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PAPUA NEW GUINEA VOLUNTEER RIFLES EX-MEMBERS ASSOCIATION Inc.

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PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

On Friday 1st July 2016 we held our 74th Anniversary Memorial Service, commemorating the men lost on the Montevideo Maru when it was sunk by the US Submarine Sturgeon. The Service was held in the magnificently restored Shrine of Memories, Brisbane Cenotaph. Our Association's plaques are located in an alcove off the main room of the Shrine, which is devoted to WW2 commemorations. I would recommend a visit, if you have not visited the Shrine since its restoration.

About 25 attended the Service including distinguished guests: the Honourable Ms Di Farmer MP, Member for Bulimba and representing the Premier of Queensland and the Speaker of the Queensland Parliament; the Honourable Mrs Deb Frecklington, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Member for Nanango; Mrs Gynyth Whatmough, President of the Australian War Widows Guild; Major Earle Ivers from the Salvation Army; Mr Thomas Parun, President and Ms Maureen Mopio, Secretary of the Papua New Guinea Federation Queensland Inc.; Mr John Reid from Brisbane Legacy; Mr Des Kearton of Wavell Heights RSL and our Patron, Major General John Pearn. The presence of these representatives from the Queensland State Government and other key kindred organisations reflected the growing significance of the occasion.

Paul Brown conducted the service which many of the guests commented on its simplicity and elegance - thank you Paul. Unfortunately few Association members were present. I gave the key address, a copy of which is available on our website and Facebook page. The photograph from left to right shows Ms Di Farmer, Phil Ainsworth, Mrs Deb Frecklington and Major General John Pearn.



Our Museum Extension has been completed and our busy Curator John Holland with his helpers Colin Gould, Peter Rogers and Paul Brown are now rearranging the layout and preparing new exhibits. At the suggestion of Councillor Matthew Burke of Mt Ommaney Ward, and with John Holland's brilliant follow

up skills, the President, Nicholas Netto and 14 other fellow members of the Jindalee Rotary Club voluntarily painted the outside of our existing Museum, in keeping with our new extension, on weekend commencing 2nd July. Rotarian John Gallagher, a professional painter, was the coordinator and technical expert.

The paint was donated by Taubman's and the delivery and use of the trestles and planks were donated by Jindalee Hire Services, a generosity least expected - thank you all. John Holland and his usual helpers provided the volunteer workers with morning and afternoon teas and barbecue luncheons. A great result. Hopefully we will have an official opening later in the year.



Our recently self published book **Keepers of the Gate** is being well received, so if you have still to read it, fill in the coupon in the attachment to this newsletter and send it, accompanied either by a cheque or EFT confirmation to the Secretary. It would make a great gift for your children and grandchildren. Please remember that our book **PNGVR, A History, 1950-1973** is also available on similar terms.

The annual Fassifern Valley shoot against the Light Horse will be held at 10am, Sunday 31st July at Boonah, about an hour's drive south of Brisbane. We need shooters so please urgently ring Phil Ainsworth 0418 730 348 or email

p.ainsworth@kingco.com.au to advise your interest.

Other events which you should diary and advise the appropriate person if attending are set out below. Contact details of all committee members may be found on page 16.

- Association Committee meeting, Wacol Museum, 10am Saturday 16th July - Colin Gould
- Light Horse Shoot, Fassifern Valley Rifle Range just south of Boonah, 10am Sunday 31st July - Phil Ainsworth
- Kokoda Memorial Service, Gold Coast,

Monday 8th August - Bob Collins

- Kokoda Memorial Service, Sherwood RSL, 10.30am Sunday 14th August - Mike Griffin
- Working Bee at the Wacol Museum, 8am, 20th August - John Holland
- Battle for Australia Commemoration in George St, Brisbane, 11am Wednesday 7th September -Colin Gould
- Association Committee meeting, Wacol Museum, 10am, Saturday 17th September - Colin Gould
- Last Jimboomba Mixed Formal Dining Night, 4pm Saturday 15th October - Bob Collins
- Working Bee at the Wacol Museum, 8am, 15th October - John Holland
- Association AGM, Wacol Museum, 10am, Saturday 22nd October followed by free BBQ - Colin Gould
- Association Committee meeting, Wacol Museum, Saturday 19th November - Colin Gould

Other than some minor expenditure to refurbish the Museum exhibits, our major projects have been concluded and paid for. We are hopeful of replacing some of our computer/copying gear in the coming year through grants, otherwise this should be our major expense. In summary the Association's finances remain sound. It has about \$20,000 net in the bank, which will gradually increase through the sale of our books and other merchandise, subscriptions and donations. We will endeavour to obtain grant money for any unforeseen capital expenditure.

Phil Ainsworth July 2016

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

JOHN COOKE NGVR (CONCL)	2
MASCOTS	5
THE MAGIC CARPET	5
GUY GIBSON VC	7
P-8A POSEIDON AIRCRAFT	8
2ND DIVISION	8
GILBERT ROBERTSON NGVR	9
B17E FLYING FORTRESS	9
DANGERS OF FLYING IN PNG	11
GARAINA EXPERIMENTAL TEA	14
THIRD ROTATION TO IRAQ	14
MUSEUM PAINTING PHOTOS	15
VALE. PETER COLE	15
PETER MOSES	
FINAL JIMBOOMBA DINNER	16

Samuel Bertram John COOKE (John) NG2278 (Continued)

Leave to England.

In 1937 John took leave and sailed in the Thermistocles from Sydney to England, not returning to New Guinea until April 1939 on the W.R. Carpenter ship Rabaul. Leaving London John sailed via Rotterdam, via the Panama Canal to San Francisco, Vancouver, Suva, Lautoka, Melbourne, Sydney, Townsville to Salamaua. John had been away 18 months.

He immediately was reinstated as skipper of the Gnair and back to the old routine, although now runs to collect copra and rubber from outlying plantations were being carried out.

New Guinea Volunteer Rifle (NGVR)

Shortly after the outbreak of WW2 in September, 1939 the NGVR was formed. Major E.W. Jenyns and Captain Bill Edwards organised Lae's unit as well as those at Salamaua, Wau and Bulolo. Alf Lane, also a WW1 veteran was the Sgt Major for the Lae unit. John joined immediately and comments "We had to wait for our uniforms and equipment to be sent from Australia. Slowly but surely they arrived. Supplying the NGVR units must have provided the Australian Army with an outlet for old surplus WW1 equipment as our first issues included putties worn with shorts and the old cross-shoulder leather bandolier for carrying .303 ammunition. I think everyone cursed having to wear putties, especially in the tropics. Eventually they were discarded and khaki long trousers were issued. Our bandoliers were replaced with webbing equipment, but it all took time. It was always like opening a lucky dip when equipment arrived, never knowing what we were to receive in each consignment. We were all fitted out a bit at a time, never enough of a particular item for all of us and often the size would be wrong, mostly large sizes fitting no one."



Government buildings on the northern end of Salamaua, 1934.

A small galvanised iron shed for the Quartermaster store and meeting place was erected near the ADO's office opposite the sports oval. Guinea Airways picture hall was at their disposal for evening parades. Training consisted of evening lectures, weekend marches, exercises and night manoeuvres. A rifle range was hacked out of the jungle behind Mt. Lunaman with the help of labourers from the Administration road gang, prisoners and Guinea Airways labour line. The first machine guns were old Lewis guns, replaced later with Vickers guns.

Guard duties were rostered for NGVR men during the hours of darkness. A tent, with a stretcher bed and mosquito net, was positioned on top of Mt Lunaman. Two men were rostered for four hours which gave each man two hours on and two off. The first two on guard duty could have an early meal and clamber up the hill in daylight but the next two had to climb in the dark, slipping and stumbling up the track. The mosquitoes were vicious and though they wore long trousers



John on the Rai Coast recruiting circa 1936



John recruiting at Bau Plantation, Madang district circa 1935



John with Upper Ramu natives on his recruiting drive from Madang to Lae, 1936

and long sleeved shirts the men were easy targets.

The second guard position was a pit dug in the sand on the beach just around from Voco Point. A Vickers machine gun was mounted and packed with sandbags, and a third guard point was at the Vacuum and Shell Depots. All the guard duty by the NGVR was in addition to the normal night police boi guards at certain areas and the town patrol.

The Gnair also was laden with extra work from the NGVR and was a link between the two units at Lae and Salamaua, carrying equipment and towing target out to sea for machine gun practice off the end of Lae's airstrip.

When Italy entered the war against the Allies, the small number of Italian residents, mostly miners living around the goldfields were rounded up, flown to Salamaua and placed under NGVR guard until they could be transported to Australia.

A weekend camp was held at the mouth of the Gwado River. The advance party was ferried together with all the gear by the

Gnair several days prior to the exercise in which both the Lae and Salamaua Units participated. John's Platoon task was to build a lawyer cane suspension bridge across a river with all materials obtained from the bush.

The Japanese made their presence known one day when an aircraft appeared high in the sky and wrote the letter 'J' in the sky. John claimed they all reckoned it was his way of ensuring that they all knew it was Japanese. Another instance occurred when an aircraft from Salamaua arrived in Lae with two well dressed Japanese men with cameras. They took pictures of the aircraft hangars and the oil installations before taking their plane back to Salamaua.

In 1939 Lae's airstrip was lengthened and surfaced. John Cox carried out the job which was given a high priority. His labour line numbered over 200 natives. Both Guinea Airways and local aircraft benefitted from this, but only two RAAF Hudson bombers landed on it before the Japanese invaded in 1942, after which it was put to good use by the Japanese aircraft.



M.V. Gnair

mas Mission women and children were brought into Lae by a variety of vessels and were flown to Port Moresby.

Air Raid on Lae

Just before lunch on 21st January, 1942, John was on his way to lunch when a message was received from Finschhafen that a formation of 60 aircraft was approaching Lae. Slit trenches had been dug and Bill Batze and Jim Lucas had stacked heavy steel plates to make a shelter, so by the time the Zeros made the first attacks everyone had taken shelter.

After a number of strafing runs by the Zeros the bombers took over and their bombs blew dirt from the tops of the shelters and dislodged galvanised iron sheets but nobody was injured although Bill Batze had been almost completely covered by a near miss and had to dig himself out of his shelter with his hands. The raid lasted just over an hour.

The Japanese had obviously taken photos of Lae and their air attack had been very focused. The Guinea Airways dispensary and the power house were flattened. Telephone and power lines dangled everywhere. Six or seven Guinea Airways aircraft had been destroyed and the hangars and sheds had been wrecked and most surrounding buildings damaged, but the airstrip and the two oil depots were intact as were most of the residential buildings in Lae.

Two aircraft approached just after the raid and everyone got nervous until they were identified as Wirraways. They had been approaching Lae from Rabaul when they ran into the Japanese aircraft and took cover in cloud until it was safe to land.

John was ordered to be ready to take the Gnair over to Salamaua and, fortunately, she was tied up where he had left her with not one piece of damage, although the native crew had 'gone bush'.

Salamaua had received the same treatment as Lae, however they had not picked up the signal from Finschhafen and were caught unawares. Kevin Parer was at the controls of his Dragon preparing to take off and was killed.

After this attack NGVR, at Bill Edward's orders, moved out to Carl Jacobsen's plantation. An Army officer came over from Port Moresby to sign the NGVR men up to full time duties and alter their Army numbers from their original ones to one commencing with NG2000, the idea being to make the Japanese think there were more NGVR than there actually were.

The Evacuation of Lae

Immediately after the raid the Administrator, Sir Walter McNicoll, who was a sick man, handed over command to the NGVR and a couple of days later the Administrator was flown to Wau.

The first task for NGVR was to move all the food supplies out of Lae up the Markham Road but John was kept busy taking the Gnair across to Salamaua and back at night. His crew had not returned but he was allocated a couple of NGVR for each trip. On 24th January all civilians who were considered unfit or too old for military service were taken to Salamaua on the Gnair as the first step in their evacuation to Wau (they had to walk from Salamaua). At Salamaua a number who probably could not have made the 7 day walk to Wau were separated and taken down the coast in canoes. This party of about 30 travelled down the coast, changing canoes from one village to the next. After 10 days they arrived at Buna and they walked inland from there to the Government station at Kokoda. On their arrival there a wireless signal was sent to Port Moresby and they were flown from Kokoda to Port Moresby.

