

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

The Airforce will lead Brisbane's Anzac March with Army last this year; our Association's marching position is 61 behind 49th Battalion Association and in front of the PIR Association. Our later Brisbane Anzac Day march-off will give plenty of time to catch up with your mates before the activities. We assemble in the usual spot, near the George/Mary Streets corner (look for our banner and flags) no later than 10.30 am. Contact Colin Gould on 0424 562 030 if you require a Jeep ride for the parade.

Our post-march re-union will be held in the usual watering hole, the Stock Exchange Hotel, corner of Albert and Charlotte Streets, immediately after we complete our march. Admission cost is \$20 pp for finger food with a cash bar. Full details for the day are appended on pages 21 & 22. I look forward to seeing as many members and friends as possible this year. I hope those members and friends unable to attend in Brisbane may make suitable arrangements in their home localities.

The Association will hold its 82nd Anniversary Montevideo Maru Service in the Brisbane Cenotaph at 10am Monday 1st July. The service will commemorate the loss of 1053 Australians, military POWs and civilian internees, when the Japanese Prison ship was sunk by friendly fire off the west coast of Luzon Island, Philippines. At least 36 NGVR soldiers were lost on the ship. A reminder that Thursday 18th April will be the first anniversary of finding the wreck in 4,200m of water about 100 kms off the Philippine coast. The 1 July service is open to the public, so please invite your relatives and friends to attend this significant event. Full details will be published in the June issue of Harim Tok Tok.

During the later half of the year, the Association intends to hold an informal luncheon. This may be arranged at a suitable Brisbane hotel where attendees may purchase their food and drinks as they desire. One suggestion is a week day at the Ship Inn, Southbank where the cost is reasonable and has convenient public transport and parking. Please feel free to contribute ideas by ringing me or one of the committee members, whose con-

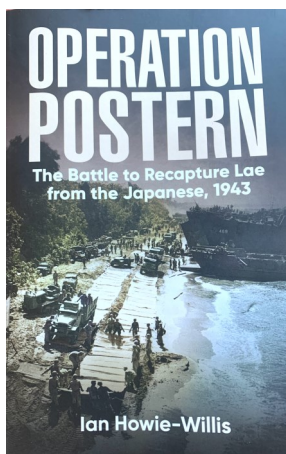
tacts are on page 20. Luncheon details will be confirmed in future Harim Tok Toks.

Sadly I report the loss of three members over the past several months: late 2023 Richard Muir died in Townsville, and Neal Rooney in January. Our most recent loss is the Association's Treasurer and Facebook administrator, Kieran Nelson, who died early February. Their obituaries may be found in the attachment, pages 21 and 22 of this issue.

The loss of Kieran is particularly felt by the Association's committee members. Not only was Kieran an efficient Treasurer, he was a friend and helped in many other ways; as Association Facebook administrator, a prime supporter to our Museum Curator, and always a positive contributor to Committee deliberations. His many connections and participations with other PNG related organisations, were also beneficial to our Association.

Peter Rogers (jnr) has been appointed our new Treasurer and Facebook Administrator. Vice-president, Bob Collins, a former Treasurer of the Association will assist Peter during the transfer and settling in stage. Phil Ainsworth and Andrea Williams will help Peter to settle in to his Facebook administrator's role. Thank you Peter for stepping up and accepting these important Association appointments.

I recently read a book titled **Operation Postern, The Battle to Recapture Lae from the Japanese, 1943** by Ian Howie-Willis, published 2023. I unexpectedly noted that the foreword was written by our Patron Major General John Pearn. The book recounts in detail the phases of the battle, culminating in the recapture of Lae from the Japanese on 16 September 1943. The author breaks new ground when he describes the battle's impact upon the village communities, on whose land the campaign was fought. Other historians may mention the War's impact on Papua New Guinea as a by-product of the process; Howie-Willis argues convincingly they were a third party to the conflict. I found the book a good read.



The Museum is open to the public from 10am to 1pm on the first Saturday of every month and selected times when groups are attending. Committee meetings are held at 10am in the Museum building every two months on dates advertised at the bottom of page 20. If you are able to attend and assist the Curator at any of these Museum openings, please contact Paul Brown on 0402 6443 361. Please remember, all members and friends are welcome to come to these openings and to attend committee meetings. Ensure you bring your BYO luncheon and enjoy the camaraderie. These gatherings are more social than business oriented.

Phil Ainsworth, April 2024

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Rabaul 1942-1945: Gordon Thomas

Gordon Thomas, the long-serving editor of *The Rabaul Times*, surrendered within hours of the Japanese invasion of New Britain on January- 23, 1942.

He found what he later described as an outsize white flag and joined the Chief Warden of Rabaul, H.C. (Nobby) Clark and the Chief Accountant of the Australian Territory, H.E. (Hector) Robinson, on the road from the gully on the edge of the town which had concealed them overnight. They walked three abreast, each carrying a white flag, down streets of looted bungalows, into a hive of soldiers with fixed bayonets. Self-appointed envoys for 300 or so civilians trapped in the port, they had gambled on the enemy's grasp of fair play, 'this idea worked reasonably well, despite their ignorance of the Japanese language. The soldiers slapped each of them on the face, then marched them to an interpreter in what, a day earlier, had been the headquarters of the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles. That was what Thomas recalled from his three—and half years in captivity in Rabaul, when he wrote his memoir, *Rabaul 1942-1945*, from the sanctuary of Campbelltown, New South Wales, in early 1946

One of the best-known newspaper correspondents in the League of Nations Mandated Territory of New Guinea in the 1930s, Thomas realised he was in the midst of a big story. Rabaul, his home for 30 years, had been routed by a force of 5000 or so Japanese soldiers and perhaps as many as 1500 Australian soldiers and civilians had been captured. The Australian army garrison, comprising 1400 members of the 2/22nd battalion, known as Lark Force, had been overrun after three weeks of bombing raids.

Up to 400 of the soldiers and an unknown number of civilians had fled, hoping for rescue by air or sea.

"Already I saw the headlines in the Australian papers, and almost felt the satisfactory scoop-glow," he writes in his memoir, recalling that he had asked a Japanese officer who searched them if he could file a story on the invasion. An aside in the first draft suggests he was not surprised at the officer's refusal and warning that he must never think of sending newspaper talks away from Rabaul while a prisoner. But at least he had announced himself as a dedicated reporter, a Somebody, despite circumstances which had abruptly turned the town's gentry into nobodies. In the new order, Thomas observed, everyone was starting from taws: "We were herded together as so many male species of the white race".

Perhaps his unlikely request to continue to work as a journalist was part of his survival strategy. A World War I veteran, his medical record shows that he was invalided in England in August, 1918, with a 'nervous debility' caused by his internment by German authorities in Bougainville in 1914. He appears to have defied doctors' advice when he returned to New Guinea in 1920. Two decades later, his medical history included heart problems, insomnia, epilepsy and a hernia. Hence, at 52, he needed an alternative to cargo-lumping on the docks, the 'coolie work' given to him and 100 of the other civilian prisoners in the weeks immediately after their surrender.

Thomas, gregarious, restless and anxious for news, seems to have quickly made acquaintances among the guards. For example, he writes of befriending their interpreter, a bespectacled civilian soldier with an ill-fitting cap and constant state of 'mellow inebriation', who reminded him of his old Latin teacher in London. He tells, too, of studying other soldiers to understand their psychology, and of his surprise at being able to discuss Shakespeare, Milton, John Stuart Mill and H.G. Wells with some young Lieutenants. Meanwhile, he says he and other old hands of Rabaul joked their way through unloading cargo for the Japanese army. No-one sulked or scowled. 'We ... did the job with a will and soon had the whole wharf under our control' guards, officers and

ships,' he writes.

He presented himself through these contacts as a knowledgeable and potentially useful old stager, and reinforced that persona by growing a grey beard which earned him the nickname, Yagi San (Mr Goat).

Arguably his assertiveness paid off very early in his captivity when Rabaul was rife with rumours about the fall of Singapore, an attack on northern Australian ports and the possible repatriation of men aged over 45. Thomas writes that the inebriated interpreter asked Nobby Clark to find an engineer for the town's freezer and ice plant, and that at Clark's request he found a volunteer who was alert to the chance of 'good pickings' there. This engineer had later returned the favour by convincing the army supply unit in charge of the freezer that he needed an unskilled hand, and suggesting Thomas. 'I did not require much persuasion,' Thomas writes. 'Special detailed jobs in the army have always appealed to me'. The engineer was Alfred Devlin Creswick, who served in the Australian Navy during World War I, and who had most recently been employed by the Rabaul Public Works Department.

The Japanese army transferred most civilian and military prisoners about this time, late February 1942, from temporary quarters in town to the deserted Australian army camp on Malanguna Road. But Thomas and Creswick stayed behind in the freezer, along with George McChean, a butcher, and George McKechnie, a Scottish-born engineer from Pondo Plantation. McChean became ill with pneumonia a few weeks later and was replaced by James Ellis, an electrical contractor and projectionist who had previously been held near Londip Plantation in the Kokopo district. Thomas regarded the freezer with its lure of ice water as the hub of war-time Rabaul. His job allowed him to watch a stream of mess orderlies, officers' cooks, brothel housekeepers, senior NCOs, officers and prostitutes, all interesting fare for his restless eyes.

Strangely, given the ban on reporting, Thomas's papers held in the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau at the Australian National University include handwritten copy addressed to the editor of *The Sun* newspaper, in Sydney, dated March 10, 1942, titled 'Rabaul Today, by Gordon Thomas, special representative'. This account of the town's capture, criticises the 'unceremonious departure' of senior officials before the invasion, praises Nobby Clark's stewardship of the remaining civilians and praises considerate Japanese officers for their care of the men under their charge. Thomas makes no mention of this bland despatch in his memoir. He presumably believed the editor of *The Sun* would read between the lines:

'It has been difficult for many of the civilian prisoners to adapt themselves to the changed situation of living in what they stand up in and deprived of the usual business of their daily life, but none of them have actually suffered to any major extent. There have been no civilian casualties that I know of and already there has sprung up between the captors and their captives, a friendliness as they good-humouredly try to make each other understand by sign language and a few broken words of English, while some of the more energetic prisoners are compiling Japanese vocabularies and airing their new-found knowledge ... at every opportunity they are preparing for the new order in the Pacific.'

The report's absence from *The Sun* suggests either that it was discarded or never arrived. Perhaps it was lost in one of the mailbags from Rabaul which went astray after being dumped over Port Moresby in April 1942. Thomas also kept a copy of a letter he wrote to his wife, Kate, who had been evacuated to Australia in December with other women and children. Addressed to 'Taliq dearest', and dated Rabaul, March 8, 1942, it tells of his part in the white flag party, of his odd jobs in the freezer with McChean, Creswick and McKechnie, of his good health at 10 stone 5 pounds, of being 'treated well by the interpreters', and of his concern for Kate's financial position. There is no evidence that she received this letter. *Pacific Islands Monthly* reported in July, 1942, that Thomas was rumoured to be a prisoner

either in Rabaul or Indochina. He was officially listed as a missing civilian until his release in September, 1945.

Australian newspapers carried grim news from New Britain a few weeks after Thomas's tame, unpublished story: the slaughter of 150 soldiers at Tol and Waitavalo Plantations, south of Rabaul, on February 3 and 4. The Australians were reported to have been executed after surrendering, believing they would be treated as prisoners of war, as promised in Japanese pamphlets dropped over the Gazelle Peninsula in preceding days. Fleeing members of the 2/22nd Battalion, they had survived in the bush for more than a week since the invasion, but had travelled only 90km south of the port.

About this time, Thomas writes that he burnt what he describes as a "most comprehensive" diary covering the first couple of months of his internment, after hearing that the Kempei Tai, Japanese military police, had executed a Chinese resident for keeping records of daily events. Later he says he invented a jumbled cipher comprising the local native language written in Greek characters to record "outstanding events". He presumably used these notes to compile the notebook now held at the Australian National University. Yet he was lucky to have concealed his jottings, given the rumoured fate of two other post-war identities, Bill Korn and A. S. Evensen, both from the Pondo Plantation on the western coast of the Gazelle Peninsula, who were said to have been among a group of 10 prisoners killed in 1944 for recording the movement of Allied POWs through their Navy-controlled camp

He supervised a similarly dangerous act of chronicling in July, 1942, when he, Ellis and Creswick compiled a list of 168 fellow civilians they remembered having seen during a roll call at the Malanguna Road prison camp in late May. They did this after hearing that the civilian prisoners had died on a ship torpedoed by a US submarine en route to Japan a month earlier, this list, now held in the Australian War Memorial, has since been used as a guide to some of the passengers aboard the prison ship *Montevideo Maru*, when it sunk off Luzon, northern Philippines, on July 1, 1942, with the loss of 1186 lives. Only 17 Japanese crew and three naval guards survived. Japanese records examined by an Australian investigator immediately after the war indicated that the ship carried 845 prisoners-of-war, 208 civilian internees, 88 crew and 68 naval guard members. Nobby Clark and Hector Robinson were both aboard, along with the Government Secretary, Harold Page, the director of agriculture, George Murray, magistrate Fred Mantle, clerk of the Supreme Court, Alec Strathean, and the manager of the Rabaul Printing Works, Jan Hoogerwerff. Thomas had known Clark for nearly 30 years and Page for 20 years, and had worked with Hoogerwerff since 1933.

