

1998 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

DATE: Saturday 5 September 1998
VENUE: 1 Training Group Sergeants Mess, Wacol Army Barracks, Brisbane
DRESS: Anzac Day Dress/ Suit/Jacket with Miniatures
TIME: 1700 Hrs- Assemble/Comradeship 1830 Hrs- Buffet Dinner
 1915 Hrs- Annual General Meeting 2030 Hrs- Comradeship
COST: \$10-00 pp
ACCOM: Some overnight Barracks accommodation may be available.
 BYO own linen/pillow/blanket Names to Col Gould ASAP.

PNG TSUNAMI DONATIONS

The Association will direct all donations to the relief fund through its senior members in Port Moresby. To date our Secretary has raised externally \$1013 to start off the fund. If you wish to donate to the Association's relief fund, please send your cheque marked "NGVR/PNGVR Fund" and send it to the Secretary by 30 September 1998.

ON ANZAC DAY - VANUATU - 1998

(Local news release)

"Today is ANZAC DAY. While many in Australia and New Zealand will be marching, a small group of New Zealanders and Australians are currently dropping a wreath above the jungle of south west Malekula, the exact location where more than 40 years ago, 4 members of the Royal New Zealand Airforce lost their lives

when their aircraft crashed in bad weather August 8, 1944.

Ken MacGowan, who is a member of the Papua New Guinea Volunteer Rifles, has a special interest helping people find the remains of their relatives. He has helped a number of families of former servicemen from Australia, America and New Zealand locate their dead." - Well done, Ken.

SAMARAI / MILNE BAY REUNION

DATE: Saturday 3 October 1998 **VENUE:** Mercure Hotel Brisbane **TIME:** 11.30 am
FORMAT: Fellowship / lunch / anecdotes / refreshments **COST:** \$39 pp
NB: Pre-paid tickets only NO tickets at the door.
CONTACT ORGANISERS: Ron & Jan Osborne Ph/Fax 07 3300 1312
 Graham & Theresa GOODMAN Ph: 07 3219 4898

NEXT ISSUE

- * Visit to Villers-Bretonneux - France and WW1 sites and Anzac Day - by Jes Hansford
- * Book Launch "We were the First" report by Don Hook in Canberra. (Canberra Temp on the launch day for Don was minus 7 degrees.)
- * PNG Dinner Dance Report
- * Membership List Update

Short stories, with or without photos are invited from members. Items can include local events or NGVR and PNGVR history or anecdotes.

NEW GUINEA VOLUNTEER RIFLES AND

PAPUA NEW GUINEA VOLUNTARY RIFLES Ex MEMBERS ASSOCIATION

Post Office Box 287 EVERTON PARK, Q 4053
 Fax: 07 3355 3382 Ph: 07 3355 3382 (after 1900)

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Ordinary Member (NGVR/PNGVR)

Current Fees: Nomination Fee \$25
 Annual Fee \$15
 Associate Member
 Nomination Fee \$25
 Annual Fee \$10

Have you renewed your fees for 1998/9 ?????



HARIM TOK TOK



NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW GUINEA VOLUNTEER RIFLES AND PAPUA NEW GUINEA VOLUNTEER RIFLES
 EX MEMBERS ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED.

VOLUME 12

AUGUST 1998

PRESIDENT'S

UP-DATE

ASSOCIATION OBJECTIVES

- ◆ To bring together the returned and Ex-Servicemen members of the Association as a Returned and Ex-Servicemen's Group or Organisation.
- ◆ To promote and encourage through the Association a close relationship with the people of Papua New Guinea.
- ◆ To offer scholarships, awards, annual prizes and bursaries to members of the Australian Army and the Papua New Guinea Defence Force.
- ◆ To preserve the memory, records and artefacts of those who served in the Second World War theatre of Papua New Guinea and to arrange exhibitions of the same from time to time in Australia and Papua New Guinea.
- ◆ To provide plaques and memorials to honour members of the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles who served and died in action or as prisoners of war in Papua New Guinea.
- ◆ To affiliate with any other organisation possessing similar aims and objectives upon such terms and conditions as may be mutually agreed upon.

Greetings. Whenever I review the objectives of our unique organisation, I cannot help but to be impressed by the loyalty, hard work and comradeship that has developed within our membership. 25 Years may have passed since we disbanded, but I believe that we possess one of the strongest and active service organisations of its type today. At each and every parade or function we attend, we are praised on our appearance and organisation.

Our 12 member Executive Committee is dedicated to the Association and its members. Through the Secretary and our computer package and Internet access, I am briefed daily on all significant events and news in Papua New Guinea.

Our financial and membership data base is being expanded and fine tuned for quick and easy access. Our Internet E-mail address is being used by some of our members for quick communication.

Through the excellent donation of NGVR and PNGVR RO's Pt 2 by Port Macquarie member, Brian Crane, we now have positive reference material on our members service history - so factual, that CARO, without question, approved every application for the ASM 1945-1975 with PNG Clasp submitted by this Association.

We currently have official letters in transit for consideration that approval be granted for the award of the AASM 1945-1995 to eligible PNGVR members, and secondly, that our PNG medals and awards be included in CARO records of member's service. This is a long sought after project for this Executive. Should any member wish to peruse these letters, please request a copy from the Secretary or view same at the AGM on September 5, 1998.

Our Executive Committee Solicitor, Bruce Crawford, has done outstanding investigative research in Brisbane and Canberra in order to compile these important submissions.

The passage of time not only records the passing into the Silence of some of our elderly members but shows up the physical frailties in other senior members.

Executive Committee member, Bill Bickerton, is our dedicated and hard working Welfare Officer. He is assisted by our voluntary Sydney member, Frank Coleman. Although at this time we are unable to offer financial assistance and support to those members in need, our Welfare Officer makes telephone and personal contact with needy members and their families and assists whenever he can. Quite often a visit or call from a Regimental comrade is heartening and most welcome.

