

PNG **Kundu**

DECEMBER 2024



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

www.pngaa.org



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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

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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 are also 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 please view 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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PNG Kundu is the official journal of the PAPUA NEW GUINEA ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA Inc.

ISSN 2652-5208, PPA 224987/00025 • DECEMBER 2024 • Vol. 5, No. 20

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

◀ **Deadline for the March 2025 issue: 12 FEBRUARY 2025** ▶

JOURNAL EDITOR: Christine Leonard—(Mob) 0422 002 667

Please send all contributions to: editor@pngaa.net

PNG Kundu Team: Christine Leonard, Jeannette Gilligan, Murrough Benson & Andrea Williams

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

Contributions may be edited for length and the views expressed are not necessarily those of the editor or the PNGAA, and if not received by the copy deadline may not be guaranteed inclusion in the coming issue.

• Contributors' Guidelines are available on page 16 of this issue or our website: www.pngaa.org

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PNG Kundu is published four times a year for the information of members of the PNGAA. It is written with care, and every effort is made to publish free of factual and typographical errors. However, readers should not act, or refrain from acting solely on the basis of information in the journal about financial, taxation or any other matter. Please note that some of the photographs have been digitally colourised whilst maintaining historical accuracy, and all enquiries should be made to the publishers. Acknowledgement and thanks are given to all contributors, creators of images and information used in the public domain and under non-profit and fair-use guidelines and to the various sources referenced in this publication.



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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.

Management Committee Update

PNGAA 74th Annual General Meeting 2025

The 2025 Annual General Meeting of the Papua New Guinea Association of Australia (PNGAA) require elections for the PNGAA Management Committee. Please see the notice to members on page 7.

Nominations are due by 31 January 2025, and we require a new President, Treasurer, Events Co-ordinator for the Sydney area, PNGAA Collection Co-Ordinator and website assistance.

Please urgently consider these positions, discuss with friends and committee if you like, and fill in the nomination forms available on the website!

If they are not filled, the running of the Association will need to be reviewed.

Events and Assistance

Thank you to those who organise PNGAA events for the benefit of members and friends, and those who contribute items to help the Association raise funds for the education program and the PNGAA Collection—all much appreciated. The events are always happy gatherings and we encourage you to come along and bring any friends along too!

PNGAA regularly receives invitations to events and Management Committee members try to support them by attending where possible.

Recently the Anglican



New classrooms and dormitories continue to be constructed at the Modawa campus

Diocese of Melbourne invited PNGAA to hear about the work of the Modawa Institute—we were grateful to Claire van Bakel who was able to represent PNGAA.

Members attended Battle for Australia Commemorative services in Sydney and Brisbane.

PNGAA Editor, Christine Leonard, attended a two-day consultation in Brisbane on Bougainville’s draft constitution to be instated upon independence.

Recently PNGAA was asked to support the Australia Awards who are looking for stories from Australia Awards recipients about how they have contributed to PNG’s development. If you know someone involved in this program please ask them to contact ashlee_chapman@hotmail.com.

PNG Independence Day 2024

Around PNG and Australia there was a buzz of festivities

to celebrate this important day, which many of our members attended.

Events captured the spirit of togetherness and showcased the cultural diversity within PNG. They were a beautiful representation of everything that makes PNG culture so special—filled with bright colours, infectious laughter, and a deep sense of pride and patriotism.

It was a moment of unity, with people from different provinces coming together to share their unique traditions through dance, song and stories. There’s something powerful about the way these celebrations bring Papua New Guineans and Australians together—bridging gaps between generations, provinces and backgrounds.

With 2025, and the 50th anniversary of independence happening in a heart-beat,

PNGAA looks forward to building stronger ties and celebrating the rich heritage and vibrant future of the PNG/Australia relationship.

The music and lyrics of Barike Band’s *Wan Kantri* (One Country), together with the national song, ‘O Arise All You Sons’ inspired all who listen.

Next year will be the 50th anniversary of PNG’s independence from Australia.

The question is—how will Australia commemorate this? Googling Australia’s role in PNG produces very little official or substantial information, and much can be incorrect.

Stories for 2025

PNGAA is interested in showcasing stories of Australia’s role in PNG leading up to PNG Independence and beyond! The article about the opening of



Tribal dancers celebrating the 49th Independence Day in Papua New Guinea

EVENTS DIARY

CANBERRA

PNGAA Christmas Lunch

Saturday,

14 December 2024

Time: Noon for 12.30 pm

Venue: Pavilion Hotel, 242 Northbourne Avenue, Canberra

RSVP: No later than Monday, 9 December 2024.

Email John Reeves at travavurconsulting@gmail.com or mobile at 0448 483 932

Cost: \$65 pp, includes a 2-course lunch buffet; drinks from the bar are a personal expense. Payment and bookings via <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/pngaa-christmas-luncheon-tickets-1033180409417?aff=oddtcreator>

Please advise Mari at the Pavilion directly on 6250 9187 of any specific dietary requirements.

Transport/ Parking: Free off-street parking is available in the Pavilion, and Canberra light rail stops almost in front of the venue.

Special Notes: Accommodation discount applies if booking between 12 and 1 on the first Wednesday of the month (30%).

PERTH

PNGAA Get-Together

Friday, 15 November 2024

Venue: RAAFA Club, Bull Creek, from 11.30 am

Everyone buys their own lunch and drinks on the day at the restaurant.

RSVP Kylee Andersen (Mob) 0405 334 501;

(Email) admin@pngaa.net

the Coastwatcher's Memorial in Memorial News, page 60, describes the wonderful and unique connection between Australians and Papua New Guineans. We know there are many examples of this friendly relationship and would like to hear more about them.

Please also think about a stand-out memory for you about your time in PNG, or as a result of it, and send to coordinator@pngaa.net.

Good Luck to Our Students

Our Association and hard working committee members recently sent a message of support to the students at Anguganak High School and Oksapmin Secondary School to wish them good luck as they attempted exams in October.

PNGAA also expressed thanks to our on-ground liaison and mentor of students, Glenda Giles, whose dedication and commitment to the students is inspiring as are the arduous journeys she makes to get to these remote and rural communities.



One of the school students, Chappelle, playing the drums

Glenda sent an update on her 10-hour road trip to Anguganak. It was the school holidays, but she spoke with the headmistress, who would prepare and send the students' academic reports after they sit for exams.

To support this PNGAA Education Program we value your assistance with fundraising and donations, which can be made via the PNGAA website, thank you.

Australian Pacific Cultural and Community Centre

PNGAA sent a letter to the Australian Prime Minister in July 2024 requesting consideration for a dedicated Australian Pacific Cultural and Community Centre.

The response of 12 September acknowledges that the proposal has significant merit and would provide the public with the ability to engage with and understand Australia's role in the Pacific, however, the Commonwealth is not in a position, currently, to provide the required support.

The letter has been sent to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to provide them with the opportunity to consider the proposal should funding become available.

Whilst it is felt that Australia needs to acknowledge this unique period in the Australian/PNG/Pacific history, this is an urgent and significant project for the PNGAA to support, and your management committee would appreciate any and all

arms to the wheel to make this happen.

Please contact admin@pngaa.net if you can participate in any way. Writing to your local member will also help!

PNG—a Haven for Historical Tourism

Recently, the Director of the National Museum of American History and former Director Emeritus of the Smithsonian Institution in America, Dr Brent Glass, made a visit to PNG.

During his visit Dr Glass highlighted the significance of PNG's war history as a powerful attraction for international tourists. He highlighted how that war history is compelling, holding global interest, and that developing historical sites that are accessible to tourists will not only preserve the history but also create opportunities for international travellers to engage deeply with both it and PNG culture.

PNGAA sees this growing international interest as another reason for an Australian Pacific Cultural and Community Centre!

ACNC Application

In the meantime, ongoing queries from the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission (ACNC) in our quest for Deductible Gift Recipient (tax deductibility for donations) status have been answered and further work has been required. Whilst it appears our PNGAA activities appear suitable, under 'Advancing

Culture' and 'Advancing Education', our objects need to better align with both our activities and what ACNC see as appropriate.

A Special General Meeting will be held on 8 November 2024 to approve new PNGAA Objects. Members have been advised by email and/or post. Information on PNGAA website. In working towards meeting requirements, your Management Committee sees this as a positive move for the future of the association.

Congratulations Gima Crowdy!

PNGAA congratulates Gima Crowdy who has been appointed to work as the Apprentice Coach for the NSW State 17s Netball Team. In 2025, Gima will continue in the role for the State 19s Netball Team and also take on the position of Mentor Coach for her local Woy Woy Peninsula Netball Association, working with the representative coaches.

Gima, a former member of the PNGAA Management Committee, says:

I'm thrilled to be working with



both of my coaches in the NSW 19s State Team. I'm also excited about my new role here at the Woy Woy netball hub. This coaching journey hasn't been easy. I am beyond grateful for the amazing people and resources that have shaped me as a coach. While there have been many personal sacrifices to improve my craft, no matter how difficult it seemed, I've had a strong support system that has kept me going. I hope this achievement inspires those facing challenges to rise and keep moving forward.

Your friends at PNGAA are delighted to see your well-deserved achievements, Gima, and wish you all the best in your new roles.

Membership

Subscription membership of PNGAA comes about through the shared interest in the PNG-Australia relationship. However, PNGAA is also a wonderful network of volunteers that has, and can, quietly boosted many beneficial projects, through individuals seeing opportunities both here and in the quarterly journal, *PNG Kundu*, and therefore widening the 'ripple effect' to help many others. It's the ripple effect that matters.

Help the PNGAA boost its own programs as well as helping others by becoming a subscription member via the Membership tab on the PNGAA website.

PNGAA New Members

The committee welcomes the following new members: John Gannan, Alexander Gilliland, Arthur Glassby, Wendy Glassby,

Sheryn & David Golledge, Paul Mabarrack, Ian Macintosh, Peter McCarthy, Isobelle Morgan, Charles Page, Scott Perry, Valerie Salama & Lorraine Watkins.

The PNGAA

Management Committee wishes members a happy and healthy Christmas and looks forward to 2025!

ANDREA WILLIAMS



Editorial

Christine Leonard
editor@pngaa.net

Thank you, members, for the fascinating stories and tributes that appear in the editor's email inbox. Some days are like Christmas, and it's a toss-up what to read first. Wherever possible, we try to fit everything in the current journal, but in the case of vales/tributes and time-specific events, prioritising may see your story moved to a future issue, and I try to tell the authors when this is the case.

Proofreaders Wanted

As everyone knows, it takes a team effort to get the journal up to scratch and out the door. As an editor, one of the most important areas of support, along with Jeannette Gilligan's production magic, is proofreading. Without a proofreader's attention to detail, a love of the English language and an aptitude for grammar, sentences will not flow to keep you, the reader, turning the page.

The *PNG Kundu* benefits from years of experience and

commitment put in by proof-readers, PNGAA Treasurer Murrugh Benson, and committee member extraordinaire and Association steward Andrea Williams. Contributions regularly exceed 1,000 words which makes the journal all the more interesting and value for money.

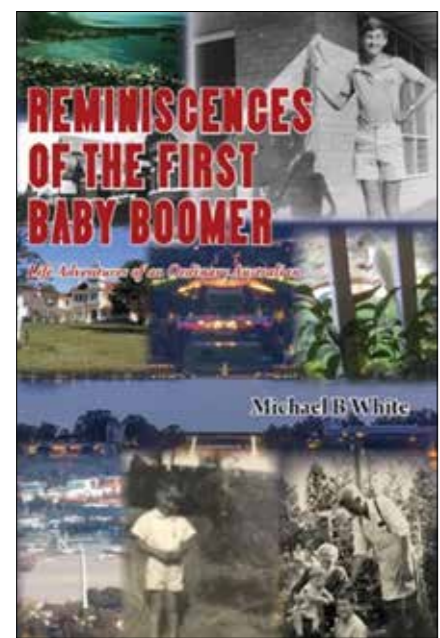
If you fit the profile of an able proofreader and are willing to help us maintain the standard we aspire for, please drop me a line.

Member's New Book

PNGAA member, Michael White, has published a book titled *Reminiscences Of the First Baby Boomer*.

Using his own experiences, Michael White, sets out to explode some myths perpetrated by later generations that baby boomers were an over-privileged, idle, self-indulgent generation that ruined the world.

What role did they play in the transition of Australia from a White Australia to the



multi-cultural phenomenon of today?

To purchase a copy, please email the author at mwhite46@outlook.com. The book costs \$27.50 inclusive of postage within Australia.

Spam Issues

Roy Ranney, Membership Officer, does a striking job looking after the Association website and disseminating the digital copy of the *PNG Kundu* to relevant subscription holders.

The PNGAA sends out periodic emails to members about new developments through a bulk email facility called MailChimp. It appears that a large number of emails are not being opened because they are being caught in SPAM filters. Most email applications have a mechanism to permit emails from a defined source to pass through the Spam filter. If you cannot find this setting in your email application, ask a tech-savvy friend for assistance.

Please check your spam folders, and if you find there is an ongoing problem, let Roy know.

Correction

The September issue of *PNG Kundu* included a tribute to Professor Hugh Lucius Davies AO, OL. It has been brought to my attention that some clarification is required regarding a statement on page 46, which claims, 'He created and led the UPNG's Earth Science Department'.

The University of Papua New Guinea's Earth Sciences Division was formerly known as the

Geology Department and Division of Geosciences in UPNG's School of Natural and Physical Sciences. The former Geology Department began operation in 1973. More can be read about UPNG's geoscience education, research and community services in the following link UPNG Earth Sciences Division on LinkedIn: [#earthsciencesdivision #goldenjubilee #frankgriffin #jerrygarry...](#) | 14 comments

PNG Kundu December 2024

For this issue the Front Cover features a photo of a Canna Lily at Bitapaka Cemetery, Rabaul, taken by Andrea Williams, during the Rabaul Memorial Tour in April this year.

Thanks Andrea, and we look forward to receiving other members' photos suitable for future front covers!

This issue includes more articles and stories from members than usual, which means you'll have lots to read over the holiday period.

However, the March 2025 journal will be a couple of weeks later than usual, but certainly worth waiting for!

Wednesday, 12 February 2025 will be the Copy Deadline. Contributions should be sent to me at editor@pngaa.net.

Tenkyu tru

Merry Christmas from all of us on the PNG Kundu Team



Papua New Guinea Association of Australia Inc. 74th Annual General Meeting

The 2025 Annual General Meeting of the Papua New Guinea Association of Australia (PNGAA) will be on Sunday, 27 April 2025. Every two years elections are held for the PNGAA Management Committee. All positions, executive and general, are automatically vacated, and a new committee is voted into office.

All committee members are volunteers and PNG enthusiasts. Management Committee meetings are normally held by email or Zoom, so location is not necessarily an issue, although some face-to-face contact is helpful.

Please give urgent thought to the PNGAA Management Committee and the future direction of the Association.

For some time now, the PNGAA has needed a new President, Treasurer, Events Co-ordinator for the Sydney area and website assistance. Requests have gone unheeded. Nominations now needed!

The PNGAA Management Committee also needs someone to take on the role of co-ordinating the PNGAA Collection. Both the Events and PNGAA Collection are General Committee roles.

The PNGAA needs all positions filled to operate smoothly.

Several members of the current PNGAA Management Committee have volunteered for eight or more years and would like to step back. Rotating the roles among the members helps keep the Association current and engaged.

It helps the Association to have a range of backgrounds and skills on the committee too, so please do consider volunteering. Being a team player is important. Please don't assume

the same people will keep doing the same jobs. Voting for the Management Committee is an integral part of this Association.

This is also a great opportunity for anyone wishing to contribute spare time, whilst exercising their skills, to a worthwhile and highly-regarded organisation, surrounded by a supportive team.

2025 is a significant year, being the 50th anniversary of PNG's independence from Australia. PNGAA is looking for working groups in each state to assist with events. Please volunteer with an email to admin@pngaa.net.

Nomination forms, together with further information, are available on the PNGAA website. Click on the following menu tabs: PNGAA>Official Business (Members Only)>Annual General Meetings>2025.

If you cannot access this website, please contact the Secretary (see inside Front Cover of *PNG Kundu*) and ask that the forms be emailed or mailed to you.

All nominees and those nominating must be current members of the PNGAA. Nomination, seconding and acceptance can also be sent via email to admin@pngaa.net.

Please help your Association and send nominations in now.

• Nominations are due by 5.00 pm 31 January 2025 •



Featuring letters to the editor along with opinions of interest, memories and enquiries from those who require assistance with their research or finding someone from the past.

Also included are book and exhibition reviews about Papua New Guinea, and items of interest to members.

Please send your contributions to the editor by 12 February 2025, the Copy Deadline for the next issue: editor@pngaa.net

Memories of PNG

A friend showed me the March 2023 edition of *PNG Kundu*, and I found it very interesting. Both my uncle, Bob Cole, and brother, Jim Sinclair, happened to be mentioned in it.

I first went to PNG in 1960 to visit my brother Jim in Wau where he was Sub-District Officer. Whilst there, the DC in Lae, Horrie Niall, needed a secretary for a short time so I went to Lae. His secretary was on two months' leave so I thought my stay would be short.

I worked in Lae for a couple of years and met a patrol officer, married in 1963 and went to our first posting at Pindiu. This was the time when the first common roll was being drawn up prior to the election for a House of Assembly. I accompanied my husband on the common roll and the subsequent election patrols; an experience very few people are lucky enough to have.

Our other postings were in the Madang District—Bogia and Karkar Island. I have a strong love for PNG and its people and I treasure the 10 years I spent there. I am sure I will enjoy the connection being a member of the Association will bring me.

RENYL WILLARD

HELENE L CRONIN OAM *The Papuan Bugle Call 1939–1945: The War and its Ultimate Effects*

Would you like a window into the past of Port Moresby during the Second World War? This book

details the day-by-day experiences of (European) life in the 'Port' under military administration and in the face of Japanese aggression.

The author has created an A4-size coffee-table book dedicated to the capital's enlisted inhabitants using war-time newspapers, photos and veteran memories. She has provided the 'exploits of individuals' staying in Port Moresby for short or long periods between 1939 and 1945.

War-time incidents (or accidents) in the capital area are presented in a snapshot on one page, sometimes two pages or more, with a patiently sought-after photo. These summaries have often been extracted from a wide variety of sources but, sadly, not always acknowledged on the page. One page might reflect multiple sources, whilst there are instances of valuable information from the author's direct conversations with war veterans.

The original newspaper headings reproduced above each story are a feature of this book. A helpful Appendix shows the names of servicemen from Papua, mostly ANGAU officers, who are listed in the Army numerical sequence.

The author's passion for Port Moresby is clear as is her research into her own family of servicemen and women. Readers can be grateful that the author has looked beyond her family to offer us tributes to many worthy servicemen and officials, for example, 'Doc' Vernon, Major Tom Grahamslaw, Squadron Leader John Jackson

and the plantation owner, PJ McDonald. A bonus for the reader lies in the cameos that summarise the pre-war and post-war lives of all these worthy men and women.

Inevitably, in a self-published book of 538 pages, there are minor faults that an external proofreader could have remedied. The author strikes a balance between her descriptions of individual adventures and descriptions of the changing Port Moresby landscape.

There is, however, some imbalance in the handling of each year; for example, 1942 is covered by 202 pages, whereas 1944 has eight pages—demonstrating possibly the campaign action moving away from Port Moresby. But, as the author says, this is 'not a conventional history book but a timeline' which I found immensely interesting. There is potential here for these sources to be used thematically in a follow-up book.

Overall, *The Papuan Bugle Call* is an impressive and unique book and would make an entertaining gift for any family member interested in war-time Port Moresby.

GREGORY JIVEY

Self-published (2024) 538 pages, photos, hardcover, RRP \$80.00
Available: hcronin@bigpond.com

Help Wanted

Looking for Brian Pawley, who lived in Goroka in the 1960s and 1970s. He was the manager of Kamaliki Plantation just outside Goroka. If anyone can help, please contact Roy Clason at clasonroy@gmail.com

Kiaps Virtually Kicked Out

I disagree with John Quinn's above suggestion in his letter published in the September issue of *PNG Kundu*.

John and I went to TPNG in 1959 as Cadet Patrol Officers. As independence approached in 1975, I, like many other permanent officers who still remained working for the Australian Administration, received a letter of invitation co-signed by Michael Somare and Administrator Les Johnson.

These letters were offers of continuing employment. Mine offered me a contract with the about-to-be independent state to continue as a *kiap* (Deputy District Commissioner).

I accepted PNG's offer and remained in the country until after I retired, aged 60, in 2001. During those 26 years, I was offered and accepted further contracts in three other positions.

Kiaps' roles probably started 'winding down' in the mid-1960s. Australia had already ceased recruiting permanent officers and offered contracts only—some up to six years in length.

After the report of the 1962 visit of UNO's Trusteeship Council (led by Sir Hugh Foot), followed soon after by the Derham Report into the administration of justice in TPNG, it became clear that 'direct rule' could not last. *Kiaps* could no longer expect to continue indefinitely as policeman, magistrate and gaoler as three of their many duties. Some field officers

started to 'specialise' in areas such as local government, business development and government liaison positions. Many moved into other 'specialist' departments. Some went into the private sector or left PNG and sought a new career in Australia or elsewhere.

