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

VOLUME 16 JANUARY 2000

BATTLE HONOURS
Rabaul Wau South-West Pacific 1942-43

1975 25th Independence Anniversary 2000
PAPUA NEW GUINEA

PRESIDENT'S UP-DATE

On looking back from the first week of January 2000 to January 1998, I feel bound to express my personal feelings concerning most important matters of endeavour. Myself as President of the NGVR / PNGVR Ex-Members Association and former Colonel of the Regiment (PNGVR) together with your Executive Committee initiated and submitted, with full supporting facts and official service evidence, a number of submissions to relevant Federal Government Departments concerned for service recognition.

Our submissions along with follow up phone calls and faxes etc, have, in some instances been treated with complete ignorance, disdain and even aspersions cast on our 24 years of overseas voluntary service in Papua New Guinea under the Australian flag—the only CMF Reserve Unit to so serve in **Australian** military history. The PNGVR was formed in 1951 in Papua New Guinea and was part of Northern Command, Australian Defence Force. The Unit carried on the magnificent traditions of its parent unit, the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles which was form in Rabaul in 1939.

I speak of the lack of knowledge of PNGVR

on the part of Government Ministers, their Departmental staff and those bureaucratic service personnel who have been appointed to investigate, assess and com-



Colonel H N Green, MBE, ED, EM.

municate with Associations like ours regarding not only service awards, but prompt courteous and ongoing discussion of service requests on matters peculiar to New Guinea Volunteer Rifles and Papua New Guinea Volunteers Ex Members Association, but so rewarding to the public relations between PNG and Australia.

Only one Division of the cumbersome bureaucracy has given us complete courtesy and a hearing on checking our production of records and service proof. I speak of the Medals Section CARO in Melbourne with its small but dedicated staff.

Since 1990, PNGVR services to PNG have been acknowledged, well recognised and honoured by their (PNG) Honours and

Awards Committee together with several Prime Ministers and Governor-Generals.

Your Committee and myself especially are indebted to Life member Lieut. Colonel Peter Grimshaw, MBE., BA., Dip Acctg., FAIM., FAHRI., JP. visiting Fellow in Pacific History and until recently Business Manager Australian National University, Canberra, for his writings, discussions, phone and fax calls and personal visits to Government in Canberra and constant liaison on every issue myself and your Committee have requested.

Gentlemen, the following is a schedule of occurrences which I have placed before the Association Committee and our Hon. Solicitor Bruce Crawford, and our member Solicitor, Utz Wellner not only for approval but also to be cleared legally of any malice or defamatory wording. Copies of correspondence, letters etc and the meager replies from government are available from the Association's Secretary, Members Representatives or myself.

Fifty-five years ago World War two ended for the NGVR and twenty-six years ago PNGVR was disbanded. However historically, we are very much alive through our Association. Should any member feel he can further our cause by approach to political entities or parties, please contact your Executive Committee.

Our activities to date have been:-

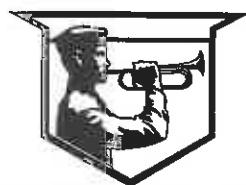
1. Aug 1998—Submission to Honours & Awards Office, Canberra re the AASM supported by two personal visits and numerous phone calls—nil result.
2. Sept 1998—Submission to Department of Defence also on the AASM—no response.
3. To January 1999—Numerous phone calls to Canberra re the AASM and definition and eligibility of PNGVR—nil result.
4. Aug-1998— Submission to Hon. B Bishop, Minister for Defence & Personnel Canberra seeking the re-

ording on our Australian service records of our PNG awards— nil reply. Follow up calls with no result.

5. To July 1999—phone call and faxes finally locating Commander Bloomfield, AM., RAN, Director of Honours and Awards Canberra (but only available in Sydney for person to person contact).
6. Written submission sent 21 July re. The AASM. Only an acknowledgement was received three months later on the 15 October 1999. It is worth noting that the Association has phone, mail, fax and Email contact points, and nominated Members who can attend any relevant "discussion" or meeting almost anywhere in Australia., yet government communication is slow, if at all.
8. I had three phone conversations with Commander Bloomfield seeking answers on our letters and our non-attendance at review meetings. When pressed for answers he promised to investigate and, if feasible, to set up another meeting either on the Gold Coast or a northern NSW location, so we could attend. Again, nil advice—nil result. When the issue was raised with Canberra, it would appear that they know nothing about us. At one stage, receipt of our AASM submission was actually DENIED, when in fact we had a letter of acknowledgement of receipt of our submission signed over Commander Bloomfield's name. We had to fax this government receipt to Canberra and suddenly our submission was acknowledged. (NB During these events, we were often told by the bureaucrats that they had no knowledge of PNGVR yet we were very much a part of the Australian Defence Force with a unique history.)
9. In July 1999, we forwarded a detailed

submission to Canberra seeking the awarding of the ASM with PNG clasp to former PNG Nationals of the PNGVR, offering to assist in locating former members and to use our records, RO's and personal knowledge to confirm applicants. No response, even though we know our submission was received.

