



# Una Voce News Letter

RETIRED OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA  
P.O. BOX 452, ROSEVILLE NSW 2069

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**A TERRIFIC CHRISTMAS**

**AND**

**A HAPPY, HEALTHY AND REWARDING**

**1993**

**FROM**

**THE PRESIDENT AND COMMITTEE**

No.4, 1992 - December

Dear Member,

The Association's Christmas Luncheon will be held on Sunday 6 December 1992 at the Mandarin Club and full details, together with booking slip, are on page 17. If you have not already done so, please send your cheque and booking slip to the Secretary at the address above as soon as possible.

Please help by ensuring that payment is made in advance, otherwise our Treasurer and other Committee Members spend a considerable time collecting money, checking lists etc., when they could be enjoying themselves the same as everyone else at the function.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

Members are reminded that the 1993 annual subscription (\$8.00) becomes due and payable on 1 January 1993, unless, of course, you have paid in advance.

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SUBSCRIPTIONS (continued)

To ascertain your financial status, please check the address wrapper from your current issue of *Una Voce*. At the bottom right hand corner of the address label is the year to which you have paid your subscription/s, i.e. 1992, 1993, 1995, 2000 etc. If, on the label, the year shown is 1992, you are only financial until 31 December 1992 and we would appreciate you forwarding your 1993 subscription without delay.

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**"M V MACDHUI"**  
by Bishop David Hand

We in Papua New Guinea continue our series of 1942-92 jubilees by remembering those who perished in the bombing 50 years ago of Burns Philp's pre-war flagship, *M V MACDHUI*.

It was on June 18 1942 that Japanese planes completed their previous day's attack in Port Moresby harbour on the ship. On June 17, all passengers from Australia having disembarked, cargo was still being unloaded when 18 Japanese bombers and nine fighters appeared. The master, Captain J. Campbell, at once weighed anchor and began manoeuvring around the harbour; but one of an estimated 56 bombs which were dropped scored a direct hit on the after part of the bridge, and passed through three decks to the first-aid station in the dining-saloon where it exploded, killing the surgeon, two crew and a soldier.

When the attack ended, the ship returned to the wharf to complete unloading; but the following day the bombers returned. Again Captain Campbell tried evasive action, but four out of 68 bombs scored hits, whilst Campbell himself received serious burns and shrapnel wounds. He managed to take the ship into shallow water for the easier evacuation of the people aboard; but there it ran aground, and has lain ever since, often prompting the question "What is that rusty old hulk?"

In 1967, *MACDHUI'S* mast was removed and set up in front of the Port Moresby Yacht Club as a kind of mascot. It was dedicated by Archbishop Virgil Copas and myself. In attendance was Captain Campbell.

In 1970, large quantities of oil leaked from *MACDHUI'S* bunkers, but the Harbours Board dispersed the slick with hundreds of litres of detergent.

*MACDHUI* had been launched on the River Clyde in Scotland in 1930 by Miss Margaret Burns, daughter of Burns Philp's then Chairman, James Burns. The ship was 240 feet long with a gross tonnage of 4,630 tons. She carried 3,200 tons of cargo and 138 passengers in two, three and four berth cabins. She arrived in Port Moresby for the first time in 1931, and the passengers were loud in their praises of the comforts provided. The fare from or to Australia was sixteen pounds ten shillings (which equals now K28.57, so bankers tell me!). Regular passenger flights between PNG and Australia started in 1938, but did not take over from ships until the fifties or sixties.

Another point of interest is that, when St. John's-on-the-Hill (now the Cathedral of the Anglican diocese of Port Moresby) was being refurbished after World War II, the then general manager of Burns Philp (PNG) kindly donated the *MACDHUI'S* bell. It still hangs in the cathedral's tower, daily calling to prayer - morning, noon and evening - and on Sundays to worship. "Lest we forget."

(June 18, 1992 PNG News/Times).

## HAVE YOU HEARD????

Jetti ZIGAS of Sunnybank Qld is taking off shortly to spend a year in the Netherlands and we sincerely hope that she does not, after the year, decide to remain there. Nevertheless, Jetti, we wish you all the very best of luck on your journey and we sincerely hope you enjoy your stay there, but do come home again!

Nesta PEARSON of Mt. Waverley Vic on 18 September started out from Melbourne, heading north up the coast stopping at friend's homes on the way. She visited the Pulsfords for a couple of nights in Sydney and also paid a brief visit to Dan and Judith Fitzhenry who live in Cammeray, a suburb of Sydney. Dan was a Marine Surveyor in Moresby, who checked the oil lines for unloading oil from tankers in the harbour, and carried out various river surveys in PNG over some years.

She departed Sydney on 24 September headed for Terrigal, an hours drive north of Sydney and that is when her trials and tribulations commenced. Tryin to find Terrigal, she had a prang - no serious damage to the car, JUST expensive (to quote from her letter). She suffered some severe bruising from the seat belt, but again nothing serious except, to again quote her words, a VERY VERY bruised ego.

Her purpose in calling in at Terrigal was to visit the Hendrys and, whilst waiting for her car to be repaired, was still there, as last reported, on 27 October, still waiting for her car.

In the meantime, Nesta was able to go by bus to Brisbane for a week to visit her youngest son, Dan, his wife Linda and "the most beautiful granddaughter of five months, Chloe".

Nesta was at the Hendrys when Bert passed away and was no doubt a great comfort to Bert's wife, Shirley, during this period.

A final report in Nesta's own words "I left Melbourne on September 18th, intending to go as far as Bundaberg to see Cindy Lamb in her new house, if it was convenient for her, and I expected to be back at the end of October. Now it is October 27!!!! I can't decide what to do. Go on - that is, WHEN I get my car -- as I originally intended or to about turn and go home. I'll see what I feel like, or what seems appropriate, after I HAVE got my car."

(Nesta, we wish you all the very best of luck and hope that everything finally turns out OK. Nesta wrote me a long newsy letter and perhaps we might quote a little more from it in our next issue. Ed.)

Phyl COX, widow of Harry, and now of Wagga Wagga NSW, is about to make a visit to PNG for a week, during which time she has arranged several "fly-drive" trips from Moresby to other centres. She will be accompanied by a cousin of Harry's who has never been to PNG but who volunteered to go along because she loves to travel. Phyl, we hope you have a great trip and that you are able to provide us with some impressions of the place.

Dan DUGGAN of Alstonville NSW advises that he had a delightful hour with Horrie Niall recently when Horrie visited Ballina to see relatives.

He also advised that there was to be a gathering on the banks of the Brisbane River on 27 September for ex Bougainville personnel both Government and Private. This is organised every few years by the ex-plantation people and is well attended.

Dan reports that Dick McIlwain, who was an ADO on Bougainville, Tinputz and Local Government at District HQ in the early 1970s, is now the Chief Executive Officer of the Queensland TAB.

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HAVE YOU HEARD????? (continued)

Des LARGE of Caloundra Qld writing about our proposal for the collection of PNG memorabilia "I think this is a wonderful idea and to this end I enclose a contribution to the collection. In the early 1950s my father and I were contracted by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to erect the permanent Memorials at Bomana War Cemetery outside Moresby. Over the period of construction and erection of the Memorials, numerous photographs were taken at various stages. I have had copies made of some of the pages of my photo albums, showing the erection work, and now have pleasure in sending this small album of photos to be included in the collection of PNG memorabilia. I hope they will be of interest."

Des also advises that he and his wife, Betty, are enjoying life on the Sunshine Coast since they left PNG in 1975 and frequently meet up with several other ex-Territorians who live in their area. Folks they have recently seen are: Ken Bruce (ex Gov. Stores) and wife, Gwen, Rhys and Dorothy Healey (Education), Geoff and May Dhu (ex Bulolo and Lae), Ron Roach (RPNGC and Funeral Director in Port Moresby), Ken Weatherall (P&T Lae), Phil and Marjorie Head (who live at Gympie), Vic and Molly Thomas (who reside at Bribie Island) and Roger (ex PIR) and Trish Jackson. They often see Dot Louttit and Carl Mayoh who are now living in Brisbane and they got quite a surprise last week to meet Ron Storer (ex-Treasury) who was holidaying in Caloundra from his home in Adelaide.

It seems wherever they go they say that they manage to meet up with old (or more correctly, former) Territorians.

John HUON DE NAVRANCOURT of Atherton Qld advised that he was leaving in September, with daughter Bianca, for an extended visit to France where he hoped to spend many months with his recently handicapped sister and also visit many of his relatives. John, we sincerely hope you enjoy a very happy and rewarding visit to your homeland.

Helen COX of Woody Point Qld recently wrote as follows: "I noted that it is possible that Dr. Topham will be coming to Australia and if he does come and journeys to Queensland, I would very much like to see him - I was at Nonga in the office during his term there.

Have noted the new PNG Cabinet and wonder what happened to Bernard Narakobi (Minister for Justice). I knew him well when he was studying in Sydney, and prior to that in Rabaul."

(Doctor, please take note and can anyone help Helen with knowledge of Bernard Narakobi? Ed.)

Doug FRANKLIN of Closeburn Qld recently advised that they were off to Adelaide via Broken Hill for a big ex Royal Australian Navy W.W.II reunion and they were told that there would be some 1200 attending. Doug, we sincerely hope that you had a pleasant trip and a most rewarding reunion.

A certain MEMBER, who shall be nameless but presently having wife problems, on a recent visit to PNG, his wife:

- (1) Burnt his passport.
- (2) Hid two very pornographic books in his luggage (he was lucky as he did not have to go through Customs).
- (3) Upon pulling out a shirt to wear to a function, found sleeve cut off and an examination of his other shirts found they had received similar treatment.
- (4) Went to put on new shoes only to find only the left shoe from each of two pairs.

Hell hath no fury like a woman spurned!!!!



## NEWS FROM CORRESPONDENTS

### JIM TONER (Northern Territory)

The 17th anniversary of PNG Independence was celebrated in Darwin at a new venue, the Portuguese-Timorese Club. Its spacious hall was needed to seat nearly 250 guests who were entertained by Asaro "mud men" and child dancers from the PNG-Australia Social and Cultural Group. Seen getting stuck into the mumu were the Alders, Battersbys, Coehns and Roger Gleeson, former kiap, now park ranger. The PNG Consul at Brisbane, Thomas Polome, came north and must have been well pleased with the evening.

Jean and Terry Daw also ventured north again in August. Terry collected a plastic hip and a tin knee (and numerous medical anecdotes to go with them) early in the year and is a limited pedestrian. However, if you can drive a caravan from Perth to Darwin and back after all that, one does not feel like a total invalid.

A handful of ex-Mendis will have made a connection between two items in the last news letter. The death at a relatively early age of Des Clifton-Bassett was reported and an obituary will appear elsewhere in this edition. When he became DC Southern Highlands in 1958 and made his first inspection of Mendi station, Des was confronted in the rear garden of the residence of Ron Neville, then a patrol officer, by a giant bamboo cage. He was informed that this was Timmie's banis. When he learned the said scion of the Neville family was no more than 3 years old, Des shook his head in disbelief but let it pass.

No doubt it was an old story; Ron gives orders for construction of a play pen, gets called away to a fight "up the road" for a few days, and on return finds that the kalabus, unsupervised, have created something fit for King Kong.

But now I see from the September edition that Timmie has not only followed his late father into the PNG Parliament but is the Hon. Minister for Forests. There is room for jesting about bamboo conservation but out of respect for my old boss, I refrain. RIP Des.