A modest compensation package was offered for the 'loss of career' to remaining permanent officers. It was designed to encourage such officers to remain if they received offers of continuing employment. The package also consisted, in part, of re-settlement assistance to those who wished to leave.

Many officers, particularly those married with children, chose to take the resettlement package and left PNG.

Kiaps who remained in PNG, some of whom had already moved into various very senior positions, continued working in those positions. Others continued in field positions and, like me, moved with the times, with some taking up positions in other departments in the years after independence.

WT (Bill) Brown wrote about roles filled by former *kiaps* in very senior (some very sensitive) positions during and after the transition from Australian rule to statehood. The article may be accessed in Keith Jackson's '*PNG Attitude*' site dated 2 March, 2020: *Kiaps-PNG didn't push us out - Keith Jackson & Friends: PNG ATTITUDE*. It was repeated on the *ex-kiap* site on 24 August 2024.

C WARRILLOW



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.

PNG’s National Rugby League Bid

PNG is reportedly set to join the NRL as its 19th team in 2028, following a \$600 million expansion deal backed by the Australian federal government. While not yet officially confirmed, this would mark the largest expansion in the NRL’s 116-year history.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and the ARL Commission have reportedly endorsed a 10-year funding plan to establish a self-sustaining team by 2037, with financial support directed toward both the team’s operations and broader regional development. Read more about this by visiting: *Papua New Guinea Reportedly Set to Join NRL as 19th Team in \$600M Government-Backed Expansion - Ministry of Sport NRL 2024: Papua New Guinea, Jason Demetriou, coach, South Sydney Rabbitohs, Pacific Championship, World Cup;*



PNG’s NRL team playing Wales in a previous World Cup match

Demetriou to take charge of Kumuls | NRL.com.

Jason Demetriou, an experienced NRL coach, has been appointed as head coach of the Kumuls. His appointment signals the continued progress of a PNG team being admitted to the NRL in the coming years.

As reported in Sydney’s *Daily Telegraph* on 18 September, the PNG team will be based in Port Moresby.

In an exclusive interview with the *Daily Telegraph* newspaper in September, the Australian Prime Minister, Mr Anthony Albanese, stressed the Federal Government’s funding would go beyond just a football team. ‘This is a game changer for your relationship with Papua New Guinea,’ Mr Albanese said. ‘The aim would be for any government funding to be aimed at economic development in schools. It’s not just for the NRL team.

‘It’s an important part of economic development and

getting young people engaged in PNG. This is not just about sport in itself, it’s building people-to-people relationships and economic development for PNG, that’s the way the government sees it.’

The formal announcement, the paper reports, was expected to be made after the NRL Grand Final game so as not to distract from the NRL finals series. The NRL grand final was held over the October long weekend.

PATRICK BOURKE

Tribal Violence Near Porgea Gold Mine

This leaves at least 30, if not closer to 50, dead in clashes between rival clans leading to a state of emergency being declared. Police said the unrest started in August when ‘illegal miners’ inflicted life-threatening injuries on a landowner in the Porgea Valley.

Source: ABC News

Papua New Guinea’s Wan Squad Wins World Hip Hop Dance Championship in US

PNG’s all-male hip hop crew Wan Squad made history in August 2024 putting their homeland on the map after winning the World Hip Hop Dance Championship in Phoenix, Arizona, USA.

The group’s creative director, Pyan Ng, said their phones were ‘blowing up’, after hours of dancing on the world stage.

According to their social media Facebook page, the group offers elite training and mentorship to



PNG Wan Squad (Facebook)

the PNG dance community along with a Champions Workshop to upskill participants in dance, leadership and creativity.

Source: ABC News

Australian Tourists Caught up in the Kokoda Track Closure

Nauro villagers in central PNG constructed a barrier in September 2024 from logs along part of the pathway in a dispute over unpaid millions of dollars in development grants agreed to by the government.

Kokoda Track Authority’s acting chief executive, Julius Wargirai, confirmed the path would remain closed as



Angry villagers have blockaded the Kokoda Track in remote PNG as part of a dispute with the government (Facebook)

negotiations continue. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade advises Australians to check with their tour companies for the latest information.

Source: 9 News

World Bank Loan to Transform Education in PNG

A \$100 million loan to PNG from the World Bank is set to transform PNG education, as the Department of Treasury has officially submitted a request for International Development Association (IDA) concessional lending.

According to PNG Secretary for Education, Dr Uke Kombra, this strategic initiative will significantly enhance educational outcomes and will be implemented in close collaboration with the Department of Education. Read more at:

A \$100 Million World Bank Loan to Reshape Education in Papua New Guinea—Papua New Guinea Education News (pngfacts.com)



Manus Secondary School students

Bougainville in 2024, Hosted by the Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific

Affairs at ANU Canberra

On Monday, 6 September, the ANU’s Department of Pacific Affairs presented a four-hour workshop on aspects of the situation in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville (ABG).

This hybrid event included, amongst others, presentations from Dennis Kuiai (Deputy Secretary, Law and Justice Department, ABG), Theonila Roka Matbob (member for Ioro Constituency covering Panguna area), and James Tanis (former ABG President).

I attended through a Zoom link and found it extremely informative. If you wish to watch the four-hour recording of the Bougainville Update Workshop that ran on 6 September 2024, please email me on *editor@*

pngaa.net and I’ll send you the hyperlink.

CHRISTINE LEONARD

Lae Secondary School Robotics Team Competes on the World Stage

Lae Secondary Robotics team of five left from Nadzab airport on 17 September to travel to Athens, Greece, for the World Robotics Challenge. As the only Secondary School in the country with an active Robotics program, this is the 5th time Lae Secondary has represented PNG at the World Robotics Challenge. The theme for 2024 was ‘Feeding the Future’, so students had to design the robots to demonstrate this theme.

The team finished 78 out of 180 countries and territories taking part. Last year, the team finished 43rd, even knocking out heavyweights Japan in the earlier rounds. Japan would go on to finish 112th-ranked.

PNG Visas

Someone recently reported having gone through a very stressful and complicated process of applying for a visa to visit Papua New Guinea. Basically, they were scammed.


As an Australian Passport holder, you will require an approved visa before entering Papua New Guinea. The only place to get a PNG visa is PNG’s Immigration & Citizenship Services Authority (ICA) site: <https://ica.gov.pg/visa>

PNG Olympic Weightlifter

Dika Toua claimed gold following her debut in the 2024 United Masters Weightlifting Championship in Suva, Fiji. Competing in the women’s 40–44 age group (50 kg division), the 40-year-old athlete lifted 68 kg in the snatch and 90 kg in the clean and jerk. Information from PNG Haus Bung’s website.



Dika Toua (Facebook)



The PNGAA Collection

This consists of archival material on Papua New Guinea—photographs, documents, maps, patrol reports, books—reflecting the lives and work of those who have lived there. We wish to ensure these are readily available worldwide to our members, researchers or those simply interested in the rich history of Australia’s relations with Papua New Guinea. If you have items you would care to donate, or you would like to contribute towards the digitisation of items already in the collection, please contact Cheryl Marvell at collection@pngaa.net or 0438 636 132.

Pope Francis Urges ‘Closeness, Compassion and Tenderness’ During His Visit to PNG

As head of the Catholic Church worldwide, the Pope visited Papua New Guinea from 6 to 9 September as part of a four-nation Apostolic journey of South-East Asia and Oceania. The Pontiff’s key message for PNG was of ‘love, unity and hope’.

On Saturday the 7th, Pope Francis met with the Governor-General, Sir Bob Dadae, and other government and civil leaders, followed by visits to the Caritas Technical Secondary School, meeting with about 800 students, former street children and people with disabilities. His decision to visit a school providing educational opportunities for underprivileged girls was significant, given the discrimination and violence women suffer in PNG, issues raised by the Pontiff throughout the tour. During his speech at the Shrine of Mary Help of Christians Church, where the Catholic community undertakes charitable and educational works, Pope Francis stressed that bishops and priests follow the ‘style of God’, which was about ‘closeness, compassion and tenderness’.

After meeting with PNG’s Prime Minister, James Marape, early Sunday, Pope Francis presided over a Mass in Port Moresby at the Sir John Guise Stadium before an estimated 35,000 who welcomed him with cheers and lively musical performances, including traditional dancing. One elderly man travelled on foot from the Highlands over mountains and valleys, saying: ‘I would not do this to see a King or a Prime Minister, but I have come this far to see the Pope. He is my Papa and the head of my church.’ This was also the attitude of the PNG people generally.

Two choirs led the crowds with religious fervour. A *sing-sing* group brought gifts to the altar during the Mass celebrated by Cardinal John Ribat. The Pope’s message of Hope and Unity was one of the main themes of the Papal tour.

Following the Mass, the Pope flew to Vanimo,

the remote capital of Sandaun Province, where he was welcomed by an estimated 20,000 people who gathered in front of the Holy Cross Cathedral accompanied by singing and dancing. When a feathered headdress was presented by a catechist, Steven Abala, the Pontiff promptly put it on.



TOP: (L-R) Madame Rachel Marape and Prime Minister James Marape meeting Pope Francis

CENTRE: Pope Francis at the Papal Mass in Port Moresby

BELOW: Crowds at the mass, Sir John Guise Stadium



Featured: Papal visit in Vanimo, Sandaun Province

Pope Francis brought with him nearly a tonne of humanitarian aid in the form of medicines, clothing and toys. The Pontiff met with the local Catholic community and missionaries from his Argentinian homeland who ministered to them. Father Augustine Prado and his brother, Father Martin, who also lives in the Baro, invited the Pope

to visit Vanimo when they visited Rome in 2019. The Prado brothers and their sibling, Sr Cielos, are Argentinian missionaries working in Baro parish, running a school and home for girls fleeing violence. Pope Francis praised the church workers who work at spreading the faith whilst urging the faithful to work closer to home at being good to one another and put an end to tribal rivalries and violence, including gender-based violence. He also asked for a sense of civic responsibility and cooperation to prevail. It was a reference to the tribal violence over land and other disputes that have long characterised the country's culture but have grown more lethal in recent years.

After returning to Port Moresby to spend the last night, and before his departure Monday morning of the 9th, Pope Francis met with over 10,000 young people with a message of Hope and Unity, saying: 'When you are down, rise yourself up and help your friends who are down—help them to get up also.' Children and some adults approached the Pontiff with presents. His presence during the historic visit left an indelible mark on the nation and highlighted the people's deep faith—bringing a message of hope, unity and spiritual renewal.

The Pontiff left PNG late Monday morning for Timor-Leste. The final word about the Papal visit was from Cardinal John Ribat, who stated that the Holy Father's visit had put Papua New Guinea back on the world map in a positive light after recent bad publicity.

I could not fly up to PNG but, through the Nunciature in Canberra, I sent a copy of my new book *Lotu Katolik: Catholic Missions in Oceania and Papua New Guinea*, tied up with golden ribbon. I hope he received it. Meanwhile, the Vatican News Agency received a digital copy of the book and was happy to include it on its website.

MARY MENNIS

Note: All photographs were sourced from the PNG National Information Centre, available online at <https://info.gov.pg/pope-francis-meets-youths-concludes-his-png-tour/>

This article was compiled from information sourced from the *Post Courier*, *The Guardian* and the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne.



Papua New Guinea first encountered rugby league during the gold rush in the 1930s through Australian miners. Australian soldiers who were stationed in PNG during the Second World War reintroduced the sport back into PNG. The PNG Football (Rugby League) League was founded in 1949.

The PNG newspaper, the *PNG Post-Courier*, on Thursday, 27 March 1975, reported on the upcoming rugby league inter-zones games between Southern, Highlands, Northern Coast and the New Guinea Islands which would be held on the following Saturday and Sunday. From these trial games, the first PNG rugby league national team would be selected to play in the first Pacific Cup against teams from Australia and New Zealand during May 1975.

The newspaper reported that the PNG team in the Pacific Cup would be wearing jerseys in the national colours with a bird of paradise emblem and would be known as the Kumuls.

The teams that played in the first Pacific Cup were PNG, Western Australia, Victoria and New Zealand Maoris. The New Zealand Maoris won the first Pacific Cup, defeating PNG by 38 to 13. The games were played at Port Moresby.

Papua New Guinea & Rugby League

PATRICK BOURKE

It has been said that there are two religions in Papua New Guinea (PNG), Christianity and rugby league. Both have been introduced into PNG and have been taken up enthusiastically. PNG is the only country in the world where rugby league is the major national sport. Rugby league is a part of the national school curriculum.

The sport has been used as a means of uniting the nation which has over 800 different languages.

FEATURED: South Alexishafen, New Guinea, 10 September 1944—an exciting moment during a rugby league match between the 61st Infantry Battalion, 'The Queensland Cameron Highlanders', and the 30th Infantry Battalion. Identified personnel are: Private N D Keen NX123694, Private C Halloway NX121857, Private W Delohery NX142221. (Photo courtesy of the Australian War Memorial: <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C66024>)

Contributors' Guidelines

We welcome factual and anecdotal stories of various lengths pertaining to Papua New Guinea, information about members, events, letters and enquiries, PNG book reviews, vales and reunions—a diverse range of material is accepted from members, non-members and PNG citizens.

• **Contributions to be submitted via email as MS Word documents:** They must be checked, and typed in a plain typeface, with the author's name included. Appropriate references are required if the article has been taken from a website or another primary source. PDF text files and handwritten or printed submissions cannot be accepted.

• **Length of contributions:** Articles 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 restraints. Vales are normally about 300–500 words, and longer ones may be reduced and the full version added to the website. Usually, news items, letters and book reviews should not exceed 500 words.

• **Photographs & Images:** Scans should be emailed as JPGs (approx. 300 dpi / 12 cm wide), with appropriate acknowledgement and captions. They should be provided as separate files and not embedded in the document. Unfortunately, slides or original photos cannot be accepted.

• **Front Covers:** We are always interested in receiving appropriate, copyright-free images that suit the format for this position. Specifications required are JPG/300 dpi/220 x 310 mm (min.) portrait size. Caption and photographer information must also be included.

• **Events Roundup & Diary:** If you have an activity to advertise, promote or report, please send the information as soon as possible for inclusion. Events are also listed on our website at *Resources>Events*.

• **All submissions are subject to editorial consideration:** However, we reserve the right to reject, reduce and/or postpone contributions to following issues subject to time and space, and there may be times when your patience is appreciated—however, members may add their stories and photos directly to our website.

We try to represent all submissions respectfully, and the journal supports the use of both Pidgin and Tok Pisin.



Please send your contributions to editor@pngaa.net by the Copy Deadline on the masthead page of each issue

PNG has continued to play rugby league in Pacific area competitions. They had a male team and a female team in the Rugby League Pacific Championships, held between 19 October and 10 November 2024. They competed against teams from Australia, New Zealand, Tonga, Fiji and the Cook Islands. Two of these games were played at Port Moresby on 3 November when the PNG women played New Zealand and the PNG men played the Cook Islands.

In May 2024, the Chair of the Australian Rugby League Commission (ARLC), Peter V'landys AM, revealed his ambitious plan to bring three new clubs into the National Rugby League (NRL) competition. A PNG team could be one of these teams.

Since then, the Prime Ministers of PNG and Australia have spoken out strongly for the inclusion of a PNG team in the expanded NRL. The Australian Government has also promised \$600 million over ten years as financial support. A top-level NRL club is seen as a diplomatic tool to strengthen relations between Australia and PNG.

The PNG rugby league team, the PNG Hunters, has played in the NRL second-tier Queensland Cup since 2014. They won the Queensland Cup in 2017. The PNG Hunters would be expected to be a talent pool for a PNG NRL team as would be the 12 clubs in the semi-professional Digicel Cup in PNG.

However, PNG will need a thriving schools rugby league program. The young PNG rugby league players need a pathway. As Justin Olam, the only current NRL player who has graduated from the PNG Hunters, has said, PNG needs a thriving schools program and a plan to scout grassroots talent from rural areas before the Digicel Cup is a sustainable source of NRL recruits:

There's heaps of talent back at home, but for me, the only reason I came and played NRL was because I went to uni.

Editor's Note: This article was sent to print in the December journal before the October and November matches were played.

Businesses for Health and the TB Crisis in Papua New Guinea

**DR ANN M CLARKE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
BUSINESSES FOR HEALTH:
TUBERCULOSIS & HIV**

In the vibrant yet challenging landscapes of Papua New Guinea a health crisis persists, yet it is one that harks back to times most believed were long conquered. In PNG, Tuberculosis (TB), an ancient, lethal, hard-to-treat disease, will flourish in 2024. The current statistics paint a far grimmer picture than the era of pre-independence.

Long-time PNG residents and those with historical ties to PNG might remember Gemo Island, an islet in Port Moresby Harbour. In the early to mid-20th century, this island served as a quarantine station and home to the TB (and leprosy) isolation hospital. The isolation strategy was a common response to TB worldwide, aimed at curbing the spread of this highly infectious TB. By the 1970s, advancements in treatments and a deeper understanding of TB transmission allowed for the closure of Gemo. Patients could now be treated within their communities. This signalled a monumental shift in public health strategy and reduced stigma.

At independence in 1975, optimism was high; by 1980, PNG reported fewer than 10,000 new TB cases annually. Fast forward to 2024, and the narrative is dark. Numbers have increased each year and this year over 42,000 new and relapse cases and an estimated 5,000 deaths will be recorded. The complexity of these cases has escalated, with nearly five percent exhibiting drug-resistant strains, coupled with high rates of TB/HIV co-infections. This triple menace complicates awareness, treatment and prevention strategies significantly.



Our tiny Pawa Women team—Ann Clarke; Ops Manager, Lorrie Tapura; Nursing officers (L-R) Lowen Sihare and Sharlonica Lung-missing is Health Extension Officer Teresa Koratsi. Our team's office is hosted by G4S Security.

Perhaps the most heart-wrenching statistic is that children constitute 26% of the national TB caseload. This is the highest proportion globally. This figure is not just a statistic but a reflection of the vulnerability amongst poorly nourished children, low rates of childhood immunisations, overcrowding and the dire state of health infrastructure.

Recognising the escalating crisis, the National Department of Health, led by then Deputy Secretary Dr Paison Dakulala in 2017, issued a compelling call to arms to the business community. This call led to the birth of the Businesses for Health: TB and HIV project (B4H), a pioneering initiative aimed at mobilising resources, expertise and awareness to tackle this complex health problem head-on from the perspective of the private sector.

B4H has since developed numerous strategies to engage businesses and the broader community. From nationwide radio campaigns across PNG FM, the largest commercial network, Toll Free TB information phonelines, to workplace training programs for non-health workers. Workplace based trainees develop programs to promote early case finding, support seamless access to free TB and HIV services. They also engage families in care



Gerehu TB Clinic—the training course includes a visit to a free TB clinic. At the clinic, trainees learn how to support people walking through the complex clinical pathway, including diagnostics, family screening and HIV testing. The business representatives at this course are all from businesses affected by the Napa Napa Road development project in Central Province on the outskirts of Port Moresby.



Patrick Robin, HR Officer and newly trained workplace TB warden from Express Freight Management, Tuhava Town training room, Central province, PNG (Photo: Ann Clarke)

and prevention processes. Most importantly, they get colleagues found to have TB back to work as quickly as possible.

Today, even the most well-appointed businesses are not immune. Recent distress calls from sectors as diverse as law, education and skilled trades highlight the pervasive reach of TB. These TB and/or

TB and HIV cases involve professionals—lawyers, teachers, accountants—who once might have been considered ‘low risk’ by outdated standards.

In 2024, the economic aftershocks of COVID-19 and persistent economic challenges have intensified the demand for B4H’s services. The pandemic, with its lengthy shutdowns and disruption of healthcare services, likely contributed to the current surge in TB cases, particularly in urban centres like Port Moresby and Lae.

To members of the Papua New Guinea Association of Australia, many of whom still have deep family and business connections to PNG, this is a rallying cry. The resurgence of TB affects us all and transcends socioeconomic barriers. Your engagement and support can help to propel B4H’s efforts from reactive to proactive, from containment to eradication.

B4H’s approach is unique, and operates without local or Australian government aid, relying entirely on the business community it supports. This model, while sustainable through strong corporate partnerships, needs broader engagement to mitigate the ‘catastrophic costs’ of TB—a disease both ancient, entirely preventable and 100% treatable.

We encourage all who hold PNG dear, to follow our efforts on social media, engage with our campaigns and spread the word within your networks. Together, we can change the narrative, ensuring a healthier future for Papua New Guineans.

The story of TB in PNG is far from over, and the path to overcoming this epidemic is fraught with challenges. With the continued education and commitment of the business community and the global diaspora, our hope remains. The battle against TB is tough, but it is a battle that can and must be won. We look forward to any member of the Association taking an interest and sharing the fabulously positive and successful work of this little project and its huge capacity to do good. Our methods to teach people to kindly support people with a cough or signs of TB into free services has saved literally hundreds of lives and prevented countless thousands of new infections. •

Department of Agriculture, Stock & Fisheries, Taliligap, Rabaul

Part Two

THE GATEWAY FOR NEW RURAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS (*didiman*) TO THE PNG ISLANDS: Personal Experiences in 1967

PETER STACE & JW (Bill) GORNALL

Part One of this article focussed on the history of DASF Taliligap and how Peter and Bill were introduced to the realities of agriculture and culture, important elements in our work. Part Two covers our continued learning experience of cocoa, the Rabaul market and livestock production, all of which were part of our orientation as *didiman* in the PNG Islands.

