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

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

On 20 March 2012, a press release was issued by the Japanese Embassy advising 4,497 Australian Prisoner of War cards and 16 other unspecified items, were handed over to the Australian Government . Seventy years ago on 20 March, the Motor Vessels Lakatoi and Gnair departed the Vitu Islands, New Britain with 214 Rabaul survivors aboard. The Mv Lakatoi arrived in Cairns eight days later . It was not until 9 April when Mv Laurabada collected 153 Rabaul survivors, 137 soldiers and 16 civilians, from Jacquinot Bay, New Britain. Most servicemen and civilians were captured . Many of these POW cards may contain information about those who did not survive during and in the aftermath of the 23 January 1942 Japanese invasion of Rabaul and New Guinea Islands and the sinking of the Montevideo Maru. Incidentally, Don Wall's book "Heroes at Sea" identifies 1,800 Australian POWs and civilian internees who were lost at sea during WW2 in Japanese" hell ships" sunk by US submarines. If correct, 58% of those lost went down in the Montevideo Maru .

Officially 34 of those lost were members of NGVR; unofficially, this number may be as high as 80.

The 70th Anniversary is an important year as the Memorial to those lost in these events will be dedicated 1 July in the grounds of the AWM, Canberra; important because there will be several survivors and many of the close relatives and friends of the victims will be present, all of whom are now elderly and frail. The dedication will be the culmination of the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Society three and half years work to have the Australian Government acknowledge the loss and pass it's condolences to the relatives and friends. The Memorial will be the physical point of reference to this public acknowledgement of their sacrifice. Our Association can be proud of it's part in helping to achieve these things on behalf of it's many NGVR members who lost their life, either in battle or as Prisoners of War.

On this note, the Association's 70th Anniversary dinner to commemorate the loss of the NGVR men in Rabaul, New Guinea Islands and the sinking of the Montevideo Maru and to acknowledge the achievements of NGVR's " Keepers of the Gate" on the NG mainland will be held at 6pm, Friday 1 June at the Greenbank RSL drop in centre, behind the Services Club. Because of the occasion, the function will be a formal Regimental Dinner. All members, friends and their partners are invited to attend. Dress will be Mess kit or Anzac Day Dress with miniatures. The guest speaker, Phillip Bradley whose latest book covers all the PNG WW2 campaigns, will focus on NGVR mainland activities. A three course sit down dinner has been arranged with drinks available. The cost is a low $35 per person. Bob Collins 0413 831 397 or bob-collins@bigpond.com is co-ordinating the Dinner. As the venue will accommodate only 50, book early by sending your cheques to either Bob or our Treasurer Doug Ng .

Your Committee held it's second meeting for the year on 10 March. Treasurer Doug's financial statement indicates the Association is financially strong and capable of supporting a robust agenda of activities. Unfortunately, the completion of the Museum ramp has been delayed because of rain . Dry weather is required for a crane to be used to hold up the heavy prefabricated components for assembly. When the rain goes away, two working bee day will be arranged to complete the ramp. The Museum is active with a recent visit by 200 children from Centenary State School as well as visits from smaller groups. Curator John announced other forthcoming visits by scouts and older groups. The committee expressed its thanks to the Curator and those members who assist John during these hectic visits.

A most enjoyable Bush Dinner attended by 34 was held at the Association's friends, Ted and Heather's home Jimboomba on Saturday 17 March. Thank you .

Our Anzac Day and a Samarai Reunion arrangements are detailed on page 15 ,with other function dates and timings on the rear cover . Please diarise these.

This recent photograph was taken in General Macarthur's Brisbane office, the ex-AMP building corner Queen and Edward Streets, which was used during 1942- 44 when he was running the South West Pacific War. Graham Davis, a freelance journalist from Navy News is sitting in the big man's chair with Bruce Petty, ex- USS Yorktown from New Zealand and me standing. A visit to this Museum is a worthwhile Sunday activity, and it has a senior's entry rate.

Paul Johnson who was recruited from PNGAA has been working on our website www.pngvr.com for some time. He has encountered some difficulties but is hopeful of soon having a much improved site up and running again.

My family and I thank those who expressed their condolences, kind words, thoughts and support to us, during the recent loss of my wife and their mother and grandmother, Joan. Thank you so much.

Phil Ainsworth
March 2012

PNG Historic Military Events

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

FEBRUARY

2,1942—First Japanese air attack on Port Moresby, New Guinea

3,1942—Australians on Ambon surrender to the Japanese.

3, 1943—Australians counter-attack at Wau, New Guinea

5,1943—Australian troops repulse Japanese forces at Wau, New Guinea, after reinforcements land by air under heavy enemy fire—fighting on the airstrip itself as troops deplane.

7,1943—Japanese forces evacuate Guadalcanal.

8,1942—Japanese forces invade Singapore.

15,1942—Singapore surrenders to the Japanese. Troops of Australian 8th Division begin years of captivity and mistreatment.

17,1942—Australian Prime Minister demands from Churchill the return of the Australian 6th and 7th Divisions to Australian from the Middle East for defence against the Japanese advances.

18,1941—8th Australian Division disembarks at Singapore.

19,1942—Darwin bombed by Japanese aircraft—8 ships sunk—over 240 killed.

19,1943—Commonwealth Government passes legislation to allow conscripts to serve outside Australian territories.

20,1941—Training service for Militia doubled.

20,1942—Japanese forces invade Portuguese Timor.

23,1942—Main Australian force on Timor surrenders to the Japanese But Australian Commando unit continues to fight.

26,1943—Australian troops in battle for Wau, New Guinea.

29,1944—ANGAU and Royal Papuan Constabulary personnel land on Los Negros Island with US forces.

MARCH

2,1943—The Battle of the Bismark Sea begins with a convoy sighting

3,1943—to 5th—Allied aircraft attack Japanese convoy in Battle of the Bismark Sea—all 8 enemy transport ships and 4 destroyers sunk. Remaining 4 destroyers seriously damaged.

7,1942—Japanese forces land at Salamaua and Lae, New Guinea.

8,1942—Japanese occupy law and Salamaua, New Guinea.

8,1944—US 41st Infantry Division moves from Australia to Cape Cretin, New Guinea, to concentrate for attack on Hollandia.

10,1942—Japanese forces land at Finschaffen , New Guinea.

10,1944—Japanese capture Hill 260 at Cape Totkina, Bougainville, from US forces.

15,1943—Troops of 162nd Infantry, 41st US Division, occupy some positions at mouth of Mambare River, New Guinea.

16,1943—Flight Lieutenant William E Newton, 22 Squadron, RAAF, VC at Salamaua, New Guinea. Shot down on 18th and captured—executed by beheading by the Japanese on 29 March.

17,1942—US General Douglas MacArthur arrives in Australia.

20,1945—Australian troops land at Soroken Peninsular, Solomons.

21,1944—Troops of 7th Australian Division and US 32nd Division link for first time 8 miles from Yalau Plantation, New Guinea.

22,1945—Corporal Reginald R Rattey, 25th (Darling Downs) Battalion, 7th Brigade, 3rd Division, AMF, VC at Bougainville

25,1945—Lieutenant Albert Chowne, 2/2nd Battalion, 6th Division, AIF, posthumous VC at Dagua, New Guinea.

27,1939—Test flight of Australia's first locally built military aircraft, the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation CAC13 "Wirraway".

27,1942—Australian General Thomas Blarney appointed.

28,1942—First shipload of US troops arrives in Sydney, NSW.

30,1945—Australian troops win the Battle of Puriata River, Bougainville, against the Japanese.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

AN ARMY COOK

Shui Hong WONG

NG 2448

I was born in Madang on 3rd June, 1918. My father, Wong Chong, already had one son in China, on Hainan Island, but had remarried in Madang and I was number 4 child with 5 brothers and 3 sisters. My mother was Indonesian and was always referred to as 'Simba'. My father had been a diesel mechanic working on ships in Singapore and then taken a job on a ship which sailed to America but left that to take up a position in Madang with the Catholic Mission.

I went to the Catholic Mission school at Sek (also known as Alexishafen, on the coast north of Madang). We left Madang for Rabaul when I was 7 years old and I then went to Yang Ching, the Catholic Primary school in Rabaul. My father had taken up a position as a diesel motor mechanic with Burns Philp in Rabaul working on trucks.

After I left school my first job was as a barman but I did not last long there and resigned to become a carpenter. I did not like this either and again resigned to move to Bulolo where I obtained work as an assistant cook with Bulolo Gold Dredging in the mess there. There were 3 cooks and myself working in the mess. We worked one of the two shifts per day, either in the morning or the afternoon, often working 7 days per week. Any time we wanted off we had to arrange amongst ourselves. We were all single and all lived in the mess. Any time I got off I spent shooting pigeons for my own eating.

