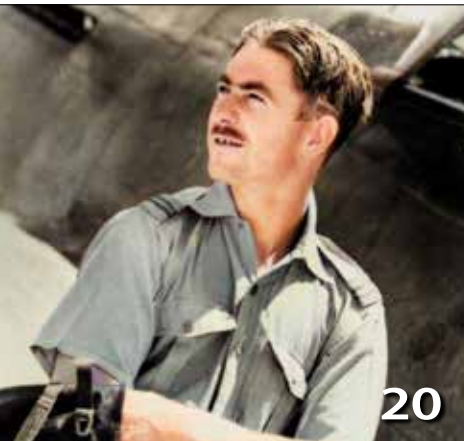


^{PNG}Kundu

SEPTEMBER 2022



**Papua New Guinea Association
of Australia Inc.**
www.pngaa.org



PAPUA NEW GUINEA ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA Inc.

(Formally constituted in 1951—incorporated in 1996)

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PNGAA ARCHIVIST & COLLECTIONS:

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

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MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:

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

RABAUL & MONTEVIDEO MARU GROUP: www.montevideo-maru.org

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PNGAA Mail: PNGAA, PO Box 250, Kilcoy QLD 4515 • **PNGAA Website:** www.pngaa.org

PNGAA Membership: www.membership@pngaa.net—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 Membership & Order Form*, at the back of this journal, for more details. Application forms also are available from the Membership Officer or our website. For members receiving a printed journal, the address label shows the current status of your membership.

PNGAA Store: www.pngaa.org/store—If you are interested in the history, adventure and stories of Papua New Guinea, and those who helped build the nation, then make sure you check out the selection of items of books and DVDs available in our store. Details are on our website or on the *Treasurer's Corner Membership & Order Form*, which can also be used to renew your membership, introduce a friend or family member who wishes to join, or book for a PNGAA function.

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PNG KUNDU is the official journal of the

PAPUA NEW GUINEA ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA Inc.

ISSN 2652-5216, PPA 224987/00025 • SEPTEMBER 2022 • Vol. 3, No. 11

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.

◀ Deadline for the December 2022 issue: 19 SEPTEMBER 2022 ▶

(Estimated delivery 1 November 2022—please allow for unforeseen delays, etc.)

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Reviewed by Murrough Benson & Andrea Williams

Printed & bound in Australia by Lismore City Printery—www.cityprint.com.au

Contributions may be edited for length and the views expressed are not necessarily those of the editor or the PNGAA. Guidelines are available on page 12 of this issue or on the website.

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Freelance Photographer & Videographer

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From the President

I hope that everybody is surviving the winter despite the cold and wet weather that those of us in southern parts of Australia have been experiencing. The good news is that by the time you are reading this, spring should be underway.

80th Anniversary of the Sinking of Montevideo Maru

Recently I attended this commemorative event in Canberra on 1 July 2022. As you probably know, the *Montevideo Maru* was the Japanese ship carrying allied prisoners of war and some civilian evacuees to Japan, following the fall of Rabaul. It was sunk by a US submarine, which was unaware of the fact that the *Montevideo Maru* was carrying allied servicemen and civilians. The sinking of the *Montevideo Maru* turned out to be Australia's single biggest maritime disaster, although it was not widely reported, nor widely recognised in history since.

The memorial ceremony, held in Canberra, commenced

The Management Committee network on your behalf, organising and 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 from the committee, along with other news of interest and a welcome to new members.

with a service in the grounds of the Australian War Memorial. Unfortunately, the Canberra weather did not cooperate and those who attended listened to some moving speeches from the comfort of their umbrellas and wet chairs. Later that evening around 120 people attended the memorial dinner at Rydges Hotel.

Both were moving ceremonies and brought home to me the fact that the link between the PNGAA and the Rabaul & Montevideo Maru Group does enhance and build on the aims and objectives of the PNGAA by providing another significant historical episode to the story of Papua New Guinea and, by drawing in to our PNGAA story another significant part of PNG history.

The Montevideo Maru Memorial Service and Dinner (see pages 59–62) were attended by a good number of PNGAA members and also caused me to reflect on what can happen when members support the activities of the PNGAA. We are a much stronger organisation when we work together and contribute what we can to the success of our Association.

Your committee along with

member volunteers works hard to make our Association a success, but I would like to ask all members to reflect on what can be achieved when the committee and the members do what they can to support the aims and objectives of the PNGAA.

Finally, I would like to specially thank Andrea Williams for the huge amount of time and effort she put into the Montevideo Maru memorial events in addition to the time and effort Andrea puts into the PNGAA in general.

PNGAA New Members

The committee welcomes the following new members: Kirsten Bruce-Jans, Maria & Graham Irvine, George Ivanow, Leofric Kingsford-Smith, Caroline Langford, Brian May, Susan O'Neill, Robyn Prebble, Robert Ridgway, Paul Scott, Ian Shelton and Elspeth Wood.

As always, as president, I welcome any input from PNGAA members. Please feel free to contact me by email on president@pngaa.net or via mobile on 0410 530 502. Questions, comments, suggestions, complaints are always welcome.

I also welcome compliments that relate to our activities.

CHRIS PEARSALL
President, PNGAA

In this issue we commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the Battle for Milne Bay—Japan's first defeat on land in the Second World War—which was a defining moment in the evolution of the indomitable Australian fighting spirit. And, featured opposite is Chip Mackellar's evocative poem—is he right? Who will mourn their passing, when the last old kiap dies?



View of Port Moresby from Paga Hil
(© Burns Philp postcard, c.1920s)

When the Last Old Kiap Dies

*They're all old now their hair turned white, as the years went rolling by,
And with every year that passes now, we see more kiaps die.*

*Their children scattered far and wide, grandchildren further still,
And who will care when the last one dies, whose memories will he fill?*

We'll remember all those lilting songs, the mission children sang,

But who'll remember Maurie Brown, Jack Worcester or Mal Lang,

Ron Galloway or Preston White, Des Ashton or Bob Bell,

Jim Kent, Bob Fayle or Brian Dodds and Jack Emanuel?

We'll forget about Dan Duggan, Harry Redmond and Rick Hill,

But we'll remember Ela Beach, and the view from Paga Hill.

We'll forget about Tom Ellis, Des Martin and John Land,

And we won't remember Bill McGrath, Denys Faithful or Bill Brand.

We'll remember snow-capped Giluwe, and the islands of Milne Bay,

But not Keith Dyer nor Freddie Kaad nor Christopher Gordon Day,

Vin Smith and Graham Pople, and old Jack Battersby,

Peter Salmon and Des Fanning, and Bill Brown MBE.

And hundreds more we can recall, but too many here to name,

They all deserve our praise and thanks, they've earned eternal fame.

Heroes all of the jungle tracks, road builders of renown,

Across the country north to south they helped build every town.

We'll remember all the events now past, which developed PNG,

But the names of those who built this land, will fade from memory.

From stone age depths of PNG, they helped this nation rise,

But who will mourn his passing, when the last old kiap dies?

CHIPS MACKELLAR



❖NEWCASTLE

Help the Sepik Dental Clinic

5 October 2022

Event for PNGAA members, Rotarians, *wantoks* and friends.

Time: 11.30 am.

Venue: Royal Motor Yacht Club, Toronto NSW.

Cost: Two-course menu \$45; three-course menu \$55.

RSVP (essential): 21 September 2022.

Contact: Suellen Holland, phone 0405 407 939;

email info@suellenholland.com.au

Parking: Available on site.

Special Notes: Suellen Holland is hosting this special fundraising lunch for the Kenthurst Rotary Club International Sepik Dental Clinic Project. All proceeds from the lunch, raffles and lucky door prize will be donated to Rotary to aid the Dental Clinic. Guests will also be asked for a \$5.00 donation to the PNGAA.

❖PERTH

PNGAA Christmas Lunch

Friday 25 November 2022

Venue: RAAF Memorial Estate, 2 Bull Creek Drive, Bull Creek

Time: 11.30 am for 12 noon

Contact: Linda Cavanaugh Manning (Mob.) 0429 099 053 or lindam121@bigpond.com

Reviews of events and reunions held throughout Australia and PNG, and a listing of upcoming functions, events of interest and social gatherings for PNGAA members. If you and your friends have an activity to advertise or promote, or have been 'out & about' recently, please send your details, reviews and photographs to editor@pngaa.net by 19 September 2022, the Copy Deadline for the next issue. Events are also listed on our website, under *Resources>Events*.

❖ADELAIDE

Oceanic Art Society Forum: Australia in the Pacific—Cultures Past, Present & Future

Sat 26–Sun 27 November 2022

Venue: South Australian Museum

Program: The forum includes displays, discussions by experts of Art from PNG and Northern Australia and a Pacific Islands dance performance.

Special Notes: Full program details, including ticket prices and early-bird special rates will be available shortly and on the OAS website www.oceanicartsociety.org.au but prospective attendees are encouraged to make accommodation and travel bookings early as November is a busy time of year in Adelaide with major events scheduled. Suggested hotels are the Crowne

Plaza, Majestic Roof Garden Hotel and the Pullman Hotel, which are all close to the Museum. **Further information:** Jim Elmslie at jelmslie@ozemail.com.au

❖CAIRNS

Ex-Kiaps & Friends Reunion

This year a smaller gathering, of about 25 people, held at the Cairns Colonial Club on 2 July 2022, included Chris Warrillow, Craig and Heather McConaghy, Col Middleton and Lyn MacDonald, and Graham Watts who all flew in for the occasion. The most senior member present was Hans Wetzel (and wife Paha) who joined in 1954 and later resigned but signed up again in 1965.

As usual, old memories were shared, a few good stories were re-told and a few new ones surfaced from the mists of time.



Those attending: Laurie Bragge, Warren Bartlett, Geoff Hartnett, George Ivanow, Martin Kerr, Dymrna Leonard, Craig & Heather McConaghy, Lyn McDonald, Col Middleton, Hugh Miller, Paul & Marie van Staveren, Kim Strutynski, Deryck Thompson, Tess Wade, Chris Warrillow, Melanie Warrillow, Graham Watts, Ray Weber, Hans & Paha Wetzel and John Wilkinson.

❖CANBERRA

Preliminary Notice PNGAA Canberra Lunch December 2022

Contact: John Reeves, mobile: 0448 483 932 (after hours please) or email neradaq@gmail.com for further information and/or to register interest in attending. Also check our social media and:

www.pngaa.org
www.montevideo-maru.org



Commemorative Ceremony & Dinner, Canberra, 1 July 2022

The 80th Anniversary commemorative events were a remarkable tribute to the fall of the New Guinea Islands and the sinking of *Montevideo Maru*. The Rabaul & Montevideo Maru Group encompasses all those connected with this history. There are still many families connected with it who we have not yet reached and who can help to share this story. It would be a great help if you can contact your local secondary school and ask them to include the online education program on the new Rabaul and Montevideo Maru website at <https://montevideo-maru.org/education/> in their history classes. It is a tremendous resource.

Several members managed to get articles about the 80th Anniversary into various media outlets and we thank them sincerely for their efforts to make this story more widely known and acknowledged.

Regional papers which have printed stories were the *Narromine Star* on 30 June, the *Townsville Bulletin* on 1 July 2022 and the *Northern Star*. A link to the ABC item is at:

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-07-01/act-montevideo-maru-maritime-disaster-80-year-anniversary/101201198>

Please help continue to share this story by contacting your local newspapers, radios, TV stations, secondary schools, etc. and asking them to highlight anniversaries. In this way, what those involved went through will not be forgotten. It is a complex story involving the Australian Army, Air Force and Navy, a civilian militia group the NGVR, coastwatchers, many civilians, prisoners-of-war, the Tol Massacre, rugged escapes by a few over weeks and months, and then the sinking of *Montevideo Maru*, which remains Australia's largest maritime disaster.

It would be lovely if you share any photos of the event on our social media: <https://www.facebook.com/RabaulAndMontevideoMaruSociety>—https://www.instagram.com/rabaul_montevideomaru_group/ or email us!

ANDREA WILLIAMS

Please turn to page 59 of this issue for a full report and photographs of the commemorative events.

❖SYDNEY

PNGAA Christmas Lunch

Sunday 4 December 2022

Venue: North Ryde Golf Club, Twin Road, North Ryde

Time: 11:30 am to 3:30 pm

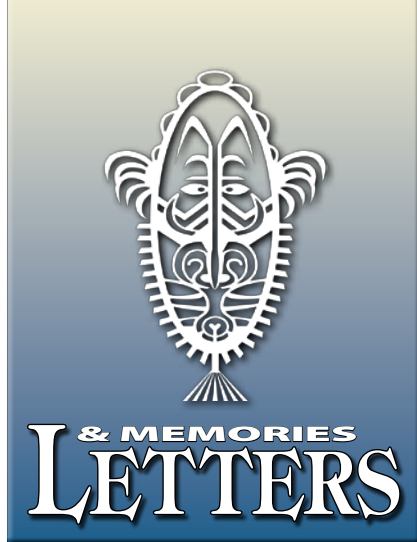
Cost: Meal \$70 for two courses; attendees pay for their drinks.

Payment: Direct deposit to PNGAA CBA BSB 062-009 Account Number 00907724 (ref SYDX+ surname). Please advise treasurer@pngaa.net when payment completed including code SYDX and surname.

RSVP: 18 November 2022 to Cheryl Marvell 0438 635 132, email: collection@pngaa.net or Andrea Williams 0409 031 889

Special Notes: Please advise special dietary requirements at time of booking.

Guest Speaker: To be advised.



PNG's Views on the World

At the PNGAA 2022 AGM lunch at the end of April, the presentation on 'PNG Voices: Perspectives on Australia and the World' from Drs Andrea Connor and Hannah Sarvasy, sponsored by the Whitlam Institute, into language and attitudinal research with people in areas of the Huon Peninsula, provided an outstanding, fresh and, in my view, rare and valuable set of insights into what and how people really feel about many issues that affect them.

In its own way, even with basic methodology the information yielded a more authentic look at these things than would, say, a conventional vote or a survey, which usually have a narrower focus. I am sure that such information can be used to facilitate more tailored approaches to questions of relationship, assistance and intent between our two countries. And that we have a capacity to play helpful connective roles in such matters.

Development assistance/ aid, as we well know, is/ has been a complex issue e.g. this 2019 Lowy Institute article: <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/curious-case-aid-concentration-papua-new-guinea>

Featuring commentaries about previously published articles and news items, along with opinions of interest and memories. Also included are enquiries from those who require assistance with their research or finding someone from the past. Please send your contributions by 19 September 2022, the Copy Deadline for the next issue, to editor@pngaa.net

It's interesting to note that the above article was written three years ago. And note also this: <https://png.embassy.gov.au/pmsb/cooperation.html>

To me we have, through the sorts of things we heard at the AGM, further confirmation that the provision of aid is not just about amounts of dollars, but an integrated suite of information that, inter alia, says at a community and personal level: 'What does this mean for me and my community?' And while this is not just a PNG issue, but a universal question, our particular focus however is of course on Australia-PNG and regional issues. I look forward to more on this.

ROBIN MEAD

AGM Speakers

I was so impressed with the sincerity and humility of the speakers from the Whitlam Institute at the AGM on 30 April.



Villager dressed for the Crocodile Festival, East Sepik Province

No disingenuous grandstanding on the problems facing our Pacific neighbours with a 'one size fits all' set of solutions. Clearly the priority of the research was 'listening' and 'hearing'.

That approach was also evident at the lunch where our comments were taken with respect and genuine appreciation. The results of the survey reinforce my belief that the similarities between our two nations in what we value most for community unite us far more than they divide us.

Having a personal interest in the Sepik, I am so impressed with the scholarship initiative for this remote area. A great contribution and definitely the sort of activity that can define the future of the PNGAA.

I look forward to seeing you all again soon and definitely support the PNGAA in exploring new ways to expand and remain relevant with our role in the wider Pacific as well as PNG.

LIZ THURSTON

Letter to President

Many thanks for inviting the Whitlam Institute to present our PNG Voices research to the Association's AGM.

Hannah and I were both very impressed by the depth of knowledge and connection to PNG that was represented at the gathering. It was a real pleasure to meet you and your colleagues

and to engage in a spirited discussion about the research findings.

We are yet to have hard copies printed but would be most happy to send your group copies when they are ready. Please let me know the best postal address.

We do hope to stay in touch in the future and wish you all the very best with your endeavours in the future. Please feel free to download a copy of the research from our website:

<https://www.whitlam.org/publications/pngvoices>

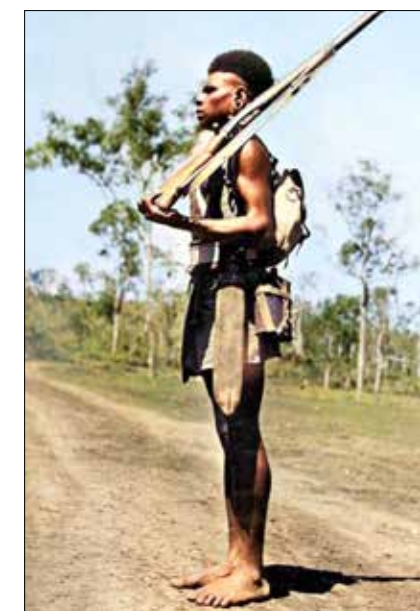
ANDREA CONNOR

Editor's Note: Please see the article on the back cover of this issue for more information.

Indigenous Soldiers 1940-45

Congratulations on your Kokoda/ Port Moresby Campaign feature (and Anzac Day 2022) in the June 2022 edition—a very timely focus.

I have been studying this Campaign for over fifteen years so I could not help noticing the errors which crept into your text, map, and photo captions. My main concern was the text about the Papuan Infantry Battalion; a text which seriously under-



A member of the Papuan Infantry Battalion with full equipment, 1944

stated the achievements of those indigenous soldiers between 1940 and 1945.

I am willing to be a future point of contact about the role and operations of the Papuan Infantry Battalion (and the New Guinea Infantry Battalions).

I appreciated your aim to achieve a balanced handling of the key Allied agencies in the Kokoda/ Port Moresby Campaign—in this you were successful.

GREG IVEY

Editor's Note: Greg Ivey is the Vice President of the PIB NGIB HQ PIR Association (and PNGAA

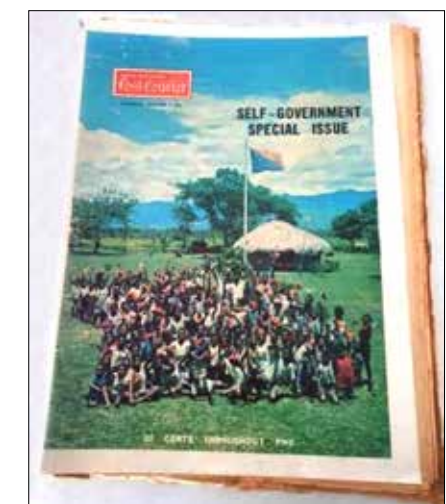
member), and editor and author of many publications, including a comprehensive review of Philip Bradley's famous book, *Hell's Battlefield: The Australians in New Guinea in World War II*, published by Allen & Unwin in 2012.

Post Courier Special Edition

I lived in PNG when I was very young; my father, Graham Farrell, was a maths teacher at Bugandi High School, Lae from 1970 to 1973. My parents, now in their 80s, wish to sell: *Post Courier*, Saturday 1 December 1973 issue—Self-Government Special Edition. I hope that some of the readers of *PNG KUNDU* might be interested in buying it.

KELLY DAVIES

kelly@pyramiddisplays.com.au



Special Offer for PNGAA Members

When the founders of **Niugini Arabica Coffee** worked in Papua New Guinea, they fell in love with the coffee. They realised that nature has endowed Papua New Guinea with a terrific diversity in its landscape. There are wonderful tropical rainforests, extensive river systems, volcanoes, waterfalls, rugged highlands, pristine beaches and remarkable flora and fauna. The fertile highlands are home to the best coffee in the world.

Niugini Arabica specialises in roasting organic coffee beans from the mountains of PNG. Specialisation means that we have been able to fine tune our roasting techniques to extract the optimal flavours from what are already optimal beans. The result brings to the fore the superb complex flavoursome body that is intense, yet smooth and silky on the palette with chocolate-nutty undertones. Our roasting operations are in Port Moresby and in Canberra. **Niugini Arabica Coffee** is open to the public at our shopfront cafe in Duffy, Canberra.

To spread our love for Papua New Guinean coffee, we've partnered with the PNGAA. Visit our online shop at <https://www.niuginiarabica.com/> and use the discount code 'PNGAA10' to get 10% off any order.





The crucifix (top), the church being built (centre), and the completed building (bottom)

A Chaplain's Souvenir

Perhaps your readers will be interested to read about a special souvenir my father, Arthur John Wagstaff brought back from New Guinea during the Second World War.

An Anglican minister, he served for four years as a chaplain in the AIF and his service number was QX45121. When he was at Milne Bay with the 29th Infantry Brigade the Papuan people built a chapel from native materials for the regular services he conducted for both the servicemen and the local people.

A feature of this church was the small crucifix which adorned its altar. The crucifix was made by a serviceman, whose name, regrettably, I do not know, from the aluminium melted down from the wreck of a Japanese aeroplane and the attached figure of Christ is of the same material. The quality of the figure suggests that an experienced sculptor was involved. The cross, square in cross section, is 180 mm high and 100 mm wide. The figure of Christ is about 75 mm high.

The base on which the cross stands is of brass and looks like the remnants of an artillery shell. Included in the markings on the underside are 1942, 25 Pr and a single arrow. The percussion plate has been fired. The small square block sitting on the circular base is also of brass.

My father survived malaria and dengue and came home after the war, but sadly died five months later from cancer of the pancreas. My brave mother did a wonderful job being left with the task of rearing me and my two younger brothers.

The crucifix stayed in the family for many years but some years ago I gave it and some associated photographs of the construction of the church at Milne Bay to a church in Victoria. I had hoped that they would make use of it. This never happened so recently, on my request, the people at the church returned it to me. Sadly, some of the photographs have been misplaced or lost.

