

# NEWS & VIEWS

## STOP PRESS

Canberra recently announced the creation of a new Australian Active Service Medal for service between 1945 and 1975. The new medal will be available for people who served in the Korean War, the Malayan Emergency and the Indonesian Confrontation and to Vietnam veterans where relevant.

This is a separate medal to the ASM 1945-75.

Your Committee is looking into the interpretation of "Active" service with the following points in mind:-

- The PNGVR was raised, served and disbanded on foreign soil therefore served outside Australia.
- The period from March 1951 to 1974 or the period when the PNGVR was active paralleled the Korean War, the Malaysian Emergency, Labuan, Malaysia post 1960, Vietnam and the Indonesian Confrontation.
- The PNGVR was on the Order of Battle throughout its existence.
- PNGVR Members were volunteers and could have been directed to proceed outside PNG if circumstances had so warranted.
- The existence of the PNGVR may have acted as a deterrent for would be aggressors
- The PNGVR, the PIR and RPNGC would have been the first line of defence if Australia had been subject to any invasion from the north.

Your Committee will be following this issue closely and if any member has any further information on the proposed AASM or would like to offer further suggestions on the Unit's eligibility for the new proposed medal, please convey your thoughts to the Committee ASAP.

Our thanks to Lt. Col. Peter Grimshaw, MBE., for his assistance and information provided. H N Green.

## ROYAL PNG CONSTABULARY

Member Max Hayes writes.....

On a recent visit to PNG I made a submission to the Commissioner for Police that the RPNGC Centenary Medal 1988 be awarded to all former regular Police Officers who had served in the Constabulary prior to 1988. The Commissioner agreed to this proposal and Christies in Sydney have been authorised to supply this medal to eligible officers at their (own) cost.

Unfortunately PNG has no officer personnel files and cannot advise Christies names of eligible persons.

If there are any persons who have served in the RPNGC or pre-war Police forces of TPNG are asked to contact me direct regarding the medal. NB Only those deemed "regular police officers are eligible.

Max Hayes- 41 Clay Drive, Doncaster 3108

## DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN.....

### Mid '60's TAA FLIGHT AMENITIES LIST

#### Papua/New Guinea Service

#### BAR PRICES

Beer (Can).....	1/9
Scotch (Min. Bottle).....	2/9
Brandy (Aust)(Min. Bottle)	2/-
VSOP Cognac (Min Bottle)	2/9
Port (Min. Bottle)	2/-
Cigarettes	
English 20's.....	2/3
Australian 20's...	2/3

*God and the Soldier we adore,  
In times of trouble - not before,  
the trouble over and all things righted,  
God is forgotten  
And the Soldier Slighted.*

Unknown.



# HARIM TOK TOK



NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW GUINEA VOLUNTEER RIFLES AND PAPUA NEW GUINEA VOLUNTEER RIFLES  
EX MEMBERS ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED.

VOLUME 9

November 1997

SPRING

EDITION

## PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

(ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 27 SEPT. 1997)

1997 has been a year of achievement with an increase in assets and full service to our commitments with 31 RQR Townsville and 9 RQR Brisbane. We have also made submissions to the Papua New Guinea Honours and Awards Committee for 23 PNG Community Service Medals - such Medals requiring 12 years, but preferably 20 years voluntary unpaid community service. Your Committee expects that possibly ten awards will be made on the Queen's birthday in 1998. We have received official acknowledgment from the Secretary of the PNG Committee through our very capable representatives in Port Moresby, Chief Superintendent of Police, Dennis Samin, OBE., and John Mudge, MBE.,

Members Representative Norm Mundy, RFM., has compiled a detailed nominal roll of former NGVR and PNGVR members, numbering 403 names. Membership of the Association has also increased to some 270 full members and Associate members which has increased the work of our Secretary, and I will speak more of this later.

We are a non-profit organisation which is a legal requirement for an Association such as ours. During the year we had an income of \$10,028 with expenses of \$8559. I am now going to take some thunder from the Treasurer's report. We have no outstanding accounts and our present bank balance is some \$1500. Due to a delay in sending our membership fee notices, we expect that some \$1600 will be received in fees over the coming weeks, so giving us a credit balance of over \$3000. From this balance we must deduct some \$330 to be repaid to members due to the cancellation of the "Association Port" project. Unfortunately we did not receive orders for Port to the minimum level required for the wine makers to proceed, so this amount must be refunded. I will leave further financial news to the Treasurer, but please remember we are a non-profit organisation, and an income of over \$10,000 a year in an indication of our strength and members commitments and support.

The passage of time is affecting all of us. During the year we have had many cases of illness, a number of heart attacks, and some deaths which have involved all of us - our Secretary, Col Gould suffering the passing of his father (S/Sgt Stan Gould) and his mother in the space of only 8 months. In every instance, members of your Committee with the support of other members, have attended funerals, hospitals and the homes of those who have suffered. To assist the Committee in this important role, we have appointed Lieut. Bill Bickerton, who has already contributed personally in a number of situations experienced by members, as "Welfare Officer". I am proposing that Bill Bickerton be assisted in this task by co-opting four Association members as a "RELIEF FORCE" to attend where possible in times of stress, difficulty and sadness.

*In this Issue:- President's Report to the AGM; Appointment of a new PNG Consul-General; NGVR Recollections; NGVR Headstone corrected; PNGVR History: "A couple of Memories 1955-56"; Association Activities - Military Excellence Award 9 RQR; Shield of Military Excellence 31 RQR; 1997 AGM; Frangipani Ball; Sir Dennis Buchanan, Kt.B., MBE.; Victoria Barracks Historical Society; News.*

## PROPOSED NEW POCKET BADGE

At the AGM members approved a new design for the Association's pocket badge.