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### GEOFF MASTERS (Bribie Island)

Whilst in Alotau heard of death of Tony BUINAFONTE (? name spelling). Tony was at Alotau, when I arrived in 1969, as mechanic in charge of Admin. transport. He later left and worked for Police Dept in Moresby where I struck him again some 2 years later. He would have been around the 50s at his death.

On the way back from PNG called and saw Jim SINCLAIR, still the same old Jim, great bloke. Phoned Ernie Sharp and had a long talk, was always a mate of Ernie's and we still have that same mateship. In Brisbane I called to see Graham LEVER, who was manager of Radio Milne Bay in the 70s and is now in charge of Telecom Corporate Advertising. Graham loaned me a video cassette to take to PNG. Also met up with Jock CUNNINGHAM who now lives at Mudjimba on the Sunshine Coast. Jock was PWD Works Officer at Alotau when I arrived, looks well and has just completed a small local RSL Club.

Back in Melbourne now but as the boat operators Cairns/Thursday Island are offering a two for one deal until end of November I will probably take advantage of that. Am organising a trawler charter (Catholic Mission) to take 15 people Alotau-Goodenough Is--Tufi--Wanagela--Oro Bay--Salamaua--Lae over 7 days around March/April and we should be able to do round trip Australia--

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NEW FROM CORRESPONDENTS (continued)

PNG-Australia in 10 days with no stopovers in Port Moresby. Will fly on days we can connect direct to Gurney and out of Lae on day we can connect with southbound flight. Charter cost is 800 Kina a day plus air fares and some accommodation at Lae, and perhaps a couple of bus trips (Popondetta and Lae). All up I think the trip would come out at \$A1500/2000 including air fares. Trawler trip would be rough as there is limited cabin space, which means some will be on stretchers and mattresses on rear and forward decks, still its a lot cheaper than via the Melanesian Discoverer (Kina 4000) plus air fares. So far have five starters.

Some tragic news from Milne Bay to advise that Karl Edwards, Manager of Milne Bay Estates was murdered by a Raba Raba national on 5 October 1992. It appears that the Company loaned one of their trucks to some workers and some of the passengers were killed (3).

The Raba Raba, whilst not connected with those killed, started attacking the office. Karl went out to talk with him and was immediately stabbed repeatedly. As he was some 20 miles from the hospital, by the time they got him there he was dead. It was terrible news, particularly as I had become close to the Edwards who had given me a house to stay in on both my recent visits. The great tragedy is that he, his wife Gai and the company, had been so good to the community that it is hard to understand why it happened.

On the 50th Anniversary trip to Milne Bay, during the morning service at Gurney, Sir Cecil Abel told a story of taking the vessel "Yella-Gilli" up to the front line to pick up wounded and return them to hospital ship "Manunda". Upon arrival he was informed that one man was in a serious condition and unless he was taken to hospital quickly he would most likely die.

Sir Cec quickly loaded the man on the boat and headed for the "Manunda", but he never knew the name of the soldier or if he lived or died. After the service, he was approached by one Harry Triffett of 2/12th Battalion, now living in Deloraine, Tasmania, who put out his hand and thanked Sir Cecil for saving his life, for Harry was that soldier who after 50 years found the person who was responsible for his survival.

On our return trip to Milne Bay we had with us James (Jim) Campbell Ross. Jim was with ANGAU in 1942, having gone to Samarai to work for Buntings in October 1940. He became a member of the Volunteer Defence Corps, rose to Corporal and served with such well knowns as Tom Grahamslaw, Alan Timperley, Syd Elliot-Smith and so on. He was made Resident Magistrate Samarai after Syd went to Port Moresby with the army. Jim patrolled the Milne Bay district 1942/43 after which he was transferred to Kikori, where he served with J. Foldi, Mick Healy and others until he returned to Australia on compassionate leave in 1945 (his father had a stroke). He never returned to Papua after that until he came back with our group.

Jim has written a book "My First Seventy Years" and 48 pages are devoted to his Papuan experiences. I am not sure of the cost as Jim sent me a copy FOC, but I recommend it to those who have an interest in things PNG of that period.

A little bit of trivia. The 1942 film "Casablanca" has recently been re-released. In this day and age of multi-million dollar productions ("Far and Away" cost \$50 million to make) it is interesting to note that "Casablanca" was made for a total of \$878,000 and that included Warner Bros taking \$223,822 in general studio overheads and claiming 2 1/2% depreciation \$15,956. Other costs:-

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NEWS FROM CORRESPONDENTS (continued)

Humphrey Bogart	\$36,667	
Ingrid Bergman	25,000	
Claude Rains	22,000	
Paul Henreid	25,000	
Waiters etc.	350	(2 1/2 weeks)

The story cost was \$20,000 - script charges \$6350 - the director, Michael Curtiz got \$47,281 - Producer Hal Wallis \$73,400, cameramen \$10,873. Max Steiner who wrote and arranged the music \$28,000. The negative print cost \$8,000 - Make-up Perc Westmore \$9,100 and so on. Only thing I cant find out is how much the film took over the years.

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## **SALAMAUA TO-DAY**

by Philip Franklin

50 years have passed since Salamaua was occupied by Japanese soldiers during W.W.II. This war, as many know, permanently changed Salamaua. Although prior to W.W.II, Lae with its larger airfield was becoming the major service centre for the Bulolo Gold Fields, Salamaua was still the commercial and Administrative centre for the area.

During the war and in particular "The Battle for Salamaua", the centre was levelled and left looking more like a lunar landscape scarred with bomb craters and shrapnel damaged tree stumps.

As with many things in the tropics, a good growing climate and fertile soils saw the site quickly revegetated to its former pacific and swaying palms type beauty along with many flowering shrubs.

Today, Salamaua is the centre for a Government Community school and a teacher's house. Fifteen or so beach houses, that serve as weekenders for Lae residents who boat over as often as time permits, have been built mostly on Government leased land. Much of the pre-war cement slabbing has been used to form the basis of current house foundations whilst the former Bank of New South Wales cement vault (the only structure that survived all the bombing), is now the home of an electricity generator. Recent heavy seas and high tides unearthed a wall built of empty wine and beer bottles, reflecting the resourcefulness of pre-war residents or perhaps confirming that then, as it is today, it was a good spot for some rest and recreation.

After the floods of 1983, Lagui village moved from the mouth of the Frisco River to an area immediately adjacent to the titled leases on the isthmus. A steel hulled boat from this village makes daily return trips to Lae to service the needs of the villagers and local residents.

Kela village on the north western side of Salamaua harbour was prepared for the site of a new High School some years ago. Once completed it is thought that a reticulated electricity system will be installed on an out station supply basis and may be available to current house owners on a user pays system. At present those who use electricity operate many small generators.

It will be some time before a road is built to Salamaua which should help to preserve the pioneering landscape and natural beauty of the place. Visitors to Lae can arrange to visit Salamaua by contacting tour operators who use fast comfortable motor boats to travel the 17 nautical miles across from Lae in 45 to 50 minutes. Alternatively helicopters can be chartered.

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## 50th ANNIVERSARY TRIP TO MILNE BAY

by Geoff Masters

On 9 September 1992 veterans of the Milne Bay Campaign headed for RAAF Base Richmond and Amberley where they were accommodated overnight in readiness to board a Hercules aircraft that was to take them to Port Moresby.

Thursday 10 September turned out to be a beautiful day and the RAAF made available the quietest of their Hercules aircraft (if there is such a thing). They also supplied a lady, Dr Helen Parsons, who also acted as hostess on the flight with two medical assistants to help her. Department of Veterans Affairs also provided a Dr John Dooley to fly with the group all the way. The RAAF excelled itself with the provision of meals and drinks whilst in flight. A buffet bar and two special toilets were set up in the forward section of the aircraft and pillows and other comforts were also provided for the 6 hour flight, which was uneventful.

Upon arrival at Port Moresby we taxied to the new (Australian funded) PNG Defence Forces terminal on the opposite side of the domestic terminal where we were afforded a diplomatic clearance. We were met at the terminal by the military staff of the Australian High Commission and Air Commodore Bill Garing, who had flown up via Air Niugini the day previous - Bill was in charge of all airforces in the area during the battle and is the last surviving high ranking officer of the battle.

The High Commission provided buses which took us to the Islander Motel, where we overnighted. Next morning the buses took the group to the War Museum then to Parliament House where the veterans were invited to have morning tea with members.

After leaving Parliament House it was a quick trip to Hanuabada village, Moresby town, thence out along Ela Beach - 3 Mile Hill to pick up a priest and out to Bomana where High Commission staff were waiting.

A Service was held and Miss Gwen French (sister of John French, V.C.), Bill Garing and Hugh Griffin laid wreaths - Hugh Griffin was C.O. of 55th Battalion and went to Milne Bay in June 1942 to prepare the area for the coming of troops, Hugh at 85 was our oldest veteran. After the service a quick look at various graves was made before heading back to the Gateway Hotel for lunch. Whilst lunching at the Gateway a young PNG national came up to me saying 'Hello Mr Masters'. I inquired how he knew me and it appears that I gave him his first job cleaning my theatre - his name is Peter Aristoko and he is now District Commissioner at Lae.

The pilots of our Dash 7 to Gurney upon hearing that veterans were on board went out of their way to show the group interesting places on the way down and upon arrival over the Bay did two runs up and down so all could see the place from the air. Upon arrival at Gurney it appeared that the whole town had come to welcome us and a traditional dance of welcome was performed by people from Raba Raba, which went on (as is customary) for the best part of an hour. Buses then took the group to Masurina Lodge. The Provincial Government had allocated me a vehicle and driver on 24 hour basis to allow me freedom of movement, for I had been given a house on the hill overlooking Gili Gili Plantation and the eastern end of the airstrip and I shared this with Bill Garing.

After settling in, we headed for town where the usual Friday night BBQ was in progress at the Lodge and where we remained until around 11 p.m. before heading back to Gili Gili.

Saturday morning dawned a beautiful day, no rain, and we all headed for Gurney terminal for the first of our commemoration services, timed to start at 10 a.m. Just prior to the commencement of the service, Air Niugini arrived and 5 members of the P.I.R. and a bugler got off the plane. An NCO reported

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50th ANNIVERSARY TRIP TO MILNE BAY (continued)

to me that they had been sent as guard of honour and they quickly took up their place around the Gurney memorial. A platform and P.A. system had been set up in front of the memorials; there are now two at Gurney, the other being the Bofors gun. Another is planned, this being a relief map and details of the battle cast in brass which is 1m x 1m designed and made by a Dr. Ross Bastion of Melbourne.

Air Niugini departed and our service got under way with principal speakers being Sir Cecil Abel and the Australian High Commissioner, Alan Taylor, who had flown down specially to be with us. The American Ambassador was unable to attend but sent a letter which was read by Air Commodore Garing.

We chose Geoff George to hand over the Bofors gun to the Premier for Geoff was a gunner on these weapons at Gurney during the battle and it was a great honour for him to do so on behalf of the 2/3rd L.A.A. Association. The Premier responded, saying what a wonderful 50th Anniversary gift it was and to be mounted almost on the spot where one was originally sited in 1942.

