RSLWA
North Beach
RSL Sub-Branch

OF SERVICE AND SACRIFICE

MEMBERS' STORIES

as told by them

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The Stories have been reformatted to provide the North-Beach RSL Sub-Branch with a digital copy in a format that can be distributed to members or added to over time should the Sub-Branch choose.

We value their stories as they are all part of our shared history.

We will remember them.

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RILEY Charles Owen

WX 29475 Trooper

2/3 Australian Commando Squadron

World War ll

The North Beach Memorial is located on the Charles Riley Memorial Reserve.

This is Charles Riley's story

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Charles Owen RILEY

Charles Owen Riley was a resident of Watermans Bay, and the North Beach Memorial precinct is located within the Charles Riley Memorial Reserve. This is his story and why the Reserve was named in his honour.

North Beach memorial Precinct

Charles Owen Riley was born on 2 March 1923 in Perth and was the son of Charles Lawrence Riley.

Charles Lawrence 'Tom' Riley

The son of Archbishop C.O.L. Riley, he arrived in Australia with the family in 1895. He took Holy Orders in 1912 at Caius College Cambridge and obtained a MA, LLB and later D Theology in Australia. He was a junior Chaplain in Palestine during WWl at the time his Father was Chaplain General. On his return to Perth he served in several parish positions, including North Perth.

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During WWll he was senior chaplain and then became the Chaplain General of the AIF from 1942 until 1957. He was awarded the OBE (1920) and CBE (1942). He was the fourth Bishop of Bendigo in Victoria and died 1 April 1971.

Charles Owen Riley

Charles enlisted in the CMF - 10th Light Horse in October 1941 while working on his Uncle's farm, "Quanagana", Moora. Prior to that he served 3 years in the Cadets while at Geelong Grammar, and 2 years at Hale School. On 8 July 1942 as a 19 year old he joined the Australian Military Forces and was assigned to the 2/3 Commando Squadron.

He was discharged on 5 August 1946. Having served in South East Asia, Balikpapan, Borneo and New Guinea.

The Battle of Balikpapan ***was concluding stage of Operation Oboe, the campaign to liberate Japanese held British and Dutch Borneo.*** *The landings took place on 1 July 1945. He was also Rabaul and New Guinea for over 12 months.*

The Kalgoorlie Miner 4 September 1954

Perth, Sept. 3, 1954

TAXI DRIVER DROWNED IN HEROIC RESCUE BID

Son of the Bishop Of Bendigo - a 30-year-old man was drowned at Waterman's Bay yesterday afternoon when he took a line to a dinghy in trouble in heavy surf about 200 yards offshore.

The dinghy, manned by two men, had gone out to pick up three girls carried out to sea in the heavy undertow. The drowned man was Charles Riley, a taxi driver, of Lennard street, Waterman's Bay. He was a son of the Bishop of Bendigo, the Right Rev. C. L. Riley, who is well known in this State, and a brother of the Rev. W. Riley, of Applecross.

Volunteers ran out the line until Mr. Riley reached the dinghy. He then signalled to be pulled in but while this was being done the line became entangled in a weed bank. He was unconscious when pulled ashore.

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The three girls - Doreen Gilbert, (19), of West Perth, Careen Brown (21), of Inglewood, and Lorraine Shrite, (17), of Inglewood—were staying at a Churches of Christ girls' holiday camp at Waterman's Bay. They went swimming about 3 p.m. and were carried out beyond the heavy breakers.

Albert Walkington, of Ida Street, Bassendean, an organiser of the camp, swam out to the girls and stayed with them for about 30 minutes until help arrived.

Meanwhile, Percy Hertel of Elsie street, Waterman's Bay, had seen the girls' plight. He and Sam Whitley a 68 year-old resident, who figured in a drowning rescue a month ago, took out Mr Hertel's 12 ft. dinghy. Mr. Whitley pulled two of the almost exhausted girls into the dinghy. The third girl had drifted on to a reef and was wading ashore.

Mr. Walkington clung to the back of the boat and Mr Riley, who had reached it with the line clung to the prow. "Charley swam up to the boat joking with us," Mr. Hertel said afterwards. "But after he had given the signal to be pulled in, he lost hold of the boat and disappeared about 3o yards from us."

The dinghy was now only 50 yards from shore. Then an oar broke and a huge wave swamped the dinghy throwing its occupants into the water. An unidentified woman swam out to the two girls and brought them ashore. The three men stayed with the boat and refused to go in when Allan Wells (20) also of Waterman's Bay swam out with the line Mr. Riley had used.

Eventually the dinghy drifted on to the reef and the three dragged it to shore. All were exhausted and slightly shocked but revived in their homes without medical attention.

The three girls, who had also suffered slight shock, were put to bed.

Dramatic efforts to bring more help to the people in the water were just too late. Johnny Alvo, a professional fisherman, sped from Scarborough with an outboard dinghy on a utility. In Perth, the Secretary of the North Beach Surf 'Life Saving Club, Mr. E. J. Richardson, heard the story and rushed to the beach in a taxi with two club members, Ron Westwood and Rodney Spencer. They were too late.

When Mr. Riley's plight became known men in a nearby hotel raced to the beach in cars and trucks. About 12 of them attempted to revive Mr. Riley on the surf club's resuscitation rocker without success. A St. John ambulance driver administered oxygen on the beach, still without effect. The driver rushed him to the Royal Perth Hospital, where he was certified dead.

Mr. Riley's wife and two young children were on holiday in the south-west when the drowning occurred.

The sacrifice made by Charles Owen Riley is remembered by the Reserve on the corner of North Beach Road and Kitchener Street that carries his name, and it was first dedicated to him by his Father, Bishop C. L. Riley on Saturday 23rd August 1958.

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BARTON Ted

Ted, a member of the Merchant Navy, joined the MV Duke of Athens as a 16 year old galley boy at Fremantle on the 27th of May 1942. The ship picked up a load of wheat at Geraldton and set sail for Europe via the Capetown. The ship joined a convoy which assembled at Freetown, Sierra Leone.

In crossing the Indian Ocean, the ship went south-west-wards to sail into the Roaring Forties. Galley boy Ted had to go outside the galley into the frequent storms to pump water into the urn. Woe betide him if he didn't keep that urn full! It wasn't only the cook, but the other hands as well who made tea and coffee at all hours of the night and day. Ted became accustomed to the big waves that frequently broke on the side of the ship. One day was particularly rough and the ship was rolling badly. As Ted pumped away a colossal wave suddenly broke over the ship. The parapet was more than ten feet above him, and the wave was higher than that. He wore no safety belt; it is doubtful if the ship had one. Ted hung on to the pump handle, facing a grim death. Although the galley was closed, water flooded it. Ted clung to the pump handle and watched the water flood down the scuppers, a gaping hole a metre by two metres wide. Later Ted mentioned to a sailor mate that he wondered if the ship would have been able to turn around and recover him should he have washed away. He was informed that it would be futile to make the attempt as the propeller would have made mince of him as he flowed by!

About a fortnight out of Freetown, Ted's ship was on the port side of the convoy and the third in the line. The leading ship exploded without warning and sank in a few minutes. It was very bewildering to a lad of 16 to observe how a ship could be there one minute and then disappear forever. Later that night, star shells were fired from an escort, which illuminated the sky. The next day saw two more ships sunk and the armed Merchant escorting cruiser was hit in the bows. Most of the day the crew were at action stations. As ships were sunk the ships moved up the line. Ted's ship was shortly the leader, which was now considered to be an unlucky location.

Nearing the Irish Channel more escorts joined the convoy. A submarine was sighted, the escorts dropped depth charges, but fortunately Glasgow was reached. Ted went to London to visit relatives, and there he heard the wailing Air Raid Sirens. He joined the SS Fort McLeod, anchored at the mouth of the Thames and again experienced the Air Raid Warnings continuously. Leaving London on the 10th of October 1942, down through "Bomb Alley" and "U-Boat Alley" for Glasgow, which took fourteen days. They had called at several ports, and by the cargo that had been stowed, the crew assessed that a second front was being established.

They assembled to form a convoy at Gourouch. The crew did not sleep too well that night. The crew gained the information of their destination because the radio operator, had gleaned the information from the poor BBC broadcast reception. It was to be North Africa, through the Mediterranean Sea. The 20th of November saw three ships of the convoy sunk, the attacks coming earlier than expected. There was another ship in the convoy that was on fire and beginning to lag. At the same time a plane was seen skirting the convoy which Ted assumed to be friendly. When it neared the convoy a warning shot was fired across its bows for it to establish its identity. It did not respond to the challenge and many ships engaged it. It successfully passed the escorts and then it was every ship for itself. It was a float plane flying directly at their ship. Ted thought that the gunner had waited too long before he opened fire on it. But the man was perfectly accurate and immediately hit the plane with a number of shots. Ted feared that the plane, now on fire, would crash on the deck, but at the last moment it veered and fell into the seas some fifty metres to the side. Ted returned to the other side of the ship to notice that the burning ship was about to sink. The convoy continued and frequent alarms occurred day and night until Algiers was reached on the 25th of November 1942.

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Some years later Ted was discussing the incident with a Royal Navy man who also had been in the same convoy taking supplies for the North African campaign when they thought that they were being attacked by a Catalina type plane with a German crew. The man made the remark that it was strange that Ted should mention the incident, for a Sunderland had skirted the convoy, dropped the wrong identification signal and was shot down. The BBC news that evening had stated that the Duke of Kent had failed to return to base.

Returning to Wales from North Africa the empty ship struck a severe storm in the Atlantic. A lifeboat become insecure and nearly caused extreme damage to the ammunition locker. With considerable difficulty between squalls and the extreme rolling the crew, aware of an impending explosion, was able to cut it free and let it drop into the sea. A cup of tea was enjoyed.

Ted was sent to Glasgow to join the "SS Orbita" and went back to Algiers, a trouble free trip. They were only in the port at Algiers one day but there was a high altitude air attack causing no damage to his ship. The next few months saw considerable sailing without many alarms and very few scares.

However, when leaving India one of the crew mentioned that "things" were appearing to smell. In fact, things were beginning to stink, for troops had been taken aboard. On reaching Port Said dozens of troopships were lying around at anchor. Barges replaced lifeboats. Once through the Suez Canal Ted's ship was tucked away in Alexandria, empty, for the troops had been landed. The crew pondered what it was all about. The troops returned a few days later with books on Sicily. Later the skipper called the crew onto the top deck to inform them that they were to be part of the invasion of Sicily. As if they didn't already know!

Arriving at Saracusa they saw many crashed gliders on shore. There were ships that had been hit in the harbour and only partly sunk and guns firing like hell on shore all day. It appears somebody was getting a hiding and they hoped that things were going their way for a change. Alerts occurred all day. A plane fell in flames from the sky, on whose side Ted did not know. They left the same evening, only just in time, for a very heavy attack commenced astern. The Jerry artillery was fiercely hitting back good and hard. Suddenly there was a blinding flash, followed by a loud explosion. The crew rushed to the side of the battleship to ascertain what had happened, some saying that it was a flying bomb or rocket, others being uncertain.

Later in the Mediterranean, homeward bound, some of the crew were on deck relaxing, talking of the things that they would like to do on being discharged. Without warning there were the sounds of loud explosions. Ted thought that it must be an air raid on shore, but he was told that there was no land around. explosions followed and again more a few minutes later. Some gun fire rang out. Next morning, they discovered that a U Boat had been sunk.

Returning to Alexandria via Malta several months passed without incident. Then to London to spend his leave where he found that there were air raids every night, some bombs falling nearby. At various times Ted experienced flying bombs and rockets. He found it much better to be back on board making for Algiers with fresh troops. Being on night duty Ted was asleep in his bunk one afternoon. He heard someone in the alley-way say, "She has hit us". He went to wake his mate and said, "We have been torpedoed". "Ya're balmy, mate", he replied, "the Duchess of Bedford' has rammed us". They returned to Gibraltar for repairs.

After being hospitalised in London with a throat infection, catalysed by being run down through the harsh naval conditions, he returned safely to Sydney for discharge.

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BENNETT Lindsay

President 1991 to 1993

Lindsay receiving 'The Ode' from Frank Hamilton

Initially Lindsay was called up during 1968 for National Service for a period of two years. He served with the 4th Royal Australian Regiment in South Vietnam during 1968-69. Lindsay was in a Rifle Company, generally conducting patrols and stints at Company strength, some lasting up to six weeks.

On completion of National Service, he signed on for a period of three years, as a regular, ending in 1974. During 1971 he returned to South Vietnam with 2 Squadron, Special Air Service Regiment. The principal role of the Squadron, operating in five man patrols, was reconnaissance, and ambushing to gain information for the task force intelligence section. That section, on gaining the information, was able to manoeuvre the infantry battalions. All members of the five man patrols were cross trained in many specialised skills, such as signalling (morse code), demolition, medics, free fall parachuting, diving, etc. Lindsay's particular facet in his patrol was forward scouting.

The wet season in South Vietnam was quite extra-ordinary, for there was a huge amount of rain falling each afternoon and evening. For an infantryman in particular it meant NOT having to be burdened with water, for only enough was necessary to be carried for a day or two, whereas in the dry season, sufficient water had to be carried for a seven day patrol, and that was a big burden.

Although there are many rivers in South Vietnam, to have to go near them during the dry season meant possibly compromising the patrol, especially a reconnaissance patrol. Naturally during the wet season there were plenty of mosquitoes, leeches and mud, the patrolmen being constantly wet through by the rain and humidity. Monkeys, being inquisitive and noisy, at times made the patrols feel insecure. On one occasion, particularly during the night, elephants were most disturbing. while the patrol huddled under a bush, not more than a hundred metres away, the animals were heard to be stamping and pushing over everything in their way. Previously bombed areas were also a hazard, as the craters left from 500 pound bombs, are quite large and inhibited movement. Napalmed areas, which killed the vegetation, made movement noisy through the crackling of the dead timber and sticks. Patrolling in the wet weather meant that you slept wet.

Back in camp at Nui Dat, the task force base location, accommodation was quite good, there being proper beds. There were only two or three men allocated to a large tent, with flooring and sand bags around the edges. There was a wet mess with a limited amount of beer available. Mail was received

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on a regular basis. Some troops received parcels supplied by various RSL Sub-Branches and the Women's Auxiliaries. Morale generally was not a problem. The malaria carrying mosquito was ever present. Although troops were supplied daily with paludrine and dapsone, which suppressed the problem, many troops contracted the disease. Heat rashes, tinea and bronchial infections were some of the more prevalent ailments suffered.

It is common knowledge now that the reception of troops on their return from Vietnam to Australia was markedly different to that experienced by personnel returning from other theatres of previous wars. Public attitude, which was against this war, eventually convinced the Americans to pull out of South Vietnam. At times, unfortunately, the home coming troops were treated with hostility. Everyone having a different personal, physical and mental make-up some troops were very adversely affected.

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BEST Basil

30 October 1923 – 5 April 2019

I was born at home at 17 Norfolk Street, North Perth on 30 October 1923 so that at the onset of World War II, I was 15+ years old. I left Perth Boys' School at the end of Year 3 Secondary and sat for the Junior Certificate, which in those days was virtually a ticket to get a job. I think I passed 9 subjects. I applied in writing for 43 jobs in the clerical area and finally received an appointment with the Agricultural Bank (which was later to become a trading bank – the Rural and Industries Bank and which in turn is now named Bankwest).

I was a junior clerk working in the Records Department and helping with the huge mail and filing. The Agricultural Bank was government owned and was not a trading bank but a government department which handled all loans to farmers who were setting farms on newly released land and also loans for clearing, Group Settlement for farmers, loans for wire netting, all designed to help the man on the land as many had come from England to start new careers in farming and had no finance, equipment, or knowledge.

On the day I turned 18, I, together with 5 other young chaps with whom I worked went to the Royal Australian Air Force Recruiting Centre in St Georges Terrace. My application was refused on the grounds that my eyesight was not good enough for air crew (pilot, navigator, etc), although of the six of us I had the essential mathematics needed to become a pilot.

On 8 January 1942, I was called up for service with the Army. In 1942 there were really 2 armies in Australia, one termed The Australian Imperial Force who were all volunteers and could serve anywhere in the world. The other section was called The Australian Military Force and consisted of conscripts, as I was, and whose service was limited to service only in Australia or its Territories. As soon as it was practical, I volunteered for service with the former, or the A.I.F. as it was called. I was enrolled at the Royal Agricultural Showgrounds Claremont, issued with a full kit including rifle and together with about 100 new recruits marched, carrying all this gear to our camp at Swanbourne which housed the 5 Garrison Battalion which prior to us arriving was made up of veteran volunteers from World War I (1914-1918).

That camp is now the Special Air Services Regiment Headquarters. After 6 weeks initial training, we set up a tent camp on the council reserve at Allen Park, Swanbourne. The tents we erected ourselves and no one had any idea how to do so, but by the time they were up, I had been made an acting lance corporal with one stripe on my right arm. During periods of rifle drill and other training exercises, the entire company was given the job of erecting barbed-wire entanglements along the sandhills. I believe this barbed wire was to face the ocean for the entire Perth metropolitan area and was so designed so as to act as a deterrent against Japanese invasions. Some deterrent!! When members of the company wished to go to the local pictures without permission they simply crawled under the wire.

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After some 4 months or so, we were all transferred to the Northam Camp prior to being drafted for overseas duty. I was to join the 2/28 Infantry Battalion (AIF) but suffered some virus, which caused me to miss the draft which went to North Africa and which joined the battalion at the disastrous action at Ruin Ridge.

By about October 1942, I was made a Corporal and drafted to 28 Infantry Battalion (AMF) stationed in the Dandaragan area. I was selected to undertake an officers training course, on the completion of which, I would be commissioned a lieutenant.

Fate plays a big part in a serviceman's life as to where one serves and one's overseas deployment is out of the individual's control. Fresh from helping the local farmers safeguard their fast ripening wheat crops from fire and completing the Officer's Course with ease, something happened that changed my life. Applications were called for volunteers to join the commandos. I submitted my name in a flash although I had no knowledge what commandoes did. I was paraded before the Commanding Officer who suggested that I withdraw my application, as I would forfeit my commission, which was ready to be promulgated. I persisted as my father had died when I was 14 and so I had no one really to discuss my decision with. So, I went on draft with 100 other hopefuls.

In my army career, I was plighted by a comment in my pay book, which stated my occupation as 'Bank Officer'. I did the mail and other lowly clerical jobs. But, in the army and having non-commissioned rank, I was detailed those jobs others shied at. For example, with this draft, when overnight leave was granted, who had to prepare and sign the leave passes? Me. And so, with the railway tickets for this draft going to Cunungra Queensland.

In the early days of the conflict with Japan, for personnel travelling by the trans train, rail tickets were issued. These tickets comprised perforated sections to Kalgoorlie, to Pt Pirie, to Melbourne etc, and I had care of these tickets, and as we reached a town so nominated, I would tear the appropriate section off and give to the Station Master, portions of tickets for that section for the 100 men in the draft. I will remember until the day I die, how we left from Karrakatta Station by train to travel to Queensland. The travel was in a normal local passenger train, and the little compartments accompanied about 8 persons, and I do believe that there were not any toilets in some. When we left Claremont, there was not one person to see us off except when we passed the red light area of Roe Street when some girls came out to wave us goodbye.

On leaving Perth Station a few disinterested bystanders just stood and watched us go, no cheers n' no farewells, no best wishes, no nothing. I remarked to a chap sitting opposite whether we would see Perth again, and several in that compartment didn't return.

Remember, we were all about 18 years old and several guys had tears in their eyes. Today the contrast is so marked. A ship or an army detachment leaving for the Persian Gulf has a band playing and relatives and friends of the servicemen and women waving goodbye. So, off to jungle training I went and received some facts of life. The officer in charge of jungle training told us that it was hazardous and that he was permitted a mortality rate of 5 percent.

As I am a bit of a pessimist, I felt I would be one of that 5 percent. I would like to say that the idea of the glamour of War is very much over rated. I would consider that my time spent overseas in particular, one was terrified for say 5 percent of the time, 5 percent of the time being very excited, and about 90 percent bored.

Army life is a cultural shock for many young men of my age. Prior to joining, I played many sports and had to shower in the company of many the same age. We all came from the same background, possibly went to church on Sundays and maybe had jobs in banks or similar but the shock of 30 or so in a hut sleeping side by side on a palliasse of straw, using communal toilets and showers, and many of us came from such a variety of occupations. In my hut, we had miners from Kalgoorlie, shearers,

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farm workers, wharf labourers, truck drivers, shoe salesmen, clerks, window dressers, so our social values were different and a real cultural shock.

Following our training, I was sent to New Guinea and on my return was detailed to a hospital in Toowoomba, Queensland. Why? That thing in my pay book. They wanted a paymaster and there I stayed until Peace in the Pacific was declared. And how the town of Toowoomba turned it on. Almost all businesses shut for two days to celebrate and celebrate they did with a communal BBQ of 3 bullocks, about 12 sheep and several goats. The hotels ran dry, and, on that occasion, I had my first drink of an alcoholic liquor.

With the impending end of war, I was further detailed to go to a Prisoner of War Control Centre in Kununoppin, WA. I had applied to go to the Occupation Force that went to Japan, but I was refused, as I was the sole person living at home with my aging mother. The POWs in this centre were all Italians and worked on nearby farms, as so many of the farmers' helpers, both male and female, were in the services. I met some very interesting Italians, one with whom I had a game of tennis with, had actually played Davis Cup tennis.

I won't bore you with the obvious result. Another one returned after repatriation to the farmers and in due course married the farmer's widow and in later life became a Road Board councillor.

On demobilisation, everyone was offered courses under the Commonwealth Reconstruction Scheme which was devised to give young service personnel whose studies had been interrupted the chance to improve their employment opportunities. I opted to do car maintenance as I opined that this would be handy as a car owner. It was not available, and I was offered a course in Farm Machinery, which I declined. After the war, I returned to the bank, which soon became a trading bank and was offered a promotion as Accountant/Teller at a country branch but as I was engaged to be married, I declined and went to work with the Native Affairs Department.

I always had a hankering for teaching, as my father had been one. I started doing my Leaving Certificate (now T.E.E.) and was informed that assistance would be available through the CRTS. All fees, books were paid for to enable me to do my Leaving subjects at evening classes in two years and complete an Arts Degree and Diploma of Education as a part time student at the University of Western Australia.

I also became a teacher and finally retired due to health problems as a Principal (now Director) of a Technical and Further Education College.

In addition to my full time employment with the Education Department for 13+ years, I was actively engaged as an instructor with the Citizen's Air Force (RAAF), retiring as a Flight Lieutenant. I was a Founder and Director of the now defunct Teachers' Credit Society and the Founder of an organisation for Retired Technical Officers and actively concerned with the professional organisation of my craft and in due course recognised with a Community Award.

In my retirement, I worked for 12 years in building and maintaining a community hall for the elderly. I have been active in Probus and the RSL and I am currently engaged in the project "Wheelchairs for Kids' which has seen over 4000 locally made chairs sent to needy nations overseas to help alleviate the trauma experienced by those young people who need a wheel chair for their mobility.

I've had a good life and I am terribly proud of being an Aussie.

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DYAS Ted

27 August 1919 to 24 January 2017

At the age of twenty Ted joined the Navy on the 14th of October 1940 at Hobart, Tasmania, at the depot called "H.M.A.S, HUON". After some training there and at Flinders Naval depot in Melbourne he was drafted to "HMAS Kuttabull", an old Sydney Harbour ferry, commandeered for accommodation at Garden Island. That was the vessel that the Japanese midget submarines torpedoed and killed 19 ratings when Sydney was attacked.

On 5th June 1941, Ted, now an Able Seaman, was stationed as a loading number on a four inch twin barrel anti-aircraft gun on "HMAS Hobart". Further training saw him a range taker and stationed near the bridge in the 4" Director Control tower, later being promoted to the 6" D C Tower, general duties being his lot whilst the ship was in Port.

