



JOHN GROENEWALD'S DIARY

*Part 6 –At Telefomin, thence Home via Kiunga
and Port Moresby
29 April 1963 to 16 June 1963*



(Wording of Memorial Plaque cover photo)

TERRITORY OF PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA
**IN MEMORY OF
PATROL OFFICER
GERALD LEO SZARKA**

-AND-

**CADET PATROL OFFICER
GEOFFREY BRODRIBB HARRIS**
FIELD OFFICERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
DISTRICT SERVICES AND NATIVE AFFAIRS
6092 PA CONSTABLE BURITORI

-AND-

3349 CONSTABLE PURARI
ROYAL PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA CONSTABULARY
WHO LOST THEIR LIVES ON TERRITORY SERVICE IN
THE TELEFOMIN AREA
ON 10 NOVEMBER 1953

APRIL, 1963

MONDAY 29

119-246

Today has been a glorious day and there has been some time to look around Telefomin. It is a very nice spot with about 6 married couples and we have had invitations for dinner ~~from~~ almost all of them. There is a good airstrip here and there are several D.N.A. officials flying in this week for discussions with us. Down at the mission there is a trade store and we have managed to buy a few tins of food so we should be living rather well these next few days.

It is really strange to be in civilization again and Leo and I are a rather scruffy pair having no decent clothes to wear - its quite embarrassing when we get asked out. I have one shirt left (2 others I started out with have just been torn to pieces in the jungle) and even that has several tears in it.

How nice it is to have a hot shower again and even small things like sitting in a chair mean a lot. This afternoon we were present with 2 loaves of bread and a cake from some of the wives - I never realized bread could taste so nice.

Before supper we had a few drinks at the Eskales and the rest of the evening we were at Mike's place where we had quite a party.

APRIL, 1963

TUESDAY 30
120-245

As I write this I have an audience of 3 of our carriers (locals from the Kaniok valley) who have just wandered into our tent, plunked themselves down and are sitting watching us. This happens all the time and one can hardly go to the toilet without having company.

Again it is a beautiful day (there hasn't been a drop of rain for 4 or 5 days now) and I have spent most of the time calculating. Tomorrow the D.C. and D.O. from here arrive and with them there should be some mail for us so it ought to be a great day - it is really a long time since I've had any letters so I can't wait for them to arrive.

A thing of interest here in Telefomin is a memorial to 2 Patrol Officers + 2 native police who were murdered a day out from the station in 1953. Evidently quite a few of the groups around here ganged up in the murders including the people we passed through there just few days. Of course that was 10 years ago and now these people are quite peaceful.

This evening we have dinner over at the mission - won't be getting any beer there!

MAY, 1963

WEDNESDAY, 1

121-244

ST. PHILIP &
ST. JAMES' DAY

As has happened every time we expected an airdrop the plane did not arrive from Daven today - these people just don't seem to be able to organise a thing properly. We did however receive a radio message telling us to wait on Telefomin till the Governor-General arrives here on May 19th. In my opinion it is rather stupid to have us sitting around here all that time just so that the G.G. can meet us. We will probably be able to go out to visit some natives (SELTAMINS) about 4 days out of Telefomin where Fregel had a few arrows shot at him a month ago. If we have to sit here till the 19th I'll ask Matmap if I can go back to Australia because there is nothing to do here.

Last night we had a very pleasant evening at the mission and this evening a "braaisleis" at the Esdales.

MAY, 1963

THURSDAY 2

122-243

Today the D.O. from Wewak arrived here and we have spent most of the day discussing the patrol, looking at maps and photos. They are going to send a patrol from here in about a month's time and are going to try to reach the "top pocket" from the north. I have been working fairly hard getting a map drawn of the area we covered.

We received a copy of the "South Pacific Post" (Port Moresby) which has a long article about the Status Patrol - it gives us quite a write-up most of which is greatly exaggerated and ridiculous.

The headline is "Tale of Courage in an Unfriendly Tough Area" - I ask you!!

Let's hope the plane from Raru arrives to-morrow.

Extract Patrol Diary - Patrol Report Kiunga 9/62-63 (2/05/63)

District Officer, Wewak arrives. General discussions re patrol and proposed future area administration with A.D.O. Telefomin and D.O.

NB: There were no Patrol Diary entries for period 29 April to 1 May 1963

MAY, 1963

FRIDAY 3
123-242

A very ordinary day during which I have been working at maps most of the time. The plane from Lam has not arrived yet and on the radio we were told that they will be coming as soon as possible.

A lot of Faiwomin carriers arrived here for us this afternoon, but now we will be sitting around till the Lam plane arrives so heaven knows what they are going to do. They are quite a wild looking lot.

This evening there is fairly heavy rain falling here – the first since we arrived.

Extract Patrol Diary - Patrol Report Kiunga 9/62-63 (3/05/63)

D.O. Wewak departs for Wewak
NB: No Diary Entry for 4th May

MAY, 1963

SATURDAY 4
124-241

Not much doing today and this is getting a bit boring. This evening I managed to observe a few stars but there was a lot of cloud around and the observations weren't very successful.

Last night we spent a very pleasant evening having dinner with the teacher and his family.

MAY, 1963

3rd AFTER EASTER

SUNDAY 5
125-240

Today the plane from Daru finally arrived with the D.O. on board - it then returned to Kiunga to take out our "crippled" carrier and brought Ross to Telefomin. It was rather good receiving a good batch of mail again.

Plans are now completely changed again and the Star Mtms Patrol is terminated here at Telefomin. Ross will be walking the carrier and police back to Kiunga and Leo and I will be flying out. In a way it is disappointing but it will be nice to get back to Australia. Ross will be leaving during the week and Leo and I will remain here to meet the G.S. White Hawk will return to Daru with the D.O. to-morrow.

Extract Patrol Diary - Patrol Report Kiunga 9/62-63 (5/05/63)

District Officer Daru arrives. Again general discussions re patrol and proposed future area administration with D.O. and A.D.O. Telefomin.