We have lost Lt Frank Holland, MBE (PNGVR), Lance Atkinson (PNGVR), Ted Foad (NGVR) and Henry "Jock" Dolan (WW1 & NGVR). Our thanks to Tom Kelly for the wording of the included VALE notice for Lance and Ted, and to John Holland for its production. In July, NGVR member Henry "Jock" Dolan, was just three weeks from his 100th Birthday, making him our oldest known member of the NGVR. When Henry's location was discovered, Tom Lega, MM visited Henry in his Coorparoo Nursing home and found that he had never received his WW2 Service Medals, although he was in possession of three WW1 medals. The spirit of our Association was highlighted over the next week, when with the aid of our NGVR RO's 2 we were able to obtain Henry's WW2 Service Medals from CARO in record time. Col Gould and John

Holland maintained contact with Henry's daughter and Grandson and a birthday party and official medal presentation was planned for the 15 August 1998 - Henry's 100th Birthday. Unfortunately, after surviving WW1, the Depression, WW2 and other of life's hardships, Henry passed away a couple of weeks short of his 100th Birthday.

With the full agreement of the family, Henry was given a NGVR/PNGVR soldier's funeral. I was honoured to be able to present Henry's family with their Father's/Grandfather's/Great Grandfather's WW2 Service Medals and Association pocket badge.

Our sincere congratulations to Colonel Dr. Bryan Todd, AM, RFD, ED, for his award of the Order of Australia (AM) and to Lt Col. Dr John Teh, AM who was previously awarded the Order of Australia (AM). With the AGM approaching (Saturday 5 September) I believe it not only pertinent but important that I encourage all members who are able, to attend the AGM. Your attendance at the AGM gives you the opportunity to reaffirm your support of the Association and its aims and objectives, and to hear, speak and vote on matters of importance and the election of the Committee for 1998/9. If you cannot attend, please send in your completed Proxy Vote form.

Our Association is 10 years old and we have achieved much for the Association and its members. There has been only one membership fee rise from \$10 to \$15. Apart from a call for donations for a computer package, no other fund requests have been made for the Association. The Committee will call for support of the Aitape Tsunami disaster and outline at the AGM the need for a special "Welfare Fund" to cover basic administration and costs associated with member support. These matters and others will be discussed at the AGM. Major Juergen Raasch (Townsville) has already tabled an interesting suggestion on membership. Committee members have been very active in attending meetings, functions and funerals and attending to members request for assistance. The endeavours of Major Bob Collins, Joe Fisk, Barry Wright and Col Gould ensured that our first Regimental Mixed Dinner Reunion was an outstanding success. Unanimous opinion suggests that we do it again. Our thanks to Victoria Barracks Officers Mess staff for excellent service and catering and to 9 RQR for Piper L/Cpl. R McArthur.

May you and yours prosper, keep well and happy.

H N Green
PRESIDENT.

AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY

**"Let me be clear about three facts:
First, all battles and wars are
won in the end by the Infantryman.**

**Secondly, the Infantryman always
bears the brunt. His casualties
are heavier, he suffers greater
extremes of discomfort and
fatigue than the other arms.**

**Thirdly, the art of the Infantryman
is less stereotyped and far
harder to acquire in modern war
than that of any other arm.**

**The Infantryman has to use initiative
and intelligence in almost every step
he moves, every action he takes
on the battlefield. We must
therefore put our men of best
intelligence and endurance into
the Infantry".**

Field Marshall Viscount Wavell 1945

KNOWN GRAVES, AND 456 NEW ZEALAND
IN OTHER AREAS OF THE PENINSULA BUT
VE NO KNOWN GRAVES, AND ALSO OF
ERS WHO FIGHTING ON GALLIPOLI IN 1915.
KNES AND FOUND BURIAL AT SEA



A VISIT TO GALLIPOLI

(By Don Lawie)

In August 1997 I had the opportunity to realise a lifelong ambition - to travel to France, Belgium and Gallipoli to see for myself the places where my father fought as a private soldier in the 25th Battalion 1st A.I.F. in 1915-1917.

My daughter Marion and I hired a car at Calais and headed straight to Ypres - now Ieper - passing numerous places mentioned in Dad's diaries, on the way.

We stood at the Menin Gate at 2000 Hours with heads bowed as the Buglers played the Last Post. The following day Marion arranged through local contacts for me to play my pipes at the Gate with the Buglers. There were three Buglers on duty. We marched onto the roadway as the gendarmes stopped the traffic. The Buglers played the Last Post and I played "Flowers of the Forest" on my pipes for all the lost souls, following which Reveille was played, and we marched off.

There was a large crowd present and I was mobbed after the ceremony. I wore my kilt, slouch hat, PNGVR name tag and medals, and this ceremony was one of the most moving events of my life.

My father actually marched through what was then a hole in the ramparts in Ypres several times on his way into action, and was one of the lucky ones to return the same way. We have the famous painting hung in our home with the ghostly dead arising by the Wall in the moonlight.

The following day we made our way to the Somme, driving along the areas of bloody conflict marked by a succession of War Cemeteries. We stopped near Arras for a few days and followed some of the campaigns on the ground. Using Dad's diary, we found the exact spot near the Butte of Warlencourt where he was machine-gunned out of the war in 1917. I played my pipes at each of the A.I.F. memorials on the Somme, usually in splendid isolation. The most stirring was the simple mound of rubble at Pozieres that marked the site of the windmill that cost so many Aussie diggers their lives. It now bears a plaque and the French and Australian flags. The Villers Brettoneux memorial to the Diggers was pitted with shell scars from a battle between French and German troops in 1940, emphasising the waste of manpower that had been poured into this area in World War 1.

There are many thousands of Australian graves in northern France and Belgium. As we stopped at each cemetery and paid our respects, I expected to become hardened by the magnitude of the sacrifices made, but the beauty of the cemeteries and the obvious pride and care with which they are maintained made each visit an occasion of pride in my heritage, with a fair bit of anger at the politicians and generals who could throw away such valour so unavailingly.

Our children then shouted me a trip to Gallipoli. The area is reserved as a type of National Park for Heroes by the Turkish government, and Australians are unreservedly treated as friends and comrades. Dad served four months at Anzac Cove and I was at last able to put places beside his diary descriptions. My guide at Lone Pine had his grandfather killed there. I mounted a small Turkish flag on my pipes and I played Lemont at Lone Pine, and Ali, my guide, shared a very poignant moment afterwards.

If only all wars and battles could have such an outcome it may almost be worth the pain and suffering.

AROUND THE TRAPS

RECONNAISSANCE IN FORCE

(A previously untold story of a daring operation carried out by Association Members in the best traditions of the Association)

SITUATION:

Own Forces: Four in total. (A somewhat rank heavy group for the mission) consisting of 1 x Major; 2 x WO1; 1 x S/Sgt:

Enemy Forces: Highly trained driver to be alert to flashing blue lights and enemy motorised transport disguised as white vans with the tail gate open usually located behind trees.

