



# HARIM TOK TOK

VOLUME

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

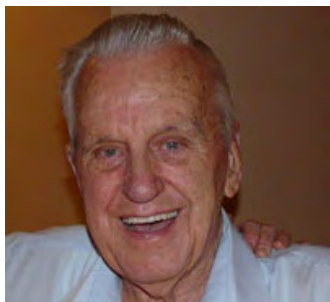
## PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

As this is the last edition of Harim Tok Tok for 2011, I take this opportunity of wishing you and your family the very best for Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

It is with pride that I can advise the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru National Memorial will be dedicated Sunday, 1 July 2012, the 70th Anniversary of the Japanese invasion of the New Guinea islands and the sinking of the Montevideo Maru. A weekend of events are being arranged for this commemoration including a luncheon at the National Press Club, Canberra on Saturday 30th June and the dedication at 11.30 am in the grounds of the Australian War Memorial, Canberra on 1 July 2011. Don Hook, our Canberra representative and public officer for the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Society, has booked 15 double rooms at Olim's Hotel for Friday and the Saturday nights at \$179 per night including full breakfasts and parking. Although one of Canberra's oldest, it was recently taken over by the Mercure Group and the place has been fully refurbished. Already 11 of these rooms have been reserved so if you wish to be part of these events contact me as early as possible on 0418 730 348 email [p.ainsworth@kingco.com.au](mailto:p.ainsworth@kingco.com.au). Further details will be made available as they come to hand.

About 25 shooters competed in a practice shoot at the Fassifern (Boonah) Shooting Complex on Saturday 29th October (see photographs on page 14). Our musketeers were Ian Thompson, brothers Zimmermann Mal and Mike and me. Ian took out the best shot for the day with an outstanding 161 out of a possible 200, which upset a few of the local folk as in previous shoots we were easy beats. Ian's rifle is a vintage 1917 model. The scores of our other shooters are not worth the telling, with complaints ranging around the quality of glasses worn. I have found adjusting to bifocal glasses most difficult - using the upper lens I can see the front sight and the aiming point, using the lower lens I can see the rear sight, a blurry foresight but not the aiming point so the whole exercise, a most unsuccessful one, is one of averages- well that is my excuse.

The Bendigo RSL dedicated a plaque to those who



*Norm Furness, a man who is enjoying life*



died from Lark Force on Friday 11th November at Bendigo. A photograph of the plaque is shown on this page. Originals of the 2/22 Bn, Norm Furness and another represented Lark Force while Andrea Williams, Marge Curtis represented the Committee of the Rabaul and Montevideo Society. Several other members of the Society also attended.

A little known fact is that Brisbane was used as a submarine base during WW2. About 70 different submarines, principally from the US, used the River facilities along the Bulimba Reach near the mouth of Breakfast Creek, adjacent to Newstead Park. There is a plaque bearing the 70 submarine names just off the river walk. The photo was recently taken when Bruce Petty who was travelling through Brisbane asked if I could show it to



him. Bruce talked to us one dinner several years ago about his WW2 social history books. He is an ex-US sailor who served in Vietnam and currently lives in New Zealand. Incidentally, the US Submarine Sturgeon which sunk the Montevideo Maru was based in Freemantle and is not named on the Brisbane plaque. I understand the submarines tied to and serviced from ship tenders, while repairs needing dry docking were completed at the South Brisbane Dry Dock. I have been told the Maritime Museum, which the dock is part, has further information about this subject if you are interested.

Please enjoy your Christmas read.

Phil Ainsworth

## PNG Historic Military Events—November

Extracted from MD, newsletter of Victoria Barracks' Historical Society, Brisbane, Inc:

- 1,1942—Australian troops recapture Kokoda, Papua/New Guinea
- 3,1884—German warship 'Elisabeth' annexes New Britain
- 4,1944—6th Australian Brigade lands at Jacquinot Bay, New Britain
- 6,1884—Commodore J E Erskine, RN, of HMS 'Nelson', proclaims British protectorate of South-East New Guinea (Papua)
- 6,1914—Australian troops occupy Nauru Island, Pacific
- 11,1942—7th Australian Division captures Gorani, Kokoda Trail
- 11,1943—Last Japanese air raid on Darwin, NT
- 12,1937—Japanese troops occupy Shanghai, China
- 12,1942—Beginning of naval battle at Guadalcanal
- 15,1943—Last major air battle of WWII over New Guinea
- 16,1884—Germany proclaims protectorate over NE New Guinea and the Bismark Archipelago
- 17,1943—9th Australian Division begins attack on Sattelberg Papua/New Guinea
- 19,1901—Parliament of Commonwealth of Australia accepts responsibility for administration of British New Guinea
- 19,1914—Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force occupies Admiralty and Western Islands, Pacific
- 21,1943—Japanese attack Australians at Scarlet Beach, New Guinea
- 22,1884—Major General P H Scratchley appointed special commissioner for New Guinea—dies of malaria 2 December 1885
- 22,1944—Australians become responsible for Bougainville operations
- 23,1944—Australians replace US troops at Torokina, Bougainville
- 24,1943—Sergeant Thomas C Derrick, 2/48th Battalion, AIF, VC at Sattelberg, New Guinea—later Lieutenant—killed in action on 23 May, 1945, at Tarakan, Borneo
- 25,1943—9th Australian Division captures Sattelberg, New Guinea
- 26,1942—"Battle of Brisbane" between Australian and US servicemen
- 26,1959—Australian National Service Training Scheme suspended



*Merry Christmas to all and have a happy New Year*

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**NEW GUINEA TIMES**  
**SIR COLMAN MITCHELL O'LOGHLEN**

**NG 2212**

**NGX 303**

I was born in Melbourne on 6<sup>th</sup> April, 1916. My grandfather, Sir Bryan O'Loghlen, was Premier of Victoria, and my father, Henry Ross O'Loghlen, was his sixth son and was a bit of a drifter – he was not addicted to work and never succeeded in life. My mother was Doris Horne.

I went to Xavier College, Kew, in Melbourne at the age of 6 and stayed there until aged 15 when I matriculated – a little earlier than most. The College had received an endowment from the Mormaine family who had donated 50 acres of land and had also headed a Committee which built a 3 story building to get the College started. The College was run by the Jesuits.

After matriculation I studied Law at Melbourne University. It was a four year course and I graduated at the age of 19. However I was not granted my Law Degree until 1936. In those days not many Law students passed the straight four years but I did. Even though I had my Law Degree I was not allowed to be given my Practising Certificate as a Solicitor until I was aged 21.

While at University I joined the Melbourne University Rifles (MUR) and rose to the rank of Corporal.

#### **Work, Marriage and Children.**

For the four years I was at University, even though I was a full time student, I worked part-time as a Law Clerk for Francis, Field and Wallace. When I left University I obtained a position with them as a Solicitor. They had an office in the City and also another practice at Dandenong. I worked in either practice as required, even though I lived in the City and travelling to Dandenong by train was a bit of a trip. I later worked for the Middleton Brothers who were one of the top 10 Solicitor firms in Melbourne and the major thing I recall about my time there was that the two Middleton brothers were the meanest two people I had ever come across.

However in 1939, after War was declared against Germany, the MUR was given the responsibility of training Technical people such as Doctors and Dentists etc who would be going into the Army as Officers, and this was done in a series of two week courses. I had stayed in the University Rifles and, as there was a necessity for Trainers, I was then promoted to Sergeant. I lasted for a number of Schools and then had a disagreement with the Commanding Officer of MUR. I was brought before him by the Adjutant for a minor disciplinary infringement and the C.O. told me that he would never recommend me for a Commission.

The Newman Society at Melbourne University, a Catholic Social Society and named after Cardinal Newman, used to go hiking most Sundays. It was during my time with them that I met my future wife, Margaret O'Halloran. We were married and our first child, Margaret, was born on 24<sup>th</sup> Sep. 1940.

#### **I Decide to Move to New Guinea**

In 1940 I saw an advertisement in the papers for a Solicitor to manage the Law practice of J.I. Cromie in Wau. J.I. Cromie himself had his own practice in Rabaul, but also had another in Wau, and the Solicitor managing his practice in Wau was leaving to join the RAAF.

I applied for the position, was accepted, and in early 1941, together with my wife and child, left Melbourne for Sydney by train and then travelled on the 'Machdui' which called at Brisbane, where we purchased a number of items for the house,



Colman and Margaret circa 1938-39

Townsville, Port Moresby and we disembarked at Salamaua. As was normal at Salamaua, disembarkation was by lighter, as there was no wharf. We then travelled by aircraft to Wau, sitting on top of a load of cargo. The aircraft

was not one of the bigger Ford or Junkers, but a small aircraft.

I was now in a position to manage the practice of J.I. Cromie, Solicitors, in Wau. The office was in the top street in Wau, opposite the Government offices.

#### **I join the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles (NGVR)**

Like many men at that time there was a feeling that Japan could enter the War on the side of Germany so I joined the NGVR which had been formed in September, 1939.

I was taken on as a Sergeant in view of my former training with the MUR.

