

## PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at this year's Anzac Day march in Brisbane. NGVR/PNGVR is in position 62 behind 3RAR and in front of PIB/NGIB/HQ PIR; the march will commence 10am with the Navy leading followed by Army and Air Force.

We will form-up on the corner of George & Mary Streets no later than 10am;look for our banner. The parade information tent will be in Queen's Park on junction of Elizabeth & George Streets with parade volunteers wearing red. Please note that descendants of veterans of all conflicts are to form up in position 126 in William Street.

Due to the increasing demand, those who require jeep/buggy transport were required to submit their application by a date long gone. If you have yet to apply but need a jeep, contact Paul Brown 0402 644 181 or Colin Gould 0424 562 030 immediately. Those who require personal assistance may be accompanied so please also advise the name of same when applying. Please get your request in urgently.

Our post-march reunion will be held at the usual place, the Stock Exchange Hotel on the corner of Edward & Charlotte Streets Brisbane from 11am. Admission is \$15 pp for finger food with a cash bar. There will be no NGVR Memorial Service at the Shrine this year due to lack of attendance last year.

Prior to Anzac Day, an A Company reunion will be held in Caloundra RSL at 11am Tuesday 23 April, see page 14 for details and/or contact Les MacAndrew 07 3824 4927.

The 7th September 2019 is the 80th Anniversary of the formation of NGVR. There will be a commemorative Day held at our Wacol premises which will comprise a memorial service in the Chapel, a couple of short talks from authoritative speakers and luncheon. Other events will be arranged on the days prior and after the 7th so a full weekend of entertainment makes it a worthy time to visit

the fair city of Brisbane. Please diarise the date and begin planning your visit and details will be released as they come to hand. If you intend to come, an early note of intent would be appreciated to give us some idea of numbers, see notice on page 14.

Maj R Harvey-Hall recently advised me of the death of Lt K C Jones 2189389 on 12th October 2019. His son Morris said his father expressly instructed not to have his eulogy published. On behalf of our Association I passed on our condolences to Morris and family. As I could not remember Ken, I checked our PNGVR History book where his details are briefly recorded. Ken served his National Service in 13 NS Bn and in 1960 transferred from UNSWR as a Sgt to C Company, Goroka, PNGVR having qualified for his first appointment in Australia . He worked at Goroka as a Traffic Officer with Ansett Mandated Airlines. In 1961 he was promoted to Lt (prob)and transferred to A Company,Lae in 1962 where he remained through to 1966, after which there is no further mention of him.

Bill Bickerton from Manjimup WA was a recent unexpected visitor to Queensland. He was visiting family but also attended our 23 February committee meeting at the Museum. Bill was surprised at and appreciative of the quality of our Museum and the work being done on

behalf of the members. Bill is a very active volunteer in his own area including the RSL.

Also in attendance was Maj Bruce Johnson whose mobility is hampered somewhat since he was grounded from riding his electric scooters. An enjoyable post-meeting bar-b-que was very ably handled by Peter Rogers Jnr, thank you Peter.

Although not recently published, another interesting book recommended is "Nuts to You" by Robert Stuart, a planter on Bougainville from 1925 to 1968. He was not a coast watcher but stayed on after the Japanese invasion until evacuated by submarine. Although sought by ANGAU and AIB, he enlisted as an advisor with the US Forces and assisted them in Bougainville, similarly as ANGAU men with the Australian Forces. He was awarded a well deserved MC. The book is well written and is of general historical interest as well as military. I will endeavour to write a review for the next Harim Tok Tok.

**Phil Ainsworth, March 2019**

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

PETER RYAN	ANGAU	2
GOV GEN'S SWORD		4
AUSSIES UNDER FIRE		4
SERENITY IN PUSAN		6
AK SHOTGUN TO INDONESIA		7
BURNS PHILP	S.S. 'MORINDA'	7
SR. BERNICE TWOHILL		7
WILLYS JEEP		10
ROSEMARY ON ANZAC DAY		10
MANUS NAVY BADSE UPGRADE		10
KIOWAS LAST FLIGHT		11
PEARL HARBOUR SURVIVOR		11
MUSEUM PRESENTATION		12
DEFENCE VETS COVENANT		12
HAWKEI ELECTRICS		13
NAT'L S'MENS DAY	WACOL	13
BURNS PHILP SHIPS		14
NOTIFICATIONS		14/16
VALE NOTICES		15



Annual Camp, Igam Barracks 1970  
 Front row L-R Sgt Zimmerman, Sgt Atkinson, Sgt Ahmat  
 Rear row L-R CSM Barlow, Maj Kelly, Capt Hansford  
 ('A' Coy was short of officers so Sgts acted as Platoon Commanders)

## *Fear Drive my Feet.*

### *Peter Ryan's War in New Guinea in WW2*

By Alistair Pope

#### Prescript

I first read Peter Ryan's book, 'Fear Drive My Feet' in the mid-1970's while on secondment from the Australian Army and serving with the Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF). This was thirty years after the end of the WW2 fighting in PNG and just as the last of the PNG veterans that Peter would have known were finally retiring.

Many years later I bought my second copy of his memoir and found it as just fascinating and evocative of the sights, scenes and smells of PNG as I had the first time. Although Peter lived just a few kilometres from me I could not think of a good reason to knock on his door, introduce myself and shake his hand. When I did find an intermediary it was too late as Peter was in terminal decline and was not receiving visiting strangers. Peter died less than three months later on 23rd December 2015. I felt I had lost an opportunity to meet a real soldier, a true Australian character and an admirable man.

#### Preparation and Planning ...

On completing his basic training 18-year-old Private Peter Ryan was promoted to Warrant Officer and posted to Port Moresby to join 'M Force' of the Australian Intelligence Bureau (AIB), an intelligence gathering operation comprised of remarkable individuals operating alone or in pairs deep inside Japanese controlled territory. They were spread throughout the mountains of the Huon Peninsula overlooking the main Japanese base at Lae in northern New Guinea and at various strategic points along the coast. One possible flaw in the plan to send Peter into this hinterland was that he had never been to either Papua or New Guinea (the two parts of what is now Papua New Guinea were separate administrative areas in those days). His main qualification for the job was that his father had taught him to speak some of the native language of Pidgin English while he was growing up in Australia!

In 1942 Australia's Defences were in a parlous state: most of New Guinea had been lost to the invaders and only a few combat ready Australian units were available to stop either an amphibious landing on the Papuan south coast or a land invasion of Port Moresby over the Owen Stanley Ranges. Knowledge of Japanese dispositions, capabilities and preparations for further operations were of vital importance if the available troops were to be deployed effectively.

After a short induction briefing, Peter (around August 1942) was sent forward to work with an already legendary figure, Jock McLeod who was operating alone in the mountains behind Lae. However, there were a few problems with this deskbound plan: Peter was despatched with insufficient rations for the journey, given a damaged rifle and a pistol with only ten rounds. It was clear the military hierarchy did not expect him to survive, so there was little point in providing him with valuable scarce resources.

Yet these were minor matters compared to the real issues. He had no radio with which to communicate information obtained, no map and no compass by which to navigate to an unknown destination in unmapped territory as nobody actually knew where Jock was. To help him, Peter was 'supported' by a native police-boy who knew nothing of the country into which they were venturing. He also had some natural concerns about the patrolling activities of the Japa-



nese soldiers spread around various bases in his proposed area of operations. With a broad brush plan like that, what could go wrong and how could he fail?

With the optimism of callow youth, Peter set off to find the forward Australian Commando camp, cross the massive Markham River, then search the immense Huon Peninsula for the elusive Jock.

Fortunately, there is an amazing 'bush telegraph' between the mountain villages with information on every happening being passed by travellers on

every conceivable subject, particularly the movement of strangers. Having stocked up on supplies and trade goods Peter crossed the Markham into the unknown. Two days later he entered the village of Bivoro and found Les Williams resting while he recovered from a malarial fever. Once Les recovered they moved deeper into the mountains to locate Jock said to be at a village called Gain. The news received there was not good as Ian Downs, a Coastwatcher reconnoitring amphibious landing beaches on the North Coast had been betrayed and had only just escaped after several very close calls. He had been injured crossing a river, but refused to leave for treatment. Also, the hoped for meeting with Jock at Gain was not to be as he had moved a further four days walk away. The chase continued with two more failures to meet before Peter finally caught up with his leader. After such a long chase they parted the next day as Jock was intending to cross the formidable 12,000 foot high (3,900m) Surawaged Ranges to reconnoitre the North Coast and needed all their supplies.

Peter returned to the forward base, replenished his supplies and retraced his steps into the barely known mountains, this time with a handwritten map. Having reached the friendly Wain country Peter moved about from village to village gathering news and information about the Japanese activities. Apart from trading such valuable commodities as newspaper (which the natives prized for making much-coveted cigarettes from local tobacco), salt and razor blades, one of Peter's tasks was to dispense rudimentary medical aid to cure such tropical diseases such as ulcers caused by yaws, hookworm and assorted wounds. This aid would ensure a steady flow of assistance and information.

