

^{PNG}Kundu

DECEMBER 2023

**Papua New Guinea Association
of Australia Inc.**

www.pngaa.org





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: Position vacant (please see page 2)

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

SECRETARY: Kylee Andersen—(Mob) 0405 334 501; (Email) admin@pngaa.net

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

EVENTS CO-ORDINATOR: Sigrid Yaru—(Email) events@pngaa.net

PNGAA ARCHIVIST & COLLECTIONS:

Cheryl Marvell—(Mob) 0438 635 132; (Email) collection@pngaa.net

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:

Phil Ainsworth, John Egerton, Steven Gagau, 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.

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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.

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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 Murrough Benson & Andrea Williams

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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 54 of this issue or on www.pngaa.org

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© Painting by Nombri Temine (see page 5)

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**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 Management Committee

President's Resignation

In early September 2023 Chris Pearsall, President of the Papua New Guinea Association of Australia (PNGAA), reluctantly resigned due to ill health, following a fall a few months previously. The Management Committee was saddened to hear this but delighted to hear that as Chris' health improves he will continue to participate where possible. As you will know, Chris has been proactive in instigating the PNGAA Scholarship Program highlighted in the September 2023 *PNG KUNDU*, a marvellous, albeit challenging, achievement. The committee will miss his business acumen and looks forward to future assistance.

The PNGAA thanks you very much for all you've achieved Chris.

Administration

Following the resignation of the president the association needs to appoint an acting president.

The good news is that Kylee Andersen, a member from West Australia, has been appointed as secretary, and we warmly welcome Kylee to the Management Committee.

Meanwhile, the association continues to need volunteers to help with social media and with the website.

Please, if you could help your association in this way, or know somebody who might be interested contact Murrough Benson



(Mob: 0448 216 049) or Andrea Williams (Mob: 0409 031 889).

PNG KUNDU

The PNGAA committee hopes you enjoy this wonderful issue of *PNG KUNDU*. We are hearing many comments expressing pleasure at the varied stories and information contained within each issue of this quarterly journal, and the very professional presentation. We hear that the journal is shared with family and friends over and over—and it is exciting to hear it is so well loved by our members and wider PNG/Australian friends.

Our committee is proud of the enormous effort put in by our Editor, John Egerton, and our Production Manager, Jeannette Gilligan, to ensure it is enjoyed by you.

The journal is a breath-taking glimpse of both contemporary information and life before PNG gained independence from Australia. With so many Papua New Guineans born since independence, and now around 50 years of age, they have little knowledge of what life and

developing PNG was like before independence.

The Australian era in PNG is almost forgotten. *PNG KUNDU* ensures that the relationship between Australia and PNG is remembered and continues. Your contributions with items of interest are important in so many ways, and so is membership of this important association.

Please help our association to grow by encouraging members to join, to contribute both stories and items of interest, and to engage with and assist the committee.

Promoting Exhibitions

PNGAA members continue to work on projects that promote the rich culture and connection between Australia and PNG. One of these is Steven Gagau, a PNGAA committee member who has recently been instrumental in the magnificent 'Bilas' exhibition at the Australian Museum, and who continues to work on projects featuring PNG and the Pacific connection (*see page 14*).



One of the photographs on display at the *Bilas* Exhibition

PNGAA Website

The PNGAA website, too, is an extraordinary resource. Recently we were asked if some photos could be used for a large new exhibition on WWII and its legacies at the National Museum and Art Gallery in Port Moresby, which is being funded by Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the government of Australia.

In supporting exhibitions we hope, too, that the PNGAA and its work is highlighted to those who have not heard of the Association.

PNGAA Collection

Members will know that one of the goals for the PNGAA is to showcase the PNGAA Collection, continually growing with thanks to our Curator, Cheryl Marvell. It would complement a cultural centre where both Australians and international visitors could learn more about PNG and its Australian connection. PNGAA would like to have a working group to achieve this. We need volunteers who are willing to be proactive, or who have experience in achieving grants, to help progress this concept. With the 50th anniversary of PNG Independence in 2025 this would be a very special achievement. Please contact Andrea Williams (M: 0409 031 889) to help.

Gatherings at Chatswood

Following discussion about the social gatherings that so many of us enjoy, and reflecting on the working bees held when the journal was labelled and packed



Wantoks! Step Inside Australia's Latest Haven for Pacific Culture

The new *Wansolmoana: One Salt Ocean* permanent Pasifika Gallery at the Australian Museum opened on 13 October.

Wansolmoana was curated by the Australian Museum's Pasifika team and cultural knowledge holders in Australia and the Pacific. This exhibition celebrates the complex, varied and dynamic cultures and languages of today's Pasifika peoples.

Breathtaking objects from the world-renowned Pacific cultural collections of the Australian Museum, are accompanied by contemporary artworks and newly acquired pieces.

Delve into the ties Pasifika peoples have with the past; each other and the environment; a space dedicated to our young Pacific people, a reminder of who you are, where you come from and what you are made of.

Wansolmoana—meaning One Salt Ocean—reflects the cultural significance of the immense body of water that connects the islands and people across the Pacific region.

It blends the wisdom of Ancestors with the voices of the present to ensure a vibrant legacy for future generations through stories and objects from across the region.

at Chatswood by a team of volunteers, it was decided to approach the Chatswood Bowling Club to see if the PNGAA could use their facilities for a regular morning get-together every three months.

As done previously, a PNGAA volunteer will bring mugs, coffee and tea, and those attending will bring some food to share. Happily, the Chatswood Bowling Club have confirmed availability, so put the third Monday in November, February, May and August into your diaries and come along.

If you'd like to email Roy Ranney on membership@pngaa.net to confirm your interest, he will email members a couple of weeks prior to the dates.

Battle for Australia Commemoration

On 6 September 2023 Cheryl Marvell and Andrea Williams represented the PNGAA, together with former PNGAA Treasurer, Doug Wood, at the annual Battle for Australia Commemoration in Martin Place, Sydney. The service acknowledges and honours those who served on land and sea and in the air, repulsing the direct threat to Australia, 1942–45.

As many of us know, but it is rarely acknowledged in Australia, the first threat to Australia was on the then Mandated Territory of New Guinea. Attending a service such as this makes a difference. It means we pause, reflect and value



The Governor of New South Wales Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC, KC speaking at the Battle of Australia ceremony

our beautiful, peaceful country—with thanks to those who have made it possible.

So many stories of our past help us to remember earlier acts of bravery and keep us aware. Next time you hear of an opportunity to attend a service like this, try to make the time to be there.

PNGAA Scams

It's a sign of our times but unfortunately some PNGAA members were recently approached by a scammer asking for money. These scammers are becoming more clever in their approach and many people can be tricked by them without sufficient vigilance. Remember the old adage? If in doubt, toss it out! Or ask someone else to check.

Roy continues to remind members to check the email address behind the name of the sender in the email newsletters

sent out to members. In regard to the scammer, Roy completed a Cyber Report with the Police and spent many hours on the phone with CBA. As with a previous attempt, the scammer is a customer of the CBA. You'd think both CBA and the Police would be able to actually DO something, wouldn't you? However, the response from both the bank and the police has been underwhelming.

Rabaul Anzac Day 2024

Members of the PNGAA are liaising with the 2/22nd Battalion members about a trip to Rabaul for Anzac Day 2024. We hear Air Niugini will be celebrating its 50th anniversary in November but obtaining information from them is not easy! Perhaps now that the new Lae terminal has opened, there will be more options for travel.

Discussion currently includes offering the name of a travel agent to progress bookings. Please email events@pngaa.net if you are interested.

Welcome to New Members

The management committee and members of PNGAA welcome the following new members to the Association: Mike Bailey, Brian Kelly and Bill Sanders.



Membership Subscription Rate Increases

Despite rising costs, we have been able to hold membership subscription rates steady for the past three years. The point has now been

reached, however, where membership subscriptions no longer cover our operating costs. We regret, therefore, that all rates will have to be increased, effective from 1 January 2024. The new annual rates from that date are:

- **Printed journal posted within Australia: \$55.00**
- **Printed journal posted to Asia/Pacific (including New Zealand): \$77.00**
- **Printed journal posted to Rest of the World: \$88.00**
- **Digital Membership (no journal postage charge): \$36.00**

Of the current base \$50.00 annual membership fee (overseas postage is extra), \$33.00 goes towards production and distribution of the journal and \$18.00 is required to cover general operating costs (mainly insurance

cover, storage and website). Very small operating surpluses in recent years have only been achieved from interest earned on investments, raffles and auctions at functions and profit on the sale of books, DVDs and other merchandise.

We believe the interest rate increases of the past year have now peaked and will likely ease back in the coming year or two while income from functions and merchandise sales is expected to remain relatively small.

If you have an email address registered with us, you can find the status of your membership by logging onto the PNGAA website and clicking on 'Membership' then 'My Subscription'.

Alternatively, if you receive a printed copy of the journal the

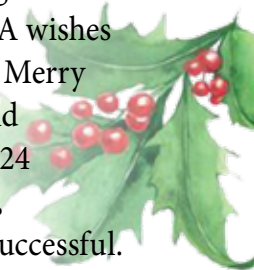
expiry date of your membership is included on the mailing sheet that comes with your journal.

Payment options are outlined in the Treasurer's Corner Membership & Order Form in the back of the journal.

Christmas Luncheons

Before closing, a reminder to please attend the PNGAA Annual Christmas Luncheons, which are always great social occasions and which support the hard work of the committee and extended volunteers. See page 10 for more information.

The Management Committee of the PNGAA wishes you all a very Merry Christmas and hopes that 2024 will be happy, healthy and successful.

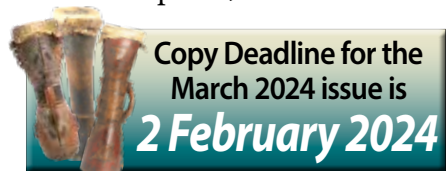


... the eyes have it!

On the front cover of this issue we are featuring an extract from one of Nombri Temine's paintings, on display at the PNG Fine Arts Gallery in Port Moresby.

Nombri was born in 1981 in the Simbu Province, and attended a Catholic school until Grade Ten, displaying a natural talent for drawing and winning regular school art prizes. When he moved to Port Moresby in 2007, he was inspired to take up painting after seeing the thriving art scene in the capital city.

Nombri, like most of Port Moresby's artists, is self-taught and has had no opportunity for formal training. He has had many exhibitions of his art at galleries in Papua New Guinea, and has regularly exhibited with local artists. His work has been widely acclaimed, purchased and recognised throughout the country, and he has also been featured at the Shenxhen Fair in China, as well as the Paradise Palette Exhibition at the Royal Queensland Art Society (RQAS) showcasing various artworks by PNG street artists. Curated by Don Wotton, this exhibition provides an opportunity for both established and upcoming PNG artists to showcase their creative talents to a wider audience as well as connect with fellow artists in Australia.



Editorial

JOHN EGERTON

I have now had the privilege and challenge of editing 12 issues of *PNG KUNDU*. Once again this issue has a diverse mixture of stories recording the experiences of people who have lived and worked in Papua New Guinea and those with an interest in its people and their culture. These stories come not only from our members, but from others in Australia and elsewhere who share our interest in PNG.

Examples of the elsewhere are the records of life in the 1920s on a big coconut plantation in the Milne Bay area (page 40) and the story about the deluge myths of Austronesian people (page 28). The authors of these stories discovered us on our website, contacted someone on the executive and the stories followed from there.

Papua New Guinea is always in the news and we try to present a range of those news reports, not only to inform people who may have missed the reports, but to

remind our members of people and places they may have known in the past. The news item about tribal fighting in Enga Province (page 18) reminded me of the cold nights I spent in the *haus kiap* at Wapenamanda (1700 m asl) in 1962 when I was part of a joint medical/veterinary team trying to find out why people were dying after ceremonial pig feasts, then part of the culture of the people of the Highlands. It also reminded me of Tim Murrell, the medical officer who led the *pik bel* investigations and who, after leaving PNG, became Professor of Community Medicine at the University of Adelaide.

Recent issues have included stories written by young people from PNG about the difficulties they have met and overcome in getting an education. This issue also includes another contribution from Ken McKinnon AO, who created and directed PNG's plan for primary school education in the 1960s. I am sure that he will be impressed by the writing of our authors from PNG and get some satisfaction



William McGregor on their coconut plantation at Milne Bay, 1920s

from seeing more Papua New Guineans benefit from the education system he put in place.

Most of the content of the journal is generated by you, its readers. It will continue to be relevant only if you continue to send your stories, accounts of events, information about books and exhibitions and anything else you think should be included. So, keep up the good work.

Your editor's time is spent putting contributions into a standard format for our production manager, Jeannette Gilligan. I try to correct mistakes in spelling and/or grammar before sending the contributions to her, and it is she who turns what I send her into the attractive content you see in each issue.

Jeannette does not produce the journal before it is vetted once again by our two proof-readers, Murrough Benson and Andrea Williams. They find the mistakes I have missed and make the journal as near perfect, editorially, as is possible. On behalf of us all I thank Jeannette, Murrough and Andrea for their skill and effort in bringing each issue of *PNG KUNDU* to life.



The community is doing what it can to support those displaced by the tribal violence in the Enga Province (© ABC News)



Listings of upcoming meetings, social gatherings and events of interest for PNGAA members, and reports of functions, reunions and ceremonies held throughout Australia and Papua New Guinea. 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 2 February 2024, the Copy Deadline for the next issue. Events are also listed on our website, under *Resources>Events*.

Visit to *Bilas* Exhibition

The rich cultural heritage of the communities in Papua New Guinea (PNG) was showcased in a multimedia exhibition, *Bilas*, held from 9 June 2023 to 2 October 2023 at the Australian Museum in Sydney.

Members and friends of Papua New Guinea Association of Australia (PNGAA) visited the exhibition on 27 September 2023. The group was fortunate to be guided by the knowledgeable Steven Gagau, who had been part of the team which curated this wonderful cultural exhibit which features photos by Wylda Bayrón.

As our group (*below*) journeyed through, memories of special occasions, artefacts and places prompted stories that bound our shared history and highlighted the joy of gathering together. Our understanding of intricate details was enriched by Steven's explanations. We absorbed the differences in *bilas* that have emerged over the years as the natural environment has changed, requiring adaptation, yet maintaining unchanged

tradition which reaches through the generations.

Everyone enjoyed this visit greatly and appreciated Steven's guidance.

Steven Gagau has also done some fascinating short audios about *Bilas* and traditional PNG culture which are truly worth listening to. They are available at: https://australian.museum/visit/audio-tours/bilas/tour_stop/1/

ANDREA WILLIAMS

PNGAA is indebted to the Australian Museum for the following background information about the exhibition.

Bilas is a powerful and integral part of PNG culture, and the exhibition highlighted its unique connection to the community's homelands by exploring the transformation of the human body as an art form.

Decorating the body fulfils everyday physical, social and spiritual needs. *Bilas* is worn in celebrations, special events, festivals or performances. It transforms the body, symbolises personal status, and brings prestige to a community.

Dr Michael Mel, co-curator





Featured is a selection of the photographs and artefacts on display at the exhibition

of *Bilas*, and a proud member of the Kilipika Village, Mt Hagen, Western Highlands, said that PNG's astonishing natural environment has provided abundant food, cultural and spiritual resources to First Nations communities for over a millennium. Michael Mel said that the body in PNG culture has always held deep meaning.

'*Bilas* translates to body adornment in *Tok Pisin*—an official language used throughout PNG. In our culture, the body has long served as a "canvas" for self-expression and to convey a multitude of messages to the outside world. Beyond being a vehicle for social communication and living art, there are also spiritual domains and meanings to the body adornment,' Mel said.

'Our connection with everything living is innate to us. It is through the domain of the natural world that the spirits and our ancestors supply us with cosmological and spiritual knowledge, prosperity, balance and materials to decorate our bodies and beyond. Adorning the body with a feather or skin from the natural world activates a metamorphosis within us, and thus we become a living embodiment of the living environment,' Mel explained.

Australian Museum Director and CEO, Kim McKay AO, said *Bilas*, supported by BSP Financial Group, is a showcase for both the museum's Pacific collections and the strength of its engagement with Pacific communities.

Shooting the War—Australia's First Oscar

Legendary cinematographer Damien Parer of the famous Parer clan of New Guinea was honoured at a new exhibition at the NSW State Library in Sydney.

The exhibition opened on 7 October and closed on 28 October 2023

The exhibition, called 'Action! Film and War' features the Best Documentary Oscar won for Parer's iconic newsreel 'Kokoda Front Line!' (1942).

It was Australia's first-ever Oscar. The inscription on the Oscar reads: 'To *Kokoda Front Line!* for its effectiveness in portraying simply yet forcefully the scene of war in New Guinea and for its moving presentation of the bravery and fortitude of our Australian comrades in arms.'

Another former ABC lensman, Neale Maude, produced the film *Action!*, which



Cinematographer Neale Maude



Ray Martin, David Brill and Les Seymour admire the Oscar won by Damien Parer.

is a feature of the exhibition and tells the harrowing stories of the Australian men and women behind the camera in war zones around the world.

PNG *Kundu* readers will remember that Neale also was the cameraman aboard the *Fugro Equator* expedition ship, which located the Japanese prison ship *Montevideo Maru* in the South China Seas in April this year. More than a thousand men and boys, mostly from Rabaul, perished when it was sunk in 1942. Neale's pictures will be used in a documentary by Max Uechtritz, who also was a part of the expedition team with fellow PNGAA committee member, Andrea Williams.

MAX UECHTRITZ

Opening of *Tidal Kin* Exhibition

This exhibition opened at the Chau Chak Wing Museum, University of Sydney, on 7 October 2023.

Tidal Kin reclaims the stories of eight Pacific Islander visitors

to Sydney during the 18th and 19th centuries. Alongside cultural objects, a soundscape of voices of present-day compatriots and descendants recount their ancestors' stories in their own languages. See also story by Steven Gagau on page 14.

The opening was attended by PNGAA committee members, Steven Gagau and Max Uechtritz.



Steven Gagau and Max Uechtritz at the display for American-Samoan Phebe Parkinson who established the first plantations in New Guinea in the 1880s with her husband, Richard Parkinson, and 'Queen Emma', Emma Forsayth

Phebe Parkinson Display (spoken by Kalolaine Fainu)

Phebe was 18 when she left Samoa to join her sister Emma Coe at Mioko Island in the Bismarck Archipelago. At 21 she went to Sydney. She later recalled:

Oh, I was so unhappy! I had to wear gloves and corsets and there was nothing to do. When the Admiral invited us to a garden party I refused to go.

