



Una Voce

JOURNAL OF THE PAPUA NEW GUINEA ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC

(formerly the Retired Officers Association of Papua New Guinea Inc)

Patrons: His Excellency Major General Michael Jeffery AC CVO MC (Retd)
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia
Mrs Roma Bates; Mr Fred Kaad OBE

The Christmas Luncheon

will be held on

Sunday 5 December 2004

Mandarin Club Sydney

Full details in next issue

Your committee is keen to encourage the participation of the younger members of our PNG - Australian community in the association's activities. To help achieve this we extend a very warm welcome and invitation to the families and friends of our members to attend our annual Christmas Luncheon on Sunday 5 December 2004 at the Mandarin Club in Sydney. Invite or meet up with old friends from your past and reminisce about days gone by over a glass of wine and a Chinese banquet. Extended families, friends, children and grandchildren of members are most welcome and we can organize tables to accommodate all ages and interests. **Get the date in your diary now and start making those phone calls!**

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***don't forget to have a
look at our website:

www.pngaa.net

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**'UNA VOCE' IS THE JOURNAL OF
THE PAPUA NEW GUINEA**

ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC

Please send all correspondence to: **The Secretary, PNGAA, PO Box 452, Roseville NSW 2069.** Items for *Una Voce* are welcome and should be marked 'For Attention: The Editor' or emailed to:

editor@pngaa.net By submitting your article/story for publication, you agree that we may, after publication in *Una Voce*, republish it on the internet unless you advise us to the contrary.

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Visit to the Blue Mountains

The annual springtime visit to the Blue Mountains will take place on **Thursday 7 October**. Again we are having lunch at the home of Edna and George Oakes, 5 Werona Avenue, Woodford – phone (02) 4758 8754. They have plenty of space and there are expansive views from the verandah and garden to Kurrajong and beyond. For the energetic there are short walks to adjacent waterfalls and lookouts.

Edna will prepare lashings of enticing soup, rolls, tea, coffee etc. Visitors can bring sandwiches, slices, or whatever (and some liquid refreshments if they wish).

The Oakes' will meet those who travel by train at Woodford Station with transport, but it is only 10 minutes to their house for anyone who prefers the picturesque walk.

The train departs from Central Country Concourse at 9.02am and arrives at Woodford at 10.31am. Returns from Woodford at 3pm and arrives Central at 4.37pm. Join us! We had a wonderful day with Edna and George last year. Please contact Pam Foley Ph: 9967 2818 by Monday 4 October. Harry West

**Deadline for next
issue**

12 October 2004

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IN 100 WORDS OR LESS – RIVER CROSSINGS

A Final Crossing

Sumi was part of a road-gang working near Dama village east of Nomad when one of the local women drowned in the nearby river. Accidents are never accidents in New Guinea—there is always someone, an enemy, who is responsible. So the Dama villagers cast the bones and ashes to discover who the culprit might be and they came up with the unfortunate Sumi. When they told him he was the chosen one, that his life was as good as over, Sumi got the wind up and high-tailed it for home. "You are a dead man!" they shouted after him as he sprinted up the road. "The river will get you just as it got our sister." When the terrified runaway reached Nomad he commandeered the station canoe and began to pole frantically across the swollen river to the safety of his village on the other side. Halfway across he lost balance and.....he was never seen again.

Laurie Meintjes

'This incident occurred in 1964, when I was Sister Myra Kennedy, at the Orokolo (LMS) hospital, Gulf District. I had previously worked at Gemo Island for three years.'

The Rabbit Scooter was new and on its first long medical patrol from Orokolo to the villages east of the Vailala. We overnighted at Vailala East, and in the morning Pastor Tinoi arranged canoes to ferry us to the west side. Nurse Iamo and I on one, while the bike straddled the other. Paddling across the river mouth, midstream, we were rocked by a tidal wave, and watched in horror as the bike slowly capsized, into the coffee coloured water. My first thought was how salty, as I dipped fingers and licked! Safe on the west bank, fortunately with the medical gear, we watched the efforts to retrieve the bike. After washing and drying to my amazement, after some spluttering the Rabbit started, and we set off the eight miles to Orokolo. Teacher Jenny, the best mechanic around, stripped it down. The sump oil poured like lumpy custard, but otherwise "Bunny" survived to do many more years patrolling. Incidentally I got my licence from Bert Counsel at Ihu, when I arrived in clean uniform, indicating I had not come off in the mud. Myra Macey.

THEME FOR NEXT ISSUE – 'ON PATROL'

Deadline for entries **12 October 2004**

Write/Phone/Fax/Email

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

Darwin was honoured with a visit by our retired Editor Emeritus, **Marie CLIFTON-BASSETT**, in June. She looked up **Des and Philippa PIKE**, old colleagues from Madang; also **Mary and Jim TONER**, the latter known to her since 1958 (when he had rather more hair).

Pat LOFTUS was also a short-term visitor to Darwin. Once with the Law Department in Moresby before moving to the NT but now practising in Hong Kong, he was flown

back to Darwin to defend one of our 'colourful identities'. Who clearly adjudged the expense worthwhile because he got off the charges. Pat, when he was the town's pre-eminent defence counsel, told me he never knew what leading citizen would be phoning him at 2 a.m. the next day.

Unsuccessful in his bid for mayoralty in the recent Palmerston City Council elections, **Duncan DEAN**, ex-kiap, is undeterred. He now intends to stand as a Democrat for the Top End seat of Solomon in the forthcoming Federal election.

Mick HEDGER, a top sports journalist in Darwin for a number of years but now working for the Tasmanian Government turns out to be a Territorian with fond memories of his childhood in Moresby. He lived in Third Street, Boroko and both parents worked for DCA. As any youngster would be, he was most proud of being a ballboy at the annual Inter-Territory rugby league contest at what was then the Ray Gorris Oval. Wantoks who attended St. Joseph's School 1957-65 might remember him.

Talking of "the greatest game of all" the State of Origin series really seizes the attention of PNG's grassroots. The Post-Courier normally sells 26,000 copies on Wednesdays but for the third NSW-Qld battle this year it provided a colour supplement for the game, printed 48,000 copies, and sold out. A local hero from New Britain is now starring in old Britain. **Marcus BAI** having won a Grand Final medal as a winger for the Melbourne Storm now plays for Leeds and since they are currently top of the table he stands a good chance of becoming one of very few rugby league men to appear in both the Aussie and English Grand Finals. Hardly believable for a native of the Nakanai.

While on the subject of sport, distinguished members such as **John RUDD** the cricketer and **Henry BODMAN**, footballer, will be saddened to learn the fate of what has been generously described as "*one of the oldest landmark buildings of the colonial sporting era*". Alas, the 'pavilion' at the Colts ground, Boroko which provided much hospitality to followers of both sports is no more. Already condemned by the National Capital District Commission in the mid-90s as unsafe it burned to the ground in June this year.

It is proverbial that close behind the explorer comes the missionary. And **Father William ROSS SVD** was the exemplar of that. This year saw the 70th anniversary of the foundation of the Catholic Church in the Western Highlands and at a great feast in June 120 pigs were slaughtered. **Sir Wamp WAN**, Big Man (and rider of the only elephant ever to visit Mt.Hagen) who was present in 1934 is still alive but was too frail to attend the ceremony.

Readers may recall my mention of East Sepik villagers taking the opportunity to grow vanilla now that it has become a valuable product following natural disasters elsewhere in the world. New Ireland is following suit and some 2400 farmers have been supplied with vanilla cuttings by the Government. This is a praiseworthy step by the Agriculture Department and contrasts somewhat with the record of the Police which I

was astonished to learn have not trained recruits since 1996. This is soon to be remedied.

Among the handful of ex-kiaps still to be found in PNG is **Warren BARTLETT**. He was ADO Angoram back in 1970 but is now Executive Officer of the Kokoda Track Authority with a HQ at Sogeri. This is no sinecure bearing in mind the current relationships between indigenous landowners, foreign would-be loggers, and Australian trek operators.

A highly successful Reunion was held in August 2002 by the ASOPA Education Officer intake of 1962-63. Now, of the forty student teachers who attended the 1964-65 course, thirty have been traced and they are to hold their own 40th anniversary bash at the Legends Hotel, Surfers, this September. Go, chalkies....!

NEWS FROM SOUTH AUSTRALIA – John Kleinig

Some weeks ago I was fortunate to catch up with **Keith JACKSON** of the prominent Sydney PR firm JacksonWellsMorris. Keith was speaking at a Conference at Shoal Bay, north of Newcastle, and later explained that his early working life was spent in PNG, first as a teacher and then with the ABC in Rabaul and Bougainville. After a stint with FM radio in Australia and then a move overseas, he rejoined the ABC in a senior position and then ventured into his own public relations agency over a decade ago. He admitted that his two years at ASOPA in the early sixties really did have a powerful impact upon him. The real impact became apparent only some years ago and he decided to establish a website at asopa.com.au [also replicated at the PNGAA site]. ASOPA.com.au explores the history of the organisation and provides a way of establishing contact with others who have been there.

The **5th ADELAIDE PNGAA REUNION** lunch will be held at Pulteney Grammar School, South Terrace, Adelaide on Sunday 31 October 2004 at 12 noon for 1pm. Notices containing further details will be posted by the end of this month. If you are not on the SA list and would like to come, please ring 08 8339 8314. Harry **WEST** is travelling to Adelaide for the occasion and will provide an update on activities including the PNGAA national agenda.

The first meeting of **‘FRIENDS OF THE PACIFIC GALLERY’** to promote the refurbishment and conservation of the Pacific Collections in the South Australian Museum, was held recently in Adelaide. The gallery is the largest display of Pacific artifacts in Australia and the second largest in the southern hemisphere. Armed with more enthusiasm than numbers, FOTPG's dual focus is to identify and encourage financial donations as well as gathering a group of volunteers to assist in maintaining the collection. Prior experience is not necessary - just an enthusiastic desire to help. Anyone who would like to become involved in any capacity should ring John Kleinig at 08 8339 1665 or 0438 081 664.

GOLD COAST REUNION: Paul Bolger writes -

The Fifth Gold Coast PNG Reunion was held at the Southport RSL on Saturday 12 June 2004 and over 630 people attended, including groups organized by **Bob Scott** (Didiman), **Lyn McGowran** and **Gaven Hilliard**.

Some attendees complained they did not have enough time to socialize with all their friends but almost without exception it was declared a night to remember.

The idea of holding a Gold Coast reunion was hatched in 1993 when the late **Mary Dimmick** and **Mike Duffy** thought the time was ripe to hold a Rugby League get together. From what I am told **Kevin Lopez**, the late **Morrie Nightingale** and **Bill Nicholson** were also involved and **Hans Sander** arranged accommodation for guests.

The bar-b-que was held at Seaworld in 1994 and 410 guests voted the night a success. Unfortunately Mary, who did much of the work in organising the event suffered a stroke just prior to the day of the function and was unable to attend.

It was decided to hold another reunion in 1998 and, with a new committee, to be advertised as all encompassing for ex PNG residents. The venue selected was the ANA Hotel at Surfers Paradise and 550 people attended. That night \$1763 was raised by a raffle in aid of the disaster relief fund for the people of Aitape. At the post reunion meeting it was decided to hold the next dinner during the Queens Birthday long weekend in 2000, starting a tradition of a bi-annual event for that weekend.

An increase in charges prompted a new venue to be sought and therefore the Southport RSL was approached and decided upon for the 2002 reunion. 540 people attended.

The success of the Reunions is due to the dedicated committee, **George O'Rourke** with his knowledge of printing, **Liz and Bernie Murray** for providing graphic art and typing, **Barry Orchard** for co-ordinating Gold Coast activities and **Brian Costello** for arranging the dinner entertainment.

When the suggestion to hold a reunion was mooted in 1993 it is doubtful if it was envisaged that the dinners would continue and they would attract so many attendees, but Lyn McGowran hit the nail on the head when in a recent letter she wrote: 'Thank you all once again for another wonderful journey to the early days in PNG – they were really the best! Friendships made then are still as strong as ever and this is the amazing fact about people who lived there – the friendships endure.

Hope you can attend the 2006 reunion to be held on the Queens Birthday long weekend.

HAVE YOU HEARD?

Of interest to most pre-war New Ireland residents and their descendents would be the OAM awarded to anaesthetist, **Dr Robert (Bob) Edwards** OAM, MB, BS, FFARACS, FANZCA, MRACMA in the recent Queen's Birthday Honours for his recent volunteer work in relation to Bali burns victims in Darwin. Bob is the son of ADO **Murray Edwards** who was a victim of the Japanese invasion of 23rd January 1942 and like many other family members received no news of his father until November 1945.

Geoff Melrose

PNG NEWS

Sir Paulias Matane became **PNG's eighth Governor-General** in late June this year. He took over after Sir Silas Atopare ended his tenure last year and acting Governor-General Bill Skate resigned in May.

Info from Aust Fin Review 26 May 2004 and Post Courier 30 June 2004

PNG and Australia have signed a \$1 billion Enhanced Cooperation Program agreement – in addition to the \$350 million aid program – to help restore law and order and regular government services in PNG and to last for the next five years. This will focus on areas of governance, law and order and justice, financial management, economic and social progress and public administration. Up to 230 Australian police officers will work within the Royal PNG Constabulary. 18 legal specialists will work in the justice area – in the Solicitor-General's Office, Public Prosecutor's Office, the Dept of Justice and Attorney-General, the Law Reform Commission, the Judiciary, the National and Supreme Court Registry and Correctional Services Institutions. Four new judges will be appointed to the PNG National and Supreme Courts and 30 Australian economic and public administration specialists will work in the departments of Treasury, Finance, National Planning and Personnel Management.

Besides helping to deal with corruption the ECP is designed to build on PNG's recent economic recovery and assist with border controls to prevent illegal immigration and trade. At the signing of the agreement Sir Rabbie Namaliu acknowledged that it reflected 'the reality of the world we live in today – a world in which the threat of terrorism must be addressed by all governments through stronger border security and effective anti-terrorism programs'.

Info from Aust Fin Review 9 June 2004 and Post Courier 01 July 2004

The PNG Government has sold 51% of its telecommunications provider Telikom PNG Ltd to Zimbabwe company Econet Wireless Group. The contract requires final approval from the National Executive Council. The deal requires Econet to introduce telephony services to 1400 villages throughout the country under a community service obligation scheme that will be funded by tax credits.

Info from Post Courier 2 July 2004 and Fin Review 5.7.04

An AIDS conference held in Bangkok in July focused on the HIV/AIDS crisis in the region. It is acknowledged that PNG is 'the worst affected of Australia's neighbours'. A report by the Centre for International Economics, commissioned by AusAID, found that 'PNG could lose nearly 40% of its workforce and its GDP could be reduced by 7.5% over the next 15 years if rates of HIV/AIDS infection are not arrested.' Australia's newly appointed specialist on HIV/AIDS, Annmaree O'Keeffe, points out that it is not just a health issue. The education department has an important role in educating school children and the finance sector needs to understand the impact an epidemic can have on GDP. O'Keeffe has said that PNG is her aid program's main focus.

Info from Australian Financial Review 16.7.04

* * * * *

On Being Elevated to the Bench

I well recall an incident not long after I took up my posting at Kokoda. I received a telegram from Alan Bensted, the District Officer at Popondetta, in the Northern District of which Kokoda was a sub-district. It was short and to point’meet me on the eastern bank of the Kumusi River at 2.00pm Thursdaysgd Bensted’.

To get to the Kumusi I had to drive for five or six hours over a rough and rocky road from Kokoda station. It was a difficult drive with unsteady bridges and deepish creek crossings. When I arrived on the western bank of the River I looked across to the eastern side to see first of all District Officer Bensted immaculately dressed in pukha white, sitting in a deck chair at a folding card table sheltered from the burning sun by a large beach umbrella. His Landrover and driver stood nearby. My second vision was of the wide Kumusi River, perhaps four or five hundred yards wide, in full roaring raging flood with stones, boulders, tree trunks and other debris being washed downstream at great speed. Since there was no bridge across the River, nor any canoe, I had no alternative but to strip down to my underpants, track upstream for a quarter of a mile or so, plunge into the river and swim down with the current, dodging obstacles, in the hope that I could make my way across safely. My Kokoda staff looked on with some consternation lest I be drowned in the process.

