

## PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

Good news!! Our traditional Brisbane Anzac Day March and Reunion will be held Sunday 25 April 2021. We will assemble in Charlotte Street near George Street at 10.40am. The Order of March is RAAF, RAN and Army. We are listed at number 67. Dress will be Anzac Day Dress with large medals. The details are included in a separate sheet with this issue of HTT. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at this year's ANZAC March in Brisbane. Please change your diary to the new arrangements now.

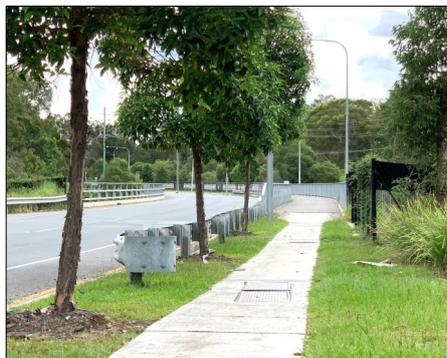
After our Saturday 20 February Committee meeting Councillor Sarah Hutton, our local Jamboree Ward representative, visited us to meet the committee members and discuss ways in which she and her office may be of assistance to our Association. She confirmed the change of zoning of the Wacol Precinct remains to be completed. The proposed zoning will allow the legal enclosure of and provide for the exclusive use of the Wacol precinct. Councillor Hutton's marketing and PR background were shown in her suggestions for us to improve our brand by approaching surrounding businesses and inviting schools and other groups within Jamboree and contiguous Council Wards. This may encourage sponsorships and donations from the businesses and more visitors to the Museum. The committee endorsed these suggestions.

A photograph of the committee, less Phil Ainsworth who took the photo, with Councillor Sarah Hutton was taken to record the event.



Lt Frank Holland MBE in 1944

once the appropriate road signs are manufactured and installed later this year. Our founding Museum Curator, John Holland, proposed this naming in honour of his father Frank some time before John's passing. Councillor Charles Strunk of Forest Lake Ward



Councillor Hutton also told us that the name of the nearby bridge over Bullock Head Creek linking Boundary Road between Richlands and Wacol is now the "Frank Holland MBE Bridge". This was approved by BCC on 10 February 2021. We plan to hold an unveiling ceremony

warded to members and friends when available.

We intend celebrating the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the formation of PNGVR. Although moves were made to establish PNGVR in 1950, the actual forming was in 1951. This event will be held in our Museum Precincts Wacol, Brisbane early September. Again, details will be made available as they come to hand.

Although he was neither a member of NGVR, PNGVR or the Association, I advise the passing of an outstanding Australian, Fred Kaad earlier this month, his funeral service was held on 26 February in Sydney. After leaving school, he served in ANGAU, transferred to the Administration and was a giant in the post war history of PNG. When he was District Commissioner in Madang, an aircraft accident left him a paraplegic but this did not deter Fred. Although little known in Australia, he had an illustrious career and died aged 100, RIP.

## Phil Ainsworth, March 2021

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championed the proposal and former Jamboree Ward Councillor Matthew Bourke supported the cause. Sarah followed up after Matthew retired and when she won the Ward election.

Our annual Montevideo Maru Memorial Service will be held at the Brisbane Cenotaph commencing 10am Thursday 1 July 2021, please diary the date and time. This will be the 79<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the loss of 1054 Australian POWs and civilian internees when the ship was sunk by US Submarine Sturgeon. Details will be for-

## Flight Out of Hell: The Harrowing Bombing Mission to Kavieng

by Steven D. Smith

In the predawn darkness of Dobodura, New Guinea, 2nd Lt. William J. Smith of the U.S. Army Air Corps was roughly awakened by a noncom announcing that it was time to get dressed and get to the mess tent for breakfast.

Smith had not slept well, having spent most of the night fighting mosquitoes that had managed to get inside his cot's netting. The nervous anticipation of flying another combat mission in the morning did not exactly make for peaceful slumber either. Five days earlier, eight North American B-25D Mitchell medium bombers of the 71st Bomb Squadron, 38th Bomb Group, Fifth Army Air Force had flown north over the Owen Stanley Mountains from their permanent base near Port Moresby to Dobodura, their temporary base of operations. The 38th Bomb Group, known as the "Sun Setters," was composed of the 71st, 405th, 822nd, and 823rd Squadrons, and 16 other Mitchells from the 38th would join today's mission. Their target on February, 15, 1944, was Kavieng Township on the northern tip of New Ireland, deep in Japanese-held territory. A long flight lay ahead of the Army aviators, even from this forward airstrip.

Lt Smith, or "Smitty," as he was known to his buddies, made the short walk to the briefing tent with the other pilots and crew members, all of whom keenly appreciated the danger of today's mission. The briefing officer reminded all that Kavieng would be "target rich" as an extremely important logistical staging base for Japanese installations in New Guinea and the Bismarck Archipelago. It served as a major supply depot and boasted an excellent harbor, an airfield, and an aircraft assembly facility. Japanese planners knew that if the empire was to maintain any offensive capability in the Southwest Pacific its outposts had to be supplied with replacement fighters and bombers. These aircraft were being assembled at Kavieng to be flown south to Rabaul.

Equally essential supplies, replacement parts, and flight personnel were transported from Kavieng by barges, freighters, and even cargo submarines. General Douglas MacArthur and the commander of the Fifth Army Air Force, Lt. Gen. George C. Kenney, were determined to cut off armaments and supplies by executing several intense air raids on Kavieng. This day's mission would not be the first raid on Kavieng by the Fifth. Consolidated B-24 Liberator high-altitude bomber attacks had been moderately successful in recent days, both in making the Kavieng airstrip a useless patch of bomb craters and in smashing local air power. But Kenney, a superb strategist and leader, knew the need for total neutralization of the target would demand the Fifth Air Force's signature low-altitude bombing and strafing. The Japanese anticipated these additional low-level raids and meant to employ antiaircraft batteries directed by newly installed radar to defend all approaches to the base. Kavieng's gunners felt confident that the murderous volume of flak they could deliver in the relatively confined areas of their base would exact a deadly toll in U.S. bombers and flyers.

The crews were informed that if missions like today's were successful, many of the Japanese bases in New Guinea could then be bypassed without threat of attack from the rear. Rabaul's huge garrison, over 80,000 men, would be further reduced to an ineffectual corps of castaways, and any shipping in its harbor, absent air cover, would be trapped in port. The once mighty Rabaul military complex would "wither on the vine" and be reduced to a de facto POW camp. The briefing ended with the officer reminding the pilots that fuel preservation was important as the distance to the northern tip of New Ireland would stretch the limits of the range of the bombers. Smith had to admit that the marathon mission today would probably be much more difficult than the 24 previous missions he had survived since arriving in New Guinea the previous year.



Mitchell B-25D

Lieutenant Smith walked around the Mitchell B-25D medium bomber to which he had been assigned, number J33F, plane 306 of the 71st Squadron, and closely checked it over before takeoff. He had never flown in this particular plane and wondered whether its nickname, *Pissonit*,

which was emblazoned on the nose, referred to what the bomber was going to do to the enemy or the frustration it had previously given other crews.

Smith admired the firepower the bomber boasted as a result of the now standard modifications made in theatre at Brisbane, Australia. The Plexiglas nose of the aircraft had been refitted with four additional forward-firing .50-caliber machine guns. With the two blister pack .50s on each side of the cockpit and the top twin turret facing forward, the B-25D could lay down withering fire on a strafing run. The aircraft could deliver two tons of ordinance and on this mission would carry four 500-pound high explosive bombs. Smith glanced around the airfield and saw it swarming with activity as the other crews made their final preparations. At 7:45 am, the pilots, 1st Lt. Eugene Benson and Smith, taxied to their place in the flight line for takeoff. The airmen heard the R2600-13 Wright radial engines roar and felt their power as the twin engine Mitchell gathered speed and lifted into the brightening Pacific sky.

At Lineman Bay, Finschhafen, New Guinea, Navy Lieutenant Nathan Green Gordon of Patrol Squadron 34, Fleet Air Wing 17 was busy making flight preparations for today's mission. Gordon, who hailed from Morrilton, Arkansas, had flown many missions with the "Black Cats," a squadron of Consolidated PB5-5 Catalina flying boats painted flat black for stealth purposes in night action. *The Dumbo*, as the PB5 was lovingly called, was a large aircraft: 21 feet high, 63 feet long, with a wingspan of 104 feet. The plane had an incredible range of over 2,500 miles and was employed in multiple roles—executing reconnaissance flights, flying patrol duties, and making nocturnal bombing raids.

Today, however, Gordon was assigned to carry out another facet of the wing's mission statement. He would fly his PB5, *Arkansas Traveler*, and orbit off Kavieng, New Ireland, to provide search and rescue cover for a major Army Air Corps bombing mission. Gordon had been briefed that several squadrons of B-25 Mitchell and Douglas A-20 Havoc light bombers would make a strike on the heavily defended base and that planes could go down in surrounding waters.

Gordon ordered the crew to cast off the Cat's moorings, and he taxied into the bay for takeoff. The PB5 was not a particularly handsome aircraft and was slow, with a cruising speed of only 125 miles per hour. Gordon was not concerned about her speed, as he knew she was extremely tough and could reliably perform rescue work even in rough seas. From past patrol and bombing missions, he knew she could absorb a lot of punishment and still make it home. He had all the confidence in the world in the big Cat and in his experienced and close-knit crew of eight: two pilots, a navigator, a radioman, three gunners, and a flight mechanic.

Gordon's trip to New Ireland was uneventful, but he was grateful for the four Republic P-47 Thunderbolt fighters covering him. Japanese fighters, although seen less frequently in recent months, could appear at the most inopportune time. After a long flight to the predetermined position, the *Traveler* took station well out to sea off the tip of New Ireland and idled at 2,000 feet. Gordon cast a glance down at the ocean, and the reports of 12 to 16 foot seas, trough to crest, were verified. Although the weather was clear and visibility unlimited, he sincerely hoped he would

not have to force a landing in those swells.