Ted soon became the Commander's coxswain, utilising a 14 foot boat for conveying confidential messages to other ships and ashore. In Naval terms the Commander's boat is always called 'The Jolly Boat' and was, when in port, always secured under the pole extending at the bow. Ted was therefore similar to the 'Don R' in an Army establishment - always ready on the dot for messages or conveying super cargo.

"HMAS Hobart was involved in many actions during his four and a half years with the ship, and it became known as the "lucky ship". Ted recalls that when in the middle of the Indian Ocean an exhausted Albatross landed on the fore-deck. The crew gave it food and drink and it flew away. There is an old sea faring proverb with sailors that if ever an Albatross lands on a ship at sea and survives, then that ship will never sink. And so it was with the "HMAS Hobart".

During the night of 20th June 1941, at 2200 hours, the Hobart slipped out of Sydney Harbour for the Mediterranean. She entered the Suez Canal, but was forced to reverse out of the narrow channel because mines had been dropped ahead by enemy planes. History recalls the intensive bombing by German aircraft on the Suez Canal and to shipping at Port Tewfik, the entrance to the Canal. Ted's initiation to bombing there was intense, for the Germans persisted for four and a half hours that first evening. During the night "HMAS Hobart" moved its anchorage twice. That albatross knew what was going on, for each time the spot where the Hobart had just left was bombed.

Nearby, only 300 metres away, the crowded troopship "Georgic" was hit by a stick of bombs and caught fire. The "Hobart" lowered its boats, set up a medical post ashore, and ferried troops to safety. Meanwhile in attempting to beach the "Georgic" it collided and interlocked with another ship, the "Glenearn" which also caught on fire. In the dark of night, the Hobart was so close that the steel plates could be seen to be red hot and buckling, with intermittent explosions.

During these crucial periods when all hands were 'Up', that is at Action Stations and every man having a specific place on the ship for a considerable period, food was still required. Each section would send a man to the galley to get some 'Tiddy Oggies'. Tiddy Oggies were pasties made from M & V, tinned dog or whatever ingredient the cook found expedient to feed the massive crew.

Dawn revealed a sorry sight. Two big ships, on fire, locked together and beached. Later that day the Hobart towed the "Glenearn" free. The "Georgic", despite being completely gutted, was later salvaged and in post war years carried Greek migrants to Australia.

The Mediterranean was reached on the 16th of June, and Alexandria Harbour the following day. There the "HMAS Perth" was waiting to return to Australia, leaving next morning. She had been severely damaged during the evacuation of Crete. The naval historians have recorded how the "Hobart"

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valiantly operated in the Mediterranean until the Japanese entered the War. Two days later, on 9th December, she set sail for Fremantle, and by 20th January she was in the South China seas. "HMAS Perth" was sunk on 27th February 1942 in the Java Seas Battle. "Hobart" was some 300 tons short of fuel which prevented her from rushing to the aid of its stricken mate.

By 14th April 1942 "Hobart" was back in Sydney for a clean-up. On the 1st of May "Hobart" and "Australia" steered north and participated in the "Battle of the Coral Sea". That battle prevented the Japanese from landing on Australian soil and turned the tide of the invading forces. The outstanding cruiser Captain Harry Howden left the ship after the battle. Ted recalls how the skipper watched the bomb bays of the high level bombers being opened. He then would slew the ship around by reversing two motors, dodging the falling bombs. The ship creaked and shuddered but survived.

To the "Solomon Islands Landing Campaign" on 7th August 1942 with a new Captain, H.A. Showers, was the next mission. Although it was a successful campaign there were severe losses, for three American cruisers and "HMAS Canberra" were sunk. After patrolling in the Coral sea for some months "Hobart" joined Admiral Halsey's Task Force No 74 which was based at Espiritu, Santo (north of the New Hebrides) on 16th July 1943. Whilst on patrol duty with "HMAS Australia" 300 miles West of the New Hebrides on the 20th of July 1943 Hobart was hit by a single torpedo. It did considerable damage to the port quarter. 13 men were killed and 7 were wounded. Ted was lucky, for he was on the bridge at that moment. Less than five minutes later he would have been at the fatal spot. A bird lover, he remembered the albatross! Repairs were made at Espiritu, the ship then returning to the dock in Sydney for major repairs.

Ted was returned to "HMAS Huon" during the overhaul, returning to the great ship when it sailed to the Philippines, New Guinea and Borneo, and finally to Tokyo. There on Sunday, 2nd September 1945, aboard the "US Missouri" the signing of the surrender was effected.

From the deck of H.M.A.S. Hobart, Ted Dyas and Joe Anderson watched more than a thousand aircraft fly over USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay.

Japan Surrendered on 14th August 1945

Nine days later the famous "HMAS Hobart" returned to Sydney, eventually to be stripped and sold to the Japanese as scrap. But the ship showed reluctance to go, and caused considerable trouble to the purchasers, breaking away from the contractor's tugs in the Great Barrier Reef. It was towed back to Brisbane for some modifications before it was subdued. Ted was discharged fit and well on the 22nd of November 1945 after serving five years in the Royal Australian Navy.

Fifty years after the day that the torpedo struck, Ted, on 20th July 1993, celebrated at Anzac House, Perth, with a few of his surviving jack tars.

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DYER JOHN (Jack

On leaving school John became a clerk in a local government office. At the age of 19 he joined the Bristol City Police, registering during May 1939, in the Militia as a reserve Naval rating. On the outbreak of War, four months later (September 1939), being a policeman, he was considered to be in a reserve occupation. Bristol, in the Bristol Channel, is on the West Coast of England, the same latitude as London. Like other cities of England, it was very heavily bombed during the early years of the War. John's wife recalls that her sister had two miscarriages because of the bombing, and that her Aunty lost three sons due to the war.

When the Germans decided to change the air raid s to other targets the younger men of the Police Force were released for the Armed Forces. John joined the navy and was drafted the Devonport (Plymouth). After initial training he was drafted to I-WIS Norfolk, a cruiser. During the winter of 1943 the ship in company with two other cruisers, HMS Cumberland and HMS Belfast, were engaged in convoy escort duties to Murmansk, in Russia. One cruiser was fitted with Asdic, the another had the new device of Radar. The Cruiser constantly circled the convoy to guard against attacks by sea and air. T

he Russians eventually recognised all the servicemen and merchant sailors who were engaged on the convoys. Although the medal was struck on the 27th of September 1985, mention is made of John receiving it in the minutes of the Sub-Branch of November 1989. The medal bears the words [N] Yyacthhky Bohhbi?[t] and inter alia, on the obverse side, [s] 1941-1945' and literally the interpretation means [x] Forty Years of Victory in the Great Patriotic War 1943-1945'.

Later John undertook a course and passed through the ranks as a Sub-Lieutenant and eventually Lieutenant RNVR. On "D" day, 6th June 1944 John was in action as a 1st Lieutenant on a British Tank Landing Craft in Combined Operations. It was one of twelve in the only flotilla attached to the Americans, in the assault landing, at Omaha at the base of the Cherbourg peninsula, at the precise time of "H" plus 20 minutes. He recalls how on leaving the anchorage in the river Tamar, Plymouth, the home port, on 4th June the weather was so bad that the flotilla was ordered to return to Cawsands Bay, Plymouth. Hardly had his craft dropped anchor when a senior officer called on board to resume the assault. Note that there were no excessive radio signals! Although History records that the bad weather assisted the Allied attack, it also caused many casualties. Having completed eleven successful crossings of the English Channel the landing craft, because of further bad weather, sank 36 miles south of St Catherine's light on the Isle of Wight.

After a few varied appointments John became officer in charge of a tank landing craft at Falmouth and sailed to the Far East for the war against the Japanese. It was a long journey, first to Gibraltar because the little craft had to sail a long way west into the Atlantic Ocean to avoid enemy forces based at Brest. The journey to Cochin, India, took about six weeks, via Malta, Port Said and Aden. Thankfully the Japanese surrendered before the craft arrived, so it was used for ferrying supplies from ships to such places as the Andaman and Nicobar Islands groups in the Malay Archipelago.

John eventually arrived in Singapore and was given a travel warrant in order to reach England for discharge. It was an interesting journey, for he had to hitch a ride to Madras, thence proceed by train to Bombay. There he boarded an old ship, the City of London, which was returning to Scotland to be broken up, this carried him to Glasgow. After being demobilised on the 31st of March 1946 he returned to the Police Force, but things were not quite the same, so he migrated to Australia, with his wife, in June 1964.

When he purchased an outlying block on a street near the coast at Sorrento, for a nominal amount, his brother in law, Fred Moore, rubbished him for buying a block in the wilderness and accused him of wasting his money. The quiet street became West Coast Highway, now West Coast Drive. The wind caused them to leave, with some profit, for a quieter and clean street in North Beach. John has been a

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regular and loyal member of this Sub-Branch, serving as an Auditor for over ten years, later a Trustee and on the successful Dinner Committees.

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ELLIS W. J. (Bill)

KILLED ACTION 19-12-1952.

Bill and his Wife Daphne 1950

Bill Ellis had all the qualifications to be a member of the Returned and Services League, but he never had the opportunity to join the Sub-Branch, for he was killed in action in Korea. Bill's is a typical story of popular and dynamic young fellows meeting their death, not always because of loyalty to the Nation, but because of economic times, responsibility to the family and the will to succeed. Whenever the chips came down these fellows were loyal to the cause, the Nation, their fellow servicemen, no matter whether in Darwin, New Guinea, Korea or anywhere. It touches on the responsibility, too, that the Army accepted for the sustenance of his widow and daughter, and that Legacy contributed in a small way, to the education of his daughter. More dramatically it touches on the catastrophic effect of his daughter's deep suspicion for nigh on forty years that her father in some way had abandoned both her mother and her, by volunteering for service in a War Zone.

Bill's father Charles, a WW1 veteran of the ANZACS in Gallipoli. He migrated to Western Australia, left the South West Group Settlement Scheme and took his wife Ruby and family to Harvey, where Bill was born. A neighbour, Kitty Smith, then an eight year old girl, had a real doll to nurse. That is how, over the years, a strong friendship with Kitty, later Mrs Ted King, prospered. We find Charles a loyal member of the Harvey RSL Sub-Branch, attending all Anzac Services. At the age of fourteen years, Bill, a well-developed and handsome lad, with a keen sense of humour, was a very capable boxer. Some local Harvey people organised a boxing bout with a visiting 21 year old English sailor, and Bill ably quitted himself. A few years later Bill's family came to North Beach.

Bill married a North Beach girl, Daphne Sabine, who lived in Ada Street. During 1950 his daughter Caryl was born. With some members of his family he participated in a carrying business. The Metal Trades strike of that era had a profound impact on their business. Money was short, and it appears that Bill was very conscious of his obligation to wife and daughter. He had to get a •job and the Army had vacancies. Bill enlisted, but initially not for overseas service.

The History books state that the troops for Korea were mainly selected from the 65th, 66th and 67th Battalions, part of the Occupational Forces in Japan. Out of that body the Royal Australian Regiment, comprising the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Battalions, was formed, the honour of 'Royal' being bestowed on the 22-11-48, the celebrated birth date of the Regiment. Bill was told by an old timers' who had served

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overseas in World War Two that he would not get very far in the Australian Army unless he experienced overseas service. He therefore volunteered for duties in Korea and joined the 1st Battalion.

Bill posted a parcel to Kitty King's mother, Mrs Smith, of Harvey, on the 9th of December 1952, for that is the post mark date on the neatly sewn calico parcel that your editor clearly witnessed. It contained a photo Album, obviously purchased in Korea, as a Christmas present for Mrs Smith. Ten days after mailing the parcel, on the 19th of December 1952, whilst on night patrol duties in Korea, acting as Sergeant, leading his section, Bill stepped on a land mine. Apparently, he knew that he had tripped the mechanism of the mine, for he stood still whilst he called a warning to his men, who dived for cover. (The anti-personnel land mines as used at that time were 's armed' by a person standing on them, causing the mechanism to make a 'click' noise. They exploded as soon as the weight was released. Ed).

Bill's death is recorded in the book "Australia in the Korean War "(* see hereunder). It is recorded that when a patrol commanded by Lt Boyd, who appears to be O/C No 10 platoon, accidentally entered a mine-field at the foot of Hill 227 (Fanny Hill). Bill, the Forward Scout, was killed and that Boyd and Pte Cupitt were wounded. They were eventually rescued by their Sgt Corcoran, (later Premier of S.A.) organising a squad. After forty one years it is difficult to find and interview any of the troops that were with him at that tragic night. That he called a warning to his men and the circumstances of his death was related by a stranger to Kitty and Ted King, of Harvey, at a dance, some years ago. Efforts have been instituted to contact some of his associates on that dangerous mission. (See Can You Help, West Australian 3-7-93). Ron Cross, a close fellow serviceman friend, stated that Bill had a premonition that he would not return, whilst his brother Don felt that Bill had a feeling that nothing would go wrong with him.

The Christmas parcel arrived at the Smith household the day after the news of Bill's death. After opening the parcel Mrs Smith informed her daughter Kitty that the album should be put away and given to Billy's baby daughter as soon as they met her. That meeting did not take place for forty years, by which time Mrs Smith had died. Kitty, long married to Ted King, was an elderly lady herself, but still holding on to the parcel.

When Daphne went along to claim a War Widow's pension at the appropriate office there was some confusion, for apparently there were not many Western Australians with dependents meeting their deaths in the services at that phase of time. Bill had also taken out an insurance policy, the small print showing some confusing words to the effect that death must occur more than twelve months after enlisting or being posted. The family were only able to collect, because more than twelve months had elapsed from the date of Bill's enlistment due to him being unfit to leave Fremantle with his original posting, and not having commenced his tour of duty until the next round of departures from Sydney.

Caryl did not know her father. Over the years she created the belief that Bill had abandoned his wife and her. As she went through her teen-age years, often shorter of money than many of her fellow scholars, and struggling to gain a University Degree, she alternated between feelings of rage at her father and self-pity at having been so hardly done by. Legacy contributed what help it could and the Defence Department, because of her academic progress, extended its support through to Post Graduate Studies.

The economic years in which Caryl was maturing saw much development in Western Australia. The development of the Oil Refinery, followed by the discovery of the massive deposits of iron ore and the great reserves of natural gas, brought much wealth to many people. Young maturing people throughout the affluent sixties and seventies did not realise just what slumps meant to families and the community. Caryl did not consider the fact that Bill, with possibly some creditors, had seen the Army as an avenue in which he could get financial relief and support for his family. His case was typical of many men of

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the 1939 era, initially joining the Army for financial relief, but never flinching in the service of the Nation.

Daphne had moved to the country and remarried. Throughout most of those forty years Caryl chose, quite deliberately, to have no contact with Bill's brothers, Don and Gerry, and their families. In 1992, backed by support and caring from members of the Centre for Attitudinal Healing, Caryl came to finally understand that the only person being punished by her anger at Bill's death, and apparent 'abandonment', was herself. She then contacted her Uncle Don, who took her to Harvey to meet the Kings. They put her in touch with people who had known and loved Bill during his childhood and had been close friends of her Grandparents whom she had never known.

The laughter and the stories told by the Kings in 1992, finally convinced Caryl that her father was a man who loved life, his wife and his daughter and who had simply made the best choices that he knew to take care of them all.

It was with a deep sense of love and respect for the man, her father, Lance Corporal W.J.Ellis, 5/1677, that Caryl has approached the North Beach Sub-Branch for some memorial to him.

The two Remembrance Rocks placed at the front of the Elected Members section of the City of Stirling Council Chambers make no reference to the Korean War. Members of the Korea and South East Asia Forces Association refer to the Korean War as 'The Forgotten War'. One caller has advised that there is a Korean War memorial in Melville. Many of Bill and Caryl's relatives live in the North Beach and adjacent areas. May this epistle stimulate some interest in the community so that the troops who served in Korea, ever loyal to this Nation, to their fellow soldiers and service personnel, to their families and the community in general, are suitably recognised.

The Korean War, being a United Nations War, saw the Australian soldiers not a part of an Australian Force acting with the Australian Air Force and Navy, but as individual small components attached to the much larger forces of Britain and the United States. Yet the Australian Army suffered 277 fatalities and 1210 wounded. Combat casualties were also suffered by the Navy (2f 28w) and the Air Force (280, but the total number serving has been difficult to ascertain because of the nature of their operations and allocations. Perhaps this is the reason that not a lot of the general public goodwill has emerged for these fine servicemen.

**"Australia in the Korean War 1950-53" by Dr R. O'Neill, Director of the International Institute for Strategic Studies, London. The volume mentions the difficulty of obtaining the intimate facts, for at that phase of time, inter alia, Australia did not have its own set of War Diaries as the Australian Regiment was under the jurisdiction of the British Commonwealth Brigade and the records are in the British Ministry of Defence.(see p. 751).*

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HAMILTON Frank

Frank was born on 26th of November 1923 and joined the Army initially as a member of the 33rd Anti-tank Regiment, training at Pt Walter, Western Australia. He served as a Bombardier in a battery attached to the 6th Infantry Brigade, which patrolled areas north of Geraldton during 1942.

He transferred to the R.A.A.F. air crew. After rookie training at Victor Harbour, South Australia, Frank continued at Cunderdin, Western Australia, flying Tiger moths. He then went to Calgary, Canada as part of the Empire Air Training Scheme, flying twin engine Cessna Cranes. After obtaining his wings he was posted to England as a Sergeant pilot in April 1944, later rising to Warrant Officer.

After various airfield control duties Frank, along with 20 other pilots, was selected to do a flight engineers course at St Athens in Wales. The object was to supply second pilot-engineers for the proposed "Tiger Force", whose object was to fly out to the Pacific as a ready-made bomber group.

He eventually joined Squadron 467, R.A.A.F. Lancaster Squadron, based at Waddington, Lincolnshire. Following victory in Europe 467 Squadron was transferred to "Tiger Force". Based at Metheringham the squadron continued training for the Pacific theatre. It was spared the Pacific service when Japan capitulated.

Following V.E. day it was decided to use 467 Squadron to fly Italian Prisoners of War home to Italy from a base in Southern England. Accordingly, 20 Red coated Italians were loaded into each Lancaster for the flight to Bari in southern Italy

The Lancasters were very limited for interior space for passengers, and having no interior lining, certain control rods to the rear rudders and elevators were exposed to view, as they continually moved under the pilots' directions.

On one occasion a severe electrical storm was encountered over Italy, with a writhing band of electricity forming about the tips of one propeller. [The writhing band of electricity was similar to that phenomenon familiar to early sailors at St Elmo's Lights. It collected around the mastheads during storms]. The combination of turbulent conditions, writhing bands of electricity and the rapid adjustments of the controls by the pilot caused the Italians to panic. They grabbed the moving control rods inside the fuselage, having the mistaken impression that the aircraft was falling apart. The result was that the aircraft was locked in a shallow dive with the two pilots unable to move the controls. A panic stricken rush by the crew eventually made the Italians release the rods, thus avoiding a rather delicate situation. A very shaken group of Prisoners of War were eventually off loaded at what was left of Bari airport.

Of the 1814 aircrew members that passed through the unit, 590 lost their lives. 117 became prisoners of war and 84 evaded capture and returned to England. The squadron flew 3,395 sorties. (Note that the loss ratio of about 1/3 was par for the airmen of the Empire Air Training Scheme).

Frank was discharged in February 1946. On returning to civilian life he joined the Education Department, firstly as a Primary teacher, then seconded to the National Fitness Council as a field officer and sec

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HUMMERSTON Captain H S M.C

As told by **Koch Wayne**

Wayne Koch 5715685, a long standing member of the North Beach Sub-Branch was born in Boston USA in 1947. When National Service was introduced in Australia in 1965 he was, on turning 20 years old, conscripted to serve his 2 years. During his service he served in Vietnam from November 1968 to November 1969 with the Royal Australian Army Service Corps with Headquarters, 1st Australian Task Force.

In 2012, Wayne made a trip to Gallipoli along with 26 other Australian Conservation Volunteers to help with the commemorations of ANZAC Day 2012. Ninety Seven years before, on 25 April 1915, his Grandfather Stan Hummerston was where Wayne stood. This was truly a time of reflection.

However, this is not a story about Wayne. Like many of his generation, his father and grandfather served during World War 1 and World War 2. This is a story about his maternal Grandfather, Horace Stanley Hummerston (Stan), Service Number 677.

Stan was born in South Australia in 1890, the son of Charles Hummerston who later became the owner of the Kalamunda Hotel.

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Stan enlisted in September 1914 at Bunbury and was allocated to the 16th Battalion. He was 24 years old, 6 foot 2 inches tall (188 cm) and 175 Pounds (79 kg) and was working as a railway Sleeper Hewer.

After initial training, the 16th Battalion left Albany for Egypt on 'HMAT Ceramic' in late 1914 with the second contingent of troops ships via the Suez Canal. On arriving in Egypt he wrote from Heliopolis:

> Note: This letter is published as it was written and reflects the language of the time. It shows the wonderment and excitement experienced by many of the young Australians prior to their first time in battle.

"Heliopolis," February 10, 1915.

Dear Dad

Well I, with the rest of the boys, have arrived in the land of the Pharaohs, and what a bonzer trip we had getting here! Not a ripple big enough to drown our sorrow at leaving Australia, let alone make us sick.

Well mate, after leaving Melbourne our first stop was Albany, where we put in three days, but the censorship was so severe that I did not think it was worth while writing. After leaving Albany we had a long stretch of water, but the monotony was broken by ships passing and a few islands which we passed.

We left (that is, three of the transports) the rest of the fleet about three days off Colombo and made for Aden, so I can tell you nothing of Colombo, but as we stayed three days, at Aden—on board all the time—I will tell you how it struck me. It is one huge rock, honeycombed, the same as Gibraltar, and the town is situated on the only level piece of ground, which is close to the water. The town itself we never had chance of seeing, but I think like all of these places this way, it looks better at a distance. The next thing, and perhaps the funniest of the lot was the "bum boats," which were in swarms. All the boys had been paid a couple of days previously, so business was brisk. The first day the "nigs" had a great win at our expense, but the second and third days we started to "take a tumble," and the things we were paying a shilling for at first we bought for 3d. Oranges, for instance, we paid a 1/- a dozen for at first, but we got them for 3d. a dozen and less just as the boat was leaving. So the "nigs" will be waiting for the rest of the shrewd heads from Australia the same as we were.

The letter goes on to describe in detail the remainder of the trip to Alexandria, but this has been omitted from this story.

On disembarking we boarded a quite respectable train and started on a 120 mile ride. Dad, this is where I nearly died from shock, and so did everyone else who has never been here. Expecting to go through arid desert on our way to Cairo we went through nothing else but one vast green field of lucerne, clover, and other such grasses, except in places where there were extensive vegetable gardens. You cannot credit it is so fertile a country between Alexandria and Cairo, and right along the Nile unless you see it. But out the other side of Cairo is all desert, and also out from our camp.

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Where we are camped is about half a mile from Heliopolis, which is an aristocratic suburb of Cairo, and it is one of the finest places as far as buildings and train services go, that you would wish to see. There is not building in the town under 3 storeys high, and every building built of white freestone. The hospitals and mosques here are magnificent, and other buildings, too numerous to mention, are worth a long walk to see. They also have a place called Luna Park here, exactly the same as the one at St. Kilda, aerial railways, water chutes, etc., so we can have a lot of fun for half piastre (1.25 pence). Cairo is the dirtiest place that God ever meant humanity to live in. Some of the streets are not ten yards wide, and every window is a shop—some fruit, others beer, dance rooms, and everything you can imagine. There are also some nice streets and buildings in Cairo but taken as a whole I will write it down as rotten, and I don't think I, or any of the boys, will trouble it much, as Heliopolis is good enough for us. Heliopolis is seven miles from Cairo by train, and the fare is half a piastre.

On Sunday we went to the Pyramids, where the first contingent are camped, and that is about 11 miles from Cairo in the opposite direction to us. For that ride they charge you one piastre, so it does not cost you much for travelling.