The Commander of the little warship which took us down said 'You are a fool not to go and if you won't go at least let the children go.' But I said, 'No, we do not belong there and I haven't the money for the clothes. It is not our place and if we went and the people at home read about it, they would all say, 'look at those people trying to push themselves in down south where they don't belong'.

Later when my sister sold out her businesses (1911) she wanted me to sell out too and move to Sydney with her. But I said, 'I have all my children'. She said, 'Never mind,

I will educate all your children. You come and live with me in Sydney'.

She could not bear to part from me. But I said, 'No, I am ambitious too. I will stay and run my plantations and bring up my children. This is my life. If I went away from here, I would miss the natives, too. They are my life and I am so interested in everything that happens to them.

Across the Bismarck Archipelago, some 60 languages are spoken. Phebe learned some of them, vital to the plantation work of her husband, Richard. Just after she returned from Sydney, they moved to Ralum in East New Britain, where she worked with the makers of the objects which her sister Emma's business would sell to the Australian Museum and elsewhere. On display here are similar objects. Living on Gunantuna land also brought her close to the cultural life of the Gunantuna people. When a doctor from the University of Sydney visited, Phebe gifted them the kit of surgical instruments and bandages to illustrate Gunantuna medical practices.

**KALOLAINE FAINU
& MAX UECHTRITZ**



The PNG High Commissioner to Australia John Kali, his wife Vavine Vere-Kali at the *Tidal Kin* Opening

PNGAA Sydney Christmas Luncheon Saturday, 2 December 2023

Venue: Waterview in Bicentennial Park, Bicentennial Drive, Bicentennial Park, Sydney Olympic Park, Sydney NSW 2127

Time: 12 pm–4 pm

Cost: \$90 per person, includes two-course meal, drinks and coffee/tea

RSVP: 17 November 2023

Payment: via Treasurer's Corner (see end of *PNG KUNDU*); via online form on PNGAA website; or by direct debit—PNGAA BSB: 062-009 Acc. No. 0090 7724 (Ref: SYDX + your surname) Please advise treasurer@pngaa.net when payment completed and include names of all attending and any seating requests. Also, please advise any special diet at time of booking.

Enquiries: Sigrid Yaru—(Email) events@pngaa.net

Transport: Free parking available; train to Strathfield joins up with a 10-minute bus service to the restaurant door. OR there is a pleasant 10-minute walk through the park from Concord West Station. If you are driving, the entry is at gates near Australia Avenue and Shirley Strickland Avenue. See map on PNGAA website for this event.

Always a special day so bring family and friends along!
Please check the PNGAA website for any updates and we look forward to seeing you!

PNGAA Canberra Christmas Luncheon Saturday, 9 December 2023

Venue: Pavilion Hotel, Northbourne Avenue, Canberra

Time: 12.30 pm

Cost: \$61.24 per person.

Booking:

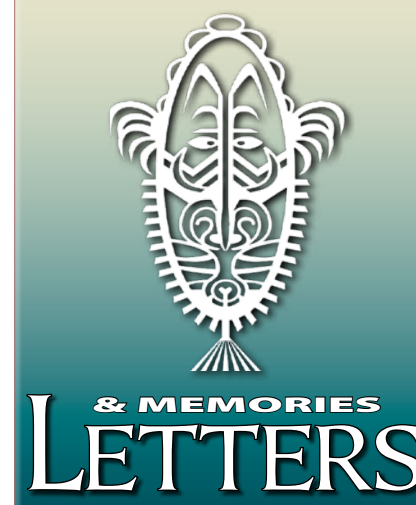
<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/pngaa-christmas-luncheon-tickets-717618495237?aff=oddttdcreator>

RSVP: Monday, 4 Dec. 2023

Enquiries: travavurconsulting@gmail.com
or phone John 0448 483 932

Visiting speaker:

Ian Howie-Willis author of *Operation Postern—The Battle to Capture Lae from the Japanese, 1943*



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 2 February 2024, the Copy Deadline for the next issue, to editor@pngaa.net

Reminiscing ...

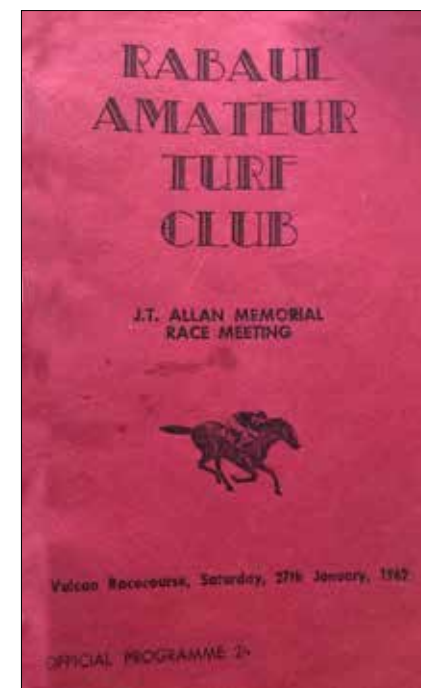
I was born at Vunapope mission 1948 and lived at Gilalum plantation out past Bitapaka War Cemetery. My grandfather, JT (Jack) Allan, owned the plantation. Jack was also a coast watcher during the war and my father and mother, Arthur and Joan, lived on the plantation as well.

I was just going through a few items reminiscing and came across a couple of items your magazine might be interested in. Here are a couple of photos (*below*).

Just love the *PNG KUNDU* magazine.

MICHAEL WHEELER

Editor's Note: The Rabaul Amateur Turf Club held its first meeting in 1923 and met regularly before the outbreak of war. It was reformed in September 1955 when 62 people attended an inaugural meeting. These officers were elected: President, Mr Matthew Foley; Vice President, Mr N Lee; Secretary, Mr Harold Brown; Treasurer, Mr Nicholson; Assistant Secretary, Mrs M Foley.



Matt Foley

Matt Foley went first to New Britain as a signalman and served as a coast watcher. He returned to Rabaul after the war and lived there until 2003. He and his wife, Margaret, formed the New Britain Transport Company. Later he ran a number of cocoa and coconut plantations.

He returned to Australia in 2003 to get treatment for malaria and stayed until 2012 when he visited Rabaul on the 70th anniversary of the sinking of the *Montevideo Maru*. He died in 2013 aged 91 and his vale is on the PNGAA website at <https://pngaa.org/matt-foley/>



The Benefits of Growing Old

- In a hostage situation in Kmart you are likely to be released first
- No one expects you to run—anywhere
- People call at 7 pm and ask, 'Did I wake you?'
- There is nothing left to learn the hard way
 - You can eat dinner at 4 pm
- Your arms are almost too short to read the PNGAA journal
- Things you buy now at Lowes won't wear out
 - Your eyes won't get much worse
- You enjoy hearing about other people's operations
 - You can live without sex but not without your Specsavers
- You get into heated arguments about Centrelink payments
 - Your back goes out more often than you do
- Your investment in Bupa Health Insurance is finally beginning to pay off
- Your joints are more accurate meteorologists than the ABC Weather Report
- Your secrets are safe with your friends because they can't remember them either
 - Your supply of brain cells is finally down to a manageable size.

Our editor, John Egerton, celebrated an important milestone recently and all the PNGAA members, and his PNG Kundu minions, wish him many happy returns, and remember:

*... it's not the years in your life,
it's the life in your years!*



To the Editor

My Mum died on 15 September 2023 in Wyong Hospital, aged 83. As you can understand, it's been a terribly upsetting time for me and her daughter, Karena.

I'm not sure if Mum will qualify for an obituary in your great magazine but I can tell you that Mum was a long-standing member of PNGAA since 1996 and really enjoyed reading *Una Voce* and *PNG Kundu*.

I've been going through her belongings in the past few weeks, packing up her unit and have found her entire treasured collection of your magazine.

Naturally, of course, she has treasured mementoes of her time in PNG as well, including great photos.

My Mum, Mrs Irene Lenehan, went to PNG to work in 1965, met my father in 1967 in Rabaul, married in 1968, gave birth to me in Lae in 1970, gave birth to my sister in Alotau in 1973 and we finished our time in PNG in Port Moresby and moved to Perth in 1976.

My Mum loved PNG and kept articles about the country for all the years after we left. She had a variety of jobs that she secured in different towns when my Dad, a police officer, got his latest transfer. Sadly, Dad died of cancer in 1987.

I can't put together a detailed summary of Mum's amazing life currently, but she was deeply loved by her children, her sisters and her parents. She loved to travel, learn and had wonderful memories of life in PNG which she frequently shared with me.

That's all for now but I wanted to let you know that one of your long-time subscribers had died. If you would like more information about Mum's life in PNG, give me a few months to put it together as it's been a very emotional time for me since she died.

Thanks for your great magazine.
Kind regards,

STEPHEN LENEHAN
astralman@y7mail.com



Featuring book reviews
about Papua New
Guinea, listings of art
and craft exhibitions,
interviews, and items
of interest to PNGAA
members.

Please send your articles,
information and photos
for the next issue by the
Copy Deadline,
2 February 2024, to
editor@pngaa.net

LOUISA VALENTINE *Still Waters Run Deep*

The author lived in Port Moresby from 1969–74, accompanying her husband who worked for Posts & Telegraphs, while she worked for the Department of Agriculture Stock & Fisheries and then the Foreign Affairs Department.

She has been writing non-fiction family histories as Louise Wilson for some years but recently wrote a few 'romance' novels as Louisa Valentine, still with a focus on family life.

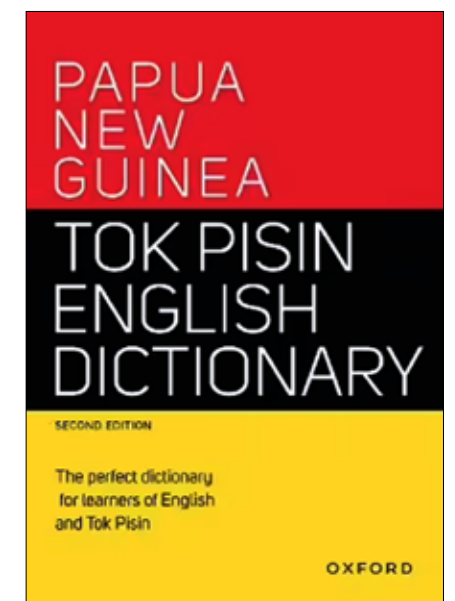
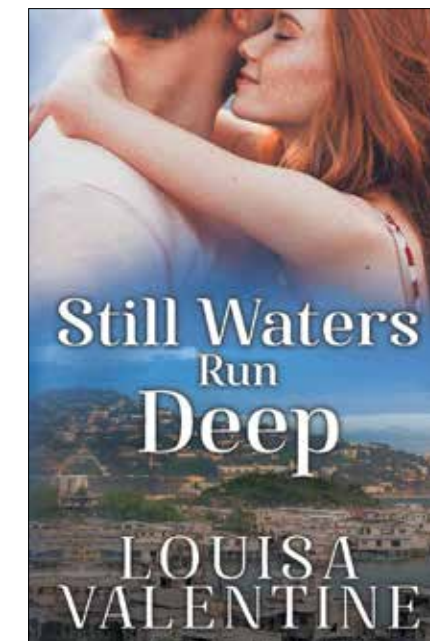
She likes to 'write what she knows', many of her long-ago field experiences in PNG are woven into the *Still Waters Run Deep* story, but not as the gospel truth. The plot involves the life of two expat couples whose lives have not gone exactly to plan.

ISBN: 978-0-6450741-5-4 (digital)
978-0-6450741-6-1 (print)

Published by Louise Wilson, South Melbourne (2022)—339 pages

Available from: <https://books2read.com/Still-Waters-Run-Deep>

Cost: eBook \$A3.99; hard copy \$A30 plus postage.



CRAIG VOLKER *Papua New Guinea Tok Pisin Dictionary, 2nd Edition*

Tok Pisin is the lingua franca of Papua New Guinea. The language has been developed naturally over the last 150 years by the people themselves, as the means of communicating among the country's many different language groups.

This concise bilingual reference is the only one of its kind in the world, fully revised and updated to provide a comprehensive language tool. With double the size of the previous edition, it is an invaluable resource for speakers of *Tok Pisin* who want to improve their English, and speakers of English who want to learn *Tok Pisin*.

ISBN: 978-0195574029

Published by Oxford University Press, ANZ (2023)

Education, 345 pages

Available from: Oxford University Press—Cost: \$A22.95 plus \$A12.50 postage in Australia and New Zealand

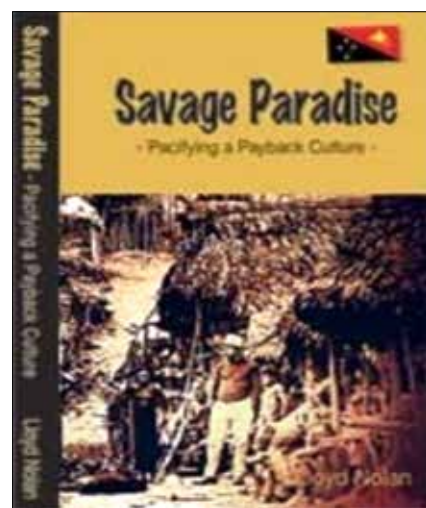
LLOYD NOLAN

Savage Paradise: Pacifying a Payback Culture

Savage Paradise was written by a *kiap*, a patrol officer who was there, and saw and experienced at first-hand the people and the places described in this book.

It is about the Goilala, a rugged mountainous region in Papua New Guinea, beginning a mere 100 kilometres north of Port Moresby. Despite its proximity to the seat of Government, established in the latter part of the nineteenth century, the tribes living on the precipitous mountainsides could not be considered 'pacified' until the mid-1950s.

These mountain tribes are numerous, usually small in numbers, but unbelievably fierce and aggressively individualistic. Collectively, like their mountain domain, they are also known as the Goilala. This is a story of human progress from warring tribes to civilised co-operation and well-being. ISBN: 978-1-921452-574, 281 pages Published in 2022 and available from Copyright Publishing, Bris. (email) info@copyright.net.au Cost: \$A49.50 plus \$A15.00 postage in Australia.

***Tidal Kin*
—Stories from the Pacific**

On 7 October 2023, a new Exhibition called '*Tidal Kin—Stories from the Pacific*' opened at the Chau Chak Wing Museum at the University of Sydney. Curated by Dr Jude Philip (Senior Curator), Co-Curator Ruth Choulai and Associate Curators Leo Tanoi and Steven Gagau, this exhibition project was developed, designed and installed through collaborative research, literature reviews, discussions with many people in academia and the originating communities with historical and contemporary narratives and perspectives, to juxtapose the theme and stories of the exhibition.

The University of Sydney's Museum exhibition, *Tidal Kin*, recounts journeys of eight Pacific Islanders who ventured to Port Jackson during the 18th and 19th centuries. It sheds light on Sydney as a significant Pacific port that thrived on travels, trade, celebrations and rivalries and the narratives unfold through cultural objects and voices telling their stories.

An important resource has been <https://marinersandships.com.au/> which details the thousands of men, and some women, from the Pacific region who travelled to Sydney throughout the 1800s.

Tidal Kin begins in 1770 with the arrival of the Tahitian navigator Tupaia on HMS *Endeavour*

on Gweagal clan's Country at Kamay (Botany Bay), then follows the passage from homelands to Sydney of Hongi Hika, 'GarryGarry', Bwahrat, King George Tupou I, Puwal, Cakobau and Phebe Parkinson. Each story is also narrated by a descendant or a compatriot.

The great Pacific Ocean witnessed competing quests for power, from colonialism and commerce to Christianity. '*Tidal Kin—Stories from the Pacific*' commemorates these connections and extraordinary travels to the small colonial outpost and later bustling metropolis of Sydney.

Tidal Kin exhibits items from the collections which reclaim the free travels of the eight people to Sydney in the 19th century. This travel and freedom came abruptly to an end in 1901 with Federation and the projection of the White Australia Policy onto the lives of many, effectively removing the history of Pacific Islanders in Sydney from the national consciousness. The University of Sydney, with its 50,000 or so students, is a perfect place to rebuild this knowledge for a new era.

HMS *Endeavour*

Phebe Parkinson

There are three Papua New Guinean stories from the eight featured in the *Tidal Kin* Exhibition.

GarryGarry from Kove, West New Britain, Papua New Guinea who was in Sydney as a tourist in 1836. His story was told by Captain Morrell from whaling times.

Puwal from Muyua/Woodlark Island, Papua New Guinea who was in Sydney with the Catholic mission in 1851, 1856, and 1858. His story was drawn from Marist missionary correspondence.

Phebe Parkinson from Samoa and New Britain, Papua New Guinea who was in Sydney for a holiday, in 1882. Phebe recorded her own story.

For the curators, the journey to craft three PNG stories of the eight individuals featured in this exhibition, with descendants and compatriots, has brought out some surprising information.

GarryGarry—his name was not remembered, or perhaps references another side to the character or origins of the young man.

Puwal—his story was gleaned from the Marist Brothers.

Phebe Parkinson—her story, well known in New Britain and Australia, speaks to the equally frequent journeys of people between different places and islands in the Pacific.

The curators' journey and the experience in putting together the exhibition was also a discovery of the disparity between text by European explorers, traders and missionaries and the oral recollections by indigenous peoples. The different research methods of collating information from a variety of sources, tracking them and relying on people's recollection of ancestors' stories, the person's identity in names, whether spelling or pronouncing them, searching maps to locate places of interest or distances travelled, whilst exploring the landscape, led to interesting outcomes that have

shaped the production of the *Tidal Kin* Exhibition.

The notable outcomes include the undisputed records of events in these stories and the differing perceptions of what was going on from an indigenous point of view, which was recorded at the time, although Bwahrat, King George and Phebe largely wrote their own stories. These were published in the 19th century and later.

There is a treasure trove of material generated by a plethora of Western explorers, traders and missionaries on the Pacific peoples—places of food and fresh water sources (essential for travelling parties), safe harbours from oceanic tropical weather and unfamiliar ocean currents, unwarranted acts of aggression by local inhabitants, places of interest and the daily activities of the people. Part of the challenge was following the threads of



Mrs Vavine Vere-Kali, the PNG High Commissioner to Australia, John Kali, Princess Lātūfuipeka of Tonga, Federal Minister for Arts, Tony Burke, Senior Curator Macleay Museum, Jude Philip, PNGAA committee member, Max Uechtritz, at the opening of the exhibition on 7 October 2023

interest across several sources of information, deposited across the globe. This part of the research was gratifying due to the ability to reconstruct and follow the individual's footsteps, actions and non-actions as recorded by an outsider.