They also listed eight other civilians who, like the freezer crew, had special duties beyond the prison camp that spared them from *Montevideo Maru*. These were among the group believed to have been executed later with Korn and Evensen. The families of men who disappeared while in captivity, or sometimes while on the run, were generally all still awaiting news when the war ended. But neither the Australian nor Japanese authorities could give definite answers.

Thomas handed over his 'nominal roll' of the Rabaul camp after his release in September, 1945, and gave it to *Pacific Islands Monthly* when he moved to Australia in October, 1945. The magazine published the list a month later, along with Thomas's observations on civilians believed to have been murdered and others seen in the Malanguna camp about the end of July, 1942, whose fate was unknown. Confusion about who was on the ship and the exact fate of those left behind and still missing can be seen in 1946 correspondence between Thomas and J.R. Halligan then secretary of the Department of External Territories. Doubts remain today.

Thomas continued to write, covertly, and occasionally under duress. He tells of a meeting in late 1942 with Tokyo war correspondent Seizo Okada, ('Okada San') who treated him as a 'brother journalist' and asked for a colour story on Guadalcanal, which he says he copied from a Pacific Islands Yearbook. "It was

telling him nothing he did not already know," Thomas writes. Later he complied with Okada's request for a short story with a local setting and insights into 'real native life', but says his choice of leading characters: a young native girl and wounded Japanese Sergeant displeased the writer "He chopped and changed it to please himself, I don't know whether it was ever printed," he writes. Thomas also agreed to write a "Message to the Japanese People", in his capacity as ex-editor of the Rabaul Times, hoping that it would show his friends in Australia that he was still alive. It is unclear whether this pacifist plea for better understanding between nations ever appeared in Japan, but Thomas included it as an appendix to his memoir when seeking a publisher in 1946. Written in late 1942, it included kudos for Japanese soldiers and sailors which might have surprised Australian readers. He said the hundreds he had met as a prisoner of war were unfailingly courteous and polite and liked sharing news about their families:

"These individual enquiries laid the foundation for a greater knowledge, for me of life in Japan, for them of life in Australia. Each of us as individuals were entitled to a place in the sun - and a fair place in the sun - and this equity can only be obtained through a Better Knowledge of each other".

He writes that he considered his message a 'prime joke'. Presumably, by including it with his story he wanted readers to judge whether it was traitorous or innocuous.

By 1943 Japan had garrisoned 93,000 personnel in New Britain. Apart from the Australians, other prisoners-of-war held in Rabaul included 200 of the town's Chinese residents, 600 British troops from Singapore, 1504 Chinese forced labourers, 5750 Indians, 607 Indonesians and 688 Malays, according to Peter Stone, *Hostages to Freedom: The Fall of Rabaul*, published in 1995. The indigenous, Tolai population of the Gazelle Peninsula was estimated at 30,455 in 1940 and 25,822 in 1945.

Thomas always identified himself as an editor and journalist, but was officially registered as a nightwatchman and cook in May 1944, when the freezer crew joined the besieged Japanese Fifth Army in tunnels in the bush at Namarai, inland from Rabaul. By then he was free to write as he pleased and concentrated on poetry, an exercise which he appears to have carried out in secret during 1942. His papers include a poem titled *Yasuma*, dated 27/6/42, which depicts strong young stalwart soldiers of the Emperor' stopping to gaze at a newly raised obelisk marking the capture of Rabaul. The author of a book of poems, *Echoes of the South Seas*, published in 1930 under the pen name Don Gordon, he reflected in September, 1945 on the fate of the 'erstwhile tyrants' of Rabaul who 'forced on other lands by bomb and shell, fundamental principles of hell'. He regarded verse -making as a good brain exercise to counteract loss of vocabulary after three years' internment: "In speaking I had to stop at times and carefully choose my words," he writes.

He saw the memoir which he began a few months' later as a window into Rabaul during the 'bomb-blasted years' of 1942-1945, an expose of Japanese soldiers in their own backyard, stripped of ceremonial veneer and artificial smiles. This was to be his account of an unmasked enemy. It was not intended as a war history, or a re-examination of the tragedy of the *Montevideo Maru*, a story he considered in 1946 was already too well known to be repeated. But he wanted to explain why he and the three other members of the freezer crew were the only survivors of the Europeans captured in Rabaul on January 23, 1942. He had other concerns too: anger at what he saw as the abandonment and sacrifice of Rabaul, certainty that Japan had intended to invade Australia and a desire to 'further world rehabilitation' not sow seeds for yet another World War. Generally he depicts his captors even-handedly, without spite, treating them as human beings, not figureheads of a despised

race. However, there is also a racist discourse running through the story which would perhaps not have been regarded as too offensive in 1946. He saw the war in the Pacific as racially motivated - an attack by Asians on the 'sovereign whiteman' aimed at reversing the status quo. He writes that yellow ruled and white served in post-invasion Rabaul.

Thomas writes pugnaciously, not in the diplomatic prose of his Rabaul Times editorials. His good-humoured account of how the freezer crew escaped death during the bombardment of Rabaul from late 1943 to early 1944 and lived the next 18 months in tunnels with their captors is so laconic that it's easy to overlook their good luck. He stresses that he and the others were artful dodgers, not war heroes, and that they barely tolerated each other in a mostly inharmonious and rancorous state of siege. It's as if he has a message for anyone who resented his luck in not being on the *Montevideo Maru*, or mistook his reporters' cunning for crawling, or his writing for collaboration. He notes that 'some MP' is reported to have attacked the white settlers of the Territory of New Guinea for cowardice, but rejects that assertion on behalf of the freezer crew. 'We certainly felt that the cap didn't fit after what we had been through during the past years,' he writes. His post-war correspondence contains no hint of such criticism. But I have heard assertions from now elderly contemporaries that Thomas must have helped the enemy to have survived. Keith McCarthy, the kiap who helped evacuate Rabaul survivors in 1942 and later wrote of his experiences in *Patrol Into Yesterday*, published in Melbourne in 1963, is reported to have considered Thomas, then aged 73, as the only person left that knew about the 'dirty past'. Ellis, Creswick and McKechnie virtually vanished after the war with nothing to say on the public record.

Thomas's message was that he and the others had not dodged death on the *Montevideo Maru* by the 'merest fluke', as he was reported to have told the *Cairns Post* in October, 1945. He relates rumours in May, 1942, that the Japanese army was preparing to push south, leaving the navy in charge of the Malanguna POW camp and the freezer.

He writes that about then he declined a naval officer's offer of a transfer to a Japanese camp, explaining that he would prefer to stay in Rabaul, his home town for the previous three decades. Soon after, at the end of May, 1942, he and the others were taken to the Malanguna Camp for a roll call, with an assurance that they would be returned to the freezer, under the control of the navy instead of the army. They met many of their old friends during what Thomas describes as a general muster of more than 200 civilian internees and about 800 military prisoners of war. But by mid-afternoon, some hours after the checking had ended, he writes that his crew began to worry that they would be left behind. They were concerned about their gear and their jobs. Nobody seemed to know or care about their position, so they hitched a lift back to the freezer with a Japanese army truck driver. "The fact of four Australians standing in the back of an Army lorry caused not the slightest interest to anyone," he writes. "Little did we realise how fortunate we were in leaving that camp and being able to retain our connection with the Freezer".

Thomas does not acknowledge the innuendo about his alleged acquiescence that is said to have hindered publication of his memoir in 1946. But he includes incidents which portray him and the others as pragmatists in a collapsing kingdom of thieves. He concedes he was motivated by self-preservation, but implies that there was a line he would not cross. For example, he regarded anyone who tried befriending him as a potential spy of the Kempei Tai, the Japanese military police. "I trusted no-one and I wanted no-one to trust me," he writes. He says he recalls telling George McKechnie,

' it's dangerous knowing things. Once the Japs suspect that we

know anything they'll bump us off'. Thomas wrote a month after his release, in a fragment found in his notebook, that he felt 'lucky to have escaped the always ready steel of the executioner's sword'.

He tells of rejecting an offer from a US-educated Japanese official named 'Ohara' to give talks in Tokyo on Japan's latest acquisitions. New Britain and Rabaul. Ohara suggested the trip about April, 1942, after taking him to see the ashes of his old office, where all of his books, records and stamp collections had been burnt in a bonfire. He told Thomas he could go there with his master, a Japanese prince who had flown his own aeroplane to New Britain to examine the island's birds and insects. Thomas recalls their conversation, which he says was his last with Ohara.

"You would like to see Tokyo and Japan, wouldn't you," he asked.

'Certainly, I replied, "but I would prefer it after the war. Travelling is not too safe these days. He laughed, the Japanese Navy is very strong," he observed parrot-wise, as though repeating a well-worn phrase. "That's what you think." I replied with a laugh

Thomas suspected he and the others received special treatment in the freezer by order of the Japanese High Command. He was surprised that the officers who came to the freezer for iced water were always jovial and never attacked them. It was as if the presence of the crew gave soldiers an extra reason for visiting the freezer, to practice their English and maybe boast of Japan's superiority over the United States. Thomas thought Allied intelligence must have known that European civilians were being held there and that they escaped being bombed for this reason, at least during 1942. The freezer and adjoining powerhouse were destroyed in air raids in February, 1944. In contrast the freezer crew's endeavours at resistance and sabotage were small-scale and subtle. Thomas tells that Creswick, whom he says had a long naval experience of malingerers' tricks, helped a shell-shocked, US-educated Japanese soldier escape further combat by giving him iodine cigarettes. "It gave us a certain satisfaction to know we were instrumental in some way in depleting Jap combatants, if it was only by swelling the ranks of the malingerers," he says. Writing after the war for *Pacific Island Monthly* he revealed another trick played on the Japanese in early 1942. Noticing that the air-raid wardens confused the freezer motor with the sound of raiding aircraft, the crew cranked up the engine every time a picture show had started or when the army and navy messes were staging a drinking bout. 'It was some weeks before the Japs discovered the cause of these false alarms,' he wrote.

Ripples from the catastrophe of the *Montevideo Maru* had swirled well past Rabaul as Thomas began his memoir. It's hard to imagine that any other story from the Japanese invasion and occupation of New Britain could have contained such poignancy, mystery, grief and anger. *Pacific Islands Monthly* described the loss of the ship, with possibly 1100 men aboard, as the greatest disaster that has occurred in the history of New Guinea', noting that among former residents of Rabaul alone, 175 women had been widowed. The November, 1945, issue of the magazine quoted an assertion by Thomas that the great majority' of civilians who died on the prisoner-of-war ship could have escaped, had Australian authorities allowed them to leave on ships berthed in the harbour before the invasion. The Australian Government had just begun to send letters formally advising next-of-kin of their loved ones' deaths, more than three years after the tragedy. "It is only fair to the memories of nearly 300 dead men that we shall find out why they were so needlessly and cruelly sacrificed, so that we can place the blame where it belongs - which is either in Canberra or with a certain High Army Command," wrote the editor of *Pacific Islands Monthly*.

Thomas writes that he was stupefied by the loss of life on the *Montevideo Maru* but reflects very little on the incident. He tells of wandering through the ruins of Rabaul in September 1945 and feeling sad about the hundreds of civilians who 'should have been there'. Wishful thinking about missing people is inescapable, he remarks. But in deciding to write a bright, matter-of-fact account of his war, he appears to have followed his own 'Advice to POWS' among his papers held at the Australian National Uni-

versity .

'... the present is no time to be looking back over your shoulder but the time to be looking ahead into the future and grappling with reconstruction and rehabilitation, not regrets or retribution. I don't want to discuss with friends these inconsequential personal discomforts I suffered in the past I want to hear plans for the future and make preparations for the To Be, which concerns everyone

Historian Peter Stone has estimated the Japanese death toll in the Rabaul area from 1942 to 1945 at 10,000, caused by disease, bombings and injuries in naval campaigns and land actions. The Australian forces which recaptured Rabaul reported a total of 101,700 Japanese troops and civilian workers present on New Britain and nearby New Ireland in August 1945, according to official war historian Gavin Long, *The Final Campaigns, Canberra, 1963*. A total of 17,501 Australian armed service personnel died during the war against Japan, including 7,777 who died or were presumed to have died while prisoners of war.

Pacific Islands Monthly reported in May, 1946, that Thomas's memoir was with the publishers and that it promised to be a very readable and factual story. The magazine quoted from a reader's report that 'humorous incidents are given full value and the robust Australian wit of the prisoners causes many an appreciative chuckle, as also does the choice of nicknames of the various Japanese officers'. The story presented a small, but to Australians very important aspect of the war. Thomas wrote to his Rabaul friend and business partner Fred Archer in November 1946 that he was awaiting word from a New York publisher and had also approached Angus and Robertson in Australia.

During 1946, he tried and failed to buy the printing plant used to produce the Australian war-time armed services' newspaper *Guinea Gold*, which he had hoped to use to re-establish a newspaper in the territory. Instead he settled permanently in Campbelltown, on medical advice. Then aged 56, he had returned from his ordeal in Rabaul with tuberculosis. He and his wife, Kate, a former Methodist Mission New Guinea nursing sister, had been given use of a flat owned by his Rabaul friend and fellow Mason, Lew Froggatt. Thomas resumed duties as secretary of Hakau Coffee Estates, a pre-war business venture with Fred Archer, began contributing to *Pacific Islands Monthly*, *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *Campbelltown News* and accepted an offer of five pounds a story, writing for a new magazine called *Famous Detective Stories*.