I made it to the other side clambered up the steep vertical bank, bruised and bleeding in my dripping wet see-through underpants and presented myself to the august one.

‘Ah....there you are Taylor....I just want to swear you in as a Magistrate in the Court of Native Matters’.

He produced a Bible, read from a printed text, I solemnly repeated the Oath of Office, my wet and quivering hand now on a soggy page of the Holy Book.

‘Well....that’s it: I must be on my way’ said the great one and with that clambered into his Landrover, his driver folded up his chair, table and umbrella and the pair quickly departed in a cloud of dust.

I stood there dripping wet and dumbfounded. Here I was having just risked my life swimming across a great river in full flood and my boss didn’t even have the gumption to apologise for my life-threatening ordeal nor enquire as to the state of my health, how things were back on my station at Kokoda, or whether I needed any assistance or guidance from him in respect of anything else.

I could do no more than shake my head in disbelief, make my way upstream along the eastern bank, plunge in and pray to God that I could struggle across to my party waiting for me downstream. It occurred to me that some might see this whole performance as being unbecoming one of Her Majesty’s Magistrates in the Court of Native Matters.

Graham Taylor

Peter & Marian Cahill recently went on a southwestern Queensland bus tour operated by Watugo Tours, Brisbane. Tour guide/driver **Graham Langtry** (a former manager of Kaivuna Lodge, Rabaul), arranges a thoroughly enjoyable 11 days with precision and good humour. If you’re itching to visit Innamincka/Birdsville and provincial centres of southwest Queensland contact Graham – 07.3289 2260 or langtry@samford.net.

EMA(European Medical Assistant)/LILIK DOKTA

By Anthony Radford

I am unsure how many liklik doctors actually became fully fledged Medical Officers. Eric Wright was one and he eventually became the creator and Dean of the Papuan Medical College and later Principal of the Institute of Health Education. Before he left the Territory to study medicine, he established a Medical School for indigenous Medical Assistants in the jungle around Divinikoiari in the, then Northern District, now Oro Province. Another was Peter Rooke.

The late Dr Peter Rooke started life in the territory as an EMA in the early 60s. I forget his basic qualification in matters of health care but think it may have been little more than a First Aid Certificate. Perhaps his last posting before entering PMC – the Papuan Medical College, which evolved into the Medical Faculty of UPNG - was to the Northern District where I served as the last MO at the district hospital situated at Saiho. Saiho was the site where the emergency hospital was erected out of bush materials by Bert Speer and others to deal with the survivors of the Lamington (Sumbiripa) eruption in January 1951. In late 1966 the new hospital opened in Popondetta with Frank Aisi as its first MO and Saiho was down graded to a Health Centre to health centre a year later.

One of Rooke's early tasks at Popondetta involved a flight to the Ioma patrol post by a STOL aircraft and then patrolling back to Saiho, checking on the aid posts along the way. At the same time he was trying to get improved personal accommodation in Pop, and he realised that his progress was too slow to reach 'town' in time to apply for /or appeal against the next round of allocations. With no other means of communication, he grabbed his pack and told the patrol to carry on without him while he ran to Saiho. After a quick tea break, he set off on the last 18 miles of rough road - I can't remember if we were able to give him a lift, or he just ran – to reach Pop with only minutes to spare.

His first posting had been to the Sepia. Soon after his arrival there the patrol officer announced they were off on a foot patrol and he, Peter, had to accompany them as whenever possible, all patrols had to have a 'medical'. The PO had instructed the assembled patrol staff that they would break-in the new *liklik docta* by jogging. Off they set, as Peter told me the story, at a brisk jog with him bringing up the rear. They soon settled down to an even pace stopping each hour for a break. Peter thought this quite fun. At the first break the PO sweating and panting asked how he was going. "Oh. OK", replied Peter, thinking that 'this was the way things were done up here.' At the next break, the PO again inquired after Peter's health, which was excellent while his was deteriorating with much puffing and blowing. By the third break the PO was in some significant distress. Early in the afternoon the PO stopped and demanded of Peter what was wrong, wasn't he tired? 'Oh no', he replied, 'this a good training run. At home I usually do the 5000 one Saturday and the 10 000 next!!'

The PO collapsed and was stretchered back to base.

JIM HUXLEY'S 'HISTORIC DOUBLE'

Of the 504 men who served on the New Guinea mainland with the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles (NGVR) I had the distinction of being the last to go to Australia on leave. I served throughout the Morobe District from January 21 1942 until late March 1943 when the six remaining NGVR people were given their 'have a holiday' orders.

More than three years later I was the last of the Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit (ANGAU) to head for Australia and discharge.

I started my fulltime service with the NGVR five days after celebrating my 19th birthday and was discharged at the Sydney Showground on July 1 1946, at the age of 23 years and five months. Previously, I had served with the NGVR on a part-time basis for 12 months. The NGVR was disbanded in October 1943 although none of us still serving in the area were officially advised at the time. We just soldiered on doing what was required of us.

Five of the six left at Wau were members of the NGVR medical detail working with Captain Hugh Marsden, who was officially medical officer attached to Kanga Force's headquarters.

Overall, we were attached to the 2/12th Australian Field Ambulance, led by Lt Col Dickie Smibert, who had as his deputy Major Bill Refshauge, later to become Sir William Refshauge, head of the Australian Army Medical Services.

The five medical detail bodies at the field ambulance were Sergeants Haydn Davies and Wally Hill, Corporals Joe Brennan and Jack Chisholm and myself. The sixth member of the NGVR still on the job was Sgt Merv Prosser, who was the clerk at Kanga Force HQ, located at Izzy-Dizzy, the pre-war home of well known Wau identity Normie Neal.

I was working on the American 'Biscuit Bombers' acting as guide as supplies were dropped to members of the 17th Brigade and Independent (Commando) Units, operating along the Skin Diwai-Mubo track. On this particular day the 20 year old pilot flying the kite decided to fly direct to Port Moresby, mainly because he had a special flight to make in the afternoon and the weather was closing in.

Early the next morning ours was one of the nine C-47 Dakotas to make the first flight to Wau, from where we would make further drops at Skin Diwai. However, I learned on arrival at Wau that authority for my leave had come through and I was to go to Australia, stopping over at Port Moresby. The other five NGVR people were packed and ready to go. I had to visit the ANGAU office first, to make sure my main offsider, Inogu, would be well looked after. Inogu, from Vanimo way up on the northern Sepik District coast, was my *mangki masta* pre-war and served with me during my NGVR days, as a *dokta boi*. He did a wonderful job, for little or no pay, and I had to make sure he would be well looked after in my absence. The young kiap at the ANGAU office, assured me Inogu would continue working at the field ambulance hospital and, when possible, he would be sent to his village. But that was another story.

Before going to the airstrip for my flight to Moresby, Hugh Marsden gave me some aspirin tablets and quinine capsules. He told me to put them in my pocket because Haydn Davies had a fever and, if necessary, I was to treat him for malaria.



When I got to Murray Barracks in Port Moresby, I was told by a young lieutenant that, under no circumstances, was I to leave camp because our movement to Townville was imminent. Nevertheless, I learned Haydn had been taken out to the 2/9th Australian General Hospital, suffering from malaria. I decided to take a chance, thumbed a ride to the AGH, which was well out of town, and see Haydn before leaving for Australia. When I got to the hospital I was informed that Haydn was on his way to the Barracks for onward movement to Australia. After a wait, I managed a lift to the Barracks only to find the rest of my group were on the way to Townsville in a Catalina Flying boat.

On my arrival at the Barracks the young officer blew his top, but after a while he calmed down and said I would fly to Townsville in an RAAF C-47 within a few days. Before leaving Murray Barracks for Jackson's Airstrip, the lieutenant called me into his office, picked up a pen and crossed my name off the NGVR list. 'That's it, yours is the last name on the list, the last of the NGVR to serve on the New Guinea mainland', he said. 'The unit was apparently disbanded in October.'

After leave, I returned to Port Moresby and attended a medical assistant's school at Gemo Island, in Port Moresby Harbour. At the end of the school I was posted to the Eastern Highlands to run a native hospital at Barola, on the highway to Goroka from Kainantu. After three months at Barola I spent some time conducting a native hospital at Asaloka, a short distance from Goroka.

While on patrol along the Asaro River I badly damaged my left knee and was taken to Sydney in the hospital ship Manunda. After surgery and recuperation I returned to my work with ANGAU, at my request. I was posted to the Malahang native hospital at Lae, patrolled the Wantoat area, between the Markham Valley and the coast, with Patrol Officer John Wakeford, for six weeks.

With the war ending I was sent to Wewak to take over the large native hospital at Moem Point from Lt Jim Goreham. By this time I had been promoted to Sergeant.

When hostilities ceased and civil administration moved in, I was relieved by Harry Erskine, who I had served with in the NGVR. Horrie Niall took over from Major John Milligan as District Officer.

Horrie told me I had insufficient points for immediate discharge in Australia but I could take my discharge at Lae, if I preferred it that way. I wanted to go to Australia for discharge and agreed to stay on at Wewak and work for the civil administration under Horrie Niall.

He sent me to Maprik to relieve the medast there, Jack Marlow, a young fellow who was ill and who had a wife and small baby back in Melbourne. I stayed at Maprik for six months, working with kiap John Wakeford, with whom I patrolled the Wantoat

some months previously, and then Ken Bridge who came in as Assistant District Officer.

Late in June 1946 I flew out in the first aircraft to land at Maprik post-war – a DH84 Dragon owned by WR Carpenter and flown by experienced pre-war pilot Arthur Collins.

On arrival at Lae I was welcomed by a young Lieutenant with open arms. ‘I have been waiting here for you to come through for several weeks. You are the last ANGAU bloke to go south for discharge. Good luck!’ he said.

Thus, I completed what might be called an historic double!

* * *

FOOTNOTE: Jim Huxley went to New Guinea to work at Bulolo for two years. He stayed for 25 years. His upcoming book, *New Guinea Experience 1940-1965*, covers those years. *Sadly Jim passed away in May this year, see Vale page 47.*

* * * * *

Donations to the PNGAA Collection, Fryer Library, The University of Queensland

Paul Mason: formerly of the Crown Law Department, Port Moresby, has donated original issues of PNG *Hansard* 1964/1967; copy of Determination 2/1969 by PS Arbitrator L.G. Matthews; copy vol.1 s.ii of the Dialogue Organ of the SRC of the Holy Spirit Regional Seminary, Madang, 1966; papers associated with the formation of the PANGU Party; Committee of 13 Submission to Select Committee on Constitutional and Political Development; copy of another Submission; and Notes towards a Working Paper on a Possible Assembly of the People of Papua and New Guinea (prepared by late Joe Lynch).

Gwen Taylor: 8mm movie shots of last Catalina flight into Sohano in mi-50s together with the salvage of wrecked planes and their smelting into aluminium ingots (to be transferred onto video).

Charles Wade (via Anne Collins): box of Kodachrome transparencies of various PNG centres taken by Charles Wade (Qantas ground staff late 1940s/early 1950s). These will eventually be scanned onto disk by the Fryer Library.

* * *

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BAUDISSION ISLAND via Kavieng, July 1958

In 1958 Denis Compston was an 18 year old plantation manager with Coconut Products Limited and was visited by his father Tym. The following letter written to his brother, back home in England, is an interesting depiction of life on isolated plantations at the time.

Here I am doing what so many people dream about, but what so few realize. Lazing on a coral island 2 degrees off the equator. It has all the traditional trimmings except the hula-hula girls. There are no women on the island and those on the neighbouring islands are pregnant and smoke pipes. There are waving palms, balmy breezes, an abundance of fish, fruit, wild animals, coral reefs, fearsome looking natives, and servants to wait on me. The boss-boi of the house is 'Baggie' who killed his wife a few years ago but so loyal and trusting to Denis and myself.

What the romantic authors fail to tell everyone is that:

- 1) The waving palms have coconuts on them. These 4lb missiles are falling 60 feet with sickening thuds throughout the day and night. I always keep well clear of each tree, only to find that they have been so cunningly planted that I am within range of another. They tell me that after a while one becomes resigned to it – not being hit on the head by coconuts, but to the fact that there are remarkably few fatal deaths from that cause.
- 2) The balmy breezes are laden with flies by day, mosquitoes by night, sandflies at dawn and dusk and moisture all the time. Apart from the heat, it is damp all the time, mostly rain (we are in the dry season now, but have had 1½ inches of rain in half an hour). When it is not raining the air is so thick that you can cut it into blocks and put it in the fridge to make ice blocks. The mosquitoes are so bad that before WWI when the Germans owned the plantation, they would not keep a white man on the place because they all died of malaria.
- 3) The fish, which are our main food, are so abundant that you cannot catch the big ones because the small eat the bait too quickly. Plus deadly coral snakes, crocodiles, sharks – much as we would like we don't go swimming.
- 4) The flying foxes eat the fruit, wild pigs and goats eat the young coconut and newly planted cocoa trees as fast as they are planted. The wild cattle keep to the jungle during the day and come out at night to eat our vegetable gardens.

Actually it is not as bad as it sounds. Every coconut that falls is more money for the company (CPL Rabaul). After a series of alarming crashes, Denis would say '...that's tomorrow's dinner paid for'. The local natives seem to be able to catch all the fish and sell them to us along with fruit and vegetables that have escaped the wilds – mind you, they have been here longer than we have. They are very friendly and only want to be paid in tobacco sticks – a horrible looking licorice stick, tin meat or rice. Money means very little to them.

I am staying with Denis on the plantation that he is managing. I am here for a holiday – my long service leave after 20 years with Woolworths. Got here by flying from Sydney to Port Moresby by Sky Master, onto Lae then Rabaul by DC3 – sitting on the side of the 'plane in canvas seats with cargo in the middle, rain coming through the windows.

Getting here was not easy. After a week's wait, staying with Toby Donald and his lovely family on the north coast 10 miles out of beautiful Rabaul, I managed to find an old WW2 converted torpedo boat that was going to Kavieng. We left at 1.30pm on Friday and had a most uncomfortable trip. The weather was too bad to sit on the foredeck and the natives occupied the afterdeck. I had the option of standing on the bridge and looking at nothing or sitting on a broken table in the cabin which was filthy dirty, crammed full of cargo and so hot because it was right over the engine. There was only one light globe and the captain wanted that for his charts. The weather was so bad. At 4am we sighted land dead ahead. We arrived at 10.30am. I have never felt so dirty and exhausted in all my life, but that is the usual mode of travel up here and I did not have to pay anything, can't grumble.

Baudissin Island is just like you would expect it to be – a little cluster of coloured buildings nestling in amongst the palm trees. Natives sitting on the wharf fishing, paddling around in canoes, smoke rising lazily from the coconut driers and a general air of peace and calm.

The house is about 10 yards from the water and 10 feet above sea level and looks over the Albatros Channel to the mainland of New Ireland, about 100 yards across. It is on the main channel for small ships travelling between Kavieng and the west coast of New Ireland and Rabaul.

Life is very easy. The *bois* (all male natives are called *bois*) go out onto the plantation at 6am, some cut grass between the palm trees, others collect coconuts which they husk, then crack in two, pack them into bags – about five bags to each *boi*. About 9am we go out in an old WW2 jeep with one gear to collect the bags and bring them back to the dryer. The coconut shell is used for the fire that dries the coconut. The *bois* crawl in the pits keeping the fire going. The driers appear very gruesome because the place is full of 8" toads. To make sure the fires are kept going, Denis has to get up two to three times a night to see that everything is under control in the driers. The dried coconut is crushed for the oil and mainly shipped to England for the making of soap etc.