MISSION:

Carry out a detailed reconnaissance of Wineries in the Stanthorpe district. Party not to return unless the following objectives achieved:-

- Identify * Best Red
- * Best White
- * Best Port

EXECUTION:

Report to Jimboomba by 0700 Hours Wednesday. Proceed directly to Stanthorpe (via a number of Wineries). Obtain midday rations on the road and then recce more wineries. Overnight at Stanthorpe and recce still more wineries Thursday. Report back to Jimboomba Thursday 1600 Hours. Last light patrol at Stanthorpe to be carried out via the RSL Club, then proceed back to camp via every hotel in Stanthorpe to ascertain other wine targets (necessary for the evening mess parade).

EVENING ACTIVITIES

A most successful evening mess parade was undertaken with the consumption of various Reds & Whites captured on the day. Consumption of coffee and port was undertaken at the Apple & Grape Motel however evening blackout conditions hindered the day's "debriefing" somewhat.

POST ACTION REPORT

The Mission orders were simple but the execution was not that simple. Several important questions remain unanswered.

* **Who** was the WO 1 who could not figure out how to turn down his bed after the blackout early in the morning? It was later suggested that he should have tried getting up off the floor first.

* **Who** was the Major who had a similar experience trying to find his pyjamas during the blackout? There was no danger of over exposure as local blackout conditions prevailed.

* **Who** was the S/Sgt who proved he could sleep through a barrage whilst a lively "debriefing" session was being held in his room?

* **Why** with such a wide variety of captured local wines at their disposal did the group dine out on interstate liquors.

* **Who** was the S/Sgt driver who had to limit his tasting in order not to clash with mobile enemy radar active in the area as described earlier.

SUMMARY

A most enjoyable outing was had by those concerned. The mission was successful with a number of local wines identified and purchased. Details of same have been recorded. Any member who wishes to obtain bulk wine for home business use please contact your members Rep. for information.

It must be stated that the original intention was to obtain suitable wines for the Regimental Dining in night in July, but Victoria Barracks Officer's Mess informed us after the outing had been arranged that we are required to use Mess wines. It was then decided to proceed with the Mission just in case the information secured could be used at a later date.

Any member wishing to conduct a similar patrol, would have an enjoyable experience.

(Our thanks to Bob Collins for his patrol report and to Joe Fisk, Norm Mundy & Barry Wright)

NGVR RECOLLECTIONS

TRUE TO THEIR TRADITIONS

(Continued from Volume 10 March 1998 - Article by Mr C F Coady)
(Originally distributed to all PNGVR Companies in May 1966 by Lt.Col M Bishop,MM)

Immediately Japan attacked, Major-General B M Morris, commanding the 8th Military District, was authorised to place the (NGVR) Battalion on full-time duty, but only a small group was then called up and it was not until 21 January 1942 that the battalion was actually mobilised.

The Japanese attacked Rabaul from the air on the 20th and in the early hours of the 22 January effected a landing.

When the Japanese came, 74 members of the N.G.V.R. were in Rabaul under the command of Lt Col H H Carr, the CO of the 2/22nd Battalion. They manned medium machine guns and mortars and fought until resistance was of no further avail, sharing the fate of other prisoners-of-war.

On the mainland, the N.G.V.R. was organised as a group of "independent companies" (not to be confused with the A.I.F. companies of the same name, with whom the N.G.V.R. later operated) at Wau, Salamaua, Bulolo and Lae.

On 21st January 1942 at about noon, Coastwatcher Pursehouse reported from Finschhafen that some 60 Japanese aircraft were headed towards Lae and Salamaua. These divided and struck simultaneously at the two towns. Systematically and efficiently the Japanese caused destruction and confusion at Lae. Seven civil aircraft which were on the ground when the Japanese arrived, were wrecked.

As the enemy planes flew away, two Australian Wirraways from Rabaul dropped down from the clouds where they had remained concealed and landed on the airfield. Major E W Jenyns, second-in-command of N.G.V.R. went to see the Administrator, Sir Walter McNiccoll, who had been working from Lae for some time in anticipation of the final transfer of the capital from Rabaul. Sir Walter agreed that a state of emergency existed and told Jenyns to "take over".

Five Japanese fighters, diverted from the main force, destroyed three Junkers (aircraft) at Bulolo but, turning east again before they reached Wau, missed five aircraft on the ground there.

At Salamaua, where Pursehouse's report had not been received, the raiders took the town completely by surprise. They destroyed one R.A.A.F. and ten or

twelve civilian aircraft on the ground.

With the knowledge that a Japanese landing at Salamaua was imminent and with the N.G.V.R. on full time duty, there was a general agreement that all civilians should leave the town.

This occurred on the 24th January when two parties, one led by District Officer N Penglase and the other by the Director of district Services and Native Affairs, R Melrose, departed overland towards the Lakekamu River, and by sea, respectively.

After their departures, the only Europeans left in the town were six R.A.A.F. men, manning a signals station and six men of the N.G.V.R. Meanwhile, other N.G.V.R. platoons prepared to defend vital points in the area, with their HQ at Mubo.

A platoon which went to Salamaua found the small group there in difficulties, due to local disorders. Lae now had a company strength of men.

On the 7 March, 1942 five enemy aircraft raided Lae, which had been laid waste, and Captain H M Lyon, OC of the group got word that a big enemy convoy was headed in his direction.

He himself stayed in the town with four men to await events while the rest of his men made for Nabzab, destroying on the way the one remaining petrol dump at Jacobsen's Plantation.

At 4.45 am on the 8th, the Japanese came ashore and Lyon, his men and three New Guineans, turned their backs on the lost town of Lae and went up the main road towards Nabzab.

That same morning, the Japanese landed at Salamaua, and the bulk of the N.G.V.R. platoon fell back across the Francisco River, leaving behind a few men to demolish the aerodrome and fire the petrol dump.

As Captain A G Cameron and his runner Lance-Corporal Brannelly - two of a small party of 2/22nd Battalion survivors - were falling back, Brannelly shot at an enemy soldier at point blank range, probably the only Japanese casualty from the land action in the landings at either Lae or Salamaua.

