



# Una Voce

PAPUA NEW GUINEA - INSIGHTS, EXPERIENCES, REMINISCENCES

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No 4, 2002 - December

**MERRY CHRISTMAS  
TO ALL  
& BEST WISHES FOR 2003  
FROM THE PRESIDENT  
AND COMMITTEE**

**CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON  
PRECEDED BY THE SPECIAL  
GENERAL MEETING** will be on  
**Sunday, 1st December** at the  
Mandarin Club, Sydney - See attachments  
Full details plus booking slip are on the  
separate yellow sheet.

**SECRETARY'S NEW PH/FAX NOS:**  
Our secretary Pamela Foley has  
moved - her new number is 02  
9967 2818 and fax is 02 9967 2856  
Please continue to send all mail to  
PO Box 452, Roseville, NSW 2069.

Wondering what to give  
somebody for Christmas? Our  
book 'Tales of Papua New  
Guinea' might solve your  
problem. For purchase details,  
see separate yellow sheet.

The 2003 AGM and LUNCHEON is  
on Sunday 27 April 2003.

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**'UNA VOCE' IS THE JOURNAL  
OF THE RETIRED OFFICERS'  
ASSOCIATION OF PAPUA NEW  
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All correspondence should be addressed to: **The Secretary, ROAPNG, PO Box 452, Roseville NSW 2069.** (Items for *Una Voce* are welcome and should be marked 'For Attention: The Editor' or emailed to: [mccliftonbassett@ozemail.com.au](mailto:mccliftonbassett@ozemail.com.au)) *Una Voce* is published in March, June, September and December. Advertising Rates: quarter page \$25, half page \$50, full page \$100

Membership of the association is open to anyone who has lived in PNG or who has a positive interest in the country. The annual fee is \$12. The membership year is the calendar year. Membership application forms are available from the Secretary at the above PO Box address.

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**IN 100 WORDS OR LESS**

(We hope, with your help, to make this a regular feature. At the end is the topic for next issue. Simply let us have your story by the date given.)

**TOPIC - AN AIRLINE STORY**

The direct flight from Daru to Port Moresby in a Cessna 310 was to take two hours - all over water. An hour into the flight I asked the pilot if he had something I could read. He handed me a copy of *FLIGHT SAFETY*. It was exclusively devoted to the results of inquiries/inquests into why various pilots had (1) set-down with landing gear still retracted, (2) mistaken an irrigation channel for an airstrip, (3) been trapped in a valley by descending cloud cover, (4) made an emergency landing after running out of fuel. Nowadays I always pack a *BULLETIN* magazine. □ Graeme Baker

(This feature was suggested by Graeme)

In the 1950s we owned Belik plantation in New Ireland and mostly travelled by workboat from Rabaul to Ulapatur and across the mountain by jeep. However we sometimes drove to Kavieng and travelled by DC3 to Rabaul. The DC3 on this route only had web seating along the sides of the aircraft and the cargo and baggage was piled up in the rear under netting. Once when we were airborne we saw the netting moving. Suddenly there was a procession of live crabs down the cabin (Kavieng was famous for its crabs) - they had escaped from their sacks. Although we were all laughing we soon had to put our legs up on the seats and sit cross-legged when they became too friendly. It was weird having a dozen crabs wandering around the cabin. At Rabaul some experienced Matupit Islanders came aboard and caught the crabs and we were able to disembark. □ Pat Hopper

**Ludicrous but true** - Oh, for today, with payouts of thousands of dollars like the one Federal politician, Leo McLeay, received

**Don't forget our Special General Meeting being held before our Christmas Luncheon on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December. If you can't come, send your proxy - all details are in the attachments.**

for falling off a pushbike in Canberra! On 15 January 1969 the Cessna 310J that my husband Bill was travelling on, on official duties, crashed on Unea Island in New Britain and the Chairman of the PNG Lands Board was killed. Three days later Bill arrived home with a painful shoulder injury, and black and blue over most of his body and legs, more so around the waistline where the seat belt had been when he hung upside down in the crashed plane. He lost all his luggage and personal effects, and his injured shoulder was a problem for the rest of his life. For this he was given \$50 compensation, yes, FIFTY dollars, and he was asked to sign a release against further claims, including medical expenses.

□ Nancy Johnston

In 1956 I managed to stand the Dragon on its nose when landing at Faita in the Ramu - an alarming experience. Wally Ferguson and I spent seven days camped there repairing the damage. The local creek water was a bit 'weedy' to the taste so it was purified by Scotch - we felt great by about 3.00 in the afternoons. When finished we loaded up the Dragon and as I lined up for take-off Wally tapped me on the shoulder and said, 'If you've forgotten how to fly this thing, you'd better learn in the first thirty yards'. Fortunately I hadn't, and I haven't.

□ Frank Smith

*(The following item was sent in quite some time ago, but it fits well into this section.)*

**Pilot Peter Manser**, in an Auster aircraft, was flying into Dreikikir with a local recruiter who worked for Wally Allen of Allen & Buscombe, recruiters.

Dreikikir was a small outstation about 30 miles west of Maprik with a Catholic Mission, a bush hospital and a very tricky airstrip. The runway was no more than 400 m. long; 150 m. of it at the touchdown was very narrow and almost flat, but the rest was up a fairly steep hill, with the government office and the hospital on top. Just a bit left of the line of approach was the Catholic Church perched on another hill. Approaching the church, Peter, on the wrong tank, ran out of gas and knew he wasn't going to make that little bit of flat ground. His alternative was a deep jungle-covered chasm. At tree-top height he instructed the recruiter, sitting in the rear holding an axe, to jump.

The Auster, upside down with Peter strapped inside and unconscious, came to rest in the lower branches of a tree. Wally Allen saw the approaching aircraft disappear and summoning his staff, headed down to the crash site.

After four hours Peter was extricated from the wreck alive, and well enough to spend another 20 years flying in New Guinea. Wally went home to a well-earned beer and found his recruiter sitting in his favourite chair, axe in hand, saying, 'mi no lusim akis Masta'. The loose translation, 'I looked after your axe and here it is'. Wally had loaned him the axe to cut firewood on the way to Maprik a few days before, with strict instructions to bring it back. He had tumbled through the canopy, axe in hand, apparently unhurt - but never to travel by air again.

□ Bruce Lawes

**THEME FOR NEXT ISSUE - MEDICAL EMERGENCIES**

**Deadline for entries - 17-2-2003**

**Write/Phone/Fax/Email**

## IT'S RENEWAL TIME AGAIN

Subs are due on 1 January 2003

A renewal slip is on the separate yellow sheet. You may renew for 2003 plus a further four years - renewing for more than one year helps reduce paperwork.

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Airmail rates for overseas members are listed on the renewal form.

## HAVE YOU HEARD???

**Don LUSTY's** daughter **Natalya** (Natasha) has been admitted to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the School of History and Gender Studies, University of Sydney. Natalya first attended Kundiawa and Kainantu Primary 'A' Schools. She organised the recent seminar on PNG at Sydney University.

**Maureen HILL** of Madang had been awarded an MBE, a richly-deserved honour. Maureen was running the kindergarten in Madang before independence. She still does this, but now takes responsibility for the running of a number of village kindergartens. She has been a constant supporter of the CWA and Rotary (and no doubt other organisations) - she steps in to help when membership is low, and moves back when these organisations are running reasonably well. (I have found that if you want help in anything to do with Madang, Maureen is always willing to assist, and her knowledge of Madang - and PNG - activities is extensive. Editor.)

## NEWS FROM THE NORTHERN TERRITORY: Jim Toner writes -

This year PNG Independence Day in the Top End was celebrated with a black-tie dinner at the Palmerston Tavern. Something of a change in style from the former family-oriented functions but then it is a much younger generation which is carrying the flag these days. However, on the morning after there was a more traditional barbecue at Darwin's Water Gardens.

**Hugh RICHARDSON** has Gone Finish. After 20 years in Darwin he has retired from the NT Department of Local Government and moved to NSW to be near his children. Hugh went to PNG as a Cadet Patrol Officer in 1958 and eventually became its Commissioner for Local Government. This provided a good c.v. for his NT appointment but he was somewhat taken aback by the state of Aboriginal settlements and communal management as compared with the generally neat villages and functioning Councils he had just left behind in PNG. However, as a keen Moresby yachting he slipped effortlessly into life as she is lived at the Darwin Sailing Club.

The Festival of Darwin included some remarkable outdoor sculptures and **Ken BURRIDGE** was among the exhibitors. He was an Education Officer at Boisen High and Keravat, ENB, but has been settled here for some years.

**Ken McKINNON**, once PNG Director of Education and later Vice-Chancellor of Wollongong University, has emerged from retirement to take on the interim vice-chancellorship of the NT University. Aged 71, his appointment was greeted rapturously by the NT Council for the Ageing. It referred to the wealth of experience and knowledge that older people bring to the workplace. Quite so. However, after 14 years in the top job at Wollongong the septuagenarian will be committing to only 12 months in Darwin whilst a long-term appointee is being recruited.

Co-ops Corner: **Patrick Virgil DWYER**, now unbelievably white of beard, was over in Sydney from Perth during August and called on **Michael GREY's** widow, Lee.



She said that **Peter CORMACK** was also now living in Manly so they adjourned to his home where **Dan MANNIX** was found somewhat exhausted. Peter and Dan had spent the afternoon visiting with **Athol GRAHAM** who is now in a retirement home at Dee Why and the former Assistant Registrar had apparently lost none of his enthusiasm for the Saturday afternoon punt.

Another Co-ops stalwart, **Bill BARCLAY**, has been in Darwin for 4 years and is quite happy with it. Bill also began PNG life as a CPO but after independence lived in NZ for a time. He is now executive officer for the Tiwi Health Trust which operates nine facilities for Aborigines on Melville and Bathurst islands.

'Even in Africa there is no reason not to do things properly.' So wrote the monocled Colonel Stewart Gore-Brown from Northern Rhodesia to his aunt in England in 1922. Oh, quite. Readers of *Africa House* (Penguin 2000) would learn more of that extraordinary Englishman (later knighted) and of changing black-white relations in the colony now known as Zambia. However, my first reaction was to recall one or two chaps in PNG who were also inclined to be a little 'pukka'. To the amusement, sometimes concealed, sometimes not, of other *wantoks* who were inclined to be 'okker'.

Then I thought more seriously that 'doing things properly' in, say, terms of record-keeping was one of the better things you could do for a fellow officer taking over your post. Frequent transfers meant that newcomers were always at a disadvantage but their problems could be minimised by a conscientious predecessor.

I was once privileged to witness the Hand-Over of a District. Alan Flinders Gow and Desmond Clifton-Bassett sat on either side of a District Commissioner's desk. At the agreed moment both men rose, turned to their right, half-circled the desk and planted their respective rears in the chair just vacated by the other. Take-Over accomplished. Even in New Guinea there is no reason not to do things properly.

## **NEWS FROM SOUTH AUSTRALIA:** John Kleinig writes -

The Rev **Rodger BROWN** and his wife **Kathleen** continue to lead an active life in St Morris with Rodger now in his 92<sup>nd</sup> year. His book 'Talatala' published in 2001 is now in its third reprint and tells the story of Kath and Rodger Brown's life in PNG both before and after the war. It details their escape from the Japanese and Rodger tells of joining remnants of the 2/22<sup>nd</sup> battalion and their epic evacuation on the *Lakatoi* from Witu Island and the north coast of New Britain to Cairns. He also describes returning to Rabaul three weeks after the surrender had been signed, as chaplain to the 118<sup>th</sup> AGH at Nonga. 'Talatala' is edited by Margaret Henderson and is a quite delightful book that is devoid of the clutter found in so many personal accounts.

**Jane MORRISON**, former registered nurse in PNG and now liaison officer with the Door House Hospice Foundation in Adelaide, encountered an ex-territorian recently when speaking at the AGM of the SA Association of Past Bowling Club Presidents. In the introduction, reference was made to Jane being in PNG. She had finished talking and was into the afternoon tea phase when she heard someone mutter 'giddy wantok!' Turning around she was provided with a burst of pidgin which was a bit rusty but certainly not lacking in sincerity from **Eric BOLTON** who had been with DCA in Goroka. Dressed immaculately in his blazer and sporting a walking stick, he was clearly delighted to meet someone who could relate to his time in PNG.