Training with the NGVR was varied. We had plenty of musketry practice and some drill and field training. I considered that the Non Commissioned Officers (NCO's) were very good but the Warrant Officers were even better.

On Saturdays we used to go into the bush – it wasn't very technical, and I considered it to be more of a march into the bush and a march back with a bit of exercise thrown into the middle. The C.O. used to signal "Enemy attack" and whoever was in charge then had to sort out the problem. I must say that I don't think we ever sorted out the contact drills satisfactorily, however we tried. I must say, however, that all the chaps were very good individually, as we were, in the main, much older than a normal Regular Army Company.

#### **Evacuation of Women and Children.**

When the order was given to evacuate women and children from New Guinea in the latter months of 1941, my pregnant wife, Margaret, together with daughter, Margaret, were among the first evacuated from Wau. They went out from Wau by Dragon aircraft to Port Moresby, then by ship to Townsville, and then by train to Melbourne where she was able to stay with her parents. The allowable baggage weight of 30 lbs (12kg) was taken up with baby Margaret's needs. My office Secretary,





Kathleen Villiers, assisted with the organisation of the evacuation, and was said to be the last woman out of Wau on Christmas Eve, 1941. Our second daughter, Janet, was born in Melbourne on 21<sup>st</sup> Feb, 1942.

### **Mobilisation and the move to Mubo.**

On 21<sup>st</sup> January, 1942, I was sitting in my office about 1.30pm. At this stage there were rumors around that the Japanese had planes in the area, taking off from Aircraft Carriers, but none had been sighted. However it was our custom to have manned one of the 2 Lewis Guns, well sited higher up the hill, on the water race. Someone came in and told me it was my turn to man the Lewis Gun, so I just shut the front door of the office and he drove me up to the top of the water race to the gun. The guns were well sited, as any aircraft coming in to attack them would have had to fly up a re-entrant, directly into the fire of the guns, with the ground rapidly rising behind the Wau Hotel. I did my 2 hour stint on the gun – nobody was manning the other gun, but no aircraft came into Wau – instead they followed a Junkers into Bulolo and shot up the Junkers, incidentally, which was loaded with beer, and the airstrip. They then flew to the hill divide between Bulolo and Wau, turned around and went back to their ships.

We were mobilised on 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 1942, and immediately taken to Bulolo, where a training school had been established by Captain Umphelby. In the end Capt Umphelby turned out to be a very capable soldier – he led the attack into Salamaua together with Captain Norm Winning, and later on was Town Mayor in Lae and Madang, doing a very good job in both places when there was a fair amount of confusion about.

After a few days there B Company was formed under Captain Umphelby. He chose as his Platoon Commanders Alf Lane, Ernie Hitchcock and myself. Capt Umphelby approached the Commanding Officer of NGVR, Major Bill Edwards, about my rank and it was agreed that I would be promoted to 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant. To this day I am not sure whether they really had the authority to promote me like that, but they claimed they did. My Platoon Sergeant was Lea Ashton, and my Section Corporals were Tom Lega, Arch Graham, and Tiger Lyons. Lyn Noakes was the Company Sergeant Major.

After about a week in Bulolo the Commanding Officer, Major Bill Edwards, chose to go with A Company down to the Markham River and B Company was sent to Mubo. The idea behind moving down to the Markham was to be in place if the Japanese landed in Lae, and by moving to Mubo, we were in position to be the first to know if the Japanese landed in Salamaua and tried to move up to Bulolo/Wau. We left Anderson's Sawmill on day one and proceeded to Ballams Camp, located near Old Kaisenik Village. There we issued the new Thompson .45 sub-machine gun to the troops and everybody was allowed fire a few rounds each from one.

Two days later we moved to Skin Dewai Camp, which was built in under the canopy cover and was very damp and cold all the time. On the following day we arrived at Mubo which was situated on the Bitoi River. We did not locate ourselves in Mubo Village itself, but took over the Lutheran Mission area, near the village. Company Headquarters was located together with Ernie Hickcock's Platoon on the road nearest Salamaua, and they had plenty of firepower with them – 2 Lewis Guns and 1 Vickers Gun. My platoon had the centre position, at the Mission, and Alf Lane had his platoon on the other side of the Bitoi River, on the slope up back towards Wau. Our first priority was to establish Guard Posts and dig defensive trenches.

When we were established we commenced patrols down to Salamaua and the beach villages – usually two patrols per week of 6/7 men each lasting 2/3 days. Our patrol orders were to scout and obtain information, both about the Japanese and the

lie of the land, but not to get involved in contact with the Japanese, who had landed and occupied Salamaua on the night of 8<sup>th</sup> March, 1942.

The local Forestry Officer, who was attached to Australian New Guinea Administration Unit (ANGAU) would have nothing to do with B Company. He had attached to him a number of locals and he established himself back towards Wau, in the bush on the hill behind Alf Lane's Platoon.

After Salamaua was occupied the chaps from 4 Platoon, who had been in Salamaua, came back up to Mubo and were allocated positions on Vickers Ridge with the rest of their Platoon and B Company HQ. Stragglers then continued to come in over many days and from them we learnt about the Japanese victory at Rabaul and also of the occupation of Lae.

After the Japanese landing Alf Lane took half of his Platoon down to the Francisco River on the way to Salamaua, where the steel suspension bridge had been dropped into the River by the NGVR chaps who had departed Salamaua in a big hurry. They did not stay there long as the Japanese showed no interest in moving out of Salamaua.

There were consistent reports of native co-operation with the Japanese at Salamaua, particularly the Busama natives, so Lt John Murphy (NGVR) together with some 2/5<sup>th</sup> Ind Coy chaps went down to see what was happening, but, naturally, each group of natives blamed those from the next village for co-operating with the Japanese and strongly denied their involvement. Our Scouts, from their observation post, were able to see Japanese patrols being guided around the area by natives.

There were 5 Scouts who kept a permanent watch on the Japanese in Salamaua Geoff Archer, Jim McAdam, Jim Cavanaugh, Jim Curry and Gordon Kinsey. They did this by establishing an observation post in a large tree, forward of Komiatum and this had a magnificent view of the airstrip and the Isthmus of Salamaua itself. There was also another observation post overlooking the Airstrip towards the mouth of the Francisco River, but it was impossible to man this on a permanent basis, although the Scouts used to go down there regularly to obtain information on what the Japanese were doing.

### **Arrival of the 2/5<sup>th</sup> Independent Company.**

In early June, 1942, members of the 2/5<sup>th</sup> Independent Company began arriving in Wau, and were sent forward to both the Markham and to Mubo. They were well equipped and well trained in Australia and very keen to have a go, but part of our role then was to familiarise them with the local conditions. This we did by taking them with us on patrols.

I believe that the attacks on Salamaua and Heaths Plantation in the Markham Valley were planned to 'blood' the 2/5<sup>th</sup>.

### **The Salamaua Attack.**

On 15<sup>th</sup> June, 1942, a combined force of 50 NGVR and 2/5<sup>th</sup> Ind. Coy were assembled at Mubo. Unknown to me at the time this was to be the nucleus of the party to carry out the raid on Salamaua, which eventually took place in the early hours of 29<sup>th</sup> June.

The attacking forces were split into different groups, each with a separate target:-

- One group, under command of Lt Drysdale, was in support with Mortars
- Lt Kerr (2/5<sup>th</sup>) and Alf Lane (NGVR) with 16 others were to attack and destroy the Japanese installa-



tions on Logui airfield.

- Sgt O'Neil (2/5<sup>th</sup>) and Sgt Mcadam (NGVR) with 5 others were to destroy the wireless masts and equipment on the south of Kela.
- Cpl Hunter (2/5<sup>th</sup>) and Cpl Currie (NGVR) with 8 others were to raid the houses and industrial area between Kela and Kela Point.
- A Command Group with Capt Winning (2/5<sup>th</sup>) and Capt Umphelby (NGVR) with 5 others were to follow Hunter and Currie.
- Myself and Geoff Archer (NGVR) with 6 others, including Tom Lega, Tiger Lyon and Brian Fraser (who later joined the RAAF and was killed over Germany) were to attack Kela Point which had been the Chinatown area and where Japanese soldiers were living in the houses vacated by the Chinese. Kela Point is not on the Isthmus, but runs up into the Huon Gulf towards Lae.

We did not have any rehearsals or specialist training prior to the attack. The only people on the attack to have any training were the 4 2/5<sup>th</sup> chaps who were to throw their 'sticky bombs' so they were given some training on these. These 'sticky tank' grenades were adhesive tank grenades reinforced with a couple of pounds (1 kilo) of gun cotton.

We left Mubo at midday on the 27<sup>th</sup> June, and stayed the evening at the old civilian evacuation camp (Butu Village), which had been designated base camp. We then started about 8am on the 28<sup>th</sup> and moved down to the old crossing on the Francisco River. We moved into a position where we could see the fortifications at the Isthmus and also Chinatown during daylight. There was quite a good road leading into Kela Point so we just sat down on a knoll where we could see the road until it got dark. It has never come out before, but while we were waiting the chaps started a 'farting' contest. Whether it was nerves or not I do not know but we could hear voices down on the road so I suppose they could hear our chaps holding their contest.