I considered sending the crucifix to the Australian War Memorial, but have now decided that it should stay in my family as a poignant memento of my father.

LORNA HAMILTON

Editor's Note: Chaplains have served in the Australian Army since WWI. During WWII, 639 full-time army chaplains served in the different theatres—34 of them were prisoners of war. In the campaigns in the SW Pacific Area, including PNG, 14 chaplains died—6 from enemy action, 5 from illness and 3 from accidents during service.



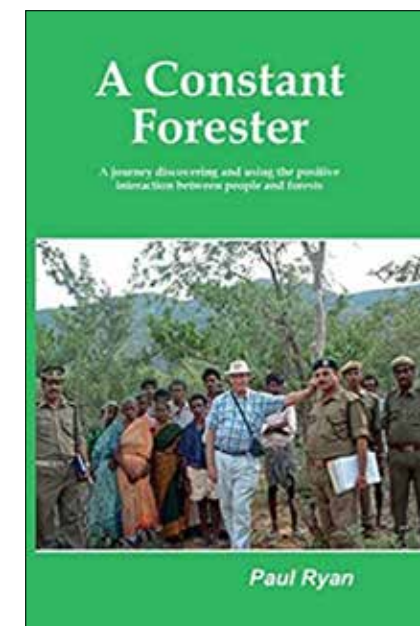
PAUL RYAN

A Constant Forester

This is the story of Paul Ryan's forestry career, but it's not just about trees. It also relates to his growing involvement with the people who, living in or on the fringes of forests, rely partially or wholly on the forest for their livelihood.

Starting in Papua New Guinea, where, to the local people, the forest was their birthright and source of subsistence, Paul then moved to Canada. Based there, he worked on numerous projects in various countries around the world, initially involved with industrial forest management.

An assignment with the World Bank to Afghanistan in



Featuring book reviews about Papua New Guinea, art and craft exhibitions, interviews and information of interest to members and authors, artists and craftspeople.

Please send your articles and photos for the next issue by the Copy Deadline, 19 September 2022, to editor@pngaa.net

1978 changed his focus, as he was dealing with the provision of firewood to rural communities. Further work with the Bank in Africa continued this trend, until, in 1986, he was asked to join the World Bank as a specialist in wood-fuels and forestry.

There followed an increasing degree of interaction with communities to develop a bottom-up approach to solving wood-fuel and forestry issues.

While designing a wood-fuel supply project in Tanzania, Paul realised that the best solution was to support communities in protecting and managing their traditional woodlands rather than to plant trees to provide the needed wood-fuels. After initial scepticism the project proceeded successfully and reintroduced communities to their forests.

As the story follows Paul's peripatetic career, it also relates the many non-forestry experiences that occurred, some dangerous, some fascinating, but none boring.

The climax was working in India on a community forest management project involving 5,150 communities. It was a win-win situation for both the impoverished forest fringe dwellers and the hitherto degraded forest, which the communities had been allocated to manage with World Bank funding.

There was immense satisfaction in seeing a majority of

the people's livelihoods improved and the forest regenerated to a much healthier state.

ISBN: 978-0645331516

Published by Paul Ryan, 2022

246 pages, paperback & e-book.

Cost \$26.95

Available from Amazon, Booktopia, Book Depository and others.

GENERAL JERRY SINGIROK

A Matter of Conscience: Operation Rausim Kwik

Twenty years on from the abrupt ending of his military career, Jerry Singirok has had much time to ruminate on the past. He stands back and reflects, often quite critically, about his own decisions, as well as more broadly about politics, leadership, corruption, faith, family and many other facets of public and personal life in PNG.

The book will be of considerable interest to many readers, and not just for those with a Pacific focus.

In a review, originally published by *PNG Attitude* in April 2022, Rae Stuart said that the book, written from the unique perspective of former Army commander Singirok, is a no holds barred account of a mutiny.

It tells the story of Singirok's bold response when Sandline mercenaries, engaged by the government of then prime minister Sir Julius Chan who was intent on winning the civil war in Bougainville, were stopped in

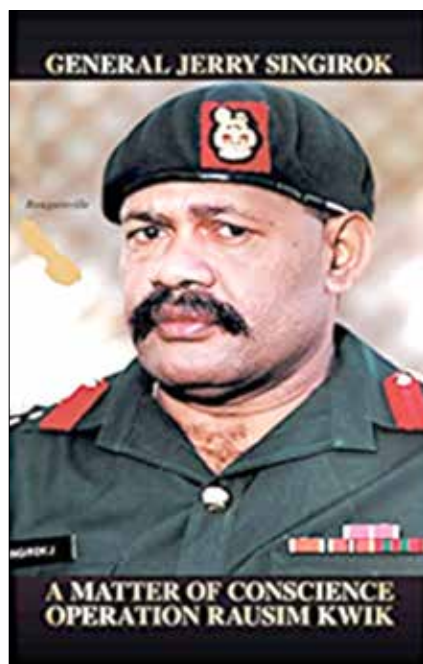
their tracks, potentially saving thousands of lives.

Singirok tells the story leading up to this event and relates what happened when, as defence force commander in 1997, he defied Chan's orders and stopped the Sandline mercenaries.

Singirok was dismissed and faced a number of inquiries, one of which reinstated him in 1998. But, dissatisfied, the government called another inquiry and he was dismissed again in 2000 facing a number of charges including sedition. In March 2004, he was cleared of all charges except sedition and his military career was over.

More recently, Singirok has been outspoken against Australian intervention in the Pacific, particularly the deployment of forces to the Solomon Islands. He has accused Australia of imperialism and also suggested that Papua New Guinea risks becoming a failed state.

The book also covers other aspects of Singirok's life, including what influenced



him as a youth and a young man. It describes his career as a professional soldier in the Papua New Guinea Defence Force, and what happened when, after the drama of the Sandline Affair, he had to reconstruct his life.

ISBN: 9781543768800

ISBN-10: 1543768806

Published 24 February 2022

636 pages; hardcover \$70.34; soft cover \$56.56

Available from Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com.au/Matter-Conscience-Operation-Rausim-Kwik/dp/1543768806>

RICHARD NYE

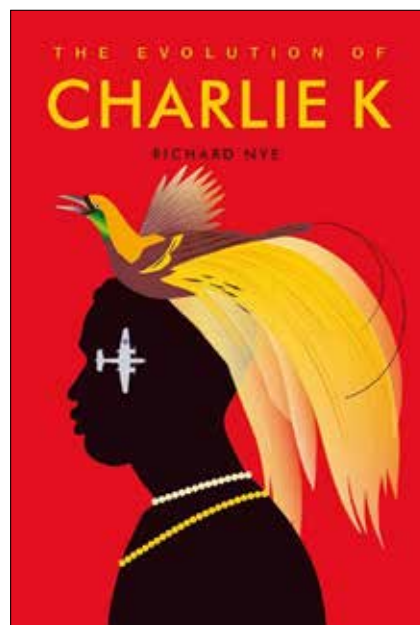
The Evolution of Charlie K

The novel follows the fortunes of a young man from one of the world's most extraordinary countries. He is suddenly thrust from a stone-age society, having to navigate the alien culture of American schooling and university life, later returning to his home country.

Overnight, the young man has to cope with extreme racial prejudice. He suffers violence but also experiences generosity of spirit, in an otherwise inward-looking America. The reader follows not only his adventures in the US, but later when he returns to his own country, to live in a remote tribal area with vividly described episodes featuring unexpected and exciting encounters. The story draws on the effects of war on his country during WWII.

The book is spiced with humour, tragedy, romance and violent racism.

'A fascinating book ... A must read ... Captivating and great storytelling ... A thoughtful and



eye-opening read ... Interesting story brilliantly told'.

About the author. In 1960–61 at age of 23, Richard Nye worked for the administration's P&T Dept as a telecoms technician based in Port Moresby, travelling throughout the Territory, maintaining the then rudimentary radio networks. Richard now lives in the UK.

There is more information about him and PNG with some of his photos, to be found at richnyeaauthor.com
ISBN: 1800462832
Published by Troubador Publishing Limited, 2021
370 pages, softback,
Cost: (incl postage within Australia) Paperback \$20.37, Kindle \$7.39.
Available from Amazon, Kindle, Audible.

JOYCELIN KAUC LEAHY

The Lazy Little Frog

Liklik Hambak Rokrok

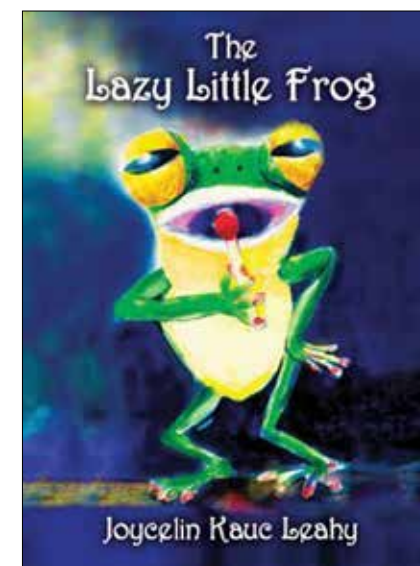
(*Tok Pisin*)

The author, Joycelin Kauc Leahy, is also a visual artist, textile designer and arts curator, and she has illustrated the books with water colours and

pen and ink drawings. The books tell the story, in both English and *Tok Pisin*, of life in an abandoned *haus kuk* where a group of animals all have a place to sleep and a job to do. All except the little green tree frog who thought hard work was for losers and, instead he spent his days sleeping or singing, and pretending to be Elvis.

Singing like Elvis and being a nuisance gained him the name 'Loki Enough'. When he added trickery to his performances to gain free food, all the animals could see through his tricks and they resented Loki. The hero and peacemaker is a generous and tolerant rooster.

Pam Jeffs, the author of *Turtle Island*, writes: This is a delightful universal story suited for children of all ages. It is a story about love, kindness and friendship. The story gives an insight into life in PNG. Joycelin wrote this book in English and *Tok Pisin* to assist in language preservation in PNG. This is a wonderful example of how different languages can be used to portray a story. All cultural terms are delivered in



an accessible manner and easy to understand.

ISBN: English 978-0-9807503-3-1

Tok Pisin 978-0-9807503-6-2

Published by PNG Publishing, 2022, 46 pages, hardback;

Cost: \$45 plus postage.

Available: For order on Kickstarter

<https://lazylittlefrog.com/>

For every book sold through Kickstarter a portion will be donated to help develop elementary school materials for Bukawac speaking schools in PNG.

Additional info:

Joyce Leahy at (Tel.) 61-415743025:

(Email) joycelinleahy@gmail.com

MICHAEL VEITCH

Australia's Secret Army:

The story of the Coast Watchers, the unsung heroes of Australia's armed forces during World War II

Acclaimed author Michael Veitch brings to life the compelling and vivid account of a little-known chapter of Australian wartime history. *Australia's Secret Army* documents a group of civilians who worked with the Australian Defence Force during WWII as 'Coast Watchers'.

Established after World War I by the Royal Australian Navy, the Coast Watchers were a loose organisation of several hundred European settlers, missionaries, patrol officers and planters living in British and Australian Pacific Island territories. They were mostly all unpaid volunteers whose job it was simply to observe and report on foreign shipping and aeroplane movements. It was never envisaged that the Coast Watchers would do any fighting, nor operate inside enemy-occupied territory. But when

World War II came to the Pacific, that is exactly what they ended up doing, becoming, in effect, Australia's secret army. Fully cognisant of their fate should they be caught, they nonetheless battled, not just the enemy, but constant exhaustion, tropical disease, and the ever-present spectre of capture, torture and death. Without the coastwatchers and the crucial intelligence they provided, key moments in the war could have turned out very differently. This is the story of these unsung heroes who risked their lives—and sometimes lost them—in the service of their country.

'A coastwatcher's work is ... to sit in hiding like a spider, right in the web of the enemy, unseen and unheard. We became the eyes and ears of the Pacific.'

Reg Evans, Coastwatcher

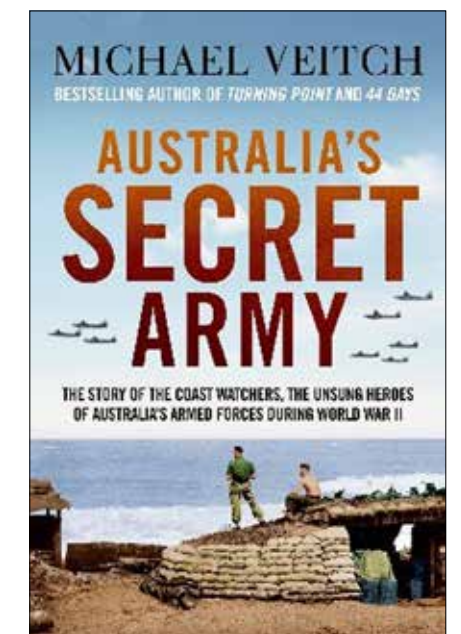
ISBN: 978 0 7336484-7-2

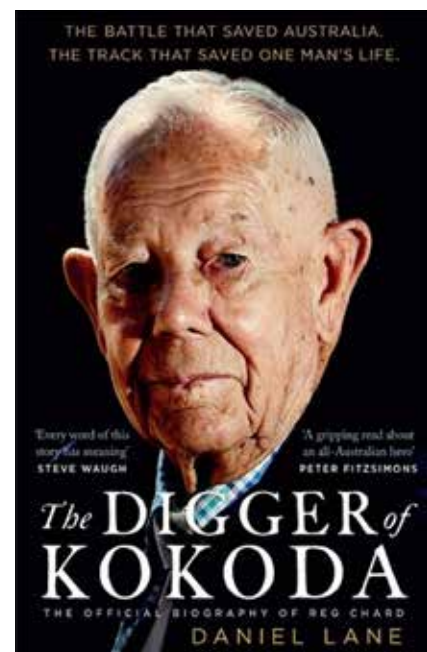
Published by Hachette Australia, September 2022

352pp, Soft or Hardback

Available from: All good bookshops and online

Cost: (incl postage within Australia where appropriate) \$32.99.





DANIEL LANE

***The Digger of Kokoda:
The Official Biography of
Reg Chard***

This book is the life story of 98-year-old Reg Chard OAM. Reg was 18 when he was sent to war and endured the hell of the Kokoda Trail. As one of the last surviving soldiers of the campaign, he has now become a custodian of its legacy.

Ironically, Kokoda rescued Reg decades later. After losing Betty, his wife of 66 years, the grief-stricken great-grandfather lost the will to live. But he found new purpose through educating young people, giving guided tours of Sydney's Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway.

This deeply moving, healing and inspiring biography tells us of Reg's war in the jungle and how, 80 years after the battle that saved Australia, Kokoda still lives within him.

Two reviewers' comments:

Grittily honest, told with great sensitivity, this is the finest account of Kokoda by a front-line soldier that I've read. Reg Chard, only 18 when he fought the Japanese in Papua, tells much more than another 'mud and blood' story. Now 98, he shows how the experience touched his life and, in an extraordinary twist, saved him from his own demons after his wife died. The true story of a boy soldier who faced some of the worst battles of the Pacific War.—Paul Ham

A lifetime ago, no series of battles were more critical nor horrendous than those of the New Guinea campaign—Kokoda and the likes of Sanananda. Reg Chard was a typical and thus extraordinary digger who fought in those battles and survived, to this day mourning and honouring his many mates who fell. This brilliant account by Daniel Lane, of Reg's war service, reminds us all of the price of peace so many of our predecessors have paid. A great story.

—General Sir Peter Cosgrove

ISBN: 9781761260278

Published by McMillan Aust., 2022

368 pages, soft or hardback

Cost: \$36.99; ebook \$17.99



Guidelines for Contributors to PNG Kundu

We welcome factual and anecdotal stories of various lengths, information about members of PNGAA and their activities, letters and enquiries, reviews of art and books, photos, news and reunions—a diverse range of material is welcome—the common factor being that it is relevant to Papua New Guinea in some way.

- **Who can contribute?** We welcome contributions from members and non-members.
- **Contributions to be submitted as Word documents:** We prefer Arial font, size 11 for all electronic submissions. Appropriate references are required if the article has been taken from a website or another primary source. Note: PDFs and handwritten submissions will be accepted subject to availability of volunteers to convert them into Word documents.
- **Length of contributions:** Stories should be between 500 and 1,500 words—longer submissions are welcome but may be split over two or more sequential issues due to space issues. Vales are normally about 300–500 words—longer vales may be separated into a shorter vale and the longer version added to the website. News items and reviews should not normally exceed 500 words. The number of words should be added to each contribution.
- **Photographs:** should be submitted as JPGs, minimum 300 dpi, with appropriate acknowledgement and captions.
- **All contributions are subject to editorial consideration:** The editorial team reserves the right to reject, reduce and/or postpone publication. While every attempt is made to reply or publish in a reasonable time, there may be times when your patience is appreciated. However, members may add their stories and photos directly to our website.

All contributions should be submitted to the editor, John Egerton, at editor@pngaa.net by the Copy Deadline stated on the masthead page of each issue of PNG Kundu



Women in Politics in PNG

Lily, a magazine published by Pacific Islands Publishing, and usually devoted to fashion and other topics of interest principally to women, has, in a recent issue (No. 25), featured stories about women in politics and has profiled many of the candidates trying once again to get elected to parliament. An article by Rebecca Nugent and Carmel Pilotti identifies some of the reasons why, almost uniquely, the parliament of PNG has no members who are women.

The first obstacle is the entrenched mindset—identified as cultural—that holds that only men are fit to lead and that the place for women is in the home caring for husbands, children and the elderly, the animals and vegetable gardens.

There are the physical demands of campaigning in areas with inadequate roads and transport, lack of financial support and in most cases failure of endorsement by the existing political parties. Only a third of the women who contested the last two elections were endorsed by a party, the lowest female endorsement rate in the Pacific, and one of the lowest in the world.

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

There are, however, many women who, in spite of these obstacles, are determined to stand for public office. The latest estimate is that at least 200 women will contest the 2022 national election in both the 96 'open' seats and the 18 provincial ones. Polling was scheduled to take place from 2 July to 22 July 2022.

Femili Coffee

On 10 June 2022, *PNG Project News* announced the launch, by PNG's High Commissioner, of Femili PNG coffee in Australia. His Excellency Mr John Ma'o Kali CMG, OBE said: *'Make your morning cup of coffee a force for good. When you buy Femili PNG coffee, you are contributing to the empowerment of women and their communities in PNG. By purchasing from female coffee farmers in PNG, we are helping women to achieve sustainable livelihoods in the coffee industry. This economic sustainability also makes it possible for women to bring about meaningful, long-term change and development in their communities.'*



Femili PNG is a PNG NGO that provides services to survivors of family and sexual violence.

The distinctive Femili PNG coffee label was kindly designed by well-known artist Lesley Wengembo. The inspiration behind the design is the idea that women are the backbone of Papua New Guinea, represented by a silhouette of a woman carrying a baby in a *bilum*.

To order Femili PNG coffee, go to: <https://shop.femilipng.org>
<https://www.femilipng.org/femili-pngs-patron-launches-coffee-with-a-cause/>

The Bilum Story

On 19 May 2022, the Lowy Institute, Sydney, hosted the screening of a new film, *The Bilum Story*, about the making of *bilums* and the women involved in translating *bilum* making into a source of income both in PNG and internationally. The film was funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade under the Australia–PNG Partnership and produced under the mentorship of the Difference Incubator. Seventy guests attended the event. These included members of the diplomatic corps in Sydney, businesses, associations including PNGAA and individuals with personal links to Papua New Guinea.

Before the film was shown there were short presentations by Mihai Sora and Jonathon Pryke of



Making a bilum (top); Caroline Sherman with bilum makers at a market in PNG (centre); Bilums for sale roadside market (bottom)

Images courtesy of Among Equals

the Lowy Institute, Caleb Jarvis of Pacific Trade Investment, Anthea Smits of the Difference Incubator and Caroline Sherman of Among Equals.

After the screening guests, while enjoying the hospitality of the Lowy Institute, had the opportunity to interact with other participants and to admire some of the bilums and other products displayed by Among Equals who are based in Sydney and Bilums and Bilas whose headquarters are in Madang.

Among Equals is a not-for-

profit group in Sydney which aims to enhance economic opportunities for women and their communities. It has identified the bilum makers of PNG as artisan weavers and is committed to honouring and promoting this ancient tradition globally.

An earlier film about bilums available on Among Equal's website (following) was made in 2017. It was made on Caroline Sherman's second trip to PNG and it, too, highlights the incredible women artisans and the ways in which Among Equals is helping to empower them. Among Equals has invested \$165,000 into the communities in PNG in which they are working and their objective is to increase the market for bilums worldwide, and by doing so considerably increase the profits for reinvestment in PNG communities.

In 2014 Bilum & Bilas (B&B) was started as an online bilum store focused on linking artisanal products to international buyers in an effort to generate better income for bilum weavers and artisans.

The B&B team has discovered the complexities, expense and instability of the craft and bilum supply chain. The intricate craftsmanship, traditional processing and labour that goes into creating a bilum is what makes them so unique, but it also means they are challenging to produce at a scale that provides the artisans with a stable and equitable income.

More recently B&B's contemporary jewellery, inspired

by the beauty and essence of the bilum, although in micro form, has been added to their collection. The range of products marketed by B&B can be seen on their website (following).

Florence Kamel, who features in *The Bilum Story* and in the film produced in 2017 by Among Equals, established Jaukae Products in 2002. This is a co-operative representing about 60 weavers and is based in Goroka. Forty of these artisans work from Florence's home while the others work at the Goroka Bilum Market.

