

KPNG KINDU

June 2023

PAPUA NEW GUINEA ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

The discovery of the Montevideo Maru closes a terrible chapter in Australian military and maritime history. Families waited years for news of their missing loved ones, before learning of the tragic outcome of the sinking. Today, by finding the vessel, we hope to bring closure to the many families devastated by this terrible disaster.

John Mullen, Silentworld Foundation





27



47



50



47



44

PAPUA NEW GUINEA ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA Inc.

(Formally constituted in 1951—incorporated in 1996)

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



2023–2024 PNGAA Office Bearers

PRESIDENT: Chris Pearsall—(Mob) 0410 530 502;
(Email) president@pngaa.net / cpearsall51@live.com

SECRETARY & EVENTS CO-ORDINATOR: Vacant—volunteers needed

TREASURER: Murrrough Benson—(Mob) 0448 216 049; (Email) treasurer@pngaa.net

MEMBERSHIP OFFICER: Roy Ranney—(Mob) 0412 556 593; (Email) membership@pngaa.net

PNGAA ARCHIVIST & COLLECTIONS: Cheryl Marvell at (Mob) 0438 635 132;
(Email) collection@pngaa.net

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:

Phil Ainsworth, John Egerton, Steven Gagau, Jaap Van Der Kamp, Chris Warrillow, Andrea Williams
& Max Uechtritz (Immediate Past President)

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

Andrea Williams—(Mob) 0409 031 889; (Email) admin@montevideo-maru.org

PNGAA Membership: www.membership@pngaa.net—This is available to anyone with an interest in PNG. Members, who receive four issues of our journal per year, have access to all parts of the website, and are encouraged to explore and become actively involved with all aspects of the PNGAA. Please refer to the *Treasurer's Corner Membership & Order Form*, at the back of this journal, for more details. Application forms also are available from the Membership Officer or our website. For members receiving a printed journal, the address label shows the current status of your membership. Digital members can check their status by logging on to the website and clicking on *Membership* then *My Subscription*. Username is your email address. A list of the names and addresses of PNGAA members is now available on our website. Please go to: <https://pngaa.org/membership-directories/>

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

PNGAA Social Media: FACEBOOK—<https://www.facebook.com/groups/PNGAA>

INSTAGRAM—https://www.instagram.com/png_association_of_australia/

TWITTER—https://twitter.com/PNG_ASSOC_AUS

LINKEDIN—<https://www.linkedin.com/company/papua-new-guinea-association-of-australia/>

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

ISSN 2652-5208, PPA 224987/00025 • JUNE 2023 • Vol. 4, No. 14

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

◀ Deadline for the September 2023 issue: 7 AUGUST 2023 ▶

(Estimated delivery 20 September 2023—please allow for unforeseen delays, etc.)

JOURNAL EDITOR: John Egerton—(Mob) 0400 311 320

Please send all contributions to: editor@pngaa.net

Designed & produced by Jeannette Gilligan—dragonwick1@outlook.com

Reviewed by Murrrough Benson & Andrea Williams

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

Contributions may be edited for length and the views expressed are not necessarily those of the editor or the PNGAA, and if not received by the Copy Deadline may not be guaranteed inclusion in the coming issue. Guidelines for contributors are available on page 10 of this issue and on the website, www.pngaa.org

© Papua New Guinea Association of Australia Inc. & Individual Contributors

PNG KUNDU is published four times a year for the information of members of the PNGAA. All rights are reserved, and no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the prior permission of the publishers. It is written with care, in good faith and from sources believed to be accurate, and every effort is made to publish free of factual and typographical errors. However, readers should not act, or refrain from acting solely on the basis of information in the journal about financial, taxation or any other matter. Having regard for their own particular circumstances, readers should consult the relevant authorities or other advisers with expertise in the particular field. Neither the PNGAA nor the editor accepts any responsibility for actions taken by readers. Please note that some of the photographs have been digitally coloured whilst maintaining historical accuracy, and all enquiries should be made to the publishers. Acknowledgement and thanks are given to all contributors, creators of images and information used in the public domain and under non-profit and fair-use guidelines, and to the various sources referenced in this publication.



40



54



31



Features

Lest We Forget—*Montevideo Maru Tribute* 18
Caitlin Nash

Finding Montevideo Maru 19
PNGAA Special Feature

The Evacuation of the Sepik: JA Thurston's
Expedition April to September 1942 27
Elizabeth Thurston—Part 2

Bundi—Before, During & After 31
European Contact
G Desmond Pike

Rotary Sponsored Me in Papua New Guinea 35
Suellen Holland

CSIRO in the Southern Highlands, 1961 37
Ken Granger—Part 1

Soldiers of PNG Fought Many Battles 40
Gregory J Ivey—Part II

Life at Daru in the Fifties 44
Ken McKinnon AO—Part 2

Life and Times at Sighere T School 1969–70 47
Diana Plowman

Distinguished Service Award to 50
Rev. Neville Threlfall
Steven Gagau

Unsavoury Plantation Owner Perishes 51
on *Montevideo Maru*
Michael White

How I Ended Up at Brandi High School 54
Ian Willis

A Nurse's Memories of Her Time in TPNG 57
Ruth Pitt—Part 2

Anzac Day 2023 Commemorated in PNG IBC
Papua New Guinea Honours King Charles III
and Queen Camilla BC

Contents

FRONT COVER—JUNE 2023

*The Montevideo Maru Discovery Expedition 2023
team aboard the search vessel, Fugro Equator*

PNGAA REPORT 2

EVENTS DIARY 5

LETTERS & MEMORIES 8

BOOKS & ART REVIEWS 11

PNG IN THE NEWS 14

VALES & TRIBUTES 60

TREASURER'S CORNER 63
Membership & Order Form



Members of the Management Committee network on your behalf, organising and attending a wide range of events and activities, encouraging new members and possible partnerships to keep our association vital and viable. Featured here are reports from the committee, along with other news of interest and a welcome to new members.

From the President

The Annual General Meeting of the PNGAA was held on Saturday 29 April at the Hornsby RSL Club. Unfortunately, numbers were a bit down again but, overall, the meeting was constructive. In the absence of a guest speaker, it was decided to have a collective discussion on the topic of PNGAA membership and members had the opportunity of discussing the issue of the declining membership numbers.

Our Membership Officer, Roy Ranney, presented some slightly disturbing data on the decline in membership over the last few years and a discussion ensued, resulting in several suggestions which will be considered by the Committee. Many thanks to Roy for compiling the statistics and leading the discussion.

Middle Harbour Draft Management Plan

We were also pleased to have our member, Paul Munro, brief the meeting on the latest activity regarding the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust. As you may be aware, the latest iteration of

the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust which has responsibility for the various lands and facilities adjoining Sydney Harbour, recently commissioned a draft management plan for various properties, including the site of the former Australian School of Pacific Administration (ASOPA).

After publication of the draft management plan for the Middle Head site, various members of the PNGAA were bewildered to find that the PNGAA was not consulted prior to the draft management plan being released, despite the PNGAA having made submissions to the Harbour Trust on the last two or three times a 'draft management plan' was discussed or released. The Harbour Trust has opened the matter for discussion and invited the public to make submissions on the matter before it is finalised.

Fortunately, Paul took up the cudgels on behalf of the PNGAA and prepared a detailed submission, ably assisted by our members, Ross Johnson and Robin Mead.



ASOPA buildings, Middle Head



Positions Vacant

• PNGAA SECRETARY •

This is an important role, for someone with computer skills, who could assist with committee meetings and field other enquiries.

• EVENTS CO-ORDINATOR •

The PNGAA need an enthusiastic organiser who is happy to manage events and liaise with co-ordinators in other states. It helps to have computer skills to advertise events on our social media, but training is available.

For more information, please contact Chris Pearsall, President, on email cpearsall51@live.com or mobile 0410 530 502

Search for the Montevideo Maru

The PNGAA is delighted to welcome home Andrea Williams and Max Uechtritz back after their participation in the search for the *Montevideo Maru*. The discovery of this ship concluded one of Australia's biggest maritime mysteries and, hopefully, brought closure and peace to the friends and relatives of those who perished in that awful event.

PNGAA Scholarship Fund

On a final note, our PNGAA Scholarship fund is now up and running with six students at the Anguganak High School in PNG's West Sepik Province benefitting from the scholarship. We will be providing further information on the progress of the students in future editions of *PNG KUNDU*.

Welcome to New Members

Listed below are our new members. We extend a warm welcome to all and ask all members, new and old, to help PNGAA achieve its objectives. Geoff Byrne, Ross Clifton, Don Dunstan, Alvina Eager, Rodney Harrington, Sue Jellis, Geoff Keating, Stephen Lenehan, Malcolm Mill, Mary O'Hello, Judith Palframan and John Rudd.

CHRIS PEARSALL
President PNGAA



Editorial

JOHN EGERTON

On the evening 24 April I was startled to see, on *SBS News*, a story about the finding of the *Montevideo Maru*. Included in the story was a picture that included PNGAA's Andrea Williams. Half an hour later there was a similar story on the *ABC News*. The next day the metropolitan dailies in Sydney and Melbourne had their own versions of the press release from the Silentworld Foundation, the not-for-profit organisation, which helped fund the search for the ship.

These newspaper stories had interviews with relatives of victims of the disaster which befell passengers on the Japanese vessel. There were quotes from Kim Beazley, Peter Garrett and Liz Thurston. There were also quotes from the Prime Minister and from the Chief of the Australian Army offering

condolences to families of the victims and thanking the team responsible for the search for, and discovery of, the wreck.

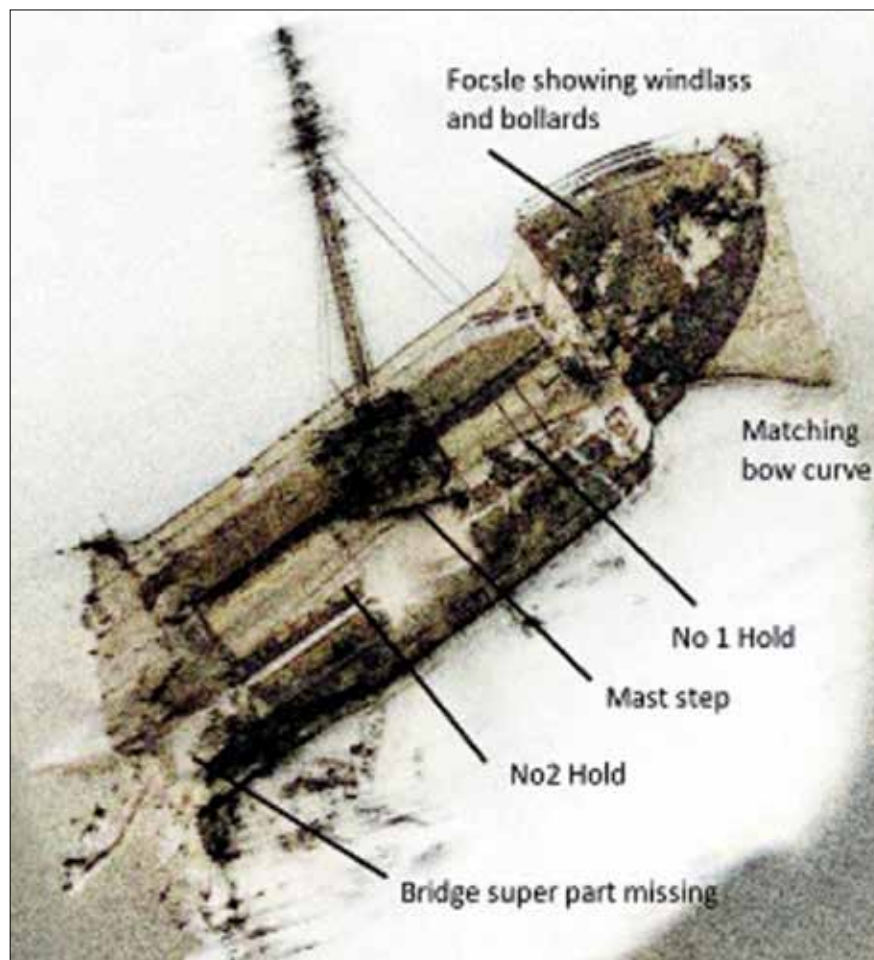
In a follow-up story in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 25 April written by Peter FitzSimons, Max Uechtritz, also on the research vessel, was quoted as saying that, among his many experiences of world events, 'nothing was as emotional as this. There was jubilation but we all thought of the families of the lost men ...'

The ABC's 7.30 Report also had a substantial segment on the *Montevideo Maru* disaster and its discovery on 22 April. This included vision of Andrea laying a wreath at the site and statements from her about the significance of the discovery.

The extensive coverage of this story by the Australian press is not surprising but I admit to some amazement at the extent



Commodore Tim Brown (Retd), Andrea Williams and John Mullen on the search vessel, *Fugro Equator*



Scan of the Montevideo Maru shipwreck (Silentworld Foundation)

in which it was reported internationally. Both the BBC and CNN had articles by 25 April again based on the Silentworld press release. Both noted that the lives lost on the *Montevideo Maru* was Australia's greatest maritime disaster.

The *Offshore Energy* website also published an article, and similar stories were printed in the *South China Morning Post* and *Japan Times*.

Some websites for the stories mentioned follow:

• <https://silentworldfoundation.org.au/aus-media-release/>

- <https://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/wreck-of-ship-carrying-almost-1000-australians-found-after-80-years/zqhj6wxs5>
- <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-04-24/new-images-from-the-montevideo-maru-shipwreck-car-truck-seabed/102261198>
- <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-australia-65356496>
- <https://www.offshore-energy.biz/terrible-maritime-chapter-closes-as-fugro-locates-80-year-old-ww2-shipwreck/>
- <https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/measure-of-comfort-wreckage-from-australia-s-worst-maritime-disaster-found-20230422-p5d2h9.html>
- <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/04/21/asia/montevideo-maru-found-south-china-sea-intl-hnk/index.html>
- <https://www.scmp.com/news/asia/australasia/article/3217964/>



japanese-ship-montevideo-maru-sank-979-australians-found-south-china-sea-after-81-years
• <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/tag/montevideo-maru/>

Finding Montevideo Maru

To celebrate the momentous discovery of the wreck of the *Montevideo Maru* after 81 years, in this issue we have published a special feature, and this will also be available from our website as an ebook on:

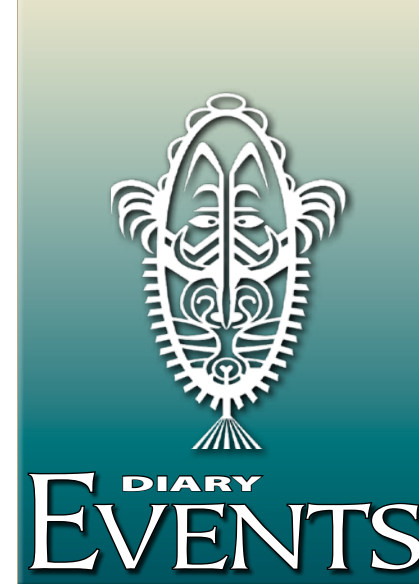
www.pngaa.org/e-books/

Lest We Forget

Also included in this issue on page 18 is a tribute to those who perished on the *Montevideo Maru*. It is a copy of a speech sent to us by Denis Green, who was born in Rabaul in 1935 and lived there until repatriated in late 1941 with his mother, aunt and younger brother. The speech, about the sinking of the ship and the fate of her great-grandfather, Eric Clive Green, was given by Denis' granddaughter, Caitlin Nash, at the Regional Northern Rivers RSL Junior Public Speaking Competition in Lismore in 2009 when she was fourteen years old. (Ed.)



Rabaul & Montevideo Maru Memorial, AWM, Canberra



Reviews of events and reunions held throughout Australia and Papua New Guinea, and a listing of upcoming functions, events of interest and social gatherings for PNGAA members.

If you and your friends have an activity to advertise or promote, or have been 'out & about' recently, please send your details, reviews and photographs to editor@pngaa.net by 7 August 2023, the Copy Deadline for the next issue. Events are also listed on our website, under **Resources>Events**.

❖ MELBOURNE PNGAA Meeting and Get-Together

Saturday, 22 July 2023

Time: 12 noon to 3 pm

Venue: East Malvern RSL, Stanley Grose Drive, Malvern East

Cost: \$34pp—drinks can be purchased at the bar on the day.

Dress: Smart casual.

Parking: Ample parking is available at the venue.

Booking: Please use the following link to book and purchase your tickets: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/pngaa-melbourne-get-together-tickets-631160206167>

Please book early as we need to arrange appropriate catering, and also advise us if you have any special dietary requirements (we may be able to assist with most special dietary issues)—if this applies please email either Peter Ryan at enquiries@wildtrektours.com.au or events@pngaa.net and refer to the meeting on 22 July 2023.

Program: 2-course lunch provided. Meet and greet with special guest speaker, Andrea Williams, Chair and founding member of the Rabaul & Montevideo Maru Group, and a member of the Management Committee of the Papua New Guinea Association of Australia.

Andrea's early years were spent on Langu plantation in the Witu Islands and the family lived in Rabaul until 1985. It was from the Witus that the *Lakatoi* escaped to Cairns and safety

in late March 1942 with 214 soldiers and civilians. Her family connection with PNG spanned four generations.

Andrea was an integral part of the advisory and fundraising team which achieved the Rabaul & Montevideo Maru Memorial located at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra in 2012.

Now, the resting place of the *Montevideo Maru* has been discovered 81 years after its final voyage. (Please see our special feature 'Finding Montevideo Maru'.)

The search was led by non-for-profit Silentworld Foundation, deep sea specialists Fugro, and supported by Defence, with our own Andrea Williams and Max Uechtritz on board—a very moving moment in time for Andrea and Max, and for all Australian families with a connection to those on board this vessel in 1942.

Last Post Service Canberra

On 1 July 2023 the Australian War Memorial in Canberra will be remembering the *Montevideo Maru* at its Last Post Service commencing 4.40 pm. Additionally, a lunch is being planned prior at Pavilion on Northbourne, Canberra.

More information from events@pngaa.net, PNGAA website and Facebook





Andrea Williams & Max Uechtritz on the discovery vessel, *Fugro Equator*

Andrea has quite a story to tell and we are all eager to share her incredible journey and experience. You simply cannot miss this opportunity to hear her account of this piece of history.

This is another chance to get together and mix and mingle with fellow PNGAA and R&MVM members, meet new members, and renew old acquaintances.

❖ **BRISBANE** **Montevideo Maru** **Memorial Service** **Saturday, 1 July 2023**

Time: 10 am

Venue: Brisbane Cenotaph (underneath, adjacent to the pedestrian tunnel to the rail station), followed by morning tea. All are welcome to attend.



Final Resting of the PNGVR Colours, Canberra, 1974

Anniversary Luncheon to Acknowledge the Disbandment of the PNGVR

Saturday, 21 October 2023

Time: The luncheon will be held after the AGM.

Venue: Everyman's Hut, 907 Boundary Road, Wacol
The Papua New Guinea Volunteer Rifles (PNGVR) was formed in 1951 and during its time in PNG had depots at Port Moresby, Rabaul, Lae, Goroka, Madang, Wewak, Mt Hagen, Banz, Kainantu, Samarai and Wau.

❖ **GOLD COAST** **Gold Coast PNG Club 50th Anniversary Charity Race Day & Luncheon**

Saturday, 24 June 2023

Time: 11.30 am–5.00 pm

Venue: Gold Coast Turf Club, Racecourse Drive, Bundall

Cost: \$150.00

RSVP: Before Friday 9 June 2023

Tickets must be bought online via the website:

<https://events.humanitix.com/gold-coast-png-50th-anniversary-charity-race-day>

Contact: Julie Webb, 0419 708 808, juliew@webbpacific.com.au

Transport/ Parking: Plenty of onsite parking.

Special Notes: A guest speaker, Highland dancers, auctions, raffle prizes.

Independence Day Luncheon **Sunday, 17 September 2023**

Time: 12.00 noon–2.30 pm

Venue: Southport Golf Club

Cost: \$47.00

RSVP: Monday 11 Sept. 2023

Contact: Iava Parapa-Falvey, 0416 820 680, iparapafalvey@yahoo.com

Transport/ Parking: Onsite parking

Christmas Luncheon **Sunday, 26 November 2023**

Time: 12:00 noon–2.30 pm

Venue: Southport Golf Club

Cost: To be advised

RSVP: Monday 20 Nov. 2023

Contact: Iava Parapa-Falvey, 0416 820 680, iparapafalvey@yahoo.com

Transport/Parking: Onsite Parking available.

❖ **CAIRNS** **April 2023 Meeting of Members & Friends**

On Wednesday 26 April a group of ex-PNG residents gathered for lunch at the Cairns Colonial Club.

Chris Warrillow was visiting from Melbourne so attending were Chris Makin, Chris Warrillow, John Fenske (ex-ANG), Lyall Forde, Paul Van Staveren, Geoff Hartnett (ex-Talair), Warren Bartlett and Ashley Miller and his friend Mary. Apologies from Arch MacArthur, Bob Welsh, Laurie Bragge, Marie Van Staveren, Martin Kerr and Anna Chu.

A long-term lunch stalwart missing from the lunch was Steve Cutlack who is having health issues. Steve and his wife Gray are now both in Regis Care Redlynch. Chris Warrillow will be back in Cairns in mid-July and we will have another lunch at the same venue at midday on Wednesday 26 July.