MAY, 1963

LABOUR DAY (QLD.)

MONDAY 6
126-239

Harv and the D.O. departed this morning. Most of us have hangovers today as we had quite a party last night – had steak and eggs in the middle of the night (brought from Harv) – the first egg I have had for almost 4 months!

Sent a cable to Matmap today asking if I had to stay for G-G's visit. If not will probably be leaving Telefomin on Thursday – if I stay as and I will probably go out for a few days to have a look around Telefomin and then fly to Harv on May 20th or 21st. after this Excellency has been here.

I spent most of today calculating the items done on Saturday night.

Extract Patrol Diary - Patrol Report Kiunga 9/62-63 (6/05/63)

Injured and/or debilitated carriers and police flown out to Kiunga this day. Again discussions with D.O. Holmes – the Star Mountains patrol is officially terminating and P.P. Henderson who has returned this day from Kiunga will walk out [with the] rest of the carriers and police via Mt Blucher area to Kiunga.

MAY, 1963

TUESDAY 7
127-238

Not much doing today – had a telegram from Melbourne to say Mr Johnson was arriving in Moresby today and would advise me on future movements. Haven't heard anything from him yet so don't know what is going to happen.

Extract Patrol Diary - Patrol Report Kiunga 9/62-63 (7/05/63)

D.O. with C.P.O. Classen departed for Daru and in C.P.O. Classen's case, Kiunga.

MAY, 1963

WEDNESDAY 8
128-237

Another very ordinary day with no new developments

Extract Patrol Diary - Patrol Report Kiunga 9/62-63 (8 – 11/05/63)

Preparing stores and supplies for P.O. Henderson's departure.

MAY, 1963

THURSDAY 9
129-236

Same again.

MAY, 1963

FRIDAY 10
130-235

And again. All maps etc. are now finished.

MAY, 1963

SATURDAY 11
131-234

Last night was reasonably clear and I managed to get a good astro-fix which I have calculated today to find that Telefomin is quite a few miles from where it is shown on the maps we have.

There has been little else to do but we are packing things to move to-morrow. He is going out ^{as an escort} with the Telefomin medical assistant ~~and~~ and I'm tagging along to do some survey work. We should be back by Thursday or so and it should break the monotony of sitting at Telefomin.

Ross left with what was the Star Ultra Patrol on his way to Kiunga - he is going via several native groups and will take about 2 months to get back. That leaves Heo, myself, the sergeant and one other policeman to meet the G.C. It was with a certain amount of nostalgia that we saw our pilot and carrier who had spent the last 3 months with us move off.

MAY, 1963

4th AFTER EASTER

SUNDAY 12
132-233

This morning Les, Keith and myself set out from Telefomin to visit the Ohiptamin valley where Keith has some work to do. We did about 4½ hours walking including quite a good climb. It doesn't take one very long to get out of condition and this past fortnight sitting around, eating well and drinking a fair amount of beer hasn't done me any good — I got awfully tired walking and my knees seem to be giving in.

The Ohiptamin valley is where Gharba and Harriot ^{2 girls} were murdered in 1953 but since then these people have been tamed down considerably and I shouldn't think we'll have any trouble.

This is quite a pretty spot we're in and we'll stay here to-morrow while Keith treats some people; then we walk about 3 hours to another group on Tuesday, stay the Wednesday and should get back to Telefomin Thursday.

Extract Patrol Diary - Patrol Report Kiunga 9/62-63 (12/05/63)

Self departed Telefomin station with Sergeant Keme, Constable Karara and four Telefomin members of the R.P.N.G.C. detachment as escort to Medical Assistant and party visiting the Eliptimin area. Passed through Ofokamin and camped at Komdovip Rest House.

MAY, 1963

MONDAY 13

133-232

Last night there was a "sing-sing" in the village. It turned out to be rather feeble with about 20 people with bird of paradise plumes in their hair running around and jumping up and down, beating drums and whooping or singing. We spent about an hour watching the performance which carried on till dawn. The dancer had a large fighting shield (carved and painted) which he's bought from them today (K2) - it has been used in a fight with some people in the next valley and has a few marks where arrows hit it. I tried to buy a drum but was only offered a very good one so will try at the next village - managed to get some nice arrows here.

Again we got a pile of food today including 2 pigs, a lot of meaties, tomatoes, bananas etc. Also one of the policemen shot 2 pigeons (quite a lot bigger than a "boudief") and a cockatoo so we have no food worries.

According to our sergeant this is the spot where one of the police was murdered in 1953.

Extract Patrol Diary - Patrol Report Kiunga 9/62-63 (13/05/63)

At Komdovip

MAY, 1963

TUESDAY 14
134-231

Today we did about 3 hours walking and are at the village where Harris was killed. There have been crowds of people in this afternoon and again I got a great heap of food. This part of the country is certainly very different from the Newwood Valley.

Kilth will be busy here tomorrow and then we'll stably walk back to Telefomin on Thursday.

Extract Patrol Diary - Patrol Report Kiunga 9/62-63 (14/05/63)

Departed Komdovip and moved through Dolvip to Teraptavit Rest House. Track time 4½ hours.



MAY, 1963

WEDNESDAY 15

135-230

Another day of people coming in for medical examinations. There must have been several hundred through here today and we have got heaps of food again including 3 pigs.

To-morrow we walk back to Telefomin and I'll be rather pleased to have this all over and get back to Australia. I'm getting tired of having nothing to do and am looking forward to seeing civilisations again.

MAY, 1963

THURSDAY 16

136-229

Before leaving this morning I managed to buy a rum from the locals. Evidently it was made by one of the murderers while he was in Wewak jail.