10. In November 1999, on the advice from Commander Bloomfield's office and Department of Defence, I phoned the Prime Minister's office in Canberra. Two conversations with two bureaucrats regarding the inclusion of our PNG awards in our Australian service records and the awarding of the ASM with PNG clasp to PNGVR Nationals took place. I could barely restrain my anger at their total lack of knowledge and pompous evasiveness, in short, they told me that seeing we were from New Guinea, we should go and see the PNG High Commissioner to Australia. I have passed on the names of these "public servants" to our two member solicitors.
11. During 1999 Lt. Colonel Grimshaw and myself have been communicating almost weekly by phone and fax and have built up a wonderful file of letters and historic information on these subjects which have been tabled at your Committee meetings. Prior to Christmas we agreed that we should, if possible, attend in Canberra the final meeting of the Asian service review board. Chaired by Major-General The Hon. Bob Mohr, RFD., ED., RL. and Rear Admiral P Kennedy, AO., RAN.(Ret) , Peter Grimshaw attended the meeting but was not permitted to speak, and has since submitted a detailed report.
12. Our solicitor Bruce Crawford was requested by your Committee to assist me in final deliberations on all the matters raised. I have received excellent advice and kept Bruce fully informed of all events. Bruce informed me on 5/1/2000 that Minister Scott, Minister assisting the Minister for Defence, has delayed his final report. Perhaps this was due to the searching questions asked by Major-General



**REGIMENTAL MEMORIAL SERVICE
N.G.V.R. - P.N.G.V.R.**

*Members and guests are invited to attend the Association's
1st Annual Regimental Memorial Service
To be held at the Flame of Remembrance—Anzac
Square, Brisbane on Saturday 22 January 2000 at
11.00am*

*Dress:- Anzac Day Dress or civilian with full medals
Family and Personal Wreaths Welcome*

LEST WE FORGET

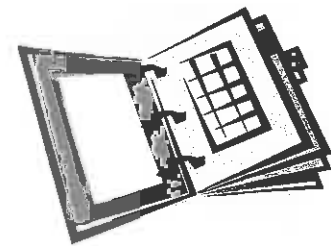
Mohr at the review, or maybe somehow or somewhere a bureaucrat has finally noted our submission, Regimental history, and that our Queen's and Regimental Colours rest in the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. Not forgetting that we all vote.

13. At our Committee meeting 16/1/2000 Bruce Crawford tabled a final letter to Government suggesting that to overlook our submissions will give us grounds to appeal and seek other political assistance.

My thanks to our overworked Secretary and dedicated Committee members.

HUSAT SANAP WANTAIM MIPELA
SEMPER SUMMUS IN EXCRITUS TANTUM
VARIAT PROFUNDUM.

H N Green
PRESIENT



For your Diary.....
2000
REGIMENTAL MIXED
DINNER REUNION

DATE: Friday 28 April 2000

VENUE: Officers Mess - Victoria Barracks Brisbane

TIME: 1900 Hours for 1930 Hours

DRESS: Mess Dress / Anzac Day Dress with miniatures / Dinner Suit

COST: Estim: \$55 pp incl 3 course dinner/wine/Port

(*Cost is an estimate due to Mess catering transferring to civilian management 1999)

BOOK NOW—ONLY 15 SEATS LEFT—BOOK NOW

Full payment not required until 1 April.-

Phone Colin 07 3355 3382 (after 1830 hrs) or Mobile 041 326 3300

MAIL RETURNED

Tom BROCKINGTON: Lt.Col Michael DENNIS
Jim TAPLIN; Can you help??
Don't forget to let your Association know when you change your address—get a new phone number—or get a new Email address.

NEW MEMBERS

A special welcome to our recent new Members:-
Major-General John PEARL. AM.,RFD.
Bill CADDEN; Tom KINGSTON; Jim McGETTIGAN; Terry McMAHON; Dr Robert HARRIS; Major Peter LANGMAN; Victor FIGGE

GOOD BOOKS

Member Burnie Gough recommends the following books which includes details of the "Montevideo Maru" and NGVR.
The Private Diary of Eddie Stanton by Eddie Stanton
We were the First by Alexander McNab.
Thanks for the information Burnie.