There were only 4 Chinese in Bulolo at the time,

After three years in Bulolo I took three months holiday back in Rabaul and then returned to Bulolo with BGD.

I Join the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles (NGVR)

On 29th January 1942, after the Japanese invaded Rabaul, I joined the NGVR in Bulolo and was immediately posted as a cook. I did not carry out any infantry or other military training – just carried on cooking for the Officers and Sergeants.

My reasons for joining were quite simple:-

- My family was all still in Japanese occupied Rabaul.

- I was born in New Guinea so I could not see myself running away.

- I was quite patriotic at the time and accepted that I would do my bit for my adopted King and country.

It was unusual in New Guinea at the time for a Chinese national to join the NGVR as in Rabaul and Lae they were not accepted although Rabaul formed the Chinese Auxiliary Aid Detachment (CAAD) which consisted mainly of Chinese with European Officers and instructors. However in Bulolo the four Chinese living there all joined NGVR, Kim Thai Chan, Chou Lai Seeto and Chui Kitt Seeto, two brothers who were tailors in the town, and myself.

I was immediately sent down to Mumeng and after a short time was then sent to Buang down towards the Markham River. There were probably about 10 or so NGVR at Buang at the time.

NGVR was split into two groups at this stage – the one I was in went down to the Markham River and the other down to Mubo, towards Salamaua.

After several months I was sent from Buang to Lae. I was given 10 cargo bois and had to take 10 cartons of spirits down to Lae – the trip took two full days, and I stopped overnight at one of the NGVR camps on the way. It was very small, consisting of only 2 or 3 soldiers. I was not told what the spirits were but had to deliver them to Capt John Simpson, who was at the time in charge of the diminished Lae garrison – the other NGVR from Lae had moved up the Markham River to Heaths Plantation, Jacobsens Plantation, Nadzab and Camp Diddy.

Move to Camp Diddy

I did not stay very long in Lae and again spent the time cooking, then I was ordered to move to Camp Diddy which, once again, I had to walk to. I had only been a day at Camp Diddy when I heard the sound of bombs falling on Lae. The Japanese had launched their first air raid on Lae which was evacuated not long afterwards when the Japanese landed a sizeable force and occupied the town.

Camp Diddy was in the foothills of the Wain Mountains, on the Northern side of the Markham River. This was quite a sizeable camp and the closest permanent camp to Lae manned by the NGVR, where the Japanese were established, after Heaths and Jacobsens Plantations had also been occupied by the Japanese. Elements of the 2/5th Independent Company, which had been sent forward to Wau after the Japanese landings in Lae, were also based at Damp Diddy.

I was the cook at Camp Diddy and did not receive a lot of assistance – a couple of cook bois for preparation of vegetables etc. There was no problem with supplies as, when Lae had been declared under Military Control, all the major stores had been abandoned and the NGVR were able to help themselves to what they wanted. However, there was a shortage of fresh meat and vegetables, with most of my cooking coming out of tins. Occasionally the soldiers shot a pig, and even more rarely a beast was slaughtered and this, of course, was special for us to have fresh meat. We had a lot of rice, of course, and I would wander into the local native villages to purchase vegetables and kau-kau. Some of the villages had been abandoned so I used to help myself to whatever I could find in the gardens in those cases. Often the NGVR and later the 2/5th Independent Company soldiers would come back from patrols etc. and, if they asked for a meal, I would prepare it for them. However one fire was usually going most of the day with hot water for a cup of tea or coffee. The kitchen was in a kunai hut so there was never a problem with cooking in wet weather. Either the soldiers or some of the bois who were in the camp would collect wood.

One day I was out in one of the villages collecting local food. We had a lot of flour in the kitchen at Camp Diddy and I was sitting down thinking what I could do with it when I realised that I had no yeast so could not make bread. I was quite depressed about this and, being quite a religious person, I prayed "Lord Jesus please help me on how to make bread without yeast". Then something seemed to enter my head – I stood up and went over and picked up a lemon which I had collected in the native garden and squeezed it. All I had was a couple of empty beer bottles, so I put some lemon juice in one. Then I put in some sugar and some flour, then put a piece of rag in the neck as a lid – I had no proper lid. The next morning when I woke up – nothing – so I started again with a new bottle and left the old one sitting. On the second morning again nothing so I commenced a third bottle. The third morning my kitchen was all white – it was working – so on the fourth morning I made bread – it was beautiful. From my point of view it was disappointing that nobody thought to ask me how I had made bread without yeast, but I guess that nobody knew much about what I was doing in the kitchen as long as the meals were good.

There were some skirmishes between the NGVR and 2/5th Ind Coy and the Japanese in late May and early June, 1942, and about 6th June, 1942, a Japanese reconnaissance plane flew low directly over Camp Diddy and the Commanding Officer of NGVR, Major Edwards, withdrew the wireless equipment, the sick soldiers and most of the stores to the south side of the Markham river. I suppose that the plane was investigating smoke coming regularly from the one place (this would have been a result of my cooking fires). As the cook I was not required to remain in such an advanced base and I was withdrawn with all the others to Wampit, between the Markham River and Wau. The morning after the plane flew over Camp Diddy it was bombed by the Japs but I was not there – I had left for Wampit, traveling with only one native assisting me with carrying my cooking gear.

I never had to worry about obtaining supplies, other than foraging from time to time for local vegetables or native food. This was the responsibility of whoever was in charge of the camp at the time. All I used to do was travel from place to place with a few local bois for carrying my cooking gear, and settle in to cooking duties.

A Short stay at Wampit.

I was at Wampit with another group of NGVR, some police bois and several natives, and my duties were to cook as well as control the airstrip. Like most of the airstrips under the control of NGVR at the time obstacles, mainly timber logs, were placed across the airstrip. It was not used very often but when it was the plane wanting to land would circle the airstrip three times. We would identify it as friendly and then move all the obstacles so it could land. I had no radio so had no knowledge of when planes were due to come in.

It was at Wampit that I started to come down sick. I was passing blood and, luckily for me, Sgt-Maj. Whittaker (NGVR), who was in charge of the Camp, also had quite a bit of medical knowledge and he found that I had Blackwater Fever. I lay on a stretcher for 14 days not eating anything at all but tomato soup and drinking tomato juice.

Medical Evacuation to Australia

After 14 days on a stretcher I had a few days further convalescing and then was considered well enough to walk to Bulolo, and then was driven to Wau where I was evacuated by air to Port Moresby. I never was admitted to hospital at any of the above places but was medically examined.

From Port Moresby I was evacuated on a Dutch boat to Brisbane. The boat called in at Townsville for a few days and then continued to Brisbane. We were allowed off the boat in Townsville but after a couple of days we continued on to Brisbane.

On arrival in Brisbane I was given 14 days leave, which I spent in Sydney where one of my sisters was living, and on return from leave reported to the 101st Convalescent Camp at Coorparoo, not as a patient but as a cook and was allocated to the Officers Mess. I must state here that I do not know a lot about Chinese cooking at all but cooked normal Australian style recipes. Again there were two shifts per day and you either worked the morning or the afternoon shift. The shifts were worked out by the Officer-in-charge and there was a bit of swapping of shifts from time to time. I stayed in the Camp, and regularly visited one of my cousins in South Brisbane, who had a restaurant in the city.

The 101st Convalescent Camp eventually moved to Burleigh Heads, as it was called then - on the banks of the Tallebudgera Creek. I enjoyed this a lot and had a wonderful time here as it gave me a chance to do a lot of fishing in the Tallebudgera Creek which was right beside the Camp. Again I was cooking for the Officers Mess.

From here I was transferred to Greenslopes Hospital, the 112th Australian General Hospital, again as a cook in both the Officers Mess and the main mess, and was at Greenslopes Hospital when the War finished. While at Greenslopes I attended a specialist cooks course, Number 16 Cooking Course, at Redbank which qualified me for a higher rate of pay as a specialist cook.

During my time in Brisbane I used to sneak out of camp every Saturday, have a few drinks which usually consisted of three rums and three beer chasers, and then go to the races. I was a keen race goer and punter.

I Return to New Guinea

When the War was over I was concerned about my family who had all (except for the brother in China and the sister in Sydney) been in Rabaul when the Japs occupied it, so I applied for a transfer back to New Guinea straight away. I must have been the only soldier in the Australian Army who applied for a move to New Guinea as tens of thousands of soldiers at the time were trying to come home from there. My family had been living in a bush camp outside Rabaul with a number of other Chinese and, when the War had finished, came back to Rabaul. One of my brothers was a mechanic and it was easy for him to get a job in Rabaul at the time.

In late 1945 I was posted to the 118th Australian General Hospital at Nonga, Rabaul, this time as a cook for the Nursing Sisters Mess. I was still a Private at this time as I never wanted any rank or the responsibilities that came with it. I was happy as a cook and never had any trouble with senior cooks except when I got a bit cheeky and deserved it.

