



Una Voce News Letter

RETIRED OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA INC
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No. 3, 1998 - September

Dear Member,

CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON Please note the following event in your diary-

**1998 Christmas Luncheon on Sunday
6 December 1998 at the Mandarin Club
corner Pitt & Goulburn Streets Sydney**

We would like to see members encouraging their adult children who grew up in PNG to come to the luncheon and meet others with similar early experiences. Full details will be in the next issue of *Una Voce* which you will receive mid-November.

1999 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - ADVANCE NOTICE

The 1999 AGM and luncheon will be held on Sunday 2 May as Anzac Day also falls on a Sunday. This is an opportunity to meet old friends and enjoy catching up with news. The AGM lasts about 30-45 mins; after that, the event is just like the Christmas Luncheon.

VISIT TO THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

The date for this excursion is **Thursday 1 October**. These occasions are happy ones, with pleasant company, a change of scenery and Spring in the air (20 attended last year). If going by train from Sydney, the train to catch is the 9.02am from Central Station which arrives at Wentworth Falls at 10.47am. (\$2.00 return for those with Seniors Cards.) Lunch will be at the Grandview Hotel, Wentworth Falls. Please check the train departure time with City Rail a week or so before to make sure there has not been a change. (City Rail No. in Sydney is 13 1500; from the recorded menu select 9, to speak to an operator.) If interested please contact Pam Foley 02 9428 2078, or Joe Nitsche 02 9451 2475 before 24 September so that we can advise the hotel.

FROM THE SECRETARY

Just a reminder that membership fees are \$10.00, due on 1st January each year (overseas members are required to pay additional postage - please contact me for details). Please address ALL CORRESPONDENCE including membership fees to me. - Joe Nitsche

DISCLAIMER

Una Voce is produced for the information of members of the Retired Officers' Association of Papua New Guinea Inc. It is written with care, in good faith, and from sources believed to be accurate. However, readers should not act, nor refrain from acting, solely on the basis of information in *Una Voce* about financial, taxation or any other matter. Having regard for their own particular circumstances, readers should consult the relevant authorities or other advisers with expertise in the particular field. Neither ROAPNG nor the editor accepts any responsibility for actions taken by readers. Also, the views expressed by any of the authors of articles included in *Una Voce* are not necessarily those of the editor or the ROAPNG.

FROM THE COMMITTEE

Distribution of surplus books: We were overwhelmed by the response to our offer in the June issue - we received 537 requests for 100 books! Some books were requested by 20 or so people. We will be allocating the books in the fairest way we can organise. However the books will not be despatched until mid-October.

School reunions: Please let us know if you or your friends are organising a reunion for members of your old PNG school/college etc - we will advertise it in this newsletter.

PNG NEWSPAPERS ON INTERNET: Member John M Howard of Stanmore NSW sent us the following details of Papua New Guinea Newspaper Web Sites -

The National: <http://www.wr.com.au:80/national/hom.htm>

The Post Courier: <http://203.22.79.35/postcour/postcour.nsf/headlines?openview>

Independent: <http://www.niugini.com/independent/>

All the above together with other PNG and Pacific sites are also accessible through:

The CocoNET Wireless: <http://www.uq.edu.au/jrn/coco/index.htm>

Rob's Papua New Guinea Links: <http://www.geocities.com/TheTropics/Paradise/4163>

The CPI Adjustment * - Superannuants will have already received their annual letter and group certificates from ComSuper and will know that pensions will not be increasing this year. The CPI increase for the March 1998 quarter was 0.3%, but this did not compensate for negative CPI figures in earlier quarters, so that the annual March 1997-March 1998 figure was -0.2%. Fortunately, legislation does not permit an actual reduction in our pensions, but unfortunately, when the 1999 adjustments are done, this 0.2% will be deducted from any increase which falls due then.

Gold Card for WWII Vets* - All World War II veterans who served in the Australian Armed forces and faced danger from hostile forces during that conflict will now qualify for comprehensive health care under an extension of the Gold Card benefits. The Government initiative is to take effect from 1 January 1999. The Gold Card provides health care services including private patient health care, choice of doctor, a wide range of other specialist treatment including psychiatric, optical care, physiotherapy, dental care, podiatry care and products, and chiropractic care and services for any and all medical conditions. * From *SCOA Bulletin, Journal of the NSW Branch of the Superannuated Commonwealth Officers' Association Inc., August 1998*

DONATIONS - AITAPE TIDAL WAVE RELIEF

The Committee believes that donations for victims of the disaster are a personal matter, and that it is better for members to make donations direct rather than through the Association. We urge those who have not already donated to do so. Committee members have made donations via Caritas Australia, The Salvation Army, World Vision, the Bishop of Aitape and the Bishop of Vanimo. (Donations to these groups are tax deductible.)

HAVE YOU HEARD???

Ron and Colleen NEVILLE's only daughter Annie was recently married to Danny Moore, son of Heather and John (Cairns football identity) in Yungaburra, Atherton Tablelands. Her godmother Dawn Levy and daughter Gail, Pat and Geoff Littler, Rev Tony Halstead and Rosemary, Ros McCourt (Laurie's wife) and daughter Yolanda were old PNG friends who attended. Annie's five brothers asked Danny for bride price so at the reception Danny presented each of them with a large china pig with the inscription on his bottom "Tenkyu tru long givim mi sisa bilong yu." 30/5/98. The following morning Fr. Ivan Hernan who married the happy couple said Mass for Ron (his anniversary) at Malanda. Colleen sat next to a man with a beautiful singing voice who happened to be Mick Gallen - PNG Police.

After five years in Adelaide, **Elinor (Lyn) and Craig SYMONS** have moved back to Sydney and are busy settling in and catching up with old friends.

Harry Andrew STANDFAST, who was in Rabaul in the early 60s, has been awarded an AM (Member in the General Division of the Order of Australia) for 'service to entomology, research into veterinary virus vectors and mosquito control'. Harry Standfast is still with the South Pacific Commission. He is based in Brisbane and is at present working in Fiji.

Margaret SPENCER, whose New Year 1997 Honour for service to community health through research in malaria entomology and mosquito-borne diseases was reported in the March 1997 newsletter, recently graduated Doctor of Philosophy (University of Queensland). Her thesis, 'The early development of health services in PNG, 1870-1939', was written under the aegis of the University's Tropical Health Programme. **Dr Ian Riley**, the Programme's director, spent several years in PNG.

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NEWS FROM THE NORTHERN TERRITORY: Jim Toner writes, "There are numerous PNG students at the NT University in Darwin and they combined with the local PNG Social and Cultural Group in a memorial service for the victims of the West Sepik tsunami. The service was held at the University's sound shell in August - a useful collection was taken for the survivors. The students will have a bigger hand in the Independence celebration this year which I shall miss due to being in Europe in September. Hopefully the other seven ROAPNG members in Darwin will be able to participate.

One, as yet, non-member is **Graham HOCKEY**, former didiman, who is a Planning Officer with the NT Lands Department. Long since *tambued* from Rugby by his wife, Phillipa, who works for the NT Chief Minister, he seems to have sidestepped a matrimonial tackle by sneaking off to Canada for a Golden Oldies tournament. (For the uninitiated the Oldies have been unkindly described as drinkers with a rugby problem.)

Readers of the *Weekend Australian* may have noted that one of our esteemed fellow members was called 'a bald Rasputin'! **John PASQUARELLI** might have thought this a bit rich coming from Philip Adams, one of the media's most 'follically challenged' commentators.

I saw a photo of another member recently and I trust he will not take umbrage if I say that no one is likely to have called him 'Junior' lately. Tempus fugit for all of us but **Sir Dennis BUCHANAN** is evidently not spending his time watching the clock. His airline, Flight West, will soon commence a six times a week service Cairns-Moresby using F28s, not the initiative of a wantok cosily settling into retirement.

It is 50 years since Rugby League was born in PNG and any taubadas who scrummed down with Kone, Paga, etc at Murray Barracks oval or people who watched good all-Papuan teams at the Boroko ground may be incredulous that the Highlanders have taken over. This year's South Pacific Cup for the championship of PNG was contested by Mendi Muruks who lost to the Hagen Eagles. It seems to be more than a truism that amongst males football is a substitute for warfare...?

PNG NEWS: RESETTLEMENT OF SURVIVORS OF TSUNAMI DISASTER

Survivors of the Aitape disaster have identified traditional land away from the disaster area to resettle on a permanent basis. Roads will have to be built before the construction of schools, aid posts and a government office can take place. The villagers have already planned a possible route for the road and chosen sites for infrastructure buildings. The National Disaster and Emergency Services would be coordinating the construction of the roads, health services and schools as a matter of priority. (From *The National*, 17-8-98)

CRUISES FROM WEWAK-JAYAPURA-MADANG: Melanesian Tourist Services, PNG's largest tour operator, has introduced new cruises to Irian Jaya on the *Melanesian Discoverer*. The company's principal, Peter Barter, said the cruises would fill a 'missing link' now that Air Niugini has ceased flights to Jayapura. The catamaran-style vessel which carries 42 passengers will operate five-night cruises from Wewak to Jayapura and back to Madang. The tour includes a visit to Vanimo and the Aitape islands, two nights in Jayapura, a visit to the Murik Lakes and to Kopar Village on the lower Sepik. Existing cruises to the Sepik River and Trobriand Islands will continue. There will also be a ferry service from Vanimo to Jayapura. (From *The National*, 17-8-98)

ELA UNITED CHURCH TURNS 108: The church, built in 1890, is largely in its original state, apart from minor extensions in 1994 and 1996. Tall buildings now surround the Douglas Street church. Over the years the congregation has grown from 60 to about 500 and the building cannot accommodate them all; church elders are hoping to extend it.

(*Post-Courier* 18-5-98)

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THE HAGEN COUNTRY CLUB
 by Chips Mackellar

When I first went to Mount Hagen in the early 1950s the District was then in the grip of development fever. It was the final frontier of Papua New Guinea, where planters were staking out their empires along the Wahgi Valley, and the Government was opening up the District to contact with the outside world. This was done by building a network of roads and airstrips, and the developmental pace was of necessity so brisk, that it called for the highest qualities of coordination and leadership.

Predecessor to such equally famous Western Highlands District Commissioners as Tom Ellis, Mick Foley and Bob Bell, the DC during my era, was Major R.I. Skinner MC RAA (Retd.)

Like most DCs of his time, Skinner ruled the Western Highlands District as though it were his own personal earldom. He was diligent, dedicated and demanding, and he exuded such an awesome aura of charisma and command that he was always addressed as "Sir" by his own officers, "Mr Skinner" by the planters, and "Number One Kiap" by the Western Highlanders. This latter title was an apt form of address, since in those days, he was a number one administrator in all respects. Amongst the expats, however, he was always referred to as "RI". This reference was often mistaken for the initials of his Christian names, Richard Ian. In fact they signified the kind of autocracy he administered, and stood for *Rex Imperator* ---- The King Emperor.

There were no hotels in Mount Hagen in those days, and the Hagen Country Club had not yet been incorporated. But there was no shortage of parties. Entertainment ranged from spontaneous drinks after work in somebody's house, to formal dinner parties in the District Commissioner's residence. It was at such social functions that we got to meet visiting judges, diplomats, and even the odd Governor-General, in circumstances which, for us, never would have happened in Australia.

The problem in those days was that there was no respectable venue big enough to host a large-sized social gathering as, for example, a Christmas party for all the expat residents of Mount Hagen and the neighbouring plantations.

This problem was exacerbated on one memorable occasion which produced a party so big and so infamous, that its consequences have survived to this day.

The occasion was for a patrol officer who had been told he was dying of cancer, and he was ordered to return to Australia. As the next ranking officer, the social duty fell upon me to host his send-off party. In those days, all the single expat personnel at Mount Hagen lived in a disorderly collective of native-built huts across the airstrip from the

District Office. This part of Hagen was called "Cannery Row" after a similar disreputable neighbourhood in the Steinbeck novel. Although the huts we lived in were small, and were each built for only one or two officers, they could, with some inconvenience, collectively accommodate a moderate number of transients at any one time.

And so it came to pass that Cannery Row by default, acquired a sort of doss-house function for itinerant visitors in the days before hotels were built at Mount Hagen, and because it was the collective residential for idle after work single officers, it also became a drop-in place for after work or weekend drinkers. And, because our departing officer also lived amongst us, Cannery Row was considered to be the appropriate venue to hold his farewell party.

Now, in relation to our dying officer, departure arrangements were made for one Saturday morning, with his farewell party to be held the previous Friday night. The departing officer was so popular, that we knew that people would come from everywhere to say goodbye, and we knew that overnight accommodation would have to be supplied for all out of town visitors. For this purpose, I had to reassign the sleeping arrangements in Cannery Row. Regular residents were dispossessed of their bedrooms and told to sleep anywhere they could find space in the kitchens, laundries, storerooms and outhouses. Meanwhile, floor space in the corridors and verandahs was assigned to single male visitors, with the bedrooms reserved for visiting married couples, and visiting single girls.

It was a tremendous party, and it went all night, but after the departing officer had left Mount Hagen the next morning everyone was still in a party mood. There was still a mountain of food and heaps of grog left in Cannery Row, and as the whole purpose of the party had been to send the officer South to die, the send-off party turned into a wake, and continued unabated for the whole weekend.

However, by Sunday night, all my carefully planned accommodation allocations had fallen into such disarray because of the continuous revelry, that ordinary domestic sleeping arrangements became totally disoriented. Some husbands forgot they had brought their wives, and partied on without them, while others forgot where their wives were sleeping and crawled into the beds of other wives, by mistake. On the other hand, there were some wives so exhausted by the revelry that they did not know that their sleeping partners were not their husbands, while there were other wives who knew but did not care. And while all this was happening amongst our married visitors, the single girls discovered that they were not single any more, at least as far as the sleeping arrangements were concerned.

Monday dawned in a torrential downpour which closed the airstrip to all air traffic. This was just as well, because none of the out of town guests were by then fit to travel in any case. So some stayed where they had fallen the previous night, while others lurched through the morning drizzle, scouring the huts of Cannery Row for lost husbands and mislaid wives.

RI, of course, expected business as usual, so the remainder of us had to front up for work. As I had been continually engaged in organising the party, I had had little time for carousing, so I was still in reasonable shape on Monday morning. But the District Clerk who had not slept since the previous Thursday night, was not exactly up to scratch when it came to sending the weather report to Madang. All the technical weather details he could hear on the radio like *two eights of alto-Q, six eights of stratus, wind Southeast 10 to 15, QNH one zero one niner* and all the other air traffic control mumbo-jumbo totally bamboozled him.

So, by the time Madang tower asked the District Clerk for the Hagen weather report, his meteorological expertise had totally abandoned him, and in desperation he

said..... "Hello, Madang.....Don't send any planes to Hagen today, cos we're having real shitty weather."

Skinner, of course, could hear all this from his office.