As food supplies were taken from Lae further up the Markham Valley the problem was lack of a road. Many rivers and creeks had to be bridged or suitable fords made by felling trees and laying timbers across the fallen trees lying in the creeks. A temporary camp was made at Ngasawapum where the 'haus kiap' was used as quarters.

Orders were received from Port Moresby for the destruction of the two fuel dumps at Voco Point. Two NGVR, Ossie Priebe and Roy Barnett, received burns doing this but the dumps were destroyed and the flames could be seen from Salamaua.

A radio outpost was established on the top of Sugarloaf for communication with Port Moresby. John took over a party of four NGVR who set up the outpost and later much valuable information was sent on Japanese air and shipping movements to Wau and Port Moresby, including an on-the-spot description of the Japanese landing at Lae.

John is injured and ordered to Port Moresby

While acting as aircraft spotter in a truck driving up the extremely rough road in the Nadzab Valley John was jolted so badly he fell backwards in the back of the truck, cutting his left elbow on a spare battery which had broken loose with the jolt. Alf Lane at Ngasawapum dressed it daily until it healed, but a week or so later John began to lose feeling in the arm and could not use it at all. He was replaced on the Gnair by Bill Money.

In March 1942 a group of NGVR considered unfit for duty was assembled at Whittakers Plantation and advised they were to walk to Wau. They were taken across the mouth of the Markham in canoes and walked over the Buang Mountains, up the Snake River Valley, via Sunshine and Bulwa



to Wau. The journey took over a week.

At Wau they were again medically assessed and the majority of the group joined other NGVR from Salamaua, Wau and Bulolo and were advised that they would then walk to Port Moresby. The party of about 36 then set out and walked via Kaisenik, Winima, Kudjeru, Waterdry, Waterbung, Middle Camp and Dead Chinaman to Bulldog.

At Bulldog they were put into canoes and took two days travelling down the Lakekamu River to arrive at Terapo, a French Catholic Mission near the mouth of the River. They then walked, canoeed and were taken in a small ship to another Catholic Mission on Yule Island, stayed there for several days and the more unfit were then taken by small ship to Port Moresby but John and the others were taken by canoes to the mainland, then walked, were taken by truck or canoe at different times and eventually by another coastal vessel to Port Moresby.

At Port Moresby John was put through a number of tests by doctors examining his elbow and was quite disturbed by one doctor's query as to whether he had had a lot of contact with natives with leprosy.

From Port Moresby John was taken by the Hospital Ship Tarooma to Townsville and then by troop train to Brisbane and Sydney where he ended up as a patient in the orthopaedic ward at Concord Military Hospital. Here he was told he has radial palsy in the arm caused by damage to the radial nerve, and for some months had various types of physiotherapy and occupational therapy.

In 1959 John Cox, NGVR, told the Pacific Islands Monthly his thoughts about various members of the NGVR on their walk from Wau to Bulldog and his description of John follows:-

'Jackie' as he was known, though small in stature, had the heart of a lion. While toiling up and down the awful greasy slopes of the hills and mountains between Lae and Bulldog, many an old-timer would never have made the grade had it not been for John Cooke, who often turned back and carried the weary one's equipment, as well as his own, to the next halting place – and thought nothing of it.

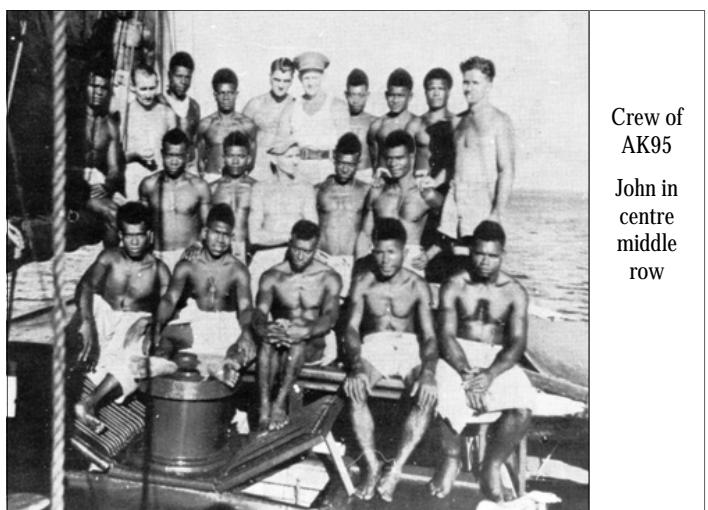
2nd Australian Water Transport Group. 1942 – 1946

In November, 1942, after six months of treatment John's wrist and hand were 95% right and, after a medical board, he applied for and was accepted into the Australian Water Transport Group at Clifton Gardens, in Sydney. From there

he was sent on various tasks:-

- to Williamstown in Victoria to bring the Alma Doppel, a three-masted topsail schooner by sail to Sydney.
- To Townsville to pick up one of two ships, the Pearl and bring her back to Sydney to be used as a training vessel. On the way down they tore a sail and put into Mackay for repair.
- At Mackay his orders were changed and he then took the Pearl to Thursday Island.

From Thursday Island John did various runs around the Island group ferrying supplies and personnel, including taking Torres Straight Light Infantry soldiers home on leave. This latter duty was always pleasant as the Islanders' hospitality when their men arrived home was unbounded.



This continued until May 1944 when John returned to Port Moresby to skipper ANGAU boats. He was for several months the engineer's offsider on the Daphne a 200 tonner before becoming skipper of the Nereus with the Army number AK480, with a crew of 5 Papuans. His first trip was to Lae carrying various types of cargo and passengers into villages and ports on the coast. The trip took 30 days in total.

Early in May 1945 some 350 Australian Women's Army Service (AWAS) were in Lae. At different times John invited some of the AWAS for picnics on the Nereus in the vicinity of Lae and it was there that he met his future wife Iris. Various trips on behalf of ANGAU to Nassau Island and Milfordhaven were undertaken.

A week after the first Atomic Bomb was dropped John took command of AK 95, formerly the Sir John Franklin a 95 ft gaff rigged ketch. He now had two Australian and 16 New Guineans as crew. Again on behalf of ANGAU he plied around Madang, We-wak, Kar Kar Island carrying copra and general cargo. He also travelled to Manus Island where the ship went into dry dock for maintenance. Manus at the time was still one of the largest US Air and Naval bases in the Pacific.

After the dry dock John continued to travel around New Guinea to Rabual, Finschhafen and New Ireland where many Japanese soldiers used to swim out to the ship. Some worrying moments were had by the crew when Japanese landing barges came towards them but they were in the process of taking Japanese soldiers to Rabaul or dumping Japanese equipment into the ocean.

On arriving in Madang in 1946 John was ordered to proceed to Lae to take over another ship. This was the AS1790, built for ANGAU at Ballina, NSW. Again trips to Madang, Finschhafen etc

were undertaken but Lae remained his home port and he was able to see Iris at regular intervals.

Early in 1946 John and his ship were to be headquartered at ANGAU Headquarters on Bougainville and his major tasks became the repatriation of natives and taking expatriates back to their plantations in addition to carrying out a regular milk run around Bougainville once a week.

Discharge and Post War

John was in Rabaul when his movement home was organised. He was offered a position with the New Guinea Administration but declined and requested discharge in Melbourne and this occurred in mid 1946. Interestingly his Army records show his number as NG 2278 from 1939-1946 so it would appear that he was never officially posted out of NGVR to another unit, even though he spent some years sailing ANGAU vessels.

He and Iris were married mid 1946 and returned to Lae, New Guinea.

Over the next 20 years he worked for Vacuum Oil Company (later Mobil Oil) in Lae and their son and two daughters were born there.

They left New Guinea in 1967.

John died in Brisbane on 22nd August, 1999, aged 90 years.

This story was taken from John's book "Working in Papua New Guinea 1931-36" Published in 1983

John certainly saw a lot of New Guinea with his various occupations.

MASCOTS

Armies, dating back to the Romans, have had animals, as pets and mascots, ranging from kittens and hens to tigers, camels and elephants. Their reasons for being adopted have varied from provision of comfort (many Russian soldiers of the Crimean War kept kittens buttoned up inside their coats to keep themselves warm) to heroes (according to Roman legend it was the cackling of geese that warned the capital's defenders of the approaching Gauls).

Some mascots are adopted by units as a representation of the regimental badge (for example, the 2nd Cavalry Regiment and the eagle), some because of history (the Royal Australian Army Medical Corps and the donkey – Simpson and his donkey at Gallipoli), and some simply because the animal in question adopted the unit. There are "unit trained" mascots, such as horses (1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment) and dogs which can participate in regimental parades and there are others which are better off for all concerned (particularly reviewing officers) if they are housed elsewhere (the 5/7th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment used to have a tiger as a mascot, and it was kept at Sydney's Taronga Park Zoo – since the separation of the two Battalions the 5th Battalion has adopted a new tiger mascot which is housed at a local wild life park in Darwin).

Mascots in the Australian Army, unlike their British counterparts, are officially recognised. They are given a regimental number and a name, both of which appear on the unit roll. They are registered with the Army's Ceremonial Section and with the Soldier Career Management agency and they can even be officially promoted. As some have discovered, they can also be charged (a certain ram was charged with having a female in his lines when a rival battalion slipped a ewe into

his pen late one night) and they can be reduced in rank too. However the unit or corps is responsible for all of the mascot's expenses and well being.

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

MANYANA

Spanish singer Julio Iglesias was on UK television with British TV host Anne Diamond.

He used the word "manyana" (pronounced "man -yana").

Diamond asked him to explain what it meant.

He said that the term means:

"Maybe the job will be done tomorrow; Maybe the next day; Maybe the day after that; Or perhaps next week; Next month; Next year. Who really cares?"

The host turned to Albert Yatapingu from the Gumbaingeri Tribe (aboriginal) who was also on the show.

She asked him if there was an equivalent term in his native language. "Na" he replied. "In Australia we don't have a word to describe that degree of urgency."

THE MAGIC CARPET [MARSTON MATTING]

By SMSgt John D. Conklin, The Airman Staff

Published in "Airman" magazine, February 1964

Around the world in WWII the 'welcome mat' was out for the US fighters, bombers and cargo aircraft thanks to an incredible product as vital to wartime air operation as the intrepid crews and aircraft.

Once a closely guarded military secret, the product consumed the energies and production capabilities of 29 industrial plants

The amazing new discovery was perforated steel planking (PSP). It was wonderfully rugged, heavy and always reliable. Remarkably, it turned sandy beaches, muddy plains and the most unlikely spots on earth into dependable landing strips for military aircraft. No doubt about it, it helped America win the war.

PSP, as it was called, was the brainchild of an ingenious American inventor, Gerald G. Greulich, who was approached in the late 1930's by the War department officials who sought ways to permit the AF to move anywhere with portable airports. With no particular interest in aviation, but a long record of successful steel product patents, Greulich listened as officers discussed the critical need of the US military for portable airstrips. "Here's your airport," inventor Greulich reportedly asserted, scratching out a hastily made pencil sketch of PSP on the back of an envelope. Soon his company laid out the first model runway in his own back yard. Between his makeshift proving ground and his company's workshops he worked out the method of producing a single unit that later became the key element for hundreds of portable runways and airstrips from the islands of the Pacific to the rugged Aleutians and the sandy plains of northern Africa.

What emerged from his idea was an item that looked very much like "a lot of holes tied together with pieces of steel." An early viewer said it looked more like a sheet of roofing talked back to a cannon than anything expected to assist the war effort.





It was a sheet of cold rolled steel, a $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick, and 15 in wide with more holes than surface. It incorporated a quick, simple self-fastening principle that allowed like units to be rapidly locked together along their sides

to produce a steel clad surface virtually anywhere in the world. A half length (5 ft long) with the same general features was used to trim out the staggered rows of standard PSP units.

By Any Other Name

Throughout WWII, PSP was literally the welcome mat laid out all over the world for US aircraft. A pilot in those days would even fly another hundred miles for a strip of PSP.

On the other hand, the aviation engineers who "reshaped half the earth's surface and covered it with PSP" had various unmentionable nicknames for the stuff. Nevertheless they became expert at moving, removing, tugging, carrying and aligning it in their unsung battle with cold steel, hot steel, mud, and sweat. Well, not exactly unsung, for while American planes were looking for the latest steel strip, the aviation engineers were sometimes loosening their aching backs and sullied lungs with their favourite song, "The Airborne Aviation Engineer."