The Pyramids are great giant heaps of stone, built systematically, of course, and how they got some of the stones there, God only knows. We went inside, but to describe it by letter is beyond me, and but for the fact that we had a guide I don't think I would have risked it, as it is very slippery and loose in there.

We also went and saw the boys of the first contingent, and on the whole they all seem in splendid "nick." I had a talk to Bert Baker (another Kalamunda contingenter), and you can tell his people if you see them he is in splendid health, and as merry as a lark. We are allowed leave till 9.30 in Heliopolis every night, and the boys conduct themselves splendidly— so the Colonel says, and that is good enough for us. One great peculiarity of this place—also of Cairo—is, as soon as you get in the town, there are hundreds of kids—black, of course—who say ***"stalia goot, boots shine mister?"****, and they will clean your boots for half a piastre, and often for a cigarette. Every second "nig" you strike has got either postcards or silks to sell you, and you want about ten men to clear a way for you. There are also a lot of Territorials here, and most of them are not much older than our compulsory cadets, and certainly not as tall, but they are not a bad lot of fellows, and we get on with them all right.*

Well, mate, I don't know when we will be in the firing line, but I hope it is soon, as we are all looking forward to a fly at the Turks."

In concluding his letter, Stan promises any news omitted will be furnished in his next letter, and conveys his kind regards to all his friends.

Letters from Stan may not have been frequent, as his sister wrote to a West Australian Senator to obtain help in obtaining his mail address. She was successful in obtaining this.

On 12 April 1915 Stan embarked Alexandria with the Mediterranean Expeditionary Forces for the Gallipoli Peninsular. He arrived on the beach on the afternoon of 25 April to a now alerted Turkish Army. In May he was wounded in the left hip, but soon returned to action. During his time in Gallipoli he was promoted to Corporal, Sergeant, and Second Lieutenant. Like many other troops he had bouts of sickness that required him to spend time on Hospital ships that were offshore from Gallipoli, and on Lemnos. These were staffed by both Australian and New Zealand Nurses who were also on the first and second contingents of troop ships that left Albany and other ports for Egypt.

In September he was admitted to hospital in London and by November 1915 returned to Ismailia via Alexandria in Egypt. He was promoted to Captain in April 1916 and by June that year was in France.

Stan served with a Major Black in Gallipoli, right through to the first Battle of Bullecourt where Black was Killed in Action. On Black's death Stan, as senior officer, took control organising his sector of the battle. On 11 April 1917 he was wounded and was reported as "Missing in Action". As a result of this action he was subsequently awarded the Military Cross, but this was not formally approved until 1919 as he was a P.O.W. for the remainder of the War The Citation reads:

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This officer is brought to notice for his exceptional powers of leadership , organization, and bravery under very trying conditions. He led his Company in the charge against the HINDENBURG LINE near BULLECOURT on the morning of the 11th April 1917.

He was the first of his Company into both the first and second objectives , and by sheer bravery and example carried his men with him over absolutely untouched barbed wire into the second objective. He was the Senior Officer of the Battalion in the line (Major BLACK having been killed after taking the first objective).

He superintended the organization and distribution of the men in all parts of the line captured and held by us. He was always to be found at the points of greatest danger assisting , encouraging and leading his men with a remarkable disregard for his own personal safety.

It is due to the resourcefulness of this Officer in husbanding ammunition and organizing troops to the best advantage that our troops were able to hold on to a most hazardous and difficult position for so long. He refused to leave the trenches until he and the handful of men remaining were surrounded on three sides.

He then directed the getting away of these men and saw that they had got a fair start for our trenches before he himself left on the hazardous return journey. He was seriously wounded when returning to our trenches and was subsequently picked up and made Prisoner by the enemy.

For his magnificent courage and devotion to duty he is very strongly recommended for the highest distinction".

During this action he was taken as Prisoner of War in France and interred for the remainder of the War in Germany. His Service Records show he was P.O.W. in Karlsruhe on the French German border north of Strasbourg. The photo shows him in Krefeld, which is on the Dutch German Border, so he may have been relocated.

Australian Prisoner Of War (POW) Officers at Crefeld [Krefeld] POW camp in Germany.

***Standing higher at back**, left to right, Lieutenant (Lt) James Matthew Cooney, 13th Battalion, from Bodangora, NSW, and Lt Vincent William Charker, 20th Battalion, from Sydney, NSW;*

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***Back Row**, left to right, Lt Norman George Blanchard, 20th Battalion, from Sydney, NSW; Captain (Capt) Alexander Smeaton Robertson, 21st Battalion, from Melbourne Vic; Lt Oliver Stanley Gluyas, 13th Battalion, from Melbourne; Lt Peter William Lyon, 11th Battalion, from Perth, WA; Lt John Hamilton Matthews, 55th Battalion, from Cootamundra, NSW; Lt George D'Arcy Folkard, 55th Battalion, from Walcha, NSW; **Capt Horace Stanley Hummerston**, 16th Battalion, from Kalamunda, WA; Lt William Alroe Halvorsen, 51st Battalion, from Perth; Lt Reginald Edwin Sanders, 14th Battalion, from Wodonga, Vic; Lt Frederick Mitchel Culverwell, 16th Battalion, from Blackboy Hill, WA; Lt George Douglas McLean, 16th Battalion, from Adelaide, SA; Lt Joseph Huxley Honeysett, 47th Battalion, from Hobart, Tas; Capt Robert Alyth Keay, 32nd Battalion, from Perth; Lt Hugh Cresswell Anthony, 7th Battalion, from Melbourne.*

***Second Row**, left to right, Lt Alfred Tonkin Brine, 12th Battalion, from Claremont, WA; Capt Arthur Gerard Fox, 13th Battalion, from Sydney NSW; Capt George Guyatt Gardiner, 13th Battalion, from Sydney; Lt Albert William Montague Bowman, 53rd Battalion, from Sydney; Lt Herbert Johnson, 21st Machine Gun Company, from Stanthorpe, Qld; Lt Leo Clement O'Kelly, 8th Battalion from Gippsland, Vic; Lt Norman David Lloyd Cumming, 22nd Battalion, from Castlemaine, Vic; Lt Ernest John Leslie Edmonds, 14th Battalion, from Melbourne; Capt David Leslie Todd, 50th Battalion, from Adelaide; Lt Maxwell Gore, 50th Battalion, from St Peters, SA; Lt John Ernest Edwards, 50th Battalion, from Footscray, Vic; Lt Harold Redman Lovejoy, 54th Battalion, from Penshurst NSW, Lt William Murdoch, 15th Battalion, from Irvinebank, Qld;*

***Front Row**, left to right, Lt George Cummins, 20th Battalion, from Sydney; Lt Alan McGown, 13th Battalion, from Sydney; Lt Leslie Percival Ridgwell, 46th Battalion, from Ballarat, Vic; Lt Albert Morris Marshall, 15th Battalion, from Ulverstone, Tas, Lt Charles William Hooper, 4th Battalion, from Sydney NSW, Lt William Stanley Missingham, 15th Battalion from Kingaroy, Qld; Lt Edward Binnington, 15th Battalion, from Bundaberg, Qld.*

His last letter home, probably written immediately prior to his capture shows a vastly different mood from his first letter, and this is understandable, considering his battlefield experience. This reads:

"Somewhere in France.

Dear Dad,

I hope you are all in the 'pink,' for we are well here. As you will no doubt know, things here are moving, though at present slowly, and we are in it, and intend to be in it at the finish. I believe fruit is very plentiful this year. Strange to say, fruit is a thing that does not trouble us much here, for you can just fancy this with a nice ripe orange, and the thermometer at 7deg. less than zero.

The 'burning question' here at present is: Do the W.A. people know that the 16th Battalion, A.LF., came from Western Australia? If not, why not?

By the people of W.A., I mean people who haven't any relations or very near friends in the Battalion, and if it is widely known that we are a W.A. Battalion. What have we ever done wrong to deserve the treatment we have had since the two first formed - i.e., if it wasn't for the extremely patriotic people in South Australia, 'this Battalion' would be very poorly represented on the gifts cards. The South Australians in the Battalion are less than 100, and this out of say eleven hundred men is but a small proportion, and yet South Australians practically monopolise the picture with regard to gifts received by us to date.

This Battalion has been formed practically from the inception of the A.I.F., and has to its credit some of the finest exploits on Gallipoli and in France; yet when we read our W.A. papers, we see of

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committees being formed for all Battalions with the exception of the first two formed, i.e., the 11th and 16th. The 'Sunday Times' and daily papers received by the last mail are the papers quoted.

The 'Victoria League' has certainly very kindly sent us papers and some gifts, but not more than enough to go round. Hearing our grand lads complaining and talking of this, what we think is lack of interest in some of W.A.'s best men, and knowing it ourselves, is what made me at last mention it.

Now I have finished for the time and do not want anyone to think we say that we are any better than any other Battalion, but a little enthusiasm displayed towards a small committee or two will certainly help to get our boys a fair share of W.A. gifts, which are so thoughtfully sent to her lads on active service."

Stan was repatriated on 1 January 1919 with other Prisoners of War to Rippon, England and embarked to Australia per "HMAT Anchises". He disembarked in Albany on 10 April 1919 and was discharged from Service on 10 June 1919.

He was active in the Kalamunda community following the War and records show he was able to win a batting award representing the local cricket club in season 1919 – 1920. Like so many of the young men returning after World War 1 his health was seriously impacted by his service, wounds and gas exposure at Bullecourt in 1917. He developed "Pulmonary Tuberculous/Galloping Consumption" and died in 1926 at the age of just 36.

His Obituary in 'The West Australian' of Tuesday 31 August 1926 stated that his funeral was well attended by members of the community, community organisations and fellow members of the 16 Battalion. It stated that he was yet another victim of the scourge of the War.

A short lived life, but just one of many who were lost during and as a result of World War 1.

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KENT Frank

WX 4075, 2/16th Battalion

During the pre-war period Frank Kent was a member of the 16th Battalion Cameron Highlanders of W.A.

At the outbreak of War, the Highlanders were mobilised and sent to Rottnest Island for intensive training. During that time the 2nd Eleventh A.I.F. was formed. Frank endeavoured to enlist in that unit but was rejected on medical grounds. He was given the opportunity to join an Infantry Training Battalion to train recruits, at Northam. He remained there as a general instructor until able to join the A.I.F.

As a member of the 2/16th Battalion he sailed on the Acquitania for somewhere overseas during June 1941. Some time was spent training in India, eventually reaching Julius camp, Palestine in November 1940. On 30th December Frank was rushed to hospital with peritonitis. He was very ill for some time and did not re-join the Battalion until the Syrian campaign was nearly over. He served there until October 1941 when illness again placed him back in hospital and sent back to Australia on the Dutch Hospital ship 'Oranje'.

Whilst in hospital the troops listened in the evenings to Lord Haw, the German counterpart of Tokyo Rose. They did not know when they were leaving, so were quite startled when Haw told them that they would be going the next morning, and he also named the ship on which they would be sailing. Haw stated that the Germans did not recognise the ship as a hospital ship and that it would be sunk whilst still in the Red Sea. He was right in everything that he said, except the sinking.

Frank reached Fremantle on 5th December 1941, the day before Pearl Harbour. Frank was put into Hollywood hospital for a long while and was discharged as unfit during February 1942. (Pearl Harbour is generally recognised as being attacked on the 7th of December 1941 if you are on one side of the International date line, and the 6th of December if you have crossed the line. Ed).

But the Army was in Frank's blood. At the end of the year he had regained his health and reenlisted, serving in Australia until the end of the War.

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MEYER Jack

A TALE OF TWO BROTHERS

13 Squadron R.A.A.F - WW2

Frank Meyer

Jack Meyer

Two Guildford born brothers both served in World War 2 with 13 Squadron of the R.A.A.F. Notification of "Missing in Action" of one, motivated the other to enlist as soon as he was able.

Francis Norman (Frank) Meyer, Service Number 290745, was born 1921, the year the R.A.A.F. was founded. He joined the RAAF in February 1940 at age 18 and by 30 January 1942, as Flying Officer, was in Ambon, Dutch East Indies, when the Japanese invaded. One serviceable Hudson left Ambon with as many personnel as it could carry. 11 R.A.A.F personnel did not make that flight, including Frank, and tried to quickly repair the remaining Hudson in order to evacuate. They were unable to make repairs, immediate evacuation was not available, so they were left to plan other options.

The group made their way across Ambon to escape by boat to the island of Ceram. Arrangements had been made with the R.A.A.F. to rendezvous there to be evacuated to Darwin. They were captured by a Japanese Patrol boat, taken prisoner to Laha on Ambon, and executed. Their deaths as Prisoners of War was recorded as 20 February 1942 - the precise date was not known. About 300 Australian Army members of Gull Force were also massacred at that time.

His younger brother **Edmund John (Jack) Meyer**, Service Number 436335, was born in 1924 and was only 17 years old when he heard that Frank was "Missing in Action".

Jack said, "As to be expected, it had a profound impact on me, and I let it be known to my father that I wanted to enlist in the R.A.A.F. as soon as I could. At the time I was 17, and a Corporal in the Air Training Corp, 78 Squadron. My father, after receiving confirmation advice that Frank was 'Missing in Action', wrote a letter of appreciation to the R.A.A.F. He did this because of the support it provided the family in clarifying, the best it could at that time, the circumstances surrounding Frank."

Jack's father wrote:

"We are delighted to know that he was granted the privilege of being associated with that fine body, the R.A.A.F., in the defence of his country. It was bad luck, it's the fortune of War that he was out so soon. However his brother, an enthusiastic member of the A.F.C., only awaits his 18th birthday next month to follow in his footsteps with, we hope, a little better luck."

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"It wasn't until mid-1946 that detailed information leading up to Frank's capture and death was provided to my father as a result of trials and interrogation of the Japanese forces who served in Ambon at the time."

At 18 and one month, Jack had joined the R.A.A.F. "I was enthusiastic to be in the R.A.A.F. I was unable to be a pilot so trained as an Air Gunner. I was too young to go to the UK, but with some satisfaction I was later assigned to 13 Squadron, my brother's squadron". Initially trained on Hudsons, Jack and crew were posted to the reformed 13 Squadron flying Venturas. He said, "On our first flight, approaching take off speed, something happened, and we ended up doing 'ground loops', just missing the hanger and other aircraft."

Initially flying escort duties and anti-submarine patrols, the crew relocated to Gove. "We carried out anti-submarine patrols and armed reconnaissance, flying out of Gove and Truscott. We were assigned bombing raids on shipping and supply barges in and around the then Dutch East Indies of Sumba, Sumbawa and the Flores. We were targeted with anti-aircraft, machine gun and small arms fire, but with no major incidences." Jack recalled that, "On one mission we spotted a Japanese vessel at anchor, but needed to reload to bomb it, so instead we attempted to use our guns, but problems with the Gun Turret forced us to return to base." A lucky escape.

Jack(bottom left) with air crew.
"Dinkie", the dog, is wearing a harness and flew on missions with the crew.

"Towards the end of the War we flew in and out of Morotai, ferrying high ranking Defence personnel to the RAAF Command base there, for them to participate in conferences with the Americans. On our flights to and stays on Morotai and New Guinea, we also experienced being bombed by the Japanese Airforce."

Jack reflected that, "The relationship between members of the crew was very supportive and we enjoyed a camaraderie that was typical of a R.A.A.F. bomber crew.

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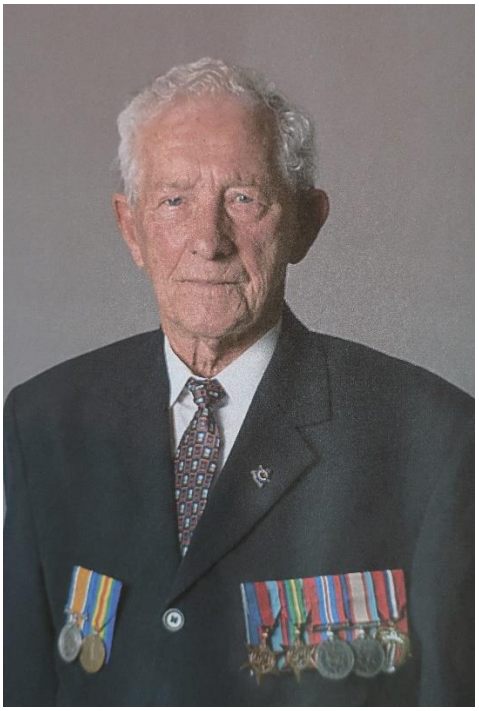

Jack Meyer

Jack served with distinction and would have made Frank proud of him. He was discharged on 14 November 1945 with the rank of Warrant Officer. He then re-joined the S.G.I.O, and by 1948 was with the Commonwealth Bank. He completed his career in 1982 as Manager of its Belmont Branch.

"I joined the RSLWA, Maylands Sub-Branch, in 1945 but didn't remain a member. In 2007 following the death of my wife, I joined the Air Force Association and the North Beach Sub-Branch. I attend as many meetings as I am able and enjoy the friendship and support it offers.". "I also used to deliver Sub-Branch newsletters to those members who lived in my area and were unable to attend meetings".

John Rolfe, the North Beach Sub-Branch President said: "Jack is an active and respected member, attends our meetings, commemorations and social events. It is important that we all respect and honour our World War 2 Veterans and their service.".

Jack is three years younger than the R.A.A.F, and reflecting on this he said, "I'm proud of the contribution I made, as it was my passion to serve with the R.A.A.F. from a young age." He commended the R.S.L., and in particular his Sub-Branch, for "the support, respect, and friendship it offers ."

It is the service of people like Frank and Jack, that has helped make the R.A.A.F what it is today.

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MOVLEY Laurie P

Laurie was born in Stratford, Connecticut, U.S.A. on 17th February 1918. He is American by birth, British by Nationality and Australian by Choice. He is a British National, for his family returned to England when he was three years old. He was, in 1939, a member of the 677 Construction Company, Royal Engineers, and later "B" Field Company. He served in France with the Royal Engineers during 1939-40 and was evacuated off the beach at Bray Dunes north of Dunkirk. On July 18th, 1940, his father was advised by letter by the Royal Engineers Record Office Brighton, that " Sapper Movley was reported Missing by his unit".

Missing does not mean that he has been killed, as he may be a prisoner of war or temporarily separated from his regiment. Official records that men are prisoners of war take some time to reach this country, and if he has been captured by the enemy it is probable that unofficial news will reach you first. In that case you are asked to forward any Post Card or letter received at once to this Office, and it will be returned to you as soon as possible.

A Letter of Concern.

No. 5/R3/83/M10. Army Form B. 104—83
(If replying, please quote above No.)

ROYAL ENGINEERS, Record Office,
BRIGHTON.

July 18 1940

SIR ~~OR MADAM~~,

I regret to have to inform you that a report has been received from the War Office to the effect that (No.) 1902596 (Rank) SAPPER.
(Name) MOVLEY
(Regiment) ROYAL ENGINEERS.
was posted as "missing" on the DATE NOT STATED.
BY UNIT ONLY.

The report that he is missing does not necessarily mean that he has been killed, as he may be a prisoner of war or temporarily separated from his regiment.

Official reports that men are prisoners of war take some time to reach this country, and if he has been captured by the enemy it is probable that unofficial news will reach you first. In that case I am to ask you to forward any postcard or letter received at once to this Office, and it will be returned to you as soon as possible.

Should any further official information be received it will be at once communicated to you.

I am,
SIR ~~OR MADAM~~,
Your obedient Servant,
P. Hutchings Colonel
for Officer in charge of Records.
R.E.

IMPORTANT.
Any change of your address should be immediately notified to this Office.

(6546) W.L.25481/1837 80,000 9/39 A.&E.W.Ltd. Gp.498 Forms/B.104—83/8

WHERE WAS LAURIE? When the German attack was launched in May 1940, they ignored the famed Maginot Line, a prepared defensive line of fortifications lining the border of France and Germany. The German Forces swept through Belgium on the northern end of the Maginot Line and behind the prepared defences.

At the same time northern France and Belgium were subjected to the full force of the German Air Force (Luftwaffe) comprising bombers, dive bombers and fighters. The chaos brought about by the

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air attacks caused every road to be completely blocked with refugees going anywhere and nowhere. They were dive bombed and machine gunned mercilessly resulting in civilian carnage of unbelievable magnitude, making the movement of allied troops virtually impossible.

At this point Field Company was formed with explosive specialists. Small sections operated with the retreating infantry who were forming a defensive perimeter based on the evacuation port of Dunkirk. His section consisting of a Staff Sergeant, 2 drivers (of which Laurie was one) and six sappers plus two trucks loaded with demolition equipment operated with the Guards Brigade. Their task was to place demolition charges on the bridges that the Brigade had to cross as they withdrew. As Northern France was serviced by many canals their task was difficult.

They continued with this until arriving at Bray Dunes where they dug in on the beach. It was under constant attack from the air, the artillery and small arms fire. The method of evacuation was to wade out into the seas and wait to be picked up out of the water by a small boat and transferred to a larger ship. He was put on the destroyer H.M.S. Ivanhoe, which was later sunk, and returned to Dover.

They were immediately put on a train which when full to overflowing departed, making room for another train. The complement was made up of allied troops of all types. The train stopped at various stations which were full of civilian volunteers. These people handed out food and drink and clothes in which they were in need, as they had not had any organised food for days. and only had the clothes that they stood in.

Eventually they detrained at Winchester and were billeted in the Rifle Brigade Barracks. After a few days, any Royal Engineers were sent to Newark, and again from Newark to Ripon, a Royal Engineers Field Company Depot. Laurie's unit was found at Upper Heyford, an R.A.F. bomber station in Oxfordshire where their task was to repair the runways after bombing raids. He re-joined his unit along with two other members about the 14th of July.

With the threat of invasion by the Germans who were massed on the coast of France 22 miles away, reorganisation of the fighting forces was priority One. All this was taking place while all the major centres were under heavy air attack. Civilian and service personnel casualties were horrific.

On reaching England he was Commissioned into the 7th Battalion Royal Northumberland Fusiliers and served in Northern Ireland until 1943.

After returning to England in 1943, he was promoted to the rank of Captain, training in Combined Landing Operations. He commanded a Mortar group of the Northumberland Fusiliers, the Fighting Fifth, which landed on Sword Beach, Normandy the day after Day. In repelling a German counter attack the unit put their barrage down at such a speed that a captured German Artillery Officer asked to be allowed to see the belt-fed field guns, for he did not believe it possible to gain such a speed by hand.

Laurie was wounded in Zettin, outside Arnhem, Holland in 1944 and hospitalised in Ghent, Belgium. He returned to active service in 1945 as second in command of "A" Company, of the 1st Battalion Leicestershire Regiment, an infantry Rifle company.

When Germany capitulated, he was made a Brigade Staff Captain and took control of a ration supply dump in Germany, servicing 93,000 displaced persons and former prisoners of war. He remained there in Germany until he was demobilised on 1Ith July 1946.

On 16th May 1951 he joined the North Beach Sub-Branch, his address being 78 Flora Terrace, North Beach.

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POPE Geoffrey Noel

2nd/13th Battalion and 66 Battalion BCOF Japan

Geoff on Enlistment

Geoff Shortly After Discharge

Geoffrey Noel Pope VX 94388 was born on 25 December 1925 and was raised in Warrnambool, Victoria. Geoff enlisted on 23 February 1944 at the age of 18. "My motivation for enlisting was that my father served in World War 1 in Gallipoli, my brother was in the R.A.A.F. flying Lancaster Bombers over Germany and my sisters were employed supporting the war effort."

"I did my initial training in Cowra, my Stretcher Bearer/Medic course at Darley Camp, Bacchus Marsh, Victoria, and then returned to Cowra. I was at Cowra when the Japanese Prisoners of War staged the breakout from the Prisoner of War Camp, very close to our base".

The Cowra Breakout occurred on 5 August 1944, when 1,104 Japanese prisoners of war attempted to escape from a prisoner of war camp near Cowra, in New South Wales, Australia. It was the largest prison escape of World War II, as well as one of the bloodiest. During the escape and ensuing manhunt, 4 Australian soldiers and 231 Japanese soldiers were killed. The remaining escapees were re-captured and imprisoned.