When it came to verifying the individual story with direct descendants, that is when we began to tread in deep water—identifying the correct location, timeline, the individual and what they did, was akin to acrobatic dancing. Why? More often, the recording of details of the individual was scant, most likely mis-spelt their name, the village and the location with not a lot of detail about the individual, his or her thoughts, what they did, what they did on their return to their village or island.

An example that has a much more interesting outcome was the story around GarryGarry. Steven was able to identify and

record the indigenous recollection of this story - it turned out to be quite different to the Western (and recorded) version. So then, what happens when this dilemma presents itself to the curatorial team—both versions are legitimate versions of the same event/s but taken from differing points of view. Our point of view is that it requires both versions to be presented, to provide enough information to the reader to gain an insight into the series of events to make historical sense of it.

Another example is what dumbfounded Ruth when she was researching an individual named Mayer and written up as such. This was not an indigenous name and therefore she struggled to identify the village or area that he may have come from. It was not until she read a newspaper clip from that time describing his dandified appearance, that she realised that his

name was actually spelt as Mea. Immediately, she was able to place the probable origin of that name and was able to pinpoint the probable village from an area of 29,998 sq.km. Unfortunately, she was unable to resurrect the recollection of his story through the many leads that were available to her. Mea was just one of a number of individuals who the exhibition had to exclude because of this.

The Curatorial team of the 'Tidal Kin—Stories from the Pacific' is pleased to present and encourage all PNGAA members and the readership of *PNG KUNDU* to visit the exhibition at Chau Chak Wing Museum, University of Sydney. The exhibition, to which entry is free, opens 7 October 2023 and closes on 31 October 2024. For more details, please refer to the website.

<https://www.sydney.edu.au/museum/whats-on/exhibitions/tidal-kin.html>

STEVEN GAGAU



'All—You mamas carry the sweet potato to the other side of the mountain ... I think I can carry the sweet potato to town on my Isuzu Lu vehicle.' The mamas are saying 'I'm wrecked' and 'I'm tired of this'. **GEOFF RUSSELL**



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.

Paul Puri Nii wins Writers Award in Australia

The Book Manuscript Award of the First Nations Writers Festival (FNWF) was awarded to Paul Puri Nii, a Papua New Guinea national, at a ceremony in Townsville in August 2023. Nii's book, *Birth of a Tribe*, is his first novel. The author said, 'It is rewarding to know my manuscript has been accepted and received an award; and I am grateful to the judges and team at FNWF for what they are doing for writers in the Pacific and Papua New Guinea.'

Paul Puri Nii comes from Kuipboat village of the Kyakin tribe in the Baiyer District of Western Highlands Province. He has a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Papua New Guinea and a Master of Laws Degree with Honours from the University of Waikato in New Zealand. He is currently the Principal Magistrate of the District Courts of Papua New Guinea.

The FNWF judges said 'Most, if not all the history of Papua New Guinea, is written by or



Paul Puri Nii

about the *kiaps* or the missionaries. Not about the experiences or history of the citizens away from the white gaze. Fortunately, just as knowledge of the first encounters is held in the precarious hands of elders, these experiences are now being written by those citizens.'

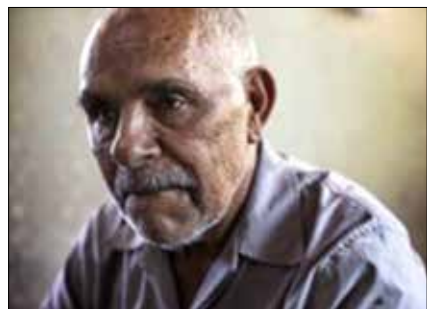
Editor's Note: this story has been abstracted from *PNG Daily*, 17 August 2023.

Between Two Worlds: The Life and Death of Joe Leahy

On 12 August 2023 Stephen Lamont of the *Guardian* wrote about a traditional funeral ceremony for Joe Leahy, owner of Kilima coffee plantation in the Western Highlands.

Johannes (Joe) Leahy, born in 1938, was the son of Mick Leahy, who, with his brother Dan, were the first Europeans to find their way into the Wahgi Valley when searching for gold in the 1930s. Joe, whose mother was a Jiga woman, was rejected by his father and raised by his uncle who had established a successful coffee plantation among the Ganiga people. Joe worked with his uncle learning about the coffee business and absorbing western ways. He would become a Ganiga tribe leader, a businessman and visionary who was caught between two different worlds. Leahy struggled his entire life to bridge his multiracial roots and traditional customs with western learnings.

Bob Connolly and Robin Anderson made three films



Joe Leahy in 2016

about Joe's life and times—*First Contact*, *Joe Leahy's Neighbours* and *Black Harvest*. According to the Smithsonian Institute in 2018 each was a triumph, and they still are recognised as such, icons of a genre, touchstones of both anthropology and film. The initial one, *First Contact*, was nominated for an Academy Award, and the last, *Black Harvest*, had 'extraordinary historical resonance', the *New York Times* wrote, 'so rich that watching it feels like taking an inspired crash course in economics and cultural anthropology.' *Newsweek* said it had 'the scale and richness of classical tragedy'. Which was true, because everything ended so badly.

Leahy's coffee empire, established by Dan and run by Joe and the Ganiga people was successful through the 1970s, but by the eighties was in near ruin due to ten years of tribal war. When war broke out between two neighbouring enemy tribes, the Ganiga had to take sides although Leahy and tribal elders realised this spelt doom for their coffee venture. The years of fighting destroyed most of the infrastructure in the entire Nebilyer Valley. After the devastating conflict,

Leahy never stopped trying to bring his coffee plantation back to life, but without success.

Among the many mourners at the *haus kra* was former Prime Minister Paias Wingti, a tribal relative of Joe's and David Mawa a Ganiga Councillor who said:

He was your leader and brought great wealth and opportunities to the Ganiga people and, even when you failed him and yourselves, Joe never gave up on you, he never left you.

The websites from which this story was written may be accessed here:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/aug/12/between-two-worlds-life-of-png-tribe-leader-and-plantation-owner-honoured>
<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/the-reckoning-180968082/>

Enga Tribal Fighting

Reporting from Wapenamunda in Enga Province on 12 September Tim Swanston and Theckla Gunga of the ABC gave a graphic account of the tribal fighting that is continuing to ravage the area. Beginning soon after the 2022 elections, the armed conflict has killed about 70 people in a series of raids and paybacks. Villages have been destroyed

along a stretch of the principal highway in the area rendering inhabitants homeless.

Rural police commander, Richard Koki, told the reporters 'Our manpower's stretched to the limit. We've become spectators, we're just waiting for the tribes to calm down.'

Police have swarmed Enga Province in a desperate bid to bring a long-running tribal conflict under control. They have turned a boarding school near Wapenamanda into their base, the students have been sent to the capital, Wabag, for safety.

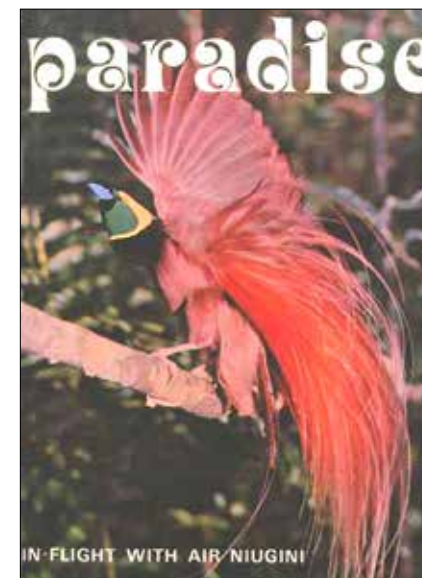
Much of Enga is in a lock-down and under a curfew, with no flights in or out.

Access to the area is by the airport at Mt Hagen in the Western Highlands, followed by a drive of a couple of hours along the major highway. At a border checkpoint, police and defence personnel are searching vehicles for guns and ammunition, or anything else that might fuel the fighting.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-09-12/png-tribal-violence-eng-a-escalates-into-guerilla-warfare/102826764>



Roadblock on highway



Paradise—Air Niugini's In-flight Magazine

Air Niugini's (ANG) first flight was PX100 from Port Moresby to Lae on 1 November 1973. The aircraft was a Fokker F.27, registered as VH TFJ, leased from Ansett Airlines and the first to be repainted in ANG colours.

ANG's first international flight was on Independence Day, 16 September 1975. However, it was a Qantas B707 aircraft that flew the inaugural Port Moresby–Manila–Hong Kong service. Qantas also resumed its services between Australia and PNG (replacing Ansett and TAA). ANG competed on the Sydney, Brisbane and Port Moresby route using Boeing 727 aircraft leased from the latter two airlines.

It was not until 13 February 1976 that ANG's newly-leased Tempair 720B (registered as P2 ANG) flew the Moresby–Brisbane service, thus commencing the airline's longer-distance international flights with its Bird of Paradise liveried aircraft. The airline already serviced its Port

Moresby–Cairns route with its own F.27s.

The first *Paradise-In-Flight with Air Niugini* was launched in July 1976 through ANG's Public Relations Department. It was to be issued quarterly and consisted of 30 pages with a Hello and Welcome from General Manger CB (Brian) Grey and an Introduction by Prime Minister, Michael Somare and Minister for Transport, Bruce Jephcott. The first cover page was, of course, an image of the Raggiana Bird of Paradise (above). Articles were very much PNG orientated. There were nine full-page and one half-page advertisements.

By early 1977, such was the popularity of *Paradise*, that it was decided to publish it bi-monthly. In fact, by September of that year the demand from collectors who had missed out on earlier editions was such that a presentation box of facsimiles of the first seven editions was produced. These copies still had the same number of advertisements; however only one was an original—that of the half-page Noritake China-ware. Gone were ads promoting TAA, Ansett and Air France, but there were the first advertisements for Air Niugini itself! The back cover of the reproductions featured a San Miguel advertisement *in lieu* of the original Ansett Holidays ads.

Thirty-six editions appeared in the six years 1977–83. Page numbers increased to 42 by Edition 21 in January 1980. However, perhaps in keeping

with the theme 'Land of the Unexpected', only five editions appeared in years 1983, 1985 and 1986! Again, in 1996 only five editions were published when the January/February edition was missed when ANG handed over the publication to Morauta and Associates. National Airlines Commission Chairman, Joe Tauvasa (who took over from Mekeru Morauta) promised, in the March–April edition (No. 114, page 3) 'Welcome Aboard', that *Paradise* would continue to promote tourism, cultural life and other aspects of PNG.

Page numbers had increased to 64 in the final of the old series (Edition #156 of March–April, 2003) when quietly, with no announcement, *Paradise* suddenly stopped appearing on ANG flights.

Then, late in 2003, 'Vol. 1/03' appeared. It consisted of 62 pages and was published by Robert Keith-Reid of Islands Business Associates in Fiji. There was a 'welcoming' line to travellers in Joe Tauvasa's 'Chairman's Message'. However, only near the bottom of his message did he mention that '*Paradise* is reappearing after an absence of some months'. The edition also celebrated ANG's 30th anniversary.

The new-look series was, like its predecessor, to be published six times a year. There were six editions in 2004. However, in 2005 only five appeared. No dates, or months, appeared anywhere (only the number for a particular year), until Vol. 2/2011 (April–May!).



Thus it was that Edition 6 of 2011 was for the months December-January (2012). Six editions appeared for the next two years, with the same sequence.

Then, in 2014 there were only five editions with the last being for November-December! The month of August was skipped to get the sequence back into kilter after the June-July edition!

The September-October 2014 edition was published by Melbourne-based Business Advantage International Pty Ltd. That company continued to print six editions a year of a fine quality magazine averaging about 150 pages.

Changes included a much larger number of advertisements (typically one a double page; forty single pages and dozens of half or a quarter and less). There was also more information about in-flight entertainment, on-board health, ANG and its services and arrivals facilities, including street maps of Port Moresby and Lae.

Notably, articles on PNG have had to compete with those dedicated to the 14 overseas

destinations to which ANG now flies in East/SE Asia and the western Pacific.

As Covid 19 spread around the world and all flying was severely restricted, *Paradise* No. 2/2020 (March-April) was the last until 'normality' returned in 2022. No. 1/2022 was for September-December. It was followed by 1/2023 January-March; 2/23 April-June and then 3/23 July-October.

CHRIS WARRILLOW

Chinese Warship Visits PNG

On 26 September the People's Liberation Army-Navy (PLA-N) training ship *Qi Jiguang* arrived in Port Moresby for a three-day goodwill visit. It was the second port call in their training cruise.

Onboard *Qi Jiguang* were Rear Admirals Sun Zhongyi and Zhu Jianda with 300 Chinese Navy Cadets from the PLA Naval University of Engineering, PLA-N Submarine Academy and PLA Naval Aviation University. Also embarked are two PNGDF midshipmen who joined the ship in Surabaya.

A welcome ceremony was hosted upon their arrival and

they were officially welcomed by PNG Defence Minister Hon Win Bakri Daki together with Chinese Ambassador to PNG His Excellency Mr Zeng Fanhua and the Chinese community.

During the visit a series of activities was conducted including visits and exchanges, open-day activities and friendly football matches. The Chinese Embassy also held a reception celebrating the Chinese National Day aboard the ship.

China's ambassador P Zeng Fanhua said the visit by the *Qi Jiguang* is to strengthen China's relationship with Papua New Guinea and their militaries, and has the strong support of the PNG Defence Force. During the visit officers and soldiers of both countries will participate in exchange programs, visits and games.

Defence Minister Win Bakri Daki said the PNG-China relationship 'goes a long way back and the country has benefitted a lot from China'.

<https://www.pngfacts.com/news/chinese-navy-ship-visits-png>

<https://www.pngfacts.com/news/chinese-navy-ship-visits-png>



PNG Defence Minister, Hon. Win Bakri Daki, welcomes Chinese sailors

Trepidations of a Female Student in Port Moresby

SHARON BANUK

Not being apprehensive about your safety in public spaces is a luxury —one that I recently enjoyed as an ANU-UPNG Summer Scholar in Canberra. Sadly, this is not a luxury that is available for Papua New Guineans. The issue of law and order has been a long-standing one in the country, generating concerns of safety among the country's population, especially its female population.



Sharon Banuk

As a female student living in Port Moresby, my safety while travelling to and from school is a cause of concern for myself and my family. The concerns faced by the female population range from petty crimes such as pickpocketing to armed robbery, kidnapping and rape.

During my childhood, I was fortunate to have been spared from the burdens of the anxiety of personal safety while travelling to and from school. My father being an officer with the Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF) meant that I grew up in the safety net of a military barracks in Port Moresby, and attended the primary school located within the barracks. My daily commute to and from school involved a 15-minute walk through the barracks with my siblings and other children of PNGDF officers.

The only concerns to our safety were speeding cars, and the occasional snake during periods of rainy weather when the bush became overgrown around the path. This cocooned safe reality was not the case for students commuting to school outside the barracks, who had to face the threats of pickpocketing, armed robbery, and drunk and disorderly behaviour from men and youths—all of which I was soon to discover.

High school brought with it the introduction of apprehension for my safety. The high school to which I was selected for my lower secondary education was notorious for the fights among its male student body, and interschool fights with neighbouring secondary schools. It was also located within the vicinity of a suburb that was deemed an unsafe place in Port Moresby.

During the two years I attended the secondary school, there were school fights, petty thefts, drunk and disorderly behaviour from youths due to substance abuse, several armed robberies of students while they were travelling to or from school within the vicinity of the suburb, and the most unfortunate case of the rape of a female student in the toilets located on the outskirts of the school in 2016. Even though I was only a witness to such incidents and not subjected to them myself, the fear was ever present in me and my female fellow students. It prompted us to walk with our guard up at all times, to have our bags and *bilums* draped in front of us, to pack our phones and purses in the deepest parts of our bags or *bilums*, and to always be looking over our shoulder when someone got too close in the crowd.

University was no different. Residing off campus required that I still had to travel to and from university, however,

unlike high school where classes concluded between 3.30 pm and 4 pm, I now had some classes that finished at 5 pm. On the days when I had late classes, I was most anxious as it was not safe, and especially not safe to be a female travelling alone, so late in the day.

I particularly disliked and avoided the crowded main bus stops, filled with street vendors and people who just loitered about, as it was usually amongst these loitering crowds that opportunist thugs mingled in wait for their next victim to pickpocket or rob.

I recall an armed robbery of two passengers on a public bus I was in. It was around 7 am, the bus was parked waiting for passengers at the main bus stop at Hohola, Port Moresby. I was sitting two rows ahead of a couple of teenagers when two thugs walked in casually and held the duo at knife point. They took their phones and walked out as casually as they walked in, mixing with the crowd outside. I was left shaken and disgusted at the ease with which they committed the theft. However sad and unfortunate the

incident was, it is a norm for residents in the city.

These are my trepidations of travelling to and from school, but they are common trepidations shared by women and girls in Port Moresby going about their daily activities. Crime and law and order issues are still on the rise in Port Moresby, in part fuelled by unemployment and the rural to urban drift. There also appears to be a gun and knife culture on the rise among criminals in the city, evident in the increased use of these weapons amongst criminals recently.

While the government is making law and order a priority issue, and the Papua New Guinea Royal Constabulary is working within its capacity to curb crime, this is not a fight to be fought by the government and police alone. Normal citizens must rise and make it their civil duty to take ownership of making their communities safer, working in collaboration with the authorities to make PNG a safe country for all. •

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: This story is republished from PNG Project News, June 2023.



Bus stop in Port Moresby



The Wartime Ordeal of Interned Missionaries

ABOVE: During the war the Cathedral at Alexishafen was used by the Japanese to store ammunition and was completely destroyed by Allied bombing

By 1943 the Japanese army had occupied many of the major centres on the north coast of New Guinea and their hinterland. Thus, Madang and Salamaua fell in March 1942, and Wewak was taken by December 1942. The Australian administration had earlier arranged the evacuation to Australia of expatriate women and children and men unfit for military service. Most missionaries of the Catholic and Lutheran churches, however, elected not to be evacuated.

The Japanese occupied Alexishafen on New Year's Day 1943. The people from the Divine Word Mission there along with some mixed-race people and their children were interned, prevented from continuing their work and forced to leave the mission and live in the bush at Mugil.