After the rear party had crossed the bridge of the Francisco, and when the Japanese appeared on its approaches from the Salamaua side, the N.G.V.R. men destroyed it. Most of them then took the track back to Mubo.

The Japanese displayed no hurry to move inland. On the 18th March 1942, a party of sixty marched to Komiatum, destroyed the N.G.V.R. stores dump there and returned to Salamaua.

On the Lae side, the invaders kept to the township area. This pause on the part of the enemy gave the New Guinea men time to meet new problems. These men of the N.G.V.R. were the only representatives of the law and order previously maintained by the administration.

With civil government gone, they assumed responsibility for several thousand indentured labourers recruited from many outlying districts by planters and others, and now unable to return to their homes.

The N.G.V.R. established depots and fed them and they became the first of the army of carriers and labourers so vital to the Allies during the fighting that followed.

Colonel Edwards was most interested to know what the Japanese were doing in Salamaua, so Corporal (later Major) J B McAdam, with a party of six men, edged so close to the enemy that scarcely a Japanese movement escaped them. They scouted into the very fringes of the Japanese garrison and only their superb bushcraft, hardiness and courage ensured their survival.

The Japanese knew they were there, and on one occasion, a searching party actually passed beneath their telephone line, but failed to see it.

As the local people were being condemned for assisting the Australians, McAdam withdrew his men to avoid further trouble for them.

Other posts of the same nature were established along the Markham and Heath's Plantation to watch the Japanese. Little the enemy did escaped the notice of the watchers.

The men of the N.G.V.R. had filled a large gap in the period up to late May 1942 - they had kept in touch with the invaders. On the 23rd of that month, the first troops to share their task arrived.

Flown from Port Moresby to the Bulolo Valley, the 2/5th Independent Company, A.I.F. arrived to cooperate with the N.G.V.R. These two units, plus some details from Port Moresby, a mortar platoon and a group of reinforcements for the widely dispersed No. 1 Independent Company, formed **Kanga Force**, with the role of a "limited offensive" and the object "to harass and destroy enemy personnel and equipment in the Markham District (including Salamaua)".

Major N L Fleay, OC Kanga Force, considered there were 2000 Japanese at Lae and 250 at Salamaua, as against 700 men under his own command, of whom only 450 were fit for operations - a pitifully small

number to meet any one of the possible Japanese threats.

To forestall these, Fleay proposed to engage the Japanese by raids designed to inflict casualties, destroy equipment and to hamper their use of Lae and Salamaua as air bases.

Accordingly, he issued orders for raids on Heath's plantation and Salamaua and, as the need for action was urged, directed that the one at Heath's was to take place first.

As it transpired, however, the Salamaua raid was made first. It could be planned quickly and in great detail, as a result of the work of Corporal McAdam's scouts.

In the early hours of the 29th June 1942, 71 members of the 25th and the N.G.V.R. killed at least 100 Japanese at a cost of three men slightly wounded.

(See "The Night Salamaua Died" comments by Tom Lega, MM Harim Tok Tok Volume 9 November 1997.

The NGVR party included Jim McAdam, Jim Cavanaugh, Geoff Archer, Jim Currie, Gordon Kinsey, Tom Lega, Lt Kerr. casualties were Mal Bishop, Jim Currie and Alex Garvie). Ed.

The raid was an outstanding success and thoroughly disturbed the Japanese, who sent fighting patrols up to 90 strong into the foothills. The raid also made them draw on their garrison at Lae to reinforce the perimeter at Salamaua.

The raid on Heath's plantation at Lae, equally well-planned and carried out by 58 strongly armed men, was successful, but barking watchdogs warned the enemy of the raiders' presence and the operation was robbed of the element of surprise that had been so valuable at Salamaua. In this raid, the leader, Major T P Keen was killed and two men wounded.

As a result of these guerilla raids, the men were in good spirits, although many of the N.G.V.R. were sick with fever and the number of fit men dwindled steadily. The most serious problem however, was one of supply. Food was not getting through and, in this regard, the guerillas were totally dependent on local supplies. The shortage of tobacco was a particularly irritating problem.

In the months that followed, attention was focused on the Battle of the Owen Stanleys, but the N.G.V.R. continued to man posts overlooking the Japanese although their numbers were shrinking.

They fought splendidly, true to the tradition they themselves had established. 1942 was their year. In view of their specialised knowledge of the country and its problems, the remaining members of the N.G.V.R. were distributed throughout ANGAU and the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles lost its identity.

and disciplined professional with all the qualities of his forbearers, the qualities of selfless bravery, initiative, adaptability, humour, loyalty and mateship. From my personal experience, I assure you, he lives up to it.

Mr Dining President, Colonel Green, ladies and gentlemen, I thank you for this honour to address you on this auspicious occasion.

Thank you.

Mess caterers ensured that members and guests were well looked after with Honey Sesame Prawns, Chicken Supreme Marinara and other delights, with generous servings of De Bortoli Sacred Hill Semillon Chardonnay and Penfolds Rawson's Retreat Cabernet Sauvignon-Shiraz-Ruby-Cabernet and the traditional Morris Oak Port for the official toasts. In accordance with Mess protocol, Official guests and senior Officers (Major and above) were piped from the Mess for coffee, whilst remaining guests

were "fined" by Dining Vice-President, Col Gould for past indescetions. Doug Ng was "fined" not only for getting lost whilst trying to drive to the 1996 Spring Picnic, arriving when all present were getting to leave, (it had something to do with never leave an officer with a map and compass.....) but for letting slip that he could not find his red cummerbund for the Dinner. Yes, you guessed it, Mrs Ng found the missing item of clothing. Tom Dowling, our official Association photographer, was suitably fined for always "flashing" at every Association function without every being arrested or propositioned.

After much humour, members adjourned to the foyer for coffee and other refreshments. A most enjoyable and successful function. The question on everyone's lips was ... "when is the next Dinner"?

The Committee would like to thank all those members who ensured that the first Regimental Mixed Reunion Dinner was such a success.



Members enjoy the pre-dinner reception at the Regimental Mixed Reunion Dinner
(L) Major Marty O'Sullivan (R); WO1 Joe Fisk (R); Lt Doug Ng(R);
S/Sgt Barry Wright (R); WO1 Norm Mundy(R).