Eight planes of the 71st Bomb Squadron, nicknamed the Wolf Pack, along with eight other B-25's of the 405th Green Dragons Squadron and eight Mitchells from the 823rd Terrible Tigers Squadron passed over Sand Island, the rendezvous point for this mission. There they joined elements of all four B-25 squadrons of the 345th Bomb Group, called the Air Apaches, and several squadrons of A-20 Havocs from the 3rd Bomb Group. The formation, designated mission number 46D-1, circled and picked up its fighter escort of Lockheed P-38 Lightnings. As *Pissonit* continued to climb in formation,



A-20 Havoc

Benson manned the controls and Smith conversed with Hollie Rushing, the navigator. Farther back in the plane, behind the bomb bay, the radioman, Claude Healan, and the tail gunner, Albert Gross, made ready their stations as the planes cruised to-

ward the target.

The other 38th Bomb Group squadrons would follow the two groups of planes from the Wolf Pack, and the 498th, 499th, 500th, and 501st Squadrons from the Air Apaches would then roar in to continue the pounding. The plane groups would come across in 30-second intervals, and *Pissonit* was to be in the second four-some of the raid. The formation would approach from the south, and the planes would fly up the New Ireland chain, making a northwesterly run at the base.

At 11:15 am, Smith's four-plane group started its bombing and strafing attack, and the big .50s let loose a blistering barrage in unison. With four planes abreast a wide bombing swath was assured, and the selection of individual targets was not a necessity. Smith released *Pissonit's* payload. The first flight of Mitchells had struck the mark, and dense black smoke already rose from the warehouses at the main wharf. The Japanese return fire was heavy with everything from small arms to 5-inch artillery shells being thrown skyward.

As Benson passed over the target, Smith heard a sharp clap to his left and a simultaneous jolt. Immediately, the left engine burst into flames. Rushing quickly pulled the Lux fire extinguisher, and the fire was chemically suffocated. But then another louder explosion shook the plane as flak hit the fuselage, just forward of where the radioman would be located. The 200-gallon auxiliary gas tank, called a Tokyo tank, which had been installed for extra range, had been ignited and now was a blowtorch with a six-foot plume of flame.

This second explosion had also ruptured the hydraulic lines, causing the landing gear to drop and creating a sudden drop in air-speed. The left landing wheels caught on fire and in turn reignited the left engine. Captain Fred Corning of Seattle, Washington, flying the B-25 immediately to *Pissonit's* left, saw the mortally wounded plane streaming flames and thick smoke and gravely mumbled to nobody in particular, "I'll never see those guys again."

It was obvious to Smith that the only option now was to ditch the plane in the ocean. But Benson, much to Smith's amazement, pulled the yoke back and tersely shouted, "We have to gain altitude!" Apparently it was the senior pilot's desire to put as much distance between them and potential Japanese captors as possible. It was well known to Allied aviators that capture certainly meant brutal interrogation and the horrors of a POW camp, while immediate execution was an equally likely probability. Gaining altitude would perhaps provide a longer glide path for the plane, but Smith realized that the engine fire would soon burn the left wing in two, making *Pissonit* a spiralling death trap. He barked at Benson that they had to put the aircraft down right away. When Benson ignored him, a struggle ensued as the two pilots briefly

wrestled at their respective dual controls for command of the plane. No words were exchanged, and Benson soon relinquished the flying to the junior officer.

Smith's immediate worry was to ditch safely in the ocean and hopefully get far enough away from the coastline to escape Japanese fire or immediate capture. He gave full power to his right engine and banked to the left, going past Nusa Island just beyond Kavieng harbor. Smith told the crew to brace for a ditched landing and silently wondered if the two men in the rear of the plane were even alive to hear him. Only seconds to touchdown, Smith felt a presence behind him and glanced back quickly toward the bomb bay. He saw tail gunner Gross crawling toward the cockpit over the flaming gas tank. He had been hideously burned.

Smith forced himself to focus on the approaching waves as he cut the right engine and struggled to hold up the nose of the plane. With no hydraulics Smith had no control of the flaps, but providence smiled upon them as the plane slid into a trough instead of slamming into a wall of pitching ocean. The jolt was still tremendous, but the plane stopped upright and for the moment was floating. Burning aviation fuel quickly spread across the water around the wreck.

The most direct avenue of escape from the cockpit was a hatch located over the co-pilot's seat, and Benson quickly removed his seat harnesses and leapt up to push open the hatch. He and Rushing hurriedly began to scramble for the exit, literally stepping on Smith as they climbed up and out. Smith looked back again to where he had last seen Gross, but he was nowhere in sight. The Mitchell was quickly flooding, and Smith spun out of his seat to search for Gross. He saw that the entry hatch located on the bottom of the fuselage, just behind the cockpit, had been forced open by the crash. Gross had apparently been thrown forward and down and then was swept or suctioned out into the ocean. Smith could see no sign of him, or Healan, but knew he had but seconds until the plane sank. Only later would he discover that radioman Healan had tried to parachute from the B-25—a fatal attempt at an altitude of 75 feet.

Smith grabbed his parachute and forced it through the escape hatch. He followed it out and stood up on the nose of the plane ready to jump away from it, but burning aviation fuel surrounded the plane. He knew he could dive underwater, but could he stay under until he reached open water? He instinctively looked back at the cockpit as the air forced from the its interior made an eerie moaning sound. Suddenly, an explosion within the plane blew out the Plexiglas nose and lifted him up and fortuitously out over the fiery surface.

Dazed, the 21-year-old aviator came to the surface and winced as his face began stinging in the salty water. Smith angrily noted that his moustache and eyebrows were no longer on his face, singed off by the explosion. Benson and Rushing swam toward him. The three survivors then kicked and paddled away from the plane, fearing further explosions were imminent. *Pissonit* sank with a bubbly hiss and steamy sizzle as burning metal met the water.

Smith's parachute provided the group some extra buoyancy and served as something to which the bedraggled aviators could cling to stay together. They all had on their Mae West life jackets, so drowning was not an immediate concern. Taking personal inventory, Smith realized that the front of his left leg from ankle to knee had been raked open by the crash impact. Smith found a tube of lip balm in a pocket and, forcing its entire contents into his hands, made a salve of sorts to spread on his face. Benson was unhurt, and Rushing had minor burns, but like Smith they were understandably shaken. They were approximately one mile out from Kavieng without a raft, food, or water and were



aimlessly drifting in the shark-infested waters of the Bismarck Sea, and his leg was bleeding. If the tide or currents took them to shore they would be captured, and if they were taken out to sea their prospects

of survival were equally bleak.

They could already see that their raid was a major success. Fires raged, and five columns of smoke rose from Kavieng as explosions continued to rock the harbor. Japanese naval and merchant vessels dotted the waters of the harbor, all partially submerged from this and previous raids. The crew could see more U.S. bombers raining additional destruction on the target, but that was little solace as they cast nervous glances toward the beach and made squinting searches skyward for some form of rescue. In a matter of minutes B-25's flew over the downed U.S. fliers, leading them to wave and shout wildly at possible salvation. Instead of delivering hope, the planes brought them horror when anxious gunners fired on them, apparently thinking they were Japanese sailors who had abandoned one of the ships in the harbor. Efforts to dive below the waves to escape the friendly fire were thwarted by their life jackets, but the gunners' aim was off, and the .50-caliber rounds fortunately missed.

Unknown to the downed flyers of the Wolf Pack, other U.S. bombers were experiencing life and death struggles of their own. The B-25s of the 345th were in the process of bombing the area of Kavieng called Chinatown, which included the main warehouse facilities and fuel storage areas. The 38th had left these supply dumps a blazing inferno that created billowing clouds of blinding smoke, as *Pissonit's* surviving crew could testify. Scores of tires, 55-gallon drums of gasoline, and other Japanese military goods exploded upward among the planes of the 500th Squadron as they roared overhead. These missiles, or perhaps bursting flak, hit the right engine of *Jack Rabbit Express* flown by Lieutenant Thane Hecox. The plane suddenly veered to the right and downward, crashing in a fireball at the edge of Chinatown. All aboard were killed, including Captain Sylvester A. Hoffman, who was on his last mission before returning to the States.

The operations officer for the 500th, Captain William J. Cavoli, led a group of three B-25s just to the right of Hecox's flight. He and co-pilot 2nd Lt. George H. Braun flew a B-25 that bore no nickname, identified only by the serial number 41-30531. As they flew into the maelstrom, Cavoli was forced to rely on his instruments because of the dense smoke. As his plane was enveloped by the blackness, it was rocked by a direct hit to the right engine. The engine exploded in flames, and aviation fuel spread the fire over the wing and down the length of the right side of the fuselage.

As the B-25 returned to daylight the crew was slammed by suffocating heat as pieces of the engine nacelle and wing melted and fell away. As the ground rushed up toward them, Cavoli and Braun struggled at the controls to keep the dying plane airborne until they could reach the ocean. They managed to dodge palms, cleared the beach, and only 600 yards from the shoreline they ditched, nose up. The Mitchell initially skipped lightly off the water, but on the next contact the aircraft gouged to a grinding halt in a huge column of spray.

The B-25's nose was partially torn away, and the incoming sea rushed in with such force that the material was torn from the navigator's pants legs. Braun jettisoned the life raft, and the two pilots gathered and rescued the other crew from the wreckage. Incredibly, all six men aboard had survived, although some suffered deep cuts and one a severely broken arm. After the emergency kits were retrieved, they paddled furiously to escape the sinking plane.

At Chinatown the fires burned ever higher, but the punishment by the Fifth Air Force continued. Major Chester Coltharp, squadron commander, led the 498th over the target in Princess Pat, a B-25 sporting the falcon head nose art adopted by the squadron. The planes dropped 59 additional 500-pound bombs. More than a dozen Japanese floatplanes anchored at the shore were shredded, a large wharf was destroyed, and a 2,000-ton freighter was sunk. Debris continued to be launched by the surface explosions, and some U.S. planes, in an effort to avoid this danger, pulled up, slowing their B-25's and presenting easy targets to the angry Japanese gunners below.