I found all my family still in Rabaul, with the exception of Number 2 brother, the oldest of the New Guinea born family, Willie Wong, who was a merchant sailor and apparently was on a W.R. Carpenter cargo boat, the 'Desikoko' sailing somewhere in New Guinea when it was bombed and he was never seen again. I tried to find out further details about his death but, to date, have not been able to find out any more than this.

I was discharged from the Army in April, 1946, having been brought down to Brisbane by boat to be discharged. On discharge I spent about 3 months doing nothing much in Australia and then sailed back to New Guinea and went to Bulolo with Bulolo Gold Dredging, as a cook in the men's mess.

My Discharge Certificate No 365661 reads:-

NG 2448 Private Shui Hong Wong

New Guinea Volunteer Rifles

Served in the Citizen Military Forces from 29 Jan 1942 to 12 Apr 1946

A total effective period of One thousand five hundred and thirty five days

which included Active service

in Australia for 1174 days and Outside Australia for 361 days

My height was then 5ft 1 and a half inches so I was never very tall.

One of the interesting things about my discharge certificate is that the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles were supposed to have been disbanded in 1943, but according to my discharge certificate, I was still in the NGVR when I was discharged.

Post War in Papua New Guinea.

After some 12 months in Bulolo I resigned from Bulolo Gold Dredging and in, 1947, went to Lae where I worked as a cook in the Mess of the Dept of Works and Housing. From there I went into the Hotel Cecil for a while.

After I left the Hotel Cecil I spent about a year doing odd jobs and then was assisted by a number of the Chinese community in Rabaul to open a trade store at Rawuwu, near Bita Paka War Cemetery. In 1962 I met and married my wife Yig Yung Seeto, in Rabaul . She had come from Hong Kong on a holiday to Kavieng and Rabaul to visit some relatives. I only met her 7 days before she was due to return to Taiwan. We struck it off well and I then approached the Immigration Dept to have her visitors visa extended. I think that being a re-

Shui Hong Wong in Rabaul, 1946, with father mother and sisters

turned soldier helped my cause, as they were very co-operative and extended her visa by 3 months, during which time we were married.

I loved fishing and often used to catch a big esky of fish near the trade store.

We later sold the trade store in Rabaul and opened one at the four – mile in Port Moresby. The business was running well but after Independence we encountered all sorts of trouble with stealing and raskols breaking into the store etc so in 1977 we sold the store in Port Moresby and moved to Australia.

We have one son Eric who works with computers. He and his wife Anita had 3 children, Daniel, Kevin and Justin. Daniel played basketball, took up Kung Fu and Dragon Dancing and loved fishing. When he was aged 14 in his second year at high school he developed a brain aneurism and passed away suddenly.

Eventually all my family moved from Rabaul to Australia. My parents passed away in Rabaul – my father was 96 when he passed on. I corresponded with my oldest brother on Hainan Island in China and exchanged photos but I never met him, and he is now deceased. At the time of writing, 2007, I am the only surviving member of my family.

This story was told to Bob Collins by Shui Hong Wong in 2007. At time of publication both he and his wife are alive and living in Brisbane.

Shui Hong Wong with the Chinese Community, Rabaul, 1946. The Welcome Sign was for the first Aust. Troops to come back to Rabaul.

Bernie's Story

By Bernard Arnold (continued)

A little after our return to Wutha, a shock went through the community—the Americans were pulling out and the Soviets were moving in. The Americans had been kind, occasionally throwing us biscuits or chocolate from passing trains or vehicles. The Soviets gave nothing but took freely. This caused people to look carefully before opening locked doors and once again there was the fear of rape. If we saw any 'Russians' we would run away and hide.

One classmate's father had been released from Soviet captivity and he returned ill with severe diabetes. No medicine was procurable in the Soviet occupation zone so he decided to go into the American zone for some. He succeeded in getting his medicine but on re-entering the Soviet zone he vanished. Some local people saw 'Russian' soldiers and heard shots at the time but whether he was shot or deported back to the Soviet Union was never revealed.

In February 1946 my mother finally got word that my father was alive and well in captivity in France. He earned pocket money and with it was able to send the occasional parcel with such items as cigarettes which were good currency in post-war Germany. I stole a couple of those strong French cigarettes and had a good smoke. Afterwards I was as sick as a dog and smoking has never had any attraction for me since.

In August 1946 my mother was milking a cow when the animal stepped on her foot. The wound turned septic and in the absence of an antibiotic, she came close to losing her foot. In the event she was hospitalised for 3 months and was unable to work for 7 months. During her hospitalisation my sisters and I were left to fend for ourselves. We were given a meal a day at one of the farmers for whom my mother had worked. In return we did some work for the farmer such as stowing beets, babysitting and running errands. Meanwhile we picked up scabies in school and once again lacked any effective treatment. After my mother returned home, she sealed all the doors and burned sulphur in a bucket. We had to stick our heads out of the one open window whilst our bodies and the flat got fumigated. This treatment worked and our scabs at last healed.

In April 1948 my father obtained prisoner-of-war leave to visit the French zone. Of course his intention was to visit us in the Soviet zone to see the conditions for himself. He took a great risk in this visit because if anyone had notified the authorities of his presence, he would have been deported to the Soviet Union not to mention the risk of being shot crossing the border. A friend of his who was in the police force gave him false papers making out he was a released prisoner of the Soviets returning to the British zone. This made his return trip less hazardous. He returned to France convinced that for his family there was no decent future to look forward to in Germany.

When my father arrived on his prisoner-of-war leave I was not home but a class-mate of mine had come looking for me and happened to be there. To his astonishment he received a big hug from my father who mistook him for me until my mother pointed out his mistake. He had not seen us for over three years and of course we children had grown a lot in that time.

My father took up an offer by the French Government for release provided he was prepared to remain in France for a minimum of three years. He obtained work in the shipyards at Le Havre on the Channel coast and organised accommodation for us by converting a former potting shed and fowl house with salvaged materials from ruins. The French Government was to

If you think nobody cares whether you're dead or alive, try missing a couple of mortgage payments.

Never test the depth of the water with both feet.

On their wedding night the young bride approached her new husband and asked for $20 for their first lovemaking encounter. In his highly aroused state, her husband readily agreed.

This scenario was repeated each time they made love, for more than 40 years, with him thinking that it was a cute way for her to afford new clothes and other incidentals that she wanted.

Arriving home one day, she was surprised to find her husband in a very morose state. During the next few minutes he explained that he had been retrenched from work.

It was unlikely that, at the age of 59, he'd be able to find another position that paid anything near what he'd been earning and therefore, they were financially ruined.

Calmly his wife handed him a bank book which showed more than 40 years of steady deposits and interest totaling nearly $1 million. Then she showed him Certificates of Deposit totaling another half million dollars.

She explained that, for more than 4 decades she had "charged" him for sex, and this was the result of her banking all that money.

Faced with evidence of cash and investments totaling nearly $1.5 million her husband was so astounded he could hardly speak, but finally found his voice and blurted out "If I'd any idea what you were doing I would have given you all by business".

That's when she shot him.

You know, sometimes men just don't know when to keep their mouths shut.

provide our travel to France but only from the French zone. How we got there was to be our problem.. No permission to leave the Soviet zone could be obtained so my mother improvised back-packs for the four of us and in the middle of a September night in 1948 we left the village and headed for the border.

Once again I had to leave my toys behind—even it was only a handful.

My mother had no idea how she was going to get us across the border. Her first attempt at escape was to hide us in the brake cabin of a minerals train headed for the American zone from Vacha. Before the train even moved there was a search and we were asked to kindly step outside and follow the guard to the station office. We were terrified at what would happen to us, but the office he took us to was unattended and he said he had to step outside for a moment. He asked that we wait in the office but as soon as he was gone my mother said 'let's hurry out of here while nobody is looking' (I later realised that it must have been the guard's intention to let us escape).

We hurried into the town where my mother got into conversation with a young local woman. From the conversation which followed she learned that between the town and the border there was a restricted zone. A river lay between us and the restricted area and the river was crossed by a small bridge guarded by Soviet soldiers. She said the soldiers often did not wait for their relief if it was not punctual and that there was a change of the guard at 12 noon. Sure enough, at 12 the guard left and the new guard had not yet shown up. We immediately hurried over the bridge feeling that we had practically succeeded in our escape. We walked to the next village and again my mother talked to locals to learn which was the best way to go. They said, 'Just watch, there will be a young couple crossing in about an hour. After you have watched them you can follow along the same way.' The village lay in a valley and the border ran along a ridge overlooking the village. The hillside was covered in patches of low shrubs and as we watched, we saw the young man and the young woman flit in and out of the shrubbery and vanish from sight. After they were clear, we were told to go.

