

# **PNG** **Kundu**

**SEPTEMBER 2021**



**Papua New Guinea Association  
of Australia Inc.**

***[www.pngaa.org](http://www.pngaa.org)***





FROM THE TOP: Alan Pierce, Roy Ranney, Richard Seeto (background), Warren Martin, Sara Turner, Mauricio Biscocho; Paul Munro, Richard Seeto, John Godlee & Ros Godlee; Peter Stace & Oscar Oberholzer; Cheryl Marvell; John Egerton, Nigel Wong and his father, Ulick (centre)

## Last Pack 'n Post!

In the past the packing and posting out of our journal, *PNG Kundu*, has been handled by a happy group of volunteers, four times a year, in the spacious surrounds of the Chatswood Bowling Club. This last time, on 27 May 2021, the labelling and the packing and posting were done on the same day rather than on two days, as had been done previously.

Everyone was busy but, as well, there was plenty of time for chat and morning tea/lunch. It has always been an enjoyable gathering. Ros and John Godlee have been organising the coffee and tea and have our grateful thanks! Various people have brought delicious plates of savoury and sweet *kai*.

Following the completion of each journal by the Editor, John Egerton, and the Production Designer, Jeannette Gilligan, Roy Ranney and Murrough Benson have organised the day, ensuring the labels have been printed into the required destinations and affixed to envelopes, the journals delivered on time for the pack, ensuring the morning flows smoothly, the empty boxes are dealt with and the journals get to the bulk post office. This job has occurred four times a year for at least the past forty-three years. With Murrough no longer in Sydney and Roy often overseas the packing and posting will now be outsourced to the newly-appointed printer.

The good news is that the Chatswood Bowling Club is happy for the PNGAA to come together every quarter so those morning tea gatherings will continue. See the Events Diary for the next one!

Those present for the final pack event were Roy Ranney, Andrea Williams, John Egerton, Cheryl Marvell, Nigel & Ulick Wong, Alan Pierce, Richard Seeto, Warren Martin, Paul Munro, Mauricio Biscocho, John & Ros Godlee, Graham Cowley, Sara Turner, Peter Stace and Oscar Oberholzer.

There have been many others involved over the years and we acknowledge their contribution. Some from recent years we remember are: Frank van Kolck, Frank Haviland, Margaret Dunlop, Paul Dennett, Ross Johnson, Jacky Lawes, Margaret Komarek, Ron Patton, Russell Wade, Pam Cowley Virtue, Dianne Guy, Bev Melrose, Judy Waterer, Jerry Lattin, Alan and Connie Anderson.

Others from further back are Joan Stobo, Marie Clifton-Bassett, Pam Foley and Joe Nitsche (both gone but not forgotten). **ANDREA WILLIAMS**



**PNG Kundu** is the official journal of the  
**PAPUA NEW GUINEA ASSOCIATION  
OF AUSTRALIA Inc.**

(Formally constituted in 1951—incorporated in 1996)

ISSN 2652-5216, PPA 224987/00025 • Vol. 2, No. 7

*Kundu* is the *Tok Pisin* word for the hourglass-shaped drum that forms part of Papua New Guinea's Coat of Arms, and after which this journal is named—formerly called *Una Voce*. The *Kundu* has told fascinating stories for centuries, and through our PNGAA journal we will continue documenting history and the evolving special relationship between the two countries this association holds in its heart. Whilst *Tok Pisin* is one of the three official languages of PNG, please note that some authors still use the term *Pidgin* for *Tok Pisin*, and *PNG Kundu* supports both terms.

### 2021–2022 PNGAA Office Bearers

**PRESIDENT:** Chris Pearsall

Mob: 0410 530 502—Email: [president@pngaa.net](mailto:president@pngaa.net)

**TREASURER:** Murrough Benson

Mob: 0448 216 049—Email: [treasurer@pngaa.net](mailto:treasurer@pngaa.net)

**SECRETARY:** Vacant—a volunteer needed

**MEMBERSHIP OFFICER:** Roy Ranney

Email: [membership@pngaa.net](mailto:membership@pngaa.net)

**PNGAA ARCHIVIST & COLLECTIONS:**

For all donations to this collection (photographs, diaries, publications, etc.), please contact Cheryl Marvell at [collection@pngaa.net](mailto:collection@pngaa.net) or 0438 635 132

**EVENTS CO-ORDINATOR:** Vacant—a volunteer needed

**MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:**

Phil Ainsworth, Chris Warrillow, Andrea Williams, Kalo Fainu & Max Uechtritz

**RABAU & MONTEVIDEO MARU MEMORIAL:**

Andrea Williams—Email: [admin@memorial.org.au](mailto:admin@memorial.org.au)

**PNGAA Membership:**

This is available to anyone with an interest in PNG. Members, who receive four quarterly issues of our journal per year, have access to all parts of the website, and are encouraged to explore and become actively involved with all aspects of the PNGAA. Please refer to the *Treasurer's Corner*, at the end of this issue, for more details. Application forms also are available from the Membership Officer at [membership@pngaa.net](mailto:membership@pngaa.net) or our website. For members receiving a printed copy of the journal, the address label shows the current status of your membership.

**PNGAA Mail:** PNGAA, PO Box 250, Kilcoy QLD 4515

**PNGAA Website:** [www.pngaa.org](http://www.pngaa.org)

**PNGAA Social Media:**

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INSTAGRAM—[https://www.instagram.com/png\\_association\\_of\\_australia/](https://www.instagram.com/png_association_of_australia/)

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TWITTER—[https://twitter.com/PNG\\_ASSOC\\_AUS](https://twitter.com/PNG_ASSOC_AUS)

**PNG KUNDU EDITOR:**

John Egerton—Mob. 0400 311 320

**Deadline for the December 2021 issue  
FRIDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 2021**

**Please send all contributions to:  
[editor@pngaa.net](mailto:editor@pngaa.net)**

Contribution guidelines are available on the website or by request from the editor



# PNG Kundu

SEPTEMBER 2021

Last Pack 'n Post	IFC
PNGAA Update	2
Letters & Enquiries	6
Events Diary	9
Out & About with the PNGAA	12
PNG in the News	13
Memoir: Papua New Guinea's Transition to Independence	19
Sydney Anzac Day March to Remember	22
The PNG Star Mountains: Still Wild After All These Years	23
A Place Where Heaven Meets Earth	26
A Career Change Called	27
Two Tales from My Visit to the Fore Area in 1957	29
A Memorable Experience (Part 4)	31
Family Farm to PNG Development Bank—Story of a Didiman (Part 9)	33
Life and Times at Talidig School 1961–62	37
The Old Goroka Hospital	41
Pig Bel—or, Too Much of a Good Thing?	44
Building the Road up the West Coast of New Ireland	47
Art & Book Reviews	49
PNGAA Vale	54
Memorial News	57
2021 Last Post Ceremony	59
Treasurer's Corner	63
Membership & Order Form	
PNGAA Store	IBC
Papua New Guinea's Road to Independence	BC



**Front Cover:**

Decorative pots don the heads of the Imuri fire dancers of Karizokara, Bundi (see page 26). If you have further information, or any background history, to the Imuri fire dancers or the Kundu Festival, please write to the editor of *PNG Kundu*.

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## President's Report

I write as the newly-elected President of the Papua New Guinea Association of Australia (PNGAA), following the recent Annual General Meeting at the Hornsby RSL Club on 1 May 2021.

The PNGAA is a long-established organisation that provides a common ground for all those interested in Papua New Guinea. Starting out its existence as the Retired Officers' Association, the PNGAA's initial role was to represent the interests of those who had been civil servants in the former Australian administration, prior to Independence.

With the achievement of self-government and later Independence,

**As well as organising PNGAA events, members of the Management Committee continue to network on your behalf, attending a wide range of events and activities, encouraging new members and possible partnerships to keep our association vital and viable. Featured here are reports and updates from the committee, other news of interest and a welcome to new members.**

the Association transformed itself to the PNGAA we know today and broadened its scope to appeal to anybody who had an interest in Papua New Guinea.

Once again, the PNGAA is somewhat at the cross roads and one of my objectives as President is to work with the new committee to examine the Association's role and its place in both Australia and PNG. We need to make sure that it stays relevant and continues to perform its major role in fostering the relationship between both countries.

While the past, especially Australia's contribution to the development of Papua New Guinea should never be forgotten, the PNGAA now needs to look towards the future to see where it best fits in fulfilling its role

of promoting the development of a warm bilateral relationship between both countries.

Papua New Guinea faces many challenges and, as I mentioned at the AGM, the country provided an interesting and varied life to those of us who were born there, or who worked there for some period of our lives, and I would like to think that the PNGAA through its members could become more active in supporting PNG and further extending the hand of friendship, wherever that is possible.

I will be discussing some new initiatives in this regard with the Committee and, hopefully, developing some action plans. Of course, it's not just up to the Committee and I urge any PNGAA member to get involved in any way they can, and to feel free to share ideas with the Committee to further consider.

Members are always free to contact me or other committee members at any time.

Kind regards to all.

**CHRIS PEARSALL**  
President, PNGAA

## Last Post Ceremony

The PNGAA gratefully thanks John Copland for representing the association and laying a wreath on its behalf at the Last Post Ceremony at the Australian War Memorial on 1 July 2021 in

memory of the sinking of the *Montevideo Maru*.

We also thank John Reeves for participating in the service and in laying a wreath, and Alexandra McCosker for the special photographs which provide an outstanding memory of the service.

*Please see Memorial News for more about the ceremony*

## Events Co-Ordinator & Sydney Events

We would like to thank Sara Turner for her hard work in the role of Events Co-Ordinator—it was most appreciated by all of us. However, we now require someone to fill this voluntary position, which is part of the PNGAA Management Committee.

You would be able to add your personal touch, meet with a wonderful network of people, extend your skills and have fun!

If you're interested and require further information, please contact Andrea Williams on [coordinator@pngaa.net](mailto:coordinator@pngaa.net).

In the meantime, Andrea and Cheryl Marvell have organised some Sydney events, including the **'Kokoda Memorial Walkway Event'**, on Tuesday, 7 September and a fundraising evening with Archibald 2021 and Wynne 2021 /2020 finalist, Julianne Ross Allcorn, called **'Bush, Brush & Bubbles'**, on Friday, 17 September 2021.

Julianne is an artist who draws inspiration from nature. Her artworks perfectly illustrate what an immense influence the natural beauty around us can have on the imagination of an artist.

She is a highly accomplished practising artist with works in



*Northern Endeavour—floating production storage and offloading facility*

many collections and has displayed in many group and solo exhibitions.

Awarded the 'Trustees Water-colour Prize' in the WYNNE 2020 AGNSW, Juli's artworks are held in various private collections around the world—London, Cornwall, Switzerland, USA, France and Australia.

Born in Rabaul, PNG, and now residing in Roseville, Sydney, Juli was the Events Co-ordinator of the Papua New Guinea Association of Australia from 2009–15 and curated the PNGAA Art Exhibition 2015 at Glebe.

Julianne says: *My two loves in life besides my family are dancing and creating artworks. Without*

*these I am not whole. Drawing is meditation. Teaching is the reward.*

*I see movement in colour and endeavour to translate the energy of the natural world onto birch wood panels, paper and canvas using watercolour, pencil, charcoal, acrylic, oil paints and pastel bringing texture and pattern alive with the colours and hues of the bush.*

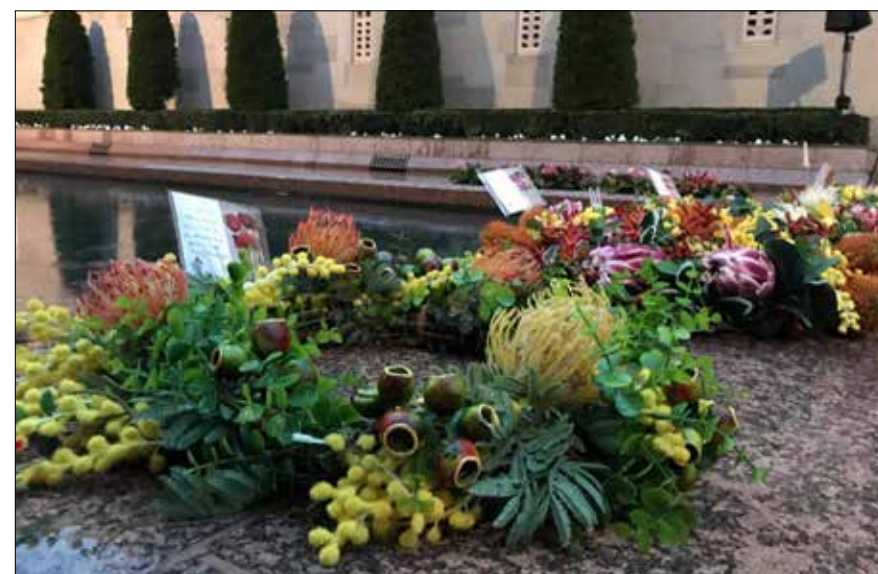
Julianne teaches Imagination & Creation Art Classes, in her garden studios in Roseville and at Strathfield Picture Framing Studio in Enfield. See more at: <https://juliallcorn.wixsite.com/juliannerossallcorn>

In addition, the popular speaker series continues with **'PNG Tales No. 3'** on Sunday, 19 September 2021. Peter Barr will give an overview of the Coral Sea 2 Submarine Cable System (CS2) project connecting Australia to Papua New Guinea, Coral Sea and Solomon Islands. CS2 is designed to be a high-capacity fibre optic submarine cable.

While there were several vessels involved, Peter was based on the *Northern Endeavour* and his discussion will be centred on the



Julianne Ross Allcorn



Some of the beautiful wreaths at the Last Post Ceremony, Canberra  
(Photo: Alexandra McCosker)



nine weeks he spent on board the vessel surveying from the coast near Port Moresby, to throughout the Solomon Islands. This was to determine a secure, technically and economically viable route for the cable. This has now been completed. If time or particular interest allows during his talk, the installation phase of work may be briefly discussed.

Peter Barr is principal director of Barmarine and a Level 1 Industrial Offshore Certified Hydrographer with the Australasian Surveying and Spatial Sciences Institute. Peter spent six years in the Royal Australian Navy and on leaving in 1980 has worked in the offshore oil and gas and marine fibre optic cable industries in over forty countries.

In conjunction with subsea engineering works he has a broad-based knowledge of marine, particularly subsea career specialisms.

In 2014 Peter participated in the search for the missing Malaysian airliner *MH370* as the lead representative for the Australian Transport and Safety Bureau (ATSB) on the initial search vessel, *GO Phoenix*.

All welcome, but make sure you book early!  
<https://pngaa.org/png-theses-3-coral-sea-2-fibre-optic-cable-project-with-peter-barr-19-september-2021/>

Don't forget the inaugural morning tea gathering, in lieu of the pack'n post days, and Sydney's Annual Christmas Luncheon, celebrating PNGAA's seventieth anniversary.

**For more information about these events, please go to the Events Diary**



## Celebrating Forty-Six Years of Independence

Papua New Guinea achieved its independence on 16 September 1975, when the new PNG flag was raised. Depending on health restrictions, this day will be celebrated throughout the country. Please see the back cover of this issue for the PNGAA's tribute: ***Papua New Guinea's Road to Independence***.

## New eBook for Website

For quite a few issues, you've been entertained by Murrough Benson's story of his time in Papua New Guinea—firstly as a *didiman* and then with the PNG Development Bank. Now, all the instalments have been combined into one book as part of our digital collection, and is available to view or download on our website: [www.pngaa.org/e-books/](http://www.pngaa.org/e-books/)

## Welcome to New PNGAA Committee Member

Kalolaine Fainu (*above*) is a content creator, a Pasifika storyteller of Tongan/Australian heritage and is the founding director of Pasifika Film Fest.

After many years of developing a platform for Pacific creatives to have their films shared with audiences on the big screen across the region, Kalo has stepped back into the production side of storytelling. This creative journey has seen her spend the past eighteen months exploring her ancestral ties in Papua New Guinea, where she now spends most of her time.

Her creative skill set has opened doors for further exploration and reporting across PNG,



which has led her to producing work for CARE International and a number of other international aid organisations and media corporations. Kalo's interest, however, has always been connecting with people at a grassroots level.

Details of her education, training and achievements can be found at the website below.  
<https://www.achildofoceania.com/>

## PNGAA New Members

The PNGAA Committee welcomes the following new members: Kalo Fainu, Francois Gastine, Rebecca Grant, Richard Knight, Jane Rybarz, Chris Sharples, Leonard Smith, Lloyd Taylor & Hans von Chrismar.

If you have a friend or family member who wishes to join the PNGAA, please use the *Treasurer's Corner Membership & Order Form*, at the back of this issue.

## June Correction

One of our members, Bernard Oberleuter, has written to identify a misprint in the June issue of *PNG Kundu* (back cover). The date of the death of the late Prince Phillip was 9 April 2021, not 2012 as printed. I regret this failure of our quality control. *ED*



## The PNGAA wishes to thank those Management Committee members who retired at the 2021 AGM—Sara Turner, Steven Gagau and Yana Di Pietro

Each of these dedicated and skilled volunteers gave their time generously to bringing our PNG/Australian community together. They have organised an enormous variety of events where members and friends have heard the experiences of others, telling stories of work, friendship and adventure in PNG.

Through these events funds have also been raised to support the work of the Association—both with the ongoing costs of supporting the PNGAA Collection and in building up an appropriate amount where the PNGAA can contribute to projects needing assistance in PNG.

Sara's creative talents meant that many enjoyable events were held in the Sydney area, whilst also supporting our regional coordinators and, together with Steven Gagau, initiating links with the Sydney Wantok community. Sara ensured that CWA's focus year on PNG was

the best focus year the CWA ever had! Sara initiated the wonderful 'PNG Tales' series of talks and anyone who attends knows they are not to be missed. PNGAA is grateful for the support from Sara's husband, Roger Turner, and to her family, especially sisters Jane Turner and Lisa Bleijie.

Sara, along with Steven Gagau, also former President of the Sydney Wantok Association, both joined the PNGAA Management Committee in 2015 and worked tirelessly bringing PNG and Pacific groups together so that a joint community sharing educational, cultural and resource knowledge can become a reality. This remains a work in progress and all assistance continues to be welcomed. Steven provided valuable assistance to the Management Committee over a number of areas.

Yana joined the PNGAA Committee in 2017 and enthus-

iastically organised two annual luncheon events in Victoria, which were popularly attended and greatly enjoyed. Many friendships were formed between Australians and Papua New Guineans living in Victoria.

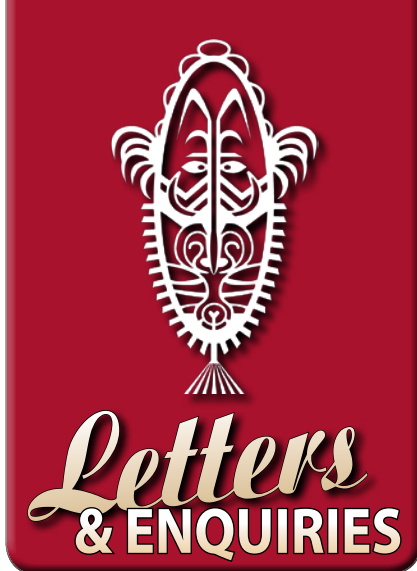
Yana was supported and inspired by a core working group including Chris Warrillow, Peter Milburn, Geraldine Tyler, with assistance from Louise and Vince Garetto, Scott Adams and the late Roy Andrews. Yana also undertook the task of increasing PNGAA's social media presence by initiating, developing and managing PNGAA's LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram social media.

***PNGAA values the tremendous contribution, including the friendship and leadership, that Sara, Steven and Yana have given to the Association and looks forward to their ongoing involvement.***



Retiring committee members—Sara Turner, Steven Gagau & Yana Di Pietro





## Rathmines Heritage Centre

On 8 April 2021 my husband and I attended the event at the Rathmines Heritage Centre, ably organised by Sara Turner and Suellen Holland. It consisted of a tour of the old Catalina base, a walk-through of the Max Dupain Photographic Exhibition in the Heritage Centre, and an excellent lunch at the Rathmines Bowling Club. The occasion was of special interest to us as my husband's father was a pilot in air rescue in New Guinea during the war (although not involved in the Catalina base) and my father was in Tobruk and New Guinea as part of the 9th Division.

Rathmines on Lake Macquarie, operated by the RAAF, was once the largest flying boat base in the Southern Hemisphere. Established in 1939 it is the only surviving and intact flying boat base left in Australia, and its significance is such that it has been recognised for

Featuring commentaries about previously published articles and news items, along with opinions of interest to PNGAA members. Also included are enquiries from those who require assistance with their research or finding someone from the past. Please send your contributions by the Copy Deadline, 17 September 2021, to [editor@pngaa.net](mailto:editor@pngaa.net)

protection on the State Heritage Register.

These flying boats and their crews stationed at Rathmines were involved in events that ended the threat of invasion to Australia including the mining of Manila Harbour and the waters off the East Coast of China, as well as in the Battle of the Coral Sea.

In its heyday the site consisted of eighty acres (32 ha) of cleared land, buildings housing personnel servicing the aircraft, a land airstrip and the water strip for launching the mighty Catalinas. Today, some of the buildings remain including the beautiful Rathmines Theatre, which has recently been renovated and is still used for artistic purposes. The RAAF operated 168 Catalina Flying Boats here between 1941 and 1950, flown by four front-line squadrons, two communications units and three Air-Sea-Rescue flights.

Max Dupain is a renowned Australian photographer, but not many know that he was appointed

as an official war photographer towards the end of World War II. In this excellent exhibition he has captured the day-to-day life at military bases, including the RAAF Rathmines Base and the base on Goodenough Island in Papua New Guinea. Seventy years later these photographs are still so clear, recording accurately and with sympathy and admiration the role played by various servicemen and women (the latter servicing the huge Catalinas at the base). During his own service Max Dupain also experimented with camouflage and concealment for the RAAF.

The exhibition has been curated by the History Section of Lake Macquarie Council from black and white reprints of material from the State Library of NSW.

It is available until November 2021 at the Rathmines Heritage Centre and is well worth a visit, not only for the exhibition but also a view of the beautiful old theatre, which played such a huge role for those serving at Rathmines Base during the war.

I still remember getting the Sunderland Flying Boat from Rose Bay to New Guinea during the 1950s for school holidays. Not Catalinas, but still exciting. I believe one or two of the old Catalinas have been restored and are still flying today.

**KAREN WILSON**

## Blamey's Rabbits and a Sequel

Reference was made in *Una Voce*, December 2019, to the remark made by General Thomas Blamey when addressing Australian soldiers in Port Moresby in 1942: 'It's the running rabbit that gets shot, while the sitting rabbit is safe', (or words to this effect).

Blamey may have only meant his words as a metaphor, to encourage the soldiers to hold their positions when attacked, rather than withdrawing, but the soldiers resented his words, thinking he may have been comparing them to rabbits.

Military discipline prevented them from voicing their resentment when on parade; but when it was learned that he would be visiting the military hospital the following day, lettuce leaves were smuggled in and soldiers chewed them ostentatiously as he came through the wards.

(Personally, I don't find Blamey's metaphor very accurate—as a farm boy I made war on them with a .22 rifle. I never wasted bullets on a running rabbit; it was the sitting rabbits that fell victim to my shooting.)

There was a sequel to Blamey's remarks, which may well have caused an Australian politician's downfall. The Hon. Francis Forde, the Minister for the Army, visited Port Moresby soon afterwards. Like Blamey, he addressed a parade of soldiers who had been involved in the fighting on the Kokoda Track. Forde had evidently heard of Blamey's remark, but gained a wrong understanding of it, for he accused the men of a



Frank Forde (Australian Minister for the Army); General Douglas MacArthur; General Sir Thomas Blamey; Lieutenant General George C Kenney; Lieutenant General Edmund Herring; Brigadier General Kenneth Walker, October 1942

particular battalion of having 'run like rabbits'.

Forde, being a civilian, there was no military discipline to prevent the soldiers from voicing their disapproval, and their hooting and booing drowned out the rest of his speech. The spreading of this story may have had a part in the following events.

Forde was Deputy Prime Minister to Prime Minister John Curtin. When Curtin died on 5 July 1945, the Governor-General appointed Forde as caretaker Prime Minister. But when the Labor Caucus met on 13 July, Forde was not confirmed in the position—JB 'Ben' Chifley was chosen as the new Prime Minister, and Forde went down in history as the Australian Prime Minister with the shortest term—eight days.

In the Federal election in 1946, although the Chifley Government was returned to office, Forde lost his seat—the only cabinet minister to do so. He did not attempt to re-enter the Federal Parliament,

but in 1955 he stood for, and won, a seat in Queensland's State Parliament. It was thought that, with his previous political experience, he had a good chance to become a future Premier. But in 1957 he lost his seat and did not try to re-enter politics. It may have been Blamey's rabbits that ended his career.

**NEVILLE THRELFALL**

## COVID-19 Travel Update

The months just fly by when you are having fun, Easter has gone and here we are well into 2021.

There has been a spike in COVID cases in PNG, they are huge by PNG standards, but small by the world standards.

There is little change in this area of the world. Our international borders (PNG, Australia and New Zealand) are still tightly closed. However, a travel bubble will open up later this month between Australia and New Zealand only.

Our company has experienced large changes in the last twelve





months, for we have gone from a company that received 90% of its business from international clients to one that receives zero international business and now does 100% locally business.

This change required a complete rethink in how we operate. We went from a company where people booked months in advance to one where local bookings are for today! These bookings could even change later in the day if they cancel.

If you come from outside Oceania all countries in this part of the world (PNG, Australia & New Zealand) require you to quarantine on arrival at your expense and in a government nominated facility. Even vaccinated people entering Australia, New Zealand or PNG internationally still have to quarantine for fourteen days on arrival. Unless you are a citizen or a permanent resident of one of these countries then it is difficult to gain entry. Our international borders are still effectively closed and likely to remain so for some time yet, maybe even to the end of 2021.

Until these international restrictions are lifted and people are free to enter PNG and Australia internationally without having to quarantine then there will be few or no international travellers 'coming downunder'. We have had no indications from the authorities in PNG or Australia as to when these international restrictions will be lifted.

All we can do at this stage is to encourage our nearest and dearest to stay as safe and as

healthy as they can and offer our understanding, compassion and help our industry friends, colleagues and partners, particularly those in North America and Europe.