The clergy, consisting of Bishop Des Moore, MSC, Fathers Jim Moore and Bernie McGrane and an Anglican priest, whose name I cannot recall, officiated at this and all other services. After this service was over a quick decision was made to hold a small service for Miss Gwen French on the site where her brother was killed in September 1942, so all veterans and clergy embussed for the site only to find that the Scouts and Guides had beaten us to it and formed a guard of honour around the memorials draped with PNG, Australian and RAAF flags. Prayers were said and Athol Nixon, who served with John French V.C., said the Ode, a very moving service that greatly pleased Gwen French.

Busses then took the group to the Lodge for lunch. 3.30 p.m. saw us all heading for Cunningham-Turnbull memorial for the main commemoration service. At 4 p.m. all was in readiness and the service started with much the same procedure as the morning service, but with more emphasis on the fact that it was on this spot that the Japanese were defeated and finally pushed back. At the conclusion of the service the 1942 war ordnance was laid out on the ground for all to see and officially handed over by the Military Attache from the High Commission to the Premier for the proposed war museum. Local people had a great time handling the Bren, Thompson, Owen, 303 and sitting behind the Vickers gun, before they were repacked and given to the police for safe keeping.

The Premier then announced that he would host a party at the Cameron Club for veterans and all were soon on the way to the club. Word must have quickly got around, for when I arrived it seemed most of Alotau was at the club. The party continued until 8 p.m. when we all went to the lodge for dinner.

Originally we were all to return to Port Moresby on the early morning flight on Sunday, however, the Provincial Government wanted us all to have the Sunday at Alotau with a picnic boat trip across to Waga Waga. For this to happen they arranged a charter aircraft to take 18 back a.m. on Monday morning with the balance (5) going in a Britain Norman Islander of Milne Bay Air late Sunday evening. This arrangement allowed all to enjoy a wonderful day on the water with the Catholic Mission providing one trawler and the government another, which was set up with a bar with drinks at no charge. I chose the wrong boat to go on!

Ian Poole had come over from Samarai in his speed boat Saturday evening to take Jim Ross back to Samarai early Sunday morning for a look see - Jim was D.O. Milne Bay 1941-43 with ANGAU and went on to have a distinguished career with ANGAU until he was discharged. Tom Grahamslaw spoke very highly of Jim and it seems a pity that he decided to return to civil life in Australia in 1946 instead of taking up the offer of D.O. in the civil administration, for

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## 50th ANNIVERSARY TRIP TO MILNE BAY (continued)

by all accounts he would have been an asset to the service. Jim has just completed a book of his life aptly named 'My First Seventy Years' and points out that there is no assurance that he will write a sequel.

Those who opted to go back to Port Moresby on the Sunday evening arrived back around 6.30 and spent the night back in the Islander, the others departed a.m. Monday and arrived around 10 a.m. Some of those who arrived back Sunday were provided with transport to take them back to Bomana early Monday to enable them to seek out and photograph headstones of 2/12th Battalion K.I.A. for a book they are compiling. Whilst at Bomana they were very nearly set upon by rascals who upon seeing military presence had second thoughts about an attack.

Our RAAF aircraft had arrived earlier than expected, so our group was quickly rounded up and emplaned. We were off the ground at 11.30 a.m. and on the ground at Amberley at 4.30 p.m. after another wining and dining courtesy of RAAF.

It was voted by all a great 50th! Pity of it was that only 21 took part. We did start with 55, but 10 passed away since it was first planned, 10 more had to go into hospital and two had to pull out at the last minute due to medical problems. We are a dying breed!

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## 50th ANNIVERSARY of the BATTLE of GUADALCANAL

by Noelle Mason

It was tremendously moving to be present at the 50th Anniversary of the Battle of Guadalcanal in Honiara in the Solomon Islands on 7 August 92, and at the dedication of a new United States Memorial to commemorate those historic times.

The memorial was largely inspired by the American Division but is dedicated to all Americans and their Allies who served in that campaign.

It was a tremendous occasion, like an American Anzac Day, the best and youngest of the Americans (grown a little older!) poured in by special cruise ship, Navy ship and by air.

I was very touched by their loving memories of Jack Read and Paul (and of course the Coast Watchers of the Solomons itself) - voices from the jungle etc. Also there was a member of the Catalina Squadron that dropped supplies to Jack and Paul!

The Memorial is truly magnificent, on a wonderful setting high on what is now called Skyline Ridge, the beautiful waters of Ironbottom Sound, with all its memories, below. It is like a collection of beautiful (often flat) "columns" of different significance, set in a large Greek courtyard.

That dedication was in the morning. In the afternoon we attended a ceremony outside the Police Barracks for the unveiling of a statue of Vouza (the famous Sir Jacob Vouza), set in the spirit of the times, Vouza in laplap and brandishing a bushknife.

I had taken a wreath for Jack and Paul (but particularly in thoughts of Jack who had died just a few weeks before). I didn't line up with the Governor Generals etc. but went up alone late in the afternoon. Few people were there, the time of day as you can imagine wonderful in its colours, and asked an old Solomon Islander the correct direction of Bougainville. So I put the wreath there quietly and in the direction from which their voices would have come.

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## THE NEW GUINEA WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION and "HAUS NIUGINI"

When hostilities commenced in the South Pacific during W.W.II, all expatriate women and children were evacuated from New Guinea and a number of them went to Melbourne. There the New Guinea women formed themselves into an Association to sustain their morale and, at the same time, raise funds for comforts to be sent to their men left in the Territory. These comforts, however, were denied them by the Japanese, who gave no indication of their fate. When war ended in August, 1945, it was found that practically the whole of the civilian male population left behind in Rabaul and surrounding areas when the Japanese landed had been wiped out by the enemy.

The New Guinea Women's Association in Melbourne then decided to raise sufficient funds to found a permanent Memorial Scholarship to the memory of these men -- in the first place to assist in the education of children who had been deprived of a father and, later, for children living in New Guinea.

In 1957, the Queensland New Guinea Women's Club, who had organised a fund for a Scholarship similar to that of Victoria, forwarded the balance of their funds to the Melbourne Association to assist in the completion of the Scholarship plan.

The Melbourne Association, assisted by similar Clubs functioning in other States of Australia, also erected Memorial Gates at the entrance of Queen Elizabeth Park, Rabaul, and compiled a Book of Remembrance, containing the names of civilians of the Territory who perished in enemy action. This was placed in the New Britain Women's Club in Rabaul.

Two seats with memorial plaques in memory of the men and women of New Guinea who suffered in the war were donated and placed in the grounds of the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne.

The Association also donated some fine books on Australia to the Port Moresby Library when it opened and gave for some years two annual prizes to New Guinea girls at High School. One to the top girl in her first year Home Economics and one to the top girl in her last year. The Association received some interesting and appreciative letters from these girls.

The Scholarship ended in 1980 or 1981 and when the opportunity came to contribute to "Haus Niugini" the Association was glad to help.

Early last year a fine, much needed community centre was opened by the Victorian RSL War Veterans' Home Trust at its large complex at RSL Park, Frankston. Its primary purpose was to provide a meeting place in which residents can socialise, entertain friends and for larger social activities. At the time, Bill Harry, of the 2/22nd Battalion Lark Force Association, commented:

"Specifically geared towards the 60 elderly widows residing in the independent living units at RSL Park, the centre is anticipated to become a social facility for the community. This \$300,000 project was funded from interesting sources. The New Guinea Women's Association in Victoria established a fund during W.W.II for the benefit of New Guinea residents in the armed forces and later for their children's education. Because of the passage of time the fund was no longer operative. On hearing that such a community centre was being talked about, the New Guinea Women's Association teamed up with the 2/22nd Battalion Lark Force Association - this unit was in Rabaul at the time of the Japanese invasion on January 23, 1941, and suffered heavy casualties along with many New Guinea residents. The War Veterans' Homes Trust welcomed their interest and agreed to match their efforts and together they raised enough for the new community centre to be named Haus Niugini."

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THE NEW GUINEA WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION (continued)

At the opening of Haus Niugini the President of the New Guinea Women's Association, Mrs Clare May (formerly Mrs Clare Cooper), presented their cheque for \$50,000, Mr Fred Field, President of the 2/22nd Battalion Lark Force Association, presented their contribution of \$70,000 and Mrs Dorothy Durkin, President of the RSL Women's Council, announced their contribution of \$30,000 towards the centre.

The bronze plaque at the entrance to Haus Niugini carries the following wording:

"The following organisations created this community centre as a joint venture:

The New Guinea Women's Association, the 2/22nd Battalion Lark Force Association, the RSL Women's Council of Victoria and the RSL War Veterans' Homes Trust of Victoria".

The architect responsible for the design, Mr. Gregory Rosman, commented:

"The building was designed to serve the community housed in the independent living units within the park. It provides for meeting facilities, a place of recreation, remedial and home service functions, i.e. hairdresser, chiropodist and welfare consultation.

The building was also to house some memorabilia and artifacts of that campaign in memory of fallen comrades.

Based on the above brief the design philosophy attempts to portray, even with contemporary building materials, the atmosphere of a New Guinea Long House, hence the raking roof, exposed beams and straw-board ceiling."

Mrs. Olga Bliss of Caulfield Victoria, one of our members, has provided me with the following names of their members who were with the Association in the early years: Mrs. Clare May (formerly Cooper), Mrs. Delphine Cromie, Mrs. Jean McCarthy, Mrs. Elizabeth Merfield, Mrs. Nan Thompson, Mrs. Sheila Waters, Mrs. Pat Tuxen, Mrs. Mary Mansell, Miss. Jean Cox, Mrs. Lorna McGuigan and Mrs. Olga Bliss. Mrs. Rosa Glastonbury, Mrs. Bill Harry and Mrs. Glyn Morgan have also been particularly helpful.

With respect to Haus Niugini Olga writes: "It is an attractive building well and comfortably furnished and has all the necessary equipment to cope with meetings of all kinds. Members have donated pictures and also artifacts and all this gives a true New Guinea touch. We hope that it will prove a very useful meeting place in the years to come. We were always a small but willing group, even to start with and we got loyal service and help from all. I remember them with much affection and gratitude. Our Association is now defunct but we meet when possible. Time has caught up with us all."

(I am indeed most grateful to Mrs. Olga Bliss for the information she has supplied, together with newspaper cuttings etc., which has enabled me to compile the foregoing. Without her assistance it would not have been possible to have recorded details with respect to this Association and its most worthwhile activities over the years. I consider that it is most appropriate that we should do this at this particular point in time. Ed.)

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## A MONTH OF MARRIAGE

By Candy Parrish

Forty eight hours after I met my Tall Dark and Handsome Prince, he proposed, but said we couldn't get married straightaway because he was going to do a patrol into Uncontrolled Territory.

I thought to myself, "Pull the other leg". Perhaps I should ask where he came from. He said "Papua New Guinea". Where was that? Seven months later, when I took off on my journey to marry 'him', was the beginning of a series of errors or should I say horrors.

Firstly, my father, who was only forty two years of age at the time, collapsed at the airport when I was farewelling Australia for the unknown. I was off loaded at Port Moresby, didn't know a soul, then three hours later told to board the 'plane for Lae. On my arrival there was no Fiancee.

One half hour later, a jeep pulled up in a cloud of dust and a 'stranger', very thin, dressed all in white, came to greet me. He had lost three stone in weight since I had met him.

I did manage to board his old U.S. jeep in a very tight skirt (with the fashionable wing flaps) and, wait for it, long kid gloves.