**Barbara JENNINGS** and one of her daughters, the charming and irrepressible **Rosie**, designer of the Annie Lantz label, were in Adelaide recently. **Rosie** recalls coming home from primary school in Rabaul in August 1971 and being told by her mother that something terrible had happened and the District Commissioner had been

killed. She immediately recalled the story told to her by the hausboi that during WW2 the Japanese had hidden at the top of coconut trees waiting for their prey. Now she really believed that in a bizarre way she would be the next victim. Despite this, she remembers growing up in Rabaul as one of the happiest periods of her life.

**Peter THOMAS** reports from Nuriiopta that the local Rotary Club helped entertain more than one hundred psychiatrists who were attending the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists' Conference in the Barossa Valley recently. At the Henschke Winery barbecue hosted by Rotary, Peter was surprised at the number of those present who had started their careers as young doctors in PNG in the 1970s and 80s including **Phillip BROCK** from Adelaide who remembers his time at Samarai in the mid 1970s.

Another Nuriiopta resident, **John FALLAND**, recalls providing the steel for the construction of the Travelodge motel in Rabaul in the late 1960s. His son, **Greg**, is currently based in Telefomin and flies a twin otter for the Mission Aviation Fellowship. **Fred and Margaret WATTS** from Valley View have just returned from a visit to PNG. The opportunity came quite unexpectedly and visas and passports were being delivered to the airport just before departure. They found the visit exhilarating even though they were not able to visit Mendi where they had lived many years ago. They made up for it with a first time visit to Rabaul.

#### **NEWS FROM PNG:** Laurie Le Fevre writes -

I ran into **Kepas RAKOB** this morning, just in after two weeks leave at home in Mount Hagen. (Kepas is Ok Tedi Mining Ltd's Manager of Financial Services.) He reported that he had seen **Pena OU**. He said Pena is fine, but suffering a bit from short-term memory loss. He also reported that **Sir Wamp WAN** is still OK, but frail. Kepas also said that the drought is not affecting Mount Hagen food crops as badly as the 1997 El Niño, but that the recent rains were welcome all the same.

I also had a great surprise last week when one of our maintenance tradesmen stopped me in the street, shook hands, and said 'My grandfather knew you'. Nicholas Wamp is Sir Wamp's grandson. He is a fine young man, charming and very handsome, and has asked me to bring some photos of the old days back from Australia. I am finding there is considerable interest in the 'old days'.

**AIR NIUGINI SERVICES, PORT MORESBY-AUSTRALIA:** An extension of the codeshare agreement between Qantas and Air Niugini means that Air Niugini is operating all services between PNG and Australia - six Moresby to Brisbane services a week, with two of these going on to Sydney.

*Financial Review 28-8-02*

**HELP WANTED:** Max Hayes is seeking more information on the colour of the piping (edging on the neck, sleeves, and the edge of the laplap) of the old generic uniform best known as the pre-war police uniform of the Papuan police forces, and which continued in use by the police until 30-9-1964. As you may recall, this generic uniform of jumper and laplap was worn universally throughout TPNG, by other departments as well. Police wore a red piping on their jumpers and laplaps (which was symbolised by the red garter flashes on the long socks of the new blue in-line uniform which commenced on 1-10-1964). On the pre-1964 uniform, boats crew wore a white piping, and court and hospital interpreters wore a twin piping of red and yellow. Max would like to know the colour of the piping on the generic uniform worn by medical workers (some say it was green, some say purple), or of any other departmental employee. Max is at 5 Peppermint Grove, Box Hill South, 3128, ph/fax 03 9898 7459.

## FIVE LAPUN KIAPS KIVUNG

by **Graham Taylor**

We five old kiaps, relics of the immediate post WWII years, classmates of ASOPA in 1948 and 1954-55 came together in Brisbane in July. For **Dave ROSS**, **Ken CONNOLLY**, **Bob BLAIKIE**, **John NORTON** and myself it was the first time in 50 years that we five had found ourselves in the one place at the one time.



L-R: Bob Blaikie, Graham Taylor, Ken Connolly, John Norton and Dave Ross  
(Graham said the sign on the tavern wall was accidental!)

Needless to say, over a long lunch and the odd intermittent shandy or two countering a warm Brisbane afternoon there was much to discuss. We ranged over our student days and the vagaries and vicissitudes of our lecturers at ASOPA, our learning experiences as very junior Cadet Patrol Officers, Patrol Officers, Assistant District Officers and in latter years more exalted posts. Needless to say we spent some time recalling some of our own sins of omission and commission in the field and the equally dubious escapades of many of our heroes. There was time too for one or two well-merited character assassinations and also to recall fond memories of colleagues who, sadly, have now ascended to a more heavenly clime, a timely reminder perhaps of the march of time which is so quickly decimating our ranks.

**Shirley TAYLOR** and **Val CONNOLLY** were able to recall their personal memories and experiences as very young innocent ASOPA brides, of life on lonely outstations living in uncomfortable conditions, of anxious moments with husbands away on long and dangerous patrols, the arrival of children and the consequential problems of their health and welfare, and the trials of managing and provisioning a household usually with wayward local staff.

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Our individual pursuits in the years since leaving the Administration have taken us in many disparate directions in many different parts of the world. Our professional interests have ranged over - amongst other things - life elsewhere in another public service, in rubber and avocado plantations, property development, small business enterprises, university management, and national broadcasting. It is not overly immodest perhaps to say that we have all lived interesting, fruitful and productive lives.

As we parted at the end of a memorable luncheon we reminded each other that the wider bonds of friendship and brotherhood which bind ex-kiaps were as strong as ever. The passage of five decades or so since we were last together had in no way dimmed our mutual friendship nor had it clouded our immediate recall of experiences in what for each of us had been a memorable and indeed privileged career.

We parted, sharing not only an abiding interest in the sad and troubled events in PNG, but also a deepening disappointment and apprehension in regard to the future of the Territory. Had we, we wondered, given so much in vain.

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## WHAT IT IS ABOUT PNG

by Doug Franklin

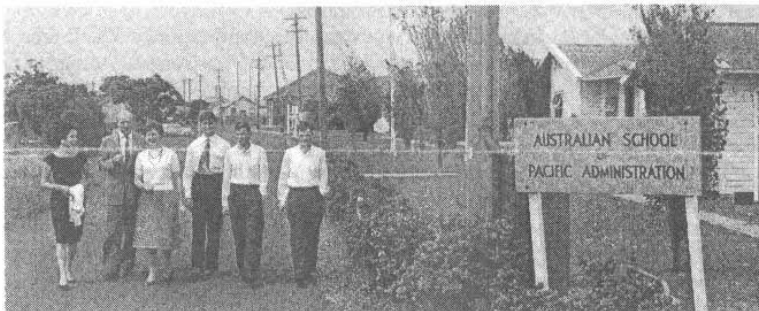
All of us who lived and worked in PNG and got to know the country and its diverse peoples have an empathy and affiliation which will never go away.

For me it started in August 1940 when I was an evacuee from Hong Kong on the Burns Philp ship *Neptuna* when she called at Madang, Rabaul, Salamaua and Samarai on the way to Sydney. Then in 1945 I was back, this time in the Royal Australian Navy, all along the coasts from Port Moresby to Hollandia, Gasmata to Jacquinot Bay and Torokina to the Treasury Islands, south of Bougainville.

Finally after ten years as an agricultural officer in Nigeria, West Africa, I couldn't resist the call to return to *ples bilong mipela* for another 16 years. If asked what were my best recollections I would say recognising the enthusiasm of the grassroots village people to put their all into improving their place, once a start had been made. I am so glad that I learned what it was to be sent on patrol, though my ten-day patrols were nothing to what had been done in the early days.

Last but not least, meeting and working with so many marvellous men and women at Kagua, Mendi, Goroka, Popondetta and Konedobu. We worked hard but in many ways it was like being on holiday because job satisfaction was so great. Everyone was happy and felt part of a competent organisation doing a duty which was recognised and appreciated. All I can really say is 'Thank you Papua New Guinea'.

## AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL OF PACIFIC ADMINISTRATION (ASOPA) AND THE HALLSTROM PACIFIC COLLECTION



(Photo courtesy of AusAID)

In the September issue John Kleinig told of his early-2002 visit to what was once ASOPA and of his feelings at seeing it in its present derelict condition. Recently Margaret Lawson\* of Caloundra sent us a copy of an article on ASOPA from the March 1998 issue of *Focus*\*\*, outlining its initial stages as a wartime Civil Affairs unit, its establishment as ASOPA on Middle Head, Mosman in 1948, its change of direction in 1973 when it was formally linked to Australia's official aid agency and re-named International Training Institute, to its demise in 1997 (as ACPAC).

The article states, 'The precious Hallstrom Pacific Collection of rare books has found a new home after 50 years as the centrepiece of the library at ACPAC and its predecessors on Middle Head. At a ceremony at the University of New South Wales on 8 October 1997, AusAID formally handed over the collection. It is now officially owned by the National Library and on permanent loan to the University.'

'The collection originated in 1948 in a bequest of £10,000 by Sir Edward Hallstrom, the Sydney philanthropist best known for the refrigerators he manufactured and as a major benefactor of the Taronga Park Zoo. Less well known was Sir Edward's love of Papua New Guinea, and it was this that led him to make the bequest to the then newly opened ASOPA. The donated library comprises more than 1600 volumes, including many rare and valuable books from Sir Edward's own collection.' The collection will be kept intact and conserved by the University of NSW. It will continue to be known as "The Hallstrom Pacific Collection".'

\* Margaret Lawson attended ASOPA in 1966-67 prior to teaching at Madina, New Ireland (1968) and Tavui just outside Rabaul (1969-70).

\*\* Focus is the journal of the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID). The article was entitled 'The End of a Unique Institution'.

**PNG GOVERNMENT SELLS SYDNEY PROPERTIES** - In August 2002, three properties on Sydney's North Shore owned by the PNG Government were sold for \$3.8 million. One property in Clarence Ave., Killara, with 4 bedrooms/4 bathrooms on 1675 sq. m., which had been used as a consul-general's residence, sold by auction for \$2.005m. It had been purchased in 1993 for \$900,000. A 5-bed house in Strickland Ave., Lindfield, on 996 sq. m. sold for \$847,000. Another Lindfield home on 836 sq. m. in Wolseley Road with 3 bedrooms, sold for \$950,000. *Figures from SMH 15-8-02* □ Pat Hopper

## WE'LL MAKE OUR OWN

by Adrian Geyle

A hot summer's day in Sydney - hot outside and hot inside my cab. A well-dressed young man with a suit coat over his arm and a leather satchel was suddenly sitting in the front seat, beside me. He had jumped in as I was stopped at traffic lights at Cremorne Junction, and said, 'City please driver, Wynyard Station in George Street', and buckled his seat belt and sank back as though exhausted.

'Edeseni oi mai? (*where are you from*)' I asked, he being from Papua New Guinea I thought, and probably from around Port Moresby. He got a shock, sitting up and bending forward, as he looked closely into my face as if to see if he knew me. He was indeed from PNG, Port Moresby, and he became quite excited. Me too. We had a great conversation, mostly hurried as he wasn't going to be with me for long.

I had lived in Port Moresby on several occasions, finally from 1966 to 1968, working in the recruitment section of the Public Service Commissioner's department. 'You left too soon' he said, 'we needed you longer'. He was talking about Independence that his country had achieved in 1975, and here now it was 1992 as we swung left and headed towards the bridge and his George Street destination, only minutes away. I told him I had been a patrol officer, and where I had served, and it was good to see him smile and nod approval. He told me he was a university graduate pursuing further studies in Sydney, and would eventually return to practise law, probably in Port Moresby where he was born. 'Hanubada oi diba? (*do you know Hanubada*)' he asked, and we weren't far from Wynyard - the York Street entrance - when I replied, 'Oibe, lau diba (*yes, I know it*)'.

He was to catch a train and said this York Street entrance was just as good for him as George Street, and I grabbed the opportunity to pull over near the buses and make a point. 'Better too soon than too late' I said, asking if this wasn't so? He disagreed, saying we (Australians) pulled out too early, and this was becoming more obvious as time passed, if not from the beginning.

'I have a pertinent little story for your consideration now,' I said, 'a true one yes, one that throws back to 1968, at the 'top' hotel, in Moresby. Do you want to hear it?' He was keen to hear it. 'I was having a few beers,' I told him, 'with seven or eight Papuan men from villages as far away as Milne Bay and the Western District. These men were mature, and articulate both in Police Motu and English, and in their own tribal languages of course. They were in Moresby training to become magistrates, eventually to replace the white kiaps. They were all middle-aged, confident and friendly.'