My mother must have been too nervous to pay close attention to the directions because when we went, we blundered right past the watchhouse and up the exposed part of the hillside. We were about half-way up with our lungs nearly bursting when there was a shout of 'halt!' My mother hurried us on when a shot rang out. 'Hurry, we're nearly there,' she called again. The second shot whipped into the ground close by us and my mother, fearing that a third shot would hit one of us, stopped. The armed guard came running up to us and said angrily 'why didn't you stop when I called the first time?' The guard was German and mother gave him a tongue lashing for shooting at a defenceless woman with children who had committed no real crime. My sisters and I were howling by this stage and the guard was visibly embarrassed. As he led us back to the watchhouse, we saw that a truckload of Soviet soldiers had stopped on the road to watch the fun. Once in the watchhouse the German guards said they were sorry they had to stop us, but the 'Russians' had been watching. They had to account for all bullets expended and our not stopping when they first called would now present difficulties; they had never had to stop a woman with children until now, and so on. After holding us for two hours, one of the guards escorted us to the border by a more discreet route and wished us well.

The feeling of freedom which struck us when we came over that ridge and looked down into the American zone will stay with us always. Unfortunately our jubilation was premature as we were to find out. We had no currency to buy a train ticket and so my mother asked the railway men to smuggle us onto a train out. They agreed and said that we should wait for the early morning train as it would not be checked. We could sleep on the benches of the waiting room in which they kept a stove going for us. It was around midnight when I was awakened by American soldiers coming into the room to check for illegal travellers just like us. Lacking the necessary papers, we were arrested and told to report to the local watchhouse. They had a jeep with a heavy machine gun mounted on it so we were suitably intimidated. In any case, my mother did not for a moment think that they would want to send us back to the Soviet zone. We went to the watchhouse where we occupied a large room with primitive benches around its four walls. One of the guards brought in new captives with a loud 'into the pen you go!' I went to sleep again and when I woke up in the morning the room was now crowded with people who had all been arrested during the night. Later that day we were crammed onto the back of a covered truck and taken to a temporary prison several hours' drive distant.

Within two days the prison was crowded with would-be escapees from the Soviet zone. Some told a sad tale of family members captured by the border guards and of some who were wounded in the attempt. A military court was to decide our fate. My mother had letters which convinced the American officer that we were to be hosted by their French allies. Besides us, another man was allowed to remain, but the rest of the people were again loaded into trucks and taken back to the border into the care of the Soviets. At that time there was no political asylum granted.

While in prison we met a real criminal. His cell was opposite ours and he was locked in whilst we could roam the building and its barbed wire enclosure. At morning ablutions he stood next to us at the wash trough and asked my mother for cigarettes. He was a man in his mid twenties and was imprisoned for robbery. I quite enjoyed my brief stay in prison because the food was better than what I had been used to!

The authorities gave us an armed escort who took us to Bebra railway station from which we might catch a train to travel to the French zone. The problem however, was that we were not to leave the station other than by train. We had no tickets, no money, nor any permits to transit the British zone which we must cross before reach-ing the French zone. My mother haunted the platforms to plead with train crews to take us out as stowaways. A couple of times we were already on a train by agreement, invariably in the last carriage, when the conductor would come and say, 'Sorry, you'll have to get off, this train is going to be checked.' We lived on that railway station for a week before finally succeeding. During that time we were fed and given beds at night by the Red Cross. I was able to thoroughly indulge in train spotting and watching crews maintaining their locomotives and shunting. The only real disadvantage of that stay was the awful latrine we had to use. This was a long shed, one side men and the other women. Each half had a line of about 30 'cheek-to-cheek thunderboxes' with nothing to give privacy. Of the smells, the worst was from the chlorine disinfectant powder that had been thrown about liberally.

Bernard the Frenchman

Our train journey to the British zone, where we were to visit an old aunt of my father's to await the permits for the French zone, was another one where we were glad when-ever the train moved. At every station we feared we would be found out and told to get off the train. At the crossing of the border between the American and British zones, we were told to hide under the seats. In the event, the train crew told the police at the checkpoint that there was no one in the last carriage, so they did not bother to check it and we were through. Later, when we travelled on and were to leave the British zone, there was another checkpoint to avoid. We did this by crossing the rails to the other train in company with a man and a woman who had experience in these matters. A policeman told us off for our illegal action but the couple placated him with profuse apologies and the excuse that we feared missing the connection.

Travel in the French zone was relaxing for us because we were now totally legal guests of the French Government. We had to report to a camp where we would be cleared for travel to France. Although we arrived at the Osthofen camp after lunch, a meal was immediately given to us, complete with a mug full of red wine, a beverage completely new to us. We felt very welcome and it didn't matter a bit that the dining room was the top floor of a disused brick kiln. We were convinced at that point that there must be truth to the popular wishful saying: to live like God in France!

We were duly deloused, showered, medically checked, photographed and then shown our quarters—double bunks barracks fashion, but that was five-star accommodation to us. The stay in camp was a relaxing holiday. After two weeks, we travelled on to France, going via Paris (where the under-ground railway was just as amazing to us as it was confusing) to Le Havre, where my father met us at the station. The family was at last re-united after five years of forced separation.

Le Havre had been devastated by bombing, with thousands of French civilians killed. A three-storey house outside the station had half of it blown away, including its staircase. On the upper floors furniture stood in the rooms, reminding me of a cut-away doll's house. It was fortunate for us that the destruction of Le Havre was not undertaken by the Germans but by the allies otherwise we might not have integrated as easily into the French community. Of course, initially there was some name-calling—I even came home with a bleeding nose one day—but as soon as I was able to speak French I wore a beret and dustcoat—I became a French boy, so much so, that when I went to school in Australia I was known as 'Frenchie.'

In one upstairs room of our landlord's house there lived a French family with a baby and a four-year-old daughter. Our landlord was a market gardener/florist eking out an existence on small patches of vegetables and flowers. In his garden there was a concrete cistern about two metres deep, from which buckets of water could be drawn for watering. One day the four-year-old wanted to play with a toy boat on the water when she overbalanced and fell in. I was nearby and heard the splash. She was just rising to the surface when I managed to get hold of her long hair and haul her out. This incident got about in the community and gave us 'Brownie points.' The girl's father in particular had been envious of our comparatively luxurious quarters. Our entire family became involved in increasing the landlord's production and in selling his produce. They were an elderly childless couple for whom we virtually became family. They tried hard to persuade us to remain in France.

When the three years of my father's contract with the French Government had nearly expired, he considered our position: return to our old home in Silesia was out of the question—our property had been expropriated and was now occupied by Poles. France was not a place for a worker to build a comfortable life and the damp foggy climate of the Channel coast did not agree with my father's health. He was aware of recruitment for immigrants by governments in South America, South Africa and Canada. My father had an uncle in South Australia but that was the farthest one could possibly go and thus the most difficult to return from if things didn't work out. In the end he did decide for South Australia. To pay for the fares he had to take up a loan from the Catholic Church. We left France at the end of October 1951. We stayed in Paris for a couple of days, then proceeded by train to Italy and Genoa, our embarkation point. When we arrived the ship was not ready to sail, and we were able to enjoy a week in Genoa at the shipping line's expense, trying hard not to step in the myriad gobbets of phlegm which people spat all over the footpaths.

The voyage to Australia was very pleasant with only a brief spell of seasickness to interrupt the month of unprecedented luxurious living. My sisters and I helped our steward to dry the dishes in our small dining room and this earned us extra servings of ice cream and other sweets. My father had decided that we should learn some English during the voyage and had produced a program of lessons. We thought that it would be 'the blind leading the blind' and managed to disappear into some remote part of the ship when lesson time came around. My father soon gave up and when we landed at Melbourne on the last day of 1951 we knew nothing of the language beyond 'how do you do?', 'yes' and 'no.' I was to regret my laziness in Colombo where I succumbed to a dose of 'the trots' and couldn't make myself understood in asking for directions to the nearest toilet.

This caused me quite some agony. In Colombo's botanic gardens we were introduced to our first Australian, a lemonscented gumtree, and marvelled at its fragrance.

The ship called at Fremantle for a day. We went ashore to walk through the town and inspect its houses and gardens. We could not understand why they ran so many trains with only a few passengers in them. Where we came from, it was 'standing room only' more often than not. We then sailed on to Melbourne where we disembarked on the last day of 1951.

To be continued

Bernie, newly outfitted after joining PNGVR, 1960.

MEDALS

Medals for bravery of participation in campaigns can be traced back to the ancient Egyptians and Romans, where plaques of brass or copper were awarded for outstanding feats of bravery.

However, the first British medals to be issued and classed as such, didn't appear unitl 1588 when they were struck by Queen Elizabeth 1 upon the defeat of the Spanish Armada. They were made from gold and silver and fitted with rings and chains for suspension around the neck.

In 1643 King Charles 1 awarded a medal for conspicuous conduct to Robert Welch for recovering the Royal Standard during the first battle of the English Civil War, the Battle of Edgehill. King Charles is seen as the first British monarch to make an award in the form of a military medal for prowess on the battlefield.

