



Harim Tok Tok

PAPUA NEW GUINEA VOLUNTEER RIFLES EX-MEMBERS ASSOCIATION Inc.



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PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

Here is another cracker issue of Harim Tok Tok for your Christmas reading. Happily, it is an issue without a vale — and may this trend continue.

A successful AGM was held on Saturday 22nd October at Wacol Museum when 24 members and friends attended. Your 2022 Patron, honorary Solicitor, honorary Chaplain, office bearers and committee members were re-appointed without change. I had the honour of presenting my seventeenth annual report. The AGM was followed by a delightful barbeque luncheon. The reports with details of the meeting may be read on pages 18 and 19.

The proposed lease of our Museum with NSSAQ will be finalised before Christmas. We thank our honorary Solicitor Craig Ray for his work.

Alas, our top shooter, Ian Thompson's hurried return from Adelaide through western NSW flood waters to attend the Boonah Rifle shoot was in vain. The Shoot was cancelled due to wet weather. It is unlikely this event will be held this year so close to Christmas. Thank you Ian for your effort.

On Saturday afternoon 12 November, our Chaplain Ron MacDonald and his wife Cheryl represented us at the Salvation Army Brass Band Concert involving five Salvation Army Bands held in Stafford, Brisbane. Ron plays the trombone in his band. One of the bands was the Melbourne Staff Band which is considered number one brass band in Australia. The music composed by noted Australian composer, Arthur Gullidge of the Brunswick Salvation Army Band, all of whom were lost, but one, on the Montevideo Maru was played. Funds raised will promote brass band music in PNG.

9 RQR's "Exercise Steel Tuff" competition to determine the best section in the Regiment will be held late November 2022. The presentation of NGVR's "Medallions of Excellence" to each member of the winning section will be made by Bob Collins, Peter Rogers DFC and Phil Ainsworth on Saturday evening 26th November. The next issue of HTT will highlight this event.

Kylie Adams-Collier (country music singer

and composer of her Montevideo Maru song) and Rod Miller (historian and author of "Lost women of Rabaul", <https://www.simonandschuster.com.au/books/Lost-Women-of-Rabaul/Rod-Miller/9781922615930>), representing the PNGAA /Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Group attended the dedication of the 'Lost At Sea' memorial on Mona Vale Headland on 14th October 2022. Although I was unable to attend, we were indirectly represented as I am a committee member of PNGAA and the Group. Kylie and Rod spoke very highly of the ceremony and the location of the memorial. The memorial and seat overlook the Pacific Ocean at Robert Dunn Reserve on the Mona Vale Headland, northern beaches, Sydney. Kylie's photos are attached. The following links provide further details of the service and memorial:

<https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/67342780/pittwater-life-november-2022-issue> (pp 20 & 21) and Pittwater Online News Oct 16-22, 2088 Issue 558 - <https://www.pittwateronlinenews.com/Lost-at-Sea-Wal-Williams-WWII-Memorial-Mona-Vale.php>

Following representations by Gillian Nikakis, the daughter of NGVR soldier Cpl George William (Bill) Spensley NG4031 lost on the Montevideo Maru, the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Group (R&MVM) of the PNGAA is sponsoring a commemorative seat and storyboard at



the Mornington Memorial Gardens in conjunction with Mornington Peninsula Shire Council, Victoria. Cpl Spensley's story was highlighted at the AWM'S Last Post Ceremony on 1st July 2022 (see my update in HTT 135). The site has been selected and the dedication service will be held on 23rd January 2023. NGVR will be highlighted on the storyboard. Without Andrea Williams' dedication this would not have occurred - well done and thank you Andrea.

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs recently announced the appointment of Kim Beazley to the Council of the Australian War Memorial. Brendan Nelson will be stepping down as he has been appointed President of Boeing and will be working in USA.

Our next committee meeting and BYO luncheon will be held from 10am, Saturday 10th December in the Museum. All members and friends are welcome to attend.

On behalf of the management committee I extend best wishes to you and your family for Christmas and New Year.

Phil Ainsworth, November 2022

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The Lonely Vigil of 'Golden Voice'

Leigh Grant Vial 28.2.1909—30.4.1943

The story of Leigh Vial and his six months as a coastwatcher above Salamaua, New Guinea, during 1942 is a legend. Even before this, as an Assistant District Officer with the civil administration at Rabaul, he assisted Australians, including members of 24 Squadron, to escape the town when the Japanese invaded.

Enlisted into the RAAF at Townsville in January 1942, as a Pilot Officer, Leigh Vial returned to New Guinea specifically to be a coastwatcher above Salamaua. This was an area where he and his family had worked and lived in pre-war years.

On his return to Port Moresby from his coast watching duties, Leigh was awarded a Distinguished Service Cross by the Americans. There was no recognition, unfortunately, at the time, from the Australians or our Air Force.

Vial tragically lost his life on 30 April 1943 when guiding an American B-24 Liberator carrying supplies to a remote Australian Army reconnaissance group in the Highlands of New Guinea, near the present-day Goroka. All on board the bomber lost their lives when it crashed short of the drop zone.

Vial, as a well-educated young cadet patrol officer in New Guinea in 1933, went seeking adventure and a career after graduating from Melbourne and Sydney Universities, with a degree in anthropology at the latter. His early days were spent in the Morobe District, around Lae and Salamaua. Vial loved the country and people.

In 1936 he wrote 'It's a long time since I left - nearly a year now - but the time has passed very rapidly for me. I've been patrolling steadily for the last five months in my own district. Theoretically I'm stationed at Buki, but all told I've only been there about four weeks.'

On 15 August 1938 Vial made the first ascent of Mt Wilhelm (15,400 feet), the second highest peak in New Guinea. To calculate the height he boiled water on the peak, recorded the temperature with a thermometer, and a calculation then gave him the altitude. At the summit he noted mist and snow lying in sheltered spots. Vial climbed the mountain again in 1939, this time accompanied by a geologist L. C. Noakes, investigating evidence of glaciation.

When war broke out with Japan in late 1941 Vial was an assistant District Officer stationed at Rabaul.

The day before the Japanese invasion of Rabaul, Vial led a large group of Army and air force to Sum Sum, on the other side of the island, from where unarmed Empire flying boats ferried them to safety.

With his wife Majorie and two children, who had also earlier lived at Salamaua, safely back in Australia, Vial enlisted into the RAAF at Townsville. Eric Feldt in his book *The Coastwatchers* recounts:

'Vial quietly insisted that he should be given a coast watching assignment. With his youth, ability and knowledge of the country he was an ideal coastwatcher. It was expected that the enemy would occupy Salamaua before long, and operate aircraft from there and from Lae against defenseless Port Moresby. The Air Intelligence Officer (Squadron Leader J. Welwood DFC) was as anxious to get Vial to Salamaua as I was. In two days Vial was commissioned as a Pilot Officer and within a week we had supplied him with a teleradio, codes and food.'

Vial took a portable radio and a large supply of trading items for the natives which included a big bag of new Guinea shillings. He also carried a series of grid maps of the whole Lae-Salamaua area so that he could describe exactly the loca-

tion of any targets, especially shipping. An RAAF Hudson flew him in before Salamaua fell. A diary was kept and the following are two extracts from it:

- 25/2/42 - Arrived O.P. area.

- 10/4/42 - Seaplane left Salamaua about 6:30. Ship 1,000 tons thought merchant vessel into Lae at 0735 (Reported).

Careful watch all day - weather good. Cars seen to and from drome and to and from assumed enemy H.Q.

An extract from 32 Squadron's diary records a supply drop from one of their Hudsons on 19 April 1942 ... 'A16-153. Photographic reconnaissance Madang-Wewak and drop supplies to P/O Vial.'

The Japanese were not long in monitoring Vial's transmissions and seeing the results in the bombing of Lae, Salamaua and coastal shipping, as well as the timely interception of their aircraft heading for Moresby. A small enemy floatplane was sent to comb the ridges and machine-gun his area, backed up by ground parties, and on 24 June 1942 Vial was forced to move his post and equipment. Twice he escaped by remaining motionless in the fork of a tree infested with green stinging ants, while a Japanese patrol passed below. But such was his skill and jungle craft that he was not caught and the local people never gave him away.

His mother wrote afterwards of some of the privations that Leigh suffered because of the damp and poor food during his lonely vigil:

'The worst time was when he had a very bad case of tinea - the irritation was intense both on his face, eyes and body. He had to keep his arms straight out at right angles as he lay in his shelter, to control himself from scratching. Then he could only crawl out and put his shaving mirror on the ground in front of him to see the sky and so send his report on the weather. Each week there was a telephone message to his wife (from Sqn Ldr J. Welwood DFC), "your husband is well and sends his love."

Some six months survival in the difficult climatic conditions, combined with a poor diet, began to have their effect and Vial began suffering bouts of blindness caused by lack of vitamins. On 10 August 1942 he was replaced by Lieutenant F. H. Moy of AN-GAU (Australia New Guinea Administrative Unit). Vial then set out by foot for Wau, in the hinterland, from where he was airlifted to Moresby.

The Air Intelligence Officer, 9 Operational Group RAAF subsequently reported:

'It is desired to draw attention to the fact that during the period of six months in which Vial was at his post he transmitted as many as nine signals a day giving valuable information of enemy dispositions, and not on any single occasion did he neglect to get his messages through, and thus showed a total disregard for his own safety.'



However, it was the Americans who were quick to recognise and give Vial recognition for his work. On 12 September 1942 General Eichelberger, at a formal parade at which all available troops were



gathered in a hollow square, presented the modest coastwatcher with their Distinguished Service Cross. The citation, which was not released at the time for security reasons, read in part... *his reports enabled us repeatedly to disperse our aircraft and send aloft fighters for successful interception. They also enabled a striking force to sink several ships and to harass enemy operations.*'

Vial, on his return from Salamaua, produced an excellent booklet on jungle survival for Allied aircrews. He was also promoted to Flight Lieutenant and placed in charge of the Port Moresby section of the Far East Liaison Office. This organisation's work was psychological warfare, which often involved the dropping of propaganda leaflets from the air with information to both the enemy and local New Guinea people.

In April 1943 a special reconnaissance party (codenamed Ladybird), led by Lieutenant G. Greathead, a pre-war patrol officer, radioed for a supply drop in the Bena Bena (Goroka) area of the highlands of New Guinea. Assigned to the task was an American B-24 Liberator, named *Czechem*, from the 90th Bomb group then based at Jackson's Strip, Port Moresby. On 16 April *Czechem*, with a crew of 11 and Leigh Vial as observer, departed for the Bena Bena area.

For reasons still unclear today the Liberator crashed 16 air miles south of the drop zone and all on board lost their lives. Coincidentally, Lieutenant Eric Snook, an engineer surveying for the Army in the area, saw the crash and with the aid of local natives and missionaries he was travelling with found and buried the bodies.

Serving with Vial in pre-war New Guinea as a patrol officer was Gerald (Gerry) Keogh, formerly of Maitland, NSW. They had been together on the Yuat patrol in 1934 and remained friends over the years and into the war. Keogh enlisted with the RAAF on 13 July 1942 to also become an intelligence officer at Port Moresby.

Exactly four months after Leigh Vial was killed Gerry Keogh lost his life under similar circumstances. A pre-dawn takeoff from Jackson's Strip (Port Moresby) in a B-24 Liberator of the 90th Bomb Group, with an American crew of 11 and Keogh as the RAAF observer. In a slow climb out over nearby Bootless Bay and a 180 degree turn to the north, the bomber struck the top of nearby Varirata Plateau at 2000 feet above the drome and all on board were killed instantly.

On 30 April 1993, 50 years after his death, the RAAF remembered Leigh Vial. An oil impression painting, by the late Frank Harding, was presented to Mrs Majorie Vial and her family at the RAAF Museum, Point Cook. In a moving ceremony Group Captain Dave Stevens made the presentation, which depicted Leigh overlooking Salamaua from his 1942 hilltop hideout. Also present for the occasion were Leigh Vial's daughters Lindy and Jill and son Andrew.

In July 1994 Lindy Gilham, Leigh Vial's youngest daughter, went to New Guinea to satisfy a lifelong ambition. She visited her father's grave at Lae and the area around Salamaua, where he operated. Lindy had seen her father only once, when he visited Melbourne on two days' leave.

At Salamaua, she unexpectedly met Norman, a local who helped her father in 1942 in the hills above the town. She learned that to the locals, Vial is still remembered as a '*Masta Diwai*', Pidgin English for '*the man who lived in the trees*'.

The Hidden Chapters. Untold stories of Australians at war in the Pacific.

[Why don't you ever see the headline 'Psychic Wins Lottery'?](#)

The Puggaree

The term 'puggaree' originates from the Hindu word, 'Pagri,' meaning a turban or thin scarf of muslin. Intended for insulation, the puggaree was a traditional Indian head-wrap, adapted by the British for headdress worn in hot, sunny regions.