'There'll be blood in the streets,' I said, and they all stopped talking to hear what this ex-kiap was talking about. 'You are not ready yet,' I carried on. 'Around this table with you now I share your hopes and your excitement at the prospect of you running your own country. I say this sincerely. It is behind all of our work in the bush, in the schools and medical services, by didimen, kiaps, missionaries and many, many people in so many occupations, so many roles. You surely will become an independent and proud nation, but it's too early, a lot of us think.'

A few more beers and plenty of talk, not all that I could understand as it criss-crossed the table, around me. Good will and laughter - I think 'bonhomie' would be the word to describe the prevailing mood. The man from Kerema sitting close to me on my left put his hand on my shoulder and quietly said, almost whispering, 'You have been making mistakes for us for a long time now. We want to make our own fucking mistakes'. Touche! What could I say to that.

To my young Papuan passenger I said, 'These men were your fathers, and that was



how they felt then'. He shook his head. He said 'Vaidani (*okay, enough*)' as we shook hands, and he opened the door to get out. He hesitated a little and looked at me. 'I want to say thanks and will always say thanks, for all the hard work you Australians did for us, but you did, you really did, leave too soon.'

(About this story Adrian Geyle wrote: 'It did happen, I assure you. I can remember it as though it happened last week. I might have "Kerema" wrong - it could have been "Kikori".')

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## Nurses taken to Japan and the Mystery Ship Montevideo Maru by Rod Miller

I attended last year's Christmas Luncheon and was astounded by the number of people who had travelled from far and wide to relate their stories of evacuation from the Pacific Islands prior to WWII. I felt very grateful to these people for coming along and sharing their experiences. I have for the last six years been researching the 18 nurses taken from Rabaul to Japan after the Japanese invasion in 1942. As so little information is available about these women I found researching them quite difficult. With the able assistance of Albert Speer and long-time Association member Margaret Clarence and survivor Lorna Whyte I have been able to examine and translate the diaries of five of these women.



At the Mitchell Library, Sydney - Rod Miller, Lorna Whyte (one of the nurses taken to Japan) and Sister Berenice Twohill (who was with Bishop Scharmach in the Ramale valley) looking at a wartime photo of Simpson Harbour  
(Photo: Bert Speer)

Of course while researching these women I came across the story of the Montevideo Maru. I have been trying to write about these women and their time in Japan and I decided that so much has been written about the Montevideo Maru that I would

merely touch on the subject and concentrate solely on the women - that is, until I recently attended the Memorial Service at Kavieng with Erice Pizer and many others. Of course the Montevideo Maru was again discussed with many different opinions and emotions coming to the surface. I have also had requests from Norway about the *Herstein* crew who were lost on this ship. I thought it might be an advantage to have a **data base of people interested in the Montevideo Maru** as it would help with the available information and any new information as it arises.

So what new information could there possibly be after 60 years of government officials and academics researching and studying this disaster? Well what if there was a group of people from Rabaul who had been in Japan from the very early days of the war to the very end of the war. If these people had been kept isolated and treated in a special way by the Japanese during their internment, would they be able to supply any new information about the ship?

After discussions I have decided to set up a data base of people who would like to supply or receive information about this ship. If you would like to be added to the data base where information could be shared or questions asked please email me at [hammil@magna.com](mailto:hammil@magna.com) or write to me at 130 Parramatta Road, Camperdown NSW 2050.

\*\*\*\*\*

## TAKEN IN GOROKA IN THE MID 50s

Jocelyn Alder (nee Primrose) wrote - 'Was delighted to read in the Sept. issue about Meg Taylor being made a DBE. Thought your readers might be interested in the attached photograph, taken in Goroka somewhere in the mid 1950s. The girls featured are (I think): Cheryl Woodward, Margaret Seale, Penny Primrose, Judy Greathead, Kim Wells, DAME MEG TAYLOR and Tricia Greathead.'



## A FINAL PATROL

by Laurie Meintjes

The shelf-life of the kiaps at Nomad River was relatively short. This was not surprising because the isolation, the reliance upon a none-too-reliable air service for everything from aspirins to zucchinis, the rugged nature of the patrolling, and the constant need for vigilance among defiant tribesmen who didn't always appreciate our efforts, got to us sooner or later. The married officers lasted longer than the single officers which was surprising because most of the married women hated the place. But those of us who were married were newly married and perhaps our wives were still starry-eyed enough to stand by their men without complaint, even in this godforsaken wilderness. We owe them a great debt.

By the time my use-by-date came round I was ready to leave. In particular, our daughter Nicole had arrived and we became increasingly conscious of our isolation because young lives always seem so fragile to new parents. When Nicole fell ill with a chest infection and was pulled through her crisis by a doctor on the other end of the radio, we decided enough was enough. But I was to go on one last patrol, and it was the life-saving radio that sent me.

A month after Nicole's little emergency I was sitting at the radio waiting for District headquarters to come on air when Koroba Patrol Post in the neighbouring Southern Highlands called us up: 'Nomad River. Nomad River. This is Koroba. Do you read me?'

I said that I did, and for Koroba to go ahead.

'Ah, I'm glad to catch you,' said Koroba, and I wondered what I was being caught for. I found out soon enough.

'We've heard bush-talk that two headmen have been murdered at Buguhai\* in the upper Strickland,' said the Voice that had been happy to catch me, 'and we are wondering if one of your officers can take a patrol up there and do some snooping around.'

'You make it sound like a walk in the park. Can't one of your chaps go in there? After all, it is your neck of the jungle and you are more familiar with it.'

The Voice chuckled. 'It's just like *your* jungle. All green and lumpy.' Then it got serious. 'I'm the only one here at the moment and I have a bit of a tribal fight going on. I can probably get away next week, but if someone from your end can go there sooner, it would be much appreciated.'

Appreciation aside - it never matches the favour, anyway - murder was murder and so I told the Voice I'd see what I could do. The Voice said, 'By the way, Tyler's the name and I owe you one,' and then told me what it knew about the murders, which wasn't much. This favour was getting bigger by the minute.

Margaret didn't want me to go on this last patrol because we were in the middle of PFS (Packing For South) but she relented when I promised to be back within a few days. I had never been to the upper Strickland before - to me the journey was a 60-mile squiggle on the map - but I was as fit as a piston and had no fear of the hard miles. Indeed, I was prepared to stretch every valve and sinew to accommodate them, the more so because this was my last hurrah and I could not allow myself to fail. We Patrol Officers could be cocky at times, but cockiness and confidence are the one coin and generally it buys success more readily than failure. On this occasion it bought a magnificent result—at least for me if not for the Buguhai killers—and it was the hard walk that did it.

Usually when a patrol moves through an area it does so fairly leisurely so that the bush-talk can slip ahead and alert the villages further up the track and give the people time to prepare themselves for the visit of the kiap. But not on this occasion. We were

travelling lightly and moved so fast with relays of carriers, almost forty miles in that first heart-thumping day, that we startled every village we passed through. Also, we didn't stop and chit-chat so there was little opportunity for the people to discover our destination and purpose. This suited me because I figured our true purpose would be guessed only by those who had been involved in the killings or those around them and I wanted to keep them in the dark for as long as possible. If there was one thing I had learned from criminal investigations in New Guinea it is that guilty people, or their associates, will almost always try to discover, in a covert way, exactly how much the investigating officer knows about the matter. Look for the person fishing for clues and you are probably very close to your quarry.

We made camp that first night at Gabiomosom village which was within a few hours' walk of Buguhai where the murders were supposed to have taken place. It was the perfect spot for a bit of fishing of my own. I asked interpreter Dina and my two police to say nothing to the villagers about our purpose, but to say only that we planned to stay there for two days. I knew that the villagers would speculate about our intentions, and perhaps wildly so, but I also knew that the drums would be busy tonight and that the news of our arrival would reverberate from hamlet to hamlet and that the people of Buguhai would soon be wondering why the kiai had come. Would the morning bring a response, the response I was hoping for, a trout rising to the fly?

I was sitting in the doorway to my tent when Dina came over and interrupted my reading - *The Count of Monte Cristo*, a mammoth book that kept me company on most of my Nomad patrols - to tell me that some men were coming from the direction of Buguhai. He pointed. A file of near-naked warriors - I counted five - had emerged from the forest on the eastern edge of the village and were approaching us, their composite shadow stalking ahead in the early sun. When the outstretched shadow reached my feet the men stood and stared at us, motionless and without expression, and I thought how much like American Indians they looked, or at least like some of the stony-faced Braves I had seen with James Stewart in *The Broken Arrow*, lithe and loose and fine-featured and the colour of mahogany, and all as one with their virgin world. If the idealised Noble Savage existed outside the myth, the Apollo of the South Seas, then surely this was he.

I motioned the men closer and they came like jaguars, alert and balanced, their faces as impassive as before, except that now their dark eyes flickered between Dina and me and I saw disquiet there. I smiled and their uneasiness grew laser-sharp and settled on me. My smile collapsed and I became acutely aware that I was at the meeting place of cultures separated by a thousand years and a universe of difference, and yet sharing this patch of sun in a New Guinea clearing. I recalled, presumptuously, the stories in my school readers of the first tentative contacts between Moffat and Livingstone and the age-old tribes of Africa's hinterland, and wondered illogically whether either of those dour Scots had read *The Count of Monte Cristo*.

Dina stepped forward and reached out a hand and each of the men, in turn, touched the tips of Dina's fingers with a little tweak of his own. When I put out my hand they did the same to me and their touch was as soft as a kitten's paw. Had any of these gentle fingers killed the men at Buguhai? Then, without being prompted, the five men dropped to their haunches and squatted in a semicircle in front of me, and Dina moved into the opening and squatted there himself, facing the men. The powwow was about to begin.

After a few general enquiries about this and that we got down to business and I asked the men, with Dina interpreting, what they knew about the killings at Buguhai. They knew nothing. Stone-blank nothing.

'Haven't you heard *anything* about the killings,' Dina persisted in their language.

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*'Mmmm-mm,'* they said with a vigorous shaking of heads, their sharp denials sounding like the sudden whine of a dentist's drill.

More questions and more shrill denials. These guys didn't just *not know*: they were absolute and vehement about it. Something wasn't right. Those denials were too sharp; too passionate.

I suggested to Dina that he tell the men that I had just been testing them; that I already knew all there was to know about the Buguhai killings. He relayed my comments and the men nodded agreeably. They were happy for me. 'Tell them,' I continued, 'that the kiap knows that five men committed the murders.' More nods. 'Now go from man to man,' I told Dina, 'and as you go I want you to count aloud from one to five and to touch each man on the head as you say a number.' Dina stood and moved among the heads: 'One...two...three,' he intoned in their nasally speech and the nods became less pronounced as the numbers climbed. 'Four...five,' and the nods dropped off into a tense stillness as the men pondered where the kiap might be going with this disturbing line of logic.

'Tell them,' I said finally, 'that the kiap is very sorry to see that they are a group of five because it can only mean that they are the killers and the kiap must now arrest them and take them to Nomad.' I motioned to the two police, who were watching nearby, to step closer.

Dina had not yet finished his spiel before the men began to shake their heads violently and this time their denials merged into one continuous ... *mmmm-mm-mmmm-mm...* that swelled with urgency and suddenly stopped. Then, all talking at once, they implored Dina to ask the kiap not to be so hasty. Their memories were wonderfully restored, they said, and they remembered everything, absolutely everything. What would the kiap like to know?

It all came out: names, places, dates, motive, and the whereabouts of the fugitives, which happened to be a village near Koroba. I radioed the details to Koroba that evening, including the names of the ever-so-eager witnesses, and told the Voice I would be heading back to Nomad in the morning and that the rest was up to him.

'I really do owe you one,' the Voice reminded me and I said, 'No problem; it has been fun.' And it had been. My life as a kiap was almost over and this was a good note to finish on.

\* Buguhai is probably not the name of the actual village where the killings took place. It is nearly thirty years since I spoke with the OIC at Koroba and I have long forgotten the details, so I have picked a likely spot from the map. I have even forgotten the name of the Koroba kiap, and have named him Tyler. Sorry about that, old chap. You still owe me one!