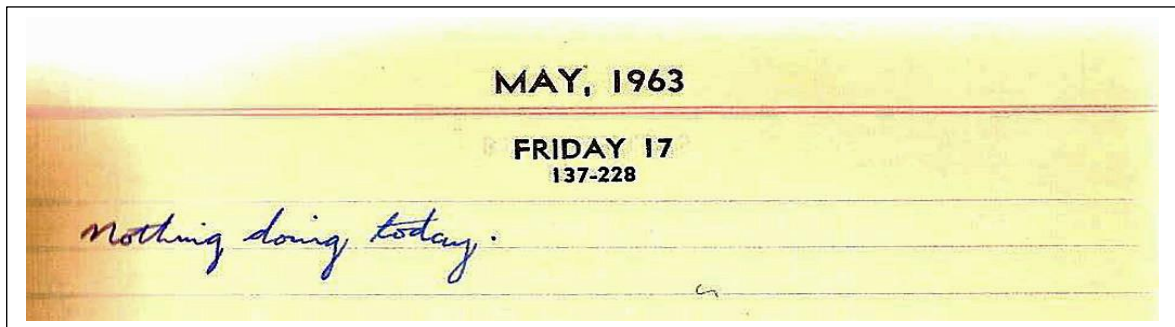
The walk back to Telefomin took about 4 hours and was fairly easy. Upon arriving here we found that Ross and his patrol had returned to Telefomin because a few of them had chicken-pox. There is nothing to do here now except wait till Sunday and I hope we'll fly to Hara on Monday.

Extract Patrol Diary - Patrol Report Kiunga 9/62-63 (15/05/63)

At Teraptavit

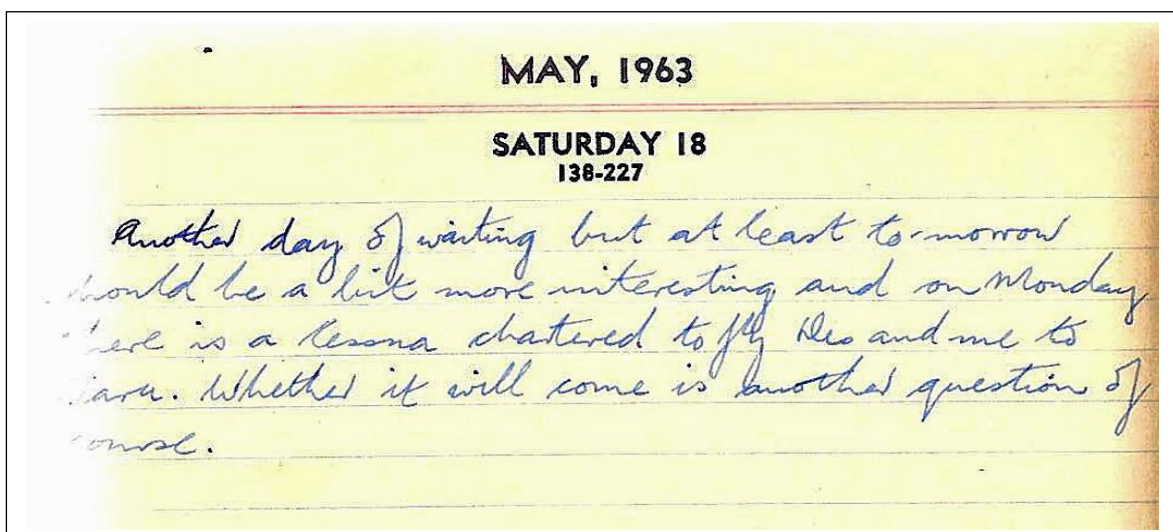
Extract Patrol Diary - Patrol Report Kiunga 9/62-63 (16/05/63)

Departed Teraptavit and moved to Telefomin station to find Mr Henderson and patrol [had] returned owing to reported outbreak of chicken pox.



Extract Patrol Diary - Patrol Report Kiunga 9/62-63 (17 - 18/05/63)

Awaiting Governor General's visit as per Headquarters instructions. After discussions with Mr Henderson, he is now to move direct through the Faiwori area and home to Kiunga avoiding all contact with any groups not previously visited or living at any distance from the established direct trade routes.



MAY, 1963

SUNDAY 19

ROGATION SUNDAY

139-226

Well at last after 3 weeks of waiting the G-6 arrived this morning and we were all introduced to him. Then we all had a buffet lunch at Wager's place and the G-6 had a chat to each of us - he seems quite nice but of course very English. They spend the night here and leave early in the morning.

With luck we should be in Haver tomorrow and I hope to be in Moresby later during the week.



Extract Patrol Diary - Patrol Report Kiunga 9/62-63 (19/05/63)

His Excellency, Lord de' Lisle, Governor General of Australia arrived at Telefomin where, at his request, he met individually [with] each member of the police detachment and congratulated them upon their bearing and the job of work which they had just completed. At dinner that evening at the A.D.O.'s residence, His Excellency displayed both interest and understanding in regard not only to the just completed patrol, but to field work in general as conducted by Native Affairs field staff in this Territory.

MAY, 1963

MONDAY 20

140-225

"The best laid plans of mice and men" -:- with everything ready to fly to Lamu I received a telegram from Matmap this morning telling me to walk out to Kiunga with Ross and do astro - fixes on the way. Half my equipment had already been sent to Moresby but we managed to intercept it at Mewak and it came in on a mission lessona. I can't say that I'm very pleased at having to walk out but we are going straight back to Kiunga and should get there in about 3 weeks so it shouldn't be too bad. Des flew out this morning leaving Ross and me - this will mean I'm the only European to do the complete East Mtns. Patrol. We'll probably start walking on Wednesday.

This evening I met 3 Americans who arrived this morning to put a Hiram station on Mt. Fugitil. This is just the team to make the clearing, etc. but later there will be a big survey team coming in with helicopters etc.

Extract Patrol Diary - Patrol Report Kiunga 9/62-63 (20/05/63)

Governor General departs for Mount Hagen. Mr Surveyor Groenewald instructed by radio to accompany Mr Henderson to Kiunga per foot. S.T.O.L. Cessna arrives ex-Daru. Self, Sergeant Keme, Constable Karara depart per same for Kiunga and Daru. Arrived Daru 1700 hours and reported to D.O. Patrol now officially terminates.