It is little wonder the aviation engineers were inclined to boast a bit. Reports in early 1943 showed that 9 out of 13 airfields overseas employed PSP in whole or part. These airfields were generally constructed "tinker-toy" fashion of 60,000 sheets for a runway approx 150 by 5000 feet. Getting the metal to prospective airfields was a matter of moving 2,000 tons of PSP in 35,000 cubic feet of cargo space in ships, planes or trucks.

Although PSP had its drawbacks and problems, its value was unquestioned. The publication, Aviation Engineer Notes, September 1943, said: "It is not a magic carpet. It cannot be floated on a swamp. It is heavy, and transportation constitutes a problem, but in every situation it has made possible a hard-surfaced runway in a matter of days." And that's what the airmen wanted.

General H. H. Arnold in his report to the Secretary of War, January 4, 1944, left little doubt about his views on the role of PSP in WWII. General Arnold's report stated: "The portable steel landing mat, used in all theatres, has been one of the outstanding developments of the war."

A Manufacturing Miracle

Meanwhile, back on the home front, nearly every major steel fabricator and steel producer was sharing the load of producing



A Curtiss P-40 Warhawk piloted by Squadron Leader Keith "Bluey" Truscott of No. 76 Squadron RAAF taxiing along Marsden Matting at Milne Bay, Papua New Guinea in September 1942

PSP along with the other wartime steel products. George Reiss, reporting in the trade journal, Steel, in August 1943, wrote: "Already the plants have produced enough steel runways to build a four-laned highway nearly half-way across the nation. And much more is on the way. Some 29 steel-fabricating plants are devoting all or most of their production facilities to the making of portable airports."

Forming PSP was an interesting process. The $\frac{1}{4}$ in thick steel stock, sheared to length and width, arrived in bundles in freight cars or trucks from the steel producer or processor. The bundles were carted to the head of the conveyor line by specially designed low-slung motor carriers. There it was deposited on skids or roller conveyors. From there the steel stock snaked from stage to stage through the plant, being first ribbed by a giant forming press, pierced and flanged by another mammoth unit, slotted and trimmed to exacting standards. After it was finish-formed the PSP continued to move through the plant at about the pace of a man walking and on into bonding, painting and drying facilities. At the shipping point, PSP left the conveyors and was steel banded into bundles suitable for shipping to seaport.

Customer Got Expert Installation

From the modest beginning in the backyard of the inventor, PSP installations became a crowning tribute to the ingenuity and resourcefulness of the aviation engineers. Techniques were developed in the US for the rapid deployment and installation of PSP into combat-ready runways and air facilities in a matter of hours. Some of the first exhaustive tests to determine the fastest methods of performing all the tasks associated with PSP were performed at Fort Belvoir, VA. Other tests to prove the feasibility of using it on various soils and under various weather conditions were conducted across the country and far behind the lines of combat theatres.

Along with experimentation into fast methods of handling and installation, military officials sought ways of effectively camouflaging PSP. Inherently, it possessed a self-concealing effect once it was down long enough for the local vegetation to find its way through the perforations. But, when first installed of fresh cleared terrain, it became, inappropriately, quite stand-out despite its standard olive drab colour. In some cases, special painting and concealing techniques were used by the aviation engineers to hide their work. Nevertheless, among various designs conceived by the concealment experts were ways of transforming a field of PSP into farm plots, orchards or something with less enemy appeal than a neat, new steel-clad airstrip. The story goes that one pilot, well aware that he



was to test the effectiveness of a concealed field of PSP, flew his aircraft to the designated coordinates and then informed the control tower, "Where's the airport?" "Right below you Sir," the tower operator assured the pilot. Refusing to believe the well-intended instructions because he could see nothing but a vast orchard and pleasant fallow fields below, the pilot flew beyond its range and crashed the aircraft.

On locations in the war theatres, and with AAF aircraft practically waiting overhead for the next completed strip of PSP to be installed,

airfield after airfield were rapidly built. Employing 6 crews of perhaps 12 men each, an aviation engineer battalion would place stretches of PSP in multiple faces each the width of a runway (approx 150 ft) and 1000 ft in length. Prior to beginning this method, that looked like a disjointed committee effort at problem solving, the engineers would very exactingly establish reference points to assure alignment of the six separate faces. Then, only a slight tug by tractors or earth movers would pull the slack out of the individual faces of PSP to achieve the necessary hookup.

While rapid installation techniques were being developed, other engineers groups were studying how to demolish an airstrip from the perforated stuff. It was no easy task to plan and prepare the right charges of high explosives that would do sufficient damage to the sturdy planks to prevent enemy seizure and use.

Then, too, there were the engineers working on the ways and means of straightening vast quantities of PSP suffering from sagging ribs, swayback, and other conditions symptomatic of the overdose or bomb-laden aircraft; or worse, the sinking feeling caused by soft earth parting company with the PSP just as it was smacked by the wheels of a returning bomber.

For most of these PSP ills, straightening and reconditioning facilities, worked out by the aviation engineers and allied contractors, saved the day.

All in all, when the chips were down throughout WWII and the USAF planes needed somewhere to set their wheels in a hurry, PSP, aided by untiring engineers, came through like manna from out of the blue. And when all was fought and won, the aviation engineers bent under an estimated 200,000,000 pounds of PSP, proudly straightened their backs and came back home.

PSP stayed on. It lies peacefully among the tall grasses at the edge of jungle, on the beaches and beneath arctic snows. It rests, almost knowingly in fitting repose after carrying a huge share of the burdens of the world's worst war.

Trevor Connell, Association member and Web Master, who forwarded this article, writes.

The first PSP I saw was when I landed in Port Moresby airport in a Fokker friendship in 1970. As it was taxiing, I noticed a change in the sound and, on looking out, saw it was on a taxiway of Marsden matting... a good use-by date! When I got to Madang, it was common stuff. The Department of Works had a yard with a lot in it and I obtained a few sheets for the Civil Defence vehicle which was constantly getting bogged. I brought these back to Australia.

I've seen a suspension bridge at Bogia (south of Madang) which used the matting and wire cables.

I did an army patrol to Truscott airfield in the Kimberly region of WA in 1983 and there was a lot of matting left there, together with old steel helmets, rusted, but quite intact. I had the chopper pilot sling a piece which I was going to take back to Darwin for the Mess but when the Nomad aircraft arrived to extract us, the pilot said he didn't have the load capacity and I had to throw it away. (That was in the days when the Nomad had a habit of falling out of the sky! I didn't argue.) It was in very good condition (it was a half sheet).

Thank you Trevor Connell, Association Web site host.

A policeman stops a blonde for speeding and asks her, very nicely, if he could see her licence.

She replied in a huff, "I wish you guys would get your act together. Just yesterday you take away my licence and then today you expect me to show it to you."

**The Death of Wing Commander Guy Gibson
VC September, 1944**

Guy Gibson was one of Bomber Command's most famous officers during World War Two.

Gibson was awarded the Victoria Cross for his leadership during the legendary Dambuster Raid of 1943. As follow-up Lancaster bombers from 617 Squadron approached their target, Gibson flew his Lancaster alongside them to effectively double-up the amount of fire from the aircrafts that could be aimed at German gun emplacements based on top of their targeted dam. Gibson was seen as too valuable in terms of his propaganda value to be allowed to fly after the raid. He toured America and Britain and was effectively retired from engaging the enemy by his superiors. After a great deal of pleading, Gibson was allowed to fly 'in anger' and on the return from one of his missions over Europe, Gibson's Mosquito crashed and Gibson and his navigator, Jim Warwick, were killed in September 1944.



The official cause of the crash has always attracted a degree of skepticism among aviation historians. As no one could officially say what happened two theories were forwarded: the first was that Gibson ran out of fuel and crashed as a result. Critics of this cause countered it with their belief that Gibson

was too skilled as a pilot to allow something so basic to bring him down. It was also said that if Gibson could fly a Lancaster bomber at such low heights as the Dambuster Raid required, he was certainly skilled enough to glide down a Mosquito to enable a decent crash landing even if he had run out of fuel. The second cause was that Gibson was flying his Mosquito very low, which he was certainly skilled enough to do, but was hit by enemy ground fire.

However, in October 2011 a new cause was forwarded to explain Gibson's death. Newly found evidence indicates very clearly that Gibson's Mosquito was brought down by what is now termed 'friendly fire' – that a British bomber returning from a mission over Nazi Germany mistook the low-flying Mosquito as a Luftwaffe aircraft and shot at it accordingly.

Sergeant Bernard McCormack, a gunner in a Lancaster bomber, believed that he mistook Gibson's Mosquito for a Junkers-88. McCormack's Lancaster was returning from a night time raid over Nazi Germany. Many bombers got lost or flew off course on the return leg of their flight to their British bases so all crew members would have been alert and possibly 'trigger happy' because of the very real threat of being attacked. Once McCormack became convinced that he had shot down Gibson's Mosquito, he remained quiet. He died in 1992 but not before he recorded onto recording tape what he believed had happened.

Official RAF reports on the crash stated that no other aircraft was in the vicinity of Gibson's Mosquito when he crashed – hence the running out of fuel and being shot from the ground causes forwarded. However, the flight combat report of McCormack's Lancaster clearly shows that he was in the vi-



Guy Gibson VC and his crew

cinity of the area where Gibson would have been flying. It also states clearly that the crew shot at what they thought was a Junker - 88. Another Lancaster crew flying in the same area as McCormack's also noted in

their combat report that they saw an aircraft flying out of control before crashing. They also saw red target indicator flares explode on the crashed aircraft and Gibson's Mosquito had been carrying the very same flares – except that Gibson had radioed in that he could not use the ones he was carrying because of an equipment malfunction. However, they would have been on board his stricken Mosquito when it crashed and the impact and fire would have ignited them.

Both Lancaster reports also stated that they were flying just three minutes flying time from Steenbergen in the Netherlands which is where Gibson crashed.

Both combat reports were made classified by the RAF and have only recently been unearthed in the National Archives.

In his tape recording, McCormack described the moment when he was questioned by a RAF Intelligence officer.

"We were on the way back over Holland and then all of a sudden this kite comes right behind us twin engines and a single rudder – and it comes bouncing in towards us so we opened fire and we blew him up.

"When we got back we claimed a Ju 88 shot down. The following day we were called in to the office and we were quizzed again.

"(RAF Intelligence Office) 'What made you think it was a Ju 88?' We said 'it had twin engines and a single rudder.' He said: 'So has a Mosquito.'

Well supposing – he put it very nicely – he said, 'supposing a Mosquito – his radio and his radar was knocked out and he was lost and he spotted a Lancaster – he would only want to follow it home wouldn't he? And it turned out it was 'Gibbo' we shot down."

If this was the case then it would be understandable why the RAF wanted such an incident covered up. Gibson was almost the perfect propaganda war hero. Just 26 years of age, Gibson has been awarded the VC, the DSO (and Bar) and the DFC (and Bar). Killed in action by the enemy might have been a more acceptable reason to explain away Gibson's death and it would have fitted in with his hero status. However, killed by your own side would have been a propaganda disaster.

Some still believe that Gibson crashed for other reasons. Gibson had a huge belief in his own ability to fly. He was undoubtedly a highly skilled Lancaster pilot. However, he never completed a course in how to fly a Mosquito, an aircraft that handled very differently to a Lancaster. The 'Wooden Wonder' was much faster, more agile and a completely different flying experience. Jim Warwick, his navigator, was also flying on a Mosquito for the first time. It would

have been his job to check the fuel tanks and the level of fuel on board during the flight. Some still believe that Gibson's Mosquito simply ran out of fuel or that it had a faulty fuel gauge on board which gave misleading readings. Bernard McCormack, however, clearly believed that it was the 600 rounds he fired at the 'Junker-88' that brought down the aircraft that he was later told was Gibson's Mosquito.

Source Daily Mail Australia. 2nd Nov 2015.



P-8A Armed Maritime Patrol Aircraft

Construction of Australia's first P-8A Poseidon armed maritime patrol aircraft has begun

Spirit AeroSystems in the USA started production on the 737 military derivative in October.

With major assembly now underway, the first unit is scheduled for delivery to Boeing early next year

Spirit is responsible for building 70 per cent of the 737-800 aircraft, including military-specific in-line modifications, before it is sent to Boeing's final assembly facility where all aircraft structural features unique to the P-8A are incorporated.