DERYCK THOMPSON

Anzac Day Marches 2023

On 25 April 2023, the sun shone on Anzac Day in Sydney and Brisbane. The Papuan and New Guinea Infantry Battalions were represented amongst the Second World War units marching in Sydney, Brisbane and Perth.

In Sydney, former PIR servicemen and descendants were led by 102-year-old John 'Jock' Wilkinson who managed to march some of the route before retiring to a wheelchair, pushed by his daughter Susie Rowe. Following the march, this contingent had a reunion lunch with family members at the Castlereagh Club in the city.

Before their march, the Brisbane contingent held their annual Wreath Laying Ceremony led this year by Major-General Jerry Singirok, Commander of the PNG Defence Force from 1995 to 1997 and from 1998 to 1999. Wreaths were laid by representatives of the PIB-PIR Association, the 2nd/14th Battalion Association, and the 39th Battalion Association followed by former residents of PNG and the general public. This ceremony is held in Brisbane's Anzac Square at the South-West Pacific Memorial where the number of wreaths laid by former servicemen, schools, and the public increases each year.

RUSSELL WADE,
PIB-NGIB-HQ-PIR ASSOC.



1. (left to right) Mark Fletcher, Russell Wade, Wayne Bensley, Jock Wilkinson, Peter Porteous & John Morris, with banner holders Michael Porteous & Anton Bassett before the Sydney March (Photo courtesy of Peter Porteous); 2. Wreaths at Anzac Square, Brisbane; 3. NGVR/PNGVR March, Brisbane

Featuring commentaries about previously published articles and news items, along with opinions of interest and memories.

Also included are enquiries from those who require assistance with their research or finding someone from the past.

Please send your contributions by 7 August 2023, the Copy Deadline for the next issue, to editor@pngaa.net

Teaching at Rabaul Sixty Years Ago

This week marks the 60th anniversary of the start of my teaching career in PNG. My first school was Malabunga High School, a one- to two-hour drive from Rabaul, depending on the condition of the roads. During the four years in the Gazelle, I tried to get into Rabaul nearly every weekend—mostly for sport but also for social activities.

I competed in rugby league for Comworks, 1963; athletics for Malabunga 1963–66; basketball for Malabunga 1964–66, baseball for Malabunga 1964–65 and AFL for Ulapia in 1965. At the end of 1966, I was selected as an athlete to compete in the South Pacific Games in Noumea, New Caledonia.

In 1966 I also taught at Kerevat Senior High School for three months and Rabaul High School for about one month.



TOP: The house at Malabunga; BELOW: Malabunga athletics team, 1963

In those days Rabaul was a beautiful town.

DAVID KEATING

Sepik Figure in Canada—Information Please

The Manitoba Museum in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada requires assistance in getting information about a dramatic, full-sized carved wooden figure in its collection. The figure was collected by Donald and Jane Paterson while on tour in Papua New Guinea in the late 1970s from a German trader in the Sepik River area.

The carving, identified by the donor as an 'ancestral' figure in style was fashioned from wood, pigments, shells, leaves, hemp and cassowary feathers. Any information on this type of ethnographic 'tourist art' and the maker would be greatly appreciated.

The donors of this figure were residents of Winnipeg and had a unique history of their own. Jane Paterson became one of the first female pilots in Manitoba and travelled with her husband to various areas of the world.

Donald worked for his family's



Carved wooden figure, late 1970s—175 cm height, 31 cm width. Catalogue No. H4-0-981

grain business, Paterson Grain, for sixty-six years. An avid pilot, Donald enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1940 and served overseas as a flight-lieutenant piloting Lancasters. He completed 29 missions and received several awards including the Distinguished Flying Cross.

The couple enjoyed travelling and Donald had a reputation for 'a traveller who had seen the world from Pole to Pole, whether by plane to the North Pole or by the first civilian expedition to the South Pole'. In addition to piloting himself across Africa in the 1950s, trips were made to Easter Island, the Galapagos and other areas such as PNG.

KATHERINE PETTIPAS

Curator Emeritus, the Manitoba Museum at kpettipas@mymts.net

Taim Bilong Kiap

It is not often mentioned that we *kiaps* were also in charge of the prisons and their warders.

As well as being the police officer in charge of our station (town) we were also the magistrate who sentenced any wrong-doers we had arrested, and if we sent them to jail we were then in charge of them whilst they served out their terms of imprisonment.

On the very rare occasions that a prisoner escaped on my watch, I usually went down to the *kalabus* (gaol), deputised the remaining prisoners and sent them off to recapture the escapee(s) and return them to the gaol.

Never failed! I never punished the escapee—rather, I would share a smoko with him and have a heart-to-heart chat. When he had finished his prison term I would have him to tea and scones in the *haus wind* in my garden. I always gave them a going-home pack of useful tools from government stores, with some tobacco and *laplaps*.

Seriously, it was wonderful to be part of *taim bilong kiap*.

TONY BUNTING

Information Wanted

Recently I saw the medallion in the photos below on eBay and purchased it out of curiosity. The vendor had no connection with PNG and was unable to provide any provenance. I would



like to know more about its history. The use of 'Papua' and 'New Guinea' and the inclusion of Samarai indicates that it was probably produced in the mid-1960s. If anyone has any information about this medal, please contact me.

DERYCK THOMPSON
dandy51@bigpond.net.au

Fire at Samarai

Some 70 years ago I was employed by Burns Philp (BP) at their store in Samarai. As part of my duties, I was responsible for the Shell Depot which, apart from supplying fuel for plantations and outstations, also provided fuel for Qantas aircraft which, at the time, involved Sandringhams and Catalinas.

As a result, the 'My Catalina Story' in the 'Letters & Memories' of the March 2023 edition of *PNG KUNDU*, caught my attention as did the name Bert Clausen. My story involves an incident in Samarai which involved Bert.

From memory the year was 1953/4 and the time was approximately 11 or 12 at night. As a single person I was housed in the BP Batch. Following a PNGVR parade we were relaxing when we noticed a fire down near the swimming pool.

Deciding to investigate, we discovered that there was a fire emanating from a store shed used for Works Department equipment under the control of Bert Clausen.

The alarm was raised and not long after the fire brigade arrived

under the control of Frank Hoeter, Police Inspector, along with his policemen who were inducted as firemen.

Fire fighting equipment was limited but, fortunately, either the *Soochow* or *Shansi* had arrived the day before and discharged a mobile pumping unit for fire fighting purposes.

This was eagerly brought into action with a hose connected to the nearest tank of water. Unfortunately, the tank was quickly emptied and a decision was made to draw sea water from the swimming pool area. Having secured the water supply, it was now the problem of attacking the fire.

Of course, all this activity created great excitement with much shouting. The most vocal was our Fire Chief Hoeter in his efforts to direct the hose whilst having to move his line of firemen clinging to the hose. His expletives berating his firemen

could clearly be heard by Rev. & Mrs Grant who were staying in the Methodist Transit House directly opposite the inferno.

Despite the lateness of the hour, Mick Healy, our District Commissioner arrived, complete with hat and walking cane, to inspect the damage.

It was reported the next day that not only were some Government stores affected and lost, but also a recently acquired and uninsured outboard motor belonging to Bert Clausen was listed as a casualty.

RALPH ALLAN

Paspas

The latest issue of *PNG KUNDU* arrived! Thank you so much for the wonderful presentation of the story of the Queen's visit to Goroka. My late husband wrote several more stories like this one, perhaps from time to time they too could be published in *Kundu*?

In the section 'Letters & Memories', there is a letter by



Donald Lawie, *Paspas bilong Buka*. He mentions that several years ago his daughter bought three woven armbands (brown and yellow) at the Queensland Art Gallery but he is not sure of their provenance. I bought the armband pictured above around 2010 in the Queensland Art Gallery shop after I saw information that the armband was made in West Papua (actually, this was the reason I bought it!).

In Brisbane there is a strong supporter of West Papua, I think it was in 2017 that in the city centre I saw a demonstration in support of West Papua independence. Perhaps the same person would supply those armbands to the Art Gallery shop?

MARIA FRIEND

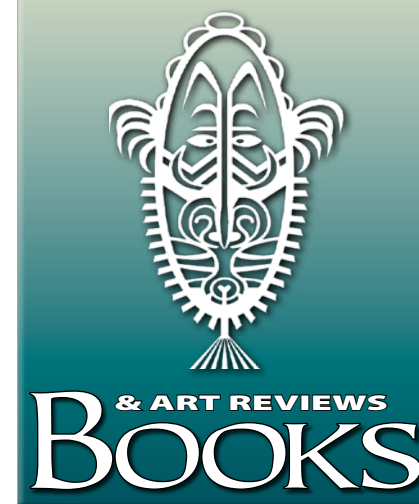


Guidelines for Contributors to PNG KUNDU

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

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

All contributions should be submitted to the editor, John Egerton, at editor@pngaa.net by the Copy Deadline stated on the masthead page of each issue. However, if not received by the deadline, they cannot be guaranteed inclusion in the forthcoming issue.



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

Please send your articles and photos for the next issue by the Copy Deadline, 7 August 2023, to editor@pngaa.net

Fr FRANZ MILTRUP SM ***When the Garamuts Beat***

Father Miltrup SM, who died in 1989, was a German national and a Marist priest who lived in Bougainville from early 1938 to 1986, mostly in remote south Bougainville. After arriving on the island in January 1938, Franz Miltrup soon learnt to speak *Telei*, the Buin language, fluently, as well as *Tok Pisin*.

Fr Miltrup's memoir deals with his adjustments to the Australian colonial administration and his role as a parish priest. Franz Miltrup's life was fully immersed in his parishioners, their culture and faith, and he wrote of his observations of their daily life in the villages, and the changes that colonisation brought.

The Second World War led to catastrophic change and hardship for the Bougainville people. Missionaries like Miltrup, who chose to stay behind after nearly all white civilians fled or were ordered to evacuate, experienced the same hardships. Twice he narrowly avoided execution by Japanese forces.



Fr Franz Miltrup SM

The memoir also deals with the tumultuous changes that affected Bougainvillean society after the war and post-independence. As subsequent generations loosened long-held ties with village traditions, Bougainvilleans were coming to terms with what self-determination meant and how it could be achieved.

Fr Harry Moore SM, who knew Franz Miltrup, translated the *Tok Pisin* memoir into English and approached Christine Leonard (née Wall), who grew up in Bougainville, to edit the story and put it into a book. Fr Franz Miltrup was a humble priest committed to the spiritual welfare of everyone around him.

You can read more about the book on <https://www.leonardstories.com>

Published by Christine Leonard, 2023

ISBN: 978 0 6453256 2 1
Available from Christine Leonard at (mob) 0422 002 667 or (email) leonardstories01@gmail.com or at this website: www.leonardstories.com
Cost: A\$28 plus postage in Australia \$10. A small pre-paid Australia Post satchel can fit up to two books, in which case only one postage fee applies.

When the garamuts beat ... the people come

So, it was on a steamy tropical night in Brisbane, 18 March 2023, when more than forty people came to the 'sound of the drums' for the launch of the memoir by Fr Franz Miltrup SM, *When The Garamuts*

Beat: a memoir of fifty years on Bougainville.

These five decades cover the catastrophic hardships of the Second World War, the closing years of Australian colonisation, and the ensuing years of the island's internal turmoil—all in the context of a man's faith and his commitment to the island and its people. But this story is more wide-reaching than one man's tale and its long-awaited launch. As Fr Harry Moore said, 'You all have a story and they are too valuable and unique to lose just because we haven't written them down. Miltrup is the inspiration for us to start.' He charged everyone present to capture their story for their families and friends, for prosperity and, ultimately, for the benefit of the Bougainville people.

There could not have been a more relevant venue for this event than the Brisbane home of Rudi and Pat Dreyer with its familiar tropical garden setting, high humidity, and traditional food (thanks to Veronica Kirin Henderson, Brisbane



Christine Leonard and Fr Harry Moore

Bougainville Community Group) serving as reminders of the island we have all called home at some time.

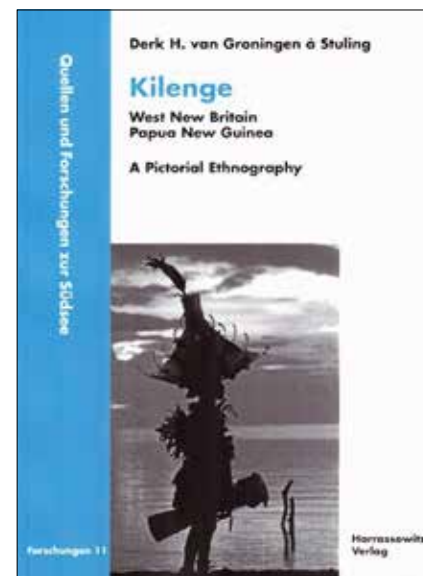
This memoir represents not only the supreme personal effort by Fr Miltrup as he was sick and aging in far-off Germany, but the determination and deep knowledge of language held by Fr Moore to faithfully translate the 200-plus pages of typed *Tok Pisin* into English. It is also a tribute to the skills of Christine Leonard who edited these pages and completed this historical record. Christine adds other names in her acknowledgement of the team that persisted to bring to light this story of 'commitment and love for the people with whom he chose to spend his life'.

I commend this read to you. All monies go towards recovering the costs of this self-published book

BELINDA MACARTNEY

DERK H VAN GRONINGEN À STULING
Kilenge—West New Britain
Papua New Guinea—
A Pictorial Ethnography

In 1977–78, shortly after Papua New Guinea had achieved its political independence, Derk van Groningen was living among the Kilenge people on the north-west coast of the island of New Britain. Originally, his ethnographic field research centred on the circular migration pattern in the Kilenge area. Being permitted to take photographs



of their daily activities, his focus became much broader.

The author's work presents a photographic documentation of many aspects of Kilenge life during the transition period from colonial rule to self-determination and governance. His original observations and photographs are published in this book for the first time.

Dutch anthropologists and ethnographers played a major part in studying the culture and people of New Guinea. This research began in the then colony of Dutch New Guinea where government anthropologists, doctors and missionaries observed and recorded their experiences.

Later the interests of the Dutch expanded to include work in the eastern part of the island i.e., into Papua New Guinea. The work described in this book is an example of that expanded interest—an examination of the life and times of a society almost remote from the changes being wrought by Independence.

Derk van Groningen conducted the research as a student of Professor Adrianus Gerbands of the Leiden University in the Netherlands. While working in New Britain he was guided by Professor Sheldon Weeks of the University of Papua New Guinea and Professor David Lancy of the University of Utah.

JOHN EGERTON

The contents of the book can be found at this site:

https://www.harrassowitz-verlag.de/Kilenge/titel_7242.shtml

ISBN 978-3-447-12007-4

eISBN: 978-3-447-39377-5

Published by Harrassowitz Publishing House, Wiesbaden, Germany (2023)

201 pages, 214 pictures

Cost: € 48,00

The Nakanai Ranges of East New Britain, Papua New Guinea, Version 2

The Nakanai Range in Papua New Guinea (PNG) is a major karst area on the island of New Britain, with numerous deep and long caves, some of the largest dolines in the world (requiring an abseil of up to 300-400 m to enter the dark zone of some caves) and some extremely large underground rivers.

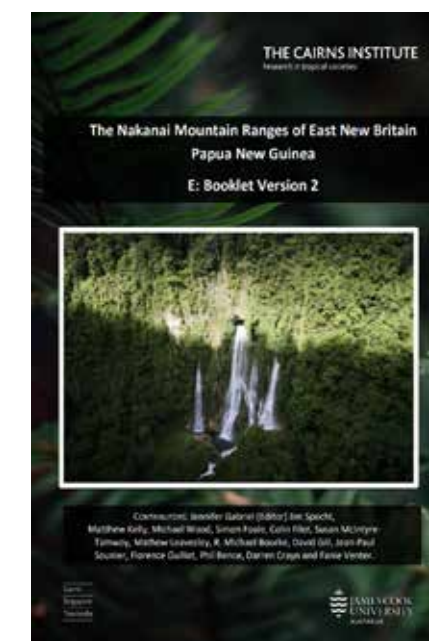
The first exploration of caves in the Nakanai Range by outsiders was undertaken in 1968 by Chris Borough and Kevin Reid of the Port Moresby Speleological Society who sought to explore Minye doline near Tuke Village.

The first dedicated speleo-

logical expedition to PNG went to Ora Cave in the Nakanai Mountains in 1972-73. The party consisted of six Australian cavers, four men and two women, led by myself. Harold Gallasch and I were based at the Lowlands Agricultural Experiment Station at Keravat on New Britain and the others were members of the University of Queensland Speleological Society.

The next caving expedition to the Nakanai Range was a reconnaissance trip, guided by me, by six French cavers in 1978. Since the Australian and French expeditions in the 1970s, there have been fifteen French expeditions, a Swiss one (in which a caver drowned underground), three British ones, a Japanese one and a French-Japanese one.

There are many significant caves in the Nakanai Range, some of which have huge rivers in them. The deepest is Muruk (cassowary), which is 1178



m deep and contains 17 km of surveyed passage. Muruk is the deepest cave in the Southern Hemisphere. In 2007, the Nakanai mountains was nominated to the PNG World Heritage Tentative List.

The book's contributors include cave explorers, biologists, archaeologists and anthropologists—many of us having been engaged in PNG over the decades.

The book's contents include an introduction to the Nakanai Mountains; sections on the karst and caves, including a short history of caving and information on the mega-dolines; a brief history of European activity in the region from the naming of Nova-Britannia by William Dampier in 1700 to the late 1940s; archaeology of the pre-colonial period; unique fauna and flora; and justification for listing by UNESCO as a World Heritage area.

MIKE BOURKE

A free eBook on the Nakanai

Range, East New Britain

ISBN: 978-0-6454198-4-9

Editor: Jennifer Gabriel

Authors: Gabriel, J, Specht, J, Kelly, M, Wood, M, Foale, S, Filer, C, McIntyre-Tamwoy, S, Leavesley, M, Bourke, RM, Gill, D, Sounier, J-P, Guillot, F, Bence, P, Crayn, D and Venter, F.

Published by James Cook

University, Cairns, 2022

Pages: 46—Cost: Free access

Available from:

https://researchonline.jcu.edu.au/74406/1/Nakanai_Mountains_ENB_FINAL_V.2_June%202022.pdf



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

Review of PNG Constitution

In five years from now, in the next term of parliament, Papua New Guinea will observe its Golden Jubilee as an independent nation. When the country became independent the election of the Prime Minister was mandated to the members of parliament who, at national elections, were elected by their constituencies.

That system may now change as there will be a major constitutional review on the form and system of the government and particularly the election of the Prime Minister.

The Constitution and Law Reform Commission (CLRC) will launch the work into reviewing the form and system of government this year. A nationwide public consultation will be part of the process of reviewing the constitution which determines how the country is governed and how the prime minister is elected.

The CLRC is required to submit a final report with recommendations to the office of the Prime Minister in December 2023.



Prime Minister James Marape

The government believes that the time is right to initiate this major review of the current form and system of government. The type of government that Papua New Guinea has today is a result of recommendations on the system of government by the constitutional planning committee which operated before independence.

'Process of Electing Prime Minister to be Reviewed', PNG Business News, Iss.175, 14 February 2023

PNG Women's Cricket

There is just one turf cricket pitch in Papua New Guinea, but that hasn't stopped the country's women's team, the Lewas, being 12th in the world Twenty20 rankings.

The national side is known for their uniquely exciting playing style. Coach Kath Hemptenstall says the team, which includes seven mothers, has overcome significant hurdles simply to play. For example, there is only one turf wicket in the country and a couple of turf nets. There are no indoor facilities and it rains four months of the year.

COVID-19 hit the Lewas hard: the team did not play an international game for almost three years before the Twenty20 World Cup qualifiers in September last year. Yet, PNG still managed to finish fifth out of eight teams, beating Scotland, the United Arab Emirates and the United States.

Lewas batter Tanya Ruma was the competition's highest run-scorer, averaging 49.5.



PNG Women's Cricket Team—the hard hitting Lewas

Captain Kaiya Arua says she was also proud their team hit the most sixes.

https://www.abc.net.au/news/au/news/2023-01-17/png-womens-cricket-team-joins-australian-championships/101859626?fbclid=IwAR1kGvmZpu5e7qwRBqkMSZnbqf3K2MGKbN2UwI_sQA2huzNwPBLvWvjIm_Y

Editor's Note: The Lewas travelled to Australia to compete in the Australian Country Championships in Canberra 16–18 February. They played in five games against Australian state sides winning two, losing two and drawing one.

New Research Project: Memories of the Kiaps: The Work of Patrol Officers in the Prelude to Papua New Guinea's Independence

Researchers at James Cook University, the University of Papua New Guinea and the PNG National Research Institute are seeking interested former *kiaps* (both Australian and Papua New Guinean) who would be willing to participate in a study documenting their work experiences.

These researchers seek to capitalise on a rich archival record and a living heritage of oral history among the last generation of Papua New Guinean and Australian patrol officers (*kiaps*) in the employ of the Australian administration during its final years in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

Focusing on the last decade before Independence (1965–75), the project will investigate the development work of the *kiaps* in preparing the rural population, politically and economically, for citizenship in the soon to be independent nation-state. Key aims of the project are to:

1. Investigate the previously under-examined development work of Papua New Guinean *kiaps*.
2. Generate new knowledge about the underexamined efforts of both PNG and Australian *kiaps* from 1965–75 to prepare the rural population for citizenship in the new state of PNG, by focusing on case studies of their political and economic development work in rural areas.

3. Analyse *kiaps*' understandings of their work in encouraging participation and citizenship in what they imagined might be the future political economy of the new nation state.