The attacks were supposed to commence at 3.15am. We were beside the road near Kela Point by 8pm. Geoff Archer, our scout, made sure the road was clear, as there had been a Japanese vehicle and voices coming from the road earlier. He then carried out a further reconnaissance along the route he has proposed to enter Chinatown and advised that there were 'wailing' women on that route, and we would have to come in from the front (sea). We had a brief conference and decided to go in along the sea wall and approach through the ocean which one chap assured us was only 5 feet (1.7m) deep at the deepest point. I might add I was only 5ft 5ins tall so was hoping it would not be deeper at any point. It was already dark and we were at risk of not getting to our objective so we went into the water and kept going until we came to Chinatown. We knew we had reached our objective when we came to some overhead lavatories which had been built out over the sea wall.

However just after 3am a burst of automatic fire started the action so we jumped over the sea wall and raced across the road into the Chinatown Trade Store area, probably a dozen trade stores. There were voices coming from the trade stores, so our 4 bombers raced through the area throwing their 'sticky bombs'. When these went off I had never seen such a flame in all my life – they created a tremendous explosion. The 'sticky bombs' had been made up by the 2/5<sup>th</sup> Ind Coy at Mubo.

By this time a number of Japanese and natives were beginning to gather so I had the group spread out and fire into the houses and trade stores. Two, probably half-castes, who tried to run away, were shot at and hit. We were still standing there when we were shelled from the Isthmus, so I gave the order "Get back to the old civilian evacuation camp (Butu Village) as best

you can, and as quick as you can". Sgt Mal Bishop, 2/5<sup>th</sup> Ind Coy and later Commanding Officer, PNGVR, was by this time bleeding quite a lot, but managed to walk down the road with the help of a couple of mates. When we came to one of our



Capt. Col  
O'Lughlen  
1942

chaps he advised us that we had to move through a big clearing to get to our meeting place. There were artillery shells falling between us and Chinatown and arcs of tracer streaking across the clearing. Mal Bishop was taken across while the tracers were going strong and when it had abated a bit we all moved across the clearing. As it happened we all got through unscathed and

the civilian camp was only a couple of hundred yards from the clearing.

We all gathered at the old civilian internment camp (Butu Village) where there was at least 3 huts, and, as soon as everyone was there, we all moved off, through Butu Village which was held by Capt Hitchcock, NGVR, who had a Vickers Gun manned at the site. When we compared notes we found that 116 Japanese had been killed and our own casualties were 3 wounded, Mal Bishop received a ricochet bullet in the back, Jim Curry (NGVR) a bullet through the wrist and Alex Garvie (NGVR) a nick across the shin.

We then moved back to Mubo via Komiatum.

**To be continued. This is Col's story as told to Bob Collins. Unfortunately Col is in a nursing home at present and Margaret passed away in 2010.**

*One day a man came home and was greeted by his wife dressed in a very sexy nightie. "Tie me up" she purred "and you can do anything you want"*

*So he tied her up and went golfing*





## KING & CO SHOWS HOW GOOD CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP AND GOOD BUSINESS ARE NOT MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE

Since the early 1990s King & Co Property Consultants has been known for its role as a good corporate citizen, mostly by initiating then promoting ideas via the firm's newsletter, King's Counsel, to further the well being of Southeast Queensland. Examples include pointing out the need for development of the Port of Brisbane area, leading to the Australia TradeCoast; vocally lamenting the shortage of industrial land in SEQld; detailing the benefits of connecting Brisbane through 9 river crossings, an initiative which is reported to have underpinned Campbell Newman's TransApex tunnel projects; providing the early arguments against the funding of infrastructure through the contrived PPP structure, a view reinforced by local debates like the River City Motorway and Brisconnections; stressing the benefits of an Intermodal "Inland" port at Greenbank or Purga as part of a standard gauge rail link from the Port of Brisbane to the Port of Melbourne. In addition, we've also offered the possibility of pumping water from PNG to Brisbane, and, most recently, argued for the reduction of Land Taxes and Rates for those industrial properties devalued by the 2011 flood. Many of these have come to pass and others are yet to occur.

Of course King & Co is much more – it is an established Real Estate company specialising in leasing, selling and managing industrial property. It's also a company that shows how good corporate citizenship and good business are not mutually exclusive

### NGVR/PNGVR Museum

A little known, or not known, area of our work for the community is its sponsorships of meaningful community ventures. Since 2006 King & Co has sponsored the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles (NGVR) and Papua New Guinea Volunteer Rifles (PNGVR) Military Museum located in leased premises on the Heritage site run by the National Servicemen's Association of Australia, Queensland, which was formerly a part of the Wacol Army Camp.

This Museum commemorates NGVR's service during WW2, initially during the invasion of Rabaul and later being the "keepers of the gate" from January to May 1942 in the Lae, Wau, Bulolo area of Papua New Guinea (PNG), without support and resupply until the arrival of the 2/5 Independent Company, AIF. NGVR was subsequently withdrawn in August 1942 due to exhaustion of this militia force. The site houses many (decommissioned) WW2 weapons, artifacts, memorabilia, photographs, maps and documents dedicated to the New Guinea campaign. It is open to the public and welcomes visits by groups from various organisations. Many children groups visit. It is a wonderful but unrecognised resource of Brisbane. King & Co also sponsors the activities of the NGVR & PNGVR Association in many ways.

### Montevideo Maru tragedy memorial fundraising

During the Japanese invasion of Rabaul early 1942, many members of NGVR were killed either during the invasion, massacred at Tol Plantation and or drowned when the Montevideo Maru, a Japanese ship which was taking over 1,000 Australians including 840 troops and civilian internees to Hainan in the south east of China, was torpedoed by a US submarine off the coast of Philippines on 1 July 1942, with the loss of all prisoners – the worst Australian maritime disaster ever.

Two years ago when an Australian wide Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Society was established to achieve national recognition for these men, I became a foundation member in honour of

the NGVR men who had died and was elected President of the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Society last February after the founding President retired due to ill health. King & Co is assisting the organising of the Society's activities.

The Society has achieved much during a short period, the most important has been increasing the awareness of the public to these tragic events, including the recognition of the men lost by both Houses of Federal Parliament in June 2010, limited progress has been achieved in having the site of the sunken ship declared a war grave, to the extent nothing further may be done until the Government of Australia and the Philippines ratify a UNESCO Convention; our attempt to have these events included as part of the school curriculum is unsuccessful due to the weight of other events considered more important; and continuing progress is being forged in finding the nominal roll of those on board the Montevideo Maru. The focus now is arranging the dedication of the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru National Memorial in the grounds of the Australian War Memorial, Canberra on 1st July 2012, the 70th Anniversary of the sinking. James Parrett, the sculptor, is working on the Memorial as you read. Further details about the dedication ceremonies on 30th June and 1st July 2012 are in the President's Update on the front page.

My interest in the "Montevideo Maru" began while I was serving with the Australian CMF military unit Papua New Guinea Volunteer Rifles during the 1960's. It grew when I learnt about its predecessor wartime militia unit. New Guinea Volunteer Rifles, whose many members died, either in the defence of Rabaul or while escaping from the Japanese, through sickness and massacres, such as at "Tol" Plantation, and/or as prisoners of war on the "Montevideo Maru". This interest heightened when I became aware that a distant relative of my wife, Harry Schiffmann, a member of 2/1 Independent Company and serving in the Kavieng area at the time of the Japanese invasion, was captured and went down with the Montevideo Maru.

**Phil Ainsworth, Managing Director, King & Co.**

### The Victoria Cross



The Victoria Cross is the pre-eminent award for acts of bravery in wartime and is Australia's highest military honour.

It is awarded to persons who, in the presence of the enemy, display the most conspicuous gallantry; a daring or

pre-eminent acts of valour or self-sacrifice; or extreme devotion to duty.

The Victoria Cross was created by Queen Victoria in 1856 and made retrospective to 1854 to cover the period of the Crimean War.

Until the Victoria Cross for Australia was created in 1991, Australians were eligible for the Victoria Cross and other awards under the Imperial System of honours.

The Imperial Victoria Cross has been awarded to 96 Australians. 91 received the Victoria Cross while serving with Australian forces and 5 others received the award while serving with



South African and British units. Australians were first recognised for their gallantry in the Boer War and more recently during the Vietnam War. Australians have been awarded the Victoria Cross in the following conflicts"-

6 in the Boer War 1899-1902.

64 in World War 1 1914-1918

2 in North Russia 1919

20 in World War II 1939-1945

4 in Vietnam 1962-1972

9 of the Victoria Crosses awarded in World War I were for Australians at Gallipoli.

The first Australian to be awarded a Victoria Cross was Capt. Sir Neville Howse VC KCMG CB KStJ during the Boer War (1900). He also served in World War I and later as Commonwealth Minister for Health, Defence and Repatriation.

The most recent recipient of the Victoria Cross was Warrant Officer Keith Payne VC OAM for gallantry during the Vietnam War (24 May, 1969). Under heavy enemy fire Payne instigated a daring rescue of more than forty men; many of them wounded, and led the party back to the battalion base.