Australia has agreed to purchase eight P-8A aircraft.

The US Navy has contracted for 62.

To date, 31 have been delivered.

A boy on the bus sat next to a man reading a book and noticed he had his collar on backwards.

The little boy asked why he wore his collar that way. The man who was a priest said "I am a father".

The little boy replied "My father doesn't wear his collar like that"

The priest looked up from his book and answered "I am the Father of many".

The boy said "My father had 4 boys, 4 girls and two grandchildren and he doesn't wear his collar that way".

The priest, getting impatient said "I am the Father of hundreds" and went back to reading his book.

The boy sat quietly thinking for a while, then leaned over and said "Maybe you should wear your pants backwards instead of your collar".

2nd Division marked a century of service

The Australian Army's 2nd Division marked a century of service today with a national parade at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

More than 300 soldiers travelled to Canberra from across Australia to take part in the parade, which displayed the Colours, Guidons and Banners of 2nd Division Brigades and direct com-



mand units.

The parade was reviewed by the Governor-General of Australia, His Excellency General The Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove, who praised the members on parade.

"In so many ways the 2nd Division represents all that is good and proud about the Australian Army and the men and women who serve in it," Sir Peter said.

Chief of Army Lieutenant General Angus Campbell highlighted the important role played by Army's 2nd Division.

"Today is a proud day for the Australian Army as we mark 100 years of service of the 2nd Division," Lieutenant General Campbell said.

"For a century, the men and women of the 2nd Division have played an integral role in our Army's domestic and operational efforts.

"It is only fitting that we acknowledge the servicemen and women of the 2nd Division, both past and present with this parade."

Commander of the 2nd Division Major General Stephen Porter said the parade offered an opportunity to link the Division's current capability with its history.

"Today's 2nd Division units trace their lineage to the volunteer soldiers of the First World War who fought with our forces at Gallipoli," Major General Porter said.

"As highly trained and professional Reserve members, they continue to uphold and build upon the values and legacy of those who have come before them.

"I am immensely proud of all our members on parade today and the vital work they continue to do for our Army."

The 2nd Division of the Australian Imperial Force was raised in Egypt on 26 July 1915 and deployed to Gallipoli later that year. It went on to become the first Australian Army Division to join the battle on the Western Front in 1916.

**Thanks to Contact Air Land & Sea Magazine
for the preceding three articles.**



The above photos are of Gilbert Robertson and another unknown NGVR soldier whilst on a catamaran mission to explore the coastline East of Salamaua to update the information available to NGVR. Several of these expeditions were undertaken by NGVR.

when they travelled by catamaran manned by native bois. Gil is wearing the Glengarry.

Gilbert's service record follows:

In summary, Gil joined NGVR on 1.10.39 and was appointed Cpl on 18.9.41, called up to full time duty 22.1.42 and promoted Acting Sgt on 1.4.42. On 16.8.42 he was transferred to Kanga Force and transferred to Port Moresby 15.9.42 and medically to Australia 22.9.42 on the Hospital ship 'Manunda'.

On 29.1.43 he resumed duty from various Hospital and Convalescent Units and transferred to Engineering School at Wagga Wagga.

On 5.6.43 he joined the AIF, and was posted to ANGAU. He disembarked from the 'Dunton' in Port Moresby on 20.6.43 and was attached to ANGAU Native Labour Section. He disembarked from the 'Taroona' in Townsville on 20.6.44 on leave and on 31.8.44 was back in Milne Bay.

On 14.10.44 he was appointed Lt with Native Labour Section ANGAU and on 14.12.45 was transferred to the Reserve of Officers.

Gil died on 27.4.89 in Mossman, North Qld.

B17E Flying Fortress

In February 1942, after America's first heavy bomber offensive raid of World War II, a bullet-riddled U.S. B-17E bomber crash

Gilbert Robertson, NGVR
NG2243 NGX 359

In 1941 Sgt Gil Robertson was one of two NGVR who undertook a reconnaissance 'march' to find the easiest route from the Coast between Lae and Salamaua to the Highlands. This proved to be, in his own words, very hazardous and exhausting.

The photos were taken at the commencement of the patrol

Gilbert Stuart Tasman Robertson - Certificate of Service No 21092 - War Badge No A174173

7 Oct 1939 Enlisted for 2 years, Bulolo, New Guinea Volunteer Rifles (NGVR) Rifleman 823
 21 Jan 1940 Leave
 18 Sep 1941 Appointed Corporal NGVR - Corporal NG2243
 21 Dec 1941 Civilian evacuation - RAAF Douglas DC-3 VH-UZJ Kyilla from Rabaul, New Guinea
 22 Jan 1942 Commence Full Time War Service in Citizen Military Forces (Militia) in Bulolo
 22 Jan 1942 Attestation, Bulolo, Territory New Guinea - Attestation documentation destroyed by enemy action
 1 Apr 1942 Appointed Acting Sergeant NGVR - Sergeant NG2243
 16 Aug 1942 Commenced service with Kanga Force in New Guinea L/C Area
 16 Aug 1942 March in transferred from NGVR to Kanga Force
 15 Sep 1942 Transferred to Port Moresby for duty
 22 Sep 1942 Evacuated to Australian Corps Receiving Centre (1ACRC), from Port Moresby for medical transfer to Brisbane
 2 Oct 1942 Embarked on "HMAHS Manunda" hospital ship to Brisbane
 8 Oct 1942 Admitted 112 to Australian General Hospital, Brisbane - Malaria
 1 Dec 1942 Medical Classification Assessed Class A1, Queensland
 2 Dec 1942 Discharged to Australian Convalescent Depot (101 ACD), Queensland
 10 Dec 1942 March in ex 101 ACD for Conf Board
 19 Dec 1942 March out to L&TD Dacot for 24 days V.H.L.
 29 Jan 1942 March in Redbank Reinforcement Depot (RRD) - unit disbanded
 2 Feb 1943 Attestation, Exhibition, Queensland - NG2243
 17 Feb 1943 March out from RRD to Royal Australian Engineers Training Centre (4RAE T.C.), Wagga
 11 May 1943 March in to RAE Training Centre (4RAE T.C.) ex Redbank Reinforcement Depot (RRD) Queensland
 11 May 1943 March out to New Guinea Force Advanced Reinforcement Depot (NGFARD) from 4RAE T.C.
 4 Jun 1943 End of service in Citizen Military Forces (Militia) with Kanga Force
 5 Jun 1943 Commence service in Australian Imperial Force (AIF) with ANGAU
 5 Jun 1943 Attestation into Australian Imperial Force (AIF), Brisbane, Queensland - NGX359
 5 Jun 1943 Enlisted with Australian New Guinea Administration Unit, Native Labour Section (ANGAU)
 6 Jun 1943 March out to NGFARD from 1st Army Personnel Staging Camp (1APSC), Tennyson, Queensland
 16 Jun 1943 Embarked from Townsville on "Duntroon"
 17 Jun 1943 "Dunroon" sailed with 1,077 personnel, 2 motor transports, 3,244 Aust mail bags, 159 US mail bags
 20 Jun 1943 Disembarked "Dunroon" at Port Moresby, New Guinea
 21 Jun 1943 Taken on strength from 2/1 Australian Corps Reception Centre (2/1 ACRC)
 30 Aug 1943 Appointed Sergeant, Australian New Guinea Administration Unit, Native Labour Section - Sergeant NGX359
 15 Oct 1943 Appointed Acting Warrant Officer Class 11, ANGAU, Native Labour Section - A/WO11 NGX359
 20 Jun 1944 Disembarked "Tarooma" on leave in Townsville
 29 Aug 1944 Embarked from Townsville on "Tarooma"
 31 Aug 1944 Disembarked in Milne Bay, New Guinea from leave
 1 Sep 1944 Admitted to RAAF Medical Receiving Station (2MRS) in Milne Bay-Pyrexia of Unknown Origin (P.U.O.) & Transferred to X List
 12 Sep 1944 Discharged from RAAF 2 MPRS, Malaria benign tertian (MBT), at Milne Bay, New Guinea
 12 Sep 1944 Strength increase, Rejoined unit from 2 MRS
 14 Oct 1944 Appointed Lieutenant, ANGAU, Native Labour Section - Lieutenant NGX 359
 18 July 1945 Disembarked "Van Outhoorn" in Brisbane from Lae
 4 Jun 1945 New Guinea Training School, ANGAU Officer's Regimental Training Course (24 days) - Northern Regional
 12 Dec 1945 Appointment Terminated
 14 Dec 1945 Transferred to the Reserve of Officers (ANGAU) Tasmania.

landed in a remote swamp in Papua New Guinea because it was running out of fuel.

The crew of nine survived, and over the next six weeks, battled malaria and heat exhaustion to make their way to safety. But the Flying Fortress was left for lost for decades. The plane has a pretty incredible story, and getting it back to Hawaii was no small feat.

After a half-century in the soggy marsh, this once-forgotten piece of history returned to its homeland in April 2013, and is sitting on display at Hawaii's Pacific Aviation Museum, Pearl Harbor.

It wasn't until 1972, three decades after its crash, that Australian soldiers spotted the partially submerged aircraft from a helicopter. They landed on one of its wings to investigate and found it "eerily untouched," according to John Darnton's article in Smithsonian magazine.

"The machine guns were in place, fully loaded, and in the cabin there was a thermos with what used to be coffee inside," Darnton wrote. "Some claim there was even an ashtray with cigarette butts." Local press nicknamed the plane "Swamp Ghost."

It took years of negotiations between the salvage team, led by former WWII bomber pilot and famed aircraft collector David C. Tallichet, and the Papua New Guinea government. Kenneth De-



Hoff, the Pacific Aviation Museum's executive director of operations, says it was well worth it, however, calling "Swamp Ghost" a national treasure.

"It's one of those first-time original airplanes, if you will," he told The Huffington Post. "I'm just in awe."

"Swamp Ghost" is arguably the world's only intact and un-retired World War II-era B-17E bomber, a "one-of-a-kind example of an aircraft that played an indispensable role in winning WWII," according to the Pacific Aviation Museum. And it is the



only B-17 in the world that still bears its battle scars.

"This airplane was such a fortress," DeHoff said. "We counted 121 bullet holes in it."

As for the aircraft's original crew, they had one week of rest after their ordeal and then were reassigned to another bomber. They continued to fly for the rest of the war. According to Darn-ton, the plane's pilot, Capt. Frederick "Fred" C. Eaton, would often fly over the wreck and tell his new crew about how all nine men survived.

Now, visitors can see the plane up-close in its original wreckage state with the Pacific Aviation Museum's special B-17E Swamp Ghost Tour.



A test nuclear explosion codenamed 'Baker'. Part of Operation Crossroads, at Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands, on 25.7.1946. The 40 kiloton atomic bomb was detonated by the US at a depth of 27 metres below the ocean surface, 3.5 miles from the Atoll. The purpose of the tests was to study the effect of nuclear explosions on ships. 73 ships were gathered on the spot - both obsolete American and captured ships, including the Japanese battleship 'Nagato'.

At St Peter's Church they have weekly husbands' Marriage Seminars... At the session last week the priest asked Guiseppe, an Italian immigrant, who had lived in Aberdeen for many years and was approaching his 50th wedding anniversary, to take a few minutes and share some insight into how he had managed to stay married to the same woman all these years.

Guiseppe replied to the assembled husbands, "Well, I've tried to treat her nice, spenda da money on her, but besta of all is, I took her to Italy for the 25th anniversary".

The priest responded "Guiseppe, you are an amazing inspiration to all the husbands here. Please tell us what you are planning for your wife for your 50th anniversary?"

*Guiseppe proudly replied.
I gonna go pick her up."*

THE DANGERS OF FLYING IN PNG

The following is Brian McCook's version of the search for a missing aircraft in the Highlands of PNG. Brian was the chief pilot of TALAIR, owned by Denis Buchanan, later Patron of our Association.

Very early one lousy, cloudy morning, in a Baron laden to the hilt with freshly killed beef, I was in a circling climb on the Ramu side of the Bena Gap looking for a hole in the cloud, big enough to dart through into the Goroka Valley. There was a lot of cloud about on the mountains, though the Ramu Valley was completely clear. One morning every week we'd fly into Dumpu cattle station for a load of beef, slaughtered the night before. In the cool of the morning with the climb to 10,000 feet refrigeration was taken care of.