The JCU researchers involved in the project—Professor Rosita Henry, Associate Professor Simon Foale and Dr Michael Wood—all have long-term ethnographic field experience in PNG and demonstrated experience in archival research.

The International partner investigators are Dr Elizabeth Koppel (National Research Institute of PNG (NRI)) and Dr Linus digim'Rina (University of Papua New Guinea). Both scholars have deep knowledge of the history of PNG crucial to the project.

The study hopes to make a significant contribution to an important gap in knowledge. Papua New Guinea poses major social, economic, and foreign policy challenges to Australia; yet Australia's colonial legacy in PNG, which has profoundly shaped the relationship between the two nation states, is largely unknown in the public domain.

In particular, the work of *kiaps* in preparing the local



Patrol Officer Chris Viner-Smith on patrol in the Western District, 1963

populace for Independence has received little attention in Australian and PNG history. By drawing on the memories of the last generation of government officers who worked in PNG prior to Independence, and their archives, the project will seek to address this significant gap in knowledge and bring to light this hitherto neglected political history.

A community consultative group composed of former *kiaps* in North Queensland will be established to disseminate communication of results among the kiap community. Some team members already have well-established existing relationships with former *kiaps*. Other material will be published via forums such as the Papua New Guinea Association of Australia.

An application for funds to support this project has been submitted to the Australian Research Council. The future of the proposed research depends on the success of that application.

Further information about the project is available from Professor Rosita Henry at *Rosita.Henry@jcu.edu.au*

Airlift of Drugs from PNG

Isobel Roe of ABC Television reported on 23 March that five men have been charged after allegedly organising a 'black flight' from Papua New Guinea to Sydney carrying 52 kg of methamphetamine in duffle bags.



The Australian Federal Police (AFP) allege the men, all from New South Wales, are members of a 'transnational serious organised crime' syndicate, which it has been watching for several months.

Police said that two men flew a twin-engined Beechcraft (*pictured*) from Wilton, south-west of Sydney, to the rural town of Monto in Queensland to refuel. They then flew on to Bulolo in PNG, where they allegedly collected 52 kg of methamphetamine, hidden in duffle bags.

It is alleged the pilots flew back to central Queensland on a 'black flight', turning off the plane's transponder, and flying at low altitude to avoid detection.

They were met at the Monto airstrip by AFP officers, who say they seized five duffle bags from the plane.

Sepik Logging and the Frieda River Dam

In a *Foreign Correspondent* episode broadcast by the ABC on 9 March 2023, Port Moresby Correspondent Natalie Whiting, Alex Barry and Theckla Gunga suggested that the Upper Sepik had become a 'battleground'.

Logging on the river's upper reaches was being met with violence, while a proposal for a massive mine and hydroelectric dam have also generated opposition.

The logging operation is in an area surrounding Edwaki, a village on the Yellow River. The Foreign Correspondent crew attended a recent meeting there convened to discuss some of the problems which have arisen in the ten years since the project began and perhaps to gather evidence for a legal challenge to the operator's activities.

The operator Global Elite, a Malaysian company, was first granted access to more than 100,000 ha of land after they claimed to have legally obtained consent from properly identified landowners. The question of ownership is now in dispute and so is compliance with the conditions of their access to the land. Rather than being registered as a logging operation their lease, a Special Access and Business Lease, was based on an undertaking to clear the land and make it ready for plantations of palm oil and rubber. Meanwhile, it is claimed, some 40,000 round logs have been shipped, or prepared for shipping, overseas.

Local landowners expressed dismay at the loss of their local environment, continue to question the legitimacy of the original agreement and have protested vigorously about the company's activities. They claim also to have been beaten by police apparently

working for the company. The company, on the other hand, asserts that there has been no progress with plantation development because local landowners, on multiple occasions, burnt down nurseries established for this purpose.

One landowner who claimed that he was entitled to sign an agreement with the company said he was happy with the 150 kina (\$A60) paid to him every fortnight. He said it helped him educate his eight children. He went on to say that he worried about the damage to the life of the river and pollution of the water but also said: 'today we live differently. We live on money'.

On the other hand, the convener of the meeting, Luke Amial, was keen to rally support for a lawsuit against the company. 'It's your land, he said, 'they've brought in big machines, they are killing the pigs and throwing us the bones.' He told Whiting that logging had destroyed much of their environment and abused the traditional rights of the local landowners.

The Foreign Correspondent team also visited the village of Paupe on the Frieda River. Here they met Rhonda Aiypantai, the daughter of the man who signed an agreement in 1964 which allowed the exploration which led to the discovery of extensive gold and copper deposits in the area. Now Pan Aust, a Chinese company registered in Australia, is planning to proceed with the mine and a hydroelectric dam.

Although Rhonda supports the mine many others oppose it given the history of mining in PNG, its impact on the environment and the relatively poor financial returns to both government and local landowners.

The plan provides for the building of a dam which would be capable of holding more than a billion tons of mine waste. There is opposition to the dam from further down the Sepik. Opponents claim that in an earthquake prone area there is the potential for massive flooding of villages downstream.

PanAust says that the safety and stability of the dam is their 'number one priority'. They said that the project had been designed to ensure that the Sepik and its tributaries would not be impacted.

If the mine goes ahead Paupe will need to be relocated. Even so, Rhonda is still in favour of the mine. She and many other villagers believe that the wealth created by the mine would make their lives better.

Papua New Guinea Association of Australia: Facebook / 'How the 'second Amazon' became a battleground', ABC News

Sir Bob Dadae Re-elected as Governor-General

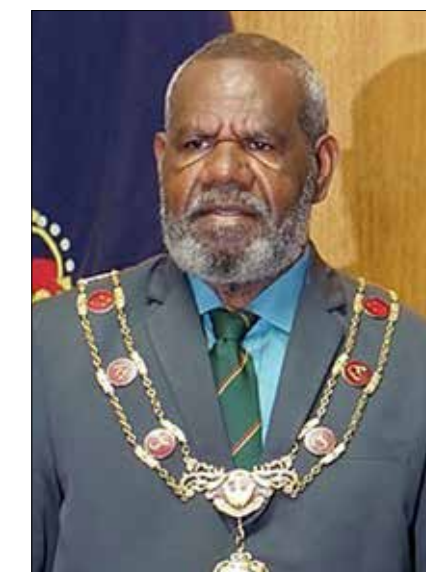
Papua New Guinea's Governor-General, Sir Bob Dadae CMG, was re-elected by the country's parliament following the elections in 2022. Sir Bob is a graduate of the University of Papua New Guinea and Griffith

University in Queensland. Before entering politics he was an accountant for the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea and a board member of the Christian Press publishing house.

Representing the United Party, he was elected to the Parliament in 2002 as the member for Kabwum Open, becoming the party's deputy leader after the election. He became Deputy Speaker in 2004. He was re-elected in 2007 and served as Minister for Defence from 2007 to 2011. He joined the People's National Congress and was re-elected in 2012.

He received the Order of St Michael and St George in 2017 and the Order of St John in 2017.

Sir Bob represented Papua New Guinea, leading a delegation, including the Foreign Minister, Justin Tkatchenko, at the Coronation of King Charles III in London on 6 May 2023.



Sir Bob Dadae CMG

Lest We Forget

CAITLIN NASH

The impenetrable darkness sets upon the Pacific Ocean. It is the 22nd of June, 1942. Deep beneath the waves, an American submarine, the USS *Sturgeon*, lines up its oblivious target. The crew waits for the signal from Lieut William Wright. Finally, it comes ...

A single, deadly torpedo is released, slicing through the water towards the unsuspecting Japanese troop carrier. It made its mark, forcing a huge hole in the stern of the ship. While the eighteen Japanese crew members clambered into lifeboats, the Australian human cargo was left for dead in the hull of the sinking ship. A Japanese soldier, numbed by the sounds of war, death and terror, watches the ship sink in merely six minutes. His blood chills, at the sound of the trapped 1,053 Australian mates defiantly singing 'Auld Lang Syne', a memory that will haunt him for the rest of his life. Within the terror, a lone man enjoys his last breaths and silently remembers his wife, two sons and beautiful life and the tranquillity of Papua New Guinea.

Clive was the superintendent of Keravat agricultural station—a government based experimental station through which he introduced the growing of coffee and other crops to the area. He lived an ideal and peaceful life with his wife, Grace, and two young sons who liked to amuse themselves playing in the extensive gardens with the native house boys. Life was wonderful, until the invasion of the Japanese.

In January 1942, the Japanese swarmed on Rabaul. Most of the women and children had been evacuated to Australia, but there was no evacuation for the civilian men as room was reserved for the precious cargo of copra. These men enlisted, but with no organisation, equipment or training, had no choice but to stand guard over their beautiful paradise. A small, ill equipped Australian force, the 22nd Battalion, was sent as a delay for the invading Japanese army. Massively outnumbered, they fought and were forced to retreat through the untamed jungle, each man for himself.

As the Japanese enveloped the island, Clive eluded capture for several months. He used the crops and stores of Keravat to hide and feed the retreating soldiers directing them through the impenetrable jungle south toward safety.

Late one afternoon, Clive was captured at Keravat. He was interned as a civilian prisoner of war at Malaguna Road concentration camp. Here he suffered many unspeakable hardships, beatings and hunger. Ironically, he would become known as one of the 'luckiest prisoners' after a fellow Australian implied that he had hidden the Commonwealth Bank's gold bullion on Keravat soil.

Clive and a bank worker were taken to Keravat by the Japanese. They were tortured cruelly for four days in the nearby jungle. Even enduring unimaginable torture, dehydration and starvation, they protested their innocence.

Forced to dig their own graves, kneel at the edge, with the cold steel end of a gun at their backs, they believed this was surely the end. At the last moment, they were saved, reprieved by the guilt of the man who laid false witness against them.

They were taken back to Malaguna Road, saved, only to be taken aboard the unmarked troop carrier named the *Montevideo Maru*. A combination of soldiers, civilians, priests and even members of the local Salvation Army were crowded below, like stock, in the hull of the ship.

I am the great-granddaughter of Eric Clive Green, who risked his life to help defend Australia the best way that he could. Like Clive, many of the Australian citizens enlisted in Rabaul, however the paperwork was lost in the ensuing Japanese invasion. Their families had to wait four years to discover their fate. Despite their bravery, loyalty and sense of mateship they have never been formally recognised.

The *Montevideo Maru*, sunk by the USS *Sturgeon*, is still today the largest loss of Australian life at sea—1053 people lost their lives, 400 more than the HMAS *Sydney* and twice as many as the entire Vietnam War. We stand here today in a democratic country with freedom of speech, thanks to the Australian men and women who selflessly gave their lives and even today continue to fight for our way of life. •

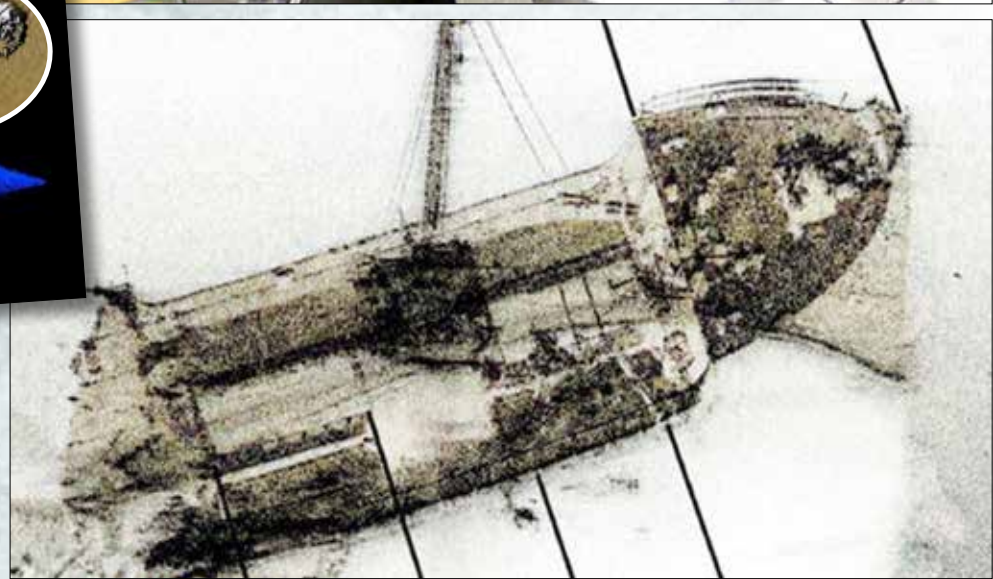
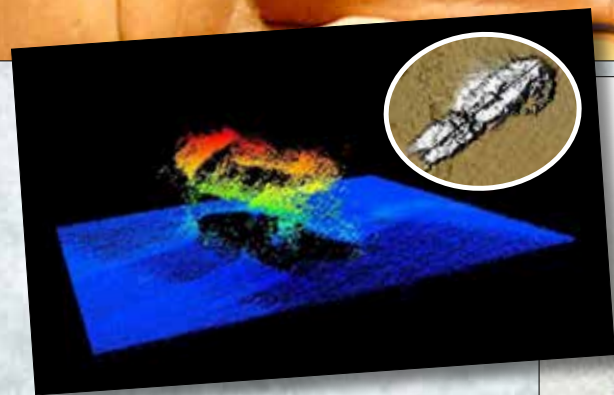


Finding Montevideo Maru

**THE WRECK OF
THE SHIP DISCOVERED
EIGHTY-ONE YEARS
AFTER AUSTRALIA'S
WORST MARITIME
DISASTER**

This is a monumental moment in history and for the families who have agonised and grieved about what happened to their loved ones.

Chair of the Australian War Memorial,
Kim Beazley



1. John Mullen, Capt. Roger Turner, Andrea Williams, Cdre Tim Brown

2. 3D image of stern section (colour); bow section in circle

3. Scan of the bow section discovered 4,200 m beneath the sea

4. Identifying the features on *Montevideo Maru*, found off the coast of the Philippines

PREVIOUS PAGE:

1. The *Fugro Equator*

2. Cdre Tim Brown AM, Max Uechtritz at back with Neale Maude, Captain Roger Brown, John Mullen and Andrea Williams

3. John Mullen, Andrea Williams, Captain Roger Turner, Cdre Tim Brown AM, with the Automated Underwater Vehicle (AUV)



'It's an extraordinarily momentous day for all Australians'

The ship at the centre of the worst maritime disaster in Australia's history has been discovered more than 4,000 metres beneath the sea—81 years after it sank.

Japanese transport ship, *MS Montevideo Maru*, bound for a Japanese prisoner-of-war camp, sank on 1 July 1942 carrying Australian troops and civilians, off the coast of the Philippines. It was torpedoed by an American submarine, the *USS Sturgeon*, which did not know it was carrying military prisoners of war and civilians captured in Rabaul by conquering Japanese soldiers just weeks after the attack on Pearl Harbor. The submarine fired its four torpedoes at the *Montevideo Maru*. Lifeboats onboard the vessel were launched but capsized and the ship sank in less than 11 minutes.

In total, about 1,053 prisoners were lost—an estimated 845 military personnel, including the 2/22nd Lark Force Battalion, their band, 36 NGVR soldiers, members of 1 Independent Company and up to 208 civilians.

The location of the wreck has remained a mystery for decades—until now.

The ship was found on 18 April 2023, after 12 days of searching in the South China Sea, by a team led by not-for-profit Silentworld Foundation, deep-sea survey specialists, Fugro and supported by the Department of Defence.

The wreckage will not be disturbed, and no human remains or artefacts will be removed. The site, which sits deeper than the wreck of the *Titanic*, will be recorded for research purposes.

Features found on scans of the wreckage, including the hold, the foremast, and the curve of the bow, match those found on drawings of the *Montevideo Maru*.

The Search

Working around the clock on two separate 'watches', the crew used advanced technology on the ship to first carefully map the ocean floor to prepare for the next stage of the mission.

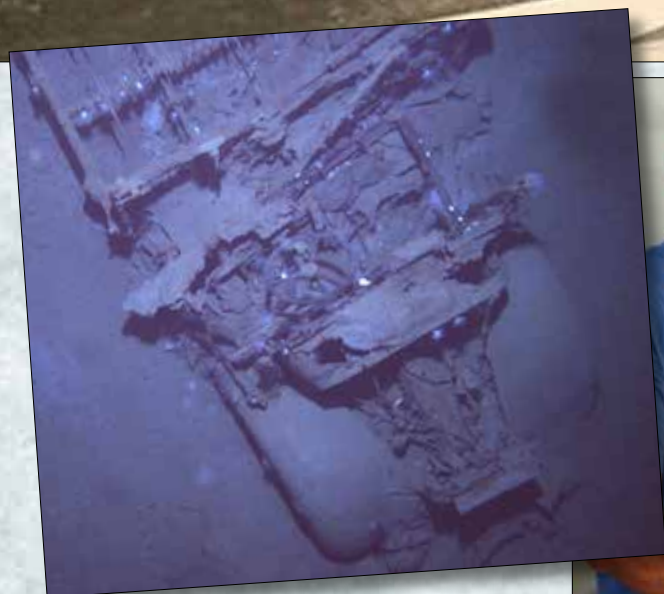
They then deployed Fugro's unmanned underwater vehicle that carried both a multi-beam echo sounder and high-fidelity side scan sonar and sent it on its pre-programmed search pattern, flying 100 metres off the ocean floor and operating at depths in excess of 4,000 metres.

'Fortunately for us, we found the ocean floor in that region is sparse and flat—perfect for seeing a wreck. Technology, planning, Mother Nature and time combined to enable this search to be successful,' Commodore Brown said. *'We had to set the autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV) at 100 metres above the ocean floor to begin with, to ensure we could cover the entire search area.'*

'We actually wanted to start closer to the bottom to maximise the opportunity to see a contact of interest, but this would have reduced the overall search area, so a compromise had to be found. Each run took about 40 hours before we had to recover the AUV back to our ship. We then processed terabytes of data, which took many hours, before pictures would start to emerge on the screens. Each time one could feel the tension biting at everyone in the operations room.'

Speaking from the survey vessel still in the South China Sea, Commodore Brown described how *'the undersea environment is heavily shrouded in opacity. It takes a huge investment in people, time, and capability to see what lurks below the surface. The Fugro technology is leading edge, but it still takes a huge effort by many people to pull it all together,'* he said.

The 12-day mission was also hampered by heavy weather caused by a small cyclone near the Philippines,



1. John Mullen, Andrea Williams, Roger Turner, Neale Maude, Tim Brown reviewing images in operations room
2. The remains of a truck on the wreck
3. Max Uechtritz, Andrea Williams and Roger Turner attend the commemorative ceremony over the site in the South China Sea
4. Autonomous Underwater Vehicle (AUV) that was used to search the ocean floor



which made it temporarily impossible to operate the sensitive deep-sea equipment, so the team briefly paused their activity to reassess and refine the search area. Then, as the team neared the end of completing a sweep of their third survey area, the AUV happened to pass over the *Montevideo Maru* wreckage.

Commodore Brown recalled how it was ‘... clear on first inspection. We immediately sensed we had found it—it just looked right. We knew it, but we had to spend several more days proving it to ourselves. The world has now seen the high-fidelity pictures of the wrecked *Montevideo Maru*, which entombs so many lost souls in the silence of the deep ocean. These detailed and ghostly images took multiple runs of the AUV running over the wreck at about 45 metres off the ocean floor. It was amazing. Twenty years ago you could not have done this. The technology simply did not exist.’

The Discovery

Silentworld Foundation director, John Mullen, said there were mixed emotions on board the ship when the discovery was made, ‘We’re looking at the gravesite of over 1,000 people. We lost nearly twice as many [Australians] as in the whole of the Vietnam War, so it is extraordinarily significant for families and descendants. The significance is a mixture of the technical challenge, which is absorbing and motivating ... but on the other side of it is the human side.

‘When we first saw the images coming up of the ship no-one had seen for 80 years, since that terrible night, it was pretty emotional stuff. We had two people on board who had family members who were lost, so while on the one side there were cheers, on the other there were a few tears. It was very emotional.

‘The discovery of the *Montevideo Maru* closes a terrible chapter in Australian military and maritime history,’ Mr Mullen said. ‘Families waited years for news of their missing loved ones, before learning of the tragic outcome of the sinking. Some never fully came to accept that their loved ones were among the victims. Today, by finding the vessel, we hope to bring closure to the many families devastated by this terrible disaster.’

The discovery was a long time in the making for technical director and submarine specialist, Captain Roger Turner, who spent years researching the wreck to narrow down its location. ‘We had Japanese researchers and American researchers helping to put together the story. There was a lot of information out there, but ours was the first time it had all been considered in one breath and put together in an argument that demonstrated where we hoped to find it. We should refer to it as not a wreck but a tomb. It’s where more than 1,100 souls now lie at peace.’