Sister Siglinde Poboss, SSPS (Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters) was one of the Catholic sisters in this group. Against all odds, she kept a record of the experiences of the captives until the rescue of those who survived. Those experiences have been published as *My Captive Experiences 1943–1944—Mugil to Hollandia*, by Target Book Store. Sister Siglinde's story was written in German but has been translated and edited by Archbishop Stephen Reichert OFM Cap. of Madang. The Divine Word Mission has generously given PNGAA a digital copy of this book.



Pilgrims in 2019 crossing the river closest to Maria Helpim, where Sister Siglinde and her fellow sisters sought refuge during the many bombings by American warplanes in 1943

Sister Siglinde's story includes the explicit account, which follows, of the bombing and strafing, by American aircraft, of the Japanese ship, *Yorishime Maru* on which the internees were being moved from Manam Island to Hollandia. Before that terrible event, the internees were forced to move and live, first at Mugil and then, in August 1943, at Bayaba. At each of these places they had to build their own houses and find most of their food. They were continually harassed by the Japanese and were in the flight path of American planes bombing Alexishafen. Poorly fed and without medical supplies they suffered from malaria, dysentery and other tropical diseases.

On 1 September 1943, the cathedral at Alexishafen was bombed and destroyed. During these raids, the Americans were rumoured to have dropped leaflets telling the Japanese to take the internees to safety. On 16 October the mission people, who now included all missionaries from the surrounding area, were ordered to leave the camp at Bayaba (Maria Helpim) and walk further along the coast to Ulingan where they boarded a vessel which took the party to Manam Island.

On Manam Island the internees were joined by about 20 captive Lutheran missionaries. Among these was Dr Braun who played a major role in the events which followed. There were now about 200 people in the captive group.

The prisoners celebrated Christmas Day 1943 on Manam Island and stayed there until the end of January 1944 when orders came for them to move again. Sister Siglinde wrote: 'We were promised a quiet, safe place where no American warplanes had even been, and a hospital that would welcome us in a friendly manner and take good care of us.'

The prisoners were taken ashore to Hansa Bay and stayed overnight in Nubia Coconut Plantation after a walk of eight miles. While there they were again exposed to American bombing of targets in Hansa Bay. Eventually, under cover of darkness, about 250 people, including about 50 armed Japanese soldiers, boarded the *Yorishime Maru* (or the *Dorish Maru* as the missionaries called it). All were told to sit on the deck. The ship was armed with two anti-aircraft guns.

Sister Siglinde Poboss SSpS writes:

The Attack on the Yorishime Maru and Its Passengers

After boarding the *Yorishime Maru* we were supposed to reach Kairiru (D'Urville) Island by seven in the morning of 6 February 1944, where the boat was to hide till the trip could be continued safely in the evening. But the boat had travelled too slowly to make it on time. At dawn several priests looked at their watches and said, 'It is too late. We are lost.' The sun was already warm, but Kairiru Island was still far in the distance.

Suddenly, at about 8.20 am, we again heard the terrifying drone of warplanes in the air; there was another sharp command from the captain. Some sisters slid down from the deck into the passageway on either side, although it really offered no protection. For a moment I deliberated as to whether I should do the same but it was too late. The planes were overhead. So, I lay down flat on my back, pulled the coat over my face and veil, closed my eyes tight, folded my hands and prayed short prayers in deepest death agony.

I do not remember who shot first, the Japanese on the ship or the American pilots. The noise of the firing and explosions was so intense that it defies all description. I trembled all over, but kept praying, 'My Jesus mercy!'

Sometimes bombs falling into the sea caused water to spray over the deck. Once something hard struck my left temple; it must have been an empty shell casing, as a bullet would have penetrated. The noise was so horrific that I heard nothing from the others. Then something very hot that smelled like sulphur passed my face; I could feel that it was fire. It must have been the bullet that hit Brother Metellus in the throat.

I cannot say how long the strafing lasted; probably ten to twenty minutes. In such agony no one thought of looking at a watch. Later I was told the children were crying and everyone was praying out loud, but the sounds became dimmer and dimmer until silence again reigned. I heard absolutely nothing but my own praying and the awful thunder from above and below.

Neither do I know how many planes were overhead; some said twelve; others, fifteen; still others, twenty. Some said two were shot down. I also heard that the squadron encircled the ship three times; that is possible, otherwise the strafing could not have lasted so long. However, I cannot state anything definite; having kept my eyes closed tightly, I saw nothing.

The excitement and fear were so intense that all words fail me when I attempt to describe the scene. It is possible that some of our dear sisters were not hit by bullets at all but died of heart failure. We had no time to examine each individual body.

When the horrific noise of the bombs and machine gun fire finally ceased there was deadly silence on the ship; not a single sound was heard. I flung the coat aside, turned to Br. Metellus and asked, 'Now they are gone, are they not?' No answer. I gazed at him; his mouth was open and the pallor of death covered his countenance; his eyes stared calmly over the sea as if into endless distances. His rosary hung around his neck and his hands were folded. Then I noticed the wound in his neck from which blood still trickled. I sprang to my feet and, seeing Father Mey standing at the railing, supporting himself with one hand, I shouted to him, 'Father, come here, Br. Metellus is dead.' But Fr. Mey looked at me pitifully and answered, 'I can't, a bullet has shattered my leg.'



Catholic church on Kairiru Island, 2021
(Courtesy Veronica Katiou Facebook)

By this time Sister Ottonia had jumped up to the deck from the passageway, wrung her hands, and cried loudly, 'Fr. Luttmer is dead. Sr. Milita has no head.' Her own hand was bleeding profusely. It all seemed to me like a bad dream.

Looking around I saw such a gruesome sight that I was speechless. My nerves were as if petrified from horror. Sr. Milita and Sr. Matritia lay there, headless. Sr. Milita held her rosary in her left hand. Her broken skull lay next to her in a heap of gray matter. Half of Sr. Dionora's face was shot away. Sr. Imelda lay somewhat raised on a bundle; I believe she had just expired when I came to her, as the blood still oozed out of her nose. Her face bore such a peaceful expression that I knelt before her a while and took a long look at her. The earnest fear and bitter anxiety had disappeared from her features; she had suffered very much internally during the last weeks, prayed much, and worked as long as she could. The two girls who had lain next to me had disappeared altogether.

In the left passageway nearly all were dead. The sisters were lying on top of each other crouched together on a pile like sleeping children; many had been hit in the back. Just in front of me lay Sr. Festina, stretched out, headless; I recognised her by the big, light-coloured kitchen apron. Opposite sat Sr. Alexis and Sr. Adulpha, covered with blood, and staring as if they did not know what had happened. They both had been grazed in the head, Sr. Alexis in the throat. For several weeks she could only stammer, but later she recovered. Sr. Adulpha died after about a week.



The victims of the bombing on the *Yorishime Maru* are among those remembered at the Centotaph at Alexishafen Cemetery

Sr. Emiliana lived only for a few minutes, I think she had been shot in the back. She was kneeling and leaned against something. I noticed how the pallor of death passed over her face, then she sank back and died. To the left, not far from her, knelt our dear good Sr. Bernereda, supporting herself on her hands. She was horribly wounded; her legs were still attached but her entire back with her clothes was shot away. It took more than one bullet to do this. On her back one could see the edge of her torn habit which had been burned away.

I felt so sorry that I did not say a single word to the two dear sisters, but just stood there and stared, unable to bring forth a single sound. Sr. Bernereda was one of our best sisters, always cheerful and diligent at her garden work, and with all her gifts as humble as if unaware of everything she accomplished.

When Fr. Kemmerling and Fr. Van Baar came around to administer Extreme Unction to the dead and wounded, I felt revived and helped wherever I could. Sr. Valentine was in a bad state; one arm was split and distorted, and her whole abdomen a bloody mass. She thought if I would straighten her arm all would be well. She lived for half an hour.

Some of the others asked for a drink of water. The sun was hot; we were all still without food, and there was a great loss of blood. Down in the two passageways the blood stood like water in a gutter on a rainy day. Suddenly, Fr. Kemmerling noticed there was a fire down in the cargo room. We collected all the water and coffee bottles and poured the contents through the holes. We soon extinguished the fire there, but elsewhere flames flared up. Okasue (a Japanese interpreter) limped over to us having a knee wound.

'The ship will sink,' he said. There was not a single lifeboat; only four big planks, about two square metres in all. They stood near the railing. In haste, Okasue told me when the planks were let down we should be sure to get on. He meant well. There were about twenty or thirty Japanese soldiers dead and many wounded—Okasue knew very well that if the boat should sink the surviving soldiers would save themselves first.

Extract from *My Captive Experiences 1943–44*

The Aftermath

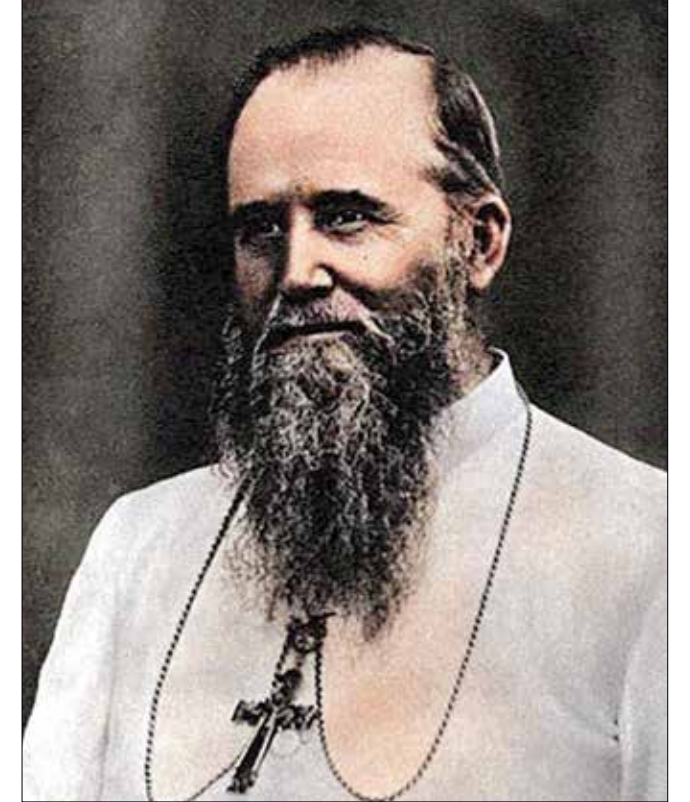
The American attack failed to sink the *Yorishime Maru*; and damaged, the ship managed to reach Wewak Harbor at reduced speed, where Japanese medical teams came on board and treated the wounded. The dead were off loaded and lined up on a hillside and later buried. Of the 138 Catholic missionaries, seven priests, fourteen brothers and twenty-eight nuns and seven others were killed with all but six others wounded.

The survivors re-boarded the *Yorishime Maru* and departed for Hollandia arriving there on 8 February 1944, after which they were sent to a camp at Hoteagan. There was no hospital and they continued to suffer from fear, a shortage of food, sickness and the death of people seriously wounded in the bombing.

The deaths included that of Bishop Franz Wolf about three weeks after arrival at Hoteagan. He had suffered mortal wounds—a bullet had smashed his collar-bone and torn into his lungs—but he bore his pain with heroic courage and patience. In the midst of the attack, he had given General Absolution to all. When it was over, he handed his pectoral cross over, that it might be kissed by those in their last agony. Then, realising his serious condition, he made arrangements for the future of the mission.

American forces landed at Hollandia on 21 April 1944 and the people in the camp heard the bombing and gunfire. Sister Siglinde, another of the six not injured in the attack, heard someone say: 'That is a landing.' It was. American troops, guided by Father Hagan and three other priests found the stricken party on 24 April and the worst part of their ordeal was over. They arrived in Brisbane on 13 May 1944.

Another of the missionaries, Father John Tschauder SVD, later also wrote an account of the ordeal described by Sister Siglinde, which can be accessed on the website of the Dorish Maru College, a Divine Word residence for seminarians at Box Hill in Victoria—<https://www.dorishmarucollege.org.au/about-us/about-dorish-maru-college>. Following is a short excerpt:



Bishop Franz Wolf SVD
Vicar Apostolic of Eastern New Guinea

Never in my life shall I forget that gruesome and ghastly picture of death. Blood was everywhere, rivulets of it running down the deck, the blood of missionaries, sisters, priests and brothers. One had pieces of another's brain on his head, which looked as if it had been frightfully smashed up.

How I wish this ghastly picture to stand for all eternity before the eyes of all those who advocate indiscriminate bombing!

And there were many more maimed, torn and mutilated. Death has so far exacted its heaviest toll from the sisters. Both sisters superior were dead, one with her head literally severed from her body. She was identified only by the number on her stockings. Bullets had smashed her head to pieces. And yet, at the same time, it was cause for sheer wonder that in such carnage some sisters had escaped without receiving even a scratch.

One sister lived for a while, and she was heard saying, 'I have had enough!' Yes, she had had enough, a chalice brimful of sufferings, both physical and spiritual. •

Editor's Note: With gratitude we acknowledge the contribution of the Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters (SSpS) to the life and service of the Church in PNG. We thank them for giving permission to republish Sister Siglinde's story.

A note on the name of the ship. Originally the ship was named *Yorihime Maru*. This was heard by the captives as *Yorishime Maru* and later corrupted further to *Dorish Maru*. For more information see this website: <https://pacificwrecks.com/ships/maru/yorihime.html>

Compiling the Austronesian Deluge Myths

VALDIS GAUSS

The island of Taiwan is the ancestral homeland of about 575,000 Austronesians who belong to one of sixteen officially recognised aboriginal tribes. Approximately one fifth of this number has retained functional usage of its ancestral Formosan language, of which about a dozen are still spoken.

Like other historically preliterate peoples around the world, Formosan language speakers, as well as those who have adopted Mandarin as a mother language have preserved a vast wealth of accounts describing a global deluge that occurred in antiquity.



I recently arranged a field trip for my Tour Guide class to the Taromak village of the Austronesian Rukai tribe near National Taitung University, Taiwan, where I teach. Due to time constraints, the introduction to the tribe only lasted about an hour and a half. However, during that brief encounter, our Taromak resident Rukai tour guide, Mr Ba, who was wearing traditional Rukai regalia, led our group to admire a series of ceramic murals that flank the entrance to the tribe's elementary school. (Figure 1)

The five panels illustrate the tribe's history and include a migration map, representations of first contact with the Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC) in the 1630s, two fire origin myths, forced resettlement under Japanese colonial rule and pays tribute to the harvest festival that takes place every summer. However, the panel (Panel 2) that Mr. Ba spent the most time discussing pertains to the tribe's origin. (Figure 2)

Among the various Rukai phratries' (a phratry is a kinship group) primary anthropogenic origin myths (i.e., antediluvian human origins), Earth, tree, stone, lily, egg and cosmic vessel genesis and origin motifs are all represented. However,

none of these motifs were introduced by Mr Ba. Furthermore, he neglected to mention any of these motifs even as we stood near numerous representations of cosmic vessels, lilies and an actual lily garden. Instead, the tribe's history introduced by Mr Ba, and depicted in the panels, is established chronologically with a narrative concerning a great flood that destroyed the Earth leaving only one pair of sibling survivors to restart humanity.

Contemporary Rukai identity relies so heavily upon the flood myth (oral histories that chronicle the origins of mankind, golden age and the great deluge) that it is one of the first topics that our guide introduced about his culture and village. Moreover, the elders of the tribe decided that this myth (Shenhua is the word used by Mr Ba during his presentation which was given in Mandarin and Rukai) is so central to Rukai identity that they saw fit to display large public illustrations commemorating the flood in one of the most prominent locations in the tribe. Every morning when the children are dropped off and afternoon when they are collected at the front gate of their school, they hurry past these ceramic murals that depict their ancestors as the sole survivors of the great flood.

My research into Austronesian flood myths began in 2019 during composition of my PhD dissertation which I subsequently published in 2022 under the title *The Formosan Great Flood Myths: An Analysis of the Oral Traditions of Ancient Taiwan*. That monograph chronicles and classifies over 220 Formosan deluge myths.

The sheer volume of findings prompted me to wonder, if the 16 officially recognised Austronesian tribes on Taiwan have preserved so many related oral traditions, how many deluge myths could there be throughout the remainder of Austronesia and the world? For example, since the island of New Guinea has upwards of 900 tribes, some of Austronesian origin, how many thousands of deluge myths must there be among these groups? Likewise, how many myths might there be among Indonesia's 500 tribes? If the average number of about ten myths per tribe found in Taiwan holds true for other regions, there could be about 14,000 deluge myths in New Guinea and Indonesia alone ... no one knows for sure, and that is the point.

In 2021, I discovered Nick Liguori's *Echoes of Ararat*, which offers a compendium of over 300 flood myths from North and South America.

FIGURE 1:
The History of the Taromak Rukai—Tile murals
Panel 1: migration map; Panel 2: deluge myth origins;
Panel 3: first contact with VOC; Panel 4: forced
resettlement during fascist Japanese colonial era;
Panel 5: harvest festival.



FIGURE 2: Taronak Deluge Myth Mural (Panel 2)—Tile murals. Clockwise from the top- Quadrant 1: deluge; Quadrant 2: survivors negotiating with fire donor animals; Quadrant 3: survivor learning how to make friction fire from fly after deluge; Quadrant 4: children of the survivors; Quadrant 5: expansion of the tribe.

Captivated by the scope and depth of *Echoes I* began corresponding with Liguori and earlier this year he invited me to co-author Volume II of *Echoes of Ararat* which seeks to compile the flood myths of the Western Pacific. Our current working corpus of flood myths includes 118 New Guinean and 75 Australian myths. Nevertheless, keyword searches on the three corpora offer a peek into frequency of motif among the groups considered.

Few authors have considered the number of great deluge myths around the world. While most researchers estimate between 200 and 400 myths, one study noted that one compilation lists over 500 of them, belonging to over 250 peoples or tribes. Another source concurs that there are at least 500 legends of a worldwide deluge. However, Dang Nghiem Van's compilation of over 300 deluge myths from 41 Austronesian tribes in Vietnam and Chen Jianxian's claims regarding the existence of 568 deluge myths in China proved that these estimates of 500 global deluge myths are gross underestimates. Published findings by Dang Nghiem Van, Chen Jianxian, Nick Liguori and myself chronicle about 1,400 deluge myths in the Americas, China, and Austronesian Vietnam and Taiwan.

