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New Guinea Volunteer Rifles and Papua New Guinea Volunteer Rifles Ex Members Association Inc.
The Secretary, PO Box 287, Everton Park, Queensland 4053

Ph: 07 3311 7480 Email: pngvr@optusnet.com.au Mobile: 042 111 7092

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HARIM TOK TOK



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



VOLUME 27

MARCH 2003

recd 13/3/03



PRESIDENT'S UPDATE...

My overall perception of our Association today is one of continuing membership stability, sound efficient secretarial and Executive Committee management in achieving the aims of our Constitution.

There is now in force a 'Privacy Law' regarding usage of various names, personal information etc., without a person's permission. Our Hon. Solicitor, Bruce Crawford, OAM, has been asked to advise the Committee on this law to ensure, we, as an Association comply. Your Committee is also constantly assessing our aims and commitment to Australia's nearest neighbour, Papua New Guinea with whom we must assist even though sensibilities and particular aversions continually are affected.

I have attended the most necessary functions and kept regular Phone/Fax communication with Papua New Guinea, Canberra and Executive Committee members—often daily with our Secretary and Members Representative—as well as the Papua New Guinea Consul General to Brisbane and Peter Grimshaw, OBE., OAM., our Life Member in Canberra.

Senior Vice President, Tom Lega, MM always gives me the benefit of his excellent memory and sobering advice on many issues. I also would like to acknowledge the efforts and support of John Mudge, MBE., in Port Moresby, our new Junior Vice-President since Tony Milan went pinis. John is President of the Port Moresby RSL, and even though he was badly effected by the drought and then fires in north Queensland, continues to strive for the interests of the Association and its members.

Your Committee depends on information from its

members on the health and welfare of members. Please contact our Welfare Officer, Paul Brown on phone 07 3283 3939 or mobile 040 2644 181 if you are aware of any member who may be ill etc.

Life Member Brig. Ian Hunter, CVO.AM.MBE.ED., suffered a recent stroke which affected his left arm and leg. Using his scots will power and with the tremendous support of his wife Rosemary, Ian is now recovered and back playing his beloved game of golf.

Ken Hendren—PNGVR—and brother of Jack, passed away on the 7 March, after a long illness. Our deepest sympathy to Ken's wife Shirley and their family. Further details in the next newsletter.

On another personal and devastating plane, Life Member Peter Grimshaw, OAM., OBE., BA., M.Ed., JP., Fellow in Pacific History., Research Fellow, School of Pacific and Asian Studies., died of a massive heart attack on Sunday 2 March 2003, age 71.

Peter was an excellent Association supporter and our advocate in Canberra since the Association was established. He also managed the Australian National University for many years. Peter recently finished a book on "PNG Police History" for publication in April/May and had already commenced researching a history of PNGVR and was seeking a research grant from the Army Military History Projects Committee.

Peter and I maintained weekly contact, and were in the process of finalising meeting dates in Canberra to meet with the Governor-General and Minister for Veterans' Affairs regarding PNGVR history and members service entitlements & service records.

Peter Grimshaw was the son of Colonel Grimshaw of

In this Issue:- President's Report; ANZAC Day details; NGVR Recollections of Jim Huxley; PNGVR enlistment of non-Europeans; Nobonob Cup; Regimental Dinner details; National Service Medal & proposed Volunteer Service Medal; 1st Cav. Reunion 2003; Field Dining Night Nov 2002; Rabaul Today in 2003; PNG Snippets; From the Q Store: Mess Dress supplies; Col Gould—Editor.

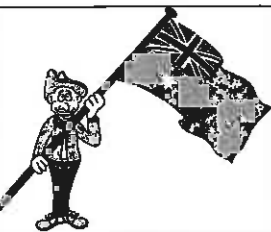
the 2nd AIF and Police Commissioner in the early days in PNG. Peter was also the first member to enlist in the PNGVR in 1951. Unfortunately due to a severe accident I sustained on Tuesday evening, 4 March, I could not attend Peter's funeral in Canberra.

My thanks to Bruce Inch and Charlie Nelson who will attend the funeral on the Association's and my behalf. VALE— Peter to Jacobs Ladder. Well done.

I am advised by an RSL Advocate that unless on

the death of a veteran, if he has not been granted 100% disability pension, his widow will not be granted the War Widows Pension with bonuses.

Finally NGVR veteran, Jack Goad turns the ripe old age of 85 on Wed 26th March. I am sure that Jack would welcome a brief phone call or visit if you are in the area. Jack's phone No. is (07) 3886 1571 and his address is 1026 Dohles Rocks Rd, Griffin (north side of Brisbane). Please phone before you plan a personal visit. Happy Birthday Jack.
H N Green.



ANZAC DAY BRISBANE MARCH

Friday 25 April 2003

NGVR / PNGVR ASSEMBLY POINT:- Casino side of George Street near Elizabeth Street. Look for the Banner **Position 7** in order of the march.

ASSEMBLE FROM:- 0915 Hours

MARCH COMMENCES:- 1000 Hours (note the new time) 10.00 am

JEEP TRANSPORT:- Some jeep transport is available in the top end of Elizabeth Street for NGVR / PNGVR.

All former members of the NGVR and PNGVR are invited to attend. Parade organisers are expecting more that 170 Units to parade making this year's turnout to be one of the largest in Brisbane to date. Members are requested to wear Association ANZAC Day dress or civilian with jacket, white shirt, fawn or grey trousers, tie and head gear if possible. 'Eyes Left' at the saluting stand and at ANZAC Square.

NGVR MEMORIAL SERVICE:- To be held in the Shrine of Memories, ANZAC Square immediately after the Unit finishes the march. All members are requested to attend this brief Service.

ANZAC DAY RECEPTION:- Doors Open:- 11.00 am
Ist Floor function room—Old Stock Exchange Hotel (now called the 'Exchange') Corner Edward & Charlotte Streets.
\$20 pp payable at the door. Exact cash or cheque at the door for admission only would be appreciated.
Cost includes limited beer, wine and lollie water, sandwiches & finger food from approx 11.45 am

There will be a **'Trade Store'** open on site for the purchase & ordering of Q Store items and payment of annual fees.

