
  
**HARIM TOK TOK**
  


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

### PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

Thirty five members and friends enjoyed the Association's six monthly mixed dinner on the terrace of Heather and Ted McAllen's home at Jimboomba on Saturday night, 13th October 2012. Previously this function was held a couple of doors away at a bush camp setting in Pam and Barry Wright's property but the advancing years of the organisers and helpers and Heather's and Ted's kind offer changed the location last year.

It was a cool evening with all being well wrapped, but the company was warm and a great time was had by all. Barry Wright's 80th birthday was also celebrated. Bob Collins was the Dining President and I gave a short talk about the Association's recent activities, particularly about those relating to kindred organisations. Many of the attendees took advantage of the opportunity and camped the night at Wright's. Although the number who can attend is limited due to space limitations, if you do get the opportunity to attend one, do so and enjoy a memorable dinner in a formal military setting in the bush. Heather and Ted and their helpers are thanked and congratulated for their wonderful contribution towards bringing the members together in such a delightful setting, thank you.



Barry and Pam Wright celebrating Barry's 80th birthday

On Saturday 27 October, nineteen members, including our Patron Major General John Pearn, assembled at the Wacol Museum for the Association's AGM which commenced after a magnificent bar-be-que luncheon organised by John Holland. The main items of business were receiving annual reports and the election of the Association's executive for 2013. The reports outlined the completion of another successful year, particularly in commemorating the 70th Anniversary of the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru tragedies and the celebrating

the sterling work of NGVR in the Wau/ Salamaua/ Lae and Markham area during the early days of the Pacific War in 1942. These and other functions have been well reported in earlier issues of Harim Tok Tok.

The Association's finances are in good order and the Museum has continued its growth in acquisitions and number of visitors attending. Additionally the Museum has purchased more cabinets for its exhibits and has just completed an access ramp. Although substantially completed, it was too late to arrange a suitable opening ceremony for the Museum access ramp on AGM day. The opening of the access ramp will therefore be held at 10am Saturday 19th January, the first committee meeting day of calendar year 2013 when the sponsors will be invited to attend. Photos of the new ramp can be found on page 16.

These successes just do not happen but rely on the outstanding work of the executive namely, Vice-President and Editor of Harim Tok Tok Bob Collins, Secretary Colin Gould, Treasurer Doug Ng, Curator John Holland, Photographer Tom Dowling, Welfare Officer Paul Brown and committee members Jesse Chee, Mal Zimmermann, Mike Griffin, Leigh Eastwood, Tony Boulter and our Honorary Solicitor Bruce Crawford, thank you one and all. The Association is most fortunate to have such an esteemed and active person Major General John Pearn as our Patron. All honorary and executive positions were filled by reappointments of the same personnel.



Exercise Steele Tuff. Our members are: Left to right: Ann Lewis, Stewart Lewis, Phil Ainsworth, John Holland and Jessica Harrington, D Company. 9RQR, Maryborough, Qld. 4 December 2012

Several members and friends were present at D Company's, 9 RQR Drill Hall in

Maryborough on Tuesday night 4 December to present "PNGVR Military Excellence" award to the winning section in 9 RQR's annual "Steele Tuff" exercise. These include John Holland, Jessica Harrington, Stewart Lewis, Ann Lewis who live at Hervey Bay and me. Attractive medallions with ribbons attached are presented individually and are competitively sought by the members of the Regiment.



The Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Memorial, AWM, Canberra, November 2012

I thank the committee and members for their wonderful support during the past year. This support and the friendly manner in which it is given make the work of the committee so pleasant and easier. I thank all for accepting your reappointment and look forward to serving with you for another successful year. May I conclude by wishing all our members and friends a Joyful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**Phil Ainsworth**

**December, 2012**

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## NGVR / AIF EXPERIENCES

### Francis (Frank) Robert WILSON

NG 201

NGX 69

I was born at Natimuk, near Horsham in the Western Districts of Victoria on 9<sup>th</sup> December, 1914. My father at one stage was an apiarist but was burnt out and had to turn to working on various properties. We had a small orchard (3 acres) on which grew apples and various other fruit. My mother was a bush nurse and used to cover the whole area. I had one sister, one half sister, and one half brother. One of my mother's sayings was 'his, mine, ours!' We lived at Tollondo and it was there that I went to primary school. Some years later the school house was moved and turned into a Club.

My high school was carried out at Glenfield, Sydney, at Hurlstone Agricultural High School where I boarded. One of my sisters was living near there and suggested I go there. My other sister also went to North Sydney Girls High.

I left school after the Intermediate Certificate, went back to Victoria and did odd jobs wherever I could get work, mainly on farms and in shearing sheds. Times were tough and I took any work I could get.

#### My move to New Guinea

My half sister's husband worked for Burns Philp in New Guinea as a store manager and, as work was scarce in Victoria, he suggested I also go to New Guinea.

In 1934 I did and left Sydney on either the 'Machdui' or the 'Montoro' - I forget which. We called at Brisbane, Townsville, Port Moresby, Salamaua, Rabaul and I left the ship at Kavieng.

My first job was at 'Panmauia' a plantation between Kavieng and Namatanai on New Ireland.

Later on I got a another job on New Ireland courtesy of a snake. The Manager of 'Wasasnga' plantation and his wife had a brand new baby. It was sleeping in a basinet beside their bed, covered with the usual mosquito nets etc. During the night they heard a scuffling and woke up to find a big carpet snake swallowing their pet dog not far from the basinet. The wife looked at the dog, looked at the baby, realised they were about the same size and announced "I'm not staying here any longer". The husband gave his notice to the plantation owner and, being the only other available European in Kavieng at the time, I was given the job. I have always been fond of carpet snakes since that day. I was in my early 20's then and worked on 'Wassanga' for the next few years as Manager.

Strangely enough, about 1937 I lost my job through sex. No – it's not what you are thinking. What happened was that there was a plague of sexava (grasshoppers) in the area and they ate all the flowers on the coconut palms and production dropped so dramatically that the owner told me he could not afford to pay me any longer, so I had to leave.

I went to Rabaul and got casual work on the wharves – tally clerking etc.

In Rabaul I met the owner, Bert Perriman, a Director of Carpenters. He owned, in his own right, 'Tovarur' plantation, about 30 miles out of Rabaul, past Kokopo. He had the reputation of being a very hard man to work for. As it happened we clicked straight away and he asked me to work on the plantation for him. It was a very pleasant spot, having about a mile of ocean frontage. 'Tovarur' was in the early stages of development and it did not take long for me to realise that the owner was buying seed nuts for his new trees from the natives. I said to him "If you plant rubbish you will get rubbish!" so he went around and eventually found very good seed nuts at Kar Kar Island, off

Madang. There were boats bringing coconuts from Kar Kar to the desiccated coconut factory in Kokopo. He was able to arrange for a boat to drop off a shipment of seed nuts at a plantation near us on the coast on its way past and I would go down and pick them up.

I lived in a very big native materials house on the plantation and remained there until War broke out and my eventual enlistment in the AIF, Australian Imperial Force.

#### I join the NGVR, New Guinea Volunteer Rifles

The NGVR was formed in late 1939 as a volunteer (militia) unit and had outposts throughout New Guinea. Those on New Britain were located at Rabaul and Kokopo.



NG 201 Rfn Frank Wilson NGVR, 1940

I joined the NGVR in April, 1940, at Rabaul, and was attached to the Kokopo Platoon.

Our role, as we understood it, was to defend Rabaul against the threat of a German sea Raider. However in 1941, unknown to those in New Britain, Australian Army headquarters had assessed the threat to Rabaul to be at the level of a major invasion, which, of course happened in January, 1942.

Our Commanding Officer was Lt Col C.R. Field (ex AIF) who was the Director of Public Works in New Guinea. At about the same time as I joined NGVR Warrant Officer Class 1 D.H. Umphelby, some time later to be Capt and Second in Command of NGVR in

Wau, arrived in Rabaul as the Quartermaster Sergeant.

There were about 60 members of NGVR when I joined and our training consisted mainly of drill and weapons training. There was a rifle range in Rabaul and we spent quite a lot of time on it firing our weapons. What was noticeably lacking, and this was demonstrated when the Japanese invasion came in January, 1942, was field training, bushcraft and living off the land. We did none of that.

In addition to our rifles we had Lewis and Vickers machine guns.

We trained most weekends at Kokopo and probably once a month we went into Rabaul to train with the Rabaul NGVR.

#### I join the AIF (Australian Imperial Force)

NGVR was a militia unit and a number of Territorians, after the outbreak of WW2 joined the AIF, the regular army. Between September, 1939, and July 1940, 143 members of NGVR resigned to join the AIF.