During World War One (1914-1918) a plain khaki cloth band was

worn and this practice continued until compulsory training was suspended in 1929.

Following the introduction of Voluntary Training in 1930, new puggarees were issued to the Commonwealth Military Force with different coloured folds denoting Arm or Service.

During World War Two, a flat type of band was issued. Troops who were on active service in the Middle East at the time introduced a folded puggaree as a distinguishing mark of active service.

Later, the Army reverted to various types of plain bands, green dyed puggarees for example, for jungle warfare. However, the official puggaree at the conclusion of World War Two was still the flat band.

The current puggaree has seven pleats, one for each state and one for the Australian Territories. It is made from light khaki coloured cotton and is worn on the slouch hat with a unit colour patch sewn on the right side.

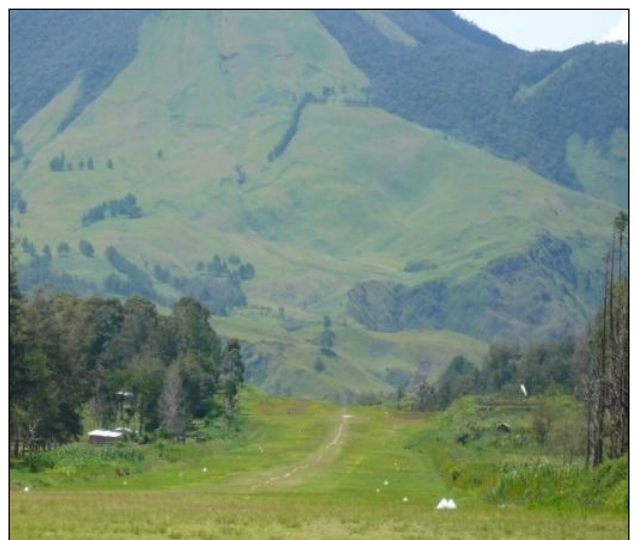
While the majority of the Australian Army wear the light khaki coloured puggaree, there are slight variations for members of the 1st Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment, and the Corps of Staff Cadets.

Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment, wear jungle green puggaree. The dark green puggaree was introduced during the Battalion's service in Malaya over the period 1959-61. Unable to get puggarees from Australia for an official parade; the task of producing them was given to the Battalion tailor, Mr. Mohavved Beseek. Mr Beseek used 'bush shirts' (common issue British field uniform at the time) to make the puggarees as he was unable to obtain the khaki material locally or from Australia.

It is thought that the Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel W. Morrow decided that the green puggaree would be the puggaree worn by the 1st Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment, in Malaya. After the battalion's return to Australia, the dark green puggaree was adopted for permanent use. Because the dark green puggaree is so distinctive, the battalion does not wear a colour patch.

Royal Military College staff cadets wear a distinctive puggaree of olive drab colour. The puggaree has eight pleats, with seven representing each state and one for the Australian Territories. The eighth pleat signifies the graduation of the first international cadet through the Royal Military College who hailed from New Zealand.

Army web site



Marawaka Airstrip Eastern Highlands. The only flat land is at the top of the strip where aircraft have to park sideways.

The Emu Plume

Slouch hats worn by members of the Armoured Corps are adorned with Emu plumes, a tradition that originated with the Queensland Mounted Infantry during the great shearers' strike in Queensland in 1891. During this time, the Queensland Mounted Infantry were called out, as soldiers to aid the Civil Power.



As time permitted, the soldiers would participate in a sporting activity where they would ride their horses alongside the emus, plucked the breast feathers, and placed the feathers on their hat. The Gympie Squadron was the first to wear the feathers, a fashion soon followed by the regiment.

The Queensland government permitted the Regiment to adopt the plume as part of its uniform in recognition of its service. In 1915 then Minister for Defence Sir G. F. Pearce granted all units of the Australian Light Horse permission to wear the plume, which they refer to as 'Kangaroo feathers'.

Emu tufts of approved design and dimensions are now worn by all members of the Royal Australian Armoured Corps as an item of dress. All Royal Australian Armoured Corps personnel were given authority to wear Emu plumes in the slouch hat, brim up or down in 1996, this was extended to all personnel serving in the Royal Australian Armoured Corps Regiment in 2000.

Army web site



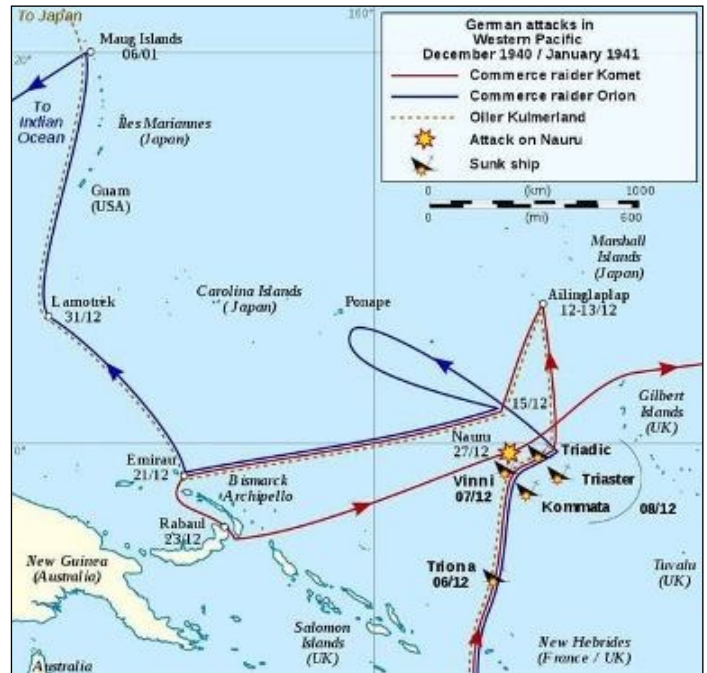
Begesin Lutheran Mission airstrip (and cricket pitch) near Madang, 1975. One pilot described landing there as driving into your garage at 70 mph (112kmh). Over the years a bulldozer was used to clear away the hill at this end and lengthen the strip.

German Shipping Attacks in the Pacific WW1

Background

In December 1940 there were two German attacks on Nauru. Nauru is an island country in Micronesia, a subregion of Oceania, in the Central Pacific. These attacks were conducted by auxiliary cruisers between 6 and 8 December and on 27 December. The raiders sank five Allied merchant ships and inflicted serious damage on Nauru's economically important phosphate-loading facilities. Despite the significance of the island to the Australian and New Zealand economies, Nauru was not defended and the German force did not suffer any losses.

The two attacks were the most effective operations conducted by German raiders in the Pacific Ocean during World



War II. They disrupted supplies of phosphate to Australia, New Zealand and Japan, which reduced agricultural production in these countries. In response, Allied naval vessels were deployed to protect Nauru and nearby Ocean Island and escort shipping in the South Pacific. Small garrisons were also established to protect the two islands.

The first attempt

When the German force reassembled off Nauru on 15 December, the weather was too bad to permit a landing and the attack on Nauru was broken off. Further attacks on shipping were judged impractical, as the raiders had intercepted radio messages ordering vessels bound for Nauru and Ocean Island to disperse.

Instead, the three German ships proceeded to the Australian-administered island of Emirau to disembark the 675 prisoners they were carrying. While Captain Kurt Weyher, of the German raider *Orion*, refused to release any of the European ethnic prisoners on board *Orion*, as he believed that "trained officers and crews are as much a problem for Britain as shipping itself", the ships landed 343 Europeans and 171 Chinese and South Pacific -ethnic people.

Fortunately for the Germans, Emirau was one of the few islands in the region to not have a Royal Australian Navy-supplied radio to contact the Australian authorities. The two European families on the island provided the released prisoners with supplies and sent a canoe to Kavieng in New Ireland to notify the Australian colonial government.

A schooner was dispatched to bring additional supplies to Emirau and arrived there on 24 December. The colonial administrator of New Britain and further supplies were also flown to Emirau on board a flying boat. The released prisoners were embarked onto the steamer *Nellore* on 29 December to be transported to Townsville in Queensland, where they arrived on 1 January 1941. They provided useful intelligence on the German raiders' operations, and the German Naval Staff issued a directive on 19 February 1941 prohibiting raiders from releasing further prisoners.

The three German ships, the raiders *Orion*, *Komet* and the supply ship *Kulmerland*, parted company after leaving Emirau on 21 December. *Orion* proceeded to Lamotrek and then Maug in the Mariana Islands to overhaul her engines, *Kulmerland* went to Japan, and only *Komet* continued operations in the South Pacific.

Komet

She attempted to lay mines off Rabaul on 24 December using her motor boat, but this project was abandoned when the boat's engines failed.

Komet returned to Nauru following the unsuccessful attempt to mine Rabaul and arrived off the island at 05:45 on the morning of 27 December. After issuing a warning for those on shore to not use radio and signalling her intent to destroy the phosphate loading plant, she opened fire at 06:40.

The bombardment lasted for about an hour, during which time the raider wrecked the loading plant, oil tanks, boats, buildings and mooring buoys. Following this attack, she sailed to the south-east and Nauru broadcast news of the attack to Australia. This was the last visit of German ships to Nauru during the war, and *Komet* transferred her activities to the Indian Ocean.

Aftermath – Fertiliser rationing



The German raids on Nauru affected the Australian and New Zealand economies and were the greatest success achieved by German raiders in the Pacific Ocean during World War II.

It took ten weeks to resume phosphate shipments from Nauru, and the loss of ships and damaged infrastructure led to a significant decline in output. The resulting phosphate shortages forced the introduction of fertiliser rationing in New Zealand from July 1941.

Komet's bombardment of the island also interfered with phosphate consignments to Japan, which caused the Japanese government to threaten to reduce the aid it was providing to Germany. The success of the attacks on Nauru led to rumours in Australia and New Zealand that the raiders had been aided by treachery in the islands. Several investigations were conducted into the rumours and proved them to be unfounded.

Defence of Nauru

Following the raids, the Commonwealth military forces in the Pacific took steps to prevent further attacks by raiders. The Royal Australian Air Force and Royal New Zealand Air Force flew an increased number of patrols in search of raiders operating near major ports.

In addition, the Australian Naval Board requested that the British Admiralty authorise the redeployment of Australian naval units to meet the threat posed by raiders. This was agreed to, and the light cruiser *HMAS Sydney* and armed merchant cruiser *HMAS Kanimbla* returned to Australia from other stations. This allowed naval protection to be provided to Nauru and Ocean islands, and the armed merchant cruiser *HMAS Manoora* arrived off Ocean Island on 4 January 1941 escorting *Trienza*.

Several Australian and New Zealand warships maintained a continual presence off the islands during subsequent months, and two field guns were deployed to each island. The attacks also led to the introduction of convoys between Australia and New Zealand.

The naval authorities were able to use the intelligence they gained from the prisoners landed at Emirau to re-route merchant ships away from the areas in which the German raiders were operating; this greatly reduced the effectiveness of the raiders, and *Komet* and *Orion* only sank three ships in the period between the attack on Nauru and their return to Europe in late 1941.

Suzy Neve—*Australian Military History*

Free Marriage Tip. Don't ask your wife when dinner will be ready when she is mowing the lawn.

Frank John Partridge VC by Barry O. Jones

Frank John Partridge (1924-1964), soldier, farmer and quiz-champion, was born on 29 November 1924 at Grafton, New South Wales, third of five children of Patrick (Paddy) James Partridge, an Australian-born farmer, and his wife Mary, née Saggs, who came from England. Frank left Tewinga Public School at the age of 13 and worked on the family farm—dairying and growing bananas at Upper Newee Creek, near Macksville. While serving in the Volunteer Defence Corps, he was called up for full-time duty in the Australian Military Forces on 26 March 1943. He was posted to the 8th Battalion, a Militia unit which moved to Lae, New Guinea, in May 1944 and to Emirau Island in September.

From June 1945 the 8th Battalion operated in northern Bougainville, containing Japanese forces on the Bonis Peninsula. On 24 July Partridge was a member of a patrol ordered to destroy an enemy post, known as Base 5, near Ratsua. The Australians came under heavy machine-gun fire. Despite wounds to his arm and thigh, Partridge rushed the nearest bunker, killing its occupants with grenade and knife, then began to attack a second bunker until loss of blood forced him to stop. He was awarded the Victoria Cross. **Of the Australians who won the V.C. in World War II, he was the youngest and the last, and the only militiaman.** After visiting London in 1946 for the Victory march, he was discharged from the A.M.F. on 17 October in New South Wales; he was again to travel to England in 1953 for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II and in 1956 for the Victoria Cross centenary celebrations.