Gratitude for Warner
30 January 2003

A Government Minister has thanked departing Australian High Commissioner to PNG Nick Warner for his contributions to the development of the Kokoda War Memorial track. He came to PNG in Sept 1999 and became involved with the Kokoda Memorial Track, forging a strong relationship with local people living along the track

Inflation peaks at 14.8%
26 February 2003

Headline inflation peaked at 14.8% last year, Treasurer Bart Philemon revealed yesterday. This was compared to the previous year of 10.3%. The underlining inflation last year was 16.3% and was due to increases in the price of cereals and airfares in the December quarter. Inflation locally was Lae 13.3%; Goroka 14.9%; Port Moresby 15.2%; Rabaul 15.5%. Inflation in the expenditure sector was food 17.8%; transport & communications 17.8%; household equipment & operation 12.7%.

Nadzab-Lae move
26 February 2003

Transport and Civil Aviation

Minister Don Polye indicated that he would organise for a feasibility study for a possible relocation of Nadzab airport to Lae. The study would look and the "pros and cons" of moving Lae airport from Nadzab back to its former location. Morobe Governor, Mr Wenge had been concerned about the law and order problems along the highway between Lae and Nadzab and said that PNG can have Nadzab as their airport but he wants the people of Morobe to have Lae as their airport.

Taiwan's K 10 Billion offer
27 February 2003

Top of the New Guinea Islands Governors meeting agenda for the 28 Feb is a K10 billion development grant from Taiwan. The money is to be sourced through a non-government organisation the PNG Overseas Economic Development Board. The money is to be used for the repair of sea, air, road, fisheries and forestry facilities in the region.

Aust Defence 'concerned'
27 February 2003

Australia is to maintain the military capability to deal with crises in the South Pacific, a defence review says. The new strategic policy released by the Australian Government identifies concerns about Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Fiji and Vanuatu. It says the overall outlook for PNG is worrying.

Port Levy rejected
27 February 2003

The PNG Harbours Board will have to look elsewhere to find K2 million needed to fund dredging work at the heavily silted Lae port. This is because a proposal to collect a user-pay levy was knocked back. The Independent Consumer Competition Commission (ICCC) rejected the proposal saying the levy would lead to increases in costs, which consumers would have to bear at the end of the line. Business houses in Lae also opposed the levy. Build up of silt at the port, caused by changes in the movement of silt released by several rivers is threatening the viability of the country's busiest port.

VISITING HAWTHORN IN VIC.?	MEDICAL TERMS an Irish Interpretation!
Then why not call in on member John Frewen? John operates a comprehensive antiques and collectables business which includes an interesting range of militaria items.	ARTERY.....The study of painting
John's business address is:-	BACTERIA.....The back door to a cafeteria
348 Burwood Road,	BOWEL.....A letter like A.E.I.O. and U.
Hawthorn, Victoria. 3122	CAESAREAN SECTION.....A suburb of Rome
Ph: 03 9819 4366	GENITAL.....Not Jewish
Please ring before you call in just to make sure John is in.	IMPOTENT.....Distinguished and well known
	LABOUR PAIN.....Getting hurt at work
	MEDICAL STAFF.....A doctors cane
	PROSTRATE.....Flat on your back
	RECOVERY ROOM.....An upholsterer's workshop
	TERMINAL ILLNESS.....Getting sick at the airport
	UROLOGY.....Nice words at a funeral

soon as they get the goahead, he says.

"One actually cleaned up his broken down premises when we got K80,000 from Sir John Kaputin, the then Member, to clean the old market site. Then they put a stop to it," he said. "Rabaul is in a stagnant state, nothing much is happening."

Mr Jubilee, a lawyer, said the town needed reliable power, a good water supply, better phones and a postal system.

"But if Rabaul is to bounce back, we will have to expand beyond port-related developments." He, like others, freely admits Tavorvur will blow up again. It's only a matter of time. But people can take protective action for themselves and property. And the blessing is that Tavorvur, when it erupts, spews out volcanic ash and smoke. The outpourings of hot lava get dumped on the side of the volcano and are not a real risk to people. Jubilee says: "People are, have and will always be here and we have to cater for them."

"People have a sentimental attachment, this is their home no matter what happens at some time in the future."

All the pro-Rabaul leaders point to the value of Rabaul as the port and say that Kokopo cannot survive without it, and an improved road link.

What Jubilee, Tovue, Marat, Alexander and McGrade are saying is that with reasonable spending, Rabaul can help itself to recover and look after itself...and maybe become a worthwhile part of the province again.

AIR NIUGINI

The national airline of Papua New Guinea

Planning a visit to Papua New Guinea to visit your old stomping ground? Then contact AIR NIUGINI.

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Fax: 07 3220 0040

CAIRNS OFFICE:- Shop 2, Tropical Arcade Ph: 07 4031 1611
4-6 Shields Street. Fax: 07 4031 3402

SYDNEY OFFICE:- Somare House, Ph: 02 9290 1544
100 Clarence Street. Fax: 02 9290 2026

BOEING 767-319ER



Aircraft type	Length (Mts)	Wing Span (Mts)	Power Plant	Cruising Speed (KPH)	Normal Altitude (Mts)	Std Seating capacity with full passenger load	Range* (Kms)
B767-319ER	59.94	47.57	2 General Electric CF6-80C2	857	11,000 -12,000	230 + bags	8100

NGVR HISTORY

NGVR RECOLLECTIONS & ANGAU EXPERIENCES ©

By Jim Huxley NGX432



Training in NGVR:-

There were about 20 of us in the detail. I was, by far, the youngest at just 18 years (16 January), while others were either in their 30's or 40's. We paraded Friday nights on the square outside the Company Mess, together with the fighting troops, and had to learn all the fundamentals, like how to use a rifle, with and without a bayonet; how to use the old Vickers gun and how to toss a hand grenade. Why we did this I don't know, as our job was to look after the wounded and sick.

Then on Sunday mornings we attended our medical parades at the native hospital where we learned a lot. We were taught how to use a stethoscope by Doc Gunther, and how to diagnose the various illnesses we would or might have to diagnose should the need arise. Ailments such as malaria, dengue fever, hookworm, pneumonia, dysentery, diarrhoea, scrub typhus (Japanese river fever) and blackwater fever. We learned how to fix and tend fractures and the type of wounds we might face. It was interesting and then, fun. Believe me it all came in handy later on.

Full time service in NGVR

Just before midday on 21 January 1942 I was, along with others in the single men's barracks, a sitting duck, when three Japanese fighter planes (probably Zeros) came in from nowhere, buzzed us at Bulwa several times at no more than 100 feet and then elected not to fire a shot.

After working the night shift on dredge 8 my three shift-mates and I and those from dredges 3 and 4, which were also working in the Bulwa area, enjoyed breakfast and then chatted until late morning.