I was one of them, resigning from NGVR on 8<sup>th</sup> July, 1940, and being enlisted in the AIF on 12<sup>th</sup> July, 1940. Lt Col Fields attended to the signing up of those of us joining the AIF and we were required to undertake quite a comprehensive medical examination. To the best of my knowledge two chaps were rejected medically.

I was given a Certificate of Discharge from the NGVR dated 8<sup>th</sup> July, 1940, and it gives my reason for discharge "On enlisting





Rabaul 1940 group photo of Australian Imperial Force shortly before they embarked for the Middle East. Many members of the NGVR joined the AIF prior to outbreak of hostilities in New Guinea

for Active Service with 2/AIF”, and my service of 107 days with NGVR. It is signed by Lt Col Field, C.O.

The AIF enlistees sailed in two contingents from Rabaul, the first contingent of about 50 and the second of about 90. Both contingents sailed on the ‘Machdui’. I was in the second contingent and, about the time we were due to sail all German Nationals in New Britain had been rounded up and were to be shipped to Australia to be interned. Consequently I was one of the guards on the ship and was issued with a rifle and bayonet so I could carry out my guard duties. One of the Germans was a chap called Oscar Rundnagle and he was a great friend of mine until his arrest. He had a bush plantation (land which had not yet been developed) ‘Mukurutabu’ and had sold it to me prior to his arrest. It was quite incongruous that, after he had been interned, I was holding a rifle with fixed bayonet outside the wire cages and he was inside.

We disembarked in Brisbane and were sent to a camp at Frasers Paddock. There we were processed into various units and split up as we were posted. The training at Frasers Paddock was a continuation of that we had carried out in NGVR – drill and weapons training.

#### Officer Training School and Specialist Training

I was selected for Officer Training School at Liverpool, Sydney. I believe two things contributed to this:-

- a) had a personal reference from Lt Col Fields which, among a lot of nice things he said about me recommended me for promotion.
- b) At Frasers Paddock I stood out among the soldiers of my particular unit because I was wearing my NGVR uniform, which had been nicely tailored by a Chinese tailor in Rabaul. The other soldiers were wearing Army issue ‘giggle suits’, many of which did not even fit properly. Strangely enough I had been allowed to continue to wear the NGVR uniform. The Officer Training School lasted for 90 days and I passed the course and was Commissioned as a Lieutenant on 1<sup>st</sup> March, 1941. I returned to Brisbane and was supposed to go to the Middle East as a reinforcement.

At the time the siege of Tobruk was in process and movement of reinforcements to the Middle East was held up awaiting the out-

come of the siege. As a result I was selected for training on the Commando Course, which was held at Wilsons Promontory in Victoria. This was an unusually difficult course and was attended by Units such as the 2/1<sup>st</sup>, 2/2<sup>nd</sup>, 2/3<sup>rd</sup>, 2/4<sup>th</sup>, 2/5<sup>th</sup>, 2/6<sup>th</sup>, and 2/7<sup>th</sup> Independent Companies carried out this course and the 2/1<sup>st</sup> and 2/5<sup>th</sup> Independent Companies later served with NGVR on the Markham and in the Wau/Mubo areas.

Other Independent Companies were sent to Timor, New Ireland, Bougainville etc.

The training was tough and realistic in the extreme. The concept was that the men should live and train in conditions as near as possible to those of active service. Training went on for 12 hours on each of 6 days and six nights each week for three weeks with no leave except compassionate leave. On the fourth week we went out on a 6 day exercise in which we carried our own food.

#### I Proceed to the Middle East

After the Commando Course I went back to Brisbane and, shortly after, was posted to the Middle East as a reinforcement Officer for the 2/9<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 18<sup>th</sup> Brigade, 7<sup>th</sup> Division.

We sailed from Sydney on the ‘Queen Elizabeth’ for the Middle East. I cannot remember whether there were 4 of us or 6 of us to a cabin, and, being Officers, we were in the first class accommodation area, and I must say the accommodation was very comfortable. There were 7,000 troops on board and the ship at that stage still had its own civilian cooks and stewards etc so the food was excellent and the voyage most enjoyable. I must say the staff on board thought it was a bit of a comedown to have Aussie troops on board after the wealthy guests they were accustomed to. The ‘Queen Elizabeth’ was so fast that the escort ships could not keep up with her so a number of ships escorted us from Australia and then were left behind, so we were met towards the African coast by escort vessels who had sailed from there to meet us. Later on in the war the ‘Queen Elizabeth’ was used by the Yanks and carried 15,000 troops at a time.

We disembarked at Suez as the ‘Queen Elizabeth’ was too big to go through the Suez Canal and were transported through the Canal in smaller ships.

This would have been early 1942.

#### Changing Postings in the Middle East

By this time the Japanese had attacked Rabaul and Australia was urgently requesting its Divisions in the Middle East, the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> to be returned to Australia to assist in the fight against the Japanese. I was posted to the 2/9<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 18<sup>th</sup> Brigade, 7<sup>th</sup> Division, but, because I had only just arrived in the Middle East and they were soon to leave for Australia it was decided that I would be reposted from the 2/9<sup>th</sup> Battalion when they left for Australia and I would remain in the Middle East. Incidentally it was the 18<sup>th</sup> Brigade which inflicted the first defeat on the Japanese Army at Milne Bay.



Consequently when they left I was sent to a Training Camp. This particular training area was not in Egypt but at Lattiquir, in Syria. When we obtained leave we would go to Tel Aviv in Palestine.

I became an Instructor in Guerrilla Warfare at another School at Nusarat, also in Syria, and a part of the major training centre at Lattiquir. No doubt my previous experience at the Commando School in Wilsons Promontory had something to do with this. The Chief Instructor had known me at Wilsons Promontory, and when he was posted out I became Chief Instructor. We would train groups of about 5 to stay behind enemy lines, or to infiltrate behind enemy lines and obtain information or carry on small scale raids. We would take in groups of 50/60 at a time and they would be divided into smaller groups of 5, of which each man was a specialist – radio operator, explosives, map reading and navigation, medic etc. Each course would last for 6 weeks. Each man would have to be a volunteer for the course and it was mainly Other Ranks who came through. I was probably at the school for about a year.

As I said before we used to get local leave into Tel Aviv which was only about 40 miles away. We used to go into town in trucks and you could accumulate leave and I normally would go in at the end of each course, every 6 weeks or so. I would stay at a hotel in town. I must say that there was a big difference between the Jewish sector, which was a very modern bustling area and this was such a great difference to the Palestinian area. The Palestinians had a few camels and would move from place to place whereas the Jewish area was in the process of having orchards established and was much more orderly.

My next posting was as a Platoon Commander to the 2/15<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 20<sup>th</sup> Brigade, 9<sup>th</sup> Division. I was PI Comd 8<sup>th</sup> Platoon, A Company. In WW11 the Platoons were not necessarily the same as they are now. A Company consisted of 7, 8 and 9 Pioneer Platoon then, not 1, 2 and 3 Platoon as it is today.

The 2/15<sup>th</sup> Battalion had been with 9<sup>th</sup> Division at the famous siege of Tobruk, and were in the process of refitting and refilling postings with reinforcements such as myself when I joined them. The 2/15<sup>th</sup> was a Queensland Unit and were not very keen on outsiders such as myself joining them. However after I had proved myself, I was accepted by the men, although for some time I was looked on as an outsider. Another big shock was the appointment of a Commanding Officer of the Battalion from outside Qld. The C.O. had been killed and everyone in the Battalion received a shock when the replacement C.O. was not a Queenslander. No doubt this was happening with all Units in the Middle East so the 2/15<sup>th</sup> was not alone in this.

The training was conducted more to fit the replacements into the Battalion than to hone weapon skills and drill played a very small part in the training.

