in Saigon shortly after Operation Crimp, MacGregor referred to his men as Tunnel Ferrets. An American journalist, having never heard of ferrets, used the term Tunnel Rats and it stuck. Following his troop's discoveries in Củ Chi, Sandy MacGregor was awarded a Military Cross.

From its mistakes, and the Australians' discoveries, U.S. command realized that they needed a new way to approach the dilemma of the tunnels. A general order was issued by General Williamson, the Allied Forces Commander in South Vietnam, to all Allied forces that tunnels had to be properly searched whenever they were discovered. They began training an elite group of volunteers in the art of tunnel warfare, armed only with a handgun, a knife, a flashlight and a piece of string. These specialists, commonly known as "tunnel rats", would enter a tunnel by themselves and travel inch-by-inch cautiously looking ahead for booby traps or cornered PLAF. There was no real doctrine for this approach and despite some very hard work in some sectors of the Army and MACV (Military Assistance Command, Vietnam) to provide some sort of training and resources, this was primarily a new approach that the units trained, equipped and planned for themselves.

Despite this revamped effort at fighting the enemy on their own terms, U.S. operations remained insufficient at eliminating the tunnels completely. In 1967, General William Westmoreland tried launching a larger assault on Củ Chi and the Iron Triangle. Called Operation Cedar Falls, it was similar



This hinged tunnel entrance is 16 inches square. It had 18 booby traps connected into the trees around the trapdoor.

to the previous Operation Crimp, however on a larger scale with 30,000 troops instead of the 8,000. On January 18, tunnel rats from the 1st BN 5th Infantry Regiment of the 25th Infantry Division uncovered the Viet Cong district headquarters of Củ Chi, containing half a million documents

concerning all types of military strategy. Among the documents were maps of U.S. bases, detailed accounts of PLAF movement from Cambodia into Vietnam, lists of political sympathizers, and even plans for a failed assassination attempt on Robert McNamara.

By 1969, B-52s were freed from bombing North Vietnam and started "carpet bombing" Củ Chi and the rest of the Iron Triangle. Ultimately it proved successful. Towards the end of the war, the tunnels were so heavily bombed that some portions actually caved in and other sections were exposed. But by that time, they had succeeded in protecting the local North Vietnamese units and letting them "survive to fight another day".

Throughout the course of the war, the tunnels in and around Củ Chi proved to be a source of frustration for the U.S. military in Saigon. The Viet Cong had been so well entrenched in the area by 1965 that they were in the unique position of locally being able to control where and when battles would take place. By helping to covertly move supplies and house troops, the tunnels of Củ Chi allowed North Vietnamese fighters in their area of South Vietnam to survive, help prolong the war and increase American costs and casualties until their eventual withdrawal in 1972, and the final defeat of South Vietnam in 1975.

Wikipedia.

Ed. Note. During the early 1980's a US student stayed with our family in Sydney for 6 months. His parents came to visit during that time and his father told me that he spent 12 months in Vietnam with the US 3rd Infantry Division. They were located for the whole of that time on top of the Cu Chi tunnels and he was unaware of their existence until after the war—all he knew was that there had been a few tunnels located.

A pensioner drove his brand new Mercedes to 120 mph on the M1 looking in his rear view mirror, he saw a police car behind him. He floored it to 140, then 150, ... then 155, ... Suddenly he thought, "I'm too old for this nonsense !" So he pulled over to the side of the road and waited for the police car to catch up with him.

The officer walked up to him, looked at his watch and said, "Sir, my shift ends in ten minutes. Today is Friday and I'm taking off for the weekend with my family. If you can give me a good reason that I've never heard before, why you were speeding... I'll let you go."

The Man looked very seriously at the police man, and replied : - "Years ago, my wife ran off with a policeman, I thought you were bringing her back." !!!

The Cop left saying, " Have a good day, Sir "...

Halifax Explosion

The Halifax Explosion was the largest man-made explosion to occur before the dropping of the atomic bombs during the Second World War.

As World War I raged in Europe, the port city of Halifax bustled with ships carrying troops, relief supplies, and munitions across the Atlantic Ocean.