We were on our way to our respective quarters, showered and prepared for a few hours sleep. In my case I made it into bed but almost immediately I was out again and checking on the noise which had interrupted what was usually a quiet, sublime scene.

Noise emanating from aircraft engines filled the air. I looked up and immediately above me was a Japanese fighter aircraft with its large red dots very visible. I could see the pilot's face clearly in the morning light as he was flying so low. Then a second fighter flew over again with the pilot's face just as prominent.

We were all just standing there waiting to be hit by a burst of machine gun fire.

I joined the NGVR fulltime that same afternoon.

Two unique distinctions I had was that I was:-

(1) The last member of the mainland New Guinea Volunteer Rifles to go to Australia for leave. That was in April 1943, after having served non-stop for 14 months, and

(2) The last of the ANGAU people on the New Guinea mainland to go to Australia for discharge.

Luck of the Draw:-

However I didn't nearly make it. Just before midday on 21 January, 1942, I was in the single men's quarters at Bulwa when three Japanese fighter planes came from nowhere, buzzed us several times at no more than 100 feet (30m) and for what ever reason elected not to fire a shot. They were so close I could clearly see the pilots faces.

Prior to the Japanese Invasion of New Guinea:-

When war started on 3 September 1939, I was working as a 16 year old copy boy on The Sun newspaper in Sydney. A year later a workmate, Neville Power, who was two years older than me decided he would enlist and asked me to enlist with him. My dad, Dick Huxley, was working at Bulolo in New Guinea, and, when I sought my mum's permission to join up (as a 17 years old) she said nothing but quickly wrote to my father with my request.

At no time the refusal came, along with the news that my father had obtained a job for me up there with him. Mum said I was too young to enlist and to ensure that I wouldn't sneak off and join up, dad would keep an eye on me for a couple of years. After that I could please myself.

Arrival in New Guinea:-

I left for Salamaua in the Burns Philp vessel 'Neptuna' on 18 December, 1940, arriving at Salamaua on 29 December, and then flew to Wau in a tri-motor Ford freighter, and then to Bulolo in a Fox Moth. I worked on No 8 dredge in Bulwa, but there is not much to say about working on a gold dredge.

In mid January the Bulolo doctor, Carl Gunther, who ran the NGVR's medial detail section, invited me to join the NGVR and nominate the medical detail. This I did and later on I was delighted to have done so.

If the Japanese had chosen to shoot us I would have died a civilian and been denied the chance to serve my time in the Australian Army. I had been in the NGVR just on a year, but only serving part time. The aircraft left us in shock and flew onto Bulolo, 10 miles away where they carried out their planned mission.

Members of the NGVR were signed up for full time duty that afternoon. Those not already in the unit were told to sit around and wait for instructions from the powers-that-be. From being part time soldiers we were suddenly on full time duty in Australia's front line.

Air Assaults on New Guinea Mainland:-

We knew that the Japanese were approaching our part of the world. They were busy with an air assault followed by the landing of ground troops and the taking of Rabaul on the 23 January 1942.

On the morning of 21 January, a flight of 60 Japanese aircraft, made up of bombers and escorting fighters, attacked Lae and Salamaua causing mayhem in both towns. A number of people were killed and much damage was done to property.

We were suddenly on full time duty in Australia's front line.

As the attacks on the coastal towns continued, five fighters peeled off and flew inland, tailing one of Bulolo Gold Dredging Ltd's Junkers G31's, flown by veteran pilot Bert Heath with young Malcolm Goad as his engineer. Bertie was carrying a load of Fosters larger (very vital cargo) to Bulolo and, with no wireless on board, had no idea he was being followed by the Japanese fighters. He had taken off just before the Nips reached Lae and knew nothing of the attack that was imminent.

The Japanese pilots did their job well. They shot up Bertie's Junkers, luckily after both he and his engineer disembarked and made it to the slit trench. The attackers also completely destroyed the other two Junkers G31's parked elsewhere on the Bulolo 'drome.

NGVR people fired a very much outdated Vickers machine gun as the Japs attacked without scoring a hit. Luckily none of our men were killed or wounded.

NGVR service with the Medical Detail:-

Over the next 14 months I served at Bulwa, the upper Watut, Wau, The Black Cat, Skin Diwai, Mubo, the Buangs, the Markam, Wau, Skin Diwai and Wau again, this latter time during the battle for Wau.

I served with the NGVR's medical detail, formed by Bulolo's peacetime medico, Dr Carl Gunther. After Gunther left to join the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) he served in Singapore where he was taken prisoner-of-war. Captain Noel McKenna, the Administration's doctor at Wau took over, and later, after McKenna was transferred to Port Moresby, a young doctor from Sydney, Hugh Marsden, who had relieved Dr Gunther in Bulolo, was posted back to Wau as Kanga Force's medical officer.

Hugh Marsden didn't get along very well with Kanga Force's Commanding Officer, Lt. Colonel Norman Fleahy. Lt Colonel Fleahy called the hospital at Wilde's upper coffee plantation, 'Marsden's Farm' and ourselves as 'Marsden's Mob'.

NGVR's average age when the unit went on active service was 38 years. A considerable number of the 500 plus had served in the Great War of 1914-1918 and were pushing 50 years of age.

NGVR Medical Problems:-

By July, 1942, after raids by the 2/5 Independent Coy and NGVR on Salamaua and Heath's plantation which was along the Markham Road, many of the NGVR personnel were suffering health problems.

NGVR personnel were medically examined and a large majority of them were sent to Australia. Most of them would be discharged from the

Army and not many of them would return to New Guinea in any capacity.

The oldies had done a great job and earned their leave and discharge.

Field work with NGVR:-

After the Japs came I was sent to Mubo. I was listed as one of four medical detail people to work with our troops there, but, in fact, I was the only medico there—no doctor—just me. All the other medical people posted to Mubo and the other three of the four Companies there couldn't make it. They were too old and the walk over the mountains was too much for them and they returned to Wau.

I stayed at Mubo until after the 2/5 Independent Coy / NGVR raids on Salamaua (this incidentally was the first Australian offensive in New Guinea), late July. As I said I was the only NGVR medic at Mubo, and, after being relieved by an old friend, Hayden Davies, returned to Bulwa for a spell.

At the time I was nursing a badly swollen knee and a nasty attack of sinusitis. Within 24 hours, Capt Noel

Courtesy of the Papua New Guinea "Post Courier" 31 January 2003

The Gazelle's ruined Jewel

A SMOKING crater is all that stands between the resurrection of Rabaul, the town that once rivalled Papeete, Suva and Honolulu as the jewel of the Pacific.