The existing Badge features the PNGVR badge which is considered not to fully represent the two aspects of our Association - the NGVR and PNGVR.

The Proposed new badge (right) is slightly larger than the present badge and features the NGVR Colour patch (in full colour) AND the PNGVR Badge also in colour, and NAMES the NGVR and PNGVR. AGM members also agreed to a two year change over period for members to purchase the new badge.

Members are invited to submit any further comments to the committee on the new pocket badge.

Background  
Colour: Dark Blue  
Printing: Gold  
NGVR Colour  
patch: Green/grey/  
red/white  
PNGVR  
Badge: Gold/Red



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New Guinea Volunteer Rifles and Papua New Guinea Volunteer Rifles Ex Members Assoc Inc.  
PO Box 287, Everton Park, Brisbane. 4053

Once again we are grateful to our Patron, Sir Dennis Buchanan, Kt.B., MBE., for donating to the Association four complimentary seats on FLIGHT-WEST AIRLINES, Brisbane/Townsville return on the 25 October for the Association's presentation of our annual Shield of Military Excellence to a soldier below the rank of Sergeant in 31 RQR. Members from Brisbane representing the Association will be Bill Bickerton (delegation leader), Bruce Crawford, Ed Hardy and Jesse Chee with Barry Wright going independently. Our sincere thanks to Sir Dennis and FLIGHT-WEST AIRLINES for their ongoing support of the Association and its aims.

The Papua New Guinea Consul-General to Queensland, Mr Christopher S Mero, issued the Association five invitations to attend a most enjoyable celebration of Papua New Guinea's 22nd year of Independence. The function was held in the Consulate-General Office, Malagan House in Creek Street, Brisbane. The occasion further cemented our relationship with Foreign Affairs personnel of Papua New Guinea, and I do welcome the Consul-General's representative, Mr Patilial Pitil, to our dinner and meeting this evening.

Our Secretary Col Gould with his wife, Pattie, is slowly recovering from a vicious attack of the flu. Colin who has suffered so much family sadness, is to be commended for his consistent and time consuming work as Secretary of our Association. I do ask members to appreciate that in this aging of our Association, the art of communication must not be lost. With regards to communication, should any member have knowledge of any stress, illness or passing on of an NNGVR/PNGVR Member, please let us know so that we may render all the assistance we can.

The Association exists only for its members, and with communication to and from our members we will continue to operate and be successful in the years ahead. My appreciation is extended to all members of the Executive Committee who have worked so hard throughout the year in their various roles. I would like to extend to all members, Associate members and their families good health and happiness for 1997/8 - *Merry Christmas.*

H N Green.  
PRESIDENT



### NEW CONSUL - GENERAL APPOINTED

The Papua New Guinea Consul-General position which has been vacant since Mr Chris Vihuri returned home, has been filled by a career diplomat, Mr Christopher S Mero. Mr Mero, married with three children, was born in Lese Oalai Village in the Gulf Province and lists sports and reading as his hobbies.

A Bachelor of Arts graduate from the University of Papua New Guinea, he furthered his studies as a Master of Science from the Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok. He holds a Diploma from the Foreign Service Training Program in PNG; a Certificate-international Political Relations from the Institute International D'Administration Publique, Paris.

Mr Mero has held various high profile appointments and was First Secretary in the PNG Embassy and Mission to the EC in Brussels. A stint with the PNG Embassy in Washington preceded his appointment to Brisbane.

We welcome Mr Mero and his family to Brisbane.  
(Details courtesy Australia-PNG Society Inc Brisbane)

### THANK YOU

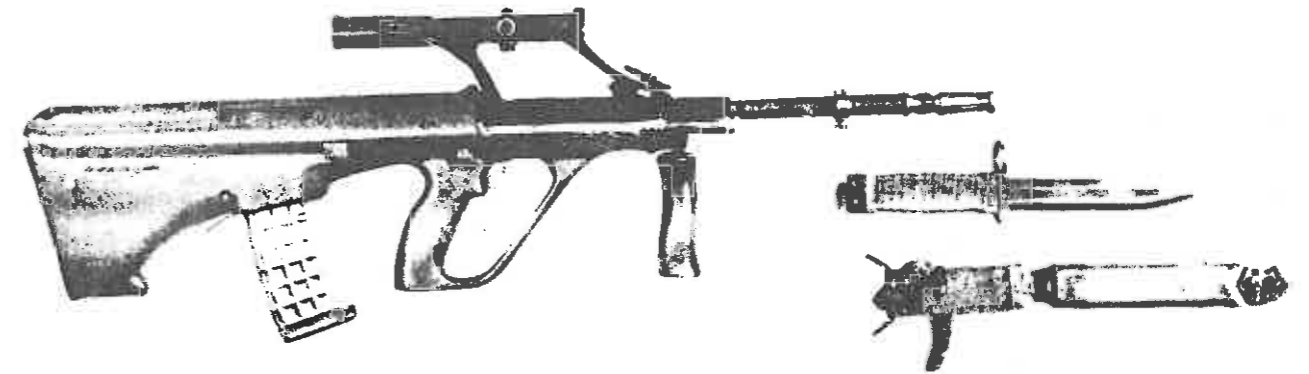
*Colin & Pattie Gould and family would like to sincerely thank all those members who sent messages of support following the loss of our Father, Father-in-law, Grandfather, (Stan) and Mother, Mother-in-law, Grandmother (Betty) in recent months. Special thanks to Joe Fisk, Norm Mundy and Kel Williams for the organisation of a PNGVR funeral service complete with a poppy parade for S/Sgt Stan Gould.*

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Small Arms Used in Queensland - The Steyr AUG Trials Rifle/F88



User trials with the Austrian AUG (Army Universal Gun) were commenced by the Australian Army about 1982 and it has been adopted as the F88. Two barrel lengths were planned - 407mm (16 inches) and 508mm (20 inches) for carbine and assault rifle configurations respectively; the bull-pup style results in a short overall length and reduced weight. A reinforced polymer moulding is used for the buttstock and the folding foregrip may be used as a monopod.