MEDAL MOUNTING

With Anzac Day just 3 months away, don't leave it till the last minute to have your medals mounted
Contact:-
Australian Medals & Frames
20 Zealand St TAIGUM, Brisbane
Ph: Glenn Mason
Ph: 07 3865 2615 Mobile: 0412 193945

Who was the member who went fishing to the local islands and had to use a mobile phone to ask another boating member to "go buy a new battery and somehow get it over to the island". Thanks to Joe Fisk, Jesse Chee was eventually able to restart his motor and head for home. Free Port for Joe at the next Regimental Dinner me thinks.....What say you Jesse???

DEFINITELY NOT LIKE THE OLD DAYS

By Bob Collins.

Recently three Association members decided to sojourn in the bush for a few days R & R. It must be said that the aim was not really to recreate the same atmosphere as in the PNGVR days and the following helps to show why.

1. Instead of one backpack each it was necessary to take two vehicles plus a trailer to transport all the camping gear necessary.
2. In lieu of ration packs the food (and other appropriate refreshments) required the minimum of four eskies.
3. Hexmine stoves were out. Each meal consisted of two or three meals, including apple pie and ice-cream served one evening by, of all people, an ex-medical S/Sgt.
4. As it happen Army mattresses would have been more serviceable as two of the intrepid campers were up one night at 0200 hrs blowing up the huge air mattresses they took with them. No – not by lung power, but by mechanical pump.
5. The fishing was somewhat limited. A RAEME Detachment would have been handy to get the boat motor started and to keep it running. Must have been something to do with wasps nests blocking the water outlet.
6. It was a good thing that plenty of fresh meat was on ice. It was wise not to rely on catching fish .

On a more mundane note that camping trip to Lake Maroon between Boonah and Rathdownie was a success. The weather was kind, the camping site absolutely delightful, with extensive views of the lake and surrounding mountains and hot showers.

Barry Wright, Bob Collins, Joe Fisk and Joe's brother from Sydney, Pat, spent several idyllic days on the shore of the Lake, alternating their time between eating, telling tall tales and sipping on the amber fluid whilst endeavouring to get that X#@ \$**# boat motor started. Barry took the mantle of Chef and turned out some great meals on the open fire (supplemented by gas cookers of course). One does not expect honeyed carrots and potatoes with herbs and spices when camping.

We highly commend the camping site to members.

MURPHY'S LAWS ON COMBAT

By Denis Samin

- ◆ Friendly fire – isn't.
- ◆ Recoilless rifles – aren't.
- ◆ Fire – wont.
- ◆ A sucking chest wound is nature's way of telling you to slow down.
- ◆ If it's stupid but it works – it isn't stupid.
- ◆ Try to look unimportant – the enemy may be low on ammo and not want to waste a bullet on you.
- ◆ If at first you don't succeed – call in an air strike
- ◆ If you are forward of your position – your artillery will fall short.
- ◆ Never forget that your weapon was made by the lowest tender bidder.
- ◆ If your attack is going extremely well it's probably an ambush.
- ◆ The enemy always attacks on two occasions – when they're ready and when you're not.
- ◆ There is no such thing as the perfect plan.
- ◆ Five second fuses always burn in three seconds.
- ◆ There is no such thing as an atheist in a fox hole.
- ◆ The easy way is always mined.
- ◆ Teamwork is essential – it gives the enemy someone else to shoot at.
- ◆ Never draw fire – it irritated everyone around you.
- ◆ If you are short of everything but the enemy – you are in a combat zone.
- ◆ If the enemy is in range – so are you.
- ◆ The only thing more accurate than incoming enemy fire – is incoming friendly fire.
- ◆ Stores than must be shipped together in order to work as a set – aren't.
- ◆ Tracers work both ways.
- ◆ Sniper's motto – reach out and touch someone.
- ◆ The one item you need is always is short supply.
- ◆ The most dangerous thing in the world is a 2Lt. With a map and compass.
- ◆ No matter which way you have to march – it's always uphill.
- ◆ Radios fail when you need air support.
- ◆ Radar tends to fail at night.
- ◆ Make it too tough for the enemy to get into your position – and you won't be able to get out anyway.
- ◆ Interchangeable parts aren't.
- ◆ Everything always works in your HQ but everything always fails in the Colonel's HQ.
- ◆ A clean and dry uniform is always a magnet for rain and mud.
- ◆ When reviewing those radio frequencies you just wrote down – the most important ones are always illegible.
- ◆ When in doubt – empty your magazine.