**To be continued**

**This is Frank's story as told to Bob Collins**

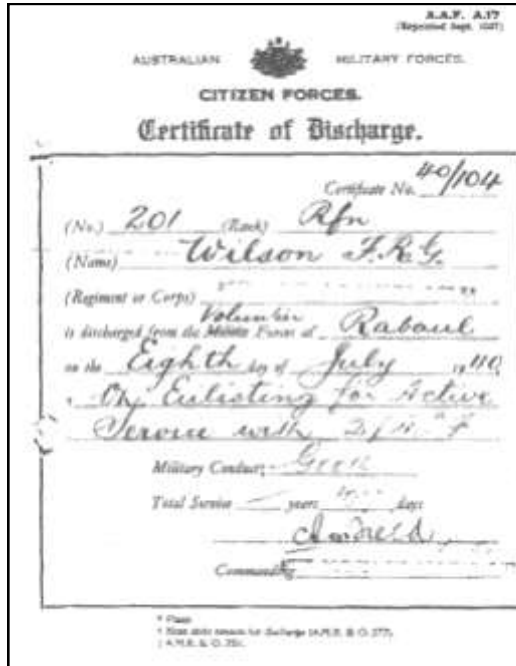
*I was lying in bed the other night and leaned over to whisper in my wife's ear "I am going to make you the happiest woman in the world."*

*She leaned back and whispered "I'll miss you!".....*

*During training exercises, the Lieutenant who was driving down a muddy back road encountered another car stuck in the mud with a red-faced Colonel at the wheel.*

*"Your jeep stuck, Sir?" he asked as he pulled alongside.*

*"Nope!" replied the Colonel handing him the keys "Yours is"*



Frank Wilson's Discharge Cert. from NGVR. Note No 201.

It was after Japan invaded New Guinea that NGVR numbers were altered to commence at NG2000 in an attempt to make the Japanese believe there were more of them.

**Following on Bob Harvey-Hall's article on the 1st US Marine Division in the last HTT here is the story of one of those Marines who went to Melbourne.**

**EX CPL E.M. GUERRY S/N 349837 U.S.MARINE CORPS**  
**Précis of war service during WWII and later his life in Australia following discharge from the US Marine Corps in 1945.**

**By Gordon McDermott (EX RAN)**

Earl Hampton Guerry was born in Orlando Florida on 29 January 1921. He joined the US Marine Corps on 12 January 1942 and saw action in the South Pacific Area from May 20, 1942 to August 6, 1945.



He participated in the capture and occupation of Guadalcanal B.S.I from August 10, 1942 to December 9, 1942; capture and occupation of Cape Gloucester, New Britain from December 30, 1943 to February 10, 1944; capture and occupation of Peleliu Island, Palau Islands from September 15, 1944 to October 15, 1944; capture and occupation of Okinawa Shima, Ryuku Islands from June 14, 1944 to June 21, 1945.

He was awarded a Presidential Unit Citation for "outstanding Gallantry and determination in successful landing assaults against the Japanese at Guadalcanal B.S.I from 10 August 1942 to 9 December 1942.

It was during his service on Peleliu Island that he suffered "blast trauma" to his left ear resulting from an exploding Japanese mortar shell which wounded two of his mates. Earl also



contracted malaria during his period of service in the South Pacific.

It was during 1944 that Earl was sent to Melbourne for R&R and there he met my aunty Peggy and they were married on December 30 1944. Three children (two girls and a boy) were born and today they are aged 64, 61 and 56 respectively.

Earl was honourably discharged from the US Marine Corps on November 12 1945 and he returned to Australia where he lived for the rest of his life until his death on July 6 1996. Life in Australia was not all smooth sailing for Earl and being an American with a Seminole Indian ancestry did not endear him to his new bigoted in-laws who came from British stock and were untrusting of the 'Yanks'. Indeed they readily supported the uncharitable view that the Americans were "over paid, over sexed and over here" (notwithstanding the reality that presence of the yanks in Australia was vital to the war effort and ensured the security of the country).

Earl had a number of vocations during his time in Australia and was mainly employed as a house builder and handyman (he built his own house in Melbourne in the early 50's). Unfortunately due to his wartime injuries he had to leave the building industry and he became a bus driver at the princely sum of 15 pound a week (approximately AUD\$30.00) and worked untiringly at other casual jobs to support his family and provide them with a decent life.

Although it was Earl's intention to commence a life after the war in his new country, he vehemently rejected any notion that he should become an Australian citizen and would not abandon his passionate ties with the US and his Indian heritage. Unfortunately this meant that he was unable to rely on Australian welfare benefits in later years when his health deteriorated and in fact he was considered to be an illegal immigrant. This weighed heavily on Earl and in effect he was working 'under the radar' for most of his time in Australia. Nevertheless he became a valuable member of the community and was a great family man who loved to entertain family and friends in the home he built.

In the mid 60's he made application to the US Government for a military disability pension resulting from his ongoing malarial condition and this resulted in him receiving a pension that consisted of two payments only. For some unexplained reason, the US government discontinued payments after they reconsidered his application and assessed his disability as 0%. Earl sought the assistance of the "Disabled American Veterans" in progressing his claim but little progress was made via this group and Earl became wholeheartedly dejected accordingly, he pursued the matter of a pension no further.

It was not until 1980 that I was able to assist my uncle during an infrequent visit with him by developing a resubmission to the US government stressing that injuries to his left ear was the main driver for the submission seeking a pension rather than his previous claims for malaria. Earl had been dogged for most of his adult life with the effects of ear damage and was hospitalised in Melbourne hospitals many times – in fact, he was still suffering from the effects of this until his death. Moreover, his condition precluded him from working in the building industry

due mainly to 'balance' problems associated with his condition.

The submission to the US Government was fruitful and following further medical examinations (funded by the US Consulate General in Melbourne) Earl was eventually awarded a small pension in compensation for his injuries and according to his daughter Barbara, he eventually received his first pension cheque in late 1991.

In summary, Earl (my uncle) was a wonderful man who answered the call to arms in 1942, saw a lot of action in the Pacific and received a unit commendation for his efforts in Guadalcanal. Prior to his discharge from the US Marine Corps in 1945 he married my aunty Peggy following a whirlwind romance during his previous period in Australia whilst on R&R in Melbourne in 1944. Their union produced three wonderful and healthy kids who still enjoy life. They are all married (or have been) and have their own children. I do believe that Earl and Peg would be proud of them.

A final word from me. You will have gathered from the forgoing passages that it took many years for Earl to be recognised by US authorities as being worthy of the award of a pension. This doesn't surprise me considering the weight of government bureaucracies but I do find it galling that administrations (both here in Australia and the US) do not follow through on their promises to look after their men and women when they have returned from 'active or hazardous service'. For example, it took almost 45 years to settle the last of the claims resulting from the collision of the HMAS Melbourne (Australian Air Carrier) and the HMAS Voyager (Australian Daring class destroyer) in February 1964 which claimed the lives of 82 men. This was the worst peacetime catastrophe in Australia's history. Governments are only too ready to send troops into active service when the political climate dictates but abrogate their responsibilities following their return to the civilian sector. One can only hope Bruce Petty, author, that through your series of lectures and books you have written and yet to write may bring to light some of the lesser known trials and tribulations of our servicemen and servicewomen and their transition back into civilian life. I would hope that the politicians and public officials can learn from the lessons of history and remedy this gross injustice across all the armed services so that new recruits will see that they will not be forgotten after they have rendered service. Incidentally, I spent 26 years in the RAN, hence my reference to this dreadful incident.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the contribution to this small work by Barbara Feil – Earl's eldest daughter. I could not have covered as much ground as I have without her generous support.

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## The trials of John Joseph ('Mangrove') Murphy

In early 1946 at Lae, PNG Captain John Joseph Murphy, a former PNG Patrol Officer and Coastwatcher on New Britain was tried by court-martial for having treacherously given intelligence to the Japanese' and under section 40 of the Army Act with 'conduct prejudicial to good order and military discipline' in that while a prisoner-of-war he gave to the Japanese more than his name, rank and number. The charges, two of which carried



the death penalty, were based on a captured document purportedly a record of Murphy's interrogation when captured and statements taken by the Allies from Japanese soldiers at the end of the War.

Defended by his cousin, the Sydney QC Eric Miller, Murphy was honourably acquitted of all charges.

Murphy had spent more than a year as a prisoner of the Japanese at Rabaul. Only seven of the original 63 prisoners in the Tunnel Hill camp survived; Murphy was the only Australian. The court-martial arose from information Murphy allegedly gave the Japanese when he was captured in October 1943. At the court martial the defence argued that Japanese documents had been incorrectly translated and that others had given information to the Japanese under torture.

After the War, Murphy returned to PNG, finishing his career as District Commissioner of the Gulf District, based at Kerema.

A film documentary is now being made on John Murphy's life. A radio program on the ABC is imminent. Attempts have been made to persuade the Government to posthumously recognise John Murphy's service as a Coastwatcher and in helping keep fellow prisoners alive in Rabaul.

But not everyone accepts the court-martial verdict.

Murphy was a well-regarded Administration officer. His actions in the Rabaul POW camps clearly saved lives. For that alone he deserves recognition. But how can one explain the captured Japanese documents and testimony of Murphy's interrogators? Records now available show the case the defence mounted at the court-martial was, in part, flawed. The prosecution and conduct of the case, too, was flawed. Today, it is most unlikely the case would get to trial.