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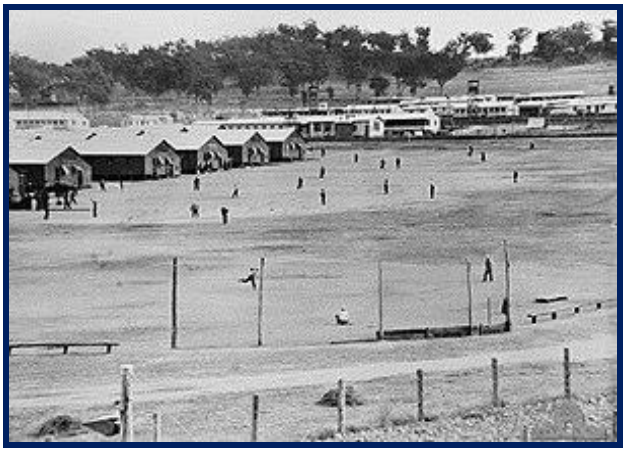

Cowra Prisoner of War Camp Before the Breakout

Geoff presented the North Beach Sub-Branch with a mounted piece of barbed wire from this Camp

From Cowra he relocated to Singleton, NSW, Eagle Farm Queensland, and undertook jungle training at Cunungra in Queensland. He then joined the 2nd 13th Battalion in Morotai. "Morotai was a staging post for the 2nd/13th to join in the invasion of Borneo", Geoff said.

In June 1945, the 2nd/13th took part in Operation Oboe, the last major Allied campaign in the South West Pacific during the War to liberate Japanese held British and Dutch Borneo. This was a multi force operation planned primarily by General McArthur, with combined forces of the navy, air and army invading from multiple directions, forcing the Japanese to relocate inland. Geoff said, "Before we landed in Borneo on Sunday 10th June 1945 the crew of the ship gave us a chicken breakfast, just to say farewell".

Geoff was involved with others of the 2nd/13th in undertaking a number of fairly complex reconnaissance missions. He recalled, "I remember one in particular; we went up river in canoes paddled by the natives. There were about six of us in the canoe, one native in the front and one in the back, and there were rocks everywhere that they had to dodge. It amazed me that the one in the back of the canoe knew exactly what the other was thinking. I think the one in the front turned his head in the direction the canoe should go, this sending a message to the native in the back. We got outside the targeted POW camp to find out how many Japanese and our boys were there. We were told that the Air Force were also there, but we didn't see any. On the way back the natives had a race down the river in the canoes and I tell you what, it was rather hairy at times."

POW numbers in Borneo were more than 4600 with only 1393 surviving at the War's end.

"At one stage we were guarding an R.A.A.F. radar installation, and on the outer perimeter a group of Dayaks came through our lines wanting ammunition for their rifles and Bren Gun, which were all brand new. We let the leader go through to see our Colonel and got talking to the men. They were very short, muscular and really good men. We found out later that an Australian Captain organised these blokes to fight the Japanese. They left late in the evening, and during the night we heard this terrible noise, banging and carrying on, all the rifles and guns were firing. Radio communications later confirmed that the Dayaks we're going back through the Japanese lines."

The Dayaks were trained by Special Operations Australia, the Z Special Unit, well prior to the June 1945 invasion of Borneo. The aim was for the Dayaks to operate covertly behind enemy lines. This very much supported the Allied invasion.

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"When we were advised that the War was over, we returned to normal duties and digging our fox holes, as the Japanese of course had not heard the news. It was some time before the more remote forces of Japan surrendered to the Allies.

In December 1945 the Army called for interest to go to Japan with the Occupation Force, so I volunteered. I went back to Morotai to wait before going to Japan. Nothing seemed to be happening, so we had a stop work meeting." The delay was the result of communications between the Allied commanders and time to organise shipping. "In February 1946 we finally arrived in Japan. It was mid-winter and very cold in our billets, especially as only one blanket was allocated to each man".

The Australian contribution included forces of the 65th, 66th and 67th Battalions. "I was with the 66th and based in Hiro in Southern Japan" Geoff recalled, "I went to Hiroshima to see what that was like. We were astounded at the devastation. Bricks on the side of the road turned to dust on touching them."

Photos Taken by Geoff at Hiroshima

"I was then sent to a village in the mountains to help organise the disposal of a large number of gas bombs and to use Japanese labour to render them safe. We managed to make use of an old electric train as transport from the village to Hiro and back again. I travelled up and down quite often to replenish the medical supplies. Two engines were needed to get up the mountain. Coming back down the mountain was a different matter, the drivers of the two engines, on the same narrow gauge line were racing and bumping each other having a great time. I was glad to get off that train."

"From there I went to Tokyo to do guard duty, but our Commanding Medical Officer wouldn't allow this, as we were Medics and needed to support the medical team. So, I got out of guard duty".

"While in Tokyo I met up with two Americans, a Scotsman and a New Zealander and we all went on a tour of the city. The locals wondered why the Scotsman was wearing a 'skirt' as a uniform. Needless to say, we all had a good time."

"We were relieved by a New Zealand contingent, but as they were short of medical supplies I had to stay on. Although their supplies arrived the next day, I remained for an additional 10 days. When I returned to Hiro, I reported to the Orderly Room only to be told that there was no record of me being in Tokyo at all. I said, 'thanks very much, I could've stopped there'. My next assignment was the island of Etajima, the BCOF Hospital. The best part of it was that the hospital cook was my brother in law, so I had some quite good meals out of him." Etajima was used by the Japanese as a Naval Base. The BCOF used the facilities on the island as a hospital for the Occupation Forces.

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"In September 1947 I returned home on the 'Kanimbla'. My brother in law was on the same ship and we were both discharged in Melbourne. After discharge I was walking down the street and a Provost pulled me up and asked for my Leave Pass. I replied that 'I didn't have a Leave Pass'. He demanded, 'why not?'. After showing him my Discharge Papers he wished me good luck and I was on my way" .

"I returned to my home town of Warrnambool but felt a great difference in the place. It was as though I was a stranger. I decided to join the Warrnambool Volunteer Fire Brigade, which I enjoyed very much, made new friends and got to know everybody once again. I then went to Hobart to join their Fire Brigade. On December 27th, 1952, I married, had two sons, Andrew and Mark and was employed in various occupations over the next 30 years before coming to live in Perth."

Geoff Pope

Geoff is a regular attendee at the North Beach Sub-Branch and is a well-respected Member.

In 2020 he received his 50 Year Membership Certificate, but first joined the RSL shortly following his discharge in 1947.

Geoff has also received a Certificate from the Prime Minister expressing thanks from a grateful nation for contributing to Australia's efforts in the British Commonwealth Occupation Forces in Japan.

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PRICE Alf

A PROUD OLD SOLDIER OF THE FAMOUS WELSH GUARDS,

Alf claims that he was born in the ancient Kingdom of Mercia of good Welsh and Lancastrian stock. He joined the 5th Regiment of Foot Guards (Welsh Guards) in 1944 and trained at the infamous Guards Depot, Caterham and later the Training Battalion in Pirbright. Alf qualified as a Signaller and Wireless Operator, manning the No 18 Back Pack set and No 20 Wireless Communications unit.

In 1945 he was posted to the 3rd Battalion at Spoleto, Italy, the Battalion being linked with the 1st Guards Brigade at Perugia and then to the Adriatic coast. The Battalion moved with the 5th Army to the River PO and on the 24th of April crossed that river to secure the bridge across the Biaco Canal between the PO and the Adige. The Battalion left the 1st Guards Brigade at Adige and returned to the U.K. to be disbanded, first to camp at Galashiels, Scotland and later to the Regiment's Home Barracks at Chelsea.

With the cessation of hostilities in Europe the Regiment returned to its normal role of Ceremonial Duties, such famous places as Buckingham Palace, the Bank of England, the Tower Guard, etc, being on their itinerary. Guard duty on No. 1 Post outside the Palace Gates was a double sentry post. Members of the public were always intrigued when watching the two Guardsmen patrol and questioned how they avoided a collision with each other at the centre of the patrol. As they were not permitted to respond the secret remains. (Actually, they had learnt from the Cornish that one always kept to the left, a simple movement forgotten by many in Perth today. Ed).

In 1946 Alfs group kitted out for overseas duty, on that occasion joining the Guards Composite Brigade in Palestine. Disembarking at Port Said transit camp they were moved at night time by Arab Dhows to Haifa Port, and then shifted to Tiberius on the Sea of Galilee. The Battalion maintained patrols on the border with Lebanon and later transferred to Sarafan Camp near Tel Aviv. There it took over duties from the Airborne Regiment controlling illegal immigrant and Jewish 'Terrorist' Group activities. The withdrawal of British troops from Palestine in 1948 saw the Regiment return to perform Home Duties stationed at Chelsea Barracks.

Alf left the Regiment with the rank of Drill Sergeant, being schooled by such eminent Regimental Sergeant-Majors as Bill Britain of the Coldstream Guards and 'Piggy' Reece' of the Welsh Guards. Alf wishes to assure readers that those were experiences that he would not wish on his worst enemy.

When he joined the Shropshire Constabulary in 1950 as a Police Constable Alf renewed many old Regimental acquaintances. He emigrated to Australia in 1963 to continue a Police career with the Australian Federal Police (then known as the Commonwealth Police). After service in Canberra he transferred to Western Australia in 1966, and joined the Scarborough Sub-Branch RSL in 1968, transferring to North Beach during 1979.

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SCRIVEN Merv A

A Soldier in the Making

In January 1953 he ambled into the Personnel Depot at Guildford, Western Australia. He was in The Army now. First stop was the Orderly room for documentation. Then the Quartermaster's Store for kitting out. 'What size are you? this size will do'. said the Quarter-Master's assistant. Boots, brown, made in 1942, to be raven oiled black before first parade next day, slouch hat and beret, both too big. The khaki webbing was to be blanco-ed, for it was shabby, the buckles and badges polished too, for it was old war-time tarnished gear. On parade next day he had never seen such a bunch of misfits, the baggy uniforms maximising the oddity. It was back to the Q Store to change most of the gear that did not fit. (Nothing's changed. Ed)

Shortly he was on a Troop train, joining 1st Royal Australian Regiment personnel returning to Enoggera, Queensland. As his destination was Wagga Wagga, NSW, then onwards to Kapooka Silver City, 25 kilometres out of town, he was bundled into trucks by Corporals, they are his future instructors. He was a part of the draft, which by ballot, comprised conscripts from all over Australia.

What a shock to Merv's system when he reached No 1 Training Battalion! The Nissen huts were hot in summer and cold in winter. All huts had to be inspected, blankets folded according to the regulation pattern. They were inspected each morning by a white gloved Junior Officer searching for dust, using the finger test.

Next day commenced with garden duties at 0530 hours (5.30 am), Physical Training at 0600 hours, breakfast at 0700 hours from a Willeys Mobile Cooker and on parade at 0800 hours for inspection. They marched to the Regimental Aid Post for immunisation, checked by the dentist, doctor and their hair cut short, Army style. The normal day began with Field training, rifle drill and then night patrol. Each day was much the same, except that each facet was gradually intensified.

There were the truck trips to the RAAF base at Uranquinty, near Wagga, to learn swimming, wearing a full kit, clothes and all. There followed a forced march of miles and miles, just to tackle an assault course at the end of the day. Then it was over and there were the Salvos with refreshments. GOD BLESS 'EM!-

At Kapooka in summer he fought bush-fires. You can imagine on a hot day, standing for hours on a Commanding Officer's weekly Parade, recruits fainting and left where they fell. In winter it was cold and muddy. That's when he learnt the leopard crawl with real bullets passing overhead. Ouch.

Out in the weather on night guard duties, 2 hours on, 4 hours off, it usually rained and was bitterly cold, the wind whistling through his overcoat. The Orderly Officer challenged at various intervals during the night and morning.

On the walls of the Kapooka Guard Hut one soldier has recorded his feelings with this poem:-

They say this Kapooka is a wonderful place,

But take it from me it's a blooming disgrace,

At six in the morning you're kicked out of bed,

At six in the evening you're fairly near dead.

There are Sergeants and Corporals, and lance-jacks as well,

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Who have b..... all to actually tell.

With hands in their pockets they bellow and shout,

About things that they know nothing about.

Bless 'Em All.

Three and a half months later DISCIPLNED soldier 5/2563 marched out to a unit far from his home State of W.A.

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SHERRIFFS Jack

Jack Sherfiffs' father was a soldier in the Northumberland Fusiliers, A regiment based near the Scottish border in the north east part of England. Jack was born on the 29th of November 1902, placed on the unit's ration list and became known as a child of the regiment, that is, the son of a member of the unit. Like most kids he became familiar with his father's profession and learned the drilling and ceremonial procedure, and very adept with military regulations. At the age of thirteen he was the unit's drummer boy when not at school. On one occasion for a special parade he was brought from school by an officer, much against the wishes of his schoolmaster.

As a youth he was in the King's Royal Rifles cadets. He joined the British Army, the Northumberland Fusiliers, as a drummer boy in 1916. Laurie Movley, a long serving treasurer with the North Beach RSL, was in that Regiment also, serving from 1939 to 1946, in the Second World War, in France and Germany. He received the Dunkirk Medal from the French Government. Laurie landed in Normandy with the Northumberland Fusiliers on Day 2, 7th June 1944 Both men experienced shell fire whilst serving in France, but two wars apart, Jack being at Ypres in 1918.

As his Grandparents had migrated to Australia, Jack's father, early 1914, paid a fare to the P.& O. Shipping Company to migrate also. The outbreak of the Great War with Germany delayed that event until 1920. The family then came to Western Australia on the P. & O. troop ship Indarra.

Not long after arriving in Perth Jack was called up for National training. It embraced training on one week night and each Saturday afternoon. On the first Wednesday night of training, as he had showed some slickness with the handling of the rifle, he was called to the office to explain where he had learned the skill of drilling. On perusing his British discharge certificate his officer informed him that he need not train; he was made a sergeant six weeks later. Not long after this promotion he had his first major confrontation. He learned that Australians did not like being drilled by Poms. Darkie was a big raw boned Australian, a shearer by trade, later to be a taxi fleet owner. Jack gave the training squad an order, in his northern English accent. A voice from the ranks, an Australian drawl, was heard. “Wha-jid-ya say?' Talking from the ranks in England is a serious crime, but in Australia things are sometimes different. A short time later the voice again said ¨Wha-jid-ya sa”. Jack realised it was intimidation so invited the fellow to meet him around the back of a hut later in the day. Stripped to his underclothes, Jack, weighing 80 kilograms with his boots on, had the better of the fight. The fellow at last stopped fighting and said Yarl do me' for which Jack, misinterpreting the meaning of the words, popped him another one on the jaw. The fellow then explained that he thought that Jack was a suitable fellow to lead and there was to be no more trouble from the ranks. there wasn't.

In 1926 he joined the 11/44th Battalion as a bandsman in Perth. The hat badge was the emblem of a blackboy (tree). Sir Talbot Hobbs was the General Officer Commanding the 13th Brigade based at Karrakatta. In 1928 their annual camp on the show grounds in Northam got flooded out and they had to move to the race course. The 1929 Annual camp was on Jimmy Mitchell's, (later Sir James Mitchell) farm block near Northam. That land later became the Northam Military camp.

When war broke out on the 3rd of September 1939, he was attending the Annual camp at Rockingham. He had a month's respite to wind up his domestic affairs and entered Northam camp as an instructor. On the 3rd of January 1940 he left Western Australia as a member of the 2nd/28th Battalion en route to the Middle East.

During the pre-embarkation march through Perth, he was in the centre of the band, being drum major. The man next to him, Charlie Stirling, was playing the trombone. Charlie's eyes were firmly fixed on a nice looking girl in the crowd near the Esplanade Hotel. His trombone got caught in the leg of Jack's Bombay bloomers (a most unattractive style of shorts), thus causing considerable disruption to a precise demonstration.

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One day a bandsman who had been trained at the Kneller Hall School of Music in London, was leading the band. The parade was to turn from St George's Terrace into Mill Street on the way to the Esplanade. The fellow obviously did not know much about the streets of Perth for on reaching that point the fellow continued walking westwards, twirling the mace, whilst the rest of the old hands turned and proceeded down the hill. Hearing the roar of the crowd the fellow glanced back, realised his mistake, and made a dash down the hill to again lead the parade. There was one bandsman who always gave a salute to his mother as he passed the Fremantle goal, for she was inside doing time for stealing. On another occasion whilst practicing in the streets of Perth the leader was twirling the mace, a flexible Malacca cane, displaying his prowess. On passing under some overhead tramline cables he inadvertently tossed the mace into the air in a whirling display. Alas it caught in the electric wires, vibrating for a few seconds before falling back to earth whilst the band marched on.

A moment of tenseness was in the formation of the band. Jack, as drum-major wanted the men in tiers of five so that there would be room for counter marching in the limited space at the saluting base. The bandsman insisted that the band be in tiers of four. Colonel Lloyd, CO. of the 2/28th, was called, whence Jack explained that the bandsman was only in charge of the music, that the drum-major was in charge of the march, and that there was limited space at the saluting base for counter marching during the ceremony. He won the day.

On board the troop ship Aquatania, sailing for Columbo, Jack was called forward by Colonel Lloyd. He was told that as he knew his work well, he could wear his ribbons, the Peace Medal and the General Service medal. Geoff Cox was the 2 IC of the 2/28th. From Colombo their trip to the Middle East was on the Dutch ship New Zealand. It was not long after reaching the Middle East that Jack joined the 1st Australian Guards Regiment when volunteers were called for. It was a force set up to guard Army Headquarters. He was a member of the Guards Regiment in Tobruk. At the end of hostilities, he held eight medals.

Jack joined the Leederville Sub-Branch of the RSL in 1920. He was a member of the North Beach Sub-Branch during the formative years. He has been a vice President and chaired meetings during the absence of the President. A member of North Beach Bowling Club, he affiliated with the RSL Bowls section and promoted RSL bowls. He was in the RSL State Bowls team which played at Canberra in1974

North Beach Golden Oldies - Dick Simpson, Paddy Conroy, Jack Sherriffs and Ernie Draper

Jack has attended the Anzac Day Service at various schools, including Marmion. In 1991 he attended the Service at the Newborough School in Scarborough, giving the address there in 1992. His address so impressed some of the adults that he was taken by a lady on an excursion in the Hills. On arriving there he was asked to speak at an Art groups meeting. He declined the invitation as he regarded himself not to be a specialist in that field. One query he makes. Why the Ode, "We that are left Grow Old", is not given at Anzac Day School Services. But then it may not be a Returned Soldier's function, but a

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service for young citizens. His wife, Gladys, was a Serving Sister, being the Superintendent of No 1 Division of the St John Ambulance Association.

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SNELL Len

SX 28102.

DARWIN'S FIRST AIR RAID.

Len was a despatch rider with the 43rd Battalion stationed at Noonamah, Northern Territory, some 42 kilometres south of Darwin. It was his daily duty to take the Battalion's despatches to Larrakeya Barracks, and letters and telegrams to the Darwin Post Office for despatch to Southern States.

The morning of 19th February 1942 started as a usual day, hot and dry, as he left the Battalion area with a cheerio wave to the guard on duty. He was approaching the suburb of Winnelli opposite the R.A.A.F. Station when he had a call of nature. Before getting back on the faithful B.S.A bike he heard a tremendous droning coming from the east and could just make out a large dark area which looked like a rain cloud, he never giving a thought about Japanese bombers.

Len usually went to the Post Office first, but for some odd reason on this day he went to Larrakeya Barracks first to deliver the despatches. On arriving just inside the gate the bombs began to fall. He left the motor-bike and ran to the cliffs on the harbour and there he sat watching the devastation take place. The bombs blew up the oil tanks, the hospital ship Manunda in the middle of the harbour, whilst the poor beggars on the other ships were jumping into the water. One Wirraway went straight across the harbour with a Zero on its tail, the poor devil never having a chance. Next minute it was a ball of fire.

There appeared to be a lull in the proceedings, so Len ventured out and returned to the Barracks and managed to get some lunch, only because he knew the cook. The next minute the air-raid siren went again so he rushed to the spot where he had been before. This time he had a companion, so it wasn't so scary. After the raid he went to collect the Batta1ion's despatches, but he still had the mail to deliver to the Darwin Post Office. As he arrived, he saw a great hole where a bomb had landed and the remains of the Post Office. What a mess. At the time he did not realise how many had been killed. He had known a few of those people, including the Post-master. He reflected that that was where he could have been if he had not changed his routine that day and had decided to visit the Post office last instead of first. What would have become of him?

The return journey through the streets of Darwin was a sad sight, people walking around not realising what had happened. There were scores of people in the railway yards hoping to get on to the flat top rail wagons to go south. Whilst returning he had trouble with the motor bike so called at the Winnelli L.A.D. workshops. Whilst the mechanic was fixing the trouble, he gazed down the aerodrome and saw all the devastation that had been done. When the bike was repaired, he set out for his home base, his mind fairly turbulent with the events of the day!

On arriving at the gate, the guard said, "Is that you Len? We heard that a despatch rider had been killed in the raids, and we thought the worst." A great cheer went up from a body of troops when they saw him as he passed by. Len said to the Battalion Postmaster "Sorry that the telegrams and letters did not go".

Len has since returned to Darwin and stood on the foreshore. He has reflected on that awful day, February 19th, 1942. He paused and reflected on Adelaide River where some of those who lost their lives found their last resting place.

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TOMLINSON Ron

Ron and his Wife Pauline 1981 Detmold Germany

Ron is from the old dart and did not want to lose the kind of comradery he found in his 22 years with the British RAF and REME, so he sought out an RSL Sub-Branch and came to North Beach in 1983.

Having lost his father in a mining accident in 1942, his mother remarried but died of cancer in 1950. Ron's step father allowed him to join the British RAF as a Boy Entrant in 1957. One and a half years later on the eve of his 18th birthday he was posted to RAF Gaydon in Warwickshire, England . There he pursued sports and joined the unit's Voluntary Brass Band in 1965 he went to Labuan (Borneo) for a year, returning to Gaydon for a further two years before going to Kuwait.

Returning in 1969 he was posted to RAF Leconfield in Yorkshire, England and lived at Beverley. Now a Sergeant his tasks changed and so did his spare time. There being no unit band Ron joined the Beverley Borough Band.

RAF Akrotiri in Cyprus was his next destination in December 1971. Fitting gearboxes to radar, his repairs tasks took him to Malta, Masira, Gan and Salala. With the Akrotiri Brass Band he played before Princess Margaret, Princess Alexandra and the Duke of Kent. The highlight of his tour was to play Hockey for the Near East Air Force. One weekend in June 1974 he took his family camping at Akrotiri beach, The Turkish and Greek Cypriots decided to have a shooting melee in Limasol and the weekend became a week. When the Turks invaded Northern Cyprus several weeks later his family were the first to be evacuated to RAF Finningly, near Doncaster, England. He joined them four months later .

On the twilight of his RAF career Ron transferred to the REME as a vehicle mechanic Retaining his rank of Sergeant after qualification training. On graduation, the chief clerk, with the usual smirch on his face said, "You are posted to 8 Field Workshops in Colchester, East Anglia, England and have 2 weeks to settle your family, then you will join your unit in Belfast, Northern Ireland". Ron did not think much of his first posting.

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Back to Colchester in June 1976 he took on more sport, learning golf and tennis. It was 3 Years before he was posted to Minden in Germany with the Cheshire Regiment LAD. Leaving there for Detmold, Germany on promotion to Staff Sergeant in a REME Workshop he refined his golfing prowess and was selected as wicket keeper for REME BAOR to tour England. At Cologne he applied for emigration to Australia, going through the usual red tape he arrived in Perth in September 1982 within weeks of his discharge.

Thanks to the encouragement and initial coaching by his friends at the North Beach Sub-Branch Ron became successful bowler at North beach and now Morley bowling club, the closest club to where he lives.