He officially retired on an Army pension in 1954, clear of tuberculosis, but still with hernia and heart problems. However, he continued his regular 'Tok Tok with Tolala' column in *Pacific Islands Monthly* and remained a correspondent for *The Sydney Morning Herald* until 1962. Six months before his death in August, 1966, aged 76, he was still looking for a publisher for *Rabaul 1942-1945*. Judy Tudor, of *Pacific Publications*, advised him in February 1966 that her company had a backlog of projects and would be unable to give his story serious consideration for some time. She passed on the manuscript to a reader from Rigbys who said no thanks in June, 1966. Why not try Angus and Robertson again? 'They liked it once', Tudor wrote to the then bed-ridden author.

Thomas left the manuscript and most of his personal papers to Nobby Clark's daughter Margot Grimes, whom he and Kate treated as their daughter after the war. He shared with Margot a birthday, January 5, a passion for writing, stamp collecting and an interest in extra-sensory perception. They corresponded for 20 years. Margot, who was nearly 30 years younger than her Uncle Gordon, wrote to him in 1965 that he had been her precious paternal rock. It is mainly through her efforts and those of former *Pacific Island Monthly* editor Stewart Inder and retired Papua New Guinea public health administrator, Albert Speer, that his story can now be published.

Edward Llewellyn Gordon Thomas, who was born in Chicago in 1890, the son of a Welsh Army Major turned newspaper

publisher, inherited the reporter's restlessness for sensation. He chased life and found 'news' in the process, in the old sense of secrets to be uncovered. Even in retirement he typically read two morning newspapers and two afternoon newspapers a day, and listened ritually to the radio news, in case he missed anything. "I never like to miss anything _ just in case _ I don't exactly know why. Old journalistic habit, I suppose," he wrote to Margot in 1962.

Educated in England and Germany, he started as an apprentice printer on his father's newspaper, the *Camrose Mail*, in Canada, about 1904. However, two years later he appears to have begun travelling through the United States as an itinerant worker, inspired by the US writer Jack London's romantic portrayal of hobo life. Thomas told Australia's *People* magazine in 1951 that he 'jumped rattlers' in the southern states. He worked as a typist, teamster, miller, sawyer, shoe-black, bar-tender, hod-carrier, compositor and farmer before migrating to Australia in 1910, as a printer and night-watchman on the *Maitau*, the ship which carried him across the Pacific. After a dreary year on the *Northern Courier*, in Bellingen, New South Wales, he joined the Methodist Mission New Guinea, in Rabaul, in May, 1911, as a printer. He told *People* he was motivated by the chance to see German New Guinea, not religious conviction. By the outbreak of World War I, in August 1914, he had married New Zealand-born nursing sister Kate Nickle, left the mission and was managing a coconut plantation in Bougainville. By a strange coincidence, he began the Great War, like World War II, as a civilian internee. German authorities in Bougainville arrested Thomas along with other British subjects and forced them to live off the land, 'on parole' until Australian troops arrived in December.

Thomas joined the First Australian Infantry Force (AIF) in Sydney in May, 1917, saw active service in France, advanced to temporary staff sergeant while working in the AIF HQ Orderly Room in Tidworth, England, and was discharged from the army in October, 1919, because of a 'nervous debility'. His medical report stated that his service in France had aggravated a nervous condition which he traced to his internment in Bougainville. The examining doctor detected a heart abnormality and reported Thomas had experienced insomnia for four years and epileptic fits since he was 10-years-old.

He returned to New Guinea in 1920 and to newspapers in 1925, as editor of *The Rabaul Times*, then just opened by Harry Hamilton, previously the Government Printer. But he quit after 15 months and spent the next seven years based in Buka, off Bougainville, as a trader, gold-miner, poet, short story writer, and casual contributor. In 1933 rejoined the paper as managing editor for Sydney businessman J.O. Moutton, the proprietor since 1930. He and Kate had rooms in the Rabaul Hotel and acted as agents for several insurance companies. His community activities included vice-presidency of the Planters Association of New Guinea, and executive membership of the Rabaul branch of the Returned Soldiers Sailors and Airmen's League of Australia, the Automobile Club of New Guinea and New Guinea Red Cross Society. He was also an original member and Past Master of the Rabaul Masonic Lodge.

In 1937, *Pacific Islands Monthly* described him as the best-known newspaper correspondent in the Mandated Territory of New Guinea. From 1946 to his death in 1966, as a contributor to *Pacific Islands Monthly*, Thomas was the unofficial voice of Old Rabaul, a champion of unfashionable causes, such as corporal punishment for cheeky natives, recognition of the Wirraway pilots who defended the town in January, 1942, and of the civilians who risked their necks as Coastwatchers. The Legislative Council of Papua and New Guinea recognised his standing in the territories by letting him sit in the Speaker's Chair during a visit to Port Moresby in 1955. The publisher of *Pacific Island Monthly*, R.W. Robson, wrote a few months before Thomas died, in 1966, that he regarded *Tok Tok with Tolala* among the most interesting and valuable sections of the magazine.

Thomas has left little on the public record, or in his private cor-

respondence, about the sadness he mentions at the end of his memoir at the loss of so many of his pre-war friends His relatively high profile compared with Ellis, McKechnie and Creswick meant that he faced years of questions about the civilians who vanished. Maybe it's not surprising that he drank a bottle of brandy every couple of days in his final, bed-ridden months. At first, just after the war, he was asked to help identify of bodies in mass graves. Later he set the record straight in his Tok Tok column about the men he was sure had been aboard the *Montevideo Maru* and those who could not have been there. Beyond this he answered letters and received visits from widows in quest of certainty beyond the slippery official record. He wrote to one such correspondent in 1965 that he had rarely been able to resolve anything:

"They shrug me off and finally remark, 'well ! just feel that he may be somewhere and that he didn't go on that boat' .. whether it is more comfort for these poor relations to know their loved ones were liquidated or not drowned at sea, I don't know'.

He told Robson in early 1966 that he was sick of frequent visitors blowing in to quiz him on subjects which interested them 'I enjoy their visits, but they are often a tax on my mental structure," he wrote.

Forty years on, some tantalising questions remain: why would the Japanese have shipped World War I diggers like Nobby Clark and Harold Page to a labour camp on the *Montevideo Maru*? Might not the older men deemed to be unfit for hard labour have been sent away on another boat and executed? Why was there never a Royal Commission into the Fall of Rabaul and loss of life on the *Montevideo Maru*? Why can't the Australian Government fund an expedition to locate and examine the sunken POW ship, like the project to find the wreck of the *HMAS Sydney*, another World War II casualty? Historian Margaret Reeson wrote in her book, *A Very Long War*, published in 2000, of the deep scars still evident among families of the lost civilians and soldiers of Rabaul She also examined the 'crime' of surviving.

Interviewed by People magazine in 1951, Thomas wondered when the public would be ready for his memoir, observing that readers were said to have lost their appetite for war stories. Now on the verge of publication. 55 years later. *Rabaul 1942-45*, is unlikely to contain the answers craved by families of Rabaul's vanished men. This small band of potential readers has had access to the story for many years through the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau in Canberra and the New South Wales State Library in Sydney. If Thomas wins any posthumous recognition it will be from readers who know almost nothing of the state of enmity between Japan and Australia 65 years ago, who have never heard of the Co-Prosperity Scheme of the East, and who could not conceive that 2 million Japanese soldiers and civilians and 40,000 Australians died during a six-year, world-wide conflict with a death toll of 52 million people, military and civilian. If Thomas's book succeeds it will vindicate his faith in journalism, which he considered a well-developed branch of Australian literature, and a powerful force in Australian society, despite the mass-circulation newspapers' support of capitalist regimes. If he wins admirers, it will be because of his eye for the minutiae of war, such as Japanese soldiers cutting and wrapping fingernails and hair to send to next-of-kin before leaving to fight in New Guinea, or of the night he cowered in a tunnel with his guards, listening to a recording of *I Bought A Million Dollar Baby in a Five and Ten Cent Store* while US bombers plastered Rabaul, or perhaps his rendering of the chronic personal abuse and vituperation between the ill-matched foursome of the freezer crew.

Thomas was proud of *Rabaul 1942-45* as a piece of journalism. 'Good reporting makes pompous bumbles squirm', he wrote to Fred Archer in 1952, describing his court and council rounds with the *Campbelltown Ingleburn News*. Be hanged if he was a historian, he wrote again two years later: 'I walked out of Rabaul without a single record of the past - except my brainbox - By Jove! I do miss my old-time records, which I had carefully

nursed through the years only to be burnt by the Jap bastards.' Margot Grimes recalls that he always defended what she regarded as a rotten and uncouth craft. I'm a journalist and they are noted for bad English, but people understand what they write and I cannot say the same about the products of English professors, or Professors of English rather," he wrote to her in 1962.

Ian Frazer Journalist., Townsville Bulletin,

Author of God's Maverick, Albatross Books, 1992

For English Language Lovers. What is the difference between 'Completed' and 'Finished'?

No dictionary has been able to define the difference between 'Complete' and 'Finished.'

But in a linguistic conference in England, Sun Sherman an Indian American, was the clever winner. His response: When you marry the right woman, you are 'Complete.' If you marry the wrong woman, you are 'Finished.' And when the right woman catches you with the wrong woman, you are 'Completely Finished.'

His answer received a five minute standing ovation.

Ubique Motto

"Ubique" (everywhere in Latin) is the motto of the Royal Artillery and the Royal Engineers.

It was given to them by King William 1V in 1832 and in 1833 it was further granted as a Battle Honour to the Royal Artillery in place of all former and further Battle Honours they could receive.

Original language: Latin. Author: Rudyard Kipling.

Army Customs.



Left and at very top of photo below.
 . Mount Tawa Airstrip on the border of Gulf and Western Provinces PNG. Mount Tawa has a Primary school but the nearest Secondary school is a two day walk away. Students usually stop with relatives and return home only during holiday periods.



Joseph Maxwell VC, MC & Bar, DCM

Joseph Maxwell (1896-1967), often claimed as the **second most decorated Australian soldier in World War I**, was born on 10 February 1896 at Annandale, Sydney, son of John Maxwell, labourer, and his wife Elizabeth, née Stokes.

Employed as an apprentice boilermaker in Newcastle, he enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force on 8 February 1915. He was posted to the 18th Battalion and served at Gallipoli before proceeding with his battalion to France in March 1916. Promoted sergeant in October, he went to a training battalion in England, briefly returning to France in May 1917 before being sent back to attend an officer training school. Involved in a brawl with civil and military police in London, he was fined and returned to his unit. He was promoted warrant officer in August and appointed company sergeant major.



In September, during the 3rd battle of Ypres, Maxwell took command of a platoon after its officer had been killed and led it in the attack. Later he safely extricated men from a newly captured position under intense enemy fire. **For this action he was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal** and a few days later was commissioned in the field as second lieutenant; he was promoted lieutenant in January 1918. In March he led a scouting patrol east of Ploegsteert and after obtaining the required information ordered his men to withdraw. He was covering them when

he saw a large party of Germans nearby. Recalling the patrol, he organized and led a successful attack, **an action for which he was awarded the Military Cross.**

In August, during the offensive near Rainecourt, Maxwell, the only officer in his company who was not a casualty, took command and, preceded by a tank, led his men into the attack on time. The tank received a direct hit and Maxwell, although shaken by the explosion, rescued the crew before the tank burst into flames. He continued the attack and the company reached its objective. **He was awarded a Bar to his Military Cross.**

Maxwell was awarded the Victoria Cross after an attack on the Beaufort-Fonsomme line near Estrées on 3 October. After his company commander was wounded he took charge. Reaching the strong enemy wire under intense fire, he pushed forward alone through a narrow passageway in the wire and captured the most dangerous machine-gun, disposing of the crew. His company was thus able to penetrate the wire and take the objective. Shortly afterwards, again single-handed, he silenced a machine-gun holding up a flank company. Later, with two men and an English-speaking prisoner, he encouraged about twenty Germans in a nearby post to surrender, and in doing so was briefly captured himself. Awaiting his opportunity, he drew a pistol concealed in his respirator haversack, killed two of the enemy and escaped with his men under heavy rifle-fire. He then organized a party and captured the post.

In just over twelve months Maxwell was awarded the D.C.M., the M.C. and Bar and the V.C., and he was only 22 when the war ended. After returning to Australia in 1919 he worked in a variety of occupations in Sydney, Canberra and New South Wales country towns. On 14 February 1921, describing himself as a reporter, he married a 19-year-old tailoress, Mabel Maxwell (not a relative) at Bellevue Hill, Sydney, with Catholic rites. There was a daughter of the marriage which was dissolved in 1926 with his wife as petitioner.



