



Armi Nius

PIB-NGIB-HQ-PIR Association Newsletter No 4, 2021

Theme: Army aviation in TPNG continued

Our newsletter again provides our former **Army aviation** members with the chance to tell short stories and show some photos of their experiences in the Territory. Just as general aviation was, and remains, vital in PNG likewise the role of Defence aviation assets was a vital operational capability assisting in many tasks from reconnaissance, search and rescue, provision of mobility, logistical support, and aid to the civil community. In recent years, our diverse Membership has been boosted by a substantial intake of former Servicemen with Army aviation experience in PNG (and elsewhere). These Servicemen, particularly from **183 (Independent) Recce Flight/Squadron**, have provided most of the articles and photos which follow. We also include some material for those Members with other interests.

Association and Commemoration events

Our Association held its AGM face-to-face on 25 July with all Committee positions filled and the Minutes emailed to all Members. The membership drive continues while a new project is beginning in Sydney. Information is available on our Website www.soldierspng.com

Covid interfered with Kokoda Commemorations in Australia but wreaths were laid, like the one (next page) by Lt. Col. Maurie Pears MC (Retd) at the Rotary Kokoda Memorial Wall in Broadbeach, Qld.

Members and partners near Brisbane are invited for **Lunch** and drinks after the **2021 Remembrance Day Service** starting 10.30am at the Ann Street entrance to Anzac Square. Our President will Lay a Wreath then we will move to honour the PIR Plaque downstairs. Those attending Remembrance Day Services around Australia are asked to send photos, for our next Newsletter, to Ian Ogston ozoggies2@gmail.com

Steps have begun towards commemorating the 80th Anniversary of the Kokoda Campaign in 2022. There will be a special focus during the annual Kokoda Day Services across Australia and possibly additional events, Covid permitting. Members will be advised later by Email.



PIB warriors: WO2 Kari MM, Sgt Major Katue MM, Sgt Sanopa LSM, Cpl Tapioli MM, Unknown warrior



Before COVID - some Members at the Kokoda Day Service, Rotary Kokoda Memorial Wall, Broadbeach, 2019

183 RECCE SQN, 1974 – 1976

by Mark Fletcher

After a 6 weeks PNG Pidgin language and culture course at 1 RTB, Blamey Barracks, Wagga Wagga NSW, I arrived in Lae via Port Moresby on 12 August 1974 on posting to HQ 183 Recce Sqn. It was my first posting overseas and I was met by two members of HQ 183 Recce Sqn from Igam Barracks, Private Gordon Brown and Trooper Dennis “Ducky” MacIntyre was the driver. They drove me to another member’s rented married quarters premises in Lae, who was away on annual recreation leave (ARL) and Ducky MacIntyre was house sitting the premises for security reasons. Well, they had a can of VB beer there to welcome me to PNG as a special treat because I had come from a posting at AHQ (M), later to become HQ LOG COMD, at Albert Park Barracks in Melbourne and probably thought that I was a Victorian, but I am NSW born and raised. Nevertheless, it was a nice gesture by them before they drove me to report my arrival at HQ 183 Recce Sqn with their excuse that the TAA aircraft was delayed in arriving at Lae Airport.



Myself after issue of Juniper Green parade dress tropical uniform.



An aerial view of Igam Barracks, Lae. “The Railway Hotel” OR lines at bottom left of pic.



CAPT Tub Matheson in Sioux helicopter No. 721.

After the march-in procedures were done, including a \$10 fee to pay for membership of the Lae R.S.L. Club through the then-SSM “Slim” Francis, I was taken to the newly completed “U” shaped 183 Recce Sqn Other Rank’s accommodation Lines where there were 3 rooms, each room accommodating 8 personnel with only a steel double door locker separating each single bed. The ablutions and latrines, clothes washing and ironing room, a kitchen and dining room were complete, but the bar/recreation room still needed to be painted, have curtains and the floor to be covered with heavy duty rubber tiles by the Unit OR members. After the bar/recreation room job was done, the premises needed to have a suitable and typical Australian iconic name. Some married members suggested to call it the “Chicken Coop,” but luckily the majority of members agreed on a better choice, so we named the premises as “The Railway Hotel,” because there had been a railway line near the shipping dock yard in Lae prior to WW2, but it was destroyed in the bombings when the Japanese army captured Lae. Also, there are many pubs in Australia called “The Railway Hotel” and we figured that it was a good excuse to have a few beers while waiting for a train that never came.