John Murphy does deserve public recognition for his time as a POW. But one cannot simply say the court-martial should never have been held. There were questions to be answered (although they should have been addressed by an inquiry rather than by a court martial.)

I am writing a biography of Eric Miller QC, having written his entry for the Australian Dictionary of Biography. In the course of my research into Miller QC's life I stumbled upon John Murphy's story, with which I have become fascinated. (Others use the term 'obsessed') So I am now trying to juggle my professional and family life with researching and writing two biographies, both about Australians who deserve greater recognition that they have received to date.



Capt John Murphy on his rescue, 1945.

Any information you might be able to share with me about JJ Murphy would be appreciated.

**Philip Selth OAM** Executive Director, The New South Wales Bar Association, and a former President of the Canberra & District Historical Society If you have any information on John Murphy Philip can be contacted on [pseth@nswbar.asn.au](mailto:pseth@nswbar.asn.au)

**Ed Note.** Lt J.J. Murphy, N.G.2322, took part in the first Japanese assault on Mubo, where the NGVR soundly repulsed them, inflicting many casualties.

When NGVR was disbanded, he joined the Coastwatcher Organisation. Lt Comd Eric Feldt, in charge of the Coastwatchers, describes Murphy as "short, energetic and decisive, had carried out patrols near Salamaua".

On the night of 28 Sep 1943 three Coastwatcher parties were landed by American submarine at Cape Orford in New Britain. Their task was to give warnings of Japanese air attacks on the American forces landing at Arawe and Cape Gloucester.



Australian troops with Japanese equipment left behind in an unsuccessful Japanese sortie from Salamaua

L-R Speed Pollard 2/5 Ind Coy, John Hanman 2/5 Ind Coy Lt Ernie Hitchcock NGVR Lt John Leitch 2/5 Ind Coy Lt John Murphy, NGVR/ANGAV

The parties had to be in place by 1st Nov, and Capt Murphy's group consisting of Lt F.A. Barrett DCM, Sgt Carlson & 8 trained natives, who had to cover Gasmata, had barely enough time to reach their position, 70 miles away. To reach his position Murphy chose to travel along the coast, as to divert inland would lose time. The coast route was by far the most dangerous but Murphy, Barrett and Carlson were all above the average in courage, and so he accepted the risk.

Murphy's radio was unserviceable owing to flat batteries. It was arranged to airdrop batteries at a set position en route. His party traveled 30 miles without interruption and then disaster overtook his party. A native sent to fetch carriers brought instead a Japanese patrol which attacked the jungle camp. In the melee which followed Murphy was captured, Barrett, Carlson and 2 natives were killed - the other natives escaped.

Source: Book "The Coastwatchers" by Lt Comd Eric Feldt.



## CONFESSIONS OF A COLLECTOR

By Bernard Arnold

In the years 1960 to 1975 I was working for the Administration of the then Territory of Papua New Guinea in a variety of locations and administrative positions in the Department of Public Works. This work took me to many places that still showed some of the wreckage of the Pacific War.

On Port Moresby's Ward's aerodrome, heaps of aircraft wreckage were to be seen in 1960 but within a year or two these were shipped to Japan as scrap metal. A scrap yard in Rabaul was heaped with interesting wartime scrap awaiting shipment to Japan whilst tunnels in the steep slopes of the volcanic caldera that surrounds the township contained stores of rusting steel helmets, artillery shells, automatic gun magazines, bomb fins, and even a barge or two. At Alexishafen aerodromes a number of aircraft wrecks had escaped the scrap dealers and lay corroding in the landscape. In many places, Japanese 75 mm multi-purpose guns still stood in their placements.

As a person interested in things mechanical and having lived in wartime Germany as a small boy, I became fascinated by the amount of ingenuity and effort expended by folks to hurt other folks. For nearly seven years I was a member of the Papua New Guinea Volunteer Rifles, where I learned to handle light machine guns, hand grenades, small mortars, and rocket-propelled grenades. In one of the drill halls was displayed a poster which showed the internal construction of 75 mm mortar bombs and I studied this with interest.

Field exercises in the PNGVR often took us to places where fighting had taken place in the late war. One annual bivouac took us to the southern section of the Kokoda track near Ioribaiwa. A week-end exercise took



Aircraft wrecks at Alexishafen, north of Madang

us to the outskirts of Wewak where we established a defensive perimeter for the night in the jungle. One of my section's riflemen spent a restless night and I was somewhat annoyed at his lack of discipline as the noise he made could have revealed our position to the 'enemy.' In

the morning after stand-down I went to criticize the soldier concerned. Not only had he put his groundsheet down on a patch of the usual roots and vines, but he had also been lying on top of the hipbones of a Japanese soldier whose rusting helmet lay two metres away. On another occasion I was being examined for first appointment to officer rank in field craft. The enemy position I was to take with my imaginary platoon was no less than that Japanese machinegun position where Pte R. Kelliher won his VC in Whittaker's Plantation outside Lae. I failed this part of the exam but I maintain Kelliher only had enemy bullets and hand grenades to contend with—I'd had a tropical downpour and lots of fresh cowpats! These experiences brought one in close touch with history and they have left me with the greatest admiration for our troops who fought in New Guinea.

After I left the PNGVR I studied the official histories of the war in New Guinea and then visited a number of places of interest. Because roads were few I purchased a light trail bike which enabled me to ford rivers which our VW-beetle could not, and to ride along jungle foot trails to some extent and thus reach places otherwise out of reach. By this time I had started picking up bomb and shell splinters which I intended to use for a sculpture - I had this urge to make useful what had been wantonly destroyed, an urge which no doubt had its roots in the images of Leipzig, Dresden, and other places experienced in 1945 as a six-year-old.

The latter part of my years in PNG was spent as Regional Finance and Administration Manager for the North Coast Region based at Madang. The frustrations at work no doubt helped to urge me on weekends to head for the bush, and the lack of job satisfaction made the challenge of 'delousing' live ammunition more appealing and afterwards it became adrenalin addiction.

I began with 12.6 mm. Typically a belt of '50 calibre' heavy machinegun ammunition was loaded with a mixture of ball, armour-piercing, tracer, and exploding bullets, the mixture depending on the intended targets and to achieve maximum destruction. To disarm the cartridge caps I welded a steel plate on the end of a section of steel water pipe. On the next Guy Fawkes Night, I heated the steel plate to red hot and dropped the empty cartridge cases into the pipe. When the cap exploded with the heat, the cartridge was sent hurtling onto the back lawn. Another two dozen followed. The exploding bullets required more careful treatment. I graduated from these to hand grenades, which were boiled out on the kitchen stove when no one else was at home. One day I wanted to clean out a detonator of a particular type of fuse of which I had only one example. Not wishing to destroy this rare item, I clamped the detonator between two wooden boards in the vice I had mounted in the space underneath the house (which was standing on 2 metres high concrete posts) and gingerly hacksawed through the boards and brass of the detonator. Not altogether unexpectedly, the detonator exploded, the boards deflecting the force as intended. Except for a small nick on the arm holding the far end of the hacksaw frame and ears ringing from the noise of the explosion, I suffered no injury, but the adrenalin got a boost.





Remnants of Australian Army camp—Dumpu—Markham Valley

Another time I was taking apart the fuse booster unit from a Japanese 75 mm shell. I was carefully unscrewing the cover plate when it suddenly sprang apart in my hands and gave me quite a start. Fortunately it was just the release of the detention spring which had been under pressure. Talk about a jack-in-the-box! At other times, when I was unscrewing various items, there would be a hissing sound, and I would immediately put some distance between myself and the item for some time. These were gases caused by chemical decomposition.

Eventually I tackled some Australian 25-pounder shells found at Dumpu in the Ramu Valley - left-overs of the Shaggy Ridge campaign. I knew the TNT explosive charge was very shock-proof, requiring a small explosion to set it off, but I also knew that it was unwise to compress it between steel on steel. Nevertheless, because I had no brass rod at hand, I made a long chisel out of steel rod to chip out the TNT. I did this sitting on the back lawn under a large frangipani bush with the shell between my knees. Everything went along well until I reached the bottom of the shell. The chisel compressing a minute amount of TNT between its tip and the bottom of the shell caused a small



Aust shells Dumpu

local explosion. This blew out some of the TNT still adhering to the bottom and sides of the shell through the narrow opening, like a mini-volcano going off. The explosion tumbled me over backwards and blew leaves off the frangipani bush and rained the debris down on the house. My wife told me later that at first she thought the bits falling on the roof were me.