In 1932, helped by Hugh Buggy, Maxwell published the very successful *Hell's Bells and Mademoiselles*, an account of the war as he saw it; at the time he was working as a gar-

dener with the Department of the Interior in Canberra. His health was often very unstable. He attempted, unsuccessfully because of his age, to enlist in the 2nd A.I.F., but eventually succeeded in enlisting in Queensland under a false name; his identity was discovered and he was discharged. On 6 March 1956, stating that he was a journalist of Bondi, he married a widow Anne Martin, née Burton, in Sydney. In 1964, with his wife, he attended the opening of V.C. Corner in the Australian War Memorial, Canberra. He was adamant that his V.C. would not end up there, as he took the view that 'lumping' all the V.C.s together cheapened the award.

On 6 July 1967 Maxwell collapsed and died of a heart attack in a street in his home suburb of Matraville; he had for some time been an invalid pensioner. After a service with military honours at St Matthias Anglican Church, Paddington, he was cremated. His widow donated his medals to the Army Museum, Victoria Barracks, Paddington.

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Greater Bird of Paradise

RAAF Radar Station Arawe, 1943

On 15 Dec 1943 RAAF members of No 335 Radar Station participated in the amphibious landing at Arawe south of New Britain and established an air surveillance radar in 48 hours.

Following the early success of the radar in Britain, the RAAF was given responsibility in November 1941 for developing an air surveillance radar network around Australia to augment other early detection capabilities like the Coastwatchers and the Volunteer Air Observation Corps. By the end of the war in the Pacific in August 1945, the RAAF had deployed 142 radar units into the Pacific Theatre.

While the Radar Station only received minor attacks from Japanese ground forces during the landing and subsequent

battle on the island, it was regularly attacked by Japanese air attacks at night and day given its close proximity to the Japanese base at Gasmata.

The RAAF radar personnel received praise for their initial landing and subsequent air surveillance work with the Australian Minister of Air, Arthur Drakeford, stating in parliament that "RAAF guards took part in the invasion of Arawe. This is the first time ground personnel have taken part in an invasion of this kind and are doing a magnificent job under the most hazardous circumstances." The reference to RAAF guards rather than radar operators was to conceal the unit's true operations.

Air Force Association. S.A. Division



A teenager brings her new boyfriend home to meet her parents. They're appalled by his haircut, his tats, his piercings. Later, the girl's mother says, "Dear, he doesn't seem to be a very nice boy.

"Oh, please, Mum!" says the daughter. "If he wasn't nice, would he be doing 500 hours of community service?"

Preparing a Mu-mu in village outside Rabaul

A pit was dug and lots of wood placed in. Then special river stones were placed on top of the wood and a fire lit. When the stones were red hot banana leaves were placed on top of them and a whole pig, stuffed with vegetables and carefully wrapped in banana leaves also, was placed on top of the red hot stones, with additional hot stones placed on top of the pig, and the pit was then covered with soil.

A typical mu-mu took about 3 or 4 hours to cook but when ready the meal was absolutely delicious. The pig was always beautifully cooked and the vegetables, some of which were special local vegetables, were great.

I attended about 6 mu-mu's whilst in Rabaul in 1964.



Cpl William Scurry: Inventor of the "Drip Rifle"

20 year old Lance-Corporal William Scurry was an Australian soldier who, invented the self firing "drip rifle" whilst serving in the Gallipoli campaign during the First World War. This invention would convince Turkish soldiers that the Anzacs were still in the trenches shooting at them, when in fact they had long gone! He had been an Australian architectural model maker and soldier. He was born in 1895, the son of William Scurry and Bessie Preston, served his country in both World Wars, and died of a heart attack in 1963. The Drip Rifle saved many ANZAC lives during the final evacuation of Gallipoli the night of 19-20 Dec 1915.

2668 Private (Pte) William Charles Scurry enlisted on 19 July 1915 in the 8th Reinforcements of 7th Battalion. He also served in the 58th Battalion. As commanding officer of 15th Light Trench Mortar Battery, Captain Scurry was awarded a Military Cross 12 October 1916 at Petillon, France.

In October 1915, the British commander of the expedition General Ian Hamilton was sacked and replaced with General Sir Charles Monro whose appraisal of the situation in November led to his recommendation that the British Mediterranean expeditionary force at Gallipoli be evacuated. This was agreed by the British government in December and planning for the evacuation began. Back to Gallipoli and the Drip Rifle, the final stage of the evacuation was conducted at night from 18-20 December 1915. Only 20,277 soldiers remained at Gallipoli at this point. Mule columns lead by men from the Indian Mule Corps transported equipment to Williams' Pier throughout the night.

"My goodness," thought one Australian soldier, "if the Turks don't see all this as it goes along they must be blind".

The men of the Mule Corps were, however, incredibly skilled trainers, and kept their animals completely silent as they carried their heavy loads down to the pier.

The Anzacs did their best to sustain the appearance of normality. On December 17, a now famous cricket match was held on 'Shell Green', the only flat piece of land accessible at Gallipoli. Intended as a diversionary tactic, it had to be abandoned when Turkish shells detonated nearby.

Another ruse, invented by Lance Corporal William Charles Scurry of 7th Battalion with the help of Private Alfred Hughes Lawrence, was the 'drip-rifle'. Made by placing two kerosene tins atop one and other, the top tin was filled with water and the bottom attached to the trigger of a rifle. As the men left their trenches for the last time, small holes were punched in the top tin. With each drip, the bottom tin increased in weight, eventually putting enough pressure on the trigger to fire a round. The men the Turks believed were firing at them had in fact left the trenches 20 minutes earlier.

Scurry was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for his "conspicuous ability and good work; in regard to a device for firing a rifle automatically". In September 1916 he sustained a serious eye injury that considerably reduced his vision. He was awarded the Military Cross in June 1917. Scurry survived the war and worked as an orchardist in Silvan, Victoria. By the end of the war, he was a brevet captain and an artillery instructor. He went on to serve during World War II despite shrapnel wounds that eventually blinded him. He died in 1963 at the age of 68.

In 1916 he wrote to his mother telling her about his invention and sent her the magazine he'd taken from his Lee-Enfield which was left behind at ANZAC Cove as part of the deception.

The final day of evacuation was filled with constant activity. Boats packed with empty crates continued to arrive at Williams' Pier to keep up the illusion of winner preparation, while in the afternoon the British started a feint attack at Helles to distract Turkish forces. At Dusk, the remaining men filed out of the trenches at North Beach. Small rear parties remained, firing the occasional shot and making enough noise to convince the Turks the entire garrison was still there.

By 4:00am, only a handful of men remained. At 4:10am, having waited long enough for any rear party stragglers, Colonel John Paton declared the evacuation complete. The last troopship sailed away as the men watched North Beach, their home for nearly 8 months, fade into the distance.

No Allied operation in the entire First World War was more successful than the evacuation of Gallipoli. Over the course of three weeks, approximately 150,000 men, 2,000 horses, 400 guns and a huge amount of equipment and supplies were withdrawn without a casualty; a triumph in planning and execution.

Gareth McCray OAM.



**MY GRANDAD WAS RESPONSIBLE
FOR 25 DOWNED GERMAN
PLANES IN WW2**



**STILL TO THIS DAY HE IS KNOWN
AS THE WORST MECHANIC THE
LUFTWAFFE EVER HAD**



**"You getting athlete's foot is about
as ridiculous as a coal miner
with sunstroke!"**

The sinking of the *Vyner Brooke*

Built in 1928, the *SS Vyner Brooke* was a British-registered cargo vessel of 1,670 tons. She was named after the Third Rajah of Sarawak – Sir Charles Vyner Brooke.

Up until the outbreak of war with the Japanese, *Vyner Brooke* plied the waters between Singapore and Kuching, under the flag of the Sarawak Steamship Company. She was then requisitioned by Britain's Royal Navy as an armed trader.

On the evening of 12 February 1942, *Vyner Brooke* was one of the last ships carrying evacuees to leave Singapore. Although she usually only carried 12 passengers, in addition to her 47 crew, *Vyner Brooke* sailed south with 181 passengers embarked, most of them women and children. Among the passengers were the last 65 Australian nurses in Singapore. Throughout the daylight hours of 13 February *Vyner Brooke* laid up in the lee of a small jungle-covered island, but she was attacked late in the afternoon by a Japanese aircraft, fortunately with no serious casualties. At sunset she made a run for the Banka Strait, heading for Palembang in Sumatra. Prowling Japanese warships, however, impeded her progress and daylight the next day found her dangerously exposed on a flat sea just inside the strait.

Not long after 2:00pm, *Vyner Brooke* was attacked by several Japanese aircraft. Despite evasive action, she was crippled

by several bombs and within half an hour rolled over and sunk bow first. Approximately 150 survivors eventually made it ashore at Banka Island, after periods of between eight and 65 hours in the water. The island had already been occupied by the Japanese and most of the survivors were taken captive.

However, an awful fate awaited many of those that landed on Radji beach. There, survivors from the *Vyner Brooke* joined up with another party of civilians and up to 60 Commonwealth servicemen and merchant sailors, who had made it ashore after their own vessels were sunk. After an unsuccessful effort to gain food and assistance from local villagers, a deputation was sent to contact the Japanese, with the aim of having the group taken prisoner. Anticipating this, all but one of the civilian women followed behind. A party of Japanese troops arrived at Radji Beach a few hours later. They shot and bayoneted the males and then forced the 22 Australian nurses and the one British civilian woman who had remained to wade into the sea, then shot them from behind.

There were only two survivors – Sister Vivian Bullwinkel, and Private Cecil Kingsley, a British soldier. After hiding in the jungle for several days the pair eventually gave themselves up to the Japanese. Kingsley died a few days later from his wounds, and Bullwinkel spent the rest of the war as an internee. Of the 65 Australian nurses embarked upon the *Vyner Brooke*, 12 were killed during the air attack or drowned following the sinking, 21 were murdered on Radji Beach, and 32 became internees, 8 of whom subsequently died before the end of the war.

An officer from the *Vyner Brooke* walked to Muntok, a town on the north-west of the island, to contact the Japanese. While he was away Matron Irene Drummond, the most senior of the Australian nurses, suggested that the civilian women and children should start off walking towards Muntok. In an action that later became known as the Banka Island Massacre, Japanese soldiers came and killed the men, then motioned the nurses to wade into the sea. They then machine-gunned the nurses from behind. Bullwinkel was struck by a bullet which passed completely through her body, missing her internal organs, and feigned death until the Japanese soldiers left. She hid with British Army Private Cecil George Kingsley of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps for 12 days, tending to his severe wounds, only then realising the extent of her own wound, before being captured. They were taken into captivity, but Private Kingsley died soon after due to his having sustained such serious wounds, including a gunshot wound in his abdomen. Bullwinkel was reunited with survivors of the *Vyner Brooke*. She told them of the massacre, but none spoke of it again until after the war lest it put Bullwinkel, as witness to the massacre, in danger.

Bullwinkel spent three and half years in captivity. Another surviving nurse, Pat Darling died in 2007. Vivian retired from the army in 1947 and became Director of Nursing at the Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital. Also in 1947 she gave evidence of the massacre at a war crimes trial in Tokyo. She devoted herself to the nursing profession and to honouring those killed on Banka Island, raising funds for a nurses' memorial and serving on numerous committees, including a period as a member of the Council of the Australian War Memorial, and later President of the Australian College of Nursing. Bullwinkel married Colonel Francis West Statham in September 1977, changing her name to Vivian Statham. She returned to Bangka Island in 1992 to unveil a shrine to the nurses who had not survived the war. She died of a heart attack on 3 July 2000, aged 84, in Perth, Western Australia.

Burma Thailand Railway Memorial Association



History of the University Platoon, PNGVR

In April 1966, Brig AL McDonald, Commander PNG Command, held talks with Dr JT Gunther, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Papua New Guinea on the matter of raising a university regiment, with the initial proposal to raise a platoon which would be later expanded to a company and be administered and commanded by the PNGVR. Recruiting was to commence in 1966 of a platoon of one officer and forty other ranks, with a view to expanding to a company of 5 officers and 100 other ranks when an Army training depot was built on the university site at Waigaini, either in 1968 or 1969.

The first platoon, designated the University Platoon, PNGVR, was raised in June, with the members coming from administrative college and university students. The first OC was Captain Ken Marshall and the first ARA Instructor was W02 John Boughton who also was posted as Instructor to Administrative and Support Companies of PNGVR.

Some difficulties arose with the University Platoon at Port Moresby because of the combined Administrative College/University makeup of the platoon, in that the term breaks of the two institutions did not coincide and the Administrative College members were not available for the end of the year camp because they had to return to their Public Service Department. Furthermore, the university was not able to change its semester dates because it had adopted the same calendar as Australian universities in order to allow free

exchange of staff and students. However, some Administrative College students attended the PNGVR annual camp at Lae in September 1967 and the remainder of the university students attended a special camp at the Goldie River training area. On the positive side, the sub-unit had paraded at Murray Barracks on Thursday evenings throughout the year on three-hour parades and had also attended a number of weekend bivouacs. Forty-eight recruits had been taken on strength at the formation of the sub-unit in June 1966.

1968. In October, tenders were let for the construction of a \$125,000 training depot at the university at Port Moresby. The depot included a drill hall, quartermaster's store (Q



store), Officers' and Sergeants' Messes, a lecture room and administration officers. The inclusion of two messes drew criticism within PNGVR as being extravagant, nevertheless, they were built. The parade ground was lit by floodlight for night parades. Although the majority of the university staff were not keen on having a military unit on site, the new depot was officially opened in April by the Vice Chancellor John Gunther.