## THE MADANG EARTHQUAKE

by Margaret Kelly

*This is a copy of a letter I wrote to my parents after the Madang earthquake in late 1970. The Jeff mentioned is our second son who had finished his schooling and was living with us and working for DCA in Madang.*

'Dear Mum and Dad,

There is now a little bit of mail coming in and going out on chartered aircraft so will put this in the post and hope for the best. With all the publicity, and general hoo-ha that accompanied Madang's big moment I feel everyone is expecting my personal memoirs of the historic occasion. I just can't write it all out several times without each version getting terser and terser at every repeat. To preserve the full incoherent flavour of the occasion please excuse this badly typed version - which has taken me two days to complete in bits and pieces, between other chores.

It has been quite an interesting week, but not, of course, as dramatic as press and radio would have liked - however both really did us proud with the material they did dress up. Madang actually seemed to be on the fringe of the 'quake affected area - and most of the damage is along only one side of the town. The really messed up area is along the coast north of Madang for about twenty miles.

We had had a late night and had only been in bed for a few hours and were so sound asleep that we did not sense the preliminary shakes at all. We were indeed very rudely woken up. The din was quite incredible - the house creaking and straining, the water tanks buckling and splitting, crashing of falling furniture and the steady sound of smashing china and glass and falling tins as well as the noise made by all the pots and pans flying around the kitchen and clanging together. The power was already off when I tried the bedside lamp so we stayed where we were until things calmed down to avoid the risk of being felled by a flying bookcase. I was quite sure that I identified the sound of each of my treasured possessions falling to their end. I couldn't find the torch that was supposed to live beside my bed either (found out later that Jeff had borrowed it a week earlier).

Bill found the dining table candle still in place and when I went to get matches from the store room I was greeted by a tide of wet broken glass. Finally found a box in my basket and, once we had that, we could see. Every time we got another shake (there were shock waves right on the heels of the big one) I grabbed the candle and fled outside - with recollections of the San Francisco drama; I wasn't leaving naked flames about in a timber house.

Jeff - and the car - weren't home so, of course, imagined all sorts of things but he turned up very shortly afterwards. He was very impressed with himself for having been the first in his party to realise what was happening and to dash outside and clutch a tree (not a coconut I hope). He said a Rabaul childhood stood him in good stead - he even remembered the tree in case the ground split - as well as being able to realise that no ordinary tremor was getting under way.

We went for a quick drive and had a look around (by headlights). We were in the area that got the worst of the shake and there were some real cracks in the road. The much photographed block of flats/arcade, that I'm sure you have seen, was most dramatic. The photographers missed another good shot of a building with a kitchen sink hanging out a window, but it was a building still under construction. It is amazing that people evacuating damaged buildings didn't cop a flying brick as they got out. The photogenic flats looked like a giant doll's house with its front completely without a wall, leaving every room on display. One room, with only two walls left, still had a narrow



shelf with every glass on it completely undisturbed! One bedroom had the inevitable drunk who slept through it all to be woken by the police and to find himself being studied by the interested pyjama-clad audience which had gathered on the opposite footpath.

We called in on the homes of several colleagues. One young wife was on her own with four small children. She was fine and the kids totally enthralled with their big adventure. Another housewife was bemoaning the loss of her prized dinner service. We went home and Jeff went off to start an early shift at the airport where he found a girl from the party he had earlier left. She was waiting at the terminal, with her packed bags, ready to depart on the first plane! Bill went off to start on a working marathon. Actually I was probably one of the most sensation deprived people in Madang - I didn't see much action at all - just stayed with the telephone and took messages until 11 p.m. that night.

When daylight came the house looked ghastly, but when it was all sorted out there was surprisingly little damage. My imagination and identifications of crashing noises had led me to expect far worse. The store room was worthy of a Three Stooge movie. The deep freezer had shot forward and met a cascade of bottles off the top shelf. The freezer and the floor were inches deep in a pungent mixture of shattered glass, wine, whisky, jam, tomato sauce, o'cedar oil, cough mixture, glue, ink and ammonia. The bath contained shampoo among various other bottles and jars and their former contents - including the remains of my little old apothecary aspro jar. The kitchen cupboards that had opened were mainly pot and pan cupboards - two of them won't close again either. Some of the fridge contents were on the floor but the door was closed. It must have swung open and then re-latched.

The bookcase fell onto the portable radio, and I lost a few plates and cups and saucers out of the sideboard, but luckily no cherished ones. The ornaments nearly all landed on the soft rug as neatly as if they had been aimed at it from various corners of the room. The ceramic lamp base, given to me by Molly Coleman, was smashed and so was the lovely blue thing the twins gave me for Xmas, but in all the escapes were far more dramatic than the breakages. One Venetian glass was swinging free, held by its lip between shelf and wall. A crystal decanter went right across the room and did not even chip.

Outside we lost a few chunks off the shore line - including the barbecue. All the water tanks are buckled and split, but luckily mostly damaged near their tops so we still have water. The people whose tanks split nearer their bases had yards full of mud - and no water. Actually the nastiest thing we encountered was an awful smell. Eventually discovered that it was caused by all the water having splashed out of the toilet bowl. There was no longer anything to stop the fumes from the septic tank backing up into the house. However that was easily fixed with one flush. There was a lot of re-potting to do in the bush house. Up the road from us there seemed to be a fairly shake-proof spot - several people slept right through the whole affair, including the DC (District Commissioner) who woke, but saw no reason to get up. The people in the houses near him had no breakages at all either.

Have hardly sighted Bill since. He disappeared up the North Coast at daylight to check that area - which, as it turned out, was the one place where the action was. He returned just after dark having spent a day evacuating the injured, interviewing the survivors of a boat that apparently was right over the epicentre of the quake, closing bridges and evacuating a few schools into safer surroundings. He spent the rest of the evening organising patrols to be dropped up the coast by a navy patrol the next morning and getting as many as possible equipped with portable radios. For the past three days he has just had sandwiches in his office between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. while he received radio reports, and organised helicopter inspections and food drops. He says it's the first time

for ages he has found his work demanding enough to be stimulating and is being very cheerful. The DC is dealing with the urban aftermath of the event.

Most people in the town did not suffer much damage, but there are a lot of wharves and bridges in delicate states of health, about 500 water tanks to be replaced and several Administration buildings to be shored up.

Out in the bush there are people to be fed and sheltered. A helicopter is going flat out delivering supplies and nails. The navy boats are delivering along the coast. The patrol officers are still finding casualties and people have to be moved off unstable ridges. Only a few minutes ago three children were found under a landslide, and there are still a lot of slides to be investigated.

Most of the private enterprise people who suffered property damage were in places where the buildings themselves were pretty jerry built. One builder was responsible for constructing most of the town's brickwork that suffered damage - including the much photographed block of flats. Other places, standing beside his handiwork, never even cracked. One house jumped off its 8ft. piers and squashed flat its owners' new MG!

New Guinea Co. has already had a sale of damaged grog - bottles without labels etc. For once I was on the spot and did well. Champagne for Xmas is well organised. Am waiting with bated breath for Steamships - they did not open for two days so feel there must be lots of goodies to come.'

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**HELP WANTED:** The following is from Bruce Hoy of Aspley Qld: 'Does anyone know when the **Carriers' Monument on Three Mile Hill** in Port Moresby was dedicated? I am going through my slides and captioning them, and this date eludes me. While curator of Modern History at the National Museum in Moresby in the mid 80s, I had a conversation with a member of the Town Planning staff of the City Council. It appears as if the Council was investigating an idea of erecting a monument to the WWII Papua New Guinean carriers. He was shocked to be told that one already existed! He had never noticed the monument before. I wonder if it is still a forgotten and overlooked monument these days?' Bruce is at PO Box 249, Aspley Qld 4034, Email: landahoy@bigpond.com

**HELP WANTED:** Max Hayes seeks information on the whereabouts of any old German cemeteries in and around Rabaul and on the Duke of York Islands. The Rabaul Town (European) Cemetery appears to have been in use from about 1910, but prior to that there were German cemeteries near Kokopo (then known as Herbertshohe), and on the Duke of York Islands nearby. Our first WW1 servicemen killed (Captain Pockley and Able Seaman Williams) were initially buried in a German cemetery at Herbertshohe, then removed to another site, before finally being reinterred at the Rabaul Town Cemetery in 1919 (since 1950 their remains lie at Bitapaka War Cemetery). In August 2001 Max saw what appears to be a reconstructed German cemetery virtually in the centre of Kokopo (but back a little), which is neatly kept, and contains portions of old German headstones, and 32 bronze plaques on cement bases (of which 10 simply say in German, 'An unknown German'). Whether this is the site of the original German cemetery is not known, but there is speculation that this current site was created in the early 1960s when a German cemetery may have been relocated from Kenabot Plantation by Burns Philp Ltd, so that they could plant more palms. The cemetery at the Catholic Mission at Vunapope and of the 'Queen Emma' family remain (though vandalised) at nearby Ralum, and are well documented by Max. If you can assist in identification of the locations and/or of the names of those buried in these old German cemeteries please contact Max at 5 Peppermint Grove, Box Hill South, 3128, ph/fax 03 9898 7459.

## BOOK NEWS AND REVIEWS

**NEW GUINEA ENGINEER - the Memoirs of Les Bell MBE Silent Key: VK4LZ by Les Bell and Gillian Heming Shadbolt - \$29-95 plus P&P \$6 in NSW, \$7 rest of Aust.**

**Reviewed by George Oakes\***

This is a fascinating biography of Les Bell who went to New Guinea as a 22 year-old in 1926. Les was a practical person who could install or repair almost anything from vehicle and ships engines, electricity plants, radios and radar. He also managed and owned coconut plantations. He was fascinated with Morse code from when he was a young boy. The description of his time in New Guinea, mainly New Ireland, before WWII gives a good insight into life at that time and covers his interactions with many people.

Because of his radio knowledge, during WWII he joined the RAAF and worked with radar, establishing radar stations in a number of areas, mostly dangerous, to track enemy aircraft. His descriptions of his wartime activities are fascinating in an area not often recorded. He received an MBE for his work. After the war he returned to New Ireland for a few years to re-establish his engineering workshop in Kavieng and supervise his plantations, before retiring to the Airlie Beach area of Queensland.

Gillian Heming Shadbolt wrote the book from many discussions with Les Bell - he had an excellent memory. Les died in 2000. Gillian's father lived in New Ireland on Kolube Plantation before WWII and was killed at Kavieng. Les Bell lost his father and two brothers in the war. Nearly all of the non-indigenous civilian men who lived in New Ireland before the war, and in particular in 1941, including many of the men discussed in this book, lost their lives during the war. Gillian returned to Kavieng in July this year for the unveiling of the plaque to New Ireland civilians lost in the war.

I found this book very interesting and written in an easy-to-read manner making it hard to put down, and recommend it to anyone who is interested in life in New Guinea particularly before WWII.

Available from Rosenberg Publishing Pty. Ltd., PO Box 6125, Dural Delivery Centre, NSW 2158, ISBN 1 877058 07 6, soft cover, 271pp, 46 b&w photos

*\* George lived in New Ireland for 7 years as a child before WWII and lost his father in the war. He then worked in PNG from 1954 to 1975. He, too, attended the unveiling of the plaque at Kavieng this year.*

**SOGERI - THE SCHOOL THAT HELPED TO SHAPE A NATION - A History, 1944-1994 by Lance Taylor - ISBN 0-949600-42-3, 340pp, 140 photos**

Lance Taylor, a secondary school teacher of English and History, joined the Expressive Arts Staff at Sogeri in 1979. In 1983 he started a History of Sogeri Club as an extra-curricular activity - this was the start of the research for this book.

'SOGERI - THE SCHOOL THAT HELPED TO SHAPE A NATION' shows how the small training centre which ANGAU set up on the site of a wartime army convalescent depot was begun very much with a 'moral mission' in mind: to thank the people of Papua New Guinea for their heroic efforts and sacrifices during the course of the New Guinea campaigns, not least the one that raged for four months along the Kokoda Track, higher up in the ranges beyond Sogeri.

With three years of education in both the territories of Papua and New Guinea lost to the war, the promise of a fresh beginning at a special government school, 'YOUR school, looked after by the Government for you', as the Administrator, Colonel Sir Jack Murray, told its students in 1946, aroused enormous interest. From the length of the

Papuan coast and across the islands of Milne Bay and the Bismarck Sea, the brightest students the Mission schools could provide found their way - often arduously and lengthily - to the idyllic setting of the 'ANGAU School' in the ranges above Port Moresby. There, they were left in no doubt that they would be in the vanguard of those native Papua New Guineans the Australian Administration would look to in getting the Territory back on its feet after the war. The governor generals, prime ministers and other future national and provincial leaders the school produced testify that its students responded impressively to the challenge.