*Gremlin's Holiday*, flown by 1st Lt. Edgar R. Cavin, was one such plane. Inside the top turret of the plane sat Staff Sergeant David B. McCready, who fired away with his twin .50s at Japanese sailors on the deck of a submarine below. Japanese incendiary shells suddenly opened up the bottom of the fuselage and ignited the auxiliary gas tank. The resulting explosion shot the turret dome up and away, and McCready instantly lost his helmet, headset, and goggles in the slipstream. The force of the wind scoured the sergeant's head and face while simultaneously the fire below threatened to burn his lower body. The gunner desperately backed down out of his compromised position and painfully scrambled forward toward the radio compartment.



PB-Y Catalina

Captain Robert G. Huff, the squadron adjutant and tent mate of Major Coltharp, was an unauthorized passenger on *Gremlin's Holiday*. As a ground officer he had always wanted to witness combat and had convinced Cavin to let him come along. After feeling the concussion of the explosion, he instantly wished he had stayed at Dobodura. Cavin realized the fire that McCready had sought to escape was spreading and intensifying. Huff and Staff Sergeant Lawrence Herbst tried in vain to extinguish the blaze. After observing the advancing fire himself, 2nd Lt. Elmer "Jeb" Kirkland, the co-pilot, warned Cavin they had to immediately ditch *Gremlin's Holiday*.

In the radio compartment Technical Sergeant Fred Arnett gently held the burned McCready in his arms and braced for the impact of the imminent crash. The plane stalled and went in nose first, going under the waves and then surging back to the surface like a porpoise. The pilots and Herbst escaped via the cockpit hatch, while Huff had to swim underwater to use the same exit. McCready and Arnett had been knocked briefly unconscious by the crash but regained their senses quickly with the horrible realization they were underwater. After some desperate struggles with straps, belts, and underwater wreckage they exited the hole ripped out of the bottom of the aircraft and with lungs bursting popped to the surface.

The crew had all survived the crash, but not without serious injuries. Huff was wounded with three broken lumbar bones and a deep gash to his leg, while Arnett had suffered a broken shoulder and a slash down his face that exposed teeth and bare cheekbone. McCready was in terrible pain with a compound fracture of the right ankle, a deep gash to his hipbone, and severely burned arms and hands. Soon other planes of the squadron circled and dropped survival kits and bright yellow rafts to their brethren swimming below.

At 11 am, 24-year-old Nathan Gordon received the first confirmation that his day was indeed going to be very busy. Even from his distant vantage point the rising columns of smoke over Kavieng were easily seen. The radio traffic provided the news of crashed planes, ditched aircraft, and crews in the water. The first call for Gardenia Six, his call sign, came from an Army-based radio at Cape Gloucester, New Britain, that relayed a message from a returning B-25 that multiple aircraft were down. But by that time Lieutenant Gordon was already approaching the township looking for rafts, wreckage, or any sign of survivors in the water.

Gordon suddenly noticed the tell-tale yellow-orange dye that downed aviators used to mark their positions. As he took the big Catalina down for a closer look he spotted oil on the water and decided to pick up anybody he might locate. He realized that the ocean landing he was about to make would be more difficult than any he had ever attempted. If anything, the wind had picked up and the height of the waves had grown.

It was essential that Gordon set *Arkansas Traveler* down with the bow high and the stern touching the surface first. This method of landing employed water resistance to slow the speed of the Cat and improve the accuracy and safety of the touchdown. But successfully pulling off this manoeuvre would be much more difficult because of the necessity of landing on the down slope of the big swells to avoid ploughing into a wall of seawater. Regardless of Gordon's training and actual experience, the first landing was rough. Upon the hard impact the 16-year-old Catalina popped several rivets in the hull. The plane started taking on water through the rivet holes. Fortunately, the damage was not serious, and *Arkansas Traveler* taxied quickly toward the dye. As they slowly moved through the debris field of a crash they saw an object and believed it was an aviator, but as they drew near they saw it was a partially deflated Army Air Corps raft. There were no survivors to be found. Gordon sadly shook his head and opened the throttle, running through the dye still in the water. It was frustrating to know that this was one crew he could not rescue.

As the *Traveler* gained altitude it was spotted by Captain Tony Chiappe, the operations officer of the 498th, flying above in his Mitchell, *Old Baldy*. Chiappe had left Major Coltharp to circle Cavin's crew and discourage Japanese attempts at capture while he searched for the PBY. Although radio problems kept Chiappe and Gordon from directly talking, hand signals and relays through the P-47s got the message across that the Catalina should follow his B-25. Gordon quickly flew the short distance and dropped two smoke flares to mark the location of Gremlin Holiday's survivors: five crew members and one stowaway.

Gordon made a much better landing this time and taxied toward two rafts that had been tied together. Standard rescue procedure called for the plane to be stationary and let the lighter object, in this case the rafts, come to the plane. However, this was certainly not a standard rescue as the shells falling from the Japanese shore batteries reminded everyone. The crew threw a heaving line to the water-soaked aviators, which they caught on the first attempt. But the forward motion



P-47 Thunderbolt

of the plane with its props still turning was too great. It might actually drown the men clinging to the rope. Gordon ordered the line cut and realized that he would have to kill the engines. He did not want to drown the people he was seeking to save; nor did he

want the heavy seas to lift weakened men into the still turning props. As Japanese fire bracketed the big Cat, Gordon's mind raced ahead, imagining their horrible condition if the engines did not start.

Gordon taxied back to the wide-eyed men in the water. Ensign Jack Kelley was sent to the port blister, where the waterlogged survivors would be taken aboard. Paul Germeau, the strongest man on board, was waiting there to pull them into the Catalina.

Cavin's men caught another line, and Gordon's props slowed and then stopped altogether. Japanese machine-gun fire sprayed the water nearby. Only the lifting and pitching of the plane in the high seas confounded the aim of the Japanese gunners. The crew of *Gremlin's Holiday* was hard to wrestle aboard. The men were helpless dead weight and were difficult to grip as they were coated in the oil from their downed aircraft. Huff and McCready were especially tough to handle with their severe injuries. One by one, they wriggled, rolled, and were manhandled aboard. Cavin, the last of his group, fell through the blister window, and the rafts were cast off.

The shells fell closer now, and Gordon knew that the Japanese artillery would soon zero in if they did not quickly get back in the air. The pilot pushed the starter buttons, and with a belch of black smoke the engines came to life. Slapping the waves as she gathered speed, the plane rose off into the smoke-filled skies of Kavieng.

It had now been over two hours since Smith, Benson, and Rushing had gone into the water. The yellow-orange dye from the stain canisters rigged to their Mae West's had long since dissipated. The dye was designed not only to give visibility to rescuers, but also was thought to serve as a shark repellent. The high swells provided a good vantage point when the survivors were carried to the crest, but upon sliding down into a trough there was no visibility at all. From time to time they had cast anxious glances down in the clear water, mistaking shadows for sharks.

Suddenly, the three heard planes approaching. Were they friend or foe, and if they were friends would they fire on them again? Straining their eyes as they looked into the mid-day tropical sun, Smith realized that they were indeed good guys, huge P-47 Thunderbolt fighters. Quickly they took the chrome mirrors attached to their life vests and flashed them toward the fighter planes overhead. Their hearts leaped as the P-47s dove toward them and began to run a tight circle around their position, this time with no ill intent. It was obvious they were now found, but their rescue still seemed highly improbable.

The *Traveler* followed the P-47s' directions to the three bobbing figures on the water. Gordon was too close to Kavieng, and the enemy had duly noted his presence. As he moved toward the water and a third landing, he did so through a hail of tracers. The crew had taken pencils and inserted them into the sprung rivet holes, intentionally breaking them off in an effort to plug the leaks. The old Cat certainly did not need any new holes caused by enemy munitions. *Traveler's* buoyant bow eased down a mound of seawater, and the plane settled on a surface whipped into froth by wind, waves, and Japanese shells.

Once again the props were killed, and the crew watched as Germeau coaxed the heaving line under the wing toward the men in the water. The rocking ocean banged the three against the side of the hull, but they came in quickly, sliding roughly over the blister window's coating. Smith joined the increasingly cramped group inside. Again, the PBY's engines reliably sprang to life.

*Traveler* lurched forward, and in her wake geysers rose from Japanese gunfire. Gordon knew that a few more seconds on the rescue scene would have spelled disaster for the plane and its occupants. The tough old bird groaned with all the extra weight but proudly left the sea again. As he lay back against the plane's bulkhead, Smith allowed the desperate hope of

survival to transform into a sweet reality.

The P-47s had to depart, as their remaining fuel would barely get them home. Gordon followed their path and had already put 10 miles between burning Kavieng and *Traveler*. Once again the now familiar voice of Major Coltharp crackled over the PBV's radio and announced that the major had spotted another ditched B-25 only 600 yards off the beach. Gordon did not want to accept what he was hearing, and he began to calculate the mounting odds against surviving another rescue attempt. Nathan Gordon's character did not, however, allow the option to cut and run become viable. He realized he could not leave any Americans to the mercy of the Japanese.

In the rear of the PBV, Smith immediately noticed *Traveler* was executing a gradual wide turn back toward Kavieng. He squeezed his eyes tightly shut and grimaced because he knew they must be headed back for another rescue attempt. The anguished thought that Gordon was absolutely crazy to put them all in such great peril was immediately erased with his guilty realization that Gordon had taken the same risk to pick up *Pissonit's* survivors.

With *Princess Pat* flying cover, *Arkansas Traveler* circled Captain Cavoli's crew in Kavieng harbor. Nate Gordon flew right over amazed Japanese gunners temporarily stunned into inaction. He made his best landing of the day, a good thing considering the plane's compromised bow plates, coming to a stop within a few yards of the rafts. Immediately, the Catalina became a duck in a shooting gallery as the shoreline lit up with muzzle flashes. The fire was so intense that Gordon was sorely tempted to push the throttles forward and simply take off again. Shells landed all about the plane, and he could attribute their current safety only to the Almighty's protection. In record time six more passengers were hauled aboard as the fear of getting killed by enemy fire overcame pain and fatigue.