Following a comprehensive three course dinner and the "passing of the Port", Lt Colonel John Teh, addressed the gathering:-

Mr Dining President, Colonel Green distinguished guests, I am most honoured to be asked by Colonel Green to address this inaugural Regimental Mixed Dinner Reunion of the NGVR and PNGVR Ex Members Association.

I am well aware of the proud history of the Unit, and was most surprised when Colonel Green rang and asked me to be the guest speaker. I went through in my mind my career for a clue as to why I was given this honour.

I was, for a short time, the last Medical Officer in the Unit before it was disbanded. My Regimental number starts with and '8' and I believe I was the last serving member in the Australian Regular Army with such a number.

I returned to Australia in 1978 and joined the Regular Army. After serving in several field units, I was posted to Canberra for my sins. I was the Colonel - Professional Services - in the Directorate of Army Health Services. I must have done well, because that position has since been disestablished. After this I was banished to the UK on secondment to the RAMC. On my return, I was posted as the Commanding Officer of the 1st Military Hospital. Once again I must have done well as this Unit no longer exists. It has been disbanded.

Next I was the Commanding Officer of 11 Field Ambulance. Yes, you guessed it, this Unit too no longer exists.

Incredibly, I was given a third bite at the apple. I was posted as the Commanding Officer of the 1st Field Hospital in Ingleburn in NSW. More incredibly, this unit still exists in the Australian Army.

So it could not have been my not very illustrious military career that precipitated this invitation to speak tonight.

Was it my oratory genius, my superb command of the spoken word? It can't be, for I am reading my talk.

For my main topic, I will answer a question I have often been asked about today's Digger, be he a regular soldier or reservist. Is he as good as his predecessors?

The Australian Soldier in previous wars and conflicts has always been highly respected. He is well known for his selfless bravery, initiative and loyalty. He would respect and follow a good and proven leader and is frequently contemptuous of an inept and pompous one. Importantly, the Australian Soldier has a tremendous sense of humour. Sometimes the humour is dry, often it is dark. Frequently it acted as a safety valve, breaking the ice in tense situations. He always showed grit and determination, got on with the job, seeing it to it's conclusion.

All these qualities are well documented, from the battles of the two world wars to the barbaric conditions in the POW camps in Changi and the Burma Railway and on the Kokoda Track.

The numerous exploits of bravery, self sacrifice, endurance and mateship are known to all. It is not my intention to enumerate them.

I had the good fortune to serve in the Gulf War in 1991 and in Rwanda in 1994. I also had soldiers who, while under my command, served in Cambodia and Somalia. I will provide you with a few examples of these qualities in these Diggers.

'The diggers found, horse traded and acquired sufficient supplies to treat 10,000 Rwandan civilians in 4 weeks'

When we deployed to Rwanda, our mission was to provide medical support to 5000 United Nation troops. Accordingly, we only had sufficient supplies for our mission. When we arrived we found sick and wounded Rwandan civilians by the thousands. Our soldiers started unofficial clinics to treat these people. Using their "initiative", the diggers "found", horse traded and acquired sufficient supplies to treat 10,000 Rwandans in their first four weeks. I never asked where these supplies came from.

The victorious Rwandan Patriotic Army was suspicious of the Australians. There were many instances when we had to go on the alert. In one incident, the Rwandan Patriotic Army outnumbered our diggers 3 to 1 and an extremely tense situation developed with our soldiers selecting targets. It is a credit to their professional and discipline that no shots were fired.

In another incident, a female medical Officer was awarded the Gallantry Cross for bravery.

I treated a six year old Rwandan boy whose whole extended family of forty-eight members were killed. He as the last survivor, was held by his feet over a fire. As a result all the hair and flesh on top of his head was burnt away leaving bare bone. Our diggers affectionately named him Bosco the skull. After some unorthodox treatment, I managed to get this bone covered with skin, however he would be bald for the rest of his life. One digger suggested we superglue steel wool on his head. Another wanted to give him a water proof hat, otherwise he would turn into a redhead during the rainy season.

What I am trying to say is today's Australian soldier retains all the qualities of yesterday's digger. The soldier in today's Army is a highly skilled, well trained

The members of the N.G.V.R had come from many walks of life. Some were too old to join the A.I.F., some medically not fit or employed in restricted occupations.

But they fought well and still found time for important

administration and for laying down an organisation of local labour that later grew to be a most important contributory feature of the success of the Allied campaign in New Guinea.

CLOSING THE TRAP ON RABAU & LOS NEGROS

(By David Mason - "History of the Second World War" Published by Purnell & Sons, UK 1967 Vol 4 No 15 - Summary only)

By October 1943, Allied strategists in the Pacific knew that it was no longer necessary to take the key Japanese base at Rabaul by storm. Their purpose would be served just as well - and far more cheaply - by making sure of New Britain to the west and the Admiralty Islands to the north, thus sealing off Rabaul. As Halsey's troops battled their way through the Solomons and approached Rabaul from the east, MacArthur's forces attacked from New Guinea - and by May 1944 the 'cork was in the bottle': Rabaul had been isolated from the Japanese Empire.