This 340-page book, which includes an evocative collection of photographs from every period of the school's history, traces the remarkable story of a school which has been called, at different times during its history, both the 'jewel in the crown' and the 'mecca in the hills' of Papua New Guinean education.

Price for ROAPNG members \$30, others \$40, plus \$11 P&P per mailing. Cheques only, made out to 'ING DIRECT - Sogeri Account'; post to M. Walker, 31 Josephine Avenue, Mt Waverley VIC 3149. Ph 03 9803 9071

**FIRE CULT** by R. B. Shaw - \$21-95 incl GST & P&P; ISBN 0-9581418-0-0

Reviewed by Adrian Geyle

Robert Shaw's second novel (his first was *Island in the Sky*) testifies to his worthiness of the title 'wordsmith'. Having been involved himself in many a drama concerning aircraft and people stranded in remote places, he brings to us a parade of vivid images born of real-life experience.

The story is set in a country he obviously loves - Papua New Guinea. He knows, from his work and travel there, many of its stunningly beautiful geographical features and matches them with fine descriptions. We see jagged limestone edges high among mountain peaks that privileged pilots see from on high. 'Silver, serpentine rivers reflecting through dense foliage' and steep mountain foothills that look like 'gigantic spread hands' - these images are indelible in the minds of many a traveller too, indigenous and expatriate alike. Gun-running pilot Fang, flying home to Port Moresby from his last dangerous illegal flight west of the border, knows he is one of very few who have seen the wonders of the Star Mountains.

The more familiar geographical features such as coastlines, the towns and the bars, and the intimacy that the hard-nosed Fang finds back home in Moresby with the beautiful Bianca - these bring to the reader the settled 'civilised' side of a frontier country which those of us fortunate to have experienced find forever fascinating.

The story is gold-fever 'driven', a search for booty hidden from Japanese invaders in WWII. Shaw depicts his characters through lively, direct and gutsy dialogues.

The employment of aircraft of variety and versatility has, I think, been at the heart of this author's enchantment with the how, the where and the why of outsider intrusions into this land that time forgot. There is a kind of casual indifference towards these machines that suggests total trust, total reliability. The author knows what these flying machines can do, and his characters use them 'up to the max'!

Encounter with a volcano is a final reminder in this fine, entertaining novel that great natural forces do determine much that excites in PNG, and that challenges abound in this 'land of the Apocalypse where the earth dances' (James McAuley). Earthquakes can fracture landing surfaces and hail can beat a jetliner down from the sky in this extraordinary, enticing land. Author Shaw weaves a credible and exciting story around such possibilities, a story with many strands. (*See advertisement opposite*)

\$21-95 payable to R. B. Shaw, Tropicana Press, PO Box 385, Padstow NSW 2211.

## REMEMBER 'ISLAND IN THE SKY'?

(over 5000 copies sold!)

**'Fire Cult'** by R.B. Shaw is now available!

**Gunrunning, intrigue, tribal cults and lost gold amid the erupting volcanic islands of New Guinea**

*Dave Stark is salvaging a crashed jetliner while Fang Mitchell is gunrunning in a revamped warplane. They are recruited by two suspicious Japanese to search for their lost father's remains . . . or a fortune in stolen gold dust. In a race to find the gold they trek through the jungled river gorges and primitive tribes of the Finisterre Ranges, following an elusive trail of ancient clues.*

*There is only one man who can help, Ted, a tormented old soldier haunted by horrific nightmares of Japanese atrocities, fanatical cults and erupting volcanoes. The minute Ted steps onto the trail he embarks on a tortuous journey of self-discovery. Their quest climaxes violently amid volcanic eruptions on an exotic island controlled by a demonic chief and his fire-worshipping cult. Planes, helicopters and boats clash in a final deadly pursuit across the Bismarck Sea.*

' . . . Fire Cult is a ripping good yarn with equal appeal for both male and female readers. R.B. Shaw is a storyteller with an awesome talent and a gift for gripping descriptive prose. Claims by his agent that he could become Australia's answer to Wilbur Smith could well be taken seriously. This engrossing novel has a most ingenious plot and ongoing sense of immediacy. The build up of tension and suspense keeps one turning the pages. This fast paced tale of heroism, terror and sickening sadism would be perfect for a thrill-a-minute action movie.'

*Writespot International*

' . . . This is R.B. Shaw's second novel. Many will remember 'Island in the Sky', an excellent yarn written by someone with personal experience. His ability to conceive a plot and tell it well was also most evident. When I reviewed it, his fast racy style and descriptions of the countryside delighted me. 'Fire Cult' does not disappoint. Shaw holds the reader's attention from start to finish. I intended reading 'Fire Cult' on the plane to U.K., but two days prior I made the 'mistake' of opening the first page. I had long since finished it before I left - such was the fervour with which I devoured the story. In the finale the reader is constantly excited as the book builds to a thrilling climax.'

*David Cooke, former reviewer, AOPA*

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## WHO ARE THEY AND WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Max Hayes wrote, 'Enclosed is a group photo of those who attended the first Admin. Linguistic Course conducted at Goroka together with Summer Institute of Linguistics staff from Ukarumpa near Kainantu

The course was conducted at the Goroka Sports Club from 31-3-1960 to 28-4-1960 for selected Admin. Officers. The concept was to give officers an introduction to the principles of learning a local indigenous language, after which such officers would return to their various stations and set about learning the local language.

... the concept never proved successful due to staff constraints, time off from work to sit in a village and undergo this being curtailed, the belief that a patrol officer learning a local language would be doomed to spend the remainder of his service in some remote area, and other reasons.

I can identify only three ... Kim Kimmorley rear row 7<sup>th</sup> from left, Grace Cuthbertson centre row 3<sup>rd</sup> from left, and self centre row at end on right.

If my memory serves me correctly, I remember Graham Lambden, Jack Erskine and Graham Hardy as being on the course but cannot identify them.'

*If you can help to identify anyone, Max can be contacted at: 03 9898 7459 or at: 5 Peppermint Grove, Box Hill South, Vic 3128*




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**HELP WANTED:** Cynthia Schmidt, daughter of Ardie (Adolf) Schmidt, Director Native Education Rabaul and a member of the NGVR (and presumed to be on the Montevideo Maru) would like to find all relatives of 2nd/22nd, Salvation Army Band, NGVR, RAAF, RAN, service personnel from other allied countries and civilians who were in Rabaul, New Britain, Kavieng, New Ireland and surrounding islands of PNG in 1941. Cynthia is at Ph. 07 5532 7495, Mobile 04 1054 7495, Email [RabaulNewBritain@hotmail.com](mailto:RabaulNewBritain@hotmail.com) or PO Box 1242, Southport Qld 4215.



## A REMINISCENCE OF PNG

by John Farquharson

It might be inferred from the wording (for which I was entirely responsible) of the personal note attached to my review of *Tales of Papua New Guinea* that my interest in PNG was only academic. Not so. I first landed in PNG in 1961 as one of the Press component of a Federal Parliamentary delegation led by the then Minister for Territories, Sir Paul Hasluck.

In that year, there was a restructuring of the legislature in PNG to provide for greater indigenous representation. Similar legislative changes were also being introduced by the Dutch administration in West New Guinea. So, after landing at Port Moresby, the delegation flew on to Hollandia to be present at the first meeting of the enlarged legislature. On the evening before the opening of the new Assembly there was a reception at the Governor's residence where I had my first encounter with several members of the Free Papua Movement.

The press party was accommodated on an air-conditioned Dutch merchant ship in Hollandia Harbour, while the MPs were put up at the Hollandia Yacht Club. Among the Press party was Peter Hastings, then still working for Packer's *Daily Telegraph*, while officials included Dudley McCarthy and Hugh Clarke (Dept of Territories), David McNicoll (External Affairs) and the deputy clerk of the Senate, Roy Bullock. We stayed for several days, with one of them providing for a visit to the Baliem Valley - except that it never happened because fog prevented the DC4 (Skymaster) from landing. I fared better than the main party that day. At the airport I ran into a couple of Franciscan monks, who had done their flying training at Toowoomba, Queensland. They were heading off in a single-engine Cessna to deliver supplies to several mission stations and they invited me to go along with them. I was dropped off at a village called Arso, where there was a Franciscan mission run by Belgian monks. They flew on to another station and picked me up on the return flight. I had a great day at the mission meeting some of the local people and seeing some of the village activities, such as sago making.

From Hollandia we flew to Madang where Hasluck opened the new hospital and was guest of honour at the Red Cross Ball. Many of the party, including the journalists, were billeted with local people. The Minister, I think, stayed with the DC (District Commissioner). The Resident Magistrate, Ralph Ormsby, and his wife who were most generous in their hospitality, took me in. At the ball, everyone was surprised to see a lighter side of the usually serious, even dour, Paul Hasluck. As the night of jollity and dancing went on, the Minister got into the spirit of the occasion, got up and joined the band to play the bongo drums. To everyone's delight the jazz-enthusiast Minister turned out to be a competent drummer. His performance, naturally, turned out to be the highlight of the ball.

We then progressed to Lae and Port Moresby. At Moresby, as on the Dutch side, the occasion was the opening of the new Legislative Assembly with greater indigenous representation and somewhat increased powers. The Governor of Victoria, Sir Dallas Brookes, standing in for the Governor-General, as Administrator of the Commonwealth, presided at the opening ceremony. The event was crowned that night with a reception at Government House, where the hosts were Sir Donald and Lady Cleland.

PNG had intrigued me, re-igniting an interest going back to reading Monckton's 'Reminiscences of a Resident Magistrate' in my school days. So when I was offered the opportunity to go to PNG as editor of the *South Pacific Post* (now *Post-Courier*), I took it. The first of our four sons was born in Taurama Hospital. The "love affair" with PNG

has never ended, though my time living and working there turned out to be limited owing to my wife's ill-health. Regretfully, we had to face the fact that living in the tropics was not for her.

However, we made quite a few enduring friendships from those days of 1965-66. I was able to visit most parts of the country, apart from the Gulf, the Southern Highlands and Bougainville. At various times, through the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, I was able to get back on visits. Those visits included two memorable trips, with ministerial sanction, to the Siwai area of Bougainville during the crisis.

I can say with the late Percy Chatterton, a fount of wisdom and helpfulness during my *South Pacific Post* days, that all my PNG experiences live with me as 'days that I have loved'.

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### **MEMORIES OF NEW GUINEA 1954** by Leo Butler

Mention recently of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ROAPNG revived some wonderful memories of my time in PNG during 1954 as an employee of Vacuum Mobil.

Lae was the headquarters for Vacuum Oil (Mobil) after resumption of its PNG operations on or about 1947/48. Lae was my second port of call after Port Moresby, as Internal Auditor for the Company's Pacific Islands Division. What a contrast I experienced after leaving a dry Port Moresby to arrive at the lush tropical town of Lae. The flight from Moresby to Lae, side saddle, in a Qantas DC3 piloted by Captain Ian Taylor was full of anxiety as we flew in thick cloud which persisted for most of the journey until we broke out into clear skies high over the Huon Gulf. The landing was made over water at the Lae strip and it appeared the pilot used the wreck of the *Tenyo Maru* to line up his aircraft to the central markings on the tarmac.

Notable Vacuum (Mobil) staff at Lae at that time included: Charley Heavey (Manager), Eric Crow (Accountant), Tom Hickling and Oliver Ducray (Operations), Leo Bowman (Sales), Noel Symington and George Bodenham (Accounts), Frank Waugh, Johnie Cook, Frank Lamsing, Des Waite, Roy Emmett, Eddie Smith and Dave McKibbin (Bulk Terminal, Operators and Drivers). The office secretary was Mrs Humphreys.

I was made very welcome on my arrival and was accommodated at the new Hotel Cecil owned and hosted by that wonderful and colourful lady, Mrs Flora (Ma) Stewart, ably assisted by her daughter Flora (later Mrs Leo Bowman) and if my memory still serves me right another lady named Dorothy Stewart. The native workers in their smart white lap laps were also impressive and their courteous attention to non pidgin-speaking guests was duly noted. The Bamboo Bar at the Hotel Cecil was a great place to drink and swap stories with the locals.