The Halifax Explosion was a maritime disaster in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, which happened on the morning of 6 December 1917. The Norwegian vessel SS *Imo* collided with SS *Mont-Blanc*, a French cargo ship laden with high explosives, in the Narrows, a strait connecting the upper Halifax Harbour to Bedford Basin, causing a large explosion on the French freighter, devastating the Richmond district of Halifax. Approximately 2,000 people were killed by the blast, debris, fires or collapsed buildings, and an estimated 9,000 others were injured. **The blast was the largest man-made explosion at the time**, releasing the equivalent energy of roughly 2.9 kilotons of TNT (12,000 GJ).

Mont-Blanc was under orders from the French government to carry her cargo from New York City via Halifax to Bordeaux,



A view of the pyrocumulus cloud

France. At roughly 8:45 am, she collided at low speed, approximately one knot (1.2 mph or 1.9 km/h), with the unladen *Imo*, chartered by the Commission for Relief in Belgium to pick up a cargo of relief supplies in New York. On the *Mont-Blanc*, the impact damaged benzol barrels stored on deck, leaking vapours which were ignited by sparks from the collision, setting off a fire on board that quickly grew out of control. Approximately 20 minutes later at 9:04:35 am, the *Mont-Blanc* exploded.

Nearly all structures within an 800-metre (half-mile) radius, including the community of Richmond, were obliterated. A pressure wave snapped trees, bent iron rails, demolished buildings, grounded vessels (including *Imo*, which was washed ashore by the ensuing tsunami), and scattered fragments of *Mont-Blanc* for kilometres. Across the harbour, in Dartmouth, there was also widespread damage. A tsunami created by the blast wiped out the community of the Mi'kmaq First Nation who had lived in the Tufts Cove area for generations.



Aftermath in Halifax

Relief efforts began almost immediately, and hospitals quickly became full. Rescue trains began arriving the day of the explosion from across Nova Scotia and New Brunswick while other trains from central Canada and the northeastern United States were impeded by blizzards. Construction of temporary shelters to house the many people left homeless began soon after the disaster. The initial judicial inquiry found *Mont-Blanc* to have been responsible for the disaster, but a later appeal determined that both vessels were to blame. In the North End, there are several memorials to the victims of the explosion.

Wikipedia



Pik Island, Madang Harbour. In 1960 it was known to us as Pig Island and was uninhabited. 7 PI C Coy PNGVR used to 'borrow' Russ Brown's coastal schooner and spend a weekend on the Island training on the 2inch Mortar, which, at the time, was a Platoon weapon. Naturally enough, fish was the major food item for the weekend.

People who say I'm hard to shop for clearly don't know where to buy wine.

Three is no crowd for bridge-building efforts

Two bridges constructed by the Australian, Fijian and Papua New Guinea militaries will improve access to a popular tourist attraction in Victoria in the wake of the 2019-20 bushfires. The medium girder bridge materials were transported on Army trucks to the Buchan Cave Reserve in the Gippsland Region, which attracts thousands of visitors every year, after the original bridges were burnt beyond repair. A team comprised of ADF, Republic of Fiji Military Forces (RFMF) and Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF) personnel worked together to turn the materials into functioning bridges, which will enable national parks workers and tourists to access the existing roads by vehicle. OIC of the first bridge build Cpl Hayden Archer said the bridges would eventually enable the reserve to get back to full operation. "As the OIC, I make sure the sequence is correct – building the bridge we have to construct certain parts at certain times and I ensure that happens," Cpl Archer said. "Working with the RFMF and PNGDF personnel has been excellent – they all have good attitudes and work hard."



"I'm proud to contribute to getting the community back to normal. It's great to be embraced by the local community and great to see them getting back on their feet." LS Joseva Delei, of the RFMF detachment, said the team enjoyed the heavy lifting. "Most of the

equipment we lifted by hand so we just needed manpower for that," LS Delei said. "It's the first time for me in Australia and it's been a pleasure, especially contributing to the bushfire assist effort. "We're just here to help the ADF and Australia out to rebuild communities."

Army Newspaper 1459



Kasanombe Airport, Morobe Province PNG
Altitude 1,737m. 5,700 ft.