Returning to Upper Newee Creek, Partridge lived with his father in a dirt-floored farmhouse. He devoted himself to self-education, reading the Encyclopaedia Britannica by kerosene lamp and developing an extraordinarily retentive memory. In 1962-63 he appeared as a contestant on the television quiz show, 'Pick-a-Box', compered by Bob Dyer; his laconic manner appealed strongly to viewers. Partridge was one of only three contestants to win all forty boxes; his prizes were valued at

more than £12,000. At St Stephen's Presbyterian Church, Sydney, on 23 February 1963 he married Barbara Mavis Vyvienne Jennifer Wylie Dunlop, a 31-year-old nursing sister who lived at Turrumurra. The wedding received extensive media coverage. Barbara remained at Turrumurra while Frank built a new home at the farm. He drove to Sydney every weekend to see her.



Partridge was an honorary member of the Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' and Airmen's Imperial League of Australia, a life member and patron of the Macksville Ex-



Frank Partridge VC, Reg Rattey VC, Richard Kelliher VC.

Servicemen's Club, and vice-president of the Nambucca district council of the Banana Growers' Federation Co-operative Ltd. Harbours deep political ambitions, he confidently sought Country Party pre-selection for the House of Representatives seat of Cowper in 1963. His views were regarded as rather extreme, and he lost to Ian Robinson. Partridge agreed to be Robinson's campaign-manager for the election that year. To supplement the income from his farm, Partridge travelled around the district selling life assurance. He was killed in a motorcar accident on 23 March 1964 near Bellingen and was buried with full military honours in Macksville cemetery. His wife and three-month-old son survived him.

This article was published in Australian Dictionary of Biography, Volume 15, (MUP), 2000

I just got pulled over by the cops. He said "I can smell alcohol". I told him that's because you're not respecting social distancing

Centurions in the Jungle

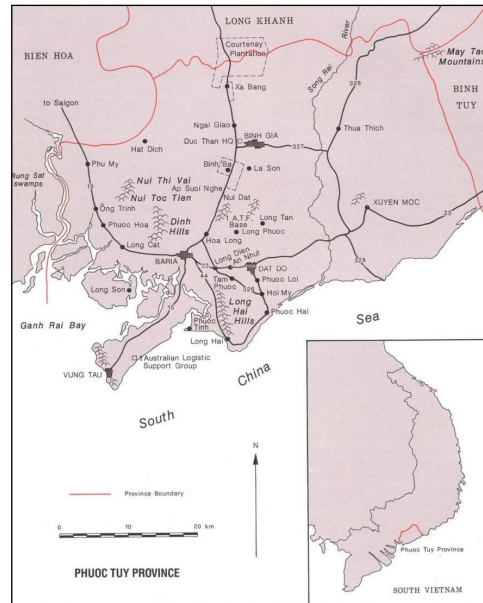
Centurions past the equator

The Royal Australian Armoured Corps existed under various names since 1927. Before WWII it was a «virtual» branch of the service, nearly devoid of vehicles and individual formations. Australia only acquired a significant number of vehicles during WWII. Large units were trained and fought on the front lines. Australian regiments and brigades fought against Germans and Italians in North Africa, with the Vichy French in the Middle East, and with the Japanese in the Pacific.

The Corps was radically reduced in size after 1945. This was connected with the optimization of the armed forces and the reforms meant to create a small professional army that was always ready for battle. The core of the RAAC was the 1st Armoured Regiment, formed in 1949 chiefly out of the experienced 4th Tank Brigade. In addition, armoured vehicles were included in a number of mechanized cavalry regiments and reserve formations.

The 1st Armoured Regiment consisted of only the A Squadron armed with Churchill Mk.VII infantry tanks. Australia received 51 such vehicles. These tanks were seen as a temporary measure, and talks to equip Australia with new Centurion MBTs began in 1949. The regiment was not considered fit for battle during the first few years of its life, which allowed it to avoid fighting in the Korean War, although several officers did make it to the front as a part of other units. Australian infantry received experience in fighting alongside Centurions, albeit British ones.

Supplies of Centurion Mk.3 tanks began in 1951. After training and trials, 39 vehicles finally entered the 1st Armoured Regiment in the summer of 1952, which allowed the formation of the 2nd and 3rd (B and C) squadrons and put the unit into a



battle ready state. Before the 1960s the Australian army received 117 (or 143 according to some sources) Centurion Mk.3 tanks, as well as engineering vehicles on its chassis: 4 bulldozers, 4 bridge-layers, and 6 ARVs. These vehicles were spread out between the 1st Armoured Regiment, mechanized cavalry units (both regular and reserve), and the ar-

moured forces training centre.

The 1st Armoured Regiment did not take part in the Korean War, and its role in the armed forces remained vague for some time. Even though the Australian military actively fought against Communist partisan movements in Malaysia in the 50s, these operations had no room for tanks, which put the value of such tanks being used by Australia into question. Suffice it to say that the first joint exercises between tanks and infantry were held in 1959, and the first exercises in the jungle (in Queensland) in 1960. The subsequent years put things in their place.

Baptism by fire

Australia was pulled into the war in Vietnam in the mid 1960s. Both the fear of the Red Menace and the obligations to their American allies (as a part of the ANZUS bloc) played a part. A group of Australian military advisors was present in South Vietnam from 1962, and in 1965 Australian Prime Minister Robert Menzies announced that he was sending a combat force to Vietnam, despite criticism from the opposition.

Based on the agreement with the American command, Australian forces were to control the territory to the east of Saigon (in the area of Viet Cong activity). Initially, the force only consisted of an infantry battalion, an armoured cavalry squadron, and a number of auxiliary units. New units were constantly rotated into Vietnam, and the 1st Australian Task Force grew to 4000-5000 men, controlling the Phuoc Tuy province in South Vietnam. The Australian navy and air force also took a limited part in these operations.

Initially the use of armoured vehicles was limited to a squadron of tracked M113A1 APCs that arrived with cavalry regiments. The vehicles fought starting with 1966, which revealed



their vulnerability and poor firepower. Suddenly the Australians were facing a powerful enemy with heavy machineguns, recoilless rifles, and anti-tank rocket launchers. Heavy fighting in February of 1963 that cost 15 men killed and 53 injured in just a few days is said to

have played a key part in the decision to reinforce the Australian task force with tanks.

The 1st Armoured Regiment's preparations for battle in 1967 included the modernization of the tanks to the Centurion Mk.5/1 standard, which included:-

- i) Strengthening the front armour.
- ii) Replacing the BESA machineguns with a Browning one, including the commander's MG mount.
- iii) Installation of a floodlight and IR lamp.
- iv) Installation of an additional 100 gallon fuel tank in the rear.

The tankers began their journey to war on February 10th, 1968. The combat diary received its first entry:

"The 1st Armoured Regiment put together a going away party for the C squadron and the maintenance unit. C Squadron marched past the RAAC orchestra playing «Waltzing Matilda». A large crowd gathered to watch the unit's departure."

C squadron commanded by Captain Peter Badman arrived in the Republic of Vietnam on February 27th. It included two squads of four tanks apiece, two commander tanks, two bulldozers, and two ARVs. Tankers got down to business immediately upon arrival. In March-April the Centurions and the APCs of the 3rd Cavalry Regiment provided fire support during Operation Pinnaroo: the discovery and destruction of Viet Cong positions in the mountains. One tank was disabled by a mine, but was repaired.

The fighting for remote Balmoral and Coral firebases against Viet Cong partisans supported by the 7th Infantry Division of the Vietnamese People's Army was a real trial for the Australian forces. Nearly all Australian units in Vietnam at that point took part in the fighting: the 1st and 3rd infantry battalions of the Royal Australian Regiment, A Squadron from the 3rd Cavalry Regiment, batteries of the 12th Artillery Regiment. Fire support was provided by Australian UH-1 helicopters and Canberra bombers. The fighting for Balmoral and Coral became the most action-packed event for the Australians in the Vietnam War.

On May 22-23rd C Squadron made a 120 km march from their base in Nui Dat to the Coral base, losing one bulldozer to a mine. The two squads of tanks were split up between the 1st and 3rd Infantry Battalions and fought to repel Vietnamese attacks on both bases for over a week. Periodically, the Australians would counterattack to destroy enemy field fortifications and firing positions. The tanks actively took part in these raids. Many hits of RPG-2 grenades were registered on the Centurions, but they could not penetrate the armour. No losses were recorded, but a number of crewmen suffered light wounds. The attacks stopped in early June and the squadron returned to Nui Dat. It is considered that the Australians lost 25 men killed and about 100 wounded, the Vietnamese lost over 200 killed.

When the number of Australian tanks in theatre reached 28 in September of 1968 the main tactical unit became a four-tank squad. No large battles took place, but C Squadron was used to control the area. On August 21-22nd two squads of Centurions were used to deflect an attack at Long Dien. The tanks survived another RPG barrage, but this time one tank was lightly damaged.

The main enemy of Australian tankers in the fall-winter of 1968 was enemy mines. One tank hit a mine and was completely disabled on September 15th (Vehicle Beyond Local Repair). Two more tanks were damaged in December, one of which killed the driver. Another two tanks were damaged in January of 1969.

Experience gathered during 1968 led to some modifications made to the Centurions of the 1st Armoured Regiment. Tankers attached spare track links to the front to offer extra protec-

tion. A carrier for additional machinegun ammunition was welded onto the turret. The smoke grenade launchers, IR lamp, and skirt armour were removed, as they were considered useless. American PRC25 radios were often installed on tanks. Other minor changes were made as well.

Fighting in the jungle was difficult. One tanker recalled:

"Naturally, the tank heated up. It was very hot from the red-hot gun, cordite, the heat of the engine, the constant heat of everything. It was very uncomfortable."

The daily life of an Australian tanker

The first rotation of the 1st Armoured Regiment was made in February of 1969. C Squadron crews were replaced with B Squadron (commanded by Major Bill Reynolds). The newly arrived tankers were immediately put to work in a wide scale operation to clear a large area east of Saigon (from Viet Cong forces. Heavy fighting broke out on February 16th. A squad of tanks engaged Vietnamese RPG crews. The head tank was immediately knocked out with three RPG hits (the Vietnamese were using new RPG-7s) and five tankers from the squad were wounded. The official history of the 1st Armoured Regiment claims that the squad commander, 2nd Lieutenant Brian Sullivan, exited his tank and suppressed one RPG crew with his pistol.

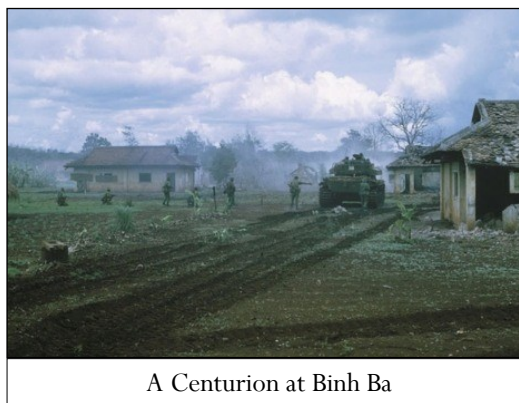
The tanks participated in protecting supply lines and offering fire support to light infantry in anti-partisan fighting. The Centurions were hit by mines and RPGs several times in April-May. A relatively large battle took part on May 7th:

"14:05: callsign Bravo was knocked out with a Chinese mine. Light damage was caused. One Australian was evacuated with light wounds. At 17:00 callsign 24 was shot up by six enemies with small arms and RPG-7s. One Australian was wounded (evacuated), the tank received medium damage. At 19:20 D and E platoons attacked under cover from B Squadron. As a result of the engagement the enemy suffered one casualty. One Russian 7.62 mm rifle was captured."

Active fighting (by Australian measure) broke out for Binh Ba village, considered an important Viet Cong base, on June 6-8th, 1969. A combat group of the 5th battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment with support from nearly all of B Squadron, M113 APCs from the 3rd Cavalry Regiment, and Australian UH-1 helicopters tried to take the village by storm, but encountered heavy resistance. The Vietnamese had new RPG-7 launchers and knocked out two tanks from the leading squad. The other tanks continued to successfully support their infantry, and the Australians announced victory on the morning of June 8th. They lost only one man killed and ten injured. Such low losses are explained by successful use of tanks. It is considered that the Vietnamese took about 100 casualties.

After the fighting for Binh Ba B Squadron returned to its routine. The intensity of the fighting for the whole Australian force decreased. Successful anti-partisan actions forced the Vietnamese to change their methods in the Australian zone.

A Squadron arrived on rotation in December of 1969, commanded by Major Jack Chipman.



A Centurion at Binh Ba

Soon after, they took part in a wide scale anti-partisan operation (Operation Hammersley). Nearly the whole squadron supported

the 8th Infantry Battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment in its attack against a large partisan base in Long Hai on February 17-18th. The Centurions took heavy RPG fire but the losses were limited to several wounded tankers.