Ron's participation in sport and the brass band in relatively peaceful times was a way of solving one of the problems our defence commanders have had over the years. Didn't Sir Francis Drake play Bowls to occupy the idle hours?

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BOWN Maud

BOWN Maud Cecelia nee WILLIAMS

WF92919 Signals – Australian Special Wireless Group and Discrimination Unit

*The official Service records from the DVA Nominal Roll and the National Archives of Australia record Maud's last name as **BOWEN**, however the spelling should have been **BOWN**.*

This is Maud's Story.

Maud Cecilia WILLIAMS, WF92919, was born in Northampton, Western Australia on 6 November 1923. She was one of eight girls and one brother in the family. Her family roots with Northampton go back to 1841 when her Great Great Grandfather emigrated to Australia from Northern Ireland and went to Northampton soon after.

On leaving school Maud was employed as a Waitress in Northampton. Maud said "I moved to Geraldton and then Perth prior to war being declared. I signed up for service and was enlisted on 27 November 1942 in the Australian Women's Army Service."

"My initial training was undertaken at the WACA, where we were sleeping on straw mattresses on iron bedsteads in the open grandstand. It involved marching around the WACA ground and the hilly streets of East Perth. On 31 December 1942 I was posted to 2 Signals Training Battalion at Ivanhoe, Victoria."

Following that she was transferred to the Special Australian Wireless Group at Bonegilla, a top secret group. Maud always remembered how cold it was there. "We would dress in layers of clothes at night to keep warm. The washing hung out overnight was usually as stiff as board in the morning because of the cold." Maud's postings included Perth, based in Queens Park, Queensland, Victoria and finally Canberra. By June 1943, Maud was posted to the 52 Australian Wireless Section. "All my travel around Australia was by train in tough conditions, but I did see a lot of the country."

"By August 1943, I was based at the Headquarters of the Australian Special Wireless Group at Kalinga in Queensland and served with the 64 Australian Special Wireless Section" Maud said that from feedback received she was "highly regarded" at what she did. Maud said, "The work was so intense we were on revolving shifts of 4 hours due to the concentration required".

"It was not until February 1944 that I was entitled to Adult Rate of Pay", Maud said. In June she was with HQ of the 1 Australian Sig Group and graded Sp 1 Operator.

WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT MAUD

The Australian Special Wireless Group was part of MacArthur's and Blamey's top secret intelligence unit called Central Bureau which comprised the Australian Army, RAAF and US Army personnel.

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AWAS personnel were the core of the groups and intercepted and logged Japanese Army, Navy and Air Force Kana (morse code) messages, recording and forwarding them to the Central Bureau where the code that was in them was deciphered.

The opinion of the Wireless personnel at the time was that they were doing an important job that was really making a difference in the war. And they certainly did.

The Australian Special Wireless Group, AIF, was a secret group. One batch of recruits for ASWG was told:-

"Not only do you not exist, you never will have existed. You will remain for always unknown and unacknowledged. There will be no awards, no glory. There will be no medals for this unit."

They were trained in Morse Code and Japanese operating methods, and their role was to:

- intercept enemy transmissions
- check for possible clandestine stations
- monitor Allied operators to ensure there were no security breaches which could allow an enemy interceptor to identify a unit or its location

The Australian Army intercept portion of the Australian Special Wireless Section moved to Bonegilla in Victoria and on 18 May 1942, was renamed the Australian Special Wireless Group with a War Establishment of 1,000 personnel. Most of the new personnel were recruited from New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia, and increasingly from the AWAS.

Some operators were involved in what was known as high speed work. Morse signals were transmitted at high speed and were recorded on Edison wax cylinders and replayed later at a slower speed.

ASWG Sections were widespread and based in: Bonegilla, Brisbane, Broome, Darwin, Exmouth, Ferny Creek, Finschhafen, Groote Eylandt, Hollandia, Milne Bay, Mornington, Morotai, Nadzab, Park Orchards, Perth, Port Morseby, Townsville, Wau and Yanrey.

Maud recalls that, "While waiting to be called up for enlistment I returned to Northampton to see my family. During this time I met Reg Bown, who was on Army training around Northampton.

We kept in touch and whilst based in Victoria we decided to get married while Reg was in Sydney". Maud arranged leave and Reg obtained a 24 hour leave pass. "We married on 9 January 1945 and had two of Reg's mates in attendance, and his sister Fay as bridesmaid.". Fay was in Sydney as a 16 year old US War Bride on her way to the USA with her Air Force serviceman Jimmy.

Maud said, "We had such a good time that we exceeded our leave passes. Consequently Reg was classified as AWOL, was caught after three days 'on the run' and finished up with a very tough Field Punishment in Queensland prior to

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shipping out to Borneo with the 2nd / 9th Battalion. I didn't get into any trouble."

In 1945 Maud was with the top secret Discrimination Unit at Balcombe, and by November was transferred to Western Command for Discharge on 9 November 1945.

"Like a lot of families at that time, my brother Kevin and sister Joan were in the Services. We are all together in this photo with our Mother.

Kevin enlisted on 16 August 1940 and served with the 2nd 16th and was discharged as a Corporal on 23 November 1945.

My sister Rita Joan (Joan) Williams enlisted in the AWAS 27 December 1942, just after me, and was discharged as a Sergeant in the District Accounts Office in Perth on 21 August 1946.

Maud is rightly proud of her service and remains a member of the RSLWA North Beach Sub-Branch. Although no longer attending meetings, Maud remains very much interested in the RSLWA and North Beach Sub-Branch.

Maud and all of her fellow Australian Wireless Operators played a significant part in Australia's War effort and it is for their service that we salute them.

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BOWN Reginald Frederick

10 December 1923 to 17 October 2014

WX36268 2/9th AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BATTALION

*The official Service records from the DVA Nominal Roll and the National Archives of Australia record Reg's last name as **BOWEN**, however the spelling should have been **BOWN**.*

Reg was born in Boulder, WA, on 10 December 1923 to Fred and Bernice with a younger sister Fay. Bernice's mother also lived in Boulder in a very tough conditions in a tough town just out of Kalgoorlie and lived there all her life. Reg's family left Boulder when the Mining Riots started around 1934 and moved to Perth.

Reg and sister Fay continued their education at the Claremont Practical School, later to become East Claremont Primary School. Reg loved sports and involved himself in as much as possible. He grew up in the Claremont area and would spend many years of his married life in the same area until moving to North Beach in 1991.

He joined the Army on 23 December 1942 at the age of 19. He had to get his father's permission to serve overseas.

Reg's initial training involved time in the Northampton region of WA where he was to meet his future wife, Maud. He was then shipped to Queensland for further training, in particular jungle warfare.

Reg joined the 2/9th and was shipped to Milne Bay and then Buna.Gona in New Guinea.

> *The 2/9th Battalion was originally formed in Queensland and served in the United Kingdom in 1940, forming part of a small Australian garrison sent there to help defend against a possible German invasion, before being transferred to North Africa where it took part in the Siege of Tobruk. It then undertook garrison duties in Syria following the Syria-Lebanon Campaign in 1941.*

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In early 1942, the 2/9th was brought back to Australia where it was re-organised for jungle warfare and took part in the New Guinea Campaign. Throughout 1942–1944, the Battalion was committed twice to the fighting against the Japanese in New Guinea.

In 1942–1943, the 2/9th fought actions at Milne Bay and Buna Gona before being withdrawn to Australia for rest prior to returning to New Guinea to take part in the advance through the Finisterre Range where the Battalion took part in the Battle of Shaggy Ridge in 1943–1944.

The Battalion's final involvement in the war came during the Borneo Campaign in mid-1945, when it took part in the Landing at Balikpapan. It was disbanded shortly after the war in early 1946.

Following Buna Gona, Reg returned to Australia for further jungle training. The 2/9th then returned to New Guinea and he was involved in the Battle of Shaggy Ridge, an historic battle. During his final service overseas he was in Balikpapan, Borneo, when the war was coming to an end. He was still fighting the Japanese in the Borneo jungles for three days after the war had ended until his unit finally received communications it was over, and the Japanese had surrendered. The 2/9th was involved in the repatriation of POW.s.

Reg, when interviewed by our Member David House, said that the highlight of his period with the 2/9th was his marriage to Maud, who he had kept in contact from their meeting in Northampton in 1942.

Maud, at the time of deciding to get married before Reg went overseas, was serving in the Australian Women's Army Service (AWAS), in particular, the top secret Australian Special Wireless Group.

She was based in Melbourne at the time and was given 24 hours leave in order to get married in Sydney. As this was not enough both agreed to go AWOL. Reg said that, "I was caught up with and had to spend a lengthy period in the slammer, it was well worth it though." He was caught AWOL three days over time and finished up with Field Punishment in Queensland before shipping out. Reg said, "It was bloody tough but got me very fit having to give up the fags at the same time."

Maud on the other hand, escaped penalty.

Reg was discharged following the end of the War on 30 January 1946

Following his discharge, like many ex serving personnel, he found it difficult to gain employment and started by carting bread for Naylor's Bakery based in Reserve Street, Claremont, using the horse and cart method. His faithful horse Bessy died in what was a sad time for him during that job.

Following that he worked in the local corner store, virtually running the place for the owners. He finished up working in plumbing supplies - originally starting as delivery truck driver and eventually becoming the Sales Representative dealing directly with clients. He retired in 1984. Reg also played football for Claremont Football Club at Reserves level and A Grade cricket for Nedlands Cricket Club as wicketkeeper / batsman. One of his proudest moments in cricket was stumping Bob Simpson, the Australian Captain, who was playing in the A Grade competition at the time.

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Reg was a Member of RSLWA North Beach Sub-Branch up to the time of his death, and at the date of writing Maud remains a Member.

Reg contributed significantly to the service of Australia and for that, we salute him.

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AGAR Ron

(23 August 1923 – 26 April 2021)

A Life Well Lived

Louis Ronald Ager was born in Nurse Ashes house in North Perth on 23rd August 1923. Always to be known as Ronnie or Ron.

His medical history if anything, gave him a most fortunate life. Why? Because, from his early days his Grandmother was often heard to say, *"that poor wee Ronnie is just a bag of bones",* and his school reports stating, *"Did well despite absences from illness"*.

Ron's earliest employment was with the State Saw Mills from April 1935. In December 1941 he enlisted as W19683 in the AIF – Service Corp. He was manpowered out in September 1942.

However, improved health convinced him and the Royal Australian Air Force medics on 5 June 1943 that he was suitable for Aircrew training. Initially he was a Trainee Pilot - with his old school mate (and later his Best Man) John Casson as his instructor.

On the way to Canada for Pilot Training with the Empire Training Scheme, Ron's asthma played up and was disembarked in San Francisco and spent some time in Letterman Hospital under the care of the Royal Canadian Air Force until he was repatriated to Australia. On his return he undertook a Fitters Course until once again ill health saw him eventually being discharged as Permanently Medically Unfit on 18 July 1945.

The one thing that is learnt from Ron's service is that he was determined to make a valuable contribution, and for this, his tenacity has to be admired. It really reflects the attitude of all service people during WW2, they all wanted to play their part and contribute to Australia's War effort.

Ron was obviously a realist and accepted the fact that his health may impact his life, but obviously he was not going to let it stop him from living a fortunate life. Typically, when Ron asked his girlfriend Norma to marry him, it was only on the basis that she fully understood that he would be the first to go because of his ongoing health issues.

On discharge Ron was employed with Post War Reconstruction until the C.E.O. guided him to the Commonwealth Bank in July 1947. Thirty four years passed and with good luck tapping him on his shoulder, it was work that he truly enjoyed.

From an early age, and to support of his Mother's Christian beliefs, Ron regularly attended Church. He relished that association, firstly at St. Margaret's in North Perth and then Innaloo church from 1967 until its closure in March 2007. His then attendance at Wembley Downs, he thought, arrived a little

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late in his years for him to contribute as he would have wanted as a Life Elder of the Presbyterian/ Uniting Churches.

Ron was a Church Elder, participated on the Aged Care Council for the Uniting Church for 10 years and was the inaugural Chairman of Chrystal Halliday. He oversaw the building of that facility 50 years ago.

He was proud of his continuing association with the Church, the 1937 Perth Boys Group, his annual Air Force get-togethers, and personal contacts with many friends.

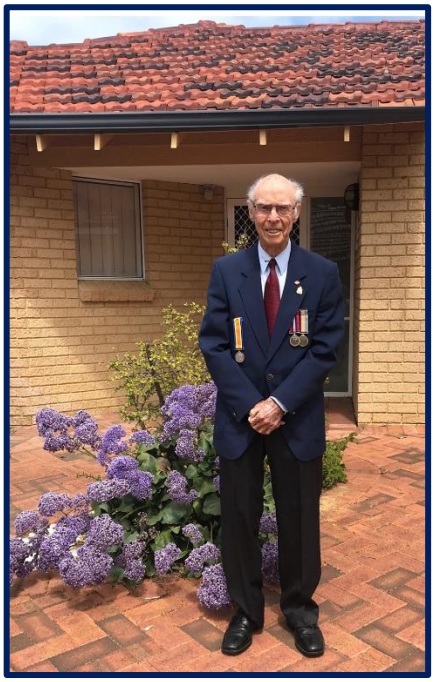
Over the past few years Ron said many times that he was not sure how he was still here at the age of 95, 96, 97 and couldn't really believe he was that old and the last one standing. Often, when asked his age he would say *"92"* - he never lost his amazing sense of humour.

Even when very ill he would say that he didn't feel too good. His family would reply *"It's because you have fluid build-up, a fractured pelvis, or pneumonia."* His usual reply, *"No, it's because I'm old".*

Ron reflected that his interest in motor vehicles helped him in his Bank career. He said that *"The outgoing officer, knowing my interest in motor vehicles, would recommend me to the vacancy - it was worth at least two promotions"*. Motor vehicles was a hobby that also gave him lasting pleasure and the opportunity to help people start car ownership on a sound footing. It was his care in vehicle selection that generated a comment from one car dealer that, *"You are too fussy".*

His first car was a 1936 Rover sedan and he paid £300, a lot of money back then but cars were scarce after the war. Fifty additional cars later in 2017 he said, *"I'm out for good"*. A total of 51 cars, not bad records to have.

Ron did indeed have a fortunate life.



Ron proudly served his Country, his Church and was a regular attendee at the RSLWA North Beach Sub-Branch.

He was fondly thought of, and *We Will Remember Him.*

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BURGESS Edward Charles (Ted)

(7th May 1933 – 19 February 2021

Edward Charles (Ted) Burgess 52194 2 RAR Korea passed away on 19th February 2021.

Ted served with 2 RAR in Korea during 1953 and was with the Army for over 20 years until the 1970's, and then he was with the Reserves. His last posting as W.O.2 was as Regimental Quarter Master. His reputation, confirmed by two of our members who served with Ted at different times, was that he was knowledgeable, very understanding, supportive and "a true gentleman".

One relayed the experience after coming off exercise and all of their "greens" were just about un-washable, or at least that's what their wives said. Ted completely understood their situation and authorised the issue of new greens, much to the dismay of those around him, and those who were at the receiving end. It was a simple thing such as this that earnt him a sound reputation.

Ted recently moved to Lady McCusker Home in Duncraig to be with his wife Colleen – a partnership of 63 years. They raised 5 children, have 9 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren. Colleen was community minded for more than 50 years and was awarded a Volunteer Service Award for her work. Ted joined her in this, and Colleen joined Ted selling Poppies leading up to each Remembrance Day.

Ted with Honorary South Korean Consul
Presenting Ted with Medal

Real life Romeo and Juliet

Love still smells as sweet after 60 years

BY HAZEL BRADLEY

"Everything was connected with us. We would help each other out, and still do."
Ted Burgess

CONNECTED: Married 63 years, Colleen and Ted Burgess - dubbed Romeo and Juliet by staff at Lady McCusker Home in Duncraig, are happy they are now together in aged care.

Article on Romeo Ted and Juliet Colleen
Reflecting their Special Bond

Ted very much supported the RSLWA North Beach Sub-Branch and was a regular attendee at our monthly meetings and commemoration events.

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He is remembered for his support and we salute his service.

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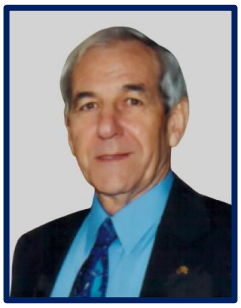
PRUNSTER Peter Joseph

(9th October 1939 – 12th February 2021)



Peter Joseph Prunster A55678 R.A.A.F. passed away on 12 February 2021 after many years at Lady McCusker Nursing Home. Peter served with the R.A.A.F. for 12 years from 1959 as a Radio Technician.

He was very much involved in Swimming WA and the WA swimming community. He was President of the Karratha Swimming Club in the early 1990's, a time when there was limited opportunity for competitive swimming within the Region. Peter facilitated the inaugural Northwest Open Swimming Championships, an event that still takes place. After a three year stint in Karratha, he and the family returned home to Carine.

Shortly after, Peter became President of the Carine Swimming Club and trained as a Referee. He later became the President of Swimming WA, where he served in this position for seven years. Vowing to be *'a President at the coalface'*, Peter and his wife Carolyn travelled the length and breadth of the State, with a goal of catering to the needs of its members in remote areas.

Peter and Carolyn attended National Championships in every State of Australia. As a result of their contributions to the sport, both were awarded Life Membership of Swimming WA In addition to this, Peter also served on the Board of Swimming Australia for one year. The highlight of Peter's period was having an all-time record eight WA Swimmers selected for the Australian team to compete at the 2004 Barcelona Olympics. His contribution to swimming was significant, devoting his time and imparting his knowledge upon many swimmers, officials and leaders along the journey.

Peter supported the RSLWA North Beach Sub-Branch, attended meetings and commemoration events when able. He and Carolyn are both fondly remembered for their support and we salute their service.

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MOORE Glen Kenneth

(25 September 1946 - 10 March 2021)

Glen Kenneth Moore 5714954 was called up for National Service and served in Vietnam from 13 November 1967 to 2 July 1968.

Glen served with the Royal Australian Regiment in Australia and Vietnam. In Vietnam he served with 2 Battalion during November 1967, 7 Battalion from December 1967 until April 1968 and then 1 Battalion until July 1968.

Following his discharge he joined the Western Australian Police Force in 1971. Glen's career included service as a Detective, an early member of the Tactical Response Group, and a Prosecutor. His country service included Menzies and as Officer in Charge of Denmark Police Station.

Glen married in 1975 and had 5 children, three girls and two boys. He retired from the Police Force in 2002 and was an active volunteer with many organisations including the Salvation Army.

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CLARKE David E ESM

(24th March 1932 – 24th December 2020)

David joined the RAAF in 1950, he had trained as a Dental Technician after leaving School. He had spent four years in the Air Cadets from 1946 to 1950, and on applying to join the Air Force wanted to be a Dental Mechanic. He was unable to have his wish granted but was accepted and trained as an Aircraft Engineer / Engine Fitter.

His 22 Year Career saw him posted to Avalon / Point Cook in Victoria, Edinburgh in South Australia, Darwin before returning to Pearce as a Dental Mechanic. He was awarded the Long Service Good Conduct Medal.

While at Edinburgh his duties included maintaining the Aircraft which had flown through to Atomic Clouds during the testing in South Australia.

In 1952 David was injured in a Motor Cycle crash which saw him in plaster for some nine months. The injury prevented him being deployed to Korea.

David's outside interests included Surf Lifesaving in which he was instrumental in the introduction of the IRB or "Rubber Duckies". He was a Life Member of Surf Lifesaving and his service was recognised with the award of the Emergency Services Medal. He was a very active supporter of Freemasonry in the Northern Suburbs and was one of a Group which established Wanneroo Lodge in 1983.

David was married to Coral, who he met in the Air Force, for nearly 70 Years. He was interested in photography and was a Member of the Valiant Car Club. His next project was to be the restoration of an S Series Valiant.

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BOWRING Peter Mission Timor 2000

5713614 Royal Australian Medical Corps, 2nd Field Ambulance Vietnam 22 May 1966 to 25 April 1967

Station Sergeant 848 Federal Police (Ex) Timor Leste

Sergeant I/c Western Australian Police Force (Retired)

Peter served in Vietnam from 1966 to 1967 with the 2nd Field Ambulance attached to Med Evac Chopper Dust off and Engineers Field Medic. He also served with the Western Australian Police Force for 30 years, retiring as I/c Sergeant in 2001.

Mission Timor

This is Peter's story of his involvement with the first team from the Western Australian Police Force (WAPOL) in its service as Federal Agents and United Nations Police serving under the United Nations Transitional Administration East Timor (UNTAET) as Peace Keepers /Makers.

All those that served and are associated with Timor understand its history, the conflict, violence, killings, destruction and political upheaval involved during its path to independence as Timor Leste.

A team of seven officers from the WAPOL, five serving and two retired, travelled to Canberra in February 2000. Following induction under the guidance of the Federal Police the Team, with its Contingent Commander Terry Clarke, was transported to Timor by RAAF Hercules C130 as the 3rd Contingent on 1 March 2000. The mission was for 3 months, although requests were made for the contingent to continue in the country.

The contingent was conveyed to accommodation at The Turismo Hotel in Dili, the prior HQ for Major General Cosgrove of INTERFET. It then attended the UN Dili compound for further induction. Peter said that "*this compound was previously the scene of attacks from gangs of militia on unarmed Peace Keepers and Timorese. On a lighter note, we had to prove that we could speak English and drive motor vehicles prior to being certified."*

Peter's posting was as Station Sergeant on the border post of Maliana. He travelled to Batugade with UN Police convoy en-route to Maliana where his team provided security and support for Border crossing of the Family Reunion operations that involved 3000 East and West Timorese. *"Five such operations were undertaken and involved riots, shots being fired, searching for weapons and illicit arms, flags, alcohol and propaganda. Constant supervision was required with the identification of persons of interest as militia or associates who were taken into custody."*

The UN Maliana compound had previously been a TNI (Indonesian National Military) Parachute Regiment Base and was partly destroyed and burnt. Patrols were conducted in the Bobonaro region where there was significant devastation of local schools, houses and infrastructure. The destruction was comparable to some that Peter experienced in Vietnam.

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Peter stated that *"the Commander was a Texan, Donnnie Hensley, who provided a strong work ethic and leadership. The rest of the team was made up of Police Officers from Egypt, Bangladesh, Nigeria, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, Argentina and Portugal. A 24/7 operational status was a priority in providing a Blue Beret presence through the Region, including in Memo, Balibo, Calico and Bobonaro. This required policing, constant patrols, interaction with locals, and liaison with the military (with my Army background this was well received), while maintaining morale, as well as being aware of threats from the militia and environment."*

Peacekeeper Station Compound Maliana

Captured militia before interview

Some Incidents

Soon after arrival at Maliana the Commander was still trying to obtain delivery of firearms, body armour, and riot control equipment which were being delayed. Weapons were becoming a priority as the team was located on the border and information had been received that up to twenty militia were in the area with the intention of breaching the base. "*With no weapons, we broke down the tables to use the legs as clubs and maintained 24/7 stand to. The arrival of an APC from 5 / 7 Battalion was greatly appreciated. Shortly after this Dili issued all of the required protective arms and equipment including 9mm Glocks and Body Amour, replacing those table legs"*, Peter commented.

"We were summoned to Bobonaro to assist the Pakistan Army. One of the villagers was armed with spears and on the previous day had wounded one of the soldiers. The OC of the soldiers indicated that under Rules of Engagement if the villager resisted, they would have to shoot him. Following a further spear through the doorway on our arrival our negotiations with the villager allowed him to be disarmed and restrictions enforced".