Seldom a day goes by without some excitement. The other day the boys dashed up to say that there was a wild bull on the plantation. We made for the jeep like a band of firemen with all our armament – one revolver and a small .22 rifle. About half a mile into the plantation we found the bull surrounded by a group of *bois*. Denis went in with the revolver but after a couple of shots, threw it away saying that it was shooting around corners. I had a few shots with the .22; it did not have any effect. The *bois* threw their spears and scored a few hits. This only made the bull wild and chased them all up coconut trees. The bull taking off into the jungle, we set off with 10 *bois* all over the jeep in hot pursuit – regardless of life and limb – regardless was the right word. The four wheel drive lever fell through the floor, followed by several other bits and pieces, then we came to a dead stop. We made some running repairs and finally caught up with the very cross bull. It greeted us by charging us head on, twice with no damage to the jeep or the bull. I took a parting shot at the back of the head. To my surprise I killed it. We were heroes to the *bois*. We kept the fillet and the labour line had a *sing-sing*

(party) for 24 hours. Fresh meat is something they have little of apart from pigs which they like to keep.

Today a *boi*, riding on the jeep, was tossed off and went right under the fully laden trailer. All I saw was a leg with the wheel passing over it. I felt sure he had a broken leg, but fortunately there was only some missing skin. Denis is quite a doctor. He holds a sick parade every morning at 6.15am. He patches, diagnoses and injects etc. He did not seem all concerned at the thought of a broken leg and no hope of getting any help. Denis is only 18 years old – the *bois* think so well of him – he is a good *Masta*, which he hates being called however they cannot call him Denis.

We left Baudissin after three months on our way to Potsdamhaven Plantation, north of Bogia. We got ship-wrecked on an island on the way. Another story. We are upset as Baggie, our loyal *haus-boi* would not come with us. He has been with Denis for four years and it was a sad farewell.

We arrived at Potsdam Plantation via Madang. The harbour is magnificent; as you know I was with P&O in my younger years, don't think I have ever seen such a lovely harbour, apart from Sydney. The plantation is eight miles across the straits from Manam Island which is a very active volcano. We were told from the departing manager: 'Always have a bag packed and transport at the ready, just in case Manam goes off. If that happens....head for the hills'.

This is another beautiful plantation with a very large manager's house and garden. We were told that the plantation was a very large Jap hospital during the War. Within a few days of arriving Denis' dog, Suzi, dug up part of a human skull. Denis made a few investigations with some old villagers nearby and found that at the end of the War the Japs dug a mass grave to bury their dead where the garden is. The old man told us that at the end of the War there were so many hungry and sick Japs going *walkabout*, walking around with nowhere to go. The old man told us that they were not nice people and did not want to help them.

Potsdam is very run down, Denis has a lot of hard work ahead of him. He has opened a Trade Store (shop) for the labour line and the locals. Again he has a very rundown WW2 jeep and a very old Austrian tractor. We are trying to get a Blitz truck going with the help of parts from old Jap trucks. Have managed to get the old truck up and going with the help of a nice old native who was trained in looking after the Jap transport in the area. He has leprosy which does not worry us. Very nice man, his wife is our house-girl, she keep the house clean and does our washing and ironing.

How I would love to stay longer but have to get back to Australia.

* * * * *

HELP WANTED – **Laurie Le Fevre** is seeking the whereabouts of **Charles Davies**, an Englishman, who was a CPO and later a Patrol Officer in Goroka in the mid-1960s. A check on the exkiap website found brief details only.

Please contact Laurie at 16 Highland Avenue, Croydon VIC 3136

TAITA, SORI, LAU LALOABOI LASI
(Taita, Sorry, I have not forgotten) by **Ken Brown**

I had been patrolling the Maprik Sub-District for a term when I went on leave in 1956. David Marsh, DO Wewak, had given me the news of my promotion to ADO just as I was about to board the plane with my wife and baby daughter. This topped off my first decade as a field officer of the District Administration in Papua New Guinea and I thought it was my best year yet.

On completion of my leave I was to take over the Kairuku Sub-District from Bill Tomasetti who would be due for leave in June 1956. Bill had the Sub-District running very efficiently when I arrived and soon after I took over a new Land Rover replaced the worn out and dangerous jeep and a sparkling 12 metre work boat, the Ruby, was allocated for patrol work. This largesse was the result of consistent and probably persistent submissions to HQ by ADO Tomasetti. Ian Gibbins, a very keen Cadet Patrol Officer also arrived shortly afterwards on the Steamships Trading Company K boat and among the station stores was a nice new Japara tent fly I had ordered. Life could not be better for a newly appointed ADO aspiring to become the ultimate – a District Commissioner.

The lot of the Patrol Officer included the investigations of deaths by accident, suicide and foul play as we were appointed Members of the Royal Papua and New Guinea Constabulary. I believe I received my fair share of these often very unpleasant tasks, in the Gulf, Western, Manus and Sepik Districts. My initial sitting as a Coroner at Kairuku involved one of the more vivid of these episodes.

On the day that Aisa Paru, the Village Constable of Bioto, arrived at my office door, it was oppressively humid. The very humid stillness prior to the start of the *LAHARA* (NW monsoon) and as I returned the customary salute I noticed the perspiration pouring off his skin and soaking his serge jumper as he had just paddled across Hall Sound. Aisa was a retired regular policeman and was well aware of the *Gavimani's* (Governments) 'need to know' when things went wrong.

He quickly explained that Taita, a young married woman from Bioto had disappeared the previous day while on a seafood gathering trip with other women from the village. According to these women Taita had last been seen some 100m ahead of them in the mangrove fringe. They had not heard any cries from her. After filling their *kiapas* (string bags) with *bisisi* (oysters) they called out for Taita to hurry up and join them for the walk back to the village. They heard nothing and made a quick search but, fearing the worst, made haste back to the village to raise the alarm. It was nearing dusk and anyone familiar with the Bioto area knew how desirable it was to get under a mosquito net or near a smoky fire before swarms of mossies descended to begin their nightly torment. The redoubtable explorer Luigi D'Albertis, likened Bioto to Dantes Inferno at night. It certainly topped my list of notorious mosquito infested places.

The search resumed with pressure lamps and burning sago fronds until high tide forced the villagers to give up. Aisa, and two companions, set off at first light in a canoe to report to me.

I called Ian into the office, gave him the details together with instructions to take the Ruby and help the villagers in the search. He hoped to have the workboat and

personnel ready in half an hour but they left in just under two hours. Making allowance for Papuan *dohore* (by and bye) this was better than par for the course. Within 24 hours the Ruby was back without success, but as so often happens, what one is looking for often turns up when one has left. A fisherman at the mouth of the Ethel River had spotted Taita's body, half submerged on a sandbar shortly after the Ruby had passed him on the other side of the river.

I called out to young Gibbins as he was making his way to board the Ruby to complete his tasks to 'Make sure you take some old blankets and a piece of canvas from Harry the storeman'. The permeating stench of a human corpse is hard to shake off.

In those days it was mandatory that a Coroner view the body that was the cause of a coronial inquiry or there could be no finding as to the cause of death. Unpleasant tasks, as I knew this one was going to be, are best attended to quickly so I was on the jetty as soon as the Ruby arrived and the bundle was deposited on the wharf.

I could not believe my eyes as I focused on my very new and never used Japara fly in which Taita was wrapped. Still in shock I could barely manage to ask the ashen-faced Gibbins: "Where did you get that fly?" 'From Harry the storeman' he managed to blurt out just in time, managing not to lose his last meal by sheer will power.

Out of respect for the circumstances it was not possible to engage in any sort of altercations so I asked for the cover to be pulled back so that I could have a quick view. The awful smell billowed out and all immediate thought of my beloved fly disappeared as I grabbed for my handkerchief to suppress a heave.

Poor Taita was not a pretty sight. Her left leg had been torn off above the knee and with the alternate exposure to sun and sea, and assisted by sea creatures had.....I'll spare the rest of the terrible details.

I was able to make a 'beyond all reasonable doubt' decision of 'death by misadventure'. However the tragedy fixed in my mind how a sizeable crocodile could move with incredible speed and stealth, and in broad daylight, take an adult in waist deep water without a sound being heard by the women nearby. I guess they had all been too busy chatting to one another.

In my japara fly Taita was taken to the cemetery for burial.

Today, in these times of affluent waste, it is probably hard to understand why the loss of the japara fly in such unhappy circumstances, 47 or so years ago, should have affected me so. Let me explain. The material used in their manufacture was silky in appearance and very light. It was easier to handle and more waterproof than similar ones made of heavy treated canvas. This product of India could be used as a temporary ceiling in rest houses to catch rat and gecko droppings and to avoid the usual roof leaks that were endemic in these temporary accommodations. During the day it could be attached to sides of the rest house to provide a shelter from the sun and used as an office, court of place to carry out the census of a village.

My good friend Ian Gibbins (1936-1997) used to live in England but spent a week with us in Budgewoi in 1986 and it was inevitable that we would discuss his first big assignment on Yule Island.

We both agreed Taita would have been proud of her shroud.

* * * * *

FRESH INFORMATION ON THE MONTEVIDEO MARU

By Neville Threlfall

Much has been written about the Australian POWs and civilian internees who were in Rabaul up to June 1942, and who subsequently disappeared, and several opposing theories have been put forward. Not all agree with the official Japanese account that they were all placed aboard the ship *Montevideo Maru*, for shipment to Hainan Island. That ship was definitely sunk by an American submarine off the island of Luzon, in the Philippines: but were all the prisoners aboard her, and did all perish in her sinking? For some of the relatives of those prisoners, the continued debate is unwelcome, only reviving memories of painful loss. But, with due respect to them, others are still eager to learn anything which will throw further light on the subject, and it is for these latter ones that this article is intended.

The Japanese Navy's records of the sinking of the *Montevideo Maru* mention that some of the crew and of the guards for the prisoners reached the shore of Luzon, although only a few survived the journey to Manila. Until recently none of those survivors had ever been contacted, and asked for information, by any Australian enquirer. But now one such survivor, Mr Yoshiaki Yamachi, has been located in Japan and has given his account of the sinking. This is thanks to the efforts of PNGAA member Mr Albert Speer, who used contacts in Japan to make enquiries and to ask questions of Mr Yamachi when he was located.

While agreeing with much of the official account, Mr Yamachi's story differs in two important aspects. (1) He states that the Australian prisoners on the ship were all men under middle age; he estimates that none was over forty years of age. While most of the privates and NCOs of Lark Force would fit in this age range, many of the civilian internees are known to have been older than this. The possibility of them having been placed on another ship is explored below. (2) He states that he saw a number of the prisoners floating in the water, clinging to logs which had been stacked on the deck as firewood for the ship's galley. While he lost sight of them as his lifeboat headed away to land, on reaching Japan he was told that at least some of these prisoners had been later picked up by a Japanese destroyer and brought to Japan; but he did not know what had then happened to them.

Two questions arise from Mr Yamachi's statement. If the older prisoners were not on the *Montevideo Maru*, on what ship did they embark? And if some prisoners survived the sinking of the *Montevideo Maru*, what happened to them subsequently?

Japanese records show that a sister ship, the *Buenos Aires Maru*, also visited Rabaul during the Japanese occupation. A recent publication, *Japanese Merchant Ships at War*, by Hisashi Noma, 2003, lists her as making several voyages to Rabaul. And Tolai witnesses to the embarkation of prisoners spoke of civilians whom they know being taken out in small boats to a ship at anchor in the harbour; whereas other witnesses speak of prisoners going up a gangplank to board a ship tied up at the wharf. So it is possible that the older prisoners were embarked on the *Buenos Aires Maru*. But there is no firm evidence as to what finally happened to them.

As for the second question, a British investigator of war crimes, Captain James G Godwin of the Fleet Air Arm, himself a former POW, turned up evidence that 387

Allied POWs; American, Dutch, British and Australian, were killed on Sado Island, Japan, on 2 August 1945. Because an invasion of the Japanese home islands was feared, these prisoners, who had been doing forced labour in a mine, were herded down the mine and it was then blown up.

Godwin recorded the details of the event in a book, *Betrayal in High Places*. No names of prisoners were available, but they certainly included Australians. There were of course many Australians captured in other places – Malaya, Singapore, Ambon and Timor – but if some POWs did survive the sinking of the *Montevideo Maru* and were taken on to Japan, they may well have perished in the Sado Island crime or in a similar incident.

All this raises questions without providing absolutely certain answers. But even now, sixty two years since the *Montevideo Maru* sailed from Rabaul on her last voyage, fresh information is turning up; and Albert Speer is still hunting for more and seeking to link together the facts which emerge. If the story is still partly shrouded in mystery, it is not due to any lack of diligence on his part.

* * * * *



HELP WANTED..... Can anyone identify the man on the right in this photo? It was taken on a plantation near Rabaul in 1937.

From left is: - Pat Doyle, Carol Coleman, Rudi Scharberth, Margaret Wood,?, and Jean Doyle with Patricia Wood aged 4. Contact for me can be either by letter to **Mrs Pat Boys**, 9 Holt Ave., Torbay, Auckland 10, New Zealand (the little girl with the rag doll in the photo) or e-mail: dpboys@paradise.net.nz

A Film Story by Mark Lynch

Bob Cleland's recent *Una Voce* item on "Walk into Paradise" flashed me back to the late fifties in Goroka where some of the film was shot. When I was first posted there as a *pikanini kiap*, the Goroka Club had inherited some remnants of this event. After work, patrons on the club verandah could gaze across the Asaro Valley with its scattered greens of casuarina groves, feathered clumps of bamboo and patches of coffee shade trees, to the more distant, almost blue, higher mountains and forests. Spirals of smoke marked villages, or garden sites being cleared for planting. Sometimes a moving cloud of dust signaled a Landrover or truck coming to town. It was a magic time of day and somehow this idyllic and exotic setting seemed even more surreal and just that little bit more enjoyable for sitting in a folding canvas chair with Director, Chips Rafferty or some far away French actress's name splashed across the back.

Those who know the movie will recall part of it is set in the Valley. There is a battle between villagers and prospectors and a scene where *singsing* dancers trample down the kunai grass to make an airfield.

One morning I was informed a copy of the film had been sent to Goroka so the local extras could see the results of their efforts. I was instructed to visit several villages not far from town and invite the people to a free showing, which I did.

The cinema was a large shed in North Goroka with corrugated iron roof and walls and basic wooden bench seating. It mostly showed westerns or Tarzans to the local townspeople. That night, many people walked into town. Villagers squeezed onto every seat and into every possible nook and cranny. Many had never seen a film before and I imagine none of them would ever have seen themselves on the big screen. A pungent, earthy atmosphere generated by so many bodies squashed together was overlaid with an air of expectant excitement, tinged with some uncertainty, as everyone waited for the film to start.

At first the audience was silent, trying to work out the English dialogue and what the story was about - but before very long the viewers began responding to the action with laughter, commentary and exclamations. Audience participation grew as the story progressed. It reached a mighty crescendo at a scene where a sorcerer releases a snake into the heroine's tent while she is sleeping. As the snake slithered towards her, the entire audience became greatly alarmed. It seemed almost everyone was screaming "*Missus, missus, lukaut, lukaut! Sinek i kam!*" Those near the walls were hammering on the iron trying to wake her up. Nothing could be heard except the cacophony of shouting and banging.

Next morning, after the police parade at the Sub-District Office, the grizzly old sergeant drifted across and took me aside as his men headed off to their duties. He had also seen the film. He wanted to know if the people in the film had actually been killed. I agreed that it had looked very real but assured him the film was *giaman*, that the dead and wounded were made to look like that with tomato sauce and other trickery. He seemed pleased and quite relieved.

An hour or so later I was tapping out a patrol report in the back office when one of our interpreters sidled into the room. He said someone outside was asking to see me

urgently. I followed him over to the large tree behind the office. A villager was there who had seen the film. He asked me if I had seen how one of the warriors had shot an arrow into a prospector and killed him. I nodded. He then said he knew who did it. He named the culprit and told me he was staying in a village at the top end of the valley. If I grabbed a vehicle and some police, he could take me there to arrest him straight away.

Through the interpreter, I again explained that the film was pretend and that the apparent killer was quite innocent. I thanked our informant for his concern. Back in the office I wondered what other stories and misconceptions were circulating from village to village across the valley.

I hope Bob's showing in August is a great success - but I can't imagine any screening will ever again arouse the consternation that accompanied its 1959 Eastern Highlands premiere.