The new film runs for about thirty minutes and a trailer can be viewed at <https://thebilumstory.com>

Organisations interested in hosting a screening of the film should contact:

Public-Affairs-PortMoresby@dfat.gov.au
<http://www.amongequals.com.au>
<https://www.bilumandbilas.com>
<https://oneoftwelve.com/bilum/jaukae-bilum-products>

Ilma Savari, Tapa Cloth Maker, Exhibits at London Royal Academy of Art

In August 2019 Rebecca Hossack, the principal of art galleries in London, Miami and New York, was invited by the Ömie people to visit their remote community on Mount Lamington, the notorious volcano in Oro Province, Papua



'Maja Nune—Eye of the Sun', on show at The Royal Academy of Art



Ilma (left) carrying her tapa cloth during the welcome ceremony (top); Villagers show Rebecca the tree used to make tapa cloth (below)
 Courtesy Chris Diov, Onesmus Ogaba

New Guinea. She was, she said, only the seventh European to travel into this remote part of the country and was touched by the warmth of the welcome she received.

The Ömie are a small group of fewer than 2,000 people living in seven villages on the side of the volcano. They had invited Rebecca to visit them to see their intricately decorated tapa cloths, woven from the fibrous inner bark layers of rainforest trees and pounded on rocks with palm-wood mallets.

All colours used are created from natural vegetable dyes, and the areas of appliqué are sewn with a needle made from the wing-bone of a bat, and thread spun from reeds.

During the four-day climb up and down the steep valleys to reach the villages, Rebecca got to know Ilma Savari, a tapa cloth maker, and recognised in her the spirit of a great artist. Since her return to London, and throughout COVID-19 lockdown, Rebecca has maintained a close relationship with Ilma and the people of her village.

Although tapa cloth has a long tradition in the Pacific, Rebecca felt that Ilma's work takes this art form in a new direction. Her art has a distinct inventive spirit, restrained palette, and graphic sense reminiscent of Picasso's use of traditional tribal designs.

Through the auspices of the Rebecca Hossack Gallery, Ilma Savari's work is now on show in London and is the first artist from Papua New Guinea to exhibit at the Royal Academy of Art in London. Her artwork, 'Maja Nune —Eye of the Sun', is on display as part of the annual Summer Exhibition from Tuesday, 21 June 2022.

Pacific Permanent and Temporary Migration

Pater Hooton of the Lowy Institute said in a posting of 21 June 2002 that the consolidation of Australia's identity as an Asia-Pacific nation is 'a work in progress'. Further he believed that earlier Australian governments' failure to take seriously their domestic and international

responsibilities has done enormous damage to Australia's standing in the Pacific.

The new Australian Labor Government has committed to listen more carefully to its neighbours and to re-examine conditions of entry to Australia by temporary and permanent migrants. The introduction of a quota and lottery-driven Pacific Engagement Visa similar to that operating in New Zealand is a welcome initiative. It promises to add a new dimension to Australia's permanent migration program. An initial cap of 3,000 visas annually will need to expand if it is to be of benefit to countries like PNG, the Solomons and Vanuatu which, in the past, have provided few of Australia's migrant intake.

Proposed changes to the Pacific Australian Labour Scheme, and the creation of a Pacific window in Australia's permanent migration program, will benefit people directly by expanding opportunities for employment, education and training, and by increasing remittance flows. The economies of all participating countries, including Australia, should benefit and further should enhance Australia's standing in the region.

For this to happen, the initiatives must have the resources needed to secure their effective implementation and have in place the appropriate bilateral understandings and domestic safeguards against worker exploitation.

Hooton also argued that special provision needed to be made for countries like Tuvalu



Tuvalu Airport

and Kiribati which are under immediate threat from rising sea-levels. There should, he said, be a specific climate change quota beyond the annual migration cap. <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/pacific-labour-mobility-and-existential-threat-climate-change>

PacificAus Sports Netball series 2022

The PacificAus Sports Netball Series was played 21 to 26 March 2022 at Netball Central, Sydney Olympic Park. Sponsored by the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade, the competition included teams from Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Singapore and Papua New Guinea (PNG). The series was free to watch and streamed on Zoom.

Each country played each other once and the two best countries played a grand final.



PNG Netball Team

The PNG coach, Anni Iammo, said her biggest problem was selection. COVID-19 restrictions and the few vaccinated players in PNG hampered selection greatly. It could be said that the one selected was not PNG's strongest team. Players were chosen from all parts of PNG (based in Port Moresby and Lae) and PNG born girls playing representative netball in Cairns, Brisbane and the Gold Coast, Queensland.

The coach said PNG's aims were to improve their world ranking which they did so the competition was judged to be a great success although PNG won only one of the four games they played, beating Singapore 64-49. The competition was won by Tonga who beat Fiji 60 goals to 52.

GREGORY CORNER

World No Buai Day 7 October 2022

Businesses for Health works to support any behaviour that promotes health and reduces the likelihood of developing PNG's deadliest infectious



Campaign Leader TB Head Education Officer Teresa

disease—tuberculosis. Chewing betel nut puts more pressure on the immune system and makes developing TB disease more likely.

COVID-19 measures have had some unexpected consequences—like more chewing. Whilst the infection control benefits of mask wearing are well known, in PNG masks have enabled people to hide their workday chewing. With fewer mask wearing requirements now in place, Businesses for Health has announced the start of their campaign to get the workers of PNG to consider the health and financial costs of chewing *buai*.

The campaign is set to run over seven fortnights. Chewers have been given time to think, analyse, plan and find friends to support them in reducing their chewing habit. It is understood that chewing is part of many people's usual routine, so planning is required for success in reducing dependency on PNG's favourite addictive drug—betel nut!

Buai Challenge
(businesses4health.com)



THE PACIFIC WAR

Milne Bay 1942



Australian troops had, at Milne Bay, inflicted on the Japanese their first undoubted defeat on land. Some of us may forget that, of all the Allies, it was the Australians who first broke the invincibility of the Japanese army.

Field Marshall William Slim, 1st Viscount Slim

The Battle of Milne Bay is one of the Australian Army's most overshadowed battles. The public's attention is mostly drawn to the Kokoda Campaign, which was fought at the same time. Kokoda rightly deserves its accolades, but so too does its sister battle at Milne Bay for the bitter fighting over this isolated harbour played an equally important role in contributing to the shifting Allied fortunes in the Pacific War.

Offering a sheltered harbour, Milne Bay cuts into the eastern tip of the island of New Guinea. Its remoteness, swampish landscape and the prevalence of tropical disease deterred any significant development prior to WWII. Despite these disadvantages, Milne Bay is situated between a number of locations that were at the forefront of the war in the South-West Pacific in mid-1942, namely Port Moresby, Rabaul, Guadalcanal and Buna-Gona.

The strategic value offered by Milne Bay's location prompted General Douglas MacArthur to order the secret construction of an Allied base with airfields to protect the maritime approach to Port Moresby. From this base, Allied aircraft could attack the large Japanese base at Rabaul without flying the dangerous journey over the Owen Stanley mountain range.

The base at Milne Bay was quickly established and expanded. Australian and American troops assisted by Papuan labourers worked tirelessly to construct facilities to support a garrison of nearly 10,000 men. Crucially, the Allies sought to conceal

**SPECIAL
FEATURE**



1. A ground crew member of 76 Squadron RAAF sits on the wing tip to guide the pilot of the P-40 Kittyhawk, who couldn't see over the nose while taxiing on the Marston planking on the runway at Milne Bay;
2. Australian troops plough through the mud at Milne Bay, shortly after the unsuccessful Japanese invasion attempt;
3. One of the Japanese barges after the battle;

Previous Page: Detail from Thomas Fisher's photograph of an Australian patrol from the 61st AIF Battalion crossing a river while searching for Japanese in the Milne Bay area. Acknowledgement is given to the editors and contributors, to the Australian War Memorial, and the online sources referenced in this publication.

the base's development and size for as long as possible.

Their endeavour was successful; for once the Japanese discovered it and despatched a task force to seize the base, they did so based on a faulty estimate that the garrison's strength was less than one-tenth of its actual size.

Japanese Landing—25 August 1942

The battle began on the night of 25/26 August 1942, when the Imperial Japanese Navy landed approximately 1,200 men at Wahahuba Bay on Milne Bay's north shore.

From the beginning, the Japanese were at a disadvantage. The marines were landed eleven kilometres east of their intended landing area, and their intelligence had significantly underestimated the Allied garrison. Whereas the Japanese believed there were no more than a few hundred troops defending the airstrip, there were actually almost 9,000 Allied troops including two Australian infantry brigades—the 7th and the 18th.

The Allies had the additional advantage of having air support close at hand because the 75 and 76 Squadrons from the RAAF, both equipped with P-40 fighter bombers, were also based at Milne Bay.

Initially, however, the Japanese met with their accustomed success. Supported by two light tanks, they advanced steadily westward. The 61st Battalion was first into action and slowed the Japanese, although unable to hold them back.

The 2/10th Battalion was moved up on the night of 27 August, but faulty dispositions and other command failings, meant it was brushed aside by a renewed Japanese thrust, and disintegrated in a confused withdrawal.

Reaching the edge of the easternmost airstrip on 28 August the intensity of Japanese operations fell away as they made preparations for their attack, which included landing 800 reinforcements. In the early hours of 31 August, they charged the defences manned by the 25th and 61st Australian Battalions and the United States 43rd Engineer Regiment and 709th Anti-Aircraft Battery.

The Japanese suffered grievously, largely due to machine gun and artillery fire, and withdrew by dawn. Throughout their operations the Japanese were constantly harassed during daylight hours by the P-40s.

On the night of 30/31 August, buoyed by the arrival of 800 reinforcements, the Japanese launched an all-out assault on the Allies' base. The attack was an utter disaster. Scores of Japanese were killed by the lethal array of firepower the Allies had placed along their base perimeter. Not a single Japanese marine breached the Allies' defensive line.

The following week saw Australian infantry push the Japanese back along the north shore of Milne Bay beyond their original landing point. The remnants of the Japanese task force were evacuated on the nights of 4 and 5 September. The invasion was thwarted and Milne Bay was secure.

Of the 2,800 Japanese landed, only 1,318 re-embarked. It was estimated that up to 750 lay dead around Milne Bay and the majority of the remainder were killed trying to escape overland to the Japanese base at Buna.

Allied deaths included 167 Australians and fourteen Americans. Milne Bay is remembered as the first defeat of the Japanese on land during the Pacific War. Despite an oppressive combination of extreme humidity, voracious insects, and the tropical disease both combined to create, Milne Bay remained an important Allied staging area until victories in New Guinea made other more suitable areas available from September 1943 onwards.

The Allied victory at Milne Bay—one of the first on land in the Pacific War—was a confidence injection to Allied armies across the world. By securing Milne Bay, the Allies kept an important base that serviced the Allied war effort for the duration of the war. In addition, the Allies' continued occupation of Milne Bay made life more difficult for the Japanese fighting on the Kokoda Trail, because they now knew they could not expect supply from the sea even if they made it all the way to Port Moresby.

Major reasons for the Allied victory included the advantages they enjoyed in troop numbers and weaponry and the close air support provided by the two RAAF fighter Squadrons.

For their part, the Japanese were not used to defeat and struggled to make sense out of the disaster that had befallen them. The Japanese commanders blamed their own troops and denigrated their fighting prowess, willpower and age.

However, the larger failings were of their own making: deficiencies in battle planning, a woeful

inadequacy of detailed intelligence and the lack of air support provided to the invasion force.

These failings can be attributed to the underlying problem the Japanese faced in the South Pacific. By committing to simultaneous military operations at Milne Bay, the Kokoda Trail and Guadalcanal, the Japanese grossly overextended themselves, and lacked the manpower and resources to carry any of those three operations to a successful conclusion.

Milne Bay Memorials

The Milne Bay Memorial at Alotau features an imposing three-metre high granite column, with the centrepiece inscribed with the three service crests, and the words:

In remembrance of those Australians, Papua New Guineans, and their Allies who fought and those who died in the Battle of Milne Bay 1942.

The Turnbull Field Memorial, in the vicinity of the former airstrip known as No. 3 Strip, marks the place where the Japanese advance towards the airfields was ultimately halted. The area was named after Squadron Leader Peter Turnbull, Commanding Officer of the RAAF 76 Squadron who was killed in action in the Battle of Milne Bay (*see the following article*). ♦



An Australian Infantry patrol passing a Japanese tank, knocked out during the fighting

Milne Bay was bloody awful. Never stopped raining. The mountains came straight up from the strip. The strip was just mud with steel planking on it. It was carved out of a coconut plantation, so if you went off the runway, which you did, you ran into a coconut tree, which didn't do the aircraft much good.

Flight Lt Arthur 'Nat' Gould, 75 Squadron



The Flying Cowboy

SQUADRON LEADER PETER TURNBULL DFC

He was called 'The Flying Cowboy' and was known for his 'magnificent fighting spirit and great skill' during the Second World War but, to his family, Squadron Leader Peter Turnbull was the much-loved son and brother who gave his all for his country during the fighting at Milne Bay 80 years ago.

The commander of No. 76 Squadron, RAAF, Turnbull was just 25 years old when his Kittyhawk crashed in the jungle while on a

Damien Parer's photo of Peter Turnbull in June 1941 (above)

mission to spot and attack enemy tanks that had been causing heavy casualties on the ground. He was killed instantly, but his remarkable courage and skill were never forgotten.

Peter St George Bruce Turnbull was born in Armidale, in the New England region of New South Wales, on 9 February 1917 and was raised on the family property near Glen Innes. The Turnbells were well-known graziers in the region, and life on the land suited Peter.

Peter was working as an electrician in Glen Innes and serving as a trooper in the 12/24 Light Horse Regiment of the Militia when he enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force in January 1939. He was undergoing pilot training at Point Cook in Victoria when the Second World War broke out in September. He was soon posted to No. 3 Squadron, a fighter squadron that specialised in co-operation with ground units.

In July 1940, the squadron marched out from Richmond to the tune of 'Roll out the Barrel' before embarking for the Middle East and North Africa. It was in Egypt that the squadron was equipped with Gloster Gladiator aircraft and Peter first made a name for himself as a top fighter pilot.

He served with great distinction through the Syrian Campaign of June and July 1941, and in October 1941 he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his actions. The citation read:

This Officer has carried out 116 Operational sorties involving 200 hours of flying. One day in April of 1941 his formation engaged 16 enemy aircraft which were attacking our troops. [Flying Officer] Turnbull personally destroyed three Messerschmitts in the combat. He has destroyed eight enemy aircraft in the air and inflicted considerable damage to aircraft on the ground, as well as [to] mechanical transports and troops. Throughout [he] has shown magnificent fighting spirit and great skill.

When Peter returned to Australia in December that year, he was greeted with much fanfare by the Mayor of Glen Innes and about 150 townsfolk who wanted to wish him well and welcome him home.

He told a civic reception at the local town hall: *I'm not much good at making speeches. I'm better at drilling men I guess ... The Squadron I have been with is entirely manned by Australian personnel, it has made a name for itself, and the credit is due not only to the pilots but the ground crew as well ... Just because I got the DFC it does not mean I won it myself. The whole squadron helped ... We must have every man available, and the more the better and the quicker it will be over. The lads over there are a grand bunch of boys and are doing a grand job. I have been away 18 months. It has been a great experience, and I wouldn't*

have missed it for anything. I am sure all the returned men here know how I feel—what it's like to get home after a real go, a real ding-dong fight.

In March 1942, Peter joined 75 Squadron in New Guinea under Squadron Leader 'Old John' Jackson, another veteran and ace from 3 Squadron in the Middle East. Equipped with P-40 Kittyhawks, 75 Squadron quickly became engaged in the defence of Port Moresby, one of the crucial early battles in the New Guinea Campaign. Shortly after, Turnbull was appointed commanding officer of 76 Squadron and promoted to squadron leader.

Equipped with P-40 Kittyhawks, the squadron was sent to Papua at the end of July to help defend Milne Bay. Following the landing by Japanese marines at Milne Bay on 25 August 1942, the RAAF Kittyhawks of 75 and 76 Squadrons played a crucial role, destroying Japanese landing barges and stores; flying at treetop level they strafed enemy positions and suppressed enemy movement.

Two days later, Peter was on a mission with Flight Lieutenant Ron Kerville to spot and attack two Japanese tanks that had been causing heavy casualties on the ground at Milne Bay. It was then that disaster struck. Kerville later wrote in a letter to Peter's mother:

It was just about dusk when we took off together to attack a Japanese tank located on the roadway right on the shore of Milne Bay. Peter was in good spirits as we talked over the method of attack and as we flew out to locate the target he told me exactly what to do if my engine failed—'hop out old boy and swim for it.'

He was really happy to be flying again after a few days on the ground. He told me to keep top cover—watch his attack and then follow him in. As I did so, I saw his aircraft dive from about 600 feet and from about 500 yards out to sea.

His guns opened fire in a long burst—tracer could be seen flying in all directions from the tank and I could not tell whether it was return fire or Peter's own fire. He carried the dive very low and his aircraft, during the recovery, turned over—hit the trees and disappeared into the dense undergrowth.

I called up on the radio in the hope that perhaps he was not badly hurt—but, fortunately, he was killed instantly, for which we were all thankful as the target was 400 yards inside enemy territory. The thought of him being in Japanese hands at that stage of the struggle was not a pleasant one. Although he has passed on, I assure you Peter's spirit still lives in the squadron of which he was so proud—we will never forget him.

Eight days later a patrol from the 2/12th Battalion found the plane near Kabi Mission and recovered his body from the wreckage. He was buried in a temporary cemetery at Milne Bay,





Members of 76 Squadron outside a tent at Milne Bay. Peter Turnbull is pictured fifth from right (top); Peter Turnbull playing chess with Squadron Leader John Francis Jackson DFC—a distinguished fighter pilot, he was killed in action on 28 April 1942 during a flying

battle over Papua New Guinea and is buried in Bomana War Cemetery. Jackson International Airport, Port Moresby, is named after him (centre); Turnbull's temporary grave at Milne Bay (below)

marked by a wooden cross, and was later re-interred at the larger Bomana War Cemetery in Port Moresby.

Such was the regard in which he was held among pilots and troops on the ground, the official historian later wrote:

Soldiers much admired and appreciated the work of the two RAAF squadrons and, for them, the gallant Turnbull had epitomised the courage and skill of all the airmen.

Australia's defeat of the Japanese at Milne Bay owed much to the RAAF and men like Peter; their Kittyhawks sank enemy landing craft and shipping, destroyed stockpiles of supplies, and suppressed enemy troop movements. Such was the importance of 75 and 76 Squadron that Major General Cyril Clowes specifically praised the RAAF's untiring and courageous work which earned the admiration of all. The Commander of New Guinea Force, Lieutenant General Sydney Rowell, noted that the actions of the two RAAF fighter squadrons were the battle's 'decisive factor'.

After Peter's death, Milne Bay's No. 3 strip was renamed Turnbull Field in his honour. It marked the furthest westward advance of the Japanese in the area, and was a lasting reminder of his remarkable courage and bravery.

Kerville later wrote in his diary at Milne Bay: *During all operations in this area, [Peter's] leadership judgement and organising ability have been an inspiration. Never still, he provided a wonderful example to all.*

Official war artist, William Dargie, inscribed 'Peter's Revenge' on one of the planes in his 1969 painting, 'RAAF Kittyhawk Squadron at Milne Bay, August–September 1942', as his own personal tribute to the much-loved squadron leader (*previous page*).

Back home, Peter's parents were devastated by his death, but were somewhat comforted by the letters they received from his friends and colleagues. In a letter to Peter's mother, Leading Aircraftsman Doug Cox said Peter's deeds *... stirred everyone ... he just ceased being an officer and became our hero and real friend.*

He enclosed a poem that included these lines:

*But pilots say when the dusk is grey
And the sunset fires grow dim
That Turnbull flies in those cloudy skies
And angels smile on him.*

His friend and fellow pilot, Alan Rawlinson, wrote simply:

He was one of the most outstanding pilots and personalities of the original 3 Squadron and was well known throughout the Middle East.

His name was legend on the Northern fronts. It was with deep regret and bitterness that we learnt of Pete's death in action. His manner and sense of duty were an inspiration to all. Australia has lost one of its finest men. ♦

Turning Point in WWII

The Battle for Milne Bay—Japan's first defeat on land in the Second World War—was a defining moment in the evolution of the indomitable Australian fighting spirit.

For the men of the AIF, the militia and the RAAF, it was the turning point in the Pacific, and their finest—though now largely forgotten—hour. Forgotten, until now.

In August 1942, Japan's forces were unstoppable. Having conquered vast swathes of south-east Asia—Malaya, Singapore, the Dutch East Indies—and now invading New Guinea, many feared the Empire of the Rising Sun stood poised to knock down Australia's northern door.

But first they needed Port Moresby. In the still of an August night, Japanese marines sailed quietly into Milne Bay, a long, malaria-ridden dead end at the far eastern tip of Papua, to unleash an audacious pincer movement. Unbeknown to them, however, a secret airstrip had been carved out of a coconut plantation by US Engineers, and a garrison of Australian troops had been established, supported by two locally based squadrons of RAAF Kittyhawks, including the men of the famed 75 Squadron. The scene was set for one of the most decisive and vicious battles of the war.

For ten days and nights Australia's soldiers and airmen fought the elite of Japan's forces along a sodden jungle track, and forced them back step by muddy, bloody step.

Bestselling author, Michael Veitch, brings to life the incredible exploits and tragic sacrifices of these Australian heroes, in *Turning Point: The Battle for Milne Bay 1942—Japan's First Land Defeat in World War II*.

In the *Canberra Times*, on 7 September 2019, Michael McKernan—a Canberra historian—wrote the following review:

Michael Veitch's account of the battle for Milne Bay of 1942 shines a light on a little-known World War II story:

In 1993, Prime Minister Paul Keating visited the Australian War Memorial to unveil a newly refurbished Kittyhawk aircraft that had come into the Memorial's collections some months earlier.