I picked myself up,

realised I was still in one piece but noticed that I had blood on my left hand. This hand had been holding the chisel near the opening of the shell and the bits ejected had somewhat pulped my fingertips. Before my wife had time to come down out of the house, I had washed the blood off and applied my handkerchief. I knew she would get very excited if she saw blood. She looked at me questioningly and I just said "drive me to the hospital." The first thing the nurse in 'casualty' asked me was "How did it happen?" The foolishness of my situation then came home to me. The nurse nodded knowingly about men's foolishness and dressed the injury. As soon as I got home I loaded all explosive items, stored on the septic tank top, into the car and took them to a cliff overlooking deep water where I disposed of them.

For three months I did not touch another explosive device. Whenever a door slammed in the wind, I jumped in reaction. Then colleagues came and said they had some nice 25-pounders, would I clean them out for them. The temptation was more than I could resist and I agreed. This time I had greater respect and used more caution and I had no further mishaps.



Bakers oven—Dumpu

Towards the end of my time in PNG, in 1975, I had spotted an unexploded American parachute fragmentation bomb in a teak forest at Alexishafen No. 1 drome. I studied it where it lay and it was obvious that in descending pendulum fashion on its parachute it had received a sideways blow to its firing pin preventing its de-

pression on reaching the ground. Before tackling an item, I would study fragments of exploded fuses to see thread directions, lock-screw locations, and so on and it usually took some months until I was confident I could safely disarm the item. When I finally went back to the forest confident that I could disarm the bomb, to my great disappointment it had been removed, probably by Army Bomb Disposal. Perhaps it was just as well.

Army Bomb Disposal personnel visited several times a year when they would deal with unexploded bombs and shells reported to the local police. After I had my pick, I also reported finds. One heavy bomb, probably a 1,000 pounder, was lying in the shallow bed of the lower loworo River. Wading through the river, I noticed it lying on its side, half buried in the gravel. What puzzled me at first was that the steel above the water surface was almost free from rust and somewhat polished. Then I realised that this was the local village toilet—a convenient squatting spot to ensure body wastes were carried





away by flowing water, inaccessible to any sorcerer with evil intent. Unfortunately, the villagers were deprived of their comfortable perch courtesy of Army Bomb Disposals who months later blew it up where it lay. A number of interesting items were found by me at Erima, south of Madang. Erima was on the main line of Japanese communications between Wewak and Lae. Some of these items were a field anvil, farrier's hammer, and a bundle of horseshoes; a Japanese bayonet with the lower part of the blade forged into a hook, which when fixed to a rifle, obviously is useful for harvesting hard-to-reach pawpaw fruit or even coconuts from young palms. In one spot I excavated about a hundred glass vials containing unidentifiable liquids, probably including morphine. Another was a charred book of artillery ranging tables. Ironically, the attempt to burn it to deprive the enemy of intelligence, had actually preserved it by charring and the information could be read with some effort. The most interesting however was a Japanese anti-aircraft barrage mortar and bombs—see illustration. I have not seen any reports by allied airmen that this bizarre weapon was encountered in service. This was very much a 'two-edged sword' since unexploded bomblets would have been draped over the shrubbery or scattered over the ground, a hazard to their own personnel accentuated by the warning on each bomblet, "It is very dangerous, do not touch it." The bomblets were charged with cyclonite, which was said to have been the most powerful chemical explosive produced. A colleague at work held an explosives licence and he arranged a controlled explosion on a lonely beach of a yoghurt container with cyclonite salvaged from bomblets. The explosion was impressive—some of the sand appearing to have been fused by the heat and pressure.

On one occasion when I had a friend visiting from Adelaide, I chartered a small aircraft which dropped us off at Dumpu in the Ramu valley and we walked back to Madang across the mountains by Shaggy Ridge, scene of heavy fighting from October 1943 to January 1944. That hike is another story. Later a primitive road was built from the coast to the Ramu and the area became more accessible for week-end exploration of the old battle field. Australian ammunition such as 25-pounder shells, three-inch and two-inch mortar bombs and 36-grenades (fully fused) were scattered about with rusting steel boxes, drums and other scrap. Some of the culverts on the road built in 1943/44 to Guy's post were made from expended 25-pounder cartridge cases with bases sawn off and tapers pushed together to make long pipes. On John's Knoll, scene of a tenacious Australian defence against determined Japanese attacks, the old weapon pits could be seen, some with mortar bombs lined up on the parapet for ready use and rotting boots were scattered about as well as the odd rusting Japanese helmet.

At Dumpu the layout of the large camp was still outlined by its once white-painted river-washed stones. A baker's oven improvised from a 44-gallon drum was still in place ready for use and mess dixies were lying around nearby.

**To be continued**



## WAR DOGS

The dog that cornered Osama Bin Laden is not your standard canine. Barak Obama, went to Ford Campbell, Kentucky, for a highly publicized, but very private meeting with the Commando team that killed Osama Bin Laden, only one of the 61 members of the super-secret SEAL DevGru unit was identified by name, Cairo, the war dog.

Cairo, like most canine members of the elite US Navy SEALs, is a Belgian Malinois. The Malinois breed is similar to German Shepherd, but smaller and more compact, with an adult male weighing in the 30 kilo range.

German Shepherds are still used as war dogs by the American military but the lighter, sturdier Malinois is considered better for the tandem parachute jumping and rappelling operations often undertaken by various military organisations around the world.

Like their human counterparts, the dog SEALs are highly trained, highly skilled, highly motivated special ops experts, able to perform extraordinary military missions by Sea, Air and Land (thus the acronym SEAL).



The dogs carry out a wide range of special-

ized duties for the military teams to which they are attached. With a sense of smell 40 times greater than a humans, the dogs are trained to detect and identify both explosive material and hostile or hiding humans.

Dogs are twice as fast as a fit human, so anyone trying to escape is not likely to outrun Cairo or his buddies.

The dogs, also equipped with video cameras, also enter certain danger zones first, allowing their handlers to see what's ahead before humans follow. SEAL dogs are even trained parachutists, jumping either in tandem with their handlers, or solo, if the jump is into water.



As well, the dogs are faithful, fearless and ferocious—incredibly frightening and efficient attackers.

When the SEAL DevGru team (usually known by its old designation, Team 6) hit Bin Laden's Pakistan compound on 2nd May, Cairo's feet would have been four of the first on the ground.

And, like the human SEALs, Cairo was wearing super-string, flexible body armour and outfitted with high-tech equipment that included "doggles", specially designed and fitted goggles with night-vision and infrared capability that would even allow Cairo to see human heat forms through concrete walls.

### **William Manning Edwards CMG MBE MID Colonel, NG 2000, NGX 455**

Bill Edwards was born in Enmore, Sydney on 27 February 1896. His father was W I Edwards who resided at 115 Enmore Road, Enmore. Bill was 18 years and 7 months when he enlisted 25 September 1914. He was described as being dark complexioned with blue grey eyes and brown hair. He weighed 66 kg and was 1.625m tall. For the previous six months he was a Military Science Student at Sydney University. He was attested and posted to D Company, 13 Battalion, 1 AIF with Regimental Number 381. The 13<sup>th</sup> was formed in NSW and raised just 6 weeks after the commencement of the war. It was part of 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade under the command of Colonel Monash. Edwards was promoted to Corporal 1 October 1914 and embarked for overseas in Melbourne 22 December 1914 on the "Ulysses".

The 13<sup>th</sup> took part in the landing at Gallipoli arriving late 25 April 1915. For the first four months it undertook defensive operations establishing the ANZAC beachhead. The breakout was attempted 8 August. Corporal Edwards was made Acting Sergeant 3 May 1915 after the Platoon Sergeant was wounded. On 11 May 1915 Edwards was wounded and was transferred to a hospital ship. He was discharged from hospital and arrived in Weymouth Depot, in the UK on 14 September 1915. Weymouth was the Depot for the ANZAC Gallipoli casualties sent to UK hospitals for treatment and for discharge as convalescents.