"Get off the air, McGowan!" RI bellowed in his best parade ground voice.

"But it's true, Sir," the clerk responded lamely, "it *is* shitty weather. Somebody shit in the rain gauge."

"Don't be ridiculous", RI bellowed again, "Get off the air. Mackellar, you do the weather report!"

"Yes Sir," I replied, and I went outside to check the rain gauge. And there in the middle of the gauge, like a big fat sausage, was a large human turd. I returned to the office and stood outside the DCs door. "He's right, Sir," I said, "somebody did shit in the rain gauge."

"I don't care," Skinner bellowed again, "Do the weather report. And when you're finished, take him home. I don't want to see him in this office again in that condition."

"Yes Sir," I replied. And after I had done the weather report, I put the District Clerk into the DC's Landrover, and took him back to Cannery Row.

And while some of the out of town guests were thoughtfully coming to terms with the regrouped sleeping arrangements, there were others for whom the party was still in progress. "Yipeeee! A party," the District Clerk yelled when he saw these revellers, as though he had forgotten where he had been for the last three days.

The bad weather and the party continued off and on for the next two days, and finally when both had finished, the immediate aftermath was too awesome for me to relate.

But I can tell you that the long-term consequences of this party resulted in four separations, two divorces, and three marriages, and there were many irate husbands who, to this day, have never forgiven me, as though the subsequent disruption to their lives was all my fault.

But the worst blame was reserved for the officer who had been sent off to die. Within three weeks, he was back in Hagen again, cured. There had been a wrong diagnosis, and he was not dying of cancer after all. In fact, he is still alive today, living in Sydney's northern beaches. But thinking that he would be welcomed back from the dead when he returned to Hagen he was unprepared for the poisonous atmosphere which greeted him. On the day after his return, an irate planter who had been severely cuckolded during the Cannery Row party confronted this officer angrily, outside the District Office. "We sent you South to die, you bastard!" he yelled, "So, why didn't you die?"

Skinner, at the time, happened to be standing nearby, and by then he was sick and tired of hearing about all the domestic problems which had resulted from that party. "Don't use that language around my office," he bawled, "we've got enough problems of our own without having to listen to yours. Now, *get out of town!*"

This was bold frontier talk coming from RI, but then it was in keeping with the times. Hagen was then a frontier town, and Skinner, like Davy Crockett, was undisputed king of this wild Highland frontier. So, unwilling to contest this harsh frontier edict, the injured planter slunk out of Hagen like a mangy dog, and was never seen there again.

But before the dust could settle on this infamous party, Cannery Row's reputation went from bad to worse. Rumours began to circulate that nubile young Highland girls who then frequently plied from house to house in Mount Hagen selling vegetables, were making a lot more money than their vegetables were worth, by lingering longer around the huts of Cannery Row. In those days, Hagen girls wore a G-string and a shell necklace,

and nothing else, and nervous expat wives began to suspect that when "having a drink with the boys" in Cannery Row, their husbands might have been sampling other enticements which might have been on offer there.

So it came to pass that people began to talk about setting up a decent sort of clubhouse in Mount Hagen, where they could have movies and dances, and a few quiet drinks, without having to frequent the disreputable hovels of Cannery row. Even the local missionaries who were against fornication and strong drink were advocating a club for Mount Hagen as a less sinful alternative to Cannery Row, which for them had become the Hagen equivalent of Sodom and Gomorrah. But since nothing of any consequence could then happen in Mount Hagen without RI's consent, the matter was put to him. Skinner was generally on side, but saw the practical difficulties. In those days before the Highlands Highway was built, airfreight costs alone, he reasoned, would have been so prohibitive as to make the building and maintenance of a decent private clubhouse totally unviable. Anyhow, Skinner said, he was too busy setting up a decent expat primary school to think about a club at this stage. He had a point there, because enrolments at the expat primary school were increasing so rapidly that the school was in need of new premises.

The teachers at the time were two Australian girls, and they were amazed that the District Commissioner was suddenly taking such an interest in their proposed new school. They were having funding problems and other administrative difficulties with the Education Department, so Skinner offered to help. Of course once RI got his clutches on the project, the teachers lost all control of it for ever after.

But by making the new school his top priority, RI got a long distance dialogue going between the Treasury, PWD and the Education Departments in Port Moresby, and the airlines in Lae and Madang. Eventually plans were finalised and funding obtained for a brand new permanent building primary school for expat children at Mount Hagen, with everything to be airfreighted in. Skinner even selected a new site for the school, on prime residential land overlooking the airstrip which was then in the centre of town.

To begin with, the plans were fairly basic, and showed an admin office for the teachers between two classrooms, with a storeroom at one end of the building, and toilets at the other. But no sooner had construction started, than mysterious alterations began to be made to the plans. A verandah was added, and another storeroom was inserted, this one between the admin office and one of the classrooms.

Nobody could understand who authorised the alterations. PWD and Education each blamed the other, and Skinner who had somehow escaped any blame at all, demanded extra funding for the alterations, and got it. Then a tennis court was added, which Skinner said was for "school sports" and then the furniture arrived, not only classroom furniture, but also casual chairs and tables of a kind you might find in the beer garden of a hotel. These, Skinner said, were for "parents and citizens meetings". Then a large fridge arrived, which Skinner said was for "school milk." Whatever the total cost was, RI managed to have it all funded, and when the school was finished it was the most handsome building in Mount Hagen.

To celebrate the opening of the school, RI invited all the expat residents of Mount Hagen, and some of the nearby missionaries and planters, to attend the premises on the Saturday night before the children were to move in. Of course a school was of no interest to the single expat residents of Cannery Row, but we were invited anyway, and in those days because an invitation from RI was the Mount Hagen equivalent of a Royal Command Performance, we all attended whether we wanted to or not.

For the purposes of this opening ceremony, the school furniture had been stacked

in one classroom, while the other classroom had been bedecked with flowers and fronds. The casual furniture had been arranged around this classroom and out on to the verandah outside. The whole scene was lit with strings of twinkling fairy lights, and the building looked quite impressive. But, except for the blackboards, it didn't look much like a school.

Ever the accomplished Master of Ceremonies, Skinner stood in front of the blackboard and made a short welcome speech. He thanked Treasury, PWD and Education for funding and supplying the materials. He thanked Barry Blogg and Bill Lane for building the school, he wished the teachers well, and he asked all the parents to support the school's activities. It was the usual sort of speech you would expect at a school opening. Then he called two of his kiaps forward. "Mackellar and Howlett, come up here please."

John Howlett and I went to where Skinner was at the front of the classroom, and stood beside him. "You two get behind the bar," RI commanded, then with a flick of his wrist he pulled a lever, and the blackboard slid away, to reveal a well-stocked bar in the storeroom behind.

Everyone stared in amazement, then in a loud voice Skinner said, "Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the Hagen Country Club."

At first there was a stunned silence. Then as the reality of Skinner's school project suddenly sank in, there was a tremendous cheer, a burst of applause, and a rush on the bar, and John Howlett and I spent the rest of the night serving drinks at this ecstatic, spontaneous party, the best Mount Hagen had ever seen.

And that is how the Hagen Country Club was born.

It was a masterpiece of Skinner's guile, manipulation, creative accounting, organisation, and design. For at no cost to anyone at Mount Hagen, RI had presented us all with a superb social club. It was exactly what everyone wanted.

True, the club had to double as a school from Monday to Friday, and considering that the Government had funded the building for this purpose, this was not surprising. But each Saturday the school would evaporate and in its place the Hagen Country Club would appear, to host tennis matches, movies, barbecues, dances, birthdays, Christmas parties, and in my time, even two weddings.

Then, late each Sunday night, when nearly everyone was asleep, the Country Club would disappear, like Brigadoon, into the midnight mists of Mount Hagen, leaving no earthly trace behind, other than a locked storeroom behind the blackboard, in the primary school.

Skinner, of course, was in total control of the Club and he ran it like an extension of his own lounge room. But even he would not dare to licence a primary school building. So, during a Supreme Court visit to Mount Hagen, RI pestered the Judge for ideas on how to sell liquor from the Club legally, without the necessity of a liquor licence. And the answer was pure genius. According to the Judge, Skinner said, liquor sales without a licence would be lawful, if they were made in a currency which was not legal tender, and that currency was not exchanged on the premises. So Skinner got Barry Blogg to produce, in the PWD workshops, the Club's own currency. This consisted of coins made from masonite, with the Club's name stamped on one side and the denomination of the coin on the other.

A bank account for the Club was then set up in the CSB agency at the District Office where, as part of his atonement for his "shitty weather" episode, the District Clerk was volunteered by Skinner to exchange Club currency for Australian legal tender. People simply paid cheques into the Club's account and got Club currency in exchange.

And I know you won't believe it, but this Club currency soon developed a dynamic of its own and was quickly in regular usage around Mount Hagen. Both Danny Leahy and Norm Camps would accept it in their trade stores, because it saved them from having to make their own exchanges before they went to the Club.

But while the Club was the venue for some magnificent social gatherings in Mount Hagen, it also became the scene of some bitter confrontations. For, as the planters became increasingly more wealthy and therefore more powerful, they began to challenge Skinner's divine right to rule the Western Highlands. One such memorable challenge occurred in the Club, following a breach of his "camber rule."

In those days, all the road construction was done by volunteer Highland labour. There were no funds to tarmac or gravel the road surfaces, but plain dirt roads proved themselves to be capable of carrying considerable traffic if they were adequately drained and shaped.

And we built these roads simply by digging by hand, two parallel six foot deep ditches and then by throwing the fill onto the ground between the ditches. This fill was then levelled with a slightly convex surface, curved sufficiently to allow rainfall run off. A thousand stamping feet from the road gangs would then mould this camber into its final shape and, left alone for a month, alternate lashings of sun and rain would bake the surface until it was as hard as concrete.

The secret lay in allowing the surface time to harden before subjecting it to four wheeled vehicular traffic. Meanwhile, motorcycle and pedestrian traffic could still use both shoulders of the road without disturbing the camber.

As each section of a road was cambered in this way, letters were sent to nearby missions and plantations, asking them to avoid the use of four wheeled vehicles on that cambered section for the next month. This was called "Skinner's Camber Rule." It was a good system, and it worked well, when everyone cooperated.

But by this time, the planters were sick of being told what to do by RI and in the best Westminster traditional sense, they considered public servants to be their servants and not their masters. So one Saturday, a few days after I had completed the camber on this one particular section of road and delivered the usual letters requesting restraint, a Land Rover full of planters ploughed along a half mile length of soft camber surface bound for a tennis tournament at the Hagen Country Club. They had deliberately destroyed the camber and unless it was quickly repaired, the long furrows left by the vehicle's wheels would fill with water at the next rain storm. The road surface would then collapse into the ditches for the full length of the damaged camber. It was a wanton, senseless act.

The clan leaders from this part of the Wahgi Valley were furious. Their people had built this road without pay, and they would now have to repair it without pay. I was also worried that there might be violence against the planters responsible, and in any case we needed to keep faith with the Highlanders in order to preserve the volunteer road building programme. So I got on my motorbike and reported the incident to Skinner, who was then in his tennis gear, about to join the tournament.

RI listened to my report without comment, then said simply, "Dismantle the bridges at each end of the damaged camber." I must have looked confused, because he then repeated the order, this time a lot louder, "You heard me! **Pull the decking off the bridges!**" Then he marched off to play tennis.

Skinner had always threatened to do this to transgressors of his Camber Rule, but this was the first time that his threat had been seriously put to the test. So while the tennis tournament was in progress, I slaved away with 200 Highland warriors, dismantling the

bridges at either end of the damaged road. Firstly, we prised off the decking. Then we rolled the big log bearers to one side, so as to make a solid foot bridge. Then we stacked the planks in a heap on top of the outer abutments, so as to form a barrier across the road, at both ends of the damaged section. Then with white paint, in large letters I wrote on each stack of planks, "Bridge Closed." Although, in reality, the bridges were still open to motor cycle and pedestrian traffic, in accordance with Skinner's Camber Rule.

Later that night, totally exhausted, I went over for a drink at the Club where the post-tennis party was in full swing. And as I walked up to the bar, I was confronted by this bunch of angry planters, who were then full of booze, and all looking for a fight. They had tried to go home after the tennis tournament, but could not get their Land Rover past my roadblock, so they returned to the Club, and they were now in an ugly mood.

"The kanakas said you pulled the bridges down," one angry planter yelled at me. "Is that true?" The noise of the party subsided, and all eyes turned towards me.

"Yes," I said, and all conversation ceased. The other drinkers at the bar moved away to give us space, as if taking part in a B-Grade movie scene from Dodge City.

"Why did you do it?" the angry planter demanded. But before I could answer, Skinner stood up at his table and said, "I ordered him to do it." And a breathless hush fell over the club.

"Why, for God's sake?" the planter demanded, this time facing Skinner across the crowded, silent room.

"You know why," RI answered softly, and you could have heard a pin drop in that awesome, frightening silence.

"So how do we get home Mr Skinner?" the planter demanded, and the dreadful silence continued.

"You will walk home," said Skinner, *Rex Imperator*.

And they did. And no one ever after, ever broke the camber rule again.

But the sands of time were running out for RI. For, as tall trees have long shadows, so great men have many enemies. And as the planters became more powerful and more confident and more vocal, there were even more bitter scenes of confrontation in the Hagen Country Club. These occurred with increasing frequency, until finally, the inevitable happened, and Skinner was posted to Port Moresby where he served out the remainder of his time in PNG in relative administrative obscurity.....

The Hagen Country Club later moved to its own premises, where it expanded and thrived in its own identity. Then later, as other clubs in Mount Hagen were formed, it amalgamated and changed premises.

Today, the Hagen Country Club survives as the upstairs part of the Mount Hagen Club, complete with all its memories and its memorabilia.....a memorial to those early Australian residents of Mount Hagen, and a tribute to its creator, Skinner RI.

RABAUL RELIEF FUND: This month the fund was able to help in places other than Rabaul. \$4,000 was given to the Salvation Army's disaster relief fund after PNG's tidal waves on July 17.

The Michael Gware Memorial Wing of the Angau Memorial Hospital, Lae, named after the first Morobean health worker, needed funds for medical drugs. We were able to send \$500 for this project. Also, Darren Brown was leading a group over the Kokoda Trail and told me that the schools along the trail had very little basic stationery (pencils, paper etc). Equipment worth \$500 was purchased and handed to the schools on the trek.

The Rabaul Relief Fund is financed from the Estate of F P Archer through Mr Eric Storm.

□ PAT HOPPER

A VOYAGE WITH VODICKA GEORGE

by J B Toner

Some of our readers can look back at 1939-45 and find difficulty in counting the number of occasions when they thought their number was up. Younger civilians like me find it easier. I always reckoned on two: being locked up for the night in a cold storage room at the Kyabram cannery and sinking beneath the waters of Loch Lomond when I was a non-swimmer. But recently re-reading J.K. McCarthy's "Patrol into Yesterday" I recalled my voyage with George.