Also present in Aircraft Hall for this significant event was the original pilot of this particular aircraft, Bruce 'Buster' Brown and his wife Polly. As soon as the silk parachute covering the aircraft was withdrawn by the Prime Minister visitors gasped and applauded as the resplendent machine was revealed,

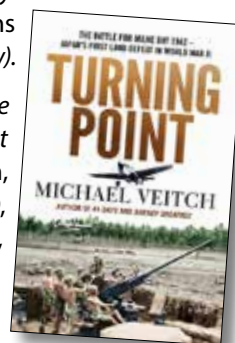


A Kittyhawk comes in to land at No. 1 Airstrip, guarded by an anti-aircraft gun of the 2/9th Light Anti-Aircraft Battery, during the Battle of Milne Bay



Australian troops repairing the bridge on the main route between the pontoon wharf and the Gili Gili-Waigani area, with Major-General CA Clowes supervising (top); Thomas Fisher's photograph of the happy crew of Lockheed Hudson A16-246 of 6 Squadron RAAF, after their return from attacking Japanese destroyers which had been shelling Australian positions in Milne Bay (below).

Turning Point: The Battle for Milne Bay 1942—Japan's First Land Defeat in World War II, by Michael Veitch, published 23 July 2019, ISBN 978-0-73366405-5-1, is available from most bookstores



bearing the name 'Polly', which Buster had inscribed on his plane in honour of his, then, fiancée.

The Prime Minister said he was amazed that this was the only surviving Kittyhawk in a public collection in Australia. As a kid, he said, he had played at Bankstown Aerodrome, roaming on and around the dozen or so Kittyhawks parked on the edge of the field. They must all have been sold for scrap, he suggested, regretfully.

Michael Veitch, the author of this excellent and engaging book, would have applauded the Prime Minister's sentiment. Veitch's main point in narrating this crucial battle is the close and essential co-operation between the Australians in the sky and the Australians on the ground in repelling the Japanese.

The soldiers called the aircraft 'airborne artillery' and each morning of the battle, from 25 August to 7 September 1942, the Kittyhawks of 75 and 76 Squadrons would be in the air pouring thousands of rounds of ammunition into the enemy, who suffered from the lack of any protection from its own aircraft.

Sheltering in the jungle by day, the enemy emerged at night to press the attack for the landing strip which was the aim of the operation. Worn down by Australian soldiers and airmen, the Japanese eventually evacuated, throwing up the white flag for the first time anywhere in the Pacific War. The Japanese were stunned and humiliated by their loss.

Australian soldiers and airmen alike shared the horrible conditions of this battle, where the rain was continuous and the sun rarely seen. Readers will understand the appalling conditions of fighting on the Western Front during the First World War and I was astonished to read that at Milne Bay it was much worse. One soldier, Michael Veitch tells us, remembered beginning the night in a slit trench with water around his knees: 'by the time he was relieved in the morning it was up around his chest'.

Milne Bay was the first airfield in the war to be constructed with Marston matting, prefabricated metal strips, perforated, which when deployed, allowed the use of modern and powerful aircraft almost anywhere. The trouble at Milne Bay was the ground on which the matting was laid. The place was a quagmire and every landing or departing aircraft threw up vast quantities of mud which coated

everything. This was a great danger to the pilots and so ground crew worked overtime to try to return mud-encrusted machines to something like flying conditions.

Eventually, the aircraft from these two Australian squadrons had to be sent to Port Moresby for a thorough cleaning with pressure hoses. They then re-entered the final phases of the fight.

Before Milne Bay the Japanese had swept away everything before them, but this battle showed that they were not invincible. Far from it. Indeed, it is one of the great strengths of Michael Veitch's account that he outlines the weaknesses, ineptitude and even arrogance of the attackers. 'The fact that the Imperial Japanese Navy sent their men to Milne Bay without proper intelligence ... speaks to their military folly.' When the troops landed 'they had no idea where their objective, the Australian airstrip, even was.'

The focus of the story, however, remains on the Australians. Mistakes were made, of course, and men killed because of lack of equipment, or misdiagnosis of the situation. But there are heroes aplenty. 'Silent Cyril' Clowes, the Australian commander, was unflappable, methodical and clever. Never appreciated by his superiors and uncelebrated in his lifetime, except by those who were there, despite his magnificent victory, Clowes saw out the war in a backwater. Peter Turnbull, commanding officer of 76 Squadron, died in combat, exhausted beyond his capacity to fly in any way safely. Milne Bay was an action of which Australians deserve to know.

Michael Veitch gives us a clear, non-technical account of this important battle, and a thoroughly interesting story, too. *Turning Point* and 'Polly' in the War Memorial brings the lives of these brave and dedicated Australians into full light.

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Those Concert Parties of Wartime PNG

PETER KRANZ

The armed forces of Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom have a great tradition of entertaining the troops in wartime through concert parties which bring popular entertainers to the frontline.

The tradition dates back to World War I when the generals decided to bring some light entertainment and comedy to the troops to keep their minds off more bloodthirsty matters.

But not so much is now recalled of the concert parties in Papua New Guinea during World War II.

The US troops were entertained by such outstanding celebrities as Bob Hope, Bing Crosby and Larry Adler, while on the Australian side the talent included George Wallace, Michael Pate, Gladys Moncrieff, Bebe Scott, Jenny Howard, and Colin Croft of the 1st Australian Entertainment Unit.

There were even concerts on board warships, such as HMAS *Australia*, which was at the time in Milne Bay.

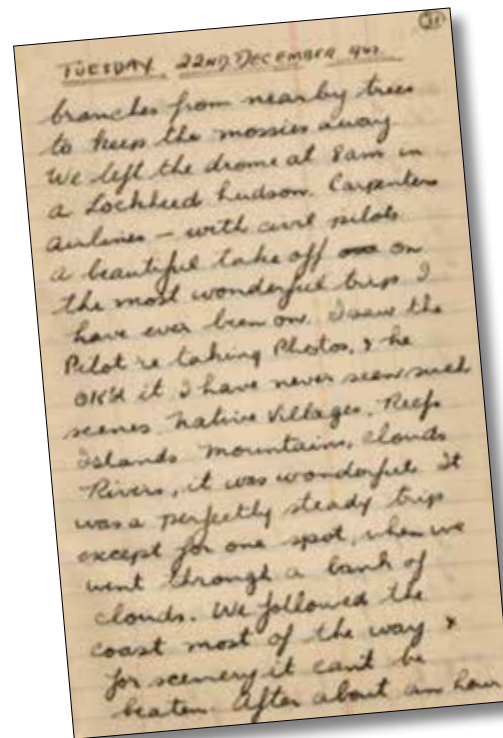


'Milne Bay Concert Party, 1942', carbon pencil, crayon and watercolour drawing by Roy Hodgkinson

Australian celebrity George Wallace, posted to the 2nd Division Concert Party, toured New Guinea as producer and comedian. He was commissioned as lieutenant in January 1946 and prided himself on being the only officer in the army whom no one saluted and everyone called George.

The concerts attracted huge audiences from battle-weary troops who were missing family and friends back home. A concert unit including Frederick Jagel, Robert Weede, Polyna Stoska, Isaac Stern and Alex Zakin landed in amphibious ducks to perform for 10,000 GIs in New Guinea. ♦

Edited extract from *PNG Attitude*, 30 November 2014



Out of the Box ... Sergeant Herbert Collection

MARG POWELL
Specialist Library Technician
John Oxley Library

A diary, a phrase book, and a box of negatives—with no provenance, needed dusting off—to see if we could reveal the story of 'Sergeant Herbert', and we really didn't know that was his name—it was a guess made from the name pencilled on the front cover of the phrase book. Now digitised and transcribed—here is the reveal ...

The diary begins on 16 December 1942 with the author reporting to the Townsville Flying Boat Base to get a ride to Port Moresby; five hours later he was picked up at the wharf by a car that had been cobbled together from several vehicles, no doors or bonnet, and was dropped at the sergeants' mess for a meal.

At this time Port Moresby was full of allied soldiers, engaged in its defence from Japanese forces—most recently from an overland advance from the north coast, via the Kokoda Trail and Owen Stanley Range, intended to isolate Australia from the United States.

Notes from the Diary

He sought out Padre Percy Sands, the RAAF Chaplain who ran the Recreation Hut, which provided activities for off-duty servicemen, and the next day set up a projector, checking it several times during the afternoon.

The following day when the Mobile Cinema arrived, he erected the 'plant' and met the operator, Frank Hall, from Newcastle; he was also introduced to Les Bell (b. 1905/d. 2000) a radar operator, who lived in New Guinea prior to the war and was a cousin to a friend in Edmonton, near Townsville, Val Plate.

In between commitments 'Herbert' was keen to explore—he met up with Flight Sergeant Harry Drake and spent the day hitching rides on jeeps and army trucks—travelling high in the mountains, stopping at a hospital unit at Koitaki and continuing to Rouna Falls, bordering the Sogeri Road.

He had borrowed a webbing bag from Drake to carry his 16 mm camera and film and took many photographs—although the falls are not represented in the small box of negatives in this collection. Their day was long—hitching rides home was less successful, having to walk a number of miles, and shelter from torrential rain, eventually arriving back in town too late for dinner.

Having instructed the padre in how to operate the film projector, he made arrangements to visit Milne Bay—this time aboard a Lockheed Hudson aircraft, and with permission from the pilot took photographs of the scenery along the way—villages, reefs, islands, and



Mobile Cinema Unit No. 111 of the Australian Army Amenities Service, Acc 067215 (above); page from Gibson's diary (left)

cloud formations, until they reached the forward position on the far eastern end of the Papuan peninsula.

Here he set-to repairing a projector at 100 Squadron (RAAF) camp, staying with the 'photo section' and enjoying their unique kerosene-tin shower. 'Herbert' then spent Christmas and Boxing Day 1942 exploring villages and battle sites in the area with his camera.

'Herbert' waited more than a week for transport back to Port Moresby. His diary details his 'adventures'—being led astray by crafty villagers and bargaining for souvenirs; it also documents his visit to a mass Japanese grave site, and a side trip flying up the coast to deliver parts for a damaged aircraft before he finally returned to Port Moresby.

There was an obvious association between 'Sergeant Herbert' and the Mobile Cinema units. The answer lay in the collections of another man, also held at State Library, Gordon George Gibson (1913–54) who was born in Charters Towers and later lived in Edmonton, North Queensland where he worked as a cinema projectionist at the Regent Theatre, from 1939 to 1941.

Gibson then served in the Royal Australian Air Force from 1942 to 1946, as a cinematographer and technician, who maintained cinema equipment in the North East Area which included Horn Island, Port Moresby and Milne Bay. There are four collections relating to Gibson held by State Library; one in particular, OM87–26, includes a biography written in the same hand as 'Herbert's' diary—in which Gibson recorded spending Christmas 1942 at Milne Bay.

The diary and negatives, which have been digitised from 'Sergeant Herbert's' collection (now Gordon Gibson Diary and Photographs) will soon be available online, and images which were obviously taken during his trip in 1942 are held in Accessions: 5955, Gordon Gibson Photographs and 27011 Gordon Gibson Photograph albums, specifically Album No. 1, and can be viewed by appointment at the John Oxley Library Reading Room.

Many thanks to staff member, Hannah Nguyen, for transcribing 'Sergeant Herbert's' diary and so revealing his true identity, and which now also informs the images in his other collections. ♦

© John Oxley Library State Library of Queensland



All photos Milne Bay, 1942, M1151—Gordon Gibson Diary and Photographs

Marston Matting

Marston (Marsden) matting or more correctly perforated steel planking (PSP) was a rugged heavy and reliable system that made it possible to turn beaches, muddy plains and the most unlikely places into serviceable airstrips for military aircraft—it helped win the war.

PSP was invented by GG Gruelich, a steel expert with no experience of aviation. It consisted of sheets of corrosion resistant steel 2 m long and .38 m wide. One of the long edges had a series of hooks and the other a series of slots into which these hooks fitted. A feature of the sheets were the eighty-seven holes punched out of them to reduce weight. Each sheet had three rows of twenty-nine holes and weighed 30 kg.

The name Marston matting comes from the town in North Carolina in which they were first produced. This name was often mispronounced Marsden. Developed through the 1930s PSP were proven effective by the US Air Force by 1942 and later became a feature of the many airstrips built in Papua New Guinea and elsewhere in the Pacific region during the Second World War.

After the war strips made of Marston matting continued in use for many years. It found other uses too, roads and bridges were made of them and, bent lengthwise into a shape triangular in cross section, they made excellent fence posts—more durable than timber ones. Cattle yards made with PSP posts and rails in the 1950s and 60s probably still exist in parts of PNG. ♦

FEATURED: In 1942, RAAF pilots from 75 & 76 Squadron at Milne Bay airfield, which was laid with Marston matting, and No. 1 (Gurney) airstrip at Milne Bay. The airfield was named in commemoration of Squadron Leader CR Gurney who died in an aircraft crash in 1942 (main) (Courtesy AWM)



Native Troops in World War II

JAMES BURROWES OAM



One issue that receives less attention than it deserves concerns the role of the native troops throughout the islands north of Australia who played a crucial role in the defence of their own countries and Australia as well. These native troops included men from Papua, Bougainville, Buka and the Solomon Islands (where they were known as Scouts), Java and Timor.

Whilst this article is dedicated to the local men of New Guinea who were recruited and trained to serve with the Coastwatchers, there were two other bands of nationals who contributed so much to the Allied war effort in the South Pacific and thus deserve appropriate and well-earned recognition.

First, the **Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels** (with no military status) comprised the untrained volunteers, and indeed sometimes conscripted natives, who assisted and carried injured Australian soldiers down the Kokoda Trail, and retrieved all supplies and ammunition dropped by parachute from the C47 Dakotas. They have been deservedly highly publicised and recognised as heroes, by all channels, including governments, the Australian military forces and the media.

Second, a **Papuan Infantry Battalion (PIB)** had been formed with 500 nationals (led by 77 Europeans) in early 1940, being recruited and fully trained with weaponry to engage the enemy. When the Pacific War in 1942 eventuated, they became the

unsung heroes who carried out sterling support of the young and undermanned troops of the Kokoda Trail Campaign. This was then followed by further missions at Buna, Gona, Sanananda and Salamaua, then further north to the Ramu Valley and Finschhafen, moving forward to push the retreating Japanese towards Saidor.

However, the natives who served with the **Coastwatchers** were also little known, except for any readers of the book *The Coast Watchers* written by their founder and Commander, Eric Feldt.

Moreover, it should also be noted, despite the countless number of natives who served in each of the above categories, there has been an almost total indifference to those natives who were killed, of which there were many! Despite considerable searching, I have been unable to ascertain the number killed while serving in their various capacities, and can only pay homage, richly deserved, to those indigenous heroes, who served and died while performing their duty in defence of their homeland and ours.



Sgt Yauwika receiving the Loyal Services Medallion (top); The author with names of fallen comrades from Australia and the Pacific on the memorial at Tidal River, Australia (below); Coastwatchers Memorial Lighthouse, Madang (previous page)

Because of my own service in Papua New Guinea I worked with those men and I would like to relate some of their contribution here, from a coastwatching perspective.

Our trained Papua New Guinean allies performed a range of essential tasks. They carried our radio equipment and all our other gear, climbed coconut trees to erect radio aerials, built our thatched accommodation and retrieved our food and other supplies dropped in parachuted 'storepedos' by Liberator bombers or Catalina flying boats. They also performed several functions in relation to our daily living such as cooking, washing, digging holes for the latrines and the security duty of maintaining

escape routes. Importantly, as recorded in Feldt's book, using their local knowledge and language skills to elicit information, they guided and warned us when on patrol.

In his recent article 'Remembering the "wasman" of Papua New Guinea', Paul Slater* reported that in 1943 the Allied Intelligence Bureau (AIB) brought 76 native men from Port Moresby to train at a camp in Queensland. This occurred because it was recognised that insertion of Coastwatchers into the islands to observe and report on Japanese positions and movements would not work without local assistance.

And so the young men from the islands trained with the Australians at Tabragalba. They were armed with US M1 Carbines, better for jungle fighting than the Army's bolt-action Lee-Enfield.

On 21 June 1943:

They embarked on an Australian hospital ship bound for Townsville. From there, they travelled by rail and road to the secret camp at Tabragalba, not far from Canungra in the Gold Coast hinterland. Here they trained as Coastwatchers. More young men arrived later.

But, as I can testify from personal experience because I was there: they were not too happy! 'Em long kol planti' ... 'It was bloody cold!'

Anyway, as Slater goes on:

The Papua New Guinean Coastwatchers were the eyes and ears of the Australians in a place where white men stood out. The formula worked well, and the intelligence provided by the Coastwatchers would prove critical to the Allied effort.

The locals also possessed some basic medical skills! On one occasion, I had developed a nasty boil on the back of my neck. One of them straddled it with two lines of cotton (where he got the cotton from, I don't know!) and then twisted them with his fingers to grip the edge of the boil. He then pulled the cotton and out popped the boil!

As we literally lived with these troops in the field, we soon learned to communicate with them using *Pidgin English*. It is a simple descriptive language. For example, the Lord's Prayer words 'Our Father who art in heaven' becomes 'Papa bilong mipela i stop long heven'.

The four essential components of a coastwatcher's party were the expatriate leader, the radio operator, a former member of the 1st Independent Company

and the Papua New Guineans, so without our indigenous allies, there would have been *no* Coastwatchers!

Our fully-trained Papua New Guineans were committed, like the other members of our parties, to be non-combatant. We were all under the strict mandate of the Coastwatchers to *not* confront the enemy, but to hide from, observe and report enemy movements.

Those local men I can name include people known to us as Yali, Mas, Buka and Mariba —although I can name many others such as Golpak, his son Kaole, Yauwika, Rayman, Ishmael, Makelli and Oras. Some, including Sgt-Major Simogun, are famous and were duly honoured with the British Empire Medal and/or Loyal Services Medallion for their fighting service.

Eric Feldt's tribute to two Papua New Guineans following their particularly heroic effort after the Hollandia fiasco reflected his own high regard for our indigenous comrades generally, as expressed in his book, *The Coast Watchers* (p. 373):

Throughout the world, there has been divided opinion among the learned and wise on racial virtues. There are those who contend that the pure-bred is superior and that the mixed breed inherits the worst traits of both parents. There are others who hold that the complete mixture of races, once stabilized, is the best; others that the half-breed and all other men are creatures of their environment and training.

Coast Watchers wouldn't know about such erudite matters. They only know that the half-caste Julius McNicol and the full-bred native Yali can have a place in any party where danger is to be faced and courage and resource are the qualifications.

Julius McNicol was later awarded the British Distinguished Service Medal for his services with the Coastwatchers, before and at Hollandia.

It is fitting that the names of the local soldiers killed in the islands north of Australia appear side-by-side with their fallen Australian comrades on memorials throughout Australia and the Pacific. The names of killed Papua New Guineans and Timorese Coastwatchers, for example, appear on the memorial at Tidal River, in Victoria, Australia.

Because many of these men were fully-trained AIB troops armed with Lee Enfield rifles, towards the end they were used as guerrilla fighters and were provided with more lethal weapons to ambush and kill Japanese troops. In this manner, over 200 Japanese troops were attacked and killed by the coastwatching party on the north coast of New Britain.

In return for their expert and indispensable efforts in support of the Allied cause, our Papua New Guinean troops received a weekly issue of twist tobacco. ♦

Editor's Note: Along with those mentioned here, there were many groups and servicemen involved in the New Guinea Campaign, including the militia unit, New Guinea Volunteer Rifles (NGVR), the New Guinea Infantry Battalion (NGIB) and the Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit (ANGAU), amongst others.

*Paul Slater's article may be seen at: <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/remembering-png-wasman-second-world-war>
Readers may access other stories by Jim Burrowes on his website: <https://thelastcoastwatcher.wordpress.com>



Sgt-Maj. Simogun BEM LSM (top); Native Coastwatcher, Rayman (middle); Kaole, son of Golpak (bottom); © Photos from Eric Feldt's book, *The Coast Watcher*

Lark Force Track

GREGORY BABLIS

The Lark Force Track is a little-known wartime walking trail with a big history. Located in East New Britain Province, it runs from the Warongoi River in the north to Tol, Wide Bay, along the south coast. The track is named after the 2/22nd Lark Force Battalion, an Australian force sent to guard Rabaul and its important harbour.



This story was originally published in *Ples Singing* and later posted in *Past Times: World War II & Kokoda, Research, Travel, Tourism & Transport/Permalink*.

But when the Imperial Japanese Army descended in January 1942, the small garrison was outnumbered and quickly overwhelmed. The Australian soldiers were forced to escape across the Gazelle Peninsula in fragmented groups. One group of about 200 soldiers decided to retreat from the Warongoi River and through the northern Mali Baining villages of Arabam, Rigel, Vaingait and Lamingi. They crossed the rugged Baining Ranges, skirting Mt Bururimea, the highest peak in the province, and trekked to the Balus River, about four kilometres north of Tol Plantation.

On 4 February 1942, pursuing Japanese soldiers captured 158 Lark Force Battalion soldiers and some civilians between Tol and Masarau where they were massacred. The route taken by the Lark Force soldiers is a traditional bush track used by the Bainings moving between villages in the north and south. The German Catholic priest, Fr Alphonse Mayerhoffer, who was stationed at Lamingi pre-war, was providing support for Australian soldiers and it was he who pointed them to the track.

But the Lark Force Track hides yet another secret that local oral history only now has, only now, revealed. Sometime between 1942 and 1945, Japanese soldiers also massacred Baining villagers at Vaingait. The villagers were marched to the site and ordered to dig a tunnel into the side of a hill. They were then told to hide in the tunnel for their own safety from the Allied Forces bombing raids. A machine gun was placed at the mouth of the tunnel and used to slaughter the villagers. A conservative estimate of the number of the villagers killed is 200 but it is suggested that as many as 1,000 died.

Today, locals of Tol, Masarau, Marunga and the Mali Baining villages from Karong to Rigel have come together to acknowledge the history of the wartime track book-ended by two brutal massacres—one of Australian soldiers at Tol and one of Baining villagers.