In compiling flood myths from as far north as Siberia, as far east as Easter Island, as far south as New Zealand and as far west as the Indian Ocean,

it has become apparent that an extremely limited number of deluge myth collections have been published from throughout Austronesia. Indeed, the same can be said of the whole world with the exception of the aforementioned sources.

Throughout the 1800s, Polynesia and Micronesia were opened up to catechists, missionaries, ethnographers, conquerors and other adventurers who penned countless works about the peoples there. A few of these records include mythology and some even chronicle deluge myths. Since the deluge myths within these writings remain scattered for the most part, the working draft of *Echoes of Ararat* Vol. II already represents the largest corpus of Pacific great flood myths compiled to date.

The largest corpora of New Guinean flood myths that I am aware of are *Religious Texts of the Oral Tradition from Western New-Guinea* by Freerk Kamma which contains 29 Irian Jayan myths and Thomas Slone's *One Thousand One Papua New Guinean Nights* which has preserved approximately two dozen flood myths. Moreover, Laurie Bragge's *Sepik I* and *Sepik II* contain nine deluge myths which were recorded from the Mongwalion, Leptigon, Sawos, Burui, Iatmul, Kanganaman and Gaikarobi groups. Combined, works by Kamma, Slone and Bragge contain approximately 60 New Guinean deluge myths.

The value of contributions made to the collection and preservation of deluge myths from the island of New Guinea cannot be overstated. These works shine a light on the histories, world views and cultural values of the groups that preserved them. And through these works, a greater understanding and appreciation for these unique cultures can be gained by readers around the world.

Following is an abridged (by myself) myth sourced in the Sentani region of Irian Jaya. This myth, translated by Kamma, and others like it must not be lost to obscurity.

The antediluvian chief of the Manipora built a ladder and used it to place the moon in the sky. In doing so, he transgressed the boundary of human beings. Upon his descent to the Earth, he quickly built a giant canoe and filled it with birds and people. Then, the deluge came. The canoe and its passengers floated above mountains saving all who were on board.

At first sight of land after the flood, the survivors released a crow three times. At first, it found nothing. The second time, it brought back some leaves. The third time, it did not return. Another bird, a cockatoo was released and it failed to return. A lory bird was released and it did not return either. The fourth bird, a pigeon was released and it was never seen again. Finally, the survivors disembarked and built homes at the location where the tribe lives today.

(Kamma, 1977, p. 56-57)

Part of my aim in penning this article is to call on the readers of *PNG KUNDU* for assistance in identifying little known publications that record deluge myths. While our current review of New Guinean and Australian aboriginal oral literature has uncovered approximately 200 flood myths, I am convinced that this figure is barely scratching the surface. The diverse deluge traditions of New Guinea deserve to be preserved and shared with the rest of the world. As such, any sources with Austronesian, Australian aboriginal and New Guinean deluge myths that you can share with Nick Liguori and me for inclusion in our forthcoming publication of *Echoes of Ararat*, Vol. 2, will

be greatly appreciated as we seek to compile and preserve these myths so that they are remembered and admired by the whole world for years to come.

•Please contact me at gaojiajo@gmail.com

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FIGURE 3: Class Tour of Taronak—My class learning about the flood myth (Photos by author, 8 May 2023, at Taronak Elementary School, Beinan Township, Taitung County)

Two Cargo Cults and Their Origin

**MARY MENNIS
MBE**

Brian Mennis, my husband, wrote about two cargo cults he witnessed when he was working with the US Airforce in Papua New Guinea. Brian arrived in the country in 1959 and in 1979 he was the Acting Surveyor General for a few years before we left. He died in May 2018. The stories of the two cargo cults which follow were among his lasting memories and they show how easily these cults can begin.



Brass survey marker like that on Mt Turu

Brian Mennis' account:

The first cargo cult – the Johnson cult

I was seconded to the US Air Force in 1962. This was in the days when satellites were just starting to be launched, and data were needed to calculate their orbits. The Americans had a good geodetic network north of the equator in their territories and Australia had a similar network south of the equator. It was necessary that these be connected.

The Americans had developed a system using high flying WWII bomber aircraft making observations to ground stations over long ranges. To do this, they needed to set up stations on mountains in Papua New Guinea and occupy these for several weeks while the observations were going on. I was with the preliminary reconnaissance team selecting the various stations and getting them ready for the observers. My job, as originally envisaged, was to arrange all the labour and liaise with the local people.

It was a very interesting six months, with many lasting consequences including the fact that Americans started two cargo cults because of their activities.

When we did the reconnaissance at New Hanover in New Ireland, the local chief was very helpful. He must have had dealings with the Americans after the war and said he would build a bush house for the men who would man the station. This he duly did and, when they came, they found a very comfortable station indeed.

However, at this time there were two elections coming up, one in PNG and the other in America where President Johnson was standing for office. The locals were discussing this with two US servicemen who laughed and said they would be voting for President Johnson in the election.

They said to their listeners: 'Why are you bothering with these local politicians, you should vote for President Johnson.'

They were joking of course and did not realise that the people would take them seriously! I thought it was foolish talk by the two American servicemen. Apparently already pre-disposed towards cargo cultism, a new cargo cult very quickly emerged, the Johnson Cargo Cult, where the locals expected a ship to arrive from America with a cargo of all the white man's goods.

There was a sequel to this a year or so later when a US Navy ship requested permission to berth in Kavieng, very close to New Hanover, on the very day that the cult had predicted that their cargo would arrive. They were very quickly and firmly told to go away.

The Johnson Cult was mentioned in the *New York Times* on 24 March 1964. The headline read: *New Guinea Cult Ends Effort to 'Buy' Johnson; Wanted President Because 'Americans Are Good.'*

The cult was also the subject of an anthropological study, *Cargo cult as theatre: political performance in the Pacific*, which suggested that the Lavongai people on New Hanover had, by voting for Johnson, consciously engaged in a theatrical act of shaming, seeking to draw attention to what they saw as poor administration by the Australian authorities.

The cultists did not really expect Johnson to come; what they really wanted was the knowledge of the Americans, wishing to

live happily and richly like them. America had provided the islanders with food, clothing and other goods during World War II, when some of the islanders worked for them on other islands. In addition, some Lavongai viewed the election itself, which had been imposed by Australia, as another humiliation, and thus were eager at the chance to get back at their colonisers.

Brian witnessed the beginning of the Johnson Cult. However, in the study above there is no reference to what really happened or how the two American servicemen jokingly told the people to vote for President Johnson! Perhaps this is the first time that this has been recorded.

Second Cargo Cult witnessed by Brian Mennis near Mt Turu in 1971

By 1971, Brian was Regional Surveyor of the north coast of PNG and was required to be present when the climax of the cult occurred.

Graham Egan (PNG KUNDU, December 2021) described the episode:

The cult was started by Matthias Yaliwan, who lived in Ambukanja village up high on the side of Mt Turu and was called the Peli Association. Matthias Yaliwan had decided that after the cargo he promised his followers failed to appear it would only come if the people removed the survey marker on top of Mt Turu.

The situation was getting out of hand with thousands of people following the cult. The Administration elected not to stop the removal of the marker.

Brian Mennis, as the Regional Surveyor, was

called in as he had previously helped the Americans put the survey marker on Mt Turu. It was 7 July 1971 that the concrete post was carried down the hill with the survey marker on top of it. The procession was beamed over the radio and I, the author, heard the people saying the rosary quite loudly as they made their way down the hill with the concrete trig post with the marker on top of it.

This is how Brian Mennis described the event:

The cargo cult involving Mt Turu was not quite so directly involved with the US, but they were part of it. A man had started a cargo cult east of Yangoru Patrol Post in the Sepik District. There were the usual trappings of virgins, silver coin levies, etc, all with the promise of the white man's goods arriving. After a few years, nothing happened, and the followers started muttering that this cult was useless. A quick excuse was needed. It was found on the top of Mt Turu, not far from the cult HQ and above Yangoru Patrol Post.

The Americans had put a brass marker in a concrete trig post on the hill to mark their observing points in 1962 and the people were told that, 'The reason the cargo is being blocked is because those pesky Americans have blocked it with the magic of these brass markers.' This notwithstanding that there has been a survey marker on the top of the hill since the oil explorations in the 1930s.

So, on 7 July 1971, with much ceremony, saying the rosary and singing hymns they removed the brass marker [which was on the concrete trig post they carried down] and presented it to me at the bottom of the hill. I have kept that survey marker in my house over the years. [It has since been lost]. •



Brian and Mary Mennis with Major Hendry of the US Airforce and Lt Commander Moore the Captain of the US Navy LST *Cayuga* County—Brian worked with them in 1962



CSIRO in the Southern Highlands, 1961

Part 3: Going Solo

KEN GRANGER

From Kagua the main party moved further south toward the Erave River and the limestone country. Their traverse would take them through lightly populated country so it would be necessary to ferry out supplies and some fresh carriers to intercept them on the Erave River at Iapi. I headed out from Kagua with Apal, my young Madang offsider, a couple of police and 87 carriers heading west through quite heavily populated country.

Our first camp was at the *haus kiap* in the village of Sumi where the locals turned on a feast for the carriers with *kaukau* and other local foods such as *pitpit* cooked in a *mumu* (an earth oven). This was the first time I had seen the locals using an earth oven for cooking their food—they normally just roasted their *kaukau* on the coals of the fire.

I recruited some more carriers in Sumi and from there headed on with 119 carriers the four hours to the edge of the escarpment above the Erave with the fantastic views across to the limestone country. This limestone barrier had been described by some of the early explorers as ‘broken bottle country’ because of the sharp karst limestone. A good pair of stout boots could be cut to shreds within days and of course the feet of the locals would be badly affected.

From the ridge down to the valley and the camp at Iapi it was at least 1,000 feet, and took an hour of calf-numbing and knee-jarring descent. By the time we got to the bottom and the main

party’s camp, some of the carriers really needed some patching up from the first aid kit.

I needed a bit of first aid myself on the way back to Kagua. Just after getting back to the top of the escarpment above the Erave River I was hit by a very sudden onset of diarrhoea. As a result I ended up with badly-chafed buttocks so I made a stop in Tagure to get some relief. I was told that there was a medical aid post in a nearby village so I wrote a note to the aid post orderly explaining as best I could in *tok pisin* that I needed some salve to relieve the chafing and dispatched one of the police to deliver the note.

Half an hour later the policeman returned with a reply from the orderly to the effect that he did not understand what I needed but he sent a couple of wooden tongue depressors, some cotton wool and half a dozen aspirin! After an hour or so rest I was a lot more comfortable so it was back on the track again.

Just out of Tagure I came across a scene that has lived with me ever since. A family group of

a man, five female relatives and three children simply sitting in the landscape. It was such an idyllic scene that I have referred to it as my ‘Garden of Eden’ photo. One of the women, probably the man’s mother, is daubed in white clay which was a sign of being in mourning. The other women may have been his sisters and/or his wives. This scene really encapsulated the impact of the Southern Highlands experience on me—very much an interest in the people in the landscape rather than just the landscape itself.

With that task finished it was on to the next job—fly to Tari to bring a line of 60 to 70 carriers down to Lake Kutubu and be there by 12 August. The Lake Kutubu area had only a small population so it was necessary to bring carriers down from Tari to permit the main party to undertake the planned traverse up to Tari.

I made contact with Bill Crellin, one of the kiaps at Tari, by radio from Kagua to let them know when I would arrive so that they could round up the carriers that John McAlpine (Mac) had already arranged for. As well as the carriers I needed to line up the rations for the carriers and myself for the more than 60-mile walk. I flew from Kagua to Mendi then on to Tari on 31 July taking Apal, my Madang shadow, with me.

The Huli people of the Tari area had the reputation of being hostile to any disruption to their way of life. They had violently opposed the first

European patrol, led by Jack Hides, which entered the area in 1935. They had become less hostile by 1961 but were the most vigorous of all the people I encountered during the survey.

After a day resting and getting washing done I met up with the 70 carriers who had been organised for the trek to Lake Kutubu. Because Tari was at an altitude where there was no malaria and we were heading to Lake Kutubu, where malaria was endemic, I was required to make sure that every carrier took his anti-malarial tablet before we could depart. They were all lined up and I went along the line with the tablets while a local interpreter followed with water for them to wash the pills down.

From Tari to our first camp at Harenda was about a four-hour walk. The following day was a long eight and a half-hour walk to Dara on the Banaria River where I camped in the *haus kiap*. Along the way that day I observed what I was told by my interpreter was an ancestral shrine in which the skulls and long bones of departed ancestors were wrapped in bark cloth and visited from time to time.

The following day was a four-hour walk to Tamera which included fording the Banaria River. This crossing was not too difficult even with a fairly fast flowing stream. The carriers were sure-footed on the river stones. From Tamera to the next stop was just a three-hour walk, followed the next day



Family group near Tagure, July 1961



Crossing the Kondari River, August 1961 (top);
Huli ancestor shrine, August 1961 (left)
(All photos courtesy Ken Granger)

with a six-hour walk to a very swollen Kondari River.

The track crossed the Kondari River twice and at each crossing we had to improvise a bridge so that the carriers could safely cross. Given that only Apal, two of the police and I could swim this was an interesting exercise. The Huli flair for getting things done was well on display as they felled trees and dragged them to the river, wedging them between large rocks and lashed the logs together. Each bridge took two hours to build so it was a long day before we reached our next camp at Bawa.

Early that evening one of the policemen came to my tent to tell me that one of the carriers was very sick. He suggested that I put him in my tent overnight and in the morning arrange for a relay of carriers to carry him the final 20 miles to Lake Kutubu where there was an aid post. The constable was concerned that if the man died his relatives would want to take his body back to Tari and I

would be left with fewer carriers than we needed.

We headed off at 0700 and after 11 hours reached the Government station at Lake Kutubu—the most welcome sight imaginable. Mac and the main party had reached there that morning and it was with some relief that I left the sick carrier with him and the kiap, Frank Howard. We had made Lake Kutubu on 9 August, three days ahead of our deadline.

Unfortunately, the sick carrier died the next day. The rest of the carriers were rather restless and had to be kept under close supervision by Frank Howard and his police contingent. Meanwhile, I was advised to stay close to the kiap's house just in case some of the dead carrier's *wantoks* wanted 'pay back' for his death. Rather than return to Tari with the survey it was decided that I had would end the survey at that point and fly out to Mt Hagen and beyond within a day or so. •



As a postscript, in looking at my photos from 62 years ago one of the leaders of the Huli carriers has a striking resemblance to PNG PM James Marape. I had noted his name in my field book as 'Morabu'.

A Good Beginning

KERRY WILSON

In 1955, Most Rev. Leo Arkfield, SVD, DD, visited the Reverend Mother Damian Duncombe RSM at All Hallows' Convent in Ann Street, Brisbane. Born in the United States and in charge of the Vicariate of Wewak, Rev. Leo was in Brisbane to honour the Golden Jubilee of His Grace, Archbishop Duhig.

During this visit, Rev. Leo asked for a Mission of the Sisters of Mercy which was subsequently decided in a council meeting of the Sisters of Mercy Brisbane Congregation in March 1956. At the Bishop's invitation, Reverend Mother Damian RSM and Mother M St Brigid RSM travelled to view the Kunjingini Mission run by Father Blasig, which was located two days' travel or 25 flying minutes from the nearest Convent in Wewak (Holy Spirit).

'It seems too good to be true', wrote the Bishop, 'may the Lord be praised for sending the All Hallows' Sisters to Wewak.' (Page 311, Sr M Xaverius, *Beyond Our Dreams*)

On returning home, Reverend Mother Damian told the Sisters about Kunjingini and its surrounding villages, the people, and the climate noting 'there was strangeness and loneliness to be faced. Who would go?' (page 311). The positive response from Australian and Irish Sisters was astonishing as mailbag after mailbag was received with requests to join the mission.

The Sisters chosen for the Mission prepared by learning *Pidgin* and learning how to drive both a jeep and autobikes (now referred to as motorbikes or motorcycles). His Grace, Archbishop Duhig, in support of the first Mission to PNG from the Queensland Diocese, authorised a successful appeal within the Archdiocese to assist in the launch of the venture. Both financial and other gifts, including a jeep, musical instruments and materials were then gathered.

The first Sisters were to depart for Papua New Guinea on 27 January 1957. In attendance at the ceremony to confer the Mission Crosses in St Stephen's Cathedral was a full congregation, the Apostolic Delegate, Most Rev. Romolo Carboni, and His Grace, Archbishop James Duhig.



Kunjingini classrooms—photo taken 30 May 2007 during the 50th Anniversary of the Sisters' arrival in PNG



Torembi—schoolhouses lining the airstrip (top);
The new dormitory, date unknown (below)

'In accepting the Bishop's invitation, the Mother General and Her Council (reflecting the mind of the Sisters of Mercy) chose Kunjingini, the Mission that, viewed humanly, could only be considered as the least attractive and the most difficult. It is precisely in such challenging atmosphere that the Sisters will work ...'
(Page 312)

The Sisters chosen for the Mission were from both Queensland and Irish birth, and had nursing training, (e.g. splinting bones, wound stitching and injections) and teacher training. There was one fully-trained and experienced nurse with war service in New Guinea (Sister M Isobel) and one fully-qualified and Mater-experienced pharmacist (SM Margarita). The full list of Sisters consisted of:

Mother M. Francis Regis Everingham, Sisters M. Marietta Reidy, Margarita Shannon, Cephass Philben, Carthage Fennessy, Isobel Condon, and Philip Cervetto. (Page 313)

The Sisters first travelled to Wewak where they were welcomed and stayed with the Sisters of the Holy Spirit until the Bishop was ready to fly them to their Kunjingini base. The Sisters arrived at the Mission and found a house constructed out of local materials by Father Blasig, a church, and a school of approximately 370 pupils. The

house was also used as a teacher-training centre for indigenous students with Sister M Margarita qualified to train the teachers.

The Sisters' focus on teaching, health and hygiene saw them travelling to villages by jeep, bike, motorcycle, canoe, horseback and foot. The Bishop, in conjunction with the Government, saw the ante-natal and post-natal clinic works in Kunjingini recognised as a Mother-care centre under Sister M Isobel. The Mission was also involved in nutritional education and introduced dairy in the form of a cow gifted by the Sisters' relatives.