British SAS operator reportedly killed five militants in seven seconds with Benelli shotgun.

In recent years, we have seen a lot of reports about the extraordinary actions of British Special Operations Forces, mostly SAS and SBS. But, sometimes there are doubts about the accuracy of those reports. In its latest report, The Sun reported about an SAS operator who reportedly killed five terrorists in just seven seconds to stop a suicide bombing attack. He was reportedly armed with a shotgun.



The British operators were after a bomb factory. They stormed a building as part of an SAS raid on an ISIS outpost in Baghdad, Iraq. As the SAS 'assault team' entered a courtyard,

they were confronted by a group of heavily armed militants.

One of the operators from the 'Assault team' fired at them with his Benelli M4 Super 90 semi-automatic shotgun, killing three enemy combatants. Another two militants appeared from a building and he reportedly shot them dead as well.

Several other militants then emerged, but immediately surrendered after seeing two of the bodies "didn't have heads", reports claim. One source told the Daily Star that the five were killed in less than seven seconds.

"The terrorists were no more than a few feet away when the SAS team came face to face with them," the source said. "They had just finished morning prayers and were loading weapons into a vehicle. We now think they were about to carry out an attack. One of the Breach Team opened fire... It was a case of bang, bang, then bang, bang. It was over in seven seconds."

Suicide vests filled with slabs of plastic explosives and ball bearings were found on two of the dead militants. The vests are understood to have been designed for inflicting huge damage, purportedly for mass casualties. The raid took place last year after the SAS (Special Air Service), working alongside MI6 agents and the Iraqi Special Forces, had been given details of a suspected bomb factory in the Iraqi capital. A 12-man SAS team was present on scene for several days. After the surveillance of the house, they learned about plans of multiple suicide bombings.

The team moved to action just before dawn, with a "assault team" entering through a doorway into a courtyard.

Special Ops Magazine Oct 2019.



Government orders six new Cape-class for Navy

The government today announced it would spend around \$350 million to build six new Cape-class patrol boats for the Royal Australian Navy.

The vessels will be built by Western Australian company Austal, securing Australian shipbuilding jobs.

This build is an un-planned, out of sequence addition to the government's Naval Shipbuilding Plan.

The six new Cape-class boats will grow the patrol boat force to

16 vessels, while the new larger Arafura-class offshore patrol vessels are introduced into service.

Australian Border Force currently operates eight Cape-class patrol boats, while the Navy operates two leased boats.

Minister for Defence Linda Reynolds said the new vessels would play an important role in keeping Australia's borders safe, while Navy's new capability is brought online.

"These vessels will not only enhance national security, but will provide important economic stimulus and employment continuity during the COVID-19 pandemic," Minister Reynolds said.

"The ability to build more of these vessels in Australia will deliver Australian industry content of more than 65 per cent, providing significant opportunities for Australian industry and Defence."

Minister for Defence Industry Melissa Price said the six new patrol boats would be built at Austal's shipyard in Henderson, Perth.

"This will help to ensure continued employment opportunities for 400 of Austal's commercial shipbuilders in WA, with flow-down benefits to Austal's supply chain," Minister Price said.

"Austal is an Australian industry success story with the company already building variants of the Cape-class patrol boat for international customers including the government of Trinidad and Tobago.

"They are also building the Guardian-class patrol boats in support of the Pacific Patrol Boat Program."

Contact Newsletter 118

Do not let them take your temperature going into a store.
It's a scam! They're erasing your memory.
I went into the shop for bread and eggs and came home
with beer and wine.

MILITARY SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Trey Gowdy, former South Carolina Congressman, responded to a question from a CNN reporter about the ban of transgenders from joining the U.S. armed forces. As Trey typically does so very well, he nailed it rather succinctly. He does not mince words.

Question : "How can President Trump claim to represent all U.S citizens, regardless of sexual orientation, when he banned transgenders from joining the military? Isn't that discrimination"

Trey Gowdy's Response : " Nobody has 'a right' to serve in the Military. Nobody! What makes you people think the Military is an equal opportunity employer? It is very far from it - and for good reasons - let me cite a few: The Military uses prejudice regularly and consistently to deny citizens from joining — for being too old or too young, too fat or too skinny, too tall or too short. Citizens are denied for having flat feet, or for having missing, or additional, fingers."