1969. Lt Mike Griffin (currently on the Association Committee) took the University Platoon to Annual Camp at the Goldie River Training area. He later declared that the level of training achieved was of a very high standard. A number of members were students, some were Trainee Magistrates and several were from the British Solomon Islands Protectorate. General Vickery, the CMF member of the military Board was most impressed with the platoon on his visit to Murray Barracks prior to the Camp.

The University Platoon was still having teething problems, albeit in its third year of operation. Lieutenant Dick Smith became the fourth platoon commander, replacing Lieutenant Mike Griffin. Smith was starting with a small core of NCOs from the 1968 NCO course; he was anxious to 'rebuild' the sub-unit. In effect, a rebuild had occurred at the beginning of each year. As a result of the review of the University Platoon, put in place by the CO, which included CMF recruitment during the next five years, Harrington produced a report, 'Proposed University Unit in PNG Command'. On future expansion, the report indicated the sub-unit would generally

be in accordance with the following pattern.

1969-70 one platoon
1970-71: two platoons
1971-72: one company
1972-73: one company
1973-74: one company

1970

Parade attendances at the University Platoon in Port Moresby had fallen and Major Bob Bowmer had advised the CO that attendance at the sub-unit's annual camp at the end of the year could be as low as 20. Bob Bowmer said he was aware that in past years attendance at annual camps by university members had been very poor.

HQ PNG Planning Cell stated that their studies were not advanced sufficiently to enable further consideration of the matter of the future organisation of the university sub-unit at that stage and Command responded to the CO that there was no alternative but to freeze university recruitment. In fact the Planning Team was deeply involved in conducting deliberations on the future of the PNG Army, which included the expansion of the University Platoon to a Company and the future of the PNGVR relative to an independent Papua New Guinea.

The University Platoon was disbanded on 31 Dec 1973, prior to Independence, along with the rest of PNGVR.

In 1969 Pascol Idok from Rakunai village, near Rabaul, who was in the first intake for the University Platoon, became the first and only PNG national to be commissioned into the PNGVR.

*Extracted from "PNGVR: A History 1951-1973"
by Maj Bob Harvey-Hall. RFD. ED.*



University Pl at Owers Corner. 1972. Photo Les Bohm.

Slugs: The Most Unlikely Heroes of World War 1



They are slimy, squishy, and slow-moving creatures with long bodies with no legs, pretty much like homeless snails. Slugs are land-dwelling mollusks that are considered garden pests. However, during World War I, these mollusks

actually played a totally different role when they became some sort of life-saving, organically-powered, costless life-savers.

Gas Uses During WWI

World War I was an era of gas warfare. When the Germans first used the deadly chemical weapon in 1917, the troops were basically unprepared for the kind of attack. They had trouble detecting whether or not an area was contaminated. During World War I, the production of different dangerous chemicals started.

Tear gas was among the first gasses used. The chemical causes irritation, coughing, and burning sensations in the eyes, mouths, and nose, thus making you tear up. It was not lethal enough to kill people, so chlorine gas followed. Chlorine was deadly and could damage the tissues of the eyes, throat, and lungs after contact. The chemical could cause fluid to form in the lungs and basically drown people from the inside. The disadvantage of using chlorine gas was that it has a yellow-green color that screams its grand entrance, so the victims could immediately tell if they were being attacked.



A soldier of WWI who had suffered extensive Mustard gas burns to his back and arms

There was also phosgene gas, which as opposed to chlorine, was colourless. The French first used the highly toxic chemical in 1915, which could also cause the lungs to fill with a liquid called pulmonary edema. Around 85,000 soldiers fell victim to this chemical. Then there was mustard gas that could soak up the troops' clothes and cause severe blistering upon skin contact. Mustard gas is not easy to detect either until the victims start to itch and then, later on, develop large blisters.

The major problem was that the military didn't have sophisticated technology back then to enable them to create masks like the M50 Joint Service General Protective

Mask or MOPP gears. They even thought soaking masks with urine would offer some protection from the harmful effects of these chemical gases, you still had a face soaked in urine. Hopefully, it was your own.

Although less than 1% of the total deaths in the war were from gas, the fear instilled in the troops was huge. After World War I, the Geneva Protocol of 1925 prohibited the use of chemical warfare.

Slugs as Mustard Gas Detectors

The use of slugs as mustard gas detectors started with a curator named Paul Bartsch at the Smithsonian's US National Museum, now called the National Museum of Natural History. His discovery was purely accidental as he brought these slugs

home one day, and they escaped from their enclosure and crawled into his furnace room. When Bartsch found the slugs, they looked so distressed: the slugs were doing some weird movements with their tentacles to show that they were distressed.

He didn't really think much of it until a few years later, the United States entered World War I in 1917, and he recalled the reaction of the slugs in his furnace room and thought they could possibly be useful. He went back, collected some slugs, and conducted experiments to see if the mollusks would react to the mustard gas. He found out that they were extremely sensitive, more than humans and more than other animals that were commonly used to detect gases like dogs. He informed the US Army about it, and the army entertained the idea.

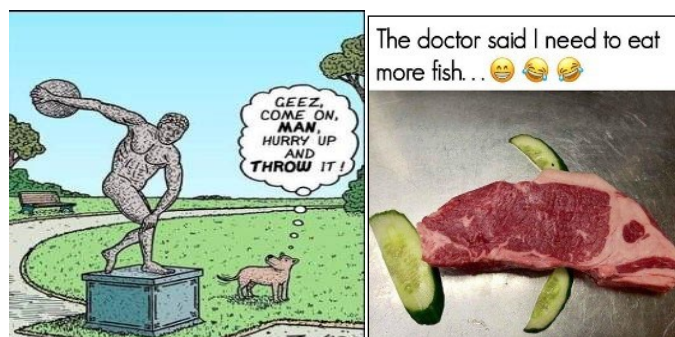
Enlisting in the Army

As it turned out, slugs react at levels of one particle per 10-12 million and would compress their bodies and close off their breathing spores to survive the gas attacks or whatever chemicals without a fuss. Compared to horses and dogs with fatal responses, the slugs don't incur adverse effects.

So in June 1918, the US Army officially enlisted our ordinary garden slugs to help and technically fight alongside the troops in the trenches. Imagine the soldiers carrying these little slimers around and looking at them from time to time to see if they were acting weirdly. Three of these gas-detecting slugs saved thousands of lives during their five-month duty by alerting the soldiers about mustard gas presence way before they could tell. Once they see that the slugs compressed their bodies, it would be an indication for them to put on their masks, after peeing on them.

Slugs are proof that not all heroes wear capes... or have legs.

Sofrep Military.



Australian Army Reserve.
(Continued from HTT Vol 144)

Post World War II to the Vietnam War

Due to an overcommitment of resources early in the war, the Australian economy suffered badly from manpower shortages. As a result, the government began the demobilisation process before the war was over and, when it had finally come to an end, the government was very keen for the demobilisation process to be completed as quickly as possible. Defence issues were not given a high priority as people tried to rebuild their lives after the war and as such it was not until 1948 that the CMF was reformed.

Subsequent reviews would see the CMF providing a platform upon which the Army could mobilise in the event of a war. Initially, the plan had been for the CMF to be made up of 50,000 men organised into two divisions and other units, however, recruitment was unable to meet these targets as initially it was attempted to achieve this through voluntary enlistment. Indeed, in its first year of existence, the actual strength of the CMF was only 8,698 personnel, although this rose the following year to 16,202 and to 32,779 in 1950. In March 1951, a

system of compulsory national service was re-established.

The reintroduction of this conscription scheme saw the numbers of the CMF rise substantially but its management and administration required the allocation of a large number of resources and personnel from the Regular Army at a time when the army Regular Army already heavily committed in Korea and Malaya and so the scheme was suspended in 1959. This was a significant blow to the CMF and its strength fell by more than half in that year to 20,000 men. Further changes came with the introduction of the Pentropic (five battle group) Division into the Australian Army in 1960. This proved a disaster for the CMF, as wholesale changes were made and units removed from the order of battle.



A CMF machine gun team during an exercise in 1952

In 1965, as the Pentropic system was abandoned, a further re-organisation of the CMF was undertaken as existing battalions were reduced and additional battalions were raised in the more populous areas, namely in Queensland, Victoria and New South Wales. Concerns about the regional

identity of these units were addressed by reintroducing the old numerical designations. In 1966, the Army authorised the raising of six remote area battalions, one in each state. These units offered special conditions of service for men who could not meet their training requirements through normal attendance due to their occupation or place of residence. Ultimately though the Tasmanian battalion was never formed.

The subordinate relationship between the CMF and Regular Army was further underlined when the national service scheme was re-introduced in 1965, albeit in the guise of a selective ballot. Whereas previous incarnations of the system had not allowed for national servicemen to be sent overseas (within various definitions of that term), the new scheme was implemented with the express purpose of sending these recruits overseas as Australia's commitments in the region required a large-scale increase in the Army. Additionally, instead of being used to fill the ranks of the CMF, the scheme was essentially used to expand the Regular Army. Due to the terms of service,



Two CMF Brigadiers examine a captured Type 56 assault rifle at Nui Dat.

national servicemen were required to serve two years full-time in Regular Army units, after which they were required to serve a further three years in the CMF. Despite this, however, potential conscripts were given the option to voluntarily enlist in the CMF prior to their date of birth being announced, thus exempting them from being drafted for overseas service. Due to the desire of many to avoid being sent overseas, as a result of this option, it was estimated that by 1968 almost half of the 35,000 men in the CMF had joined to avoid being drafted. This led to a widespread public perception that the CMF was a refuge for "draft dodgers", and to the creation of an organisation in which the majority of its members had little or no motivation to fulfil their training obligations. Although this was not a universal experience, overall it affected the morale of the CMF and, coupled with the decision by the government not to activate CMF

units for service in Vietnam, this led to a decline in genuine voluntary enlistment.

Post Vietnam War to the new millennium

When the Whitlam Government came to power in late 1972, the CMF was in a very poor state. The new government moved quickly to end conscription, and this caused the CMF's strength to fall by roughly 5,000 to 23,119 by June 1973.

A committee of enquiry found that the CMF was a hollow shell of its former self, depleted in numbers and in equipment and unable to adequately fulfil its tasks. However, it still found that there was a role for the CMF to play in the strategic environment that existed at the time, although it would no longer be called upon to provide the base upon which mobilisation in a time of war would be built, instead it would be used to augment the Regular Army. It also recommended that the name be changed from the CMF to the Australian Army Reserve.

Nevertheless, due to further cuts in defence spending and an eagerness of the government to implement those recommendations that could assist in achieving this goal, units that were unable to meet attendance requirements were disbanded or amalgamated with others, thus further diffusing the community links units had established in their local areas and thus further impacting upon recruitment and retention.

Further reviews came in this time as Defence planners attempted to grapple with the questions regarding strategy following the wars of diplomacy of the previous three decades.



A member of the 9th Battalion, Royal Queensland Regiment during an exercise in 1999

Nevertheless, there remained a reluctance to rebuild the Reserves and despite these major reviews, as late as the 1990s the Army still had not managed to develop a well-structured reserve force.

In 1991, in an attempt to rectify this, the Ready Reserve scheme was established. Under this scheme the 6th Brigade, an existing Regular brigade

based in Brisbane at the time, was converted to a Ready Reserve formation. The majority of the personnel were Reservists who undertook a period of twelve months full-time service before returning to normal Reserve status for a further four years. The scheme showed considerable promise. Nevertheless, due to cost constraints it was abolished in 1996 by the newly elected Howard government.

By the time that the opening phases of the East Timor operation began in 1999, the issue regarding the purpose of the Army Reserve still had not been resolved. Instead of being able to provide formed units to augment the Regular Army, the Reserves was reduced to providing individuals for round-out purposes only. As a result, in the initial phase of the operation there were only 100 Reservists available to fill positions in INTERFET, mostly in specialist roles that the Regular Army had trouble providing. As the deployment progressed to a second rotation in April 2000, however, a further 630 Reservists volunteered for full-time service.

The deployment to East Timor highlighted the limits of the Australian Defence Force and the need for an Army Reserve that could effectively provide deployable capabilities and individuals to round-out to the Regular Army in times of heavy operational commitment.

The continuing high operational tempo of the Army after East Timor further emphasised the need to develop the capability of the Army Reserve. Since then increasing numbers of Reservists have been deployed overseas in varying capacities as well as undertaking periods of full-time service in Australia to maintain capabilities within Regular units heavily committed to deployments to Iraq, Afghanistan, East Timor and the Solomon Islands. In lower intensity areas, such as East Timor and the Solomon Islands, formed units of Reservists raised from personnel drawn from many units, have been deployed on peacekeeping duties to relieve the pressure being placed upon the Regular Army and allowing them to focus on the higher intensity combat zones in Iraq and Afghanistan. In addition to this Australian Army Reserve units have been deployed on border security duties with the Royal Australian Navy as part of Operation Relex, as well as participating regularly in multinational exercises such as Rifle Company Butterworth.