Locals recognise the potential for this track to generate something of economic value through the tourism and trekking industries.

With the support of the National Museum & Art Gallery and the leadership of the indigenous Baining authority, Qaqet Stewardship Council, chaired by Nicholas R Leo, locals have come together to begin revealing the secrets and stories of the events of World War II from a local perspective. They plan to make the Lark Force Track a viable tourist track, firstly by mapping the route taken by the Australian soldiers massacred in Tol.

A 34-person team from the Mengen, Sulka and Baining tribes recently completed a seven-day mapping expedition of the Track which runs a total of 61.4 kilometres from Arabam in the north to Tol in the south. Baining landowners have also established an entity called RAIMA, which is envisaged to be the managing authority over the Lark Force Track. The major sponsor for the important \$15,000 project mapping exercise was Angela Pennefather of Melanesian Luxury Yachts and financial assistance was also received from other private sponsors including the Qaqet Stewardship Council. ♦

Madang Yacht Club

RON AUSTIN

In 1964 I arrived in the Territory of Papua New Guinea to fly for Trans Australia Airlines (TAA). As I was dual endorsed for flying DC3s and Bristol Freighters and would be of maximum use in Madang, in May 1964 my family and I were transferred from Lae to Madang on permanent posting. We were lucky to be placed in a newly-completed house on the harbour's edge.

Shortly after our arrival, I noted two yachts occasionally sailing on the harbour. Having sailed for four years at Beaumaris in Australia, the attraction of being out on Madang's extensive harbour beckoned. How could I get a yacht to use? One of the yachtsmen was the local accountant, Paul O'Hare, and I approached him for advice. My initial proposal was to buy a kit boat, but this wasn't necessary as Paul told me there was a yacht in Madang available for immediate purchase.

Located on the edge of an inlet was the Mandated Airlines hostel, where Paul showed me a 16-foot Hornet yacht just pulled up near the water's edge. The rigging seemed complete, the mast and sails were lying on the deck and the entire boat was full of rainwater.

As an amateur boat builder, I was horrified. Fresh water can rot the plywood lining of boats, but I could see it had potential to be dried out and repaired, so I bought the boat and shifted it to the space under our house. The house was built on steel pipes and was elevated about four metres high, so there was plenty of space for my car and the yacht; the first priority was to dry it out.

After some difficult boat building problems, we finally launched the red and white painted boat, with a new name 'Little Audrey'. When Audrey, my wife, was born there was a cartoon character illustrated in newspapers called 'Little Audrey', so the boat name was our joke.

Now full of new enthusiasm I contacted the other two yacht owners, Paul O'Hare and Rom

Hemsley, and suggested we organise some sailing races on Sundays. After several social races, we became more serious in competition. I bought three red plastic buckets, filled them with white plastic packing material, attached a line to the handle and anchored them, in strategic spots around the harbour to form a triangular sailing course.

Our yachts, sailing in competition, sparked interest from other residents. Not only Europeans, but also the younger native youths who decked some canoes with a mast and triangular sail. Soon we were approached by other folk with questions about the availability of other boats.

We three discussed the possibility of forming an official Madang Yacht Club, and it was suggested that the meeting be held at the Madang Club.

The first meeting was attended by a very small group, but we did achieve our club formation plan. The Harbour Master, Bill Gibson, was nominated as Commodore, and we decided to claim the equipment left by a previous water-skiing club. The only useful asset we gained here was a floating timber ski jump which, if lowered down flat and supported with empty fuel drums, could be used as a pontoon.

To assist the club, I offered members the use of space below our house to store their boats and I advised them I intended building a launching ramp alongside our house. This ramp project alone took some organising, as the ground level was about two metres above the water level. One Saturday afternoon I hired some TAA employees, who usually loaded our planes at the airport. They dug a sloping ramp about



Yachts on Madang Harbour



TOP: New club location

BELOW: Madang Yacht Club post-race festivities

five-metres long down to the water. For the ramp we bought timber from a sawmill in Goroka and I carried the planks to Madang as backload on an empty DC3. We constructed a suitable wooden grid over the ramp. This lasted only a short time, as the tropical teredo worm burrowed into the wood and caused it to collapse. This pushed the members into a working bee to seal the ramp with smooth concrete. One disadvantage of the concrete was the growth of algae, which made it slippery but now, using two rubber rollers, it was easy to launch our yachts.

My next surprise came the following week. The Harbour Master's boat pulled in alongside the ramp and his crew erected a steel frame designed as a

signal mast complete with flag lanyards. This was set up directly in front of the house close to the water.

Our Commodore, Bill, proved to be our club's greatest asset. As he was a friend of all the regular cargo boat captains, he arranged boat transport, as deck cargo back to Madang, for any yachts we purchased in Lae or Port Moresby.

When anchored in the harbour they were simply lifted off the high boat deck, complete with the trailer by the ship's crane, and were placed in the water beside the ship. From here I could tow the boat and trailer ashore using the 4 hp Johnson outboard motor attached to the back of my yacht.

With experience our club progressed. While we boys jostled to win, our wives and partners occupied the balcony of the house to view the activity on the harbour. Fresh roasted coffee beans came, as a continuous gift, from the manager of a coffee plantation who regularly flew with me in the Bristol, on his charter deliveries. At race end, local beers disappeared to expand the discussion. To maintain this supply of beer one of the members would appear mid-week with cases donated by various members. Another gift which we received, in appreciation for the use of our house, was a Noritake dinner set, it was placed in our lounge, on Christmas Day, while we were at church.

On our sailing Sundays, pilots and engineers who found themselves in Madang with free time on their hands, were invited to join in the activity—we taught many beginners to sail a yacht and, after returning to Australia, some pilots purchased their own craft. Some of the yachts they bought were much larger than our dinghies.

A practical way to increase the racing fleet was to build our own yachts. The first was a 14-foot GP class boat, which could be loaned for the day, and a New Zealand designed P type trainer was made, for our girls, by a Dutch carpenter and joiner. Brian and Helen Thirkell produced a Heron and if we needed sails they were ordered from Melbourne.

Our yachts were not kept only for racing. The harbour is dotted with uninhabited small islands. A favourite picnic island of the Europeans was Pig Island, one of the outer islands just far enough away from Madang to forget you were living in this different primitive land. At every opportunity, when the children were free of school and I had a day off,

we would pack the 'esky' with juice and food for a picnic on the beach on this island,

In the past we foreigners had abused the beauty of Pig Island. The clear water just off the beach is littered with broken beer bottles. The children always wore sandals in the water to protect them from the deadly stone fish with the poisonous spines. This also gave their feet protection from the broken beer bottles. In our two years of sailing the harbour on the water, we did not detect any dangerous sharks, crocodiles or other risks.

Apart from these minor dangers our trips out there were precious. In the morning we used the outboard motor to drive the boat, as the wind was calm. To return in the afternoon we sailed back on the strong sea breeze, usually flying the spinnaker. We enjoyed these times on the island with our families. As the charter flying continued every day, even Sundays, on occasion, a Bristol Freighter would come low over us and a roll of toilet paper was thrown, streaming, out of the front window in our direction. I suspect the pilot, with the sense of humour was John Guggenheimer, a member of our club.

Now having a respectable fleet of yachts, on New Year's Day 1965 we invited the Madang District Commissioner to officially receive the sail past and present our trophies. With his acceptance, our club came of age. Thirteen yachts sailed in line for the occasion. Our eight-year-old daughter Alison brought up the rear of the line of yachts sailing our small P type trainer.

This wasn't an aviation club; I was the only resident pilot involved, and the members' skills included medicine, boat engineering, retail and one was a Dutch coffee plantation manager. All had stories to tell at our dance parties and other social interchange activities. The floating pontoon, anchored just off our ramp, became a dance floor for our parties.

Eventually, time caught up with us. I was notified of my 'go finish' date. The replacement pilot, planned for Madang, requested we remove the boats and so we needed a continuity plan. A lease was obtained for a small waterside block; this was close to the Harbour Master's base. I suspect Bill Gibson had a hand in this. A local builder completed a row of carport-like garages for the boats, and



TOP: Yacht Club members and visitors, ready for Sunday sailing

CENTRE: Race day at Madang Yacht Club

BOTTOM: Ron and crew in the Hornet 'Little Audrey'

a clubroom; and this became the Madang Yacht Club. The following Easter, 1967, Audrey and I were invited back to Madang, as the official guests, for the opening of this new clubhouse. It had been built after Audrey and I returned to Australia.

We did attend this opening and returned to Melbourne with a feeling of satisfaction that all our early efforts had been rewarded. ♦

Imagine being able to pay your parking fine with a string of shells. In Papua New Guinea's East New Britain Province, you can do precisely that!

The Kina Meets the *Tabu*: Ancient *Kastom* and a Safe Passage to the Afterlife

KALOLAINE KALU

The pearl oyster, the cowrie and the giant clam are common shells of adornment amongst the many tribal groups of PNG, and in New Ireland the misi shell is still traditional barter, however, it is only in neighbouring East New Britain (ENB) where the tiny snail shell known locally as *palakanoara* is legal tender.

Shell money, or *tabu*, has been used by the Tolai people for hundreds of years. The German Imperial Government tried to eliminate it in the late 19th century by granting locals access to the German New Guinea mark and pfennig through authorised bank accounts, but this proved unsuccessful. *Tabu* has since survived Japanese occupation and the arrival of Australian sterling and decimal currency.

In 2001, as the value of the kina dropped, the ENB provincial government officially accepted *tabu* as payment for a range of taxes and invested local courts with the power to award restitution and settlement of disputes in *tabu*. The outbreak of COVID-19 further increased pressure on a nation already facing major economic challenges and political uncertainty, and the *Niupela Pasin*—the new normal—saw a return to old ways in ENB.

Aunty Minia Tolik from Kerevat district says that during the lockdown period:

We couldn't travel to town to sell our produce at the markets or buy things from the shop, so we started to use our tabu more.

Vanessa Mulas, a resident of Kuradui village, says those who were able to circumvent the cancellation of public buses brought back store goods and exchanged them with neighbours for *tabu*.

The re-mobilisation of customary wealth has added value to the purchasing power of *tabu*, reinforcing age-old customs and instigating the establishment of shell money banks in the major centres of Rabaul and Kokopo. There is about K8 million worth of *tabu* currently available amongst the Tolais, with only a quarter of that estimated to be in circulation. These days, *tabu* can be used in local markets, trading stores and churches, and when exchanged into kina, to pay for school and hospital fees.

Tabu is valued in three ways: by the length of the fathom of shells, the number of shells in the length, and the quality of shells being presented. Its economic value is underpinned by the painstaking

labour involved in its production, its cultural value is reinforced each time it is distributed in ceremony and its spiritual value arises from the mighty ocean. Like a long genomic trail, it carries into the future the inherent energy of wisdom passed down through the ages.

This little snail shell is much more than simply a bartering medium. It has traditionally been an intrinsic part of mourning ceremonies, bride price, initiations and other significant customary practices. It is indispensable during sacred rites, particularly so during *Kinavai*, a ritual which pays tribute to the origins of shell money and the oceanic lineage of the clan. Its exchange forges bonds, resolves disputes and honours ancestors. It is not just a symbol of prestige but the representation of a profound spiritual belief and its use signifies deep respect within Tolai society. It also plays a crucial role in inter-clan networking and the reinforcement of traditional governance.

In the late 19th century, my great-great-grandmother, Phebe Parkinson, sailed from Samoa with her Danish husband to settle in the largely un-charted Gazelle Peninsula. She learned the local customs and languages, planted the very first coconut plantations, settled disputes, took orphans



The gravesite of Alf and Marylou (top); Preparing the *aripe* (bottom); Family and friends in procession up the hill to the *matmat* (opposite page)



The author, Kalo, at *matmat* with family from Kuradui under her wing and helped her sister Emma establish a vast trading empire in the Bismarck Archipelago. She is now buried on the land where she once lived, in the Parkinson family *matmat* (cemetery) at Kuradui, near Kokopo. Adjacent to the *matmat* is the Phebe Parkinson Study Centre for disadvantaged children run by Sila Watanagi, who also looks after the well-being of my ancestral spirits.

I first met Sila when I volunteered at the school for a few months in 2013 and she had taken me to my first *tabu*-breaking ceremony during that time. In 2019 I returned to Kuradui, not as a volunteer or a spectator, but as an integral part of a special mourning ceremony (*minamai*) for my Uechtritz grandparents, who had finally been brought back from Australia to be buried in the family *matmat*. I had put my hand up to be the on-the-ground representative for our family, working closely with the local communities and liaising with my family members back in Australia.

It had been a year in the planning—a long deep dive into history, cultural complexities, logistics, documenting, negotiations and re-negotiations, co-ordination, permissions. A year to grow pigs from baby to beast, to hold those numbers through death, disappearance and misfortune. A year of listening to stories from before and voices from long ago whispering in the wind; and everywhere signs; and every day the unexpected. I am no longer the

girl who packed up her Eastern Suburbs bayside apartment in Sydney. I have found my place. The long process of bringing my grandparents' home to rest has become the most defining time of my life.

Part of my responsibilities has been to commission enough *tabu* for use and distribution over two days of ceremony. It must honour both the cultural aspects of inter-clan networking and the spiritual needs of the deceased. An agreement was reached that ten *aripe* (approx. 10 m) per sibling was required. My mother is one of ten, therefore 100 *aripe*.

Integrally intertwined with the latent power of the *tabu* and the culture of the Tolai are the mysterious and powerful *tubuan*. Every clan is represented through its own *tubuan* and I had to find and identify our own. If there are no *tabu*, the *tubuan* don't emerge from the spiritual world to ensure safe passage into the afterlife. Without it, our loved ones are doomed to wander forever, unrecognised, on this earthly plane.

Over 100 family members and friends have flown into this remote province from the four corners of the world, booking out almost the entire accommodation reserves of the Kokopo beach bungalows and beyond. The local Tolai clans have taken ownership of the ceremonies. As is right and proper.

The day of the *minamai* is a perfect September day. At the bottom of the Kuradui driveway, we meet Timmy Nandre, now an old man but once a little boy with the big responsibility of minding my aunts and uncles as children. I had crossed flood-swollen, crocodile-infested rivers to find him. He is family. He holds the container with my grandparents' ashes tight to his chest as he and his wife Maria head the procession up the hill. As we climb, we sing.

My grandparents are first blessed in the Catholic tradition. Family and friends pay tribute. My youngest uncle identifies himself as the last born of ten. He speaks in *Pidgin*, reminding us that my grandfather was born on the open sea in a small canoe and my grandmother always had a strong aversion to being 'contained'. He asks for us to pause before we cover their ashes, to let their spirits breathe again in this place where they met and fell in love, not just with each other, but with the land and its people.

Not to be outdone, Timmy jumps up and steals the show by reminding everyone that he is the oldest brother and that makes eleven. His animated story-telling of days gone by leave all of us laughing out loud. There are tears as well, but mostly it is a time of quiet reflection. The drums sound and the chewing of betel nut begins. Trailing a field of frangipani in our wake, we bid farewell to the corporeal and move toward the stepping stones that lead to the hereafter.

One of the many local Tolai clans, the Tolom, are going to officially adopt every member of our immediate family into their clan. This reflects the abiding respect accorded my great-great-grandmother. An uncle, a cousin, a little grand-nephew and myself exchange baskets of *tabu* (three *aripe* of *tabu*) with representatives of the clan. To this day, I am still absorbing the significance of this ritual. I now belong to the Tolai, who will forever be the guardians of my grandparents' spirits. I am honoured and profoundly moved.

And now, 18 of my male bloodline relatives of a certain age are about to undergo the first level of initiation into the Tolom clan's secret men's society; this will take place away from the ceremonial grounds, under the same tree where my great-great-grandfather was also initiated. This initiation (*niolo*) is strictly guarded and cannot be discussed with anyone. Betel nut and a minimum of one *pokono* (arm's length) of *tabu* per person initiated is offered.

The rest of us will never know what happened while they were gone, but the 18 left as though going on an adventure, with puffed up chests and western egos. When they return wearing only red lap-laps and the markings of ritual, they come as a unit, bearing pride and humility and a connection that I have never seen in them before.

Preceding them come the *tubuan*, only two feet visible from beneath spherical layers of red and green leaves and a mask with large staring eyes and a pointed head. Children fall silent and stay close to their mothers, and the magic of centuries crackles in the air. In the past, such ceremonies would be closed to strangers on pain of death. We are all mesmerised. This is not a show for tourists and foreigners. We belong now.

The following day, we all return for a ceremony called a *git-git-vudu* to remember our ancestors



Uechtritz and Diercke women at the *sing-sing* (top); Uechtritz men prepare for initiation (centre); Returning from initiation led by *tubuan* (bottom)

together. We break open the large coils of *tabu* and distribute them amongst the community along with the precious pork from the troublesome pigs and hundreds of bananas. And now, finally, it is time to dance. The *sing-sings* begin. Our new Tolom clan, the Kuradui community and the spirits of our ancestors dance and sing of things I am only just beginning to understand. The Kuradui female group pull myself and my mother into their ranks, covering us with *kumbung*, a mixture of lime powder and betel nut.

We are home! ♦

Editor's Note: This story was originally published in *PNG Air Magazine* whose editor has kindly agreed to its re-publication in *PNG KUNDU*.

Tim & Judy Terrell

A KIAP AND A SECRETARY—AN ENDURING LOVE

HOLLY NORTHAM

We are proud to share a little about the lives of our adored parents, Tim and Judy Terrell—and to frame their legacy that is so deeply connected to Papua New Guinea. Tim shared his story of Judy with you in 2019. To our despair, Tim slipped away quietly nine months later to join her on the 10 March 2020, just as the pandemic 'became real'. We were fortunate to send him off with love and dignity just ahead of lockdowns.

Judy & Tim in 1957

Like so many of their generation, they were adventurous, curious, and courageous in taking on the unknown and forging new futures. They were exceptional—like their story.

Tim was born in Darjeeling, India on the 30 October 1929 on a tea plantation managed by his parents Alex and Joyce. Early in his life their home was destroyed by earthquake and then rebuilt. Tim was one of four, Mike and Jill were younger. Tim and his older brother Alan, who also spent time in TPNG as a pilot, spent their early years at boarding school in India. When he was nine the family returned to England for a visit, and it was then that Tim commenced as the youngest boarder at Ardingly College, Sussex, England accompanied by Alan.

The war created challenges and the boys were evacuated from England to Scotland and then on a troopship to India. Despite their guardian fracturing her leg at the start of the voyage and the engines failing, the then unescorted ship safely caught up with their convoy and travelled on to India to reconnect with their family. They subsequently travelled to England to complete schooling at the end of the war, returning to India in time to help pack up the family and migrate to Australia, arriving in March 1947.

After studying at Gatton Agricultural College, Tim helped his parents on their new dairy farm in the Numinbah Valley. The family found few attractions with dairy farming despite the beauty of the valley, and moved to Brisbane where his parents grew flowers for the Brisbane Markets and the now adult children explored new opportunities. Tim had loved reading about Papua New Guinea in books by Ivan Champion, Jack Hides, Ion Idriess and Frank Clune. When vacancies were advertised for cadet patrol officers (CPO) with the TPNG administration in early 1950 he applied and was selected. The following period of training at the Australian School of Pacific Administration (ASOPA) at Mosman in Sydney and, subsequently in Port Moresby, were memorable. Tim reflected that, of 30 CPOs who



started the course with him, over half of the group 'finished up in messy, bizarre or otherwise unusual circumstance'. Including resignations, only 15 of the 30 remained in service at the end of two years.

In 1950 Tim was sent to Wewak, then in early 1951, to the patrol post at Green River. He remembered the arrival was impressive with the GSA Norseman becoming bogged and landing on its nose—requiring a propellor replacement and 'panel beating'—no injuries.

The next posting in 1952 was to Lake Kutubu in the Southern Highlands District. Names Tim remembered from this period included David Wren, Bill Brand and Quentin Anthony—who we were so pleased to hear from in a kind message after Tim's death. (The patrol reports from that period were all sent to the Australian Archives in 2002.) Observations that were important included the seepage of oil in some parts of the district. Tim provided supervision for an airstrip constructed at that time at Moro, near Lae. Tim's next adventure was to Port Moresby in 1956 when he met Judy.

Judy was a proud and very beautiful West Australian. She followed the opportunities open to women at that time and had moved from secretarial positions at the University of Western Australia and working with the American Consulate to, at the age of 22, having her imagination sparked by the advertisement to be a secretary in Port Moresby. Tim and Judy spoke about their romance and marriage at St Johns in Port Moresby followed by a honeymoon at Rouna Falls—a place they always loved—and their memories of 'Woodie', the proprietor of the Rouna Falls Hotel.

Following some study leave in Brisbane they were posted to Lumi. Judy and Tim frequently reminisced about their happy time there and related remarkable stories that are unimaginable to the current generation. Judy grew roses—that would be sent out to Wewak—and managed the radio. Judy was deeply committed to the people on the station and, as the only expatriate woman, she often told me how she felt protected by those around her—especially when Tim was out on patrol. During this period, Holly was born in Wewak in 1959 and, like many of the women who lived there, Judy found medical resources and help was very limited and was grateful for the prayers of the nuns.



Tim & Judy in later years

Their next posting was to Finschhafen in 1961 to build the Kiap Training Centre and take on the work Phil Fitzpatrick generously spoke about in <https://www.pngattitude.com/2020/03/trainer-of-kiaps-tim-terrell-dies-at-90.html>. Kim was born in Lae in 1962—again Judy and Tim needed to relocate for the birth. Their next movement was to Rabaul in 1964, followed by Port Moresby in 1965 where Tim worked in local government becoming the Town Manager and then Chief of Policy Secretariat, Department of Social Development and Home Affairs. They remained in Port Moresby until they made the difficult decision to leave PNG in December 1973.