We are committed to recovering from this and getting our international travel business moving again as soon as this is over. Stay safe and healthy and my very best regards.



### Plantation Life in New Ireland in the 1960s

Becoming a member of PNGAA and reading the many interesting articles from contributors has rekindled many memories of the early 1960s when I was a copra and cocoa plantation manager employed by WR Carpenter Pty Ltd, Rabaul. I enjoy reading others' experiences but would like to know if you think readers would be interested in other stories from my own experience.

The early 1960s were a period of change; the Vietnam War was of concern as was New Guinea's shift from semi-colonial rule to independence. Plantation managers (and owners) had to adjust to the circumstances and plantation life was full of alarms, for example when different groups of workers tried to settle their tribal disputes between each other.

Being on my own managing an isolated plantation on the East Coast of New Ireland there was no outside help. I had an old 3BZ wartime radio that was near useless so medical emergencies were a challenge. Local people

as well came for help with their health problems. Fortunately, all managers were required to work fulltime at Nonga Base Hospital to obtain a medical assistant's certificate before employing workers. There had to be enough food supplies for the 180 indentured native workers for three months. Managers were also required to do all mechanical repairs on plantation machinery so, all in all, it was a full-on occupation.

IAN SMITH

**Editor's Note:** Ian wrote to PNG KUNDU (March 2021) about his memories of working with the late Peter Shanahan. I have assured him that further stories about his life as a plantation manager would be of interest to our readers.

### Accident at Wau

I write re the Bristol freighter aircraft story by Ron Austin in the June issue of PNG KUNDU.

I was told, correctly I hope, there are the remains of one of these aircraft at the bottom of the airstrip at Wau.

The story was: Because of the slope it is the practice to land uphill at Wau and then, at the top turn at right angles to the strip. This aircraft was on a promotion flight in the then Territory of Papua New Guinea. The pilot did not turn after landing and the brake cable broke. Mr Austin mentions their original 'dodgy' brakes but it wasn't them that led to the loss of this plane.

JOHN R HORNE

**Editor's Note:** Ron Austin's account of this accident, from a pilot's perspective, will be in the next issue of PNG KUNDU. Meanwhile the official report describing the event may be accessed at the following link: <https://aviation-safety.net/database/record.php?id=19471123-0>



### SYDNEY

#### Oceanic Art Fair

Saturday, 21 August 2021

PNGAA is sponsoring a 'sale' table for members at the Oceanic Art Fair in Sydney. Do you have artefacts or memorabilia that are surplus to your needs and you would like to sell?

**Venue:** The National Art School (NAS), corner of Forbes & Burton Streets, Darlinghurst.

**Time:** 9 am–5 pm

PNGAA members may wish to bring along items for sale and add them to our table at the Oceanic Art Society's Tribal Art Fair in Sydney. PNGAA asks that 10% of the sales from our table on the day go to PNGAA.

You may also wish to book your own table at the Oceanic Art Society's Tribal Fair. All artefacts and PNG memorabilia are welcome—this is an opportunity to clear your shelves! Please let us know you would like to participate by emailing confirmation to the contacts below.

Please note the PNGAA is always looking for artefacts for our own collection. If you would like them to stay a treasured item for future display within the association please donate them to us.

**A listing of upcoming functions and events of interest to PNGAA members—if you have an activity to advertise or promote, please send the details by 17 September 2021, to [coordinator@pngaa.net](mailto:coordinator@pngaa.net) or [editor@pngaa.net](mailto:editor@pngaa.net)**  
Events also listed on our website, under **Resources>Events**.

If you have an item you would be willing to donate to the silent auction on the day, that would be most welcome—20% to go to OAS and the balance to PNGAA.

This is a wonderful opportunity for PNGAA and OAS to complement and enhance each other's organisations and your participation helps both associations with fundraising.

Andrea Williams, Cheryl Marvell and Bev Melrose are organising the PNGAA table. If you can help us on the day we would welcome any assistance, so please volunteer. We know from past years that it is a fabulous day.

Please contact Andrea on [coordinator@pngaa.net](mailto:coordinator@pngaa.net) or Cheryl on [collection@pngaa.net](mailto:collection@pngaa.net)

#### Kokoda Memorial Walkway Event

Tuesday, 7 September 2021

**Venue:** Kokoda Memorial Walkway, Killoola Street, Rhodes Park, Concord 2137

**Time:** 9.30 am for a 10.30 am start of visit and tour until 12 noon.

**Cost:** Nil but please register to attend.



**Visit & Tour Registration:**

[collection@pngaa.net](mailto:collection@pngaa.net) or Cheryl Marvell at 0438 635 132.

**Parking:** Available at Centre.

More information see:

<https://pngaa.org/amg-event-in-sydney-1-may-2021/>

#### Bush, Brush & Bubbles Friday, 17 September 2021

An evening with Archibald 2021 and Wynne 2021 /2020 Finalist, Julianne Ross Allcorn.

**Venue:** Roseville—venue to be advised to confirmed participants.

**Time:** 6.30 pm–9.30 pm

**Cost:** \$150 includes art materials, three hours of art instruction, great company, and high tea canapés. BYO bubbles and drinks (glasses supplied).

**RSVP:** 5 September 2021

Payment to PNGAA BSB: 062-009 Account No. 0090 7724

**Reference:** ART plus your surname.

Please email Andrea or Cheryl when payment is made.

**Contact:** Andrea Williams

E: [coordinator@pngaa.net](mailto:coordinator@pngaa.net) /

M: 0409 031 889 or Cheryl Marvell

E: [collection@pngaa.net](mailto:collection@pngaa.net) /

M: 0438 635 132

Note: This is a PNGAA fundraising event for a PNG project and, at the same time, a fun evening whilst creating and socialising. Be quick!

**For more information, please go to page 3 in PNGAA Update**



### PNG Tales No. 3

**Sunday, 19 September 2021**

**Speaker:** Peter Barr, 'Coral Sea 2 Fibre Optic Cable Project Connecting Australia to Papua New Guinea'

Another speaker will be advised on the PNGAA website when further information is available.

**Venue:** The Roseville Club, 64 Pacific Highway, Roseville

**Time:** 11 am–3 pm

**Public Transport:** Train to Roseville Station; then cross the Pacific Highway.

**Parking:** Street parking or car-park behind the club in Larkin Lane.

**Cost:** Due to COVID-19 lockdowns we could not confirm this before going to print. Please check [www.pngaa.org](http://www.pngaa.org) for further information. Include in the search box 'PNG Tales-Peter Barr'. Cash bar only.

**RSVP:** 3 September 2021

**Contact:** Andrea Williams  
E: [coordinator@pngaa.net](mailto:coordinator@pngaa.net) /  
M: 0409 031 889 or

Cheryl Marvell E: [collection@pngaa.net](mailto:collection@pngaa.net) / M: 0438 635 132

**Payment:** CBA/BSB 062 009  
Account No. 0090 7724

**Reference:** PT3 plus your surname.

Please email Andrea or Cheryl when payment is made.

**For more information, please go to page 3 in PNGAA Update**

### Reliving the Label and Pack Days Thursday, 28 October 2021

**Venue:** Chatswood Bowling Club, 655 Pacific Highway, Chatswood.

**Time:** 10.30 am to noon

**Cost:** Nil

**RSVP:** [coordinator@pngaa.net](mailto:coordinator@pngaa.net)

**Transport:** The club is ten minutes' walk south of Chatswood Railway Station.

If driving—travelling south on Pacific Highway, turn left into Gordon Avenue (at the Payless Tyres building), then left into Hammond Lane.

Plenty of free parking is available.

**Activities:** Chatting, socialising, telling tall tales and generally enjoying the company of other ex-PNG folk. This will be a social event only, because from now on the labelling and packing will be done by the newly-appointed printer. Please bring some food to share. See the Inside Cover for more about the 'Last Pack'n Post'.

### ADELAIDE PNGAA Adelaide Reunion Lunch

**Saturday, 30 October 2021**

**GUEST SPEAKER:** Timothy Pietsch, Manager 'Wantok Place', Museum of Papua New Guinea Artefacts, 175a Archer Street, North Adelaide

**Venue:** The Public Schools Club, 207 East Terrace, Adelaide.

**Time:** From 11.45 am

**Further Information:**

Peter Thomas 0438 642 294

[pjthomas@ihug.com.au](mailto:pjthomas@ihug.com.au)

Jan Kleinig 0438 032 640

[janis.kleinig@bigpond.com](mailto:janis.kleinig@bigpond.com)

### PERTH

#### PNGAA Lunch

**Saturday, 26 November, 2021**

**Venue:** RAAF CLUB, Air Force Memorial Estate, 2 Bull Creek Drive, Bull Creek 6149

**Time:** 11.30 for 12 noon lunch

**Note:** All welcome. Attendees order at bar for own choice of food and drink.

### GOLD COAST

#### Gold Coast PNG Club

**Independence Day Luncheon**

**Saturday, 19 September 2021**

**Christmas Luncheon**

**Sunday, 28 November 2021**

**Venue:** Southport Golf Club, Slatyer Avenue, Southport (Noon)

**RSVP:** Five business days before scheduled date.

**Contact:**

Heather Kingston 0412 999 999  
[hkingston@live.com.au](mailto:hkingston@live.com.au)

or Ru Taylor 0418 521 285

[prr7@live.com.au](mailto:prr7@live.com.au)

**Special note:** After registering, lunch must be paid for whether you attend or not, unless notification of non-attendance is given five business days before the event.

**Advance notice:** We are celebrating fifty years in June 2023 with planning underway for a *bikpela bung wantaim* to mark the occasion. Details will come out in the coming months.

### SUNSHINE COAST

#### 2021 South East QLD

#### Ex-Kiaps Reunion

**Sunday, 14 November, 2021**

This invitation is extended to all kiaps, their families, their friends and other acquaintances from a previous lifetime such as teachers, *didiman* and so on.

**Venue:** Kawana Waters Hotel, 136 Nicklin Way, Buddina, Sunshine Coast QLD

**Cost:** Attendees pay for food and drink from the bistro and bars.

**RSVP:** 16 October 2021

**Accommodation:** Kawana Waters Hotel 07 5444 6699 or other local motels.

**Contact:**

Peter Salmon 0438 092 052

[kiap@optusnet.com.au](mailto:kiap@optusnet.com.au);

Bob/Heather Fayle 07 5444 7446

[rjfayle31@gmail.com](mailto:rjfayle31@gmail.com);

Denys & Helen Faithful

07 5444 4484

[denysfaithful@hotmail.com](mailto:denysfaithful@hotmail.com)



#### Seventy-Ninth Anniversary Montevideo Maru Memorial Service

Unfortunately, the three-day lockdown of Brisbane due to COVID-19, commencing 30 June 2021, caused the cancellation of our Memorial Service on 1 July 2021 at the Brisbane Cenotaph.

This was the first cancellation of this service since it began at the Brisbane Cenotaph in 1994.

**Advance Notice:** South-east Queensland members please enter the eightieth Anniversary Service into your calendar. It will be on Friday, 1 July 2022 at 10 am, in the Hall of Memories beneath the Brisbane Cenotaph.

#### PNGVR's Seventieth Anniversary Luncheon

**Saturday, 23 October 2021**

The Papua New Guinea Volunteer Rifles (PNGVR) was formed seventy years ago and the

Association will be holding a celebratory luncheon to celebrate this occasion.

**Venue:** PNGVR's Museum, Wacol Military Precinct, Brisbane.

The event will include a two-course, mixed luncheon in the adjacent Everyman's Hut. A short talk about PNGVR will accompany the luncheon. There will be plenty of time to chat with your friends and still be home before dark.

There is easy parking on site and Everyman's Hut is wheelchair accessible.

**Time:** 10 am

**Cost:** \$40 per person for the meal. Drinks will be available at a cash bar.

**RSVP:** Advise either Paul Brown at [paulbrown475@gmail.com](mailto:paulbrown475@gmail.com) / 0402 644 181 or Colin Gould at [pngvr@optus.com.au](mailto:pngvr@optus.com.au) / 0424 562 030 by 18 October 2021 if you are interested in attending.

**Payment:** Please pay by electronic transfer directly to NGVR & PNGVR Association BSB:064 006, Account No. 10001126, ensuring an adequate reference is used so the transaction may be traced. Please send a confirmatory email to [kierannelson@bigpond.com](mailto:kierannelson@bigpond.com)

PNGVR was a militia (CMF/Citizens Military Force) battalion formed in 1951 and disbanded in December 1973, prior to PNG Independence. PNGVR's parent unit was the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles (NGVR), the militia battalion which faced the Japanese at Rabaul and did valuable front-line work on the New Guinea mainland during the first six months of the Pacific War. ♦



### PNGAA Sydney Annual Christmas Lunch

**SUNDAY,  
5 DECEMBER  
2021**

**Venue:** Killara Golf Club, 556 Pacific Highway, Killara. Plenty of parking—10 minutes' walk from Killara Railway Station. Disability access available.

**Time:** 11.30 am to 3.30 pm

**Cost:** \$78 pp two-course meal. Attendees to pay for their own beverages at members' rates. Price increase is due to increased costs from facility. NB: Please advise if you have any special dietary requirements when you book prior to the event. You are able to make up your own table or request seating with friends.

**RSVP:** 19 November 2021 to Cheryl Marvell E: [collection@pngaa.net](mailto:collection@pngaa.net) / M: 0438 635 132 or Andrea Williams E: [coordinator@pngaa.net](mailto:coordinator@pngaa.net) / M: 0409 031 889.

**Payment:** PNGAA CBA/BSB: 062-009 / Account No. 0090 7724 (Ref: SYDX + your surname. Please email [treasurer@pngaa.net](mailto:treasurer@pngaa.net) when payment is made and include code (SYDX and first three letters of your surname) used in your transfer.

#### PNGAA is celebrating 70 years!

**Come along and join the fun—meet new friends and catch up with those you know—members and friends all welcome!**

*There will be further announcements closer to the day with an optional dress theme for the lunch and some different activities in light of the significant anniversary of the Association. Don't miss out this year!*







Steven Gagau, Phil Ainsworth, Andrea Williams, Bob Lawrence & Chris Pearsall (top); Lesley Wengambo (below)  
(Photos: Claire Van Bakel)

## PNG Tales No. 2 with Bob Lawrence & Lesley Wengembo

Sara Turner's last official function as event coordinator was held on Sunday, 6 June 2021 and what a fabulous day it was!

With Bob Lawrence carrying the audience away with amusing anecdotes from the *Pacific Islands Monthly* (PIM) about Robbie Robson, Judy Tudor, Stuart Inder and Gus Smales, along with characters of the Pacific—Amelia Earhart, Aggie Grey, James Mitchener, Margaret Mead, Errol Flynn and many, many more, we heard about the rise of news around the Pacific from August 1930 until August 1988 when PIM moved to Suva as

part of the *Pacific Times* group.

As Stuart Inder said in his obituary of the *Pacific Islands Monthly*: 'The recipe for PIM that Robson devised and perfected was a palatable pie of news, commentary and information services.' PIM later passed on to the *Adelaide Advertiser*, the *Herald and Weekly Times* and finally News Ltd.

The weekly, later monthly, PIM lunch in Sydney brought together journalists, islanders and island residents past and present—rather like this event—a day not to be missed!

Bob Lawrence has written a short memoir, titled *A Short History of the Pacific Islands Monthly*, available by emailing him. See more about this at <https://pngaa.org/new-book-a-short-history-of-the-pacific-islands-monthly-magazine/>

Anyone following the art of PNG cannot but be in awe of twenty-four-year-old Lesley Wengembo's energy and passion. Lesley spoke to

the audience about his 'Art Practice and Journey'. He spoke about growing up in PNG and how challenging it was for a PNG family to accept that someone could make a living from artworks. Art was not encouraged at school but he continued to draw and paint in any free time.

Lesley began entering art competitions—sometimes winning and sometimes not. This did not dampen his enthusiasm! His first exhibition was held at the Port Moresby Arts Theatre in 2014, and he was a finalist in the Brisbane Portrait Prize in 2020.

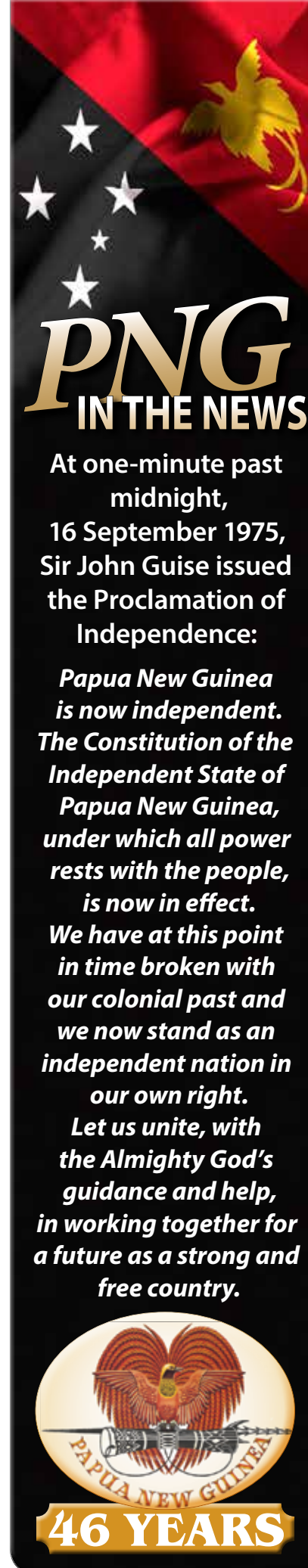
He has been invited to paint a number of commissions, including the Prime Ministers of PNG. He has participated in art workshops overseas and been invited on cultural exchanges.

PNGAA wishes him well in the future whilst looking forward to hearing about his future achievements.

This event was another hugely successful PNGAA event and we thank Sara Turner together with her husband, Roger Carroll, very much for the joy they have given our members over the last four to five years. The audience, over forty-five attending, thoroughly enjoyed meeting and interacting with the speakers and were reluctant to go home!

**ANDREA WILLIAMS**

**Featuring reviews of events, festivals and reunions held throughout Australia and PNG—if you and your friends have been 'out & about' recently, please send your reviews and photographs by the Copy Deadline, 17 September 2021, to [editor@pngaa.net](mailto:editor@pngaa.net)**



**Featuring articles and news reports about contemporary Papua New Guinea—also included are the nation's sporting achievements and events, and stories about young people doing interesting things—we encourage young people to become involved in PNGAA to ensure the strong ties formed between Papua New Guinea and Australia continue into the future.**

## A Casino for Port Moresby

Quoting a story in the *Post-Courier* of 31 May 2021, PNG Business News featured the announcement that a new multi-million kina casino would be built in Port Moresby to encourage tourists and stimulate other economic activity. The establishment of a casino accorded with the Marape-Basil government's Special Economic Zone concept it said.

An agreement was signed at the Stanley Hotel in Port Moresby by the National Gaming Control Board (NGCB) chairman Clemence Kanau and Paga Hill Development Corporation (PHDC) chief executive officer, Gudmundur Fridriksson, to clear the way for the development of a 150-million-kina entertainment complex.

Apart from Port Moresby's first casino the entertainment development would include a hotel, restaurants, theatres and retail outlets.

Mr Fridriksson stated that the NGCB will introduce lottery, bingo, online betting, and other gaming activities in order to increase income and stimulate economic activity, employment, and other prospects. 'The casino will focus on cruise ship passengers, tourists, foreigners



Gerard Ivalaoa receives his laptop and phone

and the well-to-do population,' he said.

## Determination Wins the Day!

PNG Attitude has described how an author from PNG, Gerard Ivalaoa, has written a book on his telephone and had it published.

A man of Gulf parentage living on the outskirts of Port Moresby in a house without power, he had to recharge his phone at a friend's house or pay one kina at a trade store. The book is about the importance of education and entitled *70 Reminders of Academic Excellence*. He said he wanted to inspire students to give their best efforts academically.

Digicel PNG was impressed by the young author's determination to write and be published and presented him with a new Dell laptop and Samsung smartphone. They arranged for sixty copies of his book to be distributed





Joys Eggins and Garry Nou (top); Prashanth Pillay and Belinda Kora (bottom)

to schools supported by the Digicel Foundation. The senior vice president of Digicel, Lorna McPherson, said that education was a core investment of their Foundation. Gerard intends to continue writing.

<http://www.digicelfoundation.org/png/en/home.html>

<https://www.pngattitude.com/2021/04/he-had-a-phone-he-wrote-a-book.html#more>

### Lowy Institute Webinar

On 19 May 2021 the Lowy Institute conducted a webinar on the challenges of misinformation about COVID-19 being published on social media in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

The participants, moderated by Shane McLeod, were Joys Eggins and Dr Prashanth Pillay from ABC's Media Development Initiative, Belinda Kora of the Media Council of PNG and Dr

Garry Nou from the PNG National Control Centre for the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The ABC team analysed 36,931 social media posts trying to establish the predominant themes among these posts. They found a number of ideas being repeated: that PNG was being used as an experimental site for AstraZeneca vaccines, that major institutions including the churches and mainstream media were doing as they were told by the government and were, in effect, part of a conspiracy. Overall, there was distrust of major institutions, including WHO.

Dr Nou confirmed that people in PNG that he had surveyed were repeating the mistaken ideas identified by the ABC team. He talked about some concerns he and his colleagues felt for their security when they spoke publicly in

favour of vaccination but insisted that it was essential that medical authorities continued to speak publicly and positively about the benefits of vaccination.

Belinda Kora, an experienced journalist in PNG, told the panel of the challenges faced by mainstream media is getting accurate information about both the disease and its prevention and lamented the scarcity of accurate and authoritative sources for their stories. There was a responsibility, too, to avoid basing stories on the misinformation on social media.

Access the webinar at:  
'Infodemic' - Social Media Misinformation and Covid-19 in Papua New Guinea | Aus-PNG Network - YouTube

### Maseratis for Sale

People in Papua New Guinea are outraged after the country's Finance Minister revealed that most of the luxury vehicles, forty Maseratis and three Bentleys, bought for the APEC summit in 2018, have still not been sold.

Non-government organisations have slammed the government for wasting millions of dollars on the meeting, including the purchase of forty luxury Maserati vehicles, with only two having been sold.

Mr Pundari said in a statement that PNG was still paying the cost of hosting the meeting of leaders from twenty-one countries in the Asia Pacific region. He revealed that two Maseratis and one Bentley had been sold, generating K1.6 million (AU\$590,000). Mr Pundari said that the remaining luxury cars have been re-tendered for domestic and international buyers.

Later Mr Pindari told local media that the remaining Maseratis

would be sent to the country's overseas missions upon their requests, while the rest will be given over to a contracted local firm to maintain for major events.

Susan Setae, who heads an NGO that supports women who are victims of violence, said that the decision of Peter O'Neill's government to buy the luxury cars was irresponsible. She said the money should have been spent on supporting women to get into parliament, as well as on health and education.

Ruth Kissam, a leading human rights activist, believes the hosting of the 2018 APEC summit was a waste of public money and she claims it has produced very few results for the people of PNG. 'We know that a huge amount of money was going to be spent in rural electrification in Papua New Guinea, from some of the partners ... but apart from that, what did we get out of that?' she asked.

An agreement for a multi-million-dollar rural electrification program, with funding from the US, Australia, New Zealand and Japan, was signed at the APEC meeting.



Stephanie Copus-Campbell

<https://www.abc.net.au/radio-australia/programs/pacificbeat/pngs-maseratis-for-2018-apec-summit-still-not-sold/13423194>

### Queen's Birthday Honours List

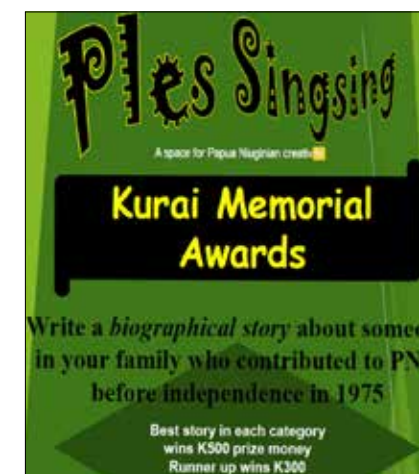
The Queen's Birthday Honours List included the award of the medal of the Order of Australia (AM) to Stephanie Copus-Campbell (*below left*). The award was in recognition of Stephanie's significant contribution to aid and development work in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

From 2009 to 2011 Stephanie was the head of Australia's aid program in PNG. She is now the executive director of the PNG Oil Search Foundation that has annual programs dealing with health, education, leadership and the protection and empowerment of women. In PNG she is member of a number of provincial health advisory boards, is a director of the Harold Mitchell Foundation Board and Femili PNG Board and is a member of Bel isi PNG Steering Committee.

Image from <https://www.oilsearch.com/how-we-work/sustainable-development/oil-search-foundation>

### Ples Singing

*Ples Singing* is a relatively new online site created in Papua New Guinea (PNG) to provide a platform for expressions of creativity, ingenuity and originality in all aspects of art and culture. It is open to citizens of PNG. This platform had its origin in the initiative of Keith Jackson and Friends PNG Attitude (<https://asopa.typepad.com/>) on which site Papua New Guinean writers had the opportunity to publish their material. The difference now is



that the blog is run by volunteer Papua New Guineans for their own artists.

An example of their initiative is the recent announcement of a prize for a biographical story about PNG before independence. The prize is in honour of the late Cr Kurai Tapus of Kaiap village, Wabag.

PNGAA congratulates the publishers of *Ples Singing* and anticipates publishing and reviewing material from the site in the future.

<https://plessingsing.com/about/home/about/>—<https://plessingsing.com/2021/05/01/announcing-the-paul-kurai-memorial-awards-for-biographical-short-stories/>

### Trans-Island Highway Announced

The government's Connect PNG project seeks to divide the nation's twenty-year National Road Network Strategy into a series of five-year projects that will result in a more connected nation. David Wereh, Secretary of the Department of Works and Implementation, said that the first of these would be the Trans-Island Highway. This would start from Nine Mile Junction near Lae and finish in Malalaua in the Gulf Province. Existing roads would be



upgraded to two lanes of new road, 302 km long.

The ambitious project, when completed, would mean that driving between Lae and Port Moresby would be possible for the first time.