He went on to explain: "By the way, poor eyesight will disqualify you, as well as bad teeth. Malnourished? Drug addiction? "Bad back? Criminal history? Low IQ? Anxiety? Phobias? Hearing damage? Six arms? Hearing voices in your head? Self identification as a Unicorn? Need a special access ramp for your wheelchair? "Can't run the required course in the required time? Can't do the required number of push-ups? Not really a morning person? And refuse to get out of bed before noon? All can be legitimate reasons for denial.

"The Military has one job: Winning Wars. Anything else is a distraction and a liability . Did someone just scream? That isn't Fair? War is VERY unfair; there are no exceptions made for being special or challenged or socially wonderful.

"YOU must change yourself to meet Military standards and not the other way around. "I say again: You don't change the Military - you must change yourself. The Military is not about being fair, it is about taking advantage of others and about winning.

"The Military doesn't need to accommodate anyone with special issues. The Military needs to Win Wars and keep our Country safe - PERIOD!

"If any of your personal issues are a liability that detract from readiness or lethality... Thank you for applying and good luck in future endeavours.

"Any other questions?"

Source—"Armour" Journal of the Royal Australian Armoured Corps Association NSW Inc

Upon hearing that her elderly grandfather had just passed away, Katie went straight to her grandparent's house to visit her 95 year-old grandmother and comfort her.

When she asked how her grandfather had died, her grandmother replied, "He had a heart attack while we were making love on Sunday morning."

Horrified, Katie told her grandmother that 2 people nearly 100 years old having sex would surely be asking for trouble. "Oh no, my dear," replied granny. "Many years ago, realizing our advanced age, we figured out the best time to do it was when the church bells would start to ring.

It was just the right rhythm. Nice and slow and even. Nothing too strenuous, simply in on the Ding and out on the Dong."

She paused to wipe away a tear, and continued,

"He'd still be alive if the ice cream truck hadn't come along."

Battle of the Barges

How Charlie Blake won a Decoration.

Two lightly armed American barges, closely hugging the jungle fringed coast of New Britain, were returning from a vital reconnaissance patrol. They ran head on into a convoy of twelve heavily armed Japanese barges carrying hundreds of enemy reinforcements. The Australian Warrant Officer in charge fought what well may be described as an epic naval action, until his two craft were shot to pieces and forced to run ashore.

In the early landings on New Britain a number of Australians were attached to the American forces. Among these selected men was Warrant Officer Charles Blake, who had spent many years in New Guinea, where he was last a gold miner on the Bulolo. As a plantation owner and District Inspector he had gained an intimate knowledge of New Britain. His wide experience of the native tribes and their customs proved a valuable asset in these operations.

- Special forces were sent forward by the GOC of the US troops to collect vital information as to enemy dispositions.

These small patrols of Americans and natives were led by the Australian WO Blake and proceeded from Arawe where the American forces had landed and established a small base. The two barges carried Americans and a number of picked natives. Their task was to land and work behind the Japanese lines to secure information for further operations against Cape Gloucester.

Hugging the jungle-fringed coast they made good headway through the numerous reefs. Despite a sharp lookout, they ran head on into a convoy of twelve heavily armed Jap barges. These craft were packed with hundreds of enemy reinforcements moving forward to launch a counter attack on the American held base at Arawe.

The enemy barges blocked every avenue of escape and opened up with every gun they could use. The two smaller American barges were subjected to a terrific crossfire from the

enemy 25 mm guns. They fought a hopeless battle with the odds of twelve to two, and returned a light fire with their smaller guns.

Breaking through the surrounding enemy barges, they succeeded in beaching their two badly shot-up craft. Still under heavy fire, they abandoned the barges and plunged for cover into the swampy jungle. They had sustained heavy casualties, with eight wounded men. One American received eight bullet wounds in his leg.

Carrying the seriously wounded man, Blake waded for half a mile through knee-deep mud and slime. Cutting their way through thick jungle, the party finally rested and treated their wounded.