Mother General Damian with the Bishop subsequently visited the Kunjingini Mission to see the Sisters and to visit other areas, including Torembi. The Mother General and her Council, under the recommendation of Bishop Arkfeld, later sent out an invitation to the Federated Congregations of Sisters of Mercy to supply volunteers on a term of five years. Four congregations (Rockhampton, Townsville, Herberton and Grafton) responded and All Hallows' became responsible for the Mission. Mother Joseph Xavier Byrne received the Mission Cross on 26 January 1958 and was accompanied to Torembi by SM Annunziata McNamara (T'ville), Sister M Felix Wildie (Rockhampton), Sister M Vincent Kelly (Grafton), and SM Gertrude Russell (Herberton). The parish at Torembi covered 2,000/3,000 square miles and was isolated and inaccessible, except by air transport. On the way to Torembi, the Sisters visited Sister M Carthage at Kunjingini Mission who helped them to settle in.

Due to its isolation, Torembi Mission experienced difficulty in getting supplies of food, shelter, clothing and fresh milk. They were sent supplies by the Kunjingini Mission:

Mother Joseph Xavier said: 'Father told us a few days



ago that he would not be able to buy food for the boarders if he did not have newspapers, so you can be sure that every sheet of paper you keep means coconut and fruit for our charges.' (Page 321)

Due to lack of milk and fresh food, Sister M Vincent returned to Australia after two years in poor health. Sister M Annunziata had earlier returned to Townsville due to ill health. These two Sisters were replaced by Sister M Chrysostom Hooper, and Sister M William Myers, both of the All Hallows' community.

A couple of weeks prior to Easter in 1961, Archbishop de Furstenberg, Apostolic Delegate and his secretary accompanied the Bishop to Torembi Mission where the Apostolic Blessing was bestowed on the church. Ongoing support from Australian Catholics for the Sisters of Mercy Missions at Kunjingini and Torembi further assisted in raising support in Europe and saw funding coming from Germany to run the Maternity Clinics and to buy petrol.

The works of Mercy in Papua New Guinea continue today through the work of the local Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea Sisters. Their endeavours, along with the collaboration of local women and men, are supported by Mercy Works Ltd and Catherine McAuley Services Limited with the Sisters of Mercy, Brisbane being a financial sponsor for community projects across the country. For further information on the continuing mission of Sisters in the tradition of Mercy, please refer to: <https://institute.mercy.org.au/> •



Torembi—the old convent after the big wind, late 1950s (top); Sister Marietta Reidy riding a motorcycle in Kunjingini (centre); Kunjingini—students' sign, photo taken 30 May 2007 during the 50th Anniversary of the Sisters' arrival in PNG (below)

Editor's Note: the author's quotations are from the book, *Beyond our Dreams*, written by Sister Mary Xavierius O'Donoghue published in 1961 by Jacaranda Press. The sisters at these missions have recently donated their collection of artefacts to PNGAA.

A Canadian Prairie Family in Gili Gili: 1925–29

KATHERINE PETTIPAS—Part 2

From 1925 to 1929, a Canadian prairie family from Manitoba could not have been further from home. During this time, William and Kate McGregor, and their daughter Rubina, lived on the Gili Gili coconut plantation where William was employed as the Head Stockman. Part 2 of this three-part article is an overview of the photographs taken by Kate McGregor at the time.

In 1974, Rubina (Ruby) Miles donated to the Manitoba Museum artefacts and a small number of natural history specimens that originated in Papua New Guinea. Ten years later, I decided to visit Ruby at her home in Brandon, Manitoba, to gather more information on this collection. Welcoming a rare opportunity to share her fond memories of Gili Gili, the elderly

Ruby received me with much enthusiasm and grace. Fortunately, she had preserved some of her mother's (Kate's) photographs and letters that documented the family's residency at Gili Gili.

We spent hours talking about her artefacts, poring over the contents of the letters, and examining over 100 photos. Following our visit, Ruby decided to donate the photographs and typed

copies of the letters to the Museum to preserve the historical context associated with the initial donation of artefacts. Later, her mother's original letters, and a smaller number of images were gifted through Ruby's Estate to the SJ McKee Archives at Brandon University in Manitoba. This illustrated essay focuses on Kate's surviving photographic record.

Kate used the popular Eastman Kodak Brownie camera to record her stay at Gili Gili. Inexpensive and easy to use, 'The Brownie' was popular among amateur photographers. Kate imported supplies such as film and photograph paper from Australia. Understandably, conditions were not optimum at the plantation for processing film. Ruby stated that her mother did develop her own photos, often around 2.00 am when the water was cool enough for processing. While Kate enjoyed photography as a hobby, she was



Kate's husband, William McGregor, posed with two labourers (*above*); Ceremonialists wearing bark cloth clothing and holding kundu drums (*below*)





1. Preparing roof thatching from palm leaves

2. Cattle being loaded into boat

3. Unidentified man and a woman who likely wears a dress sewn by Kate McGregor

(All the photographs were taken in Gili Gili in late 1920s, and are courtesy of the Manitoba Museum, Winnipeg)

often dissatisfied with the quality of her images. Nevertheless, her photographs served as personal mementos of Gili Gili and were often included in letters home to her parents in Brandon, Manitoba.

Most of Kate's photographs that have survived throughout the years feature labourers and, in some cases, their family members. According to Ruby, most subjects seemed to have enjoyed the novelty of the experience and were willing to pose for her mother. At times, a sheet or blanket was used to blank out a building in the background, unintentionally creating 'studio portrait' type of effect. While individuals were photographed in a 'plantation style' code of dress, there are several images depicting subjects in traditional forms of clothing, adornment, and hairstyles. These photographs of labourers are in good condition and the individuals could be readily identified. Less numerous are images of the plantation grounds and operations, housing, modes of transportation, recreational activities, and other expatriates.

There are few photos depicting labourers at work. Unfortunately, the lighting for the single image of a 'copra gang' in action is very dark. As Ruby explained, the 'copra gangs' made up the largest group of labourers. These 'gangs' worked in groups of 15–20 to collect the coconuts. The collection process involved knocking down old coconuts with a long bamboo handle (40–50 feet) which had a curved end. Another gang would pile these coconuts in high mounds while other workers chopped them open. Still another gang of 20–30 men cleaned out the coconut meat and bagged it.

The women in Kate's photographs are outfitted in their traditional fibre skirts, but a few individuals wear cloth garments or a combination of the two types of apparel. Ruby noted that her mother often sewed western-style cloth attire for the children of Papuan labourers. Material was used from the same cotton material distributed to workers. As a token of gratitude, one woman presented Kate with a red and yellow fibre skirt at Christmas. In her correspondence, Kate expressed her appreciation of the gift and its workmanship:

... they [dyed fibre skirts] are also rather rare around here as the women have to go into the bush to get berries to stain the dress red and yellow and take much longer to make them than their every-day plain dress, of which they wear six or seven at a time, one on top of the other. They make them out of sago leaves and split the leaves into threads (Kate McGregor, no date).

A small number of photographs document Indigenous celebrations that were held by workers and their families. Most of the images of celebrants are blurred, likely because the subjects were moving. However, Kate was able to produce a formal photograph of a number of male celebrants posing with their kundu-style drums. On one occasion, approximately 200 people were on the beach performing dances and feasting on pigs, taro, yams and bananas. About 20 pigs had been donated by various individuals and a two-year old steer was contributed to the feast from Gili Gili. Kate's husband, William, was honoured with a presentation of a shoulder from a pig (McGregor, November 23, 1926). Taken from a distance, the details in Kate's photograph of the gathering are not clear. However, she was able to produce a clearer image of labourers bringing a slaughtered pig to this feast.

The family's employment on the Gili Gili Plantation was viewed as temporary in nature (as long as her husband's contract) and therefore, little attempt was made to forge strong relationships with the few other expatriate families. Perhaps this is the reason for the lack of images of expatriates, or Kate may have been more interested in preserving memories of the 'exotic'. Thus, there are few images of other expatriates in her collection. One of the more interesting expatriate-related photographs depicts the traditional-style home and motor vehicle belonging to a Mr Coleman. The McGregor family enjoyed their visits to the Coleman residence. Ruby described this expatriate as a former British missionary and a trader with plantation experience who decided to now spend time 'in close touch with the natives and their affairs' (McGregor, 22 June 1928). He was culturally knowledgeable and spoke several dialects.



Kate McGregor (left) with daughter Ruby who poses with her pet cockatoo

Unfortunately, the subjects in many of the images are not identified by name and Ruby was not able to supply their names. A future 'naming' project could involve supplying digitised images to the appropriate cultural agency to provide community-based access for purposes of identification and as a way for individuals to reconnect with relatives. As a beginning, the Manitoba Museum has initiated discussions with the PNGAA to supply copies of the images for further research. •



Teaching English in Primary Schools in PNG

KEN MCKINNON AO

In 1959 Ken McKinnon was moved from his position as Education Officer for the Western District, to Port Moresby as Inspector of Schools Papua. In 1960 he was promoted again and became Chief of the Primary Education Division.

By the time I took in my new role, it was clear that, in addition to providing more teachers in more schools, steps had to be taken to achieve higher quality school outcomes.

The whole bag of needs had to be tackled forcefully. My biggest task was to get approval for the steps needed and to organise implementation upgrade of every aspect of PNG's schools, government and mission. Not a short-term project.

The targets required involvement of the big group of government and mission school people for the two years of effort. The goal was to complete and implement a detailed revision of the curriculum for indigenous primary schools in PNG, to be accompanied and later followed by a sustained program of developing textbooks and teaching guides.

There was ready approval; in fact, the newly-appointed Director of Education, Les Johnson, welcomed the initiation of a sizeable target that everyone in the department should be willing to eagerly assist to ensure success. The desire from outside for PNG to move actively to produce a university educated leadership cadre was another of the targets I was expected to achieve.

ABOVE:

District Education Office, Ela Beach,
Port Moresby, 1963

I was influenced by the thinking of CE Beeby, whose writing about education in the Pacific I had read and thought sensible and informed. He had been Director of Education in New Zealand, in which capacity he had had long experience in the Cook Islands and other New Zealand-oriented Pacific Islands. His later book, *Quality in Education* (Harvard, 1969), encapsulated that thinking. In it, he described several typical stages in the evolution of education systems from the Dame School approach, adopted particularly in developing countries.

In PNG we were at the earliest stage. To put teachers whose own education had been scant and whose preparation short, in a position where they could teach material relevant to PNG children's needs and interests was the objective. It was essential to provide guidance material and assist teachers to use it.

Language was by far the toughest issue. The sentimental view was that the vernacular should take precedence and that use of English as the medium of instruction was an illusion. In the first flush of postwar idealism, Bill Groves had instituted four-year Village Schools, purporting to use the vernacular including learning to read in the first two years, then transitioning to English in the next two. The reasoning was that that model would best lead on to successful four-year Village Higher Schools using English as the primary medium of instruction.

The policy did not work for the simple reason that practically none of the over seven hundred languages had been written down. Only a few had been studied, almost all by missionaries, intent on producing bible translations as their priority, not school primers and reading material. In twenty years in PNG I only ever saw one vernacular school with enough good teaching, proper guidance material, enough vernacular primers and enough advanced vernacular reading material.

Even more problematic was the question of a workable (e.g., *Motu* or any other) language of instruction in urban schools. For instance, how could teachers use any vernacular in a Port

Moresby school where among the thirty children in a class there might be twenty or more mother tongues?

Partly because of the urban area problem, and partly because the opening of schools in new areas was only possible by bringing in indigenous and expatriate teachers who did not speak the local languages, almost by default English became the medium of instruction in PNG government schools. Since the Village/Village Higher Schools had demonstrably failed, there was no reason to think PNG could make progress through reviving original postwar thinking.

Even though use of local vernaculars was a proven failure for practical reasons, it was not simple to do better in English. One part of the lengthy debate about the desirable language or languages of instruction was about what and how to teach. Another related to the likelihood of being able to devise the detailed assistance that would help teachers teach in a structured, progressive way. A third passionate part of the debate concerned correctness. Should the English taught be formal, 'correct' text-book English, or more colloquial, conversational English 'as she is spoke'?

The Use of English

It was relatively simple to demonstrate that people habitually use oral structures like 'have got' rather than 'have'. But old-timers stoutly claimed we should be teaching students proper English. One senior officer, to illustrate his point pointed to the papers in front of him and said, 'Look, if I've got these papers, I do not say "I've got these papers", I say "I have these papers"'. He could not have made the point about spoken English better. With the decisive backing of the new Director of Education, Les Johnson, in 1962 and a huge effort across the country by all government staff, the curriculum and materials that the working parties had devised were adopted across the Territory.

The curriculum was one thing; getting the detailed English teaching materials produced and into schools was another. They were created over several years, led by Frank Johnson and illustrated by Lois Niall, and concentrated on helping children

to learn to speak and read English with increasing fluency. A key part of the development, my biggest decision to that point, both in importance and cost, was the commissioning of The Jacaranda series through the Jacaranda Press (Brisbane).

It was a big gamble for me, the Department of Education, and, for that matter, Jacaranda too. As PNG could not afford high costs per book we bargained ferociously, to the point that Jacaranda's investment would only make a profit if the department bought the series for several years. We took the risk that we could, though not able to guarantee that in writing. Frank Eyre, the Australian Managing Director of Oxford University Press, who had previously sold us an English series based on the approach used in English Colonies in Africa, reduced my worries by shaking his head in disbelief at the quality of the deal we had struck. He did not believe that Jacaranda could ever make a profit at those prices.

There were literally hundreds of teachers, both indigenous and expatriate, who needed detailed in-service training and written guidance if the quality of schools was to improve.

Obviously, indigenous teachers, whose own general education had been limited to a couple of years of secondary education followed by one or two-years training in a teachers' college, would need detailed guidance. The tricky part was to get expatriates to accept that they, too, needed the same help.

It was a deliberate decision to insist that all schools should use the same material and the same teaching principles. We did not want to confuse teachers by allowing the revolving cycle

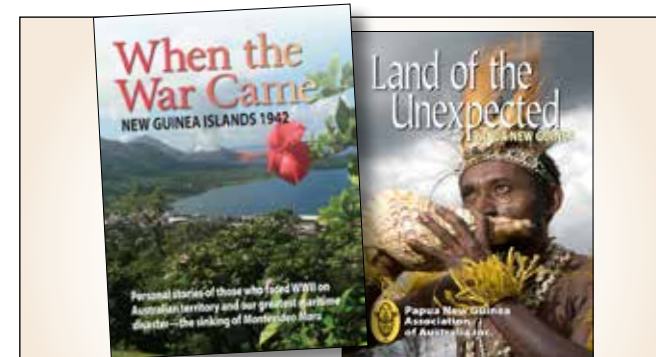
of expatriate supervisors to impose their own preferred approaches, particularly to the teaching of language. Native speakers of English trained to international standards could vary the curriculum and teaching approaches in their own classroom, but all other teachers and particularly supervisors were required to adhere to the common approach. We were aiming at consistency and successful outcomes.

The principal concern had to be to ensure students would make good progress in English, which was the principal tool through which we could hope to achieve higher standards in other curriculum areas. Standards were appreciably lifted through this consistent approach.

When the new curriculum was launched accompanied by nationwide in-service training, I was braced for what we got, mutterings of dissent from those who still wanted to chase the absolutely impractical ideal of every child being able to learn it in another tongue. That could not happen for several lifetimes.

As soon as we had the organisation to support the drive for better national standards the results did come. I was constantly impressed by how quickly indigenous kids could learn English if reasonably well taught. Most of them already knew more than one language, so learning another one was not strange. Of course, they would have picked up literacy skills as well or better in the vernacular if well taught, but that was just not a practical possibility.

Why have I told you about those times in such detail? Principally because this was the period in which I had my first chance to grapple with one of the major educational issues of the day. Deciding what to do and organising the enterprise so that we got a result constituted two particular challenges that took me further along the personal development path. The exhilaration of mounting a sustained all-out effort, and the satisfaction of seeing it gradually come together in visible progress that more participants relished was substantial even then. Looking back, it was a peak time. •



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Horse Riding in Port Moresby **DEBORAH EDWARDS** (Mapleson)

My family went from Melbourne to Port Moresby in 1966, Dad as the manager of Moniers at Six Mile. We were only there for a year when he passed away, unexpectedly, at Port Moresby Hospital (a bit of a medical mix-up but we probably shouldn't go there). He was thirty-eight.

My mum was left with two children to raise and got work at the Commonwealth Department of Works at Konedobu. We had to move from Six Mile and went to East Boroko. I was at school there, my brother at the high school.

Mum met my future stepfather, Lyall Yarnold, at the Four Mile Club and they eventually married. Lyall was a farmer type from Kempsey in NSW, who had worked in PNG for some decades as a grader driver for the Department of Civil Aviation, mainly doing airstrips all over the place.

He recognised the fact that I was horse mad, even though nobody else in our family had any



The Ida Clausen in Port Moresby (top); Deb on LiMace (centre) & Lyall Yarnold (below)

connection to horses at all. I was the sort of kid in Melbourne who used to get up early to see the milkman come down the road with his draught horse, and if we went for a drive in the country, I had to stop at every horse to pat them.

So Lyall was pleased to know I had that

addiction and he arranged through Mactaggarts, the stock and station agents, for a horse to be sent up from a pony stud in Boonah, Queensland. We were advised of her impending arrival by telegram: 'Horse arriving on the *Ida Clausen*, the date, and pony marked with blue paint on rump.'

Was I excited! Lyall had arranged a paddock—a spare block of land he fenced in preparation—we were living in Gordon's Estate then. The day the boat came in we were all down at the dock and watched the horses come off the boat until the one with blue paint on her rump appeared. She was just gorgeous. We named her LiMace after my paternal grandmother, Lillian Mary Cecelia, and she was a bright bay mare, about 14 hands, and surprise, surprise, she was pregnant! Eventually, a little foal, which we called Caine, arrived.

Lyall had purchased a horse for himself, a bay gelding called Woody, and we would spend weekends trail riding out from Gordons Estate, and Port Moresby Pony Club became our second home. Lyall and I both competed, individually, and also as pairs in many show-jumping events. When the new turf club at Bomana was being set up we were amongst those clearing fire breaks and doing whatever else needed to be done. I even rode LiMace in a race—I think we came last.

I had three glorious years with our three horses, learned to break one in when Lyall started Caine, and became a very effective rider—something that continued until just 18 months ago when, at age 64, I sold my last horse.

To say it was traumatic leaving PNG in 1973 and leaving behind my best friend is an understatement. I was 15, and very emotional. The quarantine laws were such that taking horses home to Australia was just impossible.