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(Editorial Comment: *As the initial Patrol Instructions and the subsequent patrol diary entries have been included in John Groenewald's Diary, it is fitting to also include Des Fitzer's conclusion following the termination of the patrol at Telefomin on 20 May 1963 as recorded in Patrol Report Kiunga 9/1962-63)*

The patrol achieved all bar the second objective given to it in the District Officer's Patrol Instructions. The failure to complete this objective is deeply regretted not only by the writer but also by all members of the patrol. The decision to turn back was not lightly taken, and I must confess when taken was only done so, as I considered that it was extremely probable that any further efforts to move north-west would have jeopardised the lives of the weaker members of my carrier personnel. At the time we turned back for Telefomin our original carrier strength had been depleted to only 19 owing to desertions and to the necessity of sending out carriers with Mr Henderson and the Supreme Court witnesses. Of these 19, possibly 2 or even 3 may have been defined as being fit, the rest were both physically and to even a larger degree, mentally played out. Conditions were the worst that we had encountered in the course of the patrol with terrain that beggared description, extreme cold, constant dampness and no more than 1 to 2 days free of cloud. It is to be hoped that a Kiunga patrol can, in the near future, establish contact with these people living in the Mount Blucher area of this sub-district and thereby enable us to honestly claim that we no longer have any uncontacted people living east of the Strickland River. If it were at all possible to dedicate the patrol report then this one might well be to people such as Champion, Karius, Hides, O'Malley, et al, who in a bygone era and without the medical benefits nor the organisation available to present day P.O.'s opened up the rest of the Territory of Papua and New Guinea, May I on behalf of myself and the patrol express my thanks and appreciation to the officers both at Headquarters, Daru and on the outstations, for their co-operation, assistance and understanding.

Sgd J. D. Fitzer
a/Assistant District Officer, Kiunga

MAY, 1963

TUESDAY 21

141-224

Most of today Ross and I have spent getting ready to move tomorrow. We have most of our things packed and I'm looking forward to start again and get it over with.

Had further talks with the Yanks today and found what they had to say very interesting. It wouldn't be bad working for the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey as they have a lot of overseas jobs on the go.

MAY, 1963

WEDNESDAY 22

142-223

We're back on our way to Kiunga at last but in a way I was sorry to leave Telefomin after all the kindness I received there. We did 24 hours fairly hard walking it being a beautiful day (a bit hot). I found the going fairly easy and seem to be as fit as at any time on this patrol.

Last night Ross + I had drinks with the Esdales, then dined with the Craigs altogether a very pleasant evening. This morning Dorothy gave us a lot of apple pies etc. so we are starting this journey well fed and with plenty of food.

We were pretty lucky as it started raining shortly after we arrived here (we are camped just outside a small native village). We will have crossed the border into Papua today and have about a week in the mountains and will then be back in the swampy sand next.

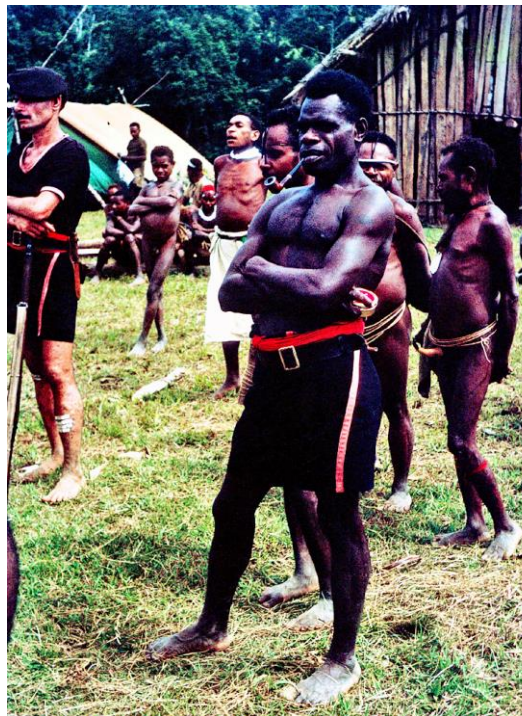
MAY, 1963

ASCENSION DAY

THURSDAY 23
143-222

HOLY THURSDAY

A very ordinary 4 hour walk today, and we are camped in the bush. Actually were on a grass covered hill - a beautiful spot for an astro-fis but it is completely overcast and drizzling so I have very little hope.



MAY, 1963

COMMONWEALTH DAY

FRIDAY 24
144-221

This morning at 5.30 Ross woke up to find that it was clear so we hurriedly got everything set up and I managed to do a complete set of observations just before it got light. I'm very pleased because it was a perfect spot for a fix. Today we were on the track for 6½ hours having quite a tough walk. We climbed over a very jagged ridge crossing at about 8,000 ft and then came down almost vertically on this side and reached the village of GOL TEM VIP at 4,800. There is a very nice rest house here.

The tracks we have been on since leaving Telefomin are not the best but compared to the Kaniok valley they're marvellous. Today I slipped off a rock and one of my legs went through a hole in the roots - I was lucky not to hurt myself very badly.

Unfortunately we ~~are~~ have been in cloud almost all day so missed what should have been a good view from the top of the cliff. We seem to be in comparatively flat country and have probably left the very big mountains behind. Again we have been very lucky, as it started raining within a few minutes of our arrival here.

We have only seen 2 old men here and evidently the rest of the villagers are out getting food. We hope they'll bring some in this evening.

MAY, 1963

SATURDAY 25

145-220

Last night was very miserable with rain all night and this morning it was still drizzling but by the time we were ready to move it had stopped. The carrier went on while Ross and I went to look at a possible airstrip site but it turned out to be unsuitable.

The track was shocking today – a real pig wallow and we were in ankle-deep mud most of the time. It only took us 1½ hrs to get to this spot where there is a small village. The locals have just brought in food – still mostly taro.

While having lunch earlier we had a huge audience some right inside the tent. One would swear these people have never seen Europeans before.

As things are planned now it should take us 12 days walking to get back to Kiunga.