In 1650 Oliver Cromwell issued the first campaign medal and it was awarded to Officers and men. It was known as the Dunbar Medal and commemorated the defeat of the Scots Royalists at Dunbar. This medal also was suspended from the neck.

The first official war medal, as we know them today, was the 1815 Waterloo Medal, issued with a ribbon and an instruction stating "..the ribbon issued with the medal shall never be worn but with the medal suspended on it".

From this time on, medals were struck for nearly every engagement and later medals were introduced as honours and awards.

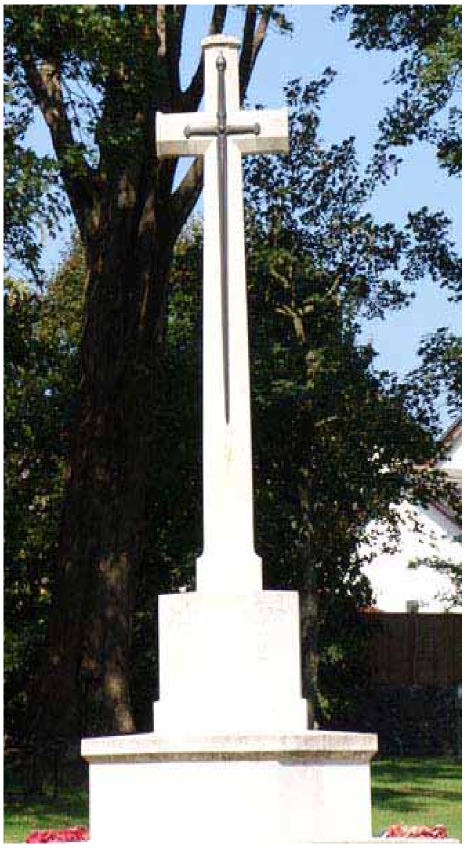
There is today some confusion about the difference between honours and awards, and orders, decorations and medals. An honour is an appointment made to an order (eg. The Order of Australia), while awards cover decorations and medals.

Decorations include the Cross of Valour, the Star of Courage, Conspicuous Service Cross and Medal, etc; while medals cover the Member of the Order of Australia, the Medal of the Order of Australia, (the term 'medals' includes the badges of the 4th and 5th classes of orders and decorations which are worn as medals) campaign, long service and other medals.

A current popular method of wearing medals in the Australian Army is the style known as court mounted. This method of mounting has the ribands going back behind the medals. It was designed in the British Royal Courts to stop the medals 'clinking' against each other as personnel moved about.

Features of Commonwealth War Cemeteries

Cross of Sacrifice



The Cross of Sacrifice was designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield. The cross represents the faith of the majority, the sword the military character of the cemetery.

Crosses of Sacrifice are, in general, found in cemeteries with over 40 war graves. There are three different sizes of cross ranging from 18 to 32 feet high. The largest size is only used in the largest sites.

In sites where subsistence is an issue the Cross of Sacrifice is often replaced with one built into the boundary wall of the cemetery.

Stone of Remembrance

The Stone of Remembrance, or Great Stone, was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens. It is a non-denominational tribute to the fallen.

The inscription on the stone, "*Their Name Liveth For Evermore"* was chosen by Rudyard Kipling and is taken from the Biblical book Ecclesiasticus.

The Stone of Remembrance is used in cemeteries with over 1,000 graves

The Headstones

The principle of equality is the cornerstone of the work of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The uniform headstones commemorate all casualties regardless of their civil or military rank, social position race or religion.

After both world wars, the service information of servicemen and women who had died was provided to the Commission by the relevant service authority. The Commission then wrote to the recorded next of kin for further information and to ask what religious symbol, if any, they would like and if they would like to choose wording for an inscription at the bottom of the headstone. A large number had moved on, or were too upset to reply, and the details recorded for that casualty are only what had been provided by the service authority. For this reason, there is a huge variation in the information engraved on the headstones.

Pedestal markers in Gauhati War Cemetery, India

The headstones of unidentified casualties bear any information which could be gleaned from the body. Most commonly, they bear the inscription, chosen by Kipling, "An Unknown Soldier of the (Great/Second World) War. Known unto God."

Headstones are made from a variety of materials, chosen to suit the climate or for their availability in the area.

In some countries headstones are replaced with pedestal markers. The pedestal markers are more durable in countries prone to earthquakes and subsidence.

LEST WE FORGET

Again we thank WO2 Richard J.T. Jones, *CSC,MEngSc, JP ,* son of member Brian Jones, for allowing us to take extracts from the booklet he produced using info obtained from the Internet. Richard is currently posted to Igam Barracks, Lae,

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THE RISING SUN

The origin and development of the Australian 'rising sun' badge is one of the most interesting aspects of Australian Military history.

Appropriately enough, it began with a collector, a Major in the South Australian forces, who thought of the design to mount his collection of bayonets. He asked a Captain in the South Australian Navy to help him build a trophy-shield, using timber and brass.

This shield seems to have come into the possession of Gen. Sir Edward Hutton, who was appointed to command the military forces of the new Commonwealth of Australia. The trophy of arms, fixed above his office door, comprised a semi-circular red painted board, on which bayonets and sword-bayonets were arranged alternately, surrounding a crown cut from sheet brass. Specifically the weapons were the Martini-Henri rifle triangular socket bayonet and the cut-and-thrust sword-bayonet.

IN 1902 when the 1st Battalion Australian Commonwealth Horse was being raised for service in the South African War the General Office Commanding apparently decided on a general service badge and suggested 'something like' the trophy of arms. The contingent was due to leave five days later and a first badge was hurriedly struck. It consisted of seven triangular points above 'Australia' and the crown on a form of wreath base.

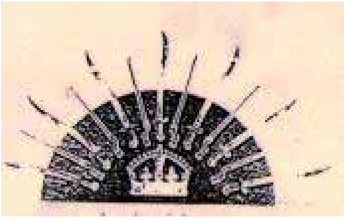
The design was amended for later contingents, with six intermediate points between the larger ones. The metal around 'Australia' was pierced, probably to sew a piece of coloured cloth beneath. Still later that year another variation was struck with 'Commonwealth Horse' forming the badge's base. It was worn by Australian troops who went to London for the coronation of King Edward V11.

It is possible that the badge designers were symbolically including the six-pointed Commonwealth Star, which is the major part of the crest of Australia. The origin of the 'rising sun' title given to the badge is connected neither with the sun, nor heraldry, nor history, but with a brand of jam. Until about 1906 the only building near Victoria Barracks, Melbourne, was Hoadley's jam factory, which produced a widely advertised 'Rising Sun' brand. Large quantities were shipped to the Australians in South Africa, and the jam's trademark was striking. In Melbourne returning soldiers were sometimes called 'Hoadley's Horse'.

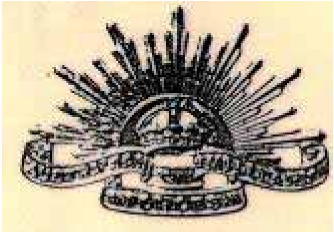
In 1903 the badgemakers, J.R. Gaunt & Sons of Birmingham designed a badge whose basis did not change until the

1970s.

The inscription on the scroll was 'Australian Commonwealth Military Forces' until 1949 when it became 'Australian Military Forces'. In the 1970s it was shortened simply to 'Australia' and minor changes were made in design.



Original Shield



1903

1904

1949

1972

The darkest hours come just before dawn. So if you're going to steal your neighbour's milk and newspaper that's the right time to do it

I was so depressed last night thinking about the economy, wars, jobs, my savings, Centrelink & Social Security, retirement funds etc., I called the Suicide Hotline.

I got a call centre in Pakistan, and when I told them I was suicidal, they got all excited and asked if I could drive a truck.

INTERESTING US MILITARY WW2 TRIVIA

FROM COL. D.G. SWINFORD, USMC, RET. AND HISTORY BUFF

1.The first German serviceman killed in WW II was killed by the Japanese (China, 1937), the first American serviceman killed was killed by the Russians (Finland 1940); highest ranking American killed was Lt Gen Lesley McNair, killed by the US Army Air Corps. So much for allies.

2. The youngest US serviceman was 12 year old Calvin Graham, USN. He was wounded and given a Dishonourable Discharge for lying about his age. His benefits were later restored by an act of Congress.

3. At the time of Pearl Harbour, the top US Navy command was called CINCUS (pronounced 'sink us'), the shoulder patch of the US Army's 45th Infantry division was the Swastika, and Hitler's private train was named 'Amerika.' All three were soon changed for PR purposes.

4. More US servicemen died in the US Army Air Corps than the Marine Corps. While completing the required 30 missions, your chance of being killed was 71%.

