




  
**HARIM TOK TOK**
  


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NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW GUINEA VOLUNTEER RIFLES AND PAPUA NEW GUINEA VOLUNTEER RIFLES EX-MEMBERS ASSOCIATION INC

## PRESIDENT'S UPDATE



*President Phil Ainsworth  
National Service 1955  
3rd intake  
11 Battalion, Wacol*

Welcome to issue 61. Now that our journal is being distributed regularly, the need for my monthly e-newsletter is no longer necessary to keep you informed of the Association's activities. I will revert to e-newsletter should the distribution of our journal be delayed or disturbed. To those who receive their HTT

by email, they also receive monthly editions of PNG Altitude and the Montevideo Maru Newsletters, the former of up to date news from PNG and the latter reporting the ongoing activities of the Memorial Committee, both of about 30 pages, and other items which may be of interest to our members and friends. I do promise not to bombard you with spam nor will the distribution list be used for purposes other than those mentioned.

Since the last edition, the Jimboomba Bush Dinner was held at Pam and Barry Wright's property. The recent rain and much TLC had transformed the area into a picturesque picnic area. The weather was mild, the food good and the company outstanding. About 43 members and friends attended with many camping overnight. The success of these unique mixed formal dining nights is underwritten by the good work done by the Wrights and helpers, some who work during the year improving the facilities and immediately prior to the function to prepare the site and afterwards to dismantle and put away the tents, awnings and gear. Thank you again for this sterling effort. For those members who have not attended one of these dinners, I would suggest it is worth investing your time and effort in participating. These dinners cannot continue forever, so diary now Saturday 9 October 2010 to attend the next Bush Dinner at Jimboomba.

Your Management Committee met Saturday 27 March to finalise activities up to July 2010. These activities are listed on page 12 of this newsletter. Unfortunately the Regimental Dinner for 23 April had to be cancelled because of lack of numbers. We needed 50 but could only manage 18 by the booking date. Those who paid their money should receive their refunds soon. An invitation from the Boonah Rifle Club for our Association members to participate in its May

annual shoot against the Light Horse Association was not accepted for the same reason – lack of numbers. Perhaps these are reminder calls that our Association Members are ageing and our activities will need modifying to suit the changing profile of our members and friends?

Besides our usual activities the three main focal issues for the Association are 1) the Museum, its maintenance and succession 2) the publication of 2 books, PNGVR history which is in an advanced stage of preparation by Bob Harvey-Hall in Melbourne and Bob Collins' collection of NGVR stories, some of which are being published in the Harim Tok Tok and 3) our ongoing involvement in the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Memorial Society.

The Museum hardly needs an introduction but suffice to say that John Holland continues to manage the Museum with limited assistance. Our Military Museum is a credit to the Association, John Holland and those who regularly assist in its maintenance and exhibitions. John is not in the best of health and it is pertinent to plan succession to ensure the Museum and the good work continues either through our Association or another organisation. Since the opening of the Museum in February 2006 the Committee has often pondered this question but has yet to find a solution. The key is to find volunteer folk who have the aptitude for the work, particularly for PNG and its military heritage - the organisation to which it may be attached is secondary. The Museum premises are leased from the NSAAQ, a much larger and stronger organisation than ours, but one which also has an ageing membership. If we could find NSAAQ members with the right aptitude for history, the military and PNG, the NSAAQ may well be the solution. I canvass ideas from you so this issue may be progressed over the coming months.

The Association is well managed and is financially sound. Funds may be obtained through tax deductible donations to the Museum, for specific purposes by applying for grants and money raised by regular sausage sizzles at Greenbank Services Club. Membership fees are important but are a declining source. Expenditure on the Museum is worthwhile but it's need is limited. The publishing of PNGVR history and NGVR stories must be completed in the next couple of years, preferably in book form but another medium such as CD or DVD may be just as good. I seek your views how the Association should go about this. Our members and friends have a wide range of qualifications, skills, knowledge and experience- lets us put them to good use. Who can help?

The Montevideo Maru Memorial Committee is about to be incorporated and a name change is necessary if its program is to be progressed with speed. It is likely to be called "Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Society" and its purpose

includes: 1) consolidate the story of Rabaul, the New Guinea Islands and the Montevideo Maru as a continuing part of our Australian History; 2) having the Montevideo Maru site declared a War Grave and arranging an official memorial service over the site for the family of the victims and representatives of appropriate organisations; 3) finding the original nominal roll; 4) financing and arranging an appropriate national memorial in the grounds of the AWM; and 5) the AWM to establish a permanent display commemorating the sinking of the Montevideo Maru.

It is proposed a Parliamentary resolution be passed in the last sitting of Parliament prior to this year's Anniversary date of the tragedy - this is in an advanced state of planning and details will be released early, when available, to allow relatives and friends to travel to Canberra to be present at this historic occasion.

Work is continuing on all the above activities. Item 4, the funding and arranging the national memorial is the function in which our Association is represented by Clive Troy and me as joint chair. The Council of the AWM at its March meeting approved in principle the locating of the memorial in its ground and is establishing a consultative committee to ensure a suitable national memorial is erected. Our Association is likely to be represented on this consultative committee. The Society will be responsible for most of the funding with perhaps the Commonwealth providing top up once the Society has completed its task. Already concept drawings of the proposed memorial are being produced so costing and marketing materials may be prepared. Once the Society is incorporated, an application to ATO for tax deductibility status for donations will be made. When received, corporations and organisations will be approached to fund the memorial, which at this stage is expected to be around \$ 0.5 million. The dead line for the completion and dedication of the memorial is 1 July 2012.

PHIL AINSWORTH,  
29 MARCH, 2010

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## CONTINUATION OF HARLEY ARMITSTEAD'S STORY AS TOLD TO BOB COLLINS

### I volunteer to go to New Britain

In the second week of February, 1942, we were sitting down to a meal at Lae and Capt G.C. (Blue) Harris stood up, outlined the situation in New Britain and called for volunteers to go over with him to, as he put it "Rescue any survivors from the 2/22<sup>nd</sup> Battalion".

The situation was that Lark Force, the force designated to defend Rabaul, had been overrun and survivors were fleeing down both the North and South coast of New Britain. Lark Force consisted of the 2/22<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, attached units of Artillery, Engineers and Signallers and elements of the N.G.V.R. (Battalion HQ, 1 Rifle Coy, a Machine Gun Platoon and the Chinese Auxiliary Aid Detachment), some 1,300 men in all.

The Japanese attacked Rabaul before dawn on 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 1942, in overwhelming numbers - at least 23 Japanese vessels were counted in the Harbour on the morning of the attack. It was all over in hours, and it appears that the order 'every man for himself' was given that morning. The survivors of the battle then began to make their way down the New Britain coasts, both north and south.

Over the following weeks many of these survivors, who had not been given any training at all in living off the land, were either killed or captured by the Japanese and, in one case at Toll Plantation, on the south coast of New Britain, 150 soldiers who had surrendered to the Japanese were brutally massacred and left where they were killed.