This was a passive way of gathering information, but Peter was also active. On one occasion, with two police-boys, he penetrated right to the edge of the Japanese Base at Lae and interviewed Chinese internees about Japanese operations. He escaped back to his mountain lair before the Japanese found out. When they did, they were so angry that they posted a reward for his capture of two cases of meat and £5 (about \$50 in today's currency). Naturally, his fellow spies sardonically threatened to turn him over for the reward by saying a case of meat was worth more than he was. Unfortunately, the valuable intelligence he had obtained on hidden targets would take 3-4 days to reach the air force Command Centre in Port Moresby as the Army hierarchy still refused to give them a radio!

Peter had now spent more than a year in these mountain villages. From his position he could often observe Japanese activities at their main base at Lae and their airfield at Nadzab. Apart from Peter, there were about a dozen of other intrepid 'explorers' crisscrossing the mountain tracks, carefully observing, but avoid-

ing the increasingly active Japanese patrols intruding ever deeper into the mountains. Some of the New Guinean clansmen began to come to the conclusion that the Japanese were here to stay and that it was time to change allegiances. The level of danger as a result of betrayal had markedly increased. On one occasion, Peter and his patrol partner, Captain Les Howlett were traversing a high mountain track when shots from a Japanese patrol on another track several hundred feet below interrupted their journey. They reported the incident and that the enemy were heading for the operational zone of Harry Lumb, another lone operator in the Kaiapit area. Harry was a long-term resident of New Guinea that Peter had met a few weeks before as Lumb was passing through on his way to Kaiapit.

As movement between villages was becoming very difficult, information was harder to obtain and their operational value was diminishing in inverse proportion to the increasing risks. The situation was resolved when a message was received that the experienced Harry Lumb had been betrayed by the natives in the village of Ofofragen and killed by a Japanese patrol. Apparently Harry had not been warned of the advancing Japanese patrol by the AIB! Their orders were now to evade and escape by whatever means and route they thought best. No support was available. They were on their own a hundred miles from safety in an increasingly unfriendly and dangerous environment.

Having weighed the options, Les, Peter, their police-boys and carriers took the longest route to go around the most likely occupied areas. This would require crossing two 3,500m+ mountain ranges, the Surawaged and the Finisterre Ranges. Just crossing both of these would be an achievement, but then they still had to pass through more Japanese controlled territory before finally reaching and crossing the mighty Markham River to relative safety. The journey was the most difficult they ever made in a country in which the minimum rating for an average track is 'difficult'. Finally, they cleared the mountains and entered the village of Ewok on a tributary river of the Markham.

At Ewok, they paid off the carriers by giving them most of their remaining gear as Peter, Les and their police boys were now on the last long leg of their run to safety. Peter was now barefoot and wearing the few rags that remained of his rotted uniform. Unfortunately, the news at Ewok was bad as it appeared that Japanese patrols were everywhere, but their exact locations were uncertain. The decision was made to move as fast as possible before news of their presence reached their enemies. This resulted in a 28-hour forced march by day and night, which took them under half way to their destination of Chisavang Village. From there it was a further short step of a few hours walk to the Markham River crossing. They also discovered that another lone 'escapee' from the north coast, the wounded Captain Basil Fairfax-Ross had passed through only two days before. The next morning their party set off for Chisavang.

At Chisavang they became suspicious of the natives' uncooperative behaviour but after a short reconnaissance they moved into the village. They were met with a burst of machine gun and rifle fire. Captain Howlett was shot and wounded. With bullets clipping the grass around him, Peter jumped into a stream, losing his Owen gun and most of his shirt before escaping into the long Kunai grass on the far side. He did not go far, but dived into a stinking pig-wallow and buried himself in the mud up to his nose. He heard the voices of the Japanese and the squelch of their boots as they hunted for him. He lay there for another half an hour then he heard natives calling out that the Japanese had left. Fortunately he ignored them as he soon also heard Japanese voices. He waited until nightfall before moving off nearly naked in the direction of the Markham River. Despite his best efforts he could not reach the Markham in the darkness, but spent another mosquito infested night in the bush. At noon the next day he finally crossed the river and later that day reached the forward outpost at Kirkland's Camp (manned by the NGVR).

In one of those instances of mindless black humour, when the ragged Peter reached Bulolo the quartermaster refused to issue him with a new uniform because he had lost his paybook! It required the intervention of a senior officer to countermand the rigidities of the bureaucratic mind.

### A Better Way of War ...

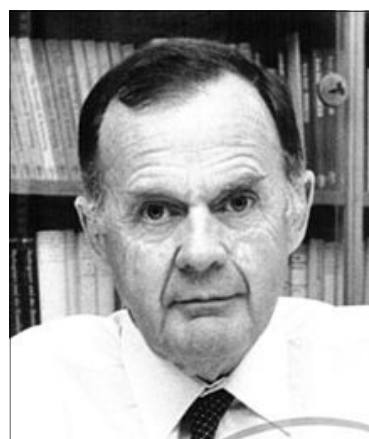
One would think that this is where Peter Ryan's war should end, but there was more to do. Peter was given the assignment of observing an undefended 20-mile (32km) stretch of the Markham between two new airfields constructed by American Army engineers. Just as he was about to set out an American, Tex Frazier asked if he could come along. Peter reluctantly agreed, but it was a decision that produced amazing results. As usual, the Australian Army could not spare a radio, so reports still had to be sent back by courier. Tex found this bewildering, so he had the natives cut a short airstrip out of the bush then returned to Bulolo where he obtained a Piper Cub and flew in it back to their base. Peter remained for several more months assisting with the organisation of native carriers and helping Tex build his airstrips. Although he had no more close encounters, Peter saw much of the death and destruction of war as the Australians and Americans advanced, often leaving their dead foes unburied as there was no time to stop the war for such niceties. Eventually, the tropical diseases, fevers and his wasted body caught up on him and Peter was evacuated to Port Moresby and then to Australia. At 20-years old his war was over. For his work he was awarded the Military Medal (MM) and was Mentioned in Dispatches (MiD).

### Epilogue

The war went on and order must be maintained. Tuya, the native from Chivasing Village who had betrayed and then murdered the wounded Captain Howlett was publically hanged at Lae in February 1944.

Peter never forgot the police-boys and village natives who had helped him survive his private war and often returned to PNG to meet and support them. He raised money for schools (and has one named after him).

The final unique twist came during one of his visits 41 years after the end of his war and was recorded in one of his weekly newspaper columns. On one of his visits to PNG he noticed a group of Japanese dining at another table in his hotel conversing in Pidgin English ('Tok Pisin'. He introduced himself as he guessed they were Japanese war veterans. He told them about his war in the mountains. They explained they were members of a signals platoon whose job it was to intercept the radio calls from these spies and send patrols to their location to eliminate them. One mentioned a particularly elusive call sign who



always successfully evaded them. Peter replied "Em mi tasol!" The former enemies roared with laughter and as old soldiers do, they shared many a whiskey together as they reminisced about a brutal war now firmly in their pasts.

The character of Peter Ryan was forged in the horrors, degradation and losses of war but he survived and



emerged a better person than he could ever have been had he lived a more routine life. Peter was self-reliant, principled, trustworthy, willing to sacrifice everything and the embodiment of the best of the Australians' of his era. Australia has changed and there are few who are like him today, yet we will need his kind again.

**Alistair Pope retired from the Australian Army in 1986 as a Lt Col. He works internationally as a project management consultant.**



Above. Capt Alistair Pope in PNGDF uniform

L. Two week patrol in the Owen Stanley Ranges.

At my age "getting lucky" means finding my car in the shopping centre car park.

### THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S SWORD

The ceremonial sword carried by the Under Officer commanding the Sovereign's Company at the Royal Military College, Duntroon, was presented to the college by the then Governor-General, Sir Ninian Stephen, in 1988.

It was presented as a farewell gift on the occasion of the final parade he reviewed in his capacity as Governor-General.

*WOI C.J. Jobson, former RSM Ceremonial and Protocol, ADF.*

### AUSSIES UNDER FIRE "LIKE RAIN ON WATER" IN AFGHAN AMBUSH

On 26 August 2008, 1 Troop SASR, made up of four six-man patrols, flew 80km to American Forward Operating Base Anaconda near Khas Uruzghan intent on finding a Taliban leader they thought was in the area.

No sooner were they on the ground than intelligence came in that their target had been spotted elsewhere – and the Aussies were stuck at Anaconda for several days waiting for a return flight. Rather than kick back and relax, however, the Aussies asked their American hosts if there was anything they could do to help. Among those Aussies was SAS team leader Sergeant Troy Simmonds.

In truly understated Aussie fashion, Sergeant Troy Simmonds, a veteran of Somalia, East Timor and Iraq, recalls asking the soldiers from the American 7<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group, "We're here for a couple of days – where's your hot spots?" "Well, we have these two valleys we can't get into," came the reply.

Up for anything, the Aussies said, "We'll have a go at them – make ourselves useful while we're here".

So, 'a plan was hatched' Sergeant Simmonds says. The

plan would see a sniper patrol clandestinely sent out on foot under cover of darkness to reconnoitre and set up an ambush and wait for a vehicle patrol that would overtly go out the next day As planned, five Humvees set out for one of the troublesome valleys, heretofore designated a no-go zone, to stir things up.