ANNUAL MILITARY EXCELLENCE
AWARD - 9 RQR BRISBANE

By Bob Collins

On Saturday 4th December 1999, eight Association members attended Gallipoli Barracks, Enoggera for the annual "Steel Tuff" exercise, the aim of which was to identify the best Section in 9 RQR.

The Exercise commenced on the Friday and ran almost non-stop till Saturday afternoon, during which time Sections were put through their paces of patrolling, navigation and ambushes. Saturday was devoted to initiative exercises which forced sections to work as a team and pool their knowledge and experience to overcome various obstacles set for them. Again, our members were glad to be observers rather than undertake the rigorous training of the young Diggers.

The winning Section came from 'D' Coy Bundaberg, and at the conclusion of the Exercise the winning Section was presented with individual medallions and Certificates by Association members present.

The presentation was followed by a Bar-B-Q attended by 9 RQR members and Association members.

In order to demonstrate to 9 RQR Unit members that our organisation values highly its association with them, it was then decided that representatives would drive to Bundaberg the following Tuesday (7/12/99), to present the medallions and certificates to members of the winning section in front of their comrades in

their home Barracks at Bundaberg. Joe Fisk, Barry Wright, Jesse Chee and Bob Collins drove to Bundaberg and attended the Unit's own celebrations and final parade for the year. In addition to the soldiers of the Platoon, their families and several other local dignitaries, including the President of the Bundaberg RSL were present.

Joe Fisk had done sterling work in having the individual medallions engraved and Certificates endorsed in such a short period of time, and this was much appreciated by the winning Section.

A great social evening followed and this gave Association members the opportunity to mingle with the Bundaberg Platoon and much goodwill was created as they certainly appreciated our efforts to travel to Bundaberg to make the presentation.

One remarkable feature of the Bundaberg Platoon of 9 RQR is that, in the past three months, they have had two of their members join regular Army Battalions in East Timor, and there are three other Platoon members on standby waiting for their callup so they can join other Army Units in East Timor. For such a small Platoon to have 5 of their members either in East Timor or waiting to go is a great indication of the spirit of these young, capable soldiers.



A DINING NIGHT WITH A DIFFERENCE
By Bob Collins

On Saturday 27th November 1999, 34 members of the Association and their partners attended an informal Dining Night under a marquee at Jimboomba.

Mind you it was no ordinary dinner under a marquee. The Association Flags, dining bell, sword, chromed .303 rifle and bayonet were all on display at the head table together with candelabra.

Because the Long Tan Sergeants Mess at Gallipoli Barracks could not cope with a formal dining night due to Army commitments to East Timor, and with the Officers Mess at Victoria Barracks being booked up, it was decided that this would be no barrier to a final dining night for the year.

Thanks to Committee member Barry Wright and his gracious wife Pam, a suitable flat paddock was donated for the oc-

caslon. Committee members Barry Wright, Joe Fisk, Jesse Chee, Bob Collins and Norm Mundy put in a number of working days at Barry's, and with the supplier of Bamboo, John Holland, the scene was slowly being set. And what a scene it was to behold:- * A Dining marquee * Pre-dinner drinks annex to accommodate 40 persons * Kitchen for the caterers * Huge Bar-B-Q fire for those who were there for lunch on the Saturday and breakfast on the Sunday * Overnight tents (a few bought their own haus on wheels) * Shower * Toilet complex * A bon fire (not used due to the wind later in the evening) * loads of parking plus a generator for pre-dinner lighting and kitchen use.

Unfortunately our President Colonel Green was unable to attend the function and his place was filled by yours truly. I must confess I had a lot of fun with the Mess bell.

Hank and Berry Cosgrove from the Aust-PNG Cultural and Business Society were our official guests. Our official photographer, Tom Dowling (affectionately nicknamed "Flasher" or "Snappy Tom") was Mr Vice for the evening, and, after the meal, entertained members with his witty comments.

Outside caterers were used for the three course meal and quality, quantity and variety were all in abundance. For those ladies who did not attend, you missed the chance of a lifetime, as during the meal, members waiting on their ladies. True!

The tables were laid with white table cloths, silver candle holders and candelabra and flowers. Val Fisk provided a gardenia spray for the ladies.

The meal was conducted by candlelight, and those members with Association polo shirts wore same to help create a superb setting. The usual dining formalities and toasts were observed. The weather was kind and overall it was an enjoyable evening.

Whilst a number of members worked hard leading up to and after the function, our special thanks go to Barry and Pam Wright for providing the venue, and to Barry for all the hard work he put in to make the function a success.