One chap called Robinson was handcuffed and in a long line of soldiers who were all killed. He feigned death and eventually escaped, but was in a very bad way when eventually found by friendly forces.

However some made their way to the southern part of New Britain and were still alive, and J.K. McCarthy, Assistant District Officer at Talasea, was given the authority to organise the rescue of survivors, and was also given authority over all soldiers in the area, regardless of rank. McCarthy had a plan for volunteers in small boats to come across from mainland New Guinea through seas totally dominated by the Japanese Navy and Air Force and rescue these survivors.

I volunteered for this task, and on 15<sup>th</sup> February, 1942, left Lae in the 'Gnair', a 15 ton vessel owned by Guinea Airways. The Skipper was Bill Money, a lovely chap who had travelled the world extensively, Gus Keuster, W.B. (Snow) Blackley and myself were the crew, all NGVR. The following is an extract from Snow Blackley's diary for the next few days:-

-15<sup>th</sup> Feb - Left Lae for Finschaffien at 6am. Anchored and hid ship at Malasigge. Arrived Finschaffien at 9pm.

-16<sup>th</sup> Finschaffien

-17<sup>th</sup> Left Finschaffien for Lae at 8pm 'Bavaria' left with

missionaries for Lae

-18<sup>th</sup> Arrived Lae 7pm

-19<sup>th</sup> Left for Finschaffien t 6pm Arrived daylight 20<sup>th</sup>

-20<sup>th</sup> F'hafen. During day picked up Wing Commander Lareu, Bill Douglas and Harold Koch. (survivors from Rabaul) Also another party for Witu.

Left that night for Lae again with the above three named on board for Salamaua

-21<sup>st</sup> Arrived Salamaua. Dropped passengers and then returned Finschaffien.

-22<sup>nd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> Waiting F'hafen

-27<sup>th</sup> To Hellsbach and returned

-28<sup>th</sup> Waiting F'hafen

-1<sup>st</sup> March To Tami Island for fish

-2<sup>nd</sup> Left for Buki to await instructions

-3<sup>rd</sup> Waiting Buki

-4<sup>th</sup> Returned to F'hafen and received instructions proceed to Luther Haven (Umboi Island)

-5<sup>th</sup> Arrived Luther Haven daylight and waited until 5pm for 'Totol', 'Umboi' and 'Bavaria'.

These latter three boats were also proceeding to New Britain.

'Totol' -35 tonner belonging to the Lutheran Mission, Madang. Crew Ted Radke, Bob Emery(NGVR), Andy Smith, Ron Chugg (NGVR)

'Umboi' -23 tonner belonging to the Australian Lutheran Mission. Crew Vic Newman., Harold Freund (NGVR), Jack Goad (NGVR), and Blue Harris (NGVR) in overall command of the operation.

'Bavaria' -45 tonner belonging to the Lutheran Mission, Finschaffien. Crew Adolph Obst (NGVR), Dave Rohrlach, Bert Gazard (NGVR).

These vessels were then nicknamed 'THE NGVR NAVY'

Back to the diary.

-6<sup>th</sup> Left at 3pm for Kalingin (extreme end of New Britain)

-7<sup>th</sup> Arrived Kalingin 10am and picked up a couple of bois with local knowledge. Called at Iboki. Found 19 A.I.F. (Australian Imperial Force) there. Left Iboki and proceeded to Garu via Kautaga.

-8<sup>th</sup> Left 'Gnair' and walked over Peninsula with Blue Harris, Pastor Freund and Jack Goad.to Walindi. Had radio schedule with Pursehouse at Finschaffien at mid-day and got his message that Lae and Salamaua had been invaded. "This is my last message. I'm off". Arrived Walindi after 8 hours. Found 65 AIF. Met McCarthy.

-9<sup>th</sup> Left Walindi with AIF for Garu. Arrived there and camped the night

-10<sup>th</sup> All day at Garu

-11<sup>th</sup> Left at 2am to walk along beach to put AIF on

'Umboi' at anchor. Walked 2 miles in water. On board and dumped AIF on 'Totol' Rejoined 'Gnair' and returned to Garu.

-12th Left Garu at 6am and proceeded up coast to Malaila (mission station) and stayed night.

-13th Proceeded to Bailala and Butiolo and in both places picked up 41 men. Returned with them to Malaila. Discharged men. Anchored night.

-14th Proceeded to Walu looking for more troops. Went ashore but could find no one. Heard later they mistook us for Japs and went inland and thence down the coast. Returned to Malaila for night. Sighted Jap bombers.

-15th Proceeded to Valoka and picked up the last 90 AIF. With ourselves and bois had 111 souls on board. Very uncomfortable. Sighted Jap bombers. Left for Walindi.

-16th Arrived Walindi - discharged fit AIF men and picked up the sick and left for Iboki. Engine trouble off Cape Hillman for some hours.

Fixed up and proceeded on our way. More bombers.

-17th Arrived Iboki 7.30am. Discharged sick and anchored Iboki where all survivors were now concentrated with Mrs Gladys Baker (ex Witu) in charge of sick and wounded.

-18th At anchor until 5pm. when we proceeded to Witu to take over "Lakatoi" - by force if necessary

(McCarthy had obtained Navy permission to seize the Burns Philp 300 ton trader 'Lakatoi' which was anchored in the Witu Islands under instructions from the Japanese not to move)

-19th Arrived Witu after all-night sailing at 6am. Skipper of 'Lakatoi' agreeable to make a dash for Australia with AIF and civilians. Crew painting (camouflage) and we killed cattle on plantation for their trip and unloaded copra.

The 'Lakatoi' sailed with 214 soldiers and civilian survivors on board and eventually reached Cairns on 28th March. The 'Totol' returned to Madang with Blue Harris and her initial crew and Andy Smith and Bob Emery. The 'Bavaria' had been stripped of everything of value and was left in the Witu Islands in place of the 'Lakatoi'. Everybody hoped that the Japanese, who sent out an aircraft almost daily to check on the 'Lakatoi', never sent out the same pilot and all the pilot would be told was to look out for a boat anchored in the Witu Islands. Apparently this worked.

We knew by now that the Japanese had taken Lae, Salamaua and Finschhafen so we could not go there. We also considered that the 'Lakatoi' would be too conspicuous and draw Japanese attention so Bill Money, Sno Blackley, Gus Keuster, Dave Rohrlach, Bert Gazzard and myself - all NGVR from Lae and Darcy Hallam from Pondo decided to attempt to reach the Trobriand Islands and perhaps even Australia in the 'Gnair', Australia was 2400 km away and we had a 15 ton launch.

I return to Snow Blackley's diary at this stage.