Trials rifles were marked on the right side of the green buttstock, "STEYR-DAIMLER-PUCH AG AUSTRIA" and "AUG/A1" and sling swivels are fitted to the left of the butt and at the front of the carry handle, which houses the sight. This sight has a doughnut reticule although some trials rifles also have four posts; there are three adjustment knobs on the tube, the right one for lateral adjustment, the one underneath for elevation, and the left one for tightening the adjustment screws. A blade and "V" notch on the top of the carrying handle serves as emergency sights.

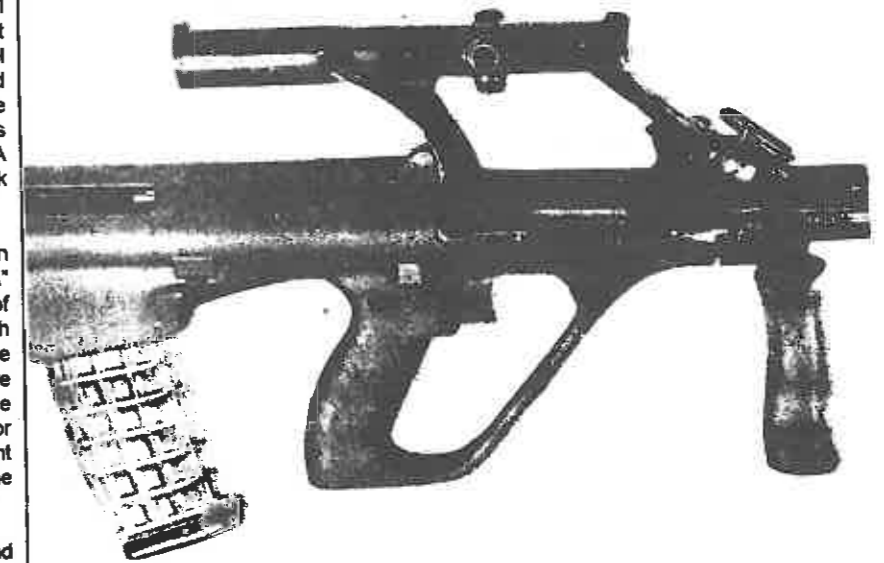
The transverse safety catch is in the pistol grip, and the action take-down latch is forward of the magazine. The repetition or automatic fire option depends upon how far back the trigger is pulled, while the gas nut is mounted forward, with three settings - normal, fouled and single shot (also for grenade launching). The bolt guide rods serve as a cocking lever rod and the gas piston; many parts, including the trigger group, are plastic. The quick-change barrel latch is underneath, behind the foregrip.

The German trials bayonets have a 6.9 inch (175mm approximately) long blade with a saw back and a slot for use with the scabbard as a wirecutter. A green composition material has been utilised for the scabbard and grips and those specimens examined have had no markings on the blade. Some black commercial models appear to have been initially supplied as samples. KCB 77 is the designation of the new bayonet, supplied through Steyr and most likely produced in Germany.

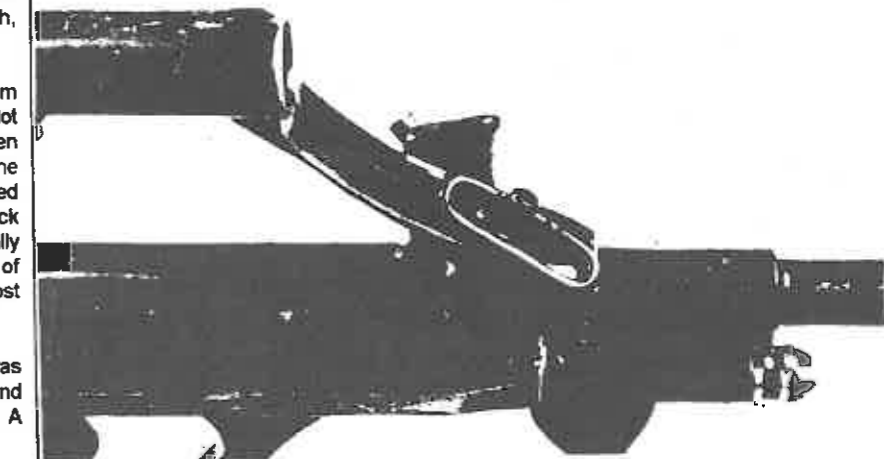
A manufacturing and user trial batch of 500 rifles was produced at the Lithgow Small Arms Factory and proposed orders for the F88 stand at 84,000 units. A New Zealand order has also been supplied.

Some characteristics of the rifle are:

Cartridge	5.56 X 45mm (SS 109)
Action Type	Gas piston operated; selective fire.
Magazine	30 rounds; staggered feed.
Rifling	6 groove right hand twist.
Overall Length	31.5 inches (800mm).
Barrel Length	21.6 inches (550mm) including flash hider.
Backsight	1.5x optical, to 300 metres.



**Close-up of the Action Housing of the AUG A1**  
Note the "bullpup" configuration with the magazine and breech to the rear of the trigger group and the ejection port above the magazine.



**Aluminium Die Cast Receiver Assembly and Gas Adjustment**  
This particular rifle was one of the user trials batch and engraved "AUS 001"

### The Museum Administered by the Society.

Victoria Barracks Museum, Brisbane, is located in Building E4 at the Defence Centre, Petrie Terrace, Brisbane, and is open to the public from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. every Sunday except at Easter or a Sunday that falls on a Christmas/New Year long weekend. The Museum will be opened for group visits at any time by arrangement (contact 07-32334531). Admission is free but donations are gratefully accepted.