Several hazardous trips were made to the beached barges for stores. Blake and two men successfully evaded two Jap patrols that were searching for them.

Owing to the dense jungle and swamp it was impossible to carry the badly wounded man further. His wounds were cleaned and treated with sulphanilamide and were then heavily bandaged. A few gallons of water and a quantity of food was left within his reach. The remainder of the party then set out on its long detour to reach the American lines.

The small force spent many days and nights in the jungle and swamps, and had several hair-breadth escapes when penetrating the Jap lines. Sick and exhausted, they finally reached their own lines, with their main task successfully completed.

WO Blake volunteered to return and bring back the wounded American left in the swamp. With a large canoe and several natives he was successful in rescuing the injured soldier, who had survived the ordeal.

While serving with the US forces during subsequent operations, WO Blake led a Company of Americans in a successful attack against the Japs at Umtingalu village. He also assisted in the evacuation of 300 natives from the villages of Meselia and Umtingalu, both Jap occupied at the time. This was done a short distance from the enemy, and under overhanging cliffs, from which the party on the barges could have been annihilated had not the enemy been surprised by the manoeuvre,

The Commanding Officer of the American forces at Arawe forwarded a separate commendation of WO Blake's action in leading a dangerous patrol to capture prisoners for intelligence information. A strong party of Japs were surprised in a large hut, and several were killed during the sharp fighting. The raiders returned with three prisoners, without casualties to themselves.

For individual bravery and devotion to duty, WO Blake was awarded the Military Medal and granted his Commission.

The citation added that he had been a source of inspiration to the natives under his command, and his activities in no small degree contributed to the success of operations in the Arawe area.

A.R. BONNEY, RSM 36 Aust Inf Bn. Unit Correspondent, Pacific Islands Monthly. January 1945.

NG2052, NGX 347. Lt Charles William Blake served in the NGVR prior to being posted to ANGAU. When serving with NGVR Cpl Charles Blake had volunteered to go to New Britain with "The New Guinea Navy" to rescue survivors of the Rabaul debacle, but was recalled from Finschhafen to Lae. In Oct 1942 Cpl Charles Blake (NGVR) searched for and found Lt Col Fleay, Officer Commanding Kanga Force, and Pte Danny Jones, 2/5th Independent Coy, who had been lost for a week after the first unsuccessful attack on Mubo, fed them, gave them a warm dry sleep in a native hut and returned them to Wau.

Imperial Japanese Navy Hospital Ship "Tachibana Maru"

The Tachibana Maru was the only Japanese ship captured under sail by the U.S. Navy during World War II.

Early in the morning of Aug. 1, 1945, the 279-foot hospital ship smuggling 29 tons of weapons and ammunition and 1,663 Japanese soldiers bandaged to look like injured troops, was straddled by the *USS Conner* and the *USS Charrette*, DD-581, in the Banda Sea in the Southwest Pacific.

The Navy had received reports from coast watchers that the Japanese were taking soldiers and equipment back to Japan in hospital ships. The soldiers were to be reassigned. The equipment would be refurbished and sent to the front again.

The two-destroyer task force was given general coordinates where the *Tachibana* was operating. Lt. Cmdr. Ernest Peterson, skipper of the *Charrette* and the man in charge of the operation, headed his ships toward a rendezvous with the Tachibana.

Running at flank speed, the *Conner* and the *Charrette* pulled up on either side of the *Tachibana*. All guns on both destroyers were trained her way, as well as all 10 torpedo tubes aboard ship.

A boarding party consisting of a couple of officers with sidearms and a bunch of sailors was sent over in a whale boat to have a look at the contents of the *Tachibana* and her passengers.

A US doctor started checking the "injuries" of the bandaged enemy soldiers. He discovered they weren't hurt. It was all a ruse to transport healthy front line soldiers from one point to another in a hospital ship.

This was against international law.

The Banda Sea was ringed by a number of Japanese inhabited islands. The crew of the two destroyers had to shepherd the enemy ship past these islands and on farther west to Morica Island, where the U.S. Navy operated a prisoner-of-war camp.