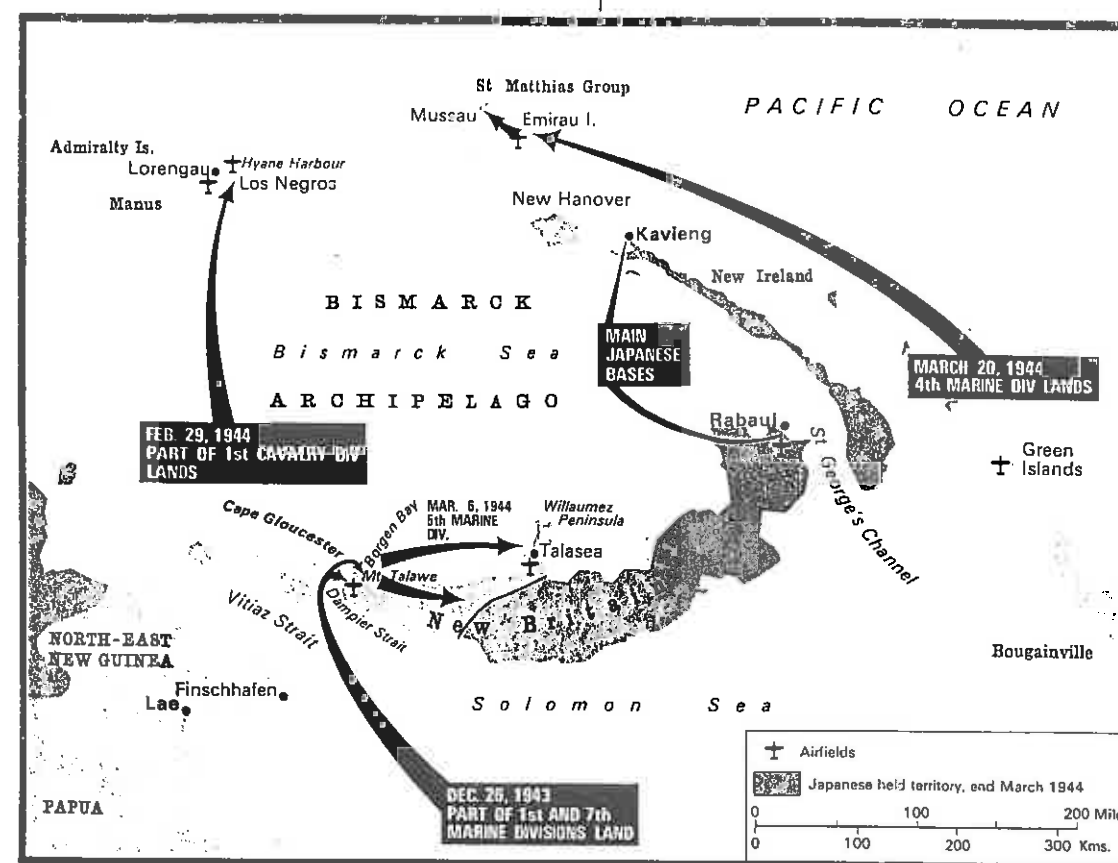
The control of western New Britain was a vital factor in the allied advance north-westwards across the Solomon Sea towards the Philippines. As forces under General MacArthur and Admiral Halsey struck in twin spearheads along the coast of New Guinea and through the Solomon Islands, they faced the prospect of continual harassment from Japanese bases in New Britain, New Ireland, and the Admiralty Islands. The key Japanese base in the region was Rabaul, with its com-

plex of five airfields, the finest natural harbour in the whole area, and a garrison of some 100,000 troops.

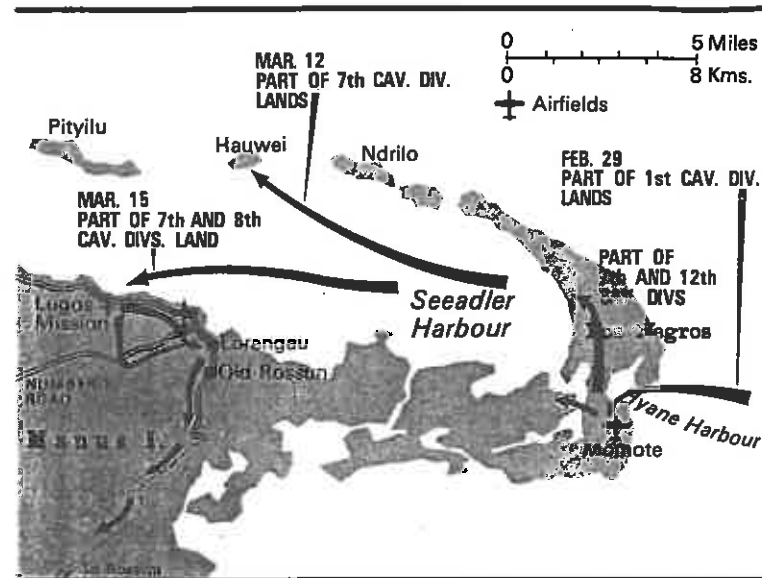
At first the plan had been to concentrate the two-pronged assault on the capture of Rabaul. With the base in allied hands, the Japanese in the Solomons would be cut off and the threat to Australia virtually eliminated. Later it emerged that these conditions could be as easily fulfilled not by taking Rabaul, but simply by isolating it and keeping it in check with a steady bombardment. By October 1943 Rabaul had ceased to figure in any plans.

The Japanese at Rabaul and Kavieng were rapidly being reduced to the point of twiddling their thumbs and waiting for supplies which could never arrive.

As Kavieng and Rabaul were being taken care of, the Allies were already engaged in their next objective - the taking of the Admiralty Islands. So long as these islands gave the Japanese an air base, they were a staging post through which supplies might just reach Rabaul. Their capture would eliminate even this scintilla of danger.



RESERVE FORCES 50TH ANNIVERSARY MARCH BRISBANE - SUNDAY 5 JULY 1998



Los Negros - The allied assault on Los Negros included US forces, and "Brewer" Force" which included members of the NGVR attached to ANGAU

The US Army's 1st Cavalry Division was scheduled for the Los Negros Campaign. MacArthur set D-Day for the Admiralties at February 29, 1944. A force of 880 men was assigned the task of going ashore for a recce in strength, and if engaged, reinforcements would be sent and an invasion mounted.

After the customary initial shelling, the first wave of 4 boats went ashore in Hyane Harbour on Los Negros, the smaller of the two main Admiralty islands. Sporadic fire from shore batteries was silenced by the destroyer transports, and the first wave raced ashore. By the time the second wave started the Japanese had recovered from their shock of the shelling, and were spraying the landing craft with machine-gun fire from

each side of the harbour entrance. The boats turned back until the destroyers had a second, and successful shot at the opposition. The second wave landed and by 0900 hours they were firmly established at the edge of the Momote airstrip, and by noon had occupied the whole airfield, finding it derelict.

For night defence, the landing party was pulled back behind the airstrip, where they dug in to await the inevitable counterattack. It was not long in coming. Soon after dark the Japanese struck. Generally the adversaries could not see each other, except by flash of grenades.

Defending the perimeter against determined attempts at infiltration proved a considerable strain on the original landing force, and they welcomed the arrival, on March 2, of 1500 combat troops and over 500 engineers. It was however, hand-to-hand fighting around the perimeter on the night of the March 3. At daybreak no less than 750 Japanese bodies were counter around the front lines and within the perimeter itself. Some 61 Allied troops died in defending the perimeter, and the 2nd Squadron, 5th US Cavalry Unit and attached Australian Units (Brewer Force) received a Presidential Distinguished Unit Citation for successfully securing and holding the beach-head.