It is Mount Tavurvur, the modest-sized hill that dominates everything that happens in and around Rabaul, and even the new provincial and commercial capital of East New Britain, Kokopo.

For while it continues to puff out volcanic smoke and ash, its very presence casts a shadow over whatever the government planners and captains of industry plan to do.

Businessman Gerry McGrade, who lost a fortune in the 1994 eruptions and is still busily tinkering away there, reckons Rabaul has a future . . . if the men of government cast a little help in the way of commerce and if Mt Tavurvur learns to behave itself!

I found him, with wife Joyce, striding along Namanula Avenue, on the edge of the abandoned Sector 1. The couple try to have their walk around the town every afternoon, even if the parklike atmosphere of previous times is now buried under tonnes of black volcanic ash.

"Rabaul could still be great," he says, "if not for that damned thing," tossing his head back in the direction of Tavurvur.

His son-in-law Bruce Alexander, who runs the Hamamas Hotel which Gerry and Joyce own, feels much the same way and is involved hectically in plans with government and business groups in trying to do something for the town.

He readily concedes that the town will never be what it was, but is adamant that it could prosper and salvage something worthwhile from the volcanic vestiges, if several moderate gestures are made by those in authority.

He and people like former premier Sir Ronald Tovue believe re-establishment of the famous Rabaul market is one key to revival. The town's market, a key drawcard of Tolai villagers and tourists, was shifted after the 1994 eruptions to a public park and survives there but with public health worries and limitations on what can be done.

Sir Ronald, who has taught school, run courthouses and run a province as a district commissioner, helped get the original market site cleared a year ago.

Then he saw the project, which was going ahead with European Union assistance, come to a dead halt as the World Bank threatened to withdraw all its funding for Gazelle Peninsula restoration if the market went back to its old site, in Sector 2. Sector 2 is a zone covering the heart of the old town where business thrived. It is subject to cautious planning controls, for fear the area could be blanketed again by volcanic outpourings.

The market restoration, modest improvement to health and education, clearing of the main roads, fixing of the troubled phone, power and water supplies and help to boost the town's tourism attractions, would go a long way to helping Rabaul help itself, these men say.

Meanwhile, the Gazelle Restoration Authority continues on its program of restoring normal services to the province. This mostly entails the rebuilding of government and services at places like Kokopo, Toma and Keravat, well away from the volcano town of Rabaul.

A senior executive of the province told me recently that while everybody would like to see Rabaul rebuilt, the province's resources could not cope with building two towns at once.

All the current resources were needed for completion of the shift of capital to Kokopo and it was not likely that Rabaul would be given major attention for another 10 to 15 years, he said.

That would be fighting talk to the ears of people like Rabaul MP Dr Allan Marat, who happens to be the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade and Industry.

He told this newspaper recently that it was not for others to tell the people of Rabaul where to live. They knew best what the threats to Rabaul were like and had made their decision to return home.

He vowed to fight for basic services to those who had committed to life in Rabaul and nearby villages. On that aspect, it seems as if the province's MPs are united. Kokopo MP Sir Rabbie Namaliu says all the members want to find out if it is true that the World Bank is against the market going back to its old site in the middle of town. Dr Marat was angered to hear that the aid agency had apparently banned the market move with the threat that all other financing was at risk on that issue.

Rabaul Mayor Ephraim Jubilee, a former deputy governor, says it is hard to run the town on a shoe string budget and also sees the market being restored to its old site as a key development lever. Store owners are ready to rebuild on their old sites across the road from the market as

FIELD DINING NIGHT—23 November 2002

Attendance at this evening function was 30, and a fine time was had by all. The travellers award for the night went to Bruce Inch who travelled from Coolamon in NSW and, as Bruce said at one stage "If it wasn't going to be another great dining night I wouldn't be here". Other travellers were Ann and Greg Shaw who made the trip from Roma and Pam and Ron Strand from Nambour.

We were fortunate in our visitors for the evening as we had two PNG University students, Stephen Baisi studying Law, and Arnold Batiken studying Economics, come along with member Bob Davies for the evening. Both Stephen and Arnold attend University in Port Moresby and they came along as guests of Bob Davies who was their teacher at Talasea some years ago. It was interesting to talk with these students and obtain some up to date information regarding current events in PNG. Prior to the dinner I spoke with both students about the riots at the University in PNG last year during which several students were killed.

Some rain had fallen at Jimboomba during the week prior to the dinner and the site and grounds looked great. There is now electricity connected to the site, and, with the Christmas decorations, the venue looked great. Quite a lot of work had gone into improving the gardens and this is now starting to show.

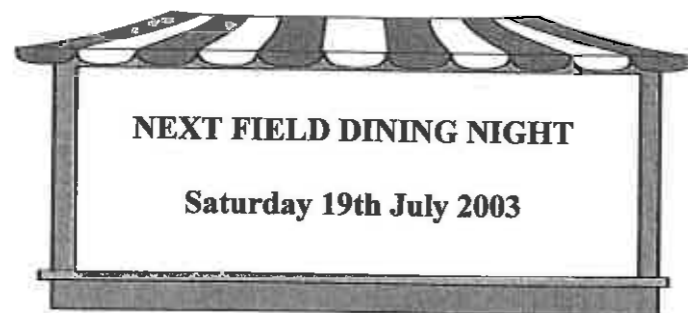
Guest speaker for the evening was Hank Cosgrove, Secretary of the Australia-Papua New Guinea Business and Cultural Society Inc in Brisbane. Hank and his wife Berry were the head caterers for the recent 'Tag-a-long' horse ride from Longreach to Brisbane via Boonah. From Hank's description it seemed that they were not sure whether to cater for 70 or 200 for an evening meal due to a lack of information provided. They catered for some 13,000 meals from the 30th June when they left Longreach to 17 August when they paraded around the ring at the last night of the Brisbane Ekka in front of 50,000 people. The event was a great experience and we thank Hank and Berry for their comments.



Unfortunately there was no bonfire at the conclusion of the dinner, as a total fire ban was in force. This will mean a bigger bonfire next July as the material was all in place for the fire on the evening. The Chef who catered for us on the evening has only missed one dinner in the past. He enjoys the evening almost as much as we do and requests that he be the duty Chef on any night we have a function at Jimboomba. After the toasts he was paraded before the Dining President and thanked for his efforts on the evening and prior, and given the difficult task of drinking a port with us.

All in all a great evening was had by those present and we look forward to the next Field Dining Night in July, 2003. Special thanks to our gracious hosts, Pam and Barry Wright.