When the American sailors opened the crates on board, they found thousands of rounds of mortar shells and ammunition. In addition there were 400 rifles, 15 semiautomatic rifles, 2x88mm field howitzers and other military equipment.

"War tales". This story first appeared in the Charlotte Sun newspaper, Port Charlotte, Fla. on Sunday, Aug. 6, 2002



Diggers on Covid-19 Duty.

On 12 June 1996, two Blackhawk helicopters collided in mid-air near Townsville during a training mission.

Fifteen SAS soldiers and three aviators died that night - Sergeant Hugh Ellis was among them.

Sergeant Ellis' mother, Mrs Tonia Ellis, lives in Hebel, 650 kilometres west of Brisbane. Her home overlooks a Covid-19 movement border control point, where 6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment soldiers have been supporting Queensland Police Service

.Mrs Ellis had been visiting the task group members with baked

goods.

"I'm delighted to have them here, so I took down some Anzac biscuits every now and then," Mrs Ellis said. "It's been very healing. I've been able to talk about things you can't talk to others about."

Lieutenant Colonel Bryce Herslet, Commanding Officer of Task Group 629.3's Task Unit 1, said it was during those talks that the soldiers realised who she was.

Nine off-duty soldiers then took it upon themselves to renovate her yard.

The soldiers "were humbled by the opportunity to contribute to a very deserving person," said Lieutenant Colonel Herslet.

They were thanked with a generous country lunch and by Mrs Ellis saying that her son would be very proud of them all.

Originally posted by the Defence Minister, Sen Linda Reynolds



A game of cricket on Kundiawa (Chimbu) airstrip circa 1960. The airstrip had a slope and steep drops on two sides, so any hard hit 4 or a 6 could cause the ball to go over the side of the strip into the River below. Local 'mankis' (boys) were paid to wait below for such an occurrence. The airstrip was also part of the Golf Course and a sign on the first tee read "Players must give way to incoming and outgoing aircraft."

**Save business cards of people you don't like.
If you ever hit a parked car accidentally, just write "Sorry" on the back and leave it on the windshield.**

75th Commemorative Service of Operation Rimau.

The Australian Commando Association, Qld Branch, held a commemorative service for those on *Operation Rimau* at

ANZAC Square on 12th July.

Due to Covid restrictions the number of guests was restricted but members from the Commando Association, SASR Association, Royal Marines Association, Rhodesian Light Infantry Association, NGVR/PNGVR Association were present. Phil Ainsworth and Bob Collins, President and Vice President of the NGVR/PNGVR Association attended. Mrs Beverly Ellis, widow of Lt Col Hugh Ellis, Z Special Unit was the Guest of Honour.

After the success of *Operation Jaywick* in Sep 1943, in which a handful of picked operatives travelled in an old Japanese Fishing boat renamed 'Krait' then canoed into Singapore Harbour and sunk some 39,000 tons of shipping a second raid, named *Operation Rimau*, was planned for Oct 1944.

Six of the operatives are believed to have made it into Singapore and sunk 3 Japanese ships with limpet mines although evidence on this is limited.

Unfortunately things went wrong on this raid shortly after their insertion on an island near Singapore and of the 23 operatives involved 12 were killed in action and 11 taken prisoner-of-war by the Japanese. One died in captivity and the others were executed on 7th July, 1945, one month before the War in the Pacific ended.

Each year the ACA (Qld) holds a commemorative service to recognise the valour of these men.



Above. Commando, SAS, British Royal Marines, Rhodesian Light Infantry Group

Below. Bob Collins, Phil Ainsworth after the Service.



A Japanese Governor of New Guinea

Lieutenant General Tomitaro Horii was one of two significant commanders during the Japanese occupation of New Guinea during WW2; the other was Lieutenant General Hatazo Adachi: both were classed as Governors of New Guinea.



Tomitaro Horii was born in 1890. He graduated from the Japanese Imperial Army Academy in 1911 and was assigned to HQ Shanghai Japanese Expeditionary Army. He, along with Hatazo Adachi, was involved in the January 28, 1932 Incident (battle of Shanghai) which sparked the second Sino-Japanese war with China. In order to justify further military action in China, the Japanese military instigated seemingly anti Japanese incidents in Shanghai. Later Horii attended the Wasala University.