According to *Business News*, 4 May 2021, the Australian Government will contribute K190 million to the Trans-Island Highway component of the Connect PNG project. Australia will contribute \$70 million (K170 million) on favourable terms, including a grant portion, and PNG will contribute K16 million, or just under one-tenth of the total cost. Additional funding will be provided by the Asian Development Bank.

<https://www.businessadvantagepng.com/economic-lifelines-connect-png-outlines-key-road-projects-to-help-boost-papua-new-guineas-covid-recovery/>  
<https://www.businessadvantagepng.com/economic-lifelines-connect-png-outlines-key-road-projects-to-help-boost-papua-new-guineas-covid-recovery/>

### Kokoda Track Foundation (KTF) Initiatives for COVID Prevention in PNG

Early in the COVID-19 pandemic KTF responded immediately and urgently with the design and delivery of Project Airborne. Project Airborne aims to prepare communities to deal with COVID-19 through education and awareness of health and hygiene methods including handwashing, social distancing, mask wearing and healthy lifestyles. In 2020, Project Airborne worked with all KTF communities in the Kokoda Track catchment region across



KTF packing ready for delivery

the Oro and Central Provinces, particularly focusing on schools, colleges and health facilities.

They delivered: 11,000 water sanitation and hygiene kits to communities, schools and health facilities including tanks, tippy taps, soap, sanitisers and disinfectants; 12,000 pieces of personal protective equipment to frontline healthcare workers, teachers and college staff.

They provided 78,000 people in KTF programs with COVID-19 education of awareness campaigns.

In 2021, KTF is preparing for a large-scale Project Airborne roll-out across New Ireland Province, and to continue support for the Oro and Central provinces and all of KTF's physical project locations across the country.

KTF Annual Report:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5bea4ca150a54fcc72890ee8/t/6062b40dae23eb39d51e9a8a/161708144707>

### COVID Situation in PNG—30 June 2021

WHO has reported that, so far, there have been 17,190 cases of COVID-19 infection reported in Papua New Guinea (PNG). These

infections have resulted in 174 deaths. This death rate, about 1%, is similar to that reported in other countries. 51,170 doses of vaccine had been administered by 30 June. This represents about 0.6% of the population.

<https://covid19.who.int/region/wpro/country/pg>

### COVID and Sorcery

An ABC news story filed by PNG correspondent Natalie Whiting in Port Moresby and Bethanie Harriman has described an increase in violence and deaths in PNG associated with *sanguma* or sorcery.

While many parts of PNG have a long history of belief in sorcery, authorities are concerned that many recent killings have occurred in regions where that belief was not common. For example, a man was killed by a mob in Daru recently after being accused of using sorcery.

'Sorcery-related killing is unheard of in Daru Town,' Daru Police Commander, Inspector Soiwa Ricker, told *The National*, a local newspaper.

There are also concerns that deaths related to COVID-19 could lead to an increase in sorcery accusations—one such case has already been recorded. This involved a community health worker in Goroka who contracted COVID-19 and died at home earlier this year.

'His family's tribe said the man's wife used sorcery to kill her husband, so the community abducted the woman and tortured her,' local MP Aiya Tambua said. Before police could intervene the woman was thrown from a bridge.

She survived but while the woman was in hospital her daughter was also attacked and had to be rescued by police. Both mother and daughter also contracted COVID-19.

Ms Kissam, who works with the NGO, The Tribal Foundation, said that COVID-19 was a potential 'time bomb' for sorcery-related violence in PNG.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-06-26/coronavirus-a-time-bomb-in-png-amid-sorcery-allegations/100227350>

### Mission Aviation Fellowship Celebrates Seventieth Anniversary

A *PNG Buzz* story reproduced by *PNG Attitude* on 14 May 2021 described the first flight in 1951 of an aircraft of Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF). The pilot was Harry Hartwig, a veteran of World War II bomber anti-submarine operations. MAF had its origins in a meeting three years earlier in Melbourne, at which returned Christian airmen looked for a means of using their flying skills.

In the few months after his first flight Hartwig logged many hours of flying to airstrips in isolated parts of the country. Tragically, his career ended in a fatal crash near the Asaroka Gap in August 1951.

Seventy years later MAF is the longest-established airline operator in PNG with 100 national and forty international staff in eleven bases, and partners with local church groups, missionaries, NGOs, development and relief agencies and government departments working to change the lives of people living in remote areas.

### COVID-19 and the Torres Strait

In a story in *Sydney Morning Herald* on 12 June 2021, Anthony Galloway described the changes that have happened in the Torres Strait since the border was closed in March 2020. Before the COVID-19 pandemic about 15,000 cross border movements happened each year.

This mostly came to a halt when both countries suspended their Torres Strait treaty in order to help prevent the infection of the Torres Strait population. Australian Border Force and Defence personnel were then deployed on Operation Overarch to stop the arrival of PNG nationals. Even so, between April and December last year, there were 115 cross border movements.

Since the resurgence of COVID-19 in PNG in March, Border Force and Defence signif-

icantly boosted the number of vessels patrolling the northern Torres Strait islands of Saibai, Boigu and Dauan. As a consequence, the number of arrivals has decreased to roughly one a week in recent months. Generally, the policy is to direct incoming boats to return. However, if passengers need medical attention they may proceed to Saibai for treatment. To help reduce these medical arrivals the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has assisted the PNG government to establish a clinic at Mabaduan, one of the PNG villages closest to the border. This reduces the need for some Papua New Guineans to travel to Daru for medical treatment and vaccination.

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/how-the-torres-strait-has-become-a-covid-front-line-20210610-p57zxu.html>



Harry Hartwig, his Auster aircraft with the people MAF was established to serve (top); the Auster Harry Hartwig took to PNG in 1951 and in which he was later killed when it crashed in the Asaroka Gap (below)



## Teachers Trekged from Tapini to Port Moresby to Deliver Exam Papers

A group of teachers from the remote Sacred Heart Secondary School in Tapini, PNG, have gone above and beyond the call of duty to make sure their students' exam papers made it to the capital, Port Moresby, for marking.

After a charter plane failed to arrive to pick up the papers, the eight teachers trekked for two days and a night from Tapini, which is at the base of the rugged Owen Stanley Ranges. Among the group is a first-year teacher, Raphael Amato, who said they decided to undertake the arduous walk to ensure their students' hard work was not wasted. 'The principal told us: No we cannot wait because the lives of our students are in our hands.'

## Community in PNG Grateful to Police for Not Accepting K100,000 Bribe

A 40-year-old doctor and two others were recently charged with the murder of the doctor's wife, Imelda Tubi Tiamanda, near Mt Hagen.

Magistrate Leonard Mesmin read out the charges to Imelda's husband, Dr Simon Temo, Paul Ken 27, and Nombe Kasu, 42, from the Mendi area. They were remanded at Baisu Prison in Mt Hagen. No bail was granted.

Police alleged that Imelda, a University of Goroka student, was picked up by Temo on 8 May 2021 at the university and taken to Mendi where an argument erupted and Imelda was assaulted. Her



Zane Nonggorr

body was allegedly kept at their home in Mendi until driven to Mt Hagen. Police at a checkpoint became suspicious and discovered Imelda's body in the back of the vehicle.

Comments on Facebook praise the PNG police officers who showed honesty and integrity by not accepting the K100,000 bribe allegedly offered. <https://www.thenational.com.pg/3-charged-with-murder/>  
<https://www.abc.net.au/radio-australia/programs/pacificbeat/png-teachers-trek-to-deliver-exam-papers/13404176>

## Haus Pikinini Receives Much-Needed Grant

*Haus Pikinini*, a home run by Donna Harvey-Hall for disadvantaged children in Wau, was recently visited by Prime Minister, Hon. James Marape, with many other senior government ministers and officials, and accompanied by the Australian High Commissioner.

*Haus Pikinini* was delighted to have received a pledge of K100,000 from the Deputy Prime Minister, Hon. Samuel Basil, which will enable some maintenance, as well as completion of an ablutions block. PNG Prime Minister, Hon. James Marape, gave a donation of

K5000 followed by an additional cash donation of K5000 by Sam Basil to top up housekeeping at *Haus Pikinini*.

Donna tells us that Wau is now four hours' drive from a supermarket! Donna's achievements with *Haus Pikinini* are greatly admired and it is wonderful to see this recognition for her tireless work.

<https://www.facebook.com/donna.harveyhall/posts/1457546831244656>

## PNG Man in Queensland Reds Team

Zane Nonggorr, a twenty-year-old Papua New Guinean (left), has played for the Queensland Reds in the Super Rugby competition since 2020. This year he was selected as a front row forward in the team playing the Brumbies in the grand final in Brisbane on 8 May 2021. The Reds won 19 to 16. <https://reds.rugby/players/reds/zane%20nonggorr>

## DC3 Perched Outside Air Niugini Haus

The Air Niugini engineering team are currently giving a facelift to the old DC3 aircraft perched on display outside Air Niugini Haus Head Office at 7-Mile in Port Moresby. The aircraft was named after a well-known and highly respected pilot, Larry Blackman, who commanded that aircraft for many of the 17,000 hours that he flew Air Niugini's DC3s.

The plane was mounted to its final resting place at 7-Mile on 23 November 1979, by the then Minister for Civil Aviation, Mr Paias Wingti.

<https://www.facebook.com/destinationsairniugini/posts/4155275247845023>



The new generation of political leaders in 1972, preparing for self-government: (from left to right) Dr John Guise (Deputy Chief Minister), John Yocklunn (adviser to Pangu), Michael Somare (Chief Minister), Tony Voutas (Pangu strategist, partly obscured), Tos Barnett (adviser to Chief Minister) and Andrew Peacock (Australian Minister for Territories) (Photo courtesy Donald Denoon)

# Papua New Guinea's Transition to Independence

## ANDREW PEACOCK

In 1971 I was labouring under a variety of pressures as a very young Minister for the Army, having been appointed at the age of thirty. As you know, we were very heavily involved in Vietnam. I had already visited Papua New Guinea once whilst a student at Melbourne University. The Army portfolio took me frequently to PNG because as Army Minister I was responsible for the Pacific Islands Regiment (PIR) as it then was, now the PNG Defence Force. However, when Ceb Barnes (Charles Barnes, Minister for Territories, later External Territories, from 1963–72) stood down, I took over his portfolio.

I was sworn in on 2 February 1972, and I spoke with Ceb Barnes, spent an hour with David Hay, who had been Administrator and was then Secretary of the Department of External Territories, and then flew to PNG, which in those days involved going via Sydney and Brisbane and only then up to Moresby. I arrived on the same day I had been sworn in and immediately held a press conference!

My predecessor, Ceb Barnes, had emphasised that I was going to have to address law and order issues—I didn't find this surprising because there

were already stirrings for self-government. There were the demonstrations led by Michael Somare of the Pangu Party, there was extensive cargo cult activity, a breakdown in law and order was commencing, particularly in the Highlands, payback attacks were rising and there were the stirrings of secession on Bougainville. It seemed to many a tenuous situation.

So, I made my first ministerial visit with my firm view that, given the deterioration in the security situation, if the government sought to restrain the movement towards self-government and independence, it would bring about a backlash of perhaps even horrific proportions—even in a relatively small country such as PNG.

I didn't have much guidance on what awaited me in PNG. I knew that I had a first-class Administrator in Les Johnson, who wanted to move the pace. David Hay had been more conservative as Administrator, but then he had been enormously constrained by Canberra. The Department of External Territories gave the Administrator very little leeway whatsoever; Administrators had to



report back to Canberra all the time for advice. David, therefore, understanding this situation, wanted, as Secretary of the Department, to free things up.

There were some flaws in the Department's advice to me through the period of 1972 and some flaws in the Administration's advice to me. I made mistakes. But I found myself, once we increased the pace, to be extremely well served by both the Department and the Administration.

I made something like twenty-one trips to PNG in 1972. But, as I said, I was already convinced when I first arrived that we had to move sooner rather than later, although I was constrained in the first two months because we had to await the House of Assembly elections. This election was fought on the issue of whether or not there should be internal self-government.

The largest party, the United Party, was opposed to self-government. I got sick of going around PNG to be met at airstrips by a man in a grass skirt with a bone through his nose, *bilas* (a decoration such as feathers, paint, plants, etc.) in his hair, carrying a bloody pig and a *bilum* (string basket) and someone standing beside saying, 'This man is the physical embodiment of the reason why you can't have self-government.' It was quite clear that it was a setup—it happened too often. This was part of the United Party's orchestrated campaign opposing early self-government.

The elections were held in late February and early March. The House of Assembly was to convene on 20 April and the first vote there would determine who had the numbers. To form the Government would require fifty votes. The results of the election gave the United Party forty-six or forty-seven seats. The Pangu Party under Michael Somare had twenty-six or twenty-seven. The Peoples Progress Party under Julius Chan had ten seats.

The night before the House of Assembly convened on 20 April, my Press Secretary, Michael Darling, brought me a count which showed that Pangu, with all their efforts to form a coalition still only had forty-six members and, therefore, were theoretically one short of the United Party. At the very time I was reading this, Les Johnson brought me a statement of Michael Somare's announcing that he did have the numbers, that he had more than fifty votes, and that the Peoples Progress Party had better decide whether

they were going to join Pangu in government or not. In fact, Somare, consummate politician that he was, announced that he had the numbers when he didn't—it was a bluff and it worked.

So, PNG now had a government comprising a national coalition that, in the case of Pangu, wanted immediate self-government, but in the case of the People's Progress Party was more interested in the form of the government that was put together. Michael Somare saw me the next day and said, 'I want early, not immediate, but early self-government, but at present I'm more interested in the shape of self-government.' I responded by proposing that we hold constitutional talks in June 1972. Interestingly enough he suggested July—a month later.

I want to emphasise that all of the travelling I did to PNG and all of the discussions I held there just reinforced in my own mind the view that though Australia had been slow at moving towards acceptance of independence, we were now on the right track. The worry was always that when we did transfer power, there would be a lack of depth in the PNG civil service. It seemed to me we couldn't correct that overnight. We had established training colleges and these were doing a sound job, but there were still insufficient trained people.

On 27 and 28 July, Michael Somare and I sat down to discuss the transfer of extensive legislative and administrative power to PNG. We had an enormous range of powers and programs to hand over. Some powers had already been transferred but even so Australia had until recently exercised a veto because the Governor-General, on the advice of the Minister for External Territories, could overturn any proposal by any minister in PNG.

Matt Toliman, Leader of the United Party, was not in favour of the more rapid pace towards independence—the United Party was starting to adjust to the fact that there had to be self-government, but they weren't keen on independence.

Mr Thomas Kavali had been elected to the House, the sole representative of the New Guinea National Party. A very astute man, Mr Kavali. Whilst Michael Somare was trying to put his coalition together, Kavali had persuaded six of the independent Highlanders to join his New Guinea National Party, even though they had been elected as independents. He also took one or two from the United Party and

brought those into coalition with Somare as well. So, the New Guinea National Party had established a role for itself.

This period really did see the development of a framework for PNG as a fine independent nation, and I think it is important to recognise that the way in which a trustee leaves a territory is extremely important. I was always very proud of the way we finished the job.

I say 'we' although the Coalition was swept out of power on 2 December 1972 and the actual task of seeing through the date of self-government and independence was left to the then Labor Party. Gough Whitlam and I used to talk about it a great deal. And it does seem to me we left PNG with a substantially larger reservoir of goodwill between the former colonial power and the newly-emergent country than existed in most other comparable situations.

I should add that there were also, of course, pressures in Australia, from those in favour of a federal structure, to desist from faster moves to early self-government. But I was strongly of the view then that a country, containing 500 different tribes speaking more than 700 different languages, needed not a fragmented system, but a more centralised system.

After I ceased to be Territories Minister, the question of autonomy for Bougainville arose. I'd always believed that Bougainville ought to have a degree of autonomy, but when the provincial system of government was first mooted in PNG, I discussed the matter with Michael Somare. At that stage I was the Shadow Foreign Minister and I rang him and said, 'Why are you doing this? Why are you setting up a provincial system of government? This is going to haunt you in the future.'

And he said to me (and I well remember the conversation), 'If I don't establish a provincial system, I may lose Bougainville and PNG will end up just another exporter of coffee, tea and copra. I have to have Bougainville's copper contributing its resources and revenue to the task of nation building. Unless I give Bougainville that autonomy, PNG will not be a viable entity.' This was the origin of the system of provincial government. I agreed with Somare's political assessment. He persuaded me, as so often was the case.

I think PNG owes the Somares and the Chans

of this world an enormous amount. Particularly, at that time, Michael Somare. I had met Somare when I first went to PNG and when he was an angry young man. He was to become a very close personal friend. I suppose in those days we were both a couple of smooth operators and we probably deserved one another! But we were able to achieve a fair amount together and his astuteness, his timing, his capacity for negotiation in 1972 in putting that coalition together was something at which I marvelled.

And it is well to remember that had it not come together, then the future of PNG and its relations with Australia would have been vastly different. I had started out on the assumption that because the Westminster System was the system I knew well, it was the system for PNG. But I very quickly came to realise that institutionalised division between government and opposition might well be the antithesis of what a Melanesian society requires—a society where you need to sit and talk and talk your way through problems. At the end of the day we did hand over a Westminster System, but we did so on the basis that we expected this to change and change substantially. I've been amazed that it hasn't changed to a far greater extent.

PNG achieved independence on 16 September 1975 and here we are in December 1993. I think we are witnessing a situation where, for whatever reason, bilateral relations have drifted somewhat.

I think it is a slightly ominous drift. If I were to name Australia's key foreign policy relationships, they would have to be: PNG, New Zealand, each ASEAN country, Japan and the United States. Of course, it is always a dangerous thing to identify 'special relationships' because those not deemed as special can take offence—though it's not as offensive as accusing someone of being *recalcitrant*. But I don't think there would be too much disagreement over this list.

And so, I conclude a fairly personal account of an interesting ten months in PNG. I have left many anecdotes out, but nevertheless, I have tried to give you the flavour and thoughts of someone seeking to bring about historic change. ♦

**Edited extract from *Lines Across the Sea: Colonial Inheritance in the Post-Colonial Pacific***

**Edited by Brij V Lal & Hank Nelson, published by the Pacific History Association, Brisbane, 1995**



# A Sydney Anzac Day March to Remember

**RUSSELL WADE**

Anzac Day 2021 was a momentous occasion for Warrant Officer John Irwin ('Jock') Wilkinson, having both recently turned 100 and met his personal goal to march on his own two feet on Anzac Day.



Warrant Officer Jock Wilkinson served with both the Papuan Infantry Battalion and the 2nd New Guinea Infantry Battalion during World War II. These units fought with Australian troops during the Kokoda campaign and other campaigns throughout New Guinea. In fact, it was the Papuan Infantry Battalion that opened the Kokoda campaign with the first planned ambush of Japanese troops '1000 yards east of Awala' on 23 July 1942. As many readers will know, the Government of PNG later selected this date, 23 July, to commemorate Remembrance Day.

In years gone by, Jock had always reiterated his intention to march on Anzac Day when he turned

100. His fellow marchers, under the banner of the Papuan and New Guinea Infantry Battalions, admired Jock's ability to keep the pace and to resolutely lead the contingent each year.

A stickler for good order when on the march, Jock was noted for insisting that the bands who accompanied the marchers on Anzac Day, played to a consistent beat. In 2017, during a pause in the march, Jock wheeled off to the rear of the contingent and had words to the very tall bandleader of a leading Sydney college band, about maintaining a regular beat.

In 2021, there wasn't a band in sight of the contingent and we marched in silence. This did enable us to hear the crowd's applause and appreciation for Jock's steady march.

The Anzac Day March organisers provided a Regular Army Sergeant to escort Jock along the march. While this was a thoughtful gesture, Jock completed the march without needing any assistance.

Following the march, the contingent and Jock's family assembled at the Hyde Park Memorial for photographs and then proceeded to the Tattersall's Club for lunch.

After the lunch, fellow marcher Peter Porteous approached some members of a pipe band, who were dining at the same venue. He asked if they knew the Regimental March of the Pacific Islands Regiment, which they did. To the amazement of fellow diners, the pipers played 'Nut Brown Maiden' as a tribute to Jock, who was most appreciative.

The Sydney 2021 Anzac Day March will be one that Jock and all of us will remember.

Acknowledgements: I thank Greg Ivey, Vice President of the PIB NGIB HQ PIR Association (and PNGAA member) for assistance with both the article and photos, including those sourced from *Armi Nius*, the Association's newspaper ([www.soldierspng.com](http://www.soldierspng.com)), as well as the ABC's live television coverage. ♦



Jock Wilkinson leads the Papuan and New Guinea Infantry Battalions contingent down Elizabeth Street (top); Jock with family and Association members at Hyde Park Memorial after the march: (l-r) Ray Bassett, Bob Strachan, Peter Porteous, Army Sergeant escort, Sam Wilkinson, WO Jock Wilkinson, Peter Wilkinson, Greg Ivey, John Morris, Wayne Bensley, Suzie Rowe, Katie Steyn, John Hain, Russ Wade (above); Jock thanking the pipers after they played a tribute to him (bottom)

# The PNG Star Mountains: Still Wild After All These Years

**CHRIS SHARPLES—Part One**

In 1963 white people first tried to reach the western Star Mountains peaks (John Groenewald's 'Diary of the 1963 Star Mountains Patrol', *Una Voce*, December 2016). My account describes a private expedition to that remote and rarely visited corner of PNG. In November 2016 Grant Dixon and I climbed the two main Star Mountain peaks on the PNG side of the border, Mt Capella and Mt Scorpio, only a few kilometres from West Papua.

The Star Mountains, once glaciated, reach 4,000 metres above sea level at the geographical centre of New Guinea, straddling the PNG-West Papua border. Between and west of Capella and Scorpio, the broad central New Guinea ranges narrow down to a single ridge providing a spectacular alpine traverse with steep slopes dropping thousands of metres either side to the Sepik River north and the Digul River basin south.

A Dutch expedition first saw from a distance and named the Star Mountains in 1914, but it was not until 1959 that a Dutch scientific expedition first climbed the highest peak on the West Papua side,

Mt Antares, and Mt Juliana (now Gunung Mandala) further west. Juliana still had a 'permanent' cap of glacial ice, which disappeared around 2000. In PNG, the 1963 Fitzer patrol was forced to turn back near Beroro Pass, but two years later in 1965 the Australian Star Mountains Expedition, over several months, explored westwards from Telefomin. It made the first ascents of Mt Capella and Mt Scorpio before descending south over Beroro Pass to Kavorabip village, a day's walk north of what is now the Ok Tedi Mine. The definitive story of this expedition, *The Star Mountains* (Tom Hayllar, Balboa Press, 2016), appeared just prior to our visit.



The crew at Dokfuma Plateau with Mt Capella behind: (l-r) Chris Sharples, John Tarabi, Andrew Tarabi, Hans Milok, Clement Tarabi, Grant Dixon





TOP: At Kavorabip village, with Benstead Bluff beyond  
 BOTTOM: Walking route and selected features between Ok Tedi Mine and the Star Mountains. Satellite photography is Google Earth imagery. Green areas are forest and brownish areas are alpine grass and scrub. The route walked is based on GPS tracks captured by Chris Sharples using a Garmin GPS64 handheld GPS unit. The walking route is an existing walking track from Ok Tedi Mine to Dokfuma plateau, but from there to Mt Capella and Mt Scorpio was an unmarked route chosen (and cut where necessary) by Grant and Chris.

Surprisingly, our literary research and enquiries to both locals and previous expedition members indicated only two subsequent ascents of Mt Capella and just one of Mt Scorpio, all in 1975. This is despite extensive regional mineral exploration following Ok Tedi mine's establishment, and local people regularly crossing the high alpine grasslands of Dokfuma Plateau

(east of Mt Capella), itself the site of several subsequent scientific expeditions. This apparent dearth of subsequent ascents may be because the original route from the northern end of Dokfuma Plateau to Mt Capella was much longer and harder than the route we explored from the south-eastern side during our 2016 expedition.

In 1985, after a ten-year bushwalking apprenticeship in southwest Tasmania, I looked for challenges further afield. I initially focussed on visiting the Carstensz Pyramid tropical glacier region in then Irian Jaya. Faced with the seemingly insurmountable political and bureaucratic difficulties in gaining independent access to that area, I looked at the Star Mountains. While not as high, they were still glaciated tropical alpine peaks and were less-known and less-visited than the Carstensz. Both qualities appealed to me. Given that there seemed to be no political obstacles to visiting the PNG side of these mountains I saw them as an opportunity to explore one of the least-known alpine areas on the planet.

In those pre-internet days, I could not find much about the Star Mountains. In late 1986 I decided to just go to PNG and see what I could find out. I flew to Mt Hagen, but it all got too hard. I made do with a solo ascent of PNG's highest peak, Mt Wilhelm. Ten years later, in 1996, I made a second attempt with Ian Houshold. This time we not only reached the Ok Tedi mining town of Tabubil, we spent five weeks exploring the area, including an unsupported two-week bushwalk to Dokfuma Plateau. It became obvious that climbing the high summits would need more time than our self-carried food supplies allowed. Our reconnaissance gave me some idea of what would be needed to reach the summits.

Several subsequent attempts to organise a return expedition went nowhere. As the years went by the dream of climbing the Star Mountains faded. Then, in 2015, a friend asked me to join him on the popular (and highly managed) Kokoda Track walk. That trip reminded me I still had unfinished business in PNG. With my sixtieth birthday approaching, I realised it was time to do it or forget it. After all these years of thinking about it I could not forget it. Fortunately, I mentioned the idea to Grant Dixon, a friend with a wealth of experience walking and climbing in mountain areas all over

the world. He was interested: New Guinea was one place he still had never visited.

Previous successful expeditions to the PNG Star Mountains were highly organised; our five-week visit during November 2016 was a low-key affair, entirely self-funded, with minimal planning and only a normal bushwalking kit. We could do this because Tabubil, with daily flights from Port Moresby, a supermarket and hotel accommodation, provided a convenient point of entry to the Star Mountains. The real key to our success, however, was finding a local contact prior to our visit. We thus could meet senior members of the local Wopkaimin people soon after our arrival, and negotiate permission to visit their traditional lands. The contact made was a classic 'four degrees of separation' job: a local caving friend in Tasmania, Greg Middleton, put us in touch with Mike Bourke, a caver and researcher with many years of experience in PNG, who put us in touch with Peter Graham, the CEO of Ok Tedi Mining Ltd. (OTML), who put us in touch with OTML's community liaison officer, Yon Buhuyana—who worked with the local community leaders. Without their permission and assistance our trip could not have proceeded

Our flight from Port Moresby to Tabubil was diverted to Kiunga on the Fly River due to cloud. We still arrived in Tabubil by bus the same day and contacted Yon who had organised our meeting with Wopkaimin elders and some prospective guides. After lengthy discussion we set off through the mine. A day and a half's walk got us to Kavorabip with four local guides who carried our gear and enough food for three weeks in the alpine areas.