It didn't take long. The snipers spotted three Taliban moving into what was thought to be a command position some 500m away, and took them out. When a heavily armed 'technical' arrived to collect the bodies, the combined Aussie/American patrol fought through using rifles and grenade launchers, aided by the snipers. A follow-up battlefield clearance confirmed 11 enemy down.

That night, with the tactic proven, the SAS sent out two foot patrols to the second valley. At 0400hr on 2 September, 12 SAS plus two Aussie engineers and explosives detection dog Sarbi joined 10 Americans aboard the middle three of a five-Humvee convoy. The first and last vehicles contained 10 Afghan soldiers each.

Near the mouth of the valley, the Aussies hopped out of the vehicles and clambered up into the hills to set up yet more ambush positions while the vehicles waited in the green zone before moving into the narrow valley The convoy quickly attracted attention, but their movement in turn only brought the enemy to the attention of the waiting Aussies – as planned. Another seven enemy were killed in short order.

Sergeant Simmonds' patrol spotted another nest of Taliban, armed with rifles and RPGs about 800m away, but this group had children among them, so they were not engaged.

As the day wore on, the decision to return to base was made. The 12 Aussies who rode out with the vehicles married up with the Hummers while the two sniper teams went back over the mountains and started their long walk back to base.

The valley was so narrow and rough that the vehicles had to simply turn around and go back along the same track they had used to get into the valley – tactically not an ideal choice, because the hornets' nest had been well and truly kicked.

It was 3pm and the Taliban were pissed. Enemy radio chatter rallied all available men to, "Kill them – kill them all". Mortars began to rain down, quickly followed by hails of bullets and rocket-propelled grenades.

On foot, using the vehicles for cover, the allied patrol returned fire with everything they had – rifles, grenade launchers, 7.62mm



Sgt Troy Simmonds

and .50cal machineguns, and 66mm and 84mm anti-armour weapons. But the enemy were in much better positions – high ground, good cover and concealment, estimated at about 200 strong and "pouring a shit-tonne" of ordnance down on the convoy. The rough ground and the dismounted troops meant progress was agonisingly slow.

An American soldier firing a .50 cal machine gun was hit in the arm early in the fight and, after rendering first aid, an Aussie jumped up behind the weapon to keep the big gun going.

Close air support was called and 500lb bombs

silenced the mortars and slowed the bullets just a little.

But the convoy was far from saved.

Having moved just 1km from the start point, they were still under heavy fire from at least two directions. American Sergeant Greg Rodriguez was next to go down – shot in the head and killed outright. Even while two Aussies carried his body to a Humvee the already-dead sergeant copped another two rounds in the back, missing his Aussie aides.

About then, a Chinook helicopter was spotted flying past at some distance and everyone knew it would have Apache escorts. Australian joint terminal attack controller Corporal Gibbo attempted to call them in, but the Dutch Apaches were reluctant, citing rules of engagement.

Corporal Gibbo decided to move to higher ground to assist the pilots to pinpoint targets, but he was shot in the chest and was in a bad way. The Apaches were eventually and unceremoniously told to “F..k off then” if they wouldn’t help.

About now, the lead Afghan Hummer stopped, the Afghan soldiers trying to use its bullet-proof glass for cover – effectively halting the entire convoy in the kill zone. Another American went down with gunshot wounds to the legs – then another Aussie – and another.

Sergeant Simmonds was on one knee, beside an American, returning fire in the direction of muzzle flashes, which was all he could see of the enemy on his side of the vehicle. At that stage we were getting shot at from all directions, so there wasn’t anywhere you could really hide,” he says. “Bullets were landing all around us – it was kind of like rain on water in the dust. One of those bullets landed very near me and ricochet’d into my calf. I turned to the guy next to me and I said, “I just got shot”. “God damn, so did I,” the Yank yelled back.

Sergeant Simmonds stayed upright however – thanks to adrenaline, training and a desperate desire to live through this.

Moments later, while ordering two of his men to go forward to get the lead vehicle moving again, an RPG landed directly between Sergeant Simmonds and the two other Aussies. The explosion blew all three off their feet and everyone who witnessed the explosion were certain their sergeant and colleagues were dead. Lying on the ground, peppered with shrapnel all up his left side and with a massive ringing in his ears, Sergeant Simmonds says he couldn’t feel his left arm, like it was numb from sleeping on it.

“I couldn’t see a thing with all the dust the RPG had kicked up and I was actually afraid to feel for my arm because I was scared it wasn’t there. But I eventually reached over and was relieved to find my arm was still attached – and the feeling started to come back into it.”

The other two Aussies, although also wounded by shrapnel, got back on their feet and went forward to the lead vehicle as

attempted to move to where the American commander was, to appraise him of the situation and why his men were going forward, but was shot at from close range by two Taliban behind some rocks.

He began to shoot back. Suddenly, his own rifle, which he had in his shoulder with his cheek on the stock, carefully aiming, kicked up and smashed him in the face. It had caught a round in its ejection port, undoubtedly saving the sergeant’s life. His weapon was now useless.

Seconds later Sergeant Simmonds felt another massive pain in his lower body, which again knocked him down. “I didn’t actually know where I’d been hit because I was already covered in blood anyway. What had happened, I found out later, was the bullet went through my right bum, past my bowels and my bladder and lodged in my left hip joint. In surgery later they had to leave it where it was – it would have been too complicated and dangerous to take it out.

“The surgeons said I was extremely lucky with that shot. They said they tried to push a rod through the entry wound to where the bullet was, without going through my bowel or vital organs – but couldn’t. But somehow the bullet had gone through one side of my body to the other without nicking anything vital. Anyway, at the time, I thought I was just winded, so I got up and went to the American captain in the Humvee. I was sort of dodging bullets all the while because there were bullets hitting the car all over. I opened the door and the captain was sitting there with a radio to both ears, talking to two different people

I told him that my guys were going forward to get the lead vehicle moving and assured him that everyone else was on or near a vehicle and ready to move. As I closed the door, a burst of machinegun fire hit the back of the car, so there was no way I could go that way. So I dropped on my back and actually shuffled underneath the car. I was surprisingly calm under there and had a little time to go over our situation in my head.”

Suddenly the Hummer started to move and Sergeant Simmonds grabbed a hold of something to go with it. But the ground was too rough to get dragged over, and he eventually had to let go – and try to avoid being crushed between the rear diff and the jagged rocks.

Clear of the vehicle, which was still moving at walking pace, badly wounded in the both hips, with the rain of bullets still dancing in the dust all around him, Sergeant Simmonds “hobbled like an instant old man” after the Hummer. As he got close, another RPG burst above the vehicle knocked him down again and sprayed the men inside with shrapnel.

Some shrapnel from this RPG also sliced through the leash tethering Sarbi to her handler, Corporal David ‘Simdog’ Simpson. Sarbi took off – and 14 months later stamped her own pawmark on the pages of Australian military history when she was recovered during an American SF raid on a Taliban compound, returned to her super-grateful owners and eventual retirement in Australia.

Catching up with the Hummer, Sergeant Simmonds found there was no room for him inside the vehicle nor were any of the men in it in a fit state to help him, so he staggered around the front where he managed to lodge himself in the gap between the radiator and the bullbar. Just then, another RPG airburst above the back of the vehicle peppered those inside with even more shrapnel.

One of those wounded this time was an Afghan interpreter, who was badly hit in the head and thrown out of the vehicle – and saved by Trooper Mark Donaldson who was later awarded the Victoria Cross for his actions. Four other gallantry medals were be awarded for surrounding events, including a Medal for Gallantry to the Aussie who took control of the lead vehicle.



SAS soldiers in Afghanistan

instructed. One banished the Afghan driver to the back and jumped into the driver’s seat, taking direct control of the situation.

Sergeant Simmonds got up and



Curled in a foetal position on the front of the Hummer, Sergeant Simmonds became a deliberate target again. Rounds started peppering the bonnet and the bullbar, inches from the badly wounded, almost deaf, covered in blood, armed with a useless weapon and all but helpless Aussie, who was wearing only the shredded remnants of what was once a uniform. 'I thought it was just a matter of time before I got hit again,' he says. "I remember actually thinking, 'I've been hit in the body already and I think I'm alright, but if I get hit in the head then it's all over. I didn't have a helmet on so I was quite worried about my head. Then I spotted the heavy tow chain wrapped around the bullbar, so I unravelled that and wrapped it around my head – while bullets were still pinging on metal all around me."

But now a new danger seeped into his mind. The patrol had a strong suspicion that the enemy may try to cut them off by planting an IED in the pass up ahead, which would really finish them off.

"It was a very narrow pass – not much more than a vehicle width, with rock on either side. Anyway, my guy who was now driving the front vehicle did a bit of a dynamic move and went through the pass sort of up on an angle, with one set of wheels up on the rocks, and he got through. So all the other vehicles did the same thing, following in his tracks, and we all got through – under a huge amount of fire.

"They had machineguns on us from every angle, but we got through and gradually the fire started to ease off – and that's when I got really nervous. I was thinking, "OK we got away with that – now we'll probably hit an IED or something". And riding behind the bullbar is probably not the best place to be when a vehicle hits an IED."

Reflecting on the ambush years later, Sergeant Simmonds says it was probably a bit selfish worrying about himself instead of his men, but concedes it was probably human nature too – and there wasn't a lot he could have done for anyone in his precarious, exposed position anyway.