The campaign on the Admiralties came to an official end on May 18, 1944. By then construction work was well underway on a naval base on Los Negros, plus an 8000-foot strip there and a 7000-foot one at Momote, were in use.

The casualties on the Admiralties, 326 allies killed and 1189 wounded, compared with 3280 Japanese killed. The cork was in the bottle: the isolation of the powerful Rabaul and Kavieng garrisons was complete.

NGVR MEMORIAL SERVICE

Shrine Of Memories - Anzac Square - Brisbane

On Wednesday 1 July 1998, 25 members of the Association and civilian guests attended the memorial service to those members of the NGVR, allied soldiers and civilians lost on the "Montevideo Maru" on the 1 July 1942.

Colonel Harry Green, MBE addressed the gathering and NGVR member Jack Goad, paid tribute to the civilians lost on the ship, and the names of those civilians were read out to the gathering.

ROLL OF HONOR

NEW GUINEA

VOLUNTEER RIFLES

In memory of Members of the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles who lost their lives as Prisoners of War during the tragic sinking of the Japanese Prison Ship "Montevideo Maru", off the Philippines Coast on 1 July, 1942. Memorial Service today, Shrine of Memories, Anzac Square, Brisbane, 10.30 a.m. **LEST WE FORGET**

"Courier-Mail" 1 July 1998

Following the Service, Colonel Green and Colin Gould laid a wreath at the Eternal Flame in Anzac Square to honour all departed members of the NGVR and PNGVR. The wreath was laid as part of Queensland's tribute to all Army, Navy & Airforce reservists who served their country, on the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the C.M.F. on 1 July 1948. Members then proceeded to the Stock Exchange Hotel for a fine lunch and good comradeship. Our thanks to Norm Mundy for organising the memorial service.

Queensland lived up to its reputation by providing fine weather for the Reserve Forces Day march in Brisbane. Fifty-five members of the Association, led by President Colonel Harry Green, joined several thousand other past and serving reservists in a unique march through Brisbane. The Salute was taken by Army Reservists, Maj-General D C Low Choy, AM, MBE, RFD. The Hon. B Bishop, MP was amongst guests at the saluting dais.

The Parade included reservists from the U.S.A. and the UK plus a very interesting range of military equipment. Military transport has come a long way since our days in PNG with the old landrover. One vehicle inspected after the march for the transport of approx 8/10 soldiers was well off the ground, armoured and contained indi-

vidual padded seats (with head rests and seat belts) not to mention air conditioning and all manner of communication and fighting equipment.

After the march, members laid claim to the private Bar at the Stock Exchange Hotel and enjoyed a few quiet ales and comradeship. A display of military equipment and band music was provided at the Botanical Gardens. Members were able to meet and talk with Maj-General D C Low Choy, AM, MBE, RFD. who mentioned in conversation that he was most impressed by the presentation and turnout of the NGVR / PNGVR Unit.

The Committee would like to thank all members for making parade, especially those members who travelled great distances to participate.

1st REGIMENTAL MIXED DINNER REUNION VICTORIA BARRACKS OFFICERS MESS BRISBANE FRIDAY 10 JULY 1998



9RQR Piper L/Cpl R McArthur
with member Jesse Chee

A warm and cosy open fire greeted 56 members and guests to the Victoria Barracks Officers Mess for the Association's first Mixed Reunion Dinner. Guests were welcomed with silver trays of sherry and light finger food before moving into the dining room at 1930 hours.

Once members moved to their allocated seats, the official party led by Colonel Harry Green and Mrs Green, was piped in courtesy of L/Cpl R McArthur of 9RQR Pipe Band. The official party was followed by the piping in of the Association's flags.

Guests included Colonel Bryan Todd, AM, RFD, ED and Mrs Todd, Lt Colonel John Teh, AM and Mrs Teh, and Mr & Mrs Hank Cosgrove (Aust-PNG Society)

Members included Mr & Mrs K Aschhoff, Mr & Mrs G Shaw, Mr & Mrs J Chee, Mr & Mrs J Fisk, Mr & Mrs B Harvey-Hall, Ms N Green, Mr N Mundy, Mr & Mrs B Crawford, Mrs & Mrs C Gould, Mr & Mrs B Wright, Mr & Mrs M Zimmerman, Mr & Mrs K Hendren, Mr & Mrs D Ng, Mr & Mrs J Vote, Mr & Mrs U Wellner, Mr & Mrs M O'Sullivan, Mr & Mrs K Connolly and Mr A Martin, Mr T Dowling & guests.

**MILITARY EXCELLENCE AWARD
BEST SECTION 9th BATTALION
THE ROYAL QUEENSLAND REGIMENT
1998 - "STEEL TUFF"**

By Bob Collins

On Sunday 14th June, nine members of the Association attended the conclusion of EXERCISE 'STEEL TUFF' at Enoggera Barracks to witness the final chapters in the annual Exercise to determine the Best Section within 9 RQR.

The Exercise commenced on Friday evening at Greenbank with a night navigation and patrolling exercise which lasted all night, to be followed on the Saturday by further Patrolling exercises which included contact and ambush drills.

On Sunday morning at Enoggera the Sections were subject to Infantry Weapons Tests, including the 5.56mm Steyr rifle, the 5.56mm Light Machine Gun (the replacement of the M-60), Claymore Mine, and M79 Grenade Launcher. They also faced a Military History Test (which I may add, most of our members present had extreme difficulty with, although the excuse was "it had a heavy 9 RQR content"), and an initiative test in which the Section had to move a loaded vehicle trailer with only ONE wheel over a kilometer, maintaining security all the time.

The final 6 Sections from the 18 which competed then had to finish the "Confidence" Course. Why they call it the Confidence Course always escapes me as, whilst attending numerous courses at Canungra the "Confidence Course" completely drained any confidence out of me.

My outdated thinking still believes it to be the OB-STACLE Course. Anyway this course is a beauty and it takes a lot of stamina and excellent teamwork to complete the course with all members in tact with its water, barbed wire, rope and high obstacles to overcome.

The winning Section was Callsign "Charlie Two" from C Coy, 9 RQR based at Loganlea with the members being Cpl R Serra, Ptes S Robertson, G Brett, D Wymark, B Perkins, P Wagels, A Lutherhand.