All was quiet on the air waves till Madang called to advise me that a Cessna 206 was unreported on arrival at Keglsugl, a catholic mission station at 8,000 feet on the eastern slopes of Mt Wilhelm (14,783 ft). That mountain, the tallest in PNG was about 50 km from where I was making my circling climb. Madang requested that I overfly the mission station at Keglsugl and advise whether or not the Cessna was on the strip. Early morning radio blackouts were common. "Safe landing" reports from pilots were sometimes lost in the ether. Heavily laden as the Baron was, coupled with the rising storm clouds, it took some time to climb to over 15,000 ft and fly across the Bismarck range to where for only a few seconds, it was possible to sight the mission station through the clouds and report that there was no sign of the Cessna on the strip.

The pilot, Father Joe Walachy, an American priest of Divine Word Mission, had been flying from Madang since the end of WW2. Father Joe had probably made more trips into that area from Madang than any man living. Had he not been able to get through the weather, which was quite bad, he would have returned to Madang, or diverted to another landing place, there to await a clearing of the weather before attempting another try for Keglsugl.

Through an exchange of radio calls it was learned that the last progress report received from him stated that he was climbing above 10,000 ft outside the Bundi Gap and expected to arrive in Keglsugl ten minutes later. More than thirty minutes had elapsed since that report.

The weather on the Wahgi valley side of the Bismarks was clear. The task allotted me by the searchmaster, that I knew would be a sheer waste of time, was to comb the heights of the rugged shoulders of Mt Wilhelm above 12,000 ft. In clear weather I droned up and down the granite walls of the mountain for as long as my fuel reserves allowed, before returning to Goroka to unload the meat and refuel to maximum capacity.

Returning to the area after unloading and taking on three ob-



Wonenara airstrip PNG

servers, we found that a number of other aircraft had been recruited for the search, including airline DC3s. It seemed to me that the DC3 was not the best choice of equipment to be darting and diving through breaks in the clouds over high mountains, some covered in tropical rainforest.

The high country from Mt Wilhelm south to Mt Otto above 9,000 ft was allotted to me. Grey and black rain sodden clouds rose to 25,000 ft right along the range. The aircraft allotted the lower altitudes weren't making any progress either. These circled mainly in the Ramu valley, miles away from the ranges where the 206 was thought to be. Occasionally I'd attempt to probe in closer, only to be turned back by a wall of 'stuffed' cloud. The radio was continually clogged by a cacophony of useless pilot cackle about the location of one search aircraft or another. No efficient searching was done. Most of that day was a waste of time for all aircraft concerned. The next day started out the same as we in the Baron were first on the scene, having left Goroka at daybreak. At dawn the north side of the Bismarks were seen to be pushing up huge rain clouds. That lasted for a good part of the morning, obscuring the most likely target areas. Afternoon saw the clouds lifting, but not enough to allow a good view of the wooded ridges in the Bundi Gap area close to Keglsugl where by then it was suspected, the aircraft might be found.

The Baron was now beginning to show its true worth as a search plane. She was fast, light and easy to handle, the ample power developed by the engines allowing for tight turns and quick climbs. The low wing presented no problems with visibility.

The short tropical twilight was creeping across the hills as I left the search area that evening, diving smartly through gaps in the cloud cover from the north of Goroka valley. Indications were the following morning would see a marked improvement in the weather.

That night I was briefed by phone by the searchmaster at his HQ in Port Moresby. My request for a lower search pattern was granted. There were to be some fifteen aircraft taking part in the search next day, should the weather be good. The search area would be then even more crowded.

First light saw us scudding once more across the Bundi Gap partly under early morning mountain range shadow. Ahead the sky and the ranges were cloudless. Over the Bundi Gap we maneuvered into a gradual descent from 9,000 ft down and along the range towards Mt Otto, with the forested ridges of the range just off the flight wingtip. The observers were glued to our right side windows. Closing rapidly on the shoulders of Otto at the finish of the run, I swung to the left away from the ranges in a turn that would retrace our flight path up towards Mt Wilhelm. That put the ranges on my side, allowing me to tuck in even

closer to the face of the many sheer cliffs and the full torrent waterfalls from the previous day's heavy rains. Spectacular sight.

On the third run down the range, just skimming over the trees, from the rain soaked forest came a sharp glint of reflected light that could only have come from something metallic. It came from a cliff face close to the Asaloka Gap, twenty kms or so from Keglsugl. I felt the adrenalin rush as I laid her over into a tight left turn, holding her there until we had gone round 270 degrees so as to roll out pointing directly at the narrow defile between the mountains that formed Asaloka Gap. The sunflash first seen would be just to the right and slightly below. For a split second a fragment of shiny metal could be seen against the reddish colour of an almost vertical landslip, which by the look of it was freshly made. Then it was gone as the ridges on each side closed in forcing us to fly straight through. Seconds later we burst through into and over the northern reaches of the Goroka valley and our comfort zone.

To allow the observers to confirm the find we came back through the gap again, low but not too fast, while they craned their necks at the spot. Though certain that what I'd seen was a part of Father Joe's Cessna, confirmation was needed from at least one of the observers.

Now the sun's rays were blocked by M Otto, so no more was there the glint of metal to hone in on. So as to get a closer look down the face, our successive passes necessitated these low runs through the gap, wingtips almost brushing the forest. By now one of the crew was looking decidedly seedy from the sharp turns, descents and climbs, in spite of his condition he managed to indicate to me that he'd spotted the wreckage. I estimated it's elevation to be about 7,000 ft.

As we continued pass after pass we saw parts of the wreck embedded in the cliff face. The sight was sickening A shudder ran through me digesting that grim fact. Certain now of no mistake I reported our find to the searchmaster at Madang. He asked that we fly there to give him the precise details of wreckage location. All three observers looked relieved to be flying at last steadily straight and level.

Those who later viewed the crash site from the air were surprised how difficult it was to positively identify the wreckage. Without the sun glinting on that part first seen from the Baron, the search may have never been successfully concluded.

Days passed before a ground party led by Patrol Officer Richard Giddings struggled up and through the Asaloka Gap. The climb down to the wreckage was perilous. From the air, the almost vertical route to the wreckage looked to be inaccessible except perhaps for a trained mountaineer. Richard and his party of New Guinea highlanders made it there in three days. Because of the almost sheer face there was little hope of the



Keglsugl Airstrip, 2,561 metres, 8,400 ft, with Mt Wilhelm in background.

investigators gathering sufficient evidence for a conclusive technical report. Many pieces had tumbled further down the landslide created and were irretrievable.

The search party recovered only a few remains of the two priests. Father Joe was well known, much loved and respected for his work as priest, mission pilot and mechanic. For years he had lived a Spartan life in an open-air hangar beside the runway at Madang, supplying the many Catholic mission stations in the interior. Over many years, almost all his flights entailed crossing the mighty Bismarks in his well known, well maintained Cessna 180. A hush seemed to fall over the harbourside township as the news spread of his passing.

Despite some 'experts' opinions, weather was not the primary cause of this accident. Though it was time and again the major factor with accidents of which I had first hand knowledge, in this instance, though doubtless a contributory factor, there was, I thought, a more plausible explanation.

Joe had amassed hundreds of hours between Madang and the highlands in the mission's Cessna, a smaller, tail-wheeled model than the one in which he was killed. The 206 was relatively new to him, larger, heavier and fitted with a tricycle undercarriage. Of the differences between the two types, a significant one in my opinion is the arrangement of the fuel selector lever on the floor between the front seats. With the Cessna 180's tank selector centered forward, both tanks were ON. In the 206 the fuel was OFF when the selector was centered forward. Changing from one tank to the other on the 206 meant that the selector must go through OFF. It could well be that Father Joe had always flown his 180 with both tanks selected, for that was common practice with pilots flying the type. During the climb near the Bundi gap with his mind fully occupied searching for a way through the cloud and rain, he'd need to change tanks, the fuel might have been inadvertently shut off during that selection. Such is often the nature of entrenched habit. Given that scenario, Father Joe would have been taken by surprise with a dead cut of the engine, while fully engaged positioning to avoid the many clouds that covered the high terrain that day, possibly resulting in a loss of control. Conjecture of course, for the parts that may have supported this theory were, as we know, never found.

With the search over, for me it was a return to the daily grind of flying through the mountains with a lot of catch up charters to do.

Father Joe and other mission pilots who lost their lives in New Guinea up to that time have been remembered with a memorial stone on the airport at Madang. On the peak is a bronze replica of Father Joe's much cared for Cessna 180 in a banked attitude.

Ed note. Father Joe had been flying in New Guinea since 1944. His passenger that day was Father Joseph Bayer who had been in New Guinea since 1948.

My office in Goroka was in the 'Haus Duk Duk' (Masonic Temple) just over the road (bush track really) from the Control Tower and airport Fire Station, so I was called out on several occasions in the event of an emergency aircraft search. I actually took part on the first day of this search but was not required for the final days when Father Joe's Cessna was found.

Rick Giddings, 7 PI C Coy, PNGVR Goroka at the time, and now an Association member, was Assistant District Officer in the Goroka Sub Branch at the time and had recently completed a comprehensive census and general administrative patrol in the Asaro district where Father Joe's aircraft had been found.

Rick's account of his getting to the scene follows.

When news came through to the Sub-District Office in Goroka, that Brian McCook had located wreckage believed to be that of Father Joe Wallachy's aircraft, I was assigned to lead a recovery



The Asaloka Gap (7,600 feet) from Madang to Goroka which is behind the mountain on the left. **Photo taken on a clear day.** The photo below shows the Gap still able to be negotiated.



team to the crash site. Wreckage had been spotted in the Asaloka Gap area on the western face of the Bismarck ranges.

I was accompanied by Patrol Officer John Coad, two police constables, and Dr Ian Riley from the Goroka base hospital. I went with Brian McCook on an orientation flight in a Talair Beech 'Baron' aircraft. Given the speed of the aircraft and the ruggedness of the terrain, I marvelled that Brian had discovered anything, but his were the skills of somebody attuned to speed while searching for shiny pieces of torn metal.

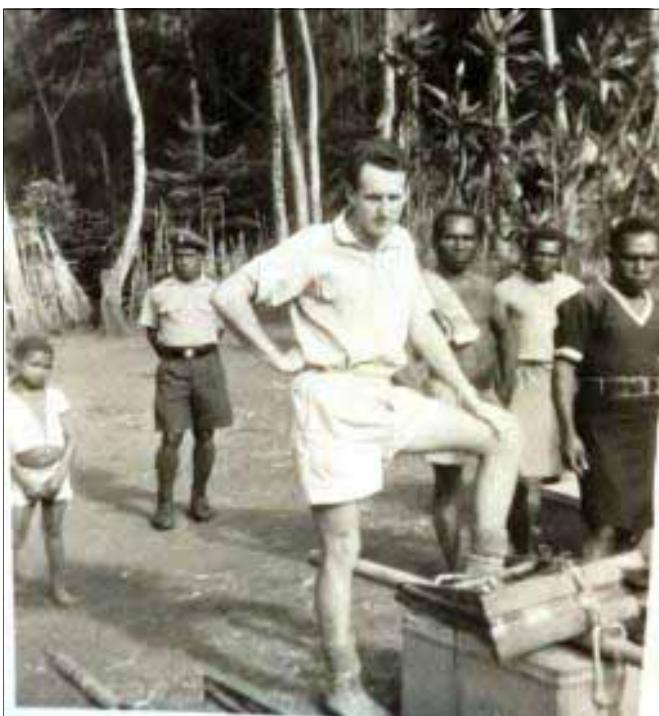
That afternoon, with the aid of village men recruited to carry our camping gear, we made it to where we reckoned we were just below the crash site, where we made camp. Brian flew three runs above the crash site and confirmed we were right on track to reach it.

I had a Very pistol with which to signal our position to Pilot McCook and I fired it on the three runs he made above us. I was too slow in firing the first two shots so they were not seen, but thankfully the third was!

The following morning we broke camp and climbed the last half-hour before arriving on the crest of the ridge beneath which the wreckage was impaled.

One of my constables volunteered to clamber down to it which he did, arriving back a short time later with part of a human foot suspended from a bush vine strung around his neck. He reported there was not much to see down there, as the impact had been so violent.

It was then that I should have used better judgment and called the recovery mission off but after consulting with my colleagues I decided to attempt to reach the crash site from below rather than from above.