The tanks took part in routine anti-partisan fighting throughout the year. Long periods of silence were broken up by short bursts of combat. The A Squadron combat diary lists a number of examples.

"April 25th, 1970. 22:10. Supporting a mine disposal squad at Timothy checkpoint. Fire support of 9th platoon C company of the 7th Infantry Battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment. 45 HE shells fired, presumably successful hit at the given coordinates. Four dead Viet Cong were found in the morning, plus traces of blood and dragging."

"May 21st, 1970. 15:15. The third squad attacked an enemy bunker alongside an APC squad and an infantry platoon. 3 Alpha was knocked out by an RPG-7 (?). The commander, Sergeant Chambers, was wounded in the head, the driver, Private Gebhard, in the hand and foot, the gunner, Private Lynch, was contused. All were evacuated. Sergeant Chambers returned to duty two days later, Private Lynch on the next day, Private Gebhard was evacuated to Australia. The tank was penetrated through the gun mantlet. 8 Bravo covered 3 Alpha and it was later evacuated."

The tanks' missions included protection of supply lines, covering engineering and construction work, and periodically fire support for light infantry. The Vietnamese were occasionally recorded as using RPGs. On June 16th a Centurion used for fire support took two hits. The tank caught fire and was fully disabled. One crewman received burns.

Operations of A Squadron continued until December of 1970, after which it was replaced by C Squadron (commanded by Major P. Burk). This period was not very eventful, and the tankers prepared to depart from Vietnam in May of 1971. On August 29th, 1971, the combat diary declared: «OPERATIONS OF TANKS IN VIETNAM HAVE CEASED». In September the tanks were moved out of the fighting area. The rest of the Australian forces followed in October-November.

Generally accepted information on the fighting in Vietnam states that 58 Centurion Mk.5/1 tanks from the 1st Armoured Regiment took part in the fighting in Vietnam, of which six were damaged to the point where they could not be repaired. 2 men were KIA, and the official website of the veteran's association records 7 more as having died of wounds. The 1st Armoured Regiment officially received three Battle Honours for Vietnam: Corall-Balmoral, Binh Ba, and Hat Dich.

The Centurion Mk.5/1 tanks did not remain in service for long after Vietnam. The Australian army began to compare the West German Leopard 1 tank and the American M60 Patton in 1972. The German tank won out. In November of 1976 the last parade of the 1st Armoured Regiment with Centurions was held, after which training with new tanks began.

Some Centurion Mk.5/1 tanks became museum exhibits. Among them, the vehicle stored in the Australian War Memorial in Canberra stands out as having taken part in the fighting in Vietnam and retained its wartime configuration.



Troops of the Australian 9th Infantry Battalion enjoy a traditional Christmas lunch on the island of Bougainville, December 25, 1944



A dental surgery of No.26 Medical Clearing Station, RAAF, at Morotai in December 1944. Note the M1928A1 on the picture on the top. The bag that this negative was in had a note stating: 'Tommy gun on wall, which may infringe Geneva Convention?' The original print had the following written on the back: 'D.P.R. (Defence Public Relations?) Request that tommy gun be deleted and print be re photographed. This print and the negative should be destroyed'. James Thewlis—Australian Military History





This is how Traditions are born

A new camp commander was appointed and while inspecting the place, he saw 2 soldiers guarding a bench. He went over there and asked them why do they guard it.

"We don't know. The last commander told us to do so, and so we did. It is some sort of regimental tradition!"

He searched for last commander's phone number and called him to ask him why did he want guards in this particular bench.

"I don't know. The previous commander had guards, and I kept the tradition." Going back another 3 commanders, he found a now 100-year old retired General. "Excuse me sir. I'm now the CO of your camp you commanded 60 years ago. I've found 2 men assigned to guard a bench. Could you please tell me more about the bench?"

"What? Is the paint still wet?"



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL EN/20 0143/VN

HTT has has a number of articles on PSP or Marsden Matting. The above is an M2A2 howitzer from 101st Field Battery at Fire Support Patrol Base (FSPB) Picton, which is still under construction, in the May Tao area, South Vietnam, December 1969. The FSPB is being established to support 6 RAR during Operation Marsden which ran from 1-28 December. The aim of the operation was to destroy a Viet Cong HQ, logistical and hospital complex in the area. At the conclusion of Operation Marsden large quantities of VC supplies and weapons were captured and the complex largely destroyed.



Marsden Matting on a footbridge over the Guama River, Kabwum, Morobe Province PNG.

The story of Nadzab Airport

Longtime Lae resident, the late Horace Niall, once predicted that Nadzab would one day become the main international airport for Papua New Guinea .

It hasn't, as yet, however, is capable of receiving international flights and remains one of the busiest airports in the country.

Niall was one of those who helped to build Nadzab back in 1943 into one of the busiest airstrips of World War II. And he fondly recalls that Nadzab was almost in every respect an "international airport" in those days, with loudspeakers calling for passengers to Honolulu, Los Angeles, Australia and many other faraway places.

Nadzab fell into disuse after WW11, however, rose from the ashes of the war to be reopened in 1977 and eventually took over from Lae as the main airport.

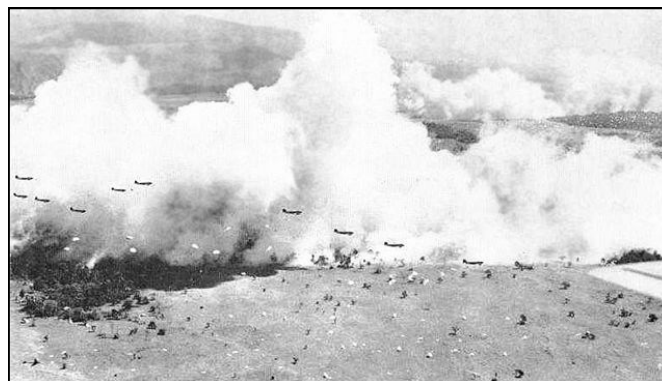
"Having had so much to do with Nadzab, I was happy to hear in 1973 that it was to be made operational again," Niall wrote in 1978.

"I doubt that it will ever be as busy as it was from late 1943 to 1945, but I have a feeling in my bones that one day it will become the main international airport for Papua New Guinea."

The first airfield in the Nadzab area of the Morobe Province's Markham Valley was established by the Lutheran Mission for use by small planes serving the mission station at Gabmatzung.

It was not used very often and, after the outbreak of the Pacific War, it soon became overgrown with dense kunai grass.

It was with the capture of Japanese-occupied Lae in mind that the Allied forces decided to use the Nadzab area as a landing craft for Dakota and other aircraft.



The landing at Nadzab. Sep 1943.

On September 5, 1943, about 1600 men of the 503rd American Parachute Infantry Regiment, with an Australian battery of 25-pounders, were dropped at Nadzab. The Americans were in 82 Dakota transports, the Australian gunners in five.

Before the attack, part of the 2/2nd Pioneer Battalion, with a Papuan Infantry Battalion (PIB) company and an Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit (ANGAU) detachment with almost 1000 Papua New Guineans as carriers and labourers, had been assembled at Tsili Tsili airstrip in the Lower Watut area, to the southwest of Nadzab.

"The ANGAU detachment was under my command," Niall takes up the story.

"All of us made a three-day march from Tsili Tsili to a point overlooking the Markham River and almost opposite the area where the paratroopers were to land.

"Before the drop, the site was heavily strafed by Mitchell bombers and fighter planes. At the same time the Lae airstrip was also coming under heavy bombardment.



“During the strafing, large areas of kunai grass were set alight. The paratroopers landed with no opposition.

“The overland troops and carriers crossed the Markham River just west of the junction with the Erap River but their progress to the drop area was held up because a track had to be cut through the tall pitpit (a wild sugarcane). By dark, Lieutenant Colonel J.T. Lang, CO of the Pioneers, and myself had reached the site of the proposed new airstrip.

“Word was sent back along the track for all to sleep where they could and to be at the old airstrip site by first light. This happened and by 7.30am I was able to report that, by a superhuman effort on the part of the Papua New Guinea labourers, the old strip was cleared and ready for planes to land on it.

“On hearing this, the 5th Air Force headquarters began moving troops of the Australian 7th Division, the first arrivals landing about 11.30am. Cover for the incoming aircraft was provided by the US paratroopers.

“The next day I was told to report to Colonel Price of the US Army engineers, who instructed me to accompany him to a site, marked on aerial photograph of the area, which appeared suitable for a large airstrip. We travelled at breakneck speed across country to the site of the present Nadzab airstrip.

“After driving up and down the proposed site a few times the colonel said he was satisfied it would be suitable. We then arranged for 50 labourers to be put to work clearing the kunai and other rubbish.

“A camp site, which is still recognisable, was selected for ANGAU personnel near the present turn-off from the Highlands Highway to the airport.”

Grass knives and machetes were dropped and some large tractor drawn mowers were sent from Port Moresby. However, they could not be used until large stones and bush covering the area had been cleared.

Then six bulldozers were flown in. They cleared a track as they drove to the site of the planned strip. That track was almost in the same position as the track which today leads from the airport to the racecourse.

“The ‘dozers quickly levelled the area but in doing so they raised a pall of black dust, caused by the kunai being set alight, which made working conditions unpleasant, especially since drinking water had to be carried several miles,” Niall recalls.

“Another danger was the death adders which turned up by the score. Most were large and angry at being disturbed and each had to be caught and killed before work could proceed. Luckily no one was bitten and I think the adders helped augment the meat rations of some workers!”

Next came the Marsden steel matting which was laid on the new strip by the US engineers.



Nadzab 1944

Two days after work had begun, the first flight of Mitchell bombers landed. The strip had already been tested by a few Dakota landings and a makeshift control tower, made from poles cut from the nearby bushes and tied with wire and kunai vines, had been erected.

In the days that followed Lae was recaptured and the US 5th Air Force headquarters was moved from Port Moresby to Nadzab.

Two more strips were prepared plus an emergency landing ground. Dispersal bays were made and connecting roads, most of which were sealed with bitumen flown from Port Moresby, were laid. An Australian Construction Squadron also built two strips near the entrance to the present-day Nadzab airport for use by RAAF aircraft.

The main airstrip was, at first, used mostly by medium and heavy bombers such as Liberators and Flying Fortresses which were attacking Madang, Wewak, Rabaul and Hollandia (now Jayapura in West Irian). They came and went from dawn till dark.

This went on until Hollandia was captured by US troops. The heavy aircraft were then moved to Hollandia, and to Morotai in the northern Moluccas.

Nadzab then became home to the Combat Replacement Training Centre (CRTC). Planes were flown in from Australia and the United States and the crews were given their final training before combat.

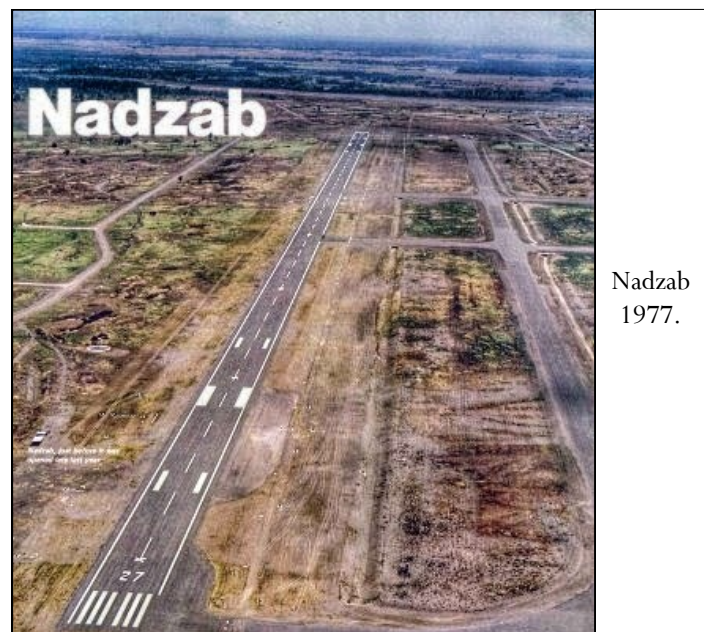
“Nadzab was almost in every respect an international airport,” Niall remembers. “All day long, one could hear loudspeakers calling for passengers to Honolulu, Los Angeles, Australia and many other faraway places.

“Most air operations for the transport aircraft were controlled by civilians in uniform. One told me they were getting ready for the period after the war when they would be traffic controllers for US civil airlines. It must have been excellent training for them!

“We were hoping to have the use of a lot of the army-built huts at Nadzab after the 5th Air Force moved on but to our disappointment nearly all were dismantled and flown to Hollandia. Only the concrete floors were left, many of which can be seen at Nadzab today.”

The war over, Nadzab fell into disuse, nearly all air movements being made from Lae.