Throughout this period, they both contributed to the community and to the work that was done to support empowering the people of Papua New Guinea. It is not possible in this article to talk about the work and relationships that grew and were supported by them. I do remember their hospitality and the remarkable people who would visit. I know many who read this will know much more than we do about their contribution. Judy and Tim's passion for gardens was obvious in Rabaul and Port Moresby and became a unifying aspect across their lives—culminating in Canberra.

But I digress—after leaving PNG they moved to Darwin where Tim was appointed the official Member of the Legislative Assembly tasked with running local government and services, until Cyclone Tracy destroyed their 'cyclone-proof' new home. Surviving the cyclone was a pivotal moment for the family—grateful to be alive and unharmed despite the loss of home, photos and memorabilia from PNG. Tim used his emergency training skills

to bring together our local community in the aftermath of the storm and initiated an evacuation plan, secured safe water and food and led around 500 homeless people over a period of about four days before ‘help’ arrived. There is no question Tim and Judy’s experiences and resiliency, honed in TPNG, helped through this period.

Moving to Canberra after the ‘clean up’, somehow Judy and Tim managed to rebuild our lives after we lost everything in Tracy. An early step was to buy a home in Farrer, the family home for the past 45 years, a place of beautiful gardens, flowing water and love. Another step was to join the St George’s congregation as Tim was a man of deep and thoughtful religious beliefs. Tim played a key role in getting this church built and helped out with church services over many years.

Canberra opened new opportunities for Tim to ‘do good’ as he forged a career as a senior public servant and a leader of Australia’s aid program, and for the next 20 years helped deliver aid to dozens of countries across Asia and the Pacific. As a colleague related in his eulogy, when compulsory age retirement fell, Tim was determined that was not to be the end of his contribution.

He led a team into Kosovo, as soon as the fighting had died down, to help create financial order and good governance. This is never a risk-free enterprise in the wake of war—for many people with money and guns, the last thing they want is transparency and good governance. He did the same again in the wake of the subsequent wars, Afghanistan and Iraq, in the Middle East. Tim worked hard and was proud of what he achieved over his career. We were incredibly proud of all the awards he received, but especially by receiving recognition in 1992 of Member of the Order of Australia (AM).

On his second retirement he devoted himself to the loves of his life—his family, garden and pitch and putt. This included becoming President in 2007 of the newly formed Pitch and Putt Association of Australia. He played pitch and putt regularly up until last year and loved his competitions and notched up more than his fair share of holes in one. And right up to his death he took on other passions. The fight to protect the viability and impact of Australia’s aid program, to challenge injustice, to support same-sex

marriage, and to protest government action against Witness K and his lawyer.

Tim’s whole approach to people was gentle and compassionate. But he was resolute on public policy issues where social justice was at risk. Tim had an extraordinary work ethic and sense of duty—he learnt forbearance, tenacity, and strength to overcome life’s vicissitudes. Values that resonate, consideration for others, respect, loyalty and duty, to the very end. He was a man of deep faith that sustained him in the final years.

Throughout this period Judy supported Tim in all his work and in loving their family. Tim and Judy were unyielding in their love and support for their family. Tim was not one for grand affirmations, being more comfortable with quiet words of praise. Though this did not diminish the ferocity of pride he held for each—burning strong from our earliest achievements as babies, right through into our accomplishments as adults. Judy shared with her family an unconditional love that never faltered—we were all perfect in her eyes. Judy taught us the importance of family, her loyalty to family was second to none. She would fight for her family, her husband, children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. We were all perfect in her eyes. Her love of living things, of animals and plants, sentient beings—except for spiders that she sprayed mercilessly using a scorched earth approach! She adored the multitude of pets that joined the family over the years.

Holly remembers her market trips in Port Moresby, buying baby *maganis* (wallabies) at Koki Market, that we carefully cosseted in pillowcases hung off the bedroom louveres and, with droplet feeding, hand reared the little creatures and released them to the wild when strong enough—and other animals, echidnas, birds, possums. Judy had huge empathy with nature.

Tim and Judy were always hospitable and generous, welcoming and loving—each gave strength to the other. Both always so proud of their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Like their love for their family, their love for PNG and the people of PNG—their respect for the country, the cultures and the potential of the peoples never diminished. ♦

Astrolabe Bay

DES PIKE

I was a kiap for ten years (1964–74) in what was then the Madang District of the Territory of Papua and New Guinea. District headquarters were at Madang on the northern arm of Astrolabe Bay, named after the vessel in which the French botanist and cartographer, Jules Dumont D’Urville, visited the area in 1827.

Astrolabe Bay has a comparatively long history of European settlement and its association with the German colonial era marks it out as an area of particular heritage importance. The area’s first European visitor was the Russian explorer and ethnographer, Nikolai Miklouho Maclay.

He landed here and spent two periods living alone among the local people, from September 1871 to December 1872, and from June 1876 to November 1877. He built a hut at Garagassi Point near Bongu village and, using this as a base, he visited many of the surrounding groups collecting biological and anthropological specimens, as well as exploring parts of the mountainous hinterland. By exhibiting restraint, tolerance and providing medical treatment for sick villagers, he won the confidence and co-operation of the local people.

On returning to Russia he attempted to have the Astrolabe Bay area claimed as Russian territory in 1874 but the Tsar rejected the proposal. He also unsuccessfully petitioned the Kaiser in 1884 for Germany to refrain from annexing the Rai Coast area. He made a brief final visit to what was by then being referred to as the Maclay Coast, on a Russian corvette in March 1883.

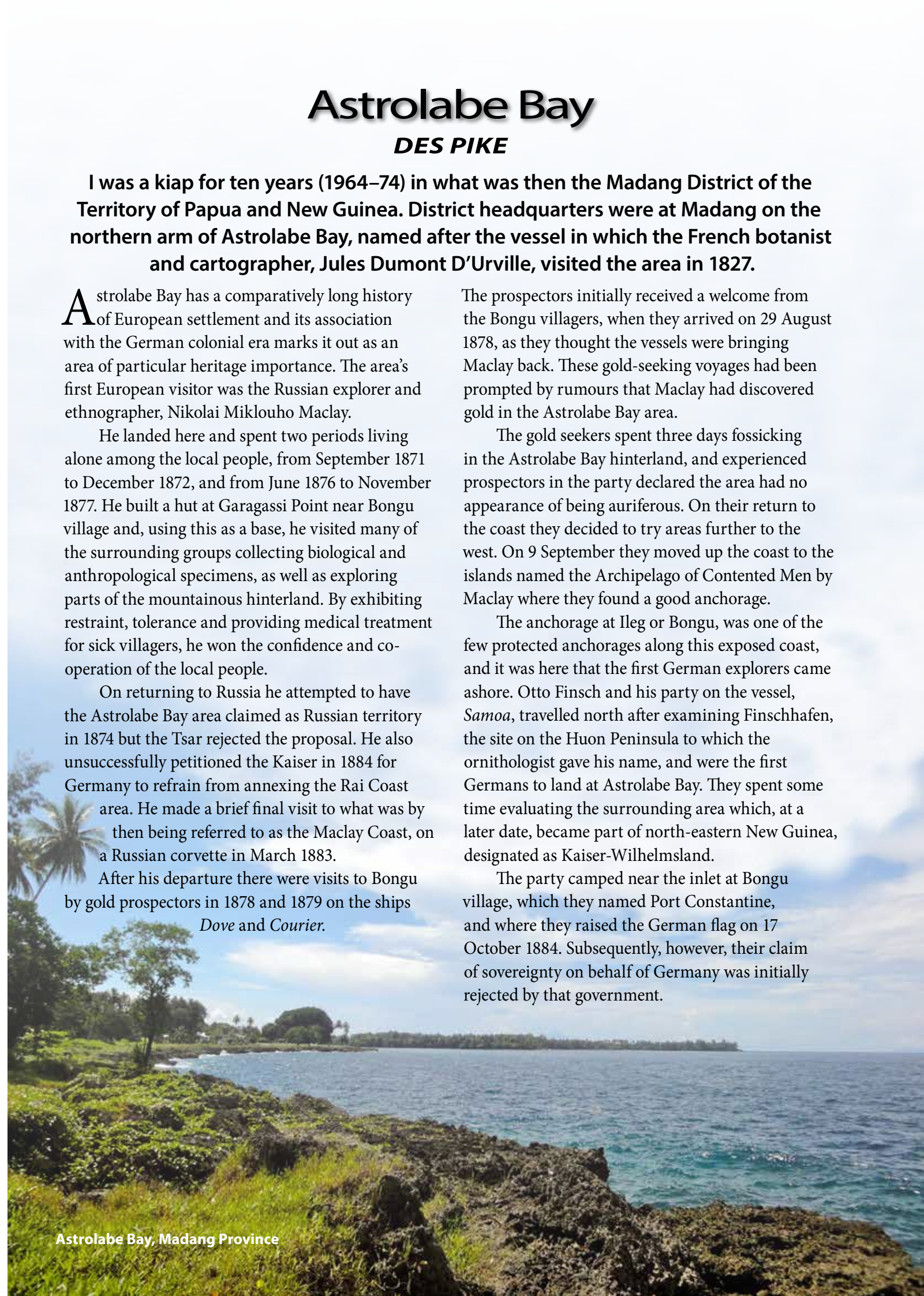
After his departure there were visits to Bongu by gold prospectors in 1878 and 1879 on the ships *Dove* and *Courier*.

The prospectors initially received a welcome from the Bongu villagers, when they arrived on 29 August 1878, as they thought the vessels were bringing Maclay back. These gold-seeking voyages had been prompted by rumours that Maclay had discovered gold in the Astrolabe Bay area.

The gold seekers spent three days fossicking in the Astrolabe Bay hinterland, and experienced prospectors in the party declared the area had no appearance of being auriferous. On their return to the coast they decided to try areas further to the west. On 9 September they moved up the coast to the islands named the Archipelago of Contented Men by Maclay where they found a good anchorage.

The anchorage at Ileg or Bongu, was one of the few protected anchorages along this exposed coast, and it was here that the first German explorers came ashore. Otto Finsch and his party on the vessel, *Samoa*, travelled north after examining Finschhafen, the site on the Huon Peninsula to which the ornithologist gave his name, and were the first Germans to land at Astrolabe Bay. They spent some time evaluating the surrounding area which, at a later date, became part of north-eastern New Guinea, designated as Kaiser-Wilhelmsland.

The party camped near the inlet at Bongu village, which they named Port Constantine, and where they raised the German flag on 17 October 1884. Subsequently, however, their claim of sovereignty on behalf of Germany was initially rejected by that government.





Ox-drawn rail carriages (top); Curt von Hagen 1859–97 (middle); Memorial stone for Curt von Hagen (bottom)

Members of this expedition also negotiated the purchase of 100 acres of land from the local villagers, paying with beads, tobacco and pieces of hoop iron.

The German Reich eventually took formal possession of the northern coast of New Guinea later in 1884. As a result of Finsch's favourable reports it was decided in 1885 that the initial German settlement on the mainland would be at Finschhafen. The German Government was reluctant to assume the financial burden that setting up colonies would involve, so they handed over responsibility for their overseas possessions to a series of chartered companies. Administrative responsibility for their colony in New Guinea was passed to Neu Guinea Kompagnie (NGK).

Finschhafen proved to be a poor location for a settlement and was abandoned by the company in 1891, after many of their officials and workers succumbed to malaria. Lutheran missionaries, however, remained and created an early headquarters for their activities along the Morobe coast.

By 1889, the NGK had become quite disenchanted by the problems they had encountered at Finschhafen and asked the German Government to reassume control of the colony, which they did for a trial period of three years.

The next site selected for the German Administrative centre was at Stephansort near Bogadjim. The NGK had, by this time, taken back control of the colonial enterprise and selected a location inland from Erima in Astrolabe Bay for their new station, and the move was under way by 1892.

The Germans originally intended to establish themselves near Bongu, but the villagers there, heeding Maclay's warnings, rejected all offers to part with land for a settlement so the colonists had to move further north to the Bogadjim area where the villagers were more welcoming. The Rheinisch Lutheran Mission also took up an area of land there for their own purposes at this time and, eventually, built an outstation at Bongu in 1909.

Road building into the interior from the new settlement was effectively blocked by the Finisterre Range, and made difficult along the coast by innumerable swiftly flowing rivers. Transport to other centres had to be by ship although movement of goods around the Bogadjim area was assisted by the construction of a network of railways. These

assisted in the collection of harvested tobacco leaf, which was one of the major crops to be grown there.

Rolling stock consisted of bogie wagons for the transport of produce and several bogie carriages for transporting management personnel. The German officials, their families and visitors rode around in these well-appointed, ox-drawn carriages which were in the charge of Malay drivers. For the German officials, the railway provided the ability to move slowly but comfortably around the settlement.

Labour for the plantations had to be imported as the local villagers shunned the settlers and would not work for them. In the six years after 1891, 1,000 Asian labourers were imported and employed on the four Bogadjim plantations. They brought with them diseases, including cholera, dysentery and influenza, which affected the settlers and local villagers and resulted in a very high mortality rate among the labourers themselves—allegedly up to 60% in one period on record.

The Germans commenced a series of exploratory expeditions from Stephansort and, after discovering the mouth of the Sepik, a voyage up this great river was made in 1887. Dr C Schrader was a member of this party and his work was commemorated by having the Schrader Ranges named after him.

Perhaps the best-known name associated with Stephansort is that of Curt von Hagen. He was an experienced administrator with a distinguished career in other German colonies. In 1893 von Hagen was appointed as the Director General of the NGK and also as the Acting Governor of German New Guinea and took up residence at Stephansort.

In 1897, two German explorers, von Ehlers and Piering were killed in the course of an ill-fated attempt to walk across New Guinea. Departing from Stephansort, they reached the headwaters of the Lakekamu in British New Guinea but by then their food was nearly exhausted and sickness was rife among the party. The majority of the expedition members wanted to raft down the river, but von Ehlers distrusted the water and wanted to continue by land. There was then a major disagreement. Two policemen, Rangia and Opia, from Buka Island near Bougainville, became enraged at this example of incompetent leadership, which threatened the lives

of everyone in the expedition. They decided to act to save their lives and shot both the Europeans and then three of the carriers who expressed alarm at their brutal action.

Rangia and Opia were returned to Stephansort by British officials after they reached the Papuan coast and claimed that the missing members of the party had died of malaria. The true story was revealed by one of the surviving carriers, and the two policemen were arrested and committed to trial for murder. On 13 August 1897 they both escaped and, after killing a Chinese fisherman and stealing a rifle and ammunition from his store, they fled north along the coast. They crossed the Gogol River and hid in the mountains inland from Bili Bili Island.

The escapees had been at large for many weeks when reports reached Stephansort that the two murderers were planning an attack on the settlement. In response, the Germans mounted a major expedition consisting of 32 armed Europeans and natives and set out to find them. Rangia, familiar with the use of firearms, set up an ambush for his pursuers as they were about to cross a small creek. Von Hagen was in the lead of the party and when he came into view he was shot and killed. The Bukas escaped and the pursuit was then abandoned in order to bring von Hagen's body back to the settlement by boat. He was buried at Stephansort the next day and the Rheinisch Missionary Albert Hoffman conducted the funeral service.

Five days later the escapees were in turn ambushed by local Gaib men when they were seen swimming across the Gogol and killed after an epic fight near the mouth of that river. Opia was quickly overpowered and killed, but Rangia put up a stout resistance and was found to have 23 spear and arrow wounds in his body when he finally succumbed to





his attackers. The heads of the two escapees were cut off by the Gaib natives and brought back to Stephansort where they were hung on the posts of the gate to the prison compound as a warning against any further insurrection.

Not unreasonably, the von Hagen family sought some monetary compensation for his death in the overseas service of the Reich. However, their approach was initially rejected on the grounds that as the Acting Governor, von Hagen should not have become involved in the task of apprehending criminals. Later the Berlin authorities relented and did pay a nominal amount of compensation to the family.

A stone monument was erected in the graveyard of the settlement by the government in memory of von Hagen and his work in the colonies. In 1896, a year before his death, the two German explorers, Lauterbach and Kersting, had sighted a peak in the mountainous interior of New Guinea and named it Mount Hagen in his honour.

In 1900, there was further violent resistance to the German colonists when New Guinea police members, rebelling against harsh treatment by German officials, shot dead three Europeans and

a Chinese at the Astrolabe Bay settlement. The conspirators plotted also to kill all the Europeans in Madang. In 1904 these numbered only about 26 but the rebels were betrayed at the last minute. Nine were captured and later six were executed for their crimes.

The depredations of disease followed the Stephansort settlers from Finschhafen, including the ever-pervasive malaria. Now smallpox, almost certainly introduced with the Asian labourers, spread through the community in 1896 and 1897.

The NGK and its officials came to dread Stephansort and its pernicious diseases and in 1897 began to plan to again move its administrative centre, this time from Bogadjim to the site of Modilon Plantation at Friedrich-Wilhelmshafen (now called Madang), which was adopted from the name of a small island near Finschhafen.

The four tobacco plantations established by the Bogadjim settlers were turned over to copra production and this was achieved in 1902. Concerned by the continuing high death rate among the settlers, the Germans decided their administrative headquarters should be moved yet again, from Madang to Herbertshöhe (now Kokopo) on the Gazelle Peninsula in 1899. ♦

side by side with nurses and one of the expat doctors. Families walked two or three days to present their children with fevers, respiratory distress and rashes. The most common illnesses were measles, malaria, pneumonia, meningitis and gastroenteritis. A toddler presented in heart failure with anaemia due to malaria. I quickly learned to take a history in Pidgin and I let families know 'Em I mas slip long haus sik' when the illness was severe enough for the child to be hospitalised. It was a busy emergency department, and I like to think we helped with the workload, but I suspect I gained more than I gave.

What I learned has stayed with me throughout my career. I learned that the nurses, who were all nationals, were far more important to the children's care than the doctors. That was not taught in medical school. A few disabled children presented with increasing seizures, carried in by a family member. There was not a hint of burden or stigma from the families or treating staff. The child was a community and family member.

I watched an eight-day-old infant die of septicaemia due to an infected umbilical cord. The nurse turned to the child's mother, looked at her sadly and said 'mi sori mama'. I have never seen bad news delivered with such sincerity or compassion since.

The highlight of our stay was an invitation to visit the local doctor's village and attend a *sing-sing*. His family welcomed us warmly. There were pigs roaming around thatched houses and smoky fires. I admired a *bilum* his aunt was making so she gave it to me. I still treasure it. When Peter and I sat on a hill to watch the *sing-sing* the children gathered round to stare at us. They scampered away when we tried to talk to them. It was obvious we were stranger to them than they were to us.

I am now teaching at Western Sydney University Medical School after three decades in paediatric practice. What I learned during my time in Mt Hagen I share with students. The best healthcare is delivered by the combined efforts of a community not by clinicians, the best communication is simple and honest, mothers should always be included in their children's care, everyone is frightened by the unfamiliar and generosity and kindness are never forgotten. ♦



The Children's Ward at the hospital (top); the hospital grounds (middle); Jenny and her late husband, Peter Sip (bottom); *Sing-sing* at Mt Hagen (opposite page).

Training in Mt Hagen, 1982

JENNY McDONALD



It was a rite of passage to go to Papua New Guinea as a medical student. I went with my husband, Peter Sip, in January 1982. We had just finished our fourth year at the University of Sydney. In trepidation we flew in a small plane up to Mt Hagen from Moresby through the mist and between the mountain peaks. The reason I wanted to do my elective term in PNG was because I spent my first five years in Port Moresby and I had grown up with stories of my father's adventures as a veterinary scientific officer.

Peter and I spent four weeks at the Mt Hagen Base Hospital, as it was known then. I worked in Paediatrics and Peter worked on the General Medical Ward. The doctors were mostly expats, but a junior doctor on the medical ward was a man whose family was from Mt Hagen and was a graduate of the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG) Medical Program.

In the Paediatrics Ward mothers slept on mattresses on the floor, or low bunks with their child. I remember there being 20 or 25 mattresses lying side by side in a long, narrow ward.

I worked in the Paediatric Emergency Triage Room

June Lovina Whittaker AM

TEACHER, HISTORIAN,
AUTHOR, FARMER & FRIEND

Part 1

GAYNOR KAAD

June Whittaker, who died on 8 February 2022, was a long-standing staff member of the Australian School of Pacific Administration/ International Training Institute (ASOPA/ITI), a frequent visitor to Papua New Guinea and a long-time member of PNGAA, making a significant donation to the PNGAA document collection in 2016.



My father, Fred, was also a lecturer at ASOPA/ MITA during the same period, and they developed a great professional relationship. To cite an example, June and Dad had adjacent offices and, for one of his recent birthdays, June sent him a selection of things to do with coffee—small plunger, cup and saucer, ground beans from PNG and dark chocolate from Bougainville—so he might recall their days as colleagues at Middle Head when, at around 11 am, he would call out loudly, ‘June, where’s my coffee?’!!

After the Whittakers retired to their property, Fairview, near Tumbarumba in the western foothills of the Snowy Mountains, Dad, my sister Amanda and I became frequent visitors and a very warm and strong friendship developed between we girls and June, cementing the bonds that had already developed between the former ASOPA/ITI colleagues.

Each year when we were planning our holiday to Victoria, Dad would phone June and ask ‘How are bookings at The Southern Cross in the Snowy?’ (The Southern Cross Hotel was a hotel in Melbourne, which opened in 1962 as Australia’s first modern ‘International’ hotel; Dad and other staff stayed there when interviewing prospective patrol officers for training at ASOPA.)

Such was the hospitality and generosity of our

hosts that we always book-ended our holiday with a week at Fairview on our way south and a week on our way back. For two weeks each year from 1996 to 2013, June and Merv saw their guest wing turned into a mini-hospital after all the special gear required by Dad was unpacked, beds and mattresses were rearranged, furniture was moved.