The whole village welcomed us, and we had another round of talks with the village chief Abson Buretam. Our plan to explore the areas unassisted was a cause of concern, but the fact I had knowledge of the area from my previous visit—remembered by at least one of the villagers—and that we obviously understood what we were getting ourselves into helped our case considerably. We also described our satellite kit that we would use to communicate our progress and position to Yon and others.

This, and the fact that the locals had no experience of, nor equipment for the high alpine areas we were able to persuade Abson to agree to

our proceeding. We later learnt that this was a point of contention in Tabubil. Our subsequent return alive, successful, and unharmed, no doubt left us with a reputation as very unusual white fellas!

We were happy for our local guides to carry some of the three weeks' worth of food and stove fuel along a rough, but well-used local track, up the Kauwol River valley above Kavorabip. This led us past the imposing cliffs of Benstead Bluff, over Beroro Pass and up the dry (karstic limestone) bed of the Krom River. Its deep gorge provided a relatively straightforward passage between imposing limestone cliffs to the open alpine grassland of Dokfuma Plateau beyond. Here by agreement our guides left us at the foot of the long jagged alpine ridge of Mt Capella, which we were told is known locally as 'Dain Namalok' (the "white mountain") for its notably pale limestone bluffs and precipices. We spent a rest day exploring the south-west end of the grasslands and cached some of the food and fuel for our return.

Part 2 of this narrative, to be published in the next issue of *PNG KUNDU*, describes the culmination of our venture to the PNG Star Mountains summits, after parting with our local helpers at Dokfuma Plateau. ♦



TOP: Benstead Bluff from our campsite in the upper Kauwol Valley

BOTTOM: Large limestone 'bomb crater' doline at Dokfuma Plateau, showing tree-line inversion caused by cold air drainage into the doline



# A Place Where Heaven Meets Earth

VINCENT KUMARA

Often called 'The Land of Handred Mauntens', Bundi, which occupies the central most scenic part of the Bismarck Range, is indeed a hidden jewel for cultural tourism in Papua New Guinea. Sharing borders with Jimi, to the west, Gembogl, to the south, Asaro, to the east and the majestic Ramu plains to the north, Bundi boasts some of the most exotic traditions of Papua New Guinea that are yet to be exposed to the world.

On the evening of Friday, 25 August, I was reading in my little mountain cabin when the sounds of distant kundu drums and bamboo beats echoed up from the valley. Five sing-sing groups from Upper Bundi that were to take part at a mini cultural show the next day were rehearsing. I could sense that the drums and beats were handled with a slightly higher degree of excitement for what would be the first-ever Snow Pass culture show. Gentle raindrops did nothing to dim the celebration. As night deepened, the accompanying slight wind intensified the coolness over the valleys and mountaintops. When the drumbeats faded to nothing, silence and darkness enveloped everything. All was quiet. The valley was asleep.

The next morning was glorious. The sun rose to clear the fluffy white clouds. Its warmth melted the fresh morning dew on the surface of the mountains. Activity was heightening around the main arena and excitement was everywhere. The big day was here. Dancing groups had prepared for weeks. Those who weren't on the dancing teams were also animated.

It was time to meet and greet. But most importantly, it was an occasion to see and exhibit the sacred dances that had been handed down for generations. People from the surrounding villages started flooding in for the show. Our guests arrived on a white trooper just as the midday fog was closing in on the valley like mellifluous white bed sheets.

Suddenly, in a well-choreographed fashion, flames flared from the white clay pots that donned the heads of the Imuri fire dancers of Karizokara as they set about welcoming the entourage. The amazing ghost-like figures were the heart of the show. Occasionally, they seemed hidden amid the sweeping white fog as they escorted the guests to the centre of the show ground.

The moment was surreal. ♦ Vincent Kumara is founder of the Kumara Foundation and managing director of the Snow Pass Eco-Lodge. He received the 2016 Digicel PNG Foundation Men of Honour Community Ingenuity Award.

Extract from an article in *The National Weekender*, Sept. 2017



Opening of the Snow Pass Eco-Lodge in Bundi in 2017;  
One of the Imuri fire dancers of Karizokara (Courtesy Cookie Piksa)

## A Career Change Called

### A RECORD OF A DIFFERENT LIFE

BILL MUNTZ

I was thirty-five with a very stable position as a senior clerk in a chartered accountant's office when I made the decision that being an accountant was not for me, and that I needed a more productive life which would be exciting as well.

The opportunity came in a most unusual way. It was about three o'clock in the morning, I had just arrived home from a heavy night out with friends. As usual, I turned on the radio to listen to the late-night jazz program before sleeping. About five minutes into the program an advertisement from AVA Australian Volunteers Abroad (AVA) requesting applications from young, and not so young, Australians to travel overseas and assist in less developed countries. 'This is just what the doctor ordered' I thought as I wrote the telephone number on the wall next to my bed.

The next morning when I awoke the phone number on the wall reminded me of what I needed to do. Later in the day I called AVA and registered my interest in volunteering. This was the commencement of a forty-year career in Papua New Guinea.

About a week later, when I was still trying to remove the telephone number from my bedroom wall, I received a package of forms from AVA for application into the volunteer crew. This was about June 1978. I duly completed these forms, returned them and began making preparations for whatever they had in store for me.

Firstly, I put my resignation into the firm that had been my employer since leaving school. This resignation highlighted an event which would influence the rest of my life, I kissed the girl who would later become my wife and lifelong partner.

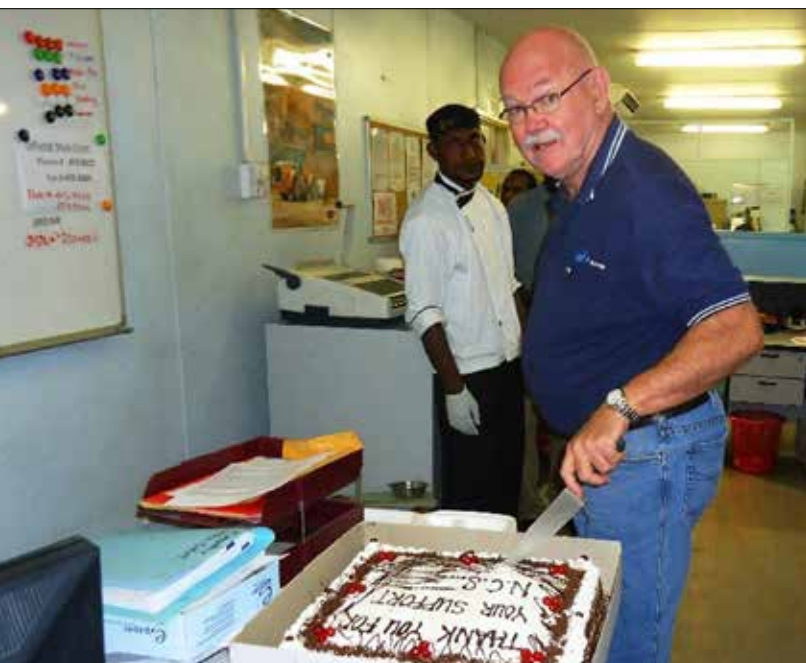
After some to-ing and fro-ing of documents I was eventually accepted into the group destined to travel in November 1978. In preparation to the commencement of my adventure I had to travel to Melbourne for an orientation and briefing on my posting. I had been advised that it was possible I would be posted to Rabaul, so I had gathered all the information I could on the people of East New Britain and was excited at the prospect of assisting the Provincial Government in their transition to independence which had been granted in 1975.

On my arrival to Melbourne, I was met at the airport by an AVA official and taken to the Melbourne University's campus where I took a week's orientation course and learnt my destination. Two days into the course I was informed that I would no longer be going to Rabaul, but instead I had been assigned to the Gulf Provincial Government as their Provincial Financial Advisor, to be stationed in Kerema, the Provincial Capital. All that study on the people and customs of the people of East New Britain went for nothing.

My travel to Port Moresby I remember well. We left Melbourne at 1.00 am and arrived in Port Moresby just as the sun was rising. From the airport we were transported to the Outrigger Motel. On arrival at the motel, we were told to wait in the lounge for our room allocations. While waiting, I kept hearing what sounded like a bird chirping but, despite my looking, could not locate the source of the noise. I later was informed this noise was the sound of geckos. These were something I had not come across in Australia, although I have since found out they are many in Australia. During our sightseeing we visited the local market at Koki and went up the hill behind the village to get a better look at the town. Half way up the hill we discovered that it was used by the people of Koki as their latrine and we had to be very careful where we walked.

On Independence the Papua New Guinea Government recognised that the provinces should have some income-producing avenues other than straight





Cutting a cake at the Hidden Valley Mine's mess congratulating our joint venture partner, NCS, for their assistance and support

out taxes so each province was given half-a-million Kina to set up a business arm. This was an interesting exercise as some were extremely successful while others died very quickly.

A week later I was still in Port Moresby learning about Gulf Province, the fishing industry in the Gulf of Papua, the rubber plantations and other products being produced. This assimilation was conducted by the Business Development section of the then Department of Commerce. It was, while in Port Moresby, I found out that the Gulf Province, through its business arm, was intending investing in a fishing venture with a Japanese company which was harvesting prawns and lobster in the Gulf of Papua.

Eventually I was in Kerema boarded with the local doctor and his wife. Accommodation was at a premium and the only way I was able to finally secure a house was to team up with another volunteer, the provincial nutritionist.

Some years before Independence the government had set up a series of cooperatives throughout the country and had a support group monitoring and assisting their operation and performance. Generally, most of the cooperatives in Gulf were not operating because the government was no longer operating the support group. Therefore, one of my jobs was to wind up these groups. This involved extensive travel throughout the province. As we had very little travel funds

in the budget, we went on joint patrols. My main companion on these patrols was another volunteer who was doing a PHD on dinosaurs, and using the crocodile farms in his study. I was shown the information he required and while I was advising the farmers on their financial requirements, I also gathered feeding and growth information.

During my two-year contract in Kerema I had a trip to Tokyo with our joint-venture partners to understand the seafood market in Japan. I travelled with my understudy (General Manager designate) in the joint venture, and on the way back we detoured to Manila where we met up with the PNG delegate to the Asian Development Bank, who took us on a tour of the bank and detailed all the projects the bank was funding in PNG.

Towards the end of my contract, the investment arm purchased the local hotel and it fell to me to locate and appoint a manager. After several months and much searching I managed to locate a manager. The only problem was he would not be available for several months, so it was up to me to operate the hotel until he was available. Six months later he turned up.

As my contract was coming to an end, I was offered a position with a third-level airline operating out of Port Moresby. I accepted this position and joined Douglas Airways in 1980. Employment in PNG at this time provided accommodation and when I arrived in POM from Kerema I was escorted to my new two-bedroom accommodation, which included a fully stocked refrigerator and housekeeper/cook. I was going to enjoy working in POM. This position enabled me to travel to most stations on the mainland of PNG.

After two years with the airline, I decided I needed to see a bit of the world, so I left for England via Singapore. As I was able to retain my airline credentials, I was travelling on IATA discounts. Though having big discounts, when purchasing tickets it had no preference, in fact it had the opposite effect and you had no preference at all. After two weeks in Singapore, I finished up purchasing a ticket to London via Moscow at about the same price as my discount tickets!

When I returned from Europe to Brisbane three months later, I started looking for a job and went to the local employment agency where, sitting on

*Continued on page 30*

## Two Tales from My Visit to the Fore Area in 1957

**JOSEPHINE WHITEMAN**

In 1957 I was flying from Sydney to the Solomon Islands to work as a nutritionist.

The plane stopped at Port Moresby. I arranged to meet the only other nutritionist working in the Pacific area at that time, Lucy Hamilton Reid. She was working in the Fore district in the Eastern Highlands with a group of scientists, mostly from the US. They were endeavouring to find the reason why so many women of the Fore group were dying young, leaving a surplus of men who could find no women for wives and, consequently, no chance of a life with a family. It was thought at that time that it might be something in the food of the women that was the cause of their early death. I would be meeting up with the group at the Fore's Patrol Post at Okapa.

**Episode 1:** When I arrived they were still out on patrol, so I spent the night alone at the Patrol Officer's house. Early next morning, when it was still cold in the mountain air, I met two men with one woman on the edge of the Patrol Post.

The two men were dressed in grass aprons and the woman in a grass skirt. I felt very overdressed. We all stopped in our tracks. I was staring at them in their scanty clothing on such a cold morning. As I became aware that they were staring at me I noticed that there was a very strange look in the eyes and faces of all three. After a few seconds the woman, who was in the middle between the two men, took a couple of steps towards me, and quietly asked me, in Pidgin, 'Yu wanpela meri?' I replied, after a slight pause, 'Yes.' It was obvious to me, but

not to her, with my hair, my face, my clothing, so different to any white man's.

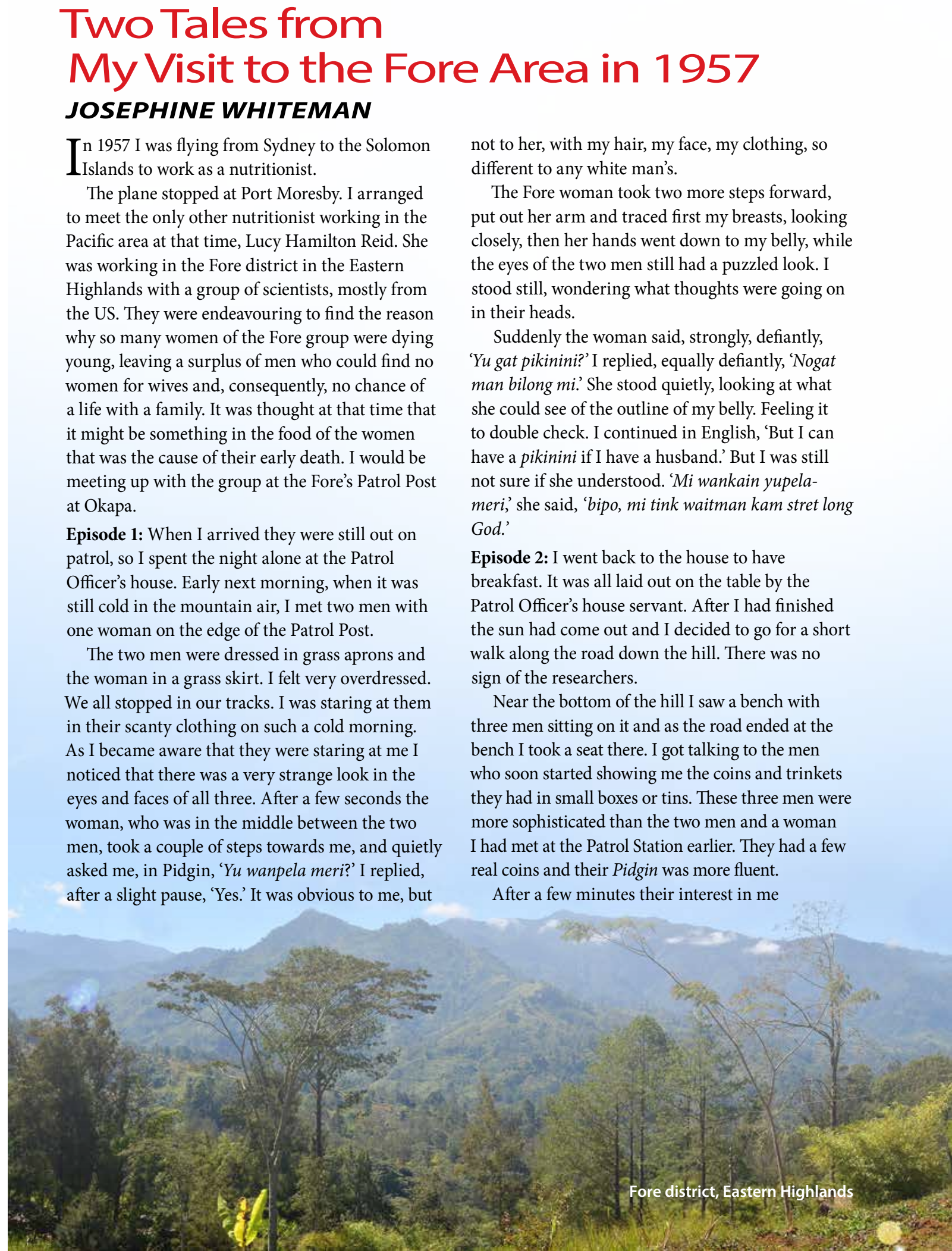
The Fore woman took two more steps forward, put out her arm and traced first my breasts, looking closely, then her hands went down to my belly, while the eyes of the two men still had a puzzled look. I stood still, wondering what thoughts were going on in their heads.

Suddenly the woman said, strongly, defiantly, 'Yu gat pikinini?' I replied, equally defiantly, 'Nogat man bilong mi.' She stood quietly, looking at what she could see of the outline of my belly. Feeling it to double check. I continued in English, 'But I can have a pikinini if I have a husband.' But I was still not sure if she understood. 'Mi wankain yupela-meri,' she said, 'bipo, mi tink waitman kam stret long God.'

**Episode 2:** I went back to the house to have breakfast. It was all laid out on the table by the Patrol Officer's house servant. After I had finished the sun had come out and I decided to go for a short walk along the road down the hill. There was no sign of the researchers.

Near the bottom of the hill I saw a bench with three men sitting on it and as the road ended at the bench I took a seat there. I got talking to the men who soon started showing me the coins and trinkets they had in small boxes or tins. These three men were more sophisticated than the two men and a woman I had met at the Patrol Station earlier. They had a few real coins and their Pidgin was more fluent.

After a few minutes their interest in me





diminished and they were talking excitedly among themselves in *Pidgin*.

I concentrated hard to hear what they were saying. It was about pigs; and numbers of pigs—bride price, MY bride price. I hurriedly stated, 'One hundred pigs.' A pause. Two seemed interested. I quickly looked up the hill to the Patrol Post. No sign of the researchers or the Patrol Officer, Jack Baker. So I responded, 'One hundred pigs; in three days I go back to Moresby.' The end of the world no doubt for these people.

**Editor's Note:** We are indebted to Mary Young for the following information about the author: Josephine Whiteman is a nutritionist who came to PNG in 1961 after working in several areas of the Pacific, including the Solomon Islands. She researched and taught in social anthropology and became a member of a clan in Gumine in Simbu Province. She also lectured at the Papuan Medical College, a forerunner of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Papua New Guinea.

## A Career Change Called

*Continued from page 28*

the notice board was advertised a position for an accountant in PNG; fate! That afternoon I rang about the position and was invited for an interview in Mt Hagen. A month later I was back in PNG with a position monitoring a group of stores in the Western Highlands Province.

Several years later found me in charge of the Accounting and Finance Department of the Agricultural Bank of PNG. A major change in the middle management caused me to resign and return to Australia. I caught up with the girl I had left behind ten years previously and we married.

After working for an old client, I found that I no longer had a lot in common with the people I worked with in Australia and, as if to support this, we got a new neighbour who, like me, had worked overseas

Then came the disappointing, disappointed reply, '*Sori misus, wan handet pik long tri de, planti tumas!*' I got up and walked slowly back to the Patrol Officer's house.

To reflect—a lone white woman, here twenty-four hours and already proposals of marriage! This was the place where I wanted to work. And I did. In 1961 I arrived in Gumine, west of Goroka in the highlands of Papua New Guinea, where I had a different kind of welcome from the local people. A more sophisticated one, but also most rewarding. ♦

for many years and was suffering severely from an inability to settle down. We both decided that we should become expatriates again. He went to Africa and I to PNG to join the mining industry.

This period with the mining industry enabled me to work closely with the local landowners and assist in partaking in spinoff business generated by the mines.

Finally, after working in Porgera, Misima and Hidden Valley I got the opportunity to set up a landowner group into a company which provided several and varied services to the Hidden Valley mine. It took six years to get the group on a sound financial footing and paying dividends.

This done I retired to the Sunshine Coast of Queensland with the knowledge that my forty years in Papua New Guinea had made a difference.

*My career in three pages ... Life ... I love it.* ♦

## A Memorable Experience

Kiunga Sub-District,  
North Fly District

**BILL (JW) GORNALL,  
Didiman—Part Four**

The northern section of the Kiunga Sub District (SD) rises up from 100 feet above sea level at Kiunga to 12,000 ft (3,700m) along the Star Mountains. Pilots told me snow was visible across the West Irian border. Mt Fubilan is located in this range, the site of the Ok Tedi mine.

Discovered by Kennecott Copper Corporation in 1968, mining started in 1984. I had a staff member stationed at the Ok Tedi campsite for the sole purpose of growing vegetables for the mining camp. The rainfall was so heavy—some 500 in (12 m) or so annually—that bush material roofs had to be fixed over the garden beds to stop them washing away. Camp superintendent Doug Fishbourne was considering concrete walls and permanent material roofing for the gardens.

Helicopter rides following the Ok Tedi north from Ningerum for twenty minutes to Tabubil were entertaining in cloudy conditions.

In step with the developing mine, plans for change were being made for Kiunga. The Department of Agriculture, Stock and Fisheries (DASF) was to move out of town, so the development of Samungos extension station was commenced on twenty-five acres selected three miles north alongside the dirt roadway to Rumginae. In March 1973 DASF surveyed an extra fifty acres to extend the station boundary further in from the road.

From a river truck, DASF staff would occasionally set a gill net late evening and next morning fetch home, on average, ten barramundi weighing 8 lb (3.6kg) each. These were distributed to staff and other Kiunga residents. An infrequent sawfish was netted; most of these left gaping holes to be mended. In October 1971 I met marine biologist Ray Moore in Daru and I was able to tag and release ninety-nine barramundi for him in the Kiunga SD.

We airfreighted in 500 day-old White Leghorn

chickens from Ilimo Farm, Port Moresby, via Daru. For starters, 200 went to the local government council (LGC) to raise and sell to villagers, with more to follow as required.

Eggs from Daru cost \$0.95 per dozen plus \$0.52 air freight. We provided eggs to our staff and sold to station personnel and mining camps for \$0.80, so all were happy. Income paid for laying mash from Port Moresby, sometimes shipped in on the MV *Pera*. The rest of the layers' diet was sweet potato leaves and most eggs were double-yolkers. There was one rooster. He won 'Best Rooster' at the 1972 Daru Show.

Some years the low rainfall to the north resulted in a prolonged lowering of the Fly and tributaries. Once, in the river truck, we overshot the Binge River entrance to the Fly and pulled up five miles further south at the old Mabaduan village site. The only inhabitant present was a trussed-up 2 m crocodile. We backtracked. The Binge was now a mere creek.

During such periods of low water level, locals would wade, rather than paddle, across the Fly at Kiunga. Not for me. However, the appearance of numerous sandbars was an attraction for turtles. Upstream at night some staff and I would watch them in the sand commencing their mode of incubation, or in the daytime locate eggs by poking a stick into the sand. I preferred the hard-shelled eggs back at base.

Occasionally, but usually on patrol, we would resort to hand line fishing. Casting with a spinner down the Ok Mart from a drifting river truck was most productive. Black and white striped fish up to 1 lb were delicious cooked on hot coals on a sandbar. Nearer the station, and from the Fly, we would land catfish and file snakes, but our lines of 30 lb breaking strain were sometimes snapped. Then, during a visit, my brother caught a 14 lb (6 kg) Papua Black Bass—a real fighter!

About 8 miles (13 km) downstream from Kiunga



## The PNGAA Collection

This consists of archival material on PNG—photographs, documents, maps, patrol reports, books—reflecting the lives and work of those who have lived in PNG. The PNGAA wishes to ensure these are readily available worldwide to our members, researchers or those simply interested in the rich history of Australia's relations with Papua New Guinea.

The collection grew from an idea of Mr Doug Parrish, former president of the association, and evolved over the years through the dedication and expertise of Dr Peter Cahill. From a modest collection of photographs, letters and diaries, the PNGAA Collection is now a fast-growing compilation and continues to attract local, national and international interest.

If you have items you would care to donate, or you would like to contribute towards the digitisation of items already in the collection, please contact Cheryl Marvell at [collection@pngaa.net](mailto:collection@pngaa.net) or 0438 636 132.





Young cassowaries near Olsobip airstrip (above); Patrol boats HMAS Aitape and HMAS Ladava berthed at Kiunga, December 1970 (previous page)

there was a submerged rock bar and a river depth over this of less than 2 m resulted in larger vessels, such as the supply barge *Ame Rupa* (some 80 ft or 25 m long), stopping here and goods on board being ferried up to the station in smaller craft. Once Brian and I had back orders of SP beer on board, so thirty cartons arrived all at once. It was a happy new year!

Soon after I arrived in Kiunga I practically forsook footwear there. Just walking up the clayey mud river-bank increased the size of my boots appreciably and station roads bore similar results, where just walking two km to watch a movie at Kennecott's camp beside the airstrip was a tasking exercise.

There was a paucity of domestic staff available locally, so my days off on station included stirring up the copper out back for the weekly clothes wash or topping up the kerosene tank in the fridge. Rarely I'd receive a windfall of a still partly full 44 g drum of avgas, surplus needs to a DASF helicopter charter. This also fuelled the fridge. Reading, letter writing and listening to transistor radio or Akai reel-to-reel portable tape recorder filled in much leisure time.

One morning as I walked downhill to the DASF bush-material-with-iron-roof office, a couple of prisoners in red laplaps, with accompanying policeman, passed me by on their way to cut station grass. The staff member with me started to grin. Asked what was up, he answered that they were possibly sizing up my legs. They were 'in' for cannibalism. Aagh! Interesting times.

Another noteworthy event, from my *Field Officer's*

*Journal*, December 1971: Borrowed 35HP outboard motor from Kennecott Construction Company—visited Drimdemasuk to show Cr Menugrup from Grehorsorae village in the Ningerum LGC area the rubber factories now in process of construction. Reason: because a man from Grehorsorae had just been gaoled for spreading a story that Kiunga rubber was no good unless the Rural Development Office (RDO) was killed and his blood mixed with the latex! (He was sentenced for six weeks.)