“Two years later, the only sign of activity was the ‘graveyard’ of dozens of wrecked Liberators and Fortress bombers plus a few Dakotas and fighter planes,” Niall continues. These were bought by an enterprising group who set up a furnace, smelted down the pieces into ingots and shipped them from Lae at what was said



Nadzab 1977.

to have been a very handsome profit.

"It was sad to see the old bombers being chopped up. On their sides were a great selection of humorous paintwork – fancy names, markings signifying the number of missions, numbers of ships hit or sunk and other aircraft shot down in combat.

"Practically nothing is left today of the 'graveyard' which was at the western end of the present airstrip."

In 1962, the main strip at Nadzab was resealed by the Australian Commonwealth Department of Works and lengthened to make it suitable for Mirage fighters, even though they never materialised.

However, it was always maintained by the Australian Department of Civil Aviation as an alternative to Lae in poor weather conditions.

Like its predecessor in Lae, Nadzab has made an indelible impact on the history of Lae, Morobe Province, Papua New Guinea and the world.

*The Write Stuff PNG Written circa 1977.
Sir Horace Lionel Richard Niall, KB, CBE, MBE, died in June 1994*

Humans are the only species that would cut down trees, make paper out of them, and then write "Save the Trees" on it.

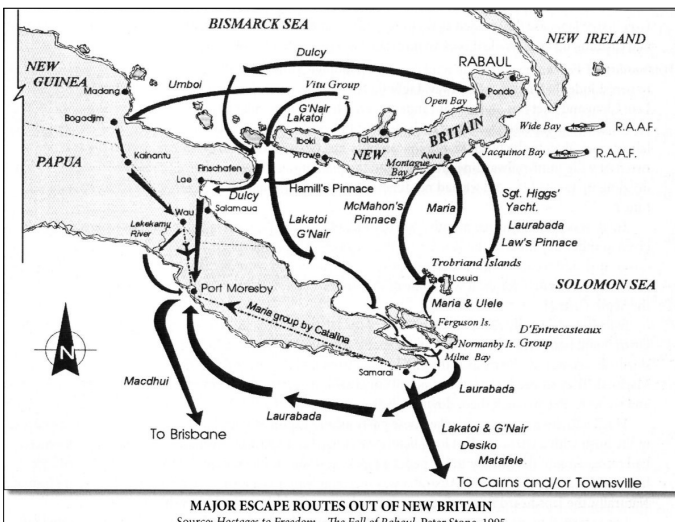
**David (Dave) Andrew LAWS
P479 NGVR/ANGAU**

Dave Laws was working in Rabaul as the Rabaul Radio Superintendent when the Japanese invasion occurred. His job included the servicing of all coastwatching radio equipment for the Administration in scattered parts of New Guinea and the Islands. On the day of invasion he was in charge of Army Fortress Signals and tried unsuccessfully to get Col. Scanlan's signals re the situation in Rabaul through to Port Moresby

During the retreat from Rabaul he found himself leading a small band of Army Signallers. One of them Sgt Les Robbins carried his camera and the image of the group in the photograph shown, taken in the Baining Mountains could have been of a Sunday picnic, not of this desperate escape attempt.

Dave Laws's local knowledge was instrumental in the survival and escape of this group. He then turned back into the jungle to lead more on the harrowing forced march from Drina to Palmalmal where they had been told a boat would pick them up. This was the *Laurabada* but by the time they had reached Jacquinot Bay they were told by Father Ted Harris that the boat had gone and would not be back.

It was again the NGVR's Dave Laws who came to the rescue. He contacted Port Moresby requesting urgent assistance. None came because Moresby was now under attack. Laws found an 18-foot (5m) boat and a drum of fuel hidden. Unfortunately, the engine was seized. For weeks Laws, an excellent mechanic, worked with others who scrounged and worked with anything they could find. Finally, the boat was running and the party put to sea. The group had 'slogged hundreds of miles through the almost impenetrable jungles and mountains, gorges and rivers. Now 17 of them were stuck in a cramped, barely seaworthy boat with a temperamental engine, little food and water, a dodgy compass pushing through 'mountainous' waves 'as high as a house' or drifting miles off course when the engine gave out. Laws wasn't feeling confident either; he might have been a good radio operator and mechanic, but a navigator he wasn't, and the strong south-easterly monsoon was blowing hard.



One of the party suffered another bout of malaria and became comatose. His shipmates thought he was dead and were about to throw him overboard when one noticed he was still breathing. Their food supply consisted of coconuts, which went bad. It was six days and nights at sea before they saw lights and land, but the current carried them away as they attempted to land. They despaired. They thought they were at Buna but the winds, currents and Law's wayward navigation meant they were off course by around 200 miles (322km). They were probably off Finschhafen, which was enemy occupied. The next day, they landed at Sio on the Huon Peninsula — on a coral reef half a mile (1km) from the shore from which natives rescued them. The party had half a gallon (2L) of petrol left, no food and no water. Fortunately, they found food in a deserted homestead. Again Laws contacted Port Moresby, requesting an urgent air drop of food, medical supplies and petrol. They didn't send any food or medical supplies but they dropped some petrol from a plane. It was aviation petrol - no good for the boat.

The party set off again by boat for Bogadjim, south of Madang, where they hoped they would be picked up and taken overland to Port Moresby. On the way, one spark plug after another broke because of the aviation fuel. Eventually they drifted ashore where, fortunately, they were found by a Coastwatcher who took them to Bogadjim. The group were spent and with a missionary's care they rested for weeks to regain enough strength for the long walk inland across the Ramu Valley. From Bogadjim, over the Finisterre Ranges and through the Ramu Valley to Bena Bena in central New Guinea - a repetition of their terrible trek through New Britain. By Bena Bena, their number was 13 but they took good heart in the care given to them by a warlike tribe with bones through their noses. A comment from Pte Bill Neave with the group 'they were really good to us - better than a lot of the more civilized blokes' His opinion was firmed when an aircraft ar-



In the Bainings on the escape attempt. Dave Laws 2nd from Left.



rived to rescue six American airmen who had made a forced landing. 'But they wouldn't pick us up.' The Australians were given boots and some supplies and told that 'if we wanted to get to Moresby we would have to walk to Wau - over the Finisterre Ranges. It took them three weeks to finish the mountainous trek to Wau from where they were finally flown to Port Moresby.

On his return to Australia, Pte Bill Neave found that his record showed he was 'derelict' in the jungle for 183 days. Lt David Andrew Laws (P479), by then posted to ANGAU returned to the New Guinea jungles as a member of M Special Unit and was killed in action on 5 May 1943. Father Ted Harris was taken by the Japanese from his mission and executed at sea. His body was dumped overboard and eventually washed ashore. The invaders did not permit the natives to bury him.

The number P479 issued to Dave Laws indicates that his enlistment papers into the NGVR in Rabaul were lost when the Japanese invaded.

The number P479 would have been issued to him in Port Moresby when he was transferred to ANGAU. NGVR personnel in New Guinea had their numbers commence with NG.....

The above story is taken from Kathryn Spurling's book "Abandoned and Sacrificed—The Tragedy of the Montevideo Maru" and Ian Downs book "The New Guinea Volunteer Rifles—NGVR a History".

Two old ladies Dolly and Ruby were talking about their grandchildren.
Dolly said, "Each year I send each of my grandchildren a card with a generous cheque inside. I never hear from them... never receive a thank you message."
Ruby replies, "I too send my grandchildren a very generous cheque. I hear from them within a week after they receive it. In fact, they each pay me a personal visit."
"Wow! How come?" asked Dolly.
"I don't sign the cheque!"

Sergeant Shoichi Yokoi

Imperial Japanese Army. 31 March 1915 – 22 Sept 1997

Yokoi was an apprentice tailor when he was conscripted in 1941.



Initially, Yokoi served with the 29th Infantry Division in Manchukuo. In 1943, he was transferred to the 38th Regiment in the Mariana Islands and arrived on Guam in Feb 1943.

When American forces captured the island in the 1944 Battle of Guam, Yokoi went into hiding with nine other Japanese soldiers. Seven of the original ten eventually moved away and only three remained in the region. These men separated, but visited each other periodically until about

1964, when the other two died in a flood. For the last eight years, Yokoi lived alone. He survived by hunting, primarily at night. He also used native plants to make clothes, bedding, and storage implements, which he carefully hid in his cave.

On the evening of 24 Jan 1972, Yokoi was discovered by two local men checking shrimp traps along a small river on Talofoto. They had assumed Yokoi was a villager from Talofoto, but he thought his life was in danger and attacked them. They managed to subdue him and carried him out of the jungle.



Yokoi's Cave.

Yokoi later said that he expected the local men to

kill him at first, but was surprised when instead they allowed him to eat hot soup at their home before turning him over to the authorities. He was in relative good health, but slightly anaemic due to a lack of salt in his diet according to doctors at Guam Memorial Hospital. His diet included wild nuts, mangos, papaya, shrimp, snails, frogs, and rats.

"It is with much embarrassment that I return," he said upon his return to Japan in March 1972. The remark quickly became a popular saying in Japan. He had known since 1952 that World War II had ended but feared coming out of hiding, explaining that "We Japanese soldiers were told to prefer death to the disgrace of getting captured alive."

Yokoi was one of the last three Japanese "holdout" soldiers discovered.

After a whirlwind media tour of Japan, he married and settled down in rural Aichi Prefecture.

He eventually received the equivalent of US\$300 in back pay, and a small pension.

Yokoi died in 1997 of a heart attack at the age of 82, and was buried at a Nagoya cemetery, under a gravestone that had originally been commissioned by his mother in 1955, after Yokoi had been officially declared dead.

Wikipedia.

Story originally sourced in "The Conquering Tide" by Ian W. Toll

I've always said exactly what I think, no matter who it upsets. Thinking about it that could be the reason I only have 2 friends.

Uncovering Australia's forgotten wartime heritage

From our research it appears that the bunkers were part of a strategy of defence in the event that we were invaded.

It is a well known fact that the government knew' for some time that a Japanese threat was increasing. As the war progressed the grand strategy of the Japanese was revealed in enemy documents. They intended closing a net around Australia and New Zealand by occupying all the surrounding islands nations. Already captured were Indonesia and the Philippines. The Japanese were occupying New Guinea, and had invaded the Solomon's. All that was needed now was to complete the plan was the invasion and capture of Fiji. New Caledonian and the New Hebrides. Australia was the prize within this island network.

During May 1942. the Japanese deviated from this plan by sending an invasion force by sea direct to Port Moresby and to Northern Australia, their desire being to accelerate the pace of the advance. Their primary objective was the Australian port of Townsville where there was a large concentration of allied shipping, newly arrived with American troops and war supplies.

As well as the large amount of surplus coining into the Townsville port which is shown in the following figures,

- 31 December 1942. 428 500 tonnes of war material, including 5,449 of vehicles, 105,919 tonnes of oil. 70,000 tonnes of war effort.
- 1943, 1005931 tonnes of material. 211,946 tonnes of oil and 160.000 tonnes of war effort.
- 1944, 845 684 tonnes of material. 213 611 tonnes of oil and 170.000 tonnes of war effort. As the reader can see. a lot of material was in fact brought into Townsville via the port, many thousands more tonnes was brought ashore by the Americans along the strand.

After reading the above, one can appreciate that if tunnels and bunkers were in every theatre of war in Europe and the Pacific and had been in use prior to 500bc. it would not be



This rooftop residence sits on top of a bunker and was designed as camouflage

hard for one to comprehend that the same activity went on here in Australia.

Our government was aware as early as 1929, that the Second World War was eminent. There were already WW1 tunnels and bunkers in strategic places.

As in European and Pacific theatres, these WW1 structures were expanded onto or just simply reactivated. During our time of research, we have found documentation that clearly spelled out that the government at the time was aware by the 1930s. war was eminent it is a well known fact, that the Australian Défense Forces at the time, were poorly equipped. Unbeknown to the average Australian, defence measures were being taken. Even though the Commonwealth thought the fall of Singapore was impossible, members of our government and trade unions could see that Australia with its raw resources would or could become the next target for the Japanese. The Brisbane line was then drawn up. and the government at the time, decided that they would give up sections of Australia to the enemy, in order to regroup and fight them back. Another plan was also drawn up. which was called the Canberra Line; this is where the military would fall back to if the Brisbane Line failed. In preparation for these defence lines, many tunnels, underground workshops, storage and magazines were built, the allied works council and the civil construction corps were contracted to build storage facilities and special operation rooms. It is interesting to note that when the Americans entered the war in 1941. they moved straight into some massive underground headquarter storage facilities/ workshops upon arrival in North Queensland. How did they build tunnels or bunkers so fast without any one taking notice of what is going on around them. One of the first ways, the engineers did to hide the nature of the works was to make it look like it was a quarry, this way it would not be bombed by the enemy, no one would take any notice of Spoil coming out. In North Queensland many hundred of thousands of cubic metres were needed to build Garbutt, Stockroute, the Bohle strip and not to mention just to bring camp areas about the flood plain. In other areas cameo net was placed over the site prior to work commencing. This way the enemy would not notice it. Needless to say the reason that the public did not see any of this was the fact that there were top secret.