As such, the role of the Army Reserve now encompasses the '3 Rs'—that is reinforcement, round-out and rotation. With a total strength in 2005–06 of just 15,579 active personnel, recruitment and retention remain an ongoing issue for Defence planners, nevertheless Reservists continue to have a high training obligation. Since September 2006, in an incentive to rectify sliding retention rates, Reservist salaries have been streamlined with those of regular forces as a reflection of overall higher standard of training. This initiative shows that in recent decades, there are now many positions for which there is little training gap at all between Reservists and Permanent Force members. In 2008–09 total strength included 17,064 active personnel. In addition there were another 12,496 members of the Standby Reserve.

In late 2008 a company from the 1st Commando Regiment became the first formed Army Reserve unit to see combat since World War II when it was deployed to Afghanistan as part of the Australian Special Operations Task Group. The initial deployment proved problematic however, with a subsequent inquiry finding that the company had received less support for its pre-deployment preparations than was typical for regular units and that its training was inadequate. The 1st Commando Regiment contributed forces to several other Special Operations Task Group rotations.

Between 2004 and 2017 a total of approximately 2,400 Army Reserve personnel have deployed on operations.

Plan Beersheba reforms

In 2011, the Army Reserve's role and structure began being reformed under the Plan Beersheba reorganisation of the Army. The Army has stated that the reserves' role will become "to deliver specified capability and support and sustain Australian Defence Force (ADF) preparedness and operations".

As part of this reform, the six Army Reserve brigades are being paired with the regular brigades. The 4th and 9th Brigades will partner with the 1st Brigade, the 5th and 8th Brigades with the 7th Brigade, and the 11th and 13th Brigades with the 3rd Brigade. The pairs of Army Reserve brigades will be expected to be able to provide a battalion-sized force upon mobilisation during the regular brigade's 12 month 'ready' phase.

The structure of the reserve brigades is also being altered. The reserve artillery regiments will be re-equipped with mortars; the reserve Royal Australian Armoured Corps units will convert from light cavalry to producing crews for Bushmaster Protected Mobility Vehicles, and a brigade operational supply company will be established within each of the combat services support battalions.

Wikipedia

Why do professional athletes think I should care about what they think?

If I wanted advice from someone who chases a ball, I'd ask my dog.

The Krait's Remarkable Career

The small fishing vessel *MV Krait* holds a special place in Australian maritime and military history. Named after a small deadly snake, it played an important part in Operation Jaywick's which sank several Japanese ships anchored in Singapore Harbour in September 1943. This is the *Krait's* story.

The *MV Krait* started life as a Japanese fishing vessel launched in 1934 and named *Kofuku Maru*. The vessel measured 11.55m at the waterline, had a draught of 2 metres, a displacement of 23 tonnes and was configured as a motorised gaff-rigged ketch. By the outbreak of war, she was based in Singapore ferrying water, food and other supplies to fishermen in the Rhio Archipelago and returning with their catch for the city's seafood markets.

When Japan entered the war the *Kofuku Maru* was seized by the British authorities. As Japanese troops advanced down the Malay Peninsula an Australian merchant mariner, Bill Reynolds, used the boat to evacuate over one thousand civilians to Sumatra in what was then the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia).

Then, in January 1942, when it was clear that Singapore would soon fall, he escaped to Colombo in present-day Sri Lanka on the *Kofuku Maru*. It was soon realised by officers from the Allied Intelligence Bureau that they were now in possession of a fishing vessel that could, with some luck, traverse enemy waters without raising suspicion. The *Krait* was then sent to Australia to begin its clandestine career.

She was the prime candidate to undertake Operation Jaywick, a plot to destroy enemy shipping moored in Singapore harbour. The plot was not without significant risk. However, before Reynolds fled from Singapore, he had noticed Japanese aircraft had ignored the vessel as they sought out targets to attack. With any luck, they would not suspect it was anything other than one of the many small fishing vessels plying Malay and Indonesian waters.



MV Krait's route from Exmouth Gulf to Singapore.

A 14-man team was selected for the operation under the command of Major Ivan Lyons, a British Army officer attached to the Z Special Unit (also known as Z Force). They were a mix of Army and Navy personnel from Britain and Australia. After completing specialised training and rehearsals at Refuge Bay north of Sydney, the *Krait* then made the long voyage around the top of Australia to Exmouth Gulf.

The passage was not without problems. The engine quit off Fraser Island and the *Krait* had to be towed to Townsville where it remained until a replacement could be found and installed. Further repairs had to be made by the time they arrived at Exmouth Gulf further delaying the operation.

Nonetheless, on 2 September 1943 the *Krait* left Exmouth



A group on board MV Krait enroute to Singapore during Operation Jaywick. Courtesy AWM.

Gulf with the Z Special Unit men on board. They comprised six commandos who would undertake the raid in folding canoes and eight Naval personnel who would sail the vessel to within striking distance of Singapore.

The *Krait* motored north, passing through the narrow Lombok Strait four days later with the Japanese ensign flying from their mast. Once clear of the strait they bore west through the Java Sea towards their intended destination. To disguise themselves from cursory examination, the men stained their skin brown to appear more like the local fishermen and were scrupulous about what rubbish they threw overboard.

Towards the end of September the *Krait* had made it to the small island of Pulau Panjang just 30kms away from Singapore Harbour. The six commandos then set off in three two-man canoes and island-hopped north to a small island where they could observe the entrance to the harbour. Meanwhile the *Krait* made for safer waters near Borneo but not before agreeing on a rendezvous point with the commandos for the night of 2 October.

On 26 September the six men paddled into the harbour and planted magnetic "limpet" mines on seven Japanese ships. The early morning quiet was shattered by a series of loud explosions as the mines went off. One failed to detonate, but six ships were sunk or badly damaged. By then the commandos were long gone and hold up on a small island to await the return of the *Krait*.

The Japanese had not considered that the attack had come from the sea rather thinking it was the work of local saboteurs. A number of local Chinese and Malays along with POWs and European civilian internees were suspected of undertaking the plot and were rounded up by the Japanese Military Police. Many were tortured and some were executed in the aftermath, an unfortunate consequence of the raid.

Meanwhile, the commandos rendezvoused with the *Krait* as planned and two and a half weeks later they were safely back in Exmouth Gulf.

Major Lyons would lead a second similar raid on Singapore Harbour the following year but Operation Rimau would end in disaster. All of the raiding party were either killed or captured and executed.

After the success of Operation Jaywick, the *Krait* was based in Darwin and used to support coast watchers and other intelligence operations reporting on Japanese activities to Australia's north. Commissioned into the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) in 1944 she was renamed *HMAS Krait* and in September 1945 was present for the local Japanese surrender at Ambon.

After the war the *Krait* was employed by the British administration in Borneo until it was sold to a British-owned timber sawmill and renamed *Pedang* meaning Sword in Malay. In the late-1950s a pair of Australian businessmen recognised the *Krait* for what she was and began fund-raising to purchase the vessel and have it returned to Australia.

In 1964 the *Krait* made it back to Australia where it was operated by the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol. In 1984 it was handed over to the Australian War Memorial and berthed at the Sydney Maritime Museum. It is now maintained and kept on display by the Australian National Maritime Museum in Sydney.

Tales From the Quarterdeck.



Remembrance Day 2019.

Above. *Krait* ready to receive wreaths.

Below. Those at the service at the Maritime Museum, Sydney



After being married for thirty years, a wife asked her husband to describe her.

He looked at her for a while, then said,

"You're A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K."

She asks ... "What does that mean?"

He said, "Adorable, Beautiful, Cute, Delightful, Elegant, Foxy, Gorgeous, Hot."

She smiled happily and said ... "Oh, that's so lovely ... What about I, J, K?"

He said, "I'm Just Kidding!"

The swelling in his eye is going down and the doctor is fairly optimistic about saving his family jewels.

Kiernan John Joseph "Skipper" Dorney AM. CBE. DSO

9 Jan 1912 – 30 Aug 2007

Kiernan Dorney was an Australian surgeon and one of the most decorated doctors of the Australian war effort.

He was educated at St Kevin's College in Melbourne, and studied engineering at Melbourne University before transferring to medicine, in which he graduated in 1937. He worked at St Vincent's Hospital before enlisting in the armed forces on 4 Dec



1939. First posted to Liberia, he subsequently served in Greece and Crete, where he was captured by the invading Germans. He escaped the prisoner of war camp and lived in hiding until he was able to gain passage on a Royal Navy boat to Egypt. Following a period of illness, he then served in Syria with the 9th Division, and then in New Guinea; during a leave in Melbourne between Syria and New Guinea, he was married and promoted to major. He received the Distinguished Service Order for acts of bravery in New Guinea.



Later promoted to lieutenant colonel, Dorney commanded the 2/3 Field Ambulance in Labuan and Borneo, and during the war was thrice mentioned in despatches (twice in Africa and once in New Guinea). His New Guinea Citation reads, "Major Dorney, without sleep for five days tended the wounded of his section, which was continually subjected to mortar fire. Many times he personally helped under fire to bring in the wounded."

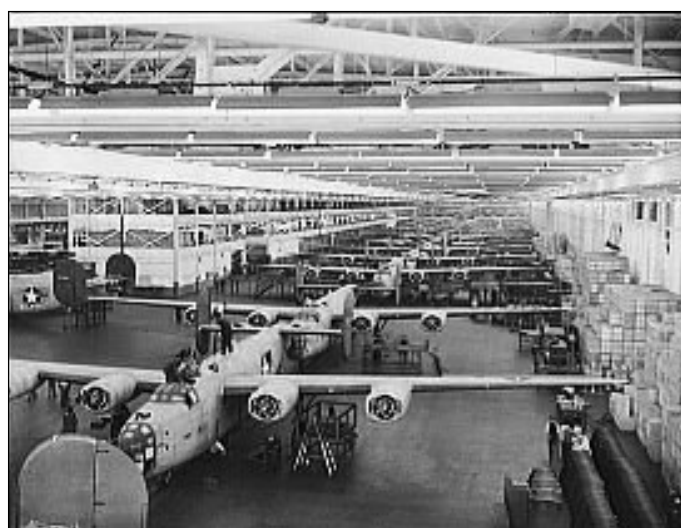
Following the war he returned to surgical training, becoming fully qualified in 1947. From 1947 to 1949 he was medical superintendent at Latrobe Hospital in Tasmania before he was recruited to become medical superintendent of Townsville General Hospital. In 1952 he volunteered to serve in the Korean War, where he was a surgeon with the British Commonwealth Occupation Force. On his return, finding that his post at Townsville had been filled, he moved into private practice. He served briefly as medical superintendent following his successor's retirement in 1971.

In 1971 Dorney was part of a civilian team sent to the Vietnam War, where he served for three months. From 1960 to 1982 he was Chairman of the North Queensland Conference Committee of the Australian Medical Association, and he was also closely involved in the local Red Cross. He established the North Queensland branch of the Endeavour Foundation, of which he later became Queensland Vice-President, and also served as chairman of the Women's Catholic Residential College of St Raphael's at James Cook University from 1974 to 1982. He was also a member of the university's council from 1971 to 1982. He later retired to Buderim, and was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 1992. In 2005 he was awarded the Tribute Medal for the Battle of Crete by the Greek government.

Dorney was also involved in politics as a member of the Democratic Labor Party, standing several times as a candidate. He died in 2007.

Wikipedia

One of Kiernan's sons, Sean, was the ABC correspondent in Port Moresby for many years.



B-24 Liberators on the production line at Ford Motor Co.'s Willow Run plant in Michigan, USA. The B-24 was the most-produced U.S. aircraft of World War II. A total of 18,482 were built, 4,600 by Ford. The B-24 was used extensively in New Guinea in WW11.

The most produced fighter aircraft were Ilyushin Il-2 (36,183), Messerschmitt Bf-109 (33,984) and Supermarine Spitfire (20,351)

Trial of Autonomous Truck Convoy a First

Army successfully operated an autonomous truck convoy on a public road in Australia for the first time last month.

The National Transport Research Organisation and Deakin University supported the leader-follower trial, in which a convoy of four autonomous Army trucks followed a crewed 'leader' vehicle on a public road in Victoria.

Col Robin Smith, of Army's Future Land Warfare Branch, said the autonomous vehicles performed well.

"This trial showed how a convoy could undertake a resupply mission between an airfield and a military base, giving us an idea of how this kind of technology could be used in the future," Col Smith said.

"Driving on a highway in traffic meant the technology was tested to stop safely, and leave distances between other vehicles, while following the path set by the leader.

"Down the track, technology like this could remove our soldiers from dangerous environments, or help free soldiers up for other roles."

During the highway trials, Army simulated an autonomous resupply mission between Mangalore Airfield and Puckapunyal using the Goulburn Valley and Hume Highways.

The trial is part of Army's modernisation, which includes exploring human machine teaming, quantum technology, arti-



The
convoy
on a
public
road in
Victoria.

cial intelligence and electrification.

Army continues to collaborate with industry and academia to explore how technology can increase mission success and lower risk to soldiers.

Army Newspaper 1537



First NGVR memorial Rabaul circa 1946-7. It read "NGVR memorial to 70 volunteers who died killing 300 in the first landing." This was obviously the euphoria around after WW11 as official Japanese casualties in the Rabaul attack were 16 killed in the landing.