Cocoa Production

Cocoa was an important cash crop since it was introduced by the German administration prior to WWI; however, cocoa dieback, a disease that affects the growing branches of the cocoa tree, had recently become a serious problem. Cocoa trees were dying, seriously reducing production, and the disease was spreading at an alarming rate across the Gazelle Peninsula. Bill recorded in his Field Officers Journal:

...At Gela Gela, staff including agricultural assistant Wilson and some farmer trainees, counted 278 cocoa trees in a village plantation of 1000 trees that had been infected with die back [sic] disease within a fortnight...

Plant pathologists at LAES Keravat were identifying the causative agent, a fungus that was attacking the growing shoots and branches of the cocoa tree. For years to come, dieback in cocoa trees affected this lucrative cash crop. Suggestions of pruning affected branches and burning the prunings, along with fungicide spraying and planting of alternative crops such as pepper and other spices, were being presented, with little success. Dieback was devastating cocoa production on the Gazelle Peninsula. It was the sound research at LAES



Cocoa drying with a hot air and sun dryer; Gazelle Peninsula
Photo by Lucille Stace, 1974

Keravat that came up with a possible solution for genetic resistance to dieback; but that came much later.

RDOs, or *didiman*, at DASF Taliligap learned much about cocoa tree dieback as well as cocoa management techniques and cocoa bean fermentation and drying.

The Tolai Cocoa Project

The Tolai Cocoa Project (TCP) on the Gazelle Peninsula was developed to centralise and standardise the fermenting, drying and marketing of large volumes of village-grown cocoa. The TCP had been active since the early to mid-1950s and by 1967 had grown to cover a large proportion of cocoa production on the Gazelle Peninsula. The TCP was implemented in collaboration with, but not part, of Gazelle Peninsula's Local Government system.

The TCP offered many benefits, such as fermentation, drying and marketing of the cocoa beans to maximise the best quality and present a more consistent product. Because cocoa sale lots were significant, market leverage saw cocoa buyers paying top prices, leading to a promising future for village cocoa producers. (For further reading on the history of the Tolai Cocoa Project see Epstein: 1968).

On this excursion, men would occasionally emerge from the bush, throw rocks at the truck, shouting abuse, then disappear

On one occasion Peter accompanied Don Shepherd from DASF in Rabaul on a wet-bean cocoa-buying excursion. They travelled with staff from the TCP by truck with a bag of money, driving out to villages where wet cocoa beans were stacked in bags and baskets on the side of the road. Each bag or basket was weighed and cash was handed to the owner. The wet cocoa beans were then put on the back of the truck and later taken to a central fermentary and drying location for processing. It was a great and interesting experience.

On this excursion, men would occasionally emerge from the bush, throw rocks at the truck, shouting abuse and then disappear. The DASF visitors were told not to worry: *'em raskol tasol. Yu no inap long wori'*—'these men are just rogues, don't worry.' Don Shepherd was not at all concerned, continuing to hand out money for wet cocoa beans. As a newcomer, Peter thought it was great as large quantities of money were being handed out to the village cocoa growers. What's wrong with that?

Bill had a similar experience when he was seconded to Taliligap from Kandrian in West New Britain to support the TCP. In his Field Operating Journal of August 1970, Bill recorded that he:

... visited villages to seek out leaders for meetings to explain the concept of the Tolai Cocoa Project. Subsequently, we held many meetings. Attendances ranged in number between 15 and 200 people. Some meetings were quiet but others rowdy. At one meeting not far from Taliligap, stones rained down on the meeting roof...

Peter returned to Taliligap as Officer in Charge in 1974-75 and the following is included to give a broader perspective.

It turned out that both the local government councils and the TCP were developments initiated with good intent by the Australian administration. They were great ideas and similar concepts worked well in Australia, but not necessarily on the Gazelle Peninsula. 'Some' in the Tolai community held a difference of opinion to the Australian administration. Political values based on Tolai cultural norms, the authority of the village 'Big Men', and the Tolai matrilineal land inheritance system, were being challenged. There were, however, many Tolai cocoa growers who were very loyal and supported the TCP.

Kepas, an agricultural assistant and a local Tolai, who worked at Taliligap, said: *'kaunsil na kakao project (TCP) em tupela em i brukim tabu (pronounced tambu) belong ples.'*—'Both the council and the Tolai Cocoa Project are breaking the traditional rules and values of Tolai culture.' At the time Peter did not understand what Kepas meant. Subsequently he realised that both the TCP



Rabaul Market, betelnut and clothing sellers at Rabaul Market—photo by Lucille Stace (top left); De-shelling and bagging cocoa beans—courtesy of Garrick Cards, Melbourne (left); Basket seller—sketched by Lucille Stace (right)

and local government councils were not completely in line with traditional political systems. These indigenous systems were based on the 'Big Man' system. Because of this discord there was a degree of mistrust among some in the Tolai community, especially with the TCP.

Due to unease and a growing concern about the Australian administration, the Mataungan Association was formed by politically aware locals to support the traditional values of some of the Tolai communities, with regards to local councils and the TCP. This is a very complex topic, however, and won't be dealt with in this article.

In summary, as young *didiman* recruits at DASF Taliligap in 1967, Peter and Bill were introduced to indigenous political and cultural values but they came to realise that Australian administration policies were not always well-aligned. *'What! We Australians were getting it wrong? Ugggh, that was a big learning experience.'* Irrespective of any

mistakes made by the Australian administration, the TCP was highly instrumental in developing a dynamic and valuable cocoa industry on the Gazelle Peninsula.

Rabaul Market

Whilst at Taliligap, Peter and Bill were advised to observe and utilise the local markets for a number of reasons. Markets are a good indication of what foodstuffs are available and as new RDOs they could pick up on social issues. Markets are also a great place for gossip and finding out what was happening around the place. Local markets are a great source of fresh fruit and vegetables—eat local and see what the farmers are doing.

Rabaul's Saturday morning market, on the corner of Malaguna Road and Mango Avenue, was an experience Peter and Bill were told not to miss, as it was a perfect example of markets—PNG style. In 1967, the Rabaul Market was full of dynamic



Taro, peanut and vegetable vendors—*tabu* is laid out in front of the produce; Vegetable & fruit seller—*photo & sketch by Lucille Stace*

and active vendors and buyers. There were two main areas at the Rabaul Market, the first being where indigenous food was sold. There was great variety, including vegetables such as taro, sweet potato, tapioca, yam, aibika, pitpit and *kumu* (edible leaves) and fruit such as mango, banana, pineapple and pawpaw. Nuts sold were, of course, coconuts but others too, galip nuts and peanuts being much sought after. Handmade baskets and clothing and large quantities of betelnut or *buai* (from the palm *Areca catechu*) were also sold. Many Papua New

Guineans really enjoy their *buai*, giving them a feeling of well-being. The red stain of *buai* spit was splattered all over the place and its smell wafted in the tropical breeze. Newcomers often found *buai* chewing disgusting but soon realised it was just a part of PNG life.

The market was an outlet for many vendors, each selling their own produce or product. Some moved only a small volume of produce whilst others offered goods or food in larger quantities.

In 1967, produce was gathered into small bundles and valued at 10¢ a bundle. The price would not change irrespective of how quickly or slowly the item/s sold. There was no bargaining and the price asked for was paid. By 1967, Australian currency was legal tender, as well as the highly treasured shell money or *Tabu* (pronounced *Tambu*: a different meaning to *tabu* meaning *kastom*, or tradition).

Tabu shell money was highly valued, and accepted as a medium of exchange to buy anything. At the time, an equivalent 10¢ in *Tabu* was about 10–12 small shells on a string of cane.

The common use of *Tabu* was an example of how important traditional cultural values were, and remain so for the Tolai. It reflected the values *didiman* needed to appreciate in their work, irrespective of posting. *Tabu* is still greatly valued by the Tolai (Sieber: nd).

The other market area focussed on produce sought after by the Chinese and Europeans. Crops such as tomatoes, lettuce and other leafy vegetables, pumpkins, lemons, limes, pineapples and pawpaw were all available. This area tended to be a little more orderly but still attracted the lively market atmosphere and the unmistakable smell of *buai* permeated throughout.

Other traded items included handcrafts, especially woven baskets, *bilums* and carvings, clothing such as colourful laplaps and blouses, and ornaments, including necklaces, bangles and other trinkets.

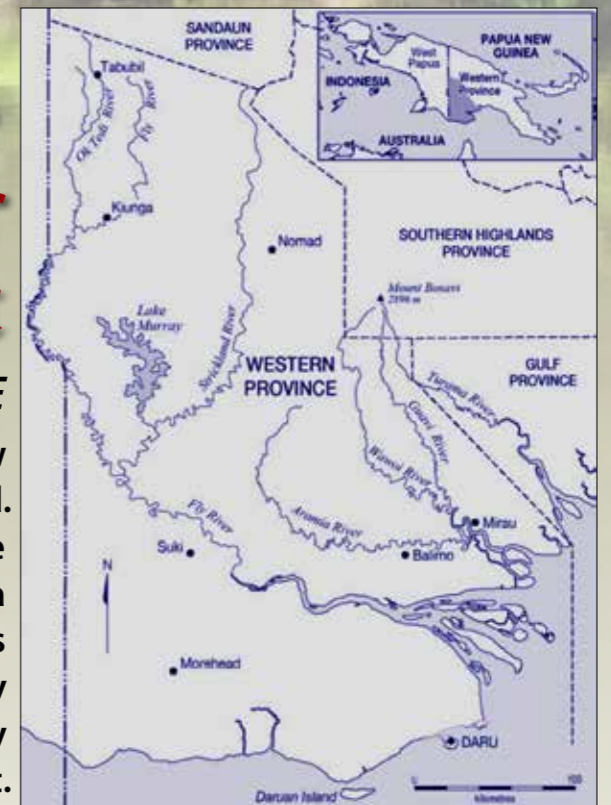
The Rabaul Market offered significant training opportunities for RDO recruits. Peter and Bill learnt to appreciate Melanesian foods and food crops important for subsistence gardening in village life (Epstein: 1968). •



Memories of the Ok Tedi Fly River Development Trust

NIGEL ROBIN ETTE

At the time of independence for Papua New Guinea, Western Province was undeveloped. It was the furthest province to the west, where high mountains take the Fly River to the sea via lowland plains. In January 1983, I was employed as a general foreman earthworks by the main construction company contracted by BHP, to begin the Ok Tedi project.



The contracted company was tasked with providing infrastructure for mining Mount Fubilan for Ok Tedi Mining Ltd. There was a gold cap atop Mt Fubilan, while the bulk of the mountain was high grade copper ore. A gold processing plant was established, followed by froth flotation copper processing on the ridge below Mt Fubilan, called Folomian. This was 20 km by road from the newly constructed town of Tabubil, adjacent to upper reaches of Ok Tedi (Ok meaning river or waterway).

The original plan was to capture the tailings from the mine process in a tailings dam situated

on a smaller adjacent river, Ok Ma. In January 1984 (from memory), I was working night shift at the Ok Ma dam site, in charge of a quarry on the western bank of Ok Ma, that provided material for the proposed tailings dam.

That night the eastern side of the valley face of the proposed dam site slid into the newly begun construction area of the tailings dam, rendering unviable any ongoing pursuit of a dam. Early construction had unloaded the toe of the valley and the landslide, quiet, slow, steady, and relentlessly silent, nearly filled the void.

That night from midnight, the 400-man camp

that was situated on the landslide had to be evacuated in torrential rain. The main construction camp one km away was not affected. I was still standing at the edge of the landslide in the early morning when senior management came along uttering appropriate oaths when they saw the whole tailings dam site had collapsed. There was also a heavy-duty corrugated iron bypass culvert structure built to take water from the Ok Ma while the dam was being built. This steel plate culvert five metres wide had been squashed flat. After due consideration management decided building a tailings dam was unviable.

Ultimately a dredge was employed near the village of Bige. Bige is on a side road between Tabubil and the Port of Kiunga, approximately in the lower third of the Ok Tedi, and north west of Kiunga at the junction of the Ok Mart, a tributary of Ok Tedi. It was a transition place where the raging torrent of Ok Tedi tumbled down from the mountains to emerge as a slow meandering stream, a tropical river on its way through flat lands to sea.

As a result of the non-construction of the tailings dam, funds were made available and transferred into Lower Ok Tedi and Fly River Development Trust, for the purpose of providing useful infrastructure for the villages downstream:

i.e. *haus wins* (with galvanised roofs) to collect rain water, rain water tanks, school rooms, medical clinic rooms, community halls, and solar panels. This was the work now of the newly formed Ok Tedi Fly River Development Trust (FRDT).

I was appointed as the first project officer for this venture, which went all the way down to the sea at the Gulf of Papua; 104 villages with approximately 30,000 people. I kept the position for 10 years when I was replaced by a Papuan officer. The primary function of the Development Trust was to provide drinking water from the iron roof catchments.

The ensuing mine sedimentation changed the navigation possibilities of the mini-bulk carriers which transported copper concentrate from the river port at Kiunga to off-shore bulk carriers. At approximately 85 adopted river miles of the 420 nautical river miles from ocean to the Kiunga River port, mining sediment was deposited at that location because of the up to six metre spring tides. The sediment consisted of large granules all approximately the same size, like heavy sand. The tides coming in controlled the water flow going out, leaving the sediment from the mine on the riverbed.

The location of this deposit was named Muga

Muga, which is more or less downstream from Sturt Island, and upstream from Wasua village; there is a missionary-built airstrip at Wasua and a village called Lewada. The mini-bulk carriers bringing the copper concentrate downstream would anchor at this obstacle, often touching the bottom of the river bed while they waited for the high tide to cross. General cargo vessels drawing up to six-metres when loaded, were considerably inconvenienced when travelling upstream. This affected essential services of food supply to the town of Kiunga and the mining town of Tabubil.

As a result, the provision of corrugated iron roofing and water tanks was a priority for the FRD Trust, of which I was the ongoing project manager. This entailed spending many days and nights down river, away from Kiunga and Tabubil and the life in the mining towns. On what is now the Indonesian side of the river, Dutch missionaries introduced Rusa deer which went forth and multiplied, providing useful meat protein for the river village people.

I lived on a ten-metre boat called the MV *Alice*, named after the wife of one of the original Fly River explorers, Lawrence Hargreaves, who appears on the Australian \$20 note. The *Alice* was equipped with generator and freezer, so I too could purchase this meat to eat. In the evenings I fished on the tributaries of the river, catching Barramundi and Black Bass, which I often gave to the adjacent villagers and even to the Catholic nuns in Kiunga.

I tended to anchor overnight just away from the village and in a tributary for two reasons: firstly, to avoid catching malaria and secondly, to avoid being rammed in the dark by any of the 4,000-ton bulk carriers loaded with copper concentrate and travelling at 12 knots downstream at night. There were eight such mini bulkers. The safest off-river anchorage and good fishing was in the Agu River, mid-Fly. There were also other suitable side streams where I could safely anchor at night.

Along the Fly River, between Kiunga and the ocean, there are nine language groups. I liked the people as they were receptive and friendly. When deciding on village projects I always gathered the

whole village together so that everyone heard the discussion. Primarily the villagers desired education for their young ones—to have future money earning opportunities.

Unfortunately, many of the American missionaries 'planted' a church then went home, having delegated pastoral care to village leaders ...

I created a system of employing local area supervisors who had the appropriate language and knowledge to select the working groups. I employed women who were also included in the discussions. Women largely carried the work materials from the boat to the village site and it was the men who constructed the projects. I provided hand operated sewing machines and bolts of bright, coloured materials for the women to use, and they loved this. Many of the community halls built became largely women's club meeting centres. It was important to speak to everybody to avoid potential internal village conflict.

Unfortunately, many of the American missionaries 'planted' a church and then went home, having delegated pastoral care duties to village leaders. The Evangelical Church of Papua (ECP) was much better, and different, because they provided hospitals and administration as did the Catholics, and they stayed long term in the field, often for many years. One of the missionaries' very important jobs was to learn and preserve in writing many of the languages.

I was in PNG from January to October 1988 in the mining area, then the FRDT from 1990 to 2000, when I left PNG. Now at 73, I am unwell, living comfortably in the Central Queensland bush on 50 acres, and reminiscing. I look back on this meaningful work and hope it all flourishes again one day. The young people were intelligent and looking for jobs and programs and proper pay, for the future of their country. I believe the concepts started will be remembered and persist with the younger generation, despite the central problems in PNG at Port Moresby. I wish them all well. •

Village leader, Kiman Katupon, signing 1996 VDF cheque with Trust Project Officer Robin Ette



Taking Muriel Home —a Mother's Legacy

Part Two

ROSALIE EVEREST

During my recent pilgrimage returning the ashes of my mother, Muriel Larner MBE, back to the Eastern Highlands of PNG, the most poignant moment took place around 3 am on 14 July. We were in Arau Number One village for the *haus kraï* that began at dusk the evening before. Madong Gegesa, the widow of Gegesa Simalobe, my parents' loyal foreman on Arau Plantation from 1957, had generously opened her small *haus kapa* home to accommodate me and my partner Martin along with my three adult sons, Paul, Ian and Marc. I woke to the strains of mournful singing and heart-rending wailing coming from the purpose-built *haus kraï* about 200 metres away, where the urn of Muriel's ashes was drawing an outpouring of boundless emotion and memory.

The main mourning song was composed in this village years ago in preparation for *Misis Lana's* eventual death. The song tells a story in Arau *tok ples* from the point of view of a plantation worker hearing the sound of the early morning *belo* calling labourers to work. Its chorus repeats the names of my sister, Bronwyn, and me. Standing alone in the cool, dark, early morning, listening on Madong's little wooden verandah, I was transfixed. In the distance, silhouetted figures were moving against bright firelight. The villagers had been dancing,



(L-R) Rosalie Everest and Madong Gegesa



(L-R) In the foreground, Biki Kabai and Asala Kabai hold an image of their late father, *Luluai Kabai*, as they greet us ahead of the *haus kraï* on 13 July 2024—*Photo by Martin Cross*

singing and weeping all night, sustained only by cups of sugary tea and, for some, the chewing of *buai* (betel nut). It wasn't until dawn, when the mountain mist descended, that the dancing and crying wound down to a hush. Only then did the women go into full swing, continuing their preparations of a sumptuous *mumu*. Along with locally-grown garden vegetables, the key ingredient would be frozen New Zealand lamb, much of which had been provided to the village as a mark of respect by the Honourable John Boito, local MP and PNG's Minister for Agriculture.

In the morning, we walked down to where Arau Plantation once was. The homestead is gone, having been levelled by a massive earthquake in 1993, and the once large, well-equipped coffee factory and its dams are also long gone. However, the blocks of coffee trees (planted by Wally, Muriel and Gegesa) remain and are now parcelled out to local small-holders who face the daily challenge of getting their produce over the often-boggy road to coffee-buying factories in Kainantu.

Still spritely at about 85, Madong proudly showed us the little Lutheran church built by her late husband, Gegesa, on what was once Arau Plantation land. Nestled amongst the coffee trees, the church continues to hold services. It was quite wonderful to see how the Gegesa family, comprised

of mixed Papuan and New Guinean heritage, has integrated into Arau's Gadsup tribal community.

Born in Daru, a young Gegesa went to Port Moresby in the early 1950s to work alongside my father, Wally Larner, at the Australian Petroleum Company. In 1957, Wally recruited the hard-working, skilled carpenter to join him on his trek up into the Highlands to establish a coffee plantation at Arau. Meanwhile, New Guinean Lutheran missionaries from Finschhafen on the Morobe Coast bravely penetrated the formidable Highland areas around Arau. Madong, the daughter of one of those Lutheran evangelists, met the dashing Papuan, Gegesa, at Arau, and they soon married. Their children, who became my childhood playmates, have settled with their families at Arau or Kainantu.

My sons were amazed to see old photographs of themselves as children pasted onto placards and held aloft by a throng of villagers who met us on our arrival with welcome songs, heartfelt speeches and a generous *bilum* presentation. They then watched a dramatic re-enactment of village folklore depicting their grandparents, Wally and Muriel, and Gegesa being greeted for the first time by the late chief *Luluai Kabai* at Arau village.

The descendants of *Luluai Kabai* welcomed Martin and me warmly, giving us a tour of the village. I revisited the site of the late chief's original *haus kunai* where I have a vivid memory of my parents, my sister and me paying our respects one night in the early 1960s when Kabai lay dying on his bed. He was the last *luluai* of Arau. One of his sons, Biki, showed us a very large saucepan that Wally gave Kabai in 1957. He said the handles broke off years ago but he still uses it and thinks of *Masta Wally*. Biki also pointed out the rows of healthy coffee trees growing in the Kabai compound and explained how they were grown from seedlings given to *Luluai Kabai* by Wally and Muriel years ago.

Before we drove back to Kainantu with Muriel's ashes for the final interment scheduled for the next day, the Arau village women handed me a bunch of exquisite heliconia blooms. They were a memento of Arau village to be buried with *Misis Lana's* remains

in her final resting place alongside *Masta Wally* in Kainantu. As a keen gardener and passionate lover of flowers, my mother would have been delighted.