* * * * *

Help Wanted - In December 1951 a small group of Moresby week-end soldiers walked, slipped and crawled along the Kokoda Trail. Wiping away the cobwebs of an aging memory I think a Canadian journalist/photographer joined us on the walk. After our return to Moresby I moved on and lost contact with the group. If any member of the group can advise me if any articles or photographs were ever published in the press, I would appreciate their help very much. Please contact **George Straughen** 9 Deodar Court Mapleton QLD 4560.

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Old German Cemetery at Kokopo by Max Hayes

Another 'grave' mystery

It's amazing what photographs reveal. Being interested in this old cemetery, I photographed the graves, such as they remain, together with the row of plaques affixed to low cement bases and the general area in August 2001. In August 2003 I returned to this site and took similar photographs which when I was comparing them very recently observed something missing.

This early cemetery site (Friedhof) is shown on the early German ground plans as being on the south eastern outskirts of Herbertshohe (now Kokopo), bordering on Vunatali and close to Kenabot Plantation, and appears to be the site of the current cemetery. Presently it is well kept having been restored around 1989 by Brother Langkamp of Vunapope, with funds made available by the German Embassy in Canberra. He has long since departed to return home and could not be questioned.

The cemetery is bordered on three sides with a low wall, with a few steps leading from the road, and at the rear, lies at the foot of a small banana palmed hill. It is situated in the short Kamuk Street, off Kotkot Street, and runs parallel to the multi-lane Williams Road (named after one of Australia's first war dead in World War 1) which runs from Rabaul to Tokua Airport. Perhaps these street names are irrelevant as all such street signs do not exist, presumably having been stolen.

Generally, the cemeteries around Rabaul have suffered not only the ravages of time and elements, volcanic eruption, war and bombing, but also at the hands of vandals. Some considerable effort and expense has seen Alf Uechtritz restore the family Parkinson cemetery at Kuradui in 2003; Peter Cohen clear some 7000 tonnes of volcanic ash from the Rabaul Cemetery in late 2002 it having been buried by more than a metre of ash in the eruption of September 1994; and the efforts by the Chinese citizens of Kokopo and elsewhere in clearing the same ash from the adjacent extensive Chinese/Mixed Race Cemetery.

Walking around the two Rabaul Cemeteries is disheartening. Vandals have desecrated many graves by stealing bronze plaques (sold as scrap metal) and, in the case of many Chinese who pictured their loved ones on ceramic tiles cemented to the headstone, suffer these images deliberately smashed. Australia's Department of Veterans' Affairs is replacing the bronze plaques of those ex-servicemen whose plaques have been stolen.

Hans Edwin GULCHER was born in Aachen, Germany on 10 July 1883, and in 1902 joined the Imperial German Navy. Promoted to First Lieutenant in 1910 on the *SMS Planet*, he had the misfortune to die on 14 December 1910, when the vessel was at Matupit, then a trading station near Rabaul. Many people do not know the origin of the name, so a brief explanation may help. In the Tolai Kuanua language it means, 'ra' the, and 'baul' place of the mangrove swamp. Rabaul first came to be named as the new German capital in 1910. Possessing a magnificent harbour, it was found to be eminently more suitable than the exposed port and capital at Herbertshohe.

For some years, Peter Cohen (in Rabaul) and I, have been working on identifying those buried in the Rabaul Cemetery, variously known over the years as the 'town cemetery', 'military cemetery', 'civil cemetery' and the 'botanical cemetery' from the first burial until the eruption of 1994, as all official records appear to have been lost. As far as we can establish, Gulcher was the first burial at that site. In due course a detailed bronze

plaque with Biblical quote was manufactured in Germany and installed on his grave. There the grave remained. The Rabaul Times of 15 September 1933, records that, in an annual event, the Administrator laid a wreath on Gulcher's grave on the same occasion as wreaths were laid on the graves of Australia's first five AN&MEF servicemen killed on 11 September 1914, when capturing the Germany wireless station, along with the 23 other soldiers who died between December 1914 and May 1921.

It cannot be established when the Gulcher's plaque (and grave??) was removed from Rabaul and relocated in the former German Cemetery at Kokopo. Probably it occurred in the early postwar years when the graves of the 28 Australian servicemen were removed to the Bitapaka War Cemetery (where they currently rest), and the Rabaul Cemetery was cleared of the debris of the Japanese who mounted an anti-aircraft gun there.



To get back to Gulcher. My photo of 2001 shows this bronze plaque affixed horizontally to a low square stone plinth. The 2003 photo shows that the plaque has been removed. If so, why?? Has it been stolen and sold for scrap?? Being only fixed by four small screws would make it an easy target. Perhaps we shall never know and this will be a mystery along with Rabaul's many other mysteries. However the

name Gulcher still remains, firmly embedded on a small simple pebble covered cement base as part of 32 small plaques in 4 neatly spaced rows; of which 22 are named, and 10 simply say 'an unknown German', all presumably placed there by the good Brother Langkamp in his restoration of this historic cemetery.

Any information on any of Rabaul's or adjacent cemeteries, would be very welcome. Please write/phone/email me at 5 Peppermint Grove, Box Hill South, Vic 3128 Phone: (03) 9898 7459 Email: makisrpngc@netspace.net.au

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Help Wanted

John Lynch is writing a biography of **DR JOHN McINERNEY** who worked in the Wewak and Sepik River areas in the early postwar years. If you have any information at all about Dr McInerney's life and work, please contact John at The Islands, Woodstock NSW 2793, or phone 02 6342 8421, or email theislands@allstate.net.au

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN?

By **Jim Toner**

Perhaps I am not the only one to find the retention of expatriate names from the so-called colonial period in PNG a bit interesting. In an earlier newsletter I mentioned the **Rita FLYNN** netball courts in Moresby. In Madang there is an oval named for **Ron ALBERT** rugby league stalwart of that town and New Guinea representative in those splendid annual conflicts with Papua. Sadly it is poorly maintained but at Boroko the **Lloyd ROBSON** Oval is used for international matches.

In Goroka the **J.K. McCarthy** Museum is still functioning. Its location is curious because that kiap's long service to PNG scarcely touched the Asaro valley and he spent only a couple of months working, reluctantly, on the Kainantu airstrip. The answer may be that he donated 64 major artifacts from his personal collection to found the Goroka display. The proposal to build that museum came from the local Rotary club in 1964 through its president **Peter FOX** and when the Museum opened in 1968 on the Showground a gallery was named after him. **Rick GIDDINGS**, now one of our 14 Tasmanian members but then a District Officer facilitating the venture, also has a gallery bearing his name. A **COLLINS & LEAHY** gallery recognises support from that Highlands pioneering company. The Museum now holds 3000 items including a US Army fighter aircraft displayed outside.

The National Museum in Moresby has ten times that number of items some of which are to be seen in **the Sir Alan MANN** gallery. The former Chief Justice became president of the Trustees in 1959 and was of course instrumental in building the collection.

One significant creation not man-made bears the name of a kiap who walked into Mendi in 1950. Visible from the station and standing proud from the valley floor a giant rocky pinnacle is known as **CLANCY's Knob**.

Finally a corporate entity, Warner Shand Lawyers, is prominent in current PNG legal affairs. It is named after **FN WARNER SHAND** who joined the TNG administration as a kiap in 1936.

* * * * *

Help Wanted

Would anyone know any details about a **PD Murray** who was with the Papuan Administration in 1919 and who sent some photographs to the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford? Please contact **Dr AM (Max) Quanchi** who is assisting a PhD student at Oxford with his research on Mr Murray. Dr Quanchi's address is: School of Humanities and Human Services, Queensland University of Technology (QUT), Carseldine campus, Carseldine, Queensland, Australia 4034 Tel 61-7-38644519; FAX 61-7-38644719; A/H Mobile 0402042879 Private: 1/23 Burns Rd, Toowong, QLD, Australia 4066. Tel 61-7-32177565

THE ABAU IN-SPECTRE By NEIL LUCAS

Ghosts of seasons past and things that go bump in the night. Our lives and histories are coloured by events and stories of the unusual. Papua New Guinea is no exception, with its tamburans, masalai and assorted puripuri legends.

The experiences of the Abau Sub-District District Services crew, friends and acquaintances during the 1960s still give those of us who sometimes manage to get together cause for pause and reflection.

Most who read this will possibly have knowledge of the position and the area, many having had first hand experience of Abau Island's isolation, being set off the mangrove mud shores of Cloudy Bay, about midway between Moresby and Samarai.

During the 1960s the island was serviced with only one fortnightly shipping service, that of Steamships' *MV Moturina*. The nearest airfield was at Cloudy Bay, hours from Abau by canoe, and air services were most irregular. So its situation posed an almost impossible, certainly intolerable, administrative problem for the sub-district. In the mid 1960s, mainly for this reason, sub-district headquarters was relocated from Abau to Kupiano on Marshall Lagoon, a debatable improvement.

In earlier days Abau reportedly had a frightful reputation; a tree purported to be the hanging tree still stood outside the island's office in the 1960s. That the place saw a good deal of activity from the judiciary was evidenced by the fact that a building known as the 'Judges' Quarters' still stood on the cliff outside the newer ADOs residence.

One assumes that punishment was meted out fairly swiftly in the days of yore, and it may well be that the admonition 'You'll never get off the island' applied equally to the spirits of the persons who were victims of the hanging tree, as well as to those souls posted there in following years.

That there was ever a desire to get off the island is evidenced by an attempt to build a causeway from Abau across the mud flats to the mainland. Work obviously proceeded for some time before being abandoned: it seems that some calculations involving the capacity of mangrove mud to consume all matter placed upon it and the volume of fill available from Abau Island to assuage that hunger, result in a conclusion that by the time the mainland was reached, Abau would no longer exist.

But, back to our story. Also pertinent to the story is the grave and headstone of Leopold Aglin Flint. The headstone reads, 'In Memory of Leopold Aglin Flint. Born Brisbane 18th March 1888, Died at Abau 19th October 1933'. It appears that Mr Flint succumbed to a mosquito born disease after having been marooned in the mangrove swamps between Robinson River and Abau whilst on return from field duties, and so was unable to get treatment for the ailment. And he certainly did not get off the island!

Following the move of sub-district headquarters from Abau to Kupiano on Marshall Lagoon, maintenance of Abau declined and the island and its gardens and coconut

plantation fell into disrepair. Then Patrol Officer, Fred Behr, who visited Abau from Magarida, to carry out normal district service duties, police work and to conduct Local Courts, writes: 'To attempt to clear the island of much unwanted vegetation, I used prison labour to clear the plantation. On inspection of the work I came across a grave, which I was told belonged to ARM Flint, who apparently died of blackwater fever many years previous. I think that it was from this time that I started to hear things.

'The noises which I believe I heard (In the ADO's residence), consisted basically of heavy breathing. The noise started very softly, appearing to come from outside the house, and gradually increasing in volume until it was in the room with me, and then slowly getting softer until it disappeared. At first I thought it was the wind in the casuarinas. This was not the case and I later found that these made a different sound altogether. The first time I heard the noise I also went outside to look under the house, thinking that it may have been kids or even the *hausboi*. Being off the ground it was easy to shine a torch to look under the house. Again nothing. I can't recall if the noise "came" every night or more often than once a night. I recall that it was regular, however, meaning that it came often during my stay on the island.

'When I thought about it the first time, believing that it was caused by some employees, or their children, I realized that while the ADOs house had good servants quarters, my *hausboi* refused to live there. Admittedly he had distant relatives in the police force whose house he shared in the compound, but I recalled that he had been adamant that he did not want to live in his allotted quarters. Nor did he want anyone to live there with him. I also remembered that he pushed off quick smart after he had washed the dishes each night, even if it was relatively early in the evening. I never thought to ask him about noises, or press him as to why he really did not want to live in the *boihaus*. When I thought about it, I also could not tell him that I was hearing noises or afraid of ghosts. It would have gone around the compound very quickly if "the kiap is hearing *masalai*".

'I tried to ignore the noises by reading and listening to music. This did not reduce the level of noise or the number of times it happened. My regret is that I did not have the nous to try and tape the noise, although I did have a recorder.

'When the opportunity came to leave Abau, I took off quick smart.

'The (my) second story about Abau confirmed in my mind that there was something about the place which was unpleasant. It was agreed that I would visit Abau on a regular basis (from Magarida), to hear court cases and to deal with local government council matters. It would mean my travelling from Magarida to the island on the sub-district's workboat, which had minimal accommodation (a mattress on a small platform and a small toilet). Neil Lucas, then ADC Marshall Lagoon would do likewise from there.

'A colleague patrol officer from Magarida accompanied me on the workboat on one trip to Abau. The first night we stayed in the house. Me, in what had formerly been my bedroom, and the patrol officer, Phil Rofe in the next. Sometime during the night I woke to hear what sounded like Rofe dragging his bed across the floor. While there

was no reason for it, I put it down to something having disturbed him during the night. The following morning I asked him what had happened during the night. He was surprised at my question as, while he had also heard such a noise, he thought this had come from my room. Phil was not privy to my earlier problems and did not know the story of Flint.'

The reasons for Fred and Phil's trip on that occasion had been to introduce some other departmental people to the island; these people were to stay in the residence in question. As the house could not accommodate all, Fred continues: 'I gladly offered to sleep on the workboat. To my surprise Rofe also decided to move there as well, and he ended up sleeping on a mattress on the deck. I think we probably both got a better night's sleep on the boat than the one we had the night before.'

My personal experiences on the island matched those which Fred described. Although I did not experience the breathing noise, a recalcitrant swinging door in the derelict Judges' Quarters caused some concern. This particular door would not swing properly, its frame was well askew, and could only be opened at all by forcing it well back on the remains of the concrete floor. By using all force to wedge it back onto the concrete, one would have thought that a good force would be needed to loosen it. However, without any wind, nor moving soul about, that door would invariably flap and cause a racket. Not every night, but enough to give the spirits best.

The kitchen of the ADO's house had a derelict fuel stove and on the wall above it was a cupboard with a swinging door. To shut the door, one had to employ the services of a blunt instrument, namely a tomahawk. Firmly belted into its rightful position, next morning it would be swinging free again.

As Fred has noted above, staff would vacate the premises at the first sign of dusk, or shortly thereafter, and no other soul was apparently game enough to come near the place, except for those brave field staff of DDS and NA.

I was told by one of the Constabulary who had earlier been posted to Abau, that the ADO's house, the old Judges' Quarters previously mentioned, and the sub-district office were all shunned by night guards. The reasons being that in respect of the Judges' Quarters there was more often than not a door continually swinging and banging, even when there was no wind; in respect of the ADOs residence, 'something wrong', but no definition; and in respect of the sub-district office, on darker nights the noise of a typewriter being used was loud and unmistakable.

Earlier reports mention inexplicable power failures. I seem to recall that powerhouse operators shunned the powerhouse after starting up usually at about 6 pm. But the unit would close down, not regularly, but frequently enough, for no known or discoverable reason. Fuel OK, oil OK, cooling water OK. Swing the handle and away would go the motor, sweetly, no bother. Until next time. So the story evolved that the noise was annoying Mr Flint who was trying to continue his eternal rest uninterrupted, in his grave adjacent to the power house building! I must admit that these occasions when I was personally involved tended to create cold feelings behind the ears and a stiffening of what head hair remained!

The subject of the Abau Ghost, or ghosts, became frequent subjects of conversation amongst the fraternity of the sub-district and visitors. It was Easter 1967 and some friends of ours came from Moresby for the weekend. Among them Jacqui Flynn from DDA Headquarters, and similar high spirited types. Of course the Ghost was discussed, theories abounded, hilarity prevailed.

Posted to Kupiano at that time was Miles Charlesworth, a patrol officer, a completely unflappable bloke who could mix it with the best of them. Miles had a couple of jobs to do in the Abau area after Easter, and the girls from Port Moresby on departure jocularly requested Miles to give their regards to Flint's Ghost, as the whole drama had by this time been named. Miles did not seem to take that too seriously, and the next day took off for Abau.