The starboard engine immediately restarted, but the portside engine refused to turn over. The plane was now running in a circle with Japanese shells getting ever closer. Gordon knocked the hands of Ensign Walter L. Patrick, his co-pilot, away from the starter button. It was evident to Gordon that one of the engines was flooded. They waited for a couple of minutes, which to every occupant on board seemed more like several hours. Patrick finally engaged the starter again, and the prop blades started moving, slowly at first, then picked up speed until finally the blade tips were a blur. Again, with a payload grossly beyond the norm, Gordon, his other seven crewmembers, and 15 Army aviators left the heaving ocean in the faithful *Arkansas Traveler*.

Coltharp, coming alongside, wagged his B-25's wings in acknowledgment of Gordon's skill and bravery. Coltharp was magnificent on this day as well. He had remained over the target searching for survivors and flying cover until it was doubtful his plane had the fuel left to get home. Indeed, the *Princess Pat* would have to make an emergency landing at Cape Gloucester with only 10 gallons of gas in her tanks. Major Chester Coltharp later received the Distinguished Service Cross.

Four times Gordon had put his plane down on the rough waters of the Bismarck Sea under heavy Japanese fire and had survived. He was relieved to be heading back to the safety of Allied-controlled skies and to Finschhafen. Now out of harm's way, the crew of *Traveler* began to realize the enormity of what they had done. They had executed perhaps the finest air/sea rescue of the Pacific War and had in all likelihood saved the lives of 15 men. Strangely, as *Traveler* reached cruising altitude, those rescued and many of the crew, including Gordon, felt lightheaded and jittery, and some could not even light cigarettes because their hands were trembling. Gordon would soon have the satisfaction of delivering his cargo of aviators back to the naval hospital and safety.

With a total of 23 men on board, *Traveler* was fully packed. Lieutenant Smith felt a mixture of pain, relief, grief, exhaustion,

wonderment, and deep gratitude. Looking around at his fellow rescued flyers, Smith broadly smiled as he recognized a face he had not seen in some time. Lieutenant Jed Kirkland, co-pilot of *Gremlin's Holiday*, met Smith's gaze at the same time, and they both laughed. Manoeuvring toward each other, they embraced and talked excitedly. Lieutenants Smith and Kirkland had become fast friends at flight school in Columbia, South Carolina, but were not even aware that they were in the same theatre of action. But in war, even the joy of a miraculous rescue often is fleeting. Kirkland was killed in action six weeks later.

Mission 46D-1 was a complete success. Reconnaissance photos revealed total devastation; the supply dumps and warehouse area at Kavieng burned for several days, and smoke was visible for 70 miles. The success came at a high price: two B-25s from the 38th, three from the 345th, and three Grim Reaper A-20s. Kavieng and its facilities were completely destroyed, and the base would remain meaningless for the remainder of the war. The capabilities of the Japanese at Rabaul were further nullified, and the invasion of the Admiralty Islands could be carried out.

Navy medical corpsmen at Finschhafen quickly but carefully evacuated the badly wounded. Smith, against his protests, was made to stay overnight in the Navy hospital for treatment of his burns and his leg wound. A Navy Seabee introduced Smith to the delights of the cafeteria the following morning. There he enjoyed the best food he had tasted since his training days in Australia, and the first ice cream he had eaten in many months. Before noon, the 71st Squadron commander flew over in a fat cat, a Mitchell stripped of armament and used for transport only, and ferried *Pissonit's* crew back to the Seventeen Mile airbase. As they returned Smith had a profound regret that he had not had the opportunity to personally thank that brave pilot of the PBV for rescuing him. He had attempted to do so but had been told that Gordon had already left for another mission.

Square-jawed, blond-haired Nathan Gordon, whose courage, strength, skill, and iron will were well demonstrated by the multiple rescues made that day, was presented America's highest military decoration, the Medal of Honour. He was indeed the only PBV pilot given this award in World War II and the first Navy man in the Southwest Pacific to receive the award.

Admiral William F. Bull Halsey stated, "Please express my admiration to that saga writing Cat crew. This rescue was truly one of the most remarkable feats of the war." Gordon would survive the war and return to his native Arkansas, ultimately serving as lieutenant governor of his beloved state for 20 consecutive years. He practiced law until he died at the age of 92 in September 2008.

William J. Smith flew 46 more combat missions over New Guinea, the Dutch East Indies, Biak, Morotai, and the Philippines. He survived both "the best landing I ever made" while a 100-pound parafrag bomb was hung up in his bomb bay, and having a piece of shrapnel go through his plane's windshield just over his head. He was promoted to captain before his 23rd birthday and became the 71st Squadron Operations Officer.

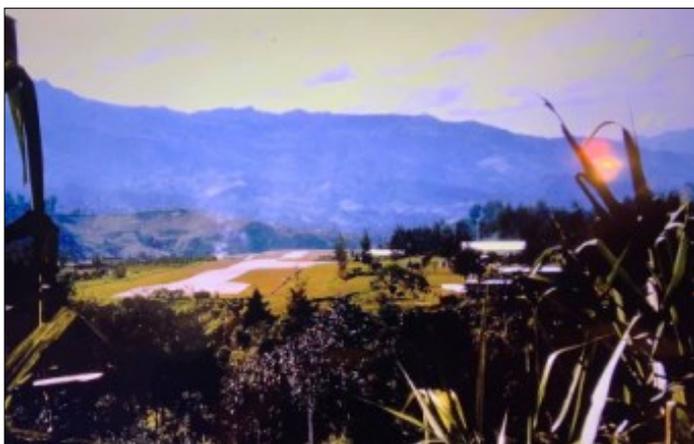
General Kenney personally awarded Smith the Purple Heart, the Distinguished Flying Cross, and the Air Medal. After the war Smith graduated from Marshall University and from Southern Theological Seminary and became a Baptist minister in 1950. He served for more than 50 years in pastorates in Kentucky, Alabama, Louisiana, and Georgia.

At long last, in 1999, Reverend Smith was able to express his gratitude to Nathan Gordon by phone. This "thank you" call developed into a long and satisfying discussion of wartime experiences and crossed paths in the South Pacific more than half a century earlier. After retirement, and for more than 20 years, Smith served as a volunteer chaplain to hundreds of

U.S. Army basic trainees at Fort Benning, Georgia. In March 2002, Smith was able to fly in a B-25J nicknamed *Panchito* at the invitation of its owner, Mr. Larry Kelley, for the first time in 57 years, and in fact on his 80th birthday!

Bill Smith was hesitant to talk about wartime experiences but did often say that he learned one very important lesson from Navy pilot Nathan Gordon that day: never give up on rescuing anyone. Captain William J. Smith, a veteran of 72 wartime missions, died on December 23, 2010, three months before his 89th birthday. On his bedside table were his well-worn Bible and a mahogany model of his beloved B-25.

Warfare History Network.com. 20.3.2019



Wabag Airstrip, Enga Province, PNG. 6,000 ft, 1830m.

### The Broad Arrow

Although not as common as it once was, the Broad Arrow is still in use in the Australian Army and is used to identify Defence owned property. It has now been embellished by adding two capital letter 'D's' (for the Department of Defence) to the broad arrow. In the past, there were occasions where the use of the two capital letters 'WD' either side of the arrow to for War Department.

The history of this mark has its origins linked to the Ordnance Service of the Britain, the Government Commissaries, Colonial Storekeepers, Military Stores Departments and Ordnance Stores Corps both in England and in the Australian Colonies. The mark of the Broad Arrow was also adopted by the Australian Army Ordnance Department at the beginning of the 20th Century, and the mark is still used today.



John was listening to the radio this morning when the host invited callers to reveal the nicknames they had for their wives. The best call was from a brave chap who called his wife "Harvey Norman". The host asked him why that name? He replied, "Absolutely no interest for 36 months."

### The Great Emu War

From the 2nd of November to the 10th of December 1932, Australia fought in the Great Emu War against the native emus of the Campion district of Western Australia. The campaign, which saw soldiers armed with Lewis machineguns, ultimately resulted in a failure as the soldiers were unable to curb the emu population and prevent the destruction of crops.

By 1932, approximately 20,000 emus were present in Western Australia, with high densities near the cultivated farmlands around Chandler and Walgoolan. The emus consumed and spoiled the crops, and also damaged fences which enabled

rabbits to enter. Farmers, many of them ex-WWI soldiers, relayed their concerns to Minister of Defence Sir George Pearce, and requested the use of machineguns against the emus. Having faced these weapons during WWI, they were certain of their effectiveness.

The government conceded to this request in October 1932 and a force of three men with two Lewis machineguns and 10,000 rounds of ammunition were deployed to Campion. Following heavy rains, the men attempted to ambush a group of emus on the 2nd of November, however only managed to kill a dozen birds. An attack on the 4th saw them engage 1,000 emus but yielded similar results after a gun jammed. Six days later, the men reported they had fired 2,500 rounds and killed between 50 and 500 birds with no casualties. The operation was stopped at this point. The commander of the force, Major Meredith compared the emus to Zulus, commenting that they 'can face machineguns with the invulnerability of tanks. If we had a military division with the bullet-carrying capacity of these birds it would face any army in the world'.

A second attempt was launched on the 12th of November with the approval of the Minister of Defence. Taking to the field on the 13th of November, the military found a degree of success, killing approximately 40 emus. By the 2nd of December, the soldiers were killing approximately 100 emus per week. The operation ended on the 10th of December, at which point Meredith reported 986 kills with 9,860 rounds, at a rate of exactly 10 rounds per confirmed kill. In addition, Meredith claimed 2,500 wounded birds had died as a result of the injuries that they had sustained.