When Makati (McCarthy) reported for duty at Rabaul in 1927 he says "there was a young man named George Kassi in the office. He was a pleasant youth whose brown skin told of Melanesian blood". George was still there and just as genial when I met him in 1960. I believe his forebears were from Ponape and would have come down from the Carolines when they, like New Guinea, were German territories.

George lived near the Kombiu Club with his inamorata, Julie, mainstay of the telephone exchange. She knew by heart the number of everyone in Rabaul. Well, everyone who mattered. I saw a lot of this couple in the next six years.

By 1966 George had Australian citizenship and a Leave Fare which he decided to use on a sea trip to Singapore. Coincidentally I was to be a fellow passenger so I overnighted him in Moresby and together we boarded the vessel there for its six day voyage. George was a bit nervous but soon settled in to ship life, he not being averse to a beer or two. What he was not accustomed to was 40% proof spirits distilled in Russia. I should have detected something when the group of German passengers he was drinking with - he could speak a bit of Vunapope German - started calling him Vodicka George.

Two days out from Singapore, George started to tell me he could hear Julie calling to him through the walls of his cabin. This was, of course, merely the moaning of the ventilation pipes. He also said that he missed her so much he would throw himself overboard. A young fellow named Nichol who had worked on Kokopo plantations was also travelling and he and I took the foregoing seriously enough to decide that we would keep a continuous watch on George, including discouraging him from going on deck.

On the fifth day I was 'on duty' with George in his cabin. He stood by the porthole and I was sitting on the floor between him and the doorway. We were chatting away when without the slightest warning George picked up a chair and smashed it down on my head. It was a heavy wooden chair, folded sideways, and he used it like an axe. Instinctively I jerked to one side so that most of the blow landed on my shoulder. This soon turned totally black and it was weeks before the bruising disappeared. Had my skull taken the full force I wonder if I would be writing this.

Obliged to do George in to the ship's doctor, he was placed in sick bay and that was the last I saw of him. When we reached port I learned that he was sent to Woodbridge Psychiatric Hospital. As soon as I had booked myself into the YMCA I went out to the hospital near Changi. There, the staff declared they had never heard of Mr. Kassi. Problem: I was booked to fly to London next day and had lost George. What would Julie say

First I went to the High Commission to report a missing citizen. The impression I was given was that many Aussies 'got lost' in Singapore without coming to harm so not to worry. I did and decided that the situation needed what the Americans call a 'heavy hitter'. So I telegraphed Makati, then Director of Native Affairs, who having previously been DC Rabaul clearly knew George. I wasn't then aware that this had been the case for

four decades or that both were Life Members of the Kombiu Club. Finally I wrote to Julie explaining that I had done my best to locate her true love but regretfully had to depart with the task uncompleted.

Makati sent my telegram to the DC Rabaul and Harry West passed it on to the Welfare Officer, Terry Daw. He then had to inform Julie, but she was not unresourceful and placed an immediate call to Singapore. She was refused permission to talk to George but did speak with a Dr. Yap who told her that her husband was suffering from delusions. She then asked Terry Daw what this meant and although hardly a man bereft of vocabulary all he could think of to say at the time was 'long long'. Fortunately this seemed to satisfy Julie until she received my letter detailing events on sea and land.

Envisaging George in some ghastly lunatic asylum Julie determined to fly to Singapore next day and personally sort out George, Dr. Yap and anyone else who stood in her way. All kind Mr. Daw had to do was to arrange her passport, tickets, etc overnight. In lieu, Harry West sent a telegram to HICOM Singapore seeking updated news of his missing staff member.

A reply came back as follows: "Psychiatrist declares Kassi fit to travel and he arrives Moresby 21/8 under supervision of ship's doctor. Travelling First Class ... Was hospitalised at Mt. Lavernia for two days suffering from Delirium Tremens. Enquirers were told he was at Woodbridge to deter visitors as there was suspicion that advantage might be taken of Kassi in his condition"

So, while my entire time in Singapore had been spent desperately seeking George he had been busy complaining that Jim Toner was after his money (and his postage stamps) Afterwards he told me he was sorry, promised never to drink 'vodicka' again and I believe he never did. I know he never left dry land.

Maxwell Hayes talks about his Rabaul days: When drinking became legal in 1962, the Tolai inhabitants and foreign labourers were quick to taste the delights of what had been a hitherto denied 'pleasure'. Consequently it became the duty of the police to attend the Ascot and Cosmopolitan Hotels and apprehend those who had imbibed far too much.

Inevitably the police utility would fail to start, so those arrested for drunkenness were unloaded and told to push-start the vehicle; the vehicle then backed up, loaded them on again, and proceeded on its way to the police station. One year the 'vote' (allocation) for police vehicles had been depleted before the end of the financial year. However there was plenty of money in the 'vote' for taxis, with the result that for a couple of weeks all drunks and other offenders were arrested and conveyed to the police station in Chan Yuk Ping's taxis.

Prior to drinking becoming legal for local people, envious indigenous police would often bring in someone with the smell of liquor on his breath. Often the excuse for such imbibing was, 'You won't believe me, Sir, but I was simply walking back home when these men threw me to the ground and forced liquor down my throat because they do not like me'. He was right, we didn't believe him, and nor did the magistrate - the result was another 5/- contribution to the revenue of TP&NG.

Easy pickings for the police were around the Rabaul RSL. This was an open building and at midnight members would toddle off, leaving half-empty glasses of beer etc, and the lights turned off. Out of the shadows a short while later would appear a few locals who would quickly quaff the unconsumed contents - again apprehended by envious local police. As I said, it was easy pickings and more 5/-s to consolidated revenue.

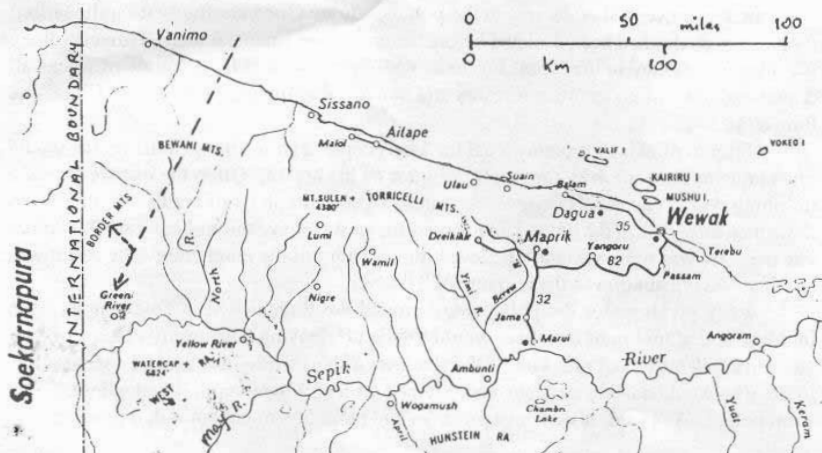
Adrian Geyle has written a number of self-contained stories about his period at Green River; three of these are printed below, and others will follow in future issues. The map shows the location of Green River station, and the Border Mountains, home of the Iuri people.

LULUAI* by Adrian Geyle

Green River Patrol Post had not been manned by a patrol officer for the best part of 12 months when I arrived there in 1954. I had been warned that there was a huge backlog of work to do around the station and nearby villages - the store's accounts were in total disarray and the compilation of an inventory was the number one priority. Of course nothing much in the way of patrol work could be organised until the mess was cleaned up, until things were made *stret*. Without going into detail of how this was approached, it must be mentioned that administrative control under the police had at least 'kept a tab' on things. Around the station, which sat on, but didn't cover, an area of four or five hectares, there were about 10 substitute *belos* (bells) in the form of mattock heads suspended from rafters in various buildings including the police barracks, the prison, the hospital and the store. The usual practice on a station was for the police orderly on duty at the office to ring a bell at set times, eg at 8am, 12 noon, and 1 and 4pm. Public service office hours were generally adhered to for routine purposes, which suited everybody occupied with the more mundane duties of outstation life. The mattocks and other sundries all had to be called in - they had served their time!

A police lance-corporal had managed the station with his detachment of eight constables, and he was my main source of information as to where things were, why there were shortages and what was on order. Nevertheless, the matters of most concern for the police and myself were our relations with village and hamlet communities around the sub-district. Problems came out one by one for discussion as I came to be trusted and accepted as being there to stay.

To the concern of one particular constable there was a Luluai headman in a village only thirty kilometres away who was 'married to his sister' and had three children with her. My lance-corporal confirmed this and we decided the man should be asked to come in with his 'sister-wife' and their three children. A constable was sent down to the village on the Sepik to accompany them in.



The Luluai was a tall, impressive man in his 30s and his younger sister of about 27 had with her their three bright, healthy-looking children of about 6, 3 and 2 years respectively. Their hair was peroxide blonde and they were really handsome children. The mother was confident and positive, and was obviously proud of them. I asked the Luluai if he and his 'wife' had the same mother. Yes, he said, and the same father too. Was the practice of marrying one's sister common in the village? No, it wasn't. Was it a good practice and if it was why didn't it catch on? Why was it not popular? The conversation by its very nature had to be respectful of personal feelings if it were to achieve anything.

Through an interpreter we slowly sifted through differences of behaviour and attitudes to taboos passed down from one generation to the next, both in his society and mine. We came to a very strong agreement, a comfortable consensus, that the marriage of a man and his sister was socially and personally a dangerous and potentially destructive arrangement indeed. I wasn't able to tell if he saw it that way because he'd probably seen deformed children resulting from incestuous marriages; in traditional societies many abnormalities in newborn babies are attributed to demonic forces. Dangerous also were sexual relationships between adults and their offspring, we agreed.

Well then, why did he do it? The arrival of white man's government was to blame, nothing else, he told me. "I was a big man before you people came. You changed the way my people looked up to me. I was a strong leader because I was a brave warrior and had many, many heads to my credit." "How many heads?" I asked, and he said there were so many he couldn't count them unless he thought for a long time and tried to recall them one by one. He was brave and was respected for it, he said, and that had made him the big man whom the government recognised also and even made him a Luluai. He accepted the government's hat to represent his people to the government and help his people, but something went wrong. Suddenly the killing of other men that got him his status was not only taboo but punishable by years in gaol! Not only did he have to stop killing, but people started to joke about him. The government's hat did not make up for his loss of status and he didn't feel good telling his people that they should obey the new laws brought in by the white man's government. These laws made a fool of him and he would not go along with them at all but for the power of the government with its police with rifles. (He didn't understand the mail and radio facilities but knew of the 'magic power' they gave the government.)

The government was there to stay, he could see that. The rationale which followed amazed me, as it was ingenious and was probably never articulated by this 'primitive' tribesman before. He said that to regain his position of leadership he had to do something no-one else would do, something that would make him 'different' - as his prowess as a warrior had done. Sleeping with one's sister was against a very strong taboo, one that was never broken. He could do it, and would do it, and no-one else would follow him. People again saw he was strong because he was gamer than all the rest.

The children had turned out to be normal, fortuitously, further enhancing the status he had regained. He stood there in the office proud but worried as he shuffled and looked apprehensively around the thatch-roofed office with its strange-looking paraphernalia, such as a typewriter, a two-way radio, filing cabinets and papers. Here, well away from his own village folk, he was confronting the very 'gavman' he blamed for his predicament, with a presence I hoped would not turn into defiance when I told him what we, the government, wanted him to do.

An important outcome of this meeting had to be reinforcement of the Luluai's self-esteem, plus support for him as he wrestled with the conflicts colonisation had dumped

in his lap. I gave him tokens of respect and support in the humble forms of an axe and a machete and some calico laplaps for himself and his wife. At the same time I warned him that he would be liable to many years in gaol if he continued to live with his sister as his wife.

We both seemed to appreciate the complexities, as cultures clashed. I certainly felt respect for this grand man, as well as humility in the ineluctable irony of being a 24-year old foreigner laying down 'new' laws and moralising in a black man's country, one steeped in culture and tradition.

Whatever the Luluai's thoughts as he left that strange meeting and headed down the plain towards his village on the Sepik, he never slept with his sister again. At least all reports I received confirmed that. He found another wife.

In my next life I would like to return to that Luluai's village as an unknown anthropologist - a black New Guinean one - to explore the inside story of that Luluai as he lived on with all the new laws, as well as in-laws!

* *Luluai*. A policy of the Territory government was to appoint village headmen to positions of liaison, to facilitate dealings between the Administration and the local people. They reported lawlessness and assisted patrol officers with census, health and magisterial matters. It was their role to see that government directives concerning village improvements were carried out.

IURI PATROL - NIGHT WORK by Adrian Geyle

What possessed me to stir the camp, tired and leg-weary as we all were, was a mixture of determination and desperation. Six young men, alleged to have attempted murder, had for a long time eluded arrest. Reports had it that they had attacked a young woman visiting Tomo hamlet. A child had died whilst she was there and she was declared a witch. At a small creek deep in the rainforest nearby, the woman was washing her face and hair when her attackers surprised her and attempted to kill her with arrows, from close range. They succeeded in making a pincushion of her body but she survived the onslaught.

It was our second camp, two days out from Green River Patrol Post and only three hours on from Iuri village where we bought food from friendly people on passing through. There we learned that one of the wanted men had left only an hour before we had arrived - our second indication that the 'bush telegraph' was at work. The first? - Not far out from the station, on approaching Iuri, we came up against a bizarre arrangement of a stick, a fern frond and a large, orange-coloured berry suspended at head height above the track, hanging on a 'wait-awhile' vine with needle-sharp thorns. A more obvious 'keep out' message would be met later, my lance-corporal volunteered! I took it that he meant arrows.

The mountain foothills that we skirted - along foot pads the locals used - were not high, but some sections of the tracks were agonisingly steep. We were there for two reasons: one to contact and, hopefully, to arrest one or all of the woman's assailants, and two to recompense the Iuri people whose houses had been burnt to the ground by police from Green River who had taken it upon themselves to mete out punishment.

A clearing on another mountain had been pointed out to us - that was where the six men were supposed to come from. By crow flight it would have been five or six kilometres away, across a heavily forested valley. We stirred at 10pm for an 11pm start. My entire complement consisted of seven police (six constables and a lance-corporal), six carriers, a medical orderly, my personal servant and an interpreter. All of the police, the interpreter and myself set out. The carriers were wantoks of the Iuris so I had no fears for

their safety nor that of the medical orderly and my house boy. The interpreter informed me that we certainly were being shadowed, and that would make our job almost impossible. No matter, I determined, as our ongoing effort was to establish trust and a decent level of dialogue. By their own code, the young men had done nothing wrong; they were seen to be protecting their own against evil forces. Evidently the presence of this 'witch' had coincided once before with the death of another person considered too young to die through natural causes. She had a reputation!