Sad End

Segio De Mello the Special Representative for UNTAET was to visit Bobonara and there had been information received that there was to be an attempt on his life. *"We provided Close Person Protection over two days for this impressive man, he spoke many languages and had the interest of the Timorese. Sadly, following Timor he went on to Iraq as the UN representative and was killed by a suicide truck bomb in his office complex."*

Militia

Peter was involved in dealing with numerous captured Militia by interviewing them regarding crimes committed, and then conveying them to Bachau Prison in Dili. *"We conveyed them to Dili in the back of our 4 x 4 vehicles for the three hour road trip. It appeared through our Interpreters that every time the vehicles slowed or stopped because of road conditions or dodging convoys, the prisoners believed that they were going to be executed. It was food for thought considering the horrendous crimes many had committed. As a result, they were very quiet during the trips."*

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Success

The 3rd Contingent in Timor during 2000 was a great success and the combination of the Police Peacekeepers and Military provided a stable platform for transition to democratic governance of Timor Leste.

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EATON Joseph Richard Interview with Captain Shiosawa

UNDATED TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW WITH CAPTAIN SHIOSAWA

RESERVE ARMY CAPTAIN JAPAN WW2

From the Papers of

WX27392 Joseph Richard EATON

Lieutenant 2nd 16th Battalion

This relates to an undated document that was in the possession of Joseph Richard Eaton and appears to be a transcript of an interview with Reserve Army Captain Kazue Shiosawa (this spelling could be Shiozawa) of the Japanese Army at Makassar Camp on the Island of Sulawesi (Celebes)

From the dates in the document and the Service history of Lt Eaton, it appears probable that it was recorded some-time between August 1945 and February 1946 at Makassar Camp prior to the War Crimes Trials held in Singapore during mid-1946. The person recording this interview is unknown, and the document may be a copy of the original interview notes.

Lt Eaton enlisted on 28 June 1942 with 28 Battalion Home Forces and in December 1944 transferred to the 2nd 16th Battalion.

AWM records that *"The 2/16th's left Australia for its last operation of the war on 3 June 1945. It landed at Balikpapan on 1 July and encountered its heaviest fighting of the campaign that day, but was involved in patrol operations until the end of the war on 15 August. From mid-October to late January 1946 the 2/16th formed part of the occupation force in the Celebes. It sailed for home for the last time on 2 February and was disbanded in Brisbane later that month."*

Referring to http://www.powresearch.jp/en/archive/camplist/outside_index.html#java on POW Research Network Japan, Captain Shiozowa (Shiozawa) was in Ambon from April 1943.

Dispatched No.3 Branch Camp	Ambon Amahai	From 1943-04	Lt. Colonel Anami (from 1943-04 - 1944-11)	Established and 6,600 POWs who had been in Java were interned in the detached camps at Amahai, Flores, Haruku and Liang in 1943-04.
No.1 Detached Camp of Dispatched No.3 Branch Camp	Amahai Ambon		Accountant Colonel Shiozawa*	

* The rank of "Accountant Colonel" probably should have been "Captain".

The transcript of the interview has him in Ambon as from April 1943 reporting to Lt Colonel Anami. This date is critical as it matches evidence given later in the War Crimes Trials held in Singapore.

https://www.singaporewarcrimestrials.com/case-summaries/detail/060

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https://www.legal-tools.org/doc/9c45b8/pdf

The document records, in the words of Captain Kazue Shiosawa, his experience in the POW Camps and events following the end of the War. It paints a far different picture from that of the War Crimes Trail held in Singapore mid-1946. Captain Shiosawa refers to his good relationship with British Major Gibson of the Royal Artillery, yet Gibson was a witness for the prosecution.

The real story will forever remain a mystery. Was he a soldier following orders of Lt Colonel Anami who was later executed as a War criminal, or was he complicit in the crimes and ill treatment of the prisoners of war. Did he serve his 15 years, and what became of him.

The charges against those on trial included a number of charges. The charges against Captain Shiosawa in particular related to three of those listed charges against all those on trial at the same time. These were:

1st Charge

COMMITTING A WAR CRIME in that they at Sourabaya, Java, and at sea, in the month of April 1943, when concerned in the transport of a draft of British and Dutch Prisoners of War to Horoekoe, Liang (Ambon) and Amahai (Ceram) Islands, were, in violation of the laws and usage of war, together concerned in the ill-treatment of the said prisoners of War.

3rd Charge

COMMITTING A WAR CRIME in that they at Ambon Island, between 1st May 1943 and 31st October 1944, the accused, *(trial notes lists others)*, as members of the Ambon prisoners of war camp-staff, being responsible for the well-being of the British and Dutch prisoners of war together concerned in the inhumane treatment of the said Prisoners of War resulting in the deaths of some and in physical sufferings to others

5th Charge

Against Anami, Shimada and Shiowasa only. COMMITTING A WAR CRIME in that they at Ceram Islands, between 1st May 1943 and 31st October 1944, the accused Lt Colonel Anami as Commandant Prisoners of War Camp Group, the accused Captain Shimada, as Medical Officer Prisoners of War Camp Group, and Captain Shiosawa an officer in charge Amahai Camp, being responsible for the well being of British and Dutch Prisoners of War interned in the said camp, were, in violation of the laws and usages of war, together concerned in the inhumane treatment of the said prisoners of war resulting in the deaths of some and in physical sufferings to others.

As a result of these charges Captain Kazue Shioswa was found Not Guilty of the 1st Charge, but Guilty of the 3rd and 5th Charges and sentenced to 15 years imprisonment.

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TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW WITH CAPTAIN SHIOSAWA

BRIEF OUTLINE OF MY CAREER

I am head of the "Peace Camp" *(Makaasor)* Reserve Army Captain Shiosawa.

I responded to the call in August 1942 and was ordered to serve at the Java Prisoners of War Camps. By the order, I served at SOERABAJA Camps (then called the 3rd branch of SOERABAJA Camps) for the first 8 months and then served at the 1st Branch of DJAKARTA Main Camp. Although I did not come into direct contact with the Prisoners of War at SOERABAJA I had an opportunity to get acquainted with quite a good many friends at DJARTKA as I was Superintendent there.

This Camp was located at TANDJOENG PRIOK (Tandjong Priok). I had the most memorable life there for 4 months in this camp. It was at the Camp of TANDJOENG PRIOK that I was acquainted with Major Gibson, Lieutenant Hammer and others who later came along with me to the vicinity of AMBON, which is located nearer the front, when I was ordered to advance.

I left many other respectable friends there such as Colonel Noble, Surgeon Lieutenant Colonel Mazie, Lieutenant Colonel Tobin and so on.

Still now I look back upon the past when I spent the days with these friends there, making the flower gardens cheerfully, going fishing and holding athletic meetings and cinema shows etc. At last, I think, those who remember me, will recall how I did my best for the benefit of the war prisoners. I shall like to have an opportunity to see those friends again and talk about the past with them, to whom I want to congratulate for their victory and celebrate the peace. I sincerely look to them for guidance in the future.

In April 1943 I was ordered to serve to the AMBON Detachment under the command of Lt Colonel ANAMI of the 3rd Branch Camp and sent back to the front. In pursuant to the order I went to serve in the construction work of the AMAHAI AERODROME in CERAM ISLAND. Those who engaged in this work were chiefly Dutch and among them were Captain LECLERK and Captain GERHERT the Dutch representative Officers, and Captain AEREN the British representative officer with whom I was well acquainted. We had rather hard time there for about six months, but I made utmost efforts for them.

We altogether went fishing every day and I believe those AMAHAI days probably are a sweet remembrance to them. But it is my great regret that about twenty persons of them unfortunately died of illness. We altogether made a flower in the graveyard and prayed for the bliss of the deceased. Then some of us left there for BALK ISLAND, and the others for RIAN at AMBON ISLAND., where we were put under the direct command of Lt-Col ANAMI. In these places we were obliged to have bitter experiences under the frequent bombings, but they worked in real high spirits.

In August 1944 Lt Col ANAMI and most of the prisoners of war went to JAVA. Since then the war situation has become rather unfavourable to Japan. We, Major Gibson, Lt Hammer and others were forced to remain there owing to the shortage of ship space. Then we finally got a navy sailing ship and started for MAKAASAR on the 8th October 1944 as the last party.

On the half way we were raided by the allied air forces twice and some of us were wounded or killed. As the ship was leaking we all made our best for temporary repairs. From then we continued drifting and at last reached RAHA at MOENA ISLAND where we stayed for about eight months. During this time I as well as medical officers went to KENDARI and MAKASSAR as many as three times by a parahoe, and approached the authorities concerned for a rescue ship, medicine and food. But in spite of our great efforts we were unable to receive satisfactory assistance from them owing to the adversary situation of the war.

In those days we were often air attacked. The rations had become gradually low, as about all the natives had escaped to the mountains and we were afraid to go fishing and farming. But we both had endured the painful life combining all our efforts without making differences between each other. My soldiers went to work ox hunting every day and the war prisoners cultivated the farms. It was the only consolation to us to listen to the trumpet played by Englishman HENTHLEY. I can still recall the brass tune of the British Navy March which he played.

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According to our decision Sergeant State followed Major GIBSON, Captain EARLEH, and others left for MAKASSAR in November 1944 by a Parahoe (sailing boat) while we were frequently air raided. But the boat was sunk by an enemy air attack and those on board swam back to RAHA, all their efforts having been in vain.

I prayed for the repose of souls of the war prisoners and Japanese soldiers who were unfortunately killed by bombs at that time.

While we were on our way to MAKASSAR on board a parahoe leaving in August 1945 for our last destination, the war closed. We were advised of that after we arrived.

I at once gave the good news to them, and offered whiskies, tinned food, and the other provisions which were taken from army and navy stores, gave them new suits and arranged for music and communications instruments.

I did everything in my power to better the treatment towards them in a hope to thank and reward for their three years hardship.

Upon closure of the war I was ordered organise the MAKASSAR branch of the Java Prisoners of War Camp with 1106 men including those from MAKASSOR Temporary prisoners of War Camp abandoned locally by the Navy and I was ordered to serve as the Superintendent of the new camp.

Immediately I changed the name of the camp to be called "Peace Camp" as long as the war closed, I thought it was not suitable any longer to call Prisoners of War Camp

I am not well aware how the MAKAASAR Temporary Prisoners of War Camp was managed while under the Navy, because I took over it only after the close of the War. Please refer to reports submitted by the Navy on affairs before I took over.

In answer to my request for the future friendship of Major Gibson and Lieutenant Hammer with whom I have been acquainted since TANDJOENG PRIOK (Tandjong Priok) days associated very closely ever since, they gladly consented giving me their signature and address, and left here in high spirits

I used to instruct to all my men to be always sincere in treatment of the War Prisoners, and I did all in my power for their benefit to the last minute, which I believe Major Gibson whom I respect, understands well.

I hope that those intimate friends of those days will enjoy this year the most Merry Christmas in their lives, reunited with their families after a long interval. I am looking for an early opportunity to send a message written on a beautiful Japanese picture card to Major Gibson from my native place.

I am very thankful for the assistance given to me by Allied Nations in relation to the Peace Camp.

The following was recoded on the last page of the document. There is no indication that this was transcribed by Major Gibson, or it is details of Major Gibson so contact could be made at some later date.

Major L V Gibson

Royal Artillery

Home

Holley Grange

Pirbright

Surry England

Bank

Westminster Bank

Leadenhall Street

London EC3

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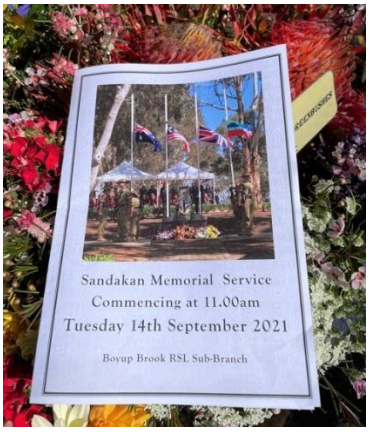
SANDAKAN MEMORIAL BOYUP BROOK

September 2021

Jessamy Welfare



In 2017 I trekked Kokoda. Beforehand I read all the books about the conflict that I could lay my hands on and happened to come across Paul Ham's book *'Sandakan - The untold story of the Sandakan Death Marches'*. Paul Ham interviewed the families of survivors and the deceased in Australia, Britain and Borneo, and consulted thousands of Court documents in an effort to piece together exactly what happened to the people who suffered and died in the then British North Borneo, and who was responsible. It is a very powerful and historically correct book that portrays the brutality as it was.

I was incredibly moved by what I read about in the camp and on the death marches. It astounded me that so little of this was known to the public in general. Out of 2500 POWs the only men who survived were the 6 Australians that managed to escape. As a result, it has been on my agenda to visit Borneo to pay homage there, and walk a section of the route to Ranau.

A local Boyup Brook farmer Ted McLaughlin, who was a POW on the Burma-Thailand railway during WW2, was determined to erect a memorial to honour his mates who died at Sandakan to ensure they would never be forgotten. So, in a little country town in the south west of Western Australia is this beautiful memorial honouring those men who went through 3 years of brutality. Consequently, when I became aware of the September 2021 service at Boyup Brook, I felt compelled to attend.

Boyup Brook Memorial

One of the Plaques

Catafalque Party

I felt very honoured to attend and to remember all the men who died at Sandakan.

Each year Boyup Brook awards a Sandakan Scholarship. This year the recipient was a local school girl, Anne Deas. Anne made a powerful speech about the horrors of Sandakan. Following her speech

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she sang a song she had composed, and also had on display an art piece she had painted about Sandakan. Anne was extremely impressive and a credit to her family and school.

I had the honour of meeting some of the local veterans. Colin Hales, President of Boyup Brook Sub Branch and Graham Pemberton, President of Kojonup Sub Branch. Graham was quite surprised to hear how many turn up each month at North Beach, and expressed his interest in attending as a visitor when next in Perth

Colin Hales President Boyup Brook Sub-Branch, Terry Myers Kojonup Sub-Branch, Jessamy Welfare North Beach Sub-Branch, Graham Pemberton President Kojonup Sub-Branch, Peter Aspinall AM President RSLWA

After the beautiful service, I enjoyed some country hospitality and had a "cuppa" with Vietnam veteran, Kevin George (Fred) Casson who was with 4 RAR. Fred was a great bloke to talk to and I was told by another veteran that Fred has a chest full of medals but only wears them on Anzac Day. He was awarded for his bravery during Operation Ivanhoe at Nui Le.

(Fred was Mentioned in Despatches for his role in the Battle of Nui Le – the last battle by Australians in Vietnam before the withdrawal of troops, and was consequently awarded the Medal of Gallantry)

http://vvaavic.org.au/battle-of-nui-le/

I am constantly impressed with the way these little country towns honour our fallen.

Sandakan must never be forgotten

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MCHARRIE Kenneth John (Ken)

WX36207 Staff Sergeant 29th Infantry Brigade Bougainville

Ken was born 30 December 1923 and completed his education at Hale School. It was there he joined the cadet unit and began his lifetime association with the school

Ken as a Hale School Cadet

Ken as a Hale School Old Boy 2018

Following school and being employed in the Commonwealth Bank Ken was "called up" for military service on 23 January 1942. Following his basic training, Ken thought he was to be assigned to the Ordnance Corps, but soon discovered it was Infantry. He was assigned to the armoury and undertook a number of training courses in the storage & maintenance of ammunition.

Ken's early training centred in Bushmead, Guildford and Merredin before transferring to the AIF on 30 December 1942. He qualified as an Ammunition Examiner before being transferred to the Ammunition Depot at Albury, NSW on 17 June 1944. Four months later came a transfer to

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Townsville and then on the "Fairisle" (a converted cargo ship that operated in both the Atlantic and Pacific) to Torokina, Bougainville on 1 January 1945 to join Headquarters of the 29th Brigade.

Group portrait of personnel of 244 Supply Depot Platoon.

Identified left to right are:

back row:

VX109555 Driver (Dvr) John Samson; N24483 Dvr Albert Millen; VX88037 Corporal (Cpl) John Bourke; NX140919 (N256020) Dvr Kenneth Hemsworth; N263378 Dvr Norman Barrett; NX153445 (N240191) Dvr Derek Gadd; VX137796 (V321759) Dvr Keith Odell; NX157811 (N119526) Dvr Albert Bottle; NX124660 (N352309) Dvr Roy Bonnington; NX194399 (N437932) Dvr Keith Milwain; NX167141 (N238838) Dvr Ronald Huckel.

Middle row:

NX136642 (N225979) Dvr William Carrall; N101905 Dvr Kenneth Penman; NX122796 (N256062) Staff Sergeant (Ssgt) Frank Kingsbury; NX131852 (N131061) Ssgt Clifford Ryan; QX47715 (Q137007) Warrant Officer Class 2 Leslie Sheppard; NX121934 (N27214) Captain James O'Donnell; NX131850 (N10978, N42310) Lieutenant Raymond Bernasconi; WX34661 (W31319) Sergeant (Sgt) Frank Smith; VX87503 Sgt Ronald Callander; WX36207 Ssgt Kenneth McHarrie; QX50978 (Q45642) Sgt Robert Williamson.

Front row:

N205859 Dvr Ronald Leet; VX142023 Dvr Leslie Little; N262571 Dvr Rowland Gibb; NX157945 (N130159, N205860) Dvr Leslie Lewis; N444020 Dvr Charles Sharpe; NX120812 (N229024) Cpl John Mackay; S48976 Dvr Murray Bryant; NX149215 (N352230) Dvr Roy Kuhner; NX175313 (N319318) Dvr Raymond Macdouall; N479089 Dvr Charles Rapley.

On Bougainville, the Australians had taken over from the American garrison in late 1944 in order to free up the US troops for the Philippines. Prior to their arrival the US garrison had maintained a defensive posture, but the Australians launched limited scale offensives on the Island that evolved into three main drives in the north, south and centre of the Island. The 29th Brigade relieved the US 182 Infantry Regiment and was assigned to the southern drive towards Buin, where the main Japanese force was based.

The 29th Brigade comprised 3 battalions (15th, 42nd and 47th) and the headquarters in Torokina. The 15th Battalion commenced the Brigade's campaign on Bougainville, being committed to the fighting in December 1944, while the 42nd and 47th joined them later the following month. During the initial

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stages, the 15th patrolled along the western coast clearing the Japanese from the area between the Jaba and Tavera Rivers. In early January 1945 about the time of Ken's arrival, the 15th joined the 42nd and 47th and advanced to Mawarak, fighting a series of minor actions in the jungles and swamps before it was relieved by the 7th Brigade in the middle of the month. The 29th moved back to Torokina for rest.

The 29th was committed to a second effort in July 1945 advancing from the Mivo River to the Oamai River during the final stages of the campaign. Two companies from the 15th lead the advance , setting out from Sisikatekori, while the 47th positioned a company along the river dubbed "Lawne's Track", and the 42nd sat astride the Buin road just short of the Mobiai River. The Brigade's efforts to secure a crossing over the Silibai River was frustrated by determined Japanese defence which held them up between the 3rd and 10th July 1945, when the Australians pushed their way across. Temporary positions were then established on the opposite banks and the patrols began ranging south towards the Oamai River. Further advances were hampered by heavy rain which held up the advance on the Japanese stronghold around Buin until the end of the war.

Bougainville. 1945-07-19. Sergeant K J McHarrie wading through the store as members of Q staff, 29 Infantry Brigade, salvage equipment after flooding. during the last five days, seven inches of rain have fallen in the area making the Buin Road, the main supply route for the Brigade's operations, impassable to traffic.

During his almost 15 months on Bougainville Ken's role took him on treks into the Army's jungle positions to inspect ammunition supplies air dropped to the troops and to ensure good standards of storage. Ken described how mortar shells could become unstable following air drops due to the rough landing. This necessitated him dismantling and resetting the shells ready for use. Ken said, "it was safe – providing you knew what you were doing".

Japan surrendered on 15th August 1945 and the 29th Brigade was disbanded in December 1945. Ken remained on Bougainville for another three months waiting to be demobilised, however was transferred to the 2nd 11th Battalion at Rabaul on New Britain to assist with the disposal of Japanese ammunition stock piles. By the end of the War there was a sizable Japanese garrison of approximately 69,000 troops. It took the Allies over 2 years to dispose of the large quantity of equipment and to repatriate the Japanese troops.

Although interaction with the locals on Bougainville & New Britain was discouraged, Ken had a number of Japanese POWs including a translator assigned to his works. The ammunition was brought in from the country, stockpiled at the beach & then loaded on barges to be dumped into the ocean. There was only one instance when the ammunition dump was compromised and set the night alight.

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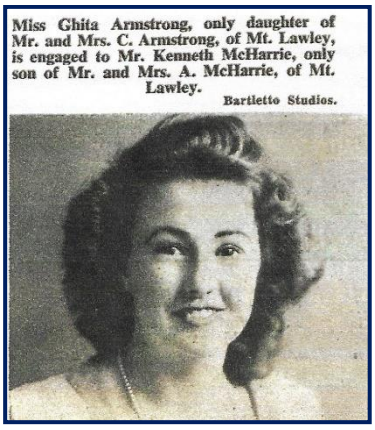
Ken said the POWs were generally compliant and did as ordered, although lack of a common language prevented much interchange. He remembers asking the interpreter (who worked at a University prior to the war) of his family in Japan. The response was "They are probably dead", with no further explanation. There was however some humour, as the sign at Ken's office was "Rest Camp".

Ken's duty concluded on 8 June 1946 with his transfer on the "Ormiston" to Sydney, and was discharged on 19 June 1946 with the rank of Staff Sergeant.

Transitioning to life following discharge was, like many service personnel, difficult. Ken returned immediately to his position with the Commonwealth Bank


Miss Ghita Armstrong, only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C. Armstrong, of Mt. Lawley, is engaged to Mr. Kenneth McHarrie, only son of Mr. and Mrs. A. McHarrie, of Mt. Lawley.

Bartletto Studios.

He met Ghita Armstrong of Mount Lawley just as the Bank posted him to Boulder. That started a long distance romance where Ken would fly to Perth for a weekend every 6 weeks. Ken & Ghita became engaged in 1948 and married in 1949, rearing 3 sons & 7 grandchildren. They spent 14 years in various WA country postings with the Bank before returning to Perth. They both remember their country years as friendly & enjoyable.

Ghita, Ken and Family

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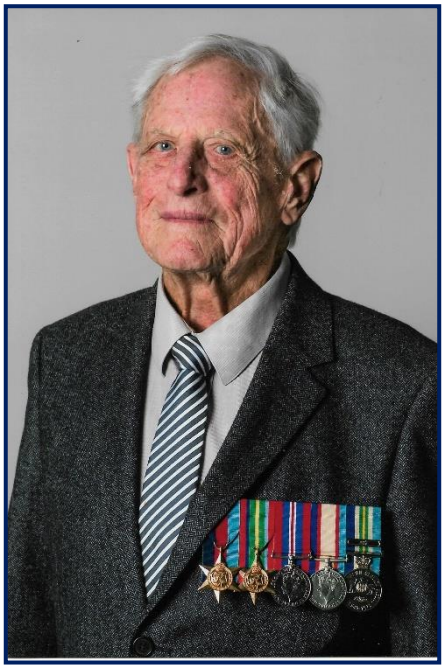

Ken is a well respected member of the North Beach RSL Sub-Branch and has been a regular attendee at its meetings.

His service and contribution to Australia will be remembered.

The information in this story was sourced from Ken McHarrie and family, publicly available records of the Commonwealth Department of Veteran Affairs, War Memorial Australia and other records in the public domain.

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FIELDING William John (Bill)

A Life of Service

79306 WILLIAM JOHN (BILL) FIELDING

R.A.A.F. 1942 - 1946

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This story was compiled by Brian Jennings of the Western Australian North Beach RSL Sub-Branch, under the guidance of Bill Fielding – January 2022.

Much of the information in this article is from personal recollections of Bill, documented history within the public domain, Australian War Memorial records, Papua New Guinea Parliamentary records, and Newspaper Articles.

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John Fielding

The Fielding story in Australia starts with Bill's Grandfather John Fielding**,** born in Crediton, Devon in 1848. As a 17 year old in 1866 he arrived in Brisbane on the 'Golden City'.

On arrival he gained employment with the Dart family, also from Crediton, but they were well established in the colony with farms and stores in the Brisbane area. Over the next decade John had regular farm employment, studying in the evening and two failures in the gold rushes of Gympie and Charters Towers.