On Monday, 15 July, a memorial service was held at the Eastern Highlands Cultural Centre (EHCC), founded by Muriel in Kainantu town and officially opened in November 1981. The memorial service, which was truly moving, was organised by the Centre's director, Johnson Puma, and the new Manager of KKB Enterprises in Kainantu, Dorothy Keari, a successful businesswoman, who used to model Muriel's silk-screen creations in fashion parades in the 1970s. Enabled by a Memorandum of Understanding between the Eastern Highlands Provincial Government and KKB, Dorothy has



TOP: At dawn on 14 July, inside the *haus kraï* after an all-night (*tudak inap long tulait*) vigil for *Misis Lana*. The mourners are feeling drained and trying to keep warm by the fire grate with the urn of Muriel's ashes nearby—*Photo by Martin Cross*

BELOW: Pottery created at the EHCC



TOP: Abaka, left, and Remy, second from the right, carry Muriel's urn in a farewell tour of the Centre. As a traditional expression of mourning, many were daubed in clay on their skin and clothing—Photo by Martin Cross

BELOW: (L-R) Ian, Marc and Paul Everest with Ihi, granddaughter of the late Luluai Kabai who devotedly helped to rear these young men when they were growing up—Photograph by Rosalie Everest on 15 July 2024

recently been given broad managerial oversight of the Centre,

Dorothy told me that, as a teenager in Kainantu, she was greatly inspired and encouraged by my mother. How proud would Muriel be to know that one of her young female protégés would one day become a significant business leader in the Kainantu community and oversee her precious EHCC! Following speeches by local dignitaries and a prayer by former Salvation Army Pastor Kafero, I was asked to speak on behalf of Muriel's family. Links to YouTube videos of the occasion are included at the end of this article.

After the formalities of the memorial service concluded, Muriel's ashes were carried around the Centre with such gentle reverence by two of her original loyal potters who had known and worked with her—Abaka and Remy. They wanted her to say a last goodbye to all the different parts of the amazing enterprise she had created but sadly left behind. Some of the original potters and weavers who still work at EHCC shared with me their deep gratitude for the impact that my mother had on their lives, providing them with special skills and the means of earning an income for their families.

We took Muriel's ashes to the Kainantu cemetery to be buried alongside Wally's grave. Despite relocating to Australia to be closer to family and medical assistance in her later years, Muriel always felt that she was a Papua New Guinean. Right up to her last breath, she maintained a deep interest in and affection for the people and the arts of the land of her birth.

Following Wally's passing in 1967, Muriel was left a young widow with two small daughters and a coffee plantation to run. Her contribution to the coffee industry, her advocacy for the disabled, her concern for the lives of ordinary Papua New Guineans, and her passion for developing the arts in PNG are truly remarkable legacies that she left behind.

My family is very proud of Muriel's achievements. We are at peace knowing that she lies in her husband's arms, surrounded by a loving community stretching from Kainantu town to Arau village.

Vale Mim/Muriel/Misis Lana who was born in Rabaul on 6 September 1929 and died in Queensland on 18 April 2019. •

YouTube video links were provided with permission from the Everest family. Grateful acknowledgments go to videographer Malum Nalu. The viewer may see links to Malum's 'Muriel Larner playlist' of six videos.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jf11-rB6WSQ&list=PLa9CFaBCsLjOTJ0d1_znRDDZN2X3BdGkD

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=USLEs7ELZII&list=PLa9CFaBCsLjOTJ0d1_znRDDZN2X3BdGkD&index=3

The Strange World of Lae, New Guinea in 1962

ANN MALLARD



I went to Lae to get married. My new husband, Ken Mallard, was an Australian I met on a ship returning from my first trip abroad. Neither of us had families who were placed to host a wedding, so we got married in Lae where Ken worked for the Australian Government in Forestry.

Home was a two-bedroom flat above Kam Hong's in downtown Lae. Ken had hoped to get a government house but there were none available. Our new home was big but very empty. Somehow I had finished a few curtains on a borrowed machine before the wedding, so we had a little privacy. But there was no furniture besides the bed! The flat did have hot and cold water (unlike the single dongas in town where Ken had lived for his first two years in Lae—they were cold water only).

In those days the town was very small. The population was mostly made up of Europeans—expatriates from Australia and a few (mostly missionaries) from Germany or the US. I remember going to the main shop in town and, when I got to the counter, the expatriate clerk on hearing my American accent would say: 'Shall I book this to the Lutheran Mission or the Seventh Day Adventists?'

I would say with dignity: 'I'm an ordinary American, not a missionary!' and take out my money.

The town sat on a plateau between the sea and the huge green mountains covered with jungle. The shopping area was one block long and the only real European-style store was Burns Philp (BP's we called it), an old-fashioned general store with a bit of everything from groceries to hardware and clothing—but never, it seemed, the bit you wanted!

Burns Philp is in the far-right corner of my sketch of Lae (above), which I did soon after we settled in. The brown buildings in the centre are the government offices because Lae was the administrative capital of Morobe Province. This sketch is hardly photographically correct, but I was trying to dramatise the small size of the town against the mountainous hinterland.

Down the block from BP's was the movie theatre showing movies once a week. All along the sidewalk at the BP's corner were street sellers, often selling beads.

Around the corner from BP's was Kam Hong's, a Chinese trade store selling an odd collection of tinned fish and other staples that the local people would buy, and all sorts of exotic imports from Asia—like the magnificently carved tea chest we bought right after we got married because we had no place to put anything, or inexpensive batik cloth which I learned to sew into loose dresses (*mumus*).

Besides we Europeans, the locals in town then were mostly male. They worked as house staff or drivers, leaving their women back in their home village where they would be safe. They lived in small dwellings, sometimes no more than a shack, in the backyards of houses provided for the Europeans.



A *lakatoi* coming into shore—photo taken by Ken in 1959 (left);

Ken and me on the beachfront, early in 1962 (top right); Ann's sketch of Lae street sellers (right)

The first Papua New Guinean man I had any real contact with was Tom, who worked in the house for Ken; his job included cooking. There was not much chance of a relationship here: firstly, I knew not one word of *Pidgin* and, secondly, I expected to do the cooking! Imagine my horror when I picked up the lid from Tom's pot of rice—and there were all the weevils nestled on top! When they died during cooking, they floated to the top. 'Just a bit of protein,' Ken said.

Tom did not continue in our service when we moved into Kam Hong's flat. Not only could we not communicate, but he strongly resented my taking over his job.

In the flat, my nemesis was the cockroaches. I marched into BP's to ask: 'What does one do?' They sold me some poison that you could paint on the walls. I duly took out our paltry supply of dishes and foodstuffs and painted the inside walls of every cupboard with poison. I had solved the problem I told Ken.

After dinner I went into the kitchen to do the dishes—there were cockroaches everywhere. They

were on the floor, on the bench, crawling up the walls and on the ceiling. Their cupboards were unfriendly, so ... I was aghast. I grabbed a broom and began a frantic attack—smashed cockroaches were flying.

I have never forgotten my horror that night. And never, in 24 years in PNG, did I ever learn to accept them.

I still remember with equal horror a night we spent in the Markham Valley, about 30 miles northwest of Lae. We stayed with a friend, Tommy Leahy, who had a farm in the valley. Tom was a bachelor. That night when I got up at midnight to go to the loo, I had to cross the kitchen floor. As I stepped out, barefooted, there was a rustle and a whirr, and the floor became alive with cockroaches—hundreds. I went back to the bedroom and put on my thongs.

Around the tiny shopping area and administration buildings that formed the centre of Lae were government-built houses for families and dongas for single folks. Below the town was the beachfront with the Hotel Cecil, the airstrip and



Our jeep, having just crossed a precarious bridge on the new Highlands Highway. Photo taken during a trip in 1963. Related in my book soon to be completed, *My New Guinea World* (left);

MV *Tenya Maru* on the Lae beachfront in 1962 (right)

the wharf. These were our main connections with the outer civilised world. The beachfront, with a delicious sea breeze, was also the coolest place to be and one of our favourite places for an evening drive when we finally got a vehicle.

The beach was also where the rural villages connected with Lae, like the people in the photo who had sailed in on their *lakatoi*. This form of transport was no longer common around Lae. By 1962, motorised boats were taking over because they could carry more. Beyond the beach stretched the waters of the Huon Gulf—tainted brown with the discharge from the huge Markham River, just 10 miles west of the wharf. I still remember an evening drive along the waterfront when we watched for an hour as a local man worked to hollow out a log and started to put together a *lakatoi* right there on the beach one early evening in 1962.

Everywhere along the north coast of PNG was the wreckage left behind from World War II. Many of the rusting hulks became romantic icons, like the *Tenya Maru*, which came to symbolise the Lae foreshore for me. Many years later, when I took up scuba diving, these World War II wrecks were our favourite places to dive because they attracted so many fish.

The *Tenya Maru*, grounded on the muddy beach at Lae, was once a Japanese hospital ship during the war. After the winter storms of 1963, she slid deeper into the water until only a small

part of the bow remained to show where the hulk lay. I always thought of her like she is in the photo: a dramatic wreck rising just behind the surf.

Our biggest splurge after we got married was the purchase of a Mitsubishi Jeep. It was exactly like the US Army jeeps only made in Japan (what irony). Of course, Ken had to test our new purchase, so we drove out the network of tracks called logging roads which criss-crossed the forest to the north of town. The area was drained by several rivers: the Butibum, Busu and Bupu are three names I remember.

'Bu' in the local language meant 'milk', and all these rivers were very muddy (milky?) in the rainy season. But January on the north coast was dry, and many rivers were visibly low, when our new jeep arrived. When we got to the Bupu River, it was no longer flowing, although there were a few pools.

Our first big adventure in the jeep was driving down the nearly dry bed of the Bupu. We headed off downriver, bouncing along over the stones and small boulders. It seemed as if we had left the civilised world completely, winding through the real jungle. I was in heaven. This was a true adventure and, in my mind, I expected every weekend with Ken from then on to be an adventure! To my dismay, once Ken was assured that the jeep could really perform in 4-wheel drive, we never explored another riverbed. •

The NGVR & PNGVR Association (PNGVR) Military Museum

PHIL AINSWORTH

The New Guinea Volunteer Rifles (NGVR) and the Papua New Guinea Volunteer Rifles Association (PNGVR) Military Museum was established in 2005 within the Wacol Military Heritage Precinct as a lasting tribute to NGVR and a memorial to the men who were lost in the Pacific War. The Museum is a community facility for the benefit of future generations.

The museum building is a refurbished wartime building that was originally a part of Camp Columbia. It was established in 1942 for the Sixth US Army Headquarters, the main Allied Staging Camp for the war in the southwest Pacific. During the years 1944 to 1947, the camp was taken over by the Netherlands East Indies Government in exile, the first time a foreign government was hosted on Australian soil. After the war, parts of the camp were used by the Australian military, and they served as a migrant reception and training area.

From 1951, it was used by the 11 Training Battalion of the Australian National Service and later for the support of the Australian Citizen Military Forces. The Camp was sold circa 2000, with 1.5ha set aside for Military Heritage purposes. Five historic military buildings from the camp were established there, and the precinct was transferred to the National Servicemen Association of Australia (Qld) (NSAAQ).

The PNGVR refurbished the WWII building, adding an extension, air conditioning, a secure



weapons vault and a pedestrian access ramp. Military displays and presentations about the NGVR's wartime activities and other campaigns in the PNG Archipelago were installed and maintained, as well as a wide and large collection of military memorabilia and PNG artefacts, which had been acquired by donation or loan. The security of the precinct is ensured with a security fence with monitored cameras, etc. The museum has links to the Victoria Barracks and MacArthur Museums in Brisbane. The costs of maintaining the Museum are borne by the PNGVR.

The strength of the Museum is that it is maintained with relevant displays of events, artifacts, records, photographs and memorabilia. A range of Japanese and Allied weapons and ordnance is displayed, from Japanese Samurai Swords, a Juki (Woodpecker) machine gun, a Nambu pistol and 20mm Zero fighter aircraft's cannon to Australian and US rifles, machine guns and pistols, all of which are popular with younger visitors. Other unusual items include a tele-radio used by Coastwatchers, a handkerchief of an Australian soldier lost on the *Montevideo Maru*, a small, wheeled cart for use in the jungle, an air-raid siren, various helmets and uniforms, and many more important and mundane items used by the military. Donations or loans of appropriate items are welcomed, with the assurance they will be properly and securely looked after. Should a

bequest be considered, please speak with the curator.

The Association welcomes anyone wishing to assist the Museum. If we had more volunteers, the Museum could be open more regularly, and a roster organised. A volunteer doesn't need to be an association member but does need an aptitude for the work and is prepared to become immersed in PNG history, particularly military history. To ensure the continuity of the Museum as a community facility, a succession plan is being implemented with Forest Lake RSL Sub-branch, which is situated next door. The handover will be accomplished over time.

The Museum is promoted widely, and many community adult and children groups regularly visit. The Museum is open to the public from 10 am to 1 pm on the first Saturday of every month by appointment only by contacting the curator, Paul Brown, on 0402 644 181. The limited visiting time is due to the dedication of only a few PNGVR members who live reasonably close to the Museum.

The museum's address is
971 Boundary Road, Wacol, Brisbane,
Qld 4076.

Access is from the rear off Nashos Place.
(Photos courtesy of Phil Ainsworth)



The Story of the Wartime Kokoda Trail: Sorting Fact from Fiction

PETER JESSER • Part Two

This article continues from the excerpt published in *PNG Kundu*, June 2024.

The Way North from Port Moresby

One of the reasons that there had never been a track across the mountains from Port Moresby was that the local people on the north side of the Owen Stanley Range (the Orokaiva) and those on the south side (the Mountain Koiari) were both hostile to outsiders. The intervening mountains from Alola on the north side to the Koiari village of Kagi in the south were, as pointed out in Bert Kienzle's biography '... a no-man's-land, a place of darkness the Papuans called *vabula*. This was a buffer zone between two different tribal areas where, by native custom, any stray trespasser was fair game.'^[12] There was every reason for the Papuans not to cross the mountains.^[13]

But European world views and needs differed from those of the Papuans and, by the late 1890s, miners on the Yodda goldfields were agitating for the government to establish a more convenient 'road'^[14] across the mountains. This would enable an overland mail service to be established—something which would improve service times and decrease reliance on irregular shipping. It would facilitate the government maintaining a presence in the interior to help in pacifying the local people.

With this end in view, on 25 April 1899, two government expeditions set out from Port Moresby heading towards the Owen Stanley Range (or Main Range). The first, led by Mr D Ballantyne, set out with the aim of contacting the Hagari tribe in the hills towards the Main Range and convincing them to allow government patrols to traverse their country. In this aim, Ballantyne succeeded.^[15]

On the same day that Ballantyne set out, a second expedition, led by Mr HH Stuart-Russell (the Government Surveyor) left Port Moresby. According to the Government Report for that year:

The objects of the expedition were to examine the country between the coast and the Gap to the bottom of the Main Range, for the purpose, if possible, of discovering a track that would be suitable for a road over the range. The Gap is the name given to a marked depression in the Main Range, situated to the south-eastward of Mount Victoria.^[16]

Stuart-Russell travelled up the Brown River and waited until receiving word from Ballantyne that the way was clear to proceed. The expedition

continued—with some difficulty— through the Gap and down to the Yodda, achieving its purpose. Stuart-Russell's map of the route taken—'Survey of Road to Yodda Valley via Brown River Valley'^[17]— was appended to the 'Annual Report on British New Guinea from 1 July 1898 to 30 June 1899'. In his report on the journey, Stuart-Russell observed that on the north side of the range they met with hostile tribes who pursued them part of the way back to the Gap. He concluded:

The mountainous nature of the country travelled through prevented a definite conclusion being formed as to whether the route followed was the best one for a future road. The formation of the country at the Gap itself hardly seemed suitable for a road, at least for pack animals. So far as could be judged, a good track could be got from the point where the party struck the Yoda [Yodda River] to Tamata Station, on the Mambare. But the country through which such track would pass is inhabited by natives that have not yet been brought under the influence of the Government.^[18]

Stuart-Russell took three months to complete his expedition, on which he extended his orders and pressed on to the Yodda. His party was running short of supplies and hard-pressed by hostile 'natives' when another Government Officer, C.A.W. (Charles) Monckton was despatched with relief supplies. Monckton aided Stuart-Russell's return. But although the Annual Report for the year praised Stuart-Russell's work, Monckton had a different take on the crossing. According to Monckton, Stuart-Russell had exceeded his orders in pressing on to the Yodda.

This was acknowledged in a letter to Stuart-Russell from the then Administrator, Sir George Le Hunte, which began: 'You dear disobedient person, I should be very angry with you, but instead, I can only feel pleased.'^[19] Stuart-Russell had blazed a track across the mountains.

His diagrammatic map showed the route he had taken, rivers and streams, and a hachured representation of the terrain giving a rough indication of contours.

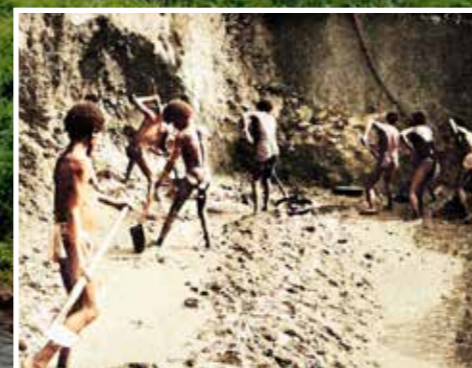


New Guinea Resident Magistrate, CAW Monckton

The Yodda Valley Road

With this groundwork completed, in 1904, the route for a proposed mail service between Port Moresby and the northern goldfields was set down. Kokoda Station—roughly the halfway point—was established by Monckton and set up as the other end of the mail run from Port Moresby. Monckton later referred to the 'big Yodda Valley road' traversing his area of responsibility. A fortnightly mail service was implemented. It is mainly for this that the original track to Kokoda is remembered. Members of the Royal Papuan Constabulary (RPC)—usually travelling in pairs—would journey between Port Moresby and Kokoda Station on a regular basis, carrying official mail between the two locations. They would wait at their destination for two or three days to collect return mail which they then carried back.

There were a few subsequent crossings by government officers, but the last record seems to have been that of Resident Magistrate WR (Dickie) Humphries who made the crossing in 1923. In the early years, others also used the track. In 1908, Seventh-Day Adventist missionaries established a



The Yodda Valley © Greenpeace / Peter Solness
Goldmining in the valley (right)

base at Bisiatabu, near Sogeri. According to Nelson, in 1913 Pastor Septimus Carr walked to Kokoda, and in 1924 Pastor William Lock and his family, including their young son Lester Lock, walked from Bisiatabu to Efogi, partway along the track. The Lock family stayed at Efogi for the next two years, developing a church.

In 1940, after Lester Lock had completed theological training in Australia, he returned to Papua where he was appointed to Bisiatabu. From there, in 1941, he traversed the southern end of the track to Efogi on church business. However, in his book, which covers his time in Papua, Lock does not suggest that he ever went further than Efogi.

The Territory's Administrator, Sir Hubert Murray, apparently walked the track more than once but, with the establishment of an airstrip at Kokoda in 1932, Murray remarked that he probably would not be making the trek on foot again. No historian appears to have identified any other records of government officers or other Europeans making the crossing after 1932. The RPC mail service also became more sporadic as the 1930s progressed. There was no regular air service, but air delivery on an opportunity basis reduced the need for the overland service.

By the 1930s, only the Papuan mail carriers of the RPC retained first-hand knowledge of the track.