Edwards was discharged from the AIF on 6 October 1915 when he applied for a commission in the 11<sup>th</sup> East Surrey Regiment of the Imperial Army. He was appointed 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant 25 December 1915 after attending an Officer Training Course at Pembroke College in the University of Cambridge commencing 11 October 1915. The East Surrey Regiment has a long and distinguished history. During WW1, it comprised 18 battalions of which 1 to 4 were Regular Army battalions with the remainder being part of the Territorial Force. The 11th was formed in Devonport 1 November 1914 as a service battalion. It moved to Dartmouth 10 April 1915 and became a reserve battalion. It moved to Colchester mid 1915 and converted into 21 Training Reserve Battalion of 5 Reserve Brigade 1 September 1916. A 16 July 1916 letter to Lieutenant WM Edwards addressed to 12<sup>th</sup> Service Battalion, British Armies, France is on his file. He left the British Army in 1919 as a Lieutenant. His 1 year and 12 days service with 1 AIF qualified him for the 1914/15 Star, British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

In September 1922 Edwards was sent an Army letter addressed to him in the Public Health Department at Rabaul. Apparently he arrived in the Territory of New Guinea in 1921 and was appointed Officer in Charge of the Quarantine Station, Vulcan Island, Rabaul. He later transferred to DDS& NA (Department of District Services and Native Affairs?). Gazettes show he was appointed a Temporary Patrol Officer on 1 January 1923 and resigned from this position on 30th August 1924. He then became an Overseer of Native Labour on 2nd October 1926 and was the Rabaul Pound Keeper from 15th March 1928 until 31st October 1928. Surprisingly or fittingly, the Rabaul Pound came under "police and prisons". There is a reference which indicates that he was employed at times on plantations up to 1929.

His Army records show an address for Edwards dated 5 September 1934 at Edie Creek on Kaindi Mountain south of Wau, so some time

after 1929 he must have moved over to the New Guinea goldfields. Little is known about what he did until he enlisted in NGVR on 14th August 1941. Sometime during the 1930s he acquired a block of land west of Lae fronting the Lae to Nadzab Road. Given his background and his later Army activities, Edwards seems to have specialised in recruiting and managing native labour. He married during this period and there were 2 children, Bill and Rosemary. His wife was nicknamed "Teddy".

In April 1941, NGVR was deployed in Rabaul (Bn Headquarters), the New Guinea (NG) Goldfields and the NG Coast. The NG Goldfields comprised the Bn 2/ic located in Wau with a Rifle Company and a Machine Gun (MG) Company, and in nearby Bulolo there was an Australian Army Medical Corp Detachment. The NG Coast was made up of a Rifle Company HQ with a MG Platoon in Lae, while Salamaua and Madang each had a Rifle Platoon.

Bill enlisted in the Militia at Nadzab on 14 August 1941 giving his NOK as Jessie Clydesdale Edwards, 2 Natal Avenue, Edithvale, Melbourne. There were 2 children and his given occupations were planter and labour superintendent. He had a plantation a few km west of Lae on the Nadzab Road, perhaps a soldier settlement lot? His Regimental Number was NG2000 and he was brought on strength as either a Sergeant or Lieutenant. He was promoted a Temporary Major on 15 September 1941 at the time he assumed command of NGVR when it's Headquarters was transferred to the NG mainland in Bulolo after the deployment of Lark Force to Rabaul lessened the significance of NGVR there. Edwards was also



Adjutant and he and his 2/ic, Major E W Jeynes, also a WW1 veteran, encouraged the detachments to develop independent units, preparing escape routes, observation points and stores dumps in their own regions. Although most were not mobilised until 21 January 1942, they continued "to give their best without pay".

Lae, Bulolo and Salamaua were bombed midday 21 January. The Administrator handed over civilian administration to NGVR

and Edwards set up NGVR Headquarters on his plantation west of Lae. The civil population was moved by late afternoon to an emergency camp about 6 km west and plans were made for all unfit males to be evacuated, a group east along the coast to Papua by boat, some through Salamaua to Wau and others including the Chinese civilians escorted from Nadzab to Bulwa and by truck to Wau. Bill Edwards whose nickname was "Mudguts, .... had to be taken seriously as a commander of considerable intelligence".

After the Japanese landed in Lae and Salamaua on 8 March, NGVR's dispositions were 4 officers and 70 other ranks (ORs) in the Salamaua area, 5 officers and 80 ORs in the Lae/Markham area, 2 officers and 100 ORs in the Wau/Bulolo/Bulwa area and another 30 ORs in the Madang/Ramu area, a total of 291 of which only 100 were fit and trained. Estimated Japanese numbers in the Lae/Markham were 1,800 and 300 in Salamaua. "NGVR had to keep in touch with the enemy and dominate the patrol areas without threatening the Japanese enough to provoke them to reinforce and attack in overwhelming strength beyond the limit of the road to Nadzab or beyond Mubo from Salamaua." NGVR was the "Keepers of the gate".

A reference in Phillip Bradley's "Battle for Wau" states "...on 8th March 1942, 8 Military District instructed NGVR to destroy Wau Airstrip and carry out demolitions in the Bulolo Valley ....by 15th



March Edwards had authorised destruction of the two power houses as well as the main Bulolo/Wau bridges". Controversially, it is believed that this command was given by Lt Col Fleay, commander of Kanga Force in May.



NGVR was reinforced late May early June when Major Keen's larger 2/5th Independent Company was flown into Wau. Although Edwards retained command of NGVR he handed over to Lt Col Fleay, when Kanga Force was established soon after. NGVR was an exhausted unit by September, although some troops remained in place until early 1943 when NGVR was officially disbanded.

A single reference to Maj WM Edwards is found in Alan Powell's book "The Third Force". It said "Maj W M Edwards, Deputy Assistant Director Native Labour controlled the carriers. Alan Hooper served under Edwards and succeeded Edwards as controller of beach-head and road head stores. By 12 September 1943 the Salamaua airfield... was in allied hands." This was during

the period July to September 1943 and the beachhead referred to is the US beachhead at Nassau Bay, the coastal drive towards Salamaua.

In late 1943, it was decided to form 1 New Guinea Infantry Battalion (NGIB) with Major WM Edwards as it's founding commander. Capt BG Dawson, formerly of the 2/22 Bn, was the Adjutant. Edward's initial work was to recruit his soldiers, with the first recruits arriving in camp 20 March 1944. Edwards returned to Camp Diddy, which was situated near Nadzab, in September and was promoted Lieutenant Colonel. 1 NGIB continued it's training until late October when the rifle companies were posted to their operational areas. The companies would operate distantly from their headquarters in different theatres of the war under the command of various Australian Brigades and Battalions. The companies were deployed as follows: 31 October, B Company to Jacquinot Bay, South Coast New Britain; 19 November, A Company to Bougainville and from 3 June 1945 to Jacquinot Bay; November, C Company to Madang; and 10 December, D Company to Open Bay, New Britain.

In November 1944, Lt Col Edwards was promoted to Colonel to command the newly formed Pacific Island Regiment, which comprised 1 PIB and 1 NGIB and 2 NGIV, with 3 NGIB to follow in August 1945. As the battalions had specific and increasing recruiting, training and supply needs and were active over a number of widely spread operational areas, the requirement for a regimental headquarters became a matter of urgency.

PIR Headquarters was the old 1 NGIB site at Camp Diddy near Nadzab until 10 September 1945 when it moved to the Bumbu River, Lae. On 10 October 1945, at the age of 49 years, Col Edwards retired from the command and was succeeded by Col. HT Allan. Edwards ceased full time duty 7 March 1946 and transferred to the Reserve of Officers 2 December 1946.

In the early 1950s, the formative years of PNGVR, the CO of PNGVR, Lt Col McLeod, asked Edwards to select the PNGVR badge from a number of designs, which he did, and it is the same



Photo Rifleman Bill Edwards Jnr NGVR, Lae, 1940.

badge worn by members of the NGVR & PNGVR Association today. Although Bill Edwards lived in or near Lae there is no record or memory that he ever visited A Company in Lae or had anything more to do with PNGVR. Bob Harvey-Hall who was the Officer Commanding A Company for many years never met him.

Edwards was manager of the Lae Club in 1950, in Rotten Row, before it moved to the top of the hill. He was probably living on his plantation property situated a few km west of Lae at the time, the property which was once used as NGVR Headquarters.

Other than that he made an application on 22 May 1963, from an unknown address, for benefits under the Repatriation Act for WW1 as Number 318, 13<sup>th</sup> Bn, nothing further is known about his post war life.

Colonel W M Edwards **CMG MBE MID** died in Lae in 1963 aged 67

Sources:  
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"Green Shadows, A War History of the PIB, 1,2,&3 NGIB", by G M Byrnes, 1989.

Service records of WM Edwards from NAA

"The Third Force" by Alan Powell

"Golden Gateway" by James Sinclair

"Battle for Wau" by Phillip Bradley

Notes from Gazettes sent by Max Hayes

Google

re: 11th East Surrey Battalion; 13<sup>th</sup> Battalion and Weymouth Depot.

Phil Ainsworth

April, 2012

## HIRODO ONODA

In March, 1974, some **29 years** after the official end of WW2, Hirodo Onoda, a former Japanese Intelligence Officer, walks out of the jungle of Lubang Is. In the Philippines, where he was finally relieved of duty.