Despite the problems encountered with the cull, the farmers of the region once again requested military assistance in 1934, 1943, and 1948, only to be turned down by the government. Unfortunately, despite the use of modern weapons and training, the military were unable to control the emu populations. Instead, the bounty system that had been instigated in 1923 was continued, and this proved to be effective: 57,034 bounties were claimed over a six-month period in 1934.

This somewhat farcical event, where soldiers were pitted against emus, is remembered – only slightly ironically – as the Great Emu War.

George Vaivarinsh—Australian Military History



A machine gun and an emu photoshopped to wear a bandolier of ammunition pouches.

### 8 Identified Victoria Cross Recipients

8 identified men in the photograph on next page, taken in 1917, are all Australian Victoria Cross recipients.

Back row, left to right: Lance Corporal John Carroll VC; unidentified soldier; Corporal Joergen Christian Jensen VC; unidentified soldier; Corporal Thomas James Bede Kenny VC; unidentified soldier; unidentified soldier; Sergeant Reginald Roy Inwood VC..

Second row, left to right: Sergeant John Woods Whittle VC, DCM; unidentified soldier; Sergeant Stanley Robert McDougall VC, MM; unidentified soldier.

Front row, left to right: Corporal Philip Davey VC, MM; unidentified soldier; Sergeant Walter Peeler VC, BEM.



Like many other Australian soldiers of WW1, Corporal Jensen VC, died not long after the war from war injuries. He passed away on the 31st of May 1922, in Adelaide, South Australia.

The photograph was taken at the Westham Camp, Weymouth in Dorset, England, where troops were based in army camps around the Salisbury Plain area of South West England on the way to and from the Western Front .

**Lest we forget.**

Image file number AWM H00176.



Ropopo Plantation, New Britain. Photo Gavin Cathcart.

**“What is the Veteran White Card?”**

If you do not already hold a Veteran Card/Lapel pin/Covenant, it is recommended you apply. **The following information is direct from the DVA web site.** If any veteran requires assistance please refer to DVA web site or contact your sub-Branch for further information.

You will need a MyGov Account, which is reasonably simple to open, DVA web site leads you through the process.

The White Card (currently being redesigned and to be known as the *Veteran White Card*) is a treatment card that can provide you with medical treatment for:

- accepted service-related injuries or conditions.
- all mental health conditions (for veterans with continuous full-time service or certain reserve service)

If you are eligible the White Card can also provide you with medical treatment for the following. You can also access a range of other services and support:

- cancer (malignant neoplasm) covered under non-liability health care.



- pulmonary tuberculosis covered under non-liability health care.

Who can receive it? You may be eligible for a White Card for your service-related injuries or conditions if you are:

- a current or former Australian Defence Force (ADF) member, including reservists and cadets, with a service-related injury or condition accepted by us; or
- a Commonwealth or Allied veteran with a service-related injury or condition accepted by your country of service.

You may be eligible for a White Card to cover treatment for any *mental health condition* if you:

- have at least one day of continuous full-time service (CFTS) with the ADF; or
- are a reservist and have completed disaster relief service, border protection service, or were involved in a serious service-related training accident.

You may be eligible for a White Card to cover treatment for *cancer (malignant neoplasm) or pulmonary tuberculosis* if you have:

- a diagnosis of cancer (malignant neoplasm) or pulmonary tuberculosis; and
- certain types of service with the ADF

*NOTE: The eligibility criteria for free treatment for cancer and pulmonary are not the same as for mental health coverage. Not everyone who can get the White Card for mental health conditions is eligible for free treatment for cancer or pulmonary tuberculosis. For more information you can check the cancer (malignant neoplasm) or pulmonary tuberculosis page.*

When I was young I decided I wanted to be a doctor, so I took the entrance exam to go to medical school. One of the questions asked was to rearrange the letters \*PNEIS\* into the name "of an important human body part which is most useful when erect". Those who answered "Spine" are doctors today. The rest of us are sending jokes via email.

**25 Feb 41 - Formation of WAAAF Announced**

The Minister for Air, John McEwen, issued a press statement on this day announcing the immediate enrolment of female wireless and teleprinter operators to fill RAAF ground staff vacancies.

Proposals to raise a Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force (WAAAF) had been before the War Cabinet since July 1940, but not until 4 February 1941 was approval given; the Advisory War Council agreed with the decision the next day. McEwen's announcement made clear that the women were wanted only 'until they could be replaced by qualified men', and - because legal doubts existed over whether women could be enlisted under the Air Force Act - they were at first enrolled only as auxiliaries for renewable periods of 12 months.



Nonetheless, the other Services quickly followed the RAAF in establishing women's Services for general war duty. The WAAAF grew to reach a strength of 18,664 in October 1944.

Sitrep—Air Force Assn NSW.

I might wake up early and go running. I also might wake up early and win the lottery. The odds are about the same.

### A road to remember

31 July 2019 by Claire Hunter

The Great Ocean Road is one of Australia's most scenic drives. Winding its way along 243 kilometres of Victoria's rugged south-west coast, it attracts millions of visitors each year.

But what many do not realise is that the road was built as a permanent memorial to those who died during the First World War.

Carved from wild and windswept cliffs overlooking the Southern Ocean, the Great Ocean road was built by 3,000 returned servicemen fresh from the trenches of the Western Front in memory of their fallen comrades.

"It was just an idea that was floated by a couple of men," said Dr Meleah Hampton, an historian at the Australian War Memorial. "They had long wanted a road to connect all of these coastal towns in southern Victoria so they floated it as an idea for using the manpower of these returned servicemen, and then they decided: 'If we are going to do it, let's make it a memorial.'

At the time of the First World War, the remote south-west coast of Victoria was accessible only by sea or rough tracks through dense bush.

"The whole focus has been on sending men away to fight, and suddenly we've got 350,000 men overseas," Dr Hampton said. "That's an entire workforce, and as time goes by it dawns on people that these men are going to have to integrate back into society. What are they going to do with them? How are they going to avoid civil unrest? How are they going to avoid having dissatisfied men roaming the streets? And how are they going to avoid all sorts of other social problems?"

"So people start turning their thoughts to how they are going to manage this and the Great Ocean Road is born out of that situation of fear and worry about what civil Australian society is going to look like after the war."

The chairman of the Country Roads Board in Victoria, William Calder submitted a plan for what he described as the 'South Coast Road', starting at Barwon Heads, near Geelong, following the coast around Cape Otway, and ending near Warrnambool.

It was Geelong mayor Alderman Howard Hitchcock who brought the plans to fruition and first saw its potential as a tourist attraction for the region. He formed the Great Ocean Road Trust and set about raising the money to finance the project. He saw it not only as a way of employing returned soldiers, but of creating a lasting monument to those who had died during the war.

"The Australian Corps suffers thousands of casualties up until the 5th of October so the process of designing and planning to build this road happens while there are hundreds of names appearing in the newspaper," Dr Hampton said.

The Great Ocean Road Trust managed to secure £81,000 in capital from private subscription and borrowing, with Hitchcock himself contributing £3,000. Money would be repaid by charging drivers a toll until the debt was cleared, and the road would then be gifted to the state, connecting isolated settlements on the coast and becoming a vital transport link for the timber industry and tourism.

Survey work began in August 1918, but the difficult terrain, dense wilderness and bad weather hampered the project. Construction work officially began in September 1919, but progress was slow with workers achieving around three kilometres a month.

For their efforts, the returned soldiers were paid ten shillings and sixpence per day – significantly more than the six shillings they received in the Army, making the project a popular one.

Through rugged terrain, wild weather and steep rocky cliffs, the soldiers worked for eight hours per day, and slept 'rough' in the bush, sleeping out in old army tents in tent cities that moved along with the road. Construction was done by hand using picks and shovels as well as explosives, wheelbarrows, and horse-drawn carts. The work was at times extremely dangerous, with numerous workers killed on the job; the final sections along the steep coastal mountains being the most difficult to work on.

It would be another ten years before the section from Lorne to Apollo Bay was finished, officially marking its completion. The road was officially opened in November 1932 with Victoria's Lieutenant-Governor Sir William Irvine holding a ceremony near Lorne's Grand Pacific Hotel.

Not long after the opening a toll was put in place to recoup construction costs for the road. Visitors were charged two shillings for cars, and 10 shillings for wagons with more than two horses, payable as they passed through Eastern View where a memorial arch was erected. The toll was abolished when the trust handed the road over as a gift to the State Government in 1936, with the deed for the road presented to the Victorian Premier at a ceremony at the Cathedral Rock toll gate.

The Great Ocean Road features on Places of Pride, the National Register of War Memorials, an Australian War Memorial initiative to record the location and photos of every war memorial across the country.

*AWM Web Site*



Common sense is like deodorant -  
The people who need it most never use it



**New office to oversee disruptive technology**

Army has established an office within the Future Land Warfare Branch of Land Capability Division to increase its adoption of disruptive technologies. The role of the Robotic and Autonomous Systems Implementation Coordination Office (RICO) is exploration, coordination and concept development using disruptive technology.

Director General of Future Land Warfare Brig Ian Langford said the RICO was “consistent with the CA’s vision of being future-ready by looking for opportunities to integrate technology as well as becoming a more intelligent customer”. The aim of the office is to build on the momentum of Army’s successes with disruptive technology last year. This included the demonstration of the Ghost Robotics ground robot and the concept of optionally crewed combat vehicles (OCCVs). The RICO will use specialist personnel with Army’s total workforce model to advance knowledge in artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, robotics and autonomy.”

“The office will also focus on alternative power and energy, such as hybrid drive and additive manufacturing, along with autonomous leader-follower trucks and increasing experimentation with OCCVs. “The opportunities presented by disruptive technology have to be understood early if we are to exploit our capability edge,” Brig Langford said.



A Ghost Robotics unmanned ground vehicle supports Army soldiers conducting an enemy position clearance during an autonomous systems showcase at the Majura Training Area, Canberra

Army News 1461

When I was a kid my parents would say ‘Excuse my French’ just after a swear word.  
I’ll never forget my first day at school when my teacher asked “Do any of you know any French?”