Victoria Crosses are made using bronze taken from guns captured from the Russians in the Crimea. These guns appear to originally be of Chinese origin, and had previously been captured by Russian forces.

To date 1,357 Victoria Crosses have been awarded, the most recent being to Pte Johnson Beharry, 1st Bn, Princess of Wales's, Royal Regiment in 2005.

#### **Victoria Cross for Australia**

The Victoria Cross for Australia was instituted in the Australian Honours system by Letters Patent on 15 January, 1991.

It replaced the British or Imperial Victoria Cross. The first award was to Corporal Mark Donaldson, of the SAS, on 16 Feb, 2009, for gallantry in Oruzgan Province, Afghanistan, on 2 September, 2008.

The Governor-General awards the Victoria Cross, with the approval of the Sovereign, on the recommendation of the Minister for Defence.

The Victoria Cross may be awarded posthumously.

The post-nominal entitlement for the Victoria Cross is VC.

A subsequent award of the Victoria Cross to the same person is made as a bar to the Cross.

They are also entitled to the post-nominal of VC and Bar.

The Victoria Cross for Australia is still manufactured by Hancock's, and each award is individually approved by Her Majesty the Queen.

Under a similar system, the Victoria Cross for Canada was created in 1993 and the Victoria Cross for New Zealand in 1999. The only other examples of these Commonwealth awards so far were made to Cpl Willie Apiata, of the New Zealand SAS, in July, 2007 and Cpl Ben Roberts-Smith, of the Australian SAS, in January, 2011, (both also for gallantry in Afghanistan in July, 2007, and June, 2010).

*At the Dining Night at Jimboomba in March, 2011, the Patron, Maj-Gen John Pearn gave an address on "Courage" and had, for those present to pass around and study, a Victoria Cross (not a replica), as well as a replica of the George Cross.*

## **A BOOK REVIEW OF A LITTLE KNOWN STORY- 18 BRITISH SURVIVORS FOUND IN RABAU AFTER THE WAR**

This is a story told by a soldier, Gunner Alf (Blackie) Baker, one of 18 British survivors found in Rabaul after the surrender of the Japanese. In October 1942, 600 British Royal Artillerymen, including 63 officers, were shipped by the Japanese from Singapore to Rabaul, a journey of three weeks. There was one death amongst the prisoners during the trip.

About 3 weeks after their arrival, the 599 were sorted into 2 groups with 517, including 51 officers, declared fit for work and shipped off to build an airstrip. The remaining 82 of which 12 were officers, were kept in a camp near Kokopo. Within a month the larger group returned to Rabaul, but instead of being reunited with the others and without disembarking, they were transported to Ballali Island in the Shortlands just south of Bougainville. Their task was to build an airstrip in support of the Japanese attempts to retake Guadalcanal. This group was never seen again.

After the war a mass grave was discovered on Ballali Island and 435 bodies, identified as British soldiers, were disinterred. These were later re-interred in the Boumana Cemetery near Port Moresby. From various accounts, it appears that on 30<sup>th</sup> June 1943 the Americans shelled the island and the Japanese, expecting an invasion, massacred the men. Thus this massacre occurred on or about the first anniversary of the sinking of the Montevideo Maru.

Meanwhile the others on Gazelle Peninsular were assigned work but were poorly housed and fed. Their work was mainly tunnel digging. The attrition rate was high from malnutrition, beatings and sickness, with as many as 20 a month dying during the worst period. Around March/April 1943 the monthly deaths diminished and their numbers stabilised at just over 20. They were moved about and in February 1944 they were shifted to Wantom Island, about 10 km off the northern shore of the Gazelle Peninsular, close enough to Rabaul to hear and see the results of the Allied bombing of Rabaul if the conditions were favourable.

Here the men were divided into smaller groups and allocated to various Japanese units to dig tunnels. They were constantly told that should an invasion occur they would be killed. The story tells of horrific beatings and killings by the Japanese. It also mentions acts of unselfishness and heroism of fellow prisoners. An outstanding example is the story of Sgt Joe Blythe.

In September 1945 they were returned to Rabaul and handed over to the Royal Australian Navy. The Australians were surprised to find the British soldiers, as they were expecting to see, no doubt, the survivors from Lark Force. There were only 18 British survivors, none of whom were officers. He also mentions there were another 8 survivors, including Captain John Murphy, American officers and a New Zealander Flying Officer, were collected by the Navy that day.

"What Price Bushido" speaks of the brutal treatment, physical and psychological, inflicted by vicious captors and highlights the iron will needed, over a sustained period, to overcome depression, disease, starvation and the Japanese.

**Phil Ainsworth 2011**

Publications details are: "What Price Bushido?" by Alfred J Baker, Torch Books, UK, 1991, first edition, 139 pp, available from [www.pacificbookhouse.com.au](http://www.pacificbookhouse.com.au) (Bill McGrath, phone 07 5522 4110). A revised and enlarged edition was published in 2000.







## FLASHBACK

### EARLY DAYS OF THE ASSOCIATION

#### A COY.

##### L-R

Laurie Kelly, Peter Barlow, Noel Serafini, ??,  
Joe Fisk, Ken MacGowan, Mal Zimmerman,  
Tony Boulter, Bryan Todd, Bob Harvey-Hall,  
Paul Seravini, Karl Aschhoff.



#### B COY

##### Rear L-R

Joe Fisk, Viv Humphrys, Harry Green, ??, ??,  
Tony Milan, Karl Aschhoff

Peter Rogers,

##### Front L-R

Tom Dowling, John Holland, Don Clark

Simon Hue, Douglas Ng, Mike Griffin.



#### C COY

##### Rear L-R

Alan Wadsworth, Barry Wright, Joe Fisk, Peter  
Rogers, ???, Karl Aschhoff.

##### Front

Peter Harbeck, Stewart Lewis

**Please advise Editor if you are aware  
of the names of those listed as ??.**



**Where do you fit in? Recruiting  
How to recruit the right person for the job...**

*Put about 100 Bricks in some particular order in a closed room with an open window. Send 4 candidates into the room and close the door. Leave them alone and come back in 6 hours to analyse the situation.*

*If they stack and count the bricks: Assign to RAAOC*

*If they recount the bricks: Assign to Pay Corps*

*If they've done nothing useful except make a huge mess with the bricks: Assign to RAE*

*If they arrange the bricks in strange order: Assign to Clerks*

*If they make the bricks into a wall and insist on knocking it over with their heads: Assign to Infantry (without delay)*

*If they insist on eating the bricks with the belief of hardening up: Assign to Armour*

*If any bricks are broken and one candidate dobs them in: Assign him to MP's and the others to Infantry*

*If the candidates are throwing bricks in no particular direction, Assign to Artillery*

*If they've already knocked off for the day: Assign to the RAEME*

*If they're staring out the window: Assign to Air Force*

*If they're each sitting in a separate corner: Assign to Navy*

*Finally, if they are all sitting around talking to each other and no bricks have moved... congratulate them and send them to Duntroon.*

*A crusty old Army Warrant Officer found himself at a gala event hosted by a local liberal arts college.*

*There was no shortage of extremely young idealistic ladies in attendance, one of whom approached the Warrant Officer for conversation.*

*"Excuse me, Sergeant Major, but you seem to be a very serious man. Is something bothering you?"*

*"Negative, ma'am, Just serious by nature."*

*The young lady looked at his awards and decorations and said, "It looks like you have seen a lot of action."*

*"Yes, ma'am, a lot of action."*

*The young lady, tiring of trying to start up a conversation, said, "You know, you should lighten up. Relax and enjoy yourself."*

*The Warrant Officer just stared at her in his serious manner.*

*Finally the young lady said, "You know, I hope you don't take this the wrong way, but when is the last time you had s.e.x?"*

*"1955, ma'am."*

*"Well, there you are. No wonder you're so serious. You really need to chill out! I mean, no s.e.x since 1955!"*

*She took his hand and led him to a private room where she proceeded to "relax" him several times.*

*Afterwards, panting for breath, she leaned against his bare chest and said, "Wow, you sure didn't forget much since 1955."*

*The Warrant Officer said in his serious voice, after glancing at his watch,*

*"I hope not ma'am! it's only 2130 now."*

*You gotta love Military time*

**The following is evidence given by Pte A.L. Robinson, N.G.V.R. 240, in Brisbane, April, 1942, after his escape from Rabaul, the Tol massacre, and New Britain.**

**The conclusion was there was no evidence that he deserted.**

2<sup>nd</sup> Witness

N.G. 420 Private Robinson, A.L., N.G. Volunteer Rifles, formerly stationed at Rabaul, being duly sworn states:

1 I was a civil servant in the N.G. Administration at Rabaul, and have been in New Guinea since 1926. I joined the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles.

2. There was a large raid of Japanese planes when a copra ship in the harbour was set on fire. I do not remember the date but I am told it was the 20<sup>th</sup> January.