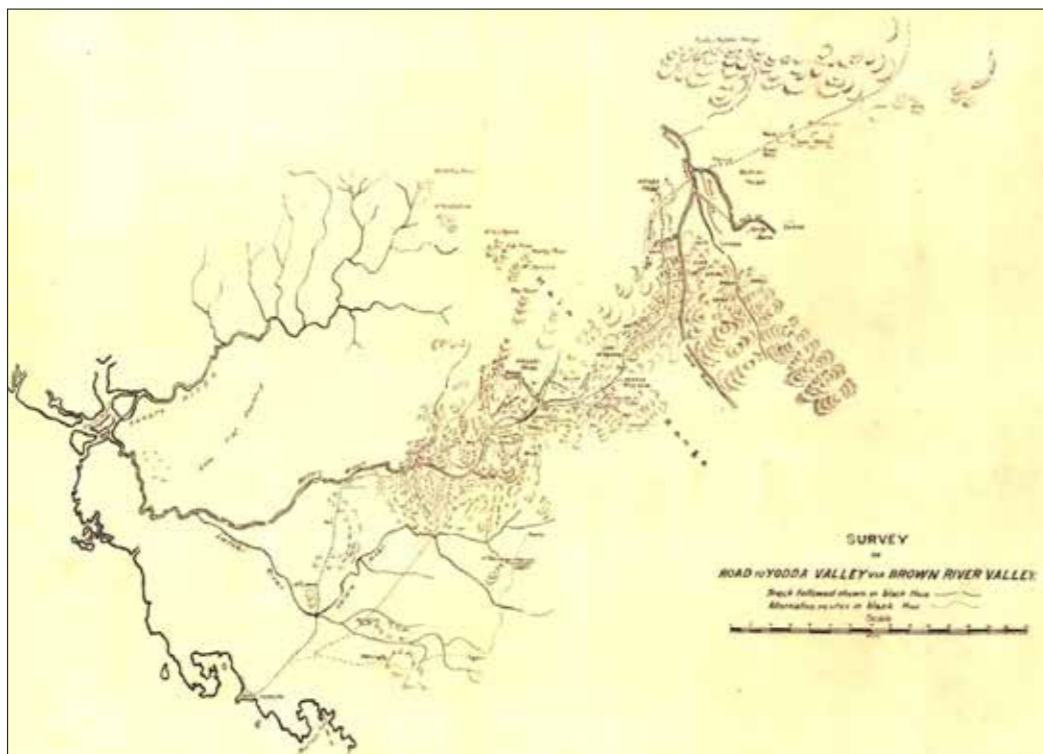
Notes

12. Kienzle, Robyn, *The Architect of Kokoda*, Hachette: Sydney (2011), p. 118.
13. Nevertheless, it seems that occasional crossings had been made in the past, possibly on head-hunting raids. The crossing was alleged to have taken 'five sleeps'—roughly the same time that it would take Lieutenant Harold Jesser's party to cross in January–February 1942.
14. A 'road' in this era was simply a conveniently cleared walking track. It was not until the advent of motor vehicles in later years that it assumed the specific meaning of a vehicular road.
15. 'Annual Report on British New Guinea from 1st July 1898 to 30th June 1899; with Appendices', Brisbane: Queensland Government (1900), pp. xv-xvi. (The last two pages of the report, one of which would be the relevant map, are missing from the Report held at the National Archives. A copy of the map, catalogued as 'Survey of road to Yodda Valley via Brown River Valley / M.I. L.H.Q. August 3 1942', was located at the National Library of Australia; catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/8049238 accessed 15 August 2021.
16. 'Annual Report on British New Guinea', p. xvi.
17. Survey of road to Yodda Valley via Brown River Valley' *Ibid.*
18. 'Annual Report on British New Guinea', p. xvi.
19. Monckton, C.A.W, *Experiences of a New Guinea Resident Magistrate*, Newnes: London (c. 1922), p. 289.

Editor's Note:

This article is an excerpt from the PIB NGIB HQ PIR Association website and can be read in full at https://www.soldierspng.com/?page_id=5390. It is reproduced in the *PNG Kundu* with the author's permission.

HH Stuart-Russell map 'Survey of Road to Yodda Valley via Brown River Valley', appended to the 'Annual Report on British New Guinea from 1 July 1898 to 30 June 1899'. Map copy dated 3 August 1942 marked 'TRACED IN IA SECTION M.I. L.H.Q. FROM A PRINT DATED 16.6.42' (National Library of Australia (nla.gov.au), catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/8049238).



Planting Memories: A Settler's Life on the Sogeri Plateau

ANTHEA MATLEY

At the beginning of September 2018, long after my parents had passed away, I said to my husband, Peter: 'I want to go back to New Guinea. Do you think we can do it? Will you help me?' He readily agreed, and a couple of weeks later we were on a flight to Port Moresby. We had no plan other than booking a room at the Grand Papua Hotel. We'd agreed to see how things were when we landed and allowed ourselves five days for the trip.

I popped the pressure in my ears as the plane descended to Jackson Airport, Port Moresby. A modern-looking airport terminal had replaced the tin shed I remembered from five decades earlier. Jackson Airport is at 7 Mile, 11 kilometres from the city. We were the only white people among the passengers who, I assumed, were either travelling home from shopping or working in Brisbane. Everyone was in a good mood with lots of laughter and chatter and although we exchanged smiles with several of our fellow passengers, we didn't have a chance to speak to them on the short flight.

After disembarking and reaching border control, I handed over my documents to the serious-looking young woman with her long black hair pulled tightly into a neat bun on top of her head. She wore a pale blue, open-necked shirt with a colourful emblem on the sleeve and a matching dark blue skirt.

'What is the purpose of your visit?' she asked, taking my passport and papers and closely studying my identification details. 'It says here you were born in Port Moresby.' She looked up at me, her eyes widening.

'Yes! I was born here. I've come back for a visit,' I replied with a smile.

She laughed, shaking her head: 'You were born here! Welcome home.' She lifted her arm high, stamped our visas with a flourish and waved us through, still smiling. I nearly cried at the warmth

of her welcome and felt I had made the right decision to embark on this sentimental journey.

We moved outside the airport to the pick-up area. The hotel had promised to send a car to meet us. As soon as we stepped out of the airconditioned building we started to perspire. The air was hot and humid, with a blustery wind raising dust and rubbish into little eddies in the corners of the buildings. It seemed to change direction continually, and we couldn't find any shelter. Our shirts clung to our bodies, and grit stuck to our sweaty faces. September is a warm, dry month in Papua but still humid. A shower and change from travelling clothes were a priority.

Below the 'Welcome to Papua New Guinea' sign was a large warning: 'No betel nut chewing. No smoking'.

The airport was quiet. Below the 'Welcome to Papua New Guinea' sign was a large warning, 'No betel nut chewing. No smoking'. Our fellow passengers quickly disappeared out the front doors to waiting vehicles or to continue their journeys on foot. Soon, we were the only ones waiting. After an hour, we phoned the hotel and eventually a large van arrived to collect us. We were the only passengers.

The slow drive through the city's outskirts gave us plenty of time to take in the suburbs bustling with people, mainly men. Most had beards and either squatted or stood in small groups outside graffitied buildings. Dressed in shorts and t-shirts with fading slogans they spat, smoked and argued. According to our driver, the piles of rubbish littering the sides of the road were due to an ongoing garbage strike. In contrast, the central city area looked like any modern city with high-rise buildings and lots of traffic (both vehicular and foot) as people went about their business.

The driver explained it was a month before the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, and the PNG government wanted the city cleaned up before the international visitors arrived. Betel nut chewing, popular and rampant throughout the country, was banned. When mixed in the mouth with mustard and lime, the chewed betel nut produces a red liquid. When it's spat onto the concrete pavements and curbs, removing the stains is very difficult.

At the Grand Papua Hotel, we asked a young man at the reception if he could arrange a four-wheel-drive vehicle and driver to take us into the mountains. He looked inexperienced and flustered, so he called another young man over who asked us what we wanted. He too looked unsure and called a third person, a young woman, who was more fluent in English. They either didn't understand what we were asking for or genuinely couldn't help, because they were vague in their answers, looking at each other and shaking their heads. We decided not to pursue it and went to our room.

With some effort, we got onto the internet and tracked down an Australian-run security firm. The process took most of our first day before we found the necessary vehicle and driver. The difficulty was specifically requesting a four-wheel-drive vehicle. City cars were plentiful but not what we needed. My brother had walked the Kokoda Track a few years before and had tried to visit the plantation we grew up on but was unable to due to the road's poor condition. He said we would need a four-wheel-drive vehicle to tackle it. We finally arranged a vehicle and driver to take us inland in three days' time. The next morning we thought we would do some sightseeing.

'Is it safe to walk the streets?' I asked the desk staff. 'Oh yes. Safe,' they said, nodding.

We headed down to Ela Beach, about 400 metres from the hotel. I had great memories of family picnics here under the shade of coconut trees, playing in the sand and paddling in the warm ocean, the laughter and shrieks as a thronging mixture of European and local people picnicked and swam together. We crossed a busy four-lane

highway, and we had to use the pedestrian crossing button to cross the road.

From the highway, we could see the beach. It was a sad sight. All the trees and vegetation had been removed and it looked denuded and lifeless, with yellow plastic barriers roping off the sand. There wasn't a soul on the beach, or in the water. A fancy new Conference Centre had been built on the foreshore in anticipation of the expected foreign visitors and the government didn't want anyone messing up the beach.

We continued our walk along the footpath, following the shoreline in search of a café we'd read in a hotel brochure that was worth visiting. The hot wind blew relentlessly. The occasional vehicle making its way down Bramell Street slowed down, the occupants staring at us—probably wondering why on earth we would choose to walk around in this uncomfortable heat and wind.

We approached the busy waterfront, which hugs the south side of the harbour and where lots of road construction was in progress. We walked and walked but couldn't find the café. Eventually, we passed the busy port and headed into a deserted area. We stopped to look at the map, and a police car pulled up. The officer was a policewoman from New Zealand, sent to help with law and order during the APEC summit.

'Can I help you two?' she asked. 'I saw you were looking a bit lost, and you don't want to do that here; it's too dangerous. Hop in, and I'll take you where you want to go.' •



This is an extract from the chapter 'Port Moresby, 2018', from Anthea's new book, *Planting Memories—A Settler's Life on the Sogeri Plateau*, which was reviewed by Keith Stebbins in the June 2024 issue of *PNG Kundu*. The second part of the chapter will be published in the next issue.

Of Dolphins and Men (and women and children)

CHIPS MACKELLAR

Ever seen that 1957 movie, *Boy on a Dolphin*, with Sophia Loren and Alan Ladd? The title song sung by Julie London stated:

*There's a tale that they tell of a dolphin
And a boy made of gold.
With the shells and the pearls of the deep,
He has lain many years fast asleep,
What they tell of the boy and the dolphin
Who can say if it's true?
Should he rise from the depths of the ocean,
Any wish which you wish may come true.*

The movie tells the story of an archaeological search for the legendary golden statue of a boy riding a dolphin which, in its way, enlivens the ancient Greek myth that there is a natural affiliation between wild dolphins and humans.

Visitors to Sea World will marvel at the amazing performance of trained dolphins as they jump through hoops, play water polo together, come when called, and squeak or click in conversation with their handlers. These dolphins are tame and trained. But according to Greek legend, wild dolphins can have an affinity with humans and respond in situations where humans are involved. Consider for example the wild dolphins at Monkey Mia in Western Australia, who frequently approach swimmers there to socialise and to be hand-fed.

But does such a friendly association with wild dolphins exist in PNG? I know of two occasions when it did, and you will not believe either of them.

When I was a *kiap* stationed at Bogia in the Madang District, we had frequent contact with the people of Manam Island, mainly because of its active volcano which sometimes caused us to



assist with evacuations to the mainland or elsewhere on the island.

The Manam Island people were excellent fishermen, and whole families would sometimes venture out to sea in the family canoe for a day's fishing. During one such excursion, a family was caught in a sudden storm, and when they failed to return, the Catholic Mission on Manam Island raised the alarm and we instituted an air-sea rescue operation. We did this by diverting passing aircraft to overfly the sea around Manam Island. In addition, we sent our Bogia station workboat to conduct a sea search off that part of the island where the storm had struck—all to no avail. This search never found the missing family and we presumed that they had all been lost at sea.

Then about two weeks after we had abandoned the search for the missing family, they walked into the sub-district office at Bogia. Mother, father, and three young children, asking if they could hitch a ride in our workboat back to Manam Island. If they had been lost at sea off Manam Island, 'How did they make it to the PNG mainland?' we asked.

'We were rescued by dolphins,' the father said—I told you, you would not believe it.

The storm was so fierce, the father said, that their canoe broke up. There was sufficient debris from the broken canoe, he said, for them to cling onto it and stay afloat, but they had no way to return to Manam Island. Furthermore, there was a danger that they would drift with the current further out to sea.

In the dead flat calm that followed the storm, the father told us they were visited by a pod of dolphins. He added that the family had

had occasional contact with dolphins before. Sometimes when they were fishing, dolphins would swim close to their canoe, and any fish they had caught that were too small for the family to eat, their kids would feed the dolphins.

The father said that on this occasion when the family was struggling to keep afloat holding onto the debris of their broken canoe, the dolphins came up close and in a chorus of squeaks and clicks seemed to be telling the family something. On a desperate whim, the father recounted how he let go of the flotsam he was holding and clung to one of the dolphins. He was relieved to find that this was what the dolphin had been telling him to do.

‘Quickly!’ the father called, telling his family to do the same, and with his wife and the three children, each clinging to a different dolphin, the pod ferried the family towards the shore, in the vicinity of Potsdam Plantation.

When the father felt his feet touch the bottom, the dolphins moved away as they made their way ashore. He continued, despite the dolphins’ rescue, they were completely exhausted from their time in the sea. For several days they were nursed back to health by local people who lived near Potsdam Plantation. Once they felt well enough to travel, the family walked into Bogia.

Fifteen years later in my final posting in PNG, I was appointed District Court Magistrate at Ela Beach, which was basically a traffic court, but now and again we were called on to hear and determine cases that other courts found too unusual to deal with. This was because I was not a stipendiary magistrate. I was a *kiap* magistrate, and *kiaps* sometimes did things differently, such as solving cases by applying a good deal of common sense.

So I was not surprised when the case before me on this day was an accusation of sorcery. What happened here was that on a canoe bound from one of the Motuan villages to Kerema, and halfway across the Gulf of Papua, a dispute broke out amongst the crew. During this dispute, one of the crew accused a female passenger of sorcery

and took to her with an axe. In desperation, the woman preferred drowning to dismemberment and, in the middle of the night, she jumped off the canoe into the sea. With no hope of finding her in the darkness, the canoe sailed on without her.

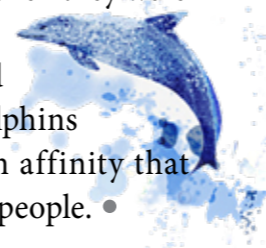
One month later with the change of season, the canoe sailed back from Kerema. Surprise! Surprise! A crew member saw the woman walking down the street at Hanuabada. This immediately set off a hue-and-cry confirming the accusation that the woman must have used sorcery, otherwise, how did she get back safely from the middle of the Gulf of Papua? So I asked her.

‘I was rescued by a pod of dolphins,’ the woman replied. ‘Rubbish!’ or words to that effect in *Motu* were repeatedly screamed from a crowded public gallery. I had to call the gallery to order, threatening to clear the court unless there was silence. In the silence that followed, the woman told her story.

It was almost exactly like the story of the Manam Islander family who had been rescued by dolphins fifteen years before. Of course, nobody believed the woman’s story, but I did.

So, to a silent courtroom, I told the story of the Manam Islanders’ rescue. And in the awesome silence that followed, people began to mutter that perhaps the woman was telling the truth after all. I transferred the case from the district court to the local court, which I could do because I was a magistrate in both jurisdictions. I then converted the case from a criminal matter to a civil matter, and in its mediation mode we solved the original dispute, compensated the woman for the obvious stress she had suffered, and everyone went home satisfied that justice had been done.

To this day I still wonder what that legendary boy on that legendary dolphin would have thought about those PNG dolphins who rescued those people in their time of need when they were helpless in the sea. One thing is certain, the Ancient Greeks would have been proud of those PNG dolphins for keeping alive the legend of an affinity that exists between wild dolphins and people. •



Our Time in PNG: and How I Became a Historian There

IAN HOWIE-WILLIS

From the time I was five years old, I wanted to go to Papua New Guinea. That was in 1943, the year the Australian Army recaptured Lae, Salamaua and Finschhafen from the Japanese. At my Methodist church in Melbourne, we sometimes saw films about the PNG mission fields. The films told me that *Fuzzy-Wuzzies* lived in PNG, and their souls would be saved if I put pennies in the mission box. Soul-saving was a mystery, but I did know I wanted to go there.

My chance came in 1964, when I was teaching in a lonely little one-room, one-teacher school in Warrambeen, out along the Geelong-Skipton road in Western Victoria. Responding to a newspaper advertisement, I applied for secondment to the PNG Department of Education, was accepted and joined about 60 other new Australian secondees in Port Moresby in early January 1965.

After a two-week orientation course at the Ela Beach Primary School, we were posted to schools all over PNG. I was fortunate to be sent to Brandi High School, on the coast 11 kilometres east of Wewak in the East Sepik.

I wanted to be at Brandi because my younger brother, David, was the Department of Agriculture, Stock and Fisheries *didiman* at Angoram, on the big river only 70 kilometres south-east of Brandi.

Margaret and our infant daughter, Rosemary, joined me at the end of the month. Our second child, Tony, was born in the Wewak Hospital at Boram that August. Our third, Katie, arrived in the ANGAU Memorial Hospital in Lae in early 1969. We accordingly produced one Aussie, one Sepik and one Morobe.

Brandi High School was a great adventure for Margaret and me. She joined the Brandi staff in our second year there, 1966, after our headmaster, the late great Jeff Keast, talked her into it. Needing a Form 1 English–Social Studies teacher, he obligingly

arranged child-minding for us and juggled the timetable so she could teach all her classes before lunch, and then spend the afternoons with Tony, who was only five months old.

I could easily write a book about our three years at Brandi, but I’ll limit myself now to two short anecdotes. The first is about Margaret’s new lacey, black bra, which disappeared from our clothesline. A few weeks after this we were attending a *singsing* at Maur village, 500 metres east of the school beyond the Brandi River. As the female dancers trooped onto the dancing ground, Margaret exclaimed: ‘That’s my missing bra!’ pointing to one well-endowed woman. Perched on the tips of the woman’s pendulous breasts was a wholly inadequate lacey, black bra. ‘Do you want it back?’ asked Deirdre, Margaret’s best friend on the Brandi staff. ‘No,’ replied Margaret, ‘her need is far greater than mine!’

The second story concerns the war museum I set up in a spare classroom. (The museum is still extant 59 years later.) As the Brandi history teacher, I thought that such a collection would be a good idea. So much detritus of the recent war was littering the jungle around the school that preserving some of it would show how Brandi had been caught up in the fighting. We soon had rifles, bayonets, helmets, pistols, the peculiar two-toed boots worn by Japanese marines, assorted bomb and shell casings, an air raid siren, an anti-aircraft gun and a searchlight. We even found a couple of Japanese skeletons at the end of a tunnel, but they didn’t go into the museum because the District Commissioner, Ted Hicks, took responsibility for them.

The most amazing exhibit was a set of six ice skates. An excavator digging a trench for a water pipeline across the school grounds threw them up from a depth of about 1.5 metres. Though rusty, they were clearly ice-skating blades. How did they

get there—three degrees below the equator with the nearest ice-skating rink 3,455 kilometres away in Sydney?

In January 1968, we moved to Lae so I could teach English at the new Institute of Higher Technical Education, which was being relocated to Lae after a year in Port Moresby. Nicknamed Hitech, the institute achieved university status in 1973 and is now known as Unitech.

Margaret transferred from Brandi to the Bulae Primary School near the Lae Golf Club. Bulae was an ‘A’ School, one following an Australian curriculum rather than a ‘T’ (for ‘Territory’) one. The ‘A’ schools were for European, Chinese and mixed-race children and the ‘T’ schools were for Papua New Guineans. She remained there for a year before taking two years off to have Katie. She then taught at the Igam Barracks ‘A’ School for a year before opening the dual-curriculum ‘A’-‘T’ school on the Unitech campus, which subsequently evolved into the present Taraka Primary School.

In the meantime, I had realised that history was my vocation. In my first two years at Hitech/Unitech, I undertook a Master of Arts preliminary course at the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG). My thesis was on the epic 1930 journey of the prospectors Mick Leahy and Mick Dwyer. Starting at Salamaua, they had trekked up the Markham Valley, crossed into the upper Ramu, and then climbed up into the Central Range, where they discovered huge village populations previously unknown to outsiders. Prospecting

downstream along the southward-flowing creeks and rivers, they reached the upper Purari River, which they followed all the way to Port Romilly near the Gulf of Papua. After catching a boat to Port Moresby, they *hiked* back to Salamaua via the Kokoda Track with their team of 15 New Guinean carriers, who had accompanied them all the way. Tough, enterprising, venturesome blokes, those two Micks! Much the same could be said for their carriers.

For the MA thesis proper, I investigated the interactions between the townspeople in the burgeoning airport town of Lae and the five local village communities—Ahihengali, Butibam, Kamkumung, Wagang and Yanga. The town had sprung up in the late 1920s as the transport hub for the Wau-Bulolo goldfields. The research involved talking to the ‘Befores’ who remembered the pre-war town, probing Lutheran Mission archives, seeking out and interviewing people like ‘Pard’ Mustar (who’d flown the first plane from Lae to Wau), talking to the village *lapuns* to record their memories of the pre-contact times, and spending many hours in libraries reading about early Lae in long-defunct newspapers like the *Rabaul Times* and the *Papuan Courier*. Melbourne University Press published the revised thesis in 1974 as *Lae—Village and City*, my first book.

By now I knew that if I wanted to be taken seriously as a historian, I must scale the academic heights by producing a PhD thesis. We accordingly moved to Canberra in January 1975 so I could do

that in the Research School of Pacific Studies at the Australian National University (ANU). My topic was the rapid development of the PNG university system in the period up to Independence, for much of which time I’d been what anthropologists call a ‘participant observer’.

The initial research was carried out among the files of the old Department of External Territories. I was given privileged access to the records by the late and legendary Ian Downs, *kiap*, coffee planter and parliamentarian extraordinaire. He was working there researching and writing his official history, *The Australian Trusteeship in Papua New Guinea 1945–1975*, which was published in 1980.

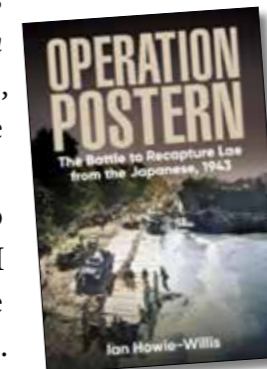
I then spent seven months back in PNG, mainly at UPNG in Port Moresby and at Unitech in Lae, delving into their archival records and conducting interviews. The outcome was a 1977 doctoral thesis with the title, *A Thousand Graduates: Conflict in University Development in Papua New Guinea, 1960–1976*. It was published under that same title in 1980 by ANU and again in 2012 by UPNG.