Local identities I met and listened to in awe and amazement, with their colourful descriptions of conditions, events and personalities during pre-war and wartime PNG, were: Horrie Niall, Jim Taylor, Jim and Ela Birrell, the Zavattoro family, Keith and Alma Bradford, Jack Rice and Kevin Hilliard, Tom Hilliard, Carl Jacobson, the Bretag family, Paul Bolger, Bobby Smith (taxis), Dick Tebb, Mick Leahy, Jack Punch, Ray Spreag, David Dickie, Ray Stockden, Fred Mayos, Greg Baldwin, George Pike, Dick Davis (accountant), Harold Hindwood (MAL), Kam Hong, Tom Seeto and Madam Wong Fong (driving her big new American Chevrolet).

At some of Lae's notable watering holes drinks were consumed with great gusto and excellent companionship. The Aviat, Comworks, Golf, Lae and RSL Clubs all provided excellent facilities. Some names which come to mind were Arvi Pitkanen, Hank Cosgrove, Norm Osborne and Lofty Weedon.

Aviation was an important and vital part of the lives of residents, both expatriate and indigenous, and being in Lae enabled me to meet many notable aviation personalities - Tom Deegan, Bill Johns, Bertie Heath, Mal Shannon, Gordon Biggs, Jack Stammer, Dick Mant, Bobby Gibbes, Robin Gray, Peter Manser, Frank Goosens, Jim Perry, Dick Davis, Laurie Crowley and engineer Bill Humphreys.

Trips to Salamaua, Finschhafen, the Markham Valley, Wau and Bulolo (via barges across the Markham) were eye-opening experiences for me.

Unfortunately I have never been back to PNG since my last term (1959-66) but would love to have revived these memories by a personal visit. Thankfully *Una Voce* provides a link for those of us who had both the pleasure and privilege to have lived part of our lives in PNG.

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## UNUSUAL PETS

Two stories from Geoff Melrose which occurred before WWII

(1) 'One Mark' was a baby pig who joined our menage a few months before Christmas. Like most little porkers he was quite intelligent and very affectionate. His name derived from his sale price of one shilling at the local native market.

My mother fattened him up on goats milk and a solid mixture of chook-food laced with kitchen scraps, even bacon rind. He quickly adapted to his new home and Mother became his idol. He wasn't penned in and mostly hung around the kitchen precincts. Like a dog he had his own food dish. A pottery planter was his water trough - he snorkelled in this relentlessly and the water often became disgusting. Woe betide the poor *boi* responsible for water quality, if my mother found dirty water. Hygiene differences between the two cultures were extreme. The only explanation possible was 'misis i longlong' (the Missus is mad).

One Mark created mayhem in the zinnia beds and made himself a dust bath next to the front steps. He followed Mum everywhere around the spacious grounds and was not averse to shopping trips where he occasionally outraged curious dogs. But he was able to take care of himself on such occasions.

Life is all too short for happy little pigs. But execution day brought a problem. One by one our servants refused to kill him for he was now a *wantok* (family member). Dad's response was perhaps more deliberate, 'Not on your nelly!'

But in New Guinea there was always someone at hand. Dad sent a *boi* off with a note. Shortly after an anonymous person arrived in an old Ford truck and collected the pig. After all, multi-skilling is not a recent invention.

On Christmas morning, a fine back leg was duly delivered, neatly striated to provide the much-favoured crackling. 'Where's the rest?' Mum wailed. 'You have to give the bloke something for his trouble', Dad replied, hastily adding, 'he wanted the head and half a leg. The rest is being smoked or salted. Anyway our ice box could not hold it all'. Over the next few weeks bacon, salted pork and various other bits including trotters arrived in good order. Christmas dinner was a huge success. There was no quibble from anyone about eating an erstwhile pet. Fresh meat, after all, was something of a rarity.

(2) Somebody donated a young *muruk* (cassowary) to us; it was about 60 cm tall on arrival. It amused all and sundry when fed bananas which it ate whole - they applauded as the fruit travelled down its long neck.

But it was a nuisance, polishing off a hedge of caladiums to the dismay of the gardener concerned. As it grew older it became more aggressive and developed watch-dog

tendencies, attacking strangers and chasing off locals just for practice.

Bosangat (our cook and my friend) commented that there were no *muruks* on Manus Island so Mum gave it to him to take home at the end of his contract. Farewell day was turmoil. Mum had tethered *Muruk* to a tree. By the time crating was to take place, the bird had wound himself round and round the trunk and was in a bit of a lather, pecking and kicking his would-be captors. Ultimately subdued, he was boxed.

Here mystery enters the tale. Nobody was telling how he came to arrive in Rabaul where he was let loose. But he created mayhem there for a time. He roamed the streets, kicked clothes off lines, ate bright articles like ball bearings, and committed various other felonies. One day he loped after Mrs Jean Clarke and knocked her down from behind, apparently fancying her colourful parasol. He ate some kittens and was finally destroyed.

His deeds were immortalised in the local paper (*Rabaul Times*?).

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## REUNIONS

**SOGERI REUNION and BOOK LAUNCH - Report back.** The 4th Sogeri Reunion was held Sept 27-29 in Canberra. About 60 people from PNG and most States of Australia attended the weekend of activities.

The main day, Saturday, commenced with a session entitled 'PNG Today' with talks by Brian Elliott, (ex Head of English and now living in Madang), Sir Paulias Matane (ex-student of Sogeri and an author and elder statesman), Herb Golightly (past Principal of Sogeri and presently with AusAID in Lae) and the present Principal of Sogeri, Ms Lillian Ahai. The session was most informative and interesting for those of us who had left PNG 20, 30 or 40 years ago.

In the afternoon the Reunion Group, plus more people from the ACT, attended the launch, at the PNG High Commission, of Lance Taylor's long anticipated 50-year history entitled *SOGERI - THE SCHOOL THAT HELPED TO SHAPE A NATION 1944-1994* (See *Book News/Reviews*). His Excellency Renagi Lohia, the PNG High Commissioner to Australia, spoke of the significance of the Sogeri School towards the development of PNG and launched the book. Mr Lohia was a student of Sogeri in the 1960s.

The day concluded with the Official Dinner in the evening. At the dinner Dr Michael Webb, Music teacher at Sogeri in the early 80s, led the assembled company in the 'Song for Sogeri' (written by Howard McDermott for the 40th Anniversary in 1984 and still sung on special occasions.) Michael also, at short notice, led everyone in singing the Iarowari school song of the 1960s. Iarowari is now a separate Provincial High School but in the 60s Sogeri and Iarowari formed one institution. At the dinner Lance Taylor and Chris Martin entertained everyone with a PNG/Sogeri Trivia Quiz. After dinner Ms Ahai gave an excellent talk on Sogeri School today. The next Sogeri Reunion, planned for late July 2004, will celebrate the 60th Anniversary.

**REUNION OF FORMER STAFF OF MALAGUNA TECHNICAL COLLEGE, RABAUL, - REPORT BACK** by Stan Pike. This event was held in Canberra on Saturday 12 October at the Kaleen Sports Club. The PNG High Commissioner, His Excellency Renagi Lohia, and his wife attended the gathering. One of the heartening aspects of the reunion was the contacts made with former staff. A number were away on holidays or had family commitments but sent their best wishes as well as news which was passed on to attendees. Those present included Sylvia and Steve Chow, Jill Brewin, Jessie Pearce, Stella Emberson, Rocky and Anna Valaris, Bob Hopkins and Jenny Clayton, and Stan Pike.

## CAPTAIN OWEN STANLEY RN FRs

by Neville Threlfall

The mention, in a recent issue of *Una Voce*, of geographical features along the Papuan coast named by Captain Owen Stanley, and of the central mountain range named after him, prompts me to offer further information about this brilliant young naval officer who during his short life played a part in the history of Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea.

Born in England in 1811, Stanley entered the Royal Navy as a midshipman during his teens, and earned rapid promotion while on ships engaged in survey work in South America and the Mediterranean. By 1839 he had risen to the rank of captain and was sent to the Australian station in command of HMS *Britomart*. In 1840 *Britomart* was sent to New Zealand where British sovereignty was being negotiated with the Maori chiefs on the North Island. Soon after the Treaty of Waitangi was signed in February 1840, there were signs of French intentions to settle in the South Island. Discovering that settlers were on their way to the Banks Peninsula, east of the present city of Christchurch, Stanley sailed south in *Britomart* and on 11 August 1840 he raised the Union Jack at Akaroa Harbour on the Banks Peninsula and claimed the whole of the South Island for Great Britain. The French settlers arrived there in the corvette *L'Aube* (Dawn) only six days later! They accepted British sovereignty, but decided to make their intended settlement just the same, and many present-day residents, streets and businesses in the town of Akaroa have French names. A monument on a site overlooking Akaroa Harbour commemorates Owen Stanley's action; and he is further commemorated in the cathedral of Christchurch, by a marble font donated by his brother Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, Dean of Westminster, with a memorial inscription.

In 1846 Owen Stanley was given the command of the warship HMS *Rattlesnake*, and engaged in survey work along the coasts of Australia. In 1848 *Rattlesnake* escorted Edmund Kennedy's exploration party to its landing point at Rockingham Bay in North Queensland, and then carried out survey work along the Great Barrier Reef and in the Torres Strait Islands, pending a planned rendezvous with the Kennedy party at Cape York. But following a series of setbacks, Kennedy was killed near the Escape River. Owen Stanley in the *Rattlesnake*, and HMS *Bramble* under the command of Lieutenant Yule, carried out a series of searches for the missing expedition, doing more survey work in the meantime. Even after the expedition's aboriginal guide, Jackey Jackey, reached Cape York and told of the party's disasters, the searchers stayed in the area trying to recover Kennedy's papers and the bodies of the dead. In his reports to the Admiralty, Owen Stanley recommended the establishment of a military post at Cape York; this was carried out much later, in the short-lived settlement of Somerset, which was later replaced by an outpost at Thursday Island.

While exploring the beaches near Cape York, the *Rattlesnake's* crew rescued Barbara Thompson, the sole survivor of the wreck of the cutter *America* in 1844. She had spent over five years among the Torres Strait Islanders, being regarded as the *Lamar* or ghost-person of a dead island woman. The ship's naturalist MacGillivray, who found her an invaluable source of information on the islanders' language and culture and on the local fauna and flora, recorded in his journal how kindly his captain treated Barbara during her difficult readjustment to the use of English and to life among her own people.

The *Rattlesnake* then went on to another assignment, the surveying of the coasts of south-eastern New Guinea. It was during this time, 1849-50, that Owen Stanley gave the names to several coastal features, and that his name was given to the central mountain range, a name that became so well-known to Australians during World War II. By this

time he had been made a Fellow of the Royal Society for the quality of his naval surveying work. Sadly, he died soon after the end of this latest piece of work, perhaps from an infection picked up in the tropics. He was only 39 years old.

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## DIVING RABAU

by Bob Scott

Deep-sea salvage dives don't usually encounter Crocodiles. Being somewhat naive of big lizards and not having met any sea monsters as depicted in books of the time, one comes to ignore certain dangers or considers oneself bulletproof.

One time when doing salvage work on wartime vessels in New Guinea waters, my co-diver Shorty and myself came across a long narrow bay called Masawa, west of Rabaul, New Britain. As we entered the bay we could see the remains of multiple wrecks protruding out of the water. These small ships were referred to as 'Sugar Charlies' by allied attacking aircraft. They would be unloading supplies for the beleaguered Japanese garrison in areas where they could be easily camouflaged into the nearby mangroves.

These ships of approximately 800 tons had been plastered with cannon fire and bombs, some even catapulted into the air and end-over-end in these shallow waters. They were of no great value, it was mainly interest that found us skindiving amongst the wreckage trying to work out which part of what ship belonged where. Our interest finally settled on a ship intact against the mangroves, which still had its superstructure above water. Moored alongside this vessel, we dived down to its propeller in somewhat murky water and found it buried with hard coral rubble. As we cleared some of the small boulders away, pushing them off into the deeper water of the bay we were watched with great interest by a giant cod of 3m. length tucked in against the hull. He would inspect our work as we returned to the surface and move away as we descended again. Finally we determined that the propeller was worth recovering and moved our boat closer to the stern in readiness to place an explosive charge against the propeller. This vessel had been placed right up against the mangroves leaving only 5m. between it and the heavy growth.

Into this strip of water a white man paddled a canoe, surprising us that a habitation or plantation was close by. Also surprising was the yelling and abuse that we received as we floated in the water. Demands to get out of the area and questions as to what we were doing there, prevented us answering until finally a yelling session got under way and we told this bloke who we were and what we were doing. This led to more argument as to ownership of the wrecks in the area and rights of entry into the bay. To top it off this very cranky and agitated 'troppo' plantation manager told us that his crocodile friend would get us as he lived close by. With this he departed back up the bay muttering and yelling abuse which left us stunned as to what had come out of nowhere.