Colonel Harry Green, MBE made a speech prior to the presentation of the award, which is an attractive medallion featuring both the PNGVR and 9 RQR badges with each soldier's name engraved. The award

also includes individual Certificates.

Each member of the Association in attendance then presented a medal and certificate to each member of the winning Section. Members present were Col.H Green, Col Gould, Joe Fisk, Norm Mundy, Ken Hendren, John Holland, Jesse Chee, Bob Collins and of course, our official Photographer, Tom Dowling who would have excelled the legendary Damien Parer in his enthusiasm to obtain action shots for the occasion.

Any members who would like to be present any future like functions, please contact your Members Rep. (NB numbers are sometimes restricted). It is always a great to see young soldiers of today going through their paces.



Part of the "Confidence Course" at Enoggera Barracks. Note HEAD HEIGHT of each of the levels. Each Section required to climb over the obstacle with packs and weapons with no more than 3 members on any one level. (Photo courtesy of ARMY Newspaper and original photo/article by WO2 Graham McBean.)

ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES

ANZAC DAY BRISBANE - 1998

The Brisbane weather welcomed over 10,000 participants for the 1998 Anzac Day parade. 75 members including 6 members of the NGVR ensured that our Association was well represented.

As in previous years, a number of members travelled great distances to be present on Parade or sent messages of greetings and/or apologies.

Our thanks to Mr Dave Parkinson and the military jeep club for providing a command vehicle for our NGVR and PNGVR members.

Our order of march was:-

9 RQR Band

- * NGVR members in command vehicle
- * Colonel Harry Green, MBE, ED, EM, (Rtd)
- * WO1 Joe Fisk, RFM, EM & WO1 Norm Mundy, RFM, both wearing Juniper Greens
- * Flag bearers (Australian Flag, Regimental Flag & Papua New Guinea Flag
- * Association Banner

* Association members

Our thanks to 9 RQR Pipe Band who preceded the Unit and provided us with a stirring "beat" during the march.

Immediately after the Parade, members attended a memorial service in the Shrine of Memories, Anzac Square to honour departed NGVR comrades.

120 members and guests duly reported to the Old Stock Exchange Hotel for another successful Anzac Day reception. Old stories were retold and many PNG friendships renewed. We welcomed several members to Parade and reception for the first time.

Our thanks to those members who assisted on the day from setting up the reception venue early in the morning, to transporting the flags & banners, display, door duties and sale of stock items and collection of fees.

ANZAC DAY - GALLIPOLI - 1998

(By Sophie Collins - Visitor to Gallipoli)

This year about 8000 Australian and New Zealanders, most of them young adults, celebrated ANZAC Day at Gallipoli. In the preceeding weeks travelling through Turkey, all the conversation amongst travellers from either country was of ANZAC Day, and how lucky we felt to have the opportunity to go there.

Talking to people from other countries was very different however. None of them had anything like ANZAC Day as a day of remembrance, and hence could not understand why we were converging on Cannakale in such numbers.

I did a tour of the peninsula on the 24th April, and was amazed at both the beauty of the area and the geographical difficulties that had been overcome by the troops in 1915. The guide for our tour was a Turkish man whose grandfather had fought and died at Gallipoli, and was buried at Lone Pine in a mass grave with four thousand others. His stories brought to life the realities of a campaign in which the trenches were only a few meters apart at certain points, the friendship between the men on the two sides, and the respect which the Turkish still have for the people of our two countries.

We had all been to Dawn Services in our respective cities, but knew that was unlikely to prepare us for the

Dawn Service at Anzac Cove. As there were so many people there, the buses started taking us over at 3.00am, and we waited for the dawn to come, imagining what it had been like eighty-three years earlier, as the ANZAC's waited to land.

Finally the service began. In itself it was unremarkable, a few speeches and presentations. It was the feelings that it evoked that were special. When we sang our national anthems at the end of the service, the emotion was almost tangible. I have never felt so proud to be an Australian as I did at that moment. Men from my country had come thousands of miles from home to join in a fight which was not of their making. They did not shirk what they saw as their duty, although they must have been daunted by the task which was ahead of them. I knew what the ANZAC's had sacrificed for us had given our young nation the spirit which is so much a part of our identity.

After the dawn service an International service was held by the Turkish for all countries who had sent troops to the Gallipoli Peninsula and then we went to Lone Pine for the Australian service. This was the most touching of the day for me because of its specificity. It was a time for all of the Australians who had come to join together in remembering our former countrymen.

During the ceremony the Minister who spoke informed us that the Prime Minister had announced that in future years there would be a competition held in schools and that one child representing each state and territory would be chosen to attend the services in Turkey. Having just experienced how powerful an event this was, all present greeted the announcement warmly.

The pervasive feeling was summed up well by a young schoolboy who participated in the New Zealand ceremony "I think that all young people should come here on ANZAC Day so that they can see what was achieved by our men."

I have heard it said that ANZAC Day is part of the glorification of war in our country. I have never thought so and do so even less after attending the services at Gallipoli. It was time to remember those people who have been prepared to give their lives for others. My generation of Australian are extremely lucky that we have never been faced with that decision, and that may be one reason why most of those at Gallipoli were young Australians. We went to pay homage to all those who, in the last eighty-three years, were prepared to say yes to a question we hope never to have to consider.

(Sophie is the daughter of Member Bob Collins)



LONE PINE
GALLIPOLI

For your Diary.....

*The Australian-Papua New Guinea
Business & Cultural Society (Inc)*
FIRST ANNUAL DINNER DANCE

- * **DATE:** Saturday 19 September 1998
- * **VENUE:** Queensland Irish Club - 175 Elizabeth Street Brisbane
- * **TIME:** 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm * **COST:** \$50 pp incl 3 course meal & limited beer/wine/juice

- * **DRESS:** Formal = Anzac Day Dress with miniatures / Mess Dress / Suit
- * **BOOKINGS:** Essential - ASAP NGVR/PNGVR Bookings/money to Colin Gould by the 5 September 1998.

Music.....Dancing.....Lucky Door Prizes.....Raffles.....Entertainment.....Airline tickets to be won



STAN BURTON: TOM KEENAN: TOM LEGA,MM.



TONY MILAN, RFD,ED



JOHN MUDGE, MBE



HARVEY BOOTH



RUDY BUCKLEY



BILL BICKERTON



DOUG NG

**FACES OF
ANZAC DAY
1998**