Lyall passed away from malaria, very young at age 50. He had experienced it in PNG and had a relapse when we got back to Australia (Cairns). The doctor refused to believe he had malaria but, unfortunately, he had cerebral malaria and died at home with Mum as we could not get him the care he needed.

So that's my story of horse-riding in PNG. •



On Patrol with Mike Eggleton at Morehead

DERYCK THOMPSON

On Wednesday, 26 April 1972 I arrived at Morehead Station by twin-engine Baron aircraft and was met by Mike Eggleton, who was the Assistant District Commissioner (ADC) for the Morehead Sub District in the Western District of the then Territory of Papua and New Guinea.

I was but a callow youth of twenty-one, newly arrived in PNG and I was much impressed by Mike who, as well as having worked in PNG for ten years, had also lived in England, Cyprus, and Sydney. Mike was single at the time, so I stayed with him initially and then moved into a share house with Patrol Officer Geoff Smith. Over the following months, usually over a few beers, Mike told me stories of his other postings and of the other kiaps he had worked with—Press and Warrillow *et al*—with whom I also worked in later years.

On Friday, 28 April, two days after my arrival at Morehead, I was off with Mike on my first patrol. We had a late departure due to an unserviceable outboard motor and finally got away from Morehead at 1300 hrs travelling in the station river truck, a sort of flat-bottomed tinnie. At 1330 hrs we stopped at Iokwa village to pick up Councillor Darum who was travelling with us to Bula village on the coast some 90 miles

downstream from Morehead. Darum was a member of the Morehead Council Tax Tribunal, and it was his job to decide if village people could afford to pay Council tax, or not.

By 1600 hrs we were zooming down the Morehead at 25 knots. Mike held the tiller of the outboard and he was scanning the river surface for floating debris which could have caused damage to our craft or the outboard motor. He was squinting into the glare of the sun, now low on the horizon, and cursing its glint on the water. There was a chill in the air as we cut bends in the river and passed into the lee of the jungle on the bank, which blocked the warm rays of the sun.

As relief from the glare of the sun, and out of interest, for I could already see that he was very attached to this domain of his, Mike glanced from bank to bank and watched the abundant wild life—deer, wallabies, pigs, cassowaries and many species of birds in their thousands.

Suddenly, above the screaming of the outboard, I heard Mike shout 'crocodile'. He had spotted a large crocodile resting in the undergrowth on the left-hand bank of the river. I knew that Mike was very concerned about the presence of crocodiles as he had already told me that the previous November a young schoolgirl had been killed by a crocodile while she was washing with her classmates in this very same river, at Morehead Station. As Mike throttled back, he put the river truck into a gentle right-hand turn and beckoned me to the tiller and, as I took it, he was already reaching for his Lee Enfield .303 rifle and punching a brass round into the breech.

I continued our turn and it became a circle and as we approached our original position on the river, we cut our wake and even at slow speed the river truck jumped and bounced. As we reached the position of the original sighting Mike stood up, raised the Lee Enfield, and steadied. There was a loud crack and a whiff of cordite but the bouncing river truck and the precarious firing stance prevented a second shot and, as I guided the river truck towards the bank, Mike reloaded and slipped the safety catch on, and then

indicated a landing position some 40 feet downstream from the position of the crocodile.

We tied the river truck to the root of a tree sticking out from the bank which was five feet above the level of the river truck and this prevented us from clearly sighting the crocodile. We clambered up the bank and advanced stealthily behind Mike. The undergrowth, although sparse by PNG standards, had the usual high tropical forest cover, and, in the dim light, we could not see for more than 20 feet.

Mike sighted the crocodile about 15 feet in front and, without taking his aim off it, he manoeuvred into the shelter of a large tree and braced himself as he knew that it was possible that the beast was lying doggo. He turned his head and with quick eye movements indicated to Massa and Darum that they should move to its offside while he maintained his aim on its head.

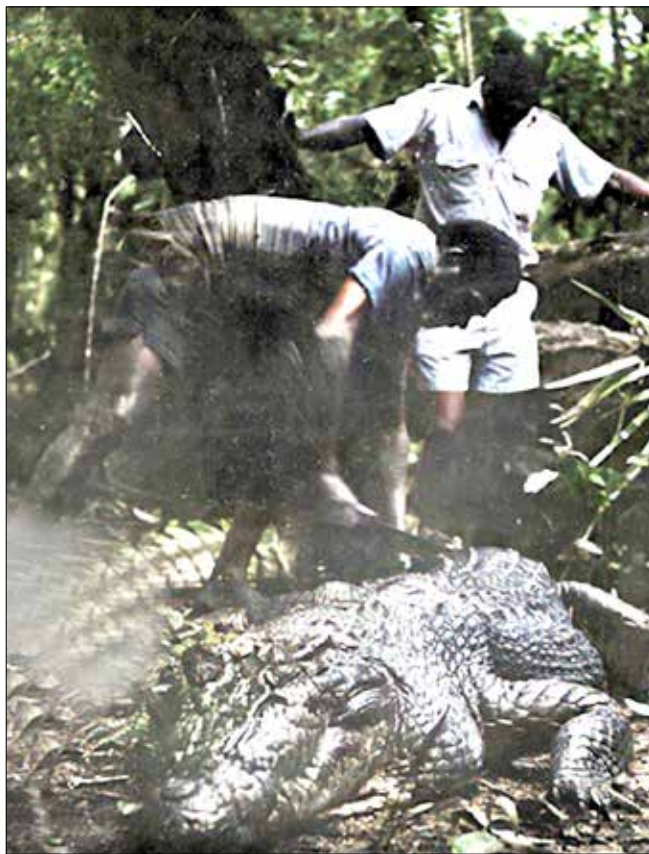
I stood, sweating, behind Mike, wondering which tree I would leap into if the crocodile charged. Then I heard a sudden whirring sound and a thump—a rotten piece of timber thrown by Darum had landed on the animal's side—no movement.

Massa circled to the tail end of the creature. Mike re-positioned by a few feet, never taking his eye off the crocodile, so that he could get an oblique shot at it if it moved and to reduce the danger to Massa if he had to shoot.

We watched breathlessly as Massa approached the animal from the rear. I could see Mike's finger



Mike Eggleton on the Morehead River



Massa and Darum cutting off the tail of the crocodile tighten on the trigger. Massa prodded the mighty tail with a stick. Still no movement. He grabbed hold of the tail and swung it. Nothing. He walked up the crocodile's mighty back and yelled a shout of glee. Mike moved forward until the crocodile and the .303 were muzzle to muzzle. There was no further movement. 'Guns up,' I yelled rather dramatically and we surrounded the creature.

The crocodile was about 14 feet long and was a 'saltie', or saltwater crocodile, as we could tell by the pattern of horny plates at the back of its head.

Massa and Darum cut off its tail and heaved it into the river truck. We considered the skin, but it was oversized and anyway there was not enough time to skin the crocodile. Even its mighty teeth eluded us as they were sunk into its massive jaws.

With darkness approaching we climbed back into the river truck and continued our trip down river and arrived at our destination, Bula, at 1930 hrs. Crocodile tail stew was on the menu that night—very pleasant although very fatty—accompanied by yams baked in the ashes of our fire.

Three weeks later, on 17 May, I was again travelling down the Morehead River, this time on my first solo patrol, and managed to identify the spot where Mike had shot the crocodile. I pulled in and we climbed the bank and found that scavengers of the jungle from green tree ants to pigs had demolished the mighty carcass.

An assorted collection of vertebrae, ribs and leg bones remained and all had been picked clean. The bottom jawbone had completely disappeared, but the remains of the top jawbone was there—and with it, the clue to the demise of the crocodile. The top jawbone is an extension of the skull, but in this case the rear section of the skull was gone, sheared off, not by a predator but by the impact of a .303 slug. I picked up the skull section and about 15 teeth and took them with me back to Morehead. Mike retained the largest tooth and gave me the rest and years later I got them capped and gave them to friends. •

RIP Mike Eggleton—25 March 2016



The Papua New Guinea Association of Australia (PNGAA) website is a source of association news, interesting articles, membership details, special documents, photograph collections, digital material, eBooks, and items available in our PNGAA Store—www.pngaa.org/store/ but it is also a means of contacting other members. A list of the names and addresses of PNGAA members is now available on our website. Please go to: <https://pngaa.org/membership-directories/> If you do not wish to scroll through the many pages of names, you can type a name in the 'Search' box to find someone you are looking for.

When you want to use our website, your user name is your email address or nominated *User Name*—you can use either one. If you have forgotten your password, select the option 'Forgot password' and a new password will be sent to your email address. It will be a complex computer-generated password, but you can overwrite it to something with more meaning for you. If you do not receive the password email, check your Spam or Junk Folder. If you are still having trouble, let me know and I will reset your password.

Roy Ranney, Membership Officer—membership@pngaa.net



The Merrie England **DAVID JONES**

***Merrie England* was a pretty ship with a jolly name. She was well known on the Brisbane River when she came for her annual overhaul or regular visits, lying lightly at anchor in the Gardens Reach.**

The *Brisbane Courier* reported 'her lines are extremely graceful' with clipper bow, shelving stern and rakish masts and funnel. But more than this, the report continued 'she is a fine sea boat capable of going to any place in the world'.

So, what was the *Merrie England*?

She was a government vessel, born out of the turbulent journey followed by the eastern Australian colonies to convince the Imperial Government in London to take possession of eastern New Guinea in the face of German expansion. Finally, in 1888, Great Britain took possession of Papua, south-eastern New Guinea, if Queensland and the other Australian colonies financially subsidised its administration. Under the terms of this agreement Great Britain provided a steamer for the New Guinea Administration to exercise its authority throughout the possession.

Merrie England was the vessel chosen. Built in Leith in 1884 as a steam yacht with auxiliary schooner rig for a wealthy Englishman, she was 147 feet long (44.8 m) with a beam of 25 feet (7.62 m) and measured 260 gross tons. A pair of compound steam engines and a single screw gave her a speed of ten knots. Various modifications were made to suit her for her new role in the tropics. Her rig was reduced, hull refurbished, a steam launch and 25-foot whaler were provided

as well as awnings and an ice-making machine. A three-barrelled 25 cm Nordenfelt quick-firing gun, rifles, revolvers, cutlasses and plenty of ammunition were supplied for her policing role in a wild and untamed land.

Merrie England arrived in Port Moresby for the first time on 12 May 1889 after a 67-day passage from London. Two days later she left on her first assignment, carrying a court party to administer justice in a settlement 70 miles to the east. At this time New Guinea had been barely touched by civilisation and was virtually unexplored by Europeans. A cycle of conflict, bloodshed and retribution was commonplace among the native tribes. The few European traders, goldminers and missionaries struggled against hostile country, fickle natives, and tropical disease to pursue their difficult ambitions.

The *Merrie England* would greatly assist the Administrator, Sir William Macgregor, in promoting the rule of law in Papua. He often travelled aboard her himself, seeing and being seen

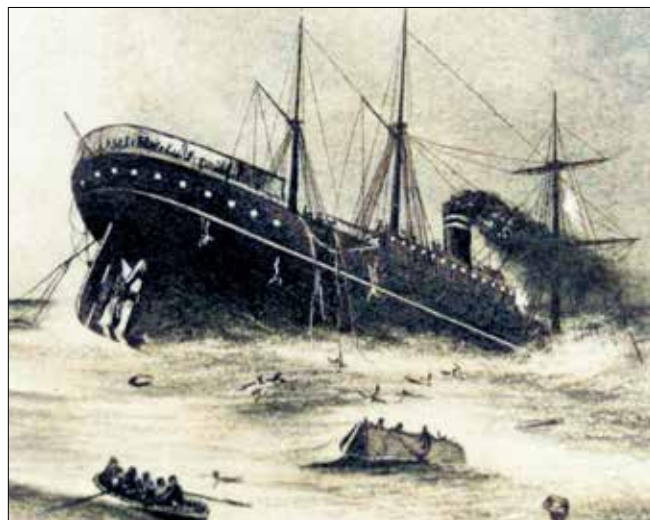
across the length of his frontier domain. *Merrie England*'s duties were many and varied, including coastal transport, transfer of administration officers, law enforcement and policing, rescue, and relief of sick and destitute settlers, as well as aiding exploration. But it was not all serious business. Four months after her arrival, *Merrie England* gave 200 children from Port Moresby a three-hour cruise out to sea.

The Quetta Connection

The steamer was regularly seen in Queensland ports, Brisbane, Cooktown and Thursday Island, connecting with shipping from Great Britain and obtaining supplies. *Merrie England* was in Thursday Island when, at 2 pm on 1 March 1890, news was received that the mail steamer *Quetta* had struck a rock and foundered in the approaches to Torres Strait. *Merrie England* was loaded with food and blankets, and within an hour was heading to the scene of the tragedy to rescue survivors and carry them to Thursday Island.



Sir William Macgregor GCMG, CB, AM, PC, FRSGS



Saving the *Quetta* survivors from the wrecked ship

Another rescue and her end!

Again in 1909 she spent almost a month searching for the German Government vessel *Seestern*, which had disappeared after sailing from Brisbane. But no trace of *Seestern* was ever found.

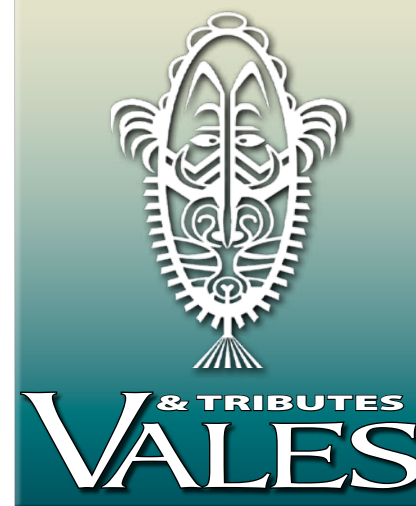
For 23 years *Merrie England* made a substantial contribution to the colonial development of Papua, enduring the hazards of uncharted waters, groundings, and cyclones, in a remote area, dependent on her own resources for repairs and replacements. But her time came on the night of 24 October 1912.

While approaching Port Moresby in hazy conditions, a light on a canoe was mistaken for a guiding light into the harbour and *Merrie England* glided smoothly onto Basilisk Reef.

Her engines were put hard astern, but it was to no avail, *Merrie England* was held fast. Boats ferried all her people ashore and, as the tide receded, she listed heavily on her starboard side. Salvage attempts over several days failed and *Merrie England* was abandoned as a total loss.

After sterling service over many years establishing British rule in Papua, *Merrie England* had fixed her name in the colony's history. Her name was revived in 1917 for a 169-ton wooden motor ship to continue the work of her predecessor. But this vessel's life was short, being accidentally burnt at her moorings in Port Moresby two years later. •

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**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,
2 February 2024, to
editor@pngaa.net**

HARRIS, Gregory Vincent d. 23 August 2023

Greg passed away in Flinders Medical Centre, Adelaide after a short illness. He was 75 years old.

Greg's early career as an ABC journalist gave him a life-long interest in reporting, story-telling and film.

He went to the then Territory of Papua and New Guinea, firstly as a volunteer for a brief time with a Catholic mission service, returning in June 1971 as Assistant Patrol Officer. He was on the Assistant Patrol Officer course 29 June 1971.

He served at Baiyer River and Tambul Patrol Posts in the Western Highlands District.

What is beyond any doubt is the fact his experiences made Greg into what he became later in life.

After leaving PNG in late 1974, he served in the Commonwealth Public Service in Adelaide, Darwin, Alice Springs and finally in ATSIC in Canberra.

Greg returned to work in Papua New Guinea with CARE Australia in 1998 and 1999 in the aftermath of the drought raging at the time. This was in part a small attempt to repay Papua New Guinea for what it had given him all those years ago.

Returning to study later in life, Greg graduated with a Bachelor of Arts, Literature and Pacific History, Flinders University 1983; Bachelor of Laws, Macquarie University 1995; Grad Dip Legal Practice, ANU 1996; and Master of Arts, International

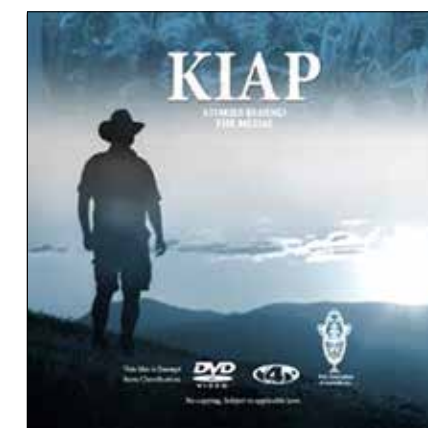
Development, Flinders 2021 (completed in retirement).

In ATSIC, he played a role in the initial work to establish an indigenous television network, that later became National Indigenous Television, Channel 34. He contributed to the major report on implementing the NITV in 2002, that led to its establishment in 2007.

In 2013, the Australian Government awarded the Police Overseas Service Medal —TPNG Clasp, 2014 to kiaps for services rendered before 1975. Greg was one of the recipients of this medal.

Building on his previous experience in journalism and storytelling through film, Greg co-produced the *KIAP—Stories Behind the Medal* documentary DVD, which is available from the PNGAA. In the film, patrol officers reflect on their individual experiences of their time in TPNG. Greg produced this film to commemorate the story, the process and the occasion.

His experience in Papua New Guinea without the slightest doubt, formed his personality and character, and laid the foundation of the immensely



productive, intellectual and morally courageous person his family and friends knew and admired. In his last days, he talked with great emotion about what Papua New Guinea had meant to him.

His lasting passion was a project to produce a commercial film on the work kiaps did, that was also intended to cement relationships between Australia and Papua New Guinea. He discussed this with a number of people in detail and had already engaged film production professionals to plan and assist his wife, Helen, in furthering this project.

Greg is survived by his wife Helen, who joined him in PNG when he returned in 1998. He will be remembered with love and respect by his extended family and friends.

Helen Prescott & Jim Moore



The Venerable Marjorie McGregor AM

McGREGOR, The Venerable Marjorie AM
d. 17 September 2022

I am the youngest sister of Marjorie McGregor, who died on the 17 September 2022, two days before her 91st birthday.

Marjorie was the eldest daughter of Private Sydney McGregor who went to Rabaul with Lark Force and who drowned on the *Montevideo Maru*.

Marjorie became the first

female Anglican Archdeacon in Australia and was awarded the Order of Australia medal (AM) for her service to the Anglican Church of Australia.