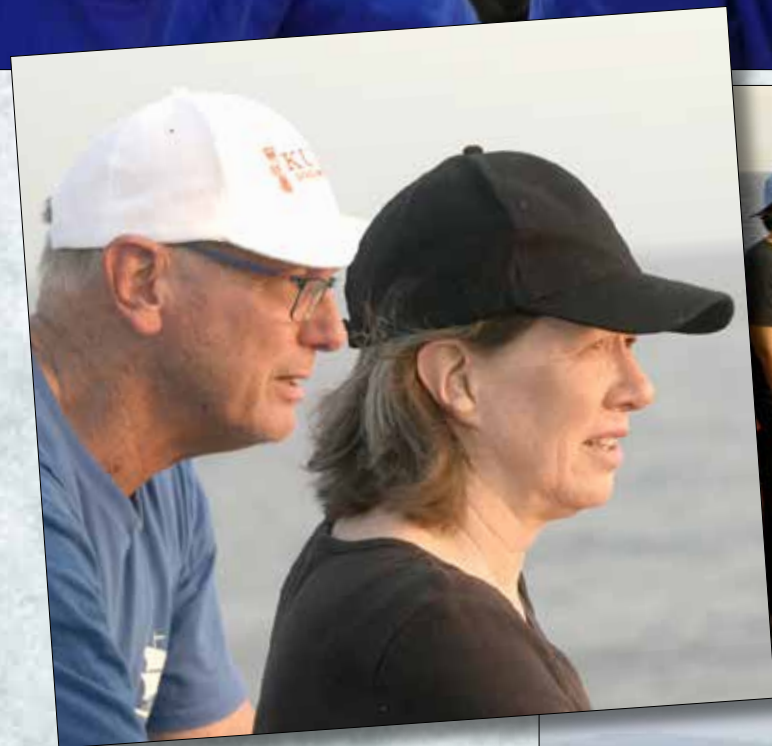
The team conducted ‘bottom contour mapping to initially locate the *Montevideo Maru*,’ Captain Turner said. ‘That allowed us to program an autonomous underwater vehicle so that it could then fly at a constant height over the seabed. The seabed was actually delightfully, boringly flat, which was great because then it meant anything we might find would stand out and be easy to identify. Then, when we got the information back from our third search, there were the obstacles on the bottom very recognisable as the *Montevideo Maru*.’

He added there was still a lot of work to do to unpack the information revealed by the scans and underwater vehicles. ‘As we speak, the underwater vehicle is conducting a more detailed search of the debris field underneath the ship. We hope that will bring back still more clues as to the succession of events. Hugely emotional moment for families.’

The ship had split into two sections, with the bow and stern lying about 500 metres apart upright on the seabed. It appeared that she was struck by two torpedoes. The first one was what caused her to sink, the second one actually blew off parts of the superstructure.

On Board Commemorative Services

The ‘Find the *Montevideo Maru*’ Silentworld team, and as many crew of *Fugro Equator* as possible, gathered together on the foredeck for a special service at sunset, after the discovery, to remember all those who lost their lives when *Montevideo Maru* sank. Sitting over the location, the extractor vents were cut and there was silence. Silentworld leader, John Mullen, provided solemn and caring words of reflection, before a minute’s



silence was observed, as the vast blue ocean stretched around. Having seen only an occasional petrel in three weeks on board, out of the sky three pigeons appeared, settling on the deck nearby. As the sun lowered on the horizon, a golden path flowed between it and the boat, the colours glowing and softening with the ripples. Magnificent floral wreaths, kept incredibly fresh in the vessel's cool room, were then dropped overboard to float over the gentle waves into the sunset.

This was followed by a short Tsuito Shiki ceremony and casting a beautiful Senbazuru—on this occasion 50 paper cranes, a symbol of peace—into the water.

On Anzac Day the team held a private Dawn Service on the bridge.

Documentary

PNGAA's Max Uechtritz was on board when the wreck was discovered. A founding member of the Rabaul & Montevideo Maru Group, he is working on a documentary about finding the *Montevideo Maru*. Accompanying the team as cameraman was Neale Maude. Spine-tingling images and videos of the \$15 m AUV both entering the water, and being recovered from it, were produced, along with images of life on board this world-class search vessel, which had previously located AE1 at the Duke of York Islands and also searched for MH370.

The Families

Chair of the Australian War Memorial, Kim Beazley, who in 2009 joined relatives urging the Federal Government to launch a search for the wreck, described the discovery of MS *Montevideo Maru* as *'... a monumental moment in history and for the families who have agonised and grieved about what happened to their loved ones.'* The former Federal Opposition Leader's uncle, Sydney Uwin Beazley, was among those on board the *Montevideo Maru* and was lost in the tragedy. *'Finding the site of Australia's most devastating loss at sea will help heal Australia's collective memory for generations,'* Mr Beazley said. *'This has solved a Second World War mystery and my family's history. The discovery is connected to an enormous Australian tragedy, both from massacres on land and the huge loss of life at sea.'*

Former Labor minister, Peter Garrett, was in his mid-20s when he learned of his grandfather's fate, which inspired the Midnight Oil frontman to write the song 'In the Valley'. Born in England, Tom Garrett had served in World War I with the 6th Light Horse Regiment and later worked in the New Guinea plantations, where brutal massacres occurred.

Other families lost multiple members of their family, including the Turners of NSW, whose three young sons, Sidney, Dudley and Daryl, all enlisted together in Australia's first commando group. The youngest civilian to perish was 15-year-old Ivor Gascoigne while many others were aged in the 60s.

Australian Army Chief, Lieutenant General Simon Stuart, said those involved had met a *'terrible fate at sea. Today we remember their service, and the loss of all those aboard, including the 20 Japanese guards and crew, the Norwegian sailors and the hundreds of civilians from many nations,'* he said. *'I want to thank the Silentworld team and the dedicated researchers, including the Unrecovered War Casualties team at Army, who have never given up hope of finding the final resting place of the Montevideo Maru. A loss like this reaches down through the decades and reminds us all of the human cost of conflict.'*

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence, the Hon. Richard Marles MP, said: *'For 81 years, hundreds of Australian families have waited for news of this shipwreck. It is my great privilege to confirm their loved ones have been found.'* Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said he hoped the discovery would bring *'a measure of comfort to the families of the victims ... this is the heart and the spirit of Lest We Forget.'*

Extracts from varied news resources, including ABC News & News Corp.



1. Members of the research team aboard *Fugro Equator*

2. Max Uechtritz and Andrea Williams reflecting on their family members' fate

3. Wreaths were cast into the South China Sea, over the site, in a remembrance ceremony

4. The crew of *Fugro Equator*
(All photographs courtesy Silentworld Foundation)



'I could never understand why it was not a more powerful part of our Australian WWII history'

On board the search vessel when the wreck was discovered was Andrea Williams, who lost both her grandfather and her great-uncle in the disaster.

Andrea, former PNGAA president and long-standing committee member, is also a founding member and present chair of the Rabaul & Montevideo Maru Group, formed in 2009 by then PNGAA President, Keith Jackson, to represent the interests of descendants. Along with Max Uechtritz, who was also on board, other founding members include Phil Ainsworth, Elizabeth Thurston and Rod Miller, who have all continued to work on acknowledgement of this disaster. 'Today is an extraordinarily momentous day for all Australians connected with this tragic disaster,' Andrea said.

'Having had a grandfather and great-uncle as civilian internees on Montevideo Maru always meant the story was important to me, as it is to so many generations of families whose men perished. I could never understand why it was not a more powerful part of our Australian WWII history. Being part of the Silentworld team that has found the wreck has been both hugely emotional and also fulfilling.'

Andrea said it was important to remember the captives had been held by the Japanese in Rabaul for five months before they boarded the *Montevideo Maru*. 'We want to make sure the men are remembered and not forgotten. What they went through was horrific. By telling their story and by finding the *Montevideo Maru* the families will know they've not been forgotten.'

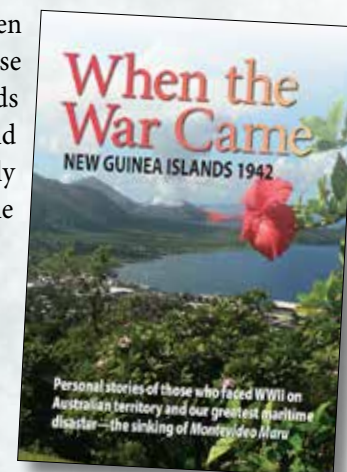
Rabaul & Montevideo Maru Group

Established in 2009 to represent the interests of the families of the soldiers and civilians captured in Rabaul and the New Guinea Islands after the Japanese invasion in January 1942, and the sinking of MS *Montevideo Maru*, the Rabaul & Montevideo Maru Group was integrated into the Papua New Guinea Association of Australia, after the erection of the commemorative sculpture at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra in 2012. Members receive *PNG Kundu*, which includes 'Memorial News', dedicated to those who lost their lives at the start of the Pacific War in New Guinea.

When the War Came: New Guinea Islands 1942

Published in 2017 by PNGAA to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Fall of Rabaul and the sinking of MS *Montevideo Maru*, the book tells the stories of the civilian and military men, women and children caught in the leadup and aftermath of the Japanese invasion and occupation of the New Guinea Islands in 1942. The book brings into focus the actions and characters of young men who left home to willingly serve their country, and then literally vanished off the face of the earth.

For more information, please contact Andrea Williams on admin@montevideo-maru.org



The Evacuation of the Sepik: JA Thurston's Expedition April to September 1942

PART 2

ELIZABETH THURSTON

Part I of the story of this expedition appeared in *PNG Kundu*, March 2023. It described preparations for the expedition which included the collection of stores from Thurston's mining claim and their transfer from Yimas to Timbunke, a station on the Sepik River.

The following account of the expedition has been taken from Jack Thurston's journal:

I left Timbunke with my party comprising Messrs. Pickwell (Medical Assistant), Odgers (Administration Clerk), Petterson, Hindwood, Atkinson, Mason, Malicki (miners) and self. We left Timbunke after recruiting a line from that place for the trip on the 14th of April. It took us until 27th April [1942] to get to our departure point from the *Thetis* on the May River. On the trip up we recruited the rest of our carriers. We now had 82.

Our route to Daru was up the May River by canoes as far as we could go, thence walking to the head of the river. We crossed the Thurnwald Range to Clear River, thence over the Donner Range to Donner River and over another range into the Telefomin Valley.

From there we crossed the limestone barrier towards the head of the Fly River and over another limestone barrier to the Feneng River (head of the Fly). We made canoes here and finished the rest of the journey by canoe to Maderi Plantation

near Tureture and the mouth of the Fly River, and by cutter to Daru where we reported to Captain Vertigan.

We were unable to carry many stores and by 20th May we had finished our rice and had to rely on native foods for the rest of the trip. We arrived at Daru on the 21st of September, so we had four months on native foods for our line. We took only a small supply of corned beef for ourselves and a few tins of soup and a little tea and coffee. We were out of stores for ourselves by the beginning of June, so the whites had to live on native foods for nearly four months with a pig now and again. In the high country no game was shot as we had to conserve our small supply of ammunition for defence purposes, and we anticipated that no one would be at Daru, and we would have to cross the Torres Strait and go down the Queensland coast. It was only on arriving at Maderi Plantation at the end of our journey that we learnt that we did not have to face a trip across the Strait.

Only one native was lost on the trip, and he died of pneumonia. The boys stood up wonderfully to the trip but after crossing the limestone barrier were in a very bad way. For a great deal of the trip, they were on short rations. Once we got to the Fly River they picked up at once. The whites were getting in a very weak state near the end of the trip, for the diet of taro and later *sac sac* [sago] alone began to tell. However, there were only two cases of real sickness: Malicki was laid up with blackwater or kidney trouble, and Petterson had a very bad go of fever and was in a critical state for a while.

Owing to Malicki's illness the party had to divide for a while and Petterson took charge of the party remaining behind. They joined the main party after being separated for a month. No trouble was experienced with the natives on the trip and not a shot fired. The natives did, on two or three occasions, steal knives and axes, but most of these were recovered.

The trip took us 148 days from the time of leaving the *Thetis*. About ten days were spent in resting. What took up the time mostly was when

we had to stop and cut *sac sac* and it took us a week each time to cut sufficient to give us a range of about eight days.

We had a sketch map of the route from the May River to Telefomin and a description of that part of the trip from ADO [Assistant District Officer] Taylor, but unfortunately, we got off his track very early and had to make our way by compass and cutting bush. [In 1938–39 Jim Taylor had travelled from Mount Hagen to the Telefomin Valley, then down the May River to the Sepik River]. For the rest of the trip, we had no reports and only a map of the two Territories that gave no details and was of little use so that we had to do a lot of cutting for our own track which was very slow work.

None of the country we passed through could you say was thickly populated, really the opposite, very sparsely populated. Food was scarce throughout the trip, and the severe drought of 1941 had its effect and made food scarcer.

The best type of natives we met were from the Upper May River and they stood out away above all other natives we met. The only country we passed through that might be worthy of investigation by the prospector would be the Upper May River. We did not have time to carry out any prospecting, but this certainly had good indications.

Good timber was seen in many places throughout the trip, but in such a place as being impossible to get. The timber on the upper Fly where we made canoes might be worthy of investigation.

Regarding trade, the natives on the May River are very keen on steel ware and the small cowrie. The natives of Mianmin and Donner River are also keen on knives, axes and the cowrie shell. In the Telefomin Valley they will take cowrie shell, knives and axes and also want salt, mirrors and other small articles of trade which we did not have. This same trade is what was demanded all the rest of the way over.

The language, of which we had a small vocabulary from ADO Taylor, is very similar from the Upper May River right across to Bolivip and even

further. In fact, it was rather astonishing how far the same language extended.

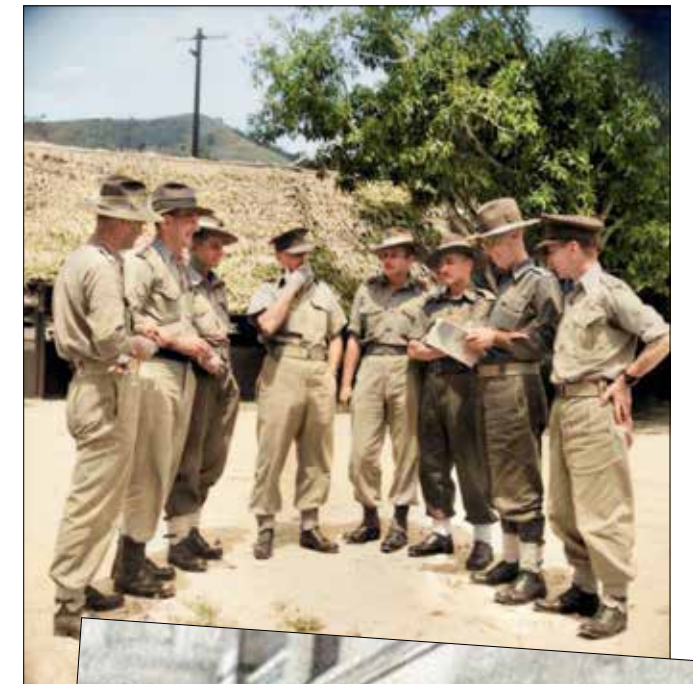
Two police boys were in the party: Silia from Kieta and Porhau from Manus. Silia was in his first contract and did not have the experience of the other boy but did a good job and always willing. Porhau did a very good job and was at the head of the line throughout. His energy was amazing and after hard days cutting bush and on arriving at camp, would go out scouting for tracks or cutting the road for the next day. Coming over the last limestone barrier he cut bush from early morning leaving an hour before the main party and carried on till we stopped for *kai* [food], but he would not stop and continued cutting and then ate a little when we caught up to him. He would cut through all afternoon and after arriving at camp go on for another hour or more, cutting for the next day.

All the rest of the boys were good workers and when things were tough did not complain except to indulge in a lot of humorous abuse at the mountains etc.

As regards the whites of the party, a trip of such long duration can be very trying, and it speaks for itself that we had no disagreements throughout the trip. Every man did his bit and was always willing to do whatever was asked of him and very often went for me for not giving him more to do.

Petterson, when separated from my party brought his party along without mishap and they had a tougher part of that trip than we did, as we had already denuded an already famished area of food and their food shortage was far more serious than ours. They also were responsible for bringing a six-pound [nearly three kg] tin of meat right across to the coast, and doing this when on the main limestone barrier where they were living on two taros a day. Petterson looked after the cooking on the trip and, with what few items he had at his disposal, made a wonderful job. He certainly became a master in the art of cooking pig.

Odgers took on the job of interpreting and



Capt. (later Major) Vertigan, on left, with other officers of the Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit (ANGAU), 1944 (top), and Jack and Betty Thurston in Sydney (below)

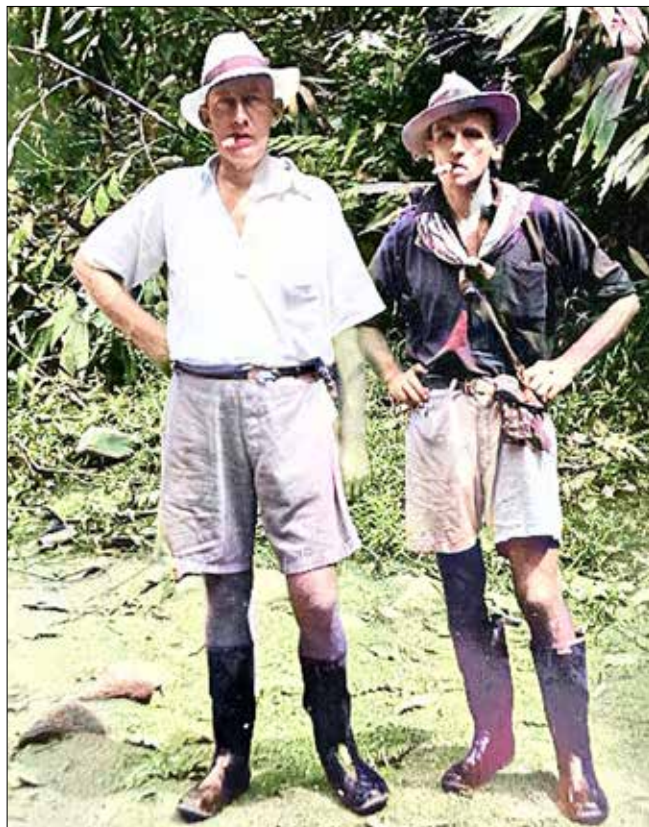
did a fine job of this, and in the end became very proficient in the language and through him we were able to obtain most information we wanted. He also became our vegetable man—that is our native food buyer.

Maliki put a marvellous lot of energy into his hunting activities, but unfortunately was not crowned with the success he deserved. I had only to ask him to do anything and he would do it at once.

Atkinson had the job of erecting tent flies and this job was always accomplished without any fuss. On the Fly River at our last *sac sac* camp, he added to our larder considerably with his .22 rifle, and anyone who can do that is very popular.

Pickwell looked after the health of our line and ourselves. I think he was a bit disappointed for some time as we all kept so fit, but at Feramin he had two cases as Malicki and Petterson took ill and he did not spare himself in getting these two back to health.

Hindwood most of the time kept with me at the head of the party and his cheerful optimism throughout the trip was a great help, and he was



Expedition member, Eric Petterson, and Jack Thurston

always the first to come and shake hands when we had got over another one of our little difficulties in our trip. Whatever job he was given he cheerfully carried it out, and well.

Mason was at the rear of the line most of the trip, and anyone who travelled bush in New Guinea will understand what this means, for it is by far the hardest job. All the weak and lame gradually lag behind the line, and it is a hard job to keep them up. It often necessitates carrying a boy's load for a while. It always means being last into camp. He carried one of the worst jobs of the trip and I never heard him complain once.

I was never worried about our party getting through but was worried at times regarding the boys—that we might lose some of them, and I know that was all that worried the others.

The size of our party was a safeguard against any attack by natives but made the trip much harder for we had a big line to find food for. We naturally were not equipped for such a trip as we would have been in peace times. We had no planes to drop us supplies by parachute, and just had to live on the country.

I must mention the help that was so freely given me by ADO Taylor and ADO Bates who, from the outset of the evacuation, did every possible thing for us. I greatly appreciated the free hand, which DO [District Officer] Jones gave me, and the confidence he placed in me.

The first white we were to meet was M Wood on Maderi Plantation, who proved a wonderful host.

It was great to land at last at Daru and to find there Captain Vertigan who just took charge of us and our boys, and he was just the kind of person we had been looking for to do this. We had been fending for ourselves long enough and it was great to hand all responsibility over to someone else.

I must thank all the party for sticking so well to me on the trip and for their loyalty, and this includes all the boys.

Perhaps I should have started this report with an apology to the reader, but not being used to this kind of work I will ask to be excused. •



Bundi—Before, During & After European Contact

G DESMOND PIKE

Trading links between the villagers of the eastern coastal areas of New Guinea and the mountain dwellers of the interior had developed into a mutually beneficial barter system perhaps thousands of years before Europeans landed on the island.

The pattern of trading was often indirect, and items might pass through many hands before finally being absorbed into mountain or lowland communities. For instance, along with salt, marine shells collected from coral reefs became highly valued by the Highlanders, for whom such items were a revelation when first encountered among other goods being offered for exchange.

On the other hand, a few Highland groups had access to quarries of suitable stone and had developed the skills to shape, grind and polish stone axe heads. These became essential items for use by subsistence farmers before the introduction of steel. Once a demand was identified, the coastal people and their inland intermediaries co-operated to ensure that salt, clay pots and a steady supply of the most favoured shells were carried into the interior by traders. In return, items such as pigs, stone axe blades, net bags and particular varieties of Bird of Paradise feathers were traded back down to the coast and lowlands, creating what eventually became a variety of established inter-linked exchange relationships.

Several important trade routes crossed the Ramu Valley and followed up three of the major river systems of the Bismarck Range and over into the Central Highland valleys. One such route originated in the coastal villages around Madang from

where goods were moved, through intermediaries in the Garia villages among the western Finisterre foothills, then across the Ramu Valley and into the mountains.