Mealtimes were somewhat delayed with a sumptuous brunch around 11.30 am, then a mid-afternoon feast of fresh figs and peaches plucked warm from their trees, followed by coffee on the terrace, drinks by the fire at 6.30 pm interrupted by the ABC TV 7 o’clock News and dinner served anytime from 8 to 10! Each year they introduced us to another fishing spot, where we would picnic while Dad cast in a line or two, and led us to picturesque places where we might sight a porcupine, or where there were wonderful things to explore like fungi forests, waterfalls, corroboree frogs, old pubs, vineyards.

My birthday sometimes fell during our stay and, although Dad and Amanda lost all track of time, June remembered and organised a celebratory lunch or dinner complete with fresh, sweet-smelling roses from the garden, candles, balloons, champagne and interesting friends to add to the merriment and make it a real party!

In the mornings, we would often awaken to the sound of June playing a gentle melody on the piano. In the afternoon, there was always something interesting to read—the latest Booker Prize winner, or the *London Review of Books*, or any one of recently published Australian novels, or history magazines from Scotland—these are just some that I recall.

Our evenings were fuelled by wonderful discussions where you could really get down to the nitty-gritty of a topic, have your opinion changed, or change another’s. Sometimes there was poetry, arising quite naturally from the conversation. June loved poetry, one of her favourite poets being W B Yeats. On a wall in the bedroom where Amanda and I stayed on our visits to Fairview, hung a small painting illustrating a few lines from a verse of one of his poems, and I will forever think of June when I recall these lines:

*And walk among long dappled grass,
And pluck till time and times are done,
The silver apples of the moon,
The golden apples of the sun.*

After she died, her daughter Ingrid and son Kristian organised a gathering of friends and family at Fairview on 12 March, about 80 in all, to celebrate June’s life and bury her ashes with those of Merv on the property. Much of what follows is based on their reminiscences and a short biography lovingly put together by June’s family.

June was born in Port Kembla, a beachside town near Wollongong, about 90 km by road from Sydney and well-known for its harbour and significant role in the industrial history of the region. She grew up amongst its steelworks, attending Port Kembla High School and enjoying a life near the beach with her family and many friends. In 1946 she was accepted by Sydney University to study for a Bachelor of Arts but, concerned that she was only 16 and might be exposed to unwanted attention from the opposite sex, her father decided Wagga Wagga Teachers’ College was a more suitable place for his impressionable young daughter to further her education.

Little did he realise that, with the end of World War II, the college had instituted a policy of granting scholarships to newly-returned servicemen, resulting in an influx of young men enrolling with June!

And so, she met Mervyn, a country boy from Tumbarumba, who had served in the Royal

Australian Air Force and had just returned from overseas duty in Japan. One of the ‘notorious’ servicemen her father was so keen to protect her from soon became the love of her life and, after completing their study at Wagga, June and Merv were married in Port Kembla on 3 May 1952.

They began their teaching careers in Sydney, then returned to Wagga where they taught locally and built their first home. This was a hands-on build and Merv’s practical skills came to the fore, even to casting concrete blocks in homemade moulds, the cement having been acquired on the black market due to its scarcity.

In 1953 June gave birth to Ingrid and, undaunted by the demands of motherhood, completed a Master of Arts Degree majoring in English and History through New England University a year later. With her new qualification June became a lecturer at her old alma mater. In 1959, Kristian was born.



Fred Kaad and June Whittaker



Merv & June Whittaker (top) and June (below)

June always had a strong desire to travel but the opportunity had never presented itself until Merv facilitated this yearning. In 1962 the family, accompanied by June's recently widowed mother, Della, set off on an adventure, spending two wonderful years travelling through Europe and teaching in England and Canada. June was in heaven, feeding her love of history, expanding her children's

education and fostering their love for travel while revelling in it herself. Friendships which developed then were kept alive until her death by June's formidable letter-writing skills.

Returning to Wagga, the couple took up their respective teaching positions, but not for long as June was soon targeted to lecture in History at ASOPA at Middle Head in Sydney. Although that meant another move so soon, and a new teaching position for Merv, he supported June's career enthusiastically.

From 1965 she was a lecturer in History and Government, preparing patrol officers and teachers to work with indigenous communities in the Northern Territory and Papua New Guinea, from 1974 Senior Lecturer and Head of Development Studies at ASOPA's reincarnation, the International Training Institute, and from 1981 to 1993 Director of Regional Training and Aid Programs for AIDAB and AusAid (during this period ITI became the AIDAB Centre for Pacific Development and Training).

Her last position required extensive travel to many developing countries including PNG, the Philippines, Thailand, Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, and some African countries, to implement training programs for their respective governments.

After June's death, among the many emails Kristian received was one from Tony and Helen Foster who wrote:

One of the major programs that June developed was the Education Program for Southern Africa (EPSA), which brought together many subject specialities and involved visits to the seven English-speaking African countries, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Swaziland, Lesotho, Tanzania, Malawi and Botswana. The program continued for five years, after which June designed a second phase, EPSA 2, which continued for a further five years.

I was always greatly impressed with her ability to design programs to fulfil the needs of the developing education systems, negotiate with AIDAB in Canberra and the education specialists in the seven countries and plan and manage the budgets.

June also designed and managed the Climate Impact Assessment Program for Commonwealth Countries promoted and funded by Bob Hawke. She had great talent for negotiating with and entertaining government officials from the participating countries, as well as an ability to manage climate specialists from Australian universities. It was a privilege to be included in the team that June led. ♦

Editor's Note: Part II of the story of June Whittaker's life will be in the next edition of *PNG KUNDU*.



In 1872 the vessel, *John Knox*, under Carl Thorngren, lost its way and landed in Milne Bay while carrying Lifuans from the Loyalty Islands to the Torres Strait Islands mission of the London Missionary Society (LMS) established the year before by the Rev. Samuel McFarlane.

Here the olive skins of the people, the decorated canoes looking like Roman galleys and the relatively high status of their women, reminded Thorngren of Polynesians and he told McFarlane of his discovery. Four years later, in 1876 WG Lawes, pioneer LMS resident in Port Moresby, with McFarlane, took a party of Loyalty and Cook Islands mission teachers to Milne Bay and nearby islands. The Loyalty islanders were Kerisiano, Tom, Siweni and Mataika. Two of these built a house and church at McFarlane's landing place called 'Dimdim Creek' (men who traded in iron).

On a subsequent voyage Lawes or McFarlane left a fifth teacher, Dieni. As soon as a large bush material house was finished at Killerton Island Dieni moved from the mainland for health's sake. Soon afterwards Dieni's wife died in childbirth. He told the people to make lime, and afterwards they built the double-storey house where he lived with his second Loyalty Islands wife.

Dieni was a well-respected mission teacher



The writer on the way to the church at Killerton in 1971

Are These PNG's Oldest Surviving Mission Buildings?

DAVID WETHERELL

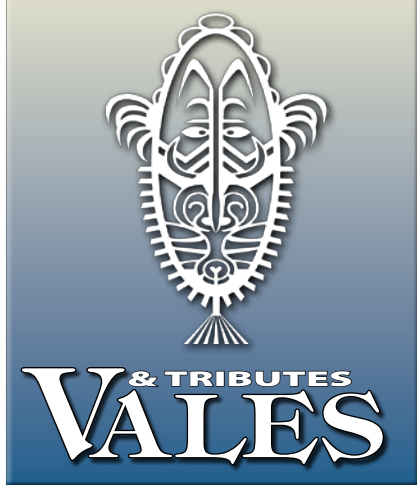
but he was removed by the LMS pioneer, James Chalmers, for shooting birds of paradise and selling the plumes to traders against the rules of the society.

The second island group to arrive in Milne Bay were from Samoa: Ma'anaima, Filimoni and Toma. They landed at Samarai in September 1891 and settled on three villages near East Cape where, according to the resident English missionary, CW Abel, they 'went into their new work with something like the soul of the Salvation Army'. A fourth Samoan teacher, Mataesi, then arrived. He moved into the double-storey concrete church at Killerton built by Papuans under his predecessor, Dieni's direction. Many other Samoan teachers or *faifeau* went to Milne Bay in the 25 years afterwards.

Beside Killerton Island, ruined houses and churches built by Loyalty Islands teachers and dating from 1879 include those at Bou, Lilihudi, and a stone palisade at Tubetube.

The lower walls of the Killerton church are still visible. Some readers may even compare the vine-encrusted ruins to those larger buildings at Angkor Wat in Cambodia. The photograph (above) was sent in 2020 to the writer by David Mitchell, a resident of Alotau. It depicts Papuan children from surrounding coastal villages inspecting the surviving lower walls of the structure at Killerton.

This brief account may be of interest to readers. The collection of ruined buildings should become part of PNG's historic material culture. They should be protected and preserved for future generations. ♦



ATKINS, Geoffrey Paul d. 6 June 2022

Beloved husband of Pearl (dec). Dearly loved father of Kay, Janet and Wayne (dec). Father-in-Law of David, Noel and Sharon. Beautiful Papa to Karissa, Damian, Kerrilee, Devan, Bradley, Wayne, Daniel, Timothy, Jake, Jason & Natalia. Great Papa to 16 Great Grandchildren.

BARTER, Sir Peter Leslie Charles GCL, KT, OBE, PhD (Hons) d. 22 June 2022

A Papua New Guinean businessman and former politician was being mourned across the Pacific after his death on 22 June 2022 at Cairns Hospital, where he was receiving treatment for a medical condition.

Born in Australia on 26 March



Sir Peter Barter

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 tributes for the next issue by the Copy Deadline, 19 September 2022, to editor@pngaa.net

1940, Sir Peter first went to PNG in 1967, working as a pilot for Divine Word Aviation. He quickly fell in love with the country and became a prominent businessman, launching PNG's international tourism industry.

His businesses around the country, particularly in Madang, provided much-needed employment to locals. The Melanesian Foundation, founded by him in 1980, is a not-for-profit organisation that invests in remote communities that have been hospitable to tourists. More recently the Foundation has been active in promoting positive messages about the prevention of COVID-19 infection.

In 1992, Sir Peter was elected to the parliament of PNG as the member for Madang Province. He went on to serve under the late Grand Chief Sir Michael Somare, who he counted as a friend, and held the roles of Health Minister and Governor of Madang. He was a champion of the active conciliation movement on Bougainville and was there when the region signed its first peace agreement. He continued to support the people of Bougainville after his life in politics.

Sir Peter Barter was a strong supporter of a free press and media development. He personally supported generations of students from Divine Word University.

His close friend Fr Jan Czuba

described Sir Peter as a great leader: 'In fact, they call him father because he was the one who never sent people away,' Fr Czuba said.

Sir Peter is survived by his wife, Lady Janet Barter, their son Andrew and grandchildren Jordan and Amaiya.

<https://www.abc.net.au/radio-australia/programs/pacificbeat/tributes-flow-for-beloved-png-statesman-sir-peter-barter/13942032>

BAULCH, John Richard d. 22 November 2021, aged 74

A retired Queensland District Court Judge, John Baulch was born on 21 February 1947 in Geelong. John moved to Tasmania at an early age and completed his schooling and university in that state. He completed his law degree at the age of 21 in 1968. He then enrolled as a barrister and solicitor of the Supreme Court of Tasmania.

John applied for a position in the Public Solicitor's Office of the Territory of Papua and New Guinea (TPNG) in 1970. He



John Baulch

worked for a brief time in the Port Moresby office, but soon after was appointed to the Rabaul office. For a short time, at the age of 22, he was the only legal officer at the Public Solicitor's Office in Rabaul.

In his second year in Rabaul, 13 Tolai were accused of the murder of the District Commissioner, Jack Emanuel. John had the enormous task of getting everything organised for their trial. That trial, with the Chief Justice presiding, lasted over five months. John remained in TPNG until 1974.

After that he worked as a solicitor in Townsville Queensland for a short time before moving back to Hobart to work in the then newly-established Australian Legal Aid Office, and then he joined Crown Law where he prosecuted in the Supreme Court of Tasmania.

In 1977 he and the family moved back to Townsville, where John entered the private bar as a barrister and practised for 33 years.

He served on the Patient Review Committee, the Misconduct Tribunal and the Mental Health Tribunal, the Townsville Bar Association and the Bar Association Committee of Queensland. He lectured in Advocacy at James Cook University.

In 2010 John was appointed as a judge of the District Court in Townsville. He remained in this position until his retirement aged 70.

John is survived by his wife, Christine, and daughters, Justine, Olivia and Chace and his five granddaughters.

Christine Baulch
cbaulch48@hotmail.com



Eric Coote (centre) with Crispin Howarth and curator for Oceania, Elena Soboleva of the Peter the Great Museum, St Petersburg, Russia (Courtesy Thomas Murray 2009)

COOTE, Eric 1941–2022

Eric and I first met when he visited Melbourne around 2001 or 2002. We met on Chapel Street and over lunch we spoke of nothing else than art, history and the people of Papua New Guinea (PNG). Time passed quickly; it was great. Our friendship started there.

Eric could seem quiet, reserved, but once you got to know him, his sense of humour was never far from the surface. Shortly afterwards, Eric and Evarne visited our home and we went to dinner; I remember Evarne giving advice on how to pack art if you buy it in PNG by wrapping things in *bilum* bags.

Eric's interest for Papua New Guineans and their arts was absolute—borne through his exposure to PNG art while in Sydney. He collected a number of pieces in the early '70s and stored them whilst in PNG. Some burnt in a fire; he kept the charred remains of a treasured *Lumi* shield all his life.

The couple took their children

to PNG mid-1974, pre-independence, and lived there until 1982. Evarne worked as PNG Handicraft & Cultural Officer, Eric as Building and Construction Manager at Unitech: building the dual-purpose lecture theatre known as Duncanson Hall in 1976. Eric engaged thirty-five craftsmen predominantly from the Sepik area, including Iatmul carver, Sebastian Timpun, to create the 32 highly carved columns for the Duncanson Hall colonnade at Lae Unitech.

Eric and Evarne arrived a year before Independence and were committed to the country's future. So many expats who lived in PNG left when Independence was announced, so, the Cootes' decision to stay moving in the opposite direction says something about their world view. Eric and Evarne were never agreeable with conformity and lived their own way.

Within the arts of New Guinea, it was the creations of the Tami people and other communities of the Huon Gulf that resonated with Eric. While there Eric instigated a successful canoe revival project

and spent long hours with people of Huon Gulf talking, listening, and learning about the material culture and arts, the nuances of dog tooth *bilas* and the layers of information around the carved wooden bowls for the region were fascinating to him.

Eric was known internationally for his knowledge of PNG art, he was a VIP guest at the opening of the Jolika (Friede) collection galleries at the De Young Museum, San Francisco in 2006, and was never too far away from major exhibitions of PNG art around the world.

In 2015 he was one of few Oceanic Art Society (OAS) members who made the pilgrimage to the Musee Du Quay Branly Conference connected to the major exhibition 'Sepik: Arts in Papua New Guinea'.

Eric was a serious reader devouring all sources of written material to learn more on New Guinean cultures, so it is no surprise Eric has been referenced in multiple publications for his depth of knowledge.

He wrote upon PNG arts, most recently *In Praise of the Human Form: Arts of Africa, Oceania and America*, 2020, on Tami sculpture and his first publication was the 40-page *NE New Guinea and the Tami* for the Morobe Cultural Centre in 1977.

Over a decade ago, Eric became an itinerant volunteer for the Pacific Arts Department of the National Gallery, a highlight of which was his presentation at the first OAS Forum in 2008 on the arts of the Huon Gulf with the Gallery's collection at hand for members to study.

Over these past two decades visits to the Cootes' private museum, Sanguma, were a delight. Discussions on *Tami* art: why a headrest would look as it did, marvelling at the challenges an artist overcame to carve such resolved forms. Conversations ranged from the appreciation of patina, attention to details like the binding on adornments to outright adoration of carved countenances: how a brilliant artist could give expression and personality to carved face on a betelnut mortar. These were the things that excited Eric.

By spending time in the presence of Eric and his collection it was obvious that underpinning our conversations on PNG art was his great respect for the people themselves that grew from his life in their country. With thanks to Elizabeth Pegg.

Crispin Howarth

Editor's Note: These reflections were originally published in the Journal Of the Oceanic Arts Society and are republished here with permission.

DONOVAN, Rod **d. 22 May 2022**

Roderick (Rod) Denis Donovan was born in Brisbane on 23 July 1936, and attended Gregory Terrace College before joining the Territory of Papua New Guinea in 1956 as a cadet patrol officer. Rod was initially posted to the Sepik District with different stations including a stint at Dreikikir. He attended the University of Queensland where he studied medicine for four years before returning to PNG. He was a member of the University rowing team. Rod was stationed at Siassi,

Lae and Menyamy as a patrol officer.

In 1968 Rod married Virginia and they remained in Lae till they went on long leave in 1969. He was posted to Goroka and Lufa in the Eastern Highlands, Balimo in the Western District and Kerema in the Gulf.

Amongst his many duties as the Assistant District Commissioner, Kerema Sub-District, Rod conducted coronial enquiries into the murders of Deputy District Commissioner Des Murphy, a British school teacher's daughter, murdered whilst visiting Kerema from the UK, the death in an air crash of French priest Fr. Beson and also the destruction, by fire, of the house of the OIC of Kaintiba Patrol Post. Rod was a stickler for detail and undertook these tasks with great professionalism.

Rod and Ginny left PNG in late 1975 with their two sons, Brad and Damien, both born in PNG and settled in Brisbane before buying a caravan park in Port Douglas in 1977 and developing the park together with a backpackers' hostel. The park was sold to developers in 1987 and Rod was elected as a councillor in 1988, remembering in those days councillors were not paid. A lot of his time was spent negotiating with reluctant fellow rural councillors about developing Port Douglas as a tourist destination. Christopher Skase was in the process of building his resort at that time.

Rod was very involved with the renovation of the old Port Douglas Catholic church and its relocation at the waterfront of the port. The new church was officially opened

by Rod and named St Mary's by the Sea. The church is a tourist attraction and constantly used for weddings and funerals. Rod's service was conducted there on the 9th of June this year following his long battle with cancer.

Rod was a very patient and tolerant person and his quiet demeanour was appreciated by his family and many friends.

Paul Simpson

FAVETTA, Fulvio Sergio Renato (Fif) **d. 1 July 2022**

Fif was born in Trieste, Italy on 12 February 1946, and was raised there until he was nine years old. In September 1955, Fif's family emigrated to Australia, arriving in Brisbane in October 1955. After living in several migrant camps and private boarding houses, the family purchased their own home in Rosalie, Brisbane and ultimately moved to Melbourne in 1964.

Fif matriculated in 1965 and commenced working for the State Public Service in 1966. Later that year he met Suzanne and they were married in 1967.

In 1968, Fif successfully applied for a position as a Cadet Patrol Officer and arrived in PNG in October of that year. Sue and their son Mark joined him a month later and they travelled to his first posting at Tufi. Their daughter Dani was born in late 1969.

Fif spent four years in the Northern Province and was then posted to Tari in the Southern Highlands and eventually to Mendi, until the family "went finish" at the end of 1980.

Back in Australia, Fif worked

at a number of jobs before joining the Australian Customs Service in 1982, remaining an employee until 2006. In 1997 Fif took extended leave and returned to PNG working for 12 months with a seismic logistics company near his old stamping ground of Tari, and again in 2005, for two months, based at Moro. He finally retired in Australia in 2006.

Fif enjoyed an active retirement and he and Sue continued to travel extensively both in Australia and overseas. Sadly, Sue passed away in January 2019 from a long and debilitating illness. Fif was then diagnosed with lung cancer in April 2019. Despite treatment and periods of remission, the beast reared its ugly head again in early 2022 and, sadly, Fif died on 1 July 2022.

Fif was an effective and efficient kiap and had an exciting and successful career in PNG. He and Sue were great hosts and very good company on outstations. He was smart, quick-witted and erudite. Throughout his life, Fif was a good and loyal friend to many and developed close and long-lasting relationships. He kept in touch with old friends and acquaintances and visited them whenever he could.



Fif with Dani and Mark

Fif was a very loving and proud father and grandfather. He leaves behind his son Mark, and daughter Dani, and their families. He will be missed by all who knew him.

Dave Ekins

FENBURY, Helen Mary (née Sheils) **d. 12 June 2022**

PNGAA notes with regret the death of Helen, wife of the late David Fenbury, at Subiaco West Australia.

HARLEY, Joan **d. 9 May 2022**

It is with regret I inform you of the passing of my mother, Joan Harley (née O'Brien) aged 87, at the Victoria Grange Aged Care Facility, Vermont South, Victoria.

Joan worked with the Department of Civil Aviation in PNG in the late 50s and married my father, John Harley, in 1959. Mum was involved in the foundation of the Papuan Women's Amateur Athletics Association, and coached a number of women, before taking several to Brisbane in 1963 to compete in the Australian Women's Amateur Athletics Championships. She was the manager of the first PNG women's team to attend the South Pacific Games in 1963.

Mum, Dad and I returned to Australia in 1967 and Mum lived a happy and engaged life with bowls (first started in Lae) and golf taking much of her time.

She found great comfort from reading *PNG Kundu* and felt it a great support. She was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 2016 not long after Dad's death, and

had been in full time care for the last few years. She will be sorely missed by my siblings, Ruth, Ian and I and our extended families.

David Harley

MARKS, Arthur
d. 6 November 2021

I write in response to Lois Jackman's recording the death of Arthur Marks (PNG Kundu, June 2022).

I met Arthur in Daru where I was teaching there in 1970. He had come in on leave and the Daru Club was the meet-up place for a drink, a game of tennis and so on.

Daru was full of a vast array of characters who contributed to a sense of collectiveness and acknowledgement of difference.

I remember, for example, Dulcie Dwyer and Mrs Holmes at a party dancing to the Lambeth Walk. Those of you who lived in Daru in the late 1960s and early 1970s will probably recall those wonderful women.

Arthur was a wonderful, kind and generous man. We married in Daru in 1971 and had our wedding party at Robin and Marie Calcutt's house. We had two wonderful sons, Benjamin and Matthew. They were proud of their father and he of them. He regaled them with tales of his PNG life, some of which he told colourfully for he was a great storyteller.