3. About two days later there was another raid when Praed Point Battery was destroyed. That, I think, was the day before the Japanese made a landing in New Guinea,

4 When the copra ship was set on fire the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles were not mobilised but they were mobilised shortly afterwards, on the afternoon of the 20<sup>th</sup>.

5. At the time of the Japanese first landing on a Friday, which, I believe, was the 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 1942, I was stationed with the N.G.V.R. On the beach between Toboi and Vulcan.

6. I am not quite sure of the status of the N.G.V.R. We were all volunteers and were attested, and were called together in a hurry without any written mobilisation orders that I know of. There was an extreme emergency as a Japanese landing was imminent and everything had to be done in a hurry,

7. Lieut. Archer of the N.G.V.R. was in charge of our party.

8. On the morning of the Japanese landing I was No.2 on a Vickers Gun Section and we intended to open fire on the party of Japanese that was landing in a small vessel, but through some mismanagement all the ammunition for our gun except 3 belts had been taken away so under Lieut. Archer's instructions the 3 belts of ammunition were used, the gun was put out of action, and we went bush.

9. For the next 10 days we wandered about in the bush and amongst the hills and had with us some rations we had obtained from Military trucks that we had come across, which had apparently been left for troops to get supplies from as they were going bush.

10. At the end of this time (10 days) we arrived at Toll Plantation and there first came in contact with the Japanese when they landed on the beach at Toll. There were about 50 in our party, most of whom were armed. There were one or two Tommy Guns and one or two rifles. There was a little ammunition, but not much.

11. There were about 5 Japanese boats which contained from 30 to 50 men each, or thereabouts.

12. At that time Lieutenants Grant and Irwin, who were Military Officers (I am not sure whether A.I.F. Or Militia) were in charge of the party.

13. We had arranged to take up defensive positions to do what we could, but Lieutenants Grant and Irwin conferred and decided it was not good going on further with our plans and they suggested we should "turn it in", and they gave orders accordingly.

14. As I was moving off to join the other party I was taken





prisoner by a Japanese Officer and a sentry. I was unarmed as the machine gun which I had been a member of the crew had been thrown away. It was about 0700 hours when I was taken prisoner and I was a prisoner until about 0900 hours on the following day.

15. I cannot complain of any ill treatment during the first day I was taken prisoner. We were fed in a sort of way and as far as they were able they did what they could for us.

16. The following morning the Japanese Officer came and enquired who were the two men waving white flags on the beach while they were landing. I did not know anything of this. He got the men who had waved the flags on the beach and wrote something in Japanese on two strips of white cloth and tucked them in the belt of each of the two men. We were then marched down to Toll Plantation house about half a mile away. When we arrived there a Japanese Officer wanted to know who comprised the party on the beach who were waving the white flags.

17. Eventually these were narrowed down to 20 and these 20 were separated from the rest of the party.

18. The first day the Japanese had taken all identification discs from the prisoners but the next day after the separation of the 20 men the identification discs were re-issued. On completion of this the 20 men were marched back in the direction from which we had come. The Japanese then took back the discs they had issued to the remainder of the party. I was with the party that was left.

19. The troops were then formed up four deep and marched off in lines of 10. Hands were then tied behind each man's back, and the contents of the pockets of all the men were taken away.

20. During the removal of the papers, etc. and the tying of our hands behind our back I did not see any sign of cruelty or ill treatment except in one case a Japanese handled one man in rather a rough manner and pushed his knee into this man's back to get a lever to tie the cords round his wrists.

21. We were then told to sit down in the shade of the house.

22. The Japanese sentry in charge of us got a 1 lb. Salmon tin which he filled with water and gave each man a drink, and lit a cigarette and gave each man a couple of puffs.

23. A short time after that we were formed up into single file with 3 Japanese ahead, then the 10 of us, and 3 more Japanese. All the Japanese had fixed bayonets and some were carrying spades.

24. Many of the men were roped together but the party I was with fortunately were not tied together.

25. It looked to me too much like a shooting party and I decided to break away if I could.

26. We were marched off through the plantation. I tried to lessen the cords but could not.

27. The path we were following went through shrubs and bushes and had an S bend. I suddenly darted from the line and took cover in the shrubs. I crouched down behind these shrubs and the party passed by and I was not observed.

28. While we were on the march and before I broke away we heard an agonised scream from the direction where the N.C.O's had been put.

29. While I was making my way round the plantation very carefully and with difficulty because of the creepers and cliffs, I heard about six or seven shots coming from the direction where the party I had left was heading for. I also heard three or four shots from the direction where the N.C.O's were.

*Two patients limp into two different medical clinics with the same complaint. Both have trouble walking and appear to require a hip replacement.*

*The FIRST patient is examined within the hour, is x-rayed the same day and has a time booked for surgery the following week.*

*The SECOND sees his family doctor after waiting 3 weeks for an appointment, then waits 8 weeks to see a specialist, then gets an x-ray, which isn't reviewed for another week and finally has his surgery scheduled for 6 months from then.*

*Why the different treatment for the two patients?*

*The FIRST is a Golden Retriever.*

*The SECOND is a Senior Citizen.*

*Next time take me to a vet!*

30. On the afternoon of the third day after I had made my escape I came into contact with some civilians on the bank of a creek about half a mile from the beach at Toll Plantation. They untied the cords which had all the time been on my wrists behind my back, and provided me with food.

31. By a remarkable series of instances I eventually got away from New Britain on board the Burns Philp boat "Lakatoi" and eventually arrived at Cairns.

32. While I was at the creek with the civilians near Toll Plantation different natives arrived with stories of the killing of our troops by the Japanese.

33. They said that a lot of our men had been killed by the Japanese and the mounds where they had been buried could be seen.

34. At one stage I went to a Mission for treatment for my wrists which were badly lacerated and found there Major Palmer an Army Medical Officer. He has as one of his patients a soldier who had been bayoneted. I had a conversation with this man but I do not know his name. The following is the gist of what he told me"

35. A Japanese Officer with a sword cut loose each man in the chain one by one and Japanese soldiers then bayoneted the troops. If a bayoneted man moved after the had been bayoneted they shot him and finished him off. He lay doggo and eventually got away.

36. I do not know of my own knowledge of any personnel killed or wounded except a man named Collins who had been shot in the shoulder and hands, and who got away from New Britain and is now in Australia.

37. The only man whose name I remember in the chain that left Toll Plantation was Jack Barry, of the N.G.V.R.

38. Amongst the 20 who had been taken away with the two men who had waved the white flag on the beach were the following:

- J. Street, N.G.V.R., Curator of Intestate Estates, at Rabaul.

- A man named Stewart who worked at Burns Philp.

39. I know that Lieutenants Archer, Grant and Irwin were all taken prisoner but do not know their fate. The Japanese were told that Grant and Irwin had been on the beach with the party that waved the white flags.

The evidence was read over to the witness.

(Signed) A.L. Robinson

Private N.G.V.R.



The remarkable series of instances mentioned in para 31 above includes being found by Frank Holland, later Lt Frank Holland, M.B.E., father of our Museum Curator John Holland, and being escorted by Frank from the South Coast of New Britain to the North Coast where they embarked on the "Lakatoi". After making his escape down the North Coast of New Britain Frank Holland was requested by Keith McCarthy, Assistant District Officer, if he would cross the Island to the South Coast and bring back any survivors he found. Holland did so and returned to the North Coast with nearly 30 survivors. In Frank Holland's book "El Tigre" he describes how Robinson "arrived at my camp, barefooted and in a very exhausted condition as he had lost his boots".

As Lt. Robinson in 1944 Robinson was awarded a Distinguished Conduct Medal for bravery during the US invasion of Manus, in which he started out as a Sgt.

After the War Robinson was reported by John Keenan, a former Assistant District Officer, as being killed by a native at Kandrian in West New Britain



Lt Robinson (L) with Maj. Keith McCarthy at Manus Island after the landing by the 2/5 Cavalry Regt, 1st Cav. Divn. On many occasions Robinson took his natives outside the perimeter with him at night to harass and attack the Japanese.

## LES IRVINE

### ANGAU—Continued.

It rained so often that our clothes stunk and our boots grew "whiskers". Many times I would have to go out in a four wheel drive ambulance in the middle of the night or early hours of the morning in pouring rain to pick up sick or injured soldiers and take them to our ADS.

The RAAF did a great job especially during the Battle of Bismarck Sea. Beaufort bombers would be taking off round the clock, even in the darkest hours and in pouring rain.

Where we were camped at Milne Bay, the place was alive with rats, and even under a net one could feel them run across one's body. We had a lot of Jap prisoners from the Battle of the Bismarck Sea. Many of them stunk and had maggots in their wounds. Many times we had to trek through the jungle in mud and water up to and over our knees. Sometimes we had to cross fast flowing streams and would hold hands to stay on our feet.