Patron: Major General P.R. Phillips, AO, MC

President: Brigadier T. Parslow, RFD, ED, QC

# Victoria Barracks Historical Society, Brisbane

Administering Victoria Barracks Museum, Building E4, Defence Centre, Petrie Terrace, Brisbane, Queensland, and incorporating "A" Battery, Queensland Permanent Artillery, Circa 1896

## Australian Used Machine-Guns and Sub-Machine Guns - The Gatling Gun

The U.S. designed Gatling Gun was Britain's first service machine-gun, approved in December, 1873, as a result of 1867 and 1870 British trials. American historians have distinguished the Gatling Gun models as 1862, 1865, 1871-73, 1874-77, 1879-82, 1883-87, 1889-92 and 1893; the example shown here being classified as the Model 1871. This gun features a stronger and more easily removed breech bolt than previous models, the 240 round Broadwell drum magazine introduced in 1872, and an automatic lateral traverse mechanism to spread the fire. Both .45 and .65 calibre guns were used in British service and the Gatling was not declared obsolete until July, 1905. Gatling guns were manufactured under licence in England by Sir W.G. Armstrong & Co. at Elswick Ordnance Works, Newcastle on Tyne.

This model has the sights mounted on the right side of the frame, consisting of an aperture backsight with pointed post foresight. A variety of mounts was used, which included a trunnion type for fixed defences and on board ships, and field and naval travelling carriages. The Henry rifling was similar to that of the Martini-Henry rifle, and the loaded drum magazine weighed 50 pounds (approximately 22.7 kilograms).

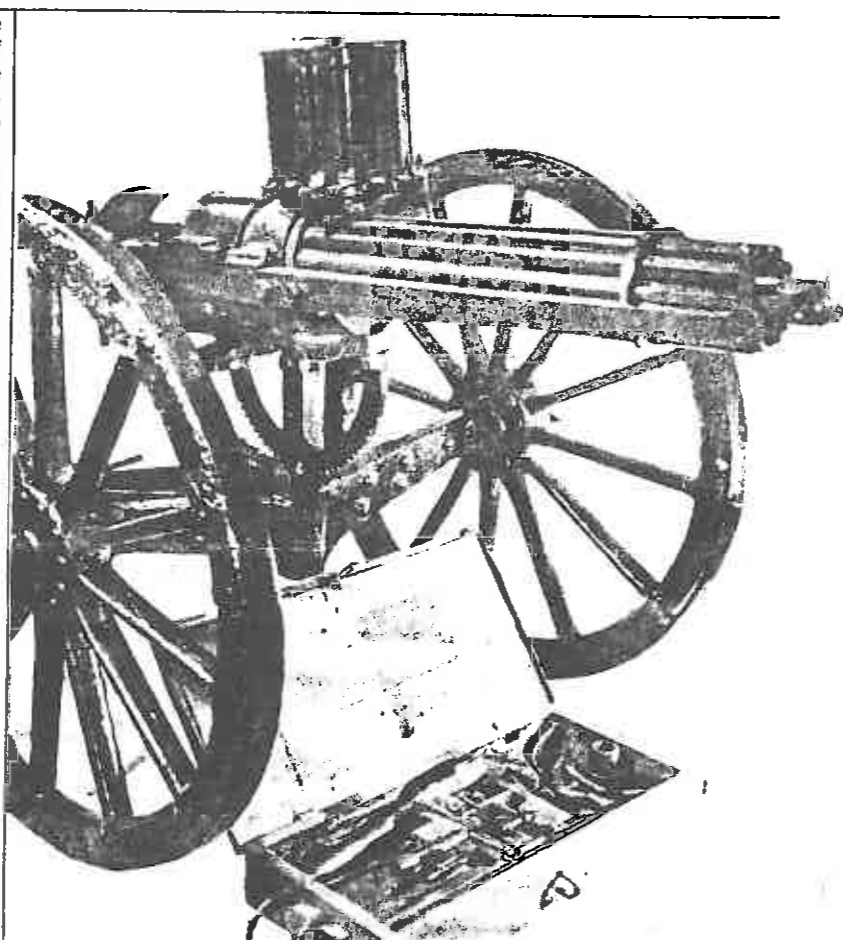
**Method of Operation.** With a loaded magazine attached, the handle on the right side of the gun is cranked, revolving the barrels around the axis along the centre. Each barrel houses a separate bolt assembly at the rear, and in the motion of the barrels rotating, cams alternately cock, fire, then pull the breech bolts to the rear, extracting the spent cartridges. The drum magazine consists of a cluster of 16 vertical magazines, and upon expending the 15 shots in each vertical row, the drum was hand rotated to the next row.

One Gatling gun is listed on the 1898 Queensland Colonial return as with the equipment of the Queensland Marine Defence Force.

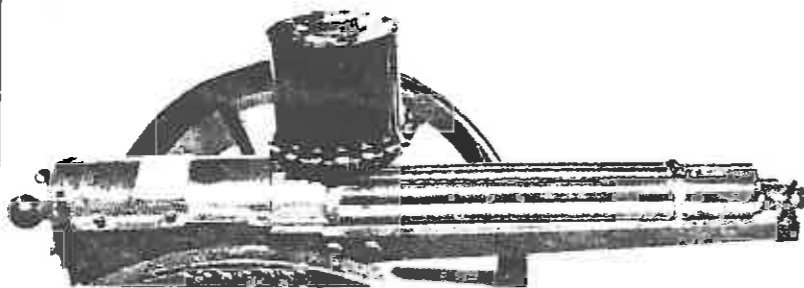
Some characteristics of the Gatling gun are:

Cartridge	.450 inch Gatling, solid drawn case
Operation	Mechanical, hand cranked, with rotating barrels
Cyclic Rate of Fire	Approximately 400-500 rounds per minute
Feed System	240 round Broadwell drum
Number of Barrels	10
Cooling	Air
Mounting	Fixed cone or travelling carriage
Overall Length	59.5 inches (1.510 metres).
Barrel Length	32 inches (813mm)
Barrel Rifling & Twist	7 groove, Henry, right hand twist
Sight Graduations	2,000 yard vertical post backsight
Weight	420 pounds (191 kg) (nominal) with empty drum

Adapted by the Editor "MID" from "100 Years of Australian Service Machine Guns" by I.D. Skennerton, with permission, and available from VBHS-B shop.