Cocktails were served that evening on the front lawn of District Commissioner Horrie Niall's house. There, I lost an expensive ear-ring and spent most of the time looking for it on the lawn.

That same evening, one Jerry Brown, offered to be best man at our wedding on St. Patrick's Day.

At midnight I was taken to the beach at Lae, told to take off the high heels, climb into a dinghy and out to the trawler, M.V. Huon, we rowed. I was then asked to climb up a rope ladder on the side of the ship (still in tight skirt and stockings) and there on deck was a surprise! There were meris, their picaninnies, dogs, chooks and pigs, and the smell!! Add to this, my first tropical storm - the thunder and lightning I had never experienced before.

What was I doing on this ship with a man I only knew for 48 hours and in a country I knew nothing about? Terror took over, I went to the 'cabin', put all my suitcases in front of the door, and there I sweltered and sweltered all night.

On arrival in Finschhafen next day my "intended" was shocked to hear that his one and only means of transport, an old American jeep, had broken down. Couldn't call a cab! and there were only two old vehicles on the station.

I was taken to stay with the local Police Master, Frank Payne and wife Muriel. No one told me that ants would eat my clothing and that the locals did not speak English. I remember well the night the cook, Kau, served long beans with custard sauce.

I had ten days to prepare for "The Wedding". We flew to Lae the day before, only to find that there was no florist nor anyone to make "the cake". Never mind, I have a whole night to think up something!

Not so, the best man fell and broke his leg and Jack Carroll took over this role. I gathered blooms from "that" frangipanni tree in Lae and was still attempting to sew blossoms on a ribbon, when Horrie Niall arrived to take me to the Church as he was giving me away and has been my "Dad" ever since. I was still putting on the make-up in the car, which travelled at a speed which I thought was only for the Peter Brocks of this world.

The ceremony over and at last married!

We boarded the single engined aircraft to take us back to Finschhafen for the prepared Wedding Reception - not before I tore my gown and lost a gold watch.

(continued next page)

## A MONTH OF MARRIAGE (continued)

But things are still not working to plan. We had a new New Zealand pilot who wasn't familiar with flying low between mountains and through the New Guinea clouds, so we were forced to return to Lae, unannounced.

Jack and Anne Carroll gave us their house that night - still St. Patrick's Day. During yet another tropical storm we went over the road to the local dance, Women, especially new ones who could dance, were in great demand and so I didn't see my "brand new husband" for hours. We eventually found our sodden way home and on the night of nights, not only did the electricity cut out at midnight, but my darling pranged.

Next day we flew back to Finschhafen, the residents and friends having celebrated the night before without us. What a dull homecoming but thank goodness it was all over. Not really, that very same day the "man of my dreams" went down with a very badly infected mouth and suffered for ten days. Ho Hum!!!!

He recovered and took me to the local airstrip for a golfing lesson. During the lesson I swung a five iron back and cracked his nose. There was blood and more blood.

The next morning, whilst checking a bantam's nest under the house, I was stung by a wasp and what a reaction - bumps and bumps everywhere.

Any day now, romance has to come into this marriage!!!

Next night there was a violent storm and in the morning the boss-boy, Avini, arrived and told me "Ologeta sit haus em i bakarap". In English can you imagine how it sounded. What was I doing here? I had left a comfortable position in Sydney and all my friends.

I had been married two weeks and, as my new husband was in need of a solid meal, I went to the kitchen, only to see our cook, Ewonding, take off at great speed -- a four foot snake was curled up under the table. I must add here that a week later, the kitchen fell off the rest of the house - yes, it fell off. We put a plank from the dining room to the kitchen and ran down hill to the stove.

One of my wedding gifts from the "new husband", was a Pomeranian puppy. I house trained it like any country girl would do - but when on patrol with "him" the dog was killing the Station's chickens. The Masta ordered that "Muffy" had to be "put down".

Three weeks married and I'm coping, but then a wonderful surprise! Our outings were to drive out into the jungle and there we found a real full size bath. We even found a lid for the toilet. I was the luckiest girl on the station! I didn't like to tell "the new husband" that I took such amenities for granted in Australia. Had he been in PNG too long?

But it did hurt when Ted Foad promised that I could have one of his cats, a black beauty called BUKA. When I went to collect the cat Ted told me that he had anchored his ship in Lae next to one from the Sepik and the crew had stolen my cat, cooked and eaten it.

Well, my first month of marriage and I'm still there!

No one told me that our Kiap husbands would go on Patrol for such long periods and we would be left quite alone. I remember Policeman LAMBI who was ordered to look after our house (and me) at night. I couldn't work out why each morning a fresh fish would be in the sink. When I asked Lambi, he said that as soon as my bedroom light went out, he went fishing. Twenty years later I met Lambi and we talked of the tree with the Sacred Snakes -- he piggy-backed me out to see them, but that's another story.

After the first month of marriage I had got to know "that brand new husband" and forty plus years later - it has been a marriage Blessed in Heaven but, as Toyoto says, "Oh what a month!!!".

(I found this and when the "bride" sees it in print, I will really be in strife. Ed.)

## JACK DUNBAR-REID - PLANTER

Jack was born on 5 October 1913 at Annandale, a suburb of Sydney, but lived at another Sydney suburb, Canterbury, where he first met his wife, then Jean Slater.

His father went to W.W.I and died of wounds received in action. His mother passed away in 1930 whilst Jack, then 17, was attending Wagga Agricultural College in southern NSW. After College Jack worked in the Young district in NSW, shearing and contract pruning.

In the meantime, Jean has been taken to Tokua Plantation, near Kokopo in New Britain, by her mother who was to nurse a sick friend, the then owner of Tokua Plantation, Vic Pennyfather. Jack contacts Jean and says that it is time for them to get married and the event takes place at Campsie NSW in January 1933. Jack and Jean moved to Young but later Jean's mother convinced them both to go to New Guinea.

Jack started his career in PNG as a Plantation Manager on Nambung Plantation on the Baining coast for Tilly Ross. He and Jean moved from Nambung and joined Oscar Rohndahl's organisation to manage Makurapau Plantation before Jack became the General Manager of the Rohndahl's organisation of thirteen plantations and associated business activities based at Kabakaul outside Kokopo, where Don was born. Kabakaul was then the major trading station and the overseas wharf for all the produce shipped from the Gazelle Peninsular.

In 1938 Jack took up an Agricultural Lease on the Mavalu River at Open Bay, and hacked Korondindi Plantation out of the jungle. He logged walnut and other timbers for Jack Chipper, grew food, smoked fish, rolled cigars and became involved in similar ventures to stay afloat until the coconuts could start bearing. Have times really changed? Their only communication and supply facility was a sailing schooner which called every 6 months. The N.W. coast couldn't be considered the most hospitable of tropical environments. Life there in the pre-war days would have been full and hard.

Now with two young boys, Don and Dick, Jack and Jean weren't notified of the start of World War II until quite late and it wasn't until January 1942 that they were able to get as far as Rabaul. This was, of course, after Pearl Harbour and the Japanese move into Malaya, and the last aircraft had already left Rabaul full to the racks with evacuees. Most of the civilian population had fled, and the Reids had to endure 6 weeks of Japanese bombing before the *M.V. Malaita* arrived to take the last of the civilians off. There was only room for women and children, the wounded, and Japanese internees, which seems inexplicable with the benefit of hindsight, and considering the staggering numbers of passengers which were squeezed on ships in other parts of the world in similar circumstances. It must also be remembered that Jap internees apparently had priority over Australian citizens.

Jack and others walked out of Rabaul through the North Coast with the aid of Coast Watchers, and he was eventually picked up by flying boat and taken to Sydney via Port Moresby and Brisbane. The *Malaita* meanwhile survived aerial attack from the Japs despite being obviously not a warship, and arrived in Sydney via Buka and the Solomons. Jean met Jack at Sydney's Central station in the same clothes she had worn when they had said goodbye on Rabaul wharf.

Jack tried to join the Army in Sydney but was refused on the grounds that he had malarial parasites in his system, but after considerable argument it was agreed that all the Australians going to New Guinea would inevitably contract Malaria anyway, so Jack was allowed to join ANGAU and was sent to Port Moresby. His experience included the Owen Stanley Trail, and then to New Britain. He was by this time a member of the Australian Intelligence Bureau with the rank of Captain, and seconded to the U.S Command. With Charlie Blake

(continued next page)



JACK DUNBAR-REID - PLANTER (*continued*)

he led the U.S. First Marine Division ashore at Cape Gloucester and up the South Coast of New Britain to Jacquinot Bay, where he was when the surrender was announced, being mentioned in despatches in the meantime.

Immediately after the war, Jack and Jean returned to Rabaul and Harry Woolcott, Peter Woolcott's father, offered Jack a share-farming agreement on Kabanga Plantation in the Kokopo Sub-District in New Britain. Jack and Jean resurrected Kabanga from the ashes of the War and started planting cocoa in the late 50s, assisted by his new Cadet Manager, son Don, recently returned from boarding school. The plantation flourished with cocoa reaching record levels of £500 per ton, equivalent today to K8000. Jack diversified with a large vegetable farm, supplying his own store in Rabaul and benefiting the whole community by forcing the heady market prices down.

Two more children, Ian and Dawn, followed and life began to achieve a new fullness. Boating, cricked, baseball, horse breeding and racing at Vulcan, a little poker now and then, a variety of cars including an impressive Humber, and a very united community, free of crime. Jack was also a very active member of the Masonic Lodge.

Jack had purchased Kabanga outright in 1956, and a few years later purchased 250 acres in the Warangoi where Don carved Clifton out of the bush, along with a whole bunch of other pioneers in that area often referred to as 'swampies'. Dick had returned from School and took over as the new Kabanga Cadet.

Later, Jack and Jean moved to Australia while the "post-war children", Ian and Dawn, went to school in Sydney. Four years in Australia, however, were enough to convince Jack and Jean that New Guinea was where they really belonged and they returned to build a new home in Kokopo.

While Dick ran Kabanga and Don Clifton, Jack established a renowned orchid garden in Kokopo and Jean a home that always had an open door and a hearty meal for anyone.

Jack joined the Bali Plantation group as Managing Director and guided that organisation through a period of consolidation. He was a founding member of the Kokopo Golf Club and it was his negotiations that secured the land from Plantation Holdings.

There are many other community and civic duties Jack became involved in; the Planters Association, New Britain Game Fishing Club, Orchid Society, Show Society, New Guinea Club, Kokopo Sports Club and the Anglican Church to mention a few.

Jack had also become a partner in Koi-Koi Plantation on the east coast of Bougainville as a result of his involvement in Teperoi Timbers and by the early 70s was the majority shareholder. He continued to develop the property until the recent problems in that area. His beloved Jean died while they were on a cruise in the East in 1980, and Jack returned with her ashes to their Kokopo home.

With respect to Jack's Masonic career this had commenced with his initiation at Lodge Horrice Thompson in 1946 before he returned to New Guinea. He became an active member of Lodge Rabaul 4468 E.C. and helped organise the building of the new Temple in Mango avenue. Prior to its completion meetings were held in members' homes, and subsequently in a tar-paper building on the Mango Avenue site. After Gus Bailes, Jack was the second 4468 member to be honoured with an O.G.R.

In August 1991 Jack moved to his daughter Dawn's home at Hervey Bay Qld, but his health was not the best and he passed away in June 1992.