But, as luck would have it, there was no IED on the route back to base and the convoy rumbled into FOB Anaconda to the waiting arms of a plethora of colleagues eager to triage the wounded and get the worst of them evacuated as quickly as possible.

"The triage all went very well. They grabbed us and put us on stretchers and took care of us really well.. They flew me and a couple of others to Tarin Kot, where there had just been a turn-over of surgical teams and so the surgeons who worked on us were a collection of top people from Melbourne and Sydney – all reservists.

"The bullet in my lower leg wasn't a big issue. It was a ricochet so it had broken up before going in. So they took out all the pieces easy enough. Those wounds took a while to heal up though.

Like I said, the bullet in my hip had to be left in place – and I was also shitting blood for about 12 months from all the trauma around that area – but otherwise my recovery was fairly OK."

Sergeant Simmonds made a good recovery and was posted to the training squadron at Campbell Barracks, Swanbourne, home of the SAS, to help on the SASR selection course and train new guys in the basic skills of the SAS soldier. He says he really enjoyed that role for a couple of years. He also enjoyed plenty of time recuperating and spent lots of time with his wife, who had only seen him for three or four months a year since he joined the SAS.

Inevitably, however, he was posted back to an operational squadron and again deployed to Afghanistan.

"I had some trepidation going back there, but this time I wasn't

going outside the wire. My job on this trip was helping to plan missions and assist and advise young officers in how the SAS does business."

Now retired from the SAS, Troy Simmonds says he feels no ill effects from his service generally nor from the ambush that almost took his life. "I saw some pretty bad stuff over there, but I think I have the capacity to put things in perspective and to compartmentalise them. It's almost like I can look back on that part of my life and see that I was like acting a role at that time, and now I'm in a different role.

"I know some blokes do suffer from psychological issues after something like that, but I don't – or I don't think I do. I can think about it and talk about it and look at photos or videos from over there and it doesn't have a massive emotional affect on me."

Troy Simmonds spent 22 years in the Australian Army and did six tours of Afghanistan with the Special Operations Task Group.

The Battle of Ana Kalay lasted about two hours and resulted in one US KIA, with one wounded. Of nine Aussies wounded, one was considered life threatening at the time, but all survived. After-action assessments put the enemy death toll at about 80

Source Internet "SASR under fire "like rain on water"

*Ray and Bob, two Government maintenance guys, were standing at the base of a flagpole, looking up.*

*A woman walked by and asked what they were doing.*

*"We're supposed to find the height of the flagpole" said Bob, "But we don't have a ladder."*

*The woman said, "Hand me that wrench out of your toolbox."*

*She loosened a few bolts, then laid the pole down.*

*She then took a tape measure from their toolbox, took a measurement and announced, "Eighteen feet, six inches" and walked away.*

*Ray shook his head and laughed. "Well, ain't that just like a 'Miss-know-it-all' woman?" he said. "We need the height and she gives us the length!"*

*Ray and Bob are still working for the Government.*

## Serenity in bustling Busan

Maj Cameron Jamieson

In the bustling port city of Busan in south-east Korea lies a green field of silence and solemnity where the remains of 2300 United Nations Command (UNC) casualties of the Korean War rest in eternal slumber.

Among them lay 281 of the 340 Australians who died in the first war to be undertaken by the United Nations. Nestled among the headstones are the graves of two Australians whose names have lingered in the memory of the nation.

Lt-Col Charles Green was the CO 3RAR when he died of wounds received after the battalion's victory at Chongju over the Korean People's Army's 17th Tank Brigade.



Lt-Col Green was the youngest Australian battalion commander in the Second AIF during World War II, and was released from Staff College early in 1950 to take command of 3RAR when it was committed to

the UNC. Assigned to the 27th British Commonwealth Brigade, Lt-Col Green led the battalion with distinction through desperate battles at Yongju, Kujin, and Chongju. After his death at the age of 30 he was posthumously awarded the US Silver Star in 1951.

Pte Horace William 'Bill' Madden was a signaller attached to Battalion Headquarters when he was concussed by enemy fire during the Battle of Kapyong. Captured by Chinese troops, he openly resisted all enemy efforts to force him to collaborate, resulting in repeated beatings and other deprivations.

Pte Madden remained cheerful and optimistic and while his behaviour often saw him denied food, he shared what rations he could buy from Koreans with other prisoners who were sick. Despite the realisation that he was progressively getting weaker and would not survive, over a six-month period Pte Madden remained undaunted in his resistance. He eventually succumbed to malnutrition sometime in late November or December of 1951 at the age of 27. Testimonials provided by fellow Commonwealth and Allied Forces prisoners detailing Madden's heroism resulted in him being awarded the George Cross posthumously.

As the only UN military cemetery in the world, the United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Korea is unique. It is the resting place for fallen service members from 11 of the 22 nations which provided forces to the UNC for the Korean conflict. Laid out over 12.4 hectares, the graves are set out in 22 sites designated by the nationalities of the buried personnel.

For Australia, the cemetery is a poignant reminder of the cost of the Korean War. The plaques reveal the youthfulness of many of the fallen Australians, who lie in neat rows without favour being given to rank or service. The Australians lay buried close to the graves of Turks and Canadians, reflecting contemporary operations in the Middle East where Australians continue to serve alongside Turkish and Canadian troops.

Today, the towering office blocks and apartments of Busan ring the cemetery, a reminder of how South Korea has recovered and taken its place in the world as a major economy and technically advanced nation.

Yet the symbols of modernity do not touch the serenity of the landscaped fields. Instead the modern monoliths keep their respectful distance so that silence, serenity and sombre statues can pay homage to those silent witnesses who fought for the future of South Korea.

*Army News Edition 1405.*

### **Kalashnikov delivers semi-automatic shotguns to Indonesia**

Kalashnikov has made its first shipment of smoothbore Saiga 12-C rifles to the National Drug Enforcement Administration (BNN) of Indonesia.

The gas-operated, semi-automatic 12-gauge comes with 10-round detachable box magazine or 30 round drum.



Kalashnikov Group, part of the State Corporation Rostec, said the delivery was strategically important to expanding the scope of civilian weapon export markets and to strengthen cooperation with its foreign customers.

In addition to supplying the civilian products, Kalashnikov experts held training sessions and demonstrational shootings for the employees of the National Drug Enforcement Administration.

A Kalashnikov spokesman said the Saiga-12C rifle was a highly reliable and tested service and civilian weapon that had become well established on the small-arms market.

"This rifle is equipped with folding-frame buttstock and a rubber shock-absorbing butt plate that provides effective control of heavy 12-gauge recoil," the spokesman said "A hinged receiver cover has a Picatinny-type rail to install various sighting devices including red-dot sights.

"The rifle is equipped with adjustable open sighting devices just as the Kalashnikov assault rifle. Additional Picatinny rails in the lower part of the polymer fore-end and under the gas block on the barrel make it easy to install various accessories, such as a pistol grip or an under-barrel flashlight. Expanded magazine chamber provides faster reloading."

*Source "Contact Magazine" Feb 2017.*



### **Burns Philp Ship SS Morinda**

The Burns, Philp ship SS *Morinda* (1913 - 1952) despite its meagre size of 2000 tons, was built to carry 60 passengers (40 in first class) and managed 321 voyages. I read that when built - it had not only dining, music and smoking rooms for passengers, but also "bulk trade rooms and retail trade rooms for businessmen travelling through the islands". In its early voyages at least, it was a regular at Rabaul. With the new Marconi wireless installed along with freezer cargo space - it was the best of its class at the time. (The photo is by Allan Green via Museum of Victoria)

*Courtesy Lindsay Parry.*

An ice cream seller was found today on the floor of his van covered in hundreds and thousands...  
Police said he topped himself.

### **Sister M. BERENICE TWOHILL**

Sister M. Berenice of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Convent was the eighth of 11 children. She had eight brothers and two sisters and was born at Tumbulgum, just out of Murwillimbah. She attended boarding school at Uki on the Tweed River, under Mount Warning. She was posted to New Britain as a teacher and was one of the group of about 350 missionary Fathers, Brothers and Sisters who were interned there by the Japanese for the duration of the war. This is a short summary of their experiences, told from her point of view.

The sister was out at this remote station of Tapo when the invasion of Rabaul took place. The first she knew about it was when she was told to go over to a plantation house to make a phone call to the people at Vunapope, the main mission cen-

tre. Before he left to hide in the jungle, the plantation owner had sent a message to the station to let them know that the phone still worked. When the Sr Berenice telephoned Vunapope she was told that the Japanese invasion was about to take place. They were instructed to remain at the station overnight and that she and one of the other Sisters should hurry to Vunapope on foot next day and report that a shell shocked Australian soldier was in their dug-out and would not move - the third Sister was to remain at her station.

The two Sisters set out to walk alone through the jungle and got lost. They wandered all day, finally locating the track, and found themselves to be almost at Vunapope. When they came to a fork in the road, a truckload of armed Japanese suddenly appeared. "We didn't even know they had landed. They stood up and they yelled and screamed and waved their bayonets about. And we thought, This is it. And then just as suddenly the truck turned around and went off. We ran for our lives up to the convent. And when we got there the Bishop was there with his council, with our Mother Martha (the Mother Superior). He said, "Where have you come from? We're prisoners". We said we were from Tapo and he told us: "You can't go back, we're prisoners". So that other poor sister was stuck out there for three months not knowing what happened to us or anything else."