Rick on a patrol with policeman, 'tanim tok' and carriers to carry his patrol box on which he is resting one leg. The patrol box was metal to withstand rough treatment and carried all the Patrol Officer would need for days/weeks in the field.

To that end we set-off in a westerly direction up the crest of the ridge, moving at one stage through a silent, dripping stretch of a moss-forest, then down to a point we reckoned to be below the crash-site.

Spending a cold, miserable night with moss-covered logs as sleeping companions (they kept us from slipping downhill), we chose to call it off and return the way we had come. The going was terribly steep, as we had found, and the finding of one body- part the previous day did not auger well for any significant recovery. Patrol Officer Coad, however, offered to continue on towards the crash site, as Dr Riley and I retraced our steps.

We regrouped on the ridge above the wreck site. Coad reported that he had been unable to locate any sizeable remains and that the violence of the impact had 'filleted' what he did locate.

I do not remember this venture as one of my most productive undertakings in Papua New Guinea: the country had beaten me and my judgment in pressing on when all indications were that we would not find much to bring back reflected a doubtful judgment on my part.

Thank you Rick for your unassuming account of what was a difficult and dangerous task, but, as you know, such was the lot of "The Kiap"

The Downturn in Garaina PNG, once a magnificent Agricultural Experimental Station since prior to WW2

Garaina airfield and the Tea Plantation in 1969 (above). Situated in the Waria Valley, Morobe Province. Angus Hutton started planting tea here in the early 1960's and by 1963 Garaina Tea was being sold in Australia. He even made the factory self sufficient on electricity by building a small hydro electric generator on the Bu River. There are no



Garaina today. Abandoned tea factory. R. Overgrown tea trees

roads in and out of Garaina. The Waria Valley was very wide and the tea was grown at about 2,000 feet above sea level. The next photo shows local women carrying out picked tea in the late 1960's.

Garaina commenced as an Agricultural Experimental Station prior to WW2 and during WW2 supplied fresh vegetables to Allied troops. It also spearheaded the development of suitable coffee and tea for PNG.

THIRD ROTATION DEPLOYS TO IRAQ

The 400 members of the third rotation of Task Group Taji deployed to Iraq in May with the full confidence of their commander.

Col. Andrew Lowe said the training continuum ensured Australian servicemen and women were well trained and ready to conduct a number of operations.

"The mission-specific training we completed in Adelaide made us even better" he said. "Everyone, from the private soldier providing force protection through to the staff officer running the critical incident response team, will have stepped off confident they are as well trained as they can be."

Col. Lowe commands about 300 ADF members and 100 New Zealanders. They will spend six months training the Iraqi Army to defeat the Daesh terrorist threat in Iraq.

"Task Group Taji is truly a combined and joint force" Col. Lowe said. "It comprises men and women from two nations across all three services".

The Building Partner Capacity mission is part of Australia's broader Defence contribution to Iraq and Syria, Operation Okra which includes a Special Operations Task Force Group and an Air Task Group.

Australia's operations in Iraq are in response to requests for assistance from both the Iraqi and US governments.

Col Lowe said Australians should be proud their country had been asked to help a friend in need. "This is recognition that we are a highly professional and well-trained defence force" he said. "Friends look after one another and this goes for our soldiers too".

Everyone on a six-month deployment will have a bad day at some point. Their strongest support will come from their mates, even if it just boils down to a conversation over a brew".

Col. Lowe said the task group would be kept busy by focusing on its mission. "Both the soldiers and their families should have pride and confidence in the mission" he said.

Source -Army Newspaper.

Vale. Col. Peter Grahame COLE 235052

Colonel Peter Grahame Cole psc, psc (US) died 29 May 2016 at 85 years of age: Colonel Cole was the last commanding officer of the Papua New Guinea Volunteer Rifles: he provided the Foreword for *PNGVR: A History 1950-1973*.



Peter Cole this Anzac Day

the unenviable task of disbanding the unit in December 1973. He remained with the Papua New Guinea Defence Force to raise the PNGDF Officer Training School at Igam Barracks: on returning to Australia he was promoted to Colonel. In 1974 he presented the PNGVR Queen and Regimental Colours to the Australian War Memorial for safekeeping. Colonel Cole was also the Commandant of the Officer Cadet School at Portsea: his last posting was as Director of Plans in Canberra.

I served as Colonel Cole's second in command of the PNGVR and I was impressed at the comfortable manner in which he commanded the unit, particularly during the onerous disbandment phase.

Peter Cole is survived by his wife Natalie, sons Michael and Roger, daughter Megan and grandchildren Rose-Maree; Elizabeth; Lawson and Lianna.

Bob Harvey-Hall
LEST WE FORGET

VALE. Maj. Peter MOSES 2149704

Peter Moses died at the age of 77 in Hobart on Wednesday 15 June 2016. As a national serviceman and sergeant, Peter transferred to A Company PNGVR in 1964 where he was promoted to Warrant Officer Class Two and became Company Sergeant Major. He was trained at the Australian School of Pacific Administration (ASOPA) and was posted to Gabari outside Lae in his profession of teaching. He also taught in the Bena Bena in the highlands of PNG and at Utu Boys High School in Kavieng. Peter Moses sat for First Appointment in 1968 and was transferred to Goroka where as a Lieutenant he was a platoon commander with C Company.

After leaving PNG he lectured at The International Training Institute for two years, returned to Brisbane to do a Town Planning Degree then moved to New Zealand as a Regional Town Planner. Two years later he was the Regional Planner for northern Tasmania, living in Launceston. From there he took up a position at the Footscray Institute as a lecturer in Planning. Further studies took him to Dundee in Scotland and Cardiff in Wales. He also worked in Singapore for two years.

He maintained his connection with The Australian Reserve throughout his life and served in units from Queensland to Tasmania and spent two years in the New Zealand Territorials. Peter lived a life of service both in Education and the Military.

He is survived by his daughter Lisa Pozzi and son Colonel Phillip Moses.

Farewell, Peter.

Bob Harvey Hall
LEST WE FORGET



Photos above show the Jindalee Rotary volunteers painting the original section of your Museum at Wacol. Curator John Holland was present all the time during the construction of the extension and the painting of both the new and the original sections - well done John. The lady in the photo having morning tea's father was with 1 Independent Coy in Kavieng and was captured but survived the war.

Peter Cole graduated from Duntroon Military College in 1953 and was posted to 4 Battalion Royal Australian Regiment at Ingleburn. He served as a platoon commander with 3RAR and 1RAR in Korea; as a staff officer in HQ British Commonwealth Force Korea in Japan; as Adjutant to 2 Battalion, The City of Newcastle Regiment; at Duntroon as a weapons instructor; as a Company second in Command, Adjutant and Company Commander with the PIR; attended the Australian Staff College and served with 5RAR and 1ATF in South Vietnam. He also attended Staff College in the USA and prior to becoming commanding officer of PNGVR, he was at AHQ at Canberra as Director of Army Recruiting.

As the last commanding officer of the PNGVR, Peter Cole had

If my body is ever found dead on a jogging trail, just know I was murdered elsewhere and dumped there



A photo of NGVR and Z Special Forces men taken at an exhibition organised by museum curator John Holland in 1998 in Brisbane.

Left rear with microphone, Norm Mundy, PNGVR.
Rear: Jack Goad, Kam On Leo, Tom, Keenan, Stan Burton, ??.
In front: Frank Holland MBE (Z Special), Tom Lega MM.

Final Jimboomba Formal Mixed Dinner

To date 32 Mixed Dining nights have been held at either Barry & Pam Wright or Ted & Heather McAllan's property at Jimboomba.

The final Mixed Dining Night will be held at 190-226 Kurrajong Road, Jimboomba, on Sat 15th October. Come along and enjoy what could well be the final formal dining night held by our Association.

For details contact:
Bob Collins - 0413 831 397
Barry Wright - 5546 9865

FUNCTION DATES

Association Committee Meetings

Saturday 17th September
AGM Saturday 22nd October
Meetings commence 10am at your museum. Come along, see the latest addition to your museum and catch up with old mates.

Kokoda Day

Monday 8th August Cascade Gardens, Broadbeach, Gold Coast. Come along and see the Unit plaques to NGVR and ANGAU. newly laid at the rear of the Kokoda Memorial



NATIONAL MEDALS Pty Ltd



REPLICA MEDALS OR MOUNTING OF MEDALS

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

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 Bn.

For correspondence contact Secretary, Colin Gould, email pngvr@optusnet.com.au, phone 0424 562 030

(The Secretary, P O Box 885, Park Ridge, Qld, 4125)

For Military Museum enquires contact Curator John Holland, email rabaui42@gmail.com, phone 0449 504 058

(NGVR/PNGVR Military Museum, Corner Boundary Road & Fulcrum Street, Wacol, Qld, 4076)

Membership fee payments to Treasurer, Doug Ng, email doug_lasng@iinet.net.au, phone 0413 014 422

(NGVR & PNGVR Ex-members Association : BSB: 064006 - A/C: 10001126)

Website Master: Trevor Connell email trevor.connell@internode.on.net, phone 0409 690 590

www.pngvr.weebly.com (all backcopies of HTT may be obtained from our website)

Facebook Master: Kieran Nelson, email kierannelson@bigpond.com, phone 0412 236 013

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ngvrandpngvrmilitarymuseum/>

Harim Tok Tok Editor: Bob Collins, email bob_collins@bigpond.com, phone 0413 831 397

President: Email painsworth@kingco.com.au to get on members electronic distribution including Harim Tok Tok (you will receive it in colour, earlier and can adjust the print size to suit)

NGVR/PNGVR service recollections are copyright.



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Restoration of the famous MV Krait

"Operation Jaywick" was one of the most daring raids by Special Operations Australia (SOA) during WW2. Seven Japanese ships were sunk or badly damaged in Singapore Harbour. *MV Krait* is credited with sinking more enemy ships than any other Australian Navy ship. The Japanese were stunned by such a brazen covert assault. A crucial element in the success of the operation was a small Japanese fishing vessel, named *Krait* and which carried the Z Special Unit operatives and their equipment to Subor Island from which they launched their attack on Singapore harbour and returned safely to Australia.

Krait is a national icon and survives as a tangible link to the daring act of bravery of those who served in her and in Special Operations during the Second World War and since. *Krait* is berthed in Darling Harbour at the Australian National Maritime Museum (ANMM). She is in urgent need of significant conservation work for her future and a refit to return her to her 1943 configuration for the "Jaywick" raid. This will be preparation for her long-term exhibition with related objects and enriched interpretation of her service in the Second World War. The Australian War Memorial and the Australian National Maritime Museum are collaborating to achieve the long-term conservation of *Krait* for generations of Australians.

"Z Special Unit is really the origins of our SAS as we understand it today." "This is a project as important as it is exciting and it is long overdue." - AWM Director Brendan Nelson.

Fundraising

Considerable work has been undertaken by the experts at the ANMM to understand *MV Krait's* future needs. They have ascertained that we need to raise \$1,100,000 for her immediate and extensive restoration and future display.

All funds raised in the campaign will be applied to the vessel's restoration and new display at the Australian National Maritime Museum, to preserve the memory of those who served so bravely with Z Special Unit, which formed the model for subsequent Australian Army special force units.

All donations will be tax deductible. There will be no fundraising or administration costs deducted from donations made. Every \$ raised will be directly spent on the *MV Krait* project.

Commitments to date

Maritime Museum and the Australian War Memorial have each committed to investing \$100,000 immediately.

How can you help?

- Providing introductions to potential benefactors for this project;
- If you are in a position to, please donate to this most important project. All donations, big and small will help achieve the goal. ANMM has established a dedicated account for *MV Krait*. Details on how to donate can be found below:

Yes, I would like to support the restoration of historic vessel MV Krait

Please accept my gift of:

\$25 \$50 \$100 Other \$ _____ OR

Please accept my monthly gift by credit card of:

\$15 \$25 \$50 Other \$ _____

(You can change or cancel at any time.)

Name: _____

Address: _____

State: _____ Postcode: _____

Email (optional): _____

Phone (optional): _____

My Payment Details:

Cheque/money order

(made payable to Australian National Maritime Foundation - *Krait*) OR

Credit card:

Visa MasterCard American Express

Card no.: _____ / _____ / _____ / _____

Expiry: _____ / _____ Signature: _____

Cardholders Name: _____

Privacy: Credit Card details will be shredded after processing.