(Jack and Jean were wonderful people and I consider it a great privilege to have known them both. They contributed so much to the district in which they lived and helped greatly in making it one of the most economically viable areas in PNG prior to Independence. Ed)



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## THE ASSOCIATION'S CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

will be held on

**SUNDAY 6TH DECEMBER**, at 11.45 a.m. for 1 p.m.

at: **THE MANDARIN CLUB**

Cnr. Pitt and Goulburn Streets, Sydney

Please note: The venue will be the Oriental Room - on the 4th Floor.

Cost will be \$20.00 per head - a banquet style meal will be served.

Drinks at Club prices:-

Beer	\$6.00 per jug
Wine	\$7.00 per carafe
Soft drink	\$6.00 per carafe

Drinks (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) will also be available by the glass.

The Council parking station, corner Goulburn and Castlereagh Streets, will be open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. - the charge still \$4.00. The Club is not far from Town Hall, Central and Museum Stations. Anyone needing assistance with transport could please ring Pamela Foley on 428 2078.

Seating arrangements will receive special attention to help those attending alone or those who feel they may not know many people. If you wish to be seated with your friends please let us know who they are when you make your booking. **PLEASE BOOK EARLY!** It is most important that we know in advance how many are coming so that we can liaise efficiently with the Club, and not have to pay for meals ordered and not used. If it is necessary for you to cancel, a full refund will be made if Treasurer Mrs. Elma Holmes is telephoned on 958 4996 by noon on Friday 4th December.

Please make your cheque payable to ROAPNG and send with the Booking Slip below to The Secretary, ROAPNG, P O Box 452, Roseville NSW 2069.

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### LUNCHEON BOOKING

Name.....(Please print Christian and Surname)

I will be accompanied by.....

.....  
Please print full name (For name cards)

If possible I would like to be seated with.....

.....  
Enclosed please find my cheque/money order for \$.....

## BOOK REVIEWS

### COAST WATCHING IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS - The Bougainville Reports December 1941 - July 1943

Edited by: A. B. Freuer with Foreward by Walter Lord.  
Obtainable from: Praeger Publishers, One Madison Avenue, New York NY10010  
USA 172 pp, price not known.  
Review by: Doug Parrish.

This book is a compilation of edited accounts of the coast watching operation on Buka and Bougainville Islands in PNG during World War II. It is primarily the remarkable story of Jack Read and Paul Mason and their struggle for survival in the Japanese-infested jungles of Bougainville. Jack Read and Paul Mason's accounts were edited from microfilm reports on file at the U.S. Naval Historical Center in Washington, D.C. Included in Read's report are reports by Jack Keenan, V. Day and G. McPhee.

The conditions under which the coast watchers and their handful of supporting troops operated behind the Japanese lines were extremely primitive and most hazardous, to say the least. That Mason and Read were able to provide such comprehensive and detailed reports under these circumstances, is mind boggling. Their exploits have never before been recorded in such detail and how the personnel involved were able to survive for such a long period with little loss of life, comparatively speaking, is absolutely amazing. Supply drops by Catalina aircraft at night, under the most dangerous and difficult conditions, contributed greatly to their survival. However, a number of Catalinas and their crews were lost providing this support.

The fantastic influence, quite out of proportion to their numbers, the coast watchers operation had on the progress of the Pacific War is quite extraordinary. It is also a gripping account of outstanding courage and devotion to duty and, because I know the country in which the coast watchers were operating, I found that I could not put the book down once I had started reading and read well into the night.

A must for anyone who was involved in, or is interested in, W.W. II in the Pacific Islands. I highly recommend the book.

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BOOK REVIEWS (continued)

CATALINA SQUADRONS - First and Furthest (Recounting the operations of RAAF Catalinas, May 1941 to March 1943.

Author: Jack Riddell  
Obtainable from: Jack Riddell, 133 Byangum Road, MURWILLUMBAH NSW 2484  
Telephone: 066 72 3376. A4/83pp. Price \$20 including postage.  
Review by: Doug Parrish.

A meticulously detailed record of operations by the Catalina aircraft of RAAF Squadrons Nos. 11 & 20 during W.W.II in Northern Australia, PNG, the Solomon Islands and surrounding areas. This book is essential reading for anyone interested in the magnificent work performed by these aircraft often under extremely difficult conditions. The coast watchers in the Solomon Islands and elsewhere could not have survived without the support they received from the Catalinas.

The Preface to the book by Group Captain Sir Richard Kingsland AO CBE DFC, an early Commander of No. 11 Squadron, I consider aptly describes the operations of the Catalinas and their crews as depicted in the book.

"About time, I say....About time that aircrew members other than pilots put pen to paper to tell us about the air war, such as the stories of the involvement of Catalinas in the South West Pacific in World War II. Their crews performed what must have been some of the most demanding tasks in the history of aviation.

They say pigs might fly. This is no more unlikely than Australia depending on a handful of Catalinas, designed for ocean reconnaissance, for its very Long Range Strike and Minelaying Force throughout the war.

Members of Catalina crews welded themselves into unique teams. Each member was mutually dependant for his survival, each member an equal link in a chain to achieve operational efficiency.

Their flying tasks were performed in very cramped conditions. This discomfort was multiplied by the flight endurance of the aircraft, anything up to 24 hours. Their ground duties, performed in primitive conditions in tropical bases around the Pacific, were no less difficult and stressful.

This operational environment placed great demands on the perseverance of all crew members. What they lacked initially in experience in this cruel game, they made up for with courage and ingenuity.

Night attacks by the slow ungainly Catalinas on heavily defended targets and minelaying from minimal heights in enemy harbours were daunting tasks for these young men. I knew of none who failed these tasks.

Jack Riddell's wartime service, which I saw in action, weaves through the story of these Catalinas. His name was a by-word for cool calm efficiency on difficult and dangerous missions, and in the long hours on duty on the ground. Who better to recount Catalina history?"

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HELP WANTED!

I am desperately seeking contact with a Nat King Cole fan club anywhere. Parties may call reverse charges, if applicable, (044) 73 8563 or reply to the address below.

The truth of the matter is: I have ruined a friend's video tape of the Nat King Cole Show and wish to find someone out there who may have taped the SBS Saturday shows for June and July 1992 (8 programmes).

Address: F W Rounsevell  
20 Beatty Crescent  
TUROSS HEAD NSW 2537

## **"PRIVATE WILLIAM COOK"**

by Herbert Edlington Clark

Japanese military forces landed at Rabaul on the island of New Britain at several places in Stygian darkness about 0230 hours on 23 January 1942.

Invasion units comprised three battalions of 144 Regiment commanded by Colonel Masao Kusunese, one battalion of 55 Mountain Artillery Regiment commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Shigeo Hozumi, one company of 55 Engineer Regiment commanded by Captain Hachiro Takemori and two companies of 55 Transport Regiment commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Toshiharu Sakigawa.

The fourteen hundred strong small force of Australians comprising the Rabaul Garrison under the Area Commanded Colonel J.J. Scanlan, D.S.O. were 2/22 Australian Infantry Battalion (Lark Force), details of 2/10 Australian Field Ambulance, the Rabaul Anti-Aircraft Battery, and a detachment of New Guinea Volunteer Rifles.

Colonel Scanlan was an experienced soldier. He had served in the Australian Imperial Forces in the Great War with 7 Battalion in 1914-1915, and was promoted Commanding Officer of 59 Battalion in 1918.

When the Japanese forces threatened to encircle them the Australian defenders withdrew to various places south of Rabaul with orders to break up, and for every man to fend for themselves. They suffered extraordinary hardships in the rugged jungle-covered mountains, the intersecting ravines and fast flowing streams. They were tormented by heavy rains and mud. They were constantly wet and sleep was difficult. Food was scarce. The troops suffered from malaria, dysentery and tropical ulcers. After much travail some troops reached the south coast of New Britain near Adler Bay. Some of the men resolved to surrender, and hoisted a white flag. The majority pushed on down the coast in small parties.

Major William T. Owen, Officer Commanding A Company of 2/22 Australian Infantry Battalion in an effort to organise supplies pushed on further south along the coast. Major Owen reached Tol Plantation on Wide Bay on 2 February 1942 passing about one hundred and fifty Australian troops within a day's march of Tol Plantation. When he reached Tol, Owen found there were about one hundred troops already there.

Beyond Tol Plantation there were two rivers which could not be crossed except by boats or canoes. Tol was a trap in the event of a Japanese attack. There would be no means of escape.

Major Owen and his party left Tol Plantation early morning on 3 February. As they were crossing the second river Owen saw five enemy landing craft laden with troops come in to shore. They shelled Tol Plantation, and landed troops. Later two of the Japanese landing craft went further south to Kalai Plantation which was ahead of Owen's party, and shelled that and other plantations. At Tol Plantation the five Japanese landing craft after firing mortars and machine guns landed without opposition. Some Australians were waiting on the beach to surrender. The Japanese took them prisoners, lined them up, and took their names, numbers and ranks. They were given some food and were not ill-treated. During the day other Australian troops were captured or surrendered.

Private William Collins and Private Clissold both of 2/10 Australian Field Ambulance managed to get beyond the two rivers south of Tol Plantation, but they were captured. They were returned to Tol Plantation and put into a hut with about sixty others.

Early on the morning of 4 February 1942 the troops were marched to Tol Plantation house where the Japanese attempted a roll call. More than one hundred Australian soldiers were present. Identification discs which had been taken from the Australians on 3 February were returned. The Japanese

*(continued next page)*

"PRIVATE WILLIAM COOK" (continued)

attempted to find out which Australians had been on the beach with a white flag. Eventually two officers and twenty men were separated from the others. The twenty-two were taken away, and the Japanese again collected all identity discs, equipment, pay books, watches, photographs and personal belongings.

Red Cross brassards were torn from the arms of Australian medical personnel by the Japanese. One Australian soldier drew the attention of a Japanese soldier to his Red Cross brassard. The Japanese hooked his bayonet under the brassard and ripped it off. The Australian was shot or bayoneted.

The prisoners' hands were tied behind their backs, and they were linked in parties of three, four, five, ten or even twelve with white fishing line or string. Owing to a shortage of cord or string the men in one or two of the parties including that of Warrant Officer Alfred L. Robinson of New Guinea Volunteer Rifles were not linked together.

Robinson succeeded in escaping, but his hands were still tied. After wandering in the jungle for three days he met a party of civilians led by Frank Holland, a timber-getter, who released him. (After the war Robinson was killed on a plantation on New Britain on 12 December 1948 by local natives.)

Another Australian named Johnson escaped using a similar ruse. He later died on New Britain. The other men who were tied up and marched into the plantation were shot or bayoneted, or both shot and bayoneted singly or in groups by the Japanese, with the possible exception of Private J. Michael Wise of 2/22 Australian Infantry Battalion. He succeeded in escaping, but died later in New Britain.

A little more than a mile to the east of Tol was Waitavalo Plantation. Here a party of eleven prisoners had their identity discs and other possessions taken from them. The prisoners wrote their names on paper. Their hands were tied behind them and they were marched into the plantation. They were shot from behind by Japanese with rifles and machine guns. The shooting or bayoneting of each victim was carried out in the presence or hearing of those still awaiting their turn. They either saw the killings or heard the screams of the victims as the bayonets were driven home.

Many victims were bayoneted from behind about the kidneys. Private N. Walkley was shot in the lungs, the anus and had his arm broken by a bullet. One victim was motioned by a Japanese to go into the jungle, and he was bayoneted there. His screams were heard by the others. A Japanese soldier came out of the jungle wiping blood from his bayonet with a cloth.