183 Recce Sqn OR lines, 20 AUG 1974. The Railway Hotel and outdoors area. The OR's bar area of the Railway Hotel.

I was glad and proud to be posted to that unique unit as it had a full cast of characters from A – Z, with adopted nick names for our monthly Unit Newsletter that was first called “Tales of the South Pacific” then changed to “Wanem”, so that outsiders wouldn’t know who we were writing about, but it was good for morale and we treated each other as good mates and being part of a family away from home. It was an interesting period to be there in PNG because it was working towards full Independence to be obtained on Tuesday 16th September 1975 with their new National Flag and governed by their first Prime Minister Michael Somare; also their currency was to be changed from Australian Dollars and Cents to Kina and Toea on 19th April 1975. The title of 183 (Independent) Recce Flt was changed to 183 Recce Sqn in 1974 and the Unit HQ moved to new premises closer to the 183 Recce Sqn OR Lines in Sepik Drive at Igam Barracks in November 1974. It remained there until 25th February 1976 when the Unit disbandment was in order.



COL. Mealy with WW2 Veteran, CPL Ditti, George Medal recipient, with President and Committee members of CPL Ditti Club. (see story below)*



Presidents CPL Tom Roberts and CPL John? presented gifts to each other's bar premises.

During my time there, it was an honour for me to have been a guard at the Cenotaph at Lae War Cemetery on ANZAC Day in 1975. In July that year, Corporal Alan the cook, Privates John Farrell, Terry Mellor and myself attended Exercise “Painim Bom” at Cape Gloucester on New Britain Island with two Platoons of 2 PIR soldiers and that was an interesting venture being transported on the LCH PNGS Salamaua. Also, it was an honour to be part of the squad to march onto the Squadron’s side of Lae Airfield, under the command of SSM Graham Haupt, to fire 3 volleys of blank rounds as a salute to the fly-past of 2 of the Unit’s Sioux helicopters and a Pilatus Porter fixed wing aircraft as part of the Unit’s Farewell Parade in November 1975. This was done after receiving a signal order from

Australia that the Unit was to be disbanded and all personnel, equipment and aircraft to be returned to Australia (RTA) before 1st March 1976.

There was the time too in the days leading up to when Australia's Prime Minister Gough Whitlam was sacked by Governor General John Kerr on 11th November 1975, when all the Supply Bills were blocked in the Senate. Captain Tub Matheson was Acting OC while Major Rowen Monteith was away on leave. Some members thought that, if we didn't get paid as normal, the married members would have to "moonlight" for income for their families. The single members knew, from the Unit's cooks, that they had a fortnight's rations left, at least. Well, it was a worry at first, but as history happened, the Bills began to move again after Gough Whitlam was sacked and, with a sigh of relief, we all got paid and the married members didn't have to find outside jobs.



Ego John (later named Ego Paul), cleaner at old HQ 183 Recce Flt premises.



HQ 183 Recce Sqn Nov 74 till Feb 76.



LCH PNGS Salamaua with MK3 Truck stalled & and stuck at Cape Gloucester.

After nearly all of the Unit members had "gone finish" (RTA) to various postings in Australia, by now promoted as a Corporal, I was the only OR left with the Unit rear guard consisting of Captain Tub Matheson, SSM Graham Haupt, QMS WO2 George Catsacos and Sergeants Owen Keane and Dave Melandri. As all the cooks and the other single members had already RTA, I was given special permission to be rationed and quartered at HQ Lae Area Sergeants Mess for a week prior to the rear guard's departure. The only restrictions that I had was that I had to wear civilian clothing and could not go inside the Sergeant's Mess Bar but could go in the beer garden as a visitor on the invitation of one or more of my unit SGT Mess members. It certainly was more comfortable with a room to myself and a menu of food to choose from in the dining room, together with a waiter to come to your table and take your dining order (without any alcoholic beverages).



WW2 USA Amphibious "Buffalo" tank destroyed on 26 Dec 43 and left to rust.



Villagers at Cape Gloucester perform a Sing Sing for the soldiers on Ex Painim Bom.



Mu Mu feast prepared by 2PIR.