-23<sup>rd</sup> March. Left Gizarum for Mandok in the Siassi Islands. Inspected wreckage of Jap ships. Found furni-

ture marked GWS (Bill Spensley). Natives said Japanese submarine surfaced where we were anchored on 21<sup>st</sup> March. Left Mandok for Tuam. Anchored to land all our boat's crew after giving them much pay and trade goods. They had been very good. Left for Trobriands at 4pm.

-24<sup>th</sup> All day on course E.35 degrees South. Bad visibility for planes. Watching all day. Nothing happened.

-25<sup>th</sup> Arrived Wawela (village on Kiriwana Island, Trobriands). Anchored to work on engines. Bad anchorage. Strong wind came up making things difficult. All hands had 'wind up'. Working on engines early morning.

-26<sup>th</sup> Started engine at 7am. Thank Christ, as we were within five feet of the reef and once on we would never have gotten off. Proceeded all day and anchored at Dobu (small island near) Normandy Island for night.

-27<sup>th</sup> Left Dobu for Samarai and arrived 3.30pm. Re-stowed fuel - filled tanks etc. re-stowed ship and all ready for daylight departure. Samarai completely deserted. Had a decent bath under some tanks that were still standing. Very filthy.

-28<sup>th</sup> Left Samarai for Australia at daylight. Course 32 degrees South. Uneventful day - good weather.

-29<sup>th</sup> At sea. Sea choppy. Making fair time.

-30<sup>th</sup> At sea. Sea choppy. Not so far this day.

-31<sup>st</sup> At sea. Saw land at dusk and steamed up and down all night waiting for daylight to try and find passage through reef.

-1<sup>st</sup> April Through reef and arrived Cooktown 1.20pm. Stayed all night. Got very drunk.

-2<sup>nd</sup> Left for Cairns at daylight and arrived 9.30pm.

-3<sup>rd</sup> At Cairns

-4<sup>th</sup> Left for Brisbane and Sydney by train. Gave 'Gnair' to Navy.

What Sno left out of his diary was:-

When we left the Witu Islands we had 12 X 44 gallon drums of fuel strapped to the side of the 'Gnair', and these acted as floats also.

When we arrived in Cooktown we were placed in custody for about four hours, as the garrison there had never heard of NGVR. Eventually we were released and told to sail to Cairns where we were again put under guard until we were identified.

When we came on to the reef in Australia, Sno reckoned he knew the area well, as he came from Cairns. He insisted we head North to get to Cairns. So we headed North and came to Cooktown instead.

I was so seasick on the way back that I couldn't even pick up a glass of water.

When we pulled into the Trobriand Islands it is a matriarchal society and the women are in charge. The head meri was a huge albino - she would have been over 6

feet (2m.) and the skipper Bill Money would not allow us to leave the boat as the Trobriand women have quite a reputation, but, when we were asked if we had any special requests, and asked for some crayfish, within 10 minutes about 8 canoes went out with men equipped with their long spears, and in another half an hour they were back with about 30/40 crayfish.

I had a slightly different experience on New Britain to Sno Blackley. On 8th March I joined the 'Bavaria' and we proceeded to Ketenge village, approx 70 miles North of Kalingi, the skipper being Adolph Obst, later executed by the Japanese.

We were at Ketenge for two days when a Mission pinnace came from an unknown destination skippered by Mr Douglas, with orders to proceed to Ellanor Bay about 70 miles North of Ketenge.

On arrival at Ellanor Bay we sighted M.V. 'Totol' carrying about 50 military personnel who, it is understood, were collected from the vicinity of Rabaul. He had orders that Skipper Adolph Obst and myself were to proceed in Mr Douglas' Mission pinnace (the name had been erased so I never knew it's name) to Walindi. We were put ashore and walked for 9 hours. On the way we met two natives, but the only information they could give us was directions. Then we met 'Blue' Harris and proceeded up the coast for approx 120 miles in the 'Umboi' to Walindi. On the way we passed a few villages but there was no sign of military personnel. On arrival at Walindi we met J.K. McCarthy, formerly District Officer, Talasea, who was in overall charge of the rescue mission. He was accompanied by a team of Police boys and had a radio transmitter and equipment with him. As I understand his tactics he used to send and receive messages, but never from the same place twice, so he was constantly on the move. ('Blue' Harris also had a transmitter on the 'Umboi' (which was the only one in our convoy) so he was able to maintain contact with both J.K. McCarthy and Port Moresby.

Here 'Blue' Harris received instructions from McCarthy as to the position of all Military personnel and civilian evacuees, who had been spread around the countryside in small groups and supplied with food. 'Blue' Harris and myself moved and waited approx 14 miles North East of Walindi for 35 Military and Civilian personnel to arrive and we then returned to Walindi.

'Blue' Harris was later captured together with his transmitter on the mainland of New Guinea (Hollandia) and was executed by the Japanese.

The following morning I proceeded with those 35 men, acting as their guide (although a Police boy was the actual guide) to an open beach where the 'Gnair' was waiting. The men were then taken to (I found out only later) Iboki Plantation, about 150 miles South.

I returned to McCarthy's rendezvous and awaited the arrival of another group of about 120 men, who 'Blue' Harris and myself guided back to Walindi where we awaited McCarthy and another 20 men. As I recall Lt Col Carr (Commanding Officer 2/22nd Bn), was in the last batch. At this stage all the evacuees embarked on

the 'Umboi' and the 'Gnair' and were taken to Iboki Plantation. I went on the Mission pinnace back to the 'Bavaria'.

At Iboki the men were rested for 2 days and bullocks, goats and dairy cows were killed for fresh meat. Mrs Gladys Baker from a Plantation in the Witu Island group treated casualties.

From Iboki the entire group proceeded to the Witu Island group and we are back to 'Sno's' diary.

I cannot speak too highly of the excellent work done by J.K. McCarthy in his efforts to extricate Military and Civil personnel from a country in enemy hands. He was an able leader and inspired his men with confidence. His knowledge of the country and of the natives was undoubtedly responsible for the saving of many lives.

To this day I am appalled at the lack of bushcraft and living off the land training given to the men of the 2/22nd Battalion. They did not know what a paw-paw tree looked like – did not know about coconuts or sweet potatoes. They would come to us and say "We're starving!" when all around them local food was growing.

### **I am hospitalised, discharged and re-enlisted**

When we arrived in Brisbane I was hospitalised with malaria. I was then sent to Warwick to the convalescent depot which was located at Scots College.

At this stage I was facing discharge from the army as I had been medically classified B2 and could not return to combat duty. My father knew some of the army Officers in the area and I had an interview with Major Jones, OIC Army Records, who told me of my medical classification, and my pending discharge. As a matter of interest I found out at this stage that I had been promoted to L/Cpl. This was in June, 1942.

Another army Officer my father knew arranged for me to join the AIF (Australian Imperial Force) dated the day after my discharge, so I have continuous service. I was then issued with khaki uniforms and rifle etc, (we only had our NGVR uniform, which had been tailor made in one of the Chinese stores in Lae), and sent to Boggabilla, just over the Qld/NSW border for training. Our training was mainly field training - we were on route marches nearly every day and involved in many range practices. It was now that I had to plug my ears when on range practices as a result of the bomb explosion in Lae. I also did a drivers course while at Boggabilla.