The Gatling Gun and Tools



Upper View - With Broadwell Drum Magazine

## NGVR RECOLLECTIONS

### THE NIGHT SALAMAUA DIED

(Continued)

Original article by Mac Morris

Tom Lega, MM. recalls.....

Seventy-one of us, 50 from the 2/5th Independent Coy and 21 from NGVR, left Mubo on June 25 to proceed to Nuk Nuk via Komiatum. "It rained like hell all the afternoon. Our rations and supplies were saturated. We stayed a day and night to dry our gear and pushed onto Butu evacuation camp on June 28. Here we studied some maps and attended lectures, then we split up into parties. Butu was approximately six Km behind Kila, our target, across rough country.

"NGVR scout Jim McAdam, Jim Cavanaugh, Geoff Archer, Jim Currie and Gordon Kinsey led the raiding parties.

On June 29, Lt. Drysdale and his mortar crew moved out first and headed for Logui near the mouth of the 'Frisco' river, where they set up their mortar. "Lt. Kerr's party was to attack the airfield, Cpt Umphelby and Cpt Vinning with Bill O'Neill, were to attack the wireless masts, with another party attacking the road junctions. Lt. O'Loughlen's target was the trade stores at Kila Point with all attacks to commence at 3.15 am.

"Our party was beside the road at 10.00pm. Suddenly the balloon went up at four minutes past three am. A burst of automatic fire triggered it off. "We jumped over the sea wall and raced across the road, shooting the two sentries who stood dumbfounded. We hurled sticky tank grenades, reinforced with a kilo of gun powder, in through the windows and doors of the trade stores. "The blast was so severe it blew us over like nine pins. One can imagine the devastation inside the buildings.

"We charged through the doors shooting everything that moved. We picked up a tommy gun, a rifle and ammunition and pulled out.

"We returned to Butu camp that afternoon and compared reports. We found that we had killed 116 of the enemy.

"We had three casualties; Mal Bishop received a ricochet bullet in the back, Jim Currie a bullet through the wrist, and Alex Garvie a nick across the shin. We reckoned it was a good night's work.

\*\*\*\*\*

1982

*The guns are rusted and silent - now children's playthings.*

*There will be no Remembrance Day among the isolated bush dwellings.*

*The Graves of the dead are overgrown with a tangle of jungle.*

*The huge concrete bank now holds a diesel lighting plant.*

*The wharves, scarred and bullet pocked, are disintegrating.*

*The airfield in only a memory.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Few people will remember the vital growing Port of Salamaua of 1942. It was a casualty of war that bought about the birth of the city of Lae.

Thanks for the Memory  
Of Salamaua shores  
The burning of the stores  
Scrounging Beeps and Carpenters  
Greenwood and Laws.

### HEADSTONE ERROR CORRECTED

In our June '97 issue (Vol.8) members would have noted that the Headstone of NGVR Cpl R H Sutton listed his Unit as the "New Guinea Volunteer Reserve.

The error was passed onto Canberra by this Association and we are pleased to advise that Australian War Graves office has notified us that a new headstone showing Cpl Sutton's correct Unit - New Guinea Volunteer Rifles - will be installed. Our thanks to Australian War Graves for their prompt action.

### ROLL OF HONOUR



#### NEW GUINEA VOLUNTEER RIFLES

In memory of the Members of the NEW GUINEA VOLUNTEER RIFLES who lost their lives during the tragic sinking of the Japanese Naval Prison Ship "Montevideo Mary" off the Philippines coast on 1st July 1942.  
THEY SERVED WITH HONOUR  
LEST WE FORGET  
New Guinea Volunteer Rifles and  
Papua New Guinea Volunteer Rifles  
Ex Members Assocn. Inc.

"COURIER - MAIL"  
Queensland  
1 July 1997

## OLD PHOTO IDENTIFIED.....

By Tom Lega,MM

At the Executive Committee Meeting Ipswich in September 1997, I was handed a photograph of unknown origin and asked if I recognised anyone in the photo. "No trouble" I said, I could name all the members of this NGVR group.

Back Row L to R  
L E Ashton  
Sir Coleman  
O'Loghlen  
Tom Lega  
Bob Jenkins  
Roy Napier  
Syd Burns  
Front Row L to R  
Arch Grahame  
Brian Fraser  
Len Lyons



Wau 1942

The photo was taken in Wau 1942 where we were resting up after the battles of Salamaua and Mubo. We had not had any substantial food between March and June 1942, as not enough food had been coming over the Bulldog track. Airdrops from DC3's were just coming into their own, but the drops were "freefall" and most of the supplies were damaged or blown away in the aircraft's slipstream and lost in the surrounding jungle.

A summary of the men involved is as follows:-

- ◊ L E ASHTON- Platoon Sergeant. Rose to rank of Major and led patrols behind enemy lines, two patrols of which got right into Wewak.
- ◊ Sir Coleman O'LOGHLEN-Platoon Commander. A good soldier who wishes he could have done more.
- ◊ Tom LEGA- Section Leader. An ordinary run of the mill soldier. (Rose to the rank of Lt. and awarded the Military Medal. Ed.)
- ◊ Bob JENKINS- Another good soldier who

wanted to achieve more during his service.