One day I had to pick up an unconscious soldier and take him to our ADS. The M.O. had a look at him and then I took him to our MDS. There were air-raid warnings for most of this morning and on the way to our MDS we passed the RAAF airstrip. Returning to our ADS and on passing the RAAF, an hundred Jap aircraft raid was in progress. I stood up in the front of the ambulance with the roof hatch open having a look when, all of a sudden, everything opened up, the 3.7s blasted away and bombs fell. I soon closed the hatch and sat down. The driver said to me "Will I pull over into the scrub?" I said "No, just go like hell". On arrival back at our ADS, the Jap bombers were in formation above us. A U.S. Lockheed Lightning aircraft got stuck into them, but the bombers stayed in formation. A lump of shrapnel about the size of a match box landed at my feet. Unfortunately, the Lightning crashed coming in to land to refuel and the pilot was killed.

The Jap bombers concentrated on the air strips and the shipping in Milne Bay Harbour. This day I had to go to Gilli Gilli and board a small boat manned by the RAN in aid of the ships hit in the harbour. A naval man said to me "It's safer out here on the waters than on the land". He didn't convince me. We were pulling men, some wounded, some probably dead, out of the water on our way to the ships. Nearing the ships we could hear men groaning. On going aboard we saw men with shrapnel hits from head to toe. Sometimes it was hard to know whether they were alive or dead. Those we found alive and conscious were given shots of morphine.



Les (front) with other ANGAU soldiers and native policeman at Yombes village, Aitape / Wewak area, March, 1945

These air raids were headlined in the Courier Mail newspapers during April 1943. Here are two: "Many Acts of Heroism in Milne Bay Raid", and "Japs Lose 30 Planes, 3 Ships Damaged".

From earlier battles there were lots of stinking, dead Japs near Gilli Gilli and our army graders and bulldozers had to cover them with soil. The Japs made no endeavour to bury their dead and bodies piled everywhere. The stench was terrible. We treated wounded Japs because we had to. I recall one had half his limb shot off.

Searchlights were checked every hour during the day and every half hour at night because the phone wires were being cut by Jap infiltrators. If a searchlight battery had its wires cut, it would operate only if a nearby battery was also operating.

While I was in Milne Bay, the June 1943 Army Routine Orders advertised for volunteers to join a new and special unit called Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit (ANGAU). This unit had priority for volunteers who were interviewed by a





*The real reason we can't have the ten commandments posted in a courthouse or Parliament is this:-*

*You cannot post:- "Thou shalt not steal". Thou shalt not commit adultery." and "Thou shalt not lie" in a building full of lawyers, judges and politicians.*

*Apparently it creates a hostile environment.*

senior officer from ANGAU. I applied on the basis that if accepted, my unit had to release me and I would be given a months trial, and if I didn't measure up, I would be returned to my original unit, the 7<sup>th</sup> Australian Field Ambulance. There were three others from my unit who were accepted and we four boarded a DC3 and flew to Port Moresby on 26<sup>th</sup> July 1943, my first plane trip.

We were supposed to attend an ANGAU school which was being erected near Kila Kila, just east of Port Moresby. We went with a group of natives by canoe and outrigger to Pari, to get timber from the houses which were vacated, to assist in the construction of the school. However we did not attend the school when it was completed because we were needed and posted to other areas.



. Les (L) with 3 members of 7th Aust Field Ambulance at Torokina, 1945

After a short stay around Port Moresby I was placed on movement to Wau. While waiting for transport I contracted dysentery and was admitted to an army field hospital outside Port Moresby, where I spent my twenty-first birthday. Someone else was sent to Wau in my place. I was then posted to various areas within about thirty miles of Port Moresby until I was sent home on leave, as I had already served over twelve months in Papua. At Port Moresby about this time, a large fire at a bomb dump had bombs exploding for two days.

On 7<sup>th</sup> September 1943, a bomb laden American Liberator bomber taking off from Port Moresby airstrip crashed into a convoy of four trucks of Australian troops awaiting transportation to fly into action in New Guinea. Between 100 and 120 Australians were killed.

My trip home was aboard a U.S. Liberty ship "The Paul Chan-

*As a test pilot climbs out of the experimental aircraft, having torn off the wings and tail in a crash landing the crash truck arrives. The rescuer sees a bloodied pilot and asks "What happened?" The pilot's reply "I don't know. I just got here myself"*

der" which was on its maiden voyage. This ship was tied up in the boiling sun with its holds covered with tarpaulins. There was a small opening for us to climb down the ladder into the hold allocated to us, where every inch had been taken up. At meal times, still down the hold, we would line up and take a chunk of bully beef with a handful of dog biscuits.

There was only one water tap on board and no toilets, just a small trough on a wooden frame and a hose running into it with water from the ocean. After we had eaten, my mate and I climbed up the ladder to see if we could find a space on deck. There was no space anywhere. Men even crawled between 44 gallon drums which were being used as life rafts. I don't know how we would have fared if the ship sunk.

It was very hot in the holds, so we pulled the tarpaulins half off to let in fresh air. It rained during the night but before the tarpaulins could be pulled across, the rain water which collected on them tipped into the hole over the not so smart, fortunately not us, and their gear.

Whether it was at 1am, 2am, or 3am, or whenever, there would be a line up at the only tap to get a wash. It was a total blackout at night. We eventually arrived off Bribe Island 6am on a Sunday morning. We thought we would be home for lunch. The anchor was dropped and we were still there at mid-day waiting for a pilot to come aboard. Late afternoon we steamed up Brisbane River. People were waving towels and sheets at us from the windows of their homes. I felt like shouting for joy and had a lump in my throat. On Sunday afternoon our convoy drove up Queen Street to the Exhibition grounds transport depot and leave. It was great to see my family and see how my young sister had grown

On completion of leave I was sent to Townsville by troop train and by ship "Taroona" to Port Moresby. I then flew to Lae and onto Finschhafen. After a short time at Finschhafen, I boarded a small ANGAU Water Transport boat and travelled to Lae. During the night I slept on top of 5 bags of rice which were alive with rats. When in Lae, I experienced several large earth tremors when everything shook and the trees moved about as if in a severe storm.



Les home on leave, 1945

Sometimes while camped at Lae, a DC3 would fly low and drop the Courier Mail newspaper almost at our feet, with a note inside "Best of luck from ANA Archerfield".

At Lae I was picked up one midnight and taken by truck to Nadzab airstrip to fly to my new posting at Aitape. After the plane was loaded with cargo, I tried to sleep on the floor of the plane, as it was not due to take off



until 0500 hours, but the mosquitoes kept me awake. While warming up the engines before take-off, the engines went "bang bang". I didn't like the sound of this and the Yank crew came out of the cockpit and said to me, the only passenger, "We'd probably make it but we'd better check it out". After some time, they decided to transfer everything to another plane. We took off, landing first at Madang then, after flying over some enemy territory, landed at Tadjai airstrip at 0930.

Apart from the RAAF, there were no Australian troops except for about 15 to 20 ANGAU personnel who were attached to two American divisions. Most of our men were not happy being with the Yanks.

Not all the natives were "fuzzy wuzzy angels". Many worked and collaborated with the Japs and were responsible for the death of at least one of our men. Many natives, especially Yakamuls, were tried by army courts and imprisoned on Ali Island where ANGAU had a native hospital and jail. We travelled to Ali Island by US barge and sometimes by native canoe and outrigger. Often at night tracer bullets could be seen against the blackened sky over the mainland.

The Japs were cannibals. When short of food, they would eat their dead, prisoners and even natives. One day, one of my mates came back from a patrol and said to me that he had seen an Australian soldier strung up with his heart and liver cut out, see "Webb's Japanese Atrocities Report".

After some months the Yanks prepared to move out and an advanced party of the Australian 6<sup>th</sup> Division moved in with us in October 1944. Some days later, three Commando Squadrons, the 2/7<sup>th</sup>, 2/9<sup>th</sup> and 2/10<sup>th</sup> landed at Aitape. Tokio Rose came on the air that night and said "A well known Australian Division has landed at Aitape and taken over from two American Divisions, which were hopeless". We had a good laugh. Normally, when our news was broadcast, the Japs would blot it out and Tokio Rose would give her version. Now that we were attached to 6<sup>th</sup> Division, our food for some time consisted of only two meals a day and a vitamin pill.

I found a Japanese book on Pidgin English, so whenever I spoke to a Jap prisoner I would talk in Pidgin.

One day a line of native carriers and some armed police boys accompanied by a few ANGAU men had to leave from our camp at Lemiang carrying food and ammunition. I called the roll of natives before they set off. This trip would take several days through knee high mud and water, with a climb of the Torricilli Mountains. After the line of natives had been gone for some time, Bill Banner asked me to go with him to catch up with them. As there were no roads, only swamps and jungle, the only way to catch up was to drive a jeep along the hard beach sand near the waters edge. We set off with Bill Banner driving the jeep as though there was no tomorrow.

I was sitting on the back seat with a Tommy gun. We caught up with the "line" at Yakamul where there was a German Mission, which was previously used by the Japs as their H.Q. The natives of Yakamul had collaborated with the Japs. From Yakamul the line moved on while Bill and I returned, less hurriedly, to Lemiang.

Bill Banner was a good and brave soldier and after the war was awarded the British Empire Medal. I felt honoured when he asked me to go with him on a few sticky occasions. We became good mates and I visited his cattle property in Victoria on my first holiday after the war in 1947. We corresponded with each other up to the time of his death.