Station outboard motors were worked hard in the main and required much maintenance. They still broke down on patrol. Once, on the Elevala River, the prop fell off. It was retrieved, but not the nut. The former was satisfactorily affixed using spark plug washers. At other times an internal problem could not be rectified on the water, which meant usually paddling to the nearest village and sending word to the station for backup.

I was indebted to Fr Benedict at the Montford Catholic Mission for the use of their puller for flywheel removal, and so one night when the Assistant District Commissioner (ADC) rocked up in his Land Cruiser wagon to pick up Kiap Murray and informed us of trouble at said mission, I didn't hesitate to jump in. Apparently, a deranged bloke had run amok and was causing much civil unrest. The mission was located between the station and airstrip.

With moonlight assisting us we spotted the hostile subject approaching us down a small track and we hot-footed it back to the vehicle. He followed us to the airstrip, shouting and gesticulating wildly, where, with room to manoeuvre, we turned 180 degrees and from about 60 m transfixed him in our headlights. That's when we saw him raise a bow and arrow ...!

Whump! ... the sound of three policemen in the back with us hitting the floor. That left Brian and me on top ... far too slow. Then we watched someone move in behind the perpetrator and pin him in a hug. Brian and I, with little choice, were first out, raced up and had grabbed an arm each, when whump again, and crash! The police came down on top of us and we all went down in the maul. Wow! Nobody hurt in the [farcical] scenario, although two arrows stuck out of the radiator with contents slowly leaking.

On 23 March 1973 I flew out on long service leave, handing over to Assistant Rural Development Officer (ARDO) Jeffrey Kaiowai, who was later relieved by RDO Graham Preston. ♦

## Family Farm to PNG Development Bank—Story of a Didiman

### MURROUGH BENSON—Part Nine

As early as 1970 the Development Bank recognised that in order to help promote more rapid development of the country it would be necessary for the Bank itself to become involved in initiating its own projects. Early initiatives were in the commercial field but by 1974 the Bank was starting to fund the development of large-scale rural ventures in less developed parts of the country—areas that were unlikely to be viable without the injection of some Government funding.

My initial trip to inspect the site of the first of these proposed ventures, several thousand acres of grassland well suited to the grazing of beef cattle in the Sugu Valley south of Kagua in the Southern Highlands, provides a further example of the logistics sometimes involved in doing our job. I was joined on this trip by a livestock specialist who had been recruited by the Bank to assist with setting up large Bank-owned projects such as this. We got away from Moresby on an early flight, flying direct to Mendi, which took a bit under two hours. The next leg of the trip was in the Bank Rep's Toyota Landcruiser, driving, via Ialibu, the two and

a half hours to the small Government station at Kagua where we arrived around lunch time.

While we waited here for the local *didiman* to turn up with three horses he was trucking in for our ride into the valley the next day, we drove a few miles out the Sugu road to remove some logs we had been told were blocking a bridge we would have to cross in the morning. Back in Kagua late in the afternoon we borrowed some Farmer Trainees' blankets from the agricultural station for our overnight stay with one of the kiaps who provided us with a welcome bit of floor space.

After loading the horses onto the truck early



Meeting landowners in Sugu Valley, Southern Highlands—1974





Sugu Bulamakau cattle, 1976

next morning we set off for the Sugu Valley. After about four hours the truck bogged, indicating that this was where the horseback leg of the trip started. The ride into the valley took a further couple of hours and we spent the rest of the afternoon exploring the area, gaining a good appreciation of the extent and quality of grazing land available. Being elevated on the horses was very helpful in the long grass. We also met with the local landowners.

Late in the day we rode back to the truck, let the horses loose nearby and headed back to Kagua, a relatively quick two-hour trip in the Bank Landcruiser, arriving about 9.30 pm. The hospitality of another of the kiaps ensured a good night's sleep.

The next morning we drove back to Mendi and, after discussions with the District Agricultural Officer, took the half-hour regular TAL flight to Mt Hagen. After visiting one of our large tea-growing clients not far out of town to follow up on some previously requested figures we got on a plane for home. As was often the case, though, a direct flight was not available so we had a three-hour trip via Goroka and Lae, touching down in Moresby a bit before 7.00 pm. All up, it had taken us the best part of two and a half days getting to and from a place in which we spent barely three hours (which was all that was needed at that stage of its development). That, however, was the nature of travelling in PNG

at the time—and in many situations it has perhaps not changed a great deal since then.

My final two years with the Bank saw me take on responsibility for two large-scale cattle properties that the Bank established under the Government-supported funding arrangements. By this time the first of these projects, *Sugu Bulamakau*, the development mentioned above, was already in the early stages of being set up under the management of an expatriate who had been recruited specifically for the role. He lived on the property with his wife and young son but before moving there had to build their house. There was no development at all in the valley when they first went there. Labour quarters and other buildings, fencing, yards and stocking of the property followed soon afterwards, with the stock being walked in via Kagua.

The second cattle property that I had responsibility for in this role was in the Musa Valley of the Northern District. It had the business name of *Yareba Bulamakau*. When I became involved this project had only reached the approval stage so I had the immense satisfaction of being heavily involved in the early days of its establishment. Like Sugu, there was practically no development in the valley, just a small tin shed alongside the airstrip and a few village houses nearby. The potential, however, was immense with a vast area of good grassland and the big Musa River along one boundary. Compared with Sugu, though, it had one important advantage: there was a very good, long airstrip in the centre of the valley. Again, we recruited an experienced expatriate to manage the day-to-day operations on the ground and he and I worked closely together for some months making all the necessary arrangements to get the project off the ground.

In the course of this preparatory work, *Yareba Bulamakau* can take some credit for a close encounter I had with the Queen during her Silver Jubilee visit to Moresby in March 1977. I had been away all week and when I got back to the office had to dash down to Boroko to pick up something for the project. As I turned onto the main road near Six Mile in my grubby Landcruiser I was surprised to see thousands of locals lining the road. Then they started waving and cheering. I thought I'd better

respond with a few waves of my own but my mind was racing: 'What's going on here?' It was then that I glanced in my rear vision mirror and caught a glimpse of four police motorcycles followed by a black car with a flag on its bonnet. Suddenly I twigged: I was leading the Queen's motorcade! I beat a hasty retreat at the next exit, trusting that my waves had been sufficiently regal for the occasion. Clearly the security arrangements for the royal visit had not extended to blocking all the minor roads joining the Hubert Murray Highway along which the Queen travelled from the airport.

Amongst many other things that were done in preparation for the start of the project, we negotiated with the Defence Force to use one of their DC3s to fly all the initial materials and equipment into Safia, the airstrip in the valley where the property was to be developed. Fuel, a generator, a slasher (for the tractor that would be brought in later), a portable sawmill, building materials, tools and a motorbike were all amongst a full payload on the first flight in. The Defence Force also made a barge available to transport the initial batch of cattle from Moresby to a landing point at Pongani, down the coast from Popondetta. Others to support the project included the New Zealand High Commission which responded favourably to our approach to donate the portable sawmill.

When the first mob of cattle was shipped to Pongani there were no unloading facilities and the barge had to anchor a little offshore. The cattle were herded into the water and had to swim ashore and be held in temporary yards when they reached land. From there they were walked into the property along a rough track, a trip that took three or four days. Of the 300 or so cattle in that first mob four had to be destroyed when they broke their legs while trying to negotiate the many fallen trees that had not been fully removed from the track by the bulldozer operator who was supposed to have left a clear path for the animals. The track was prepared properly for later drives and not one animal was lost from the 1,500 or so subsequently walked in.

As was the case with the Sugu property, the manager's first task was to build a home on the property for himself and his wife and three young daughters. Within five years, they had managed to establish a vibrant community alongside the

airstrip at Safia, including a school and aid post (both funded by the Government), slaughter house, sawmill and staff accommodation. Cattle numbers, built up from the five lots walked in from the coast after being barged there from various locations, totalled over 5,000 and beef was regularly air freighted out to Port Moresby. When they were well settled on the property, the manager and his wife ran the annual Safia races on the airstrip and people flew in from all over the country to be part of this signature event. The viability of the property was tested a few years after its establishment when DC3s were taken out of commission and the beef had to be flown to Moresby on Twin Otters. Overnight the cost of airfreighting the beef went from 5 toea a kg to 15 toea.

The model used for *Sugu* and *Yareba* proved to be very successful in bringing economic and social development to areas that would otherwise have struggled to attract the necessary investment. Extension of this project concept saw a total of five large-scale cattle properties having been developed by the Bank by 1981, making it the second largest beef producer in Papua New Guinea at that time.

Training of the local staff was always an important priority for us. As Papua New Guinea moved first to Self-Government on 1 December 1973 and Independence on 16 September 1975, and then into the post-Independence era, expatriate staff were always very mindful of the fact that one of their responsibilities was to work themselves out of a job. None of us, I'm sure, wanted to leave the country without having done as much as we possibly could to try and ensure a smooth



First Yareba house underway, Safia, 1977



and lasting transition to the local staff. In the previous instalment of my story I mentioned the training given to our Vudal graduates from the very early days. Across the Bank, though, similar initiatives were taken and I and others in the Rural Department played a role in this broader training by preparing and presenting various training programs.

One particular training module that I prepared covered the role of the agricultural extension officer in rural credit, providing guidance on budgeting, determining loan requirements and assessing a project's capacity to repay the proposed loan, supported by examples based on actual case studies. At another time a joint Asian Development Bank/PNG Development Bank/Fiji Development Bank training program, 'Development Banking for the South Pacific Region', was developed. Along with other PNGDB staff, I spent a considerable amount of time preparing case studies and other material for use in this program. The material I prepared was later also used in a joint DAS/PNGDB training program and was also made available to other Pacific development banks.

Come September 1977 I had to make a decision



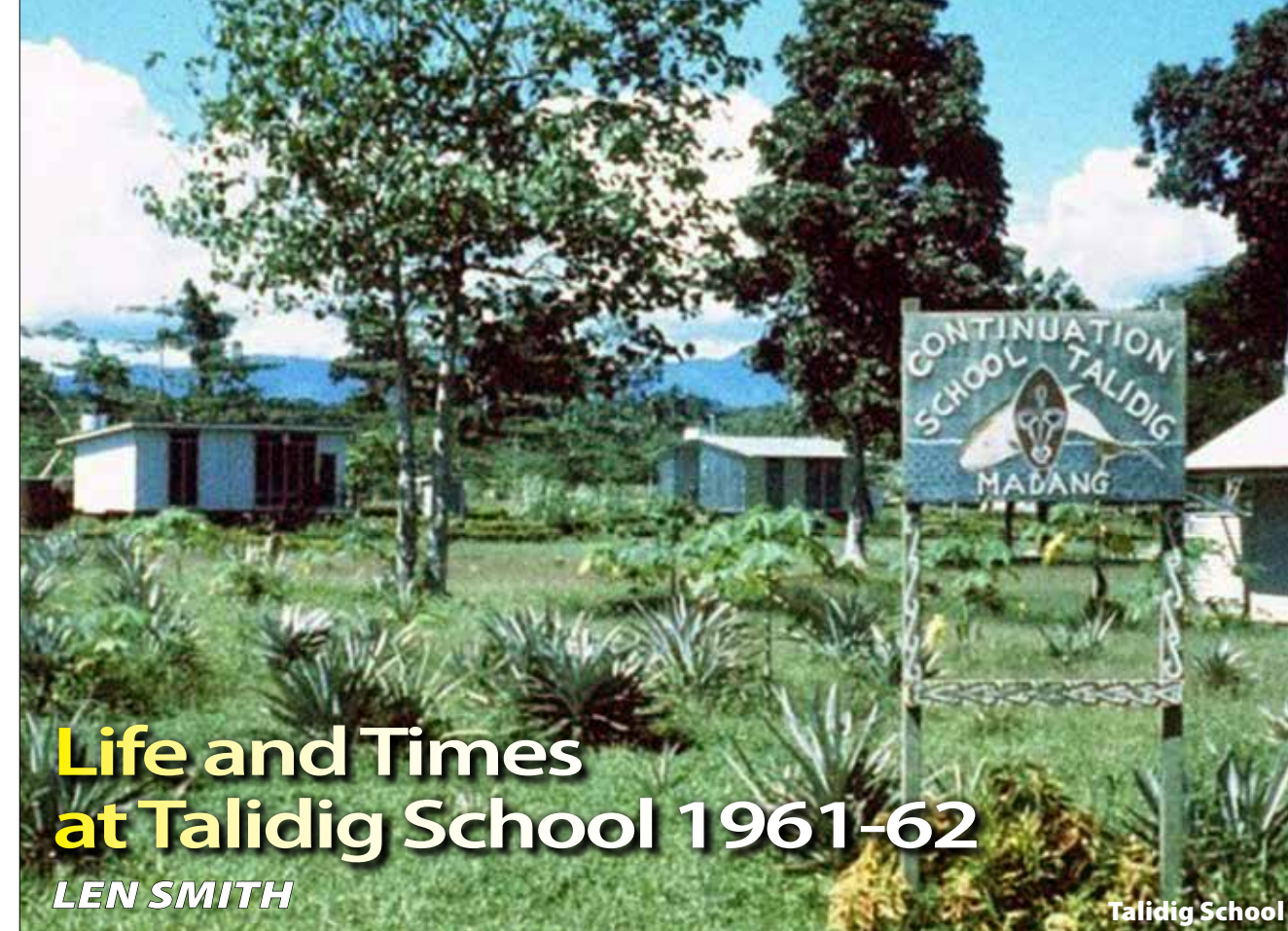
New Development Bank Head Office building at Waigani, opening performance on 7 August 1975

as to whether or not I would take up the offer to extend my contract with the Bank. It was not an easy decision as I had thoroughly enjoyed my twelve years in PNG, including a particularly interesting and rewarding seven years with the Bank. In the end, though, I decided that it was time to put down some roots in Australia. I felt my PNG experiences had equipped me to face whatever challenges may be thrown at me—and the subsequent years proved that I was absolutely right. The opportunities and experiences that came my way in PNG really set me up for the rest of my career.

The 1970s was a time, both for me personally and the Bank generally, of great change, wonderful opportunity, challenges aplenty and, most of all, considerable achievement for the country and its people. The satisfaction that accompanied those achievements was immense. There can be no doubt that the establishment of the Development Bank in 1967 gave a tremendous boost to Papua New Guinea's rural sector and the broader economy in both an economic and social sense.

The boost to production that came from more readily available development finance flowed directly to the borrowers and their families, whether indigenous or expatriate. In establishing its own projects the Bank also brought direct economic and social benefits to entire communities that may well have remained neglected for many more years. Regardless of the nature of the ventures, the ensuing economic development brought employment opportunities to the broader population, new skills, greater financial independence and the opportunity for improvements in health and education. Whether or not these potential gains have been fully realised or sustained over the years is open to debate. Regardless of one's position on these questions, though, they should take nothing away from the tremendous contribution made to the rural sector by the Papua and New Guinea Development Bank, its partners and its employees of the late 1960s and 1970s. ♦

**This is the final instalment of Murrough's story, and now they have all been combined into one book as part of our digital collection—available to view or download on our website: [www.pngaa.org/e-books/](http://www.pngaa.org/e-books/)**



**After six months at Malahang Teachers' College in Rabaul, in 1961 I was posted to Talidig Continuation School. Talidig was a boarding school in the Madang District and it catered for students aged from eleven to eighteen years of age. The school was on the coast about fifty km north of Madang and had the Del River as one of its boundaries. There were four classes of about thirty boys each. There were no villages close to the school so all the pupils were from other villages all over the Madang District. I was one of a staff of four, with the head teacher having been there for five years.**

Three weeks after I arrived at Talidig, nearly all the pupils and the head teacher left for the six-weeks' holidays, leaving just fifteen boys, a Papuan teacher and his family and me in residence. I had no transport so I was more or less on my own. There were two villages about a mile on either side of the school, but in 1962 none of their children attended a government school.

For the first time in my life I found myself living on my own and fending for myself; before leaving for TPNG I had lived with my parents. My house was a single person's quarters and was basic. It was an unlined, fibro, six metre by four metre rectangular box with a metal roof. There was a small dining table and two chairs, two folding aluminium chairs, a kerosene refrigerator, a wood fuel stove, kitchen sink and cupboard. The bedroom contained a single bed and a shower and sink recess. There was a cupboard separating the bedroom from the

living room; the bedroom side was for clothes and the living room side was for food and kitchen gear. A small rear porch held two concrete laundry tubs. The water supply was from two tanks at ground level with a wall mounted hand pump to lift water to a small tank on the roof. This tank fed the shower room, laundry tubs and kitchen sink. Only cold showers could be had.

The laundry consisted of a freestanding wood-fired copper in the yard behind the house. There was a pit toilet made of bush material. Another pit about one metre deep and wide and about two metres long—the rubbish dump—finished off my housing. Lighting at night was by kerosene pressure lamp. I had to buy this as there was no government issue. I had also purchased a twin-burner kerosene stove in Rabaul as well as a short-wave radio—my only form of entertainment. *Radio Biak* from Dutch New Guinea, *Radio Australia* and





Kiap and Sir Donald Cleland

the ABC in Port Moresby were the main stations available.

My duties, besides teaching a Standard 5 class, included supervising working bees before and after school and inspection of the dormitories, issue of rations, sick parade, cooking of meals and turning lights out at nine each night.

Every second Friday afternoon a Land Rover and driver would come to pick me up and take me to town to purchase food. This situation lasted for a few months until a trade store opened about two miles away on the town side of the school. We then placed our order with the storekeeper, who passed it on to the store owner, who then did our shopping for us and delivered it to the school.

After fifty-eight years I do not remember in detail what I ate. I do remember that soft drinks came from America, tinned ham from Canada, tinned fruit was Del Monte brand from USA. Tinned white peaches, which I really liked, came from Japan. Frozen meat and Arnott's biscuits came from Australia. Cigarettes were English, beer was

Australian. One English brand whose products I enjoyed were the Sun Pat peanuts in small cans, and their potato chips, which came as dehydrated flakes in cans also. To prepare the chips one had to heat oil in a pan and then drop in the flakes. Instantly they would swell to full size like the Australian chips I remembered.

By March 1962 I had purchased a motor scooter. This meant I was no longer housebound, although, until I got myself a licence, I did not venture far from the school. Huxley's plantation and Rempi swimming hole one way and the Road Master's Camp the other way were my limits. By Anzac Day I must have obtained one as I was in town that day and witnessed the local Catholic priest tossing the pennies at the Two Up game.

A discussion must have taken place in the Madang Club another time about who was the best marble player growing up, because the next thing we knew a group of men was outside the club playing marbles.

In the midyear school holidays, we all came to

town for a week to attend refresher courses. Our accommodation was paid for at the Madang Hotel. On a few other occasions, when I was off duty and I came to town, I would usually find a spare bed at the Commonwealth Bank Mess. Otherwise, I stayed at the house of a chap I had known from the Meadowbank Boy Scouts. He was a Co-Op officer and would not always be in residence. On these visits I would catch up with other teachers and we spent our days drinking and our nights at the movies. If the new District Education Officer joined us, we would all end up drinking gin and tonic. All drinks were twenty-five cents each in those days, so on Sunday afternoon I would return to Talidig with a very sore head.

The Royal Commission on the use of alcohol by Papua New Guineans arrived in Madang in the August/September 1962 school holidays when we were all staying in the Madang Hotel for the refresher course. It was here that I first met Bill White, another teacher, who was being posted to Karkar Island. One night, while having dinner at the hotel, two very attractive women were in the dining room also; they were secretaries attached to the commission. Bill said, 'Let's ask them out' and so he called the waiter over and asked him for a pencil and paper. He then wrote a little ditty that went like this, 'Our names are Bill & Len, we are two lonely men and we would like to meet you.'

Their first reaction was to say NO, but Bill was not deterred and whatever excuse they sent back, including that they had to type up the day's meeting minutes, did not stop him. He approached the judge, who gave them the OK to meet us. With no further obstacles, we took them for a moonlight stroll from the hotel to the Coastwatchers Monument and back. It was nice to have a couple of girls to talk to. I had been in PNG for about sixteen months and they were the first women of about my own age that I had spoken with in all that time.

Living fifty km from town and only getting into it occasionally, it was almost impossible to meet or have a relationship with a member of the opposite sex. I had had a girlfriend in Sydney and we corresponded regularly for most of 1961, but she and her parents had moved to Melbourne about the same time as I came to PNG.

She had made new friends and, while I didn't



(From the top)  
Dancers celebrate the new council;  
Papuan teacher and class;  
Spectacular head-dress;  
Luluais' caps





Teacher's house

receive a 'Dear John' letter, I understood when her letters became fewer and fewer and then stopped. So that night walk with the two secretaries was a nice interlude. They flew out the next day for the next town.

My only regular contact with women in 1961/62 was with a Mrs Huckley, who was the same age as my mother and the head teacher's wife, who would say a few words if she was taking her baby for a walk after school hours.

She and her husband did not encourage close social intercourse. I think in the year I was there, I had dinner with them once, when they invited some of the Catholic brothers or priests from Rempì to dinner.

The only other women I saw were those who worked in Burns Philps' or Carpenters' stores and in the Education Office, if I was in town in business hours 8.00 am to 4.06 pm, which wasn't often, and they were all either married or spoken for.

Of all the major towns I visited during my time in PNG, I think Madang is the most picturesque. My favourite place to stand and enjoy the view was on a small bridge between the Madang Club and the hotel where you could look up the inner passage between the mainland and a string of islands and see Karkar Island, faintly in the distance. I called it my 'Bali Ha'i' place, like the one in the movie, South Pacific.

#### Sumgilbar Local Government Council

The school was in an area which was part of a proposed Sumgilbar Local Government area, and the new Sumgilbar Local Government Council was to meet for the first time in March 1962. This was an historical event so we transported the whole school

to the site of the new council and its ceremonial inauguration. This was about ten miles further up the North Road near Dylop Plantation.

This occasion gave me an insight into how the villagers and the Administration had interacted with each other until this time. The Administration had been trying for some time to get the people in the area to co-operate in forming a local government council as the first step on the road to self-government and independence. Until this day each village had been run by a *luluai* (a headman or chief) and his assistant known as a *tultul*. These appointments had been made and confirmed by the Administration. On this day all the *luluais* and *tultuls* would step down and be replaced by the newly elected local government councillors. As part of the ceremony they would all hand in their previous badges of office, which were their head caps. The new badge of office showed that they were now elected by their villagers, instead of being appointed by the Administration.

All the dignitaries were there: the Administrator, Sir Donald Cleland and his wife, the heads of the various government departments, the Catholic Bishop for the Madang District, the heads of the Lutheran and Seventh-Day Adventist Churches, all the school children from government and mission schools and their teachers along with many other interested parties. The day started with the addresses of welcome followed by the change of badge ceremony. This was followed by opening speeches by Sir Donald and the new Head Councillor. Speeches by the administration people were in English and were translated for the villagers into *Pidgin* by a patrol officer and vice versa, when the councillors responded. After the formal ceremony we were treated to a mass of entertainment in the form of play acting and sing-sings performed by each village group. They were dressed in some of the most elaborate costume hats I saw while in PNG.

I made a tape recording of the opening ceremony and the sing-sings. I can still listen to these to this day and if anybody knows how to save and add these recordings to Facebook, I would be happy to share them. I had the tape recordings put on to two CDs about twelve years ago, so I can play them on my computer. ♦

## The Old Goroka Base Hospital

### A PERSONAL RECOLLECTION OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA MEDICAL SERVICES PRE-INDEPENDENCE

**JACK WALL**

**In 1968 I spent two months working for the Public Health Department (PHD) of the Territory of Papua and New Guinea (TPNG) in the so-called 'old' Hospital (c.1953–69), situated in the central highlands of TPNG.**

The old Goroka hospital, enveloped in lush green. I did not know it at the time, but the upper level was reserved for the ex-pats whilst the lower, with its hard dirt floor, was for the Melanesians.

My family and I, including a six-week old daughter, arrived in Port Moresby on New Year's Day, stayed overnight, then flew to Goroka via Lae. At the time, Goroka airport was one of the busiest airports in the world, being the only way in and out of the Highlands. We moved into our new residence in town, a comfortable little house on stilts, in the 'Queenslander' style. We inherited Dusty, who was our well-paid houseboy helper during our stay.

On my very first day in Goroka I had the opportunity to fly to nearby Kundiawa to pick up some medical casualties. The airport was closed due to an approaching storm immediately after we took off from Goroka in a four-seater Cessna. I recall very well the rather scary trip to Kundiawa, flying between very high mountains which, thankfully, could not be seen through the dense surrounding rain clouds. The pilot took pleasure in leaning forward in his seat to see outside, from time to time pointing out crashed planes. He told me that 'in TPNG, there are only two types of pilots, good ones and dead ones'. Having spoken with a veteran PNG pilot from Geelong, where I lived for two years after returning from North America where I lived for twenty-five years, I have no doubt that this is true.

As we approached our destination, I was very relieved to see the green surroundings of the Kundiawa airstrip emerging through the clouds and mist. The runway sloped up towards a tiny terminal where our medical casualties awaited us. When we returned to Goroka the next day we took off down the runway towards a menacing cliff face, passed a crashed plane on our left (if I recall well) then swerved sharply upwards and to the right to avoid running into the cliff.

My appointment at the hospital was as junior registrar in medicine, which meant that I tagged along with the Senior Registrar, Dr Bill Pigott, who was rotating from the now 'old' Sydney Hospital where, three years later, I sat my oral exams that qualified me as a Member of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians. The Chief of Medicine was Dr Frank Rhodes, a self-described refugee from South Africa, who told me that 'he and his wife had twenty-three years of bliss, then they met'. Frank lived alone—more or less—and played golf every day at four o'clock, sharp. His caddy was one of the local youths who worked in the hospital as a medical orderly (between golf rounds).







Traditional and 'affordable' house in Goroka, similar to the one I lived in for eight weeks in early 1968 (top); Historic photograph from the University of Queensland library archives of a typical scene outside the old Goroka Hospital, namely a missionary observer, a patient with a leg problem, a child and adult presumably related to the patient and the attending medical assistant (below)

I had come to the Goroka Hospital to see some exotic old-world medicine, but also to look for patients with goitre due to iodine deficiency. With the help of a patrol officer, whose name I forget, several 'volunteers' were rounded up and taken by truck to the hospital for 'donation' of their blood, which was sent to Adelaide for our research studies. Fifty-three years later we are still waiting for these samples to arrive.