Australia under attack: Rail transport and Australia's war effort

Rail transport was the main means of shipping service personnel and military equipment around the country. However, Australian railways were not up to the demands of war. Each state used a different gauge, much of the rolling stock was unsuited for the task, and not until early 1943 was rail transport centrally organised. And yet the demand for quick and efficient means of transport only increased as coastal shipping was diverted for use by the armed forces or reduced by losses to enemy action.

The rail network in Queensland was closest to the fighting. In 1942 the army had effective control of transport in northern Queensland. This led to the Queensland Railways Commissioner and the federal Minister for Transport clashing with the Minister for the Army, a dispute only solved through the Prime Minister's intervention.

By the end of the war hundreds of thousands of Australian and Allied soldiers, and even enemy prisoners, had travelled millions of kilometres on Australian trains.

Rail workshops

State railway workshops were established centres of industry that played a vital part in Australia's war effort. In 1942 the Ipswich Railway Workshops, Queensland, was a major centre of wartime production. As well as constructing and maintaining the tracks, locomotives and rolling stock that were under increasing demand from military as well as civilian traffic, the workshops produced war material and provided the expertise and tools to test enemy weapons.

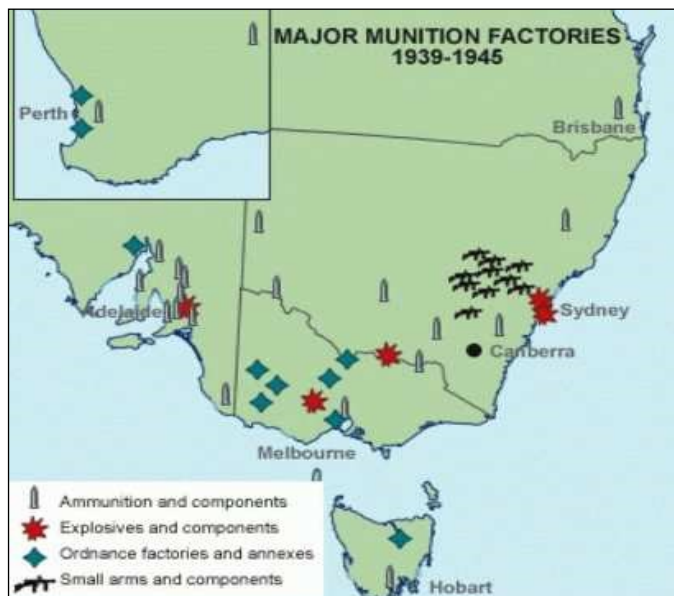
Ipswich Railway Workshops expanded in 1941 when the federal government constructed a Tool and Gauge Room. The skilled technicians at the railway workshop were able to provide support for the munitions factory at nearby Rocklea.

Troop trains in the Northern Territory

With sea lanes exposed to enemy attack the Allies had a

major problem moving troops and supplies over land to Darwin. Troop trains could move armies from east to west but not from south to north. The narrow gauge Central Australian Railway from Adelaide ended at Alice Springs. A single line railway ran southeast from Darwin for 500km to Birdum. The 1000km from Birdum to the Alice was partially traversed by rutted vehicle tracks. In 1942 the AMF, CCC and the US Army worked together to build a road to connect the two railheads. When the link was complete truck drivers of the Australian Army Service Corps ran road convoys that transferred men and material that had been transported by troop train from supply depots and training camps in the south to the railhead to forward bases in the north.

Source AWM website



I feel bad for parents nowadays. You have to explain the birds & the bees. The bees & the bees. The birds & the birds. The birds that used to be bees. The bees that used to be birds. The birds that look like bees and the bees that look like birds but still got a stinger.

Building relationships in PNG

Tradespeople from three nations are renovating a school building for the children of Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF) personnel posted to Lombrum Naval Base on Manus Island.

As part of Exercise Puk Puk, personnel from the Australian Army's 3rd Combat Engineer Battalion, the Papua New Guinea Defence Force Engineer Battalion, and the British Army are repairing the building, with Australian sappers fabricating new components.

Site foreman Corporal Dillon Butler said managing a construction project with partners in such a remote location was a unique experience. "We started by demolishing the old walls, and removed asbestos sheeting, old structural posts and the old roof sheeting," Corporal Butler said. "New components are now being fabricated for installation.

"I'm enjoying the experience because I'm running a team of multiple nationalities, and the rest of the team are getting a lot out of it because they're collaborating with people of nationalities they've never worked with before. Seeing how different people operate is really beneficial.

"The PNGDF tradies have been brilliant, they're keen to get stuck in and help out wherever they can."

PNGDF Sergeant Tarzan Napitali said his tradesmen were benefiting from the experience. "The tradesmen here just completed their apprenticeships, and we made them the priority to come



An Australian Army sapper and a soldier of the Papua New Guinea Defence Force help renovate a school during Exercise Puk Puk, Manus Island, Papua New Guinea. Story by Major Taylor Lynch. Photos by Corporal Brandon Grey.



While this fleet size of 129 vehicles was reduced from Army's tendered 450 vehicles by the Albanese Government, the cost of the total value of project is an eye-watering \$7 billion dollars – representing the single largest Army contract to date.

Redback infantry fighting vehicles will be built at Hanwha Defense Australia's state-of-the-art facility in Avalon, Victoria. The first vehicles are scheduled to be delivered in 2027, with the final vehicle set to be delivered in late 2028.

The infantry fighting vehicles will be delivered at around the same time as the new HIMARS missile systems and Army Landing Craft – reflecting the Defence Strategic Review's call for Army to be transformed for littoral manoeuvre operations from Australia.

Aside from training vehicles, the IFV fleet will be entirely operated by the 3rd Armoured Combat Brigade in Townsville.

Minister for Defence Richard Marles said this was an important project for the Australian Army. "This is a significant investment that will properly equip the Army so it can keep Australians safe," Mr Marles said.

Contact Newsletter 207.

here to experience renovations in a more inaccessible location," he said. "Most of them are new guys. I believe they will learn a lot here. "When we first started, they fitted in well with their Australian counterparts, and by the second day they really started to get to know each other."

Sergeant Napitali was proud to be working alongside international partners on a meaningful project that would benefit the community. "It's good to be part of a job like this, reaching out to the community" within the barracks," he said.

The renovations are due to be finished by the end of October.

Army Newspaper 1545



Lombrum Naval Base classroom mural complete.



The new Australian Government funded ANGAU Memorial Hospital, Lae.

Free-falling into PNG

Australian Army commandos from 2 Cdo Regt parachuted into Papua New Guinea to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the World War 2 Nadzab Landings.

Jumping from both RAAF and United States Air Force C-17A Globemaster III aircraft, 15 members of Army's 2nd Commando Regiment descended to Nadzab Tomodachi Airport. The Globemasters also airdropped cargo containing donated sports equipment from the ADF Sports Council for local communities.

The event commemorated the Nadzab Landings of September 5, 1943, an Allied operation that helped establish a major airbase during the New Guinea Campaign of the Second World War. The airbase at Nadzab would go on to become an important regional airport for PNG.

Corporal Kristanto Sandjaja, a C-17A Loadmaster with RAAF 36 Squadron, said the landings in 1943 showed the importance of air mobility to reach remote places. "And 80 years

<p>I can't afford an Ancestry DNA Kit to learn about my relatives. So instead, I posted online that I had won the lottery.</p>	<p>HUSBAND HACK: Next time you're in a fight with your wife, start undressing. She will instantly have a headache and fall asleep.</p>
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Contracts signed for Army's Redback IFVs.

The government has signed contracts with Korean-parented Hanwha Defense Australia to deliver and support 129 locally built Redback infantry fighting vehicles for the Australian Army.

on we continue to work alongside America and Papua New Guinea to deliver wherever help is needed,” Corporal Sandjaja said. “I’m really proud to be involved with this, it’s great training for us and the airdrop includes donated sporting equipment, which will get distributed to the community.”

Following the airdrop, the RAAF C-17A crew landed at Nadzab Tomodachi Airport and hosted an aircraft tour for PNG Government members and PNG Defence Force (PNGDF) personnel.

As part of Australia and PNG’s defence cooperation, PNGDF personnel were integrated within the parachute demonstration. This included supporting ADF personnel prepare the clearance zone at Nadzab and help load, secure and extract equipment.

Colonel Travis Gordon, the Australian Defence Adviser to Papua New Guinea, said the cooperation built on the long-standing defence partnership and enhanced the ADF’s ability to support the PNGDF on future peacekeeping and humanitarian and disaster response operations.

The airdrop mission was flown as part of Exercise Global Dexterity 23-2, a biannual training activity to build interoperability between participants.

The exercise involved C-17A aircraft from the RAAF, USAF, and Royal Air Force in the unique and challenging geography of PNG.

Contact Newsletter 208.



More Aussie soldiers deploy for Ukraine training

South Australian-based soldiers from the 7th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, will depart Australia tomorrow to train Ukrainian recruits in the UK as part of Operation Kudu – Australia’s mission to train the Armed Forces of Ukraine..

Deploying members were farewelled at a ceremony at RAAF Edinburgh in Adelaide on Monday 8 January 2024, starting at 11am.

The farewell event will feature a Ukrainian Orthodox blessing to be performed by the 7RAR chaplain and a religious representative of the local Ukrainian community.

Assistant Minister for Defence Matt Thistlethwaite was in attendance, along with Commander 9th Brigade, Brigadier Tim Orders and members of the South Australian government.

This 90-strong Operation Kudu contingent (increased from 70 in previous rotations) will be commanded by Major Michael Jack.

Australia’s contingent size is being expanded to include a junior leadership training program, focusing on areas such as foundation warfighting skills, including urban and trench warfare, combat first aid, explosive-hazard awareness and marksmanship.

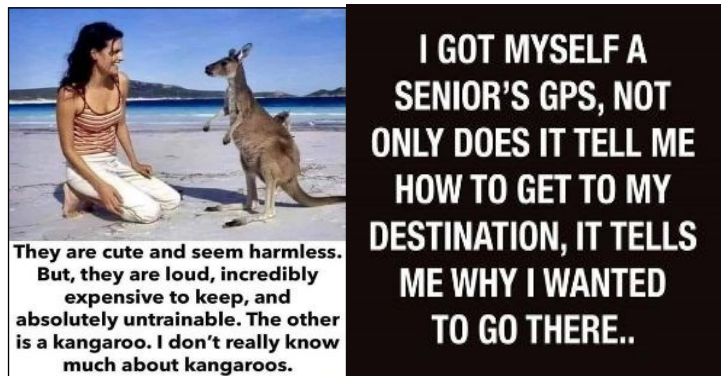
This is the fifth rotation of Australian Army trainers to participate in Operation Kudu in England.

Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Romania and, of course, the UK are providing basic soldiering training to raw recruits from Ukraine.

To date, the training operations in southern England has seen more than 30,000 Ukrainians pass through since June 2022.

Australia has also provided vehicles, weapons, ammunition and humanitarian support to Ukraine in an overall assistance package valued at about \$910 million, including \$730 million in military support

Contact Newsletter 210.



ADF helps after two Queensland weather events

Soon after Defence concluded support to flood-affected far-north Queensland on 29 December, it was called out again to provide assistance to flood-affected areas in the south-east of the state.

When Private Ronin Saunders looked at the devastation caused by the flooding in Cooktown following ex-Tropical Cyclone Jasper, he didn’t hesitate to provide emergency support to his local community in nearby Wujal Wujal.

After securing time off from his civilian employer – local farmer Dave Webber – Private Saunders joined other reservists from 51st Battalion, Far North Queensland Regiment, Privates Cole-ridge Scotford and Keenan Yale Pearson, under the guidance of Lance Corporal Bowen.

With areas cut off from road access, Private Saunders spent four days flying in an Army AW-139 helicopter to nearby towns, checking on residents and providing essential supplies.

“We were really busy working with the Queensland Police doing welfare checks in Wujal Wujal and making sure people were okay,” Private Saunders said. “With damage to roads, it made it hard for them to get places, and many were without power and showers. “We took them food and water, and helped where needed. A few Chinooks arrived in Cooktown with pallets of water, Sultana Bran, Weetbix, bread and potatoes.”

Lance Corporal Bowen believed the reservists’ work really helped where most were locals and had connections to the community. “It was great to have a team on the ground in Cooktown supporting surrounding areas with essential supplies,” Corporal Bowen said. “About 30 people came from Wujal Wujal on the Chinook, who needed medicines and other essential items.

"We were lucky to have Queensland Ambulance here to meet those people."

Down south, members of Brisbane's 11th Brigade were met with smiles and gratitude from local residents, and had a chance meeting with the Queensland Premier, while assisting state agencies in clearing access to essential infrastructure following storms across the Gold Coast region.

Following a request from the Queensland Police Service on 2 January, about 50 ADF personnel, along with high-clearance vehicles, were deployed to assist with recovery efforts in the Gold Coast, Logan and Scenic Rim areas.

On 3 January, ADF reconnaissance and coordination teams worked with emergency authorities to prioritise tasks for ADF personnel.

The region is strewn with damaged buildings, infrastructure and fallen trees.

Army personnel are enabling workers to restore key services, including electricity networks, communications, water supply and sewage-treatment plants.

About 80 ADF personnel with high-clearance vehicles are working with the Queensland Police Service and Energex during recovery efforts in the Gold Coast, Logan and Scenic Rim areas after storms caused widespread damage on Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

Sappers Cameron Gough and Claire Lowe were on the ground with chainsaws clearing roads when they crossed paths with Queensland Premier Steven Miles and Federal Minister for Emergency Management Murray Watt, who thanked them for their hard work.