### Vunapope

To begin with Sr Berenice was housed with a group of Sisters in one of the mission buildings. They were not allowed to have any contact with the people from any other building. Their only source of news was Bishop Scharmach, who "liaised" (if that is the word!) with the Japanese on behalf of the whole mission.

"At first the Japanese were menacing," Sr Berenice recalled, "At night they would come knocking on our door. Of course we never opened it but they would go around and around outside. We were in a two-story building and the Japanese would go around and around and around. It was terrible until the Bishop really got control. Every day we were searched, we were called to order and counted. And we were warned: Never let a Japanese soldier find you alone – so we always went around in groups. But after a while we knew there was no danger like that - they wouldn't dare."



Sr. Berenice 1945

Just prior to the invasion, and with permission from the head of the Burns Philp and Carters, who had taken refuge at the mission, the Bishop and his flock managed to salvage plenty of the company's stores. These were hidden in various caches in and around the mission. "The Bishop had told us to take anything of value, any clothing, anything else, and to put it away. We had a room where we stored supplies. Our Superior, Mother Martha, was a Dutch woman (we were 17 or more nationalities altogether) and she spoke very broken English. Every time the Japanese came they poked into everything we had. Every day we were lined up and counted and searched. They were looking for radios. Of course we didn't possess radios. When they'd get near this

room where the supplies were, Mother would say: Oh no, malaria in there. Malaria! We knew the Japanese were terrified of malaria and of TB. So those supplies lasted us for at least six months."

Then quite suddenly the Japanese declared that they wanted the mission buildings and that their prisoners were to move back into some native huts. This compound was

*A biker is visiting the zoo in Brisbane when he sees a little girl leaning into the bars of the lion's cage.*

*Suddenly, the lion grabs her by the cuff of her jacket and tries to pull her inside to slaughter her, under the eyes of her screaming parents. The biker without hesitation runs to the cage and hits the lion square on the nose with a powerful punch.*

*Whimpering from the pain the lion jumps back letting go of the girl, and the biker brings her to her terrified parents, who thank him endlessly.*

*A newspaper reporter has watched the whole event.*

*The reporter addressing the biker says, 'Sir, this was the most gallant and brave thing I've seen a man do in my whole life.'*

*The biker replies, 'Why, it was nothing, really, the lion was behind bars. I just saw this little kid in danger and acted as I felt right.'*

*The reporter says, 'Well, I'll make sure this won't go unnoticed. I'm a journalist, you know, and tomorrow's paper will have this story on the front page...'*

*So, what do you do for a living and what political affiliation do you have?'*

*The biker replies, 'I'm a soldier in the Australian Army and a Liberal.' The journalist leaves.*

*The following morning the biker buys the paper to see if it indeed brings news of his actions, and reads, on the front page:*

**"AUSTRALIAN SOLDIER ASSAULTS AFRICAN IMMIGRANT - AND STEALS HIS LUNCH."**

*That pretty much sums up the media's approach to the news these days.*

promptly surrounded by barbed wire.

### The compound

Australian wounded soldiers were nursed in the mission hospital and the Sisters were permitted to cook a meal for them. "I was in a little native hut with the Australian Sisters. And we had a whole lot of supplies up top. It was a round hut, and all the supplies were up in the ceiling. We had a guard all the time, going around and around and around. We used to cook everything in a great big bowl. We had a ladder. And while the guard was away we would run quickly up and get our supplies, then quickly put the ladder back out of sight. That happened for a couple of weeks and the guards never suspected where we were getting supplies. The Japanese are strange. We used to say they had a one-track mind. They only thought of one thing at a time. It never struck them where we were getting this food from. One day one of the sisters forgot to pull the ladder down in time. Up the guard went and found everything, so then we were banished. We couldn't go back there any more."

During this period the AANS and civilian nurses who had taken refuge at the mission were told by their captors that they must be shipped out. The original plan was to transport all of the women to Japan, including the convent Sisters, but the Bishop fought against removal of the Sisters, only regretting that he had no authority to do the same for the rest of the women.

"We studied, we sewed. We had the Fathers to sew for, all their washing to do. We kept busy. We studied languages. As time went on they would bring in the missionaries. A lot of the missionaries were further out on stations and they would be brought in to us. A lot of them were tortured. Some of them you'd think were going to die within five minutes. Germans, they'd been dragged in for helping Australian soldiers. But they got better. A lot of the Germans wanted to learn more English, so we had English lessons. And German lessons. Then some sisters from the Solomon Islands were brought in. They were French. So we had French lessons. Then we had our mission doctor and he taught us everything he could - First Aid. We tried to write everything down, we had nothing to write on but the Japanese had biscuit tins. Dog biscuits, we used to call them. The Japanese would throw the tins over to us and we used to scribble on that, it was all we had to write on. We really had the lessons to keep us going."





Sister Berenice on right.

aries found themselves spending more time underground than out in the open. The mission buildings were soon razed to the ground.

### The tunnels

As the allied bombing increased, it became impossible to remain out in the open for long. The missionaries and boys began enlarging the tunnel shelters so that the whole group could live underground.



Sister Berenice says that was the worst period of their internment because at the same time they were steadily starving. The bulk of their supplies had been virtually bombed out of existence and the Japanese made no effort to supply them with anything. The Sisters crept out to (wrecked) Japanese buildings and stole packets of Marie biscuits and cocoa and lived on these. As these had been looted by the Japanese from the Rabaul residents in the first place, the Fathers and Sisters did not consider it to be stealing so much as requisitioning. Sr. Berenice described: "The Little Sisters (Indigenous Sisters) would creep in and leave a bunch of bananas or taro for us. They were tortured but did not stop doing this. The food would just be left there... We never saw them and were never allowed to speak to them."

The tunnels were so crowded that no-one could breathe properly, so the men started digging an air shaft from the tunnel to the surface. A number of their people died during this period and illness increased alarmingly.

The entrances to the tunnels were camouflaged. They had very small openings. When the bombings began, everyone would make a dash for the entrance. The Sisters were likely to get a boot in the face from some fleeing local boy (the mixed race boys and girls were still being cared for by the mission). Emerging from the tunnels after a raid they would be confronted by all the horrors of war: Japanese victims of the bombing, strewn everywhere, had to be cleared away because the Japanese would just leave them where they lay, the cemetery's uprooted contents had to be re-interred. Such is war and the missionaries set about these ghastly duties, accepting them as part of their current plight.

After a while, just as the air shaft was completed, the Japanese decided to requisition the tunnels for their own use and the missionaries had to move again.

### Ramale

In June 1944 everyone was marched to the Ramale Valley, a sheer chasm in which nobody had ever lived be-

fore. "Descend!" Everyone slipped and slid down the sheer cliff face. At the bottom no sunlight penetrated. It was unhealthy, damp. There was a stream running through it but the prisoners were forbidden to use it because it was for the use of the Japanese further downstream. For water the Fathers and Brothers made a pump and dug a well. The water had to be boiled before use. The group of more than 300 people lived on local weeds and jungle plants. "Pig weed" was a staple food. (Scharmach reports that they were glad to supplement their diet with such protein as grubs, larvae and snake). They were, in effect, starving. At one stage, although they were needed to help keep the rats in check, they ate feral cats.

By this time, the gathering of missionaries and their charges consisted of the following nationalities: Australian, American, British, German, Austrian, Polish, Czechoslovak, Dutch, Luxemburg, French, Italian, Canadian, Half-caste, Guinantuna, Manus, Sulka and Baining. (Scharmach, p.211)



Sr Berenice 1997.

Eventually they were permitted to establish gardens. Each day 20 of them were allowed to go out to tend the gardens. If they went out they had to stay out all day regardless of illness or injury. They were permitted to bring in food from these gardens. The guards would often steal this hard-won food and eat it themselves. The missionaries were 18 months at Ramale and managed to establish a self sufficient, if poorly supplied, community. In this they were clandestinely helped by the Indigenous Sisters.

The Japs built a platform high above and all around them in the gorge. Sometimes they would bring locals there and torture them in front of the Sisters and Brothers, to remind them what would happen if they did the wrong thing.

### Liberation

At Ramale on 16th September 1945 they heard a "Cooee" they replied with a "Cooee" and were found and brought out by Australian soldiers led by a Redemptist missionary with Majors Bates and Roberts.