From there, access into the Highlands was gained by following the steep and narrow Imbrum River valley with its few villages and hamlets, until the walking track branched away on reaching the Guagu River, a tributary of the Imbrum. The track then climbed the western slope of this valley and crossed numerous creeks and tributaries eventually leading up to the saddle which marked the watershed of the main range. This was the Iwam or Mondia Pass 2900 m. asl., from where the track then descended abruptly into the densely populated Chimbu River Valley. This gorge became a gateway providing access to the broader valleys and tribal groups of the Central Highlands.

Over the centuries upper Imbrum and Guagu River Valley residents derived considerable benefit



from the movement of traded goods backwards and forwards through their land.

For example, the Gende villagers near Yandera, were the source of an unusual and much sought-after trade item, known as *mondono*, a whitish powder, which was used as a special food supplement fed to pigs. The Bundi people were convinced that when *mondono* was mixed with sweet potato and fed to these animals, they become unusually fat and more fertile. The belief in the powers of this product extended far afield and *mondono* has been traded with the Chimbu and Jimi Valley people for generations.

The legend relating to the discovery of this material stretches back to a time when an earth tremor occurred, causing the ground to open in a garden area belonging to the Kumburumba sub-clan, lying below Yandera village. Subsequently, strange rumblings were heard, trees shook and sounds like a snake moving underground were detected, and it is said that these sounds are heard occasionally, even today. Then a large python with two tails was seen in the fissure which opened in the rocks.

Next morning a white powdery substance was found around this hole. The local people thought it was from the python's droppings (or scats). Pythons have a very efficient digestive system, and their droppings are often an entirely calcined white, so it was not fanciful for the parallel to be drawn.

The local pigs were attracted to the site and soon began to eat this powdery substance and were soon thought to have rapidly improved their condition.

The Gende people quickly appreciated the benefit of this powder and began collecting it to trade to nearby villages as a food supplement for their pigs and as a medicine for porcine ailments.

The python with two tails appeared for a second time at the hole in the ground, but since then it has not been seen and is thought to have moved away. *Mondono* is no longer found at the original site although it is still collected at another site on a nearby hill.

Tradition required that pigs be sacrificed to the great snake and their blood collected and poured around the hole in the ground. This ceremony originally required the participation of all the nearby sub-clans but this involvement gradually declined and now only members of the Kumburumba sub-clan carry out this ritual and it is they who control the supply of *mondono*. The actual collection of this deposit, which often appears as a precipitate on taro leaves in a garden overnight, was done by an old woman who the local people regarded as a witch. She collected the powder, which was said to be deposited nightly by the great snake, dried it, and traded it to the local people.

At Bundikara, some distance away, *mondono* is used sparingly as a fertilizer in gardens. Trade in this white powdered material ensured that knowledge of its special properties spread as far as the Asaro and Jimi valleys. In the Chimbu area it is called *imendem* which means 'dirt of the earthquake'. When it was traded, *mondono* fetched a very high price and was exchanged for salt, dogs' teeth, stone axe blades and even small pigs. A similar material with allegedly analogous properties was reported by early European explorers of the Ramu River, collected by the so-called pygmy tribesmen in the mountains behind Aiome and traded down to the Ramu River dwellers. In this instance, the material was fed to dogs to improve their hunting capabilities.

A sample of *mondono* was collected by European researchers and analysed. This revealed that it consisted of quartz granules with gibbsite, chlorite, albite and muscovite in small proportions. There was

also about 1.5% of organic matter, mostly rootlets. It was described as the natural weathering product of the local granodiorite.

As with other Ramu Subdistrict Stations, I went regularly to conduct preliminary hearings of indictable offences occurring within the areas of its four Patrol Posts. One of the more memorable hearings was at Bundi, where a man was charged with murdering a fellow villager after a violent argument. What was unusual was that this crime was alleged to have been committed with a traditional obsidian dagger. Obsidian does not occur in the Bundi area, so this unusual knife must have brought in from those coastal areas where the material had been traded from distant islands. Manus, New Britain and Western Fergusson all had layers of this material deposited by local volcanic activity and where local people had developed the skills to fashion artefacts from this material.

The dagger was about 20 cm long and the handle was made from beeswax and decorated with small shells. The victim died as the result of a slashing wound to the neck inflicted by the sharp, flaked edge of obsidian. The dagger, tendered in evidence at the preliminary hearing, became an exhibit at the trial which was heard by the Supreme Court in Madang. The court convicted the accused of murder and imposed a prison sentence.

On a later visit to Bundi a deputation of villagers from the area approached me and enquired about the whereabouts of the dagger which, they said, was highly valued and was of cultural and ceremonial significance to the clan members. I wrote to the Registrar of the Supreme Court in Port Moresby and asked about the status of exhibits once a case had been decided and the appeal period had lapsed. I explained that the village people would like the obsidian knife returned to them.

I received a reply explaining that an exhibit could, indeed, be returned to its owner once all the legal requirements had been met, but in this instance the dagger could not be located. No doubt it was snaffled by someone in Crown Law tempted

by the rarity of the weapon and its bloody history.

Transformation of Bundi commenced when the Kennacott Mining Company took out a permit to develop a copper deposit near Yandera in the valley of a tributary of the Imbrum River. The existence of an area of mineralisation in the mountains to the east of Bundi had been known for some years but it was the Kennacott company which conducted the first exploratory drilling in the area around Yandera. Later, a small alluvial gold deposit was discovered near Kobum village. This was reserved for sole exploitation by the local village landowners.

I visited the Kennacott mining camp on several occasions in my capacity as Assistant Mining Warden, on one occasion to investigate the death of one of their workers. The company used helicopters to supply this camp and as well as using the Bundi airstrip and the Usino airstrip down in the Ramu valley to fly in supplies. The company employees were very secretive about the results of their drilling program, but it did seem that the copper lode was extensive enough to be commercially viable and that there was a gold component that made exploitation additionally attractive.

The location of the site on the side of a steeply sloping ridge would make its development problematic, but there was an air of cautious optimism that these problems could be overcome. In fact, their Camp Manager approached me and offered me a job with the company, to handle the land negotiations with the local villagers. I told him that I was not interested as I was still doubtful about the project's viability. I never did ask how much they were prepared to pay me.



Prehistoric stone mortar(?) found in a Bundi village



Bagasin-made cooking pots at Kurinagobu Village

Later, the Carpentaria Exploration Company took over the mining leases from Kennacott and expanded their exploration activities. The presence of company staff in the valley to the west of Bundi began to have an impact on the local villages. These Gende people had used rock crevices and crannies in the hillsides as tombs for the remains of their dead since they had first settled these valleys. Also secreted were the personal possessions of the deceased, including bows, arrows, shields and spears. It was the carved wooden shields that the mine workers were keen to obtain as these were often of great antiquity and could be sold in Australia for a good price. We warned the company management to instruct their employees not to desecrate or encourage the robbing of these burial sites as not only was it illegal, but it would create great hostility towards Carpentaria Exploration.

After we had left the Madang District, further exploration activity of the mineralised area resulted in the discovery of a major nickel deposit in the Bismarck foothills further north and near the Ramu River, at Kurumbukari. This proved to be a more exploitable prospect than the Yandera copper deposit although the problems associated with its development were such that the site was acquired by a series of overseas companies over the

years. Ultimately, it was the China Metallurgical Group Corporation and Ramu NiCo Management (MCC) Limited that, in 2005, became the manager and operator of the project under a Joint Venture arrangement with the Australian Company Highlands Pacific Limited.

After Independence, the Bundi Patrol Post seems to have been only intermittently staffed. On the other hand, the establishment of the Kurumbukari mine has meant that there is now a road to Madang, crossing the Ramu River using the specially constructed Maria Bridge. The road from Bundi down to Brahmin seems to have been completed to provide at least intermittent vehicular access and there is a 4WD road from Brahmin on to Kurumbukari. The walking track from Gembogl to Bundi over the Iwam Pass promises to become a popular tourist hiking route if the local people now manning road-blocks and demanding payment from passing users can be appeased in some way.

Economic development opportunities for the Gende people however still seems a distant dream. In 1986 an ambitious cardamom plantation was established near Kobum village by Indian private enterprise in cooperation with Bundi residents. However, this venture collapsed after seven years due to a series of economic and social factors, and nothing has been proposed as a replacement. Employment for local men as workers at the Kurumbukari mine provides some income for these mountain dwellers but it has an expected life of 35 years and what will happen to the road and bridge infrastructure after it ceases operating is unknown. The Yandera copper deposit may then become a viable proposition.●

Editor's Note: Des Pike was a kiap in the Madang District from 1964 to 1974. The story above is an excerpt from his memoir, *Crumbs from Memory's Table*, and re-published with his generous permission.

Construction of what has become known as the Ramu nickel project commenced production early in 2012. A 135km pipeline connects the Kurumbukari mine to a processing plant at Basamuk, 75km east of the provincial capital of Madang, along the Rai Coast of the Vitiaz Basin.

Rotary Sponsored Me in Papua New Guinea

SUELLEN HOLLAND

Even though I was born in India, I grew up in Rabaul on the island of New Britain in Papua New Guinea. In 1969 and again in 1970, Rotary International sponsored me to represent Rabaul in the (then) Territory of Papua New Guinea School Swimming Championships. These Championships were held each January in Port Moresby, Lae, Rabaul or Madang.



My father, Cyril Holland, was an active member of Rotary in Rabaul and from a very young age I remember attending many Rotary events. I recall standing with Dad at the Rotary stand at the annual Kokopo and Kerevat Shows, attending the Rotary Golf Days and being present at sporting events sponsored by Rotary. I also recall that Rotary held their monthly meeting on a Tuesday evening at the New Guinea Club.

The first championships in which I participated were in Port Moresby. I was also selected for the team the following year to compete in Lae. On both occasions I was billeted by a local Rotarian family.

The swim trials for selection for the Port Moresby event in 1969 were held in Rabaul at our local swimming pool. However, I was in New Ireland at that time visiting our friends, the Harrisons, and was not able to compete.

I was in the swim squad at boarding school and that year had won the Junior Pollard Swimming Trophy. On that basis Dad approached the Rotary committee and asked that I be considered for the Rabaul team. The committee insisted that, when I returned from New Ireland, I swim a 'time trial' and if 'good enough' my placement on the team would be 'voted on'. I was more than pleased when the vote went my way, and I was selected to join the team.

I had now been home from boarding school for more than a month and the championship was only a few weeks away. My Dad was very sports minded and extremely competitive and was concerned the team did not have a designated swimming coach. He often voiced his opinion to me on my 'declining fitness' and reminded me that, for me to swim at that level, I needed to be swimming fit. Dad also reminded me that it was as an honour to represent Rabaul in the Rotary swimming team and that if I wasn't fit I would 'let the team down'.

The fact that we did not have a swim coach, or that I appeared lackadaisical towards my

declining fitness played heavily on Dad's mind. One morning he announced he had decided to coach me himself! For those who have (and for those who have not) read my autobiography, *Black Sand and Betel Nut*, you may remember that my Dad was a *very* poor swimmer. However, being a poor swimmer did not seem to worry him and, armed with stopwatch, whistle and note pad, took to his coaching role with gusto.

Every afternoon after he had finished at the office, Dad 'trained' me as one would train an Olympic hopeful. I pounded up and down the local pool, lap after lap after lap. I practised my starts, my finishes and my in-betweens. Dad, stopwatch in hand, ran along the side of the pool and at each wall turn shouted encouragement. If I was lagging in my (allotted) time, he spurred me on: if I was ahead on my time, he urged me to swim faster, and when I hung on the pool side, water-logged and spent with exhaustion, he patted me on the shoulder and said, 'You swam very well today, pet'. Let me add at this point that, even though Dad offered to coach the other members of our team, they declined his offer!

On the day before I flew to Port Moresby for the championship, Dad presented me with a gift, a dark blue beach towel fringed with white tassels. When I unfolded the towel, I saw my name stitched in thick white embroidery running down one side. I loved my towel and every time I dried myself with it, I remembered with love how Dad appointed himself my 'swim coach'.

As I recall, in Port Moresby there were only two girls and two boys in our Rabaul team. The



two-day program was a busy one and as we were such a small team (despite our ability in each stroke) we competed in all the swimming styles. The heats in all categories were completed on day one. I remember being hoarse from cheering, tired from competing and starving at the end of the day.

The finals in all categories were held on day two. Our freestyle girls relay team came second in the four X fifty-yard finals. I swam in the individual finals for freestyle and breaststroke and came third in both. I do remember our boys team made the finals as well but, try as I may, I am unable to recall in which events.

All in all, as a team, we were pleased with our end results.

The next year, 1970, the championships were held in Lae. I was home this year for the trials and was very proud I had made the team again. Dad resumed his 'coaching role' and once again, rather than body surfing at Pila or snorkelling at Nonga, I spent most afternoons pounding up and down the Rabaul pool.

The program was much the same as the year before, however, this year there were only two in our team, so we combined with the Mount Hagen team. We made the finals again this time in the four X fifty-yard relay. I also remember I competed in the individual freestyle, backstroke and breaststroke.

Upon our return to Rabaul after the Port Moresby and Lae Championships, Rotary hosted a congratulatory dinner for the team. I was very proud to be seated at the official table, along with Dad and the other committee members of Rotary.

Although many, many years have passed, my selection to represent Rabaul at the Rotary International School Swimming Championship remains in a special place in my heart.

Thank you, Rotary for all you do and all you have done.●

Footnote: The Rotary Club of Port Moresby was established in 1957. In 1959, the Rotary Clubs of Lae and Goroka received their Charters and in 1969 Rabaul, Mt Hagen, Madang and Wewak also received their Charters.

CSIRO in the Southern Highlands, 1961

Part 1: Learning the Ropes

KEN GRANGER

In late 1960 I was appointed as a technical assistant in the CSIRO Division of Land Research and Regional Survey, New Guinea Survey Section. My job was to assist the Section's transport officer John McAlpine (Mac) and, where appropriate, assist the scientific staff of the section.

The Section had been involved in 'integrated surveys' of the Territories of Papua and New Guinea since 1953 at the request of the Territory Administration.

These surveys followed the approach pioneered by the Division in northern Australia since 1946 in which the knowledge of a range of specialists such as soil scientists, botanists, agronomists and geomorphologists gained in the field were integrated to identify 'land systems' that were assessed as to their suitability, or otherwise, for agricultural or pastoral development.

The survey to be undertaken in 1961 was to cover the Southern Highlands District of Papua and was to complement the survey done in 1960 in the adjoining western part of the Western Highlands District of New Guinea. In 1961 the area was still regarded as 'uncontrolled' so anyone moving more than a mile from a government outpost was supposed to be escorted by members of the Royal Papua and New Guinea Constabulary (RPNGC). The survey was to commence in Mendi and move through the more populated areas around Ialibu and Kagua before heading west though the lightly populated Erave-Lake Kutubu area, before moving north to Tari, and then back to Mendi.

Mac and I flew to Port Moresby on 6 June 1961 then on to Mt Hagen and Madang where we took delivery of the heavy survey gear such as tents and tinned rations that had come up by sea from Australia. We also made contact with people from Amele village, near Madang, who Mac had recruited for previous surveys to act as camp and field assistants. On 8 June we flew by DC-3 charter from Madang to Mt Hagen with the survey assistants and the heavy gear.

From Mt Hagen we began pre-positioning food and other necessities to patrol posts such as Ialibu and Kagua, which were along the survey route, as well as establishing our first base camp at the Kiburu rest house to the south of Mendi.



Breaking camp at Mt Giluwe



Purchasing food at Kombemi

As part of this preparation I flew down to the mission at Orokaiva to set up some self-recording instruments.

All was ready when the scientific party arrived in Mt Hagen on 24 June. The team was led by Herman Haantjens (soil scientist), together with Martin Bik (geomorphologist), Roy Pullen (plant ecologist) and John Saunders (forest botanist). After a few days of work around the Kiburu area the survey started east supported by a line of 70 local carriers. We had the use of a tractor and trailer from Mendi to take our gear the first 10 km as far as the Angga River and from there it was all manpower.

The road up the eastern side of the Angga Gorge was being built by several hundred local people. This road, which was to be the Mendi end of the Highlands Highway, had reached the upper level of the gorge and the scene that met us was like something out of antiquity.

We established our first bush camp that evening and the following morning Mac told me to pack up the camp and take the carriers, as well as our three police, up through the montane forest, and

establish a camp in the grassland of Mt Giluwe. The scientists were to link up with me in the grassland that afternoon. So there I was, a few months after my 20th birthday, a couple of weeks in the Territory and virtually no *tok pisin* so off we went.

All went well following a fairly well-defined track with many ridges and streams to cross until about 1.00 pm when it started to rain. The carriers wanted to stop but the very experienced police corporal convinced them otherwise and we continued on for another hour and a half when they stopped again as the track had petered out.

It was clear to me and the corporal that they were not going to budge so we set up camp in the moss forest at around 9,000 feet. I sent the police off to try and find the scientists but they returned after an hour of searching with no sign of them. I had a very restless, but comfortable, night as I had all of the scientists' personal gear as well as all the tents and food.

Next morning we made it through to the grasslands and I set our camp on a prominent ridge so that the scientists would see it. Again I sent out the police to see if they could locate the scientists

while I headed further up the ridge to around 12,000 feet but with no other soul within cooee. Fortunately, Mac had a pre-publication edition of Fr Mihalic's *Dictionary of Neo-Melanesian Pidgin* he had lent me so I could start to communicate with the Madang assistants and the police reasonably well. There was no sign of the scientists.

After a very cold night I decided to head back to Mendi and Kiburu following a well-established track known to the locals.

I made it back to Kiburu just on 6.00 pm to find the scientists sitting down to the last beers in the camp! They had stopped work around 11.00 on the first morning because of rain and had returned to the road camp where they stayed that night. I was no longer the new chum and my *tok pisin* had started to flourish and had picked up the ins-and-outs of managing a carrier line.

After a rest day we then headed back east following the surveyed route of the putative Highlands Highway along the southern flank of Mt Giluwe. The next major river after the Angga we had to cross was the Anggura. This was achieved by a suspension bridge made entirely of local material—bamboo, rattan and bush rope. Incredible bush engineering.

One of our camps on the way to Ialibu was in the *haus kiap* in the village of Kombemi. John Saunders, who had been off on his own examining the forests of Mt Giluwe, re-joined us here and paid off his own line of carriers led by the very impressive village constable. Mac, with the help of a local interpreter (*tanim tok*) gathered information on the location of villages and tracks to help flesh out the rather basic mapping that we had available. In larger villages such as Kombemi we were able to supplement the rations of our Madang assistants and our carriers by purchasing local foods. That became one of my jobs.

From Kombemi we moved on to the Government station of Ialibu. It was here that I was first made aware of the competition between the various missions for souls. I was talking to Ron Hiatt, one of the *kiaps* at Ialibu, when he spotted a teenaged boy walking past carrying a new blanket



John McAlpine gathering information (top);
Anggura River bridge (below)
(All photos courtesy Ken Granger)

and a few tins of fish. Ron recognised the youngster and asked him where he got the blanket. He replied that the Methodist missionary had given it to him. Ron observed that the boy normally went to the *lotu Popi* (the Catholic mission) and the kid replied, '*Methodist I mobeta, em I givim blanket na tin pis*' (the Methodists are better, they gave me the blanket and tinned fish).

In addition to learning the ropes of organising and managing the carriers and the camp I was also beginning to tune into the conversations of the scientists and began to understand the way in which ancient volcanoes had formed the land, the impact of altitude on the form of the natural vegetation, and the way the locals had settled the area.

From Ialibu we moved south towards Kagua and the Pangia area. My adventures on that part of the survey will be in Part 2. •

Soldiers of PNG Fought Many Battles

GREGORY J IVEY—PART 2

This part of the story of PNG soldiers maintains the rarely-viewed perspective of a loyal, proud, resourceful, and gritty fighting unit – one that any soldier would feel confident to be part of in combat. Those servicemen combined such qualities with local knowledge that helped swing the balance in some of the most difficult and demanding campaigns in the South-West Pacific theatre. That this has not been more widely recognised and valued is regrettable. Indeed, it was not always recognised by senior officers during the Second World War itself. This has meant that the place of these servicemen in the history of the War has largely been unrecognised and undocumented. The words that follow are one attempt to redress that imbalance, and to show that their contribution is both remembered and honoured.

NEW GUINEA INFANTRY BATTALION WARRIORS

In Part 1 of this article (see *PNG KUNDU*, March 2023) we saw that the Papuan Infantry Battalion soldiers ‘proved that they made splendid troops for bush warfare’ (Gavin Long, official war historian). During 1943, the focus of the War was passing to New Guinea regions and pressure from both Australian commanders and young indigenous men led to the creation of the first New Guinea Infantry Battalion (NGIB) in March 1944.

After camp construction and training at Camp Diddy near Nadzab, two companies of 1 NGIB took part in the New Britain campaign, supporting various units of Australia’s 5th Division. D Com-

pany 1 NGIB operated with different Australian battalions on the north-west coast of New Britain.

There, in February 1945, Warrant Officer Bengari (formerly of the PIB) bravely counter-attacked a Japanese ambush party from the surf using his Owen gun. Although wounded, Bengari repelled another enemy attack on the beach using a Bren gun taken from a dead Australian soldier. The Japanese retreated from such firepower allowing Bengari to be recovered by NGIB soldiers (including Sgt William Matpi) and sent to a military hospital.

Such leadership was not reciprocated by the Australian platoon commanders who were poorly briefed on the skills of NGIB soldiers, such that NGIB companies were unable to practise their cavalry reconnaissance role, as documented by the author Peter Charlton.