"It has been a very busy day responding to requests," Sapper Lowe said.

"The chainsaw has not stopped as we have moved from location to location to clear debris from roads and power infrastructure. "We were busy at work and were surprised to meet the Premier and the Senator, but had a good chat with them and they even offered to help."

Commander Joint Task Group 629.3 Brigadier Richard Peace said he couldn't be more pleased with the way personnel were helping a community in need. "Often our soldiers are stepping into their own community or places they have previously resided to provide assistance," Brigadier Peace said.

Contact Newsletter 210.

The leading cause of injury in old men —
is them thinking they are still young men.

Appointment a first

COL Boni Aruma has been appointed Deputy Commander 3 Bde – the first time a Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF) officer has been promoted to such a senior command position in the Australian Army.

Speaking at the promotion ceremony at the Army Museum in Townsville on January 31, Cmdr 3 Bde Brig Dave McCammon said the significance of the promotion reflected the relationship between the Australian Defence Force and PNGDF.



"We have a relationship that has endured wars together. This promotion is a reflection of the strength between the PNGDF and ADF," Brig McCammon said. "The ADF has previously embedded PNGDF officers at varying ranks; the key difference with this appointment is the seniority and

being in a position of command.

"Boni is involved in the day-to-day management of the 3rd Brigade, which is currently going through important changes. He will be integral in supporting this."

Speaking at the promotion ceremony, Papua New Guinea's Defence Adviser to Australia, Col Siale Diro, said the promotion was a quantum leap that "sets a platform for how we must face oncoming challenges in our region together. "The relationship between the Australian Army and Papua New Guinea Defence Force is strong, and it will always be strong," he said.

Lt-Col Brent Hughes, who worked with Col Aruma while posted to PNG, said he had great leadership qualities. "He is a smart guy, has a great heart, is very honest and trustworthy; these qualities breed friendship, which is very important in that role," Lt-Col Hughes said. "His knowledge of the region will aid in training for specific terrain types, and what will be of greatest importance is his leadership."

Col Aruma said he was looking forward to learning and offering his experience to the ADF. "I'm looking forward to absorbing as much as I can and hopefully bestow my own knowledge to the 3rd Brigade, in particular the mindset of improvisation on the go," Col Aruma said. "Both countries share common interests, values, history, and it's the human beings that drive these for our nations. I am grateful to have been offered this opportunity."

Army Newspaper 1551.



"New Guinea. Gona. 5 December 1942. Australians on reconnaissance in the Oivi-Gorari area found this piece of packaging case marked "A.I.F. MALAYA" indicating that Australian material captured in Malaya was being used against them in New Guinea." - Australian War Memorial. Holding the packaging is Capt. Trevor Clowes, D Coy, 2/33 Bn who was killed at Gona.

Today I got fired from my job in a computer store.
A guy came in and asked if I could recommend a hard drive.
I said "Yeah, Brisbane to Perth in a
Datsun 120Y".

MY KIDS LAUGH
BECAUSE THEY
THINK I'M CRAZY.

I LAUGH BECAUSE
THEY DON'T KNOW
IT'S HEREDITARY.

The main function
of the little toe on your foot
is to make sure that
all the furniture in the house
is in place.

Shotgun training advances urban warfare capability

Soldiers from the 6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment have qualified on the Remington 870 shotgun, which is a key weapon in the urban battlespace.

Sergeant Ryleigh Egan was the lead instructor for the shotgun qualification course in the Greenbank Military Training Area.

"The Remington 870 can produce excellent lethality in urban operations, particularly with room clearances and the ballistic method of entry," he said.

Sergeant Egan said the Delta Company soldiers were enthusiastic about learning to use a different weapon, and adding to their overall skillsets as professional soldiers.

"The training on the Remington 870 is a mirror image of any other individual weapon system. The operator progresses through lessons covering off on key points and conducts the weapon drills safely shortly thereafter," Sergeant Egan said.

"We have a very young company and they are keen and willing to better their personal skills, so when the Remington was offered as a course, they were very keen to get hands-on and practise new forms of combat."

Sergeant Egan said the 6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment was working on modernising its training as the battlespace evolved and urban operations become more of a focus for the Australian Army.

"The end goal is to have the vast majority of Delta Company and possibly the battalion qualified in the weapon, allowing soldiers to participate in further courses such as the Light Explosive Urban Breaching Course," Sergeant Egan said.

"Ultimately we are trying to increase the company's lethality in all combat scenarios."

Contact Newsletter 140



The Association would like to thank KING & Co Property Consultants for its continuing support, including the printing of this edition, together with the past 86 issues of Harim Tok Tok. Its contribution is much appreciated.



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

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

Includes former members of the PIR, PIB and NGIB.

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, Peter Rogers (jnr), Phone 0405 639 358, 0434 790 987.

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

Facebook Master: Peter Rogers (jnr)

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

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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

NGVR/PNGVR service recollections are copyright.

FUNCTION DATES

Sat 6 Apr. Sat 4 May.

Museum open. 10am—1pm

On Sat 6 Apr the Historical Vehicle Association of Qld will be visiting the Museum and could well turn up in some interesting vehicles.

On Mon 15 Apr 10-15 members of Anglicare will be visiting the Museum and enjoying morning tea while there.

Museum volunteers always welcome.

Sat 13 Apr. Sat 15 Jun.

10am. Executive Committee meeting. Members always welcome. BYO lunch.

VALE Cpl Kieran Nelson

1/11/1950—7/2/2024

Kieran's father Harold was with the Army Medical Corps in New Guinea during WW11 and then worked for PHD in PNG from 1945 to 1972. His mother Della had health concerns with toxemia so all of the three children were born in Australia—Kieran in Melbourne.



Typical of PHD in PNG the family moved about regularly and his postings were:- Goilala, Maprik, Lumi, Kavieng, Sohano, Wewak, Mt Hagen, Kainantu and Goroka.

From 1963 to 68 Kieran went to St. John's College, Woodlawn, on the outskirts of Lismore, NSW. It was nice to see about 10 fellow students from Woodlawn at Kieran's funeral.

A large group from the PNG Federation of Qld Inc. was also

present at the funeral and several PNG farewell songs were sung by them, accompanied by a guitar and kundu.

In 1969 Kieran commenced working for the CBA/PNGBC and his postings were Moornvale, Goroka, Kundiawa, Surfers Paradise, Tewantin, Wewak, Burleigh Heads, Lae, Brisbane, Darwin, Qld Relief Staff, Woodridge, Mt Gravatt, Mansfield, Manly (Qld). He was in PNG on Independence Day and left Lae in 1979.

Kieran was in the Army Cadets whilst at Woodlawn College and joined D Coy, PNGVR in Wewak and was serving when PNGVR was disbanded in Dec 1973.

He married Frances (Margo) Habermann in Oct 1982 and settled in the Logan area of Brisbane. They had 3 children, Mark, Elizabeth (Libby) and Matthew, and 4 grandchildren.

Kieran's contribution to community was extensive. He was a founding member of the Gold Coast PNG Club in 1973, Treasurer of the PNG Federation of Qld Inc, Treasurer of our NGVR/PNGVR Association.

He was also Facebook Administrator for:-

- NGVR and PNGVR Military museum
- PNG Federation Qld Inc.
- Papua New Guinea Association of Australia
- In memory of the dearly departed TPNG
- PNG Kids we grew up with
- CommBank expats 60's and 70's
- Gold Coast Papua New Guinea club
- PNG reunions
- Sepik Club



Margo and Kieran with Libby, Mark and Matthew Circa 2005

- Wewak international primary school
- Expats and missionaries to Papua New Guinea

He arranged the annual PNGAA gathering in Brisbane at the Ship Inn, the Woodlawn ex students reunions, the Kiap and PNG Police reunions, and other PNG groups. In addition he was a regular volunteer worker at our Association Museum. And Museum fund raising events e.g. Bunnings BBQs.

He was a fluent Pidgin speaker and his translations of 'Twas the Night before Christmas' and The Ode in Pidgin, as well as his rendition of 'tripela liklik pig' and 'Liklik Retpella Hat' were excellent.

Members of the Association present at the funeral were Paul Brown, Mike Griffin, Tony Boulter, John Batze accompanied by daughter Rowena Langan, Gil Harvey-Hall, Bob Collins and Chaplain Ron MacDonald. Both Jessica Harrington and Sylvia McNeilly who work tirelessly in the Museum office were also in attendance.

Kieran is survived by his wife Margo, 3 children and 4 grandchildren.

LEST WE FORGET.

VALE. Lt. Richard John MUIR

258822

Richard died in late 2023 in Townsville, shortly after the death of his wife, Ellen.

He was serving as a Pte in Admin Coy, PNGVR in Port Moresby in 1957, having transferred in from that year from 30 Inf Bn, Sydney. At the time he was possibly known as John Muir and during 1957 was transferred to HQ Coy PNGVR.

By 1968 Richard had been promoted to Lt and completed his Promotion to Captain examinations. It would appear that he left PNG prior to being promoted as when he joined the Association he listed his rank as Lt.

He obviously went back to Sydney as, on a number of occasions, he and I spoke of our service with 4RNSWR, a Sydney based CMF Unit, although were not there at the same time.

For many years Richard lived in Mackay, Qld, where he had shares in one of the town's shopping centres. In 2021 he moved to Townsville so his wife, Ellen, could be closer to essential medical services for her cancer treatment.

He had volunteered as an assistant to Trevor Connell, our Association Webmaster, and was undergoing training for that role.

Unfortunately nothing more is known of Richard so if any reader has more information please contact Editor—Bob Collins.

LEST WE FORGET.

VALE. Edwin Neal (Neal) Rooney
125231 17.11.1929—15.1.2024

Neal was born the second of three children. In his teens he trapped rabbits and sold the carcasses and skins. He was a good shot and shot fowl and game for mother to cook.

Aged 21 he took up sharefarming and met his future wife, Ann Bramham, the daughter of a neighbour and they were engaged a year later. He later recalled driving 50 miles to Beaudesert, having all his top teeth removed, driving home again and milking 50 cows.

After 18 months on the farm a flood washed some of the buildings away which put an end to that. He got a job grubbing Lantana but soon after applied for and was accepted for a storeman's job with Dept of Works in Port Moresby. After a month he was transferred to Rabaul where in due course he became Purchasing Officer.



Neal standing in background in left of photo. Ivan Old, PNGVR, escorting Officer.

He joined B Coy, PNGVR in Rabaul on 1 May, 1955 and was discharged on 1 Feb 1957. He always had fond memories of his time in PNGVR and in 1956 was part of the Guard of Honour for Prince Phillip and Field Marshall Sir William Slim, then Governor General of Australia.

In 1960 when Neal was home on leave he and Ann married and returned to Rabaul. Their son Edwin was born in Rabaul in 1961.

Neal returned to Australia in 1961 when his father was dying with cancer.



Neal and Edwin on ANZAC Day

Neal joined the Association in the 1990's and has always attended ANZAC Day and other functions.

Philip was born in 1963 and Mary Ann in 1966. Unfortunately Philip was lost in a vehicle accident in later years.

Wife Ann also suffered a stroke and now suffers dementia.

Neal is survived by Ann, 2 children, 4 grandchildren and 7 great grandchildren.

LEST WE FORGET.

ANZAC DAY 2024 BRISBANE WARNING ORDER.

Order of March. Air Force, Navy, Army, Allied Units.

NGVR/PNGVR will be in Position Number 61, behind 49th Battalion Association and before PIB, NGIB, HQ PIR Association..

Look for Banner, flags and familiar faces in George St, Mary St area.

The Parade will commence at 10am, but given past experience it is likely we will not move off until 10.45 or later.

Parade Marshalls and information will be available in Queens Park, near the Casino.

Dress. PNGVR ANZAC Day dress, full size medals and name badge. Berets or hats should be worn. If no PNGVR ANZAC DAY Dress then jacket and tie. Definitely NO Jeans or shorts.

Jeep Loading Point. A Buggy service will be operating from Queen St & Eagle St where veterans and their carer can be taken by buggy to the Parade Jeep loading point located in Queen St / Edward St, adjacent to Post Office Square.

Anyone requiring buggy service please contact Colin Gould 0424 562 030 ASAP.

POST MARCH RECEPTION.

Stock Exchange Hotel—corner Edward and Charlotte Streets. Enter via Charlotte St entrance.

Entrance Fee \$20 payable at door—Exact change is appreciated and will speed up the entrance process.

This is for hot and cold finger food, tea and coffee only. Hot counter meals are available at hotel prices.

The bar will operate as a cash only bar for all drinks for the duration of the function.

Membership Fees and Donations can be paid on the day.

Books. "PNGVR—A History" and "Keepers of the Gate" will be available for sale on the day.

Family Members of NGVR/PNGVR personnel are welcome to march and attend the post march reception on the day. We only ask that, if marching, they be appropriately attired.

This is one of the few opportunities to get together these days and the Executive Committee looks forward to seeing as many ex PNGVR members as possible on the day.

Wherever you may be and cannot attend the ANZAC Day march in Brisbane, we wish you all the best on the day.

Phil Ainsworth—President.