- ◊ Roy NAPIER- a hard wiry soldier who could keep up with the best of them.
- ◊ Syd BURNS- A former Bank officer with the Bank of NSW. Found it a bit difficult at first with the hardships of bush life, but came through with flying colours. A good soldier.
- ◊ Arch GRAHAME- a hard but jovial section leader. He had a mate Don McDonald and we called them "A & D"
- ◊ Brian FRASER- A brave young lad of 19 years old. I think he was the third youngest member of the NGVR. Brian had keen ambitions and transferred to the RAAF. He was shot down over Germany later in the war and killed.
- ◊ Len "Tiger" LYONS- A section leader who did a lot of good work in behind Salamaua. I think that today there are only three or four of this original group still alive. (Photo courtesy of Stewart Lewis)

## NEXT ISSUE

In the next issue of HARIM TOK TOK, there will be an article titled "TRUE TO THEIR TRADITIONS" by C F Coady written in the mid 1960's. The introduction to the article is as follows:-

*As keeper of the Written Records at the Australian War Memorial, Mr C F Coady is familiar with much of the lesser-known history of Australian Forces in wartime. Here he summarises the remarkable work of the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles during the first years of the New Guinea campaign.*

## 1997 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

PRESIDENT: Col.Harry GREEN.MBE.ED.EM.  
SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT: Mr Tom LEGA.MM. (NGVR)  
JUNIOR VICE-PRESIDENT: Mr Stewart LEWIS  
SECRETARY: Mr Col GOULD.JP(Qual).AFAIM  
A/SECRETARY: Mr Bruce CRAWFORD  
TREASURER: Mr George BAGAJLUK  
A/TREASURER: Mr Bob COLLINS  
WELFARE OFFICER: Mr Bill BICKERTON  
MEMBERS REPS: Mr Joe FISK ,RFM.,EM.  
Mr Norm MUNDY,RFM.  
HON. SOLICITOR: Mr Burce CRAWFORD  
HISTORIC OFFICER: Mr John HOLLAND  
A/HISTORIC OFFICER: Mr Tom DOWLING



Colonel Green discusses Association activities with the PNG Brisbane Consulate-General's Education Advisor Mr Patilial Pital at the 1997 AGM - 1 Training Group Sergeants Mess - Wacol .  
(Photo: Tom Dowling)



## FRANGIPANI BALL 1997

Proudly Sponsored by Air Niugini

Who was the Member who won one of the Ball raffles- a \$20 voucher for "Beauty Treatment"???? Read on. The 1997 Frangipani Ball was held on the 8 November at the recently extended East Rugby League Club, Coorparoo. 15 members and their partners/guests attend the function - Colonel H Green,MBE.,ED.,EM.: Ms Nicola Green: Karen Bickerton: Col & Pattie Gould: Joe & Val Fisk: Norm Mundy: Barry & Pam Wright: Bob Collins

and guest: John Holland: Col Newton & guest. John Holland again performed his "Magic" with partitions and compiled and presented a fantastic photographic display of civilian and military history of Rabaul - the Ball was dedicated to former residents of Rabaul - from the "German Occupation" to the "1994 eruption. During the evening our members were successful in taking away a number of prizes. Bob Collins won the return trip for 2 to Hong Kong courtesy of Air Niugini. Nicola Green and Pattie Gould each won a carton of SP. The \$20 BEAUTY TREATMENT was won by, yes, WO1 Norm Mundy. A number of suggestions were made as to how Norm could best utilise his prize, but he did not take up any of the offers. I am sure that Norm would welcome any suggestions from our Members so that he may extract maximum value from his prize.

## PATRON SIR DENNIS BUCHANAN,KT.B.,MBE., & FLIGHT-WEST AIRLINES

(Re-produced with the kind permission of the "Courier-Mail" )

Bobby Gibbes was a very proud old fighter pilot recently when a former employee and long-time friend delivered the ultimate aviation accolade.

Mr Gibbes's name now graces the side of FLIGHT WEST AIRLINES' new Fokker F-28 - the airlines first jet- after owner Sir Dennis Buchanan decided to recognise his friend of 50 years.

"It's quite terrific," said Mr Gibbes, who at 81 still flies a twin-engined home made aerobatics aircraft. A delighted Mr Gibbes christened the aircraft with champagne after an impromptu slug from the bottle. Mr Gibbes, who with his wife Jean founded Gibbes Sepik Airways in 1947, and gave Sir Dennis his first job as a 17-year-old.

The Association wishes Sir Dennis every success with his new Aircraft.



THAT jet has my name written all over it... Wing Commander R.H. "Bobby" Gibbes, left, checks out the Fokker F-28 which bears his name with long-time friend Dennis Buchanan. Photo: DEREK MOO



## P.N.G.V.R HISTORY

The Shield of "Military Excellence" is presented each year to a soldier below the rank of Sergeant in 31 RQR, and is an initiative of the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles and Papua New Guinea Volunteer Rifles Ex Members Association Inc. Our aim is to maintain the strong ties that have existed between our respective Units since the second world war. and to reward a soldier of the Unit in consideration of his or her efforts in military skills, attitude, initiative and attendance.

A perpetual plaque which is inscribed each year is held in the trophy cabinet in the Drill Hall in Townsville. The successful soldier also receives an individual plaque.

The Commanding Officer, Lt.Col., Steve Graw advised that there is tremendous enthusiasm amongst the soldiers of the Unit and the Association's award is hotly contested.

The 1997 Shield of Military Excellence award was won by LCpl Brook Hastie and judging by the response on the night, this was a popular result. It was also our pleasure to meet with previous winners - Lcpl (now 2Lt) Mark Hastie (Brook's brother) and Cpl Hal Tucker.