A Company 1 NGIB fought on Bougainville continually for six months until exhausted. In May 1945 they were finally relieved by the PIB. A Company servicemen worked with three different Australian Brigades in succession, and always with the forward battalions. The unit historian of the 29th Brigade wrote,

Long before the Japanese patrols or ambushes knew of their presence, the silent moving native soldiers would be aware of the Japanese and fade into the bush. It seems that they have another sense denied to

Europeans or Japanese. They despise the Japanese who they regard as their inferiors ...

NGIB soldiers were often able to slip past Japanese sentries with ease. One method employed by them, when circumstances were favourable, was documented by James Sinclair. The leading scout would carry with him wild ginger or pepper. He would very carefully ease himself into a position upwind of the Japanese sentry and then throw the wild pepper into the air. The pepper would be carried on the breeze to the sentry who would begin to sneeze and cough, allowing the scout to slip by him and kill him from behind.

2 NGIB was raised in September 1944 and was also trained to carry out a cavalry role. This battalion was very active in driving the Japanese from the Maprik sub-district in co-ordination with Australian forces. After only two weeks deployment in this sub-district from June 1945, 2 NGIB results more than satisfied the Australian Commander, Brigadier Moten. 2 NGIB were involved in ‘hard fighting’ leading to greater than expected casualties.

Wisely, 2 NGIB was deployed as a unit rather than as a pool to be drawn on piecemeal by Australian units, as occurred with 1 NGIB on Bougainville. 2 NGIB remained fighting a ‘wearisome and vicious war’ in this sub-district until well after the official Japanese surrender in mid-August 1945.

COMPLAINTS RAISED

Despite their bravery and heroism, PIB and NGIB soldiers raised legitimate complaints with their supervisors during the war (and after the war) about what they saw as humiliating treatment. Here, two examples are briefly outlined.

While 2 NGIB was being trained in late 1944 at Nadzab, coinciding with a controversial period when Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit (ANGAU) assumed military control of the battalion, an experienced, former PIB corporal complained that he had been instructed to wear his corporal stripes on his *rami* (or laplap).

In the PIB, Corporal Diti had worn his stripes



Sgt Tapioli, DCM and Sgt Wellington, Army Public Relations, 1944

on his shirt sleeves but now he had been instructed to wear them similar to the custom of civilian, indentured sanitary workers before the war. Corporal Diti went to Battalion HQ and attempted to explain how insulting this direction was to the indigenous NCOs who had earned their stripes in combat. (It has also been recorded that Sgt Tapioli, MM was equally vociferous and dramatic in an identical complaint.)

The 2 NGIB Temporary Commander, Major JH Pawson, refused to change the instruction and the exchange became heated. The experienced Corporal Diti was furious, but Pawson insisted that the NCO should wear his stripes on his laplap or ‘he would not have any stripes at all’.

There were consequences the next day when a European duty officer was set upon by upset NCOs when he visited their mess. Soldiers then headed aggressively towards the location of other European supervisors but were stopped when their leader was knocked down by one of the officers. Four ringleaders were punished and transferred out of 2 NGIB while the striking officer also left. Months later, Corporal Diti saw four of his supervisors stranded in the middle of a flooded river and attempted to rescue them. One was swept away and drowned but Corporal Diti personally saved the lives of the other three, one of whom,



Corporal Sala, MM with Sgt William Matpi, 1944



Members of No. 3 Platoon, 2 New Guinea Infantry Battalion, 1945

ironically, was Major Pawson. Corporal Diti was later awarded the George Medal for his rescues. Higher authorities subsequently withdrew the controversial and insensitive instruction to indigenous NCOs about re-positioning their signs of military rank.

Complaints were also raised in mid-1945 about labouring work, pay, and police actions when all battalions of the PIR re-located to the Gazelle Peninsula. One example: the soldiers were 'frustrated with their static role of containing Japanese prisoners' or labouring on the Rabaul wharves while 'there were still (active) Japanese troops north of the Sepik, which was home to many of the soldiers'. Although some experienced Australian commanders were convinced that there was much justice to the soldiers' grievances about pay, rations, and working conditions, it was not until after Japan surrendered that improved rates of pay were announced.

The soldiers' battles with exhaustion and frustrations led to ill-discipline in 1 NGIB, resulting in discharge or imprisonment for those found guilty. Confrontations also arose between PIR soldiers and others: e.g. some ANGAU officers, local people who resented the presence of PIR troops on their land and the police. In the latter case PIR

soldiers sometimes set up roadblocks around their camps to deny access to the police.

In this deteriorating situation, a highly decorated and respected leader, Sergeant-Major William Matpi, DCM, was flown from Lae to reason with the soldiers. Matpi was briefed and given a free hand by authorities to resolve the stand-off. Matpi entered one camp by surprise then gathered the leading soldiers of the battalion, discussed the issues with them, and convinced them that civil law must prevail, now the War was over. He visited each battalion in turn to calm the soldiers and listen to their complaints. His presence restored order, Army discipline, and the status of the police. Finally, Matpi reported to the PIR Commander about the soldiers' complaints, especially the unfairness, after their years of hard fighting throughout the war, of soldiers being limited to the same rates of pay and conditions as the police.

THEIR LEGACIES

To better co-ordinate the expanding PNG battalions, the Australian Army established a new headquarters for them in November 1944 called the HQ Pacific Islands Regiment. The last active PNG battalion was 3 NGIB which continued to exist until approximately November 1947. Such

was the military success of the PNG Battalions during the war, that the Pacific Islands Regiment was officially resurrected only three years later with the PIR re-commencing active service in March 1951. The PIR, awarded the title 'Royal' after Independence, has inherited the battle honours and history of its predecessor wartime regiment.

Many war-experienced soldiers re-enlisted in the new PIR and rose to positions of responsibility in the Army, and in their communities after they were discharged. Through a remarkably far-sighted Australian Army policy of localisation, young soldiers with leadership or technical potential were identified and trained in PNG or Australia. Further, an educational scheme was 'spear-headed' by the Army Education Corps, boosted in size over the 1966 to 1973 period by approximately 300 qualified National Service Teachers from Australia. As a result, Papua and New Guinea Command was the most prepared institution in the country as self-government and Independence were achieved.

In Australia, the returning war veterans from the PNG battalions formed an association, originally based in Sydney (now based in Brisbane) for purposes such as social events, reunions, and honouring comrades who had fought and died in PNG. Respectfully, this association retains the letters PIB and NGIB in its title.

With over 140 active members across Australia, including three wartime veterans, the association publishes newsletters, manages a website, erects bronze plaques, all designed to promote the heroic role of the PIB and NGIB plus the constructive role, post-war, of PIR servicemen in preparing the military for PNG's Independence.

CONCLUSION

This is history that needs to be told and re-told. The soldiers of the PIB and NGIB performed so well for so long that the people of PNG and Australia can be proud of their achievements during the war. We can justifiably hope that more books will be published, and more research will be undertaken, about them. In the meantime, we are called to recognise their vital role, to document

their military experiences and to engage with (and honour) the few war-time survivors before those servicemen pass away.

The seed of self-determination was sown during the war although it took another 30 years for it to be achieved. The people of Australia have surely inherited an obligation to their servicemen and women from the PNG campaigns, and to the citizens of PNG today, to support the people of PNG on their path to personal fulfilment and democratic institutions. •

I acknowledge that the following publications provided material used in preparing this story.

James Sinclair, *To Find a Path: The Life and Times of the Royal Pacific Islands Regiment*, Volume 1 (Brisbane, Boolarong, 1990)

Gavin Long, *The Final Campaigns*, (Canberra, Australian War Memorial, 1963)

Peter Charlton, *The Unnecessary War: Island Campaigns of the South-West Pacific 1944-45*, (South Melbourne, Macmillan, 1983)

Darryl Dymock, *The Chalkies: Educating an Army for Independence* (North Melbourne, Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2016)

GJ Ivey, *Soldiers in Papua & New Guinea 1940 to 1975*, self-published, 2017

Gregory J Ivey, 'Service with 2nd New Guinea Infantry Battalion, recalled by Lance Sergeant Don Collins,' *Sabretache* vol LX11, no.2 - June 2021, pp 4 -8.

www.soldierspng.com and www.wikipedia.org



Members of B Company, 1 NGIB aboard a vehicular ferry, 1944



Life at Daru in the Fifties

KEN McKINNON AO—PART 2

Physically the environment of the Western District was always testing, but ignorance was anything but bliss. The following incident gives a flavour.

The engine stopped. Soon the forward motion of the boat stopped, but the pitching and rolling did not. In fact, it increased. There was a strong south-easter on the port stern quarter. The big, grey, spray-laden waves threatened to overwhelm us over the stern. If that didn't happen, we'd be blown ashore by the big waves. What to do now?

We, (a Kiwai villager, Kambel and I), had over-nighted in the shelter of Saibai in the Torres Strait and expected to complete the journey from Daru to the mouth of the Bensbach River in the far west of Papua New Guinea near the then Dutch border. There was no time to wonder what sort of educational experience it was to find ourselves a couple of miles offshore, being driven by the wind toward a shore with no known populated villages in the vicinity, and neither of us knowing much about diesel marine engines.



It was wonder more than fear. There was chagrin over my ignorance. There was a sense of impotent urgency, a need to effect a repair before the day was too advanced. We needed to reach the Bensbach before dark. There was no intermediate shelter we could make for. We had better figure out what needed to be done to get the engine going, and quickly. If we can't, what do we do? We can stay with the boat, but it will probably be broken up by the waves as it is driven onto the beach. Or should we try to swim the mile or so to the shore—and then what?

There are few places less desirable than the diesel fume-filled engine-room of a pitching and rolling boat. Since my companion was a good seaman but had no engine skills, he kept watch at the helm. Queasily, I laboured away in the engine compartment, cleaning injectors and trying other ploys. We must have some reserve power to turn the engine over when needed, so must not use the remaining battery power turning it over futilely. Logic suggested that the injectors might be the problem. Taking them out, one by one, I cleaned and adjusted them as if they were made of platinum.

My mind was racing; thoughts about the repair attempts; what if we weren't successful? Reflections on family, adolescence, university, Oodnadatta, and PNG experiences to that point. Finally, time

for the big test! I held my breath and pressed the start button. The engine coughed twice and then came to life. Relief! The journey resumed; we were just able to make it inside the dangerous bar of the river by dark.

If it hadn't been that experience it could just as easily be a multitude of others—an engine stalling mid-flight, scheduled planes not arriving, overturned canoes, food perishing, or even being stymied by the Canberra bureaucracy. Education as a career was proving to be full of adventure.

A similar, more testing example, occurred when I was returning in a government workboat from the Bamu River area east of Daru. It involved crossing the 50 km wide estuary of the Fly River in a fierce storm. We did not know that, because of the fierceness of the storm, all boats had been instructed to remain anchored in Daru until it cleared. We didn't have a radio. Even if we had there would not have been reception in the storm. All we could do was to keep going, keeping the orientation of the boat to ensure that waves going over the top hit the bow first rather than tipping us over. District Commissioner John J Murphy and other senior staff expressed amazement that we had survived; so much amazement that Murphy forgot to give us a dressing down for risking one of the District's scarce boats.

Travel in government workboats tested one's ingenuity. The government fleet in Daru boasted only one trawler and three workboats, one or more of which was usually propped up ashore for repair. The trawler, being larger and more seaworthy, was used for long trips, so the Agricultural Officer and I often had to use a workboat.

Being such a big district, whenever a boat of any kind was going anywhere it had to carry, not only freight and mail, but villagers who had been ill and were returning, public servants on posting and people hitching a ride.

Government workboats were both useful and uncomfortable. A full load on a thirty-foot boat might be as many as forty people, both sexes and various ages. The difficulty was that there was decking only for the first few feet from the bow,

creating a small crew cabin of sorts. The rest was a hull, wooden benches around the edges, and a raised wood framed cover over the rest. No washing facilities, no toilets. We carried our own drinking water and food.

There was no absence of decorum; women and children were given as much privacy as possible when the boat tied up or anchored for the night. To find an opportunity to shit over the stern, privately, when there are forty people on board is not easy. Similarly, hauling up a bucket of seawater and trying to use it to get a complete wash without losing some dignity in the process is certainly an acquired art. Finding a place to sleep comfortably is similarly difficult, even though precedence was afforded to *taubadas*.

Mention of the Bensbach River earlier reminds me of another occasion when the London Missionary Society missionary from Daru, Rev. Gordon Price, volunteered to accompany me on an inspection visit to his most western school, right at the unmarked Dutch border. After the two-day boat trip from Daru to the Bensbach we disembarked at the coastal village, leaving the boat anchored in the still waters just inside the bar.

It was to be another two-day walk west to reach the LMS school. As was the custom, we recruited



One of the governments workboats in the swampy area near Balimo, Western District, 1958

three carriers for our patrol gear—a full patrol box, carried on the shoulders of two carriers. We stepped off just behind the last of the village houses straight into water and knee-high kunai grass. We were bare foot, because it was the wet season and there would be water up to the mid-calf all the way. Cuts and scratches to the feet from the sharp grass were normal.

Unfortunately, just after we reached the half-way point, Gordon Price's back gave out and he could not walk further. He was an unusual missionary, a worldly man who had been a Spitfire pilot in the RAF during the war and had decided to profess religion when the war finished.

The dilemma was what to do, go on or go back? The question was, 'How'? There had to be an answer as we could not stay where we were. The solution decided upon was to get out the canvas 'sleeve', the basic ingredient of a patrol bed.

To make a bed, poles about eight feet long are cut and threaded through each side of the sleeve. Other poles are cut and embedded in the ground crossed and tied at the top to create two upside-down 'Vs', a little more than six feet apart. The sleeve with the poles in it is placed over the V structures and pressed down. Thus, the sleeve is pressed apart and the heavier the person resting, on it the tighter it gets. That makes a firm, secure but comfortable surface on which to place any other bedding.

After considering the options we decided to press on to the isolated and rarely visited school.

We had no option but to carry Gordon. Poles were threaded through the sleeve as usual, but instead of going to the next step we added separator

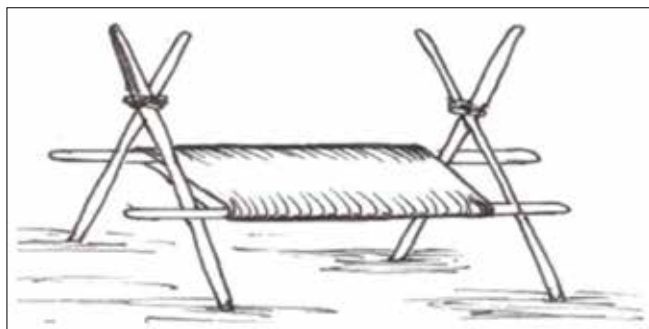


Diagram of sleeve bed used on patrol in PNG in the fifties

poles head and foot, thus making a firm stretcher.

The four persons assigned to carry each corner of the stretcher necessarily included me. I put myself near Gordon's head, chatting but also asserting that this was a prime example of government support for the missions. It was tough going because the track was too narrow for the four of us to be on it at once. Two had to wade while simultaneously pushing the sharp kunai grass out of the way as they went.

Gordon did not complain and was suitably apologetic about our sore shoulders and cut-about legs. We stayed two nights in the village and Gordon improved to the point where he could walk most of the way back. When we returned, we were all pleased to have accomplished what we set out to do.

On a visit to Kiunga using the district trawler, the *Parama*, which also carried the District Commissioner Alan Champion, on one of his routine visits, a patrol officer was said to be exhibiting symptoms of 'stir crazy' in his lonely post, eight days travel up the river from Daru. Having been told by the DC to come down for some R&R in the 'civilisation' of Daru, the patrol officer said he would not travel down on the boat with 'that old fool'.

As he could not defy what was an order, I asked what he intended. He said he would make his own way. There being no possibility of another suitable boat, I asked how. His response was that he would paddle the whole thousand kilometres in a canoe. He planned to take only water and a bunch of bananas for food.

To my surprise he was as good as his word, gone at first light the next morning. Three or four days later, on the way down, but with four more days to get home, we caught up with him paddling away. I thought that the DC would pick him up, the more so as he told the skipper to turn the trawler in that direction. It was not to be.

The DC merely called out as we passed 'Don't be late for work on Monday!'

Editor's Note: This story has been abstracted from the author's memoir, *Brushes with History*.



School assembly Bena Bena

Life and Times at Sighere T School 1969–70

DIANA PLOWMAN

After three years at Bowali Peter thought the Highlands might be a pleasant change. At least they would be cooler. So, he put in for a transfer and we were told we were going to Sighere in the Eastern Highlands.

This school was well-established and, in the government compound, there were a small hospital, a doctor and two nurses. We now had a much larger house—a Dowsett kit home assembled by Merv and Les Gillies of Goroka. It had a big fuel stove which also heated the water, a generator which we had purchased from the previous teacher and a pretty, fenced garden with lots of lovely casuarina trees under which the children played.

Again, we had teachers from all over Papua New Guinea and our children played with a Papuan girl, whose dad was the deputy headmaster, and the doctor's children.

We applied for correspondence lessons from Queensland and Lisa did very well. Each week her little exercise book would arrive in our mail at the Education Office in Goroka and each week we posted her filled book back to Brisbane.

The boys loved playing outside with their new

pull-around trailer. Brendan was very dark and Phillip was very fair. The locals would squeeze Phillip's legs and arms whenever they could get close to him. I later found out that they thought he would be good to eat!

The climate in the Highlands was fabulous; warm days and cool nights. We had a very big lemon tree which was wonderful; we purchased tomatoes, beans, peanuts and sweet potato from the locals. They would come along the road, climb over our stile and sit on the grass until I noticed them. They never knocked on the door. Some of the older women had the tops of their fingers missing. This was their way of saying they mourned the loss of a relative.

We found the locals still referred to the currency as marks. This was the German influence which had stayed with them. Ten marks made a shilling or ten cents. However, I soon discov-

ered they preferred to have a couple of sheets of the *Sydney Morning Herald* in which to roll their tobacco.

We ate very well in the Highlands. My specialty was beef casserole. The beef in the Highlands was mainly local and not particularly well-butchered or tender. So, with onions, heaps of tomatoes and beautiful fresh beans I would make a casserole, which was simmered for hours in the slow fuel oven.

The road into Goroka, 17 miles away, became treacherous when wet as it was basically clay. If we had continuous rain we didn't bother going into town. Instead, we made our provisions last as long as possible, augmenting with more locally grown produce. I bought flour by the drum, rice by the bag and stocked up on tins just in case.

Life in the Highlands was always eventful. There were visits from Brisbane medical specialists who came to do a three-month stint at the Goroka Hospital. The Bena Bena was a fascinating place. Visits from the World Bank delegation, overnight stays by the patrol officers who would head off into the mountains to do an update on the Births & Deaths register and visits from other teachers and friends.



Bena Bena schoolgirls

During our two years at Sighere we became friendly with Joan and Merv Gillies who ran the coffee plantation next door. Joan was an ex-matron and Merv and his brother had a sawmill in Goroka. Their children, Peter and Cindy, played with our children. Morning tea at Joan's was always a highlight for a lonely mother. Joan's coffee was homegrown and she drank it strong and black and, therefore, so did her visitors. Occasionally we had a splash of muscat in the coffee which, for me, made it more palatable.

The only other Europeans within coo-ee were the Four Square missionaries who lived across the causeway over the very fast-flowing Bena Bena River. One day Geoff, one of the missionaries, knocked on the door with his bible under his arm; he had come to convert us. Inside the front door was a very large model train set which Peter was setting up. Geoff put his bible down and started asking about the trains. Religion was never again mentioned. Geoff was a bit of a find really, because he knew how to decoke the generator we had purchased from the previous teacher, and he came as often as the generator needed attention. He had electrical knowledge, too, which was wonderful for wiring up the train set.

Geoff was a Kiwi and his wife was American. Their mission was supported by parishes in America and New Zealand. They would often receive large boxes of hand-crocheted and knitted garments for the villagers. Within a few weeks the beautifully crafted garments had all been undone and made into *bilums*. They were stunning in their simplicity and many coloured variations.

There were many missionaries in the Highlands and one Saturday morning we observed a truck pulling up outside our front fence. A number of locals hopped out, cut down a huge clump of *kunai* and proceeded to load the soil from around the clump onto the truck. Peter went to investigate and the chap in charge was a missionary closer down the valley to Goroka. We had never heard of them but invited him in for a cup of tea.

He too was American and needed the rich soil to grow his asparagus! He regaled us with stories



of his mission and the high standards he kept. Telling how his house boys wore white lap laps, white shirts, red bow ties and cummerbunds to serve his dinner! There were all kinds of strange missions popping up all over the country. I'm not sure they did any good for the Papua New Guineans, but I know many of them had a lifestyle many Australians would have envied at that time.

I took the older girls in the school for sewing each week. There was a lot of giggling and shy glances. They thought the three children were amusing and giggled at just about anything they did.

School uniforms were non-existent, so I took it upon myself to make each of the girls a yellow shift dress, and we purchased yellow T shirts for the boys and they purchased them at cost.

We also sold blankets at cost. A small cotton blanket at that time could be purchased from Steamships or a Chinese trade store for about \$3.

It was difficult to make our house look presentable. The floor was Masonite which was pop riveted to the aluminium frame. The surface had worn off long ago and the only way to make the floor look good was to hand polish it with brown floor polish called Chieftain. It was time-



Bena Bena man selling vegetables (top) and Peter Moses, 1969 (above)

consuming and, as the surface of the floor went up and over the frame and then down again, also very frustrating. Nevertheless, I did the floor frequently and felt much better.