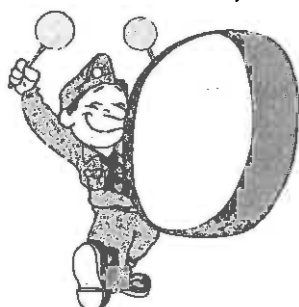
Bob Collins.



RESERVE FORCES DAY BRISBANE MARCH

Date:- Sunday 22 June 2003.

Details in the next newsletter.



Kenna, who was running the medical detail from Bulwa, sent for me and said that he was sorry but there was a job to be done and I was the only one who could do it, swollen knee, sinusitis and all. Sgt Terry Powell, McKenna said, was nursing a swollen knee and he felt he couldn't do justice to the planned patrol. It was a joke. My knee was as bad as his. The patrol to the Buangs was led by Lt Alf Boyland, and comprised a section of his 2/5 Indep. Coy plus NGVR's WO2 John Glover who acted as a guide and interpreter, as well as myself as the medical man.

Boyland and his men started off working with the NGVR and when the 2/5 Indep Coy joined us they were officially linked with them. They were sent to New Guinea as reinforcements for the 2/1 Independent Coy, whose personnel were spread throughout the Islands when they were attacked by the Japs.

We stayed at Mapos (Buangs) for six weeks until, on 1 September, Fleahy 'scorched' the Bulolo Valley. I didn't know much about what was going on at the time, and the man to tell this story is Mal Bishop, then a 2/5 Sgt (and later the CO of PNGVR) who was given the job of torching the Bulolo Valley. There was still a job to be done and we, the younger bracket carried on.

Over the following month, from the NGVR people remaining, men were sent out in dribs and drabs for leave.

Japanese attack on Wau:-

Towards the end of 1943 the Japs became very active. They attacked and took our base at Mubo and then, to everyone's surprise, they took an old miners track to Wau. This was by way of Bitoi and the White Cat track to Wandumi village.

The old miner's track was overlooked by our people, but the Japs knew all about it, and used it and got to Wau with little opposition. Actually when my platoon, led by Lt (now Sir) Coleman O'Loughlen, and Sgt Lea Ashton were at Skin Diwai, a few of the men cut their way through the bush and over the mountain and found the old miner's track and finished the job by edging their way through the underbrush for the last 50 yards so as to not leave any indication that they had been there. This was the last we heard of this track until the Japs suddenly used it.

A Swiss or German farmer called Hoffstetter, who grew sweet potato & kau kau is generally believed to have had links with the Japanese. He may have known about the old track, but also would some of the older natives on the coast who had linked up

with their new mastas, the Japanese.

While all this was going on, Capt Marsden asked me to take some medical supplies to Major Bill Refshauge of the 2/2 Field Ambulance, who was conducting a Field Station at Skin Diwai. Skin Diwai was building up for a counter-attack on Mubo.

The 2/2 Field Ambulance was one of the Corps units attached to 17 Brigade which became part of Kanga Force, led by, at first, the very disliked Lt Colonel Norman Fleay, a 26 years old middle east veteran who turned out to be a hopeless jungle fighter and a liar. Fleay was awarded the DSO for leading the July raids on Salamaua and Heaths plantation in the Markham area simultaneously, although the raids were at least 30 miles apart. I have given Fleay a nice old serve in my upcoming book. The piece concerned is headed "The Man Who Wasn't There".

My instructions were to deliver my package to Major Refshauge and then to return to Wau. However when I reached Skin Diwai, I found Haydn Davies assisting Refshauge and he asked me to "hang around" for a few days and help him out. This I did.

After three days Haydn and I were told to return to Wau. We set out early in the morning and enjoyed a cup of tea with Capt Bill Sherlock and some of his men from the 2/6 Bn at Ballam's Camp. It was there that we learned that the Japs were already in the outskirts of Wau. They were in Wandumi village and surrounds in their hundreds, after having by-passed the majority of our troops who were stuck up on the main track—the Skin Diwai to Mubo track—where Haydn and I had just left.

Capt Sherlock wrote a message on a page from his note book and asked me to deliver it, as quickly as possible, to Kanga Force HQ at Izzy-Dizzy, the former home of prominent Wau resident Austin Ireland.

Haydn was to report to the Field Ambulance's Hospital on the Big Wau Creek and warn the CO, Lt. Coloel Dickie Smibert that the Japs were about to attack Wau in force.

Lt Colonel Smibert was the CO of the Field Ambulance with Major Refshauge as his 2 I/C. Reshaugue stayed in the army and finished up as a Major General in charge of the Australian Army Medical Services. He was a great bloke and lives in Canberra and is now 88 years old. I worked with him a lot and found him to be a top performer. He had a high regard for the NGVR medical detail people, and also for Capt Hugh Marsden who took over from Capt Kenna. Marsden was a terrific surgeon and I helped him on a number operations.

Haydn and I made our way from Ballams to the end of the Wau vehicle road at Crystal Creek, where we had a supply depot. Luckily we were able to by-pass the Japs who were very active, and we made it to Wau in a very speedy jeep.

I spent the night at Izzy-Dizzy, and, in the morning, was shown, with the aid of binoculars, the Japs in their hundreds, very busy in and around Wandumi village, obviously preparing for their assault on Wau.

Later that day we learnt that Capt. Sherlock and several of his men had been killed in a bloody clash with a large enemy force. This was the beginning of the Battle for Wau, which lasted through the end of December and well into January. By the end of January most of the NGVR had been sent out on leave, and of those left, a half dozen or so were medical people.

Disbanding of NGVR and transfer to Kanga Force:-

At the time we didn't know it but NGVR had been disbanded in October, 1943, and those of us soldiering on at Wau were officially attached to Kanga Force HQ and worked with the 2/2 Field Ambulance, responsible to Major Refshauge.

I was detailed to work with native labourers unloading and loading US Air Force C47 Dakotas (DC 3's as we now know them) as they flew in and out of Wau in flights of nine aircraft, several times a day. I was, as well, detailed to fly with the "Biscuit Bombers" as a guide as we dropped supplies to our troops at Skin Diwai.

Leave and return to Australia:-

Early in April, I was told that I would not be flying with the Yanks that day. We had returned to Wau after overnighing at Port Moresby and I was to go out on leave instead. Had I stayed on, the aircraft I expected to fly in, the one I had flown in twice before, crashed into the trees near Skin Diwai and the seven men on board were killed instantly. Among them were two young Australian Commandos who had volunteered to take my place when I missed the flight.