He handed over his sword (hanging from his hip in photo), his rifle, his ammunition

Hirodo Onoda at his eventual surrender. He is wearing the sword mentioned above



tion and several hand grenades. Onoda had been sent to Lubang Is in Dec. 1944 to join an existing group of soldiers to hamper any enemy attacks. Allied forces took the Island just a few months later, capturing or killing all but Onoda and 3 other Japanese soldiers. The four ran into the hills and began a decades-long insurgency extending well past the end of the war. Several times they were found or were handed leaflets notifying them that the war had ended, but they refused to believe it. In 1950 one of the soldiers turned himself in to Philippine authorities.

By 1972 Onoda's two other compatriots were dead, killed during guerilla activities, leaving Onoda alone. In 1974 Onoda met a Japanese college dropout, Norio Suzuki, who was traveling the world, and through their friendship, Onoda's former Commanding Officer was located and flew to Lubang Is. To formally relieve Onoda of duty, and bring him home to Japan. Over the years the small group had killed some 30 Filipinos in various attacks, but Onoda ended up going free, after he received a pardon from President Ferdinand Marcos.



Above: Great Military photo - Plus The armament of a B52 bomber



Comanche a stallion. The only US Cavalry survivor of the Custer Massacre at the Little Big Horn, USA.

**WHY ENGLISH IS DIFFICULT TO LEARN.**

We polish the Polish furniture.  
 He could lead if he would get the lead out.  
 A farm can produce produce.  
 The dump was so full it had to refuse refuse.  
 The soldier decided to desert in the desert.  
 The present is a good time to present the present.  
 At the Army base a base was painted on the head of a base drum  
 The dove dove into the bushes.  
 I did not object to the object.  
 The insurance for the invalid was invalid.  
 The bandage was wound around the wound.  
 There was a row among the oarsmen about how to row.  
 They were too close to the door to close it.  
 They sent a sewer down to stitch the tear in the sewer line.  
 To help with planting, the farmer taught his sow to sow.  
 The wind was too strong to wind in the sail.  
 After a number of Novocain injections, my jaw got number.  
 I shed a tear when I saw the tear in my clothes.  
 I had to subject the subject to a series of tests.  
 I spent last evening evening out a pile of dirt.  
 How can I intimate this to my most intimate friend.

*Dear Lord I pray for Wisdom to understand my man,  
 Love to forgive him: And Patience for his moods.  
 Because, Lord, if I pray for Strength I'll beat him to death.*

**WHY RED WINE IS IMPORTANT AT CHRISTMAS**



Another recent addition to your museum, courtesy Leigh Eastwood and Salisbury RSL Sub Branch.





C COY GOROKA 1960

Inspecting Offr—Dr J Gunther

Parade Comd - Lt Don Heap

Attending—Brig Eldridge, H.P. Seale DC., Maj Frank Hoeter OC Photo Courtesy Juergen Raasch who emailed “Col Eldridge was responsible for my ending up at OCS Portsea where I graduated in Dec 1963 into the RAA.

Following my year in Vietnam I was posted back to HQ PNG Comd in 1967 for 3 years as SO 3 Ops/Air/SD/Trg and ended up as the Brigs ADC where we shared many memories of the PNGVR. As much as I used to curse jungle training at Goldie, it helped me survive on numerous occasions during 1966/67”



Be very careful to supervise men when they erect the Christmas Decorations this year.

**No Nativity Scene in Canberra this year**

The Supreme Court has ruled that there cannot be a nativity scene in Canberra (the Australian Capital) this Christmas season.

This isn't for any religious reason.

They simply have not been able to find Three Wise Men in Canberra. The search for a Virgin continues.

There was no problem, however, finding enough asses to fill the stable.



Plaque located in the Hall of Memories, Brisbane.

and popular newspapers in Australian history - “Guinea Gold”.

Civilian population, too, drew from it virtually the daily news they had of the progress of the war and of a saner life far from the battle zones.

The Japanese knew of its immense value, Mr Leonard, now crusted with industry and

journalistic honour, recalled. “They kept dropping eggs on us, trying to put us out of operation, but they never did”.

Leonard, editor of the paper for more than two of its wildest years, disclaims credit for one of the most essential logistics exercises in WW11 – the provision of news, and particularly hometown news to isolated, embattled and lonely men.

“The real credit belonged to the junior officers and to the Sergeants, corporals and privates who did not spare themselves when things went wrong” he said.

There was the time too, Mr Leonard remembers – and they are golden memories for a newspaperman – when the only linotype machine in Port Moresby and “Guinea Gold's” only press at Dobodura broke down simultaneously.

Such was the demand by uniformed readers that RAAF airmen flew copy type from Dobodura across the Owen Stanley range at night to the press at Port Moresby. “It was crazy flying, almost suicide, but they did it and we got the paper out”

**A MAD RUSH TO PRINT**

In 1942, with an invading Japanese army only 65 km from Port Moresby – and Australia threatened – isolation was a morale destroying disease among troops in New Guinea.

The men were cut off from day-to-day news, recalls Mr Reg Leonard, and the result was a flood of mad rumours which swept through the troops, then just beginning to push the Japanese back from mountain strongholds.

There are moments in all careers, but particularly in journalism, when orderly progress becomes in an instant a mad rush to adventure and achievement.

For Reg Leonard, recalled from London to cover the invasion of New Guinea, this was one such moment.

“I suggested to a half colonel that we could combat the disease with a small newspaper” he said this week.

Before he knew it, Leonard was taken before General Blamey, who, “in sulphuric language” demanded to know if the paper could be published and how often.

“Daily!” said Leonard. “Done!” said Blamey, and the somewhat bewildered war correspondent emerged from the General's tent as Major R.B. Leonard, a commissioned Australian Army officer.

And within weeks -“there were a lot of good men around” - he had, on November 19, 1942, produced as editor the first edition of what was to become one of the most incredibly determined



Leonard said.

Men in loathsome situations are still men. "Guinea Gold" helped keep them that way with features like the comic strip Ginger Meggs.

Newspapermen are not overly awed by great presences. But Reg Leonard confesses to being thoroughly starved by an over-enthusiastic batman when called before the Supreme Pacific Commander, General MacArthur.



"He liked newspapers without sex and without editorial comment" Reg Leonard said. "He got it every morning over coffee and he liked "Guinea Gold" and he wanted to tell

me that. I don't know whether he knew it, but the General's plane, which flew daily from Australia carried out Ginger Meggs blocks along with the food he ordered from Lennon's Hotel – among other things, of course. And every picture block we used had to have been made by the Courier Mail. They must have wondered there who they were working for".

Perhaps for people who accept that their daily newspapers arrive as a matter of course on their front lawn each day, the "Guinea Gold" is merely one of history's asides.

It was not, in its time and under the direction of Reg Leonard, "Guinea Gold" was a world daily in the sense that it brought the world to hundreds of thousands of men and women fighting in the Pacific.

At their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in Sydney yesterday, the "Guinea Gold" veterans were very thin on the ground. But newspapermen everywhere – in the absence of lids which might be dipped – were saluting a fine chapter in the history of journalism.

**By Don Peterson. From "The Courier Mail" Sat Nov 29, 1982.**

### Overseas Privately Constructed Memorial Restoration Programme

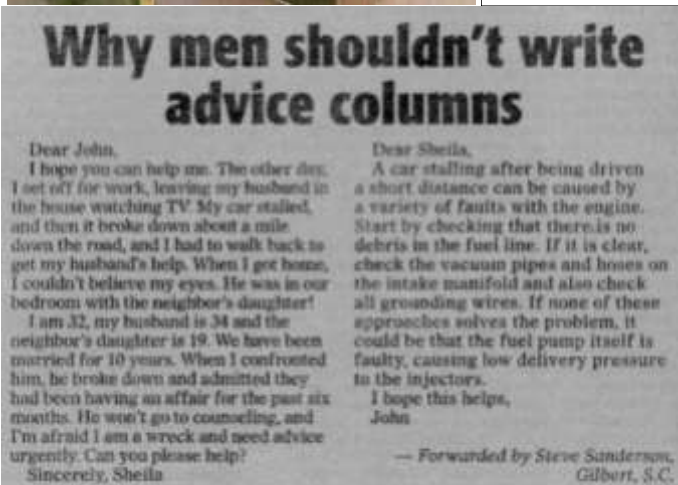
Memorials restored through the OAWG Overseas Privately-Constructed Memorial Restoration Program (OPCMRP) were the locations of several commemorative ceremonies held in April. The RSL Cenotaph in Rabaul, PNG, was the site of a Dawn Service on Anzac Day 2012, which marked the 70th anniversary of the fall of Rabaul in the Second World War. The restoration of the Cenotaph was an initiative of the Rabaul Historical Society and was made possible by a grant through the OPCMRP. Granite plaques were installed on the Cenotaph, replacing bronze plaques which had disappeared some years earlier, and volcanic ash was removed from the surrounding area.