General Douglas MacArthur, having witnessed first hand the might of the japs blitzkrieg of South-East Asia and the bombing of the mighty Fortress of Corregidor, knew first hand the necessity of fortified and underground installations. An engineer of general Moore's staff, Colonel Lloyd E. Mielenz, has estimated that the total length of all wartime tunnels equalled the length of all tunnels completed in the peacetime years. This is a clear indication, that when pressed, anything is possible when it becomes life or death struggle. MacArthur was evacuated two months before the eventual fall of Corregidor on the 6th of May. which was midway through the battle of the Coral Sea. With Macarthur stepping out of Corregidor and coming to Australia, it is likely that he brought the same plan he used while in the Philippines. At Macarthur's Tunnel in Corregidor they achieved the same amount of tunnelling while under siege as they did in the 10 years prior to the war. With the bunker system proving its worth, while under heavy shelling, the only thing that let Macarthur down was the shortage of supplies, and why would he not have adopted the same plan here.

So with Townsville being known as the garrison city, it is no surprise that our research has found and proven that the same scale of underground works you see in other theatres of war are here. At one stage, gravel was delivered to Garbutt. at a rate of

4000 cubic yards per day. Bearing in mind that this went on for 6 weeks, at this aerodrome, one has to ask the question, "Where did all the gravel and fill come from?" If Garbutt was taking fill at a rate of 4000 cubic yards a day. then other strips, similar to Garbutt that were constructed at Anthill Plains. Stockroute, Woodstock. Upper Ross River, Fanning, Bohle River, Reed River, Aitkenvale and Mount St John would need the same. Where did the fill come from? On an average, that was 36 000 cubic yards of fill required per day for approximately 6 weeks to construct one strip 150 feet wide by 5000 feet long. Due to the configuration of the ground at Charters Towers. the construction of two 6000 feet long landing strips involved unusually large cuts and fills up to 10 feet, and earthwork quantities approaching 250,000 cubic yards for each strip. This amazing feat was completed in 14 days, as the military authorities believed that the Garbutt Airfield was too vulnerable to enemy action. It is also noted in the Archival Book "The History of the Main Roads Commission During WW2" on page 22 that disused or old gold mines were used for storing explosives, ammunition and petrol and some of the buildings were well obscured from view amongst the old mine dumps.

Another interesting extract is found in this main toads history is the following the Fifth American Air Force requiring a suitable centrifugal pump which was not available; did a reconnaissance of old mines in the area, located a force pump of the plunger type, which was adapted for the purpose. Flanged galvanised steel piping, which had once served for de-watering deep water trenches in the construction of underground works at Townsville was now anchored to a precipitous river bank, served as a delivery pipe; and did so for several months until a more modernised one could be found.

The question of where did the fill come from is an easy one to answer. The fill came out of the bunkers that were being used and appeared to be quarries. The bunkers are a hidden chapter of history. It would appear that the history of the units that built them has been sealed for over 50 years. We hope that the military miner engineers will come forward and help our project team rewrite the history books and finally get the men and women who played an important part in our war time history the recognition that they duly deserve. The bunkers also have over 50 years of WW2 history entombed inside them. The first bunker we hope to open when agreement can be reached with the Department of Defence to ensure that The Australian Bunker & Military Museum will retain ownership and are allowed to open more of the bunkers through out Queensland.

It was the dying wishes of some 12 WW2 veterans who worked inside the bunkers, to see that they are opened and preserved for all to see. In a life long tradition of the Australian way and the diggers mateship. we have given our word that the project will not stop until their wishes have been upheld.

Australian Historical and Tunnelling Association



Operations and Signals bunker

Australia Gifts Newbuild Patrol Boat to Papua New Guinea

Shipbuilding group Austal announced it has delivered the ninth Guardian-class Patrol Boat (GCPB) to the Australian Department of Defense. The vessel, the future *HMPNGS Rochus Lokinap*, was then gifted by the Australian Government to the Papua New Guinea Defence Force at a ceremony held at Austal Australia's Henderson shipyard.

The vessel is the second of four Guardian-class Patrol Boats to be delivered to Papua New Guinea under the Pacific Patrol Boat Replacement Project, part of the Australian Government's Pacific Maritime Security Program, and follows the delivery of the *HMPNGS Ted Diro* in December 2018.

Austal CEO Paddy Gregg said the delivery of the latest Guardian-class Patrol Boat to Papua New Guinea had further enhanced the company's relationship with both the Australian Department of Defence and the Papua New Guinea Defense Force.

"Austal not only design and construct the Guardian-class, but also deliver a comprehensive training program to each crew accepting the vessels. Through this successful handover process, we are continuing to develop a very strong, productive relationship with the Papua New Guinea Defense Force and their crews," Gregg said.

Faster, with improved seakeeping, better amenities and an enhanced mission capability—including an integrated RHIB stern launch and recovery system—the Guardian-class Patrol Boats provide the Papua New Guinea Defense Force with a much improved naval asset to carry out border patrols, regional policing, search and rescue, and many other operations domestically and internationally.

The Pacific Patrol Boat Replacement (PPB-R) Project was awarded to Austal in May 2016, with an additional contract option awarded in April 2018, taking the program to 21 vessels, valued at more than A\$335 million (\$262.2 million). Twelve Pacific Island nations including Papua New Guinea, Fiji, the Federated States of Micronesia, Tonga, Solomon Islands, Cook Islands, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Palau, Samoa, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Timor Leste will receive the vessels through to 2023.

Austal Australia's expanded service center in Cairns, now incorporating an 1,200-tonne (80-meter LOA) slipway and an 1,120-tonne mobile boat hoist, continues to provide in-service support to the growing Guardian-class Patrol Boat fleet.

The 39.5-meter steel monohull patrol boat—designed, constructed and sustained by Austal Australia—is based on a proven design platform that has included the 38-meter Bay-class, 56-meter Armidale-class and 58-meter Cape-class patrol boats that are in service with the Australian Border Force and Royal Australian Navy.

The vessel is named after Brigadier General Rochus Lokinap, a former Commander of the Papua New Guinea Defence Force from 1987 to 1992.

Marine Link June 2022.



I checked Kelley Blue Book today for my car's value, and it asked if the tank was full or empty

Out of the millions of statues built across the world. Only the statue of Marilyn Manroe is useful



A Personal Account of the Ascent and Climb to the Summit of Mount Kilimanjaro, Tanzania (5,895 metres)

John Pearn 15 February 2013

"Usiruhusu Kwenda" Don't Let Go" - in the Kiswahili Language

An account of the final Summit experience - on 15 February 2013 - the culmination of an eight-day climbing expedition on Mt Kilimanjaro of 19,340 feet, the world's highest free-standing mountain.

The dome of Kilimanjaro is topped by the peak of Uhuru, (19,340 feet) with its world of glaciers and ice walls. It looks down upon the Kibu Crater and the peak of Mewensi (17,564 feet) and the lower Shira Ridge (12,395 feet), this latter being the remnant of an earlier volcanic crater.

An extract from my Commonplace Book, written and dated 16 February 2013, at the Millennium Camp, Kilimanjaro National Park, Tanzania.

Our Chief Guide, Meke Godfrey, had quietly told me in the Kiswahili Language, to "Kuheshimu Mlima", to "always respect the Mountain".

Kilimanjaro, the great ice-and-glacier-capped monolith, looks down today on all of Africa, as it has done for 200,000 years, since the last eruption of the massive volcano which created it. Its name, in a dialect of the local Chugga People, may be translated as "That Which Defeats".

The Summit of Kilimanjaro was first reached in 1889 by the German geographer and alpine mountaineer, Hans Meyer. In the twenty-first century, its arduous ascent is possible because of the support, counsel and strength of Kilimanjaro's Guides and Porters, mountain men of the local Chugga and Maasai People.

We had been climbing for six days, every day demanding. Our small party of five friends from Brisbane had trained together for six months; and were now part of a larger expedition group of fifteen colleagues drawn from five nations. We shared our ice-bound two-person tents. The extreme altitude, cold, wind and exhaustion led to sleepless nights. For the last two nights before our final attempt to reach the Summit, each of us became quieter and more introspective, as thoughts of the final challenge weighed heavily.

The last evening before our Summit attempt were spent at Barafu Camp at 4600 metres, or "Ice Camp" as it is known in the Chugga Language. In the early evening before the final attempt to reach Kilimanjaro's peak, we ate hot porridge and kitted up. Our line of 15 expeditioners and ten guides and porters was to start at midnight on the late evening of 14 February 2013.

It was to be perhaps the worst day of my life; but perhaps one of the best. In one sense, it was hell on earth. In another, it was a time of experiencing great personal resolve to be followed by its ultimate fulfillment.

We set out at midnight, in single file along the boulder-strewn upward track, the night bitter and the temperature below freezing. I had four layers on my lower body - two layers of thermals, trousers and rain-proof overpants; and triple socks. On my upper body I wore seven layers, covered in turn by my polar fleece.

Alpha Simon was with me as my personal guide and porter. Alpha had been the Porter on Kilimanjaro to the late Scott Fisher (1955-1996) the famous American climber and guide, who per-



ished on 11 May 1996, on the descent after a successful summit of Mt Everest. Early in the evening of our own Summit climb on Kilimanjaro, my headlight was not functioning perfectly, so Alpha gave me his. I checked that there were spare batteries in my backpack. We all wore double gloves, with heavy wind-proof over-gloves; and a balaclava and over-beanie. I filled my pockets with chocolate bars; and carried a small extra plastic water bottle next to my skin as we knew that the water in our backpacks was inevitably going to freeze. My camera was in an inner pocket of my polar fleece, to try and keep it above freezing as we climbed.

Barafu Camp (or "Ice Camp") at 4600 metres is an inhospitable place. Volcanic dust and sharp jagged volcanic rocks are everywhere. The incessant wind blasted grains of fine volcanic glass against the small exposed areas of our noses and mouths. I was not sorry to leave, albeit for me, to attempt "the worst journey in the world."

Over the next ten hours, the ascent was challenging in the extreme. As I climbed, in many places hand-holds were often needed. In unpredictable bursts the wind at 40-45 knots tried to pluck us off the rock faces. The extreme discomfort was compounded by exhaustion which set in after the first two hours of climbing. All of us on the final Summit attempt experienced the survival-driven reflex of heaving over-breathing. The primaevael need to gulp in more oxygen was irresistible and affected us all.

Because a small group of three of us - Gabriel Dubler, Mary Swayne and I - were slower and obviously distressed, Meke, the Chief Guide and Expedition Leader, made the decision to split off the fitter and younger group of 12 of my colleagues; and set them to go on with their Guides and Porters, with the higher probability of them achieving the Summit. They achieved this without injury, as we ultimately were also to do.

As one climbs towards the Summit on Kilimanjaro, there is one feature, Stella Point, at 5739 metres, which is a datum point and place for consolidation and refuge on the great heights of the Mountain. Our younger and faster colleagues achieved this point; and had already climbed beyond it to the Summit; and had commenced their descent as we were still climbing ever upwards! They passed us, going downwards, before we reached Stella Point. They exhorted us to keep going.

I plodded upwards, matching every slow step to Alpha's, who walked ahead of me. Meke, the Chief Guide, walked behind me, steadying me if I slipped or wavered.

After eight hours of agony - my resolve occasionally fleeting and a questioning of myself increasing - we finally made Stella Point. It seemed never to come in the nightmare in which I was living. I had already taken an extra acetazolamide tablet (Diamox) and a Maxolon tablet to dampen the altitude symptoms of extreme breathlessness, headache and nausea. At Stella Point, I was cold and totally exhausted. We rested for perhaps thirty minutes. The sun had now risen and the world, to other eyes, must have looked beautiful. The great ice walls were about us, the glaciers now glistening.

Meke, the Chief Guide, was worried about me, and also concerned about Mary; but not about Gabriel who nevertheless later said "I was ninety-eight and a half percent exhausted and was also suffering - but I recovered quickly." Meke was worried about our trio continuing to the Summit. After twenty minutes rest, I showed him I could stand on one leg (with walking pole support!) for two seconds, one of the tests he administers. He asked me "Do you know where you are?". This sharpened my senses. As a specialist neurologist, I had often used this same

question in testing the mentation and cognition of patients with various neurological diseases. In spite of almost complete physical exhaustion, I was totally "compos mentis" and I knew I had no symptoms of cerebral oedema, the potentially fatal scourge of altitude sickness. My chest was still heaving terribly. Meke made me take another whole Diamox tablet (250mg) and I insisted we press on to the Summit. He reluctantly agreed.