I then had a few matters to attend to prior to going out. One of my main duties was to ensure Inogu, my pre-war 'mangki masta' and wartime 'dokta boi' was looked after. Inogu, of Vanimo, was left in Wau in good care, and, when I was later posted to Malahang Native Hospital he was there. I quickly claimed him and he worked with me for the rest of the war while I was with ANGAU. He will appear again in my ANGAU experiences later on.

At the hospital High Marsden told me that the last of

the NGVR people attached to the hospital, fellow medic Haydn Davies, Joe Brennan and Jack Chisholm, had already left for Port Moresby and I would catch up with them at Murray Barracks.

Capt Marsden gave me some quinine and aspirin to carry in my medic bag. He said that Haydn had a touch of fever and I should "dose him up" if need be.

After arriving at Port Moresby I was driven to Murray Barracks where I learned that Haydn had been taken out to the 2/9 Australian General Hospital where he would be treated for malaria. This worried me because Haydn was a long time friend and I felt I could not go to Australia without seeing him first.

Although told that under no circumstances was I to leave the barracks, I ignored those orders and thumbed a ride out to the hospital some miles out of town. When I arrived at the AGH, I was told that Haydn was on his way back to Murray Barracks for onward movement to Australia. I had just missed him and, no doubt, he was in serious trouble.

Eventually I got a ride back to Barracks and found, on arrival, a very cranky young Lt waiting for me. He bawled me out and then informed me my fellow NGVR people were on their way to Townsville by Flying boat. After some time he simmered down somewhat and informed me I would be sent to Cairns in two days time in the ship "Katoomba". He then told me that I was the last of the NGVR to be marked off his long list.

There were more than 500 names on that list and the notation against my name was the last entered. Thus by chance, I was the last of the mainlander NGVR to leave for Australia.

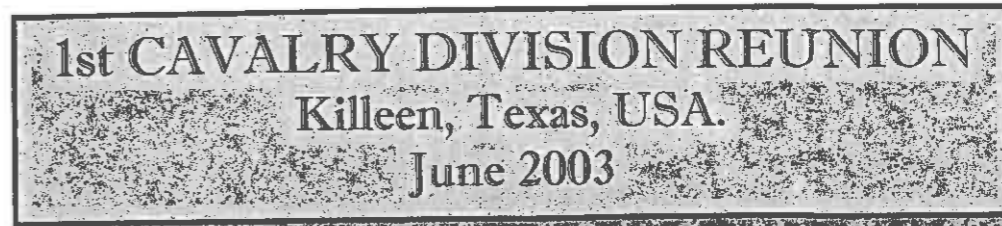
I spent 14 months serving in various parts of the Morobe District. At Wau I was given a pay book but didn't need to have a draw until I reached Murray Barracks. There I withdrew a few quid and bought a beer at the barrack's canteen.

The Huxley Brothers in NGVR:-

I wasn't the first Huxley to join NGVR. An older brother, Tom, who went to Bulolo to work in 1937, joined NGVR in 1939. In 1940 he resigned his job as a dredge hand with Bulolo Gold Dredging and travelled to Sydney where he enlisted in the AIF. He was posted to the 2/3 Pioneer Battalion and trained at Cowra in NSW and at Alice Springs before his unit sailed in the 'Queen Mary' for the Middle East. His unit trained in Palestine and Syria before moving to Egypt.



1st CAVALRY DIVISION



As you are aware four members of the Association went to the annual reunion of the 1st Cavalry Division Association which was held at Killeen, Texas, USA, in June 2001. The Cavalry Association holds an annual reunion, and every second year it is held in Killeen, Texas, the nearest town to the home of the 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood.

The history of the 1st Cav Div includes Los Negros Island—part of the Admiralty Island group in Papua New Guinea. It was here in 1944 when four members of NGVR/ANGAU landed with the assault party of "Brewer Force" (5th Cav Regt, 1st Cav Division, and unattached troops—1026 soldiers) and, after fierce fighting against the Japanese defenders between the 29th Feb and 4 March, the beachhead had been established.

For their actions this force was awarded the United States Presidential Unit Citation which we, as an Association, wear to this day. The Citation was presented to B Coy PNGVR in June 1952 by the US Military Attaché to Australia to carry on the fine tradition of distinguished service. This was the only US Presidential Citation ever awarded to an Australian Militia Unit and only one of three awarded to Australian soldiers. The other two are the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, for their actions at Kapyong in Korea, and Delta Coy, 6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, for their actions at Long Tan in Vietnam on 18th August, 1966.

Members Representative, Joe Fisk, has reported on the 2001 trip in previous issues of 'Harim Tok Tok'. Overall the 2001 trip was successful, with the legendary hospitality of the Americans much evident.

2003 Reunion-

The next reunion will be held between the 11/15 June 2003, and some who went two years ago are considering returning again this year.

This is NOT an official NGVR/PNGVR Association event and any participants will be required to meet all their own expenses for travel, accommodation and incidentals. The cost for such a visit combined with a vehicle trip across at least a part of the USA would amount to approx Aus \$5,000 depending on the exchange rate of the day.

However, if any member wishes to attend then it would be in the Association's interest that we ensure a degree of organisation and uniformity about the visit. The following would be the ideal minimum required for the visit:-

- (1) ANZAC Day dress (2) Formal military Mess dress (3) Slouch hat and current Army cam shirt
- (4) 3/4 Association Polo shirts for wearing both at the reunion and during the journey.

Experience indicates that the ideal number of travellers would be 4 in one group.

If anyone is interested in attending, please contact the Secretary (Col Gould) ASAP so that interested groups of 4, can be put in touch with each other and some formal uniform arrangements made with the 1st Cav Div in Texas. Planning must commence soon as accommodation in Killeen is always in demand. As this is NOT an Association function, members involved will be responsible for making all their own arrangements.

Bob Collins.

FOOTNOTE TO THE NOBONOB CUP

Later in the 60's and early 70's during my time with the Platoon in Madang, the 'Cup' although leaking, held one full SP stubbie, and was used to celebrate promotions, marriages etc., - the celebrant, having to toast the cup and skoll the entire contents. The Cup continued to occupy pride of place in the Madang Unit's Mess. The whereabouts today, of this historic relic is unknown.

Our thanks to Bernie Arnold for the article and B J Andrew for the poem.