MAY, 1963

SUNDAY 26

SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION

146-219

We have been in fog for over 48 hours now with visibility never more than a few hundred yards. It's awfully miserable not being able to see what is around one and having a fine drizzle most of the time. At times during our $1\frac{1}{2}$ hour walk today it rained fairly heavily and adding to that a terribly muddy track it was not at all a pleasant day.

The locals have brought a good amount of food and also a pig, so tonight we have pork for dinner. Since leaving Telefomin we have been eating very well as we have a fair amount of tinned beef and tinned corn, which is good as far as tinned meats go.

There is a possible airstrip site about $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours from here so if to-morrow is a good day we'll go and have a look at it - if the fog is still here it would be a waste of time.

MAY, 1963

MONDAY 27

147-218

This morning at 3.30 it was clear so Ross and I got up and managed to complete an astro-fix. This all happened after a rather late night last night as there was a "sing-sing" in the village and there was so much drum-beating and singing that it kept us awake.

It turned out to be a fair day but we could see the area of the airstrip site from Bolwijn and it was right in amongst the mountains and quite unsuitable so we decided to leave it and move on towards Kiunga. We did just over 3 hours walking up and down some fairly steep grades. Today we could see a bit more of the country around us and it is still very rugged with big mountains and deep valleys but nothing like the Karori or Alice valleys. We are again camped at a native village.

MAY, 1963

TUESDAY 28
148-217

This has been a very tiring day with $7\frac{1}{2}$ hrs on the track. We covered a good distance except for 2 or 3 steep places it was generally flat. The crossing of the Puyang river was the most interesting part of the day. We crossed it at a deep gorge and although the river is quite a large one it disappeared completely under a pile of huge boulders (about the size of a fairly large room!). Both sides of the gorge were almost vertical and to get up the one side we had to build a sort of ladder.

We came down from 3,400 ft to 2,000 ft today and it is getting much warmer. I am sweating a lot and drink a hell of a lot of water on the track.

Again we are camped at a native village. It looks as if we'll get to Kiunga sound about Wednesday or Thursday.

MAY, 1963

WEDNESDAY 29

149-216

Today we started off in light rain after it had rained all night. We went to have a look at the airstrip site not far from the village. It looks quite promising being fairly flat but I wouldn't like the job of building a strip in this country where all the work has to be done by hand.

After looking at the strip we only did about 1 hour walking as we have to cross the Pungang river again tomorrow and the bridge across it needs repairing which is being done now.

We are now at 1500 ft and the heat is getting worse. I hate to think how I'll feel down in the swamps next week after having been above 4,000 ft for the last few months. Things are beginning to get me down again - especially the mosquitoes and I have been bitten all over. The walking is also pretty boring with very little of interest and I'll be pleased to see Kiunga.

MAY, 1963

THURSDAY 30
150-215

Not a very hard day today but we came quite a
few miles. The main point of interest was the
crossing of the Pnyang by means of a cane bridge.
The Pnyang is the top part of the Fly and is a
big river up here and the bridge is about 100 ft
long. It is a suspension bridge made completely of
cane and creepers and anchored at each end to
big trees - quite an engineering feat. Walking
across it was very slow as it would swing quite a
bit and I can't say that I felt very safe on it.
I took an hour for the whole party to get across.

After the crossing we followed the river down
for several miles and are now camped in the bush.
Just south of us the river goes thro' a gorge and
we will have to climb over a big mountain to
get round the gorge. It looks as if tomorrow is
going to be a hard day as we start with an almost
direct climb of about 2000 ft.

MAY, 1963

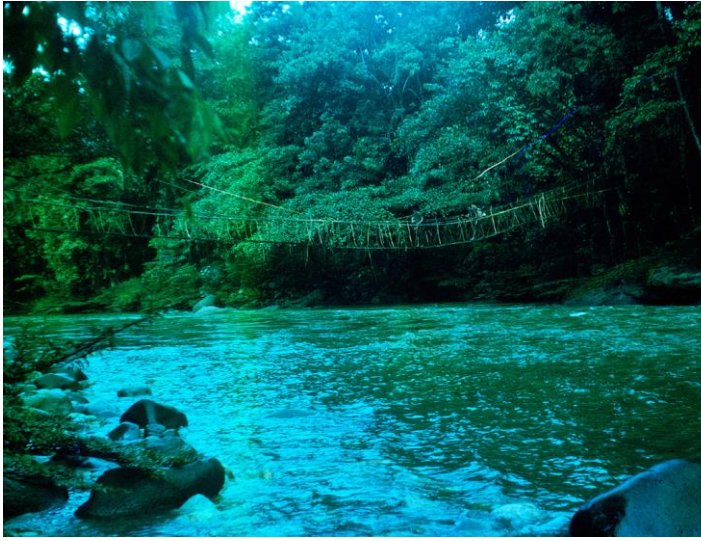
FRIDAY 31
151-214

A long days walking being on the track just 7 hours. We started with the steep climb but it wasn't as bad as it had looked and took just over an hour to get up. From there we passed round the edge of the Gum Gorge which proved to be very spectacular - the gorge is about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile wide with sheer sides of about 1,000 ft - what a site for a dam!

The country we walked through today was not shocking - all jagged limestone rocks and tree roots. Progress was very slow and two of the police slipped through holes in the roots and gashed their shins badly on the rocks below.

I had my legs going through 2 holes but came out without a scratch but towards the end of the day scratched my thigh fairly badly on a protruding rock.

We are camped in a small native village and will have a bushcamp to-morrow and from there on should be in rest houses.



*Pynang Gorge and upper reaches
of the Pynang River*



JUNE, 1963

SATURDAY 1
152-213

Another very long day of nearly 8 hours on the
back. Most of it was fairly flat along the banks
of the Pnyang. It wasn't exactly a pleasant
walk though because we struck several swampy
patches and had to wade through mud and
water. The Pnyang is a huge river by now but
still flows fairly swiftly. At one spot today one of
the policemen said he saw a crocodile. So far I
have only seen one of 2 leeches which seems to
be an amazing cause we're down to 600 ft by now.