It was a bright, moonlit night so we wouldn't be totally in the dark. We carried no torches. The rainforest cover was to our advantage and the light from the moon was just enough to see where we were heading, if not where we were putting our feet! Trekking through rainforest in daylight can be delightful - I always enjoyed its green coolness, its surprises and its mystery. Trekking at night is a different kettle of fish! Snakes are never far from one's thoughts - they are not easily seen, even in daylight. In the mottled moonlight under the forest canopy, the thought of them presented us with anxieties of the adrenalin-making kind.

Three and a half hours later, at 2.30am, we arrived at a cleared knoll with a house standing starkly before us. It was a strange construction, unusual for the area we were in. Generally, houses were walled on four sides and stood about two metres off the ground, but this one was floorless, rather tall, and open-ended. It was so open we could see right through it, like a drive-through shelter of sorts.

This was the place we had seen from across the mountain valley, from whence we had set out. There was no sign of occupants, which was to be expected at 2.30 in the morning, but with luck we had a surprise for some luckless sleepers in there somewhere, maybe in bunks along the walls.

Lance-Corporal Simun and I synchronised our watches. He took three constables with him around the edge of the surrounding forest to advance on the open end opposing myself and the three remaining police and interpreter. Close in we did, with great trepidation on my part, as we knew not what to expect ... arrows out of the darkness perhaps? We advanced with rifles, but with strict instructions not to shoot..... My report to the Department of District Services headquarters in Port Moresby reads: "Almost despair, no-one there." We were all mightily relieved and dropped to the ground, exhausted. I have read of knees knocking but never thought my own knees would! They did that night as we closed in on that open-ended house standing stark in the moonlight.

I wonder now, 44 years on, why on earth I organised this nocturnal fiasco. We had clambered through the semi-dark forest over logs and tree roots only half-expecting our elusive six to be somewhere further on. We left an axe near coals still glowing in the open-ended house to say again that the government was mindful of wrongful burning of houses by the police on that previous patrol. We would have been less disruptive and invasive (and they might have understood us better) had we placed the axe there in daylight.

On our way home, recompense was made to all who suffered from the burning of houses at Iuri. The houses would have been easily rebuilt, but possessions were destroyed and a body being prepared for burial was incinerated. An axe and a machete were given for each house destroyed.

I was told after I was transferred from Green River that the six young attackers of the 'witch' did present themselves to the officer who took over the post. I trust they received sympathy and understanding on their way to laying down their bows and arrows in the cause of progress - which was, for them, an alien notion and for us, at times, a questionable one.

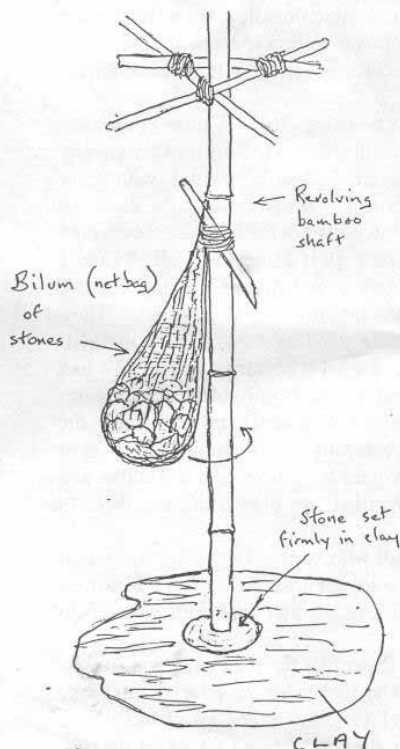
CLUBS AND WELCOMES

by Adrian Geyle

Skull-splintering clubs were furthestmost from my mind as I climbed off the grooved, slanting, tree 'ladder' through an entrance in the wall, just big enough to admit one at a time. It was out of curiosity that I asked to be shown the house's interior, and my hosts were eager to please. In retrospect, a single blow from a club in the darkness could easily have been mine as I bent forward, groping to find my feet.

My hosts were several men of the Iuri tribe who lived in hamlets scattered throughout the Border Mountains, an area under the jurisdiction of the Green River Patrol Post back in 1953. Contact between the Iuris and the native police at Green River had been of dubious worth, until this opportunity to visit the wild tribesmen 'at home'. My presence made a difference, broadening the parameters somewhat from virtually 'paramilitary' ones to tenuous peaceful overtures, for peace's sake. Whilst the sub-district had been without a patrol officer, the attempted murder of a young woman (thought to be a dangerous witch) had soured relationships between Iuris and police and resulted in a punitive patrol. The police burned houses and gardens and became somewhat 'on the nose' in Iuri country! The offenders, allegedly, were six young men who were at large in the hills around.

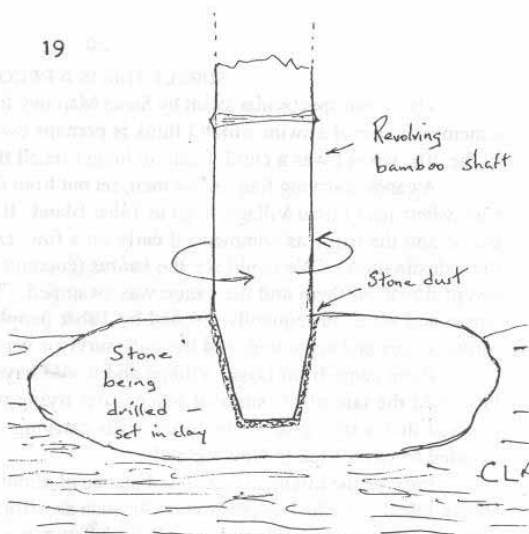
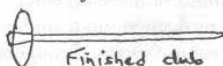
One policeman came with me into the dark interior of the house while three others remained outside, alert and more concerned for my personal safety than I was. There were some narrow shafts of light penetrating the gloom, and gradually our eyes became adjusted. String bags, bows and arrows, firewood and a fire hearth of clay set against the limbom* walls allowed us space enough to move about in the large single room. In one corner was a structure of sticks with a couple of string bags hanging from a vertical length of bamboo. The bamboo, about 2-3cm in diameter, stood on a circular water-worn stone the size of a club, secured in place on a 'hearth' of clay. The device was a drill, designed to make a hole through the stone for the fitting of a handle. (See sketch.) The bamboo shaft was heavily weighted by rocks in the string bags. The hollow structure of bamboo had no point as such, but the hard bamboo provided a cutting edge by grinding into the stone, with the dust produced by the grinding action itself. The rotary action was supplied by gently rotating the bags of stones hooked to the upright bamboo shaft-drill. The dust from this action built up as the hole deepened and its partial removal left enough of it to wear away the sides of the bamboo, diminishing its diameter. The result was a bevelling of the hole through the stone to provide the perfect fitting for a handle - as secure as handles we use in picks and mattocks, circa 1998!



Among the luris, clubs used in hand-to-hand combat were never an item of armoury on display as were bows and arrows. They were probably produced as coups de grâce late in a fight so as to be only momentarily visible to hapless victims.

For me it was an unexpected bonus to see one under production, on the factory floor; lucky too that I didn't become another hapless victim and receive one in the back of the neck.

* *Limbom* - wood from a hardwood palm



BELIEVE IT OR NOT: In March this year, Joyce and Jenny McGrade who own and operate the Hamamas Hotel in Mango Avenue (formerly The Ascot) were having a stroll along the Rabaul waterfront towards the Travelodge. On the waterfront just behind the Papua New Guinea Bank destroyed by the earthquake, they found the area littered with Commonwealth Bank cheques. Some of the cheques were those of Joyce's parents, the Christies, who lived in Rabaul, and others were those of E D Clarke and A A Hopper. The cheques were in perfect condition and dated 1966. The McGrades think that some of the debris covering the bank shifted and dislodged a few boxes. The cheques have been given to the owners or their children and are being framed. □ PAT HOPPER

HELP WANTED: Does anyone know the whereabouts of **MARTIN MUNRO**, formerly Principal of Madang Primary A School in the 1960s? Jim Eames, former editor of *New Guinea Times Courier*, Lae, has written a book on the search for missing allied airmen in the South West Pacific, particularly that undertaken in New Guinea by the late Wing Commander Keith Rundle. Jim writes, "As the book is to be published next year I have been trying to locate Martin who was a great help in my early research." If you can help please write to: Jim Eames, 6 Craig Place Gerringong NSW 2534. Ph 0242 340 873.

HELP WANTED: Mrs Beryl Peros (formerly Mason) of Toronto, Canada, writes, "I am trying to locate a book about the experiences of my uncle, **Bill Mason**, who lived in Rabaul, New Britain, from 1919-1942. Apparently this book is in two parts and the half about Bill Mason is called '**Paradise Lost**' or something very similar. The other half of the book I know nothing about. Unfortunately, I do not have the name of the author, but I do know that the author was female. This book was published sometime between 1935 and 1940. It describes Bill Mason's experiences travelling in the Solomon Islands and on his schooner sailing the Sepik River. He talks about 'head hunters' and tying dogs to his bed at night for safety. He was a recruiter on the Sepik River and managed a plantation in Rabaul." If you can help, please write to the editor, *Una Voce* (PO Box 452, Roseville NSW 2069). Information will be forwarded to Mrs Peros and to Annette Forster of Budgewoi NSW who is also seeking information about Bill (Will Mason).

SURELY THIS IS A RECORD!

The recent spectacular swim by Susie Maroney from Mexico to Cuba brought back a memory to me of a swim which I think is perhaps even more amazing. As it happened in the 30s, when I was a child, I can no longer recall the exact date.

A canoe, carrying four or five men, set out from the east coast of New Ireland, from somewhere near Lossu Village, to go to Tabar Island. It was an ordinary village outrigger canoe and the trip was commenced early on a fine, calm morning. As they came near their destination - "We could see the *kulaus* (coconuts) on the palms" - a violent storm swept down on them and the canoe was swamped. Two men managed to cling to the canoe and were subsequently rescued by Tabar people. The others were caught in the turbulent sea and separated, and the only survivor was a man named Bega.

Bega came from Lossu Village and would have been in his 20s at this time. He later told the tale of his survival when, after trying to swim ashore for some time, he realised that a strong offshore current was carrying him farther from the reef. So he decided to swim back to New Ireland!

Imagine the circumstances - a distance of about 20 miles or more lay ahead, with sharks aplenty. He had no preparation for such an effort, no protection, no team to watch and encourage his progress and provide fresh water, etc. He simply swam, throughout the rest of that day, and all night. Some time during the following day he reached New Ireland, near Lamussong, and crawled up the beach into the shade of the bush and there collapsed and slept.

Some Lamussong people found him and thought at first that a very old man had died there. His skin was grey and wrinkled from the long immersion and his hair was bleached by sun and salt. When they realised he was alive, the men who found him carried him back to Lamussong Village and cared for him until he was fully recovered.

In 1950, I undertook briefly to oversee a planting project for a neighbour who had to be away for a few weeks. Bega was the 'boss boy' on the job and I found him intelligent, reliable and courteous.

Years later, in 1980, Bega came into a trade store where I was stocktaking and, as I hadn't seen him for some time, we had a bit of a chat. By then, of course, he was quite old - in his seventies I think - and I gave him some tobacco and biscuits. Some young Highlanders, employed on the plantation, were chalking the old chap, but he walked away with dignity and did not respond. As soon as he'd gone I told the young fellows off and told them the story of his amazing swim. As the majority of them couldn't swim a stroke, they were suitably impressed!

□ PAT MURRAY

HELP WANTED: Colleen NEVILLE is writing a book about her family's PNG experience - three sons and families are still there. She would appreciate any 'sad, funny, mad or bad' stories from anyone who knew the family over the years. Please contact Colleen at PO Box 31 Beachmere Qld 4510, Ph. 0754 968707, Fax 0754 962309

HELP WANTED: On 16 May 1998 the Huon Club, the direct descendant of the original Lae and Services Club, celebrated the Golden Anniversary of its formation, making it the oldest club in Lae. By 1954 the club had developed into two groups with different aims and objectives and two separate clubs, The Lae Club and The Returned Servicemen's Club, evolved out of the original club. Mike QUINN, who has had a long association with The Lae Club, and is a Past President, has compiled a history of the club. Mike said they would welcome any contributions of photos or interesting stories from anyone who was a member at some stage. If you can help with items, please write to: Kevin Bartells, President, Huon Club, PO Box 43, Lae 411, PNG

PNG POST OFFICE NUMBERS: One of our members recommended that people use the PNG Post Codes when addressing mail to PNG as this helps ensure correct delivery and also speeds delivery.

- Official Post Offices are shown in heavy type. These offices are run by Post PNG.
- Agency Post Offices are shown in normal type. These are run by private people, often in conjunction with another business.
- The name of the province in which each office is located is shown.

Example: Mr. P. Rino
PO Box 5577
Boroko III NCD
Papua New Guinea

Post Office	Post Code	Province	Post Office	Post Code	Province	Post Office	Post Code	Province
Abau	151	Central	Jacksons	133	National Capital District	Namatanai	633	New Ireland
Aitape	553	West Sepik	Kabwum	434	Morobe	Palmail	616	East New Britain
Alotau	211	Milne Bay	Kainantu	443	Eastern Highlands	Parliament House	139	National Capital District
Ambunti	534	East Sepik	Kandrian	625	West New Britain	Popondetta	241	Northern
Angoram	535	East Sepik	Kar Kar	515	Madang	Porgera	299	Enga
Badili	123	National Capital District	Kavieng	631	New Ireland	Port Moresby	121	National Capital District
Baimuru	313	Gulf	Kerema	311	Gulf	Raba Raba	214	Milne Bay
Balimo	336	Western	Kerevat	614	East New Britain	Rabaul	611	East New Britain
Banz	283	Western Highlands	Kikoroi	315	Gulf	Saidor	525	Madang
Bereina	161	Central	Kimbe	621	West New Britain	Salamo	227	Milne Bay
Blalla	624	West New Britain	Kiunga	335	Western	Samarai	215	Milne Bay
Bogia	517	Madang	Kokoda	244	Northern	Tabubil	332	Western
Bolu Bolu	223	Milne Bay	Konedobu	125	National Capital District	Tari	255	Southern Highlands
Boroko	111	National Capital District	Kundiawa	461	Chimbu	Telefomin	555	West Sepik
Buka	355	North Solomons	Kupiano	153	Central	Tufi	246	Northern
Bulolo	423	Morobe	Kwikila	154	Central	Ukarumpa	444	Eastern Highlands
Bundi	522	Madang	Lae	411	Morobe	Unitech (Lae)	414	Morobe
Bwagaioa	225	Milne Bay	Lihir		New Ireland	University (PNG)	134	National Capital District
Daru	331	Western	Lorengau	641	Manus	Vanimo	551	West Sepik
Dogura	213	Milne Bay	Losuia	221	Milne Bay	Wabag	291	Enga
Esa'ala	226	Milne Bay	Lumi	556	West Sepik	Waigani	131	National Capital District
Finschhafen	435	Morobe	Madang	511	Madang	Wapenamanda	293	Enga
Garaina	424	Morobe	Magarida	156	Central	Wasu	432	Morobe
Gerehu	136	National Capital District	Malalaua	316	Gulf	Wau	422	Morobe
Goroka	441	Eastern Highlands	Maprik	533	East Sepik	Wewak	531	East Sepik
Gusap		Morobe	Mendi	251	Southern Highlands			
Hoskins	622	West New Britain	Menyamya	427	Morobe			
Ialibu	265	Southern Highlands	Minj	287	Western Highlands			
Ihu	314	Gulf	Moreguina	155	Central			
			Mt Hagen	281	Western Highlands			

MOTU HAD ITS USES

In the late 1930s I was working with Island Explorations and for a few years was the field assistant for one of the geologists. He was not a bad fellow to work for, but he did have a few strange ways. He always said that there was no need to talk to the labour in Motu and those that did so were only bugging it on. This came adrift several times but he was not convinced.