5. Generally speaking, there was no such thing as an average fighter pilot. You were either an ace or a target. For instance, Japanese Ace Hiroyoshi Nishizawa shot down over 80 planes. He died while a passenger on a cargo plane.

6. It was a common practice on fighter planes to load every 5th round with a tracer round to aid in aiming. This was a mistake. Tracers had different ballistics so (at long range) if your tracers were hitting the target 80% of your rounds were missing. Worse yet tracers instantly told your enemy he was under fire and from which direction. Worst of all was the practice of loading a string of tracers at the end of the belt to tell you that you were out of ammo. This was definitely not something you wanted to tell the enemy. Units that stopped using tracers saw their success rate nearly double and their loss rate go down.

7. When allied armies reached the Rhine, the first thing men did was pee in it. This was pretty universal from the lowest private to Winston Churchill (who made a big show of it) and Gen. Patton (who had himself photographed in the act).

8. German Me-264 bombers were capable of bombing New York City, but they decided it wasn't worth the effort.

9. German submarine U-120 was sunk by a malfunctioning toilet.

10. Among the first 'Germans' captured at Normandy were several Koreans. They had been forced to fight for the Japanese Army until they were captured by the Russians and forced to fight for the Russian Army until they were captured by the Germans and forced to fight for the German Army until they were captured by the US Army.

AND HE SAVED THE BEST FOR LAST....

11. Following a massive naval bombardment, 35,000 United States and Canadian troops stormed ashore at Kiska, in the Aleutian Islands. 21 troops were killed in the assault on the island……. It could have been worse if there had been any Japanese on the island.

Another interesting item from your Museum

One year I decided to buy my mother-in-law a cemetery plot as a Christmas gift…… The next year I didn't buy her a gift.

When she asked me why, I replied "Well, you still haven't used the gift I bought you last year".

And that's when the fight started.

FLASHBACK. C COY PNGVR AT ANNUAL CAMP, IGAM BARRACKS, LAE, 1968. Photo courtesy Mal King

BADGES OF RANK (NON COMMISSIONED OFFICERS)

The badges of rank for Warrant Officers and Senior Non-Commissioned Officers were not quite so confusing as that for Officers. However there were different badges for trades and ranks. There were three classes of Master Gunners, there were Bandmasters, RQMSes, provisional Staff Sergeant Majors and Sergeant trumpeters to name but a few.

The Master Gunners first class and second class, the Staff Sergeant-Major first class, the Bandmaster and the Warrant Officer first class (those who did not fit into any of the previously mentioned positions) were all WO1.

While it could be said that this is not too different from today (Master Gunners, RSMs and some Bandmasters are all WO1s, at least at present all these positions wear a common badge of rank.

Lance Corporal. The word Lance means just that. In days past, mounted soldiers were considered superior to those on foot. When unhorsed in battle, the Lance that the ex-mounted man carried indicated his superiority and gave him certain prestige. From Lance-man-of-foot, as he was called, comes the modern Lance rank.

Corporal. Is derived from the French Caporal, which was originally Italian (Capodi) meaning head of a section. The current style of wearing the chevrons by NCOs dates back to 1802 when an instruction was issued in the British Army laying down the style in which stripes were to be worn.

Bombardier – Lance Bombardier. The junior-most NCO in Artillery was referred to as Bombardier, which is derived from an artillery piece called the Bombard (used at the battle of Crecy in 1346, the first battle in which the English employed artillery)

There were problems with Bombards – at times they could be just as deadly to the detachments as they could be to the enemy, for they were known to blow up as the charge was ignited. Therefore the dangerous task of firing the piece fell to the most junior NCO, hence the rank Bombardier.

In 1924 Royal Australian Artillery did away with the rank of Corporal and replaced it with that of Bombardier. The new rank of Lance Bombardier was then introduced.

Sergeant. The term Sergeant dates back centuries to the English feudal system when landowners used serfs from the fields to fight battles. The sons and personal servants of the landowners were also employed but, as a mark of respect, they were put in charge of the serfs and others with a lesser station in life. These sons and servants became known as servientes, from the Latin 'to serve'. In time the term became Sergeant.

Chris Jobson, former RSM Ceremonial ADHQ.

With Anzac Day almost upon us we take a look at Anzac Day, 2011, in Europe.

PNGVR Represented at the 2011 Anzac Day ceremony at Villiers Bretonneaux.

Assoc member Barry Beaman and wife Margaret were present at the 2011 Anzac Day ceremonies following an extended tour of the battlefields of WW1 in France and Belgium where Barry traced the last movements of his grandfather, Charles Edward Beaman (25th Bn, 2nd Div) before he was killed near the village of Zonnebeke, Belgium on 2th Oct, 1917.

Ceremonies were held at Villiers Bretoneaux (A memorial to those soldiers who fell and have no known graves) and also in the nearby village by local authorities for their own fallen soldiers at which many Australians attended.

Barry assures us he will be in Brisbane this Anzac Day as usual.

Barry with senior members of the Franch and Belgian Police in the town square

Barry & Margaret at Villiers Bretonneaux

Entrance to B Coy, PNGVR, Rabaul

A Morse Code transmitter—on view in your museum

EMAIL FROM BERNIE GOUGH

My father in law, George Beard, a former member of the PIR recently gave me 2 slides he took down near the wharf in Port Moresby in the early '60's. The occasion was a PIR dress parade for inspection by the Captain of HMAS Melbourne during her visit to PNG,

EXERCISE FOR PEOPLE OVER 50

Begin by standing on a comfortable surface, where you have plenty of room at eachside.

With a 5-lb potato bag in each hand, extend your arms straight out from your sides and hold them there as long as you can. Try to reach a full minute, and then relax.
Each day you'll find that you can hold this position for just a bit longer.

After a couple of weeks, move up to 10-lb potato bags.
Then try 50-lb potato bags and then eventually try to get to where you can lift a 100-lb potato bag in each hand and hold your arms straight for more than a full minute. (I'm at this level.)
After you feel confident at that level, put one potato in each bag.

The Army Way

(Rick Giddings)

Once you join the army it does not take long to realise that your life is no longer your own. This is particularly true for regular soldiers but only a little less so for citizen soldiers. After you have sworn your fealty, and put your uniform on, life become different. There is the 'army way' of doing things. It may differ from the way citizens do things but the 'army way' is always the only way, the correct way, because someone, somewhere at some time has decided it is the best way. Choose to do differently and you risk being bawled out if you are a soldier, or given a bollicking if you are an officer.

The 'army way' covers a multitude of disciplines. It includes such things as the way in which a roll of toilet paper is to be suspended from a holder. Should it unwind against the wall or unwind away from the wall? Alas, I no longer recall the difference but there is a correct way to unwind it, and that's the 'army way.'

At one of our annual camps held at Igam Barracks I was put in charge of the Recruit Training Unit in which those newly enlisted were taught rifle drill, marching and minor infantry tactics. I was assisted in this by WO Terry Egan DCM, who had served with distinction in Vietnam. It was the old story: I held officer rank so I was nominally in charge. Terry, on the other hand, was effectively in charge! The Anglican padre, Captain Jeremy Ashton who, as a British National Serviceman had once served with the Kings African Rifles, spent time with us as well.

One morning I was told to report to the Bn 2i/c's office. When you are called to front the 2i/c that invariably spells bad news! Maj Harry Green MBE wasted no time in telling me he had noticed, and was not at all impressed by, the casual manner of my deportment. He had, he said, noticed me 'slouching' around and this could not be tolerated from the OIC of the Recruit Training Unit, or any officer for that matter. That was not the 'army way'.

So, in this vein, I was given a bollicking. Well, yes, I may have deserved it, I mused. I had, perhaps, slipped into something of a casual mode and, yes, I could and would change my ways.

As I was being taken to task– in a firm, no-nonsense manner, I looked down at the row of medal ribbons on Maj Green's chest and recognised some which my father had earned in the same great conflict, the Pacific War.

If you are a soldier and you are going to be taken down a peg or two, better it comes from a fighting soldier than not. I stood to attention before him and recalled that as a school boy I had been summonsed to the headmaster's office on a number of occasions for mucking-up in class, and was strapped for doing so. The strap stung the palms of my hands but I bore it stoically knowing that it was being delivered by an old Light Horseman who had served in Palestine during the Great War.

Finally I was dismissed. After delivering a cracking salute, and turning smartly to my right, I marched back to my duties. I was embarrassed but, at the same time, consoled by the thought that my ordeal was a reminder that casual deportment was not the 'army way' of bearing oneself, particularly when you are a junior officer!

Reminiscences: Service with the PNGVR.

Place: Igam Barracks, Lae.

Date: Late 1960s

Rick joined PNGVR in Goroka as a Recruit and later, as a Lt, had the privilege of being Pl Comd. 7 Pl., Goroka.

More great shots. The pilot of the Chinook above probably had a few anxious moments getting & staying in position.