I was then transferred to Tenterfield for a short period for more training and then returned to Brisbane to be posted overseas - to a destination which was a big secret. However in Brisbane we were issued with jungle green uniforms (which gave the secret away), we marched through Brisbane and then went by troop train to Townsville and shipped to Port Moresby.

### **I meet my future wife, Clare**

While I was on leave I attempted to look up an old female friend of mine who had been a university student with me at Gatton. I eventually found out her address and went to see her. When she opened the door she

exclaimed "Goodness! I thought you were dead". As it happened she was married and, over a cup of tea, she invited in one of her friends, Clare, who was a University student. We hit it off well and went to the pictures etc. When I finished leave I wrote to her from the Islands but at the time I thought her name was Clare Smith. Luckily I addressed the letter 'Miss Clare Smith c/- Mary McDowell, (the old friend), who gave it to Claire, whose name was Clare Laws. It took me a long time to live that down. Clare came from Toowoomba and, as it happens, she was born in the same hospital as I was in Warwick.

**I am posted to 2/14th Battalion, hospitalised again and posted to ANGAU (Australian New Guinea Administration Unit)**

In Port Moresby I was sent to a Reinforcement Holding unit and was posted to the 2/14th Battalion, which was to join 'Char Force'. 'Char Force' was formed to hurriedly move up the Kokoda Trail.

We were intensely trained in unarmed combat, but after only a week or so I collapsed with pneumonia and pleurisy. I was in and out of consciousness for about 6 days.

After this episode I was called before Brigadier Graham, who was C.O. of ANGAU and asked to join them. I accepted, was immediately promoted to Sgt., and my first posting was in charge of about 3/400 native labourers. We were taken by boat from Port Moresby to the headwaters of the Lakekamu River, and from there we walked to Mt Bulldog. The natives were to work on the road which was being built by Australian Engineers from Bulldog to Wau for re-supply **purposes**.



**Sgt Harley Armitstead on Leave**

The Engineer CO was Col. Reinholdt, known to the troops as 'J.C.'. On one of my early days on the road I met an old friend of mine from the 25th Battalion (Gatton/Toowoomba days). He was a Major in the Engineers by then, and he met me walking along the section of the new road that had been built. He said to me "Armitstead - you are going to meet a little fellow coming along in a jeep shortly. I am warning you now that you are not allowed to walk along this road". Sure enough a chap in a pair of shorts got out of a jeep soon and ordered me off the road. I replied "Who are you?" to which he responded "What's it got to do with you? But I will tell you - I'm in charge of this road so get off". My answer was "OK but I'm telling you now - I'm in charge of your native labour so if I have to get off the road I will take them back to Port Moresby". What he didn't know, and I didn't tell him at that stage, was that I had written authority from the Chief Engineer in New Guinea giving me complete control of all native labour in the area.

At the time Bulldog had no air-dropping ground. I made up my mind to clear one and within 24 hrs had about half an acre cleared of trees ready for a drop. I then requested an air drop of rice, kau kau and bully beef etc for the labour lines, but also asked the Engineers if they wanted anything special. Their Major replied "If you get what we want you will need two plane loads". Sure enough the next day two plane loads of labour line requirements arrived and another day later the two plane loads of Engineer requests arrived and I had my labour line put the Engineer food and equipment in the same holding huts as ours, but in separate spots. One of the things they specially requested was chocolate and we got lots of it. They also had flour and sugar which they had not seen for some time.

Col Reinholdt was curious about the second air drop and followed the natives to the store house where he demanded to know who had ordered the stores. I told him I had and in response to his query "What authority have you got?" I said "Well I must have a hell of a lot as I got two plane loads of food you couldn't get",

A bulldozer working on the road had gone over the edge and slid down the mountain about 1,000 feet. The driver rode it all the way down, and I suppose he was more afraid to jump off than to stay on. Strangely enough he was not injured at all and later claimed that the worst part of the whole thing was the climb back up the mountain again. It took about a week to get the bulldozer towed up again.

*(to be continued)*

***My wife and I were watching "Who Wants to be a Millionaire" while we were in bed. I turned to her and said "Do you want to have sex?"***

***"No!" she answered.***

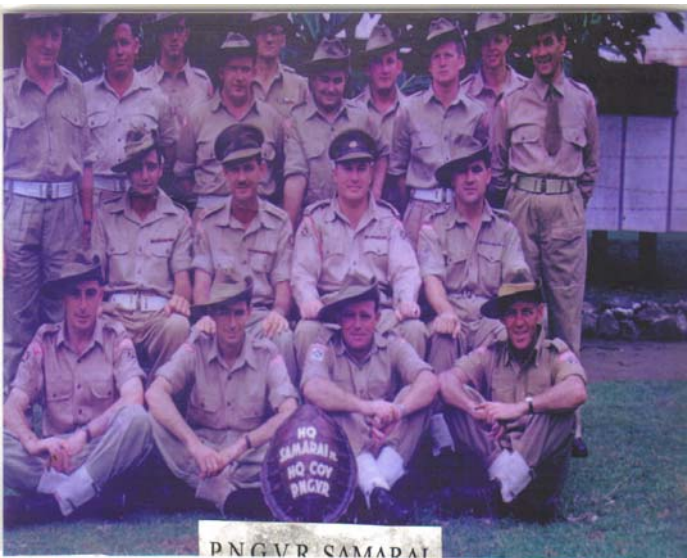
***I then said "Is that your final answer?"***

***She didn't even look at me this time, simply saying "Yes!"***

***So I said "Then I'd like to phone a friend."***

***And then the fight started.***





**FLASHBACK** Were you aware that PNGVR had a platoon in Samarai? It was raised by Lt (Prob) F.G. Hoeter in Nov 1953 and was disbanded on 30 Jun 1956. Seated second from Right in the middle row is Frank Hoeter, now aged in his 80's and living in Hervey Bay. Note the clothing - khaki uniform, gaiters anklets web, and all are wearing PNGVR shoulder flashes and the Northern Command flash on their sleeves.

10 members were taken on strength on 25 Nov 53 as recruits and up to 20 Sep 1955 a further 24 were taken on strength with 4 posted in.

Promotion to Cpl included Barker, Scown, Taylor Gabriel, with Barker, Davis, Taylor promoted to Sgt and on 24 Jun 55 A.B. Barker was promoted to 2/Lt.

There were 4 transfers out between 1954/56 and the balance of the Platoon was discharged under DA 40 (own request) when the PI was disbanded.

Current members of the Assn who served in PNGVR Samarai include A.B. Barker, Con Doran and Col Scown.

If you can name the personnel above please advise the Editor.

This is just one of hundreds of photos available to visitors at our Museum.