One trip we did was over the Kaban Range to the headwaters of the Fly River. Molega, the boss boy, was carrying the stadia rod used for surveying, and this day he was just about fed up with it. We were not following tracks but cutting our way through the jungle. Each time the rod hit a tree it would give Molega a hit on the ear. This day, as I was checking the loads in, Molega was saying a few words about how he would rather carry a bag of rice and someone else could carry the rod. The geologist asked what the row was all about and I told him.

He turned to Molega and said, "Well never mind Molega, when we get to the end of the trip and we are coming home we will not bring the rod with us, we will just throw it away."

Next day as I was sorting the loads out, I failed to find the rod and on asking Molega what had happened to it he said that Taubada Baduna (the big boss) had said throw it away - so he went to the cliff, with the Fly River about 500 feet below and did just that. The only words of English that he understood were "Throw it away". I think it did convince the 'Big Boss' that Motu had its uses. □ E. A. SUTHERLAND ROSS

THE 'LUCKY' GAME

For those of you who do not know, 'lucky' was a simple game of cards played illegally in compounds etc by the indigenous population. It was based on the recognition of the sum of 10 points, as the cards were dealt around to the players. As the Playing Cards Ordinance prohibited the importation of playing cards (also narcotics, firearms, sword sticks, and the like as well) the local citizenry made their own on pieces of cardboard. In the days of few amusements, the playing of 'lucky' was widespread and from time to time there were violent arguments over the distribution of the betting money.

Picture this - you are on duty at the Rabaul police station on a Saturday night when the phone rings. A panting voice (obviously of a loser) conveys the message 'oli luki long BP compound'. That revelation merely prompted the action that you would have taken later that night anyway, as they always played 'lucky' at the BP compound on a Saturday night.

So you quietly surround the particular building (will they never learn and have the 'lucky' in a different building) with police, staking out all the windows and doors, for the eventual flight. Then you softly walk into the dwelling which is totally void of light save for a small kerosene lamp in the centre where the players are, until, because of their concentration, you are right above them. Then they sense apprehension, and the heads swivel to the erect police officer. Panic - the smart ones grab the money, another throws the kerosene lamp about, a bed or two catches fire, and all flee. Of course those going through the windows and doors are quickly fastened, but one smart one headed for the cement sheet wall, went through it with a mighty crash and kept on going. How could we have anticipated this ... but you can't win them all.

For those apprehended, it meant a night at the police station, a few meals and the fine of 5/- on Monday, or the forfeiture of their bail of the same amount. The smart one was ahead, as he had picked up the kitty very quickly on the raid. □ M. R. HAYES

MALAGUNA ROAD - The Papua and New Guinea Diaries of Sarah Chinnery, edited by Kate Fortune. National Library of Australia 1998, 246 pp, illus, index, \$24.95 +\$5 p&h and from Pacific Book House (17 Park Ave, Broadbeach Waters, Gold Coast Qld 4218, ph 07 5539 0446) \$25 less 10% members' discount + \$6.50 p&h = \$29

Reviewed by Heather Seale

The book *Malaguna Road* adapted from Sarah Chinnery's diaries has evoked so many memories of my childhood in Rabaul, and the years until the eruption on that Saturday afternoon in May 1937.

What an adventurous lady Sarah Chinnery was - leaving England, her homeland, with her husband for Australia, and then Papua New Guinea in 1920/21, furthering her interest in photography and anthropology, travelling up the Sepik and Ramu Rivers on a schooner (no mod. cons. in those days) with never a word of dismay from her ... she found everything so wonderfully interesting. I admire her tremendously, for she also got out with her houseboys - and soiled her hands - making a beautiful garden around her home in Malaguna Road. Quite unheard of in those days!

Her description of the Rabaul eruption was so vivid and correct - I often wondered where the photos of the eruption came from. They were published overseas in the English papers of the day (I still have my father's copies). It was Sarah Chinnery who took and processed those photos when she and her husband and a couple of others went out to Vulcan in a small pinnacle to see what was happening! My parents and I, along with a hundred or so other residents, stood and watched in fascinated horror on the other side of the harbour. When hot ash began to fall on us, we all rushed for cars and sped out of town. A traffic jam on Tunnel Hill was the result - luckily we got to Wunawutung before the river between it and Rabaul became a raging torrent of rocks and debris and washed the bridge away.

I have enjoyed every page of Sarah's book and hope many others will do the same. The photographs are excellent. Thank you, Sarah Chinnery, for keeping your diaries.

Note: In 1924 Sarah's husband was appointed Government Anthropologist in New Guinea, and in 1932 he became the first Director of the newly established Department of District Services and Native Affairs, located at Rabaul.

MASKED EDEN - A History of the Australians in New Guinea by Anne McCosker.

Anne McCosker is well suited to writing a history of Australians in New Guinea: her father went there in 1924 and in 1929 married Marjorie Martin in Rabaul. Later the partnership, McCosker and King, bought Matala Plantation. Anne McCosker was born in Rabaul, and New Guinea dominated her childhood even when she was being educated in Queensland. She later obtained a B.A. History Honours degree from the University of London. "*Masked Eden* is a story of love and beauty, gallantry, courage and betrayal. The wonderful pioneering spirit of Australians is seen - often in co-operation with the New Guineans - struggling with the incompetence and ignorance of a small elite in Canberra and Rabaul." The book fully examines the fall of Rabaul to the Japanese in 1942, using original material gathered from the nation's archives and the author's personal collection. The Foreword, written by John Leeuwin-Clark, son of Nobby Clark, states, "Anne McCosker ... has a feel for the beauty of the land and its indigenous people and has written with authority from the valuable original material given to her by pre-World War II residents." 370pp, maps, notes, photographs, selected bibliography, \$57 + \$4.50 postage Qld, \$6.50 interstate. Order Direct from Matala Press, PO Box 829, Maleny, Qld 4552.

BETWEEN THE THUNDER AND THE SUN by Dick Horton. The Book Guild Ltd, 25 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 2LU. 161 pp. £14.95, hardback.

Reviewed by Stuart Inder

Posted to what was then the British Solomon Islands Protectorate in 1937 as a member of the colonial service, Dick Horton was Guadalcanal District Officer when the Japanese invaded in 1942. Evacuated to Australia, he resigned the service and got back into real action in the Solomons with the US 1st Marine Raider Battalion, and later the RAN Coastwatching service as a lieutenant with the RANVR.

Now in his 80s, he has long since retired to Sussex, from where he has produced this latest of several books he has written about the Solomons - all dealing with the war except the first, *The Happy Isles*.

His *Fire Over the Islands*, published in 1970, was the first full first-hand account of Coastwatching activities in the Solomons to appear after Eric Feldt's comprehensive history of islands coastwatching, *The Coast Watchers*, in 1946.

Coastwatching activities in the Solomons have since been dealt with by other writers, the most readable being Walter Lord's *Lonely Vigil* (1977). The latest authoritative work, *Coastwatching in the Solomon Islands*, by A B Feuer, with a foreword by Lord, appeared in the United States in 1992. Feuer had access to many original diaries and reports by all the well-known participants. But his book is expensive.

In *Between the Thunder and the Sun* Horton delves into Solomons' coastwatching yet again, revisiting some old material while developing a perspective on his main object - a detailed account of activities in the north of the island chain, mainly on Bougainville. He describes the activities there of all the Allied forces, including the Fijians, Tongans and Kiwis.

Eric Feldt, *et al.*, have told us a lot about what happened on Bougainville and of the extraordinary exploits of men like Read, Mason and Yauwika, but Horton gives us a useful overview of the three years of action that ended only when the general cease-fire order came down from Tokyo after Japan's surrender. There were still 23,500 Japanese troops on Bougainville at the cease-fire, despite a huge death-roll from disease - a force that would have made Japan's final defeat on the island long and costly if Tokyo hadn't given in.

Horton brings in to clearer focus the difficulties of Coastwatchers whose main purpose of passing on information on enemy movements had sometimes to take a lower priority while they avoided Japanese search patrols or went on the offensive to survive; fed and directed irregulars and carriers, sometimes arming them; and evacuated civilians and downed fliers - sometimes all at once. The taciturn Paul Mason once signalled in exasperation when directed to shift posthaste to the other end of the island and concentrate on sending out information: "There's a war on here!"

Horton obviously uses a variety of sources, but appears to rely heavily on material from a long report produced for the RAN by the late Jack Read.

Read was in the thick of it, and it's all good stuff, but it's a pity the reader has to speculate as to sources when Horton could have given us a short bibliography, or at least some indication in a preface or foreword. But there is no bibliography, no preface or foreword - and no index.

Some maps in the text would also have been useful for readers having to make sense of the sometimes bewildering number of small hit-and-run actions that engaged all sides because of the difficult terrain.

(The Book Guild says credit card orders for the book can be lodged by phoning them on 01825 723398).

THE SKY TRAVELLERS - Journeys in New Guinea 1938-1939 by Bill Gammage. This is the story of the last great journey in 450 years of European land exploration - the story of Jim Taylor and John Black's first-contact patrol across 3,000 km of the western highlands of PNG. The patrol consisted of 350 people, mostly carriers from Highlands areas already familiar with Europeans; about 40 were New Guinea police from the coast. With war looming, records of their remarkable experience were officially suppressed. Bill Gammage has talked to many of the people who were there - both the visitors and those visited. A committed historian and a skilled storyteller, Bill traces a complex journey of minds as well as bodies. Every participant in this adventure was changed irrevocably. The book contains original photographs and detailed maps. After many years teaching history at the universities of PNG and Adelaide, Bill Gammage is now a Senior Research Fellow at the Australian National University. Melbourne Univ Press, 1998. \$39.95 (incl postage within Australia). Please send order to: Reply Paid 1043, Melbourne University Press, PO Box 278 CARLTON VIC 3053. Ph 03 9347 3455, Fax 03 9349 2527

The following is available from 'Australian Military History Publications' (AMHP):
WE WERE THE FIRST by Sandy McNab - This is a history of the First Independent Company (commandos) whose members operated out of New Ireland, Manus, Bougainville, Vila and Tulagi - sadly half of the members were lost in the *Montevideo Maru*. The book includes an examination of the friction between the Company and coastwatchers Paul Mason and Jack Read. \$45 incl postage. Please make cheques to A.M.H.P. 13 Veronica Place, Loftus NSW 2232. Ph 015 284 760 or Fax/ph 02 9521 6515

NEWS FROM PACIFIC BOOK HOUSE, 17 Park Avenue, Broadbeach Waters, Gold Coast Qld 4218. Ph 07 5539 0446, fax 07 5538 4114. 10% discount to ROAPNG members.
AUSTRALIAN WOMEN IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA - Colonial Passages 1920-1960 by Chilla Bulbeck. An account of the experiences of white women in PNG between the 1920s and 1960s, based on oral reminiscences and written records of 19 women, exploring the colonial period through women's eyes. Cambridge Univ. Press, Melbourne, 1992. pp.xii, 327, bibliog, index, 33 b/w photos, hardcover. \$35 less 10% plus \$6.50 p&h

AN ETHNOLOGY OF THE ADMIRALTY ISLANDERS. The Alfred Bühler Collection, Museum der Kulturen, Basel by Sylvia Ohnemus. In 1931-32 Alfred Bühler assembled a unique collection documenting the culture of the Admiralty Islanders. The author presents the results of Alfred Bühler's important collecting and study expedition to the Admiralty Islands (Manus Province). Bühler's original field photographs are reproduced together with illustrations of the artifacts he collected. The author complements this material with her own contributions based on her own field work and field photos. Crawford House, Bathurst 1998. First Australian Edition, pp.xi, 430, bibliog, index, 4 maps, 462 photos in b/w and col, hardcover. \$75 less 10% plus \$6.50 p&h

TAIM BILONG MASTA - The Australian Involvement in Papua New Guinea by Hank Nelson. Based on the ABC Radio series produced by Tim Bowden, this book tells the diverse stories of those Australians who went to Papua and New Guinea to administer, convert, plant, mine, marry, run a house and bring up children. People speak for themselves and Hank Nelson provides the continuity and comment, all against a background of photos, period advertising, newspaper clippings and documents. First published in 1982, this is the latest edition. Australian Broadcasting Commission, Sydney, pp. 224, index, illus, cardcover. \$30 less 10% plus \$6.50 p&h

OUTSTATION MEMORIES

by W J Johnston

(An extract from "Through the Eyes of a Kiap", the memoirs of Bill Johnston during his service with the Department of District Services and Native Affairs, 1946-75)

During my time with District Services and Native Affairs, I once bought a cassowary chick about thirty centimetres tall. He was cute for the kids and ultimately he was to be a special occasion dinner. The chick grew fast. He was fascinating to feed - whole bananas, cobs of corn, in fact anything smaller than a soccer ball easily slid down his long neck; he once passed a pen holder, nib and all. He was getting too big and I could not bring myself to destroy his trust by consigning him to the oven. The bird reached at least 1.5 metres and unconsciously could have hurt our young children.

One day Nance came to the office in a distressed state and told me the cassowary had eaten a small fish left on the hook of Alan's fishing line". "So?" I asked, "The line is still attached to the rod", she said. The thought of the hook becoming set in the bird's innards made me grab a knife and the chase began. First the rod was cut free, then I thought the long length of line could be entangled in the bushes, so around and around we went, bird and I, until I got within thirty or forty centimetres of its head and was able to cut the fishing line. This started me thinking the bird was becoming too much of a nuisance and it could not be returned to the wild. Man was his source of food. The station police detachment solved the problem, they wanted the bird as a main course for a small party, so I gave it to them.

We had eaten cassowary several times - the legs, as big as a leg of lamb, had been delicious. We must serve cassowary to some guests, we thought. We got another leg and cooked it. Unfortunately, when I carved it at the table in front of the guests, much to our embarrassment, the slices of meat curled up like rubber - it must have been an old bird. I once asked an ex-cannibal what human flesh tasted like. His embarrassed reply was, "I don't know, but my mother says it tastes a bit like cassowary". Cassowary never featured on our menu again.