Later, attached to a 6th Division commando squadron, three others and I, with a line of native carriers and armed police boys, left by truck from Lemiang. We travelled along jungle paths and over newly constructed bridges made from coconut tree trunks

and steel mesh by the army engineers, and headed for Yakamul where we slept on the floor of the German Mission house.

From Yakamul we walked inland through creeks and up and down mountains, which formed part of the Torricilli Range. At times we camped on cold mountain tops, then we would descend into valleys and creeks which wound around like a snake before having to climb again. In one creek, the natives told us there were a lot of Jap tracks. The four of us and the two armed police boys decided to split up and each guard a bend in the creek. After some short time, I decided this was madness as the Japs would only be a few yards away before being sighted. I beckoned to the others and they agreed that instead, we climb the creek bank and take cover in the bush. We waited for about an hour, nothing happened so we moved on. On the highest and steepest mountain the engineers had built a flight of 846 steps. When we were almost at the top of these, we came across a sign which said "You're nearly half way there". There are always some smart characters around! Before reaching our destination we passed through a number of villages including But, Balif, Tong, Yambes and Maprik

During most nights, the Australian 25 pounder artillery would be firing, which I didn't mind, but the ratta-tat-tat of machine guns and the crack of rifles seemed a little too close. A fellow who slept next to me shouted one night "Something bit me". It was a Jap bullet that luckily just grazed his arm.

While on top of the range, I saw a native who had a letter passed on from a native friend. I looked at the letter which gave details and sketches of Jap positions. I took the letter and passed it on to army intelligence. I also located one of our native carriers from a previous expedition, who had been reported missing.

By this time my clothes were "on the nose" as I had been wearing them for about six days. All I could do was to take them off at night and put them on in the morning, wet and covered in mud.

While up in the Toricilli Mountains, I came across some Indian labourers who were escaped prisoners of the Japs. They had been so badly treated by the Japs, they had to stay in the mountains to recuperate, as they were too weak to walk or be



*Eric Patterson & Les, Toricilli Mountains March 1945*

#### **Solve this mathematical problem in your head.**

Take 1,000 and add 40 to it. Add another 1,000. Then add 30. Then another 1000. Then add 20. Now add another 1,000. Then add 10.

What is the total.

Answer bottom next page





carried out on a stretcher.

As Jap forces had occupied native villages, ate their food and molested their women, the natives' allegiances easily swung to the Australians for assistance, and food for information. An Australian patrol found the bodies of two natives who had been shot by the Japs and both bodies had had all the flesh taken from their bodies. After a short time with this line of carriers and police boys, we retraced the torturous walk back to the coast and to Lemiang.

Later I left the Aitape/ Wewak area and flew to Lae as I was overdue for leave. From Lae I had to fly to Finschhafen to collect and escort four Jap prisoners to Brisbane. I spoke to the Japs in "Pidgin" and made them carry my gear. We landed in Townsville at Garbutt Airfield at 1800 hours. The plane had engine trouble and the RAAF mechanics decided to do repairs before we flew onto Brisbane. When the time approached 2200 hours, the crew decided to stay the night in Townsville. I phoned the military police at Kissing Point to come and lock up my prisoners for the night. To my disappointment when the police van arrived at Garbutt, there was only the driver, no other escort, which meant I had to travel to the lock-up. I had already put my rifle away as I intended to go to Hermit Park to see friends, but the driver Corporal had a different idea and handed me his rifle and told me that I had to guard the POWs overnight. I said "Not me, I've had these Japs since 0500 hours this morning, I'll see you tomorrow". I hitched-hiked into town but as it was too late to call my friends, I slept on the floor of an empty shop in Flinders Street. In the morning I visited my friends who were very cross with me for not sleeping with them. After a short stay I headed back to Garbutt Airfield and again took charge of my prisoners. We then departed Townsville for Amberley. On arrival, I phoned the military police in Brisbane and the prison van arrived at Amberley just on dark, when a repeat of what happened at Garbutt occurred. I eventually got to the Gaythorne POW Camp, and after handing over the Japs, I got a lift to the Valley where I caught a tram home. This was the 20<sup>th</sup> February 1944.

After 12 days leave, I reported back to the army at Wacol, was taken to a wharf at South Brisbane and boarded the Dutch Ship "Van Houtin" for my third trip to Papua and New Guinea, stopping at Bowen for three days. There were live sheep on board and the smell was not "that great". After losing sight of land, the ship had trouble with its rudder. The ships officers were concerned about enemy activity and were out on deck looking through binoculars. We had no naval escort, only a Catalina aircraft above. We arrived in New Guinea, passing Milne Bay on the way to Lae.

From Lae I flew to ANGAU HQ at Finschhafen. I was told that I was being sent back to the Aitape/Wewak area, but I requested to be sent to the Solomon Islands as I had four cousins there, as well as my previous unit. I was sent by plane and landed at Torokina on the western side of Bougainville. Unfortunately I was unable to catch up with any of my cousins, one of whom had been killed in action there. However, I managed to meet up with my old unit, the 7<sup>th</sup> Australian Field Ambulance.

Even though the temperature was always hot, one night it was hotter than usual and we could smell sulphur in the air. Mt Bogana which always had smoke pouring out of it flared that night, and we were ordered to "stand to". For about a week it looked as though snow was falling, except it was ash from the volcano and it was grey.

***To be continued***

If, like most people, you came up with 5,000 go back and have another go.

The correct answer is 4,100.

### **More on Roy Sheargold, Dec'd. Ex PIR**

"World War Two Veteran" was emblazoned on Roy's cap every Anzac Day. It defined Roy and it defined his place in our history. He wore it proudly when he marched with the Pacific Islands Regiment Assn and he revelled in the heartfelt gratitude shown by those who lined the city streets and cheered him on every year.

Roy saw active service for 1540 days during WW2. He served as Acting Adjt in 2nd Aust Inf Bn, was a Staff Capt 1st Aust Inf Bde, Adjt in PIR Depot Bn, Acting Staff Capt in PIR, a PI Comd in the PIB and Acting Adjt in the PIB.

He was:- Cpl at 17, Sgt at 18, Lieut at 19, Capt at 20, Staff Capt at 21, Acting Staff Capt & Acting Adjt at 22,

He was a proud member of the Papuan Infantry Bn and a wonderful supporter of the PNG Infantry Bn Assn, and the PIR Assn after the war. Roy, after his kippers and claret breakfast was always suitably fortified to march with us, and in his later years he came along in his wheelchair, pushed by his grandson, Michael.

Roy's life was a life well lived and a life dedicated to the service of his country and his local community.

### **LEST WE FORGET**

Peter Porteous

### **LIGHT HORSE CHALLENGE SHOOT - BOONAH**

This .303 shoot is hosted annually by the Boonah Gun Club, and is for Gun Club members, serving and ex-military personnel. There are 3 men's, one women's and an encouragement trophy.

Firing is from a laying or sitting supported position, and contestants have 2 minutes to fire 20 rounds.

On 18th July the Assn was represented by Mal and Mike Zimmermann and Ian Thompson. The original date set was 22nd May, but due to inclement weather was postponed. However a practice shoot was conducted which proved very enjoyable.

Contestants were an impressive contingent from the Fassifern Light Horse Detachment, Boonah Gun Club and our contingent.

A couple of real .303 experts were on hand, including a gunsmith and one ARA Light Horseman who had an impressive collection of unusual .303 rifles, including a sniper's rifle and one set up for firing volleys. They were happy to share their knowledge and kept us well entertained while waiting our turn on the firing mound.

On the day conditions were very light with variable wind, and alternating bright sunshine and cloud. For those of us with less than perfect eyesight it was a bit of a lottery, it being easier to define the target in bright sunshine.

Top scores were 168/200, 158/200 and 156/200, with our shooters Mal Z 98/200, Ian T 70/200 and Mike Z 68/200.

The Boonah Gun Club is looking at mid year practice shoots, and possibly other .303 competitions to which Assn members would be welcome.

Ian Thompson.

Photos next page



## MUSEUM REPORT, 2011.

The Assoc. is fortunate to have such a committed Committee that are willing, at times at very short notice, to assist at the museum.

We have been active with groups from Probus Clubs, RSLs, nursing homes and Scout and Cub groups. We have had 10 groups so far in 2011 with 3 more to go, and these visits have raised approx \$2,000.

Why don't you ask your local Rotary, Lions, Probus, RSL Clubs etc to pay us a visit? Just look up the phone book and make a call.

We have conducted 6 sausage sizzles at Greenbank RSL so far this year—2 more to go. Funds raised from the BBQ's to date are \$3,500.

With the above sources of funding the museum is self funding and not a drain on Assn funds.

Two display cabinets have been purchased and two more donated. Many donations of memorabilia have been made and placed on display. Displays are regularly changed so if you have not been there for a while please feel free to give me a ring.

We applied to DVA for a grant of \$1500 to produce and erect a new honour board. Thanks to Lee Eastwood, Paul Brown and Bob Collins this was done in the required time and within budget. I say "thank you" to the many who have contributed to the running of the museum, but there are some who deserve a special mention.