When we returned to Australia he worked for the Commonwealth Department of Aboriginal Affairs in its various forms engaging in a totally different context to his role in PNG.

Later in life we went our different ways but remained true friends till the end. Arthur

was able to reconnect with Lois Jackman in the 1990s and they had a wonderful, fulfilling relationship for many years in Toowoomba.

PAM MARKS

SCRAGG, Dr Roy OBE, AM
d. 26 June 2022, aged 98

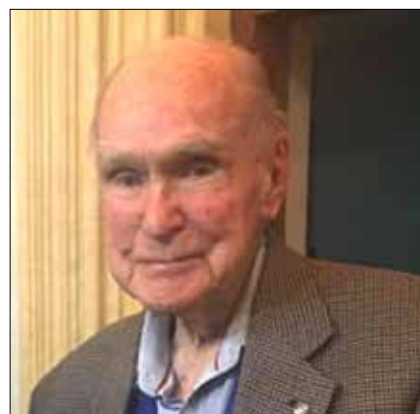
Dr Scragg spent 27 years (1947 to 1974) developing the health system in Papua New Guinea as a field medical officer, a pioneering administrator and later as a ground-breaking university professor.

In 1947, after graduating from Adelaide University, he became the first young Australian doctor to join the Department of Public Health, Territory of Papua and New Guinea after World War II.

In 1950, he added a Diploma in Tropical Medicine & Hygiene to his qualifications and, as an epidemiologist, he undertook a ground-breaking study of why the population of New Ireland was in rapid decline.

He discovered that a high prevalence of gonorrhoea had resulted in 54% of New Ireland women being childless. The disease was eradicated by the injection of penicillin and, in 1955, Adelaide University awarded him a Doctor of Medicine for his thesis, *Depopulation in New Ireland: A Study of Demography and Fertility*.

By 1957 Dr Scragg had succeeded Dr John Gunther as director of the Public Health Department, where he played a central role in the establishment of the curative, preventive, research and educational divisions of the medical service. The health system he fostered doubled the average



Dr Roy Scragg

life expectancy of Papua New Guineans from 32 in 1950 to 64.

As Director of Health he also served as a member of the pre-independence Legislative Council and House Assembly. In this role he was a member of the committee that established the University of Papua New Guinea in 1966, including its medical faculty, in 1970.

In 1971 he became the foundation professor of social and preventative medicine at the university and was awarded an OBE for his significant contribution to public health in PNG.

Dr Scragg returned to South Australia in 1974 and, until his retirement in 1982, was the founding co-ordinator of the South Australian Postgraduate Medical Education Association.

In 1982, he was awarded a fourth degree, Master of Public Health, for his thesis on the effects of health care interventions on village people in Bougainville.

Another honour came in 2021 when he was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) to mark his significant contributions to medicine, epidemiology and medical associations.

Another of Dr Scraggs' outstanding commitments was his 64 years as a member of the Rotary Club, which he joined in Port Moresby in 1958 and continued as member of the Rotary Club of Adelaide in 1974 until his death.

Dr Roy Scragg was always a man of clear view, strong mind and acute understanding of affairs. With his death we have lost another giant of Papua New Guinea's emergence as an independent nation-state.

Keith Jackson

https://www.pngattitude.com/2022/06/death-of-pngs-remarkable-dr-roy-scragg.html?fbclid=IwAR15iatdRI9ZCyRvh8tESqEJJTzq_VS82i4-NS7HIYnEb8mu2VRj_rq8H1I
<https://pngaa.org/mtt-to-md-in-30-years-a-human-metamorphosis-dr-roy-scragg-obe-md-fracma-mp/>

A Tribute to Forester Alan Ross OBE

Before I got to know Alan Ross well as a friend, I read his field report, dated sometime in May-June 1957, following a forest inventory survey around Crocodile Point in the Arawe Forest region on the south coast of West New Britain. I was then a year and seven months old when Alan conducted that survey. I came to realise how long Alan had spent working in PNG when, aged 31, he was Provincial Forestry Officer in Kimbe. His report was in the Resource Investigation File 87-14-0.

Only then did I realise that Alan was a forester. Prior to that, I supposed that many foresters of his time who were mostly provincially based knew Alan as an economist—not a forester. This included the likes of Cathy Munagun, then, timber permits officer in HQ who worked under

SUTHERLAND, Aida
d. 26 February 2022, aged 94

Aida Sutherland was the wife of Robert Sutherland (dec.) and mother of Jamie (dec.) and Hilary. Aida went to PNG for a holiday in 1964 and stayed for 20 years. There she married and raised her two children. During her time in Port Moresby she took up various positions working for the Education Department, Port Moresby Freezing Company and New Guinea Motors before eventually returning to Perth WA where she retired to her garden.

She passed away peacefully with family by her side and is survived by her daughter, son-in-law and four grandchildren.

Hilary Aves

WONG, Winnifred Loi
d. 10 June 2022

Loved wife of Mr Jimmy Wong Por Por (dec) and late of Tee Cee Wee Street, Rabaul. Slipped away at Peace, with daughter Sophie Watson by her side, and husband Bert.

Winnie, born on 10 May 1932, was a very proud wife, and mother of nine children.

Always smiling and laughing, Winnie was a strong, stoic, beautiful lady, loved by many people.

She was one of those strong women that pulled through whatever they were confronted with.

Donal McKenzie
with Sophie Watson.



Alan Ross and the author, Brisbane, 2013—having tea at his favourite Japanese Restaurant after signing the Scholarship Trust Deeds

We were tasked by the Managing Director to visit all nineteen provinces and establish their Provincial Forest Management Committees.

During the provincial tours, I came to know more of him. In every province, he would go to the market looking for avocados and pawpaw. After every expenditure

he made he would always count the change before putting it into his pocket—not one *toea* short. When we were in Goroka, he pulled out an old string *bilum* from his brown leather briefcase and went looking for avocados, other fruits and veggies. That *bilum* dated back to the '70s when he was last stationed in Goroka.

The other thing about Alan was he did not seem to believe in new technologies—he preferred the old ways. In his Hohola office he refused to have a desktop on his desk, while some of us eagerly accepted them—a change from the old ribbon typewriter. Alan continued handwriting all his correspondence and his stenographer would type it out for him. Reading his handwriting was always a challenge for the many young stenographers who were assigned to him. Margaret Suru, a young steno at that time, reckoned Alan's handwriting was the same or worse than that of John Gardner. John and Alan both found that Margaret was the only steno who could cope and read their handwriting.

Alan believed in writing out a cheque slip as opposed to swiping a 'save card' in an ATM. I never asked him if he owned a save card, but I was sure he had a credit card; otherwise he and Helen could not have travelled the length and breadth of this planet.

With motor cars, I reckoned Alan and Francis Pana owned and drove the oldest cars among all the HQ *wokman na wokmeri* in the seventies to the nineties. Jerome Siprokau's blue Datsun 120Y would probably be the next in line.

I supposed they all ended up at

the Six Mile dump because none of the auto shops in town would have had any spare parts for them.

Speaking of corporate memory, Alan was a living achiever as NFS transitioned from the Department of Forests to the PNG Forest Authority. Between him and Keai Mirou they would eventually point to or locate the file or a document within the building if it was not anywhere in the file registry.

There are countless extraordinary acts, surprises, and experiences many would say about Alan during his working career. He was certainly an extraordinary forester and economist. For his service to PNG, he was awarded the 10th Anniversary Independence Medal and, later, Her Majesty's OBE.

Alan and Helen chose PNG as their home for their entire working life. They had served faithfully alongside many Australian and PNG colleagues in their respective professions.

During his tour of duty, Alan had seen and worked the length and breadth of PNG. He was part of a new nation, attaining nationhood in 1975. Like many of his Australian colleagues, Alan respected and accepted the localisation agenda, leading towards Independence, knowing what turbulence can do to a young, independent nation.

No matter what the future then may unfold, he chose to remain and stood with his national colleagues to weather whatever the storm. He adapted and accepted PNG's Melanesian culture and mingled well with staff. With his wealth of knowledge and experiences, he became a teacher,

a mentor, a living archive, and a script of perfection. He scolded but guided and provided advice to the younger generation of foresters. He was a great man, a true forester and role model.

As his last tour of duty before retiring and leaving the shores of PNG, Alan was the National Forest Board Secretary. He officially retired from the PNG Forest Authority in 2000 and in 2002 he and Helen bid farewell to Hohola and PNG and returned to live in Brisbane, Australia.

On the eve of their departure, they announced and pledged to establish a Forestry Education Trust Fund. The Fund would assist with some of the living expenses of PNG foresters selected to undergo post-graduate studies in Australian Universities. The Trust Fund was established in 2013 and will ensure that future generations of foresters will remember them.

In Alan Ross' own words: 'To work and live in Papua New Guinea has been a rewarding and pleasant experience for both my wife and me. To provide a trust fund of this nature is a way of saying thank you and giving something back to this country.'

Alan Eugene Hugh Ross, the last of the PNG based Australian Forest Guards gracefully stood down from active service at the turn of the century in 2001, and sadly passed on Saturday 31 May 2014 in Brisbane. ♦

Kanawai Pouru

Editor's Note: This tribute first appeared in *Papua New Guinea Association of Foresters Magazine*.



**N MEMORIAL
NEWS
RABAUL &
MONTEVIDEO MARU
GROUP**

80th Anniversary of the Sinking of the *Montevideo Maru* and the Fall of the New Guinea Islands

Commemorative Ceremony

On 1 July 2022 the 80th Anniversary Commemorative Ceremony was held at the Stone of Remembrance at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

Although light rain fell this did not dampen the spirit of guests attending, many of whom had travelled from Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, Queensland and NSW.

The catafalque party was provided by the Australian Federation Guard. Mr Brian Dawson AM, CSC, Assistant Director National Collection Australian War Memorial, welcomed 130 guests and provided background information about the sinking of *Montevideo Maru*, noting it remains Australia's greatest maritime tragedy.

The 80th Anniversary Commemorative Address was provided by Colonel James Kidd DSM, CSM, representing the Chief of Army. Colonel Kidd had recently returned from three years as Defence Attaché at the Australian High Commission in Port Moresby. Colonel Kidd also had family living in PNG in earlier years. His tribute to those affected by those early days of WWII in the Pacific and his understanding of the significance of this event to the families involved was most appropriate and very warmly received.

Wreaths were laid by: The Honourable Richard Marles MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Acting Prime Minister, and Minister for Defence, representing the Prime Minister of Australia; His Excellency Mr John Ma'o Kali, High Commissioner for Papua New Guinea to Australia and Mrs Vavinenama Vere Kali; Mr Inge Wiktil, representing the Ambassador of Norway to Australia; Rear Admiral Brett Wolski AM, RAN, representing the Chief of the Defence Force; Mr Chris Pearsall, President of the Papua New Guinea Association of Australia with Ms Andrea Williams, Chair of the Rabaul & Montevideo Maru Group, Papua New Guinea Association of Australia; Brigadier Phil Winter AM, CSC, ADC, (Retd), representing the National President of the Returned and Services League of Australia; Mr Michael White, representing the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles and Papua New Guinea Volunteer Rifles Ex-Members Association; Mr Frazer Harry, representing the 2/22nd Battalion Lark Force Association; Mr Patrick Bourke, representing 1 Independent Company; Dr Kathryn Spurling,



PHOTOGRAPHS
FEATURED ON THE PREVIOUS PAGE:

1. Dr Brendan Nelson AO, Chairman of the AWM Council, lays a wreath on behalf of the Australian War Memorial;
2. Rear Admiral Brett Wolski AM, RAN, representing Chief of Defence Force;
3. Colonel James Kidd DSM, CSM giving the Commemorative Address;
4. The Hon. Richard Marles with His Excellency John Ma'o Kali and Rear Admiral Brett Wolski;
5. Wreaths laid at the memorial.

representing the National President of the Australian War Widows Incorporated; Major Brett Gallagher, Chief Commissioner Salvation Army; The Honourable Dr Brendan Nelson AO, Chairman of the Council of the Australian War Memorial. Attending also were Captain Ryan Gaskin RAN, representing the Chief of the Navy and Group Captain Ian Gould CSC, representing Chief of Air Force. Award-winning songwriter and performer, Kylie Adams-Collier, transported the audience with a beautiful and special performance of her song 'Montevideo Maru 1942'. Kylie is donating \$5 to PNGAA from each 'Little Stone' album sold, available at <https://kylieadams-collier.com/shop>

Prayers were led by Chaplain Grant Ludlow of the Royal Australian Navy, and vocalist, Sergeant Jennifer Cooke, with the Band of the Royal Military College, Duntroon, led the hymn and national anthems. The bugler was musician Ryan Koroknai.

Michael White, representing the NGVR/PNGVR Ex-Members Association, read the Ode.

Andrea Williams provided a thank you to all who attended and who had made the service so special. She noted, with great appreciation, the tributes by the Australian, PNG and Norwegian Governments, the Defence Forces, the Australian War Memorial and all those who had travelled to be part of this significant commemorative anniversary. The support of the Australian War Memorial with this event was particularly appreciated.

Photographs taken by the AWM photographer are able to be viewed at: https://www.flickr.com/photos/australianwarmemorial/albums/72177720300229609?fbclid=IwAR3bfKr6uJZx_0ZXkWmCUXzd_ZZy6KiCjCGxX59DZLUWfDH8ys6tg-kfPzg

The Last Post Service

Held at the AWM on the evening of 1 July 2022, this service acknowledged the service of Corporal George William Spensley of the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles and the sinking of *Montevideo Maru*. Wreaths were laid by his daughter, Gillian Nikakis, and his descendants.

Wreaths were also laid by Ross Johnson, representing the NGVR/PNGVR Ex-Members Association, Andrea Williams, representing the PNGAA and John Reeves, representing the Rabaul Historical Society.

You can still watch this service online through the AWM website or at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zKxf7sIP14> (note that there is a 7-minute introduction with the flame which can be fast forwarded).

80th Anniversary Dinner

The evening, held at Rydges Hotel, Canberra on 1 July 2022, began with mingling and cocktails before guests moved to the Forrest Suite for a 2-course dinner. Special guests included the PNG High Commissioner to Australia, His Excellency John Ma'o Kali and his wife, Mrs Kali, as well as Emeritus Professor David Horner AM, Dip Mil Stud, MA (Hons), PhD, FASSA, who gave the keynote address with the topic: 'The Fall of Rabaul, the *Montevideo Maru* Tragedy, and the Defence of PNG and Australia'. Mr Horner is an emeritus professor in the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the Australian National University, where he was Professor of Australian Defence History for fifteen years. He is the author of 37 books and numerous articles on military history, strategy and defence. His books on command during the Kokoda battle and on Generals Blamey and Vasey deal particularly with the New Guinea Campaign. He has also written a book on the Pacific War.

Kylie Adams-Collier kindly led the two national anthems for Australia and Papua New Guinea. We are also grateful to Kylie for taking the wonderful photos during the evening dinner.

Guests enjoyed hearing from His Excellency, Mr Kali, who spoke briefly at the start of the evening.

The Commemorative Address by David Horner AM covered the broader worldwide situation in the early years of WWII and how it affected the New Guinea islands and Australia. His address was outstanding. Numerous questions followed. The address will be available on the website at www.montevideo-maru.org under 80th Anniversary.

We were hoping that the new book *Lost Women of Rabaul*, by Rod Miller, published by Big Sky Publishing, would be available on the night, but we remembered Sr Berenice Twohill, Lorna Johnston née Whyte and their fellow prisoners, and the launch went ahead despite the book's delay. Thank you for telling us a little about it, Rod. The book can be purchased through <https://www.bigskypublishing.com.au/books/lost-women-of-rabaul/>

Each table had a magnificent bouquet of flowers arranged by Elizabeth and Drina Thurston. Display tables were scattered around the room for guests to browse information related to the fall of the New Guinea Islands in early 1942. These included a magnificent album showcasing the historical 70th anniversary dedication of the Rabaul & Montevideo Maru Memorial at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, and other albums and photos. Ross and Pat Johnson had brought several historical posters, including a tribute to the NGVR history, and we thank them for the special items of knowledge shared that evening. We thank Rebecca Mills for the wonderful displays shared too—and delighted that her grandad and instigator of the Ballarat Montevideo Maru Memorial, Dr Les Drew, could be present. There are so many angles to this history! Max Clarke brought along the original painting done by Christine Arnott and used in the first flyer that Keith Jackson and the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Society had back in 2009!



Emeritus Professor David Horner AM, FASSA



His Excellency Mr John Ma'o Kali,
PNG High Commissioner



Rod Miller, author of
Lost Women of Rabaul



Guests were also asked to bring along a small black and white photo of their relative or friend who was connected with Rabaul, Kavieng, Tol, the New Guinea Islands and the *Montevideo Maru* in 1942. Information written on the back was to include name of person, service number (if appropriate), connection with the New Guinea islands, if they escaped—how, and the connection with the person attending this event. A collage of photos of these people was made up at the dinner over a coloured canvas photo of Rabaul. It was a poignant collage and a wonderful innovative tribute, with thanks to Gayle Thwaites who has also greatly assisted in sharing this story through our social media.

It was intended to pepper the evening with various quiz questions related to the 1942 events, however, the busy evening meant that the quiz questions were placed on the tables to create discussion—with answers overleaf when needed. I thank Rod Miller, Patrick Bourke and Scott and Margaret Henderson for their contribution to this. We will gradually include general knowledge questions in *Memorial News* from time to time, with answers in the following edition, so keep watching this space!

Many people helped to make this a hugely successful evening and I thank them all. It was special to have two other founding members of the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Society present—Elizabeth Thurston and Max Uechtritz. In addition to those mentioned there was the ‘behind the scenes’ support. To Phil Ainsworth, wonderful knowledge and support always, to Ally Martell—a huge thank you for the name tags and your assistance with media (a big relief!), Ross and Pat Johnson (‘what else can we do to help?’), to Bill Brown and Anthony Regan, and to committee members—Norma Dewick, Chris & Louise Pearsall, and Max & Helen Uechtritz—and to all who attended—thank you, all, for making it a tremendously memorable anniversary.

ANDREA WILLIAMS



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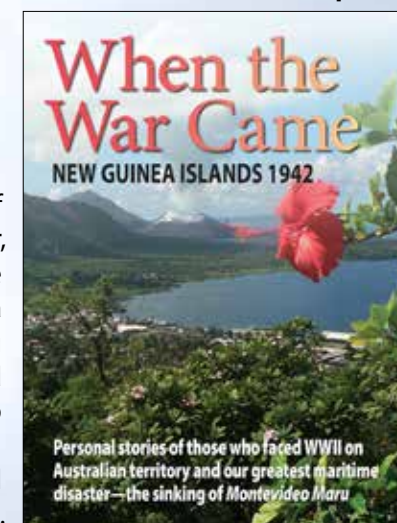
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WHEN THE WAR CAME: New Guinea Islands 1942

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 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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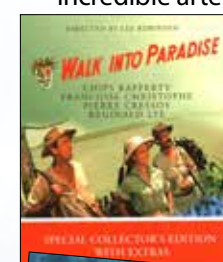


LAND OF THE UNEXPECTED: Papua New Guinea

Our nearest neighbour, 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, delicious tropical fruits and opportunities for adventurous activities—all in a terrain carved by steep slopes and jagged mountain ranges, interspersed by fertile valleys and over a dozen active volcanoes. PNGAA's new publication covers many of the different facets of this amazing country—a complex overview, flora, fauna and the environment, industries, public services, art, culture, sport, the diverse history and some of people who helped to shape the nation.

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PNG Voices: Listening to Australia's Closest Neighbour, Papua New Guinean Perspectives on Australia and the World

The recent security agreements between Pacific Island nations and China has raised concerns about Australia's relationships with these nations and the changing strategic environment within the region. It also highlights the need for deeper engagement and the importance of listening more and better to the diverse perspectives, priorities, and aspirations of Pacific Island communities.

This new research from the Whitlam Institute captures a wide cross-section of perspectives and experiences from ordinary PNG citizens, including those living in a remote part of PNG, voices that are rarely heard in more official forums.

Research co-ordinator, Dr Hannah Sarvasy, Western Sydney University, notes the timely examination of Australia and PNG's relationship. 'PNG is Australia's closest neighbour, and the single largest recipient of Australian development assistance. The two nations share a prehistory and, more recently, a colonial history.'

But despite this apparent closeness, few Australians today can say that they know how people in PNG feel about their own communities or about Australia.

Overall, respondents were largely positive about Australia, widely praising Australia's role in supporting PNG financially. However, concerns about Australia's perceived lack of respect for PNG sovereignty and cultural norms were also expressed. Significantly, China was perceived as the country investing the most in infrastructure in PNG.

The report's findings are particularly significant for policy makers and officials working in the region given Australia's historical and cultural ties to PNG and the Australian government's commitment to deepening engagement through the Pacific Step-up initiative.

'While we can take heart from the report's findings that respondents were largely positive about Australia, it would be both foolish and a disservice to these neighbours of ours if we were not to properly listen to what they have to say and to deliberate on what it might mean for our official relationship, the aid we offer, the attitudes we bring to the table and the depth of our understanding,' said Eric Sidoti, interim director of the Whitlam Institute.

This research is proudly conducted in collaboration with the Marcs Institute, Western Sydney University; the Papua New Guinea University of Technology (Unitech); Divine Word University, PNG, (DWU); the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG).

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FEATURED: 1. Approach by sea to a village on Manus Island; 2. The community listen as project explained; 3. Villager from Toweth, in the Morobe Province, in traditional dress; 4. New Ela Beach, Port Moresby; 5. Woman being interviewed for survey.

Doctors Andrea Connor and Hannah Sarvasy, from the Whitlam Institute, gave an informative presentation at the PNGAA 2022 AGM on 30 April 2022.

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ISSN 2652-5216, PPA 224987/00025 • SEPTEMBER 2022 • Vol. 3, No. 11