We kept chickens at all our postings except Madang and Port Moresby. At Manus, like most places, they were free range in the literal sense. They were free to range anywhere. Apart from the eggs and meat they provided, they kept the insects down around the house. It was good to see them thrashing a spider or centipede to pieces as you knew that it was one less danger to the kids playing near the house. They did attract snakes but they were non-venomous at Manus and in any case, at night, the flock would troop into the coop I had made for them.

The hens with chickens were another matter, they tended to nest on the ground in some nook and so were easy prey for snakes. An evening chore was to find these hens and put them, with their chickens, into a snake proof box, usually a wooden box with mosquito wire netting over the open front and a small door at the back. It was the only way we could raise chickens. The small python type snake could not swallow an adult bird but the chicks were no problem. We started this practice at Woodlark Island and in our initial ignorance of fowl behaviour, one evening we put an older, motherless chick in with a mother and her brood. The next morning the motherless chick's head had all the feathers and skin pecked off as the hen demonstrated that its presence was not welcomed. The little fellow was a fledging and with his bald head he looked more like a buzzard's offspring than a domestic fowl.

We patched him up and he was handling life O.K. but the tropical sun was a problem on his bare skull, so Nance knitted him a small bonnet and tied it on under his beak. I believe word about chickens in bonnets spread, and a lot of people got a laugh and thought we had gone troppo. Our fowls were strictly a food source but we did give names to some of them because of their eccentric nature. One such was Flossie. She stood out because of her habit of flying up onto tree branches before dropping her egg. She may have been a budding greenie - no overpopulation for her. She was destined for the pot, a distinction which was reached sooner than intended when one afternoon she was running down a steep slope with a rooster in hot pursuit. He caught her halfway down the slope - his speed and weight caused her to fall over and she broke her neck. She featured on our menu but Nance refused to help me eat her.

Catching fowls for slaughter varied from a lasso or a shot through the head whilst pecking at a grain lure, or the more spectacular dive and grab method. One of the most ludicrous results of the last method involved a young rooster, resplendent with his brilliant plumage. He had magnificent tail plumage and when grabbing at him I only managed to get hold of the feathers at the base of his tail; I was off balance on my knees and he was digging his claws into the ground and straining to escape, and he did. I was left with a handful of feathers and he was left with a large round bare patch where his tail had been. With his bare backside and the "parson's nose" twitching nervously and indignantly, he looked back at me with an injured look in his eye as he tried to strut off with his usual cock-of-the-walk look. Every time now when I see a truck prime mover without its trailer, I think of him.

After my father died, my mother came to stay with us for a short time at Lorengau. She was a lady who had spent all her life in suburbia. One morning soon after her arrival, she was sitting in the lounge room and watched, in amazement, when one of our 'free range' hens walked up the back steps, clucked at the screen door for it to be opened, walked through the kitchen and dining room into the lounge room and went behind the wireless set, then took herself back out into the backyard and announced, in a loud cackle, that she had laid an egg. Nance, matter-of-factly collected the egg and put it in the kitchen. Mum wasn't impressed with life in Papua New Guinea!! For years she had hoped that we would get some sense and return to Australia. I was her only son and I suspect she thought I had done the wrong thing by leaving home at eighteen to go into the Army and not returning until I was over fifty and she had only a few years of life left.

Friends of Noelene ALLEN of Clayfield Qld. will be saddened to learn that Noelene had received advice that her husband Ross was missing during a solo sailing journey in the North Pacific. Recently his empty yacht was recovered drifting some hundreds of miles offshore and it must be assumed that Ross has been lost at sea. (This information was supplied by Pam Foley.)

Jack READ's daughter - Someone recently asked us for the name and address of Jack's daughter but unfortunately we cannot remember who. However, daughter Judy kindly said she did not mind the details going in the newsletter: Judy Read, now **Judy FAIRHURST**, lives at 306 Heinz Lane, Ballarat VIC 3350, Ph 03 5332 1072

GONE - BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

by W J Johnston

(Another excerpt from Bill's memoirs)

The pioneering days of our lives finished with our posting to Madang in 1953. We began to live in European-type housing and there were social amenities and vehicular transport. In Madang I met, for the first time, some of the remnants of the fine young men who had gone to the Territory as Patrol Officers, a few years prior to the outbreak of World War 2. The Commonwealth Department of Territories, who had the task of selecting these men, must have had an easy job. The Great Depression was still running, and youths with excellent academic qualifications were falling over themselves applying for any job with prospects and security. It would seem that all the selectors had to do was narrow down to those who had also demonstrated athletic or sporting ability. With the outbreak of war, they joined the armed services and quickly won promotion to officer rank. Some were decorated, others killed and some moved on to higher things in other fields. One was Dudley McCarthy who, before becoming Australia's ambassador to the United States of America, was Australia's official historian of the war in Papua and New Guinea. Some returned to serve in the Territory. One of these was Wally Giles or Walter Boyer Giles, one of the best men I have had the pleasure of knowing. By accident, I learned that he had obtained nine As in his Leaving Certificate exam which, in his days at high school, would have meant that he had either topped his State or come very close. He could have taken any course he wished at university.

He served with distinction in the Middle East and New Guinea rising to the rank of Captain. He had a good physique and had been a fine sportsman. His wife, Aileen, is a lovely natural lady. Wally was a District Commissioner when I was first transferred to Madang; he was at least ten years older than I but we became friends, and remained so, until his death from heart disease in Australia in 1969 after he had been boarded out of the service. Aileen, thankfully, is alive and a dear friend.

Wally never played politics or tried to win influential friends. His life was devoted to the welfare of his wife and three sons and he was happy to be moved sideways into the Land Titles Commission where he served as a Commissioner until illness forced his early retirement. I regret he did not see his sons become a doctor, solicitor and a surveyor - he would have been so proud. I always thought his ability had been greatly underestimated by the top officials in Port Moresby. I saw lesser men, junior to Wally, reach positions of greater authority.

Note: Aileen Giles is a member of this association and many, once youthful single officers, will have fond memories of being 'mothered' by Aileen when she was old enough to be their big sister.

HELP WANTED: Christina (Gladys) Jago, widow of Rob JAGO, artist and teacher in PNG (deceased) would appreciate hearing from anyone currently in possession of any of Rob's paintings. She would like to know the title of the work, and if it has been dated. She is trying to compile a list of his work for family reasons. Christina's address is 'Belmore', 41 Pacific Highway, Ulmarra NSW 2462. Ph 02 6644 5555

In October, **FLIGHT WEST AIRLINES**, Australia's largest independently owned carrier, will begin services from Cairns to Port Moresby and return, daily except Sunday, and two return flights per week between Townsville and Port Moresby, using F28-4,000 aircraft.

MY BELOVED WIFE

by W J Johnston

(Another excerpt from Bill's memoirs)

Nance was a good helpmate, companion and wife but, even though she could shoot accurately, I don't think I would ever take her on safari as a backup gun if I was shooting big game. It took me many years to reach this decision. The first indication of this potential failing occurred at Misima. We were out one dark, moonless night, spear fishing in the lagoon. We were in a dinghy - a youth with a fish spear in the bow, another sitting amidsthips with the oars, and Nance, holding the pressure lamp, sitting on the back seat. I was standing one foot on the seat, the other on the gunwale. The dinghy was unbalanced. I said, "Move over your way a bit, Darling". Darling did and I was on my way into the lagoon. I went down in a blaze of light. Imagine my surprise when I surfaced and found everything as black as could be. She had dropped the lamp into the lagoon as a reaction to me going overboard.

One night, at Woodlark, there was a commotion in the fowl house. It had to be a snake. I got the carving knife from the kitchen and with a lamp Nance and I went across to the fowl house. Sure enough, a large snake had managed to find a hole big enough to squeeze through. I gave Nance the lamp and told her to keep the light on the snake while I went in and killed it. I opened the door, closed it and walked towards the snake about shoulder high near the perch. I was less than a metre from it when 'clatter' and total darkness. Nance had dropped the lamp. It had smashed, the flame had gone out, and she couldn't find it in the dark. Non-venomous snakes, large or small, don't really worry me but I did not like being in the dark, in a confined space, with one of them. No doubt the snake had more reason to be concerned about the situation than I had, he didn't have a knife. Anyway, I was pleased to find the door and open the fastening and get out.

The third occasion was at Bogia when, during the night, our son, Gary, stopped breathing and I applied mouth to mouth resuscitation; while Nance was lighting a pressure lamp in the kitchen, she spilt the methylated spirits used to preheat the lamp, and then set the kitchen bench alight - she did put out the flames. In the circumstances, I don't suppose that incident should count. Of course, there had been the times when she had opened the doors of the kitchen cupboards above me when I was bending down to get something out of the lower cupboards, but that must have happened to everyone; and there was the time we were crossing a swift flowing river and got stuck fast on a boulder in the middle of it and she opened the door of the Land Rover and the water rushed in and then out the back of the vehicle taking most of our belongings with it. Since the time when Nance put a new car on its roof at a speed of five kilometres per hour, travelling for a distance of twenty metres, I have been wary. In fact, you could call it distrustful.

Needless to say, she has a high opinion of my ability! This was borne out one night when we were driving back to Lorengau from a function at the Navy Depot at Momote. It was late at night and it had rained heavily most of the evening as only it can in the tropics. The rain had stopped and the wide coronus road had dried out and was in fine condition. There were about 35 kilometres to cover before we got home. The only light came from the high beam of my headlights - the area was totally uninhabited. I was travelling about 70-80 kilometres per hour when suddenly there was a large hole right in front on my left-hand side. The rain had washed out part of the road in a built-up section with a man-made swamp on the left and a timbered drop on the right. Within a split second, the left front wheel dropped into the hole, my

body went to the right and the door lock broke with the force of the blow. I was partly out of the vehicle. Out of the corner of my eye I saw Nance bounce up and hit her head on the canvas roof. The rear left wheel went into the hole, we were still going forward, the second jolt, to the left, and my bounce to the right, resulted in most of my body being out of the vehicle. I still held the steering wheel with both hands, part of my left thigh was still on the seat and my left foot was pushed hard into the floor near the seat. I couldn't reach the pedals, most importantly, the brake. The vehicle careered from one side of the road to the other as I fought to regain control. At one time, I thought we were going to go off down the slope into the trees, the next I was certain we would dive off to the left and into the dam formed by the road, and then the speed began to come off the vehicle and I started to get control and was able to get back onto the seat and reach the pedals and resume normal driving. I was just breathing a sigh of relief when what did I hear from Nance? "You idiot, what do you think you are doing". **!!!** I didn't reply, what could you say to a person who did not drive! I was thankful I had been driving a short base Land Rover, the large wheels and sturdy structure saved the day. Fortunately, I didn't fracture my right elbow when it slammed into the door and broke the lock off.

THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS HAVE NOT RENEWED THEIR SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1998

In some cases, failure to renew is simply an oversight - would financial members please jog the memory of anyone they know who is unfinancial.

de NAVRANCOURT Mrs H 23 Abbott Street, ATHERTON QLD 4883
 FOX Mrs E H 20a Clifford Street, GOULBURN NSW 2580
 FOX Mr S 20a Clifford Street, GOULBURN NSW 2580
 FURBER Mrs D Post Office EINASLEIGH QLD 4871
 GOUGH Ms R R 25 Duval Street WYNNUM WEST QLD 4178
 GUNTHER Mr C 29 Couatts Crescent COLLAROY NSW 2097
 INKSTER Mr C 15 Elizabeth Street BLAIR ATHOL SA 5084
 JOHNSTON Mr R J 9 Fiona Avenue CASTLE HILL NSW 2154
 LAWRIE Mrs N Unit 57H, Henry Kendall Hostel, Kalawarra Rd WYOMING NSW 2250
 LEGA Mrs J Unit 109 Pittwater Palms, 82 Avalon Pde AVALON NSW 2107
 LEONARD Mrs D PO Box 14 MACHANS BEACH QLD 4878
 LUPTON Mr P F PO Box 94 THURSDAY ISLAND QLD 4875
 MACKENZIE Mr J S 4 Wingara Drive ROSEBUD WEST VIC 3940
 MUNRO Mr M & Mrs J 'Namanula', Lusatia Park Rd LAUNCHING PLACE VIC 3139
 NEILSEN Mrs A M Cayan Gardens RSL War Veterans Home SUNNYBANK QLD 4109
 NORMAN Ms P A 2/73 Aralia Street NIGHTCLIFF NT 0810
 NORMOYLE Mr A 53 Vickers St HAMMERSLEY WA 6022
 PAVLICH Mr D 13 Panitz Street SORRENTO QLD 4217
 POWELL Mr F E 18 Ross Street MT PLEASANT QLD 4740
 RIDDELL Mr R previously 88 Lincoln Ave COLLAROY BEACH NSW 2097
 then Locked Bag No 6 HAYMARKET NSW 1238
 YOUNG-WHITFORDE Mr W 24 Palm Road NEWPORT NSW 2106

Rich and Poor - Bureau of Statistics income distribution figures released in July show that the top 20% of the population earned 12 times more than the average income of the bottom 20% in 1996-97. The average gross weekly income of the lowest 20% of people was \$121, while the average income of the highest was \$1,485. Income earned by the lowest 20% (including welfare benefits) accounted for only 3.8% of all income.

(From SCOA Bulletin, August 1998)

A STRONG AND IMPOSING FIGURE

Those readers who have ever wandered around Westminster Abbey might doubt whether space remained for any more monuments or memorials. However, niches were found recently for ten statues of 20th century Christian martyrs. Amongst these are the assassinated Martin Luther King, Dietrich Bonhoeffer executed by the Nazis, and the Duke of Edinburgh's great-aunt thrown down a mine shaft by Bolsheviks.

Shoulder to shoulder with these notabilities stands the effigy of a humble Papuan, one Lucian Tapiedi. Trained as an Anglican mission teacher at Dogura, he died aged 21. Northern District wantoks will know much more, but the brief history is that consequent upon the invasion of Papua by the Japanese in 1942, European missionaries endeavoured to escape. Tapiedi told his fellow native workers that they should not follow them but take to the bush for the sake of their families although he, being single without ties, would assist the clergy in their flight. Whilst attempting this he was axed to death by an Orokaiva. These local people then alerted the invaders to the whereabouts of the missionaries resulting in their capture at Buna and the beheading of men and women by the Japanese. Subsequently nearly 30 Orokaiva were tried and hanged for their offences.

In 1943 Sgt-Major Christian Arek, Papuan Infantry Battalion, located the remains of Tapiedi and he received a proper burial by Bishop Strong. The killer was never charged but eventually converted to Christianity, taking the name of his victim. As a mark of atonement he built an Anglican church at Embi.