During WW2 he commanded the 55th Division, which was part of the Japanese South Seas Force, which captured Guam: for a short time he was Governor of that US island. Next, he became commander of the South Seas Force which was tasked to capture Port Moresby, however this force was partly destroyed in the Battle of the Coral Sea whilst on the way to its target. A land approach was set in place which resulted in the force establishing beachheads at Buna, Gona and Sanananda on the east coast of Papua. His army then advanced and reached Kokoda where it was held up for a short time by the Australian 39 Militia Battalion. After severe fighting along the Kokoda Track, Horii reached Ioribaiwa from where he was able to see the lights of Port Moresby: by this time the Japanese were virtually starving.

Meanwhile, Japanese headquarters at Rabaul had decided to withdraw Horii's force due to the reverses they were suffering on Guadalcanal: they felt they could not support both battles at once. On 26 September Horii was ordered to withdraw his forces until the Guadalcanal situation was resolved. On the retreat the Japanese were closely pursued by the Australians and although they caught up with a resupply of food, ammunition and reinforcements at Oivi, they were severely defeated around Oivi-Gorari over 4-11 November 1942 after the arrival of Australian reinforcements.

Meanwhile the Australian were able to cross the Kumusi at Wairopi (wire rope bridge), however, the flooded river blocked a large part of the Japanese force and the orderly withdrawal now became a rout. General Horii decided to go down the Kumusi on a raft to get to his troops at Buna and Gona, however the raft snagged on a tree and in taking a canoe he was swept out to sea and drowned: his batman survived to report his death. The remainder of the South Seas Force was destroyed at Buna, Gona and Sadananda in a prolonged viscous battle which caused many Australians and Americans to die and no Japanese to surrender.

Thank you Maj Bob Harvey-Hall. RFD. ED.

I told my wife she should embrace her mistakes
——She hugged me.

First Japanese POW in Australia WW11.

19 February, 1942. The first Japanese POW is captured on Australian soil by Aboriginal man Matthias Ulungura. Chief Petty Officer pilot Hajime Toroshima - who'd just attacked Darwin - is taken into official custody by Sgt Leslie Powell, of the 23 Field Company, Royal Engineers.

Sergeant Hajime Toyoshima, 29 March 1920 – (5 August 1944) was a Japanese airman in World War II. His A6M Zero was the first of that type (after those recovered after the attack on Pearl Harbor) to be recovered relatively intact on Allied territory when he crash landed on Melville Island, Northern Territory.



Matthais Ulungura

While a prisoner of war, Toyoshima was one of the instigators of the breakout from the prisoner of war camp located in Cowra, New South Wales, Australia, sounding a bugle to signal the commencement of the escape, and died during the escape attempt .

Toyoshima took part of the 19 February 1942, Japanese air raid on Darwin, Australia. His Zero, tail code B11-124, was launched from the Japanese aircraft carrier *Hiryū*. His Zero crash-landed on Melville Island, where he was taken prisoner by local islander Matthias Ulungura and was taken into official custody by Sgt Leslie Powell, of the 23 Field Company, Royal Engineers.



Hajame Toroshima with Sgt Leslie Powell.

Toyoshima suffered only superficial injuries in the crash-landing. He strove to move as far away from his Zero on foot, understanding that the aircraft would aid Allied Military intelli-

gence. Before Toyoshima's crash, only nine Zeros had been shot down in the Pearl Harbor attack, 74 days before the first air raid on Darwin; their pilots had died, and the badly damaged wrecks were of little use. *Wikipedia*



Madang, NG. 1948. Photo Warren Young.

Ed. Note. Half way up the Right side can be seen the roof of two buildings. The one at top is the old Madang European Hospital, built in 1944 after Madang was retaken. I had my appendix removed there in 1961. There were still bullet holes on the walls patched over from Japanese aircraft attack. Dr Braun, a Lutheran Missionary surgeon who the Japanese had allowed to remain at Yagaum, close to Madang, while it was occupied, was the surgeon.