The following week I also went to Abau to meet up with Miles for a couple of jobs. We sat on the verandah of the ADO's house in the afternoon, and Miles broached the subject of Flint. It seems he had not been all that perturbed about the tales, taking them with a grain or two. But his story was interesting. 'Last Saturday afternoon I'd come back from across the bay, and had made myself a hot drink, took a book to the verandah and settled down to read. I must have dozed off, but the next thing there was this figure standing in front of me, bluish shirt, long pants, woolly headed, and it said: 'Can you tell me where Dedele Plantation is, I'm looking for a bloke named Bassingthwaite?', so I said it's way over there, pointing in the general direction of Dedele. Next thing I was aware that there was nobody in front of me, nor anyone even close. Made me think a bit, so I went off to find if anyone else had seen the figure, but nobody had. So I think I may have met Flint's Ghost.'

The remainder of the days we spent at Abau we did not detect any other unreal incidents, and returned to Kupiano unsullied.

Some time later I met the regular Patair bomber at Paili airstrip across Marshall Lagoon. A guy was waiting to board the kite to Moresby, and he asked me: 'Do you have anything to do with Abau?'

So I said 'Yes, we occasionally partake of a mudcrab or two there'.

'Well', he says 'I'm a mechanic employed by BNGD to service their plantation equipment, and a few weeks ago I flew into Cloudy Bay, had to get a canoe to take me to Dedele Plantation near Abau. I called up to the Abau station, found a guy sitting on the verandah half asleep, asked him for directions, he pointed out to sea, said something or other, which I couldn't quite understand, and so I went back to the canoe. I dunno, but that guy acted as though he had seen a ghost!'

* * * * *

Help Wanted

Anyone knowing the whereabouts of **KEITHA DARCY (nee Guest)**, widow of **Kevin Darcy**, who went to PNG as a school teacher in the 1960s and after retirement remained in Port Moresby as a music teacher until approximately six years ago, please tell her Alan Stone of 360 Edgecombe Road, Kynton 3444 would like to make contact.

BOOK NEWS AND REVIEWS

FORGOTTEN FLEET 2 By **Bill Lunney and Ruth Lunney**, ISBN 0 9751683 0 4 Forfleet Publishing \$50 (plus \$8 p&p) Hard cover 368 pp, 400 illustrations

Several thousand Australians volunteered to serve with the US Army Small Ships Section in New Guinea. Many of them were too old, too young, or physically ineligible to join the regular forces: old sailors, boys, discharged veterans, the disabled. Even so, their role was crucial, their efforts often heroic. They faced reef and storm and enemy attack. Their story, so long unrecorded, was first told in *Forgotten Fleet*, published in 1995. This is a revised, updated and expanded history of more than 1000 ships and more than 1500 men. Cheques to be made out to Forfleet Publishing, 7 Wade Close, Medowie NSW 2318 Ph: (02) 49828437 Fax: (02) 828423

BUILDING A NATION IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA, Views of the Post-Independence Generation: **Edited By David Kavanamur, Charles Yala and Quinton Clements** ISBN 1 74076 028 X, xvi+362pp, Cost \$55 (incl p&p). Available from Pandanus Books, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, The Australian National University, Canberra ACT, Email: maria.foster@anu.edu.au

MELANESIAN STORIES: Marist Brothers in Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea, 1845-2003, by **Lawrence McCane** fms, ISBN 9980-85-421-9 Cost: \$26 (incl p&p within Aust). 405 pp Cheques to Marist Brothers please, PO Box 300 Hamilton NSW 2303 PH: (02) 4961 2247 Fax: (02) 4962 2554 Email: lawrie.mccane@hmltn.mn.catholic.edu.au

NEVER SAY I CAN'T By **Marjorie Deasey** as told to **Gwyneth Priestly** ISBN 0-646-43647-3 \$20 (incl p&p within Aust) 290pp Available from Mrs M Deasey 9 Hersey St, Blaxland NSW 2744 Ph: (02) 47393387

This book recounts, through a series of anecdotes, Mr and Mrs Deasey's life in the Western Province of PNG from the late 1930s through to Independence with the Unevangelised Fields Mission. It highlights their work with the Gogodala people during that period and includes some black and white photographs. This book would be of interest to family and friends of the Deasey's, particularly those from the Mission.

INNOCENCE TO INDEPENDENCE: Life in the Papua Guinea Highlands 1956-1980 By **Judith Hollinshed** 2004 ISBN: 1 74076 047 6. 261 pp. \$34.95 (incl p&p). Available from Pandanus Books, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, The Australian National University, Canberra ACT, Email: dgiese@bigpond.com

Judith Hollinshed, now living in Melbourne, spent more than 20 years in PNG's Western Highlands, establishing a coffee plantation, bringing up two husbands and two children and, when finances got strained on the plantation, teaching school there and running the Mt Hagen office for PNG's *Post Courier*.

With that background you could expect her autobiography would at least be readable, but it's much better than that. It's an illuminating and invaluable account of a significant period in PNG's modern history, chronicled with a clear and unbiased eye,

and with particular sympathy for the highlanders caught up in these events and the expats who had to find new lives down south.

Hollinshed was an observer and participant from the “good old days” for expatriates after the war, to the eventual build up to self-government and independence, the confusion that independence brought to the highlanders, the land acquisitions and corruption, and the ultimate decline in law and order that took all five highlands provinces to a state of emergency in 1979.

“It was too late for us and people like us,” she finally concludes, as she departs PNG. “The people of PNG had been brought to a point in their relationship with the expatriates where they could not turn back. This had been imposed on them by idealistic pressures from outside the country, by an assortment of inexperienced PNG politicians and the nature of development. It was not what everyone wished for, but it was irrevocable. It was the end of an era that could not be reborn. I admit to cynical ‘I told you so’ thoughts, but it was time to think forward. What had gone was magnificent, and for that we were lucky.”

No expatriate who has lived in postwar PNG, whether or not in the highlands, will fail to recognise her account of what daily life was like. The greater part of the book deals with the pre-independence years, and is full of insights and asides, as for example, “One of the most important things I discovered from living in PNG was that age and background had no bearing on forming friendships. Had I stayed in Melbourne I would have associated with friends of my own age that I had made at school, at university and later at work. Anna and Jim from Wagamil Plantation at Banz, and originally from Melbourne, were friends with whom we shared a similar background and could easily have met in Australia. But the PNG scene opened the doors to a broad cross-section of friendships and acquaintances with people of diverse experiences, lifestyles and values, which I like to think taught me a bit about tolerance and understanding.”

Hollinshed’s story is enhanced by her candour, which begins from her opening paragraph: “When I stepped out of the single-engined Gibbes Sepik Airways Norseman in the Minj airstrip in the Western Highlands in 1956 I was married to Mike. Had I been more honest with myself, I would not have been married to him. I was headstrong, forever testing the rules, and my family had plenty. My parents did what they could do rear me to a neatly constructed existence in which I would marry, have my babies and enjoy a social, suburban life . . . so I married nice Mike, even though I think we both had moments of doubt.”

When that union ended she married Barry, one of their mutual friends. Twenty years after she and Barry “went finish”, she travelled back to bury his ashes in the coffee plantation they had founded, Verona Coffee Estates at Alimp, “which Barry had never wanted to leave.”

Those who left PNG before independence in 1975 will be interested especially in her accounts of the slow breakdown in the rule of law, the return of tribal fighting, and the disillusionment that spread through the highlands among every section of the

population. She makes no special drama of events as they take their course, which only serves to intensify their impact.

Liquor was destroying families and weakening clans, and bringing about a proliferation of payback killings, but liquor was not the only problem. “There was peace no more.” she writes. “Compensation payments were over the top, prompting the Lands Minister, Thomas Kavali, to draw attention to the trouble this insidious practice was causing across the highlands. A Mt Hagen councillor berated the *wantok* system which he said was corrupting the country. Guards and police were releasing their *wantoks*, the hard-pressed local hospital staff was treating only *wantoks*, village economic development funds were going to *wantoks*. Attending to the needs of *wantoks* was not only exhibiting friendly favouritism, but a social obligation to which the highlanders were tied.

“The police were having a bad time of it and were wearing too much blame. I treated them with respect, for many times I had seen how hopeless was their cause as they tackled the fiendish ridges while the fighting tribesmen mocked them from afar and outran them with ease.”

Her book is full of names, but, oddly, nearly all are first names, and readers will have to identify for themselves John and Edith, Norman and Esma, Denis and Alison, Jenny (at the school), Bill and his new wife Pam, and Tom (“blatant womaniser, raconteur, crocodile hunter and coffee grower”), and scores more. It’s the one reproach I have, for full names and an index would have been useful in a book that will be valued as a contemporary record.

Stuart Inder

AS MOTHERS OF THE LAND: The birth of the Bougainville Women for Peace and Freedom. Editors: **Josephine Tankunani Sirivi** and **Marilyn Taleo Havini** 2004. ISBN 1 74076 043 3. 190 pp. \$55 (includes p&h) Available from Pandanus Books, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, The Australian National University, Canberra ACT, Email: dgiese@bigpond.com

The Commonwealth Secretary-General, Don McKinnon, a former Deputy Prime Minister of New Zealand, succinctly sums up this book in a foreword: “It tells the story of one of the deadliest crises of the last decades – the Bougainville conflict – and the peace process that followed, not through the eyes of politicians or military leaders, but through the personal accounts of Bougainville aboriginal women whose commitment and determination played a crucial part in the resolution of the conflict. This book tells the stories of women who had to flee their homes and take to the jungle to escape violence. It tells the stories of women who lived on the run, giving birth in leaf shelters and caring for the frail and elderly. . . of women who used traditional knowledge and self-reliance to rebuild community structures in the heart of the jungle.”

There had been trouble building in Bougainville for many years during the 1980s, finally leading to the closure of the giant Panguna copper mine in May 1989. The major crisis developed from 1990 when the PNG government, in an attempt to force the island to give up its claims to independence, imposed a military blockade and withdrew all government and commercial services.

Normal society was fractured as the PNG military took control, imposed a curfew and began an armed campaign against Bougainville's rebels, the volunteer Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA). Bougainville is a matrilineal society, the women being the custodians of the land, and the women eventually played a vital part in the peace process. The turmoil had continued for more than 10 years and the damage was deep, as these accounts show.

Virtually all the contributors are Bougainville women, and the greatest part of the book records the various facets of the women's movement, and how it worked towards peace, within Bougainville and internationally. The names of who did what are meticulously acknowledged, and the movement's philosophy is detailed, for intrinsically this is a record of the women's movement.

But the general reader will be more interested in the early chapters, where the women record harrowing tales of life on the run, the blockade and "the occupation" (by the PNG Defence Force), and when everyone was forced to choose sides. None of their stories is long, but they tell of human rights abuses, kidnapping, rape, murder and frightful cruelties mindful of recent events in the war in Iraq (including shocking behaviour towards prisoners by army personnel). The accounts do not hide the fact that there were excesses among the BRA, but the government forces, being more mobile, better armed and fed, and, allegedly, disciplined, were worse. These accounts are a terrible indictment of the troops and their commanders.

Lucy Madoi's piece on "child soldiers" is especially poignant as she faces the situation in which young sons, sent home from schools on the PNG mainland before the invasion, insisted on taking part in the struggle against their mothers' wishes because they saw "that our only protection was from our menfolk – our fathers, husbands, sons." She adds: "Many men remained civilians throughout the struggle and refused to fight, but that did not stop them being accused of being 'rebels' and therefore considered legitimate targets of the military forces."

That there is not, apparently, deeper residual bitterness in Bougainville is a tribute to the inspiring qualities of the mothers of the land.

Stuart Inder

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BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE UNVEILING OF THE GOLPAK MEMORIAL AT POMIO

By George Oakes

Golpak died in 1959 at his village, Sali, near Pomio. His Memorial was unveiled at Pomio on 6th May 1961. Golpak, MBE, LSM was a war hero in World War II and also a paramount *luluai*. During the war in 1943 he assisted coastwatchers Skinner, Wright and Murphy with arranging carriers; he later hid and helped rescue a number of survivors from crashed aircraft including Wing Commander 'Bill' Townsend. The stories of Golpak's wartime activities are recorded in many books.

Pomio was quite isolated in 1961, being about 170kms south-west of Rabaul and receiving a vessel with supplies usually fortnightly but at times six weeks elapsed. There is an airstrip at Palmalmal and a DC3 usually called weekly. The airstrip was 30 minutes by tractor through Palmalmal and one hour by workboat from Pomio across Jacquinot Bay which could be quite rough. There was no electricity at Pomio and the only road vehicle was a tractor. Pomio has an annual rainfall of 6.43m or 253 inches.

When this unveiling took place my wife, Edna, was the only white woman at Pomio and we then had an 18 months old son. I was Patrol Officer in Charge and there was also a Cadet and a Medical Assistant at Pomio who were both single. There were a number of plantations in the area – the nearest about 12kms away, on the coast, but with no road communication.

Edna regularly wrote letters from Pomio to her mother and many years later we found she had saved all the letters. The following extracts from one of them gives the behind-the-scenes story of what went on at the unveiling. The letter was written on 9th May 1961.

'Well, we are just beginning to relax after the hectic weekend. In all, about 1300 natives were present, many had walked for two days to attend and 40 canoes were paddled in from coastal villages. Our Co-operative store soon sold out of *laplaps*, shirts and ties, not to mention food. My work began about a month ago – planning a suitable buffet luncheon for 50 official guests and, as we only get a ship each fortnight, I had to plan ahead not only for the luncheon but for weekend guests stopping with us; seven on Friday night and a different five for Saturday night.

'The first group arrived on Friday's plane from Rabaul and I had to serve lunch for 10 people. Luckily I was able to get tomatoes from Rabaul and had grown some lettuce myself and with the help of eggs, meat and a few tins we had a salad. I had received seven loaves of bread from Rabaul on the Friday and on Sunday not a piece was left in the house, so I had to make some, which was a success, which did not often happen. On Friday afternoon Merle Wall from Cutarp Plantation came down by our workboat and we cooked together in my kitchen. George had put together a fuel stove in our laundry so we had two stoves going and got a lot of cooking done. Merle brought down apple pies, which she had cooked on Thursday in her kitchen so we did not have much to do on Saturday except make sandwiches, scones and pikelets. Friday night we had a buffet dinner for 12 people.

'Saturday morning dawned very clear and fine, but the rain we have had since has been, I feel sure, Saturdays rain. I was up at 5.30am making wreaths and getting breakfast for

eight folk and after that the mad rush began. Everything needed for the luncheon had to be carried down the 384 steps to the court house where we were having lunch. George had organized a kitchen from a tent and plaited coconut fronds with a number of small fuel stoves (from the government store for new houses), and a kerosene refrigerator and two tables so we were well set up. Mr and Mrs Bode from Wunung Plantation, about one hour's boat trip, away worked in the kitchen making sandwiches, buttering scones and pikelets.

'Group Captain Townsend from Williamtown, Newcastle, who was rescued by Golpak from the Japs flew a special plane, a Dakota, to Port Moresby and picked up some VIP's and they landed at Jacquinot Bay and arrived at Pomio ready for a cup of tea. They were welcomed at the wharf by a choir of 10 natives, conducted by Pepi our native clerk, who also wrote the Song of Welcome. We all lined up and were introduced to the VIP's. The plane then flew to Rabaul to bring down the next load of visitors including Mr Foldi, our District Commissioner, and Mr JK McCarthy, the Director of Native Affairs. George and I met them with Mr Hicks, our District Officer, and we all listened again to the Welcome Song then proceeded to walk the short distance to the shelter erected near the Memorial Stone. The road was lined by *luluais* and *tutuls* all madly saluting. I had blistered heels and had to change to sandals to meet them. George was Chairman of the meeting. As everyone spoke it was tape-recorded and Dave Goodger, the ADO from Kandrian interpreted for those who could not speak pidgin. After the speeches were over, Mr McCarthy unveiled the Memorial Stone and about six wreaths (which we had made) were laid. The Queen sent a message which was read to the natives and a plaque was sent from London from The Royal Air Force Escaping Society. The newly completed Government School, named the Golpak Memorial School was then blessed by Father Otto and everyone then inspected the school.