Sir David Hand, former Archbishop of PNG, aged 80, accompanied Tapiedi's cousin of similar vintage on a trip to London to see the statues installed on 9 July in the presence of the Queen. The Abbey authorities having no photograph of Tapiedi had commissioned a limestone statue of "a typical PNG tribesman"... whatever such might be. Fortunately knowledgeable wantoks stepped in with a description and details enabling a new and more authentic statue to be carved. The original "tribesman" sculpture now stands in the foyer of the PNG High Commission. That of Lucian at the Abbey was described by a London newspaper as "a strong and imposing figure". □ J B TONER

THE VOLKSWAGEN SAGA

When in Lae during 1970, we lived in a 'police' house at the corner of 7th Street and Huon Road, often a busy road. One Sunday morning, around 3am, I was awakened by frantic knocking at the front door - by some Sepik locals who presumably knew that a police officer lived in that house. Two Sepiks were partially inebriated and kept repeating, 'Car I kaikaim wantok bilong mipela'. This sounded highly unlikely and somewhat suspect, however at their urging, I followed them down Huon Road for a short distance to where they pointed the car had gone, and saw a Volkswagen which had run into a barat (ditch). There was an unconscious drunken European in the driver's seat, a similarly inebriated and unconscious Sepik sprawled across the passenger seat and much broken windscreen glass. It appears that the three Sepiks were happily walking along Huon Road when the Volkswagen collided with one of them, sending him over the bonnet and through the windscreen, with the car continuing its way along Huon Road until it stopped at a barat. The Sepik was taken to hospital, the drunken European to the police cells, and I went back to bed. The 'car-napping' of the Sepik cost the European much in compensation, not to mention the contribution to revenue. □ M R HAYES

GERMAN HARRY

by Ken Humphreys

It doesn't seem possible, but there were two German Harrys in the histories of Torres Strait and British New Guinea.

HARRY CHRISTENSEN: This German Harry made the acquaintance of magistrate C.A.W. Monckton in 1895 and is mentioned in Monckton's writings. However I believe Harry arrived at Sudest out of Cooktown in 1888. He owned the schooner *Griffin* which was available for charter to parties of Australian prospectors. There is a feature on the northern coast of Sudest named Griffin Point. Monckton described Harry as being of insignificant appearance with little physical strength. It appears Harry was not a gold seeker, being content to carry passengers and cargo and dive for shell.

Harry sold the *Griffin* to Alec Matherson who on-sold it to Mahoney & Carney but the schooner sank at anchor off Samarai. Harry had purchased the *Hygeia*, but then re-sold it to William Whitten of Whitten Bros, but it was wrecked on the east coast of Ferguson Island. The *Hygeia*, 73 feet long and rated 59 tons had been purchased by Acting Commissioner John Douglas in 1887 for £1,100 delivered Cooktown. She replaced the administration's *Governor Cairns* which was returned to the Queensland Government. Harry appears to have made boat trading his profession. That is all I have on Harry except to note that -

(a) The Mahoney of Mahoney & (Patrick) Carney was John Clyde Mahoney whose wife Elizabeth was known as the Queen of Sudest (1855 - 30-3-1943). Mrs Mahoney retired to Australia in 1930 leaving two daughters and a son in Papua. Daughter Hanorah married John Leetch, then later married James Henry Driver whom I believe was the father of the late Bill Driver of Bargara Qld, formerly of District Office Port Moresby Town and a noted stamp dealer. The Pacific Islands Monthly list of Territorial Residents evacuated to Australia in 1942 contains two Drivers, J.N. & J.H., who were presumably Bill Driver's parents.

(b) Londoner William Whitten arrived Port Moresby in 1885 as one of Sir Peter Scratchley's bodyguard and police force, all ex Royal Navy. Robert Whitten joined his brother in 1892. William died in Sydney on 11-9-1912 and Robert passed away at Samarai on 16-4-1937.

HAROLD AUGUST FRITZ: Harold was born in Prussia in 1842. He probably left home in 1866 after Hohenzollern Prussia defeated Hapsburg Austria as he is recorded as arriving on Deliverance Island in Torres Strait in December 1867. He then decided to claim Deliverance and nearby Kerr Island as his own. There was a flag raising but it is not known which flag he so honoured. It was probably the Black & White sans eagle Prussian flag for it could not be German as the Second Reich did not exist in 1867. Harold built a shelter and settled down as a hermit. Perhaps he was a true remittance man instructed to go as far away from civilisation as possible. When he arrived on Deliverance, there was no European settlement on the Papuan coast. Rev Lawes was not to arrive at Port Moresby on the *John Williams III* until 1874, and Merauke was not established until 1902. The nearest Europeans were at Somerset on Cape York but there was no retail store there. There was nothing on Thursday Island, so his closest supply point would have been Townsville as stores had been established there in 1864. The main settlement in 1867 was Port Denison which had been re-named Bowen in 1865, the commercial and administrative centre of the Burdekin and Flinders District. The first James Burns store in North Queensland was opened in Townsville in 1872. When Harold

stepped ashore on his windswept coral outcrop, the population of Townsville was around 350. The town and its surrounding areas supported seven hotels.

We assume Harold lodged his claim to Deliverance and Kerr at Somerset, much to the surprise of the magistrate. Thus his claim was filed in Brisbane from around 1869. However the prevailing thought at the time was that those islands were probably owned by the Sultan of Tidore! On 14-8-1872 Queensland annexed all islands within 60 nautical miles of its coast, an act which did not affect Harold. But on 24-6-1879 the 1872 annexation was extended to the whole of the Torres Strait to within a bowshot of the New Guinea coast and Harold's islands were included along with Saibai, Duan and Boigu.

Thus, in the absence of any warship captain of the Second Reich raising the German flag on Deliverance and Kerr after 1871 and before 1879, Queensland owned Harold's islands after 1879. But Harold persevered and in 1885 when Scratchley arrived at Port Moresby he had in his working papers an application for a lease of Deliverance, a claim based on the grounds of original discovery and occupancy. In any event, if there was a skerrick of German ownership of the islands, it would have been relinquished in 1919 with the Treaty of Versailles.

The fact is that prior to Harold's arrival the Torres Strait islands had been claimed for England at least four times but the proclamations were not accepted by London. One of the raisings of the Union Jack was by the Chief Mate of the private vessel *Shah Hormuzear* (Master M.W. Bampton) in 1793 on Darnley Island. The Mate led a punitive expedition to Darnley to avenge the ambush of a party of eight seamen who had landed seeking fresh water. The islanders willingly offered water but attacked when the sailors started polluting the source by washing clothes with soap. Five of the water party were killed and the others escaped, eventually making Timor after undergoing severe hardship in an open whaleboat.

The *Shah Hormuzear* was accompanied by the whaler *Chesterfield* on a journey from Sydney to Bengal via Norfolk Island. The two masters had decided to sail via Torres Strait but made very heavy weather of it, having to continuously sound their way west, scraping reefs and searching for water. They stayed 17 days at Turnagain Island distilling seawater. They then sighted a known but unnamed island and under the euphoria of escaping into deep water named the island Deliverance.

The question is - Why did Harold choose Deliverance? How did he find it? He was fortunate in that the Torres Strait islanders considered the island as evil ground so would not attack him. A scenario could be that Harold purchased a cutter in Brisbane and headed to Bowen then Townsville and tried his luck in Torres Strait to find an uninhabited home.

Harold appears to have survived well the vicissitudes of tropical life, living off wild yam, coconuts and the rich sea plus co-existing with the Papuans and local natives. He was not bothered by the Tugeri raiders of Dutch New Guinea as their canoes were only designed for coastal waters and there was only one head on Deliverance. Harold is reported as owning a Snider rifle in 1901, probably the 1895 model readily available in Queensland.

Somerset Maugham visited Harold in 1921 when en route Batavia out of Thursday Island. Harold received his famous visitor quite coldly. Maugham reported, "I cannot say he was pleased to see us. He accepted our gifts as a right, without thanks, and grumbled a little because something or other he needed had not been brought."

On 16 November 1924 at the age of 82, Harold was attacked by a shark in his lagoon at high tide. He crawled up the beach to his shelter bleeding to death. His remains were buried in the unknown flag he raised in 1867.

FROM KHARTOUM TO THE UNIVERSITY OF PNG

by Donald P Drover

In late 1963, three Australians were having a pre-lunch drink at the Sudan Club, Khartoum. One of them, Val Knowles, said a university was to be set up in the then Papua and New Guinea. Val had been a civil engineer with the Department of Works in Port Moresby and had just returned from there. I put the news out of my mind as I had an interesting job as Professor of Agricultural Chemistry and Soil Science at the University of Khartoum. I had developed an active department and students were beginning to be interested in post-graduate work. At that time the country was run by a military junta with a benevolent dictator and, on the surface, life was stable.

The following year, however, was a turbulent one with student and civil unrest which culminated in the shooting of a student at the university by the army following a demonstration. On that evening I had attended a meeting of the Professorial Board after which I had met a Scottish girl and chatted outside the university before going to the Sudan Club for a drink. We missed the shooting by what must have been less than half an hour and no demonstration was evident.

The next day and the months to follow were particularly turbulent with curfews, spontaneous demonstrations and burning of effigies of the military leaders.

Towards the end of 1964 the Negroid Christian southerners became the focus of attention from just-as-black Arab and Moslem northerners. There were several days and nights of ethnic cleansing where the northerners actively sought out southerners and killed them. One morning I saw my laboratory staff armed with pieces of waterpipe chasing southerners around the campus - one poor unfortunate had climbed up a palm tree! I called my staff a pack of bastards and resigned the same day.

On my return to Australia I spent my paid leave with my parents in Narrandera and wrote to the Interim Council of the proposed University of Papua and New Guinea as it was then to be called, expressing my interest. In the spring of 1965 I took up a temporary research position with the then Division of Land Research and Regional Survey, CSIRO, Canberra. Not long afterwards a Chair in Biology at the University of Papua and New Guinea was advertised, I applied and was interviewed and was unsuccessful. Shortly afterwards my phone rang and I was asked whether I would be interested in the proposed Chair of Chemistry as they wanted someone with an interest in agriculture and soils. My reply was yes, and in July 1966 I arrived in Port Moresby.

Dr John Gunther met me at Jackson's Airport and later introduced me to the small group at the Administrator's House at the top of Hunter Street on Tuaguba Hill who were planning the university. Another group had begun teaching at the Port Moresby showgrounds at the mouth of June Valley.

The task of planning courses in chemistry was not particularly easy because I had never been involved in a purely chemistry department. Fortunately at that time there was a tremendous amount of rethinking going on in the UK, USA and Australia on how chemistry should be taught in both schools and universities. The UK had developed the Nuffield Scheme, and the Chem Study Scheme had been produced in the USA. The latter was conceptual rather than factual and differed from my secondary and tertiary experiences. Again, the University of NSW was working in Thailand to produce a syllabus suitable for SE Asia under the auspices of UNESCO. I tried to take the best out of all these new developments.

Prior to my arrival in Port Moresby a small band of tutors and technicians had

started preparing students in what was called the Preliminary Year. This year was modelled after the Common Year at Keele University in Staffordshire, England, which was designed to give all students the same educational experience before they decided which disciplines to follow. More importantly, the Preliminary Year was an attempt to rectify deficiencies in the secondary school system of the day. Right from the start a science workshop was set up under the capable Arthur Thomas. This provided a tremendous resource to the teaching of biology, chemistry and physics.

Apart from curriculum development I began to recruit staff. The first was Dr David Holdsworth from UK. He had had university teaching experience in Jamaica as an organic chemist and had a very considerable empathy for students. Dr Gunther was convinced that staff should have had experience in Africa or other developing countries. His philosophy had a lot of merit. It was no good recruiting staff who had no idea of what to expect in starting a university from scratch or who were ignorant of the vast gulf in education between Papua New Guinean students and those from a developed country such as Australia. Nevertheless, the embryonic university appointed many people who had never seen a black before nor worked in a multi-racial situation. Furthermore, many staff had strong Christian ethics and teaching in such a situation was one way of doing good and spreading the good news!

Suffice to say, teaching chemistry was not easy and many of the problems associated with observation of chemical reactions have been discussed elsewhere in professional journals.

Research is also an important part of the university experience and in Papua New Guinea relevance to the real world was essential. Professor Ken Lamb (Biology) and myself were approached by John Lloyd, a member of the Interim Council and the Managing Director of Cadbury's in Hobart. He was disturbed that a disorder called 'dieback' was enervating and in fact killing cocoa bushes all over Papua New Guinea. The problem, if solved, would be very important to the country and of course would boost the image of the university. Professor Lamb looked at the biology of the problem and I looked at various aspects of plant nutrition. After some time a graduate research worker, Philip Keane, was appointed and to his credit discovered a soil-borne parasite which was new to science and the cause of dieback.

During my first year in Port Moresby I became president of the local film society and a member of the Boroko Rotary Club - both these activities gave me an insight into the worlds of business and government. Before long I was approached by business and police to help with insurance disputes and drug offences respectively. One of the most challenging requests was to prepare a chemical compound which would help prevent corrosion on the leading edge of the wings of Air Niugini's Fokker Friendship fleet. I also spent a considerable amount of time in the courts as an expert witness in drug offences. These were mainly concerned with marihuana and I was able to use a simple and reliable colorimetric test for its positive identification.

Just before leaving Papua New Guinea in 1981 I published a paper on the presence of lead in pottery and other ceramic ware glazes. Prior to this there had been no control on the quality of imports with respect to lead, and my work, I believe, exposed the need for legislation to control the lead content in glazes and glass.

The following reunions will be held shortly:

KAINANTU REUNION, 19 September, Aspley Leagues Club, Kirby Rd., Aspley, Brisbane 6.30pm. Cost of evening including dinner - \$35 (drinks not included). For further details phone Stefanie Evans on 07 3265 1957 or Rosemary Reeves on 07 3353 3837.

SAMARAI & MILNE BAY AREA REUNION, Brisbane, 3 October, venue - Mercure Hotel, North Quay. Buffet lunch and an afternoon of reminiscing (approx \$39); also dinner and overnight accommodation for those who wish to stay on. For further details contact Graham & Theresa Goodman on 07 3219 4898 or Hugh & Jean Osborne on 07 3265 1229

Report back on two successful reunions held recently:

RABAUL LUNCH: On 5 June 1998, 35 ladies who previously lived in Rabaul gathered at 'Fridays' Restaurant at the Riverside Centre, Brisbane, for lunch. These included Rita Albiez, Betty Finter and daughter Deb, and daughter-in-law Karen Fenwick, Ricky Avenell, Iska King, Judy Hart, Margaret Harding, Margo Clarke, Irene Purvis, Rosemary Doble, Desley Smith and daughter Kerry, Beth Pashley, Joyce McGrade, Jo Myer and daughter Janice, Mabel Holland, Marie Bainbridge, Glenys Copley and daughter, Merle Wall, Pat Hopper, Prue Alquist, Rena Levis, Roma Campbell and daughter Tina, and Ros Gault. Isobel Pritchard was the convenor and did a very good job. □ MARGO CLARK

MALAGUNA TECHNICAL COLLEGE STAFF - held 4-5 July 1998: This reunion, held at Logan City Motor Inn, Daisy Hill Qld, was a resounding success. Stan Pike wrote, "Fifty-three who celebrated and talked of times way back to 1963 came from all over Australia, from Perth through to Darwin and Sydney... It has been suggested that we have an encore in five years' time!" Apart from Stan and his wife, those attending were: Graham and Margaret Bowden, Jeff and Miriam Convine, Sylvia and Steve Chow, Rex Drage, Keith and Meg Dawkins, Rick and Helen Dyer, Russell and Chris Evans, Stella Emberson, Max Firth, Greg Farrell, Damien and Helen Gainer, Col and Mavis Host, Jim and Mary Hicks, Bob Hopkins, Jenny Clayton, Steve and Rosemary Howells, Emrys Jones, Peter and Bev Kinsella, Peter and Kay McCarthy, Ken and Carmel McLachlan, Fred and Elaine Ng, Grainger Nicholls, Ron and Eufemia Percival, Frank and Clasina Quakernaat, Ben and Thea Tholen, Brendan and Denise Tunstall, Lucky and Anna Valaris, plus Peter Kinsella's two boys. Stan said that nine staff members had passed away, that 21 were unable to attend, and that they were unable to contact 15. The reunion was organised by Ken McLachlan. Stan said he would be encouraging former Technical College staff to join the ROAPNG.