Many books later, in 2020 I turned back to Lae, where my historian’s career had begun. I wrote about the recapture of the town from the Japanese 80 years ago on 16 September 1943.

Released in December 2023, my book has the title: *Operation Postern: The Battle to Recapture Lae from the Japanese, 1943*. It is my homage to Lae. Gratifyingly, it is reviewing well, including in *PNG Kundu*. Thank you, John Reeves, for reviewing it so favourably in the September 2023 edition!

Looking back on my long historian’s journey, I recognise that I owe much to the people of PNG and to the ‘expats’ I knew in my time there. They provided much of the raw material for my university dissertations and the books that grew from these. And now that I have returned to PNG via *Operation Postern*, I realise anew that PNG will forever be a large part of the historian I have meanwhile become. •

Editor’s Note: Ian’s article is based on his presentation in Canberra at the PNGAA Christmas event in December 2023.



Front cover of *Operation Postern*, showing US engineers laying metal matting along ‘Red Beach’ on ‘D Day’, 4 September 1943, the day Australian troops came ashore there to begin their advance on Lae.

Remembering Prue Clarke OAM

ROBERT PARER

Prue Clarke OAM, who passed in August 2022, wrote to me two years earlier about her parents, Agnes and Kendall ‘Ken’ Frank, and other interesting family members.

Her mother, Agnes, worked at one time for Sir Jack Keith Murray, the TPNG Administrator, and her father, Kendall ‘Ken’ Thomas Frank (1904–51), a wireless operator and engineer, is mentioned in *The Coast Watchers*, by Eric Feldt. Ken had a workshop in Port Moresby where he fixed all the coastwatchers’ communication radios.

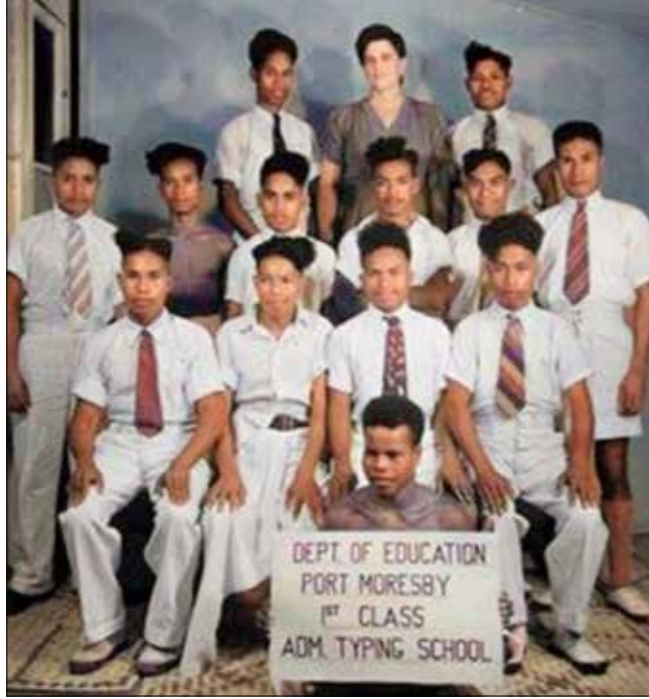
Kevin Clarke, Prue’s husband, was the District Finance Officer at Samarai. Later, in 1958, he was District Finance Officer at Madang and, in 1960, District Finance Officer of Sepik District. Kevin,

who was in the same class as me at Brisbane’s Nudgee Junior, then Senior Schools, told me that he worked in London for Margaret Thatcher for a while but didn’t say when.

Agnes Prudence Alexandra Jeffrey (1907–88), Prue’s mother, was born in Cooktown in 1907. When Agnes married Ken Frank in September 1938, it was a second marriage for both but, unfortunately, that marriage ended in divorce after Prue was born in 1939 in Port Moresby. By 1941, Agnes was remarried and had a son, Jim. Later that year, on 18 December,

Brandi High School staff, 1967—(Left-right back row) Ron Reisner, Brian Pell, Stirling Henry, Adrian Hughes, Nalden Matautu, Chris Batterham, Alan West, Pieter Degeling, Ugia Nawia; (front row) Ian Willis, Paul Somerville, Deirdre Degeling, Margaret Willis, Jeff Keast, Carol Thomas, Cathy Burrow, Eleanor Keneally, Ian MacRaidl





Prue's mother, Agnes Frank, with her students

Prue, with baby brother Jim, Agnes, and her grandmother, Mary Christie, were evacuated to Sydney on the SS *Katoomba*. The family was looked after in Coolah, in NSW, by a friend of Mary's.

Jim's surname was Waldby, the name of Agnes' third husband, but he changed his last name to Jeffrey, the same as Prue's, largely due to being teased at school and called 'wallaby'. Jim studied journalism in Gosford and went on to lead an interesting life in the film industry in the UK and Australia.

At one stage, Mary Christie, Prue's grandmother, had a trade store at the bottom of Lawes Road in Port Moresby. She married a gold miner named Preston Christie, who she soon discovered was having a relationship with a New Guinea woman, so when Mary left on the *Katoomba* with her daughter and grandchildren, she was estranged from her husband and very angry. While Mary was in Australia, Preston was purportedly murdered at the Old Port Moresby Hotel in Port Moresby. His death was possibly linked to a drinking night resulting in a fall under suspicious circumstances.

Following Preston's death, Mary moved to Sydney where she received a visit by some men looking for her husband's mining documents. Supposedly, Preston had found gold in the Owen Stanley Ranges, but Mary had burnt all his belongings after they were sent to her from New Guinea.

Prue's father, Ken Frank's family came from Kalgoorlie, in Western Australia. Prue described him as larger than life, as was his father, Joseph Henry

Frank. He visited Prue one day in the boarding school she was enrolled at in Charters Towers in Queensland, with his new wife and family, and on their return to Townsville that same day, he was tragically killed.

Kevin and Prue visited a museum in Kalgoorlie in the 1990s to find the museum had part of her grandfather's mining office on display.

After WWII, Agnes was one of the earliest European women invited back to Port Moresby, arriving in early November 1945, where she became a member of the town council. The TPNG Administration set her up in a special department teaching students typing. She fought to do this work in the early days, utilising departmental typewriters after the staff typists left work. Her initiative was not always supported as the Europeans would often remove the typewriter rollers when they finished for the day.

Prue went up to live with her mother in Port Moresby in 1947, attending school in a temporary building adjacent to the London Missionary Society Church in central Port Moresby, before the new school was built adjacent to Ela Beach.

Her half-brother, Jim, established the first newspaper in Port Moresby after WWII in his bedroom, printed on a duplicating machine. Prue would share his political cartoons with her friends at the Ela Beach Public School before they were published, a sure way of making herself very popular with the other students.

Prue was then sent to boarding school in Charters Towers in Queensland—her subjects including shorthand, bookkeeping and typing—and Agnes organised for her to work in the Administration during her school holidays in Port Moresby. She remained at boarding school until 1958, after which she trained as a school teacher in Brisbane, teaching in Mackay and then in Port Moresby at Hagara Primary T-School until she and Kevin Clarke married in Port Moresby in 1961. •

Resources

Kendall Thomas Frank—<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/frank-kendall-thomas-10236>

'Agnes Frank'—an interview by Veronica Keratitis for the National Library of Australia located at <https://catalogue.nla.gov.au/catalog/648437>



Marilyn Havini AM after concluding her role as AVI Mentor

Hako Women's Collective Association Inc. Celebrating 20 Years

MARILYN HAVINI AM

I was virtually dragooned into forming the Hako Women's Collective (HWC) in 2004. It occurred this way ... on holidays in Bougainville for a Christmas break from teaching visual arts at Cheltenham Girls High School, Sydney, Australia, I was hoping for a quiet family time of reconnecting after a 17-year absence during the Bougainville Conflict. I remained in contact with women leaders throughout the negotiations for peace between Bougainville and Papua New Guinea. With Josephine Tankunani Sirivi, we co-wrote and edited ... as *MOTHERS of the LAND—the birth of the Bougainville Women for Peace and Freedom* (BWPF) published by Pandanus Books, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies ISBN 1-74076-043-3 in 2004.

I carried the royalties for the book back to BWPF, but Haku women were upset that I would leave them to travel to Arawa during my time with them in Buka, an island north of mainland Bougainville. I explained the BWPF to them—as an umbrella women's group formed during peace negotiations to represent women at the Burnham

and Lincoln Peace talks held in New Zealand in 1997-98. The Haku women increasingly swelled their numbers to form a collective from across Haku and insisted they also become part of the BWPF.

Twenty years later, this company of women celebrates its 20th anniversary of what has developed into a community service organisation...the Hako Women's Collective (HWC).

Operating night and day from premises granted on a 25-year renewable lease in our village of Ngalkobul, Ward 4, Haku Constituency, the HWC provides services to all 12 Haku government wards. Our training and nation-building participation extends through government and non-government partnerships with other areas of Bougainville. We have become a hub for many families, clans, communities, churches and schools. Membership is open to individuals and to groups to access our training centre, library and literacy programs, food security, economic and environmental projects, the *Meri Seif Haus* and Men's Hub services and referrals.

Built on voluntary participation, our organisation's strength began with women's fellowships from across all the church denominations in Haku. This was the only existing means of gathering as women following the Bougainville conflict. In prayerful unity, the women started from nothing. They walked for many kilometres at agreed times to various villages. They identified community needs and went to work. Some notable memories of building peace and sustaining peace in Haku are:

- 2005 Women's Forum—650 women attended and participated in 12 workshops from the 1995 International Beijing 'Platform for Action', analysing issues to present to the chiefs, the newly sworn-in Autonomous Bougainville Government's (ABG) President Kabui and Chief Secretary Peter Tsiamalili and MHR for Haku, the Hon. Januarius Tenevi.
- Youth programs—the following year we held a youth forum, leadership training, sports and creative arts and performing arts workshops funded by the ABG for 330 youth. Over the next four years, we established the Haku Sports Federation, conducting annual sports carnivals until each sporting code could operate independently and participate nationally and internationally.



Hanpan Bamboo band and chiefly women welcome HWC guests at opening and closing ceremonies. Here, the band performs outside the Resource Centre following the establishment of the Bougainville Partnership Cocoa Project

- In 2007, HWC members scrubbed out the Lemanmanu Health Centre, cleaning the grounds and donating equipment and services. Our petition for an ambulance for Haku succeeded eventually—just in time for the 2011 cholera outbreak. HWC women were trained by WHO and the Department of Health to do the drudgery of emptying slop buckets and advocate for hygiene protocols to successfully counter and eradicate Cholera in Haku.

- Positive parenting—bringing UNICEF's End Violence Against Children (EVAC worldwide campaign) throughout the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, developing a homegrown Positive Parenting program, Stret Pasin long Lukautim Pikinini. These programs are ongoing since their inception in 2017.
- Court Users Forum held in 2010 for 100 chiefs and hundreds of Haku Grade 6-8 school students. This was conducted by the PNG Law and Justice Department and the PNG Attorney General's office.
- GBV/SARV 2023-2024 interventions to negotiate peaceful conflict resolution to several serious cases of long-standing gender-based violence (GBV) and sorcery accusation-related violence (SARV).

Hako Women's Collective was incorporated, with its initial growth made possible by several Australian International Volunteers (AVI). I served in three consecutive roles in program mentoring and implementation of organisation management under the auspices of AVI. Our chief operational partnerships continue in training and networking with ABG departments and the well-recognised Nazareth Centre for Rehabilitation. We have worked closely with various United Nations programs and non-governmental organisations and the Digicel Foundation, which funded the construction of the Meri Seif Haus.

Haku is at the end of Buka Island's trunk road, with no town or commercial centre. Access and funding to build, to operate services and implement community programs have always been the chief determinant of what HWC can deliver.

In a post-war situation, the ABG has been cash-strapped and unable to fund the organisation, but we have gratefully accepted small contributions from local members over the years. Support from international bodies with overseas partnerships, grants and volunteers working alongside our members in building, training and serving has proved a mainstay. Most of these organisations are from Australia, such as Indigo Foundation, PiCCA (Partners in Community Collaborative Aid), The Bougainville Partnership, C3 Churches of Ryde and Cherrybrook, Hillsong, Baptist, Catholic churches, and the UK-based Old Darts Foundation (ODF).

Our current programs address post-conflict trauma and family and sexual violence with a safe house for women and children and a separate men's hub for rehabilitation. The Law and Justice referral pathway embraces HWC's work with residential and outpatient clients for rescue and care, counselling, dialogue, and assisting family resolution through village and district courts.

Our volunteers, in partnership with the ABG's Department of Primary Industries and Marine Resources and volunteer organisations, work to tackle food security, especially in densely populated villages. Programs address backyard farming and soil composting, rice cultivation, cocoa farming, forestry regeneration, reef, mangrove, crabs and local fishing resources. The HWC's newest partnership is with the Kyeema Foundation to assist farmers in developing Ples Kakaruk (local chicken farming and coral farming).

Hako Women's Collective continues to develop, expand and respond to needs. Its future will be guided by HWC's vision statement:

***Lu hatolo mi u hiromomo kao hovoto
ri Hako Collective***

In the spirit of love and true sisterhood, we, the women of Hako Collective, are called to build a safe, secure and just environment within our families and communities and create an integrated sustainable development that will establish a better future for our children and children's children.



Typical afternoon reading time with children in the HWC library—(Photos provided by Marilyn Havini AM)

We have much to celebrate for 20 years of sustained development. The HWC's resource centre now consists of an office and library, a separate training hall with kitchen and storage facilities, an agriculture hub with a rice mill, a program and a project office, a traditional conference catering hauskuk, the safe house and men's hub, an agriculture shed, a cocoa fermentary, a budwood garden, a garage constructed in readiness for HWC's 20th anniversary arrival of a 15-seater bus from the ODF. This bus will provide rescue for clients, access to referral pathway services, a mobile library for children in 13 schools of Haku, and operation mobilisation for volunteer programs.

Celebrations were held on 26 June 2024, the actual anniversary date from date of origin. The HWC theme: 20 Years Creative Arts for Peace Celebration. Thank you to all past pioneers, present volunteers and partners for your enormous contribution. We hope that we can continue to serve Haku with love and support the everyday operations with encouragement and wisdom for our children and their children's children for the next twenty years. •

Note: Hako/Haku are both pronounced as Harkoo. You can learn more about HWC by visiting <http://www.hakowomen.org>

The Saruwageds Revisited

MARTIN KERR—Ex-Kiap 1964

Can I offer some clarification about the Saruwageds, and who crossed them and when? The role of New Guinea's generation of 'Europeans' should not be dismissed as pure and destructive colonialism when, in fact, locals obtained many benefits and also, at times, expressed appreciation for their own positions, enhanced by contact with miners, oil searchers, missionaries, kiaps and the like.

What follows may be of interest to your readers. Some of your recent contributors emphasise their specialisations, academic qualifications and claim special relationships with locals through marriage and so on. Such contact inevitably results in quite normal extended family arrangements with inevitable ups and downs. Regardless of the sire, *kiap*, adventurer, plantation owner, plantation manager, priest or scientist, life goes on.

Mention is made of the previous groups who crossed, including Peter Ryan, followed by the retreat of Japanese forces in 1943 from Lae to Finschhafen.

This writer got the impression that Ian Howie-Willis, Robin King, Matt Linton and Hector Clark were the only outsiders since World War II who, in 1976, had crossed the almost impregnable barrier of the Saruwageds. Untrue. Peter Shanahan, who featured a number of times in *Una Voce*, and more recently in *PNG Kundu*, passed through in 1964 from Pindiu. He was a specimen collector on Dr J Linsley Gressitt's expedition, representing the Bishop

Peter Shanahan
(photo by Martin Kerr, 2012)



Museum, Hawaii, on behalf of the U.S. Department of Defense. Members of this party, Czechoslovakian refugee entomologist and teacher of biology Joe Sedlacek, and two Hungarian scientists, plus assistants and their equipment, required three brief flights from Finschhafen to Pindiu.

The patrol post was later serviced by Richard Leahy, who set up a trade store, who later crashed his plane in 2010 near Baining with the loss of all six passengers on board. Richard and Peter, both New Guinea-born, were friends and went crocodile shooting among the Orokaiva.

The specimen collecting group took five days to cross the Saruwageds, during which time Peter discovered numerous caves and suffered injuries collecting small bats and many other specimens. What Peter observed as arrogance from the scientists resulted in a standoff with their carriers, who refused to go further unless their pay was increased.

Recognised through the local grapevine that Peter was a grandson of the German Bruno Wilde and the son of gold miner and coffee grower, Tom Shanahan, he was able to establish a mutually acceptable bargaining position with the local headmen. The expeditioners continued on their way using a route identified by the carriers and finally descended to Sangawa copra and cocoa plantation.

After enjoying the usual overnight plantation hospitality, they travelled by road into Lae, crossing the Busu River in a quiet state at an established ford. After returning from the Solomon Islands in 1965, Peter waded the Busu at the mouth.

Peter was trained in specimen collecting by Joe Sedlacek and others, which included the use of mist nets, light traps, use of dangerous chemicals, including cyanide, as well as recording results in small print on labels for insects. A specimen collecting party was also armed with under and over shotguns for taking birds, possums, tree kangaroos, etc. All specimens collected had to be dissected and/or skinned, preserved and recorded in field manuals.

Peter and Richard visited Mount Lamington. With guns and collecting equipment, their party took a shortcut in a vehicle across a neatly laid lawn and discovered Bishop Philip Strong at Dogura in his bishop's finery, entertaining Prince Charles and fellow Timber Top students to afternoon tea on the veranda of his glorious residence.

Besides socialising in Wau and Bulolo with others, including forestry officials, miners and kiaps, Richard Leahy travelled the mighty Sepik River leaving his aircraft at Ambunti. He accompanied this writer in September 1967 in a double trading canoe as far as the West Papua border, shooting crocodiles by night with his skilled staff from a punt with a 20 hp Mercury motor.

Richard was determined to achieve independence with his business ventures, being a son of Mick Leahy, who, with his brother Dan, opened up the Western Highlands on a controversially destructive gold prospecting expedition in 1933. I believe Richard holds a collection of coloured slides recording his work and travels through New Guinea.

As a matter of passing interest, this writer worked closely in Queensland during the early 1970s with a tall, impressive ex-serviceman of the Ninth Division who landed at the beach-head near Lae and suffered the setbacks of air raids, weather, disease and the crossing of the Busu at its mouth.

The purpose of this campaign is described in Phillip Bradley's book, *D-Day New Guinea* (Allen & Unwin 2019), using heavy tank landing craft and paratroopers to destroy or capture enemy assets supported by air power. The paratroopers were ordered not to attack but to repair and strengthen Nadzab airstrip. An Australian Independent Company held their ground on a section of the Busu River. Eight thousand retreating Japanese forces bypassed them into the Saruwageds, losing 2,000 troops on the way to Finschhafen.

Peter Shanahan

Peter and his mother, an American-Samoan compatriot of New Britain's Queen Emma, were evacuated from New Guinea in 1942 while his father stayed on to fight the Japanese. Educated in Sydney's private schools, Peter forgave further studies to expand his



The remains of Richard Leahy's Kiunga Aviation Cessna 185 after the fatal crash, 2010
(photo by Bustin Anzu)

parents' copra and cocoa plantation. Gaining experience in land surveying and plantation operations in Rabaul, he was recalled to manage Wau Coffee Estates.

Peter also became a fauna collector for the Bishop Museum, Honolulu and gained a degree in biology in the United States. He moved to Australia in 1981 and joined the Queensland Department of Forestry, taking a position in the inaugural team raised for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. A former lecturer and interpretive officer for the Cairns Botanic Gardens, Peter was elected President of Friends of the Gardens. He enjoyed a menagerie of 'friends' at his rainforest retreat in Kuranda, Queensland.

This writer is the editor and amanuensis of Peter Shanahan's manuscripts titled *Jungle Shan: Growing up in New Guinea* and *The Birdman of Wau*. His cousin Anthony Mayfield and his family hold these two volumes of unpublished memoirs. Peter visited this writer in Atherton with Anthony Mayfield and his wife Julia on 2 February 2020, before he passed on 13 March 2020. Through Shanahan family connections, a memorable day as children was spent with Peter and his sister Gail in Wellington in 1949. •

Editor's Note: Martin Kerr's *New Guinea Patrol* was first published in 1973. His cult memoir, short stories and seven novels are available on Kindle, www.maskimedia.com or by email martinkerr@gmail.com

Exploring New Guinea in the 1930s

S WARREN CAREY AO

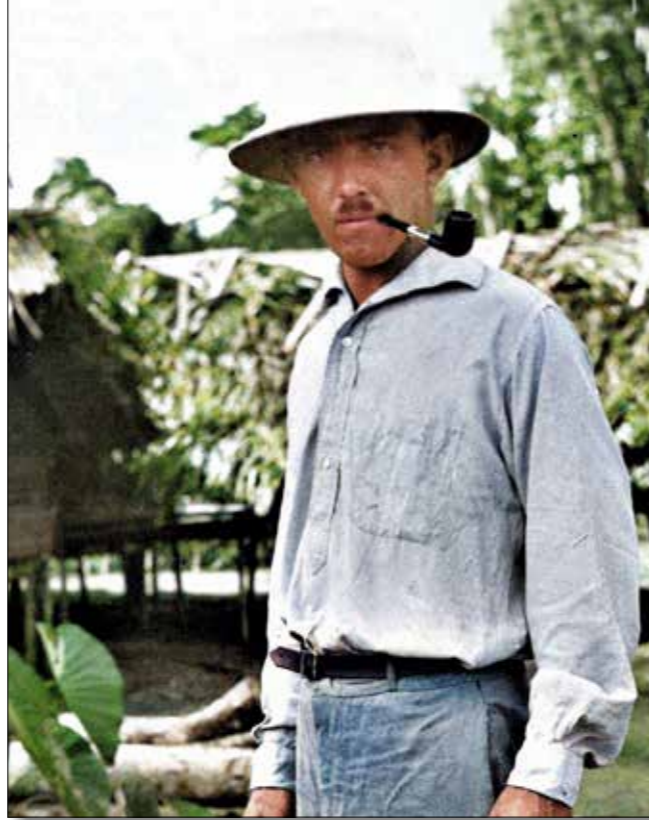
In September 1934, any thought of going to New Guinea had never entered my mind. I was well settled in my geological field work in the Werris Creek region and was planning on applying to go to Cambridge University in England to complete my education with a doctorate.