ADDRESS GIVEN BY LT. COL. DARYL CAMPBELL COMMENORATION OF KOKODA DAY 8 Aug, 2011

Veterans, distinguished guests, ladies & gentlemen.

May I begin by thanking you for the opportunity to attend this commemoration of Kokoda, and may I note what a daunting and humbling task it is to speak about Kokoda to some of the very men who elevated that name to history. My grandfather was an Engineer on the Kokoda Track, so I have also been raised somewhat in awe of these men's exploits there.

I have the honour to serve as Adjutant of the 10/27th Bn, to command a rifle company in the 49th, and to command the 25th/49th Bn, as CO so I am familiar with the history of Kokoda, and I have long marveled at the courage, character, fighting spirit and sacrifice shown by the stout men of all the magnificent units represented here today.

I currently serve at Canungra, a Military School established during the war, to pass on the lessons our men at Kokoda learned in the hardest imaginable way. At the Kokoda Barracks Officers Mess each room is named after one of the battles fought by these indomitable men—Isurave, Deniki, Templeton's Crossing, Wairopi, Ioribaiwa, Brigade Hill, Buna, Gona, Sanananda and the list goes on.

Our main instructional theatre is named after Lt Col Ralph Honner, DSO, MC, who commanded the 39th Bn and Honner Force, and every day his picture gazes down from the wall

Assailant suffers injuries from fall

Orville Smith, a store manager for Best Buy in Augusta, Ga., told police he observed a male customer, later identified as Tyrone Jackson of Augusta, on surveillance cameras putting a laptop computer under his jacket. When confronted the man became irate, knocked down an employee, drew a knife and ran for the door.

Outside on the sidewalk were four Marines collecting toys for the Toys for Tots program. Smith said the Marines stopped the man, but he stabbed one of the Marines, Cpl. Phillip Duggan, in the back; the injury did not appear to be severe.

After Police and an ambulance arrived at the scene Cpl. Duggan was transported for treatment.

"The subject was also transported to the local hospital with two broken arms, a broken ankle, a broken leg, several missing teeth, possible broken ribs, multiple contusions, assorted lacerations, a broken nose and a broken jaw...injuries he sustained when he slipped and fell off of the curb after stabbing the Marine," according to a police report.

An article appearing in a newspaper in the USA

reminding me and my instructors of our sacred duty to prepare our young officers to lead our diggers in war.

This is perhaps ironic to our veterans here, given the profoundly poor preparation afforded to our brave militia battalions before being rushed to the horrific New Guinea campaign. We all now know the limited training and disgraceful standards of equipment of the young untried force as they first faced the Japanese thrust towards Australia.

Today we also know what Macarthur and the high command should have known back then about the conditions on the Kokoda Track.

These days it is considered a major feat just to walk the now peaceful track, and we have celebrities and politicians grandstanding on TV about their great achievement in making the journey. But they are not carrying a 70lb pack and weapon, with poor, inadequate equipment and a dysfunctional supply and medical evacuation system reliant on unreliable air drops and native carriers—as magnificent as those native carriers usually were, and, of course, no-one shooting at them either!

But even now, the journey up the Kokoda Track is still measured in grueling hours rather than distance and is now marked by the places where these men fought. It remains enervattingly hot by day, bone chillingly cold at night, constantly rainy and enveloped by seemingly endless inhospitable jungle.

Today, we all acknowledge that just surviving the conditions on the Track was a titanic struggle against the environment that imposed very great physical penalties on our men for every ignorant, thoughtless mistake made by the inexperienced staffs in Port Moresby and Australia.

There is no good place to fight a war, but New Guinea is indeed a bastard of a place. It is a place that our veterans still know well, for the hardships there are engraved in their minds and hearts. They remember going up the 'Golden Stairs' to Ioribaiwa, slogging on to Menari, over Brigade Hill, through the searing heat in the Kunai grass on the way to Efogi.

They well remember climbing 3,000 ft in 5 miles up to Kagi, and clinging to saplings and roots on the way down to Templeton's Crossing. Then into Efogi village and 2 hours more to Isurava—where they were later to turn the tide against the Japanese in a major battle. They remember the ups and downs to Deniki and the first glimpse from up there of Kokoda down the Yodda Valley below, grueling enervative, exhausting work—and that was just to get up there to fight the Japanese.

The battles these men fought are these days quite well recorded, and we now marvel at how incredulously well they fought with little support and under heart-breaking privation—against a well trained and experienced, fanatical, and vastly numerically superior enemy who was previously undefeated.

These were perilous days. Malaya and Singapore had fallen, the Japanese advance through the Pacific seemed invincible, and Australia lay open to invasion , so Australians were uplifted in siirit and admiration when our brave diggers faced the overwhelming odds at Kokoda and acquitted themselves with such honour.

Kokoda then became, and remains today, a blazing symbol of national pride…...but as inspiring, audacious and courageous though they truly were—the actions at Kokoda had no realistic hope of holding that vital airfield against a ten-fold enemy attacking in unending waves with crushing firepower.

So Kokoda Day doesn't commemorate just that battle, instead, Kokoda's auroral glory shines from the brave Battalions that sustained the shock of battle all along the Kokoda Track to be shattered, dismembered and sadly depleted in the cruel mountains, the strangling jungles and fetid swamps. ..but never vanquished—and in the end—victorious, but at such a terrible cost...with the lifeblood of so many of their beloved brothers spilled on the numerous, fearful killing fields along the Track.

We mourn and remember all those who paid the supreme sacrifice on the Kokoda Track, and, aside from the sorrow, what remains in our mind is the courageous, noble and selfless conduct and examples of Aussie mateship—their glaring faithfulness in each other, and the pure fortitude shown during those dark explosive days. We know full well that at Kokoda "Uncommon valour was a common virtue".

I feel I can do no better than to borrow the words of Lt. Col. Honner, who wrote "Their legacy of pride and sorrow passed to those enriched by their living and bereft by their dying: and it is the treasured memory of their brief brave lives that provides the most moving motive for the commemoration of Kokoda Day."

So today, and every day, we remember and honour them all. We honour those who we are privileged to still have amongst us. We remember those who survived but have since left us.

We remember those who lie together , interred in the solemn and hushed beauty of Bomana Cemetery, and those who still lie as yet unfound in the savage jungles across the Goldie River. We remember them as they were—young., laughing kids—never to become old or embittered.

Those fine Australians passed into the silent land, and we will shortly honour them by ourselves becoming silent. Our silence will be an echo of the eerie stillness that now becalms Kokoda, and of the homes made so badly saddened when they did not return.

Those of us today in uniform rank Kokoda alongside Gallipoli. Both were fought with tragic errors from the high command. Both horrific struggles for the diggers in appalling conditions…. and more importantly, both examples to us of the courage, initiative, and mateship that marks the Aussie Digger. We in the army today recognise the legacy we have inherited from our Kokoda forbears. We honour fully the sacrifice made by those who fought, and ...living in the luxury of the freedom they bought dearly for our great land…… we pledge to uphold the unblemished record of honour they have bequeathed us.

Most of all, today and always….we will remember them. And it is a signal honour for me to represent the Army in doing so today. Thank you.

LEST WE FORGET.

Ed note. I had the honour of representing the Assn at the Kokoda Memorial Wall ceremony on the Gold Coast this year. The above speech was well received by those present, including a number of Kokoda veterans. My thanks to Greg Ivey, ex PIR, who traveled from the Sunshine Coast for the service, bringing with him a WW2 ANGAU veteran. Greg had the initiative to obtain a copy of the speech from Lt Col Campbell.

Email received from Peter Rogers DFC.

A long time ago you asked me for help in deciphering the attendance lists at our first ever PNGVR functions. I couldn't make head or tail of the copy I was sent (of the copies of the letters I had sent out) - ah typewriters.

While fooling around a little while ago, I came across and old e-mail from Val Fisk, which was slightly more readable. It jolted my memory-banks that I had never replied to the request. Sorry tumas, and here is my best effort at deciphering it.