HMAS TAMBAR HIT BY "FRIENDLY FIRE" FROM FORT COWAN, MORETON ISLAND

On 4 March 1942 an unfortunate accident occurred, when the auxiliary minesweeper *HMAS Tambar* was fired on by the Examination Battery at Fort Cowan on Moreton Island. There was a mix up in the code signals for identification of the vessel and the examination Battery at Cowan Cowan was ordered to fire a shot from one of their 6 inch BL Mark VI guns across the bow of the unidentified "intruder". The gun was under the control of Lieutenant E. Bingham, RAA. The shell that was fired was apparently a practice round filled with plaster of paris.

Unfortunately the shell struck just below the wooden decking of the gun platform. Able Seaman Archibald E. Bartch (PA1922) of the anchor party was hit by the shell and was killed instantly whilst he was painting underneath the gun platform.

The shell then flew at head height across the forward well deck, passing through the Captain's Cabin severely injuring Steward Eric R. Harrison (S4788). It then passed into the chart room where it severed both legs of Warrant Officer Henry Theeman. Stoker Arthur Forwood, who was twelve feet away from Theeman, also had his face cut by metal fragments.

The main remains of the shell then went through the other cabin wall and flew past the funnel, near where Able Seaman Thomson was painting.

It then slammed through the steel walls of the radio room just missing the radio operator. It then passed through the starboard wall of the radio room, across the



Kokoda Day Service at Sherwood Indooroopilly RSL.

Left

Mike Griffin with Lantana sprigs to place on memorial. It is believed the raw troops moving up on to the start of the track found the smell of lantana reminded them of the bush at home. For many years the Sub Branch has honoured their memory by laying sprigs of lantana on Kokoda Day.



Left

Phil Ainsworth lays a wreath on behalf of the Association.



The doctor asked me to spend at least one hour per day on the treadmill.

DURING THE MIDDLE AGES THEY CELEBRATED THE END OF THE PLAGUE WITH WINE AND ORGIES DOES ANYONE KNOW IF THEY HAVE ANYTHING LIKE THAT PLANNED WHEN THIS ONE ENDS?

deck through the railings before leaving the ship and plunging into the sea.

Warrant Officer Theeman later died as a result of his injuries during the journey to the wharf at Pinkenba. Eric Harrison died of his wounds that night in Rosemount Hospital. Other crew members, including Able Seaman Bert Degen, received lacerations and flesh wounds.

HMAS Tambar was on a routine patrol at the time of this incident. The Commanding Officer of *HMAS Tambar* was Lieutenant J.H.P. Dixon, RANR. *HMAS Tambar* was part of Mine-sweeping Group 74 and was based in Brisbane. *HMAS Kianga* was also part of the same group.

The military authorities decided to cover up the incident so as not to affect morale in the services. "*Tambar's*" crew was dispersed throughout the RAN immediately after the funeral of their shipmates. The captain was given a new ship to command and the "*Tambar*" was later paid off as a minesweeper. It was used as a boom defence vessel later in the war.

Peter Dunn. Australia @ War



Early 1960's. A long house in the Upper Chimbu— used for visitor accommodation during a sing-sing

FUNCTION DATES

Sat 10 Oct. Sat 21 Nov.

Executive Committee Meeting Museum 10am.
Members always welcome. BYO lunch

Sat 24 Oct.

Association AGM at Museum 10am
followed by free BBQ

NOTE There may be Covid restrictions in place at that time so please contact President, Vice President or Secretary close to the event if you intend to be present.

The Association would like to thank King & Co Property Consultants for its continuing support, including the printing of this edition, together with the past 66 issues of Harim Tok Tok.

Its contribution is much appreciated.

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Web site. www.pngvr.weebly.com

Over the past few months your Webmaster, Trevor Connell and his Assistant, Richard Muir, have been busy putting in an enormous amount of new photos under headings such as:-

- NGVR Photos—before, during and post WW11.
- Anzac Days
- Montevideo Maru Services
- Exercise Steele Tuff
- Unit and General Photos
- Dining Nights
- PNGVR Annual Camps
- Miscellaneous Photos
- Annual General Meetings
- Reserve Forces Day.

WANTED - MISSING NAMES

Please have a look at the sites and if you can identify people not named advise Facebook Master above.