*Sr Berenice died on 3 Nov 2017 a few days short of her 101st birthday.*

*From an interview*

*Friday October 13th, 2000*

*at the Convent of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Sydney*

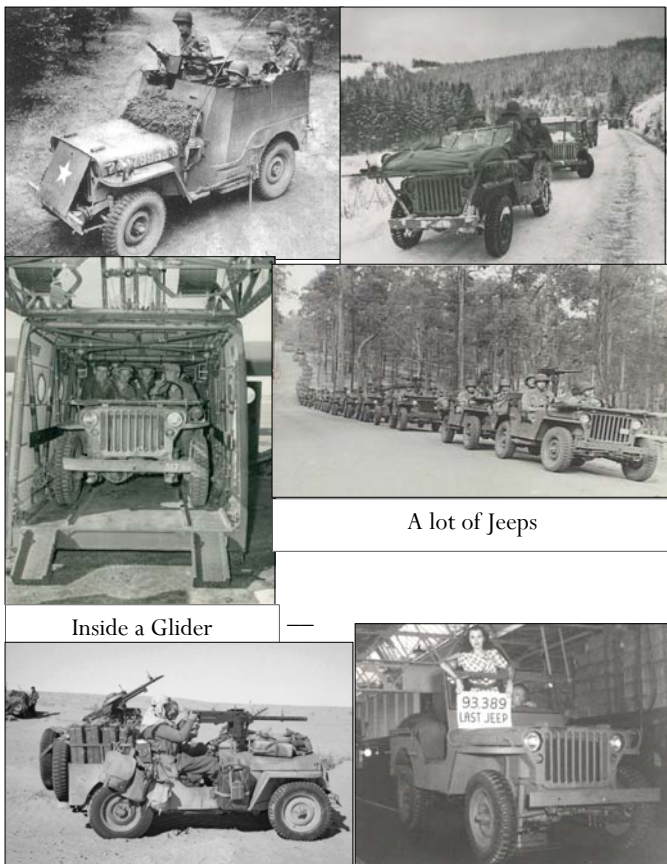
*Article taken from the website "Prisoner Missionaries of Vunapope—Angell Productions"*

*Sr Berenice's comments on the Indigenous Sisters who were with her will be published in the next HTT*

**Sometimes when I reflect back on all the wine I drink I feel shame. Then I look into the glass and think about the workers in the vineyards and all of their hopes and dreams. If I didn't drink this wine, they might be out of work and their dreams would be shattered. Then I say to myself, "It is better that I drink this wine and let their dreams come true than be selfish and worry about my liver."**

## The Versatile Willys MB and Ford GPW (Willys Jeep)

The first article on the Willys MB and Ford GPW (Jeep) appeared with photos in HTT Vol 114. The above photos continue showing the versatility of the Willys Jeep during WW2.



A lot of Jeeps

Inside a Glider

## The Significance of Rosemary on ANZAC Day.

Rosemary has been associated with the dead, and Egyptians used it more than 2000 years ago to place on tombs. The smell of rosemary is also believed to improve memory, with stories that Greek scholars wore it in their hair to help them with their studies. Perhaps because of this, it has since become an emblem of fidelity and remembrance in literature and folklore.

It also has particular significance for Australians, as the herb can be found growing wild all over the Gallipoli peninsula, where troops fought in 1915.

When a wounded digger from Adelaide was repatriated to the Army Hospital at Keswick, South Australia, in 1915, he is reported to have brought back with him a small rosemary bush, dug up from the slopes and ravines of ANZAC Cove, and it was planted in the hospital grounds.

Cuttings from this original plant were grown in nurseries and today they can be found all over Australia. It is this original Gallipoli strain of rosemary that is worn on ANZAC Day, and also sometimes on Remembrance Day.

Several organisations around Australia, including RSL Sub

Branches, Legacy and commemorative committees, often band together to prepare sprigs of rosemary to distribute on ANZAC Day. They are usually handed out for free,



but many people choose to make a donation, which goes to support the Defence community.

In 2015, for the 100th anniversary of the ANZAC landing at Gallipoli, Sydney Legacy asked the public to donate sprigs from their gardens for Operation Rosemary, to help prepare 150,000 sprigs - three times more than usual - for distribution.

April 25, 1915 marks the day Australian and New Zealand forces landed on Gallipoli peninsula, Turkey, which started the first major military action fought by the Australia and New Zealand services during WWI.

The goal of the intervention was to clear a passage through the Dardanelles for the allied navies to access and capture Constantinople (now Istanbul), which was the capital of the Ottoman Empire and an ally of Germany.

The daring decision by the British to send the Australian and New Zealand soldiers to Gallipoli was anticipated to be a quick action to remove Turkey from the war, but the campaign escalated into an eight-month battle, with heavy casualties on both sides.

More than 8700 Australian soldiers lost their lives in the campaign and another 19,441 were wounded.

Use of the word ANZAC to describe the Allied forces can be dated back as early as 1915. It has been used in various books and telegrams from that time as a way of shortening Australia and New Zealand Army Corps. One of the earliest references to the word appears in the appendix to the 1st Australian Division War Diary from April 24, 1915 - the day before the Gallipoli landing.

*Qld RSL News Edition 2 2017.*



Detention Centre Staff aboard an Australian Landing Craft at Lombrum 2013.

## Australia to upgrade PNG navy base on Manus Island

Australia will invest millions of dollars in upgrading wharf facilities on Manus Island ahead of the gifting of new patrol boats to the PNG Defence Force.

Minister for Defence Christopher Pyne said Australia was continuing its commitment to regional maritime security through an upgrade of wharf and shore-based infrastructure at Papua New Guinea's Lombrum Naval Base.

"The \$5 million contract with Fletcher Morobe Constructions Limited is part of the Australian government's Pacific Maritime Security Program," Minister Pyne said.

"Lombrum upgrades will support the safe and secure berthing of PNG's four new Guardian-class patrol boats.

"The infrastructure works build upon existing security coopera-



tion between the ADF and the PNG Defence Force, including a recently established \$2 million communications centre at Lombrum."

Minister Pyne said the Australia-PNG defence relationship was an enduring testament to our shared historical and cultural ties.

"Australia is proud to support the PNG Defence Force in strengthening their maritime security capability, and remains committed to our longstanding partnership."

21 Guardian-class patrol boats are being gifted to 13 Pacific nations from 2018-2023 under the Pacific Maritime Security Program.

"The Pacific Maritime Security Program, which is also providing a regional aerial surveillance capability, is the cornerstone of Defence's engagement in the Pacific, and strengthens partner capacity and regional maritime security," Minister Pyne said.

*Contact Newsletter 77.*

Two blondes were doing some carpentry work. Lisa was nailing down some house siding wood. She would reach into her nail pouch, pull out a nail and either toss it over her shoulder or nail it in.

Judy, figuring this was worth looking into, asked, 'Why are you throwing those nails away?'

Lisa explained, 'When I pull a nail out of my pouch, about half of them have the head on the wrong end and I throw them away.'

Judy got completely upset and yelled, 'You moron! Those nails aren't defective! They're for the other side of the house!'



### After decades in the air, the Kiowas have taken their last flights.

On 18 October 2018, the Australian Army officially retired (the remainder of) its Bell 206B-1 (CA-32) Kiowa fleet. It was in service for 47 years, with the first unit becoming fully operational in 1972.

In total, 56 Kiowas were delivered to the Australian Army. From 1990 the Kiowa was the primary training helicopter. In that role it has been replaced by the Airbus Helicopters EC135T2+ since 2016. The Australian Army Aviation Corps has celebrated the 50th anniversary of its formation with a number of flypasts of key Army Aviation base cities.

The flypasts were conducted at the 5th Aviation Regiment (5Avn) home base of Townsville, 6th Aviation Regiment's base of Sydney, and the Australian Army Aviation Training Centre's base at Oakey west of Brisbane.

The anniversary also saw the final retirement of the Bell 206B-1 Kiowa training and light observation helicopter, which first entered service in 1971 and has been replaced by the joint-service Helicopter Aircrew Training System (HATS) Airbus H135 at Nowra.

"Then and now, the Corps is committed to helping the Australian soldier fight, survive and win, and be ready to serve wherever needed," Head of the Australian Army Aviation Corps, Brigadier Scott Benbow said in a release to mark the occasion.

"From a small Corps formed in 1968 flying light fixed-wing aircraft, the Australian Army Aviation Corps has grown to be an advanced, state-of-the-art force. Today, the Australian Army Aviation Corps flies a variety of capabilities, including the Tiger armed reconnaissance, Chinook medium-lift and Taipan multi-role helicopters."

The former fixed-wing elements of the AAAC including the Pilatus Porter, GAF Nomad and more recently, the B200/350 King Air have long been retired or transferred to RAAF service.

About a dozen S-70A-9 Black Hawks remain in service with 6Avn, although these are scheduled to be phased out from 2019 as the MRH-90 assumes the commando and special operations support role.

*Army News Edition 1431*

### Oldest U.S. military survivor of Pearl Harbor dies at 106

Ray Chavez, the oldest U.S. military survivor of the Dec. 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor that plunged the United States into World War II, died Wednesday. He was 106.

Chavez, who had been battling pneumonia, died in his sleep in the San Diego suburb of Poway, his daughter, Kathleen Chavez, told The Associated Press.

As recently as last May he had travelled to Washington, D.C., where he was honoured on Memorial Day by President Donald Trump. The White House Tweeted a statement Wednesday saying it was saddened to hear of his passing.

Daniel Martinez, chief historian for the National Park Service at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, confirmed Wednesday that Chavez was the oldest survivor of the attack that killed 2,335 U.S. military personnel and 68 civilians.

Hours before the attack, he was aboard the minesweeper USS *Condor* as it patrolled the harbour's east entrance when he and others saw the periscope of a Japanese submarine. They notified a destroyer that sunk it shortly before Japanese bombers arrived to strafe the harbour.