Col Gould—Editor



ANZAC DAY REGIMENTAL DINNER REUNION Saturday evening - 26 April

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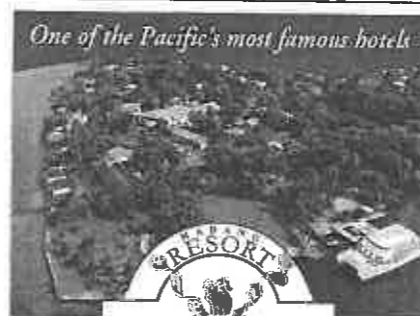
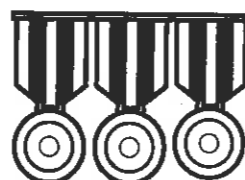
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Tom and his mates fought in the battle of El Alamein and, unfortunately and sadly, he was wounded and died of his wounds on 7 November 1942, at the age of 28. I visited my brother's grave at El Alamein in 1990 on my way home from England. It is a magnificent cemetery and the boys buried there are well looked after.

Leave in Australia:-

I didn't have a clue as to what was to happen to me when I reported to the Sydney Showground. I was told that, following the disbanding of the NGVR in October, while I was still serving in New Guinea, I was seconded to Kanga Force HQ and attached to the 2/2 Field Ambulance, as a temporary arrangement. I wasn't aware of this at the time.

After enjoying five weeks leave with family and friends, and a spell in hospital with a dose of malaria, I felt I was ready to return to New Guinea. However, while in hospital a surgeon looked at an ingrown big toe nail and decided to remove it. This had plagued me since my NGVR days. The surgery and recuperation took about two weeks and by then I was ready to go.

I travelled to Townsville by troop train and then by ship, the troop carrier "Canberra", to Port Moresby where I reported to ANGAU HQ.

He died of his wounds on the 7 November 1942 Aged 28.

Australian New Guinea Administration Unit ANGAU

Introduction to ANGAU—Medical Assistant School:-

When I reported to ANGAU HQ I was given a set of Corporal's stripes and told to put them on. I didn't think this would improve my work, but it did mean I would receive a small increase in pay.

At ANGAU HQ I was directed to the unit's medical services where I was told that I was not, at that stage, a part of that set-up. For starters I would attend a medical assistants school at Gemo Island, on the south side of Port Moresby's harbour, and then be posted to a native hospital or an outstation somewhere in New Guinea.

Gemo was a leprosy hospital pre-war but had been turned into Port Moresby's general native hospital when war came to the area. The lepers were moved to another hospital some distance away, further along the coast.

The school at Gemo Island lasted six weeks. The students were a mixed lot. I was the only one who had served on the New Guinea mainland while Gilbert 'Johnny' Renton was with the NGVR in Rabaul. He and I became mates and we palled up with a smart young bloke, Rhys Healey, who had served in the Middle East before coming to Port Moresby with his then unit. He, like a number of others, transferred to ANGAU when the unit sought recruits for its medical school. I was 20 years and seven months at the time.

The school was interesting. Captains Alex May and David Deland, who served respectively with the New Guinea Administrations before the war, May in Moresby and Deland in Madang, covered just about every facet of medicine we would need to know about. We studied the various diseases and learned to carry out minor operations. The chances that we would be posted to areas where we would deal with village native populations other than with indigenous soldiers and / or carriers, working with the Australian and American forces.

A third Captain got into the act in the last week of the school. Will "Tremmy" Trembath, who was a dentist in pre-war Morobe District, initially served with the NGVR in this capacity. He gave us a run down on mouth care, showed us how to anaesthetise the gums and how to extract teeth. This was something I was not looking forward to.

Captains May and Deland put together a written examination and tested us orally as well at the end of the school. They were happy that we did well enough and told us that we would receive a Medical Assistant's Certificate. Mine caught up with me some week later.

As far as I was concerned the school covered ground I had already experienced whilst serving with the NGVR and the Field Ambulance, after being well taught at Bulolo before the NGVR was called to active service.

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE.

Yet to come:-

* NGVR/ARMY History—Sgt Bruce Fraser NGX 419

* A Brief NGVR Experience—Edgar (Bill) Peters NG 2372

NATIONAL SERVICE MEDAL & VOLUNTEER SERVICE MEDAL

Association Members Representative, Joe Fisk, has provided the following information, courtesy of the National Servicemen's Association:-

National Service Medal:- Those called up for National Service between 1951 and 1972 may be eligible for the award of the Anniversary of National Service 1951-1972 Medal (ANSM). This includes members who served 6 years in the Reserves as an alternate to National Service.

If you believe you are eligible and have not yet lodged an application, you can obtain an application form by downloading it from the Department of Defence web page at www.defence.gov.au/dpe/ or by contacting the ADF Medals Section, Directorate of Honours & Awards, R1-1-D009, Dept of Defence, Canberra. ACT 2600 or telephone 1800 111 321.

Volunteer Service Medal:-

The RSL has proposed that the Government issue a new Volunteer Service Medal with an eligibility period of two years. It is understood that the rationale is that most full time and part time members have an average service length of about two years.

There is no further information at this time, but we will monitor the situation and report back to members.

PNGVR HISTORY

ENLISTMENT OF NON-EUROPEANS IN PNGVR.

By Bob Harvey-Hall (Cont from issue 26)

In a note in a Christmas card several years ago, Bill Guest reminded me of the incident and how I told him to take the two blokes away (Jesse Chee & Michael Ahmat) and teach them to 'slope arms'. I don't recall the exact nature of my request, but whatever it was I'm sure Bill carried out his task with his usual aplomb.

By now Jesse had taken matters a giant step further by going directly to Canberra, which soon meant that I was on the receiving end of a bureaucrat's phone call from the Prime Minister's Department wanting to know why I hadn't enlisted Mr Chee, who was an Australian citizen.

Several of these calls occurred over what seemed to be a lengthy period of time and then I heard nothing more for several months

In 1962, the Pacific Islands Monthly introduced an article in the August edition asking "are there two grades of Australians—first class and second class?"

The PIM went on to say that this is the question being asked by several New Guinea born Chinese, who, as naturalised Australians, have tried in vain to join the PNGVR.

The article also said that the PNGVR was advertising on picture theatre screens for recruits and that at Lae and Rabaul several young naturalised Chinese had been told—"nothing doing". The article finished by saying that the Chinese can't be blamed for feeling slighted, especially when the PNGVR help wanted ads are being screened in Chinese owned theatres.



On a Tuesday evening at the Training Depot the phone rang. I lifted the handset probably expecting a local call and after identifying who I was, I was told I could now go ahead and enlist Jesse Chee into the PNGVR. I do not recall who made that call from Canberra, but it was certainly not military and after some small talk I hung up.