The day of the 183 Recce Sqn rear guard departure came on 27th February 1976 and we all left together, riding in the back of an open truck. The last laugh was, while we were waiting in the truck just before we departed Igam Barracks, as a typical Aussie, QMS WO2 Catsacos, who was also a Vietnam war veteran as many of the members were, souvenired the HQ Lae Area PNG National Flag and took it with him back to Australia. That flag is now with the 183 Recce Sqn memorabilia at the Army Aviation Museum in Oakey, Queensland. On our way back to Oz, we had a wait period to change to First-Class seats on an international flight to Brisbane from Port Moresby.



9 Sqn Riot Police practice at Igam Barracks on 11th September 1975.



183 Recce Sqn Farewell Parade at Lae Airfield, November 1975.



Sioux helicopters after the fly-past and farewell salute at Lae Airfield.

While waiting, a former member of 183 Recce Sqn who had been posted to HQ ADAG from our unit in November 1975, Private Peter “Pop” Baldry, met us at the airport and gave us a quick tour of Port Moresby in his car while we were waiting for our flight back to Oz. We called Peter “Pop” because, being 43 years old, he was the oldest divorced, single member in the Squadron. He had served in the Vietnam War during his previous service where he had been a Sergeant in the Ordnance Corps before taking his discharge and later re-enlisting. He was a character of humor, with a slight touch of being a con artist, and the gift of the “gab” when it came to getting a free ride out of some Lae taxi drivers. He spent all his postings in PNG wearing civilian clothing because he had an allergy to wearing green uniforms – yet he remained in PNG. My posting to 183 Recce Sqn in Lae PNG, was the most memorable experience that I had during my period of service in the Army.



183 Recce Sqn squad march onto the airfield for the Farewell Parade.
The farewell parade photographs are by courtesy of Tom Robarts.



Spectators watching the Farewell Parade of 183 Recce Sqn.



Keith Keighley with the WW2 Mitchell Bomber prop in Wksp Sioux Bar and Cpl Bob ‘Bull’ Long assisting.
The Mitchell Bomber propeller is now on display in Oakey Aviation Museum.



Lae Domestic Airport Terminal in January 1976. The airport was relocated to Nadzab Airfield in late 1977.

***Editor's note:** PN414 Corporal Diti, Papuan Infantry Battalion and 2 New Guinea Infantry Battalion, came from Iarus Village near Lae.

On June 23, 1945, Corporal Diti showed bravery and devotion and a complete disregard for his own safety when four European members of his unit were marooned on a heavily-loaded truck in a river, rising rapidly following torrential rains.

Undeterred by the fact that one European NCO (Sergeant) was swept away and drowned when he tried to reach the shore, Corporal Diti raced into the torrent and, after a struggle, reached the truck. Immediately, he grasped a Sergeant and dragged him to safety through the flooded stream. Without pausing, he re-entered the river and battled his way to the truck. On this occasion, he carried an Officer (Major J. Pawson#, Battalion 2IC) through the still-rising river to the shore.

Although obviously fatigued by his efforts, Corporal Diti with supreme courage and almost super-human effort fought his way to the truck. He seized the remaining Officer and, despite the fact that both rescuer and rescued were twice swept bodily downstream when struck by boulders, he maintained his grip on the now-helpless Officer and finally struggled to the shore.

His coolness, courage and devotion were responsible for saving the lives of two Officers and one Senior NCO.

[Citation for the George Medal from *To Find a Path* Volume 1 by James Sinclair (Brisbane, Boolarong, 1990)]

#Major Pawson had been at the centre of a serious dispute, only four months earlier, with his battle-experienced, indigenous NCOs - including Cpl Diti. To his great credit, Corporal Diti put aside his (justifiable) grievance against Major Pawson and saved his life.

PNG REMEMBRANCE DAY, 23RD JULY 2021

Commemorative Address by Director Land Preparation, Lt Col Boniface ARUMA, DMS

I commence by paying respect and acknowledging our GOD Almighty, the Creator of Heaven and Earth. For the life we have and for all the blessings that we enjoy every day.

CO 1RPIR, LTCOL Heta Nombe

COL Siale Diro

Distinguished Guests

Veterans

Former Serving Members

Officers, SNCOs and Soldiers of 1RPIR

Our wives, children, families, friends and members of our surrounding community who are here with us this morning.

On the 3rd of September 1939, Great Britain declared war on Germany. The Second World War had begun. Australia, too, immediately declared war. In consequence, the Territory of Papua and the Mandated Territory of New Guinea – both administered by Australia – were at war.