*After retiring, I went to Centrelink to apply for a Seniors Card. The woman behind the counter asked me for my driver's licence to verify my age. I looked in my pockets and realised I had left my wallet at home. I told the woman I was very sorry, but I would have to go home and come back later.*

*The woman said "unbutton your shirt!" so I opened my shirt revealing my curly silver hair. She said "That silver hair on your chest is proof enough for me" and she processed my Seniors Card application.*

*When I got home I excitedly told my wife about my experiences at Centrelink.*

*She said "You should have dropped your pants and you might have gotten a disability pension too."*

*And then the fight started.*

**FURTHER CONGRATULTIONS**

in Cairns, for his award of an MBE from the PNG Government in the Queen's Birthday Honours, 2009.

It has been awarded for "...for service to the Community through promoting Australia/PNG relations.."



*Stan Carswell at right with John Batze at an Assn function in the mid 1990's.*

**THE FLAG**

OUR FLAG BEARS THE STARS THAT BLAZE AT NIGHT  
 IN OUR SOUTHERN SKY OF BLUE  
 AND A LITTLE OLD FLAG IN THE CORNER  
 THAT'S PART OF OUR HERITAGE TOO.  
 IT'S FOR THE ENGLISH, THE SCOTS AND THE IRISH  
 WHO WERE SENT TO THE END OF THE EARTH  
 THE ROGUES, THE SCHEMERS, THE DOERS AND THE DREAMERS,  
 WHO GAVE MODERN AUSTRALIA BIRTH.  
 AND YOU WHO ARE SHOUTING TO CHANGE IT  
 WHO DON'T SEEM TO UNDERSTAND,  
 IT'S THE FLAG OF OUR LAND AND OUR LANGUAGE,  
 NOT THE FLAG OF A FAR AWAY LAND.  
 THOUGH THERE ARE PLENTY OF PEOPLE WHO'LL TELL  
 YOU NOW,  
 WHEN EUROPE WAS PLUNGED INTO NIGHT,  
 THE LITTLE OLD FLAG IN THE CORNER,  
 WAS THEIR SYMBOL OF FREEDOM AND LIGHT.  
 IT DOESN'T MEAN WE OWE ALLEGIANCE  
 TO A FORGOTTEN IMPERIAL DREAM,  
 WE'VE GOT THE STARS TO SHOW WHERE WE'RE GO-  
 ING  
 AND THE OLD FLAG TO SHOW WHERE WE'VE BEEN.

Author unknown. Poem sent to HTT by Brian Costello.

*The following report by the 2nd CO PNGVR is held at the museum.*

*The original report is in correct Staff Duties format and Lt Col Maddern MBE would undoubtedly frown at the way it has been adapted for our purposes i.e. to save space and fit into our format. Ed.*

## PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA VOLUNTEER RIFLES

### UNIT HISTORY

1950 – Mar 1953.

By Lt Col N.P. MADDERN MBE – CO PNGVR.

31 Mar 53.

#### Introduction.

The PNGVR is a CMF Unit. Its ARA Cadre were the first troops to move back to the Territory of Papua New Guinea in the post war period.

As the first unit to be formed in the Territory, the PNGVR has in turn fostered the raising of the Pacific Island Regiment and HQ Area Comd, Papua New Guinea. In so doing, the PNGVR has had many functions and responsibilities not normally associated with a CMF unit. PNGVR interests frequently have been sacrificed in establishing the regular units.

#### PARENT UNIT

The parent unit was the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles. This was a volunteer – and illegal – unit formed in NEW BRITAIN and NEW GUINEA after the outbreak of WW 11. Its members were plantation men, miners, civil servants, businessmen and others, all of whom purchased their own uniforms and acquired a heterogeneous collection of weapons in limited quantities.

The Territorians feared Japan and their fears could not wait upon the defence authorities in Australia who were preoccupied with war in Europe, the Middle East and an enormous commitment at home.

The NGVR efforts were later recognised and an Army representative was sent to the Territory to assist them in organising. Weapons followed shortly afterwards.

So far as is known, the NGVR never totaled more than 200 in all centres. Its ranks contained many anomalies such as the Roman Catholic priest who held the rank of WO 11 and was assigned as the pilot of one of the several aircraft available to the Unit. Another pilot was Rifleman Norman WILDE who is still a resident of WAU and saw service with the NGVR and later as a pilot with the US forces.

No coherent story can be pieced together from reports of NGVR activities after Japan entered the war. Undoubtedly there were many acts of individual heroism, there were heavy lessons, particularly in RABAU, but since the NGVR never fought as a unit no one will undertake the task of preparing a complete history.

Colonel J.K. Murray, Administrator of the Territory of Papua and New Guinea recommended the reformation of the NGVR as a CMF unit during 1949. The name proposed was "The Papua and New Guinea Volunteer Ri-

fles". Old New Guinea Territorians resented – and still resent – the inclusion of Papua since the NGVR never included a PORT MORESBY detachment.

#### PREPARATION

Maj HOBBS, GSO11 (Int) HQ N Comd BRISBANE was sent to the Territory during late 1949 to investigate and report upon the possibility of successfully forming a CMF unit in the Territory.

Maj HOBBS paid a flying visit to PORT MORESBY, LAE, RABAU, WAU, WEWAK, BULOLO, KAVIENG, KOKOPO and MADANG.

His investigations followed the same pattern in each centre. One of the leading citizens was warned in advance and a public meeting was called. On the night of his arrival Maj HOBBS addressed the meeting and outlined the proposal to form a CMF unit.

The project was received with enthusiasm in every centre. It appears from subsequent events that the acclaim had no relation to the manpower available to fill the unit.

As a result of the tour the opinion was expressed that the Territory could support a CMF unit of 450 all ranks, centered as follows:

|              |                             |
|--------------|-----------------------------|
| PORT MORESBY | Bn HQ, HQ Coy               |
| LAE          | One Rifle Coy, less two pls |
| WAU          | One PI                      |
| BULOLO       | One PI                      |
| RABAU        | One rifle Coy, less one pl  |
| KOKOPO       | One PI                      |
| KAVIENG      | One PI                      |

Records in PORT MORESBY do not disclose the intention in MADANG and WEWAK.

It is unfortunate that Maj HOBBS did not investigate the population thoroughly in these centres. Such an examination would have shown very few young men between the ages 18-35 years available except in the main centres PORT MORESBY, LAE and RABAU.

#### THE DECISION

The Military Board decided to form the Papua and New Guinea Volunteer Rifles. The unit was to comprise Bn HQ, HQ Coy and two rifle Coys. LE 11/23D/1 was produced. The unsuitability of this LE will be discussed later.

The Military Board decided also that no recruiting was to commence until all Administrative details were complete, including wet weather training accommodation, lest the unit should fail later due to the lack of facilities and administrative preparation.

If these instructions had been followed, the recruiting in all main centres would not have been commenced until early 1953.