One Australian next in line broke loose and tried to escape, but was cut down with a sword by a Japanese officer who then shot him in the head with a pistol.

Two badly wounded victims bayoneted in the stomach succeeded in reaching Mrs. Ross's house on the plantation. Some days later they were found alive by Japanese who put grease on them, poured kerosene or benzine over them, set fire to the house, and burnt the Australians to death.

William Cook was thirty-three years old when Rabaul fell. He was an oiler before his enlistment in 2/10 Australian Field Ambulance. Cook and the seven other Australians in his party were near to Tol Plantation when the Japanese landed there. His mates were Staff Sergeant S.C. Caston, Sergeant Gordon Hudson, Private C. Duck, Private R. Buck, Private H. Galloway, Private R.M. Attwater and Private R.M. Cantwell.

The party stopped to rest and prepare a meal. Four men including Cook were sitting on the ground playing cards, and the other four were cooking the meal. The four cooks ran past the card players. Cook saw a Japanese soldier standing close by with a fixed bayonet. Cook and his three mates ran into the jungle. They returned later and surrendered. They were not armed, but carried a bush knife in their haversacks.

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"PRIVATE WILLIAM COOK" (continued)

Eight men in Cook's party were joined by other Australians, making twentyfive prisoners in all. They were taken by Japanese soldiers to Tol Plantation. Cook was wearing his brassard. The prisoners were marched through the plantation to a point about half a mile away. They were told to sit down with their backs towards the sea. One Australian who looked around was struck in the face with a rifle butt. Various parties were marched off in different directions leading from the track into the undergrowth.

One Australian was then taken down a path. A few minutes later the Japanese called "Next". The Japanese soldiers then started to take Australians away in twos and threes with their thumbs tied behind them.

Cook was linked to others with a piece of native loin cloth threaded through their arms. Eventually there were only seven Australians left. Five of these were 2/10 Australian Field Ambulance medical personnel tied together. Two Victorians in the party were cut loose. A Japanese officer pulled out his revolver, and asked whether they would prefer to be shot or bayoneted. Both said they would prefer to be shot.

"Next" was called again. Cook and two others walked down the path under guard. Three other Japanese soldier who were standing about thirty yards away walked across, fell in behind them, and started to stab them in the back with bayonets. Cook was stabbed in the middle of the back with a bayonet while he was still tied to the other two Australians. He had his thumbs tied behind him. All three were stabbed about the same time. The blows knocked them all to the ground.

The Japanese soldier standing over Cook stabbed him another six times in the back. He was about to walk away when Cook, who was holding his breath feigning death, could do so no longer. The Japanese stabbed another four times, once through Cook's ear. The point of the bayonet came out through Cook's mouth after severing the temporal artery. Blood gushed from his mouth. The Japanese soldier pulled some dead leaves over Cook and the other Australians with him, and left.

Cook heard two revolver shots and a volley of rifle fire. Cook lay where he was stunned and shocked for some time. He did not lose consciousness. He imagined he could hear a voice calling him, and resolved not to die. He eventually got to his feet and managed to reach the beach about thirty yards away after collapsing once. He managed to manoeuvre one leg in between his arms, and chewed through the cord tying his thumbs. He bathed his painful bayonet wounds in the salt water, and kept walking very slowly in the shallows away from Tol Plantation to avoid leaving traces of blood.

The following day in the grey light of dawn he followed a path into the jungle, and met Colonel Scanlan, Lieutenant A.G. Fischer and some other Australian officers. Scanlan applied a field dressing to Cook's neck and gave him another shirt. He was allowed to sleep for a couple of hours, and put in charge of a native guide to go back to find Staff Sergeant R.L. Kennedy of New Guinea Volunteer Rifles who had charge of a good quantity of medical supplies.

The native shook hands, and left Cook to go on by himself after they had travelled only a short distance. Cook did not meet Kennedy because he was one of the Tol massacre victims. However, he met three other Australian soldiers and went with them into the jungle behind Tol. They were Corporal M.R. Edwards, Sapper W.G. Roberts and Private H.B. Sisson. After wandering the jungle-clad mountains for about a week they finished back where they started. They then met a party of twenty to thirty Victorian soldiers.

Colonel Scanlan reached Kalai Mission on the evening of 8 February 1942. There were two messages from the Japanese Commander in Chief exhorting him to surrender, and beg mercy for his troops. Scanlan left to surrender to the

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"PRIVATE WILLIAM COOK" (continued)

Japanese on 10 February. He was sent from Rabaul to Yokohama the following July in a dirty old freighter.

About the end of February Cook met up with Major A.C. Palmer, Senior Medical Officer in charge of 2/10 Australian Field Ambulance. He remained in Palmer's care until rescued at Palmal in April 1942. Palmer's greeting to Cook was, "Cook, you're a tough old bastard".

Cook's party were headed for Palmal in Jacquinot Bay. At night he suffered terrible nightmares reliving his Tol experience. He was unable to sleep in a confined space, and each night he took to the bush to avoid being recaptured by Japanese soldiers. Eventually they reached Palmal Mission Station and were greeted by Father Edward (Ted) Harris. He arranged for them to go to Drina Plantation because he had insufficient facilities at Palmal.

On 6 April 1942 Australian troops moved from Drina Plantation back to Palmal. They were anticipating an evacuation. The first indication help was at hand was the arrival from Milne Bay of the twenty foot long pinnace *Mascot* under the command of Lieutenant Allen T. Timperley of Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit, formerly an Assistant Resident Magistrate in the Papuan Public Service.

Timperley's companions were Sergeant John R. Marsh and Corporal David O. Neil volunteers from Fortress Signals, Corporal Sari and Armed Constable Oivo of the Royal Papuan Constabulary. The engineer was a Papuan named Bobi. At Salamaua Timperley picked up a Solomon Islander named Hitop with local knowledge of the Jacquinot Bay area.

*Mascot* reached Palmal early on 5 April 1942. On Wednesday 9 April just after dawn, the Motor Yacht *Laurabada* of 150 tons was sighted out to sea heading towards Palmal. *Laurabada* was under command of Lieutenant Ivan Francis Champion of Royal Australian Naval Reserve. He was a former Resident Magistrate in the Papuan Public Service. Timperley in *Mascot* met Champion and escorted *Laurabada* safely into sheltered waters under the lee of a small island off Palmal.

Champion uplifted one hundred and fifty-one Army, Navy and civilians. Four Tol massacre survivors including Cook, two women and four children sailed aboard *Laurabada* under cover of a welcome storm. Next morning Private I.I. James died and was buried at sea. Three days later *Laurabada* entered China Straits and headed west along the Papuan coast towards Port Moresby, where she arrived on 12 April. Survivors were transferred to M.V. *Macdhuil*, and sailed for Townsville.

Although pressed to escape aboard *Laurabada*, Father Harris insisted he must remain at his station at Palmal. Details are now known, but it appears that Father Harris was captured at Palmal, put on a Japanese vessel, and executed about 12 December 1942. He was probably bayoneted, shot and thrown overboard. His body was washed ashore, but the Japanese prevented his burial by local natives.

Major Owen was promoted Lieutenant-Colonel and made Commanding Officer of the 39 Battalion on the Kokoda Track. He was killed by a sniper's bullet while throwing a grenade from near the escarpment during the retreat from Kokoda on the night of 29 July 1942.

It is not known how many Australians were killed in the massacres. An Australian Military Court of Inquiry held in May 1942, presided over by Brigadier-General Allen, agreed that the number was not far short of one hundred and fifty. Officers of the War Graves commission uncovered one hundred and fifty eight skeletons in 1945. Some were civilians, but there is no way of knowing how many.

Six of those left for dead by the Japanese recovered sufficiently to

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"PRIVATE WILLIAM COOK" (continued)

make their escape. They were Private W. Cook and Driver W.D. Collins both of 2/20 Australian field Ambulance; Gunner Maxwell (Smacker) Hazelgrove of the Rabaul Anti-Aircraft Battery; and Sergeant H.J.(Nipper) Webster, Lance Corporal C. Marshall and Private M. Walkley all three of D Company 2/22 Australian Infantry Battalion. Private Walkley died on 1 March 1942.

There were at least four separate massacres on the morning of 4 February 1942 at Waitavalo and Tol. There was no justification for the brutal bayoneting and shooting of Australian soldiers and civilians by the Japanese soldiers. The Japanese unit responsible for the massacres at Waitavalo and Tol was probably the 3 Battalion of 144 Regiment commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Isiro Kuwada. It was suggested the reason the Japanese killed the Australians at Tol and Waitavalo Plantations was because they were angry with the resistance shown at Rabaul. They were also angry at having to chase Australians around the coast from Rabaul.

The hideous killings at Tol and Waitavalo were cruel, wicked atrocities, carried out with savage brutality. Troops were killed one by one almost in the presence of each other.

Cook was discharged medically unfit from the Army in September 1942. He received a princely pension of four shillings and two pence a week, or forty-two cents in today's currency. On appeal in 1943 his pension was increased to sixteen shillings and nine pence a week.

He was working at Central Railway Station, Sydney, on Friday night 14 September 1941 and it was his job as train examiner to test the brakes on the trains. He wore a hearing aid because of the bayonet wound to his ear, but at the time, the hearing aid was being serviced and he did not have a replacement. Cook was working between number nine and number ten platforms at Central Railway station, when an engine and tender came up the middle track unnoticed, knocked Cook down and severed both his legs at the thighs.

Cook did not lose consciousness and other railwaymen found him about fifty yards from ten platform. He gave them his telephone number so that his wife Alma could be advised and one medically inexperienced workmate held the severed arteries for twenty minutes until ambulance officers arrived.

Surgeons amputated one leg at the hip, and the other was left a very short stump. The surgeons were amazed at Cook's remarkable courage and fortitude. Billy Cook ended up in a wheelchair.

Cook's tragedy moved the people of Sydney, and an appeal was launched through The Sun. It realised sufficient money for Cook to purchase a small cottage in Bexley which he nostalgically named Laurabada.

Billy Cook was a happy fellow until about four years before he died. He became a vegetable and could not talk. He had to be fed, his mental facilities were impaired and he suffered heart trouble and cancer. His wife Alma visited him daily and was with him when he died.

A sad end to a brave digger!

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VISIT TO BLUE MOUNTAINS

On 12 October 18 members visited a new venue in the mountains in the Medlow Bath/Blackheath area. Most of those travelling from the city enjoyed a comfortable journey on the train at a cost of only \$2.00 for the return trip (Senior Citizens' rate).

After lunch at the Hydro Majestic the group visited the "Bacchante Gardens" at Blackheath, admiring Rhododendrons and Azaleas just coming in to flowering season.

Those attending were: Aileen Giles, Bonnie Dun, Marie Day, Florence Cohen, Don Drover, Pamela Foley, Roma Bates, Elaine Kimmorley, Harry West, Bill Kelly, Mary and Bob Pulsford, Mert Brightwell, Ken Gorringer, Syd Smith, Ted Hicks, Bill and Friedegard Tomasetti.

## PNG NEWS

ADDRESS BY THE PRIME MINISTER THE RIGHT HONOURABLE PAIAS WINGTI  
TO THE PORT MORESBY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AT THE PORT MORESBY TRAVELODGE 1/10/92

### Titled: "The cost of maintaining Provincial Governments"

The last time I addressed this distinguished forum, I outlined PNG 2000. (At this first address to the PNG Chamber of Commerce the Prime Minister outlined his Government's major policies).