- Jessica Harrington—who resumed cataloguing the library books—over 400 now.
- Phil Ainsworth and his Company King & Co for producing the brochures for the museum and for other donations.
- Pam Wright has once again been a staunch supporter, and, even with her health problems, still finds time to cook cakes, slices and other goodies for our visitors.
- Brian Collin, from Greenbank RSL, assists with his computer skills and has almost completed the museum inventory of photos.

- John Winterbotham assists with the cataloguing of the museum photos.

If we had to pay for all the volunteer labour the museum could not exist.

We have been contacted by relatives of crew members the USS "Sturgeon", the submarine that sank the Japanese prisoner of war ship "Montivideo Mauru" and they donated memorabilia to the museum.

We obtained a number of items from the "Bunker" museum in Maryborough, which closed down and these include replica medals & photos of Billy Singh, a sniper from WW1 and Albert Jacka VC, MC and bar, plus a number of North Vietnamese meals. Bernie Arnold also sent us a variety of items from Adelaide.

The challenge for 2012 will be setting up museum succession.



One of the many items in your museum. Tan Hob nail boots. I recall being issued with a similar set in 1959 (PNGVR) and had to remove the brass hob nails and blacken the boots.



Other items in the museum—WW2 Japanese badges of rank



Boonah shooters at the practice shoot—Oct 2011  
L—R  
Ian Thompson,  
Mal Zimmermann,  
Mike Zimmermann,  
Phil Ainsworth



Ian Thompson at the practice shoot at Boonah with his own 1917 Vintage 303 rifle—Oct 11

Photograph by Phil Ainsworth



**John Holland,  
Curator.**

*Japanese water bottle on display at your museum*





| CALL AND INSTRUCTIONS   |  | IN   |  | OUT                     |  | MESSAGE FORM |  | GR.      |  | Solid Sp. |  | OFFICE DATE STAMP |  |
|---|--|------|--|-------------------------|--|--------------|--|----------|--|-----------|--|-------------------|--|
|   |  | COPY |  |                         |  |              |  |          |  |           |  |                   |  |
| (ABOVE THIS LINE IS FOR SIGNALS USE ONLY.)  |  |      |  |                         |  |              |  |          |  |           |  |                   |  |
| TO 9 DIV  |  |      |  | FROM 25 BDE             |  |              |  | Sept 45  |  |           |  |                   |  |
| 25 BDE  |  |      |  | in occupation           |  |              |  | 1100 hrs |  |           |  | 16 Sept           |  |
| (.)   |  |      |  | Thanks for Army support |  |              |  | mid-day  |  |           |  |                   |  |
| but please don't blow our   |  |      |  | shithouse               |  |              |  |          |  |           |  |                   |  |
| down  |  |      |  | (.)                     |  |              |  |          |  |           |  |                   |  |
| THE MESSAGE MAY BE SENT BY WHITTIES IF LIKELY TO BE INTERFERED BY THE WIRELESS OR BY THE WIRELESS MAY BE SENT BY WHITTIES.<br>(Sgt) R.H. MARSON Lt-Col<br>2/25 Aust Inf Bn (BELOW THIS LINE IS FOR SIGNALS USE ONLY.)<br>T.H.I.<br>T.O. |  |      |  |                         |  |              |  |          |  |           |  |                   |  |

*This message was sent by the C.O 2/25th Bn, 25 Brigade, 7th Div, upon their occupation of Lae on 16 Sep. 1943.*

**Raymond Edward Dalton.**

**159540/859540 Sgt PNGVR**

**N281388/NX109475 Spr 2/4 Aust Fd Sqn, 7 Div. AIF**

**1922-2011**

Ray was born in Darllinghurst (Sydney) on 29 Oct 1922, the eldest of 3 children. He had the usual life of a child growing up around Clovelly, Bondi, North Bondi and Waverley. At 16 he joined his father at the Australian Hotel, training to be a waiter. However when his father opened a restaurant in Leeton Ray joined him again.

Ray was 19 when he tried to join the AIF during WW2. His father refused permission so he joined the Militia and later was posted to Thursday Is. As a member of the Fortress Engineers, Torres Straight Force in the AIF, His Militia service was from Oct 41 to Aug 42 with AIF service from Aug. 42 to Dec.45, including operational service on Morotai and Borneo. He was discharged in June 46.

After the War he trained as a motor mechanic and then worked around Sydney, mainly in nightclubs as a waiter, and had great stories to tell about the interesting characters in Kings Cross. He then joined a shipping line going from Sydney to Perth as a steward. Later he transferred to Burns Philp on the Island ships and worked as a steward around the Pacific Islands.

He met Norma on one of his trips and within 6 months they married. They moved to Lae, New Guinea, where he took up his old mechanic trade and travelled around the islands repairing trucks and petrol pumps for Vacuum Oil. Peta and Greg were born in Lae. Ray joined the PNGVR in Lae and always kept a close



*Reserve Forces Day, Sydney, 2009. Assn members from the left are: Jes Hansford, Ray, Noel Serafini, Richard Hart, Bob Collins and John McGrath.*

association and mateship with his old comrades. At A Coy he was one of several WW2 veterans and very popular with the young soldiers.

After 5 years the family returned to Sydney and lived in Ryde. He worked for a friend who had a building company and eventually started his own company "Dalton Construction & Plumb-ing".

Ray was interested in Junior football and was a life member of Balmain Rugby League. He also completed a course with DVA and became an advocate at Ryde RSL, helping veterans with their entitlements, until he was too ill to continue. During his membership of Ryde RSL he served as Treasurer, Pension & Welfare Officer and Historian.

In July, 2010, he wrote to Bob Harvey-Hall telling him he had attended a wonderful Reserve Forces Day.. "After the March we were invited to meet the Governor General for Afternoon tea. She kindly allowed me to have a photo taken with her. She was very gracious and requested that I place my arm around her."

Ray handled his illness with tenacity and dignity. He never complained—just got on with things. He attended "The San" hospital for seven years, three days a week, and expressed his respect and appreciation for the nurses and doctors.

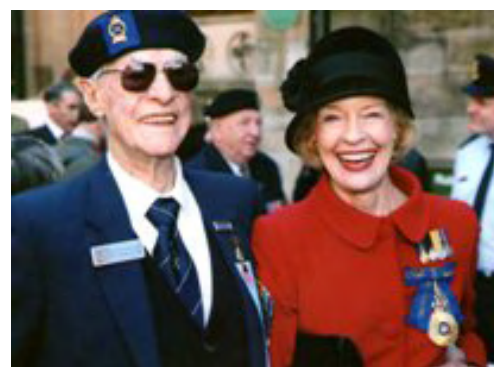
Ray died on 12th Sept, 2011.

**Lest we forget**

Bob Harvey-Hall

*Ray with Governor General Quentin Bryce.*

*July 2010*



*Ray with Gen. Gillespie, Comd. Aust Army and Owen Bennett, original 39th Bn man on the Kokoda Trail*



*Ray with the Governor of NSW, Marie Bashir.*



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## **FUNCTION DATES**

Sat Dec 3. 12 Noon

Committee Meeting  
Museum—Wacol.

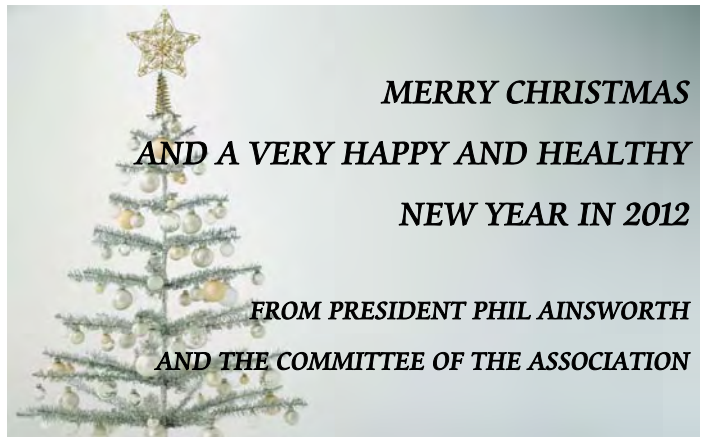
Sat 30 Jun 2012.

Luncheon National Press Club Canberra.

Sun 1 Jul. 2012

Dedication of the "Montevideo Mauru" Memorial at the Aust. War Memorial, Canberra.

Further details on Page 1



**MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND A VERY HAPPY AND HEALTHY  
NEW YEAR IN 2012**

**FROM PRESIDENT PHIL AINSWORTH  
AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE ASSOCIATION**

## **WANTED**

Photos and articles from your PNGVR days for publication in HTT.

Group photos should have the names of those in the photo and date and place where it was taken.

PIR photos and articles also urgently required as I do not have anything for publication from our PIR members.

Email to [bob-collins@bigpond.com](mailto:bob-collins@bigpond.com)

or post to 45 Capricornia,

121 Surf Parade,

BROADBEACH, QLD. 4218.



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**Bob Collins—Editor**