During the 1960s our research team, headed by the late Professor Basil Hetzel, carried out research in the nearby Jimi Valley, on patients with a new neurological disorder manifest as muscle spasms of the legs (giving a cross-legs appearance) and mental deficiency, caused by iodine deficiency, known in *Pidgin* as *long-long*. These people were to be

found working in domestic gardens. My MD thesis research, which I began on my return to Adelaide, was to be an extension of this work

My role as junior registrar was to listen and learn and to encourage and support the patients and their families, some of whom stayed with their sick relatives, helping with their management and sleeping on the dirt floor under their beds. I also helped the paramedical staff from whom I learnt a lot about how to manage patients with serious illnesses in a very rudimentary health system run by medical assistants and largely self-trained nurses and nurse assistants.

The doctors who worked at the old Goroka Hospital lived in the nearby woods, often with their exotic pets including, in one case, a rather handsome but aggressive (presumably the reason it was chained to a tree) cassowary. Their social life consisted of house parties, story-telling and drinking. The conversation was always interesting and reflected the personality of doctors who had escaped Australia for a romantic and challenging life in the Highlands of TPNG. Some of the doctors were escaping from broken relationships, the stress of 'modern Australian medicine' or 'family situations' (such as a general practitioner who had absconded from a well-known Adelaide medical family and described himself as the 'black sheep of the family').

One young doctor, who had been a researcher in Melbourne, was fleeing from a broken relationship to work for the TB screening unit of the PHD. By day he read mini chest X-rays and by night he listened to Beethoven in his small house in the woods. I recognised him as a true 'romantic' looking for something different and exciting but suffering in the meantime. Then there was Long John Pasquarelli, patrol officer and later politician, whose brother Leon was a friend and medical colleague in Brisbane.

Some of the exotic medical conditions that I saw during my time at the old Goroka Hospital included cerebral malaria, cerebral tuberculoma, blackwater fever (a severe, life-threatening form of malaria), syphilis, pulmonary tuberculoma and a deformity of the legs caused by yaws, conditions which were rarely seen in Australia at that time (and since). There were also many cases of more mundane conditions such as rheumatic heart

disease, pneumonia, bacterial and viral infections and malnutrition. And, of course, many patients, and indeed some of the staff, had goitres due to the severe iodine deficiency that was endemic in the Highlands, the reason that members of the University of Adelaide thyroid research group had been working in the area for many years.

I also had the opportunity to learn from the hospital surgeons about a common and often fatal bowel disease called pig bel, an acute abdominal condition characterised by patchy intestinal gangrene without obvious vascular or mechanical cause. *Pig bel*\* was associated with eating huge amounts of partly-cooked pigs. Pigs could be seen wandering all over town and even in the hospital grounds. The first surgeon to operate on pig bel cases was Dr Lajos Roth, but the chief surgeon at this time was Dr Frank Smith (1960–78), a legend in the Highlands for his work as a tireless and expert surgeon carrying out his trade under difficult conditions, as well as for being a pleasant and interesting raconteur. His wife was the hospital obstetrician; as the reader can imagine, she was often expected to deal with some extreme pregnancy and labour situations that were only rarely seen in Australian hospitals. The infant mortality rate was, as expected, very high but was improving steadily due to her heroic work. The anaesthetist was from Brisbane, as were most of the nursing staff.

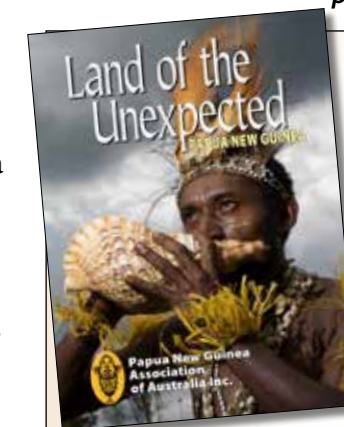
Twenty years later, AIDS found its way into independent PNG and, as I write this report, the number of COVID-19 cases has surged to crisis point in the country and, with international help, a vaccination program is underway. The old Goroka Hospital, its medical and nursing staff and the diseases that they treated, have largely passed into history. The old hospital has been replaced by a new medical centre, which has links with the PNG College of Medicine (Port Moresby) and the Goroka University. With the opening of the new Goroka Hospital came modern diseases. The ten most common cause of death in PNG today are lower-respiratory infection, ischemic heart disease, stroke, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes, road injury (which did not surprise me), iron-deficiency anaemia, asthma and diarrhoeal diseases. Sadly, we must now add COVID-19 infection which may top them all.

Life in Goroka town itself was interesting and very different from my home town of Adelaide. No surprise there, eh! We enjoyed visiting the market, sightseeing and meeting the locals. On one memorable occasion we were offered four coconuts in exchange for our small, pink-skinned, daughter. We tried bargaining but, in the end, we kept her.

I recall that many of the people walked long distances in the surrounding countryside often eating, or selling, cucumbers, which were plentiful and mouth-watering. On one occasion, we took a car trip along the road to Kundiawa, but were forced to turn back because the road had disappeared into the adjacent valley, a not uncommon event we were told. And yes, we had the opportunity to see a *sing sing* and meet the inevitable German tourists looking for something unique and extreme. Or perhaps it was that they had some link with the past when PNG was under German control.

Although my stay in Goroka was brief, I was there long enough to understand the challenges of health care in a developing country. Hopefully, I also contributed in a small way to the evolution of health care delivery in the area, not only through our research into iodine deficiency disorders in the PNG highlands, but also in the day to day running of a traditional regional hospital with dirt floors and historic diseases. I also learned that there was more to PNG than Sepik masks, the mystery of David Rockefeller's disappearance, cargo cult, the missionaries who 'came to do good and did bloody well' and the Kukukuku headhunters. ♦

**\* Please turn to Robin Cooke's article on the next page about the pig bel disease**



PNGAA's new publication covers many of the different facets of Papua New Guinea—including a complex overview, public services, flora, fauna and the environment, industries, art, culture, sport, the diverse history and some of those who helped to shape the nation—and will be a great gift or addition to your library.

**\$30.00 + \$7.00 p&h Aust.**

If you wish to purchase a copy, please go to the Treasurer's Corner Order Form at the end of this issue or PNGAA Store on our website—[www.pngaa.org/store/](http://www.pngaa.org/store/)  
Sales proceeds will be dedicated to fundraising for PNGAA programs.



Pigs are widely distributed throughout PNG, although it is not clear how long they have been in the country. However, they have been there long enough to be incorporated into the social and cultural practices of the people. This is especially so in the Highlands where pigs are still used for paying debts, settling disputes and buying brides.

Pigs were owned by men but cared for by women. A characteristic of the husbandry practised in these pig-owning communities was that they were rarely used as a normal part of the diet—rather there were feasts of pig meat held at intervals of three to seven years. These feasts were not only a celebration of pig ownership and the status of their owners, but they also had a role in cementing relationships between groups or in the settlement of long running disputes. Hundreds of pigs could be assembled and killed, and all the body parts subsequently eaten by people whose diet was usually without much protein.

While these pig feasts were times of celebration, they also had some dire consequences. The severe inflammation of the small intestine suffered by some participants often resulted in death. Lajos Roth, a surgeon from Hungary, recognised this disease when working at Goroka Hospital in the early 1960s. He saved the lives of some of these patients by removing affected parts of the intestine and the investigation of the cause of the disease began almost immediately. None of the bacteria

or other agents usually associated with gastro-intestinal disease were found in tests done at Goroka Hospital. It seemed to be a new disease and its association with pig feasts was not initially recognised.

Tim Murrell, a recently graduated doctor from Adelaide, was appointed as Government Medical Officer, Goroka in 1960. Apart from his normal duties he began the search for the cause of the 'new' disease. His patrols in the Eastern Highlands coincided with a series of pig feasts and following these he encountered deaths and illness, especially in children. Because he was able to carry out limited autopsies on two of the fatal cases, he realised that the deaths were due to the disease described by Roth and therefore recognised the close association with a recent pig feast.

Samples from some of these cases were sent to the School of Tropical Medicine at the University of Sydney but no specific agent of disease could be recognised. Because of its association with pigs and feasting on pigs, the veterinary laboratory of the Department of Agriculture, Stock and Fisheries

at Kila Kila was asked to assist the investigation. Tissue samples from surgical and medical cases were sent on ice from Goroka to the laboratory. From some of these samples, John Egerton and his colleagues, Anita Rampling and Patricia Abbott, were able to recover a variety of bacterium known to cause fatal diseases of the gut in sheep, pigs and chickens, but previously unrecognised in humans. These bacteria were sent to specialists in the UK for confirmation of their identity. The only record of something like them and their association with human disease was from a series of cases in Germany shortly after the Second World War. The New Guinea germs were sufficiently different from these, however, to justify their description as a geographic (i.e. New Guinea) variant.

The search now began to find this bacterium in pigs and/or pig meat. A joint medical and veterinary team attended a major pig-kill and feast at Wapenamunda near Wabag in 1963. Samples were collected from pigs before and after slaughter and from the body parts after the completion of the ritual cooking process. The team noted the details of the whole process and saw the many opportunities there were for contamination of meat by the gut content of pigs. There was a degree of skill in the preparation of carcasses for cooking in the stone lined pits in the earth—the women carefully washed out the content of the intestines before adding them, with the other organs, to the prepared carcasses. Local herbs were added along with *kau kau* and other vegetables. The temperatures achieved in the cooking process were also recorded by the investigatory team.

These early investigations failed to find any evidence of the bacterium found in the diseased intestine of patients. Although that was a disappointment, the evidence for it being responsible was sufficient to justify the preparation, testing and use of a vaccine to be used against one of the major toxins produced by the bug. Antiserum prepared against a major toxin made by the bacterium was used successfully in treating acute cases of the disease that continued to occur throughout the highlands. The vaccine was later used to protect children against *pig bel*, as the disease had been named.

The credit for the name *pig bel* is given to Tei



TOP: The killing of the pigs

BELOW: Butcher at work—note the Qantas flight bag, in widespread use in the 1960s

OPPOSITE PAGE: Assembly of pigs for killing

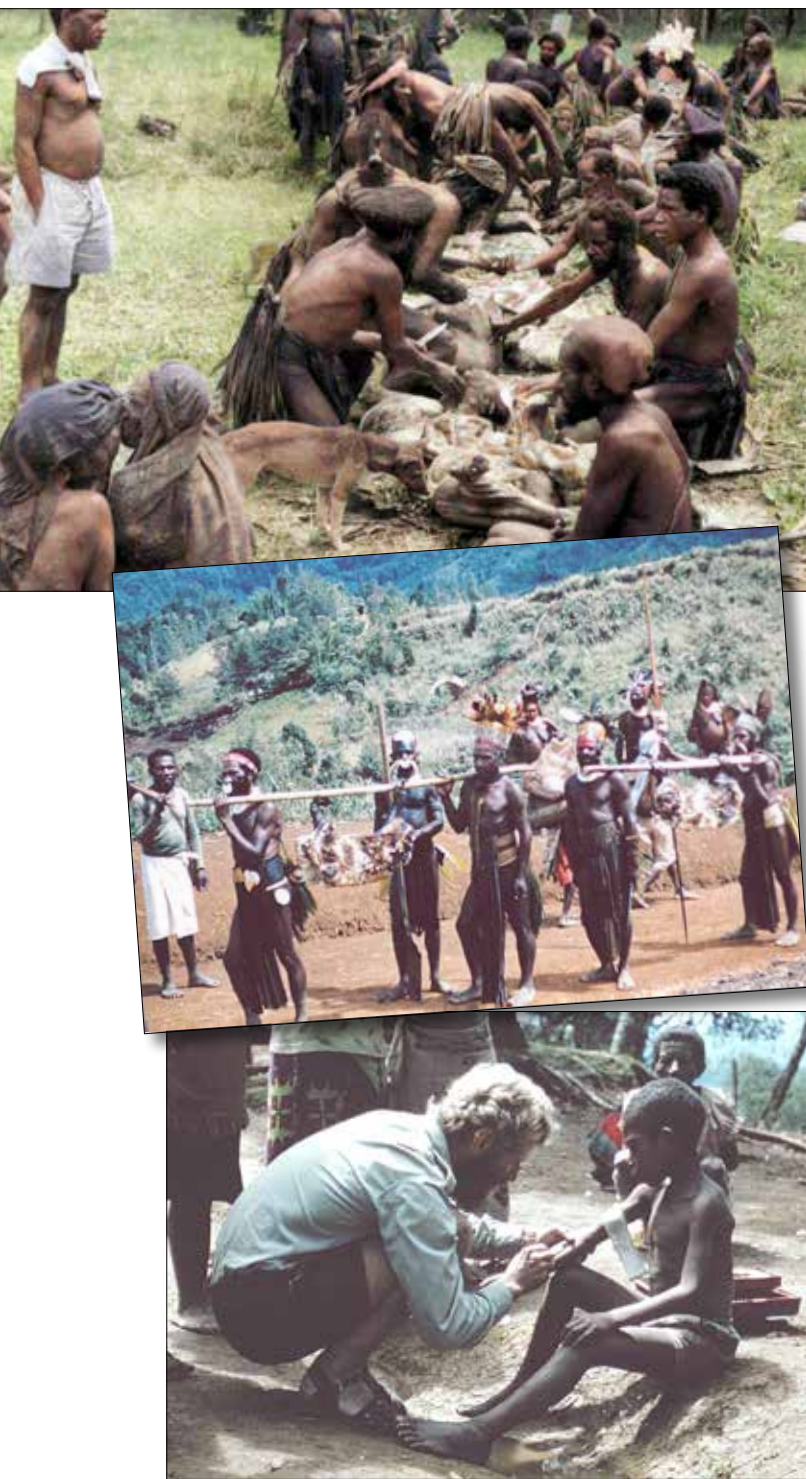
Abal who worked as an orderly in Goroka Hospital—he later became the member for Enga Province in the National Parliament and was subsequently knighted.

Research into *pig bel* continued. The people at Wellcome Research Laboratories in London developed a special test for the identification of the *pig bel* organism. With this test it was easy to show that the culprit was widely distributed in pigs, in highlanders, and even in a few Europeans. Testing of the vaccine developed by Peter Walker of Wellcome was done by Gregor Lawrence and Frank

## Pig Bel—or, Too Much of a Good Thing?

ROBIN COOKE





TOP: Preparing carcasses for ovens

MIDDLE: Carcase leftovers on the way home

BOTTOM: Gregor Lawrence taking blood in vaccine trial  
Shann working from Goroka. Lawrence continued his interest in *pig bel* after returning to his research institute in Brisbane. Here he developed strong evidence that the humble *kau kau* has a role in the development of *pig bel*. He showed in experiments with guinea pigs that *kau kau* has an inhibitor that prevents inactivation of the toxin of the *pig bel* bacterium by intestinal protease. (Protease is an

enzyme that causes the breakdown of proteins into smaller components). This natural protection occurs in people with normal levels of intestinal protease. The *kau kau* protease inhibitor resists heat and so survives the cooking process. The investigations at Wabag showed that temperatures reached in the earth ovens were not particularly high and not high enough to kill the spores of bacteria or inactivate the protease inhibitor of *kau kau*.

As information was gathered about *pig bel* it became clear that most of the severe cases were in children and that many deaths resulted before the vaccine was introduced. In a series of 542 cases operated on at Goroka, 75% were in children under fifteen. Before vaccination was introduced, *pig bel* was the fourth most frequent cause of death in Highland children after pneumonia, diarrhoea and meningitis. Adults were apparently more resistant and blood tests of normal people later showed evidence of previous experience with the disease.

Several factors have together resulted in a marked decrease in the number of *pig bel* cases in the Highlands in recent times. The most important of these is awareness of the problem resulting from all the work done by Tim Murrell and his colleagues. The introduction and practice of improved hygiene at slaughter has also helped. Perhaps of greater importance are the cultural and socio-economic changes that have occurred and the consequent decreased frequency of pig feasting. Consequently, the vaccine that was made and used in the twentieth century is no longer available.

Although there are still occasional reports of *pig bel* in hospitals in the Highlands, it is no longer a major health problem. When it was first recognised it was thought to be associated only with pig feasting, however more recently it has been found in Thailand and Vietnam. The cases seen by Greg Lawrence in Vietnam were among people who had sweet potato (*kau kau*) as a staple in their diet. Other sporadic cases have been seen where proteins other than pig meat seem to be involved.

As was the case with the disease 'Kuru', the reporting of *pig bel* created international interest in PNG, its people, and their diseases. As a result of this interest all the information needed to control and effectively eliminate it was acquired and applied in about twenty years. ♦

## Building the Road up the West Coast of New Ireland

BEVYNNE TRUSS

**As the push started towards and up the west coast of New Ireland in 1969 my bulldozers' track systems suffered huge damage—cracking and high cleat wear, bolts shearing apart due to the hardness of the coronos rock, worn out blade-cutting edges and corner pieces. Ripper tyne shoes deteriorated rapidly and, in some cases, sheared off. All this kept the local mechanics busy. Motor graders suffered similarly with cracking of circle frame components.**

Working on a grader with visitor, Mike Koonan

Hydraulic failure also occurred under these heavy operating conditions. The workshop truck was always busy. In light of all this, the decision was made to use PWD explosives to fracture the larger coronos formations. As a stroke of luck Japanese war munitions were found scattered in the bush. These were put to good use, sometimes clearing more than was intended. Jap depth charges were found to be effective to sever huge fig tree roots, allowing the dozers to fell the trees more efficiently. Once construction moved to the west side, heavy jungle was encountered and the road surface became muddy with constant rain making it slippery and boggy.

As an observation, while standing still one morning I can still recall the sound of someone sawing tree limbs, when suddenly a huge bird appeared among the tree-tops. The sound was actually coming from a *kokomo* (hornbill) in flight through the forest, avoiding the local hunters.

Road construction increased when we linked up with existing tracks to various plantations. The ground became more stable due also to military assistance during World War Two. But many of these tracks were now overgrown. The plantations invariably had wharves, built to receive supplies from Rabaul on small ships. Of course, pallets of beer and cartons of spirits received first priority, followed by food stuffs and other daily needs.

A road camp was established at Panaras Plantation next to a local village, close to the sea. We got cool relief swimming. The mechanics fished and ate well. I usually returned to Tong's guest house at Namatanai for the night.

By then the wheel tractors with tipping trailers were encountering front wheel bearing failure from the numerous saltwater creek crossings. With my local mechanics we decided to modify the outer front-wheel bearing hub caps by drilling, tapping and inserting a grease nipple in each, which proved to be successful. Greasing the







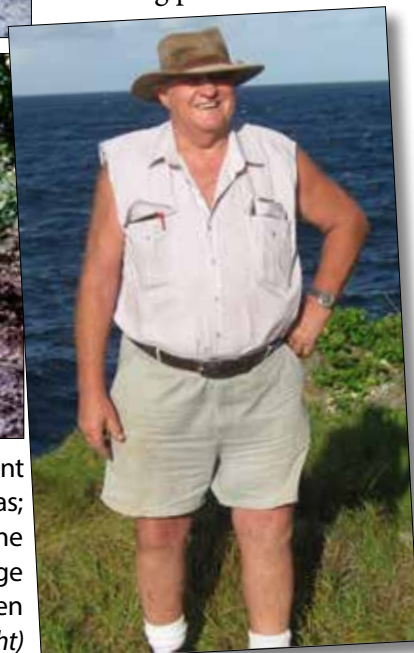
(From the top) Hydraulic hose and other problems; Plant and construction camp on the west coast at Panaras; A new concrete culvert on the west coast; Bevyne Truss in straw hat and construction foreman George Lancaster; Muddy conditions on the jungle overburden & Bevyne Truss in New Ireland, 2011 (right)

bearings became a daily routine. Eventually a number of crossings were improved with concrete culverts.

The new road was now connected from Uluputur to Komalu, Kalili and Tibili plantations. These now had access to Panaras. The plantation manager there was widely known as Panaras Jack, a flamboyant character, sometimes seen driving his cream Mercedes sedan known as a *burut* taxi with its vertical-style headlights. Wearing a white Panama hat and a sweat towel around his neck, cigar in mouth, he cursed the last section of road on which we were working eastward from his property into Kavieng.

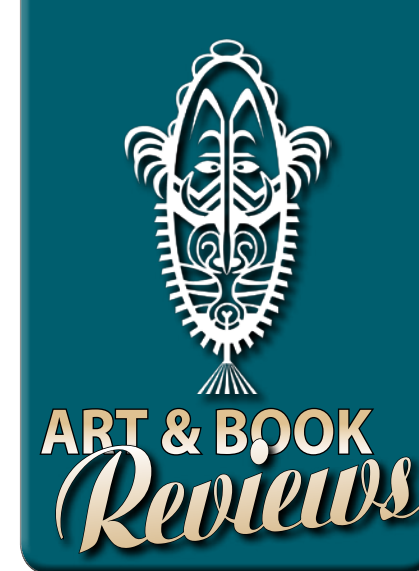
Jack had a great liking for rum so one day whilst he was overseeing his garden boys, hard at work with *sarips* near his homestead, he suddenly jumped to his feet and let out a yell: 'Ambush! Ambush!' The plantation manager raced inside, came back out and cut loose with his revolver, firing over the boys' heads yelling: 'Clear! Clear!' Jack imagined he was under attack. The workers flattened out like lizards and crawled quickly into the bush. When word of this incident got into town, the constabulary paid a casual visit and persuaded old Jack to go on long long leave.

Early in December 1969, the last section of the new road was upgraded from Panaras across the Schleinitz Range to the road junction at Fangelawa on the Boluminski Highway, thus enabling travel from east to west coast and the flow of commerce to Kavieng port.



In 1970 I was transferred to Kundiawa in the eastern highlands because my then wife was not coping with the humid climate. I was quickly promoted to plant inspector. But more about this later ... ♦

Bevyne Truss went to PNG in 1967 and spent later years on secondment to New Britain Palm Oil Limited (NBPOL).

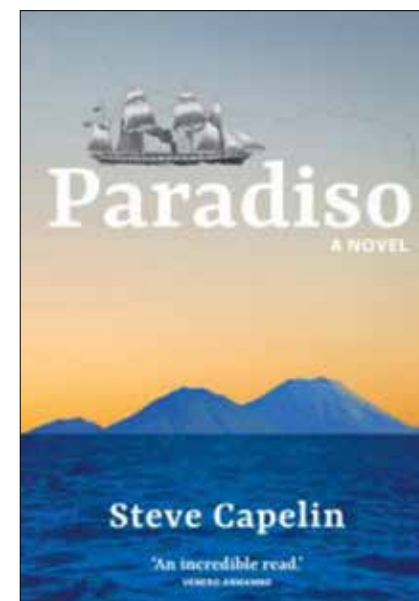


## STEVE CAPELIN *Paradiso*

This novel is set in New Ireland and is based on the bizarre but true story of the Marquis de Rays, who had ambitions of starting a great French colony in the Pacific, and who persuaded hundreds of people to invest and settle there—despite never having been there himself.

In 1880 three hundred Italian peasants joined an expedition to establish a utopian colony in the islands of the Pacific. Wealth, independence and liberty awaited them.

The venture was a disaster. The expedition leaders abandoned them, the dream disintegrated. Struggling to survive in the



**Featuring books about Papua New Guinea and reviews, art and craft exhibitions, interviews of interest to members and information for authors, artists and craftspeople—please send your articles and photos by the Copy Deadline, 17 September 2021, to [editor@pngaa.net](mailto:editor@pngaa.net)**

jungles of New Guinea, the Italians were desperate to escape. Australia beckoned but unseen events threatened to frustrate their quest for liberty.

Brisbane writer, Steve Capelin, has spent the better part of ten years researching the story behind his novel, *Paradiso*, the story of his Italian ancestors who arrived in Australia, via New Guinea, as refugees in 1881.

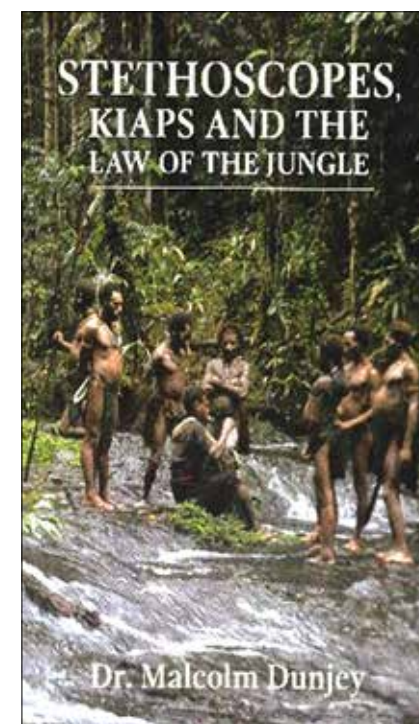
There is pain in this true story but there is also hope and redemption and, while the utopian dream did not eventuate in New Guinea, a life in Australia offered an opportunity to create an Italian community in a place they had never expected.

This site survives today as New Italy on the Pacific Highway, near Woodburn, in northern New South Wales.

ISBN 9780648905110/Paperback  
Published by AndAlso Books,  
30 April 2021—RRP \$30.00  
Also available from AVID Reader  
Bookshop, Brisbane:  
<https://avidreader.com.au/products/paradiso-3>

## Dr MALCOLM DUNJEY *Stethoscopes, Kiaps and the Law of the Jungle*

The author of this book was the District Medical Officer in the Western District in 1966 and 1967. Based in Daru he accompanied patrols into recently controlled parts of that district. These were to the Nomad and the Olsohip areas.



The book, uniquely, reproduces copies of the contemporary patrol reports accessed from the digitised copies held in the library of the University of California, San Diego. Clearly typed copies of each report ensure readability. Added to each of the reports is the author's medical and social commentary on the patrol written some fifty years later.

Altogether it represents another fine tribute to the kiaps who made it possible for others to provide professional services to the people of PNG.

ISBN: 978-0—6451031-6-8 (pbk)  
Published by Ark House Press, 2021  
162 pages, softback  
Cost: \$22.00  
Available from: <https://www.arkhousepress.com/stethoscopes-kiaps-and-the-law-of-the-jungle/>



## NEIL MURRAY

### *Hutjena High School Buka*

This book is about Neil Murray's seven years (1967–73) as headmaster of Hutjena High School in Buka. It is not a study of the province or people, it is a story told through photographs. It could be called a social history of the place and the people of that time, fifty years ago. The author is aware that Buka and Bougainville have changed greatly in that time and hopes that people today can visualise the great changes since he lived there.