In 1873 he married Mary Whivell and in 1877 purchased land at Blenheim in the Lockyer Valley, west of Brisbane, and developed his own farm. Bill's father, William Arthur Fielding was born 30 April 1879 at Laidley.

William Arthur Fielding

His father, Service Number 96, William Arthur Fielding, 5th (Queensland Imperial Bushmen) Contingent and his uncle, Service Number 178 Ernest Victor Fielding, 1st Queensland Mounted Infantry, both left for the Boer War from Fort Lytton Brisbane. Ernest was invalided home in 1900.

Corporal William Arthur Fielding was part of the Contingent of 503 officers and men, and 450 horses that departed in the transport ship 'Templemore' on 6 March 1901, arriving in Port Elizabeth on the 1st of April. His rate of pay was 5 Shillings, plus 1 Shilling Colonial Allowance, per day. An extra draft of 26 officers and 100 horses sailed from Brisbane on 10 March 1901 and joined the main Contingent at Pretoria in the Transvaal.

The Contingent saw significant fighting, including Onverwacht on 4 January 1902 where a large number were captured and subsequently released when the Boers retreated. Bill said, "my father rarely talked about the war, as he was far from impressed with the British Army Officers and their relationship with Aussies and treatment of Boer women and children."

After the end of fighting Bill's father, with other selected men from the Contingent, boarded a ship at Cape Town and headed for England to participate in the celebration of the Coronation of Edward V11 in mid-1902.

Following the Coronation and a short holiday in continental Europe, William visited his father's birthplace of Crediton to visit relatives, before returning to Australia on the German vessel 'Oldenburg'.

William in Coronation Uniform and Cousin Emma Locke

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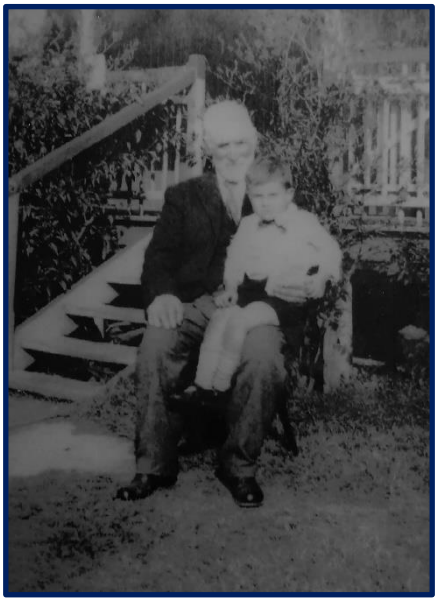
On discharge he returned to the family farm at Cedar Glen before leaving to work as a wheat share farmer on the Darling Downs. William married Elizabeth Polkinghorne in 1908 in Toowoomba before moving to Proserpine to commence share farming in the sugar cane industry.

He was active in local politics as a Councillor, supported political candidates at elections and was himself a candidate for the Senate in the 1922 election. A firm supporter of primary producer organisations throughout Queensland, his oratory skill was very much in demand during political elections. He worked regularly in the Maranoa electorate, three times the size of Victoria, where he received remarkable assistance from John Jackson. John was a successful grazier with stock and station agencies in Surat and St. George, and owned and flew his own aircraft for pleasure and business. The aircraft enabled him to extend his business activities and fly Bill's father to meetings all over the electorate. Bill had, as a prized possession, photos of the plane. Both he and his father wanted to be pilots.

> *Service Number 493 John Jackson DFC MID had joined the RAAF in October 1939 and flew in the Middle East as a fighter pilot. His records show that he downed three enemy bombers and destroyed a further eight around Benghazi, Libya. As a Squadron Leader of 75 Squadron based in Port Moresby, he was killed in action on 24 April 1942 in New Guinea.*

William John (Bill) Fielding

Bill was born in Nambour on the Sunshine Coast Queensland on 21 September 1924 and the family were living at Forest Glen on their fruit farm.



Bill and his Grandfather

In 1925 Bill's Grandfather was in ill health and his family returned to Blenheim to assume control of the Cedar Glen farm. His father acquired the larger neighbouring farm established by the Dart family, the same family that Bill's Grandfather had employment with on his arrival in Australia in 1866.

Bill's father and older brother Viv worked to develop the farming properties during the Great Depression, a period when cars, utilities and tractors were replacing horses, carts and sulkies, along with the more widespread introduction of electricity and telephones.

In 1937 the family moved once again, this time to the Gold Coast which allowed Bill to join the Bilinga Surf Life Saving Club, where he acquired swimming skills needed later on Normanby Island. Bill entered college to obtain a Diploma in Agricultural Science, which he achieved in 1941. In early 1942

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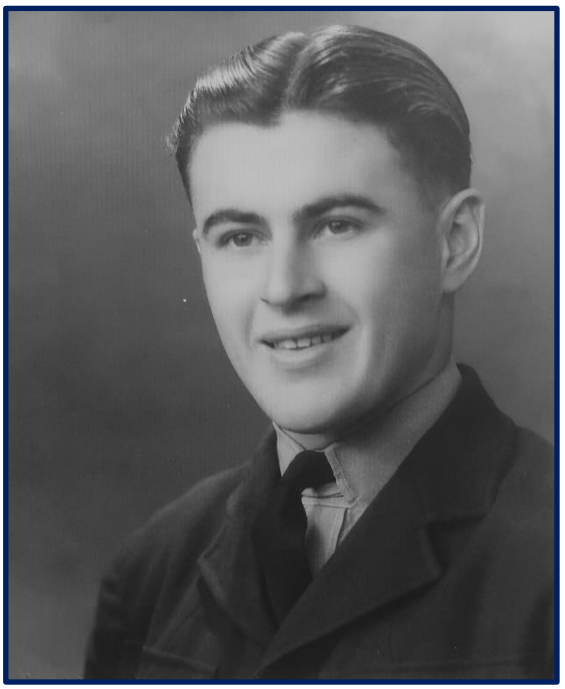
he joined the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Stock on a Cadetship, working in research in the sheep and wool department. In October 1942, with flying on his mind implanted by John Jackson, Bill visited the RAAF Recruitment office only to be told they were not recruiting air crew at that time, but he was accepted as a trainee Radio Location Mechanic. Radar development had not reached the stage where positions in that field had been promulgated. He enlisted on 28 October 1942 at 3 Recruit Centre, Brisbane.



Bill in uniform

Initial recruit training was for about three weeks at Maryborough, just south of Hervey Bay in Queensland. Following a slow trip by train he arrived in a very wet Melbourne, just after the Melbourne Cup 1942.

> *It was about a week after Bill left Queensland and arrived in Melbourne that 'The Battle of Brisbane' took place during the last week of November 1942. Bill was well aware of the tensions building in the city between the Australians and the Americans and the abhorrence of all Australians of the treatment by the US Military Police of the Afro-American soldiers who were based on the south side of the city, and risked being shot if they ventured across the Victoria Bridge into the centre of the city.*
>
> *A comment by Sergeant Bill Bentson of the US Army that "the Americans had the chocolates, the ice cream, the silk stockings and the dollars. They were able to show the girls a good time, and the Australians became very resentful about the fact that they'd lost control of their own City".*
>
> *It was also the facilities that the US had, such as a PX in the middle of the city, and the heavy handed nature of its Military Police who readily used batons with little provocation. The US, and particularly McArthur, did not at the time acknowledge nor compliment Australia's actions and victories in Papua New Guinea, often claiming credit for the US. (McArthur was embarrassed by reports that his troops were humiliated when they dropped their weapons and fled from the Japanese at Buna. He later acknowledged the role of Australia in the critical Battles of Milne Bay and Gona.) It was understandable that Australian defence personnel on the streets of Brisbane were resentful.*

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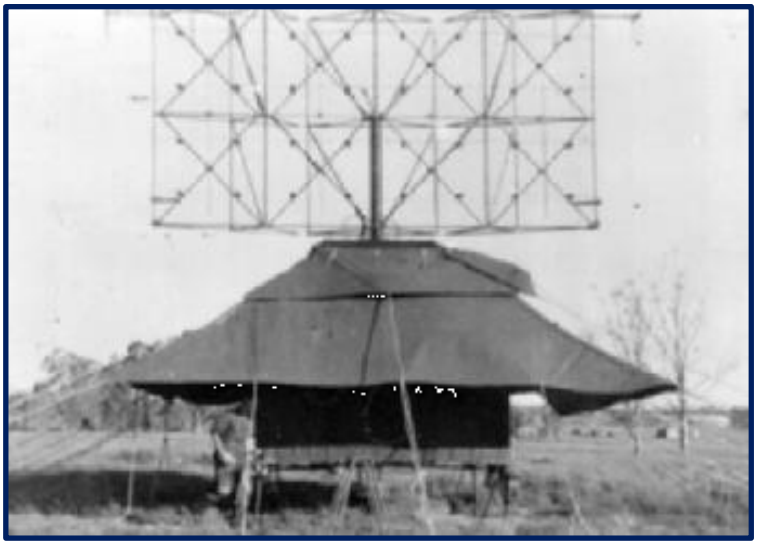
On the first night one Australian serviceman was killed by gunshot wounds, eight suffered gunshot wounds and several hundred injured. On the second night eight US MPs, one serviceman and four US Officers were hospitalised with injuries. The units involved were relocated out of Brisbane, the Australian canteen was closed, and the US PX relocated.

This incident and its outcome are well documented in articles dealing with the history of the time although the extraordinary censor restrictions put in place at that time somewhat blur the details.

The Australian Radar design was the Light Weight Air Warning radar (LW/AW) designed by a team led by Dr J H Piddington and B F Cooper at the NSW Government Railway workshops. The LW/AW was developed in September 1942 for the Royal Australian Air Force as an air-transportable radar that was easily disassembled and reassembled in the field by the radar team. At 2-3 tons, it was significantly lighter than American models, which weighed as much as 40 tons. It could be set up in a matter of four hours: It was simple, rugged and tropic-proof in construction.



LW/AW (Light Weight Air Warning Radar)

'Towards the end of 1941 the Chiefs of Staff of the Armed Services recognised the need for early warning radar equipment that could be dismantled and packaged in such a way that it could be manhandled and transported on land or by aircraft (DC3) or small landing barge. It needed to be capable of reliable operations in conditions of high temperature and humidity in tropical areas. It was to be operated by the RAAF to meet the demands of that service. The forerunner of the CSIRO developed and manufactured this - a lightweight rotatable aerial array was constructed in the workshop of the NSW Government railways. It was constructed with lightweight metal tubing that could be assembled with minimum bolts. The end result was an air warning apparatus LW/AW Mark 1, the most successful of its kind to be operated in the south west Pacific during WW2.

Selected recruits were trained in basic fitting, electrical technology and radio transmitter and receiver servicing at RAAF No 1 School of Technical Training at the old Exhibition Building and using the facilities of the Melbourne Technical College. The intensive training was completed at the high security compound at the Richmond RAAF Base west of Sydney.'

Extract from Book by Smith and Coghlan "Secret Action of 305

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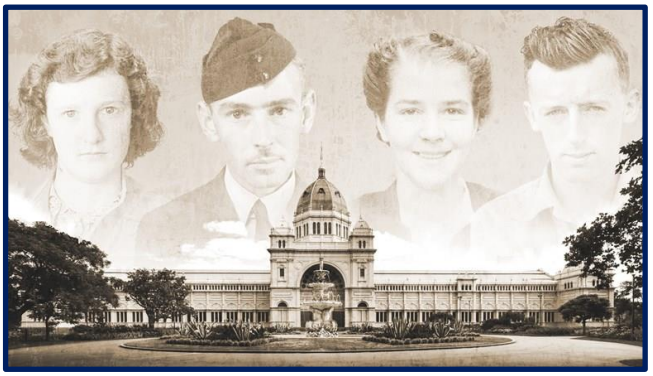
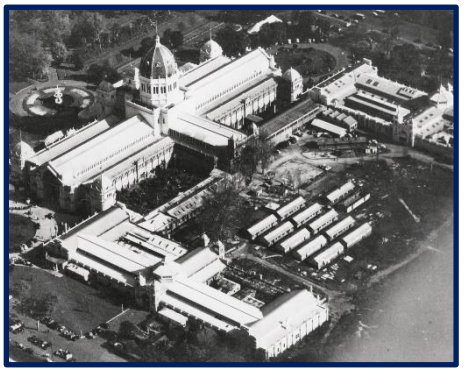
Exhibition Building Melbourne



Exhibition Building Melbourne.
Courtesy Museums Victoria



Aerial View showing temporary buildings.
Courtesy Museums Victoria

Wartime occupancy of this building began in October 1940 when the RAAF officially requisitioned it under the National Security (General) Regulations for use as a barracks and training facility. In January 1941 No. 1 School of Technical Training was relocated from West Melbourne Technical School and occupied the Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens from 17 March 1941 to 8 October 1945.

By 1942 there were over 2000 RAAF personnel living at the Building, mostly non crew aircraftmen, trainers and administrators. Members of the WAAAF were also located at the Building. The main hall could accommodate 2000 personnel and areas were allocated for a shower block, concert hall and recreation room. The gardens had long huts constructed for other facilities.

It is interesting to note that in 1989 while undertaking works to replace the floor boards over 270 personal items that had been pushed through the cracks in the floor during wartime occupation were found, including intimate letters and personal effects. These are now in the possession of Museums Victoria.

Bill commented that, "marching through Carlton Gardens from the Exhibition Building in summer uniform, while enroute to the school in the morning could be great, but also lousy; especially when it was wet and cold. Most times we seemed to be in the wrong dress mode, but then we were in Melbourne!"

It was there during training that he met up with Keith Rawle, who was about to play his first game with Essendon. War interrupted his playing career however he went on to play 111 games with Essendon, including in the Premiership teams of 1946 and 1949. Needless to say, it was this RAAF friendship with Keith that provided certain benefits to Bill and friends on practice days, with entry into the Members Rooms and a welcome drink.

Following training in Melbourne, Bill was transferred to the then top secret Richmond NSW Radar School for specialist training and then to Fort Lytton as a Radar Mechanic. Bill commented that, "It was rewarding to see low level Flying Boats from the United States pass by after tracking them on the radar screens".

It was just before Bill arrived at the Fort that the Hospital Ship Centaur was sunk, just east of Moreton Island.

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Centaur began its life in 1924 as a combination passenger and refrigerated cargo ship operating between Western Australia and Singapore via the then Dutch East Indies. At the start of the Second World War it was placed under the British Admiralty, fitted with defensive equipment and continued operations. In 1941 it was involved in the rescue of German survivors of the engagement between Kormoran and HMAS Sydney. In 1943 it was handed to Australian military and converted to a Hospital Ship for south east Asia. In March it undertook a trial voyage transporting wounded from Townsville to Brisbane and then from Port Moresby to Brisbane before being replenished in Sydney. On 12 May it embarked the 2/12th Field Ambulance for transport to New Guinea. On 14 May before dawn it was sunk off Moreton Island, Queensland. Of the 332 aboard 64 survivors were discovered 36 hours later. It was not until 1970 that the probable identity of the attacking submarine, I-777 became public.

The story is well documented in history, including "ECHOES OVER THE PACIFIC - an overview of Allied Air Warning Radar in the Pacific from Pearl Harbour to the Philippines Campaign" by Ed Simmonds and Norm Smith.

AHS Centaur in 1943 after its conversion to a Hospital Ship

Through conversations with the women Radar Operators at Fort Lytton Bill was told of what occurred and said, "Well prior to the attack they had identified echoes on the radar screen that they thought to be a surface vessel located off Moreton Island. This was reported up the line and investigations by higher authority could not substantiate the significance of the radar echoes, some reporting the echoes as being weather related, so no defensive action was initiated." Shortly after that, the Centaur was sunk.

What would have been the impact on the Radar Operators who first reported suspicious echo activity, only for it to be discounted?

Bill commented on this that, "during the course of researching my story I had discussions with personnel from Fort Lytton National Park and Fort Lytton Historical Association, as both my father and I had war time experiences at the Fort. From the information I received regarding the Radar Station reporting and consequent sinking of the Centaur, it was one view that a reported sighting of a submarine off the coast was thought to be a US submarine enroute to their base, USS Fulton Submarine Tender at New Farm, Brisbane, and hence no further action was taken by the authorities."

While Bill was at Fort Lytton, and hearing recruitment for air crew had recommenced, he requested a re-muster which was approved, and he went to No. 3 Initial Training School, Kingaroy. Once again, he was to learn that the air crew training had almost slowed to a halt. Subsequently, he requested a return to his former position as a Radar Mechanic. This was granted and in August 1944 Bill was transferred via Sandgate, Townsville, Milne Bay New Guinea, to the 304 Radar Unit on the eastern coast of Normanby Island.

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Milne Bay at that time was a major United States and Australian base, secured as a result of the Battle of Milne Bay during late August and early September 1942.

Normanby Island – North East of Milne Bay

The Battle of Milne Bay is described in military history as the first major battle of the war in the Pacific in which Australian troops decisively defeated Japanese land forces.

During the battle the advancing troops found evidence that the Japanese had committed a number of War Crimes at Milne Bay, specifically the execution of Prisoners of War and civilians. None of the 36 Australian troops who were captured by the Japanese survived; a number of them were found to have been executed with some showing signs of having been mutilated as well. In addition, at least 59 civilians were also murdered between 25 August and 6 September; included in this were a number of Papuan women. The war crimes committed at Milne Bay was said at the time to have hardened Australian soldiers' attitudes towards Japanese troops for the remainder of the war.

Australians throughout Papua New Guinea heard of the stories of cannibalism by the Japanese along the Kokoda Track. Much has been written, confirmed, denied and reported on this, and also that the cannibalism was not an act initiated solely by hunger. It had been reported by Australian soldiers that they recovered part cannibalised bodies lying close to stores of rice and tinned food.

Following on from the outstanding success of the radar stations, it was decided to install a line of stations along the eastern coast of Papua New Guinea from Milne Bay northward, with the first two units to be installed on Normanby and Goodenough Islands.

On 9 January 1943 equipment was transported from Gili Gili, Milne Bay, and landed at Cape Pierson on the north east of Normanby Island to where 304 Radar Station was to be sited. The beach at Cape Pierson was treacherous for small craft and the equipment was off loaded onto rafts made from 44 gallon petrol drums and floated onto the beach. It then had to be broken down and carried by hand up a steep winding path around the cliff face for about 750 metres to the cliff edge site, about 55 metres above sea level.

Supplies were delivered to the Radar Station about every 10 days, and those of the group that were strong swimmers, including Bill with his Surf Life Saving background, needed to assist with offloading. Bill still carries the scars to his foot from an injury caused by jagged coral as a result of assisting with this task.

The base on Normanby was relatively small, but self-contained. A total of about 30 personnel were based at the Radar Station, including 5-6 Radar Mechanics. Bill said that they were all told, “not to wander too far from the base because of possible threats, not only from the natives but also from the risk of injuries, as back up personnel was not readily available.”

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Whilst Japanese forces were not in the immediate area, the natives were severely impacted by them. Some of the natives throughout Papua New Guinea were appointed Captains by the Japanese Army, and offered the world to help them win. They in turn ill-treated other natives who remained loyal to the Allies, and were also responsible for handing over Australian missionaries and American Soldiers, an act perceived as one of betrayal. As a result, the Australia New Guinea Administrative Unit initiated the execution of those involved.

Remembering Australia's Wars: Hangings of Papua New Guineans by Australian Soldiers in WW2 Complicate Our National Narratives

By Dr Kirstie Close-Barry and Dr Victoria Stead, Deakin University

Following a period on Normanby, Bill was transferred to 315 Radar Unit Milne Bay.

The battle front in the South Pacific had moved northward, and the principal military activity in Milne Bay was at the US Naval Submarine Base to which the USS Fulton was now located. Bill said, "the relationship between the Radar Unit and the Naval Base was good, and this allowed about 20 personnel from the Unit to attend a concert at the Naval Base where Irving Berlin with most of the cast from his hit Broadway show 'This Is The Army' gave a stellar performance."

Irving Berlin in New Guinea

The group arrived early and got seats in the amphitheatre and were soon surprised when Irving Berlin, trailed by a group of senior Naval Officers, came up to talk to them.

It did not take him long to get to talk with them about Waltzing Matilda. He wanted to know about each and every detail of the song. When one of the group said he could play the tune, we all followed Irving Berlin to the stage where there was a piano. Shortly after the start of the rendition, many of the US Seamen nearby started singing along, as they had learned the song while stationed with the USS Fulton in Brisbane.

The group returned to their seats and were joined later on by Irving Berlin who was most hospitable and wanted to know if we had any questions. Bill asked him about Enrico Caruso's ability to shatter crystal chandeliers with his voice when performing in New York. His reply was to the effect that whilst he was not present, several of his colleagues were, and they assured him that it happened. Bill reflected that, "His reply had me on cloud nine for many days."

The next move saw Bill on his way to 332 Radar Unit on Kranket Island, located in the outer Madang Harbour.

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They were to join other units preparing to join McArthur's US forces as they advanced further north in the Pacific towards the Philippines and beyond. Training involved landings, setting up, operating, and dismantling radar stations.

Kranket Island – off Madang

Bill caught up with Keith Rawle, his footballer friend from training in Melbourne. Bill said that "this time Keith was a keen cricketer, and apart from his football career, went on to play first class cricket for Victoria."

Bill reflected that "One of the downsides of being on Kranket Island was an outbreak of Dengue Fever. This resulted in nausea, vomiting, rash, aches and pains including the eyes, muscle, joint and bone pain. Symptoms typically lasted 2-7 days, but during that time on Kranket Island daily doses of common headache tablets were taken to relieve symptoms."

After peace was formally declared on 2 September 1945 our main activities became cricket and various codes of football. Bill was transported by Catalina Flying Boat via Port Moresby and Cairns to Brisbane to become stationed at Amberley RAAF Base. From there, Bill was engaged in dismantling radar stations on Toorbul Point (near Bribie Island) and Southport on the Gold Coast. Radar Stations were based at regular intervals around the coast of Australia and in the years following the end of the War, they were all dismantled.

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Bill was discharged on 11 March 1946.

> *'The names of the heroes of the early squadrons are immortalised in the landing strips in the islands: but when the full story is told of how the tide of battle was turned in the Pacific, from the widest possible Allied view, one of the brightest and most inspiring chapters will be that on RAAF radar.'*
>
> *This is the final paragraph in an article by "a Wings Correspondent: entitled the Story of RAAF Radar published in Wings Magazine, V 6 No 3, January 15, 1946.*

It was also said that, 'the introduction of Radar was the most significant change since the development of gunpowder.'

Life After Discharge

Following discharge Bill re-joined the Department of Agriculture to continue research in the sheep and wool department.

Bill said that "In 1949 I was recruited for work in Sabah, North Borneo on a 2 year contract with the manilla hemp plantations that were developed by the Japanese in the 1930's. Manilla hemp ropes were used throughout the world, but that position was being challenged by plastics and the declining market price of hemp. Borneo Abaca Ltd had been developed as a joint venture established by the Colonial Office London, and a USA developer, Colonel Grimm, who was part of McArthur's Head Office in Brisbane. However, as there was increasing political turmoil in the area with Indonesia, at the end of my 2 year contract I returned to Brisbane."

A chance meeting with a colleague from the Department of Agriculture resulted in Bill receiving an invitation from the Department of Territories to visit Canberra to discuss employment in Papua New Guinea. Information was that there was a pending crisis in the wool industry as the Pakistani India war was threatening the jute industry, and the manufacture of jute fibre wool packs. As a matter of considerable urgency the Government had moved to source another suitable supply. Kenaf fibre was selected, and plans were in put in place to establish it as a supply source.

Papua New Guinea had been chosen as the location to field test kenaf, and an agreement had been reached with a private consortium to manage fibre extraction. The Department of Agriculture Stock and Fisheries of PNG was to be responsible for the field test and Bill accepted an appointment as Field Officer, based in Port Moresby.