**WWII Statistics US Army Aircorps**

More airmen died in WWII than Marines

Almost 1,000 Army planes disappeared en route from the US to foreign locations. But an eye-watering 43,581 aircraft were lost overseas including 22,948 on combat missions (18,418 against the Western Axis) and 20,633 attributed to non-combat causes overseas.

In a single 376 plane raid in August 1943, 60 B-17s were shot down. That was a 16 percent loss rate and meant 600 empty bunks in England .. In 1942-43 it was statistically impossible for bomber crews to complete a 25-mission tour in Europe .

Pacific theatre losses were far less (4,530 in combat) owing to smaller forces committed.. The worst B-29 mission, against Tokyo on May 25, 1945, cost 26 Superfortresses, 5.6 percent of the 464 dispatched from the Marianas..

On average, 6,600 American servicemen died per month during WWII, about 220 a day. By the end of the war, over 40,000 airmen were killed in combat theatres and another 18,000 wounded. Some 12,000 missing men were declared dead, including a number "liberated" by the Soviets but never returned. More than 41,000 were captured, half of the

5,400 held by the Japanese died in captivity, compared with one-tenth in German hands. Total combat casualties were pegged at 121,867.

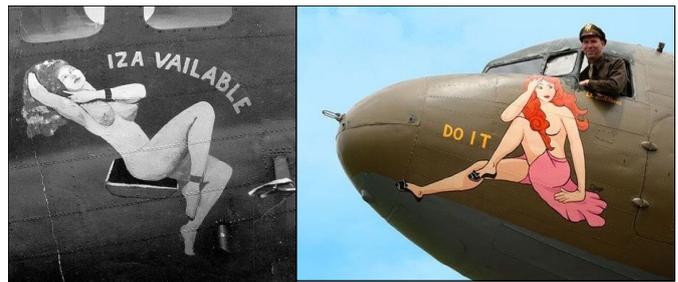
US manpower made up the deficit. The AAF's peak strength was reached in 1944 with 2,372,000 personnel, nearly twice the previous year's figure.

The losses were huge---but so were production totals. From 1941 through 1945, American industry delivered more than 276,000 military aircraft. That number was enough not only for US Army, Navy and Marine Corps, but for allies as diverse as Britain, Australia, China and Russia. In fact, from 1943 onward, America produced more planes than Britain and Russia combined. And more than Germany and Japan together 1941-45. However, our enemies took massive losses. Through much of 1944, the Luftwaffe sustained uncontrolled haemorrhaging, reaching 25 percent of aircrews and 40 planes a month. And in late 1944 into 1945, nearly half the pilots in Japanese squadrons had flown fewer than 200 hours. The disparity of two years before had been completely reversed.

At its height in mid-1944, the Army Air Forces had 2.6 million people and nearly 80,000 aircraft of all types.

In 2009 the US Air Force employed 327,000 active personnel (plus 170,000 civilians) with 5,500+ manned and perhaps 200 unmanned aircraft.

The 2009 figures represent about 12 percent of the manpower and 7 percent of the airplanes of the WWII peak.



**War Pigeon**

By Dave O'Malley

For as long as humans have, in their infinitely selfish wisdom, found it necessary to go to war, they have also conscripted innocent and unwitting animals to accompany them into their war hells—to carry their equipment, to support their knights, to track their enemies, to make their suicidal charges, to sniff out their insidious mines. From Hannibal and “Elephant Bill” Howard's pachyderms to Sir William Marshall's charger and the Light Brigade's plunging steeds to the terrifying Alsatians of German POW camps.

Maria Dickin, an animal welfare pioneer came up with the idea of a decoration for animals known today as the PDSA Dickin Medal to honour animals who served meritoriously in the Second World War. The decoration has often been called the “Victoria Cross for animals”. Truth be told, the Victoria Cross Trust is not particularly happy with the comparison.

An amazing 32 pigeons were among the 53 animals that received the award for actions taken during the Second World War. The first three recipients were pigeons of the Royal Air Force Pigeon Service, all of whom received their medals on the same date—December 2, 1943. The following story concerns a blue checker pigeon hen named Winkie, who, by date of her heroic action, was the first recipient.

**February 23, 1942**

During the Second World War, the fabled airfield of RAF Sumburgh was a major jumping off point for RAF Coastal Command shipping raiders. On Feb 23, 42 Squadron Beauforts were ordered to conduct a reconnaissance and offensive sweep, seek-

ing to find one or more of the three German warships that might be attempting to join the 52,500-ton monster battleship *Tirpitz* holed up in Fættenfjord, deep in the labyrinth of the Trondheim Fjord. Needless to say, any operation that required crews to operate over the frigid waters of the North Sea in February was a very dangerous undertaking. In addition to the four airmen on board were two homing pigeons carried in separate yellow metal waterproof boxes, stored on a rack inside the fuselage. One of those pigeons was a blue checker hen by the name of Winkie (RAF number NEHU 40 NSL).

The Cliff crew came away from their short recce without spotting any enemy activity. Cliff instructed Flying Officer McDonald to calculate a course for RAF Leuchars, whereupon, at 16:30 hrs, he swung the Beaufort southwest and flew on over the bergy North Sea at 500 ft. About an hour into the flight, with the sun beginning to disappear over the horizon somewhere behind the cloud, a sudden explosion blew apart the port engine. Immediately, the damaged Taurus engine caught fire and the Beaufort began to lose altitude. The heavy aircraft hit the water tail first then slammed down and ploughed into the darkening and icy sea.

Their faint SOS had in fact been received, but it was so weak that a proper fix on their radial from Leuchars could not be determined with certainty. In the hopes of finding them in the dark, an RAF Catalina flying boat was launched to patrol along the line of Cliff's planned egress from the patrol. Despite searching all night, the Catalina saw no flares. Search aircraft would have to wait until sunlight to begin looking for Cliff and his crew.

At 8:30 AM the next day, pigeon fancier George Ross of Broughty Ferry on the North Shore of the Tay River estuary was checking his loft before work and found an exhausted, oil-stained bird at the back of his loft. After examining her, he recognized her as one of those he had lent to the Royal Air Force at Leuchars, some ten kilometres to the south. He called Leuchars immediately, giving the airman on the phone the serial number on her leg band—NEHU 40 NSL—Winkie. The squadron was able to confirm that Winkie was one of the two birds assigned to Cliff's crew the previous day.

Since she was covered in oil and because pigeons were known to abhor flying at night, they believed that she may have landed on the one oil tanker that had been in that area of the North Sea the previous night. That, combined with an Army post reporting they too had a weak S.O.S. signal the evening before, convinced them to move their search area farther east. Aircraft were launched later in the morning and at 11:15 hrs, a Lockheed Hudson with a Royal Netherlands Naval Air Service crew from 320 Squadron spotted the crowded dinghy floating on the sea. Circling the tired and hypothermic crew, the Hudson dropped a smoke float and then some basic provisions in what was called a Thornbury Bag—essentially a parachute bag with kapok floats attached, filled with rations, water and cigarettes. A crew member took a photo of the men in the raft during one particularly low pass.



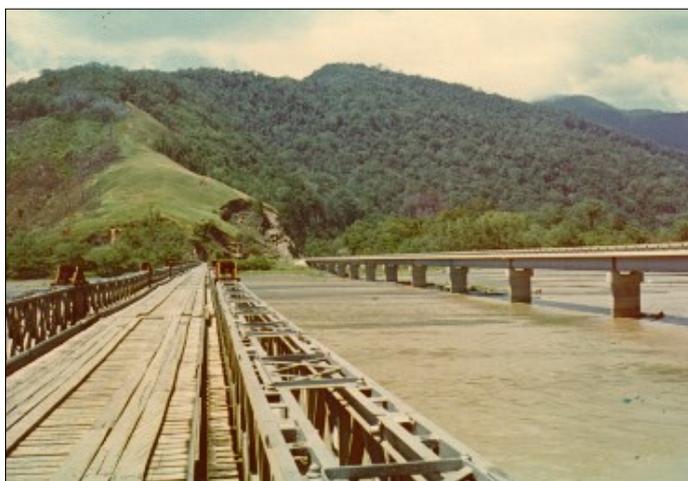
Loading pigeon boxes into a Beaufort.

The Royal Air Force knew a good story when they saw one and on March 4, Cliff travelled to Edinburgh for a recorded interview with the BBC to tell about his miraculous rescue thanks to a pigeon. While at Leuchars, the crew posed for the press with their saviour Winkie, before heading off for three weeks of sick leave and rest.

It would take almost two years for Winkie to get her due for the rescue of the four airmen. It wasn't until 1943 that Maria Dickin created the award for animal gallantry and on December 2, 1943 Winkie was one of three pigeons who received the first three awards. The others were a pigeon named White Vision who helped rescue the crew of a 106 Squadron Catalina flying boat forced down in the North Sea off the Hebrides in 1943 and Tyke, an Egyptian-born male pigeon that helped in the rescue of a downed American air crew in the Mediterranean Sea in 1943. Because Winkie's exploits came first, she is often thought of as the first recipient of the Dickin Medal. In February of 1944.

By the end of 1943, the RAF Pigeon Service, which had not achieved great success save for a few rescues, was withdrawn from Bomber Command and Coastal Command service.

Source. *Vintage Wings of Canada. War Pigeons.*



The old and the new bridges over the Markham River prior to the demolition of the old one. The old one was an extremely long Bailey Bridge built during WW11.

### Don Bradman Served Both In The Australian Army And Air Force During World War II

For cricketers like Don Bradman, World War II took away some of their best years. With no Tests being played between 1939 and 1945, a lot of time went by and many never played again.

Bradman did however play till 1948 and would end up with a world record average of 99.94, one that is yet to be surpassed.

Bradman actually served both in the Australian Army and Air Force. He was in two separate defence services. In June



1940 he joined the Air Force. But he was transferred to the Australian Army and after a brief training was commissioned as a Lieutenant, with the task of Physical Training Officer.