PRINTING NEWS

Harim Tok Tok is photocopied and collated by "On Time" Copy Centre in Hamilton, who provide an excellent and cost effective service. Due to a mix up within the copy centre itself, the photos in our last Newsletter (which were of excellent quality) were run through the colour digital copier in error, hence the high quality. This process, involving a colour copier is expensive and beyond our financial resources. The Management of "On Time" Copy Centre subsequently did not charge the Association for the error.

The Editor and copy centre Management will make every effort to reproduce photographs at the highest possible standard within our budgeted means - Editor

MEMBER'S REGIMENTAL HISTORY

Former members of the NGVR and PNGVR are asked to consider recording their military history, so that they may be preserved for future generations. Personal recollections will only be reproduced with the author's expressed permission, otherwise they will remain in our archives. Assistance may be available to help record and type up personal records.

Members are also asked to consider sending the Association a suitable photo of themselves, not only for the records, but to reproduce in future newsletters - Editor

HISTORY OF THE N.G.V.R.

Members will be interested to learn that extracts of an N.G.V.R. WAR DIARY were recently found in the Australian archives. They will be re-produced exactly as they were written in future newsletters. Ed.

N.G.V.R. WAR DAIRY -PART 2

22/1/42 Suggested to 8 M.D. that full mobilisation of NGVR including government officials be made immediately. 8 M.D. requested details of petrol and oil stocks still remaining Madang, Salamaua, Lae. Approval granted 8 M.D. for expenditure pounds 300 for construction operation HQ and store depots.

23./1/42 Instructions from 8 M.D. to advise Salamaua to clear aerodrome immediately—8 M.D. unable to make radio contact. 8 M.D. advised later that day that RAAF now in touch with Salamaua, 'drome had been temporarily cleared, and no action by NGVR HQ was necessary. The fox moth left for Port Moresby 0600 hours. Total strength all areas NGVR and attached personnel at date 12 Officers and 327 OR's—total strength 339. Instructions from 8 M.D. to mobilise NGVR immediately. Salamaua advised. Madang advised. 8 M.D. advised all W/T communication with coast was dead—no details. Madang instructed to collect two W/T sets in custody of D.O. and forward to Bulolo immediately by air. Radio to 8 M.D."The Aerodrome" is OK. Instructions passed on to Lae, Salamaua and Madang Branches Bank NSW to destroy, in extreme emergency, notes, war savings certificates, travelers cheques in presence of suitable witnesses. No. 2 Platoon (Bulaw) under Sgt Jocumsen instructed to proceed to Lae area and join the Lae detachment in Lae itself if still in occupation by our troops, or to assist in fighting a rear-guard action if necessary. General instructions to hold a line Gabensis/Wampit, and to keep enemy from getting in last foothills. If enemy remain in Markham Valley, harassing tactics to be adopted.

24/1/42 Requested by Sigs. 8 M.D. to commence immediately a listening watch on 4775. Advised by Madang that after air attack (bombing and MG fire) civilians have left Madang and are now in the vicinity of Amele en route to Ramu. NGVR still in contact in Madang. Instructions requested. Advised 8 M.D. have taken over stocks of B.P's Bulolo Branch and B.G.D. in view of uncertainty of supply position. Admin taking over all supplies in Wau area. 8 M.D. requested to forward supply of flour immediately. Above action confirmed by 8 M.D. radio and advised flour and ammo being sent by RAAF plane first opportunity. Administrator left for Port Moresby per Moth aircraft (24th or 25th). Advised 8 M.D. petrol stocks at Lae and Salamaua as Lae 300,00 gallons and Salamaua 250,000 gallons. Oil stocks unknown. Advised 8 M.D. plane required immediately to collect radio transmitters ex Madang and place on watching stations. Only plane is district is required by Admin. Requested permission from 8 M.D. to recruit Chinese and malays for transport and medical duties.

25/1/42 8 M.D. advised no news had been received from force (NGVR & 2/22nd) at Rabaul since early 23/1/42, and enquired whether possible to send patrols from this district to contact and report. Madang Det. Instructed to remain in Madang to report daily. On sign of occupation to destroy what could not be removed. Civilians to carry on to Ramu. NGVR withdrawn outside limits of Wau town area. Legal officer 8 M.D. requested to advise whether NGVR had power to override Administration. Legal officer suggested NGVR assume all necessary authority.

To be continued.

NEW GUINEA VOLUNTEER RIFLES AND PAPUA NEW GUINEA VOLUNTEER RIFLES
EX MEMBERS ASSOCIATION INC.

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