The next two hours were indescribably terrible. Exhausted and cold and with the wind howling in gusts, our breathing was now at sixty breaths per minute at extreme vital capacity. I was unable to talk. Alpha carried my backpack of eight kilograms.

And so our little group set out for the final challenge. I was resolved to climb to the Summit, perhaps out of a primeval fear of failure. Mary Swayne was also exhausted but was now on oxygen. Gabriel, his quiet resolve always there, was almost exhausted also. Our line of march was now:

Alpha, first and leading;

John Pearn, matching his Guide's "pole pole" footsteps, step for step;

Meke, the Chief Guide, his strength and experience always there;

Mary Swayne, her courage and resolve an inspiration to all;

George Justine, Guide with Mary's backpack; of great strength and humour;

Gabriel Dubler, irrepressible and resilient; and

Aristide, our Porter and friend.

The final two hours seemed endless - upwards, every leaden step upwards. With a feeling of unreality I saw the Summit and its sign proclaiming "Uhuru Peak". "Uhuru" in the Kiswahili Language means "Freedom". Its peak proclaims the freedom of the peace-loving Tanzanian People; and relates to the independence and foundation of the Nation of Tanzania in 1964. But the "Freedom" of Uhuru on Kilimanjaro is also, in another way, a release for those who in their earlier lives have dreamed of achieving its Summit. To attain the Summit of Kilimanjaro is for some a release from a Carcassonne dream.

It seemed like an eternity to climb the last 400 metres to the peak, the bitter wind clawing about us. My lips had long since cracked and were constantly bleeding. One upward step

with the right foot, breathe in, breathe out, then a step with the left foot with the same rhythmic cadence, a sequence seemingly repeated forever.

After reaching the Summit I sat for perhaps fifteen minutes in quiet reflection, recovering from almost eleven hours of continuous climbing. Around us and below us, the great ice walls and glaciers glistened with the intense reflected light which for millennia has guarded this special place.

Alpha took my camera, partly frozen in spite of being in my inner fleece; and took a photograph of Gabriel, Mary and me - three special friends who for months had trained together on Mt Coot-tha in Brisbane; who had experienced the rigor of the lower camps on Kilimanjaro throughout the preceding six days; and were now together on the Summit.

I feel emotional when writing of the wonderful mountain men,



our Guides and our guardians, who made this adventure possible and a success. Many reach Kilimanjaro's Summit with much in reserve. By contrast, many who attempt the climb, perhaps as high as thirty percent of all who attempt it, can never go on and have to turn back or be rescued. In my case, two special mentors kept me safe - Meke Godfrey and Alpha Simon, Chugga men of great strength and endurance and wisdom. Both Meke and Alpha had "summitted" more than one hundred times; and had given fulfilment and ensured the safety of scores of other climbers who had previously attained the Summit of Mt Kilimanjaro. Both Meke and Simon are recorded in our Summit photograph. They will always remain in my heart for their enormous wisdom and strength, their kindness and their care; and their support personally for me as I was pushed to the limit of endurance.

The great walls of glistening ice were beside us, close but below. After fifteen minutes on the Summit, we set out again, in the first steps of the descent. Downwards this time, every step just as treacherous as the ones up. My two Black Diamond carbon-fibre walking poles saved me on several occasions. Onwards and downwards we slid and plodded, the nightmare continuing now as we had been climbing for twelve hours with still four hours to go before we reached the temporary sanctuary of Barafu Camp - the point from which we had set out seemingly so long ago.

It was a somewhat pathetic but proud little group that walked into the Ice Camp at Barafu at 3 p.m. on the afternoon of the 15th February 2013. We were proud of our personal achievements; but not in any sense of having conquered the great Mountain of Africa. Rather I was intensely aware of a feeling of privilege to have climbed upon it to the highest. It was a true feeling of "Usiruhusu Kwenda", that we had not let go.

I fell asleep almost immediately, totally exhausted. After 45 minutes of sleep our Guides had to wake us as we had to descend for another four hours to the safety of the Millennium Camp, below us at 3800 metres, before darkness set in. Again, Alpha took and carried my pack. When we reached that sanctuary, dazed but with a feeling of immeasurable fulfilment, our little group of six - three expeditioners and three great mountain men, went to our tents - the Guides to work and us to sleep. I fell asleep immediately and slept throughout the night.

On the next day, the 16th February 2013, we descended carefully for another six and a half hours downwards to the Mweka Gate, one of the entry and exit Control Points on the foothills of Mt Kilimanjaro. I carried my own pack all the way. It was there we said farewell to the special Tanzanian men who in some ways had changed our lives. Alpha Simon, my Guide, said to me:

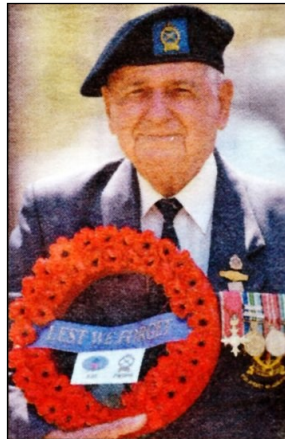
"You came as clients but left us as friends".

Thank you Maj Gen John Pearn AO. RFD., Association Patron, for a wonderful account of a difficult journey.

A Russian soldier ran up to a nun in downtown Moscow. Out of breath he asked, "Sister, please, may I hide under your skirt, I'll explain later."
The nun agreed.
A moment later two military police ran up and asked, "Sister, have you seen a soldier?"
The nun, pointing, replied, "He went that way."
After the military police ran off, the soldier crawled out from under her skirt and said, "I can't thank you enough Sister. You see, I don't want to go to Ukraine."
The nun said, "I understand completely."
The soldier added, "I hope I'm not rude, but you have a great pair of legs!"
The nun replied, "If you had looked a little higher, you would've seen a great pair of balls. I don't want to go to Ukraine either."

Member's Activities

Stan Carswell MBE, Cairns



Stan Carswell laid a wreath at the service to remember Victory in the Pacific

For the past 20 years Stan has been representing the Association and the 2/22nd Bn at the services held at Rocky Creek Memorial Park, Tolga, on the Atherton Tablelands. He considers it a great honour to represent the NGVR and PNGVR on such an occasion. He drapes the PNG flag on the NGVR memorial.

Whenever he is at Rocky Creek he gives the NGVR Plaque a wash down and ensures it is always in good condition for any VIP Day at Rocky Creek. In Stan's words the memorial is standing up well.

He also was requested by the Cairns RSL to give the keynote address on Vietnam Veterans Day.

Henry Sims, Australind, WA

Every year a memorial service and wreath laying is held at the Flame of Remembrance, King's Park, in Perth WA to recognize the Kokoda Campaign and those who perished there.

The local 2/16th Battalion AIF Association is a very strong group and organize the ceremony each year as supported by:

- The State Memorial Wardens
- 16 RWAR Catafalque Party and smartly attired unit members
- 16 RWAR Chaplain
- Guildford Grammar School Cadets
- The Australian Army Pipes & Drums, Perth
- Bugler
- Serving members of the ADF
- PNG Nationals in customary dress, singing their Anthem
- Flag detail



It was an honour to greet again the single surviving WA 2/16th veteran and express veneration.

Travel well, Lt (ret'd) Bill Grayden

My own uncle, QM Sgt W.M.F Sims, served as part of a composite unit, with the 2/14th alongside of the 2/16th at the fight for Nauro and when the group were pushed back to Ioribaiwa, to be over-run by the Japanese and posted Missing, Presumed Dead for 14 days, before those remnants self-extracted to the coast to be rescued by the Americans.

For this reason, I turn up to join in on the WA bun fight, to lay hand-made wreath for the 2/14th whenever I can.

My own service in PNGVR and having walked that bloody track, gives me to also represent the NGVR/PNGVR Ex-members Association wearing our ANZAC Parade dress with medals.

Additionally, I have 2/14th Association approval to represent on their behalf.
My pleasure, Henry Sims.

Bill Bickerton, Manjimup, WA

I am Vice President of the Manjimup RSL sub branch. Our clubrooms are a single building with large meeting room, kitchen, toilets and an outside annexe with lots of photos and regimental plaques. We also have an APC, an SLR and a .303.

Clubs over here are very different to over there - no public dining, pokies and the likes. Our clubrooms are used by a bingo club once a week and that is a good source of income for us.



Above. Bill with the PNGVR attired model at the RSL Club Museum.

Below. The APC of which a previous President of the RSL commanded in Vietnam and the SLR and .303 rifle.



In a small country town all service clubs support one another and often representatives from those clubs attend our meetings - CWA, Lions, Mens Shed, Freemasons and the likes.

Over my many years working overseas I attended many different ANZAC services, Kanchanaburi (after the Dawn Service at Hellfire Pass), Kandahar (Afghanistan).

In Manjimup we have a full ANZAC service with several veterans and we are allocated a support group from the Royal Australian Navy from *HMAS Stirling*. We have a full colour party, a band and then the local Police, SES, ambulance, Scout and guides, school kids and local sports teams join the parade. The service is very well attended by the local population.

After the main service there are snacks and drinks at the club and we have built a very high roofed shed for two up.

Thank you Stan, Henry and Bill.

Stormy Daniels and Queen Elizabeth went to the Pearly Gates on the same day. They both met with an angel to find out if they would be admitted to Heaven.

The angel said: "Unfortunately, there's only one space available in Heaven today so I must decide which one of you will be admitted."

The angel asked Stormy if there was some particular reason why she should go to Heaven.

Stormy took off her top and said: "Look at these, they're the most perfect breasts God ever created and I'm sure it will please God to be able to see them every day, for eternity."

The angel thanked Stormy, and asked Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, the same question.

The Queen walked over to a toilet, pulled the lever, and flushed it without saying a word.

The Angel immediately said: "Okay, your Majesty, you may go into Heaven."

Stormy was outraged and asked, "What was that all about? I showed you two of God's own perfect creations and you turned me down. She simply flushed a commode and she got admitted to Heaven! Would you explain that to me?"

"Sorry, Stormy," said the Angel, "but even in Heaven, a royal flush beats a pair, no matter how big they are."

HTT 136. Article re C47 aircraft crash in West Irian WW11

A response received from one of our readers, Mike Patterson.

"Thanks for the Harim Tok Tok, its always a good read.

Interesting about the C47 from 38 Sqdn that crashed in the NEI highlands during the war and undiscovered until 1968.

My father was a CPL instrument fitter with 34 Sqdn - it was also flying C47's on many and varied tasks and was part of the op getting allied prisoners to Moratoi AGH. Dad said it was horrific as they carried the poor buggers on stretchers and they were just skeletons and on the flight back to the hospital the nurses could just damp their lips as their bodies would not take any food so it was a slow process of thin soups and building them up over periods of time.

Re the flights from Moratoi to Townsville it was to Biak then a flight to the west of West Papua, as they knew that the planes were unable to safely fly over the mountains as they were not pressurized plus the clouds would routinely close in making flight dangerous.

There was a saying by pilots in PNG "Don't fly in cloud as you may find rocks etc !!" This flight apparently deviated from the directive and flew over the high mountains and, one can but surmise got "clouded in and then hit the terrain.

The usual flight was a long haul with stops at Biak for refuel then to Horn island and thence Townsville.

The Dutch Sqdn equipped with B25's did some exploration runs through West Papua towards Hollandia but it must have been not viable.

Dad said that 34 Sqdn also did some flying out of Jacky Jacky but he did not know what that was about and it was kept restricted.

Thanks Mike.



Museum Visitors

On Sunday 25/9 the Big W Carindale fundraising group of 46 visited the Museum and enjoyed a morning tea in the process. The veranda was chock a block with visitors, chairs, tables and morning tea items.

Their organiser, Pierina Jarrett, runs bus tours for the group from Carindale Shopping Centre. The bus driver is a co-owner of the bus and took a number of brochures to give to his partner so that they can distribute to groups they drive around.

Curator, Paul Brown has also organised with the driver of the Redcliffe Community Bus for brochures to be handed out and they are arranging a group visit early next year.

The Museum received \$200+ in donations on the day. A big thank you to the Museum volunteers, Paul Brown, Colin Gould MBE, Kieran Nelson and Mike Griffin for the time and effort they put in at the Museum.



AGM 2022. From L. Maj Gen John Pearn AO. RFD, Patron. Bob Collins, Vice President. Phil Ainsworth, President. Kieran Nelson, Treasurer, Colin Gould MBE, Secretary, Paul Brown, Museum Curator and Welfare Officer.

Thank you to all our Museum volunteers for your efforts, not only on the day also during the year.