OAKEY Army Aviation Centre Sgts Mess. Sat 26 Mar, 1983

Ken Newton	Bob Horner	IanRogers
Alistair Martin	Terry Egan	Peter Rogers
Leigh Eastwood	Ray Cattermole	Stewart Lewis
Peter Harbeck	Jim Cattermole	Joe Fisk
Phil Ainsworth	Norm Mundy	Tom Dowling

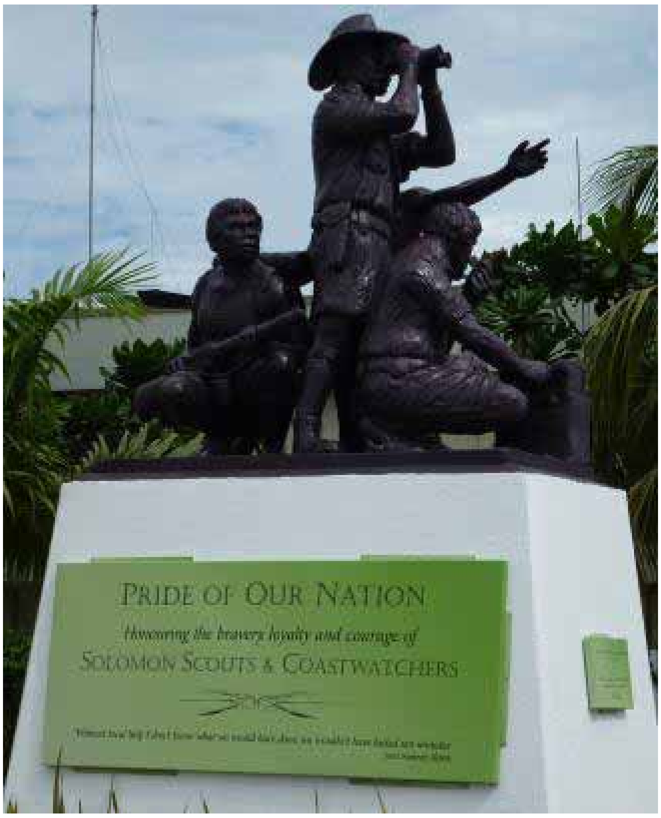
ENOGGERA 8/9 RAR Sgts Mess Sat 28th May 1983

Phil Ainsworth	Peter Barlow	Steve Gannon
Bob Goldsmith	Ed Fitzgerald	Barry Wright
Bill McGrath	Tony Boulter	Utz Wellner
Allan Bell	Barry Barnett	Karl Aschhoff
Mike Kennedy	Malcolm Miller	Stewart Lewis
Graeme Blanch	Tom Dowling	Joe Fisk
Ian Robertson	Terry Egan	Ken Newton
Bruce Brearley	Bill Kelly	Geoff Kenney
Peter Rogers	Alistair Martin	Bert Sedgwick
Peter Broman	Ray Cattermole	Bob Horner
Jesse Chee	Norm Mundy	Peter Harbeck
Nev Harris.		

Apologies were received for Enoggera from:-

Lt Col Mal Bishop, Noel Kenna, Brian Todd, Jim Cattermole, Brian Jones, Alan Uhlman, Nigel Collins, Jock Collins, Tony Milan, Brian Lucan, Leigh Eastwood, Kerry Glover, Trevor Webb, Terry Carroll.

Thanks Peter



Email from Martin Hadlow, Brisbane.

I recently saw a copy of HTT and thought you might be interested in the attached story which relates to neighbouring Solomon Islands.

I've been involved with the Coastwatcher Memorial group in Honiara and attended the unveiling in August. While the statue relates primarily to Solomon Islander Scouts and Coastwatchers, it also recognises those elsewhere in the South-West Pacific, especially Bougainville.

Three Solomon Island Coast-watchers at the unveiling

The march into history

ON AUGUST 25, WO1 G. E. Wease marched out of 2nd Battalion, The Pacific Islands Regiment, as the last Australian RSM.

He has been posted to 4th Cadet Battalion, Townsville, and veteran WO1 Manli Rosi has been posted RSM, 2PIR.

☐ **ARMY's UC with 2PIR reports on a historic changeover**

WO1 Wease had served with 2PIR for three years, understanding at the outset of the posting that he was to work himself out of a job as the last Australian RSM of 2PIR.

The 2PIR Sergeants' Mess, which is the first mess in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea to be run by a Pacific Islands committee, will remain as a monument to WO1 Wease's ability and enthusiasm in his regimental role.

ARMY's UC, making the historic handover, reported: "WO1 Wease was a hard taskmaster, who had only one standard — the best.

"He was extremely popular because of the time he took in the soldiers and for his enthusiasm and help."

WO1 Wease spent considerable service in "the bush" around the area and participated in an epic patrol along the Sepik River into the highlands, operating over some 300 miles of testing swamp and jungle and moving over mountains up to 10,000 feet.

"He will be sadly missed but his example will be measured by his soldiers of 2PIR," said ARMY's UC.

WO1 Wease was farewelled by 2PIR and was presented with a rare Bird of Paradise by the soldiers.

However, the Bird is a prohibited export so he donated it to the Sergeants' Mess where it now stands in pride of place.

The Sergeants' Mess farewelled him with a barbecue dinner and presented him with a soda syphon

WO1 Manli Rosi

and a regimental plaque.

A silver statuette of a Pacific Islands' soldier was also presented to him by the CO 2PIR, Lt.-Col. E. M. McCormick.

ARMY CAMERA in the hands of L. cpl. Kivisme of 2PIR recorded S. sgt. Kokomunga and WO1 G. E. Wease, Mrs. Wease, son Darryl and daughter Donna.

S. Sgt Kokomunga and WO1 Wease had just been presented with the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.

Email from Maurie Pears.—re HTT Vol 72.

"Thanks Phil—wonderful history effort.

PIR Officer on P14 is Maj Gen Horrie Howard—now retired."

Email from Leo Foxter.

VALE: ALEXANDER WILLIAM FOSTER 1920-2012

Just to advise that my father Alex Foster passed away on Jan 13th after a short stay in Fremantle hospital in Western Australia.

He often spoke proudly of his experiences with the PIB during the war.

Regards, Leo Foster.

LEST WE FORGET.

Photo at Left. RSM Wease and family after the handing over ceremony to WO1 Manili Rossi

NOTICES

ANZAC DAY MARCH BRISBANE

Assemble in **George Street** near the **top of the Queen Street Mall** – look for the Association's Banner.

As in previous years, we may be moved about by the Marshalls, but look out for our banner. Please assemble **by 9.30 am** with the march commencing at **10.00am** precisely. For members who have booked Jeep transport, please be at the jeep assembly point at the top end of Elizabeth St no later than **9.00 am**. Paul Brown will be in the area to assist. Preferred dress is ANZAC Day dress with full medals. (White shirt, tie, slacks, jacket and beret or suitable head gear (no jeans) Carers of members may march with the Association but at the rear of the unit. Following the end of the march there will be a brief NGVR memorial service in ANZAC Square – all are welcome.

POST MARCH MEMBERS/GUESTS REUNION:

Venue / format same as in previous years - Upstairs function room, Victory Hotel, corner of Edward and Charlotte Streets, CBD; enter by the Charlotte Street ground floor hotel doors, from 10.45 am; entry subscription is still only $20 pp payable at the door.

Please have exact change. Your door fee includes sandwiches , hot and cold finger food and limited beer wine and soft drinks . Children under 15yrs – no charge. Treasurer Doug Ng will have his "Doug Ng Banking Corporation" shop open for payment of membership fees, and Welfare Officer Paul Brown, will have his "Trade Store" open for the purchase of Association polo shirts, cap, ties etc.

2012 SAMARAI REUNION

The 2012 Samarai reunion will be held on the weekend of 7-9 September (Fri-Sat-Sun) at Rydges Oasis Resort, Caloundra . Friday night will be a Meet and Greet function, and Saturday will be the main dinner dance with a live band.

Total cost for the two nights (excluding accommodation) will be $ 95.00 pp. For further info go to www.loosenuts.com.au/SamaraiReunion.html or email Jack Medley (ex Samarai) on samarai.reunion2012@gmail.com or contact Col Gould (ex Samarai) on pngvr@optusnet.com.au

A fantastic night of friendship, dancing, tall stories and much more is planned for ex Samarai residents and other ex Territorians.

FUNCTION DATES

25 Apr ANZAC Day march and reunion—Assemble in George st at top of the mall BY 0930. Afterwards reunion at the Victory Hotel in Edward Street.

21-29 Apr Some Assn. members travelling to Rabaul for ANZAC Day service and 70th Anniversary commemorating the victims of the Japanese invasion and the sinking of the Montevideo Maru

19 May 10.00am Assn. Committee meeting Wacol Museum.

1 Jun NGVR 70th Anniversary function; Greenbank RSL drop in centre.

30 Jun Noon 70th Anniversary of Japanese invasion of New Guinea Islands and sinking of the Montevideo Maru Luncheon at Rydges Lakeside Hotel, Canberra. Contact Andrea Williams on 0409 031 889 or email: andrea.williams@bigpond.com

1 Jul Dedication ceremony of Rabaul & Montevideo Maru National Memorial at AWM, Canberra. Contact Andrea Williams

1 Jul Service for Montevideo Maru victims at Hall of Memories, Brisbane. 0930 for 1000 start. Contact Paul Brown on 0402 644 181 for further details.

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:-

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www.pngvr.com

Bob Collins—Editor

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You will also then receive it in full colour and be assured that the quality in colour is much better than in B & W.

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

bob-collins@bigpond.com

You can rest assured that your email address will only be used by the Association to communicate information to you.