I did a bit of shooting today and had
two shots with a shotgun - got a flying-fox
with the first and a Nombill with the second
both sitting shots of course - it would be
impossible to shoot anything on the wing in
this jungle). It's the first flying-fox I have
ever seen - (there were hundreds of them
in this one spot all making a horrible
screaming sound) - it's quite a big thing
(body about the size of a half-grown cat) and has
a wingspan of about 4 ft.

All the scratches etc. I have are now festering
and I think it's a good thing we'll get back
to Kiunga next week.

JUNE, 1963

SUNDAY 2

153-212

WHIT SUNDAY
PENTECOST

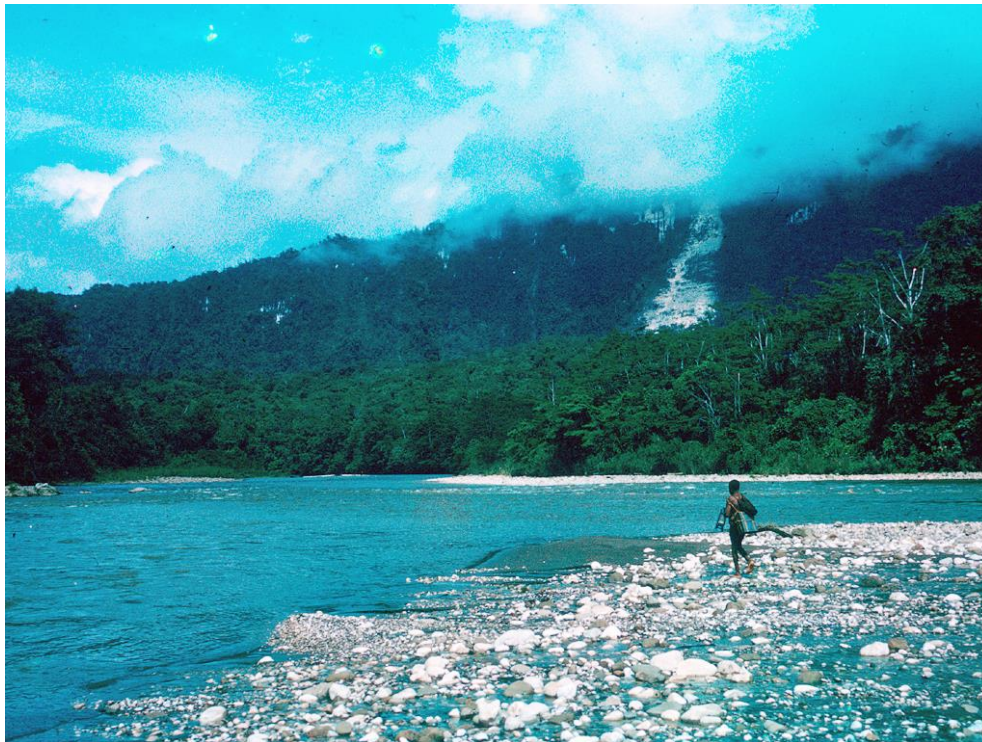
It has rained every night for days now and there has been no chance of doing any astro-work. Last night was the same and it was still drizzling when we got up this morning. It was only $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the spot at which we had to cross the Pnyang where we built a raft for the crossing - in the end we didn't use it because one of the police swam across and found a canoe. It was a slow business crossing in the canoe as it could only take small loads and the river is about 200 ft. wide and fairly fast.

Once we all got across it was only an hours walk to SRIKE which is a village regularly patrolled from Kiunga - there is a rest house here and we'll be in them from here on. We hope to reach Kiunga on Friday but it could be Saturday. Now that we are in the lowlands I really feel the heat - it's sheer murder and I'll be very pleased to get back to some cold weather in Melbourne.

Yesterday our corporal shot a Goura pigeon which I believe is delicious but we did not have any as we had a pig. It is a big bird, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ times as long as a fowl, with nice grey-blue feathers and a crest on its head.



Pnyang River (lower reaches)



JUNE, 1963

FOUNDATION DAY (W.A.)

MONDAY 3
154-211

An easy day of 3 hours today on a beautiful track. What a pleasure to walk on a decent track - flat country for a change - we are definitely out the mountains now. Of course this part has its curses - we are back amongst the bees and bees again.

Upon arriving in this village we found Bob both here on a census patrol - I met him in Kiunga in January.

The corporal shot a four foot crocodile this afternoon which they'll be eating. He offered the skin to me but I couldn't do anything with it so won't take it.

It now looks as if we'll get to Kiunga on Saturday.

JUNE, 1963

TUESDAY 4
155-210

This has been a fairly long day on a good track with quite a number of little ups and downs. It was awfully hot and the heat is really affecting me and Jim completely exhausted. My boots are giving in having had some very rough treatment and the soles are very thin now. The result is that my feet are getting a bit sore but with only 3 more days walking to Kiunga I should be right.

Soon after starting this morning we crossed the GOMU river by canoe. It is a tributary of the Puyang and a pretty big one at that. These rivers certainly carry a tremendous volume of water.

With two hard days to-morrow and Thursday we hope to reach Kiunga on Friday and I have called Matmap to get a charter early next week to take me to Moresby.

It is now 17.30 with the temp. at 86°F.

JUNE, 1963

WEDNESDAY 5

156-209

Last night was beautifully clear and I got a very good fix early in the evening. This evening was even better and although it is not yet 8pm I have already completed the observations for a fix here.

The whole of today was overcast and we did not have to walk as far as expected (4½ hours walking) so it wasn't a terribly hard day. My feet are getting pretty sore though and I'll try wearing my rubber soled boots to-morrow.

This walking back is fairly boring as there is nothing to see but jungle and swamps. The country is very flat now and all the villages we are passing through are on regular patrol routes. We expect to get to Kiunga about lunch time on Friday and at least this walk has paid off as far as astro work goes.