President's report for NGVR & PNGVR Ex-members Association's 2022 AGM, 22 November, 2022

Patron, members, friends and guests, I have the honour and pleasure of presenting my seventeenth annual report to the NGVR & PNGVR Ex-members Association inc.

The Association has been well managed and members and friends well served during the past year, because of our long serving, able office bearers and committee members. Our aging membership remains reasonably stable, losing a few to death or debilitating illness and adding the odd new ex-PNGVR soldier as member. Since our 2021 AGM, to my knowledge, seven ex-PNGVR and/or Association members have died. Those deceased were: Chick Hutson (December), Evan Wham and Jack Hobbins (February), Sir Peter Barter(May), Allen Bell (July), Colonel Ron Lange (July) and Michael Zimmermann (August) -

2022 Association AGM

24 Members and Friends attended the AGM at the Museum on Sat 22nd Oct, an excellent turnout considering the weather and predicted hail and storms. As usual there were a number of unavoidable absences at the last minute. It is always a pleasure to see our Patron, Maj Gen John Pearn AO. RFD. at our AGM.

Reports were tabled by the President Phil Ainsworth, Treasurer Kieran Nelson, Museum Curator Paul Brown and Welfare Officer Paul Brown.

The election of Officers resulted in the current Committee, Patron, Welfare Officer, Auditor and Solicitor all remaining unchanged (surprise. surprise) and these are mentioned in the President's report which follows.

Malcolm (Mal) Zimmerman was elected a Life Member of the Association. Mal has served on the Committee over a number of years and is an extremely willing worker at all Association functions. Congratulations Mal.

After the meeting a BBQ lunch was enjoyed by all, cooked by Peter Rogers (the younger).

Lest we Forget.

I also acknowledge the September 2022 death of our Queen , Elizabeth the Second under whom we served during our period with PNGVR.

After the Covid restrictions were lifted late 2021, the Association's normal activities resumed. The Association's activities since our 2021 AGM include :

- ANZAC Day march and reunion;
- The 1 July Montevideo Maru 80th Anniversary Memorial Service;
- Publication and distribution of 6 issues of "Harim Tok Tok", our 20 page newsletter;
- Administration and maintenance of our website www.pngvr.weebly.com and our Facebook page;
- Maintaining and operating our Museum (openings for the public on the first Saturday of each month and group tours)
- Holding six committee meetings;



Part of the Attendees. Paul Brown, Mal Zimmerman, Alex Garlin ,NSAA(Qld), Andrew Rogers, John McGrath, Frank Kummer, Glen O'Brien, John Batze, Mike Griffin, Gerry McGrade.

- One fund raising Bunnings sausage sizzle (the Oxley Bunnings was flooded in February and until the premises are reconstructed there will be no further sizzles);

- Attendance at numerous kindred organisation's 80th anniversary Pacific War events and commemorations; and maintaining contact with our aged and frail members.

Most if not all activities were reported in Harim Tok Tok, Facebook and Web Site - please keep yourself informed by regularly viewing these media.

Our last committee meeting and BYO luncheon for the year will be held in the Museum at 10am Saturday, 10th December - all members who are interested are welcome to attend.

Our newsletter Harim Tok Tok is the main means of communicating with our wide-flung membership, and it continues to grow in popularity. Editor Bob Collins has produced 78 issues over the past 13 years, thank you Bob for your dedication.

Kieran Nelson administers our face book with timely postings of information and notifications, thank

you Kieran. Canberra based member, Trevor Connell, efficiently maintains our website www.pngvr.weebly.com, thank you Trevor. Our Military Museum Curators Paul Brown and Colin Gould with assistance from Jessica Harrington and Sylvia McNeilly continue to maintain the Museum to a high standard. We are indebted to Paul, Colin, Jessica and Sylvia for their ongoing and devoted work to the Museum - the Museum has become a focus for many of our activities. The Association's legacy to the community is our military museum which will ensure the histories of our two unique units and the enduring relationship between Australia and PNG are not forgotten.

I congratulate Alex Garlin and his NSAAQ team on its management of and presentation of the Wacol Memorial Military and NSAAQ precinct. We have a good relationship with NSAAQ which we must sustain for our common benefit.

The pressing issue for the Museum is its tenure and succession. I understand the long promised lease for the Museum is reaching finalisation, hopefully signed prior to Christmas. I particularly thank our Honorary Solicitor Craig Ray for his assistance in the protracted lease negotiations and its progress to date. When achieved this will allow us to confidently move forward with succession plans. Despite limited fund raising opportunities, our present financial position is sound with thanks to Treasurer and Grants Officer Kieran Nelson, Museum donations and the 1 January 2022 sausage sizzle. During 2022/23 our financial position may come under pressure due to loss of sausage sizzle revenue and increased commitments due to the lease conditions - increased rental, security, insurance, electricity water and maintenance payments. Your 2022/23 committee will need to address this issue.

On behalf of our members, I thank the outgoing Committee members; Vice-president and Harim Tok Tok Editor Bob Collins; Secretary and Assistant Museum Curator Colin Gould; Treasurer, Grants Officer and Face book Administrator Kieran Nelson; Museum Curator and Welfare Officer Paul Brown, Museum assistants Jessica Harrington and Sylvia McNeilly, Webmaster Trevor Connell and committee members Peter Rogers DFC, Mike Griffin, Malcolm Zimmermann, Tony Boulter and Peter Rogers (the younger). We are much appreciative of our Honorary Chaplain Ron McDonald and Honorary Solicitor Craig Ray who are always available when needed. Our Patron Major General John Pearn graciously continues to provide engaged support and encouragement to us, thank you Sir.

As an Association, I am confident that we continue to meet and exceed our stated objectives in our constitution and the expectations of the community.

I wish our incoming office bearers and committee members every success in 2022-23.

Lastly I thank Colin Gould, Paul Brown and Peter Rogers, the younger for arranging today's AGM and following barbeque luncheon.

Phillip Ainsworth, President.

Treasurers Report 30 June 2022

Our association entered this financial year on 1 July 2021 still in the midst of the Covid-19 Pandemic with little understanding that twelve months later we would still be dealing with the implications of it. It is only now that we seem to be emerging from it with the prospects of life returning to normal.

We did not escape the impacts of the severe flooding earlier this year with Bunnings Oxley, which has become a major source of our funding, being closed indefinitely due to flood damage, so we are grateful for their donation of \$500 in gift cards when our sausage sizzle opportunity was subsequently cancelled. We also profited from several Bunnings sausage sizzles before it was closed and from the 70th Anniversary of the formation of PNGVR luncheon which was well supported.

DVA approved a grant of \$3249 to purchase a defibrillator.

In June of 2021 our association was very fortunate to be considered for a donation by Veterans Support and Advocacy Service Australia Inc. which was in the process of disbanding and cancelling their registration as an incorporated association. We benefited from a partial donation of \$5,000 with an additional \$10,000 donated this financial year bringing the total benefit received from them to \$15,000.

Our main source of income remains our Annual Membership Fees which need to be paid when due to cover the cost of our insurance public liability and museum contents policies amounting to \$1,481.28 and post, printing and stationary amounting to \$2735.15 which includes the mailing of our Harim Tok Tok journal which is a very important communication tool for our association. We appreciate the support of King and Co Property Consultants for printing in this regard.

Unfortunately, our financial membership has been in decline for several years now due to deceased and lapsed members resulting in the subsequent loss of membership income, **so any assistance members can provide by receiving all communications by email to cut down on postage would be appreciated.**

NSAAQ have been gifted freehold title to this military precinct by BCC allowing them to lease the buildings, one of which we occupy, at their discretion. The lease rental will be \$100 per month to NSAAQ in addition to all the other expenses we incur in maintaining the museum as an asset to the community.

Kieran Nelson, Treasurer.

NGVR PNGVR EX MEMBERS ASSOCIATION INC		
Profit & Loss		
July 2021 through June 2022		
	Jul 21 - Jun 22	Jul 20 - Jun 21
Income		
Annual Fees	1,990.00	4,205.00
Book Sales	150.00	930.00
Donations		
General	11,430.03	5,851.00
Total Donations	11,430.03	5,851.00
Functions Profit	4,926.80	1,221.58
Grants	3,799.00	0.00
Museum Income	649.70	1,302.05
Q Store Sales	130.00	574.50
Sales	20.00	0.00
Stock Adjustment	0.00	-702.00
Total Income	23,095.53	13,382.13
Expense		
Audit Fee	400.00	0.00
Bank Charges	16.83	7.99
Book Purchases	37.74	2,158.42
Depreciation	4,496.99	0.00
Events	3,213.90	0.00
Fees	123.60	57.60
Insurance	1,481.28	1,481.28
Internet	312.57	373.20
Light and Power	797.43	789.12
Museum Expenditure	0.00	116.66
PO Box Rental	211.00	205.00
Post, Printing and Stationery	2,735.15	2,317.95
Q Store Purchases	50.00	482.90
Repairs and Maintenance	119.56	391.70
Security	787.86	690.92
Total Expense	14,783.91	9,072.74
Net Income	8,311.62	4,309.39

Note that if it were not for the two large donations the position of our Profit and Loss would have been:-

2020-21 Loss \$700.61

2021-22 Loss \$1,688.38

and with the loss of Bunnings Sausage Sizzle income for possibly the next 2 years the losses will be even greater in 2022-23 and 2023-34.

I went to visit a
psychic.
I knocked on her
front door and
she yelled...
"Who is it?"
So I left.

Felt
uncomfortable
driving into the
cemetery. The
gps blurred out
you have reached
your final
destination.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND
A HAPPY AND HEALTHY YEAR IN 2023
FROM PATRON MAJ GEN JOHN PEARN AO.
RFD., PRESIDENT PHIL AINSWORTH
AND YOUR ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE

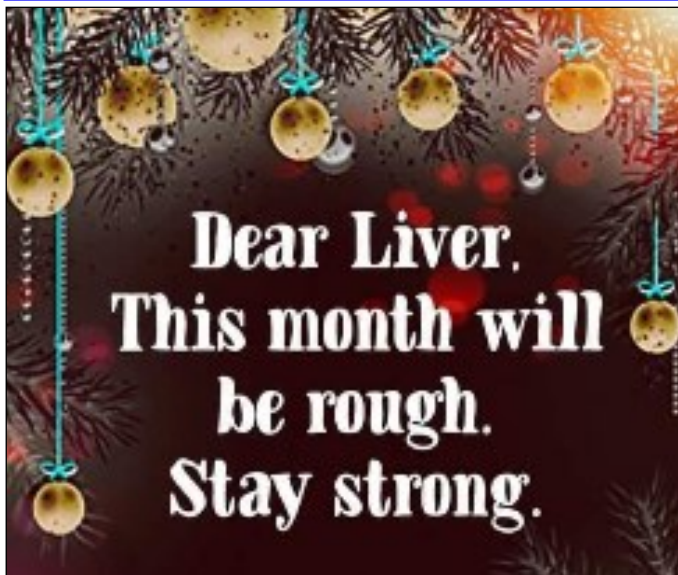
Special Request.

For Those of you who are placing Christmas lights/
decorations in your garden, can you please avoid anything
that has Red or Blue flashing lights together?

Every time I come around the corner, I think it's the police
and I have a panic attack.

I have to brake hard, toss my wine out the window, hide the
weed, fasten my seat belt, throw my phone on the floor, turn
my radio down, and push the gun under the seat, all while
trying to drive.

It's just too much drama, even for Christmas. Thank you for
your cooperation and understanding.



The Museum would like to acknowledge the very kind
donation given by our Association Chaplain
Ron MacDonald and his wife Cheryl.
Such donations ensure that the museum is able to main-
tain its high standard of presentation.

The Association would like to thank KING & Co Property
Consultants for its continuing support, including the
printing of this edition, together with the past 78 issues
of Harim Tok Tok.
Its contribution is much appreciated.



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15% Discount for all PNGVR members

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

Includes former members of the PIR, PIB and NGIB.

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

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

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

Membership fee payments to Treasurer, Kieran Nelson
email kierannelson@bigpond.com Phone 0412 236 013

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

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

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

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

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

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

President: Email p.ainsworth@kingco.com.au to get on members
electronic distribution including Harim Tok Tok (you will receive it in
colour, earlier and can adjust the print size to suit)

Chaplain. Rev Ron MacDonald. Phone 0407 008 624
email Cheryl.ron@gmail.com

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FUNCTION DATES

Wednesday 9 November

Evening Museum visit by Carina Scouts.

Sat 3 December

Museum open 10am—1pm

Exhibits have been refreshed and new exhibits
displayed so even if you have been there before it
is will worth another visit

As usual the Museum will not open in January as
it has been proven over past years that visitors do
not come during the January holidays.

Saturday 10 December

10.00am Final Executive Committee Meeting
for 2022.

Members always welcome. BYO lunch.