By then Chavez, who had worked through the early morning hours, had gone to his nearby home to sleep, ordering his wife not to wake him because he had been up all night.

"It seemed like I only slept about 10 minutes when she called me and said, 'We're being attacked,' " he recalled in 2016. "And I said, 'Who is going to attack us?' " "She said, 'The Japanese are here, and they're attacking everything.' "

He ran back to the harbour to find it in flames.

Chavez would spend the next week there, working around the clock sifting through the destruction that had crippled the U.S. Navy's Pacific fleet.



Later he was assigned to the transport ship USS *La Salle*, ferrying troops, tanks and other equipment to war-torn islands across the Pacific, from Guadalcanal



to Okinawa.

Although never wounded, he left the military in 1945 suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder that left him anxious and shaking.

Still, he would not talk about Pearl Harbor for decades. Then, on a last-minute whim, he decided to return to Hawaii in 1991 for ceremonies marking the attack's 50th anniversary.

"Then we did the 55th, the 60th, the 65th and the 70th, and from then on we went to every one," his daughter recalled, adding that until Chavez's health began to fail he had planned to attend this year's gathering next month.

Born March 12, 1912, in San Bernardino, California, to Mexican immigrant parents, Chavez moved to San Diego as a child, where his family ran a wholesale flower business. He joined the Navy in 1938.

Chavez was preceded in death by his wife, Margaret. His daughter is his only survivor..

*USA Today 23 Nov. 2018.*



#### Presentation of etching to Museum

On Sat 1 Dec George Crowe, a Vietnam veteran presented a magnificent etching on brushed aluminium of a WW2 B-17 bomber. This etching is particularly relevant to the museum because the B-17 was used extensively in New Guinea during WW2.

George, a veteran of Vietnam, is a talented artist and also has some of his paintings hanging in the foyer of the Veterans Affairs office. George is unique in that he does not sell his paint-



Paul Brown (Museum Curator), Bob Collins, George Crowe, Maj Gen John Pearn AO (Assn Patron) and Colin Gould (Assn Secretary and Asst Museum Curator) at the presentation.

ings or etchings, but gives them away to friends and others who have helped him along the way. George is prominent in the Scottish community in Queensland.

Whilst speaking to George at the presentation it became clear that an etching is different to a painting in that, whilst creating an etching, there is no room at all for an error. Once the surface is etched the resulting marks cannot be erased and a new start made.

On behalf of the Association and the Museum curators  
**"Thank you George".**

*An article on the remarkable versatility of the B-17 appeared in HTT Vol 95, Dec 2015.*

**After 100 years lying on the sea bed, Irish divers were amazed to find that the Titanic's swimming pool was still full.**

#### Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant

The Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant was announced by the Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP, and the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon Darren Chester MP, on 27 October last year.

The Covenant encourages Australia to recognise and acknowledge the unique nature of military service, and support veterans and their families.

The Covenant includes an oath, which the Australian people will be encouraged to take at community commemorative events, such as Remembrance Day.

The new Veteran Card and an Australian Veteran Lapel Pin and a Reservist Lapel Pin underpin the Covenant.

The intention of the Covenant is to provide employers, businesses, local communities, and veteran and sporting organisations the opportunity to commit to supporting veterans and their families

#### Veteran Card

The Veteran Card will make it easier for Australians to recognise and respect the contribution that veterans have made to Australia and for our veterans to connect with the broader Australian community.

The Veteran Card is available to anyone who has served in the Australian Defence Force with at least one day of continuous full-time service.

Eligible Reservists, including those engaged in Disaster Relief Service, Border Protection Service, or involved in a serious service-related training accident, will also be able to request a Veteran Card.

The card will help Australian businesses, service providers and community organisations to identify veterans so they can offer their acknowledgement and respect. For example, the card could provide a platform for businesses and community groups to provide tangible recognition and service to holders of the card.

It is important to note that the respective business or organisation determines what concessions, if any, they choose to offer to a veteran and their family. There is no obligation for a business or organisation to offer a concession.

The appearance of the Veteran Card is a rebadging and re-design of DVA's current health treatment and concession cards (Gold, White and Orange).

**Existing DVA health cards (Gold, White and Orange)**



master.

The multi-agency program led by Army's Land Capability Division and supported by the Capability and Sustainment Group will enhance the capabilities of the Thales Bushmaster and Hawkei vehicles and the Rheinmetall medium- and heavy-capability trucks.

All existing DVA health card holders (Gold or White) and concession card holders (Orange) do not need to apply. Your existing services and entitlements are maintained. Health providers and participating businesses will recognise your existing card.

The new-look card will be issued to you automatically over the coming months, along with a Veteran Lapel Pin and Oath as part of a phased roll-out. Orange Card holders will also receive their new-look card in due course.

### The Oath

A key objective of the Covenant is recognition and support of the Australian community for veterans and their families.

The Oath is a declaration on behalf of the Australian people to give an enduring and formal recognition of the valued contribution that current and former members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and their families make today, and have made in the past, to our country.

The Oath is not intended to replace the Ode, but is an additional commitment of respect to Australia's military veterans.

The Oath may be said at special events such as community commemorative events, such as Remembrance Day.

### Veteran Lapel Pin and Reservist Lapel Pin

The Veteran Lapel Pin and Reservist Lapel Pin provide a way for the public to recognise and connect with veterans and acknowledge their service to the nation. The pins will help identify veterans when they aren't wearing their uniform or medals.

The pins will be available for distribution in the first half of 2019.

Source. Dept of Veterans Affairs./ Australian Defence Veterans Covenant.



An Australian Army Thales Hawkei protected mobility vehicle-light photographed at a purpose-built facility near Woomera in South Australia where Army is running Protected Mobility Integration and Capability Assurance program testing. ADF photo.

### Army testing Hawkei electrics

Army is testing its new Hawkei vehicles to ensure that electrical management systems are fit for purpose.

The Protected Mobility Integration and Capability Assurance (PMICA) program aims to ensure key systems are effectively integrated on Army's protected mobility vehicles and resolve long-standing vehicle power-management issues with the Bush-

An Army spokesman said that through smart system integration, Army would be able to better manage capability performance.

"When the PMICA program is finished, the vehicle fleets and their integrated systems will be at the forefront of their respective capabilities."

Army did not elaborate on what the long-standing vehicle power-management issues with the Bushmaster entailed.

Contact Newsletter 86.

Jack walked into a sports bar around 9:58 pm. He sat down next to this blonde at the bar and stared up at the TV as the 10:00 news came on. The news crew was covering a story of a man on a ledge of a large building preparing to jump. .

The blonde looked at Jack and said, "Do you think he'll jump?"

Jack says, "You know what, I bet he will." The blonde replied, "Well, I bet he won't." Jack placed \$30 on the bar and said, "You're on!"

Just as the blonde placed her money on the bar, the guy did a swan dive off of the building, falling to his death. The blonde was very upset and handed her \$30 to Jack, saying, "Fair's fair... Here's your money."

Jack replied, "I can't take your money, I saw this earlier on the 5 o'clock news and knew he would jump. "

The blonde replies, "I did too; but I didn't think he'd do it again."

Jack took the money.

### NATIONAL SERVICE DAY, WACOL: 14 February 2019

The National Service Day Memorial Service held on the morning of 14th February 2019 at the NSAAQ historical precinct, Wacol was attended by well over 200 people with the Queensland State Governor giving the keynote speech. The dedication was made by NSAAQ's Chaplain. The armed services, the three levels of Government and kindred organisations including the NGVR & PNGVR Association were represented. All representatives laid wreaths at the new sandstone memorial situated near the entrance to the Chapel.



The Queensland Branch of the NSAA is to be congratulated for this well organised and run memorial service, morning tea and luncheon. The purpose of the event was the dedication of a memorial commemorating the death of 20 Queenslanders who died during their national service training between 1951 and 1959. It was an emo-





tional scene when family members of two men whose names were on the memorial were asked to place their wreaths on the memorial.

The NGVR Memorial Museum was open and over 50 interested attendees to the service took the opportunity to visit. Most commented positively on the quality of presentation in the Museum. The grounds were also in an immaculate condition. Thank you to Curator Paul Brown, Secretary Colin Gould, John Batze and Tony Boulter who accompanied the visitors through the Museum.

The photos show the memorial and the Governor returning from laying his wreath on behalf of the Queensland

people.

Well done NSAAQ!

Phil Ainsworth



More uses for PSP (Marsden Matting). Currently used as a banis (fencing) at the Goroka Administration piggery. Photo Warren Young.

Socialism works until the Socialists run out of other people's money."  
Margaret Thatcher

### Burns Philp Ships

Burns Philp was formed in the 1870s and originally concentrated on Australian passenger and cargo coastal trade. In the 1890s trade expanded to the Pacific Islands. The company survived in shipping until 1970 by which time it had disposed of most of its ships and diversified into other industries

Those readers who were in PNG will be familiar with Burns Philp shipping. However did you know that, for many years, all Burns Philp ship names commenced with the letter "M" and were 7 letters long.

The following may not be a complete list of Ships but as complete as I can make it.