I bought a bird of paradise plume in this village for a K1. It is a beautiful thing but illegal to have so I'll have to smuggle it out. ~~and~~ I don't know what I'll do with it though.

JUNE, 1963

THURSDAY 6

157-208

This has been another fairly hard days walking and we are camped in the bush about 2½ hours out of Kiunga. It is hard to believe we'll get there to-morrow after all these months of wandering around. I'm looking forward to getting to Kiunga not only because it means the end of this job but also because there should be a fair amount of mail there for me and it's been almost 5 weeks since I have had a letter.

Actually getting to Kiunga means very little because it is even smaller than Telefomin but I shouldn't have to stay there too long waiting for a plane to Moresby. We'll probably still be living on tinned food but a nice cold beer will go down well when we walk in to-morrow. It's really dreadfully hot these days and I drink gallons of water on the track and it just pours out as sweat.

JUNE, 1963

FRIDAY 7

158-207

It's hard to believe but here we are at Kiunga - what a relief to know that to-morrow there will be no need to sit on dirty clothes and wet boots and then struggle 60 miles through mud with something to trip you & give way under you every few yards. No thorny bushes to scratch one, no leeches, no bees, no sore feet. This walk from Kiunga to 'Kiunga' I must have walked over 500 miles through some of the worst country in the world and I'm very pleased it is all over. Nevertheless I wouldn't have missed it for anything - it was a marvellous experience.

The biggest thrill of getting to Kiunga ^{this morning} ~~yesterday~~ after about 3 hours walking was all the mail I received. There were about 30 letters for me and I have been reading them all afternoon - most of them several times over. There was so much interesting news in all the letters from home, Beverly and other friends. One bit of bad news from Jack though - poor old Hain was badly hurt in an accident in the Lyeke tunnel and will be in hospital for several months.

We had a terrific lunch with Dan (lamb chops!) This evening we have dined with the supervisor over the airstrip which they are enlarging.

I'll probably be getting a lesson up here next week to do the apt photography and go back to Moresby in it. Then back to Australia probably round about 20th.



Carriers back at Kiunga

JUNE, 1963

SATURDAY 8
159-206

Its all a bit of an anti-climax now that everything is over and there is nothing worth putting down. I have a few days calculations to do and then the spot photography.

JUNE, 1963

TRINITY SUNDAY
SUNDAY 9
160-205

Calculations all day - everything working out well

JUNE, 1963

MONDAY 10
161-204

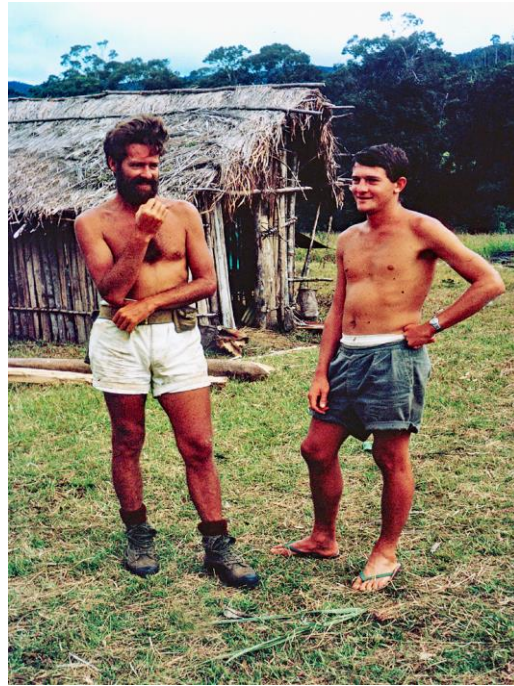
Finished all calculations today. Got a telegram from Dave Cook to say there was a Lesna chopper for me and it should have arrived yesterday. Wouldn't know what's gone wrong now and it will just be a matter of being patient till it arrives.

JUNE, 1963

ST. BARNABAS' DAY
TUESDAY 11
162-203

The Lesna arrived today and the pilot was the same bloke who brought me to Kiunga in January Lionel Jenkins. We set off straight away to do the spot photography - Ross booking. The camera is a huge thing (Williamson F24) and one has to open the window and stick it out to do the photography. After about 6 photos the damn thing jammed and we had to land at Kiunga again and after a bit of fiddling I got it working and we went off again. We managed to photograph 5 of the 13 piles in spite of a lot of cloud. With all the banking and turning I felt awful + was very nearly sick. It was very nice flying over the country we have walked through - it's certainly easier flying than walking!

Leo arrived here this afternoon in the mission aircraft. He is on a station inspection - it was really nice seeing him again. He goes on leave on June 21st so I hope to see him in Sydney.



*Des
and I
meet
again
in
Kiunga*

JUNE, 1963

WEDNESDAY 12
163-202

The weather was lousy this morning so Lionel and I flew down to Pengoa (Lake Murray) to refuel and then took 2 police over to Nomad patrol post. The P.O. there gave ^{me} a stone axe which the people around there were still using when the station was established last year.

This afternoon we decided the best thing was to fly to Telefomin and do the rest of the photography from there. We took off just after lunch and crossed the main range which was covered in cloud and then found we couldn't get into Telefomin because of poor weather. That meant we had to go on to Green River about 70 miles north of Telefomin. We are spending the night here with the P.O. Will Muskins.

JUNE, 1963

THURSDAY 13

CORPUS CHRISTI

164-201

This morning we flew to Telefomin and got Tracy to come along to do the booking for the photography. We got to the Hanuabada Valley which was well covered by cloud and I only managed to get a few photos of Tukutu but Benkwari was covered so we gave it away. Flying about in cloud amongst all those big mountains did not make me feel at all happy. We also managed to do Hialimin, Urapimin, Mong Valley and Telefomin passes and I decided to forget about Bolovip + Bostenwip as they are almost always covered by cloud.

We then set off for Moresby and got as far as Mount Hagen after picking our way through holes in the clouds. Here we are staying in the hotel - it's a beautiful little town and the hotel is lovely. What one could see through the cloud on the flight looked lovely with a lot of coffee, tobacco and other gardens. The people here are also completely different from any I have seen so far and dress differently.