Today, I would like to confide in you a certain problem in this country that is hindering this Government's plans to move PNG faster towards that goal. I am referring to the provincial government system in Papua New Guinea. In particular the cost of this nation of maintaining provincial governments in Papua New Guinea.

When our Constitutional Planning Committee first proposed a decentralised system of Government in the form of the present provincial government system, they envisaged a system that brought goods and services closer to the people. Seventeen years later that noble goal has yet to see light of day. Our people are crying out for basic services.

The little that the colonial administration has left behind is now broken down or in need of urgent maintenance work.

When the same Constitutional Planning Committee talked about the provincial government system, they had unity in mind. Somebody suggested "Unity in diversity" as the catch-word and it stuck. Even today you hear some of us beating our chests and asserting on many occasions that the nation's strength is in its diverse cultures and traditions.

You look around you today. The diversity is slowly strangling our nationhood. Each time major decisions have to be made, we have to take regional and provincial concerns in mind. Provincial Governments and regional groupings are pulling off in different directions for reasons that are not in the national interest.

The whole dream and purpose of provincial governments has gone wrong. Something has to be wrong if a Premier consistently writes off his brand new Nissan Patrols and gets new ones. Something has to be wrong if provincial assemblies award themselves ever increasing amounts in electoral allowances. Something is definitely wrong if the people are crying out for the very basics in life at one end, whilst at the other end the system that is supposed to help them only supports a few hundred politicians.

Provincial governments are around basically as the result of our young Parliament giving in to a blackmail in 1976.

When the Constituent assembly accepted the Constitution in 1975, it rejected the provision for provincial governments. This led to the famous walkout by Fr John Momis and Bougainville MPs. It brought about the first amendment to our Constitution to put back the provision on provincial governments in November 1976. Whether we like it or not this nation was forced to take on this costly second tier of government as a result of a blackmail from one provincial grouping. The blackmail was essentially "Give us provincial governments or Bougainville secedes". Once was enough. We will not allow the same blackmail again.

Until the current crisis, provincial governments seemed to work in only Bougainville and a handful of provinces.

Some still continue to work. But far too many do not work. Goods and services are tied up within provincial headquarters. Annually, K239 million goes into the delegated functions of the provincial government system. At least K50 million of that can be channelled to directly benefit villagers.

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## PNG NEWS (continued)

Five hundred and fifty provincial politicians and their provincial government staff took up just over K10 million in 1991 in wages bill alone. This excludes perks and privileges for 240 provincial ministers.

Add our 109 members of Parliament and that works out to PNG taxpayers supporting 659 politicians. This is not counting the provincial government staff or the staff and officers of the 224 third level governments. New Zealand with a similar population as PNG and a far more advanced economy supports only 97 politicians. The 97 costs the New Zealand taxpayer \$7 million per annum which covers salaries and allowances. That works out to about K3.5 million. Our annual wages bill for provincial politicians is more than three times that of the money New Zealand pays for all politicians.

Let me tell you. When these figures and these comparisons came to my attention, I was not surprised. Now, I am more convinced than ever that we cannot continue with this system.

We have politicians who are being under-utilised. I am referring to our 109 parliamentarians. We should be happy with just the 109 members, not a massive 650 politicians living on the public payroll. Parliamentarians are the people who should be employed more meaningfully in grassroots affairs. They should be helping their constituents build roads, bridges, schools and hospitals. By any test provincial governments have failed to give people basic services.

The inefficiencies of Provincial Governments is hampering development by causing a major imbalance in the distribution of our scarce skilled public service manpower in the country. Although the National Government is paying for most public servants and public service general orders are directed from the Department of Personnel Management, the Government cannot shift its employees around. This causes severe shortage of skilled manpower in some areas. It hampers movement of skilled personnel from one province to where they are needed in another province. With no surplus of expertise, National Government must be able to get its professional public servants from one area to another with the minimum of fuss.

What about revenue collected by the provincial governments? Between them, the 19 governments raise about K25 million annually and receive K67 million in grants from the national Government. About 60% of revenue collected from both provincial and national sources is spent on administration costs and overheads. Planning leaves much to be desired. Provincial governments planned to collect a total K214 million in revenue this year. Come September, they had only collected K23 million. There is no way they can collect the money anticipated by the end of the year.

Look at it from another angle. Individual assemblies are stretching the Organic Law on Provincial Governments by pushing for more and more powers. They award themselves slush funds. They extend their terms of office beyond the required period. They add ever-increasing allowances and add to already impressive vehicle fleets. They are becoming a power unto themselves to the point of downright disrespect and disobedience of national government directions. Listening to some of the complaints coming forth these days, I think some premiers are even beginning to see themselves as Prime Ministers of some future independent state. Provincial government rivalries are creating disunity in this country.

Nearly half of the provincial governments in the country have been suspended for gross mismanagement and corruption at one time or another. We want a nation which is united and strong - not divided by petty regional loyalties, fostered by self serving, well paid provincial members.

Take an example that is closer to your hearts: the provincial tax system. Quite apart from the collection of sales tax in many provinces being

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PNG NEWS (continued)

inefficient, there is little or no consistency in the imposition of sales tax by the provinces. Sales tax on the same item varies from province to province. For instance, there are 14 different rates of sales tax imposed on beer in twenty provinces. They range from nil per cent to 22 per cent. There are four different rates of sales tax imposed on soft drinks varying from nil to four percent.

This is unacceptable. Sales tax is passed on to the consumer as we all know. By charging different prices in different provinces for the same product, we are discriminating against our citizens. Of course, this is quite apart from the legitimate reasons to mark up prices such as freight costs.

In addition, I am sure you will all agree that it is extra work on our distributors. That is because each time a price changes, it is necessary for the whole range of different sales taxes to be calculated and imposed for each province. This increases the administrative costs of distributing and selling goods in the country.

The provincial sales tax system will be reviewed with a view to standardising it.

The provincial government system also discourages investment. Not only is it necessary for investors to discuss matters with national government departments in Port Moresby, but having done so, it is then necessary for those investors to repeat the process with the relevant Provincial Governments of those provinces they are investing in. And of course if they are investing in more than one province, then the investor has to repeat the process many times. The process can hardly be called encouragement of investment. We must streamline the process.

We must always maintain safeguards to ensure proper protection of our resources and to ensure that our nation and its people are properly rewarded for those resources -- but where these safeguards are in place and we are seeking to encourage investors we should do everything to facilitate the investment. We will not permit investors to be discouraged as they are by the current multiple duplication process between the national and provincial governments.

It is quite obvious by now that I am all for overhauling this costly system. Reform has been talked about by various administrations. My Government is convinced that the time for that reform is now. And Parliament has got a team that I am certain will think across petty politics and effect this reform.

The nature and details of that reform will be announced by this Government soon. All I will say at this point is that any reform will be aimed at rationalisation of the existing system.

As with any reform, there will be criticisms. There will be some from those of you here. I ask that rather than whispering them at exclusive clubs, tell them to me. My office is open. I welcome criticisms if they are constructive.

Of course, criticism will come from those people who are directly affected. Watch where the loudest cries of outrage come from in the next few days. It will not be from the general public but from those who want to guard their perks. Well, as you would by now have realised, my government and indeed, this Parliament, is not concerned with biased criticism. It will always do what it considers to be in the best interest of Papua New Guinea.

I ask that you think carefully of this important and long overdue reform and regardless of whether you support my government or the opposition, in this case think only of the interest of our nation. This issue is far too important for us to play politics. This reform will substantially benefit Papua New Guinea in the future.

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PNG NEWS (continued)

I will not stand to see the nation's limited resources go to waste. I will not allow goods and services to be stopped at the edge of towns. And I will NOT stand for fragmentation of Papua New Guinea. That, ladies and gentlemen, is my personal guarantee. Thank you.

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## SMITH'S NORTH AND NORTHWEST JAUNT

By Frank Smith

The idea of three months travelling in a campervan was initially a bit daunting, but come 15 May 92 we departed Sydney for Darwin etc., Toyota well loaded with bedding, clothes we'd never wear, spare parts, food, and a carton of beer (heard of Burke and Wills), extra water, maps and information brochures - via western NSW to Wilpena Pound, Port Augusta to the Stuart Highway, branching off now and then to places like Roxby Downs and Oodnadatta. Some rain and cool weather, I think some of the early explorers and bush men suffered from the cold and water saturation.

Chickened out on climbing Ayres Rock but King's Canyon was a great 4 hour hike. At the Olgas we met Hugh Miller and partner Jake from Coast-watchers Hotel, Madang. Alice Springs good, warm enough by now for shorts - visited gold mining relics at Arltunga and aircraft museum at Alice.

Soaked in the thermal springs at Mataranka, cruised Katherine Gorge, saw Adelaide River War Cemetery, stayed at Litchfield Park and Wangi Falls and reached Darwin after 4 weeks wandering. Liked Darwin, in time for the big Bougainvillea Festival. Parade included a party from PNG. Took in all the sights then off to Kakadu and Jabiru, great area, lots to see. Jim Jim Falls dry, Twin Falls wonderful. On to Cooinda and Yellow Waters tour, to Waterfall Creek then Katherine, by this time we'd finished with swimming in park pools, rock pools and crocodile inhabited rivers. Some of the branch roads are inclined to be a bit agricultural and the red dust is almost a way of life.

From Katherine to Wyndham via Lake Argyle and Kununurra, then Halls Creek, Fitzroy Crossing and Geike Gorge tour. On to Derby, sandflies a bit aggressive, 11.6 metre variation between high and low tides. To Broome, large Japanese cemetery, port still active, only 3 or 4 pearling luggers working, could live there in the old part of town.

To 80 Mile Beach, then through Port Hedland to Wittenoom, Vampire Gorge, Dale's Gorge and Fortescue Falls, to Newman and mine tour, impressive operation. Back to Port Hedland and tour of loading facilities, on to Roebourne, Karratha, Dampier, Onslow, Exmouth and Carnarvon - great display of wild flowers on the way. Carnarvon to Monkey Mia via Hamelin Pool and Nauga Station. Monkey Mia great, dolphins fantastic. On to Denham then Kalbarri at the mouth of the Murchison River - caught lots of fish but only 4 of legal size, lots of pelicans wandering about the shore.

From Kalbarri to Geraldton then the Wildflower Highway to Perth via Dalwalinu and New Norcia. Rain started in Geraldton. To Kalgoorlie via York, Beverley, Southern Cross and Coolgardie, very heavy rain in Kalgoorlie for 24 hours or so. From Kalgoorlie to Norseman and across the Nullabor to Ceduna, showers of rain en route. Fished at Ceduna, but no luck. Heavy rain from Ceduna to Port Augusta, Burra, Waikerie, Kerang and Echuca, had an hour trip on the "Emmy Lou" paddle steamer. From Echuca to Tocumwal and Griffith, overnight with friends - first time we's slept in a house since leaving Sydney. From Griffith to Carcoar where it blew a gale and rained all night, then home to Sydney through the snow and ice at Blayney and Bathurst.

A great holiday, 13 weeks and 21,480 kms. We're still getting the red dust out of the van, and trying to save up for the next trip.