'By that time, 1.30pm, they were all hungry and we were ready for them and about 50 people crowded into the Court House to eat. The aircrew was so hot and exhausted they could not eat a thing but drank lolly water; some of them had been in cold weather in Canberra two days previously!! There seemed to be plenty of food, frankfurts, sausage rolls, sandwiches, bacon and egg pie (hot), tuna savoury (hot), savoury boats, apple pies, jam tarts, lemon cheese meringues etc, even a little left over, which the house boys who had acted as waiters eagerly ate. Mr Foldi said he really enjoyed the bacon and egg pie!

'The cleaning up was accomplished very quickly, each house boy knowing the forks, plates etc which came from his house. All our things were carried up the hill again to be put away by the house boys. They had all worked hard non stop for two days so were given ten shillings bonus. We were left with five guests for the weekend and, my goodness, didn't our linen press notice it. Towels and sheets for seven on Friday, then another lot for five over the weekend, plus ourselves and it's been raining since so wet linen everywhere.

'On Sunday two reporters walked to Sali Village which was Golpak's home village and recorded a talk with Golpak's son, Kolea, and also took lots of photos. In the afternoon they interviewed me on the life at Pomio to be played over the *Women's Session* on our local station plus one interview and photos for the *Women's Weekly* or *Woman's Day*. Whether it will be used or not we will have to wait and see. [A few months later Edna

received through the mail a copy of an article from an English paper which was embellished so much by the author we hardly recognized ourselves! – GO.] All the Mission School children came up to the house and a recording was made of their singing plus photos taken for a southern magazine. Our Reporter visitors left on Monday morning early by plane.’

I remember one of the reporters, before she left, asked Edna if she could spare a loaf of bread for her evening meal in Port Moresby as she would arrive there too late to buy one! Edna could honestly say we had no bread left.

Life in the bush was always a challenge especially since Edna had been told two months previously to take things easy due to a threatened miscarriage! Thankfully both she and the baby survived.

* * * * *

THE MARKHAM BRIDGE SAGA

A microcosm of PNG today By John Collins in Lae

It was suggested to me to write this as many ex-PNGites lived in the Wau Bulolo area, which for many years after the war was the engine driving the PNG economy with its huge gold and timber resources. Alas, since those halcyon days, the Morobe Highlands has undergone a painful slide. Nothing better typifies this than the problems people in the area have been experiencing with the closure of the Markham Bridge.

The road linking Wau and Bulolo to Lae was built during the war by Australian Army engineers. One of the largest obstacles they faced was the mighty Markham River, which had to be crossed. This was done in the early years, until around the mid 1950s, by way of barge from Labu on the Wau Bulolo side of the Markham River mouth to Lae wharf on the other. My father, who arrived in Lae in 1952, following his uncles and older brothers north to PNG, had his first taste of working life in PNG driving the barges back and forth across the river mouth. When looking for employment he underwent a gruelling interview and testing process to see if he had the ability and experience to handle such a demanding job, which consisted of the barge master asking had he ever driven a barge before. He immediately replied ‘yes’ and was offered the job, never having set foot much less driven one of these contraptions.

In the mid 1950s a bailey bridge consisting of many sections was used to span the river a few miles upstream. This was followed by a permanent concrete structure completed in the early 1970s. The Bridge is still the largest in PNG and spans a distance of 660 metres. It remains a vital link in the road connecting the Morobe Highlands to the rest of PNG.

It is estimated that approximately 200–300,000 people now live in the region serviced by the Bridge. From relatively nearby areas such as Zenag, Mumeng and the Buang Valley through to Bulolo, Wau and on to the rugged outlying mountains and valleys of Aseki, Menyamya and Garaina, right up to the southern edge of the mountain barrier that divides PNG in two.

The economy of the region is still driven by gold, timber and coffee. Substantial amounts of gold are still mined in areas like the Wau, Bulolo and Watut valleys. Recently, Harmony Gold Limited, the 4th largest gold mining company in the world has

indicated that it intends to mine gold deposits at Hidden Valley, up behind Wau and also Wafi, which lies in the ranges between Mumeng and Nadzab. Those associated with the project have suggested that the Wafi deposit is huge, making it a world class deposit which could rival the giant Porgera mine in terms of gold and Bougainville Copper in its copper reserves. Both these are in the exploratory stage, with Hidden Valley supposedly entering the construction phase, prior to mining, sometime in mid to late 2004. Exploration has gone on for well over 15 years in both cases. The usual culprits for this delay are landowner negotiation problems and the volatile nature and direction of PNG politics. This has made any company wishing to develop these riches very cautious, especially in light of recent history with Bougainville and Mt. Kare. At present virtually all the gold mined in the Morobe Highlands comes from individual local prospectors who work the streams and rivers.

Bulolo is still home to the large timber and plywood mills owned by PNG Forest Products, (formerly Bulolo Gold Dredging and then Commonwealth New Guinea Timbers). The ply mill supplies PNG with the majority of its plywood, the sawmill exports large amounts of timber to Australia. Substantial amounts of coffee still trickle in from the outlying valleys and mountains even with the deplorable state of the roads. Since the late 1970s poultry has become a large industry in the area with Zenag Chicken being one of the 2 major poultry producers in PNG. Along with these major industries go the usual ancillary businesses such as trading houses etc.

On 1 March 2004, after heavy rain in the valleys of the catchment area, the Markham Bridge began to develop a noticeable sag in its deck about 1/3 the way across from the Lae side abutment. Additionally the Bridge could be felt to spring up and down and rock to and fro as the swollen waters of the river rushed past its supporting piers. Engineers from Department of Works (DOW) and other private companies decided that the third pier from the Lae side had had its base eroded which had resulted in the 300 tonne concrete pier swinging off the deck of the Bridge in the current. DOW immediately closed the Bridge explaining that in its compromised state it was dangerous and should not be open to the public. After a day or so, movement of the Bridge settled down resulting in a sag of about 8 inches. The Bridge was to remain closed with large steel beams being erected across each end to prevent vehicles passing over it. The Bridge was open to foot traffic only.

Naturally, business and the general populace were concerned as to what steps were going to be taken to rectify the situation. Initially it was proposed to close the Bridge entirely, even to foot traffic, as it was too dangerous. However after howls of disapproval from the main business houses, coupled with the fact that the human tide that swept across the Bridge daily on foot would prove impossible to stop, it was agreed that the Bridge remain open to foot traffic at the pedestrians own risk.

Papuan New Guineans have always been resourceful when pushed into a tight corner with the little they have and so immediately there sprang up a "trolley industry" on the Bridge. The first few days were chaotic with thousands of people and businesses scrambling to get their vehicles next to the ends of the Bridge so that they could transfer goods and provisions across. Trolleys to carry the cargo appeared from everywhere, small wooden home made ones, old airport baggage ones, large purpose built steel ones. With all this went the trolley pushers, that is the arse-place people from either

side of the bridge who could see there was money to be made. The large companies such as PNG Forest Products and Zenag struck deals with the locals for so much kina per container or truck load, others would negotiate rates on the spot, for example a large trolley with one tonne of cargo across the Bridge would cost K20 per load, smaller loads of a box or bag of *buai* K2 to K5. All of a sudden the local people had gone from sitting under the shade of the rain trees at either end of the Bridge, chewing *buai* and watching the world go by to well off entrepreneurs. In the course of any one day there are thousands of people and hundreds of tonnes of cargo to go across. Zenag Chicken alone required at least 110 tonnes of stock feed a day. A very rough estimate would put the value of trade that crosses the Bridge at perhaps 150 million kina a year.

The Markham Bridge disaster hit the front page of the Post Courier, many people were interviewed and suggestions put forward as to how it could be quickly fixed. One construction company said if it could get the go ahead, it could have the Bridge open for light vehicular traffic within a few days and open to its full weight bearing capacity of 35 tonnes within a couple of weeks, all at a reasonable cost. (As it turns out, that company has now been awarded the contract.) Others said it would take months and millions more to fix. The Markham Bridge emergency turned into the Markham Bridge saga.

For four months the population has had to endure the huge costs and inconvenience that the closed Bridge has caused. For my part it cost an extra K500 per container to get a load of cargo from Lae to the other side of the Bridge.

The Lae Chamber of Commerce through its president Alan McLay (who was a *kiap* in the islands and highlands during the 60s and 70s) has done a great job in pushing and cajoling the relevant government departments every inch of the way towards a solution. The behaviour of those departments, most notably Works, has been nothing short of obstructive. When money to fix the Bridge needed to be found, that was all too hard. I was told personally by someone in AusAid, that they would assist financially if approached by someone from the PNG Government. This offer was made known to the Government. No approach was ever made. Once funding was eventually found various procedures have to be followed. Again at every inch of the process there was intentional delay and obfuscation. Why you might ask?

The constant prodding by the Lae Chamber of Commerce to do the right thing and quickly, was regarded by the Minister and Departmental Heads as interference in procedures which should not be open or accountable to the public. In the end, as is so often the case these days in PNG, self enrichment and the interests of a greedy and corrupt few are put above the benefit of the general population and country as a whole. The cost for the people on the Wau Bulolo side of the Bridge was high. There were reports of deaths as the sick could not be driven quickly to Angau Hospital in Lae, crime began to flourish (again) as there was only one working police car out of 8 on the other side of the Bridge and most pervasive was the financial cost to all as prices went up to pay the extra crossing costs, this at a time when ordinary Papua New Guineans are struggling to survive, feed and educate their families.

As of 11 June it looks like work might finally begin on the Bridge, we all hope it does. The Markham Bridge saga is confronted by everyone in PNG in different guises every day, life and business here is a struggle, prompting many of the *lapuns* from yesteryear

to ask for a return to the good old days prior to independence. That, I regret to inform them will never happen.

Postscript

The Bridge was finally open to traffic on 24 June. The sagging deck of the bridge was rectified with 4 hours work. Further strengthening work will continue for another 6 weeks.

* * * * *

Help Wanted - Brian Davis of the Gold Coast Papua New Guinea Club is trying to locate two men he once worked with - **Barry Moyle**, a Patrol Officer at Aiome in the Madang District in 1961 who transferred with wife **Maryjke** in 1962 to Port Moresby with Posts & Telegraphs. Also John Edwards, a Cadet Patrol Officer at Bogia in the Madang District in 1964. Would any member having knowledge of their present whereabouts please contact Brian on (07) 55762497 or at 23 Dogwood Drive, Palm Beach QLD 4221

* * * * *

90th ANNIVERSARY OF AUSTRALIA'S FIRST BATTLE

By Max Hayes

Saturday 11th Sept 2004, marks the 90th anniversary of Australia's first battle in WW1, and also marks that event as being Australia's first ever battle as a sovereign nation. (All earlier conflicts were fought by the various colonies sending colonial forces, eg, to Sudan, the Boxer Rebellion and the Boer War).

Yet this battle is almost totally unknown in the light of Gallipoli some seven months later and which Australians seem to think was our first battle in WW1. Certainly the horrors of Gallipoli surpassed those of our first battle.

On August 5th 1914, England in a telegram to the Prime Minister sought Australia's help in mobilising a force to proceed to German New Guinea to capture a wireless station, thought to be of great use to the German fleet then active in the Pacific area. In a remarkable feat and with considerable speed and enthusiasm, a force of 1,500 (about 1,000 were military infantrymen and 500 naval reserve volunteers) were enlisted, uniformed, equipped and set sail a bare two weeks later on the HMAT Berrima on August 19. A strong supporting fleet of Royal Australian Navy provided escort and an attack force. This force was known as the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force. After the capture from the Germans, Australian troops remained in German New Guinea until May 1921, when it became a League of Nations Mandated Territory, the mandate of which was given to Australia.

En route to German New Guinea, the troops received training at Palm Island (off North Queensland coast) and two more weeks training at Port Moresby, before setting sail for the objective.

On 11th September the Australian fleet entered the magnificent harbour of Rabaul, whilst troops had disembarked some few miles away at Kokopo and Kabakaul, and near where they met resistance from German forces consisting of a few regular army officers, militia and native troops. Little was known about the actual location of the wireless station thought to be some miles south of Kabakaul, but information was provided and the troops proceeded along a jungle track. On the way they encountered mines laid across the track, and trenches from which they were fired on.

The first to be mortally wounded was Able Seaman W.G.V. Williams (of Northcote, Victoria). An Australian Army Medical Corps doctor, Captain B Pockley to facilitate the removal of Williams for medical treatment, gave his Red Cross arm band (which signified that he was a non combatant) to the stretcher party conveying Williams. A short while later Pockley was himself mortally wounded by rifle fire. This brave deed was never recognised.

As the troops advanced along the thick jungle track towards the wireless station some five miles inland from the stone wharf, a further four Australians were shot dead. German dead were estimated at about 1 officer and 30 native troops. Three days later, Australia's first submarine, AE1, disappeared near the adjacent Duke of York Islands, with the loss of a crew of 35, and has never been sighted since.

After discussing terms of surrender 6 days after the ANMEF landed, the acting German Governor, Dr. Haber, formally surrendered his forces on 21.9.1914, and thus began the Australian occupation of German New Guinea.

Although this battle was with few casualties compared with later events it, none the less, marks Australia's first battle as a sovereign nation. And how has Australia marked this event?? It seems that it prefers that this first battle should be forgotten. The departure of the troops from Sydney's "Man'O'War" steps near Circular Quay was noted by the City of Sydney erecting a small obscure bronze plaque, high on the Tarpeian Wall near the Opera House, on the 50th anniversary of the troops sailing.

Northcote RSL however took more interest in commemorating this obscure battle as one of its citizens was the first mortally wounded.

With funds raised locally, and a grant from the Department of Veterans' Affairs, a large bronze pictorial plaque was commissioned at the front of this RSL on 16.12.2001. These two memorials constitute Australia's remembrance of our first battle. Perhaps the 90th anniversary can create a little more interest.

* * * * *

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THE DIARIES OF EDWARD (TED) BISHTON

PNGAA wishes to thank Ted's daughter, Margaret Carrick, for permission to publish this edited version of the story of one man's life in New Guinea. Copyright to this series of articles is retained by Margaret Carrick.

Continuing on from the last issue (June 2004), we follow Ted's experiences during his second posting to Manus during 1924-26.

When I arrived in Manus, I was the only wireless man there and the place had not altered to any extent, although the personnel had changed. No white women had ever been allowed in Manus, but not long after my arrival, some white women began to arrive. I think the first one would have been Mattie Melrose, then Bert Jones and his wife and their three or four year old son, Ken; Bobby Melrose was the District Officer and Bert Jones was the Medical Assistant. Doctor Hosking and his mother arrived and then I was told by Bobby Melrose that I would have to vacate my house for Digby Elliott, the Police Master and his wife. I had to live in a very rough kanaka house, until Bobby had a house built for me. There were six houses in Lorengau; the District Officer's, the Doctor's, the House Soldier Elliott's, Bert Jones' house on the point near the native hospital and my house between the house soldier and Bert Jones' house on the bank of the river. The house soldier was occupied by the other police master and the government clerk. Practically any time, I could sit on my veranda and watch the crocodiles drifting down the river towards the native hospital and the sea. This river was called the Lorengau River; it was not very long and, at the source of it, there was a small waterfall which fell into a deep round pool. We often used to go there and swim, but one day the police master said there might be some fresh water fish in the pool, so he brought along a few sticks of dynamite and threw them into the pool. To the astonishment of us all, a crocodile about ten feet long came to the surface. We had swum in this pool several times before and were about to do so again that day; so how lucky we were.

Manus was becoming more civilised with so many white women around. Every Saturday night we would have a party at one of the houses and there would be dancing to records, played on the gramophone, which everyone enjoyed. There was always supper served and I think the ladies used to try and outdo each other. When it came to the turn of the bachelors, who consisted of the other police master, the clerk and myself,

to put our social night on, I used to go round to the ladies and ask them to make me scones, tarts and cakes for the occasion. The result was that we bachelors put on the best show of the lot, so far as supper was concerned.