Please send me information on how to include the Australian National Maritime Museum in my will.

Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible. Thank you.



Commemorating the 75th Anniversary 2017 Montevideo Maru and the New Guinea Islands

WE NEED YOUR STORIES! STORIES ABOUT THE 'LOST BATTALION', STORIES ABOUT CIVILIANS WHO REMAINED BEHIND AND WERE NEVER SEEN AGAIN. STORIES ABOUT ESCAPE, STORIES ABOUT EVACUATION, STORIES ABOUT THOSE WHO LATER RETURNED TO NEW GUINEA ISLANDS AND STORIES ABOUT HOW WWII IN THE NEW GUINEA ISLANDS Affected YOUR FAMILY AND LIVES DURING AND AFTER WWII.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

To acknowledge the '75th Commemorative Anniversary of the sinking of the Montevideo Maru and the fall of the New Guinea islands', we are collecting short stories including photographs, by the families & friends of the men, which will be published as a book for the 75th Anniversary in 2017. The book will be about both the soldiers of the 2/22nd Battalion - Lark Force & the 1st Independent Company as well as the Civilians at Rabaul and New Guinea islands during WW2. We are looking for engaging and well-researched stories using a creative non-fiction technique rather than a 'facts and figures' story that links to the soldiers and civilians to their home communities, including their family life prior.

We want to get a picture about these men that were essentially deemed 'lost' by our Government for more than three years; we want to know how their families survived during this unknown time - did they go to the marches in the capital cities? Did they receive help from Legacy? Did the family visit the camps at Trawool or Bonegilla before they departed? Did they knit socks for the Red Cross? Did they attend the Christmas parties or Fete arranged by 2/22nd Welfare Auxiliary? Were any of your family members part of the 2/22nd Welfare Auxiliary and what was their role? Or did they just not talk about the missing family members? Do you have any special items at home that were sent back from Rabaul? Did your family member escape and how? Was your family member listed in the massacres at either Tol or Kavieng and how did your family handle this tragic news? What happened after the War if they were one of the few that escaped? Did they befriend any special Papua New Guineans whilst escaping? Were they a POW in Japan and how did they survive that? With civilians - what happened when they were evacuated? Did they have a home to go to? How did they manage for food and winter clothing? What support did they receive? How did losing their homes and nearly all they knew - affect them and their children? How did they find out what happened to their men? The variables are endless.

The book is to give families the opportunity to tell their story and to let others know the tragic loss that both Australia and the New Guinea Islands suffered by the disappearance of these special men onboard the Montevideo Maru as well as those that never left the New Guinea islands, and those that managed to make extraordinary escapes home.

SUBMISSION CONDITIONS

Email entry is preferred. Email: stories@memorial.org.au or Dropbox : Gayle Thwaites Postal Address: Mrs G. Thwaites, PO Box 153, Lilydale, Victoria, 3140

- Please register your subject interest and Soldier's /Rabaul Civilian name with our Project Manager - Gayle Thwaites via email : stories@memorial.org.au
- Submissions are due 30 July, 2016 @ 5.00pm; they must include a Submission Form and Release Forms (photos) if applicable
- There is no entry fee
- Submission is not a guarantee of publication
- Open to age 14 and over
- Limit of two stories per person
- Stories must be the author's own work
- Stories must not exceed the word limit of 3000 words
- You are encouraged to include photographs with your story. These must be in JPG format and scanned at least to 300 dpi. A release form will be required for each individual photograph.
- Photos should not be embedded in the text file. Please submit images as separate files from the written work
- Hard copies of photos can be scanned and returned to you by arrangement
- Stories should include a list of sources at the end
- Entries must be typed on A4 paper, single sided in 12pt font double-spaced, with page numbers; no other formatting please
- By submitting a story, the author grants the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Group/Papua New Guinea Association of Australia (PNGAA) the rights to publish the story in print and online.
- Once published, the rights revert back to the author.
- Stories will NOT be returned
- Publication is scheduled for Mid - 2017

FURTHER ENQUIRIES

Project Team Manager – Gayle Thwaites:

Email - stories@memorial.org.au or Mobile: 0477 000 771

PNGAA President – Andrea Williams: Email - president@pngaa.net

Stay up to date with the project via Facebook at

www.facebook.com/RabaulandMontevideoMaruSociety

The Association

After PNG's independence in 1975, most ex-NGVR and PNGVR veterans returned to Australia. In the late 1980s the Association was formed in Brisbane. It presently has 300 members throughout Australia and Papua New Guinea. Most live in south-east Queensland which is the centre for the Association's activities. The objectives of the Association are to:

- bring together the returned and Ex-Servicemen members of the Association as a Returned and Ex-Servicemen's Group or Organisation;
- promote and encourage, through the Association, a close relationship with the people of Papua New Guinea;
- offer scholarships, awards, annual prizes and bursaries to members of the Australian Army and the Papua New Guinea Defence Force;
- preserve the memory, records and artefacts of those who served in the Second World War theatre of Papua New Guinea and to arrange exhibitions of the same from time to time in Australia and Papua New Guinea;
- provide plaques and memorials to honour members of the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles who served and died in action or as prisoners of war; and
- affiliate with any other organisation which possesses similar aims and objectives upon such terms and conditions as may be mutually agreed upon.



Reserve Forces Day
March,
July 2006

Association activities

The objectives in the constitution were influenced by the activities and functions of the Association since its start. These include:

- ANZAC Day parade in Brisbane has 150 to 200 marchers.
- Since 1989, formal annual regimental dinners have been held on the closest Saturday to ANZAC Day.
- Bi-annual mixed bush dinners have been held at Jimboomba since 1998.
- Memorial services at the Brisbane Cenotaph for NGVR on ANZAC Day and the sinking of the Montevideo Maru on 1 July each year.
- An Annual General Meeting and reunion is held for the election of Association officer bearers.
- At least 6 regular executive committee meetings are held each year.
- Six issues of Harim Tok Tok, the Association newsletter are published and distributed each year to all members.
- Attendance at deceased members' funerals and upon request, the incorporation of the Association's funeral segment.
- Contact with and assistance to sick and bereaved members.

Association contact details

Colin Gould—Secretary
NGVR/PNGVR Ex-members Association
PO Box 885
Park Ridge Queensland 4125

Email: pngvr@optusnet.com.au
Mobile: 0424 562 030
www.pngvr.com

Become a friend of the Museum

The strength of any Museum is to provide and maintain interesting and relevant displays of artifacts, records and memorabilia. The Association's Museum has security vaults on its premises and maintains the necessary licenses including firearms to safe-guard its collection. The NSAAQ site is security fenced and protected by an on-site guard and is patrolled by dogs at night.

Acquisitioning, cataloging and establishing exhibits is continuing. Much additional work and support is required to enable the Museum to regularly open to the community. If you have an interest in assisting the Association's Museum, you are invited to become a friend of the Museum. All that is required is to contact either the Association's Secretary, or the Museum's Curator, whose details are elsewhere in this brochure.



DIRECTIONS TO MUSEUM

Going south along Centenary Highway

1. Turn off on ramp to Oxley & Brisbane City onto Ipswich Motorway
2. Proceed towards Brisbane City for 1km to Harcourt Road ramp
3. Turn onto ramp and cross Ipswich Motorway
4. Continue ahead into Acanthus Street
5. Turn right at T junction into Boundary Road
6. Proceed along Boundary Road for 2kms (crossing Centenary Highway) until arrival

Going west along Ipswich Motorway

1. Turn off on ramp to Darra (Acanthus Street / Harcourt Road)
2. Turn left at roundabout into Acanthus Street
3. Turn right at T junction into Boundary Road
4. Proceed along Boundary Road for 2kms (crossing Centenary Highway) until arrival

Going north along Centenary Highway

1. Turn off on ramp to Wacol & Richlands (Progress Road bridge)
2. Turn right onto Progress Road & proceed about 1.5kms to Archerfield Road junction
3. Turn left into Archerfield Road
4. Proceed along Archerfield Road for 2.5kms to Boundary Road T junction
5. Turn left & proceed along Boundary Road for 1.25km (crossing Centenary Highway) until arrival

Going east along Ipswich Motorway

1. Proceed under Centenary Highway
2. Continue towards City another 1km to Harcourt Road ramp
3. Turn onto ramp and cross Ipswich Motorway
4. Continue ahead into Acanthus Street
4. Turn right at T junction into Boundary Road
5. Proceed along Boundary Road for 2kms (crossing Centenary Highway) until arrival

Opening times

Monday to Friday—by appointment through the Curator

Weekends - Association meetings and NSAAQ function days— contact Curator

This brochure is sponsored by King & Co Property Consultants, specialists in industrial leasing, sales and property management.

Email: p.ainsworth@kingco.com.au
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The work of the Museum compliments the objectives of the Association

New Guinea Volunteer Rifles & Papua New Guinea Volunteer Rifles Ex-members Association Inc



Military MUSEUM

Curator: John Holland
Telephone: 07 3375 5484/0449 504 058
Email: rabaui42@gmail.com

Corner of Boundary Road &
Fulcrum Street, Wacol, Qld 4076
UBD Reference: 217 N1

History of the Museum

When Wacol army barracks was sold, the Department of Defence set aside 1.5 hectares of land and 5 historic buildings for the National Servicemen's Association of Australia (Qld Branch) or NSAAQ. Through our previous association with NSAAQ, we were invited to bid for use of one of the buildings for a museum.

Our Association was notified late 2005 of its successful bid and was asked by the NSAAQ to have it ready for its official opening on 12 February 2006. This was accomplished by a huge voluntary effort by 13 members of the Association.

The Museum was officially opened by the Australian Minister of Veteran Affairs Bruce Billson MP and PNG Consul General for Brisbane, Paul Nerua LLB on Sunday, 12 February 2006, when over 300 members of NSAAQ, our Association and guests attended.

In recognition of this work, the Minister granted \$3,000 for manikins and exhibit cabinets. The Association was also successful in winning a grant from the Queensland State Gaming Fund to air-condition the Museum. This work has been completed.

Work is continuing to collect, catalogue and exhibit the many records, artefacts and memorabilia held. Although rent is minimal, the cost of utilities and general maintenance is borne by the Association. The price of entry to the Museum is \$2.50 per person to assist with maintenance.



Six of the hard workers on Opening Day,
12 February 2006

You are invited to donate or loan appropriate items to the Museum, with the knowledge they will be properly and securely looked after. Also please do not forget to make a bequest to the NGVR/PNGVR Museum in your will.

New Guinea Volunteer Rifles (NGVR)

NGVR had the distinction of being the only Australian army militia unit raised, mobilised, fought and disbanded overseas in the Mandated Territory of New Guinea between 1939 and 1943. On 4th September 1939, Australian Army Headquarters ordered the raising of NGVR. A cosmopolitan group of men from Europe, the British Isles, New Zealand, Australia and Asia, whose homes and livelihoods were in New Guinea, hastened to join.

The initial strength of the battalion was limited to 20 officers and 400 other ranks, but this was increased in June 1940 to 23 officers and 482 other ranks. The enthusiasm in the early days stemmed mainly from returned soldiers of the 1914-18 War, but by mid-1941 the unit had lost many of its younger members having joined the AIF and other services. While the remoteness of many areas was a disadvantage, a growing realisation of the danger of war in the Pacific led to a revival of interest late 1941.

The headquarters of the NGVR was originally at Rabaul and sub-units were located at Wau, Salamaua, Lae and Madang. Fit men between the ages of 18 and 50 were accepted. Enlistment was for a two-year period and there was no pay except for an allowance of 1 pound per year. The uniform consisted of khaki shirts and trousers, made from material sent from Australia. The Army supplied felt hats, bandoliers, leather belts, boots and puttees. Brass NGVR shoulder badges were worn. Arms consisted of rifles and some Vickers and Lewis machine guns.



NGVR on parade, Rabaul 1940

In August 1941, after the arrival of 'Lark Force' in Rabaul, NGVR, under the command of Major WM Edwards, moved its headquarters to Bulolo on the mainland. After Japan attacked, the Battalion was placed on full-time duty and mobilized on the 21 January, 1942.