Kenaf tests were to be conducted outside Port Moresby on the Laloki River plain. The area selected lay between the US Schimmers airstrip and the river, even though the area was pitted with bomb craters, shrapnel and unexploded ordnance. Bill commented that, "tremendously interesting field work followed, and specifically the seed harvesting of a crop three metres in height. All went well during harvest with stems sent to the private consortium for fibre testing, and kenaf seed harvested and stored. The second cropping got off to a disastrous start upon learning that seed should have been refrigerated following harvesting. Further supply of seed from Florida followed and proved to be successful. Meanwhile, peace was declared between India and Pakistan and the wool pack industry returned back to normal."

On the completion of the kenaf work at Laloki, Bill spent time in headquarters which included opening a Regional Office in Rabaul, before moving to Popondetta.

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In 1951 the District headquarters at Higaturu, which was also the location of the home of the Orokiva people, was completely destroyed when Mt. Lamington erupted. Such was the extent of the eruption that people 14 km from the volcano were killed either by the blast or burned to death. More than 5000 people were homeless. Popondetta then became the centre for relief work. Bill reflected that, "well before the eruption and during the War, Popondetta was central to the brutal murder by Japanese soldiers of two female Anglican missionaries who were betrayed by locals - resulting in the Higaturu Hangings."

When Bill arrived in June 1956 the area was still impacted by the 1951 eruption, 32 km to the south that killed 4000 people. There were only about 12 houses in Popondetta for District Services Officers, Teachers and Agricultural Officers. They had some Jeeps, trailers and there was only one private truck. Food and supplies were flown in from Port Moresby twice weekly. The challenge was obviously in building Popondetta up and establishing schools, sporting facilities for the community, and developing agriculture. Today it is a large town with a population of about 20,000, has a high school, the Papuan Agricultural Training Institute and a tourism industry.

Prior to the eruption, coffee was grown on the lower slopes of Mt. Lamington and whilst it grew exceptionally well, there were problems as to ownership of the individual coffee plantings, and generally cultivation practices were substandard. The eruption destroyed most of the coffee producing areas. Before addressing the problem of replanting most of the coffee holdings Bill, after taking advice from Professor Crocombe, commenced a training scheme aimed at settling the ownership problem arising with the introduction of cash crops, and general planting practices with coffee.

"The scheme consisted of bringing small groups of young men from villages to the agricultural station for training prior to the commencement of replanting work in their area. At the station they would be accommodated, fed and instructed in planting methods of coffee along with the need for their people to establish ownership of the coffee block before planting commenced. During the course of their training they would be taken back to their villages for short stays to discuss with all the people the talk about ownership. Another point that was impressed on the trainees was that replanting would be with an improved strain of robusta coffee, which was obtained from Indonesia, and it was a far better producer than the coffee grown prior to the eruption. The local government council was also establishing a coffee block ownership scheme so individual blocks could be registered. Trainees were also drawn from coastal villages producing copra to encourage improving quality of their product through installation of hot air dryers using coconut husks as fuel."

After a relatively short period other districts in PNG were sending groups to be trained and the Popondetta Agricultural Training Institute was up and away.

In 1968 Bill was elected as a Member of the House of Assembly of Papua and New Guinea for the Northern Regional Electorate largely due to the overwhelming support from the Orokiva people. In Parliament Bill was Chair of the Public Accounts Committee and other Committees developing strategies and frameworks for the country's transition to independence, including structural reform of Government Departments. It was while in Parliament that Bill worked alongside Julius Chan, Michael Somare and Denis Buchanan on various Committees. (later Sir Julius, Sir Michael and Sir Denis).

Sir Julius Chan, Papua New Guinea Parliamentarian, Prime Minister, Governor New Ireland Province, wrote in his 2016 book 'Playing the Game. Life and Politics in Papua New Guinea':

'It was not long after I entered the House that I was offered the position of Vice Chairman to the Public Accounts Committee working under Bill Fielding., an Agricultural Officer. The Popondetta cocoa scheme had been established after the Second World War and gave leasehold blocks to Australian ex-servicemen. Bill Fielding had been given a block but the whole venture turned out to be a big flop. Even though the scheme was well organised and well-funded, the crops developed dieback disease from an armyworm, and the whole enterprise collapsed.

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Bill was a marvellous person – reasonable, patient and well versed in his role in accounts and all operations of government. We spent a lot of time looking into the auditor general, the public accounts and then into all the other departments. I quickly became familiar with all the deliberations and decisions they had made. Sometimes Bill and I would travel together to check the implementation of different projects and it was during this time that I was given much broader exposure to the rest of Papua New Guinea and a deeper understanding of the way government actually worked. This was a period when people like Bill were effective, aggressive and committed in the field of public account inspections and reporting. He also resolved many conflicting issues in the public service and rationalised some of the duplication of departments."

The Book continues how they travelled in the highlands examining agricultural production, and to "help support of new industries, in order to encourage community participation and fairer distribution of income . We also developed other new crops such as the English potato and cardamon……I found this work really interesting. It was not directly related to accounts but about the performance of agriculture and whether or not people were implementing the policies of the government.'

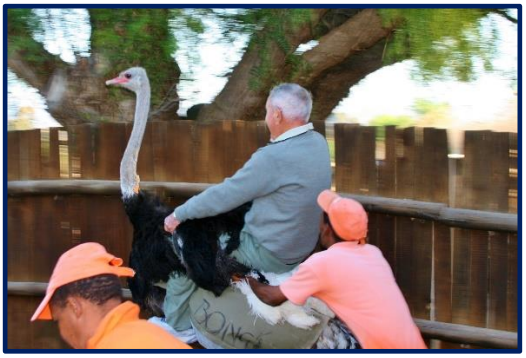
Bill had many roles in New Guinea, from District Agricultural Officer, Advisor, Parliamentarian, and work as a chemist in a Port Moresby based brewery that was a joint venture between Swan Brewery and Asahi, a giant Japanese brewing company. Bill said that "I was requested to perform the duties of chemist due to my agricultural science background. I found the Japanese staff in the brewery to be highly skilled, industrious and a pleasure to work with."

Before Bill finally departed PNG, he was asked by Sir Dennis Buchanan, owner of Talair and other airlines to manage the airlines for a short period whilst he and his family had an extended holiday in Europe. Bill relocated to Goroka for the next six months and when Sir Denis returned, Bill and Jen found themselves in London on holiday.

After casually enquiring at a tourist agency regarding charter flights for students to Europe and North America, an unexpected offer was extended to Bill to join the company. Although Bill replied, "but I am on holidays" he soon found himself employed in London. After several takeovers Bill became UK Manager for Wardair, a Canadian airline and he was based in London.

Three years later, Bill and Jen were transferred to Toronto, Canada. After some time there, and not liking the extremes in the weather, they moved to Vancouver. Once again Bill had a direct involvement with Japanese people. He joined a tour operator, Japanese owned and staffed, specialising in the field of tours to the Rocky Mountains and marketed in Japan. Once again, he found them to be delightful people, and far removed from the horror stories from World War II.

After several years in Vancouver Bill and Jen were offered citizenship in Canada but with Australia still being home, they declined. Once again, they packed up and Bill soon was working in the UK on installing Rohm communication and reservation systems for a large tour operator in London.



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Bill, aged 90, riding an ostrich in South Africa

It can be said that Bill has had an action packed life. From Bill's story this was not the result of just good luck - but from accepting opportunities offered, hard work and commitment.

Like most people "luck" sometimes runs out, an example was when he was diagnosed with a cancer. Bill reflected, "I was offered radical and new treatment, that I readily agreed to, and with good fortune and medical science, it was successful."

Bill, dawn on Anzac Day 2021

Both Bill and Jen lead busy lives maintaining their home and extensive garden and participating in charitable organisations. Bill also keeps fit and has been very pleased with the benefits he has received through participation in the 'Living Stronger Living Longer' program at Edith Cowan University.

Bill is a regular attendee and esteemed member of the North Beach RSL Sub-Branch.

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GFELLER Fritz Franzisco (Fred)

16 February 1927 - 2 June 2022
53240 Sergeant Australian Army Band Corps

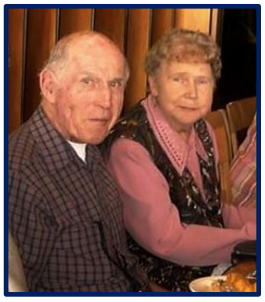
Fred, a Member of our RSL for nearly 30 years, passed away on the morning of 2 June 2022. He is fondly remembered for his friendship, attendance at our Sub Branch meetings and ANZAC and Remembrance Day commemoration events.

Fred came to Australia from Steffisburg, Switzerland in 1948 at the age of 21 on the SS Groetekerk, a cargo ship carrying 71 Peugeot, Fiat and Renault cars, and 15 passengers. Fred, a cabinet maker, was the only one from Switzerland among mainly Dutch and 2 British passengers.

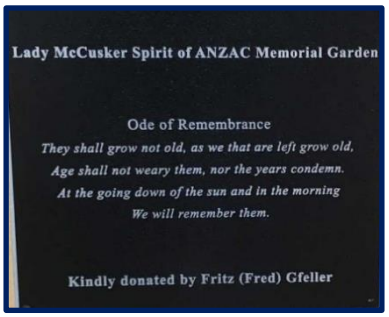
It was reported in the Melbourne Herald on 28 June 1948 that each of the passengers had plans for settling in Australia and that Fred wanted to *"try some of the beautiful Australian woods as a cabinet maker"*.

The welcome Wall in Fremantle states that he built his first home in South Guildford in 1951. He became an Australian citizen in 1954 and later joined the Australian Army where he served for 22 years as a Bandsman, attaining the rank of Sergeant and on 14 July 1977 was awarded the National Medal for his service. This experience gave Fred a strong sense of Australian mateship, motivating him to dedicate his life to honouring the diggers.

When Fred and his wife Eileen moved to Lady McCusker Village in Duncraig he established a Memorial Garden within the grounds, dedicated as the "Spirit of the ANZACS Memorial Garden". The Garden incorporated the "Spirit of the ANZACs" Grevillea and a plaque donated by Fred.



Fred and Eileen



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LEE Private 4535 Eugene Victor

30th Battalion WW1

Collated with assistance from Jess Welfare – October 2023

Eugene Victor LEE was born in Warracknabeal, Victoria and before he enlisted on 17 July 1915 at the age of 18 and 6 months was a saddler.

He was soon shipped out, via Alexandria, Egypt, to France. However on the way he showed some Australian spirit by being charged after being found on the washhouse roof reading a book during Inspection.

By 23 April 1916 after landing in Marseilles, he joined the 30th Battalion in northern France. In July he received gunshot wounds to the legs and by 5 August returned to his unit.

On 18 May 1917, Eugene was killed near Vaulx Vraucourt in France, just north of Amiens and Saint Quentin.

Red Cross reports of interviews with those present at the time, held by the Australian War Museum, advise that he was wounded the day before but did not report it.. One friend reported to the Red Cross that Eugene was sleeping in a billet left by the Germans just beyond Bapaume when he was killed by a high explosive shell. He further advised that Eugene was well liked, and his comrades placed a border of flowers around his grave, located beside the town's church. In the mid 1920's those buried in the Churchyard were reinterred in the Military Cemetery just outside of town. His family received photographs of the grave.

The following medals that he should have received were presented to the family:

- 1914 – 1915 Star
- British War Medal
- Victory Medal

Eugene was only 20 years old.

When Jess Welfare visited the grave in September 2023 she left a message in the Visitors' Book:

" A little kangaroo from home to remind Eugene Lee that he is not forgotten. RIP"

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ORTON Able Seaman F2951 Alfred George

16 November 1915 - 4 May 1985

The Listening Post Autumn 1986

An Unsung Hero's Five Days of Hell On Water

By MIKE SOUTHWELL Reprinted Courtesy of the Western Mail

HISTORY has credited the sinking of the HMAS Yarra with few words. It went down in one of the many battles between the Japanese and Allied forces for control of the Java and Coral seas. George Odgers' "The Royal Australian Navy - An Illustrated History" devotes two paragraphs to the human consequences of the sinking. "Of the ship's complement of 151, a total of 138 went down with the ship or died later on the rafts.

The 13 survivors were picked up five days later by a Dutch submarine. But one of those survivors - West Australian Alf Orton - was haunted by the awful memory of those five days for the remaining 43 years of his life. Just before he died, Alf decided it was time to tell the story the historians had ignored. He called his memoirs "Survivors at Sea" and began them with the words, "I will try to convey to the reader what happened to the men on the rafts and the terrible ordeal they went through."

A Survivors Story

West Australian Alfred George Orton, one of only 13 survivors of the HMAS Yarra, decided to write his memoir after being told he had terminal lung cancer early in 1985. · He died in May 1985 aged 68. Orton gave the eight type-written pages to his friend Charles (Todd) Marsden only weeks before his death, with the simple instruction: "See if you can get this published somewhere." Marsden said that Orton had often been urged to write about his ordeal but refused because he thought it would be distressing for the families of those who died when the Yarra was sunk or were lost from the life-rafts. He describes his friend as a simple gentleman who, after leaving the navy, always lived near the sea and loved to go fishing.

Marsden believes it was Orton's physical strength and self-control that enabled him to survive for five days on a raft.

He then gives details of HMAS Yarra's service from the time it left Fremantle on August 28, 1940, with Leading Seaman Alfred George Orton on board until its sinking in the Timor Sea on March 4, 1942. ·

The Yarra's last duty was to escort a convoy of seven ships from Jakarta to Darwin. Five days out, the drama- began. As Alf Orton tells it:

On breaking daylight we were confronted by a task force of three cruisers and four destroyers coming at us fast. Our captain immediately laid a smoke screen to protect the convoy and ordered ships to scatter in. all directions. We were soon under heavy fire as the Japs had us circled. We were taking so many hits that it was only a matter of time. We were being blown to pieces and the Captain gave the order to abandon ship. I left my gun and proceeded to my station post Carly Raft, which lay at a 45 degree angle on a chute with a wire rope connected to a slip. I slipped the raft and with. superhuman strength landed it over the side: I proceeded to the starboard side and slipped the other

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raft over. I then made it back to my gun to report to Commander Smith that the rafts were over the side. My life jacket was already blown away and then, there was a terrible surge of air and noise and I was blown over the side. When I came to, the Yarra was on her port side, with the twin screws still turning. A tin of biscuits floated passed and I managed to grab it. I had lost my boots, a sock, a glove and half my overalls, and I was bleeding from the nose and ears. I made it to one of the rafts, put the tin of biscuits aboard and hooked my 'arm through the life ropes. There were a lot of wounded people in the water and we gently lifted them on to the raft and continued to hold on for our lives. The Japs then circled us looking for officers, but we were all dressed in the same battle station rig. A large cruiser came along-side and I'll never forget looking up at the Jap sailors grinning down at us. The cruiser made a 160 degree turn, swamping the rafts in its wake. We righted them and scrambled back, losing quite a few men in the incident. The rafts and a plank that had drifted off the timber rack were filled to capacity and we were all up to our necks in the sea. We spent the first day silent and dejected. We had not had a decent sleep since the fall of Singapore and, having no food, we were not in a very good position to survive what lay ahead of us. We lost men that day as some were too weak to hang on and we were powerless to help them. You'd be surprised at the number of sailors who can't swim.

The sun was very hot and we were relieved when it went down. But we shivered that night and waves were continually breaking over our heads. That night we lost 26 men and prayed for the sun to come up,·as we were chilled to the bone. When it eventually did, to our horror, we were surrounded . by. sharks. Huge brutes they were, continually circling us but not attacking. Only when we lost a man over the side would we look away. It is in such predicaments that men turn to religion. The Catholics on the rafts crossed themselves continually. The worst time for shark attacks is dusk. That evening, as the sun went down, they came in to attack. One would make a pass and then the others followed. That night they tore away the men hanging over the sides. All we could do was smash the water with paddies. We lost another 14 men. After that terrible night we faced a new day in rafts more buoyant because of the loss of so many men.

I learnt that I was the leading seaman aboard and had to get some routine going if we were to survive. At 9 o'clock, by my reckoning, I thought it appropriate to say the prayer we all know in the navy. So I got all men to hang their heads while I conducted a service in what was a very strange place indeed. "'Protect us from the violence of the enemy (which He did) and the raging seas, so that we may return to the land, and enjoy the fruits of our labour. Amen!" A rating then asked where I thought we were and I lied and said not far from Darwin. I said that if we kept paddling south we would make it as patrol boats from Darwin would be looking for us. This settled a few of them down and gave them heart. But the truth was we were 250 miles from the nearest land. We were now into our third day, and it was starting to play on us all, some worse than others. The terrible sun was beating down on us. We had no water and the tin of biscuits had drifted away in the rough seas. Some ratings started to drink-salt water and some held their heads under. I told them to stop, but when I wasn't looking they'd do it again.

We were attacked again that night by the sharks and lost more men. There were 17 on our raft, with none over the sides. But we were still up to our necks in water. By this time we had no water or food for five days and the men were throwing salt water on their faces and eating seaweed as 1t drifted passed. There were now only 13 of us left and 1 tore strips off my life jacket and passed them to the men to suck on to keep the saliva going in their mouths.. We ate rubber, buttons, our singlets and seaweed, but the privation was taking its toll.

We were burnt black by the sun and froze at night. We cursed the sun coming up and we cursed it going down. We cursed the sharks, the sea snakes and the insects that bit us all night. By this time we were unable to talk, only croak. We sat at a 45 degree angle·on the raft and hugged each other for warmth at night, and got a few hours sleep. Some of the things that happened on the raft are painful to record but I think it is my duty to do so. One rating stood up in the raft and said he could see his

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wife in the distance and was going over the side to meet her. He swam away and I ordered the men to look in the opposite direction.

When a warship enters harbour the first man ashore is the duty postman. One man asked us if we had any letters to post as he was going ashore to get the mail. He then swam away. Another rating confided in me that there was a cellar full of food under the raft. When it got dark he was going down to get some and share it with me. I couldn't convince him it wasn't true and we never saw him again. I am really convinced that the rating saw his wife, the postie felt his duty was to go ashore and the rating had his cellar full of food under the raft.

By this time we had stopped paddling as all our strength was gone. Our buttocks were red raw with the chafing of the canvas raft and covered with huge saltwater ulcers. It was agony to move. All we could do was stare at the endless ocean. We all had our visions. l used to see a spit post sticking out of the sea. It is clear to this day. I looked for it one day just before sundown, and sure enough it was there. I told the other men: It seems different this evening. Then I saw it move. It wasn't a spit post. It was the conning tower of a submarine coming towards us. I stripped off my half overalls and hung them from a paddle. The men held me while l waved.

The submarine circled us and I could see the officers scanning us with binoculars. It must have been obvious from our emaciated appearances that we were shipwrecked sailors. They came alongside the raft and threw a rope. One by one I put it round the ratings and the sailors (they were Dutch) heaved them on to the submarine. I was the last to go but those stupid Dutch sailors - curse them and bless them - pulled me off as the raft was under water. Like the christening of a ship, I hit my head on the side of the submarine. Bloody hell, with all I had been through. now I had a bump on my head: I don't remember them carrying me into the submarine.

The submarine took Orton and the 12 other survivors to a hospital in Ceylon. After recuperating they were taken back to Fremantle. Orton later served in the merchant navy.

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BOWRING Peter – Vietnam to Timor

Peter Bowring - Mission Timor 2000

5713614 Royal Australian Medical Corps, 2nd Field Ambulance Vietnam 22 May 1966 to 25 April 1967

Station Sergeant 848 Federal Police (Ex) Timor Leste

Sergeant I/c Western Australian Police Force (Retired)

Peter served in Vietnam from 1966 to 1967 with the 2nd Field Ambulance attached to Med Evac Chopper Dust off and Engineers Field Medic. He also served with the Western Australian Police Force for 30 years, retiring as I/c Sergeant in 2001.

Mission Timor

This is Peter's story of his involvement with the first team from the Western Australian Police Force (WAPOL) in its service as Federal Agents and United Nations Police serving under the United Nations Transitional Administration East Timor (UNTAET) as Peace Keepers /Makers.

All those that served and are associated with Timor understand its history, the conflict, violence, killings, destruction and political upheaval involved during its path to independence as Timor Leste.

A team of seven officers from the WAPOL, five serving and two retired, travelled to Canberra in February 2000. Following induction under the guidance of the Federal Police the Team, with its Contingent Commander Terry Clarke, was transported to Timor by RAAF Hercules C130 as the 3rd Contingent on 1 March 2000. The mission was for 3 months, although requests were made for the contingent to continue in the country.

The contingent was conveyed to accommodation at The Turismo Hotel in Dili, the prior HQ for Major General Cosgrove of INTERFET. It then attended the UN Dili compound for further induction. Peter said that "*this compound was previously the scene of attacks from gangs of militia on unarmed Peace Keepers and Timorese. On a lighter note, we had to prove that we could speak English and drive motor vehicles prior to being certified."*

Peter's posting was as Station Sergeant on the border post of Maliana. He travelled to Batugade with UN Police convoy en-route to Maliana where his team provided security and support for Border crossing of the Family Reunion operations that involved 3000 East and West Timorese. *"Five such operations were undertaken and involved riots, shots being fired, searching for weapons and illicit arms, flags, alcohol and propaganda. Constant supervision was required with the identification of persons of interest as militia or associates who were taken into custody."*

The UN Maliana compound had previously been a TNI (Indonesian National Military) Parachute Regiment Base and was partly destroyed and burnt. Patrols were conducted in the Bobonaro region where there was significant devastation of local schools, houses and infrastructure. The destruction was comparable to some that Peter experienced in Vietnam.

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Peter stated that *"the Commander was a Texan, Donnnie Hensley, who provided a strong work ethic and leadership. The rest of the team was made up of Police Officers from Egypt, Bangladesh, Nigeria, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, Argentina and Portugal. A 24/7 operational status was a priority in providing a Blue Beret presence through the Region, including in Memo, Balibo, Calico and Bobonaro. This required policing, constant patrols, interaction with locals, and liaison with the military (with my Army background this was well received), while maintaining morale, as well as being aware of threats from the militia and environment."*

Peacekeeper Station Compound Maliana

Captured militia before interview

Some Incidents

Soon after arrival at Maliana the Commander was still trying to obtain delivery of firearms, body armour, and riot control equipment which were being delayed. Weapons were becoming a priority as the team was located on the border and information had been received that up to twenty militia were in the area with the intention of breaching the base. "*With no weapons, we broke down the tables to use the legs as clubs and maintained 24/7 stand to. The arrival of an APC from 5 / 7 Battalion was greatly appreciated. Shortly after this Dili issued all of the required protective arms and equipment including 9mm Glocks and Body Amour, replacing those table legs"*, Peter commented.

"We were summoned to Bobonaro to assist the Pakistan Army. One of the villagers was armed with spears and on the previous day had wounded one of the soldiers. The OC of the soldiers indicated that under Rules of Engagement if the villager resisted, they would have to shoot him. Following a further spear through the doorway on our arrival our negotiations with the villager allowed him to be disarmed and restrictions enforced".

Sad End

Segio De Mello the Special Representative for UNTAET was to visit Bobonara and there had been information received that there was to be an attempt on his life. *"We provided Close Person Protection over two days for this impressive man, he spoke many languages and had the interest of the Timorese. Sadly, following Timor he went on to Iraq as the UN representative and was killed by a suicide truck bomb in his office complex."*

Militia

Peter was involved in dealing with numerous captured Militia by interviewing them regarding crimes committed, and then conveying them to Bachau Prison in Dili. *"We conveyed them to Dili in the back of our 4 x 4 vehicles for the three hour road trip. It appeared through our Interpreters that every time the vehicles slowed or stopped because of road conditions or dodging convoys, the prisoners believed that they were going to be executed. It was food for thought considering the horrendous crimes many had committed. As a result, they were very quiet during the trips."*

Success

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The 3rd Contingent in Timor during 2000 was a great success and the combination of the Police Peacekeepers and Military provided a stable platform for transition to democratic governance of Timor Leste.

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