Meanwhile, geologist and geographer, GAV Stanley with surveyor, HD Eve, had returned to Sydney from two years geological survey in New Guinea on behalf of Oil Search Ltd. The company planned to increase its activity by adding three more geologists and another surveyor. Stanley approached me, for although I had not specially trained in petroleum geology, I had first-class experience in structural and stratigraphic mapping, which was what the company really needed.

I agreed to go with him to the Oil Search Ltd office, and I spent a couple of hours with him and with Eve, looking at their maps and discussing in detail their field methods and their relations with the native population.

Field work alone in mountainous country and wilderness had always stimulated me and I had found enjoyment and contentment camping in the bush. It was the country work off the beaten track which had attracted me to geology in the first place. I was a field geologist at heart, not a laboratory scientist. Cambridge meant three years of lab-work. New Guinea meant jungle geology and adventure of the highest degree.

The salary was 250 pounds per year, but all field costs were met by the company. However, it was agreed to grant me an extra 300 pounds a year as honorarium because of my M.Sc. qualifications in



structural geology, but in no circumstances was I to inform the others.

Two weeks later our party sailed on SS *Montoro* on her three-weeks' cruise via Brisbane, Townsville, Cairns, Port Moresby, Samarai, Rabaul, Kavieng, Madang and finally to Boram Copra Plantation, where we were landed by lighters.

The party consisted of JN Montgomery (a former Anglo-Persian Oil Company geologist), GAV Stanley, AKM Edwards (geologist), HAJ Fryer (surveyor), and me.

Most of the party sailed from Boram to Matapau on an island schooner, but Stanley and I surveyed the 50-mile coast from Boram to Matapau—the place where oil had been found decades before, seeping out from faults in epidiorite, so it was a logical place for our base.

The Mandated Territory

In 1919, Australia was granted the mandate to administer the former German New Guinea colony, which included the northeast sector of the New Guinea mainland, and the offshore islands of the Admiralty Group, New Britain, New Ireland, and the northern Solomon Islands, but several years were needed to set up the administration and establish effective control over those areas previously controlled by the Germans.

When I started in the Sepik district in 1934,

government officers patrolled the coastal zone and foothills, but administrative control had not extended over the Torricelli and Prince Alexander Mountains, where I started mapping. We were therefore granted special permits to enter and operate in 'uncontrolled' areas.

To go to a place a hundred kilometres away, I walked. Leaving base camp, I would not expect to see another white man for several weeks, only neolithic natives, many of whom had not seen a white man before. There would be no replenishment of supplies of any kind. The only fresh meat was what I shot. I kept a working yeast bottle to leaven my bread. No base maps—I knew where I was because I had surveyed it, and tomorrow's work would be in uncharted country.

If something went wrong with my instruments, clothes, boots, rifle, canoes—if I couldn't fix it, it wasn't fixed. If I, or one of my natives got sick, or wounded, or broke a bone—if I couldn't fix it, it wasn't fixed. The nearest medical help was weeks away!

Mail from home or company headquarters, or newspapers reached Matapau base once in six weeks, already two months old, and a couple of weeks later would filter through to me. There was no radio communication, or news broadcasts (we had no broadcast receivers), and air support was not even contemplated.

Each of us would leave base on an exploration circuit lasting four to ten weeks, during which our only contact with each other or with base would be occasionally by a native messenger travelling a day or two to the other party. There were no other Europeans in the region.

My field party would consist typically of about 30 native labourers, signed on to work for two years—boss-boy, personal servant, a survey team of seven (one to carry the plane table, one to carry the telescopic alidade and umbrella—essential to keep rain off the plane table), two survey staff men, two cutters, and my bearer (carrying my rifle, hand instruments, hammer, and notebook), and about 21 carriers, three of whom would have shotguns to hunt for a wild pig or cassowary while the others

set up camp. Each labourer carried an 18-inch bush knife, and two an axe.

Equipment consisted of an 18x18 ft canvas fly; my bed-roll; my canvas bath (3x3 ft and 10 inches deep), and one patrol-box containing my clothes, toilet needs, books, alarm clock, torch, mending kit, drafting instruments. Another patrol-box contained my table utensils and tablecloth; another contained food mostly canned, and another contained kitchen utensils, with another containing Tilley lamp, methylated spirits, kerosene, Salter spring balance, bullets for my rifle, revolver and shot-guns, cod-liver oil for weekly issue to labourers, black-twist tobacco likewise.

There was also a medical chest, a map cylinder containing used field sheets and spare field sheets, a folding table, a folding chair, a camp oven and about three 50 lb bags of rice and about three 50 lb bags of blue peas—as labourers' rations when food is not obtainable from local natives, one box of trade items—salt, beads, etc. There was also a box of canned bully beef, in case I had difficulty in shooting enough game for the meat ration of the labourers.

During one of my explorations, shortly before midday on 20 September 1935, I was surveying down the Sibi River in the Wapi country south of the Torricelli Mountains when the most violent



The team at Era Base Camp—Sam Carey (left), Norm Pratt, Bruce Hides, Wilson, JC Pratt, J McKinnon and JN Montgomery (seated)

earthquake, at 6.3 magnitude, in New Guinea recorded history struck. The shallow focus was not far below us. My terrified survey labourers were thrown down, rose, to be thrown again, and again. Trees were falling all about. Ridges were splitting and roaring down like avalanches. The survey station I had just left was buried tens of metres deep as the cliffs above erupted over it. A second earthquake followed about half an hour later, severe, but less intense than the first. After-shocks continued all that day and during the night, but it was a couple of months before the country settled down.

Many natives perished, some buried under landslides, others killed by falling timber, and at least one group were drowned in the flood of a collapsed dam. Villages are mostly on ridgetops, many of which split, with grabens taking houses down, some with people in them. One village slid down into a series of terraces, and villagers strung corpses from coconut palms to purify and scare the devils who had caused the 'quake.

Returning a few weeks after the 'quake, we discovered that the entire length of the Torricelli Range was denuded of its topsoil and timber.

The Papuan Delta

In 1937 I had left the Mandated Territory after some two years there, and was working in the Papuan Delta. When we arrived at the Era Base Camp—where the team members included Norman Pratt, Bruce Hides, JC Pratt, J McKinnon and the Field Manager, JN Montgomery—Pratt and Wilson were sent up the Era River to set up camp at Woodward's

SW Carey, Anu River,
Mandated Territory,
1935



Junction, where the Era divides into the Mena River to the northeast and the Upper Era to the west.

For the first six miles we travelled by motor canoe until a bar of brown coal crosses the river. From there the river crosses the strike of the Miocene sandstones and shales in a series of rapids for two miles to Woodward's Junction. So, we left the motor canoes just below the coal seam, and established a depot there, and dragged the paddle canoes around each sandstone bar rapid in turn, to get to Woodward's Junction where we established camp. I was with them for a couple of weeks to help them get started, before returning to Era Base to prepare my own expedition up the Upper Era.

But then the *guba* struck!

A *guba* is a line-squall or tornado which is common in the Gulf of Papua and Port Moresby. It can be very destructive along its path which may be 100 metres or less wide. Wind velocities become very high, 150 km per hour and more, so that it snaps off and flattens a swathe of quite large trees. Such a *guba* cut through the Era Base Camp about 8 pm that night, brought down several trees which flattened our mess hut and kitchen and part of the long native labour house.

Later, the base camp was moved to the Purari River just below the Bevan Rapids as this was the limit of navigation to small craft. Porterage and dragging of canoes was required above this site.

I continued working for Oil Search Ltd until 1938, working on the Aure, Erave and Itave Rivers (above Hathor Gorge) and made a trek up the Vailala River, crossing the divide to the Tauri River and down to Kerema. Subsequently, I was senior geologist with the Australian Petroleum Company (APC) until the intervention of war in 1942. •

About the Author

Samuel Warren Carey AO (1911–2002), Professor of Geology at the University of Tasmania from 1946 until his retirement in 1976, was internationally acknowledged as a controversial extrovert in global tectonics, who vigorously expounded and defended his belief in earth expansion.

This article and photographs (now colourised) were supplied by his son, Harley Carey, from the many notes his father wrote on his experiences.



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 death of members and friends.

Please send your obituaries and tributes for the next issue to the editor by 12 February 2025, the Copy Deadline for the next issue: editor@pngaa.net

PERRY, Roland Lewis (Ron) d. 13 July 2024

Ron Perry grew up in Tucson, Arizona, USA during the 1930s Depression. Both his grandfathers died young. Their widows and extended families instilled an early work ethic which saw Ron buying and selling before he was old enough to get a paying job: vegetables, rabbits, chickens and eggs; whatever helped buy things his parents couldn't afford. Sometimes he found fragments of Native American pottery in the desert. Tucson dealers bought whatever he picked up.

In the summer heat, his grandmother and great-aunt would load up the family's youngsters and drive to California and the beach—a real treat for desert kids. That love of travel, fun and adventure stuck. Hard work and a ready smile would get Ron 'on the road again'. Ron left his University of Arizona studies to surf in Hawaii. When called up, he served with the US Army in Korea, after which he hitchhiked through India, Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal and a good portion of Southeast Asia before emigrating to Australia.

Ron met Barbara Hockey in Surfers Paradise, Queensland. They married and worked on her father's sheep station, adding a daughter, Michelle, and a son, Scott, to the

family. The couple convinced Barbara's father to sell the Dubbo station and move to Sydney. Social life in Sydney was a whirl. It was all great fun, but Ron was bored.

In 1964, an artist friend from Hawaii, Flo Chang, came to visit. Flo's ticket took her to Port Moresby where she bought as much New Guinea art as a small woman could carry back in her acquired *bilums*. Flo told Ron, 'I'm sure they have much better art in the villages, better prices too.'

Ron booked his first ticket. He worked off and on in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea for 14 years: surveying, sometimes managing Jim McKinnon's sawmill and trade store in Angoram and running the first tour boat on the Sepik River. Ron loved the expat congeniality and the lifelong friendships of the clubs in Angoram, Maprik, Mt Hagen and the Wewak Yacht Club.

With air and road access from the coast to the Middle Sepik River, Angoram was a bustling place. Besides the patrol post, there was a post office, hospital, trade stores, Catholic and Protestant missions and the Angoram *Haus Tambaran* where carvers sold their art.

There was also that centre of expat social life, the Angoram Club, where Ron formed life-long friendships. Ron and Ella Lucas, with their sons,

became Ron Perry's Angoram family. Ron and his mates ran a newspaper advertisement 'wife wanted' for one of their single friends. They had great fun going over the letters and photos that arrived. Their friend and his chosen wife did live happily ever after.

Ron bought and sold artifacts to pay for his trips. After Independence, he managed Village Arts for the Papua New Guinea National Cultural Council. Good friends in Port Moresby included Morris Young, Reg and Judy MacDonald, Henry Veratau, Ken Lifu and many more.

In 1978, Ron, along with some Sepik carvers, accompanied a collection of PNG art to the American Museum of Natural History in New York. They stayed at the YMCA. Anthropologist Margaret Mead was the guest of honour opening the exhibition. One morning, Ron received a

frantic call saying the Sepik men had gone missing. They were *ol big man* in their villages and not about to *sindaun nating* in New York. They eventually showed up, and it ended well, but Ron never was sure where they went.

In 1979, Ron and Barbara divorced, and Ron returned to Tucson, but PNG always drew him back. With initial financial backing from his cousin, Kelley Rollings, Ron continued yearly trips to Australia and PNG, especially the Sepik River—*man bilong Sepik tru*.

In 1988, Ron, with his Tucson partner and wife, artist Carolyn Leigh, fulfilled a lifelong ambition to explore Irian Jaya (now West Papua) and the rest of Indonesia. Other trips took them to New Zealand, Australia's Tiwi Islands, China and the Solomon Islands.

Carolyn created their

website, <https://art-pacific.com/> and wrote a book titled *Art Dealer in the Last Unknown*, an account of Ron's early New Guinea years, 1964-1973. Ron and Carolyn, along with their long-time manager, Doug Mehaffey, continued, and still continue, the family art business.

Carolyn adds: I landed in PNG on my 40th birthday—wow! We headed for the Sepik River. The Angoram *Haus Tambaran* was still standing, full of men and their carvings, and the women were outside with *bilums* and food for sale. *Garamut* drums beat out the news of our arrival. Ron bought from everyone. He knew what it was like to earn some money—to buy rice, tobacco, fishhooks, maybe a beer in the hotel bar.

Without friends, we could never have travelled as we did. In Wewak, Peter Johnson and Laura Martin provided us with housing, food and drink, lots of fun, and temporary storage for our artifacts and a site for our shipping containers. On the Sepik, the Kambaramba men, Jeremia Mopa and, later, his son, Bom, ran our canoes. Later, Peter Dimi bossed the double canoe houseboat we rented from Lesley Martin. Roland Maein, who worked for Ron in Port Moresby at Village Arts, Cletus Smank and many others along the Sepik and its tributaries, provided lodging

after the patrol posts closed. George Leahy and his brothers provided for us in Mt Hagen.

We always found Ramu and other artifacts at Robin Hodgson's shop in Lae interesting. When we left Wewak and headed out on the Maprik road to Hayfield and the South Wosera, Dieter Idzikowsky was ready to put us up and give our trusty pick-up, 'Clem', a tune-up. Geoff and Monica Leong changed our traveller's cheques for small bills at their trade store so we didn't have to walk out of the Wewak bank carrying a bulky lot of cash.

Ron always paid cash which saw us carrying thousands of kina in small bills. My job was keeping records of what we bought (for our museum export permit), taking photographs, counting out the money for each buy, and running a logbook tally as Ron would complete dozens of buys in a day. We never carried a gun or other weaponry apart from our crew's bush knives. The villagers kept us safe. They wanted us to come back. If we found trouble in a place, we never went back. Most were longtime friends, locals and expats alike.

Tenkyu tru to all our wonderful family and friends, including the art dealers, their staff and collectors, too numerous to name, around the world, living and deceased, who helped make our amazing adventures possible—all the

way to the unexpected, sudden end of Ron's life.

Scott Perry said it well: Dad was more than a father; he was a pioneer, adventurer and a renowned tribal art dealer with an unparalleled passion for Papua New Guinea. His journey took him from the deserts of Tucson to the lush landscapes of New Guinea, where he spent over 50 years immersed in its rich culture and history. His life's work was not just a career but a love affair with the art and people of this incredible region.

His legacy is vast, marked by his extensive travels and deep connections with the communities he so dearly cherished. He was a storyteller, a cultural bridge and an inspiration to many. We will forever miss his adventurous spirit, his stories of far-off lands and his unwavering passion for life and art.

Carolyn Leigh

TROY, Clive **d. 16 April 2024**

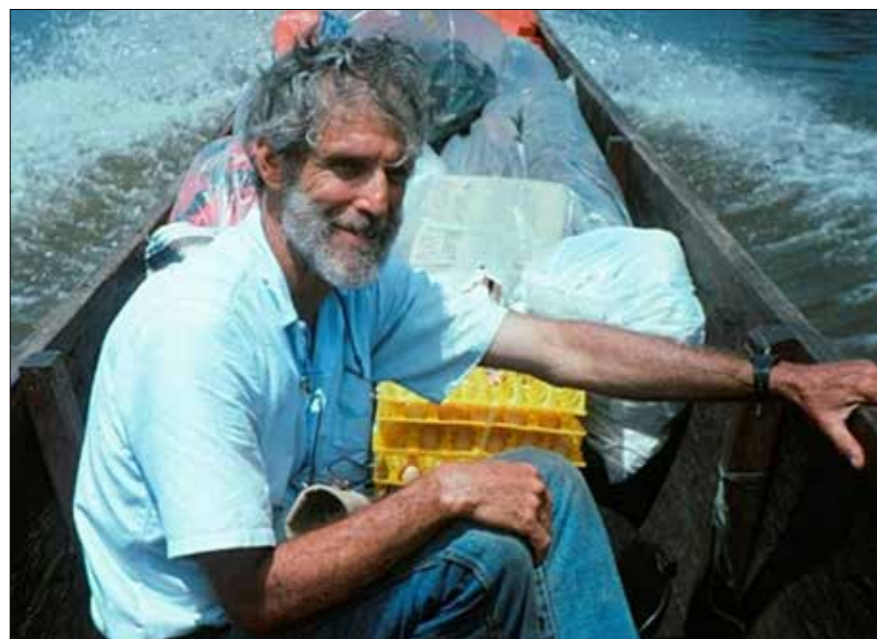
Clive was born in Wollongong, New South Wales on 30 May 1937, spending his early years in Manly, New South Wales. After completing his education in 1955, in Warwick, Queensland, Clive was appointed to a position in the Department of Treasury in PNG in that same year and served as a district financial controller and auditor for 11 years in four centres: Port Moresby, Rabaul, Lae and Madang.



Clive Troy (Phil Ainsworth)

Clive was awarded a Churchill Scholarship to study overseas which led to him resigning from the administration, marrying his wife, Harriet, and heading overseas, the Troys eventually settling in the Philippines. Clive started up and ran several enterprises in the Philippines, becoming a founding member and office bearer of the Australian Philippines Business Association, serving in the Philippines and in Australia. Clive and Harriet returned to Australia in 1988.

In January 1960, Clive enlisted in A Company, PNGVR Lae. During his three years with PNGVR, Clive also served in C Company in Madang (there was a platoon of C Company in Madang at the time) and D Company in Port Moresby. Besides being a member of the NGVR & PNGVR Association (PNGVR) for many years, Clive



Ron on the Sepik River, 1990s

was a long-time member of the Papua New Guinea Association of Australia (PNGAA) and a founding member of the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Society.

Clive and Harriet's home was shared between the Philippines and Beecroft in Sydney. Apparently, the subject of the *Montevideo Maru's* sinking was raised at a luncheon in Brisbane, which Clive attended. He realised the significance of the US Hellships Memorial at Subic Bay (a huge US naval base during the Vietnam War), about a two-hour drive north of Manila and only a couple of hundred kilometres from where the *MvM* sunk.

With Harriet's support, Clive immediately set about organising a *Montevideo Maru* plaque for the Hellships Memorial. He submitted his ideas to the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Group in the PNGAA and it was accepted. Clive also visited our Wacol Museum and addressed the management committee about the project. From this small beginning, with Clive's networking skills and his Philippine experience, a memorial plaque was dedicated on 1 July 2009, with about 20 people from Australia attending.

Clive orchestrated for the PNGAA, PNGVR, the 2/22nd Battalion and Lark Force Association and others, including himself and Harriet, to contribute and attend the Service. Clive arranged for the necessary approvals and

co-ordinated the installation of the plaque. The Australian High Commissioner to the Philippines gave the key address, and there were representatives from the Australian navy and army, the Philippine Army guards, American Embassy officials, various local RSL Clubs and the Angeles City Brass Band in attendance—it was truly a remarkable and moving day.

Knowing NGVR soldiers were on board the *Montevideo Maru* and knowing relatives of those who lost family members through the PNGVR and PNGAA, his recognition of the sinking of the *Montevideo Maru* by the Americans in Philippine waters became an important part of Clive's life. Clive always thought outside the square as to who he might assist, to bring comfort to family members.

Clive remained a committee member of the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Society for several years and significantly contributed to the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Memorial in Canberra, which was dedicated on 1 July 2012, the 70th Anniversary of the ship's sinking.

Clive had a long and interesting life—he was unconventional, had a very dry sense of humour, travelled extensively, was widely read using knowledge from his large collection of biographies and eclectic library effectively in conversations and ideas. Clive was always willing

to help when asked and stepped in to help others when needed.

In his retirement, Clive contributed to the community by actively lobbying politicians, in writing and personal representation, at all levels of government on subjects of his interest, which he considered important to the community. Clive donated his body to medical science.

Clive is survived by his wife, Harriet, and their four children.

Phil Ainsworth

WEARNE, John Mowat **d. 9 August 2024**

John was a patrol officer in Papua New Guinea from 1951 to 1970, working in the Sepik, Telefomin, New Ireland, Manus and at headquarters in Port Moresby. His interest in PNG remained very strong until his death.