Sighere T School is now a large high school.

We left Sighere when Peter decided to take a year's leave and go to Brisbane and finish off his Arts degree. •

Distinguished Service Award to Rev. Neville Threlfall

STEVEN GAGAU

At a recent Logohu Award Investiture Ceremony Rev. Neville Threlfall was honoured by the award of the Companion of the Star of Melanesia (CSM) for his distinguished services to Papua New Guinea (PNG), especially the New Guinea Islands Region, in the field of missionary work. It was awarded by the PNG High Commissioner to Australia, His Excellency John Kali, on behalf of the PNG Government, Independent State of PNG and people of PNG.

The award ceremony was held at the PNG Consulate Office, Sydney on Friday, 17 March 2023. Present to witness the ceremony were Neville's wife Margaret, Mrs Vavine Kali, PNG Consul Leo Oaeke, Jennifer Gagau and Steven Gagau.

It was indeed a great honour for the congregations of the Methodist/United Church he served in the New Guinea Islands of West New Britain, East New Britain and New Ireland Provinces and as Regional Secretary of the United Church's New Guinea Islands Region. We are indebted to Rev. Threlfall for his great work in pastoral care and bible translations and his writings about the work and history of the early church and other influences in the New Guinea Islands region.

Rev. Neville Threlfall grew up in Western Australia and has been a minister since 1951, first of the Methodist Church and now of the Uniting Church in Australia. He went to PNG in 1961 to work for the Methodist Church and then the United Church there and in the Solomon Islands. He was engaged in pastoral ministry at Nakanai in West New Britain, at Raluana and at Matupit Island in East New Britain, and at Kavieng on New Ireland. He also served as Regional



Sitting Front: Margaret Threlfall, Rev Neville Threlfall; *Standing:* Mrs Vavine Kali, HE PNG HC John Kali, Consul Leo Oaeke, Steven Gagau, Jennifer Gagau

Secretary of the New Guinea Islands Region of the United Church (1972–75 and 1979–80) and was engaged in literature and translation work. This included translation of the bible into *Tinata Tuna* (the language of the Tolai) and into *Pidgin*, and in historical research and writings. His late wife Roma supported him in all this work and taught in several schools. They returned to Australia in 1980, but Neville has made many working trips back to PNG after that. •

His writings include the following:

One Hundred Years in the Islands: The Methodist/United Church in the New Guinea Islands Region, 1875–1975;

Mangroves, Coconuts and Frangipani: The Story of Rabaul;

Volcano Town: The 1937–43 Rabaul Eruptions, in collaboration with Dr Wally Johnson. (A sequel, *Return to Volcano Town*, is due to be published this year).

Edited: *A Buk na Kakailai. A Hymn Buk in Tinata Tuna;*

An Offering Fit for a King. The life story of Rev. Hosea Linge;

A Nilai ra Dovot (The Magazine of the New Guinea Islands Region).

Unsavoury Plantation Owner Perishes on Montevideo Maru

MICHAEL WHITE

William Martin Wilkin was born in Witchford, Isle of Eley, England on 17 July 1885, the son of Martin and Sarah Jane (Langford). He had two older sisters, Emily and Matilda, and an older brother Thomas Edward. William, his sister Matilda, her husband and their son all migrated to Australia in 1911, aboard the *Geelong*, which sailed from London on 28 December 1911.

He enlisted in the AN&MEF on 11 August 1914, Service No. 426, stating that he was a farmer and that he had previously served in the Bedfordshire Imperial Yeomanry for four years. (The BIY had been re-raised in 1901 for the Second Boer War.). He is listed as being six foot in height, weighing 180 lbs, of dark complexion, hazel eyes and dark hair.

He returned from Rabaul in February 1915 and, on 25 June 1915 enlisted in the AIF, was assigned a new Service No. 1115, and attached to 12 Company, 3rd ANZAC Battalion, Imperial Camel Corp. He was later transferred to the 15th Light Horse on the disbandment of the Camel Corps.

He served in the Middle East for the duration of the war, rising through the ranks. On 25 February 1918 he was appointed Company Sergeant Major (CSM) Warrant Officer Class 2 and on 30 June of the same year promoted to Staff Sergeant Major (SSM). SSM was a fairly unusual rank used where a NCO was promoted to a Warrant Officer Class 1, but was not a Regimental Sergeant Major, as was usual for a person with this rank.

In 1918 he was awarded a Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM). The recommendation for the DCM reads:

No. 1115 Sergeant (acting Company Sergeant-Major) William Martin Wilkin, 3rd Anzac Battalion, Imperial Camel Brigade.

This non-commissioned officer, since the formation of this unit has never failed both in the Field and in Camp to show great devotion to duty and quiet bravery on all occasions. His example at the actions of MAGDHABA, RAFA, GAZA and KHUWEILFEH, (November 6th and 7th) of bravery and devotion to duty was of the highest order. His loyalty in action and under fire in backing up his Company Commander has always been very valuable.

He returned to Australia aboard the *Port Sydney* and was discharged on 13 June 1919.

On 24 September 1920 he re-enlisted in the AN&MEF, Service No. 1449, and sailed for Rabaul aboard the *Melusina*, departing Sydney on 6 October 1920. He was given the rank of Honorary Corporal and appointed Policemaster in Rabaul.

On 9 May 1921, the Military transferred control to the Civil Administration, whereupon William



The Imperial Camel Corps during the Battle of Magdhaba in 1916 in the Middle East

was discharged from the Army and became a Patrol Officer within the Civil Administration.

His time with the Civil Administration was colourful. In 1924, whilst at Aitape, in the Sepik, he was charged with having been guilty of disgraceful and improper conduct, in that he did,

(1) during the month of September 1923, order certain native women to be brought to him for immoral purposes, and,

(2) between the 9th May 1921 and the 31st July 1923, traffic in Birds of Paradise, well knowing same to be contrary to the Birds and Animal Protection Ordinance 1922-23, and,

(3) inflict corporal punishment on the native police boys Nari and Tigon, well knowing same to be contrary to Section 72 of the Native Labour Ordinance 1922-23.

He was found guilty of charges (2) and (3) and dismissed from the Public Service.

After the war, William Wilkin had purchased Lungatan Plantation, New Hanover, from the Custodian of Expropriated Properties. Property belonging to the German Government was expropriated under the terms of the Mandate granted by the League of Nations to Australia in respect of the administration of New Guinea. Such properties were offered for sale under very reasonable terms and William Wilkin took advantage of this to purchase Lungatan.

On 1 January 1928, the Commonwealth Government listed all the properties in New Guinea sold by the Custodian of Expropriated Properties. Lungatan was sold to William Wilkin for 5,000 pounds and was listed as having 52 hectares unplanted, 150 hectares planted with some 18,000 Palms with an official valuation of 1,600 pounds. Australian soldiers who purchased expropriated properties were able to pay 15% deposit with the remainder at 5% pa over 80 months.

After his dismissal from the Public Service, William set up camp on Lungatan, New Hanover, to develop the property. He was never far away from controversy. In 1924 he applied for a licence to recruit labour for a mining operation on his plantation. Their response:

In order not to debar Wilkin from an opportunity of earning a livelihood the Commissioner of Native Affairs authorised the issue of a recruiting licence to him, but intended it should be operative only for a period of six weeks ending on 30th June 1924.

However, the licence was mistakenly issued to cover the period up to 30 June 1925. The issue was raised in the Federal Parliament when Mr Forde, MP, asked the Prime Minister:

(1) Is it a fact that ex-Patrol Officers WM Wilkin and Walter John Hook, who were dismissed from the New Guinea Public Service, have been granted recruiting licences?

(2) Why were these men dismissed from the service?

(3) Is it usual practice to grant recruiting licences to such ex-officers who have been dismissed for serious offences?

As an aside, his co-accused, Walter John Hook also served in the AN&MEF, arriving in New Guinea in November 1919 and remaining until the AN&MEF was disbanded. Like William he became a patrol officer and was dismissed for trafficking Birds of Paradise. He set up a trading post in Aitape and in 1942 was recruited into ANG AU (Service No. P507). In 1943 he was murdered by a group of local villages from the Musemgilem Urat area, Aitape. He was originally buried in Wewak but exhumed after the war and reburied at Lae.

It was not long after the licence episode that William Wilkin was again in trouble with the law.

On 27 August 1929, William Wilkin was found guilty in the Rabaul Central Court of having murdered a native, one Malay, who died at his plantation in the District of New Ireland on 23 June 1929.

William Wilkin's counsel, at the trial in mitigation of punishment, informed the Court of the prisoner's meritorious war service. Because of this, a lenient sentence of two years' imprisonment with hard labour was imposed. He served the majority of this sentence in Goulburn Gaol and returned to Rabaul at the completion of the sentence aboard the *Montoro*, departing Sydney 22 November 1930.

Earlier in 1930, William Wilkins applied to the Premier of New South Wales for special remission

of his sentence on the grounds that his property, Lungatan Plantation was:

- Subject to waste owing to lack of personal supervision and work.
- Indentured labour contracts were maturing without means of replenishment, and
- He was innocent of the charges on which he was convicted.

The matter was referred to the Administrator of the Territory of New Guinea. He sought advice from the Stipendiary Magistrate in Rabaul, Mr SJ Shillington, who, acting as a judge, originally tried and sentenced William Wilkin. Shillington advised: *There was abundant proof of the prisoner's guilt and that the crime of which he was convicted was committed callously and brutally. The prisoner was liable to imprisonment with hard labour for life, with or without solitary confinement, and with or without whipping.*

The request for remission was declined.

In December 1930, by notice in the *New Guinea Gazette*, the Administrator at the time, Evan

Wisdom, ordered that William Martin Wilkin 'be prohibited from taking charge of or employing native labourers'. This prohibition was cancelled in early 1931.

William Wilkin died on 1 July 1942 aboard the *Montevideo Maru*, a freighter requisitioned by the Japanese navy to carry New Guinea Prisoners of War, both military and civilian, which sailed for Hainan, off the southern coast of China. On 1 July this vessel, which was not marked as a POW carrier, was torpedoed and sunk by the submarine USS *Sturgeon* close to Luzon, resulting in the deaths of all prisoners and internees on board.

William Wilkin died intestate and by notice in the *Territory of Papua and New Guinea Gazette*, dated 4 October 1951, the Curator of Intestate Properties was ordered to administer his estate.

In the Gazette of 25 October 1951 tenders were called for the sale of Lungatan Plantation as part of Williams Wilkin's estate. •



Montevideo Maru Memorial in Rabaul

How I Ended Up at Brandi High School

IAN WILLIS

The three years that Margaret (my wife) and I spent at Brandi High School near Wewak began with a newspaper advertisement about August 1964. At the time I was running a one-teacher bush school at Warrambeen, 53 kilometres west of Geelong in Victoria. The ad invited government schoolteachers to apply for two-year secondments to the Education Department of Papua New Guinea, starting in early 1965.

Brandi High School

Eager for change, I wrote away to the given address. Several weeks later I was summoned to an interview in the new Commonwealth Centre on the corner of Spring Street and Victoria Parade in Melbourne. The interviewer, from the PNG Department of Education, was Barbara MacLachlan, a genteel, kindly, middle-aged woman. She seemed more interested in why I wished to teach in PNG than what I had accomplished in my three years at Warrambeen, which was the only teaching experience I had. She also asked what I knew of PNG's recent political development, mainly the first popularly elected House of Assembly. She must have been sufficiently impressed by the way I presented myself because a couple of weeks later I received a letter from the PNG department telling me I had been accepted and would be required to start work in early January 1965. The Victorian department wrote to say it would release me for two years, with the option of two more after that.

A medical examination followed. I must have passed it because the PNG department soon sent me a plane ticket with instructions for travelling to Port Moresby, where I had to spend my first three weeks undergoing an induction course. I left Melbourne on 7 January 1965. About ten Victorian secondees caught the same mid-afternoon flight from Essendon. Among them I was pleased to meet Ivor Salkin (1926–2018), with whom I had trained at Toorak Teachers' College six years earlier.

The long journey north was slow and tedious. We changed planes in Brisbane, where we joined about another 30 secondees from the other states. The next stop was Port Moresby. We landed there at Jacksons Aerodrome at about 2.00 am the next morning. Clambering down from the aircraft to cross the tarmac, we had our first experience of PNG—its astoundingly hot, humid climate. The sensation was akin to walking into and being swallowed by a wall of thick steaming blancmange.



After going through immigration and customs, we were loaded aboard a couple of buses then driven to our accommodation. The men were billeted at Four Mile, a hostel for Commonwealth Department of Works employees. Four Mile was four miles from downtown Port Moresby. The hostel was comfortable. My roommate was Ian McRaid, a secondary arts-crafts teacher from Victoria. There was a large communal dining room with cafeteria-style service and a separate bar, serving bottled beer. During the three weeks I lived there I got to know my fellow secondees well. Among my new friends was an older secondary teacher from Victoria, Matt Power (1919–2015).

During the war Matt had served with the 2/14th Infantry Battalion and had seen action in Syria, on the Kokoda Track, at the recapture of Lae, in the Markham-Ramu Valley campaign and finally at Balikpapan in Borneo. Matt was later the principal at Lorengau High School on Manus and then at Kerevat High School; but like many other ex-PNG teachers he subsequently settled in Canberra and taught in the government school system here. At age 93, he returned to PNG to attend the opening of the memorial at Isurava on the Track. We regularly socialised with Matt and his wife, Bertha, until they retired to Mount Tamborine. We continued corresponding until shortly before his death, aged 95, in March 2015.

During our first Saturday in PNG, Ivor Salkin and I caught a bus from Four Mile into Port Moresby. We wandered the town and went shopping. I bought a couple of pairs each of tailored shorts, short-sleeved shirts and knee-length socks—standard local 'white-collar' working attire we had been told. Apart from that, we sat around at Four Mile getting to know our fellow secondees, drinking Merakis, i.e. SP or South Pacific lager that came in distinctive long-necked green-glass stubbies. We generally took in the exotic local social scene and were amazed by the passing parade of Papua New Guineans, who probably came from most parts of the country. We also chatted to various permanent Four Mile residents,



Ela Beach

who mostly seemed to be heavy earth-moving equipment operators on major building sites.

Early on the Monday morning after our arrival a bus took us to the Ela Beach Primary School. We spent the next fortnight there undergoing an induction course. Run by the amiable Denis O'Donoghue, a lecturer at the Port Moresby Teachers' College, it aimed to familiarise us with the country where we would spend at least the next two years teaching.

We listened to lectures by senior officials of the Department of Education, the government anthropologist, and representatives of the various government departments. We also watched films and participated in discussions on the future development of PNG. All very stimulating. It also enthused us for our new home and the teaching we would soon be doing, which meant that the course had fulfilled its purpose.

During the lunch breaks we swam at Ela Beach, across the road from the school. A coral reef lay just off-shore, about 50 metres out in waist-deep water. Among my first purchases were a facemask and snorkel so I could explore the reef and marvel at the astounding variety of the corals and tropical fish. We also walked up the hill into the shopping and banking precinct. Outside many shops, Papuan women sat on the pavement, their wares neatly arrayed before them. They were selling their hand-crafted trinkets—exquisite shell, seed and glass bead necklaces, models of outrigger canoes with lobster-claw sails, grass-skirts, little statuettes and masks carved from wood and galip nuts incised to resemble stylised faces. I bought many such trinkets to send to the folks back home in Victoria.

At the weekends we went on various excursions. One day I joined a group that travelled up the Sogeri Road beside the Laloki River, past Hombrom Bluff and the Rouna hydroelectric power station to the Sogeri plateau. We visited Sogeri High School and Owers Corner, the beginning of the Kokoda Track. Another trip was to the Bomana War Cemetery, where Matt Power found the graves of several comrades killed on the Kokoda Track. Ian McRaid contacted a friend at the PNG Administrative College, John Rumens, a former teaching colleague from Victoria, who arranged for us to take a flight in a light plane over the mountains north-east of Port Moresby. Another weekend several of us visited Kwikila High School, 80 kilometres south-east of Moresby.

We also toured Koki Market. Its exotic sights, sounds and smells assaulted the senses. The spattered, scarlet spittle from betel-nut chewing had to be stepped over. Banana-leaf-wrapped ‘drums’ of fresh sago were another new experience; so, too, were roasted flying-foxes, stalks of bananas and plantains of unimagined varieties; cords of *brus*



Produce for sale in the local market

(leaf tobacco) woven together; and people smoking long cigarettes of twist trade-store tobacco rolled in sheets of newspaper. All this was in addition to the mounds of *kaukau* (sweet potato), cassava, yams, pawpaws, pineapples, breadfruit, custard apples, soursops and the ubiquitous betel nut, with its associated catkins of pepper.

Papua New Guineans were milling around everywhere, buying, selling, visiting and socialising. I could not yet differentiate between their ‘tribes’ as I could later, but I realised they came from many districts. Nor could I hear what they were saying, but I guessed they’d be speaking *Tok Pisin* and *Hiri Motu*, the *lingua franca* of the Port Moresby region, as well as many other languages.

During the third week of our induction course, we began receiving our postings and, one by one, departed to the schools where we would spend the next year or two teaching. After our dispersal, I rarely saw any of my fellow secondees. I kept in touch with several, but never heard of most of them again.

Ivor Salkin went off to the Police College at Bomana, Matt Power to Sogeri High School, and Ian McRaid to Lae High School. I was initially assigned to Kwikila High School but was reluctant because I’d already been there and had been disappointed. Further, I was anxious to go to Brandi High School near Wewak in the Sepik District, because my younger brother David was the *didiman* (agricultural officer) at Angoram, on the mighty river a short flight from Wewak. One of my fellow secondees was marked down for Brandi, but, as he wanted to remain near Port Moresby, we swapped.

I travelled north to Brandi on Friday, 29 January 1965. This expedition took much of the day. First there was the regular Douglas DC3 flight from Moresby to Lae, which probably took 1½ hours. I then had a three-hour wait in Lae for the flight to Wewak. I used the time to stroll to the southern, seaward end of the runway to see the *Tenyo Maru*. This was a beached Japanese cargo ship which had run aground there in 1942 under attack by Allied aircraft. Only the prow was visible,

rising some ten metres above the waves. (The ship eventually slid into the depths eight years later, while I was living in Lae).

The Lae-Wewak flight was on another DC3, a ‘side-saddle’ with canvas seats running lengthwise down the cabin. The plane was on the ‘milk-run’, which took us first to Goroka in the Eastern Highlands, then Madang. On the final Madang-Wewak run we passed Manam Island with its perpetual plume of smoke, the first active volcano I’d seen. We reached the Boram airport at Wewak about 4.00 pm. As we approached the aerodrome, I was amazed to see that water-filled bomb craters pockmarked the entire coastal plain. They spoke eloquently of the savage war fought thereabouts 20 years earlier. From the air, Boram looked like the surface of a huge crumpet.

A Land Rover from the district office took me from Boram to the government headquarters buildings on the top of the Wewak hill. The Department of Education’s district clerk was unwelcoming and unhelpful. He knew nothing



Wreck of the *Tenyo Maru* at Lae

about my joining the Brandi staff nor what accommodation I might occupy. He then indicated a young chap on the far side of the room. ‘He’s from Brandi, come to collect the mail,’ he said, ‘so he can take you there.’

I introduced myself to the Brandi bloke, Ron Reisner, and asked if he could drive me to the school. Thus, my three very fulfilling years at Brandi were about to begin ...

A Nurse’s Memories of Her Time in TPNG

RUTH PITT (née Lewis)—PART 2

Kundiawa was the administrative centre for the heavily populated Chimbu District.

As well as Government offices, stores, post office, a motel, golf course on the airstrip, club with an oval, tennis court and swimming pool, there was a district hospital. The District Medical Officer and his wife, also a doctor, ran this. There was no power overnight and residents’ cars would line the airstrip for night evacuations. There was a leprosy ward. Malaria Services sprayed DDT over water puddles and elsewhere, and sprayed the *Haus Sista* with dieldrin to try to eliminate cockroaches.

H*aus Sista* was up a track above the hospital. Two Double Certificate nurses looked after the obstetric patients and undernourished infants. One also held a family planning clinic. Another Triple Certificate nurse and I would do the monthly village clinics. *Haus Sista* had a wide veranda and was a frequent venue for parties. We’d often retire to bed with doors locked

while the guests partied on. ‘Squatter’ was a favourite board game. There were themed nights and movies at the club. The Mission Aviation Fellowship flew in for monthly inter-denominational English services there. Riding tractor tubes down the Chimbu River was fun though the rocks were hard on the backside. The Kagul caves across the valley were spectacular but difficult to explore.

No overnight power meant that if a premature baby needed a humidicrib, one of us would take it to Goroka Hospital on a chartered small plane. I was grateful to hand over a live baby for fear of ‘payback’. The other MCH nurse and I took turns, along with the other registered nurses, at being on call for deliveries at weekends, and I found delivering babies and suturing by torchlight a challenge. We had no phone so would be found by a sent messenger.

One week out of four we would stay in town, hold clinic at the hospital and visit surrounding villages. Driver William in our Toyota would drop one of us with our Nurse Assistant and gear at a village then proceed to another. When the second village clinic had finished, they would return to the first and we would all head for home. Good in theory ... but with rotting bridges, landslides or mechanical problems we could arrive so late that the mothers had left, or after clinics be delayed or have to walk home, one time arriving after 10 pm. Sometimes women would walk with us to the next village. Our Nurse Assistants did not speak much English but spoke *Pidgin*, were trained to give injections, apply treatments, clean the equipment and were a great help to us. Donated empty stubby beer bottles were washed and used for mothers to take home cod liver oil for their toddlers, with a cottonwool plug in case there was spillage.