We proceeded to fix and prime the explosive charge to the propeller, but now missing was the giant cod. This made us happy - we had found, at other wrecks, that these giants seemed to anticipate a danger and would move from wreck site to wreck site away from potential danger but would visit us again after the charges had been fired. In readiness we moved our vessel from the stern to the bow laying out our shot wire and making sure we were out of direct line of the intended shock wave. As we were about to fire the button, our friend the plantation owner came paddling back towards us and as we braced ourselves for another tirade we got the biggest surprise.

He was smiling, and in a very friendly manner apologised for his previous behaviour and invited us up to lunch at his plantation after we had finished what we were doing. Completely taken aback by his 180 degree turn around we accepted his offer. He



then showed genuine concern for our welfare regarding the resident crocodile that he claimed to know lived at this wreck. He told of how only the last week it had caught one of his valuable head of cattle and dragged it down the bay and into the mangroves where we were now. He had watched it through binoculars from his residence up on a hill more than a mile away and estimated it to be 5 to 6 metres in length. My co-diver Shorty and I looked at each other sideways and thanked him for the information and told him we would be careful and keep a sharp eye out for him. With a final warning he departed. We waited quite some time for him to be well up the bay before firing 10kgs of super velocity explosive. We joked about his behaviour, his change of attitude and most of all his observation of a 6 metre croc from one mile away. Finally we let the charge go. A giant thump shook the ship, rusty flakes flew off the superstructure and we watched a 20-foot crocodile leap out of the water 5 metres away, and do a tail walk through the mangroves till it disappeared. The hair was standing on the back of our necks as the crashing of mangroves continued for what seemed eternity. Shorty and I looked at each other and didn't say a word. We retrieved our shot wire, started the motor and very slowly moved up the bay to be met by our host, and had a lovely lunch.

The propeller is still there under the wreck waiting for someone in the future to pick up and think they've won an easy treasure. I don't think the croc will be back, I know we won't be. Even to find out. The Bastard had been with us all that time.

**About Bob Scott** - Bob first arrived Rabaul in 1964 on an adventure trip to dive the islands of New Guinea and explore the limestone caves of the Central Highlands - and stayed on. Part-time salvage diving grew into a major enterprise where Bob discovered many of the ships and aircraft of WWII that are now part of the tourist industry. Best remembered for knocking patrons off their bar-stools at the famous Cosmo Waterfront Hotel after work each evening with nearby under-water detonations similar to *gurias*, Bob was recruited by the seismologists to hook his firing circuits into the atomic time clocks in Hawaii which resulted in the discovery of a major fault line right across Simpson Harbour. Back in Australia, his diving and explosive skills put Bob in the forefront of underwater construction and offshore oilfield gas saturation diving where he lived at depths of 400 ft for three weeks at a time. Living in Yeppoon he is now semi-retired as ships master, and is an accredited marine surveyor for Queensland Transport.

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## **A 61 YEAR WAIT TO FIND A PLAYMATE** by George Oakes

Up to 1941, I lived at Pinikidu, a Methodist Mission Station on the north coast of New Ireland, with my father, Rev. Dan Oakes, my mother and younger brother, Parker. On a nearby plantation lived Mr and Mrs Chadderton and their daughters, Dawn and Denise. Our mothers were friends and often visited each other, and therefore Denise and I became great playmates. In 1941, Denise was eight years old and I was seven, and you might even say that I almost worshipped her. I certainly looked up to her.

Later in 1941, Mr Chadderton's health deteriorated and Mrs Chadderton became worried about the developing influence of the Japanese so they moved to Sydney to live. Towards the end of the year, my mother, my younger brother Parker and I were evacuated from Kavieng on the *Macdhui*, leaving my father behind. This was the last time we saw him as he was lost on the *Montevideo Maru* when it was sunk on 1 July 1942. On reaching Sydney we lived with my grandparents - I did not see Denise again.

In January 1954 I returned to PNG as a cadet patrol officer and at the end of 1958 married Edna Brawn whose father had been a Methodist missionary. Both Edna and I had been born in New Britain and in 1959 we returned there. Over the next few years we had

three children including a daughter whom we named - Denise! (Later I heard that Denise Chadderton married Ray Mooney in 1961. Ray was with the Dept of Foreign Affairs and they served in various overseas countries.) At Independence we left PNG and settled in Sydney where I worked until I retired in 1992.

Through most of my working life I had little time to try and find out what happened to Denise Chadderton, and often wondered where she was and what she was doing. In 2001 it was decided to have a reunion of PNG evacuees at the ROAPNG Christmas luncheon. In the discussions leading up to this I learnt that Margaret Carrick had been in contact with Moya Carter (nee Chadderton) but that Margaret's computer had crashed and she had lost all her information. So this avenue looked finished.

Edna and I attended the ROAPNG AGM in April 2002 where I had a long talk to Margaret Carrick. After this, unbeknown to me, Margaret went home and searched through her papers. In early May she found Moya Carter's address in Brisbane and rang me. I found Moya's phone number and rang her. She told me, yes, she did have a cousin Denise and that Denise and her husband had retired and were living at Ulladulla NSW. She gave me their address, so I rang them. A woman's voice answered the phone. I asked could I speak to Denise please. The answer was, Denise speaking. I said it was George Oakes. She said, 'Oh, no, George Oakes!' Shortly after she said, 'And how is Parker?' We talked for well over half an hour trying to catch up on 61 years.

The moral of this story - never give up on trying to find lost friends.

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## SNAPSHOTS FROM THE EARLY '50s - from Paul J Quinlivan

### No. 47 - Taking a sample — and a need for praise

It is easy for many kinds of scientists to take a sample which will show precisely what was the current state of affairs at a given moment in the past. But it is seldom that this is possible in human affairs. The Telefomin Massacres are one such occasion and the insights they give us are important because they give an unbiased picture, both of the people of Wewak in general (see No. 52) and of the calibre of those who did the training of police, medical orderlies and interpreters in those earlier times. We have already seen, in No. 33, that Medical Orderly BUNAT of Moin, Sepik, was so well trained that, although he was under heavy fire at the time, he carefully boiled his syringes and followed proper procedures which kept his patients alive for hours beyond the point where, without him, they would have died. In No. 34 our heading was 'Two Policemen Who Showed that They had Been Well Trained' and I suggested, in No. 45, that not even an experienced General could have handled the tragic situation better than Lance Corporal SAUWENI did. It makes one wonder who did the training, in each case, and readers who were personally responsible, or who know that their father or uncle was, should take a bow! And, as I said in No. 45, 'training' includes, to a very marked degree, those who allowed the trained person to blossom because, without nurturing, training of this type withers and dies! There must be many readers who can feel proud for having helped produce that result but, unfortunately, I can name only one. Since that one is Des Clifton-Bassett, late husband of our editor, Marie, I quote this part of my final report to the Crown Law Officer with great pleasure (the first line refers to comments in five-month old issues of the Australian press which, at long last, were beginning to filter through to me and the 'no other place' in para 31 refers to former British, Spanish, Dutch or French colonies):

(28).....Since the view has been expressed that the police detachment there was 'out of control', I would like to express my thoughts regarding them.

(29) I was impressed by the police... I understand that Mr. Clifton-Bassett who opened the station hand-picked them.

(31).....Without casting aspersions, I suggest that in no other place where police roam among a foreign and hostile people under arrogant headmen with whom they could hardly converse and who they had to control, would the catalogue of their misdeeds be three instances of assault only .....

In SUNI's case the same comment applies but there is another level of interest because of the Supreme Court of New Guinea's attitude towards official interpreters.

#### **No. 48 - The unusual position of interpreters**

The mention of 'former British, Spanish, Dutch or French colonies' is an essential and recurring background theme because, as mentioned in No. 8, the first 'business' of my first day in Court in TPNG was devoted to the article on 'Dangerous Rigidity of Colonial Judiciary' in the then current issue of ASOPA's journal *South Pacific*. And to Monte's explanation of how lucky we were that our judges had deliberately changed much of the court's procedures so that the people who packed the courts could see that, although the new procedures were not what they were used to, they had their own peculiar value. In later times those well-intended changes were thrown out and the courts were 'Melbournised' but we should be reminded, from time to time, of how different things might have been if that jettisoning had not taken place. Two of those changes are relevant to our discussion of Telefomin: one is the rule that an experienced Defending Officer must speak with a person committed for trial at the earliest possible time, to get his side of the story, and then defend him at the trial even though, to do so, may tread on his colleagues' toes — which we shall deal with in No. 51 — the other is the attitude to official interpreters which we shall deal with now.

Papua had been a British colony for many years before she was given to Australia so she followed the British tradition of having uniformed officials at every courthouse to do the interpreting. The Supreme Court of New Guinea, on the other hand, had only one interpreter before the war. He was a white man, a Mr. Noel Barry, who interpreted from German to English! In all non-German cases the rule was that anybody and everybody could expect to be hauled in to do their duty as Court Interpreter if they could speak the language of the Accused! The fact that the Highlands were not discovered until close to the war, and that the court only sat in Rabaul (although, in the later years, it also sat, very occasionally, at Wau), helped keep this curious situation alive. After the war it was the Papua judge, Judge Gore, who returned first and he took the court everywhere in New Guinea, mainly to 'show the flag' as new areas were recaptured from the Japanese, but also because that was the system he thought was best. When Monte returned he heartily endorsed this part of Gore's decision but, except for the newly opened Highlands, where uniformed interpreters had come in under the army, it was still a case of grabbing someone who could talk to the Accused, and there were no uniformed interpreters.

When I arrived in January 1952 Monte had adopted a policy of explaining this rule on every conceivable occasion. His method was by getting the interpreter to translate his speech about the Reichstag Fire Trial (which is dealt with in No. 3) and about the commissionaire at the Dorchester (or Savoy) Hotel in London where, although everyone

is technically entitled to go in through the door of the hotel, you will find that your right is worthless unless you get into the uniformed gentleman's personal favour. I do not think that Monte himself thought that Papua New Guineans were more likely than anyone else to top up their official pay by charging people who wanted to see the kiap to lay a complaint. I think it was simply the fact that his generation grew up on stories about how, in the Indian Mutiny, the official interpreters were uniformly disloyal. And we must also remember that, in the late 40s and early 50s the newspapers were full of stories about how disloyal officials brought about the collapse of the Dutch and French empires and that, day after day, our newspapers were telling us that *Maumau* (which involved the same thing) was destroying British Africa. He himself had served in the Emergency Forces during the Melbourne Police Strike and the third of his 'usual lectures' was about how well dressed 'gentlemen' in top hats would come out of their clubs and bash-in shop windows with their expensive canes simply because they knew there was nobody to arrest them! All of which makes SUNI's constant maintenance of the Rule of Law so remarkable!

#### **No. 49 - Suni as the trainer of Telefomin interpreters**

What I am about to quote is actually the passage, in my Letter Recommending Awards and Decorations, headed TINKUKUNIMING, uncle of SINOKSEP, the interpreter trained by SUNI. I do, however, believe that TINKUKUNIMING did what he did because of Suni's teaching that he had discovered that the Rule of Law must be respected at all times -

TINKUKUNIMING, with some of his co-villagers, publicly gave active assistance throughout the entire attack (on Patrol Officer Harris' party) first making stretchers and carrying Harris on his abortive attempt to escape back to the station and then later carrying Harris and Police Constable Kombo to their various places of refuge and shouting warnings as to the nature and direction of the attacks taking place. This assistance was loyally given despite vilification and threats that they would be killed, and at a time when there was not the slightest reason for believing that the Telefomins would not be triumphant and would thus be able to carry out with impunity the threats they made with the obvious intention of later fulfilling.

#### **No. 50 - What Suni taught his wife's parents.**

As mentioned before, the plan to kill all foreigners in the Telefomin area as soon as the signal was given, involved everyone. The concept of someone not obeying simply could not - or should not - have arisen but, in the case of SUNI's wife's parents it did and we must assume that this was because of what SUNI taught them. They were both very old when the killings occurred and, since SUNI was an orphan, it is probable that they were 'people of no account' in an area where status was all-important. Despite these debilitating personal aspects they stepped forward, when the mob was about to hack Policeman MULAI to death - MULAI being the sole survivor of ADO Szarka's party - and, invoking what appears to have been an ancient formula for sanctuary (they grabbed an arrow from the men confronting them, they grabbed a piece of a shrub and, holding both aloft, they broke the arrow and twined the shrub around the two broken halves) they protected MULAI for several days until they got him back to safety. In my Letter Recommending Awards and Decorations I said:

When Police Constable Mulai, exhausted and a hounded outcast, had almost given

up hope of reaching the Telefomin station, BILTEMELIP and her husband TOFIPNOK gave him sanctuary, food, rest and safe conduct to the station through lines of armed hostile warriors and saved Mulai's life. They did this at a time when there was no reason to believe that the Telefomins would not succeed in driving out the foreigners and therefore destroying any hope (they) might have had of future protection.