## VALE

*With deep regret we record the passing of the following members and friends. On behalf of the Association the Committee extends our sincerest sympathy to their families.*

**Mr Gordon SMITH** (8 August 1992, aged 64 years)

Gordon was born at YAEDON in the county of YORK, UK, in 1928. He was always interested in the land and on leaving school studied during 1947/48 for the Northhampton Institute of Agriculture Certificate.

He came to Australia as an assisted migrant (£10 POM) in July 1949. His intention was to earn enough money in Australia to be able to return and buy a farm in SURREY, UK. His choice to remain in Australia was our gain.

He went to PINEROO in SA where he worked as a fruit picker and as a jackeroo using his UK farming knowledge. He went to PNG about 1950, became a Cadet Patrol Officer and served throughout the country. He was in Bougainville in the early 1950s and Finschhafen in the late 1950s. He lived at Wau, Mumeng and Lae, in the Gulf District and in the Southern Highlands.

At the height of his career in the field service he served, in 1968, as the acting District Commissioner of the Morobe District.

He married his first wife IONE in PNG and there his sons Chris and Tony were born. In the early 1970s Gordon decided to look to the future and studied successfully for his degree in Economics with the Australian National University. He then transferred to the National Investment and Development Authority in Port Moresby where he provided major input into the Investment and Development policies of the fledgling nation of Papua New Guinea. He travelled widely in this job.

Gordon met his second wife Zelda in PNG and they returned together to Australia in 1978, with Zelda's children, Diana, Stephen and Penny to commence fruit farming at BROOKLET. The family settled quietly into the local community where people quickly learnt to appreciate Gordon for his quiet humour and depth of knowledge. His life at Brooklet was far different to that of the district administrator in Papua New Guinea. Now Gordon the farmer from the UK re-emerged.

As a person, Gordon had many sides. He was a philosopher, a lover of music, of art and good food. He turned his mind to the law and to computers. He loved a lively discussion of politics, and so search for creative solutions to problems great or small. His brain and his wit was quick to the end. He was active in fruit growing at Brooklet till his death.

Gordon is survived by his widow, Zelda, children, Chris, Tony and Catherine and stepchildren, Diana, Stephen and Penny.

(The foregoing is an edited version of the eulogy delivered by Dan Duggan at the service held for Gordon at the Anglican Church, Bangalow, NSW, on 11 August 1992.)

**Mr. Ivor Lindsay GRIFFITH** (9 Sep 92, aged 80 years)

Joined the Department of Lands, Surveys and Mines in New Guinea on 18 May 1937 and spent many years in PNG as a Lands Officer, retiring on 28 February 1967.

He was survived by his widow, Alma Bristol Griffith, who also passed away on 25 September 92. (No further details known)

**Mrs. Joyce Melva COTTLE** (25 September 92, aged 70 years)

Widow of Alan Thomas Cottle who was a Patrol Officer in PNG from 12 October 1951 to 4 November 1960. (No further details known)

Mr. Desmond CLIFTON-BASSETT (27 September 92, aged 70 years)

Des was born in England and came to Australia at 10 years of age. He lived with his family until 1941 when he went into the army at the age of 19. He had a very strict upbringing, and he loved the army as it gave him freedom and, it is said, it made a man of him.

He was serving in the army in Papua New Guinea towards the end of the war, and in 1946 decided to join the post-war PNG Civil Administration. He spent the next two and a half years as a Patrol Officer and in 1948, at the age of 26, he opened a patrol post at Telefolmin. Unfortunately, after three months there he contracted scrub typhus, a life threatening disease in the days before chloromycetin. Bobby Gibbes risked his own life to fly him out in terrible weather.

In 1952/53 Des attended the Australian School of Pacific Administration at Middle Head, Mosman. It was there he met Marie and he and Marie were married in 1954. He was then posted to Samarai where their first daughter, Helen, was born in the little hospital on the hill in 1955.

In 1958 Des was given his first posting as Acting District Commissioner. It was to Mendi, in the Southern Highlands, when he was 36. He was over the moon with joy! He got on very well with the local people and invited them to the Residency on formal occasions.

After Mendi, Des spent short terms in Samarai and Popondetta, and then was posted to Madang as Acting District Commissioner in 1963. He was confirmed as DC in 1965 and stayed in Madang until retirement.

Madang was a District of 186,000 people. Des loved his work, he found it challenging, varied, and gave him opportunities for quick action. It was no nine-to-five job! He was always interested in town activities; he was a member of Rotary, he was the Founding President of the Madang Musical Society, a member of the Madang Amateur Theatrical Society, the Parents & Citizens' Association etc. A highlight of his term in Madang was a two-day visit by the Duke of Edinburgh on the Royal yacht 'Britannia'.

The advent of self-government and independence brought sudden change. The new government wanted Papua New Guineans in the top positions, and European District Commissioners had to go. Marie and the children left Papua New Guinea in 1974 and Des followed in early 1975 at the age of 52. He had difficulty adjusting to Sydney life, all that energy and drive was bottled up with nowhere to go. For a number of years he continued to visit PNG and maintained his interest in the country.

His last few years were not very happy ones and his health gave him lots of problems. Des had his flaws but his heart was in the right place and he would do anything for his family. He was not the sort of person who could tolerate a retirement village or nursing home and he was writing letters and working in his garden just before he died. He was active to the last.

Des is survived by his widow, Marie, his daughters, Helen and Jane and five grandchildren. (Reported briefly in September 1992 issue of *Una Voce*.)

Ms. Isobel Ada HANLON (1 October 92, aged 89 years)

Ms. Hanlon was with the Department of Health in PNG for a number of years both before and after the war. She served as Matron, at different times, of both the Wau and Bulolo Hospitals before the war and during the war served in Australia with the Australian Army Nursing Service.

Matron Hanlon returned to PNG immediately after the war and was Matron at the Rabaul Hospital until she retired to Australia on 22 September 1963.

Mr. William (Bill) PAYNE (31 October 92, aged 58 years)

Worked for a number of years as an Agricultural Officer with D.A.S.F. in PNG serving at Raba Raba, Lufa, Koroseigu and Balimo. Went to Northern Territory and served for a while with the Department of Agriculture and then on various projects there.

**Mr. Albert Raymond (Bert) HENDRY** (24 October 92, aged 67 years)

Bert was born in Sydney on 20 February 1925 and he worked with the then Postmaster General's Department as a cable jointer before joining the Department of Posts & Telegraphs in Port Moresby in 1956. Bert and his wife, Shirley, their daughters Lynn, Anne & Christine (twins) and Narelle, spent 10 years in Lae, which included construction of Kerema and Daru radio stations. Later on Bert was involved with the construction of the telephone link which mountain hopped across PNG. He also worked on the Seacom cable into Madang and the later cable from Bootless Bay to Cairns.

During this time Bert was a dedicated member of Rotary, Masonic Lodge, various bowling clubs and the PNGVR.

In January 1982, Bert and Shirley returned to Australia to live in their house in Terrigal NSW, which they had built years before. Bert continued his interest in Rotary and Lodge, but his main love was Vintage cars, which he restored and drove, enjoying many rallies, including six weeks in the outback last year. When he died there were two mobile Vintage cars (one owned by Shirley) and three in various stages of development.

Bert died in Sydney Royal North Shore Hospital of cancer which he had kept at bay, with stubborn determination, for twelve years.

At his request there was no actual funeral service but a memorial service was held at Scots Kirk, Terrigal on Wednesday 28th. His daughters, with various members of their families, had spent some time with Bert before his death and then joined Shirley afterwards in Terrigal.

**Mrs. Leah Victoria (Gran) BECKETT** (15 July 92, aged 91 years)

Gran Beckett was born Leah Victoria Streatfield on 22 January 1901 (the day Queen Victoria died) in her words "the sickly child" or fifth of seven children. This "sickly child" was to prove not only most durable but to be a great asset to the communities in which she lived.

Leah lived life on her own terms - as a girl she acquired a sound academic and religious education and then as a young woman set out on a life aimed at helping others. She completed her nursing training and joined the Australian Inland Mission and became one of the first females to grace northern Australia in short skirts and short hair. Leah had the responsibility for nursing and baking the bread at Hall's Creek; succeeding at the first but having to call on the assistance of a young miner "Ginge" Beckett for the latter. Appreciating her good fortune, she fell in love with "Ginge" and married him in Sydney. After a whirlwind three day honeymoon at Meadow Bath Ginge headed for Rabaul and when they had saved a second fare Leah followed.

In Rabaul she interspersed nursing with giving birth to two daughters, Nancy and Suzanne. Having survived the volcanic eruption in Rabaul in 1937 it was decided she should return to Australia with the girls in the face of the Japanese invasion. Sadly she was to lose her husband Ginge shortly after when he was captured by the Japanese and died on the POW ship *Montevideo Maru* which was sunk on its way to Japan.

With typical determination Leah battled on and established a home at Roseville NSW in which to raise her children. It was not long before she returned to nursing. Over the next two or three decades she saw her daughters married and managed to spend time with them both as they raised their families.

Gran finally settled in Mystery Bay twelve years ago where she was able to indulge her passion for gardening and despite her advancing years resisted all attempts from family and friends to move to where they could keep a better eye on her. With the help of her wonderful friends and neighbours at Mystery Bay she was able to complete her life in the way she lived it - on her terms.

**Mrs. Maria Ilona HASZLER** (24 October 92)

Widow of Dr. Charles Haszler, late of PNG. Survived by daughter, Christine, and son, Henry. Full details in the next issue of *Una Voce*.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

DR. J.J.BAIN 1117 GROSEVALE RD.  
MR. B. CRAIG "PANGAKALILLA", RMB 492  
MR. D.J.GRANTER 21 HUDSON AVE.  
MRS.P.N.GRANTER 21 HUNSON AVE.  
MR. S. INDER, 244 KISSING POINT RD.  
MR. H.V.QUINTON P O BOX E102  
MR. W.E.TUCKER 4/48 WYCOMBE RD.  
MR. P.J.THOMAS P O BOX 311  
MR. F.G.VAN KOLCK 105 FULLERS RD.

KURRAJONG NSW 2758  
BLACKWOOD SA 5157  
BALGOWNIE NSW 2519  
BALGOWNIE NSW 2519  
TURRAMURRA NSW 2074  
ST JAMES NSW 2000  
NEUTRAL BAY NSW 2089  
ANGASTON SA 5353  
CHATSWOOD NSW 2067

CHANGES OF ADDRESS: TO -

MR. J. BEST HAWKESBURY RETIREMENT VILLAGE, CHAPEL ST. RICHMOND NSW 2753  
DR. I.F.DOWNS P O BOX 5323, GOLD COAST MAIL EXCHANGE S/PARADISE Q 4217  
MRS.V. FOLDI UNIT 7 KAWAREE LODGE, 111 CAMPBELL ST QUEANBEYAN NSW 2620  
MR. K.A.KELLY 63 LAMEROUGH PDE., GOLDEN BEACH CALOUNDRA QLD 4551  
MR. S. MASON 40 BRAMBLE ST. WOODY POINT QLD 4019  
MR. C.P.SYMONS P O BOX 82 ANNANDALE NSW 2038  
MRS.Nan WATKINS 18 SANTA CRUZ BOULEVARDE, ISLAND KEYS QLD 4226

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**A SAFE**

**AND HAPPY**

**HOLIDAY SEASON**

***Do take care, don't drink and drive***

***and be kind to each other.***

*Doug Parrish*

**Doug Parrish  
Editor**