The occasion was marked with a "Black Tie Ball" and it was our honour to be seated at the CO's table with Brig. & Mrs Weeks, Lt.Col. & Mrs Graw and the RSM and his wife.

Our party from Brisbane was accommodated at the Mt. Stuart Officers Mess and was provided with a driver and vehicle. We were made extremely welcome and our sincere thanks go to Lt.Col., Graw and the Officers and Members of 31 RQR.

Finally a special vote of thanks to our Patron, Sir Dennis Buchanan, Kt.B., MBE., and FLIGHT-WEST AIRLINES who, once again, made it possible for the Association to be represented in Townsville.

### MEDALS AWARDED

(By Joe Fisk -Members Representative)



In 1996, PNG Medals were awarded to the family of the late Major Ken Newton in recognition of his service to the Papua New Guinea Volunteer Rifles and to the people of Papua New Guinea.

Accompanied by Peter Rogers, DFC., and Jim Cattermole, we drove from Brisbane to the Newton Homestead just inland from Gympie.

On arrival we were greeted by Patricia Newton and her daughter who made us very welcome and proceeded to show us through the property. During afternoon tea we discussed the "old times" in PNG. Pat and Belinda kept disappearing during the afternoon, the reason becoming apparent when dinner was served. Pat and Belinda had prepared a delicious evening meal with a great variety of dishes - Pat has not lost her touch in the family kitchen.

The remainder of the Newton clan had arrived late afternoon, and we retired to prepare for the formal part of the evening.

The Medal presentation was made by myself with Peter assisted by Jim, presenting the medal parchments.

Following speeches and official toasts we settled down to a cosy family evening in the country.

Next morning we awoke to the aromas of a country style breakfast from the kitchen. Following a photo session we said our farewells and departed for Brisbane.

On behalf of the Association we would like to extend special thanks to the Newton family for their kind hospitality.

### 1997 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

34 Members attended the AGM held at the 1 Trg Gp Sergeants Mess, Wacol on the 27 September. Comradeship and an excellent buffet dinner made for a very successful evening. Ken Hitchcock (Scotland) and Bruce Inch (NSW) kindly donated sufficient funds to ensure an ample supply of excellent Port for the official toasts. Thanks Ken & Bruce.

Six members (including one good snorer) overnighed in

one of the Barracks kindly made available to us.

There was no "lie-in" on Sunday morning - the 150 recruits in residence made sure we were quickly returned to the land of the living at 0530 hours as they formed up for their morning PT and respective drill and messing parades. WO1's Joe Fisk and Norm Mundy were in their element.

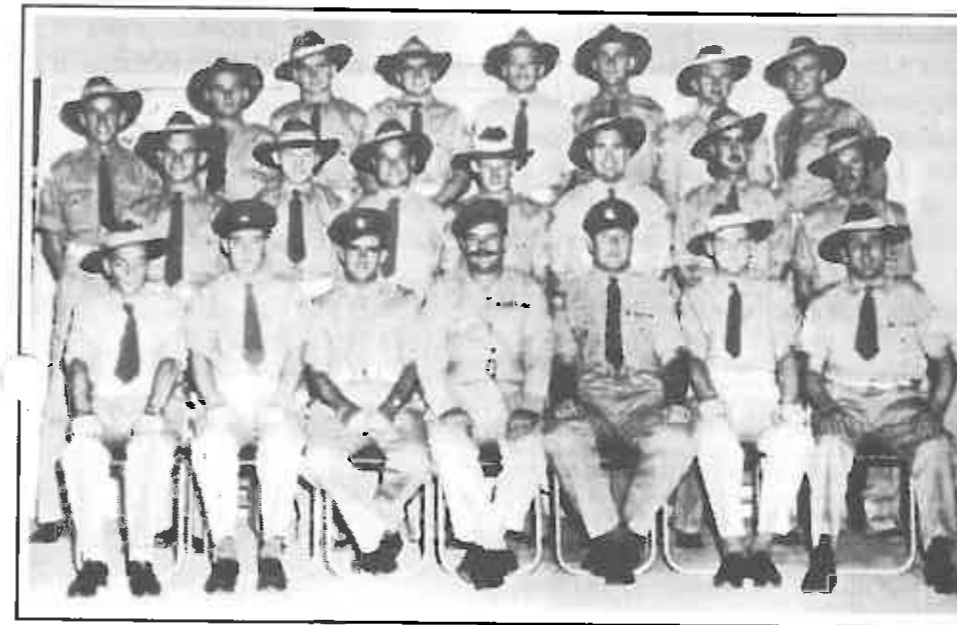
Our thanks to the Sergeants Mess Committee, Bar and Catering staff who made our annual gathering a success.



ELA BEACH RSL early 50's

(From L) Unknown  
Jim Dutton  
Lt Bill Kerr  
Unknown

Photo: Jim Dutton, QPM



B Coy Mid 50's

Back: L Roy Proud: Tex Edwards: Unkn: Geoff Smyth: Lloyd Massall: Bill Simpson: Dutchy Holland: Tom Nunan. Middle: Unkn: Unkn: Rex Williamson: Unkn ? Anderson: Unkn: Unkn: Front: Jim Moody: Unkn: Lt Jack Dowling: Maj Don Barrett: Lt Frank Hocter: Murray Westmore: Unkn.

### 1955-56 : A couple of Memories

By Colonel J Burns.

In early 1955 I was appointed Adjutant and Quartermaster PNGVR. At the time the policy was for ARA Officers to remain in PNG for normally no longer than 2 years, and, as I had already been with PIR for 1 year, this meant that I was only to spend 12 months in my new appointment. Although far too short, that period with the PNGVR was among the more interesting and enjoyable I experienced during my time in the Army. A notable event a few days before I was to join PNGVR was the destruction by fire of the Battalion Q-Store and armoury at Murray Barracks. I was given the task of investigating the cause of the fire - ascertaining the details and value of stores destroyed or damaged in the fire, and reporting on umpteen other matters as is normal when conducting such an investigation.

## ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES

A corporal storeman had discovered the fire and part of his interview went like this:-

Q: What did you do when you saw the Q-Store on fire?

A: I obeyed "fire orders" - I shouted fire and kept shouting fire.

Q: Did you do anything else ?

A: I ran to the Mess and told the RQMS who was having his lunch - he said I had to go back to the Q-Store and throw the ledgers and all other records on the fire.

Later the RQMS explained that the storeman was well known for his practical jokes and he thought that this was another one of his pranks. This part of the interview did not appear in the final report.

We had no easy way of determining exactly what had been destroyed as we had no records of what our stocks had been. Eventually Northern Command in Brisbane provided details of weapons and other important items.

Against this we confirmed our holdings at Rabaul, Lae, Madang and Samarai and arrived at figures of what we should have had in Port Moresby.

In the meantime we had sifted through the ashes and recovered those items still serviceable or repairable. The remaining stock, and there was a good quantity, were put aside pending disposal instructions. We appealed in Routine Orders for those members who had items on loan to provide details- most did but there were a few on leave down south, and were unaware of our problems. Only when they returned did we recover compasses and other controlled stores which had already been written off as destroyed in the fire. Whereas most units report "lost" items, for quite a while we were reporting "finds".

One of the training aids we lacked was a decent blackboard. (another victim of the fire). One of our members produced plans for a *Superboard* incorporating boards connected by ropes and pulleys enabling any two boards to be used at one time. We approached the Garrison Engineer and Public Works to have our super board built but were informed it would cost so much that it would have to be included on next year's works budget.

The problem was quickly solved by Unit members who had an unscheduled and unpaid weekend parade, and by midday Sunday we had our *super blackboard*.

It cost nothing, the labour was voluntary, and the materials donated and no questions were asked. A good example of self help by the PNGVR. Months later when a team of Officers from Northern Command visited PNG to check on admin and Q-Store matters I was reprimanded because the blackboard had not been formally "approved" and had not been recorded on the assets register -an example of red-tape bureaucracy at its best.

In February 1956 my time in PNG was up and I was posted as Adjutant to a CMF Unit in Adelaide. This was a fine Unit with a great history but to me its members seemed more conservative and less self-reliant than those soldiers I'd met in PNGVR. It was only then that I realised how unique PNGVR was in the CMF and how fortunate I'd been to have served in it.

Almost forty years later, and after many other appointments including one as the ARA GSO 1 of a CMF Division, I still hold that opinion of the PNGVR.



(Left) Mortar shoot - Lae 1950's. Note shell in flight top right of photo and ample stock of ammo on the beach at the left.

Photo: Brian Crane.

### THANKS

The Association's Historic Officer would like to thank all those members who have sent in valuable and historic photos, books and other Unit items for displays and the newsletter.

Your generous support enables the Association to put on display the history of the NGVR and PNGVR at functions such as Anzac Day, and recently, the Brisbane "Frangipani Ball."

If you have any interesting stories of your time in the NGVR or PNGVR please put it in writing so that it may be shared with all members and, more importantly, kept as a valuable record of our Regiment's unique history.

### MILITARY EXCELLENCE AWARD 9TH BATTALION THE ROYAL QUEENSLAND REGIMENT 1996

In 1996, the Association presented its first Award for "Military Excellence" to 9 RQR in Brisbane.

Nine members of the Association together with Member Major George Bagajluk, acknowledged the Military skills of A Section, Pioneer Platoon, Support Coy in the Battalion's annual "STEEL TUFF" COMPETITION.

Each member of the winning section was presented with an attractive medallion featuring the badges of the PNGVR and 9 RQR. Major Bagajluk said that competition within the Battalion during "STEEL TUFF" was extremely keen, and the Unit greatly appreciated the interest and support shown by the Association in encouraging today's young soldiers to excel at their military training.

A Section consisted of:- Cpl N P Kane; LCpl A D Maric; Pte D Fearn; Pte S J Carey; Pte B M Westphal; Pte L S McWaters; Pte G Sullivan; Pte J Munro and Pte A W McLoughlin.

We were privileged to be able to watch the Unit go through their various training exercises at Greenbank and on the firing range with the 5.56mm Steyr and the 5.56mm light machine gun. Sorry but there was not a 303 or SLR in sight. Nevertheless, it was a most successful day.

Lt Col. R N McNab, RFD Commanding Officer 9 RQR wrote to Colonel Green after the presentation:-

*On behalf of 9th Battalion may I express my sincere thanks to you and your Association for the support given to our annual 'Steel Tuff' Competition. The medallions presented to Corporal Kane and his section magnificently reflected their achievement and military excellence. We are honoured to accept your support in this way and look forward to seeing you again next year.*

NEXT ISSUE : The History of 9 th Battalion - The Royal Queensland Regiment.

### SHIELD OF MILITARY EXCELLENCE 31 BATTALION - (KENNEDY REGIMENT) THE ROYAL QUEENSLAND REGIMENT 1997

(by Bill Bickerton)

Once again it was our privilege to present our Association's Shield of "Military Excellence" to a soldier of 31 RQR (The Kennedy Regiment) in Townsville.

The 1997 award was made at the annual Birthday Ball of the Battalion at Jezzine Barracks, Townsville on Saturday 25 October. Representing the Association were:- Bill Bickerton, Bruce Crawford, Ed Hardy and Barry Wright.



Above: Association member, Col Hall, congratulates one of the soldiers of the winning Section. Dave Harris (R) looks on. Other Members present were Colonel H Green, Col Gould, B Wright, J Chee, E Hardy, T Dowling, J Fisk.