He was diagnosed with fibrosis and was invalidated out of Army ser-

vice in June 1941. That was the end of his military career. He resumed playing cricket well after the war ended and would eventually retire with a great record.

Source. *Indiatimes.com*.

The Grim Reaper came for me last night, and I beat him off with a vacuum cleaner.  
Talk about Dyson with death.

### Lt Albert Chalmers Borella. VC., MM., MID. 1881—1968

Born in Victoria, Borella was one of 64 Australians to receive the Victoria Cross for their actions during the First World War, doing so while serving with the 26th Battalion around Villers-Bretonneux in July 1918. After the war, Borella returned to Australia, initially farming a property in Victoria before rejoining the Army during the Second World War and serving in a number of garrison units in Australia. He was demobilised in 1945 and worked as a public servant until he retired in 1956. He died in 1968 at the age of 86.

#### Early Life

After attending state schools at Borung and Wychitella, Borella became a farmer, working around Borung and Echuca. He also enlisted as a part-time soldier in the Victorian Rangers, serving for a period of 18 months. He travelled to Melbourne in early 1910 and became a firefighter in the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, remaining in the city until early 1913 when he travelled to the Northern Territory to take up a pastoral lease, working a property on the Daly River until early 1915 when his financial situation forced him to leave the land.

#### First World War

Borella enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) in Townsville, Queensland, on 15 March 1915. He had to go to some effort to do so because at the outbreak of the First World War the military authorities were not accepting volunteers from the Northern Territory. Borella accepted a job as a cook for a survey party in Tennant Creek and in January 1915 he set out for Darwin to volunteer for active service. With Charlie, an Aboriginal man, he walked 140 kilometres (87 mi) and swam across flooded rivers. After borrowing a horse at Powell Creek, just north of Renner Springs, he rode to Katherine where he caught the mail coach to the railhead at Pine Creek. He sailed from Darwin to Townsville on 8 March 1915 with four other men who were among the first 15 volunteers for active service from the Northern Territory.

Initially serving in the ranks as a private, Borella served with the 26th Battalion at Gallipoli from 12 September 1915 until being evacuated with jaundice on 19 November. He did not



rejoin his unit until 5 February 1916, and then served on the Western Front in France, being wounded in the Battle of Pozières Heights on 29 July. He achieved promotion from Corporal to Sergeant and was commissioned as an Officer – Second Lieutenant – on 7 April 1917, and to Lieutenant on 28 August 1917. He attended officer training in the United Kingdom. Borella received a Military Medal for conspicuous bravery on 11 May

1917, was Mentioned in Despatches on 1 June 1917, awarded the Victoria Cross on 16 September 1918 for actions in July 1918 during a peaceful penetration operation prior to the start of the Allied Hundred Days Offensive.

His citation for the Victoria Cross, gained in 1918 in Villers-Bretonneux, France, at the age of 37, reads in part:

During the period 17/18 July... Lieutenant Borella, whilst leading his platoon, charged and captured an enemy machine gun, shooting two gunners. He then led his party, by now reduced to 10 men and two Lewis guns, against a very strongly held trench, using his revolver and later a rifle with great effect and causing many casualties. Two large dug-outs were also bombed and 30 prisoners taken....

He received his VC at Sandringham from King George V. Three of Borella's brothers also served during the war: Charles and James in the 7th Battalion, and Rex in the 8th Light Horse. All survived and returned to Australia.

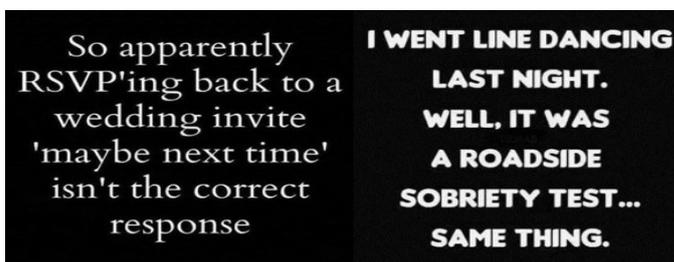
**At the age of 37 he was the oldest Australian to be awarded a VC during the war.**

#### Later life

At the end of the war Borella was invalided back to Australia. In 1928 he married Elsie Jane Love and they had four sons.

Borella enlisted in the Second World War, and served in Australia from October 1939 to May 1945, obtaining the rank of captain. He initially served in the 12th Australian Garrison Battalion until July 1941 when he was posted to the Prisoner of War Group, based at Rushworth, Victoria, before being posted to the 51st Garrison Company, based at Myrtleford, Victoria.

*Wikipedia*



#### LOUD BANGS AND FLASHES OF LIGHT By Rick Giddings MBE. AM.

Unfortunately, Papua New Guinea can be a dangerous place at times, not only from 'rascals' and the like, but from exploding ordinance left over from the Second World War. Let me tell you some of my experiences in this field when I was a Patrol Officer on Bougainville Island between 1956 and 1964.

During 1957 I was stationed at the Buin Sub-District Headquarters station situated astride a re-entrant on the lower slopes of Kangu Hill in the south of the Island. One morning I was at work in the Sub-district office when there was a tremendous explosion a short distance uphill. The ground shook and the office was pelted with dirt and stones. I was told later that some women had found an unexploded gunshell which they had covered with garden refuse. Before they departed for their homes, they set the pile alight. Fortunately nobody was injured and no property was damaged.

One night I heard a distant explosion when I was camping in the Siwai Division, west of Buin. There had been heavy fighting in this area during early 1945 as the Australians kept forcing the Japanese to retreat towards Buin. When I asked about this the following day I was told that such occurrences were not uncommon and, in fact, gardening practices had been forced to change since the end of the War because of the amount of unexploded ordinance in the ground. It was the men who cleared the bush, leaving it to their women to clear



the undergrowth in which to plant their gardens. It was before returning home late in the afternoon that they would set fire to their rubbish piles and these would occasionally explode, as I heard first-hand!

Some years later I accompanied some Saposa Islanders clearing a boundary around land on the Bougainville

mainland which they claimed ownership rights to. This was north of the Genga River on the north-west coast which had been hotly contested early in 1945.

Once again, the relative peacefulness of the bush was shattered by a large explosion followed by the whining of a piece of shrapnel passing high overhead. There had been some women gardening in the area from which the sound emanated so there was much singing out by husbands to check on their wives and vice versa. Fortunately, nobody was harmed and, again, no property damaged. As to whom the explosive may have once belonged there is the possibility it was Australian as they had a preponderance of artillery engaged during the campaign on the north-west coast of Bougainville Island, and no shortage of ariel bombs either.

Buin headquarters was moved from Kangu Hill inland to Turiboiru during my posting to the Bougainville District. Turiboiru had an overgrown airstrip which the Japanese had constructed, whereas Kangu did not. Both sites were connected by an abandoned road - again courtesy of the Japanese - and it was littered in places with wrecked Japanese trucks and staff cars. While the road was being reconstructed a number of Depth Charges were uncovered. On one occasion I accompanied an Australian bomb disposals expert sent out from Port Moresby to destroy them. With the assistance of some labourers he placed the Depth Charges around the stump of a dead tree which needed to be removed from the road site.

He then set some sticks of gelignite near the Depth Charges, lit them, and then proceeded back along the road at a leisurely pace for three minutes. I must admit I was watching the face of my wrist-watch constantly until we reached a fallen tree which would give us the protection we needed and a view of what would happen.

We peeped over the tree trunk until we saw a bright flash of light and the dead tree lifted vertically into the air. The shock-waves from the explosion arrived at about the same time as we pulled our heads down. Shortly afterwards we made our way back to see what had happened. We found that the Depth Charges had disappeared but the tree, which was about five meters tall, was extant and jutting out at an angle from the shallow hole caused by the explosion. What intrigued me most, though, was a host of ants which were scurrying up and down the trunk, seemingly going nowhere, but being more than excited by their home having been bombarded! They must have been safe within the tree as those which may have been foraging on the outside would have been obliterated.

*Thank you Association member Rick.*

Army Rules: If it moves, salute it.....  
 If it doesn't move, pick it up. ....  
 If you can't pick it up, paint it.

### Final Caribou Flight

27 November 2009

On this day, the RAAF flew its last operation involving the DHC-4 Caribou light transport aircraft, 45 years after this type first entered service in Australia.

The final flight was carried out by Caribou A4-140 from Richmond into Canberra, where the aircraft was handed over to the Australian War Memorial for preservation. The previous day, another Caribou, A4-152, was similarly handed over to the RAAF Museum at Point Cook, Victoria.

A4-140 was the oldest surviving airframe of this type operated by the RAAF, having been one of the first three to arrive in Australia in 1964. It had served in Vietnam, supported United Nations efforts in Kashmir, and seen extensive service in South East Asia and across the South Pacific, logging a total of 20,040 flying hours.

It was also the aircraft hijacked in East Timor by armed soldiers fleeing that country's civil war in 1975.

Air Force Assn—Sitrep Issue 15

*HTT Vol 126 ran an article on the hijacking.*



A4-140 Touching down at Fairbairn ACT.

### Should Australia have a 'Purple Heart'-type award?

Minister for Defence Personnel Darren Chester has directed the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal to consider recognition for members of the ADF who are injured, wounded or killed in or as a result of their service.

Minister Chester said that following preliminary consultation and advice from the Council of Women and Families United by Defence Service, this issue was now a matter for the tribunal to examine.

"The Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal will undertake a broader consideration to acknowledge those who have been injured, wounded, or killed as a result of their ADF service, and the impact on their families," Mr Chester said.

"This expert body, established to consider Defence honours and awards, is the most appropriate body to consider recognition for ADF members and their families.

"I am also very grateful for the work of the Council of Women and Families United by Defence Service in its consideration for appropriate recognition."



Chair of the Council of Women and

Families United by Defence Service Gabby Costigan said the council had carefully considered the most appropriate recognition for the families of those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

"We feel the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal consideration is extremely important and we encourage individuals and organisations to contribute to the inquiry."

Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal will seek written submissions from ex-service organisations and government agencies, but anyone with an interest in this issue can make a submission to the inquiry.

Submissions to the inquiry are expected to close in late March 2021.

Further information can be found on the tribunal's website.

*Contact Newsletter 137*

I miss the good old days - when you could actually have an opinion without offending somebody.

**Australian Department of Defence Signs Order for Saab Deployable Health Modules**

Saab has signed a contract with the Australian Department of Defence to deliver deployable health modules for the Australian Government's Deployable Health Capability Program, Joint Project 2060.

The order value is \$337m. for the years 2020-2027, including 5 years of support.



Saab has partnered with Aspen Medical, Philips Healthcare Australia & NZ, Broad-spectrum and Marshall Land Systems to

deliver more than 550 deployable medical modules.

Saab delivers health modules which includes a surgical theatre, mobile computed tomography (CT) scanner, x-ray and ultrasound equipment along with trauma, intensive care and ward units and can be ready for national or international deployment within 24hours.

The program will ultimately see a purpose-built warehouse located in South East Queensland to meet the storage, training and maintenance requirements.

*Defenseworld.net Newsletter 25 Sep 2020.*

**Defence Force administration suffers from bloating**

Former British army major turned military historian Cyril Northcote Parkinson settled comfortably into academia in post-war Singapore.

His colonial observations led him to publish his most famous work, Parkinson's law. in which he postulated "work expands so as to fill the time available for its completion".

He also coined the term Orgmanship which, according to Parkinson, was "the tendency of all administrative departments to increase the number of subordinate staff, "irrespective of the amount of work (if any) to be done."



Zero Kavieng, 1964. Reconstructed by a DCA fellow based in Kavieng and set up at Kavieng airport. Photo Ben Scheelings.

The Straits Times in Singapore identified it as "twice the staff for half the work".

Parkinson's Law of Triviality further stated that. "The time spent on any item of an agenda is in inverse proportion to the sum involved."

This, it might be noted, was in 1954 before PowerPoint had ever been thought of. To mask their numeric bloat, practitioners of Parkinson's Law should arrive at functions like cocktail parties half an hour late, then rotate

Parkinson intended it to be satirical but touched a raw nerve when he observed, "Britain spent about \$500 million building a naval base at Singapore and the only fleet which has used it was the Japanese."

Darwin take note.

Last week former soldier turned academic Clive Williams noted in The Australian the Australian Army has 29,511 regular personnel, plus 18,738 active reservists.

Williams further noted the Australian Army has 86 regular officers of general rank, while the Army Reserve has 98. one general for every 271 soldiers.

By comparison the US Army had (in December 2019) 472,595 active-duty personnel, with another 191,007 in reserve, and an Army National Guard of 131,881.

The US Marine Corps is a separate service with 180,958 active members.

This means the US Army has one general for every 2,045 soldiers and the Marine Corps one per 2,919 marines.

At the turn of the century, deputy chief-of-army Major General Taffy-Hartley was tasked with streamlining Army Headquarters at Russell Offices in Canberra.

Previously it had been dispersed across several 1960s buildings in the same location, which were deemed no longer fit for use and demolished.

A single, multi-storey building was built to contain all service HQ as well as ADF HQ.

Without deference to any other considerations, Hartley was set a staff limit of 100, the Centurions. The cull was done without any perceptible loss in efficiency or output.

When you wish upon a star, makes no difference who you are.

*Ross Eastgate. Townsville Bulletin. 16 Jan 21.  
Thank you Asst Facebook Master Richard Muir*

Fish bite twice a day -  
Before I get there and after I leave.



Ex PNGVR get together Canberra 13 Jan. Front Marilyn Nelson, Bill Molony. Byron Sullivan. Rear. Les Bohm, Charles Nelson, Michael White, Bob Collins, Trevor Connell.

**China Tests Ballistic Missile System Capable of Hitting Targets Outside of Earth’s Atmosphere.**

China has tested a land-based, mid-course anti-ballistic missile (ABM) system capable of hitting targets outside of the Earth’s atmosphere.

The country’s Ministry of National Defense announced Thursday that the test reached the desired objective. “The test is of defensive nature and is not aimed at any country,” a statement by the ministry says.

It is the fifth land-based ABM technical test China has publicly announced and the fourth land-based, mid-course ABM technical test publicly known.

The flight of a ballistic missile usually consists of three phases in time order: boost phase in which the rocket booster will power the missile into sky, mid-course phase in which the booster stops as the missile traverses outside of the atmosphere, and re-entry or terminal phase in which the missile re-enters the atmosphere and dives on its target.

Mid-course is the most vital phase in the interception of a ballistic missile. **“A mid-course ABM means to intercept the missile while it is in its free flight phase outside of the atmosphere,”** Song Zhongping, a Chinese military expert and TV commentator, was quoted as saying by the Global Times.

While the duration of the mid-course phase is relatively long, the great difficulty of an interception lies in the high trajectory, Song said, noting that the target of interception is usually intermediate-range or intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM).

It’s technically easy to intercept a ballistic missile in the boost phase, because the missile is still close to the ground and accelerating, but it is difficult to get close to the launch site which is usually deep in hostile territory; in terminal phase, the interception is challenging because the speed of the diving missile is very high.

*Defenseworld.net Newsletter 5 Feb 2021.*

**VALE ,Harold “Hank” Desmond Cosgrove  
20/2/1932 – 18/5/2019**

A tree is waiting in a quiet grove on the grounds of the Australian Stockman’s Hall of Fame in Longreach for the ashes of Hank Cosgrove. Hank was the driving force for the Drover’s Reunion, conducted under the Hall’s auspices, for 28 years, thanks to his desire to keep the history and lifestyle of driving alive in the present day. He was often taken out of school at Miles by his father to help with a mob, from the time he was eight years old. Sister Margaret Mary would bring him back up to date with his lessons on Saturday mornings when he re-

turned.

He put his age up from 17 to 21, getting work on Manus Island doing salvage work and supervising Japanese prisoners. Eventually it was discovered that he was a young civilian and that work stopped, but his adventuring spirit took him to the British Isles and Europe on a bicycle. Running out of money, he appealed to the Home Office in London and was sent to Kenya to work, finding himself in the middle of the Mau Mau uprising, where men in similar circumstances to himself were being murdered in their beds.

Hank went back to New Guinea, spending six months in Port Moresby then 18 years in Lae with the Commonwealth Department of Works. It was here that he met his future wife, Berry, who was nursing there. The married couple returned to Australia in 1971, together with their two children Stuart and Beverley. It was in 1990 when they travelled out to Longreach for the fledgling Drover’s Reunion to honour his father and three brothers, all drovers, that he was inspired to work with Jim Cuming to make the event something that would celebrate the arts of the profession perfected in the early days of settling the outback.



The Outback Games became a highlight of the annual reunion, showcasing billy boiling, damper making, whip cracking, driving the nail, throwing the rolling pin and a unique drover’s special, throwing the boot at the dog. Extended to incorporate station workers, its first roll call tallied 240 people and incorporated the National Outback Performing Arts, acknowledging the poetic

skills of many drovers.

Hank and Berry were strong supporters of our Association, attending many of our social functions, and arranging funding for the improvement to the facilitates at Jimboomba for the bush dinners.

**LEST WE FORGET**



Assn member Brian Jones and his friend Eldon Bryant. Brian is in Bluecare Home in Townsville. His phone number is 0419 872 010 and he can be emailed at [townsville@bluecare.org.au](mailto:townsville@bluecare.org.au) clearly marked “This E-mail for the attention of Brian Jones, Mt Stuart 101” Brian was 85 in January and would love to catch up with old mates.



**Robert Henry Maxwell Gibbes, DSO, DFC & Bar, OAM**  
(6 May 1916 – 11 April 2007)

On 21st December 1942 Wing Commander Bobby Gibbes, an Australian, was leading his squadron of Kittyhawk fighter-bombers on a strafing attack against an Italian airfield in the Western Desert. During the attack several aircraft are destroyed on the ground, two by Gibbes, but his formation comes under heavy anti-aircraft fire. One of their number is shot down and a second is forced to crash-land a few miles from the target.



Although his own aircraft has been hit by shrapnel, Gibbes goes to the aid of his downed fellow pilot. With the rest of his formation providing cover, he lands

and taxis his single-seat Kittyhawk across the rocky desert for a mile until stopped by a depression. He jettisons the external fuel tank to reduce the weight of his aircraft before pacing out a take-off strip as his comrade evaded Italian troops and ran to meet him.

Gibbes ditched his own parachute to allow his friend to sit in the seat before climbing in after him and sitting on his lap. Then as he took off, his undercarriage hit a small ridge, and he watched in horror as the port wheel falls off.

Escorted by his squadron pilots, Gibbes heads for base. With fighters in short supply, he decides against a belly landing but comes down on his one remaining wheel, thus causing minimal damage to his aircraft.

Recommended for the Victoria Cross for this action, he was instead awarded the Distinguished Service Order, which was promulgated on 15 January 1943 and cited his "outstanding qualities of leadership and enthusiasm".

*Suzy Neve—Australian Military History.*



**One last walk Sir Tom.**

The Association would like to thank King & Co Property Consultants for its continuing support, including the printing of this edition, together with the past 69 issues of Harim Tok Tok. Its contribution is much appreciated.



**NATIONAL MEDALS**  
Pty Ltd



**REPLICA MEDALS OR MOUNTING OF MEDALS**

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

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

**Includes former members of the PIR, PIB and NGIB.**

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

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**FUNCTION DATES**

**Sat 3 April & Sat 1 May 2021**

Museum open 10am-1pm.  
Book sales are being conducted from the Museum's extensive holding as a result of generous donations of books.

**Sat 10 April 2021**

Executive Ctee Mtg - Museum 10am  
Members always welcome. BYO lunch

**Sun 25 April 2021**

ANZAC Day Details on Page 1 and attached flyer

Come along with family and friends and make it an ANZAC Day to remember in these troubled times.