When the Japanese invaded Rabaul in the early hours of the 23 January, NGVR was under the command of the CO of 2/22nd Battalion. NGVR was positioned on the northern flank of the Lark Forces defence line around the harbour and manned medium machine guns and mortars. NGVR fought until resistance was of no avail, either sharing the fate of other prisoners-of-war or withdrawing south across New Britain to the Open Bay and Wide Bay areas for eventual evacuation south.

Over 80 NGVR personnel of the 1300 plus Australian POWs from Rabaul died when the Japanese naval prison ship Montevideo Maru was sunk in the South China Sea on 1 July by an American submarine; the worst single Australian marine tragedy in WW2. Together, with about 150 other Australian soldiers, a number of NGVR soldiers were massacred at Toll Plantation on Wide Bay by the Japanese.

On the mainland, NGVR formed independent detachments at Wau, Salamaua, Bulolo and Lae. On 21 January, when 60 Japanese aircraft struck simultaneously at Lae, Salamaua and Bulolo, the second-in-command of NGVR, Major EW Jenyns, went to the Administrator in Lae, who then declared a state of emergency and handed over to Jenyns.

Assuming a Japanese landing at Lae was imminent and with NGVR on full time duty, all civilians departed on 24 January. This left six RAAF signalers and six NGVR soldiers in Lae. Meanwhile, other NGVR groups defended strategic points in the area, with their headquarters at Mubo. NGVR was at about company strength in the Lae area by this time.

When the Japanese invaded Lae on 8 March 1942, NGVR moved westward towards Nadzab. After the Japanese landed at Salamaua on the same day,

NGVR withdrew across the Francisco River and destroyed the bridge. Positioning a section at the River, the others moved south to Mubo. Although the Japanese appeared to be in no hurry to move inland, a party of 60 went to Komiatum, half way to Mubo, on 18 March and destroyed the NGVR stores dump.

While the Japanese kept to the Lae town area, NGVR faced new problems. As the only administrative representative of law and order, it assumed responsibility for several thousand indentured labourers recruited from many outlying districts, but now without support and unable to return to their homes. The NGVR established depots and fed them, and they became the first of the army of carriers and labourers who proved so vital in their support to the Allies during the fighting that followed.

Colonel Edwards sent six NGVR soldiers to find out what the Japanese were doing in Salamaua. The Japanese knew they were there but failed to find them. As the local people were in trouble with the Japanese for assisting the Australians, NGVR withdrew to avoid further trouble for them. Similar NGVR posts were established along the Markham Valley and Heath's Plantation closer to Lae to watch the Japanese. NGVR filled a large gap to late May 1942 by keeping in touch with and containing the enemy.

The 2/5th Independent Company AIF, with supporting attachments, flew into Wau from Port Moresby on 23 May to reinforce NGVR. These units formed Kanga Force, whose role was to start a limited offensive to harass and destroy enemy personnel and equipment in the area. The OC Kanga Force considered there were 2,000 Japanese in Lae and 250 in Salamaua. Kanga Force had 700 men, of whom only 450 were fit for operations - a small number to meet the many possible Japanese threats. To forestall these, the OC ordered raids on Salamaua and Heath's Plantation west of Lae. The Salamaua raid was planned quickly as a result of previous scouting work. Early in the morning of 29 June,

71 members of NGVR and 2/5th Independent Company killed at least 100 Japanese at a cost of three men slightly wounded. This very successful raid made the Japanese draw on their garrison at Lae to reinforce their perimeter at Salamaua. Although the 58 man strong raid on Heath's Plantation was successful, it lacked surprise and the leader was killed and two other men wounded.

Although NGVR remained in good spirits, the deprivations of continuous operations in hostile terrain without adequate supply and medication took their toll, with many falling sick with fever and other tropical diseases. The number of fit men steadily dwindled. As food was not getting through, the soldiers became increasingly dependent on the local food supply. Japanese air raids, their intimidation tactics over the local people, and the sheer physical difficulty of getting rations forward to feed carriers had a cumulative effect and threatened to stop Kanga Force activity.

Later, when the focus shifted to the Milne Bay and Kokoda Track battles, NGVR continued to man its posts overlooking the Japanese. 1942 was NGVR's year. By early 1943 too few were left to be effective. Because of their knowledge of the country and its problems, the remaining NGVR soldiers were attached to the Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit (ANGAU), and NGVR lost its identity.

The NGVR soldiers came from many walks of life. While some were too old to join the AIF, medically unfit or employed in restricted occupations, they fought well. They also initiated the organising Papua New Guinean labour which was to become a vital contributory feature to the success of the Allied campaign in the New Guinea archipelago.

As at September 2010, there are 6 ex-NGVR men alive. Excerpted from Coady's article in the "Australian Territories Magazine", published 1995-96.

Papua New Guinea Volunteer Rifles (PNGVR)

Although the formation of the unit was mooted earlier, PNGVR was not activated until 17 March 1951, when the first recruits were enlisted. These were mostly Australians, who had served in WW2.

The role of PNGVR was to maintain sub-units capable of providing information and advice on topography, native customs and personalities; guides and interpreters and assistance in the organisation and training of indigenous and irregular forces, if required.

The first CO was Lt. Col. E. F. Maddern and by the end of 1951 there were detachments at Port Moresby, Lae and Rabaul. The Honorary Colonel of the Regiment then was the Administrator, Col. J. K. Murray. Eventually other detachments were raised in Wau, Samarai, Madang, Wewak, Goroka, Mt Hagen, Banz, Kainantu and Kavieng. A platoon was raised in April 1970 at the University of Papua New Guinea.

By January 1963, PNGVR was a 550 strong all Australian force mainly of European background. It was not until 1964 that PNGVR became a multi-racial unit with the enlistment of Papua New Guineans and others. When PNGVR was disbanded on 1 December 1973, 80% of its members were Papua New Guineans.

As part of the training program, a two week annual camp was held, initially at Goldie River, then after integration in 1964, at Mt Ambra near Mt Hagen, and in later years near Lae. In 1962, PNGVR was presented with NGVR's WW2 battle honours, Rabaul, Wau and South West Pacific. On 17 May 1969, the Administrator D O Hay presented the Queen's and Regimental Colours to PNGVR at Igam Barracks, Lae. Sec. Lt. Pascal Idok of the UPNG platoon became the first Papua New Guinean to be commissioned in PNGVR in July 1971.

PNGVR's last annual camp was held in August 1973 at Finschaaven when 350 soldiers from Port Moresby, Lae, Rabaul, Goroka, Banz, Mt Hagen, Madang and Wewak attended. On 1 December 1973, PNGVR was disbanded. Its colours were laid up at the Australian War Memorial on Anzac Day, 1974.



Regimental Colour



Queen's Colour

PNGVR was an Australian CMF unit always commanded by a regular army officer. There were 12 commanding officers from 1950 to 1973. PNGVR and NGVR were the only Australian volunteer army reserve units which were formed, served and disbanded overseas. They were at all times in the Australian Army Order of Battle, that is, they were front line units and were on continuous overseas service.





PNGVR: A History 1951-1973

MAJOR BOB HARVEY-HALL
RFD ED (Ret)

PAPUA NEW GUINEA VOLUNTEER RIFLES

was the successor to the WWII New Guinea Volunteer Rifles Militia Battalion. It was the only Australian post WWII Militia (CMF) Battalion which was:

- formed, served and disbanded overseas
- never served in Australia
- always on the Australia's Order of Battle
- always commanded by a regular army officer
- from 1964 actively enlisting Papua New Guineans (non-Australians)
- from 1964 a fully-integrated unit comprising Australians and non-Australians in all ranks

The colourful story of this unique Australian Militia Battalion unfolds in this detailed telling by Major Bob Harvey-Hall RFD ED (Ret), the second-longest serving PNGVR soldier/officer/ Company Commander and Battalion 2/1C, from the unit's earliest days until near when it was disbanded.

The story reveals how expatriates thought and lived in PNG from the early 1950s just after

the war; how the battalion provided the initial defence of the country and assisted to re-establish the Pacific Island Regiment. As the country's development process increased, the battalion's role was expanded and Papua New Guineans were welcomed enlistments into the PNGVR military community.

The battalion played an important role during the anxious time the governing of West Papua was transferred to Indonesia from the Dutch. As the country rapidly moved towards its own independence there was no need for an Australian CMF unit in PNG and the unit was disbanded. Many of the expatriate Australians remained in PNG after independence and further assisted the country in its development.

Read how the bonding created by the unique shared experiences within PNGVR remains strong today and is exemplified whenever a group of former PNGVR soldiers meet.

PURCHASE ORDER:

To: **NGVR & PNGVR Ex-Members Association, PO Box 885, Park Ridge QLD 4125**

Please send me copies of **PNGVR: A History 1951-1973** at the purchase price of \$50.00 per copy

plus \$20.00 for postage & handling for any purchase in Australia

Note: Overseas purchases should include sufficient to cover the postage costs
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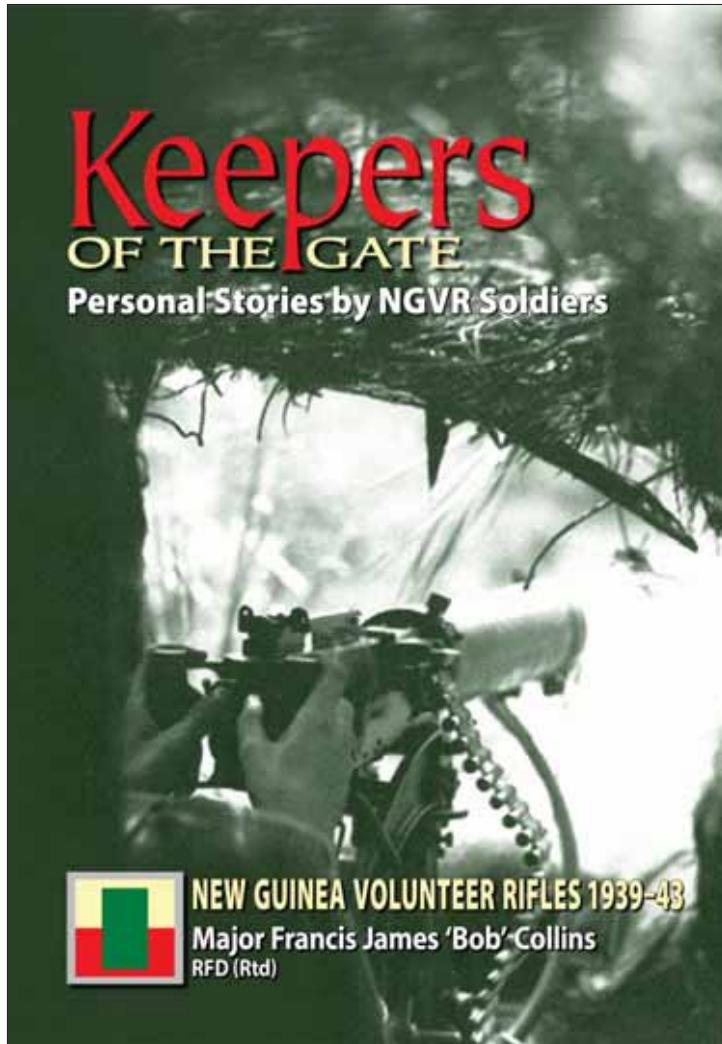
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Who were the Keepers of the Gate?

The New Guinea Volunteer Rifles (NGVR)—one of the few Allied military units engaging the Japanese in New Guinea in early 1942. With aggressive patrolling and reconnaissance the gate to the New Guinea Goldfields and central range south to Port Moresby and Australia remained closed to the enemy.

Armed with WWI light infantry weapons, no air or artillery support, few rations, minimal ammunition supply, meagre medical services and limited communications, this poorly-trained force was used to exhaustion and disbanded.

Many of the men never served again due to the deprivations suffered; others, after rest returned to New Guinea and served in the Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit (ANGAU) and units which needed their PNG knowledge and experience.

This is not a history of NGVR. These are the stories of thirty-seven NGVR soldiers—stories which reveal why they were in New Guinea as civilians at that fateful time, their wartime and postwar experiences and the effect on them and their families.

The stories were written as told to Bob Collins, who served in PNGVR, the postwar CMF unit in Papua New Guinea. He met many ex-NGVR men and saw many areas where NGVR operated on the frontline. We are grateful to this small band of courageous and adventurous men, the Keepers of the Gate—our front line of the Pacific War—and these stories are a legacy these outstanding men deserve.

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