The second week, on Monday we would set off east, through Chuave (near the Eastern Highlands border) then south to the Monono Lutheran Mission. We would sleep in a separate guest house but eat with the Hueters, taking a bucket of hot water with us after dinner for our bucket showers.



MCH and Dental Clinic, Kundiawa

From here we would hold clinics in surrounding villages, returning to Kundiawa after clinics on Friday.

We would head north, following the Chimbu River, to stay with the Nordens at the Sumburu Lutheran Mission in the third week. The Gembogl government station was nearby, also the Kegsugl airstrip at the base of Mt Wilhelm, PNG's highest mountain, with permanent snow on its peak. One day I'd hang my scale in a tree where the locals had gathered to sell the pyrethrum daisies they had grown. This was the only cash crop which could grow at those altitudes but picking then removing the petals of 3,000 flowers for 15 cents a pound didn't interest the locals unless they wanted to buy a new radio or similar—not a flourishing industry. John Pitt, a Rural Development Officer (*didiman*) of the Department of Agriculture Stock & Fisheries (DASF) gave us a roast lunch on those days. He later transferred to New Britain.

We flew south to Omkalai Lutheran Mission the next Monday, as the road was considered too dangerous for us. The plane had to rev to reach the top of the strip where the house was. A vehicle would be sent across the Marigl Valley from the Gumine Government Station for us to use for our clinics while we were there.

The village headmen would get warning of our coming and ‘sing-out’ to all concerned. We were the only Administration people to regularly visit some villages and the locals dressed up to see us. We would be greeted by deputations with concerns like land disputes and, once, a local Catholic priest co-habiting with a young lady. We would pass the concerns on appropriately. We would arrange transport for, or take people needing hospitalisation, back to Kundiawa. There were always people wanting a ride claiming they were sick. The doctor tried to solve the problem by them having to pay a dollar if they needed in-patient care, or 10¢ if an outpatient. No charge if they had venereal disease (VD). The young women would sidle up and when asked to show payment, would say ‘*Sista, mi gat VD*’. It was always possible. I remember one in a lovely wedding dress which became less white each month.



Clinic on aid-post verandah

We had to give the health talks at each clinic here too. I would say a sentence in *Pidgin*, my assistant would repeat it in her Kundiawa tongue. The headman, who visited Kundiawa for meetings, would then translate it into the local lingo. Goodness knows what it ended up like. Moresby sent posters which we would display. The illiterate had difficulty understanding them. I remember a group of old men looking at an enlarged drawing of a scabies beetle. ‘Oo ahh,’ they were glad they didn't have them!

Scabies infestation was endemic. I'd treat the burrows on new babies with benzyl benzoate and the next month those would have healed and there would be more to treat. Families huddled with animals around the fire in their huts to keep warm at night. Respiratory problems were common. We treated them with procaine penicillin if severe. They also smeared themselves with pig fat for warmth.

Very cold river water made maintaining personal hygiene difficult. Houses were usually made of vertical timber walls with thatched roofs. Public buildings could have woven pitpit cane walls and kunai grass or iron roofs. Scraped grass fibres were twisted, dyed and woven for *bilums*—traditional carry-bags for goods, made and used by women. Possum fur woven into them kept babies warmer.

The Government stations had carp ponds—to try and establish a supply of extra protein. Tinned milk, fish or meat and eggs were the principal source as pigs were kept for ceremonies. Sweet potato was the staple food grown. One day we

came across bride-price display preparations for two weddings when we arrived at a village. We gave up trying to hold clinic and watched the proceedings. During two hours of negotiations between the families, women cooked vegies in pits then the tethered pigs were killed and rolled into the cooking pits next to them. We left after this, but were concerned as the partly-cooked, uneaten pork would be distributed, taken home and could cause *pig bel*, necrosis of the bowel. Immunisation against this has since become available.

A group of us hired a vehicle one weekend and drove to Mt Hagen. Six of us chartered a flight to Madang for another weekend. A trip to Lae in the ‘Scout’ we hired from Monono Lutheran Mission was enjoyable until car trouble lengthened our return trip. I joined a golfer's charter to Rabaul another weekend to catch up with my brother and friends. Our golfer won the championship and we nursed his trophies on the flight home. Linking commercial flights I had a short visit home to Port Pirie, SA for my brother Mervyn and Jill's wedding in April.

In late June 1969 I went on leave and that will start the next episode. •



A committee man and bride price display Kogi village



The recent history of Papua New Guinea is intimately bound up with the people who made PNG their home and, in many cases, their life's work—it is therefore fitting, but also with deep regret, that we record the passing of members and friends. Please send any tributes for the next issue by the Copy Deadline, 7 August 2023, to editor@pngaa.net

CLARKE, Prue OAM d. 25 August 2022

Prue was born in Port Moresby on 21 September 1939 and evacuated in 1941 with her mother, Eileen Clarke. Her father, Patrick Harold Clarke, was at one time District Finance Officer Samarai.

She returned to the Territory in 1947 and later trained as a teacher. She taught for some time at Hagara Primary T School then left for Australia where she had a distinguished career teaching and being principal of Canberra schools.

She was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for service to education and the community in 2007. She was also awarded the Centenary Medal (for voluntary service to the community) and the Public Education Award (Outstanding Educational Service, particularly in the area of Music Education).

In 1987 and 1988 she gave a series of 100 lectures on Australia for the Commonwealth Institute in London. She is survived by her husband, Kevin sons Greg, Stephen & Damien, daughter-in-law Kristen and grandchildren Jack and Tilda.

DWYER, Joan d. 27 January 2023

Joan was born in 1926 and worked in PNG for 17 years with her husband, Patrol Officer Terry Dwyer. 'Indiana Joan', as she was known, loved every opportunity PNG offered and, after return

to Australia successfully ran several businesses in South East Queensland. She is survived by her sons David and Colin and six grandchildren.

Tracy Cheffins & Colin Dwyer

Editor's Note: A story about Joan Dwyer's life in PNG as the wife of a kiap was published in PNG KUNDU March 2019: <https://pngaa.org/article/indiana-joan-by-joan-and-colin-dwyer/>

DWYER, Peter David d. 3 April 2023

Peter Dwyer was born at Waipawa, Hawkes Bay in New Zealand in 1937. After studying Zoology at Wellington University, he did a PhD at University of New England in Armidale, NSW. From 1966, he lectured in Zoology at the University of Queensland.

In 1972, Peter travelled to Papua New Guinea and spent 15 months with the Rofaifo people of the Eastern Highlands studying bats and other small



'Indiana Joan' at the Goroka Show

mammals. He soon became more interested in what Rofaifo people knew of these animals than in the animals themselves. Thus began a shift in his interests, from zoology to anthropology.

In 1978, Peter returned to PNG. He lived and worked with Etoro people along the southern slopes of Mt Sisa (Haliago) on the Great Papuan Plateau, now within the Hela Province. With Kristine Plowman, he spent 15 months with the people of Bobole, doing research for his first book, *The pigs that ate the garden: a human ecology from Papua New Guinea*.

He returned again to PNG to work with Kubo people of Western Province, living at Gwaimasi village just south of where the Strickland River emerges from the central ranges. With Monica Minnegal, he established deep and lasting relationships with these people. He and Monica returned to the area many times over the next 30 years, spending time with Kubo, Konai, Febi and Bedamuni people. (Peter's last visit was for five months at the village of Suabi in 2014, when he was 77 years old.)

Peter became intrigued by the efforts of these people to shape a future for themselves as the world changed dramatically around them. Increasing western influence posed many challenges but also new opportunities. The people of the Strickland plains actively sought ways to engage with them. Documenting those efforts resulted in Peter's second

book, written with Monica, *Navigating the future: an ethnography of change in Papua New Guinea*, published in 2017.

The research for that book required Peter to engage with the reports of early explorers of the area—scientists, prospectors, and *kiaps*. Thus, he came to know some of the *kiaps* who patrolled the Nomad district, and the missionaries with stations in Kubo land. He was delighted to include many of Bob Hoad's photos in *Taim bipo: people of the Nomad district when the white men came*, a booklet prepared for local school students in the hope that they would begin to collate their own people's stories of encounters.

Peter was immensely grateful to the people of PNG with whom he lived for their generous sharing of knowledge, hopes and fears. He tried, always, to ensure their own voices were heard to be shared and used for their own purposes.

Peter wrote about the need to pursue both social and environmental justice long before these became topics of everyday concern. He was a zoologist, anthropologist, a geographer and an historian.

But always he was concerned with change, and how relationships are re-negotiated in the face of change—questions of ecology and evolution.

In 1997 he left the University of Queensland to join Monica at the University of Melbourne. He never retired. He continued

writing well into his final illness, with the last paper submitted for review only days before his death.

Monica Minnegal & Chris Warrillow

A longer version of this vale will be added to the PNGAA website.

For access to Peter Dwyer's publications go to: <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Peter-Dwyer>

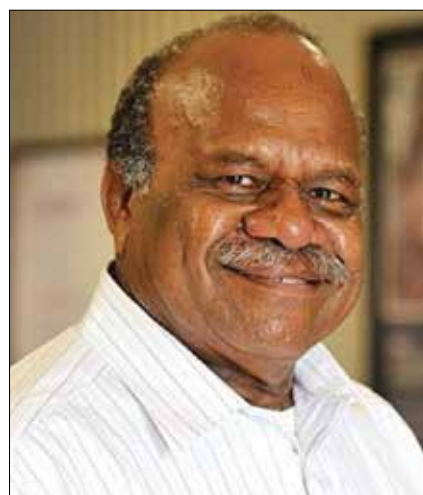
NAMALIU, Sir Rabbie Langanai d. 28 March 2023, aged 75

Sir Rabbie had a long and distinguished political career serving in many important roles, including as foreign minister in the early days in government, and later as the speaker of parliament from 1994 to 1997. Sir Rabbie served as PNG's fourth prime minister from July 1988 to July 1992.

He was an early graduate of the University of PNG and became a leading figure during PNG's post-independence era along with Sir Mekere Morauta, Sir Anthony Siaguru, and Sir Charles Lepani.

Prime Minister James Marape said that PNG had 'lost a great statesman' and confirmed that a state funeral would be held in his honour.

PNG journalist Scott Waide told ABC Pacific that Sir Rabbie was a 'typical Melanesian leader. He drew on his cultural roots, was always consultative, and at a time when there was so much instability [in PNG] during the Bougainville crisis, he survived four years in government as



Sir Rabbie Langanai Namaliu prime minister and survived many votes of no confidence. In a tribute on Facebook Max Uechtritz said: 'A proud Tolai from East New Britain, Sir Rabbie twice honoured our family at funeral ceremonies. Firstly in 2004 when we reburied great-grandmother Phebe Parkinson at our Kuradui cemetery. Then again in 2019 when we took the ashes of our parents Alf and Mary Lou to inter next to the Parkinsons. Sir Rabbie spoke beautifully and generously at both.'

He will forever hold a special place in PNG history. Deepest condolences to his family, the people of Raluana, East New Britain and PNG. RIP' <https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/487239/sir-rabbie-langanai-namaliu-papua-new-guinea-s-fourth-pm-passes-away> (20+) Papua New Guinea Association Of Australia | Facebook

STENNETT (née Holland), Margaret Ann
d. 17 October 2022
Margaret, the wife of Les (dec.)

and much-loved mother of Michael, Robyn and Martin was born on 8 February 1937 in Wau to Jessie and Bill Holland (both dec.). Margaret is survived also by her three brothers Bill, Peter and Don.

Margaret was a seasoned Territorian as she had travelled twice from PNG to Australia (pre-war) before she was three years old. Once with her mother, Jessie, who needed to recuperate from blackwater fever when she was born and then with other mothers who were evacuated on the *Macdui* in 1941.

Jessie was a sister to Dorothy and Flora, Jimmy and Glory, who were very well-known Territorians during the gold mining boom times in the 1920s up until the 80s.

The early life was typical of the kids in the highlands and her favourite babysitter was a young local, Took, someone she seemed to prefer over anyone else.

The family returned to PNG in 1954 after which Margaret spent some time, like most children during that time, at boarding school in Rockhampton (the Range Convent).

After leaving school she started her working life in Rabaul at the Commonwealth Bank in Mango Avenue. She did all the things young teenagers did there and made her 'debut' to the District Commissioner John Foldi with many of her friends in 1956.

She married Les 'the Carpenter' in 1958 who was employed with

Dahl Singh and Company. Les later became a teacher with Malaguna Tech, a position he had until they finally retired to Australia.

Margaret's three children were all born in Rabaul and Margaret's life for the next 20-odd years was spent in that lovely town. As mentioned, she descends from a well-known family of New Guinea 'befores' whose mother was a Stewart, the sister of Flora of the hotel fame in Wau, Bulolo and Samarai, Dorothy, also of the hotel fame (Cecil Lae, Cosmopolitan in Samarai and Rabaul and The Ascot in Rabaul) and their brother Jim who was well known in the 30s before being killed in an auto accident in 1937.

Margaret and Les' children had their early upbringing in Rabaul all attending school there.

Like many Territorians Margaret and Les 'went finish' at least twice but always seemed to return, but did their final 'going finish' in 1972. The family settled down to life in suburban Brisbane after a time on Magnetic Island near Townsville.

In her later years Margaret lived a quiet life in Manly, West Brisbane and passed away peacefully with the family close by.

Margaret is survived by her children Michael, Robyn and Martin and their families. She had very fond memories of Rabaul and will be sadly missed.

Bill Holland



Treasurer's Corner

Payments to: PNGAA, PO Box 250, Kilcoy QLD 4515

Enquiries to: treasurer@pngaa.net or phone 0448 216 049

MEMBERSHIP & ORDER FORM

To place an order, please tick the appropriate boxes below, fill in the details on the form overleaf, and mail to PNGAA, PO Box 250, Kilcoy QLD 4515 or email to treasurer@pngaa.net

PNGAA MEMBERSHIP

Rates shown are for 12 months' membership

- ☐ I wish to renew my membership
☐ I wish to become a new member

Resident in Australia

\$50.00

MEMB

Resident in Asia/Pacific Postal Zone

\$70.00

Resident in Rest of World Postal Zone

\$80.00

Digital Membership only

\$33.00

(i.e. no hard copy or postage costs)

PNGAA DONATIONS

- ☐ General Donations
☐ Scholarship Fund

DON
DONSF

PNGAA STORE

- ☐ **Land of the Unexpected** \$30.00 LOTU
Add \$7.00 postage within Australia—o'seas extra
- ☐ **When the War Came: New Guinea Islands 1942** \$60.00 WWC
Add \$20.00 postage within Australia—o'seas extra
- ☐ **Mangroves, Coconuts and Frangipani: The Story of Rabaul** \$60.00 MCF
Add \$20.00 postage within Australia—o'seas extra
- ☐ **The Volcano's Wife** \$25.00 VOL
Add \$7.00 postage within Australia—o'seas extra
- ☐ **Cloudlands Memoirs** \$15.00 CLD
Add \$3.00 postage within Australia—o'seas extra
- ☐ **Walk Into Paradise (DVD)** \$10.00 WIP
Add \$5.00 postage within Australia—o'seas extra
- ☐ **Kiap: Stories Behind the Medal (DVD)** \$25.00 KIAP
Add \$5.00 postage within Australia—o'seas extra
- ☐ **Rabaul and Montevideo Maru 70th Anniversary (DVD)** \$20.00 RMVM
Add \$5.00 postage within Australia—o'seas extra
- ☐ **PNGAA Tote Bag** \$15.00 TOTE
Add \$10.00 postage (10 bags \$20) within Australia—o'seas extra
- ☐ **PNGAA Membership Directory: 2022 Edition**

Available free of charge to members on the PNGAA website. First log on with your password at: www.pngaa.org then select 'The PNGAA' then 'Official Business (Members Only)' and follow the links. If you need help, please contact our Membership Officer, Roy Ranney, whose contact details are inside the front cover of this journal.

TOTAL COST \$

PNGAA Membership

Annual membership within Australia is \$50.00 (overseas extra) and available to any person with an interest in Papua New Guinea. Members receive four issues of our journal, *PNG KUNDU*, per year, full access to all content on the website, including our eBooks, receive email updates via Tok Save, network through events and social media and are encouraged to explore and become actively involved with all aspects of the Papua New Guinea Association of Australia Inc. New members are always welcome. For more details, please turn to the previous page or follow the link: <https://pngaa.org/membership/become-a-member/>



PNGAA Store

If you are interested in the history, adventure and stories of Papua New Guinea, and those who helped build the nation, then any of the items in our store will be a great addition to your library or a unique gift for any occasion. Details are available on this form, or on our website: www.pngaa.org/store/

MEMBERSHIP DETAILS

Please **print** your name and address below and fill out the relevant parts of the Order Form overleaf

Note that your journal address label indicates when your membership expires.

Digital members can find their membership status on the website by clicking on Membership then My Subscription.

Name: Membership number (if known):

Address:
.....

Postcode:

Telephone: Mobile:

Email address:

☐ I would prefer to access a 'digital' *PNG KUNDU* via the website, using a membership log-on, instead of receiving a hard copy. This 'digital membership' is available at a reduced rate (see Order Form overleaf).

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME: see <https://pngaa.org/membership/become-a-member/>

PAYMENT—Please tick method of remittance

☐ **CHEQUE Payable to:** PNGAA **Post to:** PNGAA, PO Box 250, Kilcoy QLD 4515

☐ **EFT (Electronic Funds Transfer)** **Transfer to:** BSB: 062-009 / Account No. 0090 7724

In the transaction description include the Purpose Code (from the Order Form overleaf) and Member Number or surname. (Note: More than 20 characters may not be transmitted by the bank.)

Please send a confirmation email to: treasurer@pngaa.net

☐ **CREDIT/DEBIT CARD**

Either post to: PNGAA, PO Box 250, Kilcoy QLD 4515 OR pay through the PNGAA website

Card Number: / / Amount Payable: \$

Expiry Date: / Security Code (on back of card):

Name on Card (please print):

Signature of Card Holder: Date:



Hon. Pat Conroy MP

Anzac Day 2023 Commemorated in PNG

Hon. Pat Conroy MP, Australian Federal Minister for Defence Industry and Minister for International Development and the Pacific, attended the Dawn Service in Port Moresby in Papua New Guinea on Anzac Day, 25 April 2023.

The service was held at the Bomana War Cemetery, which has more Australian war graves than any other cemetery in the world with more than 3,300 Australian service personnel buried there, alongside 40 members of the 1st Papuan Infantry Battalion who fought with them.

Mr Conroy paid tribute to the Papuans who fought with the Australians, and said 'it was an immense privilege and was incredibly moving' to see how close the relationship between the two countries still is.

Most people have heard of the 'fuzzy wuzzy' angels. They transported Australian soldiers who were wounded. I had the privilege of meeting a 92-year-old veteran ... This small frail gentleman joined up when he was 13 years old to fight alongside Australia in what was the battle for Australia and a battle for Papua New Guinea.

The battles in Papua New Guinea in the Second World War were vital to the defence of Australia. The Kokoda Track bore witness to some of the most desperate and vicious fighting ever encountered by Australian troops. I had the privilege of going up to Kokoda last year for the 80th anniversary. To witness the landscape that Australians and Papua New Guineans fought through was remarkable. It will live with me to the day I die.

The people of Papua New Guinea suffered greatly as war tore through their homeland. We remember the Papuan Infantry Battalion soldiers who served at the side of Australians and the Papuans who risked their lives to carry our wounded to safety.

We hold in our hearts the families and friends who have suffered the loss of a loved one in the service of our nation.

Lest We Forget



Papua New Guinea Honours King Charles III and Queen Camilla

Upon independence in 1975, the PNG Constitution granted Queen Elizabeth II the title of Head of State of Papua New Guinea. Upon her death in 2022 and the accession of her son, the Prince of Wales, he is now King Charles III, King of Papua New Guinea and his other Realms and Territories, Head of the Commonwealth—which now consists of 56 member states, 15 of which are known as Commonwealth Realms, including Papua New Guinea.

In September 2022 Governor-General Sir Bob Dadae and Prime Minister James Marape were joined by dignitaries at the ceremony in the capital Port Moresby to honour the late Queen Elizabeth II and proclaim King Charles III as the country's new head of state.

'In reflection of the life she lived, the exemplary performance of duties as the head of the state of Papua New Guinea, it is in this connection that we all gather here this morning to acknowledge her passing and to acknowledge and witness the ascension of the throne of King Charles III,' PM Marape said.

However, he did not attend the coronation of King Charles III in London on 6 May 2023, as he was preparing for the visit of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in late May, but was represented by Foreign Minister Justin Tkatchenko at the event, with the Governor-General representing the country and leading a delegation of more than 30 people, including support staff.

'Papua New Guinea remains a strong part of the realm nations. We are very much a part of the Commonwealth, adequately represented by the Governor-General and the Foreign Minister to pay respects on His Majesty, King Charles III, the King of Commonwealth, the Realms, and Papua New Guinea,' said PM Marape.

FEATURING:

1. Prince Charles with escorts, PNG Independence celebrations, September 1975; **2.** Prince Charles during a 1984 trip to Papua New Guinea to open the nation's new Parliament; **3.** Prince Charles and Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall in Port Moresby, 2012; **4.** King Charles III and Queen Camilla after the Coronation Ceremony, 2023

www.pngaa.org

ISSN 2652-5208, PPA 224987/00025

JUNE 2023 • Vol. 4, No. 14