What a thing to see a motor-car again after 4½ months.

JUNE, 1963

FRIDAY 14
165-200

Today's flight from Mt Hagen to Moresby was fantastic. These highlands are beautiful - lovely valleys set in these huge rugged mountains. Again there was a lot of cloud around but through the gaps I took a lot of slides.

We arrived in Port Moresby at lunch time and had lunch at the airport - I had a pint of real milk!

When I got to the office I found that Mr Johnson is still up here together with 5 other Matngay blokes - they are doing a big observing program around here.

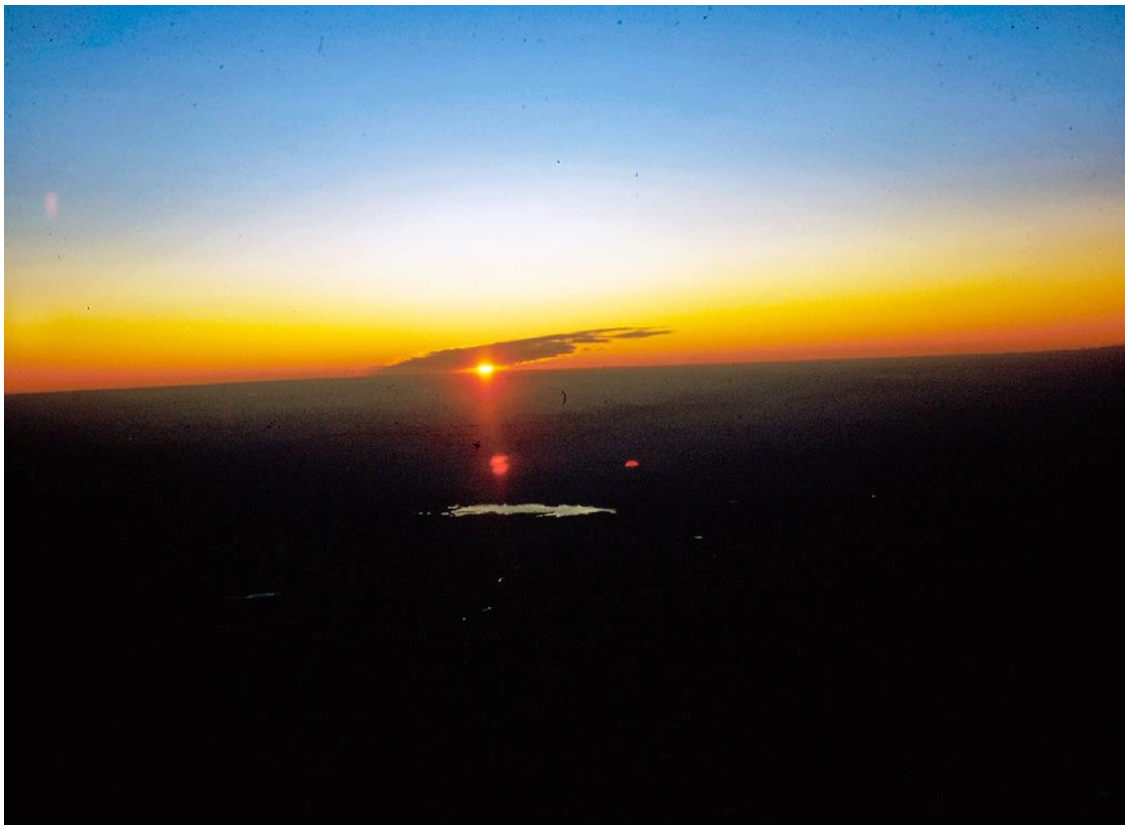
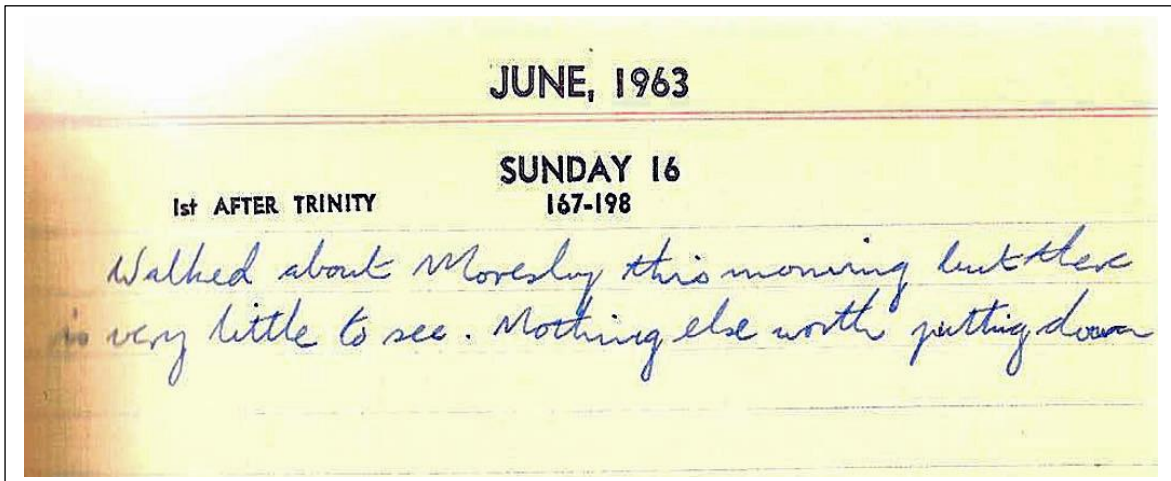
The weather here is very hot but a lot more pleasant than in January.

I'll be flying to Sydney on Wednesday.

JUNE, 1963

SATURDAY 15
166-199

I spent last night with Dave Cook and family and this morning I have been in town shopping. When I arrived in Moresby I had only the dirty clothes I have been wearing in the bush so had to buy something decent to wear. This afternoon I got all my diaries up to date and now all I need do is pack everything for the trip back to Australia.



Farewell to PNG