On 27 April in Malaysia, a wreath laying took place at a plaque dedication commemorating service personnel of Australia and other nations involved in the confrontation with Indonesia. The wreath laying was attended by several Australian veterans of the confrontation, including 22nd Const Sqn RAE members David Scott, Laurie Nelms, Rod Bramich and Gordon "Bob" Menzies. Mr Laurie Nelms arranged the construction and installation of the plaque through an OPCMRP grant. The plaque was installed

with the grateful assistance of staff at the Kundasang War Memorial. OPCMRP aims to assist Australian veterans and other individuals in the restoration and preservation of existing military unit and battle memorials that have been constructed overseas. For more information, contact OAWG at war-graves@dva.gov.au



Assn member Gerry McGrade who took part in the construction of the Cenotaph in Rabaul, views the restoration work.



### BATTLE HONOURS

The first Battle Honour, or honorary distinction as it was correctly called, was awarded in the British Army to the 18<sup>th</sup> Royal Irish Regiment by King William 111 for its service at the Siege of Namur (Belgium; the War of the Grand Alliance) in 1695.

Thereafter the custom of granting honours became more common. All the regiments that took part in the defence of Gibraltar during the Great Siege of 1779-83 were allowed to bear the title 'Gibraltar'.

As battle honours were gradually introduced, they were placed on clothing and other appointments, such as drums, as well as the Unit Colours.

The current policy, in respect to the emblazonment of battle honours on Queen's and Regimental Colours, is that a maximum of 10 battle honours awarded prior to WW1 and all those won in WW1 are emblazoned on the Regimental Colour.

A maximum of 11 battle and theatre honours won during WW11 are authorised to be emblazoned on the Queen's Colour.

For Post-WW11, there is no limit to the number of honours that may be placed on a Regimental Colour and once that Colour is full any additional honours may be emblazoned on the Queen's Colour.

Honour titles are not to be confused with battle honours. They are an artillery term and may be granted to units within the RAA (Royal Australian Artillery).

**WO1 C.Jobson, former RSM Ceremonial ADHQ**





Email from Don Lawie  
 “Stan Carswell & I paid due homage to the NGVR/ PNGVR stone at Rocky Creek War Memorial Park yesterday, 12/8 at the annual VJ ceremony. Stan supplied a small PNG flag, and we hope to do this again next year.



Assn Members present at Tom Keenan (NGVR) funeral. Jesse Chee, Graeme Blanch, Doug Ng, Norm Mundy, Kerry Glover (partly hidden), Ralph Seeto and Mal Zimmermann.

**NOW on DVD and available from the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Society:**

**70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Events of the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Tragedy**

This presentation is a coverage of the Rabaul & Montevideo Maru 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary luncheon of 30 June 2012 and the dedication of the Memorial on the 1st of July 2012 at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra. The entire presentation has been filmed in high definition format by a professional crew.

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**By mail:** Cheques can be posted to Rabaul & Montevideo Maru Society PO Box 1757 Tuggeranong CD ACT 2901.

**Nameless Warriors: The Ben Moide Story. By Lahui Ako. University of PNG Press. Port Moresby, 2012. 246 pages. K80 plus p&p from University of PNG Bookshop. P.O. Box 413 UPNG PO NCD PNG E: [upngbooks@gmail.com](mailto:upngbooks@gmail.com) [www.pngbuai.com/buybooks](http://www.pngbuai.com/buybooks)**

*Nameless Warriors*, written by Lahui Ako, describes the life of one of PNG’s last remaining WW11 veterans, Ben Moide. Fittingly, it was launched on 23 July 2012, the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first engagement by PNG and Australian forces against the invading Japanese in WWII.

‘We fought, but according to the bulk of the *taubadas* (white men), we remained nameless, we were just the native scout or the Papua guide to them,’ Moide says in the book. ‘Still, to the gallant few who addressed us by name, I owe them my undying gratitude for treating us as mates.’

‘But the fact remains, without the help of all those nameless warriors and carriers, who braved the sickness, rain, mud, hunger and despair and enemy of the campaign, all would have surely been lost.’ Moide ran away from home to join the Papuan Infantry Battalion at the age of 16 in 1940. In July 1942, he was part of the PIB platoon that ambushed the Japanese at Awala. The *taubadas* order to fire on the advancing enemy, and the ensuing action, propelled these mostly nameless warriors into the annals of PNG history.

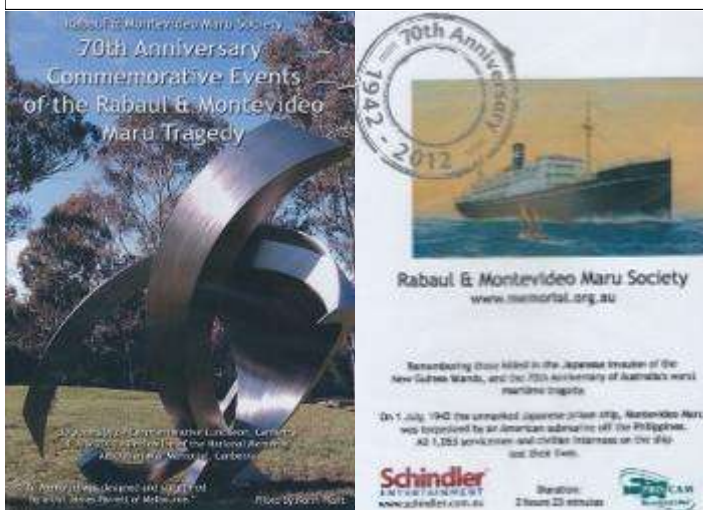
From Awala, from Kokoda to Deniki, to the Opi and Warriors rivers, and the Scarlet Beach landings, Ben Moide beat a busy track with his comrades before returning home in 1944 to act as a PIB instructor and final demob in 1945. Life after the war proved difficult as the PIB veterans struggled to find their feet in a society that had passed them by.

But Moide perseveres and starts a family and legacy that saw him drive Administrator Murray for a while before he became Dr Gunther’s drives to the Waigani Swamp to spy out land for a learning institute.

Moide was a member of the Hanuabada rugby league build-up in the 1950s, was a member of the mighty Magani outfit in 1961-1962, and was employed with San Miguel and SP Brewery before retiring in 1991.

*Nameless Warriors* is one of the very few books written by Papua New Guineans on PNG wartime history, and should be embraced by everyone, especially this generation which continues to take their freedom for granted. Information from: <http://malumnalu.blogspot.com.au/2012/08/new-book-tells-story-of-nameless.html>

Taken from “Una Voce”, Newsletter of PNGAA. For reader’s information Ben Moide was a member of PNGVR.



## VALE

It is with regret that we advise the following deaths.

### Colin Newton

Son of deceased member Ken Newton. Colin had a long battle with leukemia and died on 6th September. Our sympathies to his wife Chris and the Newton family.

### Bernadette Heap

Wife of member Don Heap. Bernadette died on 11th October following a serious stroke the previous week. Our sympathies to the Heap family.

### Lt John Denning OAM. ED. JP.

Formerly NGIB. NX 101597. Died in early October. No further details known.

### Lest we Forget.



Photos of the new disabled ramp which has been installed at your museum by volunteers. Our thanks to Paul Brown for his organisation and work on the project.



### REPLICA MEDALS OR MOUNTING OF MEDALS

A reliable alternative source for medal work is National Medals, [natmedals@bigpond.com](mailto:natmedals@bigpond.com), Ph 07 3871 0600 Ask for Greg Faux, mobile 0419 196 172. Located at 13/200 Moggill Road, Taringa, Brisbane, 4066.

Please Note:

## CHRISTMAS IS CANCELLED

Apparently, YOU told Santa that you have been GOOD this year ...



*He died laughing*

MERRY CHRISTMAS

AND A VERY HAPPY AND HEALTHY  
YEAR IN 2013

FROM PRESIDENT PHIL AINSWORTH  
AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE ASSOCIATION

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

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

All correspondence to:-

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

Mobile:- 0424 562 030

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

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

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**Bob Collins—Editor**

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Contact Phil Ainsworth

**07 3844 3222**

Email: [p.ainsworth@kingco.com.au](mailto:p.ainsworth@kingco.com.au)

99 Annerley Road, Woolloongabba QLD 4102

[www.kingco.com.au](http://www.kingco.com.au)