#### INITIAL STAFF

The following ARA staff were appointed to the PNGVR

and after completing a short course at the Australian School of Pacific Administration (ASOPA) in SYDNEY, the staff were dispatched, arriving in PORT MORESBY on the dates shown against their names:

|        |                      |           |            |
|--------|----------------------|-----------|------------|
| 2/8001 | Lt Col N. R. McLEOD  | 1 Sep 50  | CO         |
| 1/8002 | Capt H.W. WRIGHT     | 1 Sep 50  | Adj        |
| 2/1286 | Capt S.T. BENDALL    | 13 Oct 50 | QM         |
| 3/1886 | WO 1 P.V. MULHOLLAND | 30 Sep 50 | RSM        |
| 5/309  | WO 11 F.W. HOLDING   | 18 Oct 50 | RQMS       |
| 3/786  | WO 11 J.H. OLDHAM    | 30 Sep 50 | Instructor |

These men were all volunteers. Apparently there was no careful screening to obtain the best available staff for duty in a remote area.

The volunteer system produced a high proportion of undesirable who were to cause unending trouble until mid 1952 when the last of them was sent South. Pacific Islands Regiment had similar trouble and finally all volunteers were very carefully screened to weed out those with poor service records and marital troubles. Men escaping from marital troubles apparently decided that the Territory provided the necessary refuge.

#### THE STARTING POINT

On his arrival Capt H.W. WRIGHT set about arranging for accommodation for stores and personnel in PORT MORESBY.

By liaison with the Civil Administration and the Department of Civil Aviation, the latter organisation allocated one building as accommodation whilst messing facilities were provided at the Civil Administration Mess.

Lt Col McLeod remained only for a few days, then returned to BRISBANE.

Indents for stores had been made out in BRISBANE. Stores began to arrive during Oct 50 and QM PNGVR and his staff received stores and placed them in the DCA building and two former RAAF magazines. Since no native staff was available, this involved a considerable amount of manual labour by the ARA men.

By the end of 1950, sufficient staff and stores were available for recruiting to commence in PORT MORESBY. The unit could not be regarded as administratively sound, since it had a tenuous hold on the accommodation on a permissive occupancy basis.

The Army did not lack property in the PORT MORESBY district. However Murray Barracks had been handed over to the Civil Administration and the Commonwealth Department of Works on a permissive occupancy basis in 1946. The PAGA HILL Battery site also was held by the Dept of Works.

Lt Col McLEOD arranged with the Civil Administration to take over section of Murray Barracks on 15 Apr 51 as staff and training accommodation.

#### THE FIRST SETBACK

There is a carnival atmosphere in the Territory and this becomes more apparent during the Xmas festivities.

During 1950, and old Army siren was established at the Police Station in KONE DOBU. Its function was to sound for starting and stopping of work. During a ball at the Administration Mess, Lt Col McLEOD was encouraged by junior members of the Administration to acquire and dispose of the siren.

Lt Col McLEOD did this the same night.

Lt Col McLEOD was returned to the mainland on 5 Jan 51. Capt S.T. BENDALL administered command 6 Jan – 5 Mar 51.

Whether or not the incident stimulated public interest in the PNGVR is problematical. Adverse press publicity commenced and continued during the period that Capt BENDALL was commanding. This adverse publicity took no recognizance of the facts and did considerable harm. It was directed mainly at the delay in the commencement of recruiting.

#### MT LAMINGTON

The Mt LAMINGTON eruption occurred on 23 Jan 51.

The small Army staff immediately responded to a plea from the Administration for assistance. 5/309 WO 11 F.W. HOLDING and 3/786 WO 11 J.H. OLDHAM together with two Army trucks ½ ton 4 X 4 were flown to POPONDETTA by a RAAF Dakota flown by Flight Lieutenant J. CAIRNS.

WO 11 HOLDING did an excellent job under very difficult conditions. On his being withdrawn from POPONDETTA during early Mar 51, Colonel J.K. MURRAY cited him for the fine work that he had done under very difficult conditions indeed.

WO 11 OLDHAM remained in POPONDETTA for two weeks after HOLDING's withdrawal.

The Army vehicles which, according to Colonel MURRAY, "were the only ones that worked" were left in POPONDETTA and were later sold to the Administration.

#### STAFF VISITS

During late 1950 and early 1951 the following staff officers visited New Guinea on matters affecting the PNGVR and the PIR:

|                      |                                    |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Col R.F. MONAGHAM    | Col Adm N Comd                     |
| Lt Col A.S. FLETCHER | CRE N Comd                         |
| Maj P. MILFORD       | DAA&QMG<br>(Quartermaster) N Comd. |

These officers were interested primarily in selecting a composite for the PIR. None of those officers inspected Murray Barracks. In the light of what subsequently transpired, the Col Adm's remark that "the Army will never use Murray Barracks again" was very misleading.

The PIR Composite was selected at TAURAMA, the site of the wartime 2/1 and 2/5 AGH – 9 miles from PORT MORESBY.

#### PNGVR ACCOMMODATION

Lt Col N.R. McLEOD had made tentative arrangements



for PNGVR accommodation in LAE and RABAUL:

LAE - Use of an abandoned Qantas Empire Airways Mess, acquisition of a block of land in LAE proper on which a training depot would be built.

RABAUL – Acquisition of a block on MANGO Avenue, on which a training depot would be built, 1200 pounds to be provided by the Civil Administration to offset the value of the native hospital, which was Army owned.

#### NEW CO APPOINTED

On the return of Lt Col N.R. McLEOD to the mainland, HQ N Comd requested AHQ to supply a new CO PNGVR capable of coping with a situation which had become embarrassing to the Army.

Major N.P. MADDERN MBE, Co-ordinator, Joint Intelligence Staff, was selected and warned for early movement.

This Officer was given the opportunity for several days of examining files on the PNGVR and PIR. The reason for the interest in the PIR was the wording of the appointment:

“To be CO PNGVR and to foster the raising of the PIR”

On 2 Mar 51, CO PNGVR departed MELBOURNE for BRISBANE by rail, arriving 5 Mar 51.

AT HQ N Comd all files were examined and a thorough briefing obtained from the staff.

As a result of these investigations, several facts became apparent;

- a) Drastic, if not spectacular, action was required of the new CO immediately on arrival as a means of overcoming the adverse press publicity
- b) Recruiting could not wait upon “Administrative Soundness”
- c) The PNGVR would labour under the handicap of insufficient population from which to obtain recruits
- d) Normal activities of CMF units such as an annual camp in which the battalion would be concentrated would be impracticable.
- e) A role for the unit would have to be defined which would be in keeping with the peculiar conditions obtaining in the Territory.

The various matters were discussed with GOC N Comd, Maj Gen F.G. STURDEE OBE.

#### COMMENCEMENT OF RECRUITING

Lt Col MADDERN arrived in PORT MORESBY on 12 Mar 51.