#### **No. 51 - The incredible problems faced by Syd Smith and Mert Brightwell**

In No. 25, and in many other Snapshots, I named kiaps whose 'notable defences' had been recorded but the only time that I know of, where a kiap had to defend a case before it went to trial, was at Telefomin. I do not mean that defending at the Preliminary Hearing is unimportant: when the mixed-race Philip Guise was charged with attempted murder of a European there was a terrible newspaper campaign of the 'we'll all be massacred in our beds' variety so I had to overcome that hysteria by producing a 'newsworthy defence' at the Prelim., before I could raise the real defence at the trial. What I mean is that the rule envisaged a 'one-on-one' situation, one Accused with a story that had to be listened to and one kiap to listen. This is a great advance on having Learned Counsel coming from Australia but unable to speak to their client but it did not take account of the fact that the Telefomin Preliminary Hearings had been brought on prematurely - for what reason I never discovered - and there were an unknown number of possible Accused persons. Perhaps I can explain it best by quoting this part of my written advice, as Legal Officer-at-Large, to one of the Defending Officers:

(You) asked me whether it would not be limiting the scope of the defence at the actual trial if .....(you advised your clients to do such and such). (i).....

(ii).....

(iii) (you) are dealing with eleven separate Natives ..... But you must realise that there are about 140 other Telefomin area Natives here in Wewak ..... some of whom will later be your clients and they might not understand or appreciate your motives if you thwarted the knowledge-based wishes of these eleven.

Perhaps I should have first explained that each of the Defending Officers (Syd Smith, who joined the Service 11 September 1935 and Mert Brightwell, who joined 9 June 1947 and who is referred to in Nos. 22 and 25 above) was defending a separate group of men and, since the murders occurred in two totally different valley systems, there was no possibility of intermingling. One was defending the sixty to eighty arrested for attacking Patrol Officer Harris' party and the other was defending the 140 arrested for attacking ADO Szarka's party. That makes between 200 and 220 and neither figure includes the 60 or so who were in Wewak gaol having already been convicted and sentenced in regard to the abortive attack on Telefomin station itself and the Baptist Mission. Their difficulties were enormous and it is to their eternal credit that they did so well.

#### **No. 52 -The people of Wewak and their treatment of the Telefomins.**

The Telefomin Massacres were totally unbelievable, both when they occurred and when the perfection of the planning was discovered. They were the greatest massacre in TPNG history as well as being the most dramatic. In other words they were, in their own clear way, Australia's equivalent of the Twin Towers in New York City and the fact that

the Telefomins who were arrested were housed in the Police Transit Quarters at the bottom of Wewak Hill was, again in its own way, our equivalent of Camp X-Ray in Guantanamo Bay. There were, however, a few differences! For instance, we did not have two guards for each prisoner, nor did we have shackles or handcuffs. And there was the fact that, when the Preliminary Hearings were begun, the announced number of Telefomins was given as 83. But the search parties which had been scouring the mountains for the killers were still searching and the total quickly became 200 and kept rising!

Even when I first arrived the total number of Telefomins had already exceeded the number of Australians in Wewak and its environs. And the two communities were in constant contact with each other. I don't mean that individual Telefomins pushed their way through groups of Wewak citizens or that individual Wewak citizens shared hospital accommodation with Telefomin patients. What I am saying is that the two groups, as groups, were constantly in close contact. And there was never an untoward incident! This sounds unbelievable so let me explain! The Crown Law Officer, Wally Watkins, started the Preliminary Hearings - that is, the hearings of evidence, in Open Court, so that the magistrate can decide whether the charge of wilful murder has been sufficiently proved against each prisoner as to require him to commit him for trial before the Supreme Court - on the Monday following my arrival. Why he did this has never been explained but, as I discovered later, it was by direction from Canberra. Since the evidence was dramatic and the courtroom was a pleasant place, open to every breeze that blew - it had been the operating theatre of an Australian army hospital and three of its four walls were flywire - the Wewak public came in and listened. More to the point, the ten or so Telefomins in the dock, and the two or three Telefomins who were to be witnesses that day, were walked up, by two unarmed policemen, from the Transit Police Quarters at the bottom of Wewak hill, where they lived, through the European houses and the town itself. And when the sittings for the day closed they went back down the hill and a batch of between twenty and fifty other Telefomins - all arrested for murder - were walked up, through the town, to the courthouse so that we could conduct interviews to discover witnesses for the next day. And at night a third group came up and we interviewed them and, after a few hours, we sent them back, with their two police escorts, down the hill again. Why we had to do this is one of the great unanswered questions but the point is that, since it is not every day that an ordinary citizen can wander in and listen to a police investigation, people dropped in on these proceedings, also. It is mind-boggling, but it happened.

And there was more. In No. 42 I said that Bishop Arkfeld of the Wewak Catholic Mission and Matron Lynn McAlister of the Wewak Hospital both told me that they were worried at the health danger of holding Telefomin prisoners in a coastal gaol and pilots of other air companies helped to ease the Telefomins' plight by flying in food. When Canberra sent a doctor from outside the Territory Administration to deal exclusively with the Telefomins the people of Wewak were jubilant but their happiness was quickly turned to horror when the doctor started climbing into the rafters of his house and cringing there for hours screaming about the giant spiders! Luckily, Doctor John Gunther arrived in answer to their call, diagnosed the doctor, S.C. Ryall, as a case of advanced DTs and forthwith removed him. The tolerance and humanity of the people of Wewak - especially in view of the fact that it was a time of great tragedy - is something of which we should all be proud.



VALE - With deep regret we record the passing of the following members and friends -

**Mr Lionel Rhys HEALEY OBE** (7 August 2002, aged 81 years)

Rhys grew up in Sydney - as a schoolboy he travelled with the C of E Boys Society to sing in St Pauls Cathedral, and also excelled in sports. While working in his first job he was studying accountancy. He put his age up to join the army and served in Palestine and Syria. In 1943 he transferred to ANGAU and spent the rest of the war years in New Guinea running native hospitals. After discharge he joined the Health Department with responsibility for native hospitals and finally became their accountant. He was eight years in the Sepik District, five years in Chimbu and five years in Goroka. He was then posted to Port Moresby. He then transferred to Education as Asst. Director Administration. After Independence he stayed for a further five years to help train staff working for Treasury. One of these was (Sir) Mekere Morauta, the former Prime Minister. He retired in 1981. That same year he was awarded an OBE. He also received an Independence Medal and was presented with the Gold Kumul medal for his long association with the Scouting movement. He was the second person to receive this medal.

After retiring to Peregrine Beach Rhys decided to become a tax agent but dementia caught up with him, so he and his wife moved to Brisbane. He is survived by his wife Dorothy, children Peter, Sharyn, Syaun and Alastair, 16 grandchildren and two g'grandchildren. From Peter Healey

**A TRIBUTE TO JUDGE DAVID SELBY** written by Bob Blaikie of Mt Gravatt, Qld, after reading David Selby's lengthy and detailed obituary in *The Australian* of Tuesday 8 October.

David Selby was a judge of the Supreme Court of New South Wales and also a judge in divorce. He spent six months as an acting judge of the Supreme Court of Papua New Guinea in 1961-62. During one Supreme Court circuit Judge Selby accompanied by his wife Barbara spent a week with our family at Tari in the Southern Highlands where I was ADO. He describes this week at Tari in some detail in his book *Itambu!*, a copy of which I have on my bookshelf.

Judge Selby said that Australia could be proud of the way in which so many of her officials, from the Administrator downwards, were tackling problems that call for the greatest skill. On the other hand he did not spare the pettiness of certain 'Base wallahs'.

He said that he never ceased to admire the work being done by the Administration officers in the field from the senior District Commissioners who were still mostly pre-war officials to the youngest Cadet Patrol Officers. He goes on to say that there was no mistaking their genuine dedication to an exacting task. He says that it is hard to avoid becoming cynical after years of life in the harsh and grasping cities but it is impossible, after living and working with these men, to fail to recognise that the spirit of real service to a cause is still very much alive.

I am sure that quite a few others remember David Selby with affection and respect.

**Mr William (Bill) LINDSAY** (19 August 2002, aged 76 years)

Bill was born and educated in Dundee Scotland. At 17 he joined the British Army and served in Germany as a member of the Occupation Forces. After discharge he worked in the drapery trade in Dundee.

In 1952 he was recruited by Burns Philp in Glasgow and travelled to Sydney by ship. In Sydney he was signed up to join the staff of Burns Philp in Rabaul. He was a relieving manager for many years and spent a long time in Kavieng, also Lae, Madang and Goroka. Bill married May in Sydney in 1958 and they lived in Lae until they were transferred to Rabaul in 1960, where their two children were born. Bill was Drapery Manager in Rabaul until he and May retired to Takapuna, NZ, in 1978.

Bill died at Takapuna after a short illness and is survived by his wife May, their daughter Alison (Hong Kong) and son Angus (South Johnstone, Qld)

From May Lindsay

**Mr Lothar SADLO** (3 September 2002, aged 54 years)

Lothar Sadlo was a kiap, and later a clerk in Sydney and Canberra. He is survived by his wife Tricia, and children Tyson and Kynan. No further details available.

**Mr Brian William WRIGLEY** (6 August 2002, aged 69 years)

Brian was a contract surveyor with PWD in the Southern Highlands in the early 60s. He was in Kundiawa in 1970. Later he and his wife Muriel ran a travel agency on Bribe Island before they moved to Caboolture Qld. Muriel predeceased him. He is survived by his sons Simon, Phillip and Owen.

From Godfrey Grubb

**Professor Timothy George CALVERT AM** (13 August 2002, aged 69 years)

Professor Calvert discovered *pikbel* (enteritis necroticans) in the Highlands. He is survived by his wife Patricia, children and grandchildren. No further details available.

**WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:**

MR. G. BALL	65 BORONGA AVE.	WEST PYMBLE	NSW 2073
MR. H. BERG	63 PANDANUS ST.	FISHER	ACT 2611
MRS. M. BOOKER	52 BIRRA ST.	WEST CHERMSIDE	QLD 4032
MR. I. CAMERON	2 PALTARA COURT	ELTHAM	VIC 3095
MR. S. CARSWELL	25 MAZLIN ST.	EDGE HILL CAIRNS	QLD 4870
MR. G. EDWARDS	3 NICHOLAS DRIVE	KINGSTON BEACH	TAS 7050
MR. B. GREANEY	360 BALWYN RD.	NORTH BALWYN	VIC 3167
MRS. D. HEALEY	267 VERNEY RD.	GRACEVILLE	QLD4075
PASTOR I. KLEINIG	7 SOMMER PLACE	PASADENA	SA 5042
MR. D. KREIS	169 RAEBURN ST	MANLY	QLD 4179
M/S E.C. MACILWAIN	23/511 HENLEY BEACH RD.	FULHAM	SA 5024
MR. R. MILLER	48 DELANGE RD.	PUTNEY	NSW 2112
PASTOR K. NAGEL	7 SOMMER PLACE	PASADENA	SA 5042
MR. R. NEHMY	53 COMPSTON PLACE	MACGREGOR	ACT 2615
MRS. E. NIBBS	622 MT. COTTON RD.	SHELDON	QLD 4157
MRS. D. NICHOLS	U45 EDENLEA RET. VILLAGE	BUDERIM	QLD 4556
MR. K. PARKER	90 BALOOK ST.	LAUDERDALE	TAS 7021
MR. B. ROBINSON	37 CURBAN ST.	BALGOWLAH HEIGHTS	NSW 2093
MRS. C. ROBINSON	1/26 DEVINEY ST	MORNINGSIDE	QLD 4170
MR. C. SAVAGE	P O BOX 138 KAVIENG	NEW IRELAND	PNG
MRS. R. SHIRER	1/5 CLARE ST.	BLACKBURN	VIC 3130
MR. J. TRAINOR	64 RICHARD FARRELL AVE.	REMUERA AUCKLAND	NZ

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