Machdui 1931—1942	Sunk by Japanese in Port Moresby Harbour
Maiwara 1924—1950	Sold
Makambo 1907—1940	Sunk
Makatea 1925-1933	Scuttled

## COMMEMORATIVE LUNCHEON 7<sup>th</sup> September 2019

On 4<sup>th</sup> September, 1939, the Australian Government authorised the Administrator of New Guinea to form a defence force to be known as the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles. On 8<sup>th</sup> September, 1939, Lt Col. John Walstab, DSO, VD. Was instructed to raise the Unit.

The 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this historic event will be commemorated on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at the NSAAQ Military Historical Precinct, Wacol. It is planned to commence the event at 9am for a 9.30 am memorial service in the Chapel, a couple of short informative talks about NGVR and the early part of the Pacific War followed by a mixed formal luncheon in Everyman's Building. Our Military Museum will be open for viewing by the attendees. Other informal events will be planned to provide entertainment for a weekend visit to Brisbane for travelling members and friends.

At this stage of the planning timings and cost have not been finalised. Dress will be Anzac Day dress.

To allow planning for this important anniversary to proceed we now require an indication as to what numbers can be expected. Replies are not definite at this stage but we need some indication.

### PLEASE ADVISE:-

Peter Rogers Email [phrogers@bigpond.com](mailto:phrogers@bigpond.com) Phone 0413 699 173 or

Tony Boulter Email [tonyboulter47@gmail.com](mailto:tonyboulter47@gmail.com) Phone 0413 173 393

if you expect to be attending and who will be accompanying you. We realise that September is a long way away but need to commence our planning now and this notice gives all members sufficient time to make travel arrangements if required.

Parking, as well as other facilities, is available on site and the Museum will be open prior to the luncheon for anyone wishing to see this magnificent Museum.

The Co-ordinators for this commemorative luncheon are Peter Rogers DFC and Tony Boulter. Queries re accommodation, location of venue etc can be made to either whose particulars appear above.

## A COY PNGVR REUNION

A Coy reunion to be held at Caloundra RSL, 19 West Terrace St., Caloundra, in the VC Lounge on Tuesday 23rd April from 11 AM onwards.

All A Coy personnel and past and present members of the Association Committee and their families also invited. Dress Anzac Day attire, medals optional.

Lunch and drinks can be purchased from the VC lounge.

Please contact Leslie MacAndrew for further details, phone 07 3824 4927, email [lesmca1@gmail.com](mailto:lesmca1@gmail.com)

And if you know anyone, ex "A" Coy, please do invite them .



Had a bad mixup at the store today..when the cashier said strip down facing me, apparently she was referring to my credit card.





An unknown airstrip in the Highlands of PNG. Typical drop off at one end and probably a steep cliff at the other with a few bumps in the middle. Strip probably has a slope as aircraft parked sideways. Obviously a VIP arriving with the Police guard and Administration personnel dressed in their white lap-laps. Photo taken prior to 1964 as the Police are dressed in their old uniform.

*Mirani* and then there was the *Bulolo*. The *Malekula* had 8 letters.  
Source *The Ship's List*



Burns  
Philp  
Ship  
TSMV  
"Bulolo"

**VALE. JAMES HENRY WOO. OBE.**  
**Pte 860405 26.12.1939—11.11.2018**

James was born Woo Ping Wai in the Bainings, East New Britain. He was christened James Henry by the Marist brothers in Rabaul.



James with wife Nancy

He went to Assumption College in Kilmore, Victoria, and on completion of his Leaving Certificate returned to New Guinea working for Shell, driving tankers, before purchasing a Cocoa plantation near Rabaul. This was later localized by selling all shares to individuals in the four surrounding villages.



He joined PNGVR in 1964 shortly after he was eligible, however did not attend either of the Mt Ambra camps owing to business pressures. These pressures then resulted in his taking a discharge when his enlistment period of two years was completed.

He was a member of Rabaul Town Council, the Rabaul Catholic Church Parish Council and the Board of Management of the Sacred Heart School. Later he served on the boards of the PNG Development Bank and the PNG

Banking Corporation.

He was a strong supporter of women's groups and in 1982 was made a *Duk Duk* by the Tolai people.

In 1984 he received the Order of the British Empire for his services and contribution to the community.

After settling in Sydney he again became involved in community work and was Vice President of the PNG Chinese Catholic Assn of Australia.

He became ill early in 2019 and towards the end was bedridden but never lost his sense of humour.

**LEST WE FORGET.**

**VALE. Peter Nelson HARDIMAN Pte 3170399**

Died 7.2.2017 Aged 90. From his number it would appear that he had previous service prior to joining A Coy, PNGVR about 1953. In 1954 he transferred to B Coy.

Apart from the fact that he was in the RPNGC (Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary) nothing else is known of him. Should anyone have further information please advise the Editor for inclusion in a future issue.

**LEST WE FORGET**

Malaita (1)	1905-1914	Hulked/Sold
Malaita (2)	1933-1965	Sold
Malanta	1925-1933	Scuttled
Malayan	1890-1930	Sold
Malekula(8)	1952—1969	Sold
Malinoa	1925-1932	Stranded/Refloated/ Scuttled
Mambare	1900—1902	Wrecked
Mamutu(6 letters)	1938-1942	Sunk Japanese Sub
Mangola	1938-1957	Sold
Manutai	1946—1995	
Marella	1914—1954	Sold
Marsina	1905—1927	Sold
Matafele(8 letters)	1938—1944	Sunk Japanese Sub
Mataram	1909—1934	Sold
Matunga	1900—1917	Scuttled by German Raider
Mawatta	1904-1945	
Melusia	1902—1927	Sold
Mindini	1905—1923	Wrecked Solomons
Mitiaro	1931-1935	Scuttled
Montoro (1)	1911-1948	Sold
Montoro (2)	1956-1971	Sold
Moresby (1)	1898-1915	Torpedoed & sunk
Moresby (2)	1965-1770	Sold
Morinda	1913-1953	Scrapped
Muliama	1937-1957	Sold
Muniara	1908-1913	Wrecked Marshall Is.

There were others of course *Neptuna*, sunk by Japanese in Darwin Harbour, *Tulagi*, sunk by German U Boat en route Sydney to Colombo. Two ships only had 6 letters, *Merkur* and

**DOES ANYONE KNOW  
WHICH PAGE OF THE  
BIBLE EXPLAINS HOW TO  
TURN WATER INTO WINE?  
ASKING FOR A FRIEND.**

**Be good to your nieces  
and nephews.  
One day  
you'll need  
them to  
smuggle  
alcohol  
into your  
nursing home.**



#### **An Easter Message from the Chaplain.**

Worry can be a very debilitating emotion. We worry about our partners, children, family, our jobs, our finances and our health. We even worry about running out of time, and whether we have made a right decision. You know, sometimes the things we worry about never happen.

In Philippians chapter 4 vs 6&7 the Bible tells us; "be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God that surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus".

Dear Heavenly Father, when floods of disappointment, waves of doubt, and clouds of worry crowd in on us, help us to remember that we are not alone. You can give us your peace through the storms of life. So, Lord, please help us to trust you with everything in our lives, especially the things that concern us and cause us to be anxious. Amen.

### **FUNCTION DATES**

**Sat 6 April 10am - 1pm**

Museum open day; members & visitors welcome; come & have a coffee/tea

**Sat 13 April 10am**

Executive Committee meeting  
(Final before ANZAC Day)

**Tue 23 April 11am**

A Coy PNGVR reunion; Caloundra RSL;  
Contact: Les MacAndrew 07 3829 4927

**Thur 25 April 10am**

Brisbane ANZAC Day march, position 62;  
Meet cnr George & Mary Streets

Reunion at Exchange Hotel, Charlotte St  
from 11am; \$15/pp for finger food;  
CASH BAR ONLY.

*Note: there will be no service in the  
shrine after the march.*

**Sat 4 May 10am - 1pm**

Museum open day; members & visitors  
welcome; come & have a coffee/tea



**NATIONAL MEDALS**  
Pty Ltd



#### **REPLICA MEDALS OR MOUNTING OF MEDALS**

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

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

**Includes former members of the PIR, PIB and NGIB.**

**For correspondence contact Secretary,** Colin Gould, email [pngvr@optusnet.com.au](mailto:pngvr@optusnet.com.au), phone 0424 562 030 (The Secretary, P O Box 885, Park Ridge, Qld, 4125)

**For Military Museum enquires contact** Colin Gould email [pngvr@optusnet.com.au](mailto:pngvr@optusnet.com.au), phone 0424 562 030 or

Paul Brown email [paulbrown475@gmail.com](mailto:paulbrown475@gmail.com), Phone 0402 644 181

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

**Membership fee payments to Treasurer,** Doug Ng, email [douglasng@inet.net.au](mailto:douglasng@inet.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](mailto:trevor.connell@internode.on.net), phone 0409 690 590

[www.pngvr.weebly.com](http://www.pngvr.weebly.com) (all back copies of HTT may be obtained from our website)

**Facebook Master:** Kieran Nelson, email [kierannelson@bigpond.com](mailto:kierannelson@bigpond.com), phone 0412 236 013

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

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

**Padre.** Rev Ron MacDonald. Phone 0407 008 624 email [ron.macdonald@aue.salvationarmy.org](mailto:ron.macdonald@aue.salvationarmy.org)



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