Neil Murray's photographic story of six years in Bougainville is hugely revealing. When he arrived at Hutjena there were no primary grades but, eventually, a high school was established with student dormitories.

The school was located on what had been a large Japanese camp in WWII. War debris was everywhere, and students often found items in the surrounding bush or whenever holes were dug—including vials of morphine and a machine gun.

Students enjoyed bread-making, gardening and fishing in addition to lessons. Sports, festivals and music and singing were always enjoyed along with necessary jobs such as digging holes for pit latrines, chopping logs, cutting grass and general maintenance of



the buildings. About twenty staff, contract officers and volunteers, were at the school.

The book has a wonderful series of photos from Buka and also from the Mortlock Islands. Photos are accompanied by a description on each page and interspersed with small sections of further information about life in this self-sufficient community.

With its generous photos, this book is an outstanding glimpse at how Hutjena High School was over fifty years ago and testament to the lives of both teachers and students.

**Andrea Williams**

ISBN: 978-1-64921-072-2 Published by Neil Murray, 2020  
246 pages, softback  
Available from Neil Murray  
Email: [n.murray@westnet.com.au](mailto:n.murray@westnet.com.au)  
Cost: \$30 (includes postage in Aust.)

### **Guy Warren 100 not out**

Guy Warren, whose exhibitions at the National Art School, Darlinghurst and at the King Street Gallery, Sydney, were reviewed by John McDonald (SMH Spectrum, 10–11 April 2021), turned 100 this year.



Crashed plane Bougainville 1945 (top); Study of tribal people made from photographs lent by David Attenborough 1954–55 (centre); Peter Wegner's prize-winning portrait of Guy Warren (bottom)

He left school aged fourteen years to work at *The Bulletin*. Stimulated by the illustrators and cartoonists working for that, now defunct, weekly he began art classes at JS Watkin's private art school before the outbreak of

World War II. He continues to work as an artist.

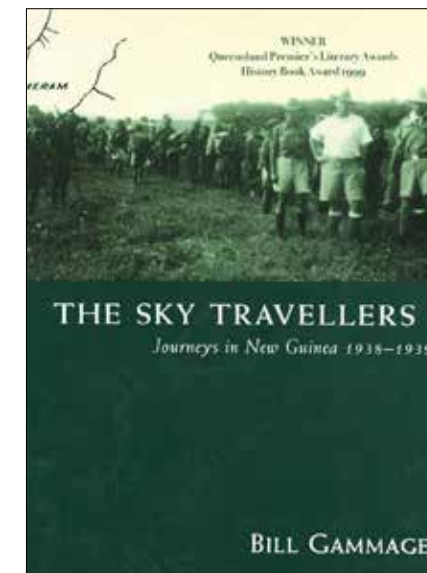
Warren spent five years in the army during the war and much of that time was spent in PNG. During his free time he filled sketch books with drawings of people and places many of which he used later in his long and productive artistic career. Of special interest was his collaboration with David Attenborough, whose photographs he used to depict people as an integral part of the land.

Warren won the Archibald Prize in 1985, with his portrait of the artist Bert Flugelman and, coincidentally in his centenary year, he was the subject of Peter Wegner's portrait, winner the 2021 Archibald Prize—celebrating its own centenary this year.

### **BILL GAMMAGE** *The Sky Travellers:* *Journeys in New Guinea* *1938–1939*

The author, Bill Gammage, a PNGAA member, describes the world's last major exploration by foot—a 1938–39 Australian expedition—and the participants' experience of first-contact with the people of the mountainous western highlands of Papua New Guinea. The pale skin of the strangers suggested that they were spirits-sky people. Local people repeatedly asked 'Why have you come?'

Jim Taylor, with John Black and Pat Walsh, led a patrol of over 350 people. Most were carriers from Highlands areas; about forty were New Guinea police from the coast.



In preparing this book Bill Gammage, a professional historian, talked to many of the people who were there—both the visitors and those visited. He uses his skill as a storyteller to trace a complex journey of minds as well as bodies. Every participant in this adventure was changed irrevocably. Readers, too, can still expect exhilaration from this adventure story.

ISBN: 978-0-5228482-7-4  
Originally published by Miegunyah Press; reprinted by Melbourne University Press; 348 pages  
Available from: <https://www.mup.com.au/books/the-sky-travellers-paperback-softback>  
Cost: \$49.99 (incl postage within Australia where appropriate)

**Editor's Note:** *The Middle Kingdom: A Colonial History of the Highlands of Papua New Guinea* by James Sinclair was reviewed by Bill Gammage in *Una Voce*, 17 May 2018.

### **ROBIN BARCLAY** *Cannibals, Conflict & First Contact: 21 Years a New Guinea Patrol Officer*

*In the tradition of CAW Monckton: a politically incorrect version of the kiap experience ...*  
It's a curious thing that Aust-

ralia has never celebrated or mythologised its pioneers in the same way that the Americans have done. There are no rousing tales of iconic Daniel Boones or Chief Sitting Bulls in our founding narratives. The closest we get is a second-rate bushranger in clumsy iron armour.

Instead we fall back on our military history as a way of defining themselves, including a perverse celebration of a World War I campaign against the Ottoman Empire that was essentially a defeat.

This does not mean that there are no great stories in our history worth telling. On the contrary, our history abounds with fascinating events and personalities well on par with anything the Americans or any other nation has to offer. It just requires a little digging to unearth them.

One particular story that has been almost totally ignored is our history in Papua New Guinea. Mention that place to the average Australian and they will tell you about the Kokoda Track campaign of World War II. Beyond that they know virtually nothing about our history there.

During the seventy-odd years of our stewardship of that diverse and rugged land, there were many exciting episodes of enduring historical significance that often involved larger-than-life personalities.

The story of the exploration, pacification and development of Papua New Guinea by Australian patrol officers (called 'kiaps' in Tok Pisin) and others is a prime example. It is a frontier story like no other.



As the last of these men pass into old age their exploits are emerging in a steady stream of memoirs, mostly in self-published form because of the lack of interest among publishers and the general public.

It is often assumed that it was a sense of adventure that sent many young men to Papua New Guinea to work as patrol officers. That may be so but the underlying motive was more often a fear of the confines and banalities of a working-class life.

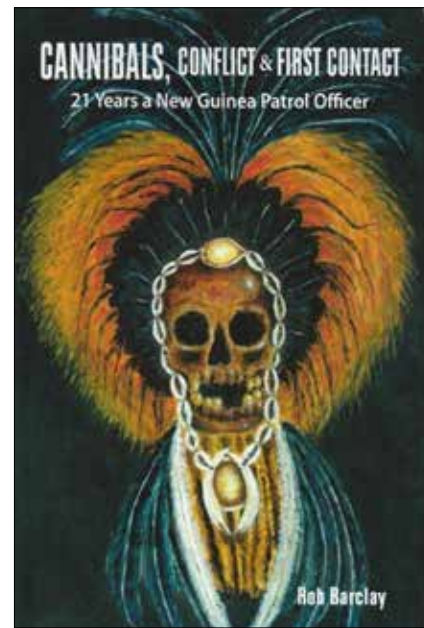
This is borne out by the fact that so many of them had great difficulty adjusting to life in Australia when they had to eventually leave.

In 1957, at the age of nineteen, Robin Barclay was looking at a future in the furniture department of Melbourne's largest retail store, the Myer Emporium. When he saw an advertisement calling for Cadet Patrol Officers in Papua New Guinea he jumped at the chance.

Barclay was a successful athlete in his youth and he believed that his athleticism was a determining factor in his selection as a kiap. That competitive spirit largely went on to inform the way he approached his job in Papua New Guinea.

In that vein he describes a hierarchy of ambition based on the various regional postings and the methods of administration required that a kiap could expect in his career.

At one end were the 'long-settled and sophisticated' coastal areas and at the other the remaining remote areas that were 'the holy grail of all aspiring officers: contacting new and often



strangely different people in previously unexplored areas'.

It was always Barclay's aim to find this holy grail and this is reflected in the title he has chosen for his book. Nomad River on the edge of the Great Papuan Plateau was where he eventually fulfilled that quest.

The golden age of European world exploration occurred roughly from the 15th century to the early 18th century and coincided with the development of colonialism by many of the countries involved.

While all of the major exploration had been completed by the mid-1800s there were still little pockets here and there where intrepid explorers could still venture.

In Papua New Guinea the major exploration phase lasted well into the 1950s and in isolated areas into the early 1970s.

Exploration in Papua New Guinea in the 1970s was basically a mopping up exercise where little pockets of uncontacted people were being tracked down and introduced to the modern world.

In his seminal book, *Kiap*:

*Australia's Patrol Officers in Papua New Guinea*, Jim Sinclair devotes a couple of pages to some of this work being carried out by kiaps at Nomad River in what is now Western Province.

Of that work he says:

*Australians were surprised to read in their newspapers of cannibal raids, tribal killings and the discovery of tiny bands of bushmen in the wilds of PNG: surely such things were not still happening?*

Of Barclay, Sinclair says:

*A thick-set, powerful man with immense shoulders, Robin Barclay did not initially impress me—he was surly in manner and he never would submit reports on time—but his field ability was so unusual that I soon changed my mind. The work that Barclay was to do in the field at Nomad was in the finest traditions of Australia's kiaps in PNG.*

It could be said that the diminishing continuum of what has been called the Age of Exploration only really came to an end in places like Nomad River in the 1970s.

Barclay's narrative is disarmingly frank with a deprecating humour. He has no problem with saying the unthinkable. It is stuff that would have made the Colonel Blimps in headquarters in Port Moresby decidedly uncomfortable.

His quest for the holy grail had to wait while he saw out service in several of the 'long settled and sophisticated' parts of Papua New Guinea, beginning with the idyllic Milne Bay District with its then district headquarters located on picturesque Samarai Island, where pliant islander girls like the delectable Dolores provided him with interesting distractions.

In 1965 he was posted to Ambunti in the East Sepik

District and managed to cajole his superiors into letting him carry out an eighty-day contact patrol in the remote headwaters of the Leonard Schultz and April Rivers where he accounted for 1,200 odd doleful souls.

Three years later he was transferred to Nomad River in the Western District as Assistant District Commissioner. Nomad River had been established as a patrol post by Patrol Officer Mal Lang in 1961 but later gained Sub-District status.

When he arrived at the district headquarters in Daru he says the District Commissioner told him:

*I want you up there in forty-eight hours to take over. Your job will be to stamp out cannibalism and bring the Biami to heel.*

Barclay had found his element. As he describes them, the Biami were ruthless hunters of human protein who savagely raided their neighbours 'clubbing and axing' them and carrying off bits of their dismembered bodies 'stuffed into string bags'.

*To look at the arrogant, implacable expression of a powerfully built young Biami, was to almost feel the intensity of the feral power emanating from the region's top predator. There was no mercy to be seen in the dark adamant depths of his eyes: not for anyone; not now or ever.*

Added to that, as he observed, many of the Biami groups remained uncontacted and were not fussed about attacking intrusive administration patrols.

Anthropologists have disputed this characterisation of the Biami (or Bedamuni) but the western world still maintains an ongoing fascination not only with remote

peoples but also with cannibalism.

After a final long contact patrol into the upper Strickland, Barclay finally brings his quest to a conclusion:

*The carriers began to chant as we marched triumphantly down to the station. As deep male voices reached a powerful crescendo, the massed station people began to cheer. I felt great pride that the final page of New Guinea's discovery and consolidation had at last turned.*

It is a bold claim that is consistent with the general tone of his narrative. Together with the suppression of cannibalism, it is a trope to which many pages of his book are dedicated.

Barclay married while he was at Nomad River and after four years there he was transferred to the Chimbu District with his wife, Sandra. There he grappled with the increasing breakdown of law and order and the perils of tribal warfare. In 1976 they moved on to the Madang District, which Sandra enjoyed. By then they had two daughters. In 1979 Barclay left Papua New Guinea never to return.

The book is lavishly produced, replete with many photographs coloured sketches of the situations he encountered, paintings and maps. His portraits are particularly good, including one of the delectable Dolores. He is now offering many of these as framed artworks for sale.

There is much in the book that is controversial and disputable, adherents of politically correctness will have a field day, but that in itself is not a bad thing. What Barclay says reflects a lot of what other old kiaps feel but are disinclined to say. The debate about their role in Papua New Guinea still rolls on

and Barclay has made a very useful contribution.

**Philip Fitzpatrick**

ISBN: 978-0-6468396-0-8

Independently published, 2021

282 pages; contains copies of original artworks

Available from the author:

[ambunti1965@gmail.com](mailto:ambunti1965@gmail.com) for copies of both the book and the artworks.

Cost: \$75.00 (soft cover), hard cover due out in September 2021. Contact author for price and postage.

## CAROLINE EVARI *When I Grow Up*

A new children's book has been published in PNG. The author has collaborated with the artist Clarisa Alu and poet Bradley Gewa in preparing a book inspired by traditional art and representing the different provinces of PNG. Suitable for readers in Grade 4, it talks about the dreams and aspirations of eight children and tells readers that it is great to have career aspirations.

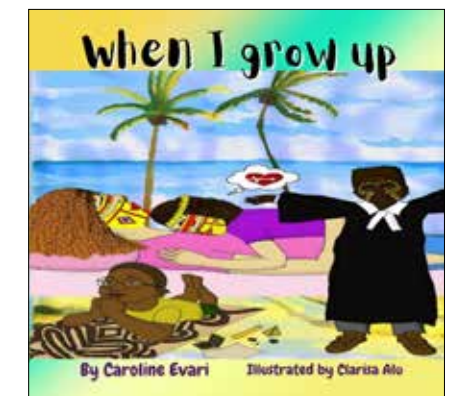
This new book is one of a series of books for children published by the same author. All these books are part of the Library for All's Together for Education project of UNICEF in PNG.

ISBN 979-87407683-7-3

Independently published, May 2021

Paperback copies are available from Amazon Australia, and hard copies will be available.

Contact the author by email at [caroline.evani@gmail.com](mailto:caroline.evani@gmail.com)







## ANDREWS, Roy John d. 28 April 2021

Roy, born 1 January 1937, was one of twenty-six Cadet Patrol Officers in the February 1960 intake who, after undertaking their five-week Orientation Course at ASOPA in Sydney, and three-week Induction Course at Konedobu, were posted to the (then) Districts. Roy was posted to Goroka, the Eastern Highlands District (EHD). From there he was transferred to Kundiawa, in (then) Chimbu Sub-District.

Promoted to Patrol Officer in 1962 Roy returned to the EHD after his first leave. However, he was selected to attend the 1963 Patrol Officers Long Course, at ASOPA. After completion Roy was posted to the Milne Bay District, in early 1964. Following a short time in Samarai he was transferred to a newly-established station at Cameron Plateau. Here, Roy played an important role in the development of the new District HQ to replace Samarai. He was also instrumental in having the name Alotau bestowed on the developing township (see *Una Voce*, December 2018).

I (JQ) first met Roy at Samarai in the now Milne Bay Province, when he was billeted with us before his further posting as a kiap was decided; Samarai was our (newly married to Judith), honeymoon posting! Over dinner, Judy and Roy discovered that they had grown up in adjoining streets in Balwyn, Melbourne and,

**The recent history of Papua New Guinea is intimately bound up with the people who made PNG their home and, in many cases, their life's work—it is therefore fitting, but also with deep regret, that we record the passing of members and friends—please send any information by the Copy Deadline, 17 September 2021, to [editor@pngaa.net](mailto:editor@pngaa.net)**

thus, a lasting bond was created.

While at Alotau, Roy had a serious motorcycle accident and came back to us for recovery and rehabilitation. He told us that he had met, fallen in love with, and wished to marry, a lovely Hanuabadan girl called Daera, a trainee welfare officer at the nearby centre of Ahioma. There was considerable opposition from some at the prospect, but when Roy asked me to be his best man I agreed happily. Thus, a great friendship was cemented.

Transferred back to the highlands in 1967 Roy was the Assistant District Officer-in-Charge of Erave Patrol Post in the Southern Highlands District. After leave in 1969 Roy was invited to join the new Department of Business Development as District Co-operative Officer in Kundiawa. In 1971 Roy and Daera were back in Alotau where they lived and worked until 'going finish' in early 1974—Roy's position was District Co-operative Officer (East Papua).

The Quinn and Andrews families kept in touch over the years, especially after we moved back to Australia. We, and our two boys, Michael and David, had good times together at birthdays and other celebrations at Roy and Daera's home at Chirnside Park with their children, Chris, John and Maria.

Roy had taken up accountancy and became our accountant in our various business enterprises, ensuring we made a profit and kept out of the clutches of the Taxation Department.

At one of his birthday cele-

brations, Roy and I (JQ) went down to his cellar to admire his collection of Penfold Grange wines. With both of us in, shall I say, a maudlin and - state Roy asked me to ensure that, if he died, I would promise to tip a bottle of the Grange on his grave every year! I put my arm around his shoulders and said that I'd do better than that—I would drink the Grange and urinate on his grave!! Despite this, our friendship continued over the years and we kept in contact at various PNGAA events and by phone and email.

The death of Daera was a sad blow and we attended her wonderful funeral where hundreds of Australian and PNG friends came together.

Now Roy has gone to join her in that wonderful Patrol Post in the Sky, where we all hope to meet up some day.

**John Quinn & Chris Warrillow**

## GRIFFIN, John, QC 1939–2021

John Griffin's life began in Horsham in country Victoria in 1939. He had two older sisters, Val and Joan, who have not survived him. His family moved to Seymour where he had his early schooling before attending St Joseph's College, Geelong.

His parents both died when he was a teenager. He went to Melbourne University to study law, living with his Aunt None before flatting with Jim Dominguez and David Ogilvie. He was friendly with students such as David Mattai and Warren Fagan.

John graduated with Honours



John Griffin, QC

in Law and in 1960 was awarded a Fullbright Scholarship for post-graduate study at the University of Michigan. He returned to Australia with a Master of Laws degree and a wife, Sharon. He worked as a solicitor in Melbourne where a daughter, Simone, and a son, Matthew, were born.

In 1968 he made the big decision to leave Melbourne and follow his academic bent as a Lecturer in Law in the Faculty of Law at the fledgling University of Papua New Guinea. I met him there in 1972 when I took a sabbatical from the Bar as a Visiting Fellow at the Faculty.

By then Sharon had returned to the US with Simone. Matthew remained with John. Living two doors from my family on the campus in Waigani. Both were kept in order by Maria, a stern and efficient housekeeper.

John, along with Rob and Irenie O'Regan, were welcoming figures for us. John was a busy man, combining his lecturing duties, academic writing and practice in the courts with an active social life.

Faculty members were diverse—even some of the Australians had lived and worked overseas. Many went on to academic or professional success—Rob O'Regan, Gerry Nash, Jack Goldring, Don Chalmers and Peter Bayne are examples.

John was friendly with many in the local legal and business community. Steven Train, Graham Thomas, Brian Riordan and Tony Ford come to mind. He found time to write a textbook on Papua New Guinea criminal law and he became an Associate Professor.

John returned to Australia and to the practising profession. He chose the Queensland Bar and Brisbane rather than Melbourne. The contacts that he had made in Port Moresby over the previous seven years had a strong connection with Queensland and virtually none with Melbourne. The Queensland Bar dominated Australian representation in PNG. After years in the tropics, the Melbourne weather may have played a part.

John developed a substantial practice at the Queensland Bar, becoming a QC in 1984. He continued in active practice until shortly before his death. Throughout that time he regularly appeared in many important and high profile cases in the courts of PNG.

**Roger Gyles, AO QC**

**Editor's Note:** The Vale is an abstract of the eulogy prepared by the author for John Griffin's funeral. An extended version of this Vale can be found in the online Vale section for September PNG KUNDU at [www.pngaa.org](http://www.pngaa.org)

## OLIVER, Norman Francis d. 3 June 2021, aged 87

It is with enormous sadness that I heard the news of the passing of Norm Oliver—former Land Titles Commissioner in Papua New Guinea, basketball stalwart and a friend to so many people throughout the country.

A native of Tempe in Sydney, Norm was a draughtsman at the Sydney Water Board before joining the PNG Land Titles Commission in the early 1960s.

After a period in Madang he was transferred to the head-

quarters in Port Moresby as a senior draughtsman, eventually leading the Commission. He remained in the position until his retirement and departure for Cairns in the early 2000s.

'He was one of the good guys who dedicated his life to helping Papua New Guinea, both pre- and post-independence,' Geoff Hancock has written on the PNGAA website.

Norm became the go-to person for information and guidance on one of PNG's most intractable issues: land disputes.

'Land disputes are common to all regions of PNG,' he wrote in the study, *Making Land Work*, 'and cause social and economic disruption. Disputes may go back several generations, and settling them is complex.'

Norm wrote prolifically on the subject and, even when he retired as Land Titles Commissioner, was kept busy as a consultant and advisor both to the PNG government and private sector companies.

I first made Norm's acquaintance at a basketball tournament in Madang in mid-1968 and experienced the substance and generosity of his character at another tournament in Lae later that year.

He paid for breakfast for



Norm Oliver



the entire Port Moresby squad (including me) at the Melanesian Hotel. You can take it from me that basketballers are hungry young men.

At that time, Norm was the backbone of Papua New Guinea basketball. This extended to Port Moresby basketball and to the Kone Tigers team.

He had an athletic stature and great skills, and was both a gifted player and a natural leader.

In early 1969, the South Pacific Games were looming and Port Moresby had no facilities worthy of the event—and there was no government assistance forthcoming.

Norm arranged a \$14,000 bank loan (K460,000 in today's money) to fund the construction of new courts and associated facilities at Hohola.

He also recruited and led a group of volunteers who over many weekends put the finishing touches to the new courts.

The subsequent outstanding success of the South Pacific Games basketball tournament was due, in no small part, to Norm—who was quite properly appointed manager of the PNG national squads.

I shared with Norm not just a love of basketball and rugby league but an abiding interest in films, books, travel and politics (especially of the left-of-centre variety).

All of these interests were the subject of many interesting conversations at the Bottom Pub and other hostelrys and clubs around Moresby.

Norm was the best of friends, not just to me, but to a host of Papua New Guineans and other expatriates who served in PNG.

He moved to Cairns after leaving PNG and, as a vastly-experienced former Land Titles Commissioner, was hired to contribute to both the PNG Attorney General's Department and the Department of Lands and Physical Planning.

In his eighties he became ill and

frail and was a resident of Regis Age Care in Cairns for the last five years.

With the death of Norm Oliver at the age of eighty-seven Papua New Guinea has lost a great friend and a great achiever.

He leaves with us a substantial body of work of PNG land issues and a legacy of great comradeship.

**Ed Brumby**

<https://www.pngattitude.com/2021/06/norm-oliver-a-great-friend-of-png-dies-at-87.html>

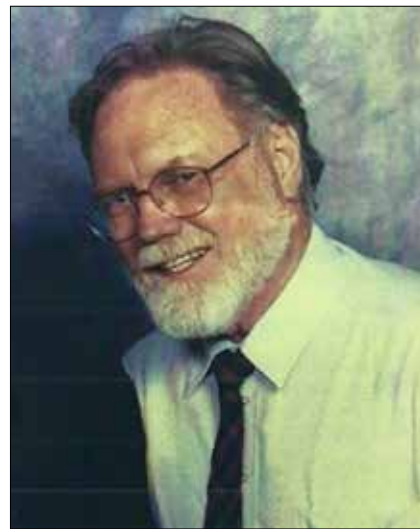
## THISTLETHWAITE, Dr Robert d. 9 May 2021

Dr Robert 'Bob' Thistlethwaite was born on 31 August 1941, and graduated from the Australian Forestry School Canberra in the early 1960s and completed his PhD in 1970.

He commenced his professional career in 1971 when he was appointed Principal Research Officer with the Territory of Papua New Guinea Department of Forests. He oversaw forest plantation research, with a wide range of tropical and exotic species.

Much of the plantation development work of PNG Forests at that time is summarised in Bob's detailed paper on 'Further domestication of PNG's indigenous forest species'. This work documents early plantation development in TPNG, together with detailed trial work of indigenous species.

Bob was also involved with Dr Kisaku Mori, an expert on mushrooms from Japan, in an investigation of the presence of Shiitake in TPNG. After Dr Mori's field visit, Shiitake was found widely distributed on Fagaceae (the fig family), especially on the genus *Castanopsis* in the Highlands. At the Tari market in Hela Province, different varieties of edible mushrooms were being sold. Shiitake was known locally as 'abus



Robert Thistlethwaite

long abus' or meat with meat and was highly prized.

Leaving PNG in early 1978 he became Principal Research Officer with the Department of the Interior in Darwin and OIC of the Berrimah Research Laboratory. In 1986 he joined the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau's Pacific Regional Team as its Natural Resources Advisor to undertake identification, establishment, and appraisal of aid-funded projects for nine Pacific island countries across the forestry, agriculture, and artisanal fishery sectors.

In 1989 Bob established his own natural resources and environmental consulting company which focused mainly on the twenty-two island nations of the Pacific basin.

**Kerrie Catchpole, Queensland Division of the Institute of Foresters of Australia & former TPNG forester, Dick McCarthy**

## Forthcoming Vales

We note with regret the deaths of Marie Therese Elma Adamson (née Bray) on 6 May 2021, and her husband Charles William Adamson on 22 May 2021.

We also note the death of Jim Burton in Brisbane on 23 May 2021.

**Vales will be published in future editions of PNG Kundu.**



# MEMORIAL News

## RABAU & MONTEVIDEO MARU SOCIETY

**The Rabaul & Montevideo Maru Society was established in 2009 and integrated into the PNGAA in 2013.**

**The society encourages students and adults to explore the significance of WWII in the Papua New Guinea islands and what the start of the Pacific War in 1942 meant for Australia, including its worst maritime disaster—the sinking of MS Montevideo Maru on 1 July 1942.**

**If you have news for the members, please contact Andrea Williams on [admin@memorial.org.au](mailto:admin@memorial.org.au)**



## Rabaul & Montevideo Maru Memorial

In the last issue, it was reported that the Rabaul & Montevideo Maru Memorial at the Australian War Memorial was removed to storage on 19 May 2021 to accommodate the construction of the CEW Bean Building Extension and new Research Centre at the AWM. The PNGAA will be working with the Australian War Memorial and other stakeholders to consider an appropriate future location for the Memorial.