There was one time when most of the staff were out on patrol - the D.O., the doctor, the medical assistant and the patrol officer. Mrs Elliott stayed with Mrs Jones, but Mrs Melrose and Mrs Hosking stayed on their own during this period. One night I was waken by natives running and screaming, so I got up to investigate. Mrs Jones, carrying young Ken and Mrs Elliott, carrying the hurricane lamp came running to my house, saying they thought someone had been killed. I got my houseboys up and told them to make tea and look after the ladies, then went to investigate. I found that Mrs Jones' cookboy's meri had been attacked by some boy and the cookboy had hit him on the head with a lump of wood. The intruder had decamped, but the police boy on guard at the calaboose, hearing the commotion, had come running and chased the intruder, who was eventually captured and brought back to me. He was in a pretty bad way, so I sent him to the native hospital for attention, under police guard.

The following day, Mrs Hosking sent for me and when I went to see her, she brought out a .44 revolver and asked me to show her how to use it, because, she told me, she had heard the noise of the previous night and was frightened. I felt terribly sorry for her, but did not like the idea of her using the revolver, so I told her she could have my dog for protection every night. My dog was an Irish terrier and all the natives round Lorengau knew him for his ferocity. I only had to soothe him and you would see natives going up trees in all directions. Mrs Hosking was very grateful for the offer and every evening she would send one of her boys down to my place and off Mike would go on guard duty. She would tie Mike to the foot of her bed and she told me she never felt safer and slept like a child.

I had had a bit of trouble with the Police Master and was pleased when the patrol arrived back from Lorengau; they had been out nearly three months. After some time Bert Jones, his wife and Ken were transferred to another station. He was relieved by my old friend, Robbie, from Kieta. The Burns Philp ship "Mataram" used to call at Lorengau every six weeks, so we were pretty well off for fresh meat and vegetables, although these would only last about three days, as we had no such thing as a refrigerator. V.R.L. Macdonald left and was replaced by Willie Wilson.

The night Willie Wilson arrived, the "Mataram" was anchored about seven miles away at Lombrum. When the "Mataram" left we boarded the government schooner to return to Lorengau and on the way over someone asked Willie if we would be opening the mail and he said it depended how he felt. I said that of course the mail would be opened, as it always was, irrespective of what the hour was. We had all been imbibing freely on the "Mataram", so Willie and I had an argument, with the result that he told me that, whether he opened the mail or not, I would not be getting mine. When we arrived back at Lorengau it was about 3am, so Bobby Melrose, who had not heard anything of the argument, told Willie to open the mail and he and Willie sorted it. When they had finished, Willie handed out the mail to the others, so I asked where was mine. He replied that he'd told me I would not get mine in any case. Bobby got my mail and handed it to me, but Willie pulled his arm back and said I was not to get it. There was a bit of a scuffle, but I got my mail and the office was closed

By this time, it was about 4am and a beautiful full moonlight night. We started off up the road and when we arrived at my home, Bobby and his wife continued on, but Willie and I decided we would settle our difference there and then. I soon realised Willie was not much of a fighter, but he made it an all-in affair and he was much stronger and heavier than I. After being tossed and rolled on the ground several times, Willie got on top of me and was choking the life out of me. The only onlooker was Hall Best and he pulled Willie off, which allowed me to get to my feet. I made sure I kept out of his reach and eventually he came charging at me like a wild bull, so I stepped aside and landed one right on his jaw. He went down like a polled ox, so when I recovered my breath a bit, Hall Best and I carried him to the house soldier and put him to bed. The following morning, on my way to the office, Willie called in to tell me I could get my mail; he was only joking, but I thought it was very big of him to come to me as he did. We shook hands and never had a cross word again. Bobby Melrose told me after that, when Willie arrived at the office, he could hardly refrain from laughing outright, as he said Willie had two of the most beautiful black eyes he had ever seen. Poor old Willie; I met him again on the goldfields at Edie Creek and he died in Salamaua about 1926 or 1927.

During my stay in Manus, I bought about a dozen Java sheep from the government and at one time I had over forty. They were more like goats, than sheep, for they had practically no wool, I doubt if they carried a quarter of a pound each. However, they were good eating and in-between boats, I would get the natives to kill one and distribute it among the Europeans on the station. They generally averaged from forty to forty-five pounds each, which gave us three pounds a head, or a little more. That Irish terrier dog of mine got amongst them on one occasion and ran them into a small creek on the edge of the station, with the result that five of them drowned. I got the boys to dress them right away, so we had plenty of fresh meat for some time, at least three or four days.

It was the last straw as far as the dog was concerned. He used to go mad whenever he saw the sheep and chase them madly. I belted him on many occasions, but it did no good. After this last episode I decided to get rid of him, so I sent him to my friend, Greg Anderson, on Noru Island. Greg told me later that he had a small island about three miles from Noru, which was planted with coconuts and also had pigs running on it. Every so often, he would take a team of boys from Noru and go over to this island and clean it up and collect coconuts and cut copra. They generally stayed a couple of days. On one of these visits, Greg took my dog and, no sooner had they landed, than the dog took off after the pigs. Greg got the boys to round the dog up and sent him back to Noru. Some time later on the next day, Greg was surprised to hear the dog barking and the pigs going in all directions, so he picked up his gun and shot the dog. It appears the boys had taken him back to Noru and he had swum the three or four miles back to the island through shark-infested waters, only to meet a death of ignominy.

During this period of my stay in Manus, old Doepke from the Lugos Mission found the isolation and loneliness too much and decided to get married. It was all done by correspondence and the intended bride duly arrived. She brought with her cases and cases of preserves in glass jars; fruit, vegetables and meat and also a small organ. The organ was to be the pride of the mission, but alas, as the boys were carrying it down the gangway of the ship, something happened and the organ fell into the water and was lost forever. It was a great blow for the missionaries and the natives and Doepke's offsider,

Kraft, had to be content with Doepke's trumpet.

Charlie Muenster had a plantation about three or four miles from Lorengau and often came to my place and I often visited him. He had a very chequered career. At one time he worked on ships on the Australian coast and also told me that he once studied to be a priest. After some years on the Australian coast, he went to Lord Howe Island (On Tong Java) in the Northern Solomon Islands. There he met, and had a row with, Jack London, the author. He threw Jack London off his ship and Jack was not high in his praises when he wrote Charlie up in his book "The Cruise of the Snark". When Charlie left there, he brought his daughter, Annie, with him and put her into the Catholic Mission at Vunapope at Kokopo. Annie became a very good artist and has had exhibitions in Sydney. She came to Lorengau from the Mission and married Jock Kramer, who ran a trade store in Lorengau with Alec Burrows. Charlie put on a party at his plantation one night in honour of a girl friend from Adelaide and of Charlie's new bride, who had just arrived from Germany. As the night wore on, the food and liquor flowed more freely and the party became very hectic. Charlie's wife's brother was killed on the last day of the 1914-18 war and she seemed to think that all we chaps at the party (who were returned soldiers) were responsible for his death; she even accused me personally. The house stood on piles ten or twelve feet high and, as I was on the veranda edging my way away from her, I came to the steps and there being no rail, I fell backwards. The next I remember was regaining consciousness by some of the guests pouring bottles of beer over me to revive me. I don't know how we got back to Lorengau, but it must have been safely.

I had a fair amount of spare time in Lorengau and used to occupy my time gardening, rearing poultry and pigs, as well as sheep. It was very hard to grow anything, but I had a certain success, because I used to get fertilizer up from Sydney. At one time I had sixty-nine ducks setting at the one time and, after they had hatched, I had a boy looking after them. In the afternoon I would tell him to go down to the parade ground, where the ducks and ducklings used to feed all day, and bring them up to their yard where they would be locked up for the night. It was a funny sight to see all this mob coming up the road - one duck then about eight to ten ducklings waddling behind, then another duck with her brood behind and so on. You can imagine how far they stretched - sixty-nine ducks and each with ducklings, in single file.

On one occasion, one of my pigs got out of its *banis* (yard), so I asked the police master if he could give me a *calabus* (prisoner) to look for it. The jungle came right down to the outskirts of the station and I thought it was like looking for a needle in a haystack. The prisoner duly arrived, a young lad of about sixteen years of age, from the Sepik River, undergoing a life sentence for murder. I knew him very well around the station, but I've forgotten his name. He had told me his story of why he was in the *calabus*. It appears there had been some killings in a village close to his village on the Sepik River and his village was supposed to have done the killings, so the Government sent an expedition to try to apprehend the murderers. When the expedition arrived at the lad's village, all the men fled and, as he was only about fourteen at the time, he stayed with his mother and the other women and children. He was caught and tried and convicted and sent to Manus to serve his time. So long as someone was convicted, everyone seemed to be satisfied and the crime was considered solved; someone had to be convicted and this lad was the scapegoat. He said he knew my pigs and knew the one

that was missing, so off he went to try to locate it. That evening he came up to me and I asked if he had found the pig. He said he had, but it was still in the bush and he would go out again tomorrow. The next evening he came and told me he had found it and, when I asked where it was, he said it was still in the bush and he would like another boy to go with him the following day to bring it in. I got another boy from the police master and off they went. That evening they arrived back, carrying the pig lashed onto a pole. I thought this was one of the greatest pieces of tracking I had ever known. Just imagine the number of wild pigs there are in the bush and the number of footprints around each waterhole the pigs had visited, yet this lad was able to track this particular pig for nearly three days and bring it back to the station.

I had a similar experience in Aitape. One evening I was at Wally Hook's place and after dinner we were having a few spots, when there was a loud shouting and whooping and some of Wally's boys came running to say that some of his new recruits had got away. Wally was a recruiter and had over a hundred wild natives from the Wapi district waiting for a ship to go to Rabaul. It was a pitch-black night and I thought the hope of getting the three or four boys who had got away was very remote. Sometime later they were rounded up and only one was still missing. About 11pm, which was about three hours after the breakout, Wally's boys brought in the last escapee. His shins were all cut and his body scarred from running through lawyer vines and running into logs etc. I asked one of the boys how they managed to find the boy in such darkness and he said "Me smell 'im." I am well aware that some natives do smell and you can smell them a long way off, but this piece of tracking and smelling in pitch-blackness beat me,

There were two old characters at Lorengau, who were serving life sentences for murder. They were two of the oldest natives I have ever seen. They were from Bougainville and their names were Kawati and Kanoki. They were in the same boat as the lad from the Sepik River. They were too old to run away when the government forces arrived at their village, so they were tried and convicted of murder and sentenced to life imprisonment. They were two of the most inoffensive old fellows one would ever meet, but they were happy at Lorengau and possibly better off than they would have been in their village. Good food, housing and medical attention, for which they did the sanitary work around the station and grew watermelons for which we paid them a stick of tobacco each.

Alec Burrows got tired of the lonely life and decided to take unto himself a wife. It was all arranged by mail and the bride, Billie Hindman, duly arrived from Sydney on the *Mataram*.

The women at the station went out to the ship to meet the bride and do her up for the wedding, which was to be celebrated by Bobby Melrose in the District Office. The weather was very rough and the bride and the women from the station had much trouble getting ashore and, by the time they did get back to the station, it was very dark and getting late. The marriage laws pertaining to the Territory in those days were that the marriage had to be celebrated before 8pm. I knew they were cutting it very short, so to make certain everything went smoothly, someone put the clock back. The reception was held in Alec Burrows' store. Jack Kramer mixed the drinks and everyone got very drunk. Jack's idea of cocktails was to go along the shelf and put a bottle of everything available into a kerosene tin and mix the lot together. It was a great night and that would have been the first European wedding on Manus. Poor old Jack Kramer committed suicide up the Watut River about 1932. Alec Burrows died a natural death in

Sydney. Charlie Nuenster was captured by the Japanese and no one knows what became of him. We were a very happy crowd at Lorengau and everyone got on well with one another. I had now been at Manus for three years and was due for leave.

I left on the *Mataram* about February 1926. We called at Maron and the Western Islands on the way to Rabaul. I did not stay long in Rabaul, but continued on to Sydney in the *Mataram*. Towards the end of my leave in Sydney. I got very sick. I thought I was suffering from haemorrhoids and, as the weather was very cold, I thought if I could get back to the tropics. I would be alright. I had had a very enjoyable holiday with my mother, father, brother and sisters and, as on all such occasions, was sorry to be leaving again. My medical assistant, Robbie, had been in Sydney on leave also and we returned to the Territory together. A few days after leaving Sydney, I was in terrible agony, so Robbie got Dr Pockley, who was going to Madang to visit his plantation on Kar Kar Island, to have a look at me. The ship's doctor had been drunk from the time we left Sydney and was absolutely useless. I knew Dr Pockley and after he had examined me, he decided to perform an emergency operation in my cabin. He arranged with the ship's engineers to have a powerful light installed in the cabin and Robbie was his assistant. The last I remember was taking the anaesthetic and the next thing I woke up and there was pandemonium in the cabin.

It appears that, during the operation, or just as it was about finished, the light fused and either Robbie or the doctor knocked the bottle of ether over. They had only given me a small sniff of the anaesthetic and I was just coming to. The stewardess arrived at this moment carrying a lighted candle. I heard the doctor roar "Get to hell out of here before you blow the bloody ship up". The smell of the ether went all through the ship and everyone left their cabins and slept in the bar and the various lounges around the ship. I felt a lot better after the operation, but on arrival in Rabaul, Dr Brennan came to my cabin and examined me and ordered me into Namanula Hospital for a fistula operation. Dr (now Sir) Raphael Cilento performed the operation and made a good job of it. Just as I was coming to after the operation, Jimmy Hunt, who was in the next bed, was just passing out. Jimmy was in charge of the Lands Department before he died.

Mrs Adams of Patlangat plantation was also in hospital at that time, having a baby. I remember telling one of the nurses that I heard some woman screaming during the night and I thought there may have been a boy prowling round. A little while later she came back with a baby in a basket and said that this was what caused the screaming in the night.

After a few weeks in hospital, I was discharged and reported back to our boss, Jimmy Twycross, for duty. A report had been received from Vitu in the French Islands that a European had killed a native, so the Administration ordered an investigation. The Administration yacht "Franklin", which used to frisk around Port Phillip Bay in Victoria before coming to New Guinea, was made ready for the voyage to Vitu. Taffy Webb, the harbourmaster, was the Captain; Johnnie Walstab, Commissioner of Police, was on board to investigate the crime; there was a doctor, but I've forgotten who he was; and I was the wireless officer. We left Rabaul in July 1926 at the height of the north-west season and we struck rough weather from the time we cast off from the wharf. The "Franklin" was a long, narrow craft, which seemed to go through the water with a corkscrew motion; the following morning saw everyone seasick. The European engineer and his Chinese engineers were all sick; the Chinese cook and his native

offsiders were all sick; the three or four other Europeans were sitting in deck chairs, skidding from one side of the ship to the other, too sick to care whether they went over the side or not. Johnny Walstab and I surveyed the scene and Johnny said “Well, Bish, it doesn’t look as though we are going to get any breakfast, so come down to my cabin and have a spot.” We adjourned to Johnny’s cabin, which was below deck and very hot. He produced a bottle of whisky, which we proceeded to demolish. He had a bunch of bananas hanging in his cabin, so we contented ourselves with drinking whisky and eating bananas. We finished the whisky and I went up on deck to do my wireless watch. When I arrived on the bridge, Taffy Webb was heaving his heart out over the side. In his best Oxford accent and cursing all the while, he said “To think I had four years in the North Sea on destroyers during the war and then had to come onto a bloody lousy packet like this to get seasick.” Up to this time, I had been feeling pretty good, but whether it was out of pity for Taffy, or whisky on an empty stomach, I don’t know, but I do know I joined Taffy on the other side of the bridge. I had several trips on the “Franklin”, but this was the roughest trip of them all.

We arrived at Vitu and after a couple of days there, during which all the investigations had been carried out, the body of the victim exhumed and re-buried and the European defendant brought on board, we returned to Rabaul. We heard on arrival that two schooners had been wrecked along the New Britain coast while we had been away. I don’t know what happened to the accused, as I was on the “Franklin” again, bound for Salamaua and the goldfields.