The initial conference of all officers, both PNGVR and PIR was held at 1400 hrs the same day. Those officers were:

|                   |              |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Maj R. SHIELDS    | PIR Coy Comd |
| Capt C.J. ORME    | PIR 2IC Coy  |
| Capt S.T. BENDALL | QM PNGVR     |

Capt H.W. WRIGHT

Adj PNGVR

The PIR Officers, together with several WOs, had arrived during Feb 51 as an advance party PIR to commence the raising of the unit.

The outline plan for the formation of the PNGVR, which was issued at this conference was as follows:

#### RECRUITING

Would commence as follows:

|              |           |          |
|--------------|-----------|----------|
| PORT MORESBY | 17 Mar 51 | 1400 hrs |
| LAE          | 7 Apr 51  | 1400 hrs |
| RABAUL       | 4 May 51  | 1400 hrs |

Men would be medically examined, attested and equipped on the same afternoon.

#### TRAINING

Would commence at 0900 hrs on the morning following commencement of recruiting

#### ACCOMMODATING & STORES

A team comprising CO, QM and RQMS, and Sgtt NEEDHAM would proceed LAE and RABAUL several days before recruiting opened to arrange temporary accommodation pending obtaining permanent quarters, then to prepare stores and open recruiting.

#### PUBLICITY

Would commence, immediately by press, radio, circular and personal contact. The Army would widely publicise starting dates, then keep to them.

In PORT MORESBY all preparations were made in five days

On the afternoon and night of 17 Mar 51, with the aid of a team of three Public Health Department Medical Officers, thirty five recruits were examined, equipped and attested.

The publicity during the preceding week was excellent, and even the South Pacific Post seemed to make the utmost effort to atone for previous adverse publicity by giving almost a full page coverage to the Army's efforts. Excellent publicity continued for some time, particularly from the Australian Broadcasting Commission's station 9PA PORT MORESBY.

Training commenced at 0900 hrs the following morning on the KONEDOBU oval, with hundreds of native spectators in attendance watching the “Taubadas” at drill. The oval adjoined the Royal Papuan Constabulary barracks and native constables were able to watch their officers – private soldiers in the PNGVR – being put through their paces by the instructors.

#### EARLY TRAINING – PORT MORESBY

Training in outcentres followed the same pattern as in PORT MORESBY in the early stages.

The instructors in PORT MORESBY were:

|                  |     |
|------------------|-----|
| Capt H.W. WRIGHT | Adj |
|------------------|-----|

WO1 P.V. MULHOLLAND RSM

WO11 J.H. OLDHAM

The last named was returned to PORT MORESBY from POPONDETTA during late Mar 51.

Training syllabuses had been drawn up which were designed to give a thorough basic training with emphasis on developing the ability to instruct.

The two main problems associated with training were:

- The difficulty of concentrating the unit for an annual camp and the impossibility of taking men away from their employment for 14 days in a Territory where almost all organisations were badly un, over the coderstaffed meant that camp training had to be covered by 14 days additional home training.
- Shiftwork for RFC officers (police), customs, airlines and civil aviation, etc prevented attendance for many men.

Parades were held:

|        |             |               |          |         |
|--------|-------------|---------------|----------|---------|
| NIGHTS | Monday      | NCO's parade  | )        |         |
|        | Tuesday     | CO's parade   | )        | All     |
|        | Wednesday   | NCO's parade) | half day |         |
|        | Thursday    | CO's parade   | )        | parades |
| DAY    | Saturday pm | CO's parade   | )        |         |
|        | Sunday pm   | CO's parade   | )        |         |

By having these many parades, it was intended that shift workers would be able to attend at least one night and one day parade per week. The strain on the ARA staff could well be imagined.

Many enthusiastic men attended three and four parades per week – pay was possible for all parades attended.

The training was thorough and progress very good indeed. Attendances were excellent for a CMF unit.

There was always the feeling that these conditions could not last

*To be continued...*

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**With the renewed interest in the “Montivideo Mauru” sinking and the loss of 1053 Allied lives it is appropriate that over the coming months various articles regarding the “MM” will appear in HTT.**

### Tragic tale of torpedoed ship

**The sinking of the Japanese prison ship *Montevideo Maru* 67 years ago is Australia's greatest maritime disaster yet a number of outstanding issues remain unresolved, writes Don Hook**

Australian prisoners of war boarding the *Montevideo Maru* at Rabaul on June 22, 1942 were well aware of the danger posed by American submarines.

Nine days later, early on July 1, the unmarked and unescorted ship was torpedoed by the USS *Sturgeon* at a point about 11km off Cape Bojeador Lighthouse on the north west corner of the Philippines island of Luzon. All 1,053 prisoners locked in the ship's holds – 845 Australian troops and 208 civilians – lost their lives.

The troops were from the 2/22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Battalion (known as “Lark Force”), the 2/10<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance, the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles and a commando unit, the 1<sup>st</sup> Independent Company. The civilians were government officers, businessmen, merchant seamen, and missionaries.

Today a privately funded memorial to the ill-fated *Montevideo Maru* will be unveiled at Subic Bay in the Philippines by Australia's ambassador Rod Smith. The sinking of the ship is Australia's greatest maritime disaster yet a number of outstanding issues remain unresolved.

Captain Lex Fraser, a commando officer who was a POW in Rabaul from February to July 1942, says that, shortly before sailing, the troops were separated from their officers.

Fraser, who is now 90 and living in Ingham in Queensland said: “We were told they were to be transported on a 10-day voyage to a better place with plenty of food and accommodation, and away from the front line. That sort of story was told everywhere to POWs and we did not believe it any more than others,” Captain Fraser said. Our guess at the time was that they were going to Hainan Island, and we were fearful of American submarine attack. We knew that they (the US submarines) were active as the Japanese stores were getting low due to shipping losses.”

Fraser, second in command of the 1<sup>st</sup> Independent Company, said the POWs were very worried about the separation and they'd exchanged addresses hoping that one day they'd meet again. Writing in his unit's history *We Were The First*, Fraser said he could still visualise his batman, Pat Byrne, who had just had his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. “I had become very close to him and it was sad meeting with his mother in Sydney after the war when I had to tell her his fate.”

Fraser, fellow officers and a group of Army and civilian nurses boarded another Japanese freighter the *Naruto Maru* on July 5 – about a fortnight after the *Montevideo Maru* sailed. “We had several submarine warnings and were fastened down into the hold while the convoy scattered. We could hear the explosion of depth charges in the distance, apparently dropped by an escort destroyer.”

The *Naruto Maru* arrived safely at Yokohama Harbour on Tokyo Bay. During the next three years, the officers and nurses were held at various locations throughout Japan. All survived the war.

It was not until late 1945 - after years scanning casualty lists, hoping and praying - that relatives and friends learned of the fate of their loved ones and friends aboard the *Montevideo Maru*.

They were told the ship sank quickly by the stern and there was no time to launch lifeboats or radio a distress signal. There was no escape for the prisoners locked in the ship's holds. They were killed by the exploding torpedoes or drowned.