Of course I didn't say that I could not enlist Jesse because I had to have formal notification from Murray Barracks; I had been through that scenario before, however I realise fairly soon that what the bloke from Canberra had said to me that evening, was only the tip of the iceberg. And indeed it was, as it was not long before enlistment of non-Europeans, including Papua New Guinea Nationals, began to occur at all PNGVR centres.

During March 1964, prior to induction, Port Moresby reported 400 acceptable recruits, 80 at Rabaul and 40 for Lae. And, although we had no trouble getting numbers, there were problems explaining the conditions of service, particularly the pay rates and delays in getting medical examinations done. However, all of those perceived problems paled into insignificance when we saw part of the end result at the next annual camp.

I still see that period as a watershed which reached a peak in that wonderful occasion (and for myself a marvellous experience) of the presentation of the Queen's and Regimental Colours at Igam Barracks in Lae in May 1969 and which then continued to flow on to make PNGVR a great citizens military force unit, albeit one with too short a life. Indeed, I reckon that there is no doubt about the aptness of George Whittaker's selection of the unit motto, 'Per Angusta Ad Augusta' - Through Trials to Triumph. —END—

THE MADANG NOBONOB CUP—A background

By Bernie Arnold

I was first posted to Madang late in 1960 as a District Accounts Clerk for the Department of Public Works—PWD. On arrival, I noticed that the few roads around Madang were generally on the level coastal strip, so I bought myself a bicycle to give me some mobility. This bicycle got me some 50K up the North Coast Road and some 25K south into the hills to Amele village. There were no frills such as lights, but I did add a battery-operated horn to clear my path as the brake was not very effective on steep descents. Sometimes I created moments of panic in unsuspecting pedestrians, who chatted loudly and thinking themselves remote from any motor vehicle, were suddenly about to be run down from behind. The only reason they remained polite as I passed, I felt sure, was that they thought I was a Missionary for

they greeted me with "Hello father."

I had joined the PNGVR in Port Moresby earlier that year and Madang had a small but very active contingent, both in military training and social activities, such as picnics, golf days etc.

Like most poems, the "Challenge of the Nobonob Cup" by Cpl B J Andrew (see next page) contains a certain amount of poetic licence. The facts however are these:-

After the business part of the Platoon's weekly Wednesday night training parade, members would adjourn to the adjacent small Sergeant's Mess for social drinks, card games and general conversation. On one such evening, Percy Neville and I got talking about bicycles, especially about the use of gears when the terrain is so steep that it is as quick to dismount and

walk the bike as it is to use gears and stand up on the pedals. It was my contention that gears would be useless under those circumstances and Percy's view was that gears were still an advantage.

At that point one or two other men tuned in and called "challenge!" The point was to be tested with a practical demonstration. There was no bicycle (wiliwil in pidgin) with gears procurable in Madang to put the respective theories to the test, but the mob had sensed blood and would not be deprived of a race even if without gears, since most of the 19K to Nobonob Mission were on level ground along the road to Alexishafen. The last two K's went up a very steep track, traversed by the Mission with its tractor and trailer to the station summit, 427 m above sea level.

The weather on the Sunday chose for the 'challenge race' was the usual sunny, super steamy 30 degrees C. The road surface was unsealed and of a glary decomposed coral limestone or 'coronas' once out of the shady rain tree covered avenue that was Modilon Road.

'Chica' Hudson, our OC flagged us off— with a red rag on the end of an old broomstick. At the start, Percy managed to get ahead of me by cutting through a garden, but I kept on his trail and on the big straight out of Madang, I passed him. With his psychological advantage gone, he soon lagged behind and out of sight. Once on the Nobonob track, I walked the bike to the summit where a control point had been set up and then walked the bike most of the way down again because the rear hub brake did not suffice to control the bike down the steep rough track. Part way down I met Percy walking his wiliwil uphill.

Two hours and fifteen minutes after starting I returned to the training depot. Perce came home fifteen minutes later almost in a state of collapse.

Percy claimed that he had been unable to get fit for this run and demanded a rematch. This was duly accepted and about two months later we set off again. This time I made the round trip in exactly two hours. Unfortunately Perch had collapsed on top of Nobonob but recovered. To my knowledge there were no further challenges for the cup.

From time to time the cup would be taken down from its place of honour above the bar, the Mess Sergeant would raise it with mock reverence to the call, "Gentlemen, the cup!" to which all present would rise and respond, "The Cup" and drink a toast.

The cup had been knocked together by one of the men from an old enamel mug, mounted on a piece of wood on a surplus aluminium saucepan lid as a base. As the cup leaked, it was never able to hold champagne for a toast, but turned upside down, the base saucepan lid could hold biscuits which could be handed around and a 'toast' eaten instead..

oooOOOooo

THE CHALLENGE OF THE NOBONOB CUP

By Cpl B L Andrew

Whilst grogging on one evening, in the Unit's Sgts Mess And the air was full of ribaldry and the talk of lust & zest One Percy Neville proudly said, "He'd never seen his peer Ariding on a wiliwil affixed with special gear.

Now over in the corner, swigging copious cans of Coke, Sat one other Bernie Arnold, a quiet and harmless bloke. Thought he "My God, this fellow thinks that he can ride a bike I'll show him how to really ride, the silly-looking skite".

With grim and purposeful intent, he challenged poor old Perce, In a voice charged with emotion "To see who's best or worst." The chatter died, the air was still, our nerves began to crack, When we heard the chilling, scornful cry, "To NOBONOB and back!"

Now old Percy, he's no piker, so the date was quickly set, And at odds of six to four he said "Would someone care to bet?" We all ungraciously declared "Old Bernie gets our dough; He'll win the NOBONOB Trophy for the first time in a row."



They sat there intensely waiting for the Starter's word to clear, Full of hope and guts was Bern; Perce of last night's beer. Standing there like a martinet, Chicka let the flag go down, And they set off hell for leather thru' the suburbs of the town.

We all returned to places cool, and laughed and talked and grogged, While on the sun-drenched, dusty road, the two contestants slogged. Their hearts were bursting with the strain; they didn't sweat—they bled; Their muscles quickly knotted and their legs soon turned to lead

But on they went, oblivious to both heat and pain, For the winner "Fame and Glory", for the loser "Grief & Shame". No rules were ever honoured, no quarter asked or given, "A Challenge to the Death"—no ride so great was ever ridden.

Our congratulations, Bernie, a fifteen minute winner, Our sympathy to Perce, who got done like a dinner. Now the moral of this story is—should you, your prowess stress, Don't ever, ever do it, in our Unit's Sergeants' Mess!