AWM Director, Mr Matt Anderson, wrote to Max Uechtritz, then President of the PNGAA and Andrea Williams, Chair–Rabaul & Montevideo Maru Group:

*I am writing to provide you with an update on the impact of our current Development Project on the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Memorial in which your organisation is a key stakeholder.*

*The AWM's Development Project is now well progressed and we have identified that it will be necessary to remove the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Memorial sculpture to storage on 19 May to accommodate the construction of the CEW Bean Building Extension and new Research Centre at the AWM.*

*The sculpture will remain in storage until the AWM has had time to consider the most suitable location. Once we have considered suitable location options my staff will work with a nominee to ensure the Papua New Guinea Association of Australia's (PNGAA) view on these necessary changes to the siting of the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Memorial are heard and taken into consideration in our planning. The AWM has also been in contact with the artist of the memorial, Mr James Parrett, to discuss the necessity of the sculpture's removal to storage and the selection of a new site on the AWM's grounds.*

Members look forward to the return of the Rabaul & Montevideo Maru Memorial in due course.

## Shrine of Remembrance Service, Victoria

The Shrine of Remembrance in Victoria held a Last Post Service on 4 July 2021 commemorating the sinking of the Montevideo Maru.

On 4 July 2021 the Shrine chose to remember the sinking of the *Montevideo Maru* with all prisoners on board killed. Margaret Curtis read the Ode.

## Montevideo Maru Secrets— How are we related?

Recent Facebook posts highlight again that the sinking of the *MS Montevideo Maru* and the non-discussion by immediate family about it due to the enormous grief it caused, also resulted in families not knowing about each other. This isn't the first time the Rabaul & Montevideo Maru Group has been instrumental in connecting families.



Recently Steve Berry wrote that his cousin, Garth Geldard, was with the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles and later died with the MS *Montevideo Maru*. Laurie Geldard replied saying Garth was his uncle and asking how they were related. He continues:

*Despite Garth's name appearing on the ship's list, he was not on the Montevideo Maru. He died in the Tol Plantation massacre. My father and his step-father, civilian timber workers, were at Tol on the night of the massacre. They decided not to inform my grandmother of how he died and also didn't tell the military authorities as they both had a very low opinion of the military's handling of the entire Rabaul episode. When the list was released after the war, with Garth's name on, they left it at that. He was not the only soldier to be murdered and have his name on the list.*

*My grandmother and grandfather split sometime in the early 1920s and separated from the Geldard family, eventually moving to Rabaul and surrounds on plantations and with a sawmill before the war.*

*My mother, grandmother and Rex, a younger half-brother of my father, were evacuated from Rabaul just before Christmas Day 1941, leaving my father, step-grandfather (both civilians) and Garth behind. My grandmother, her husband and Rex returned to Rabaul after the war. Rex was the last to leave in the mid-1980s, retiring to Cairns.*



## No. 1 Independent Company—80th Anniversary

2021 marks the 80th Anniversary of the formation of the Australian Commando during the Second World War where they mainly performed reconnaissance and long-range patrol roles during Australia's campaigns in New Guinea and Borneo, although other units such as M and Z Special Units performed more clandestine roles.

No. 1 Independent Company was raised at Wilsons Promontory in May 1941.

All members who joined Independent Companies were twice volunteers, once for the AIF and again for special duty. All volunteers had been interviewed personally to establish motivation and aptitude.

During all training, great emphasis was placed on physical fitness and endurance. Those who fell by the wayside ... found transport waiting when they arrived back at camp to return them immediately to their previous units.

All ranks were trained in demolitions and sabotage, night movement and operations, infantry minor tactics with emphasis on patrolling and the setting of ambushes, as well as scouting, weapon training and the ability to operate as individuals or in small parties.

Personal initiative was encouraged.

## Book News

Rhonda Forrest's book, *Elizabeth's Star*, has been inspired by the events of Rabaul and the *Montevideo Maru*.

In 1941, Queensland drover, Michael McTavish leaves behind his young daughter Gracie and joins the 2/22 AIF, his destination—Rabaul, New Guinea, a small town surrounded by impenetrable jungles and steep jagged mountains, its shores lined by tranquil bays and active volcanos.

Joanie has also arrived in New Guinea, with a chance to manage a trading store with her father, Reg, too exciting an opportunity to pass up. As the tendrils of war creep closer to the islands north of Australia, some who call Rabaul home are given an opportunity to return to Australian shores. Others have no option but to stay.

Based on actual events, *Elizabeth's Star* begins the story of Michael and Joanie, unfolding the lives of their families and friends, while following the life of Gracie, a little girl left behind when her father went to war. The compelling historical authenticity is based on research and familial connections to this era.

This book is part of a trilogy and has been inspired by the events of Lark Force and the *Montevideo Maru*. The author writes that her grandfather, James McGowan, was on the *Montevideo Maru* and her mother, nearly ninety-three, has shared photos and stories with her, adding to the extensive research undertaken over the last ten years. This is not James's story—the characters are fictional. By writing these books she hopes to educate readers about the events surrounding the war years in Rabaul.

ISBN: 0994535686, 9780994535689

Published by Valeena Press, August 2021

Softback, historical fiction.

Available from: <https://www.rhondaforrest.com/books>, online stores and Kindle editions available from Amazon.

## 2021 Last Post Ceremony, Australian War Memorial, Canberra

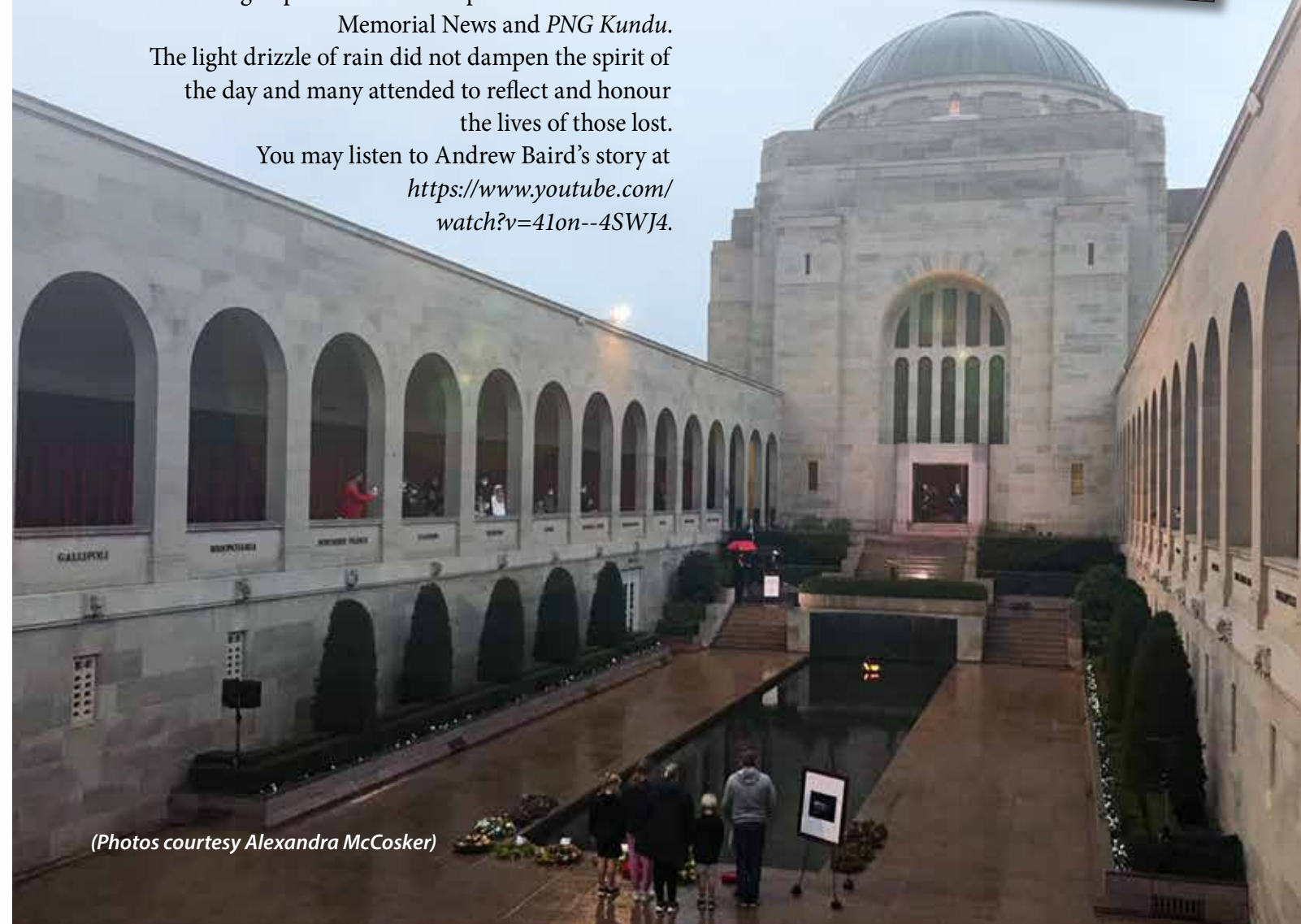
The Last Post Ceremony on 1 July 2021 commemorating the sinking of the *Montevideo Maru* acknowledged the service of Lance Corporal Andrew Craig Baird VX24605 who was with the 2/22nd AIB. Andrew Craig Baird's name is located at panel 48 in the Commemorative area at the Australian War Memorial.

COVID-19 threw travel plans into disarray and many who had planned to attend the Last Post Ceremony at the Australian War Memorial were unable to be there due to lockdowns. This included the family of George William Spensley. In discussion between the AWM and Gillian Nikakis, it was decided to postpone the tribute to Bill Spensley until 2022.

Thankfully, some of our Canberra-based members were able to attend and we especially thank John Copland who was able to represent and lay a wreath for the Papua New Guinea Association of Australia/ Rabaul & Montevideo Maru Group. John Reeves also laid a wreath for the Rabaul Historical Society. PNGAA greatly appreciated Alexandra McCosker taking a special selection of photos to share with Memorial News and PNG Kundu.

The light drizzle of rain did not dampen the spirit of the day and many attended to reflect and honour the lives of those lost.

You may listen to Andrew Baird's story at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=41on--4SWJ4>.



(Photos courtesy Alexandra McCosker)





George Milne, Frank Sleeman, Paul Metzler, Rita Albiez, Lex Fraser on a tank outside the New Guinea Club (top); Police stand guard at Bitapaka with the Lark Force banner (below)

## Wagga Whispers

David Williams, President of the HMAS Wagga Association, recently included an interesting article about the *Montevideo Maru* in 'Wagga Whispers', which is sent to ex-crew and members of the HMAS Wagga Association.

Recently Rita Albiez donated some photos to the PNGAA Collection of the Lark Force 40th Anniversary visit to Rabaul in January 1982. Besides official functions the visitors were entertained by Rabaul residents and shown around the town.

## Rabaul Under Japanese Occupation

On 23 January 1942, just forty-six days after Pearl Harbor when the Japanese Navy had taken all before it, the bastion town of the South Pacific, Rabaul, fell to the Japanese invasion force, the Nankai Shitai, with 5,000 ground troops. Pandemonium reigned after the Commanding Officer of Lark Force, Colonel JJ Scanlan, issued the ignominious order 'Every man for himself!' The consequences were dire!

Of the 1,485 Lark Force troops and the 275 European civilians of Rabaul—a total of 1,760—only 422 (24%) survived. Thus, 1,338 (76%) were casualties. This was the greatest Australian military disaster of the war against Japan in World War II. The losses elsewhere were: Buna-Gona 967, Malaya 700 and Kokoda 625 and the sinking of the Japanese POW ship *Montevideo Maru* resulted in 1,053 deaths—of whom 208 (20%) were non-combatant civilians—Australia's greatest maritime disaster.

Once my family learned the fate of my brother Bob—lost on the *Montevideo Maru* in 1942—I had always wondered how the prisoners fared during the five months before they were transported. It was not until August 2008 that I obtained a first-hand account of that time and events!

A story in our local newspaper by Max Hayes (a member of the Papua New Guinea Association of Australia) told of the retrieval of a handkerchief with a name and number, VX 19523 B O'Neil, noted on it. This handkerchief had been tossed aside by a prisoner as he was being loaded onto the *Montevideo Maru* and picked up by a twelve-year-old indigenous local, Rudy Buckley, which put paid to occasional theories that the men were not lost on the *Montevideo Maru*, but had been slaughtered.

I obtained Rudy's phone number (in Kingston, Queensland) and, while vacationing in Coolangatta, travelled by bus and rail to meet him. He was kind enough to pick me up at the Loganlea rail station and take me to his home to have a talk. As background, Rudy had had thirty years working in electrical maintenance with the Department of Civil Aviation, both in New Guinea and after he and his family relocated to Queensland, Australia.

Rudy told me that he had kept O'Neil's handkerchief for many years as a souvenir until he drew attention to it at a *Montevideo Maru* commemoration

in Brisbane where the handkerchief was then displayed. I checked the names of prisoners listed on the *Montevideo Maru*, and confirmed that Cpl O'Neil's name was on it, as are the names of my brother and his mates in the Engineers. Rudy's comments, which I have briefly paraphrased, follow: *During the Japanese occupation of Rabaul, there were always approximately 100 Japanese ships of all kinds, including aircraft carriers and battleships, in Simpson Harbour. This included the period following the Japanese defeat in the Battle of the Coral Sea in May 1942 when the invasion fleet which had been headed for Port Moresby returned, badly damaged, to Rabaul.*

Rudy confirmed he had watched the prisoners on their death march to the harbour, and being barged out to the ill-fated *Montevideo Maru*. I then asked him about life under Japanese occupation, which I believe is the only account of that time.

The Japanese had been bombing Rabaul, including the hospital, regularly before the invasion, but not doing too much damage to the airstrip, obviously destined for their future use.

The Japanese landed on 23 January 1942 from the north of Simpson Harbour and on the other side, cutting off Praed Point where two massive 6" gun barrels pointed menacingly towards the sea (like Singapore!) These heavy-duty coastal battery guns never fired a shot as the raid of 20 January totally demolished them, in contrast to the anti-aircraft guns on Frisbee Ridge, which shot down the Japanese plane on Australian Mandated Territory with a Japanese Betty Bomber crashing near the tip of Mother (Mt Kombiu). A landing in that location would have denied many of our soldiers any prospect of responding effectively to the 'Every man for himself!' order.

The Japanese soldiers were extremely cruel and not averse to killing anyone on the spot, including civilians, who gave them trouble. In fact, Rudy's forty-two-year-old father, a mechanic, was killed with many blows from a tyre lever when he was slow in repairing an engine.

Prior to their shipment on the *Montevideo Maru*, the Australian prisoners were used largely in loading and unloading ships in the harbour.

Rudy had eventually married Mary, whose father was Japanese. He had been deported, along with German nationals, to the Cowra enemy detention

centre in New South Wales. Countless other prisoners, including Koreans, British and Indians, had been imported as slaves and were used to dig all the tunnels into the mountains and volcanoes around Rabaul. They were also used to clear all available fields to establish the growing of rice, tapioca, sweet potatoes and other vegetables to fulfil the enormous task of feeding variably between 60,000 and 100,000 Japanese troops.

All natives had been relocated to the Chinese quarter and outer areas. There were no shops: Rudy's family—his mother, two brothers and two sisters—survived by selling and bartering rice, fish and craft products with the Japanese in exchange for tinned food and other goods. The Japanese had ships producing food from whaling and fishing expeditions.

Generally, the Japanese did not worry children and natives and even had a system for feeding them. They also organised a school to teach the children the Japanese language, but this did not last long because the school was destroyed in a bombing raid.

From 1944 Rabaul was routinely attacked by Allied bombers, usually from 10 am to midday with occasional raids at night to keep the Japanese 'on their toes'. Apparently, they tried to bomb the Matupi (Tavurvur) volcano to cause an eruption, without success.

During Japanese rule, approximately forty-two US, New Zealand and Australian airmen who had been shot down were captured and executed by sword; Rudy witnessed some of this from a Japanese truck.



One of the two guns at Praed Point 'guarding' the entrance to Simpson Harbour. Photo taken postwar.



In 1949, he met up with members of the War Graves Commission visiting Rabaul and was able to direct them to the site of the burial.

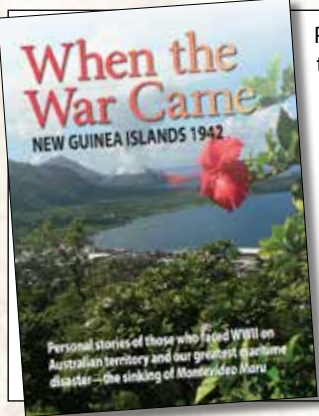
It is not impossible that one of these executed air-men was my twin brother, Flight Sgt Tom Burrowes, of the RAAF's 100 Squadron. As mentioned else-where, Tom went down on his first mission to Rabaul in a Beaufort bomber from Goodenough Island.

Rudy had also seen the prisoner, John Murphy, one of the Coastwatcher party leaders captured at Gasmata. Murphy was court-martialed after the war for allegedly disclosing the positions of other parties in enemy occupied New Britain, but was exonerated.

There was great elation for all of the surviving indigenous population when the war ended. Apart from the prisoners, there had been only four Europeans in Rabaul since the departure of the *Montevideo Maru*.

It is worth adding that I have also spoken to Lex Fraser (since deceased), who had been the only surviving officer of the 1 Independent Company prisoners held in Rabaul for five months before being transported to Japan on the *Naruto Maru*. He told me of the unspeakable conditions in the prison quarters, with poor accommodation, no clothing replacement, meagre food and water, unattainable medical and latrine facilities.

It is perhaps also worth briefly noting that, after capturing Rabaul, the Japanese quickly established a massive military base to support their navy, air force and infantry. At its height, the Rabaul base and its surrounding encampment served 100,000 soldiers and thousands of other personnel. Because aerial bombardment was the main threat to the island's remote location, the Japanese used their own



Published in 2017 by PNGAA to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Fall of Rabaul and the sinking of MS *Montevideo Maru*, this book tells the stories of the civilian and military men, women and children caught in the leadup and aftermath of the Japanese invasion and occupation of the New Guinea Islands in 1942. Order your copy from the Treasurer's Corner (opposite).

personnel, but also much slave labour (local people, as well as British, Chinese, Indian, Indonesian and Korean prisoners, many captured at Singapore) to build an estimated 300 to 500 kilometres of tunnels into the volcanic soil around the Gazelle Peninsula, and the caldera wall surrounding Rabaul Harbour where a number of facilities—such as hospital complexes, barracks, storehouses and command centre—were installed.

It was because of its importance to their military operations in the South Pacific that my own coast-watching party had been deployed to report Japanese movements to and from Rabaul. ♦

**JAMES BURROWES, OAM**

**Editor's Note:** This story is an edited extract from Jim Burrowes' *The Last Coast Watcher*. This may be viewed at the following website: <https://thelastcoastwatcher.wordpress.com/>

### James Parrett and the Moon Art Fair

James Parrett, who created the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Memorial at the Australia War Memorial, was welcomed at the Moon Art Fair, Hamburg, Germany, where he participated with his 'Masterworks of Grace' in the 2021 exhibition.

Leading galleries and artists from across North and South America, Europe, Asia, Australia, the Middle East and Africa also exhibited and presented modern and contemporary works.

James Parrett was born in 1976 in Melbourne and is a celebrated contemporary sculptor living and working in Eureka, Australia. He has been a finalist in numerous sculpture prizes, created several solo exhibitions and awarded a number of commissions. James, winner of the Montalto Winery sculpture prize in 2016, is also a recipient of the 2018 Aqualand sculpture prize, the major award at Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi.

<https://www.moonartfair.net>  
<https://www.artfixdaily.com/artwire/>



The study notes under the Education tab of the Rabaul & Montevideo Maru Memorial website have been reviewed and website links updated by Patrick Bourke. This regular checking and updating is appreciated to ensure that students receive maximum benefit. We encourage all members to offer this education package to their local school, and to let us know at [admin@memorial.org.au](mailto:admin@memorial.org.au) if you do.



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*(See details in the Events Diary of this issue)*

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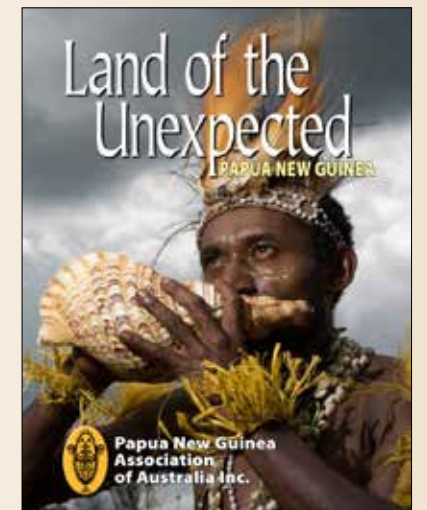
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## LAND OF THE UNEXPECTED: Papua New Guinea

Papua New Guinea is a land of tremendous contrasts—of smiling people, mad keen rugby players and followers, complex cultural dynamics and displays, singing that is out of this world, stunning scenery, incredible artefacts, opportunities for adventurous activities and delicious tropical fruits—all in a terrain that is carved by steep slopes and jagged peaks of mountain ranges, interspersed by fertile valleys and over a dozen active volcanoes—and in a country that is Australia's nearest neighbour, four kilometres away and only a few footsteps from our doors. PNGAA's new publication, with 100 large-format pages and over 200 colour photographs, covers many of the different facets of this amazing country—including a complex overview, public services, flora, fauna and the environment, industries, art, culture, sport, the diverse history and some of those people who helped to shape the nation—in fact, everything you wanted to know about PNG!

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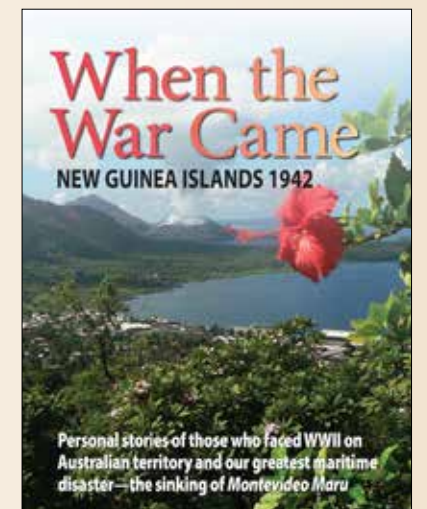
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## WHEN THE WAR CAME: New Guinea Islands 1942

Published in 2017 by PNGAA to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Fall of Rabaul and the sinking of *MS Montevideo Maru*, Australia's greatest maritime disaster, tells the stories of the civilian and military men, women and children caught in the leadup and aftermath of the Japanese invasion and occupation of the New Guinea Islands in 1942. The book brings into focus the actions and characters of young men who left home to willingly serve their country, and then literally vanished off the face of the earth; of nurses and missionaries who volunteered to stay to help both the war effort and the local people; and of civilians—both men and women—caught at home on WWII's Pacific front line. Alongside are incredulous stories of escape and survival in an environment that threw every obstacle in their path.

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*PNG Kuntu* designed & produced by Jeannette Gilligan—[dragonwick1@outlook.com](mailto:dragonwick1@outlook.com)

Reviewed by Murrough Benson, Chris Warrillow & Andrea Williams

Printed & bound in Australia by Lismore City Printery—[www.cityprint.com.au](http://www.cityprint.com.au)





# Papua New Guinea's Road to Independence

**1883:** HM Chester, Queensland Government Agent on Thursday Island, raised the Union Jack near present-day Port Moresby and annexed, on behalf of Queen Victoria, that part of New Guinea and adjacent islands lying between meridians 141E and 155E longitude.

**1884:** Britain proclaimed a protectorate over south-east New Guinea. Germany raised its flag over Kaiser Wilhelmsland, the north-east part of the country and allowed its administration by the Neu Guinea Kompagnie (NGK).

**1888:** The British assumed sovereignty over the protectorate of British New Guinea (BNG).

**1899:** The German Government resumed responsibility for the administration of German New Guinea from the NGK.

**1901:** Britain transferred BNG to the Commonwealth of Australia. The latter did not formally accept it.

**1906:** The Papua Act of the Commonwealth Parliament transferred control of BNG to Australia and renamed it the Territory of Papua.

**1907:** Australian Sir Hubert Murray appointed Acting Administrator of Papua, and then served as Lieutenant-Governor until his death in 1940.

**1914:** Australian Forces invaded, occupied and administered German New Guinea at the commencement of World War I. The first Australian 'killed-in-action' in WWI resulted.

**1920:** The League of Nations conferred a mandate on Australia for the former German New Guinea. The two territories, the Mandate and Papua, were administered separately, both being responsible to the Australian Government, until 1942.

**1942:** The Japanese invaded New Guinea landing at Rabaul. Administration of Australian-held territory was transferred to the military. ANGAU was created for this purpose.

**1945:** The Japanese surrendered.

**1946:** Civil administration restored to Papua-New Guinea. The General Assembly of the United Nations approved a trusteeship agreement for New Guinea and its administration by Australia.

**1949:** The Papua and New Guinea Act formalised the provisional administration for the two territories and provided for a Legislative Council.

**1961:** A twenty-eight-member Legislative Council, set up in 1951 by the Australian Government was reconstituted to allow for the inclusion of six elected indigenous members and six nominated indigenous members.

**1964:** Legislative Council was replaced by an elected House of Assembly.

**1972:** Michael Somare elected as Chief Minister. The territory's name was changed to Papua New Guinea. As Chief Minister, Somare led the country to self-government in 1973.

**1975:** Papua New Guinea became independent on 16 September, the day when HRH Prince Charles officiated at a ceremony in Port Moresby at which Australia's flag was lowered and PNG's flag raised. The proud new nation, led by Michael Somare, became a member of the Commonwealth of Nations, with Queen Elizabeth II Head of State and was admitted as a Member of the United Nations Organisation.

*We, the members of the PNGAA, in reflecting on the past forty-six years, can be justifiably proud of our past and continuing contributions to the Independent Nation of Papua New Guinea.*

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ISSN 2652-5216, PPA 224987/00025 • SEPTEMBER 2021 • Vol. 2, No. 7