An unknown number of Japanese crewmembers died along with the 65 naval guards. However, the captain and “no more than 10” crewmembers boarded a cutter which had floated off the sinking ship.

They eventually landed at Bojeador where several died at the hands of Filipino guerilla fighters. Five survivors set out to walk to Manila, two died on the way, and three reached the

Philippines capital 10 days later. According to the Imperial Japanese Navy, an immediate search was ordered but due to the lapse of time no trace of either ship or men could be found.

On July 20, 1942 the Navy reported the sinking of the *Montevideo Maru* to the owners, Osaka Shosen Kaisha. After completing its investigation, the Navy forwarded details to the Huryo Joho Kyoku (Prisoner of War Information Bureau) on January 6, 1943. The details included a complete nominal (Katakana) role of those on board, but the information was never passed to Australian authorities.

When the war ended, a Japanese-speaking Australian Army officer, Major H S Williams, was attached to the Recovered Personnel Division in Tokyo to investigate the sinking of the ship.

In a report dated October 6, 1945, Williams said many enquiries had been made during the war about the fate of the prisoners by Australian authorities through the International Red Cross and the Swiss Legation in Tokyo, but without effect.

He said the POW Information Bureau did not act on the information provided by the Navy. In fact, he said the details remained hidden in the bureau's files until he discovered them on September 28.

When confronted, Lieutenant General Tamura, who was in charge of the bureau, admitted that the details had been in the bureau's possession since January 1943. Williams said that Tamura expressed regret that the information was not transmitted to Australia but claimed it was "due to an oversight".

In 1945 Major Williams brought the nominal (Katakana) roll back to Australia - where, incredibly it was lost. Now many years later, the newly founded Montevideo Maru Memorial Committee is demanding answers to questions surrounding one of Australia's most tragic wartime episodes. It wants the story of the maritime disaster elevated to its place as a significant part of Australia's social history.

The committee's patron is former Labor leader (and former defence minister Kim Beazley, whose missionary uncle Syd Beazley is believed to have died, aged 33, in the tragedy.

The committee already has established the Subic Bay memorial and has discussed the possibility of locating the wreck. Also, it wants the wreck to be declared an official war grave and, very importantly, it has called for a renewed search in Canberra for those missing records.

### THE LATEST FROM THE MUSEUM

We are now having regular groups through—30 Boy Scouts for an evening visit and another group will be visiting in April.

Sunnybank RSL is also planning a visit in the near future.

Donations. As more people come through the Museum there is a growing realization that memorabilia which has sat in the shed

***My wife and I were sitting at a table at my school reunion, and I kept staring at a drunken lady swigging her drink as she sat alone at a nearby table.***

***My wife asked "Do you know her?"***

***"Yes" I sighed. "She's my old girlfriend. I understand she took to drinking right after we split up those many years ago, and I hear she hasn't been sober since."***

***"My God!" says my wife, "Who would think a person could go on celebrating that long?"***

for many years can now be displayed, and we are receiving a good number of donations.

Brian Costello—a large donation of over 60 books

Mrs Dorothea Race, whose husband was a Kiap in PNG for many years.— stone axes and pineapple clubs from Mt Hagen

- Two turtle shells from Samarai. One of them is shown in the photo of the Samarai PI on page 6.
- A pennant from the first Mt Hagen Show (1961)
- An 8 mm movie projector plus movies from the Highlands
- 3 Sepik masks

Bill McGrath, Assn member, donated a large number of NGVR photographs and photographs of pre WW11 aircraft—Junkers 31, Ford Tri engine etc.

Roy 'Edwards, Assn member, donated 2 Mt Hagen spears.

Bob Collins also brought back from Sydney a WW11 Officers dress uniform which was donated by a family friend, Bronwen Vickary. It belonged to Lt Charles Keith English, 4th Infantry Brigade, who was in the Medical Corps, rose up through the ranks, and was awarded with an MID for his services.

Displays are constantly being altered to ensure that all the material we hold at the museum is on display at some stage.

**Don't forget that the Museum will be open from 10am to 1pm on Sat 24th April.**

**John Holland Curator**

**The following letter has been received by the Secretary.**

Dear Friends,

Can you help please. I am trying to trace my Fathers early war experiences in PNG. I have reason to believe he volunteered for the Papuan Infantry Bn. He was on the North Coast of PNG & witnesses the Japanese landing. He said (my father passed away in 1983) he was a Sergeant in the Militia and there were about 50 Europeans & a few hundred indigenous troops. I believe he met up with the 39th Bn & fought at Isuarava before being evacuated to Moresby.

Do any of your members recall Reg Jarvis from the PIB?

He arrived in PNG early 1942.

*Rodney Jarvis, 88 Lewis Road,*

*Wantirna South, Vic, 3152*

Ph: 03 8805 4416

Should any member be able to assist please contact

Did you know? That New Zealand has more species of flightless birds than any other country in the world.

Did you know? There are over 75,000 species of spiders.

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## FUNCTION DATES

### Sat 24th April.

Museum Open 10am—1pm

### Sun 25th April.

Anzac Day March 9.30am

Left side George St March commences  
10am After the March—NGVR Memorial  
Service at the Hall of Memories fol-  
lowed by Anzac Day Reunion 1st Floor  
Victory Hotel, cnr Edward & Charlotte  
Sts.

### Thur 1st July

Montevideo Maru Memorial Service, Hall  
of Memories, Cenotaph, Brisbane

### Sat 9th October.

Mixed Field Dining Night—Jimboomba

## RECEIVE HARIM TOK TOK BY EMAIL

Thank you to those who responded to the request in last issue of HTT – you will receive this issue by email.

However the response was small compared to the number of copies we have to print and send out by mail.

There are several advantages to receiving HTT by email:-

- You will be able to access HTT in full colour
- You will receive it earlier than by mail
- You will be able to reproduce and distribute either by email or hardcopy to your friends
- By so doing you will save the Association up to \$300 per issue or \$1800 p.a. in postage costs alone.

Currently HTT is printed at no cost to the Association by King & Co Property Consultants. The Association cannot expect King & Co to continue to bear the burden of printing, and should the cost fall back on us, it will be in the vicinity of \$1,500 per issue, or \$9,000 p.a. Should this occur Membership fees will have to rise for those who continue to receive HTT by post.

If you wish to receive your HTT by email please email your name and email address to:-

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**Bob Collins - Editor**

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

**Includes former members of the Pacific Islands Regiment, Papuan Infantry Battalion and New Guinea Infantry Battalion**

All correspondence to:-

The Secretary, P.O. Box 885, PARK RIDGE, Qld., 4125

Mobile:- 0424 562 030

Email:- [pngvr@optusnet.com.au](mailto:pngvr@optusnet.com.au)

[www.pngvr.com](http://www.pngvr.com)

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**Bob Collins – Editor.**