(Continued next issue)

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<p>VALE – With deep regret we record the passing of the following members and friends</p> <p>Douglas (Gray) Watkins (26 July 2004, aged 78 yrs) – details next issue</p> <p>Vilma ENDERS (14 May 2004, aged 79 years)</p> <p>Vilma was born in South Tirol, now part of Italy, and traces her ancestry back to Johann Coleto who was Knighted by Matthias, King of Bavaria (now Chekoslovakia) in 1612. In 1947 she married Paul in Innsbruck, Austria. They were from ‘different countries, different backgrounds and different religions’ and migrated to Australia in 1949. In 1950 Paul was recruited by Dr (later Sir) John Gunther to work as a medical officer in PNG. First posting was Namatanai – very different, very raw, but fascinating and enjoyable. Such was the condition of the roads in those days that it took two days to travel from Kavieng. From 1953 to 1957 the Enders were in Wau and Bulolo, then Paul went to Wewak as District Medical Officer before moving on to be Regional Medical Officer in Rabaul in 1964 and finally to Moresby in 1969 as Assistant Director of Medical Services till retirement in 1974. It was then plenty of space to enjoy the garden, tennis court and swimming pool at leafy Terry Hills till 1991, when the Enders moved to the convenience of harbourside Neutral Bay. Always supportive of Paul, Vilma enjoyed sailing, tennis, swimming, her beloved orchids and her many friends. She is survived by Paul, son Tony and daughter-in-law, Jane. Harry West</p> <p>Ernest Wilkinson (13th August, aged 101 years) - Further details in December issue</p>
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Richard James (Jim) HUXLEY, 15 May 2004, aged 81 years

At 17 Jim went to New Guinea in 1939 to join his father Richard ('Dahlia Dick', as he was known for his care of flowers,) a carpenter with Bulolo Gold Dredging. When the Japanese invaded nearby Wau Jim joined the NGVR and became an ANGAU Medical Assistant, initially with Dr Hugh Marsden, until wars end.

After marrying Lee in Sydney in 1948 he resumed work with BGD before moving on to Lae to work as a journalist with the *South Pacific Post* and then the *New Guinea Times-Courier*, to later become its Managing Editor. He also started the first New Guinea pidgin newspaper *TokTok*. He was constructively involved in community and sporting affairs in Lae, especially football, until he and Lee, and four of their five sons born in Lae returned to Sydney in 1965. He continued his career in journalism with *Country Life*, then the *Australian* and finally the *Daily Telegraph*. He is survived by Lee and sons Edwin, Nicholas, James and Quentin. Son Adrian died in infancy.

Lee Huxley

A tribute in the Post Courier of 4 June 2004 by Abby Yadi highlighted Jim's friendship with, and encouragement of, Muttu Gware as PNG's first national newspaper (print) journalist. Written by Muttu and edited by Jim, the first edition of 'Niugini Toktok', in pidgin, was published in October 1962.

Marjorie Hawnt Ross Blake (18 April 2004 aged 91 years)

Born in Sydney, Marjorie traveled to Rabaul when her father became the telephone mechanic foreman for the Australian Occupation Forces who took control of the Territory of New Guinea at the end of WWI. Edmund Hawnt was later appointed Postmaster and Telephone Director for the Civil Administration. The Hawnt children were the first Australian children in Rabaul and enjoyed a carefree existence until Edmund took his family on a furlough to England where the girls were installed at a boarding school in Warwick near Edmund's family. Eventually returning to Rabaul, Marjorie got a job with the Department of Native Affairs. She loved riding horses and whilst riding track met and married Harold Jo Ross. Marjorie, with three children under the age of four, was evacuated with nursemaid Annie Lundin on the *MacDhui* in December 1941 when it was expected that Japan would invade Rabaul. She lost both her husband and father during the fall of Rabaul. Marjie supported the family in Sydney by working in the Department of External Territories (earning about 10 shillings a week) and embroidering baby clothes for sale.

In 1947 she returned to Rabaul where she purchased a plantation, 'Vunaraken, and planted cocoa, also working at Posts and Telegraphs during the week. Then Captain Charles Blake arrived – courting Marjie with a crate containing four ducks and a drake. They were married in Rabaul. Charles had two trawlers which were used for taking supplies down to their three plantations, Kabakon, Lolobau and Iboki. Two children were born to this marriage, Belinda and Charles. After the previous experience of evacuation it was decided to buy a house at Roseville in 1957. Marjie and Charles later developed Mauga Plantation before moving to Ascot in 1979. Her husband, Charles pre-deceased her in 1988 and son Michael in 1991. Marjie is survived by Prudence, Janet, Belinda and Charles, her 18 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren.

Robert George Stewart, aged 82 years – further details next issue.

Robert (Bob) Leonard Pulsford (22 July 2004, aged 88 years)

Further details next issue

Eve AKERMAN, 11 December 2003, aged 83 years

Eve went with her husband John, an Australian Government doctor, to Rabaul in 1947. Her second son, Kim, was born in Rabaul that year however soon afterwards the family was transferred to Goroka in the Highlands. From Goroka, John carried out numerous medical patrols on foot through difficult mountainous terrain to various remote locations such as Mt. Hagen, frequently accompanied by Eve for up to a fortnight at a time. In early 1950 the family was transferred again, to Wewak on the North Coast where Piers was born. They took with them Kuyeba and Ongwan who were recruited from highland villages to help in the house and with whom Eve had an emotional reunion when travelling with her friend Dame Rachel Cleland in the highlands in 1993. Eve accompanied John on more medical patrols by launch up the Sepik and to the island Wacheo where they were marooned for some weeks by the stranding of the schooner which had delivered them there, until rescued by the mission vessel Gabriel. The family left PNG for India in 1951; however their time in the Territory remained a vital part of family lore from then on. Eve wrote and lectured extensively on her life and the atmosphere in PNG in the forties until shortly before her death. Eve's husband, John, predeceased her however she is survived by her three sons and daughter, Felicity.

Jonathan C Akerman

Brien McMahon, 26 June 2004 aged 69 years

Brien was born in South Melbourne, the eldest son of former South Melbourne footballer, national handball champion and president of the South Melbourne Past Players Association, Tom McMahon. Brien himself became a respected athlete and footballer from a young age. He married Bernice Murray in 1955 and they moved to Port Moresby where he became a valued member of the Public Service Board responsible for determining staffing levels for PNG. A particular responsibility was setting up government at a provincial level. In 1964 Brien was the prime instigator in creating the first Papuan based Australian Rules football team, which became known as 'Koboni'. In 1974 he also arranged a PNG footy team tour of Australia. In 1976 the family, with nine children, moved back to Melbourne. Brien was then with the Department of Social Security followed by the Department of Community Services. Retiring in 1992 he became more involved with the Box Hill Football Club where he was a board member from 1991 and general manager in 1993. He maintained an active role in compiling the monthly club newsletter and acting as groundsman among a variety of other roles. Brien is survived by his nine children and their families and two sisters. Bernice predeceased him in late April.

Info from the Melbourne Age 9 July 2004

Helene Isabel EAST (nee THOMSON, 1 August 2004, aged 65 years)

Helene was a Cadet Education Officer at ASOPA with the 1962 intake and despite the disabilities accumulated in her later life greatly enjoyed meeting *wantoks* at their 40th anniversary reunion in Port Macquarie two years ago. Until PNG Independence Helene was a lecturer at Ward Strip Teachers College. Subsequently widowed in Australia she moved to Darwin where she spent the past 23 years. She had three brothers.

J.B. Toner

Reginald Williams Collins (13 July 2004) further details next issue.

Brenda Hammersley February 2004, aged 73 years

Brenda lived first in Mt Hagen and then the Baiyer Valley in the 1970s. As Brenda Paine, an esteemed Melbourne paediatrician, her contribution to the medical welfare of children from all over the Western Highlands will never be forgotten. Her work load intensified after she married Tas Hammersley and went to live at Trauna Valley Farm, still working part-time in Mt Hagen. Amazingly resourceful, I recall the time when Brenda interrupted Christmas festivities to pin the broken leg of their boxer dog with one of the heavy-duty barbecue skewers I had given her for Christmas.

When it was time to leave the PNG highlands Brenda began the development of a sheep property they had bought near Denmark in Western Australia while waiting for Tas to sell Trauna and join her. Later, and after an upgrade of her medical skills in Perth, she became the itinerant paediatrician for the south west coast of WA.

After her "retirement" she became absorbed with what had been a long-time hobby: the collection and documentation of wildflowers from the Denmark area which later extended to mosses and lichens. She was rewarded with several wildflower 'finds', two of which she felt very privileged to have named after her: *Andersonia Hammersleyana* and *Laxmannia grandiflora brendae*. On Australia Day last year she was presented with a community service award and named as one of two Denmark citizens of the year.

Brenda lived out her life at Denmark, at the home she designed, with never-failing interest, enthusiasm and a big place in her heart for her community. She is survived by her four brothers and step-mother Peg Paine.

Judith Blogg

Marjorie Kathleen VIAL (13 May 2004, aged 93 years)

Marjorie was the widow of Leigh Grant Vial DSC (US), a pre-War kiap and later coastwatcher, whom she met when he was aged 14 and she 13. Born in Melbourne, Marjorie went on to obtain a BA degree from Melbourne University, enjoying sport at university as well as study.

Leigh was selected as a cadet patrol officer in 1933. After a strung-out engagement because a patrol officer in the Mandated Territory had to wait for seniority to secure married accommodation, they married at Salamaua in November 1936. Leigh returned to his post at Buki, south of Finschhafen, with Marjorie but he was often away patrolling in the mountains. Marjorie sometimes went with him on patrol. After postings to Salamaua in 1937 and to Madang in 1938, during which Leigh patrolled in the Chimbu and became the first European to climb Mt Wilhelm, Leigh was appointed ADO Rabaul in 1940. Marjorie, pregnant with her third child, was evacuated with her children from Rabaul just ahead of the Japanese invasion in January 1942 and Leigh became a coastwatcher. He was killed on a supply drop in April 1943 and Marjorie was faced with raising three children as a war widow. She returned to teaching Latin and English at Korowa Girls' School. Following retirement she travelled extensively and was devoted to her grandchildren, her friends, her garden and her little dog Pierre. "Courageous, loving, gentle, wise and generous in all ways", her family summed up. Marjorie is survived by her three children and five grandchildren.

David Skinner and Lindy Gilham

William ‘Bill’ Jenkin (30 May 2004, aged 76 years)

Bill, born in Sydney, arrived in PNG in October 1949 after four years serving with BCOF Occupation Force in Japan. He joined the PNG Administration as a Tractor Operator/Mechanic with the Forestry Department until 1951 when he left to serve in Korea. In 1953 he returned to PNG, working as ‘Bush Boss’, Forest Ranger, Surveyor and eventually graduating to District Forest Officer III. He worked in a number of regions but the places he spoke of with great fondness were Lae, Rabaul and Madang – especially Madang.

Bill eventually gravitated to Headquarters in Port Moresby as Harvesting and Marketing Officer – collecting Royalties in excess of \$1 million. He married Mary, a teacher on secondment from Canberra and their two boys were born in Port Moresby. At this time also, Bill studied Accountancy, graduating as a Member of the Australian Society of Accountants. In 1968 Bill joined the Transport Department and became Executive Officer, Road Planning, for the Territory. In December 1975 the Jenkin family reluctantly left PNG to make a new life in Hobart, Tasmania. Bill worked first with a firm of Chartered Accountants and later with the State Audit Department as a Senior Audit Manager. He retired in 1994, his main interests now being overseas and Australian travel, bowls – regular and petanque, University of the 3rd Age, cooking and wining and dining. Bill is survived by his wife Mary, his sons Williams and James and his grandson, Raif.

Mary Jenkin

June ANTILL (28 June 2004, aged 88 years)

June was born at Guyra NSW in 1916, later moving with her family to Sydney. She went to Rabaul in 1947 to marry Dan, a Burns Philp plantation manager then stationed in the remote Witu Islands, and always looked on the hardships and primitive, isolated, life there as a meaningful and rewarding experience.

In 1950 the Antill’s moved to a plantation near Kokopo. Always a very popular, cheerful and capable person, June involved herself in many Gazelle Peninsula community affairs, notably the Kokopo Show and CWA. In 1962, when her two daughters had gone off to secondary school in Australia, June took a position at the sub-district office, Kokopo, looking after the Post Office and Commonwealth Bank agency. At Independence in 1975 she was asked to set up a Training School for PNG clerks and clerical assistants to enable them to be appointed to Administrative positions. June remained in charge of this school until 1980 when, along with Dan, she retired to Cremorne and finally to the NSW Central Coast 15 years ago. June is survived by her daughters Alison and Anna and their families.

Betty Benson

Stanley Francis Tyler (14 May 2004, aged 80 years)

Stan, or ‘Skinny-ribs’ as he was affectionately known to his many PNG friends, was born at Wardell in northern NSW, grew up at Mallanganee in the same region and died in Ellenbrook WA. The tragic death of his elder son Steve in 1995 and the death of his beloved Olive in 2001 precipitated failing health in the last two years of his life.

Stan was at Merauke as a sapper with the 27th Field Company of the 6th Division during WWII. New Guinea then apparently got into his blood and he first went to Port Moresby as a civilian carpenter in 1952. He later joined PWD, working firstly in Port Moresby, then in Mt Hagen and finally retiring from Madang in 1974.

The family settled in Lennox Head where Stan became unofficial chauffeur and handyman to all who needed his friendly and unstinting assistance. His often irreverent and always politically incorrect humour is legendary. While his family was undoubtedly central to his life, his mates were also 'mates for life'.

A Memorial Service was held at Mullumbimby on 29 May where his ashes were interred with Olive's. Stan is survived by his sons, Jim and Kim and their families, by his brother Patrick, sister Mary and their families.

Brian Davis

John Andrew Wallis (29 June 2004 aged 70 years)

John grew up in Newcastle NSW and then graduated from Hawkesbury Agricultural College. In 1953 he joined the Dept of Agriculture, Stock and Fisheries in PNG which he served for 29 years. His postings included Samarai, Yangoru, Finschhafen, Kapogere and Mendi where he was the Provincial Agricultural Officer for 13 years.

'He approached his work in agriculture with a consuming passion and gained the respect of many Papua New Guineans whose life he touched in a very practical way by assisting them to improve agricultural production – both in traditional subsistence farming and in economic development by introducing the concept of cash cropping of exotic crops. John was an expert in coffee production but also was well versed in tea, cocoa and coconut cultivation. Life in PNG was not all work and no play however: John's love of fun was legendary....and there are many who can ruefully attest to that, not least of all Heather. It's said that 'there's one in every crowd' – that 'one' was John Wallis! He maintained contact with many of his PNG friends over the years, for once John made a friend there was little he would not do for them, and his friendships were made to last.'

He left PNG in 1982, returning to Nelson Bay on the coast from Newcastle. There he qualified and joined the Port Stephens Strata Management Organisation. He is survived by his wife Heather and their children Sharne, Iain and Heidi.

Douglas P Franklin and extract from eulogy

Lyn Larkin (30 June 2004, aged 62 years)

Born in Sydney several weeks after her mother was evacuated from Port Moresby, Lyn returned to Port Moresby with her family after the war. Lyn joined the PNG Administration as a teenager and for a number of years was an integral member of Joe Lynch's Legislative Drafting Unit of the Crown Law Dept. In 1967 Lyn married Dr Kerry Larkin in Port Moresby. Lyn was heavily involved in community and voluntary work. She became a trained cancer carer and this was considered one of her special talents as she possessed great moral strength, empathy and compassion. In 1995 Lyn and Kerry spent two years in Malawi, Lyn continuing her volunteer work looking after babies born of mothers who had died of AIDS. They retired to Yeppoon where Lyn continued her active commitment to cancer sufferers; a commitment recognized by the Queensland Cancer Fund. Lyn and Kerry moved to the Gold Coast in 2003 to be closer to family. Lyn is survived by Kerry, her four children Nicola, Justine, Melissa and Michael, her grandchildren, sister Maureen and brothers Kevin and Geoffrey.

Maureen O'Rourke

Gabiam Mombu Gware (02 July 2004 in Lae)

Gabi is survived by husband, Muttu Gware OBE, children Rebecca, Paul, Minna, John and grandchildren. Gabi was the sister of well-known Parliamentarian Bart Philemon.

Bert Speer

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