Helen Forsyth

(See also *Memorial News*, page 57)

LENEHAN, Irene
d. 15 September 2023

We note with regret the death of a long-standing member of the association, Irene Lenehan, on 15 September 2023 at Wyong Hospital. The sad news came in a letter to the editor from her son, Stephen Lenehan (see page 12), who intends to prepare a vale for a later issue of *PNG Kundu*.

Editor

WEBER, Raymond
Edward MBE, ML, MCS
d. 30 September 2023

The vale for Mr Weber will be published in the next issue.



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.



MEMORIAL NEWS

RABAU & 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* on 1 July 1942, 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*, the quarterly journal of the PNGAA, which includes the 'Memorial News', dedicated to those who lost their lives at the start of the Pacific War in New Guinea.

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

Tell Your Story!

Remembrance Day, 11 November 2023 and RMvM's online education

Patrick Bourke, the RMvM Education Co-ordinator, continues to contact schools to share our story—but the association needs your help to do this too! Every family connected to this tragedy can do this. Patrick recently wrote to the archivist at a Sydney private school pointing out the *MvM* had been found and there were students who had had relatives on board, and therefore it might be interesting for current students to read about it.

It was not published in their magazine, or online news, despite the archivist having written an article. This is hard to understand, especially after the *Montevideo Maru's* being found and all the media in April!

We ask that you contact both the editors and archivists of school magazines, sharing your story, and referring them to the website (www.montevideo-maru.org) for more information. They can easily search online, too, for information about the April 2023 media surrounding the find of the *Montevideo Maru* after nearly 81 years.

It is well known that this is Australia's largest maritime disaster. And it is disappointing that this is still being knocked back and future generations are not learning from it.

Not only would they learn of the horrors of war on an Australian territory, but why there were Australians living on that 'territory'. It is clear that many of the 'younger generation' put something aside because it hasn't crossed their realm before—they simply don't know about it. Giving them as much information as possible makes it easy for them to tell the story.

With Remembrance Day on 11 November, we encourage families to contact RSLs and schools, reminding them that New Guinea was an Australian Mandated Territory at the time of the Pacific War and many Australians and Papua New Guineans suffered terribly. Ask that the story of what happened in the New Guinea Islands, at Tol and on the *Montevideo Maru* is acknowledged. Perhaps they will be keen to hear your story! And please let us know if they do!



A previous Anzac Day Ceremony in Rabaul

Anzac Day 2024 Rabaul PNG

The Rabaul and Montevideo Maru group, together with family members of 2/22nd Battalion, Lark Force, and Susie McGrade of Rabaul Hotel, are planning a special Anzac Day in Rabaul for 2024.

The plan is that air bookings are made individually (although we may be able to suggest a travel agent) to arrive a few days before Anzac Day. On Anzac Day there will be the Dawn Service at the Rabaul Cenotaph, a gun-fire breakfast at the Yacht Club and then travel to Bitapaka for a service there, followed by a sunset service at the Montevideo Maru Memorial on Rabaul harbour. 2/22nd family members will have six to seven days in Rabaul, however it is up to each individual how long they wish to stay. There will be buses arranged to do tours around Rabaul and Kokopo, and a day trip to Tol for the unveiling of a Memorial Story Board by the 2/22nd.

There will be some leisure time, too, to ensure it is not too taxing. At time of print, costings and an itinerary were being discussed.

If you are interested, please contact Marg Curtis (M: 0418 323 555 / E: margcurtis@outlook.com) or Andrea Williams (M: 0409 031 889 / E: admin@montevideo-maru.org).

Important Archive Request: MV Herstein

A VERY long shot but ... does anyone from the old Rabaul days have photos of the wreck of the Norwegian merchant ship MV *Herstein*?

The *Herstein* (and propeller) was raised from the Rabaul harbour bed in 1957 before being cut up for scrap. She was still there in 1960.

The *Herstein* played a poignant role in PNG and Australian history. If she had been used to evacuate the men of Rabaul in January 1942, hundreds of lives would have been saved and history changed.

The *Herstein* was commissioned by Australia after war broke out and had brought troops and weapons to Port Moresby then Rabaul, arriving in Rabaul on 14 January 1942. With a Japanese invasion imminent, Administrator Harold Page requested the ship be used to evacuate at least the civilians. But the War Office in Canberra refused and ordered the *Herstein* to continue loading copra. It was a dreadful mistake.

A few days later she was bombed by the Japanese. Most of her crew was on shore and survived. But they were captured when the Japanese invaded a few days later ... and would perish with 1,000 others on the prison ship the *Montevideo Maru* on 1 July that year when it was sunk by an American submarine off the Philippines.

Andrea Williams and I were aboard the expedition search vessel which finally located the *Montevideo Maru* wreck in April this year.

We are now following up research on the victims including the 25 Norwegian crew of the *Herstein* and several others from other nations. I am developing a documentary on it all. Images of the *Herstein* would be of enormous historical interest, especially for the Norwegian descendant families.

I have learned over many years of journalism and historical research never to write off chances of finding archival material. It could be in long lost family photo albums or publications. Please do let me know if you can help—email: maxuechtritz@hotmail.com **MAX UECHTRITZ**



MV *Herstein*

Marjorie McGregor AM (19 September 1931–17 September 2022)

Marjorie was the eldest daughter of Pvt Sydney McGregor who went down on the *Montevideo Maru*. In the early years of the then Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Society, she regularly attended events in Canberra and was a great supporter of the work for acknowledgement.

Marj became one of the first women in Australia to be made deacon when appointed by Archbishop David Penman at St Paul's Cathedral Melbourne in 1986, and she became the first female Anglican Archdeacon in Australia in 1988. Studying at Ridley College for her Licentiate in Theology in 1959 Marj earned a rare Th.Schol in 1972, the equivalent of a master's degree.

She was made a deaconess in 1961 and served at Bentleigh, London, Ringwood, The Hermitage and South Melbourne with many church agencies that eventually came under the umbrella of Anglicare, drawing the poor and marginalised into the centre of the church's attention.

As a deacon Marj led the parish of Northcote. She was appointed Senior Minister for Women. She pursued the future of the diaconate both internationally and ecumenically through the organisation Diakonia. Marg was awarded the AM for her service to the church.

In her last years in the nursing home Marj continued to say the words of the prayerbook. She was much loved in her community and cared for in her last few years by her sisters Margaret and Helen.

HELEN FORSYTH

Sydney McGregor enlisted on 3 June 1940 at the Melbourne Town Hall. He was 39 at the time, married to Elinor Marjorie (known as Madge) and with three daughters, Marjorie aged 9, Mattie (Margaret) 7 and Helen 3. He was posted to the 2/22 Battalion. Syd was a tennis player and also a chess devotee. He carried on a postal chess game during his army service, but was eventually stopped from doing this because of the possibility of the moves being interpreted as code.

Margaret later wrote:

When the war with Japan ended and [we] arrived home from school Mum told us we were all to go to Footscray for a family celebration. We were expected to get ourselves right over to the other side of Melbourne to Footscray, walking to the station, about a mile, and then by train to Footscray of course.

We didn't want to go. None of us wanted to go. I knew I would be bored out of my mind, an uncomfortable child in an adult world with uncles, aunts and cousins who were older and remote from our lives. Marjorie would take her book and would just separate herself from the revelry. Helen was the youngest and would probably go to sleep anyway. I would wander aimlessly about wishing for an end to the pretending that I was having a good time. We were to stay the night so no amount of 'Please can we go home?' in Mum's ear would make the slightest difference to my misery.

So we sat on McKinnon Station, with not a train in sight. Marjorie and Helen were in their customary places, one on each side of Mum. I wandered around, peering down the track, hoping a train would never come. Now and again bursts of celebration could be heard or glimpsed through the pickets of the station fence. Neighbours called to each other, strangers exchanged stories, and on the platform a few hopeful travellers had gathered at the working end of the platform. We sat on, isolated in our collective misery. We weren't excited or jubilant; we were conscious of the telegrams on the mantelpiece. The first one had said 'Missing, believed prisoner of war'. The latest one read 'Missing, believed killed.'

'So what happens now Mum? What will people do if there isn't a war to work for?'

I gazed at the abandoned penny Nestle's machine. 'Will we be able to get chocolate now? Will there be any more rationing? Do we really have to go? Why don't we just go home?'

Our Mum gave a great sigh of hopelessness. 'We've



Mattie, Helen & Marjorie McGregor

got to go, the family expects us to be there, I can't not go.' She screwed up her face, 'Why are they making me go ... what have I got to celebrate?'

The mesh railway gates crashed down. A train whistle shrieked. People in the street called to each other in joy. And we huddled together in quiet loneliness, a mother, three daughters—and no father. The train rattled to a stop and we were on our way to the happy celebration party.

It was just as I feared. Hospitality flowed, everyone was being jolly, even our Mum. In fact, I thought she was altogether too jolly, embarrassingly so. I must have voiced my disapproval because one aunt told me crossly, 'Don't be such a spoilsport, let your mother enjoy herself.' Enjoy?

Two months later we learnt that our father had indeed perished when the 'Montevideo Maru' was sunk in July 1942. My mother was heartbroken. We all grieved and mourned in our own way, but we were not encouraged to talk about it. We were children and in those days children were not consulted or considered in matters of life and death. There was no church service to honour our father, no funeral, no good-bye.

The family has always found strength in their faith in Christ. Marjorie was ordained Deaconess, later Deacon and then Archdeacon in the Diocese of Melbourne. She has been made a Member of the Order of Australia.

Excerpt from <https://www.jje.info/lostlives/people/mcgregors.html> / <https://tma.melbourneanglican.org.au/?s=Marjorie+Mc+Gregor>

Back Roads Travels to PNG

The final episode for the season of ABC's Back Roads, on 21 August 2023, left Australian shores for the first time and featured Rabaul, with guest presenter Tania Bale who grew up there. It was the 2023 season finale and you can catch it on ABC IView.

Guest presenter and Papua New Guinea national, Tania Bale, takes us on the first Back Roads to leave Australian shores. Just a three-hour flight from Cairns, Rabaul was once the capital of the Australian Territory of New Guinea. It was known as the 'Pearl of the Pacific' for its spectacular deep-water harbour and natural beauty. Incredibly, this community has



George Telek and the Moab string band (ABC: Back Roads/Campbell Miller)

survived not only a hostile invasion and daily bombings but also being buried by volcanic eruptions ... twice.

Tania explores why some locals or 'leftovers' as they call themselves, keep returning and rebuilding despite everything that's been thrown at them.

She's welcomed by the quintessential 'sound of PNG'—performed by world renowned singer-songwriter, Sir George Mamua Telek, and his Moab Stringband. 'Telek' is a Tolai, one of two groups, indigenous to Rabaul. Later, Tania enjoys a mouth-watering feast of Aigir, a traditional Tolai method of cooking using hot stones wrapped up in the food itself.

In the nearby mountains, Tania has an unforgettable encounter with Rabaul's other original inhabitants, the Baining, celebrated for their breath-taking fire dances.

While Back Roads was filming in Rabaul in April this year, an 81-year-old World War Two mystery made international news, with the discovery of the 'Montevideo Maru' in the South China Sea. The ship was torpedoed and sunk by an American submarine in June 1942.

This made for an incredibly moving ANZAC Day service in Rabaul as many locals had personal connections with those lost at sea. The sinking of the Montevideo Maru is still regarded as the worst maritime disaster in Australia's history.

https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-08-21/rabaul-papua-new-guinea-top-things-to-know-back-roads/102742272?fbclid=IwAR1nMgoanj3OqDCmgf5AWoiBJbi2WLa25Owh21MgbmlrrO3_NSO2LCfMDE

Memorial News welcomes your stories, photos, research, maps and memorabilia

General email: admin@montevideo-maru.org (Andrea Williams)

Send stories to: stories@montevideo-maru.org (Andrea Williams)

For education information email: education@montevideo-maru.org (Patrick Bourke)



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

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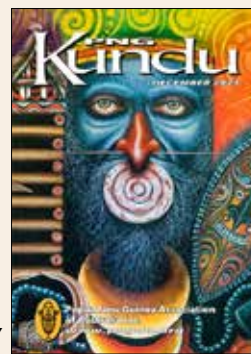
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Members receive four issues of our journal, *PNG KUNDU*, per year, full access to all content on the website, including our eBooks, receive email updates via *Tok Save*, network through events and social media and are encouraged to explore and become 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:

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If you're interested in the history, adventure and stories of Papua New Guinea, and those who helped build the nation, then any of these will be a great addition to your library or a unique gift for any occasion. With every purchase you make, PNGAA attracts funds for ongoing work of the Association through the generosity of their writers and creators. Details of other items in our store are available on the Treasurer's Corner Membership & Order Form on the previous pages or on our website:

www.pngaa.org/store/

WHEN THE WAR CAME: New Guinea Islands 1942

Published in 2017 by PNGAA to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Fall of Rabaul and the sinking of MS *Montevideo Maru*, Australia's greatest maritime disaster, tells the stories of the civilian and military men, women and children caught in the leadup and aftermath of the Japanese invasion and occupation of the New Guinea Islands in 1942. The book brings into focus the actions and characters of young men who left home to willingly serve their country, and then literally vanished off the face of the earth; of nurses and missionaries who volunteered to stay to help both the war effort and the local people; and of civilians caught at home on WWII's Pacific front line.

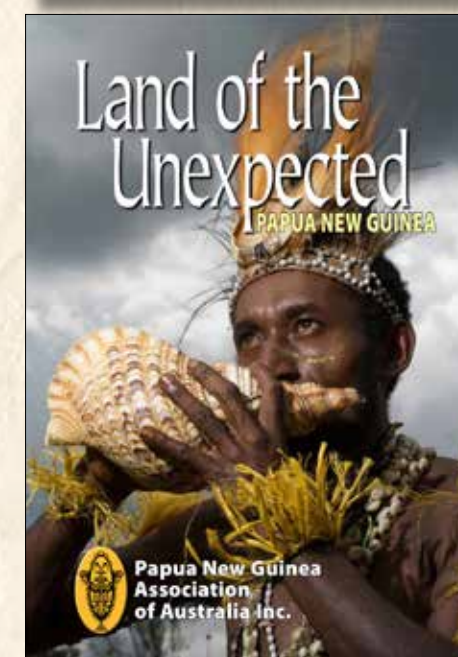
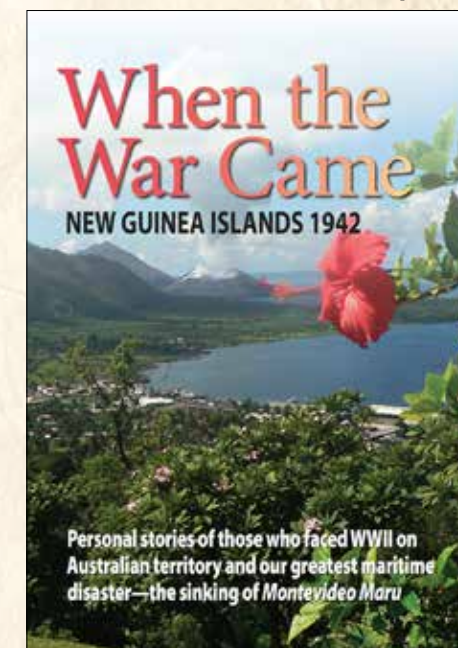
Alongside are incredulous stories of escape and survival in an environment that threw every obstacle in their path.
\$60.00 (+ \$20.00 postage within Australia)

LAND OF THE UNEXPECTED: Papua New Guinea

Our nearest neighbour, Papua New Guinea, is a land of tremendous contrasts—of smiling people, mad keen rugby players and followers, complex cultural dynamics and displays, singing that is out of this world, stunning scenery, incredible artefacts, delicious tropical fruits and opportunities for adventurous activities—all in a terrain carved by steep slopes and jagged mountain ranges, interspersed by fertile valleys and over a dozen active volcanoes. PNGAA's new publication covers many of the different facets of this amazing country—a complex overview, flora, fauna and the environment, industries, public services, art, culture, sport, the diverse history and some of the people who helped to shape the nation.

\$30.00 (+ \$7.00 postage within Australia)

Sales proceeds will be dedicated to fund-raising for PNGAA programs



A selection of some of the other books and DVDs available ... and don't forget the PNGAA Tote Bag

These high-quality, environmentally friendly, large laminated jute bags, make good gifts and are great for everyday and your shopping.

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Australia's Worst Air Crash Commemorated Eighty Years On

The worst air crash in Australian history happened on 7 September 1943. It is one of the best kept secrets of World War II. Eighty years later, Leslie Thomson, who was there, would rather not think about it.



Private Leslie Thomson

A Liberator bomber of the US Army Air Force, on take-off for a bombing raid from the Seven Mile airstrip in Port Moresby, crashed into a convoy of trucks carrying soldiers of the 2/33rd Australian Infantry Battalion. Sixty men from the battalion were killed along with two Australian truck drivers and eleven US air crew. Ninety other Australians were injured.

General Douglas MacArthur threatened to court-martial anyone who spoke of this tragedy. Relatives of the victims were not told.

Leslie Thomson who was 19 at the time was guest of honour at a service marking 80 years since the crash at the Anzac Memorial in Sydney on Thursday, 7 September 2023. He told the *Sydney Morning Herald* that three companies of the 2/33 Battalion were assembled beside the

airstrip waiting to board DC3s for a flight to Nadzab when the crash happened at about 4 am.

He went on to say:

The CO, Lieutenant Colonel Tom Cotton, first thought the massive explosion was the result of a Japanese air attack but was later told a Liberator bomber, taking off, had hit a tree and crashed into trucks carrying D Company. Three of the plane's 500 lb bombs and thousands of gallons of aviation fuel exploded. You can imagine the carnage it caused. Some of the poor buggers in the trucks didn't stand a chance. Others were incinerated trying to escape the inferno. Many, with their clothes alight, were running around trying to put out the flames"

Former *Sun-Herald* editor Peter Allen, writing in the Order of Service for the ceremony, said:

Because Papua New Guinea was then under Australian administration, the crash still ranks as the biggest in Australian aviation history, in peace or war. Although being Australia's worst aviation disaster, it remains one of the least known major accidents of World War II.

Editor's Note: The only other living survivor of the tragedy, Kenneth Waters aged 104, was unable to be present at the memorial service.

Tim Barlass' story in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 4 September 2023 may be accessed at:
<https://www.smh.com.au/national/the-men-dying-still-haunt-me-the-day-a-us-army-crash-killed-62-australians-20230829-p5e0dw.html>



The Liberator Crash Memorial Service, 7 September 2023—(Les Thomson in wheelchair)

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