We visited New Ireland, Wewak, Bougainville, Rabaul and other places 20 years after he retired, and it brought back many great memories of raising our family (two daughters and two sons) in that beautiful country. Three of our children were born in PNG, and the other one was conceived there. Life in the PNG Highlands and the coast is unforgettable even 50 years later.

Pat Wearne

YOUNG, Robert **d. 14 May 2024**

Bob Young was born on 13 May 1940, and lived in Papua New Guinea between 1964 and 1973 in various education roles,

starting with attending the 1964 E-Course in Rabaul. His last role was as a lecturer at the Administration College in Port Moresby in 1973.

In 1966, Bob went to Kerema, where he met the peripatetic welfare officer, Mary Tait.

They married in 1967 and had two children, Michael and Amy. Amy was born in Port Moresby in 1973 and, years later, discovered that she was a citizen of neither Australia nor Papua New Guinea.

Like many expatriates working in TPNG in the sixties, Bob had had a diverse range of experiences before going to the Territory.

Bob was born in Sydney in 1940. After the war, he lived in a tent for some years on a block in Yowie Bay while his father built a house for the family. He attended Hurstville Public School where Clive James was in the same opportunity class. After leaving Sydney Boys High School at 15, Bob signed up for nine years in the army. As an apprentice in telecommunications, he also studied carpentry and bricklaying. Bob did not enjoy authority (he led a strike over the quality of food), and the army agreed to let him go when he decided to study for the priesthood.

In 1964, after two years in the seminary and a year studying law, Bob applied for a place in the E-course in Rabaul, to train as a primary school teacher in TPNG. He was then recruited



Bob Young in 1965—he later sold the camera to pay for a return ticket home—
photo from family collection

by the Sacred Heart Mission to teach at Chanel College, Ulapia, near Kokopo. Bob taught Form 2 Latin, English and General Science at the Regional Junior Seminary for the South Pacific Conference. He also supervised the siting and foundation works for a new accommodation building; his army training was useful.

In 1966, Bob was back teaching for the government in the Junior Technical School at Kerema in the Gulf District. The all-male students were attempting to sit the High School entry exams for a second time, as well as undertaking technical education. They lived at the school and cooked their own meals. Bob depended a lot on his excellent assistant instructor, Heni Semese, a carpenter from Iokea, in the Toaripi area of the Gulf.

Bob wrote:
Kerema was a fairly remote backwater, but there were adventures.

I had the boys build a 70-foot-long saddlery shed for the agricultural department's extension station upriver at Murua. We built it first on flat ground near the Tech School, broke it down again and shipped it up river on big outrigger canoes. I went up and pegged out the ground and then sent the boys up with an instructor (unsupervised by me.) They did a good job.

Another time, we built a patrol headquarters (sounds grand, but it was just a 10-foot by 10-foot corrugated iron shed with one push-out ironclad window and a door. But this shed was to go to Kaintiba in the Kukukuku mountains—no river, no road and no airstrip. So we divided each sheet in two with a bolted scarf in the middle, wrapped it all in the corrugated iron sheets and bound the lot with fencing wire. That way, when the bundles were manhandled out of the side hatch of the DC-3, the wood would not shatter, as the iron sheets would bend around them when they hit the ground.

During the drop, the kiaps below had a hard job keeping the wild tribal warriors off the ground cleared for the airstrip. The hut was to become the construction headquarters for kiap overseers, plus their food and equipment, including rifles, pistols and ammo for them and the police squad.

Mary remembers Bob Deverill as the first patrol officer at Kaintiba.

Towards the end of 1966, Bob travelled down the coast to Kukipi to inspect the damage to



Students playing basketball at Chanel College Ulapia, 1965—
photo from family collection

a school caused by a falling tree. He said:

‘was entertained to dinner at the kiap’s house, given all the beer I could drink, and the grand fun of shooting a .38 Smith and Wesson revolver at beer bottles thrown by the cook. Needless to say after I don’t know how many bottles of beer, we didn’t hit the target very often.

(Name of well-known kiap withheld)

Bob then decided to do further studies, so he went to Melbourne and taught at Norwood High School on the basis of his E-course training

Wansolmoana: One Salt Ocean

This permanent exhibition at the Australian Museum has been curated by the museum’s Pasifika team and cultural knowledge holders in Australia and the Pacific, and celebrates the diverse and dynamic cultures of Pasifika peoples through stories and objects from across the region. Breathtaking objects from the museum’s world-renowned Pacific cultural collections are accompanied by modern and contemporary artworks and newly acquired pieces.

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and leaving certificate in Maths and Chemistry. Bob matriculated by private study and was accepted by Monash University to study—what else?—Sociology and Anthropology. To his great surprise, in the first year, Bob came first in three subjects, deciding to become an academic. ‘I can do this stuff,’ he said.

At the end of a four-year degree, Bob returned to Port Moresby with his family to work in the Research Branch of the Ministry of Education. Bob wrote of those two years:

‘I managed the research grants program for visiting researchers, organised conferences, and carried out research of my own plus any projects the minister for education wanted done. I got involved in the development of a new model for Junior Technical Schools which involved the head teacher making patrols to win the support of the older generation for their learning. I worked with Bob Bailey, the guy running the Makana school just outside

Port Moresby. I was able to attract Albert Maori Kiki to be honorary president of the board of management while I became active in supporting Bailey and running bureaucratic interference for him.

I also attended the PNG Education Board a few times and was able to make an argument for Bailey’s new model of a vocational centre to a visiting deputation from the World Bank. Later, the Bank funded a school for training teachers for the vocational education schools and Bailey was its first head.”

In 1973, Bob lectured at the Administrative College, teaching sociology to local administrators. He also completed an MA at the University of Papua New Guinea on the views of the new elite. His conclusions were not popular in certain quarters. At self-government at the end of 1973, Bob and his family returned to Melbourne.

He made several return visits over the years to the country, which had been a central influence in his life. Bob achieved his ambition to ‘become an academic’ and spent 25 years at Sydney University as a lecturer, senior lecturer and finally, a reader. He followed, at a distance, the ongoing developments in Papua New Guinea.

His family will miss him greatly and will miss his tales of the colourful characters, both local and expatriate, he knew in TPNG.

Mary Young (née Tait)

MEMORIAL NEWS

RABAUL & MONTEVIDEO MARU GROUP

Established in 2009 to represent the interests of the families of the soldiers and civilians captured in Rabaul and the New Guinea Islands after the Japanese invasion in January 1942, and the sinking of MS *Montevideo Maru* 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, ACT 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



2025—50th Anniversary of PNG Independence: How will Australia Acknowledge This?

Not many Australians would have a good understanding of Australia’s history in PNG. This is because this history is not taught in schools. Many Australians know of Kokoda, but they know little of the Australian history in PNG before and after this historical event. When Australia had territories in PNG, textbook authors such as Edgar Ford included information about PNG in their educational publications. The late Edgar Ford, who was the first school captain of Dubbo High School, was a lecturer at the Australian School of Pacific Administration.

As Sean Dorney has said in his book, *The Embarrassed Colonist* (2016), Australia needs to reconnect with PNG.

Including Australia’s role in the creation of PNG as an independent country in the school curricula throughout Australia would be a more significant investment in the long run. As Sean has said:

Whilst there were some things from the colonist era that we should not celebrate, helping give birth to another nation should have been one of our proudest achievements.

PNG has used rugby league as part its school curricula to unite the country. Likewise, to improve Australia’s relationship with PNG, Australia needs to include the teaching of PNG in its school curricula. Otherwise, our relationship with PNG will remain wanting.

PATRICK BOURKE

Editor’s Note: The Rabaul & Montevideo Maru World War II New Guinea Islands Education Program is available online through the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru website - <https://montevideo-maru.org/education/>

Did You Know?

The Myrtleford Times on 18 September 2024 had an article focussing on local Bright resident Roger Turner’s search for the MS *Montevideo Maru*. The article was titled ‘Captain Turner’s deep sea search’. Roger was the Search Director on the Fugro Equator when the Silentworld Foundation found *Montevideo Maru* in April 2023. The continued interest helps

to keep the story alive. Please let us know of any media articles.

Feel Like a Trivia Champion?

One of the contestant's on ABC's *Hard Quiz* on 2 October 2024 had Midnight Oil as his specialist subject. The last question was 'What was the name of the ship on which Peter Garrett's grandfather died in WWII?'

Let us know if you include trivia questions about this history in your community activities!

Coastwatchers Memorial

The last two World War II coastwatchers, Jim Burrowes (101) and Ron 'Dixie' Lee (100) passed away in Melbourne in July, Jim on 7 July and Dixie on 8 July 2024. A tribute to them was in the September 2024 PNG *Kundu*.

Vice Admiral Peter Jones (Retd) wrote:

The courageous deeds of the legendary and secretive WWII coast watchers represent one of the most illustrious chapters in Australia's military history.

Prior to World War II, the Royal Australian Navy detailed a former New Guinea District Officer, Lieutenant Commander Eric Feldt, to establish a network of expatriates who could covertly report on enemy movements around the coastline of New Guinea and the Solomons in time of war. In short order, he recruited planters, patrol officers and even priests for this potentially dangerous assignment.

When the Japanese invaded the islands in 1942, these coast watchers undertook their mission with courage and at great personal cost. Some were beheaded, others simply disappeared, while others continued their clandestine task for months on end with the help of local villagers.

As the value of the coast watcher network became fully appreciated, servicemen from the three services joined for this most dangerous of assignments. Signalman Burrowes and Able Seaman Coder Lee were among a cohort of radio operators who provided that crucial communications link using the cumbersome AWA Teleradio, portable with the help of local men who also risked their lives.'

The Coastwatchers communicated by radio through existing radio stations or by teleradios.

They were given some instruction and a code with which to make their reports on any hostile movements and to report any item of intelligence value. It was a lonely and precarious existence.

After the capture, torture and murder of Percy Good in early March 1942, an elderly copra planter on Buka Island, off Bougainville, all civilians were enlisted into the RAN in the belief that their combatant status would protect them if they were captured by the enemy. Percy Good had been executed by the Japanese at Kessa plantation, Buka, following an indiscreet Australian news broadcast which mentioned a Japanese convoy that had been sighted off Carola Haven near Kessa several days earlier. This event caused the military authorities to formally appoint all existing, and future, civilian Coastwatchers to naval rank.

In 1942 when General MacArthur assumed supreme command of the South-West Pacific Area it was decided that the Coastwatchers should become part of the Allied Intelligence Bureau under the direct command of General Headquarters (GHQ). By then there were over a hundred teleradios all linked to their own centre, either Port Moresby, Rabaul, Tulagi or Vila.

The Coastwatchers were supported by all three services. Aircraft dropped their supplies and submarines and PT boats landed them and removed them. The assistance and loyalty of the local population was essential: they performed a vital role in guerrilla operations and intelligence gathering.

On 5 August 1959 the Coastwatchers Memorial Lighthouse at Madang was Unveiled

Roma Bates, wife of Charles D Bates, MC, a Coastwatcher on New Britain who at the time of his death in 1954 was District Commissioner, Madang, wrote two letters following the event, a composite of which were published in Una Voce, September 1999. Due to space, we include excerpts here, however, please refer to the original article, available to members on the PNGAA website, which provides a unique description of this memorable and special occasion.

One thing that shines through is the camaraderie between the Europeans and Papua New Guineans who worked together in the jungle (the word native was not 'politically incorrect' until some years later).

Madang will never again have a weekend as wonderful as the one just past. A weekend of pomp and solemn ceremony, of homage and remembrance to those no longer with us, of joyous reunion and festivity. The atmosphere was overwhelming, and one was caught up in it and swept along with the tide. For months and months we have watched the progress of this Lighthouse with great interest, admiring its graceful white line which gives the impression of swirling upwards to the light itself, and on Saturday we saw the culmination in the impressive unveiling ceremony which commenced at 5 pm.

Every effort had been made by the Navy and Air Force to bring Coastwatchers, widows and relatives from every part of Australia and New Guinea to be present at this ceremony – never again, in the history of New Guinea, will there be so many of them gathered together. It was [Eric Feldt's] book, *The Coastwatchers*, come to life—with a few sad omissions.

Saturday, Elma Good arrived (direct from Kessa—the Governor-General had lent his plane for the RAAF to fly widows and relatives from all over to Madang for the ceremony).

I wish I could convey to you the excitement and feeling in the air. They were gathered there en masse and everyone made a great fuss over everyone else. The atmosphere was terrific and it was so heart-warming and wonderful. '... by afternoon all the enclosures were packed, every tree dripped with spectators.'

The Memorial is, without question, the most beautiful and magnificent design to commemorate the work these men did. As they watched the coast, so now does their memorial. The design was surely inspired. Its simple classic lines sweep from a four-finned base to a fuller top surmounted by a bronze guard in the shape of a flame (narrow strips of bronze which outline the shape of a candle flame)

and within this guard swings a 1,000,000 candle-power searchlight.

The construction is of dazzling white cement. The lighthouse, 90 feet high, stands on a base of red terrazzo tiles, and on this circle, between each set of fins, is a bronze plaque. The plaque between the two front fins is the Honour Plaque with the names of the fallen, on the left side is a plaque which reads:

In honour and grateful memory of the Coastwatchers and of the loyal natives who assisted them in their heroic service behind enemy lines during the Second World War in providing intelligence vital to the conduct of Allied operations. Not only did they transmit by means of teleradio from their jungle hideouts information which led to the sinking of numerous enemy warships, but they were able to give timely warning of impending enemy air attacks. The contribution towards the Allied victory in the Pacific by the small body of men who constituted the Coastwatchers was out of all proportion to their numbers.

The space between the fins at the back has no plaque as it serves as the entrance to the ladder that goes up inside the light. The remaining space is occupied by a plaque containing the above inscription in Pidgin English for the benefit of the native community.



The Light standing on its red circle is set in the centre of a huge cross, the wide arms of which serve as footpaths; this in turn, is surrounded by a large enclosure of crushed coral fenced with 3 foot high pyramids of white cement suitably spaced and connected with black chains. The Light is situated on the Point at the entrance to Madang Harbour—where the old light used to be.



Two of the coastwatchers with the New Guinea Air Warning Wireless Company at work beside their AWA radio at an observation post

Originally, the design was supposed to represent a torch, similar to a Legacy torch, but it was necessary to add the four fins at the base for strength and to carry the weight, so that now, it looks like a finned bomb with the warhead sliced off. A truly magnificent sight, with the revolving searchlight taking the place of the bomb warhead.

The ceremony commenced with the posting of three sentries at the base of the Light – a member of the Volunteer Rifles (Bruce Collins), a rating from the Swan and the Air Force was the third. This was followed by Guards of Honour of European and Native Naval ratings, New Guinea Volunteer Rifles and Royal Papua and New Guinea Constabulary taking up position.

It was touching to see the warm welcome and comradeship extended to the Native Coastwatchers by their European counterparts as they arrived one by one to take up their places in the enclosure.

Everyone gathered around the Light to read the plaques and on all sides friends were greeting friends they had not previously caught up with, particularly so between Native and European. Faces lit with joy at seeing each other again. Here, for the first time, I saw exemplified what we are striving for throughout Papua and New Guinea—the mutual respect,

admiration and real affection between European and Native. It filled me with hope for the future and showed that, even without the benefit of higher education, the Native and European can go forward together with mutual confidence. The happiness of comrade greeting comrade was wonderful to see and their joy was mine also when the Native Coastwatchers, unsolicited and unprompted, found me in the dusk. Shaking my hand warmly and long, they spoke glowingly and feelingly of your father and we were all very emotional.

Another Coastwatcher who was made a great fuss of was Yawita. He lost his eyesight and an arm. He was flown immediately to Brisbane and Elizabeth [Sowerby] was the theatre sister when he was brought to Greenslopes. He was completely blind. But a fortunate (for him) accident happened in Brisbane just at the right moment—a man was killed in a car accident. His body was rushed immediately to Greenslopes, his eye was removed and a corneal graft was done on Yawita. Now, 14 years later, he can still see. It is wonderful don't you think? It was the first corneal graft ever done in Queensland, if not in Australia. It was lovely to see the reception Yawita got when he arrived to take his place with the Coastwatchers. Although he has sight in one eye, he cannot see with perfect vision. He arrived with his artificial arm, an eye-shade over the blank eye, and the blue eye (blue eyes on a native look so startlingly out of place) looking around questioningly; all this coupled with his flowing beard made him an outstanding figure. The Europeans, as one man, left their seats and flocked round him shaking him by the hand and all talking at once. It was a terrific vignette. All the Native Coastwatchers received warm welcomes as they arrived, one by one.

The names of many of the coastwatchers who died are recorded on the memorial at Madang:

**'Watched and Warned
and Died that We Might Live'**

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

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

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Jumbo on Parade

JOHN BARNES OAM

In 1973, the South Pacific Brewery in Lae, where I was working at the time, set about hiring Jumbo, an Asian elephant from an Australian animal park and bringing it to Papua New Guinea as a promotional exercise.

After the necessary veterinary and quarantine regulations were met, the animal was transported to Lae as deck cargo on a trading vessel, accompanied by an experienced keeper.

By the time the vessel arrived in Lae, word of the *bigpela* pig had spread and so it was met at the Lae wharf by a large crowd and a utility full of fresh green food.

With much excitement, it was then transported to the Lae Showgrounds, where it was accommodated in a well-sheltered, reinforced cattle yard. Here it was 'based' for some days as it was intermittently paraded about the town and to the South Pacific Brewery.

Word of the elephant's presence rapidly spread throughout the district, and soon crowds of wide-eyed spectators arrived to view its every move, and a number of people had the privilege of riding it as it performed a routine of 'tricks'. With a large coloured, promotional company cloth on its back, the animal made a lasting impression on probably many thousands of people.

After a time in Lae, Jumbo was trucked via the many towns along the Highlands Highway to Goroka and then Mount Hagen for the 1973 Mt Hagen Show. Here it was the star attraction as it led the parade into the grounds. Ridden by the late great Highlands leader, Sir Wamp Wan, and to the tunes of the Pacific Islands Regiment (PIR) Pipe Band with escorting pupils from Fatima High School, Jumbo never failed to impress.

This grand entrance was followed by a thrilling



John astride Jumbo at the brewery (top); Sir Wamp Wan riding the elephant in the parade at the 1973 Mt Hagen Show (below)

display of animal strength as it pulled a heavy truck and then won a tug-of-war against a large group of local men.

After the show, Jumbo was slowly transported back to Lae—stopping repeatedly for villages to view its might and size.

Accommodated once again in the Lae Showgrounds, Jumbo had to wait for some weeks for a returning ship's berth to Sydney. This duly happened and so the animal arrived safely back to the wildlife park.

The whole adventurous undertaking was orchestrated by the sales and marketing team of South Pacific Brewery, led by Ray Priestly. An unusual and memorable job that was well done. •

From Cannibalism to Crocodiles

**DARYL BINNING
OAM, ACS**



... Missionaries to mud men, *kudus* to Kokoda, *lap laps* to *lakatois*—just some of the topics discussed by *wantoks* at the August luncheon meeting of the Western Australian branch of PNGAA. The guest speaker was *kiap* (patrol officer) Peter Worsley.

Peter left Perth in 1961 for four weeks of training in Sydney before leaving for Port Moresby to join the administration for another month's local orientation with other recruits. He was initially based as a cadet patrol officer at Finschhafen in the Morobe District. There he was to find his future roles involved a vast range of skills, which he later described:

A patrol officer's main responsibility was law and order, and he was given police powers as a member of the Native Constabulary and made a Magistrate of the Court of Native Affairs. He worked long hours and was on twenty-four-hour call, seven days a week. As well as district administration, familiarising himself with the people and the country, patrolling, court work and suchlike, the kiap needed a range of knowledge to be a 'Jack of all trades'. He had to plan and supervise the building of roads, bridges, houses, airstrips, wharves and hospitals and, as records had to be kept and reports written, he needed to be a competent clerical person. His ultimate aim was to build an orderly, prosperous and unified people living in peace and harmony, with independence from Australia as the long-term goal.

The screen presentation to support Peter's talk on his experiences kept the audience of about 40 members re-living some of their own experiences. The role of a patrol officer was best summed up years ago by the then Administrator's wife, Dame Rachel Cleland, who wrote:

After all, when you saw a twenty-year-old boy with perhaps five policemen keeping 30,000 warring tribesmen in happy harmony, you were just astounded at the thought, 'how does he do it!'

FEATURED ABOVE: A patrol in the Southern Highlands was filmed for screening at the UN to show patrol officers at work with police protection in difficult terrain while contacting scattered tribes—before independence.

As Kylee Andersen stated on the PNGAA Facebook page:

The PNGAA WA Winter lunch on 16 August 2024 in Perth was a testament to the vibrant community spirit and the rich history that we share as expatriates of Papua New Guinea (PNG).

The event not only brought together individuals with a common interest in the heritage of PNG, but also served as a platform for sharing fascinating personal histories. Peter Worsley's recount of his experiences as a kiap, complete with captivating photographs, offered a glimpse into the challenging yet rewarding life in remote areas.

Kylee Andersen with Peter Worsley, holding a stone axe from Southern Highlands



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ISSN 2652-5208, PPA 224987/00025 • DECEMBER 2024 • Vol. 5, No. 20