THE OBSERVATION TREE: In a 'help wanted' notice in the last newsletter, Albert Speer asked about the observation tree used by the Australians to gain information for attacks on the Japanese prior to the recapture of Lae and Salamaua. He received information from Clarrie James of Dubbo NSW and Harry Jackman of Angaston SA. Albert wrote, "It would appear that the huge tree was selected by Lieutenant Jefferies and was known firstly as Salamaua O.P. (Observation Post) and later when Lieutenant Jefferies was killed it became known and shown on wartime maps as Jefferies O.P. It was from this observation platform 150 feet above the ground that our late President and Patron Bill Seale and I watched the obliteration of Salamaua by a huge Liberator Bomber raid in the closing months of 1943." Albert thanked *Una Voce* and the people who responded.

AN ELEPHANT IN GOROKA by Doug Franklin

When asked about about a circus going to PNG, Doug wrote, "I was in Goroka with my family between 1972 and '74. We very well remember one elephant coming up to Goroka by road from Lae. I am not sure where the circus would have had its performances in town but remember that the elephant was kept overnight inside the fenced yard enclosure at the rear of The Bird of Paradise Hotel.

We took our children after work, in the evening, to see the elephant. Big crowds of local people had gathered to see this huge animal the like of which most had never seen or heard of before. Many were carrying their spears or bow and arrows, having come from villages nearby. Their presence caused some concern to the authorities because quite naturally the locals thought what a feast they would have with this large bulamakau!

At village singsings large numbers of pigs are killed and cooked by the traditional mumu method, over hot stones in a trench in the ground. It often happens that more pigs are cooked than can be eaten on the first day of the singsing. For days, people come back to eat the left-overs, which have not been refrigerated. This practice is associated with a serious sickness known in pidgin as 'pikbel'. It can be fatal and is believed to be a form of food poisoning. Every villager knows about it and holds it in dread.

So a big painted sign went up on the hotel fence near the elephant, illuminated at night by a spotlight. It said, 'Yu no ken kaikai dispela. Sapos yu kaikai dispela bai yu kisim elephan bel.' (You cannot eat this animal. If you do, you will go down with elephant bel.) The inference was that if pigbel was bad, elephant bel would be far worse.

The elephant was not harmed and everyone praised The South Pacific Brewery who had organised the 286km road journey from Lae to Goroka....

A joke circulated about the time of the circus visit to Port Moresby. The local people were astonished how a trainer could speak to such a huge animal and tell it to sit down. One of the locals, who had had a few drinks, boasted that it was nothing. He could make the elephant sit down too. His friend said, 'You are talking rubbish; you would have no idea how to speak to an elephant.' So the first said, 'All right, I'll show you', and disappeared in the crowd, moving over to where the elephant was standing. Suddenly the elephant sat down and the man reappeared from behind the elephant, waving and laughing. His mate asked him what he did. He replied, 'I got behind him with a large piece of diwai (wood) and hit him in the bols.' --- I apologise for that, but I know that the joke was told in the PNG House of Assembly at the time, and the Members were in hysterics for minutes."

Are YOU getting your entitlements?* Some superannuants may be unaware that they are entitled to a part old age pension and consequently to pharmaceutical benefits. These members may be:

- Married couples who receive total income (before tax) of less than \$673.60 weekly;
- Single people receiving total income less than \$403.20 per week.

People receiving a part age pension, even if it is only \$1.00 per fortnight, only pay \$3.20 for doctors' prescriptions instead of \$20.00. Doctors, including specialists, usually bulk bill holders of this concession.

* From *SCOA Bulletin, Journal of the NSW Branch of the Superannuated Commonwealth Officers' Association Inc., August 1998*

VALE

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

Mrs Molly McVEY (aged approx. 80 years)

Molly, from Buderim Qld, lived in Goroka from 1959 to 1962 when her late husband, Malcolm, was manager of the Bank of New South Wales there. No further details available.

Mrs Betty Rose HAYES (23 June 1998, aged 73 years)

After graduation Betty went bush nursing in the Myrtleford area in north east Victoria, then did further nursing training at Crown St Women's Hospital, Sydney, and in 1950 completed ophthalmic nursing training at Moorfields Eye Hospital, London; subsequently she was selected for a Queen's appointment to the Ophthalmic Hospital in Jerusalem (Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem) - she remained there for about two years. There were only three European sisters there at any one time, and all had the ex officio rank of commissioned officer in the Arab Legion, commanded by General Sir John Glubb, Pasha. It was usual for the Legion to allocate ranks to nurses - they believed this would encourage the hospital's many Arab Legion patients to treat the nurses with more respect. Betty held the rank of Captain, and is possibly the only Australian nurse ever to have held a commission in the Arab Legion.

Betty went to PNG in 1959, on her husband's appointment to the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary. In the early 60s she worked at Nonga Base Hospital, Rabaul, and was also the Girl Guide Commissioner at Rabaul for several years. Later postings took her to Kainantu and Lae. As with many overseas officers, she left PNG in 1974, returning to the family home in Melbourne. However, the lure of the Myrtleford area was strong, and she returned there to take up a small holding, spending the last 12 years of her life there. During this time she took an active interest in local affairs, many social groups and the University of the Third Age, and came to be highly regarded in the community.

Betty is survived by husband Maxwell, daughters Suzanne and Vanessa and grandchildren.
(The foregoing was provided by Betty's husband, Maxwell.)

Mrs Isa Ruby MACGREGOR (30 June 1998, aged 101 years)

Isa Ruby Florence Towner was born in Charleville Qld in October 1896, educated in Sydney and in 1921 married a WWI returned soldier, Roy Macgregor. Daughter Faye was born in 1924 and in 1927 the family moved to Madang where Roy became interested in coconut plantations and trading, Faye attending school in Sydney. Ruby was evacuated at short notice in 1942, landed in Cairns and did the long trip to Sydney by train, where she stayed until the war's end. Roy stayed in New Guinea with the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles.

After the war Ruby and Roy returned to Madang and re-established the business and plantations. They retired to Pennant Hills NSW in 1964. Roy passed away in 1967. Ruby spent the last 4½ years at Woodlands Nursing Home at Cherrybrook, enjoying a weekly visit to Castle Hill RSL to play the poker machines and have a quiet drink and a cigarette.

Ruby is survived by daughter Faye and grandchildren Robyn, Yvette, Don and Ricky.
(The foregoing was provided by Frank Smith.)

Mr Peter H J Van HOECKEL (5 August 1998, aged 84 years)

With his wife Trisha, Peter spent 14 happy years in PNG, arriving in Goroka in 1956 and leaving Madang, Peter's last post as OIC with Stores and Supply, in 1970. Peter also served in Lae, Wewak and Rabaul. He and Trisha retired to Atherton where they lived until 1982. From there they moved to Nambour. Peter is survived by his wife Gertrude Louise (Trisha).

(The foregoing was provided by Peter's wife, Trisha.)

Mr Robert Kevin GREANEY (5 August 1998, aged 68 years)

After leaving school, Bob Greaney found employment in Victoria, mainly in clerical and sales areas. In 1951 he went to PNG as a Cadet Patrol Officer; he served firstly in several areas of the Milne Bay District, then as OIC at Gumine and Lufa and also in the Kundiawa and Goroka areas. His time in the Highlands was largely concerned with consolidation and development of the peoples and the infrastructure of the area. Bob was then posted to the Gailala area where he was engaged on developmental tasks and the encouragement of Local Government and economic development. His final 'field' years were at Wau and Namatanai where he held the position of Deputy District Commissioner. Finally, from 1969-1975, Bob was stationed in Port Moresby as a District Inspector (this entailed extensive travel throughout PNG) and later as First Assistant Secretary (Policy and Planning). Before leaving PNG Bob was involved in many top level Government Committees concerned with the progress towards Independence.

Bob and his young family left PNG in 1975 and settled in Brisbane. From 1975-1990 Bob was employed at the University of Queensland in the External Studies area, overseeing the operation of the undergraduate degree programme. He retired in 1990 and he and his wife Pat moved to Bribe Island. Unfortunately Bob's health began to deteriorate soon afterwards, and became progressively worse. In spite of his severe health problems, Pat said he never lost his good mind and sense of humour, and he never complained - he was always talking about going on a trip when he recovered. Apart from his wife, Pat, Bob is survived by daughter Rebecca, sons Paul and Brendan, and two grandchildren. (The foregoing was provided by Pat Greaney.)

Mr Bertram Clifford BATT (10 August 1998, aged approx. 80 years)

Cliff Batt, the son of a naval man, was educated at Royal Hospital School at Greenwich, England. On completing his education, he was bonded for 5-8 years. He chose to go into the Air Force and in his middle to high teens went to India where he qualified as a Fitter A (air frames), then as a Fitter E (engine man). During the war he undertook a flying course in Rhodesia and became a pilot. He returned to India and during the war in Burma was flying Douglas transport aircraft. After the war, he came from England to Australia and worked as a jackeroo in Western Queensland. From there he went to New Ireland in about 1948. Some time later he acquired Kapsu plantation. From Kapsu he went to Maron in the Hermit Islands group, and from there he acquired most of the big copra plantations in the Western Islands, west of Maron - including Pellehuhun, Heina and Wuvulu. Cliff and his family lived for a time in Madang where he kept his boat, the *Rudolph Wahlen* at a private wharf.

Cliff eventually sold his PNG interests and came to Australia. He bought a cattle property in the Atherton Tablelands, and later moved to a motel on the Gold Coast. It was from there that he finally retired from business. Cliff was renowned for doing the unusual - for example, he was the oldest man to swim the English Channel. Cliff is survived by his wife Gisela, two daughters and a son. (The foregoing was provided by Peter Murray.)

Mr Wesley Daniel OAKES (10 July 1998, aged 38 years)

Wesley Oakes was born in Rabaul. He spent three years at Pomio, Jacquinot Bay, where his father George was Patrol Officer. His childhood years were spent at Kokopo, Lae and Port Moresby. He attended Boroko East School, then two years at Port Moresby High School then went to Kinross Wolaroi School at Orange NSW. He was born with a serious congenital heart defect which restricted him at times in his development. In his early twenties he underwent surgery and this gave him fair health. He had heart surgery several times since, the last being in June 1997, which was not as successful as had been hoped. He was always positive in his outlook on life. He achieved and managed to do much in his life - travelling, screen printing T shirts and recently cladding his house. On 10 July, he was driving alone near Uralla not far from Armidale when he suffered cardiac arrest. A large gathering attended his funeral at Hazelbrook.

Wesley is survived by his wife Elisabeth and 4 year old son Jonathan, his parents George and Edna, sister Denise and brother Stephen. (The foregoing was written by George Oakes.)

Mrs Mary Josephine OWNER (11 July 1998, aged 78 years)

Mary Josephine (Jo) Owner was the wife of the Late Donald Owner. She worked as an Inspector Grade 1 with Education.

Mrs Nellie Louisa BURT (13 June 1998)

Nellie Louisa Burt was the wife of the Late Harold Thomas Burt. (No further details available)

Mr Francis William ANDERSON (8 August 1998, aged 83 years)

Francis William Anderson was born in Samarai. After schooling in Australia, he worked in a various capacities, leaving permanently in 1949. (Further details in next issue.)

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

BAKER Mr G L	PO Box 77, ROZELLE NSW 2039
BATT Mrs G	5 Kingfish Court, PALM BEACH QLD 4221
BREDEN Mr M J	36 Hampden Parade, WAHROONGA NSW 2076
FLEAY Mr C	2 Martin Road, SORRENTO WA 6020
LINDGREN Mr M E	57 Buckingham Street, ST JOHNS WOOD QLD 4060
McBRIDE Mr B	2/334 Ocean View Road, ETTALONG BEACH NSW 2257
RIDGES Mr J K	PO Box 86, KAVIENG 681, PNG
SNOOK Mrs R	5 Pandanus Street, BOWEN QLD 4805
VIRTUE Mr G P	19 Valley Park Crescent, TURRAMURRA NSW 2074

CHANGE OF ADDRESS TO:

BULL Mr J	179/61 Karalya Road, ERINA NSW 2250
CAMPS Mrs E	59 Riversea Waters, 184 Beaudesert Road, NERANG QLD 4211
CAVANAGH Mr N J	83 Bilsen Road, WAVELL HEIGHTS QLD 4012
COX Mrs P E	PO Box 794, CAMDEN NSW 2567
GREER Mr H R	Niugini Oil Company, PO Box 3722, LAE 411, PNG
HIBBERD Mr W J	RMB 1410A Nicholls Road, MARYBOROUGH VIC 3465
KEAN Mr P C	35 Home Road, NEWPORT VIC 3015
MARY ANGELA Sister	Holy Spirit Convent, PO Box 127 GOROKA 441, EHP, PNG
McCOSKER Mrs W	PO Box 829, MALENY QLD 4552
MURPHY Mr K E	PO Box 78, GOROKA 441, PNG
PROUD Mr J	PO Box 18, COONAMBLE NSW 2829
REDWOOD Dr A L	2902 Schwarz Road, LAWRENCE, KANSAS L66049, USA
SCOTT Mr E P	PO Box 17 Hang Deng, CHAING MAI, THAILAND 50230
SYMONS Mr C A	66/650 Pacific Highway, KILLARA NSW 2071
VANDERKAMP Mr J A	PO Box 38M, MANUNDA QLD 4870
WESTMORE Mr B	11 Marlua Avenue, CALOUNDRA QLD 4551

MEMBERS REJOINED:

RICHARDS (Lovell) Mrs M C	Unit 227 Lindfield Garden Village, 2 Ulmarra Rd LINDFIELD NSW 2070
RUTLEDGE Mr W	31C Nelson Street, WOOLLAHRA NSW 2025