Events in far-away Europe had little immediate effect on Papua and New Guinea. But some units of the German Navy were known to be in the Pacific. More seriously, the Japanese had been fighting in China for years and had concluded a friendship pact with Germany. Japan possessed one of the most powerful navies and had millions of men under arms. Many observers thought it was but a matter of time before the Japanese launched a wave of Pacific conquests. Papua and New Guinea was almost completely defenceless, hence, raising security concerns from the Australians.

This chain of events triggered the Australian government to raise and establish a military presence in Papua and New Guinea, and so on the 1st of June 1940, Maj Logan and W.R. Humphries, Senior Resident Magistrate, began enlisting volunteers from the Royal Papuan Constabulary, in a building on the present site of what is now the Sir Hubert Murray Stadium. It was there that the Papuan Infantry Battalion (PIB) and later to be Pacific Islands Regiment was born.

Many Papua New Guineans fought in the Second World War in Papua New Guinea. Some fought with ANGAU – the Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit – and some with the Coast Watchers, and the soldiers of the NGVR – New Guinea Volunteers Rifles. Others took part in fierce teams, and ‘M’ Special Unit. Thousands worked for both Allies and Japanese as carriers and laborers – fighting of a different sort. Thousands more fought as policemen – men of the Royal Papuan Constabulary and the New Guinea Police Force. In all some 3, 800 Papuans and New Guineans fought as regular soldiers with the Pacific Islands Regiment.

There were many personal accounts of heroic deeds by PNG soldiers dating from the Second World War through to the Vanuatu campaign and to the Bougainville Crisis. The very famous “Fuzzy Wuzzy Angel” Raphael Oimbari, aiding a wounded Australian soldier is just one of many heroic acts. Furthermore, some of the braveries exemplified by our forefathers were worthy of the Victoria Cross.

I would now like to read to you an extract from Volume 1 of 'To Find A Path.'

'Matpi probed carefully along the track and came to a small fire and a dead snake, which the two Japanese had been about to cook. Matpi could 'smell' Japanese, he knew they were somewhere close. He turned and saw two rifle barrels lined up on him from the rocks. He hit the ground. The Japanese opened fire, and a bullet creased Matpi across the top of his head and knocked him out.'

'Matpi came to moments later and heard the sound of Japanese nearby. They were obviously wondering whether Matpi had been killed, and a little later both came up and stood over him. Matpi's head was bloody, and the Japanese must have thought that he was dead. They turned to race away, and Matpi knocked them over with a long burst from his Owen, finishing them off with his bayonet. Prior to and following this encounter Matpi was responsible for many heroics and acts of gallantry. Matpi's courage was recognized by the award of the Distinguished Conduct Medal. The citation noted that Matpi's personal score of Japanese killed was no fewer than 110.'

Not including the other Units, the PIB alone had accounted for 1,116 enemy killed for a loss of 23 – a feat of which any Unit might just be proud. The actions of men like Oimbari and Matpi represents the true spirit of the PNG soldier – the spirit of mateship and solidarity that provided the foundation for the organisation we now know as the PNG Defence Force.

In honouring and remembering the 23rd of July 1942 as the first step towards our awakening to nationhood and national identity, I would like to remind all of us to remember as well our forefathers who fought alongside the Japanese against the Allied forces. They too are our fathers and we must never forget them when we commemorate our Remembrance Day. They did not have the luxury to choose which side to align themselves. Sadly, we do not have accurate records of what these men did fighting alongside the Japanese. But what I am certain of, is that there were also many 'heroes' and many 'Victoria Crosses' among our fathers who fought with the Japanese.... only GOD knows! Therefore, we must always remember them too and we must always observe our Remembrance Day with a wider lens.

Let us also never forget the soldiers who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty during the Bougainville Crisis. Despite the atrocious administrative and logistic conditions – conditions which most other Defence Forces would not endure, our soldiers persevered with unwavering commitment to their duty for over 10 years. Every one of the names on the Roll of Honour represents a husband, father, son, brother or uncle taken. Their lives were precious: to their families, to Papua New Guinea and above all, to those who gave them. They never had the chance to grow old, or to watch those dear to them grow old.

Their loss is a reminder that there is nothing glorious about war or conflict. Those called upon to fight know that better than anyone. But they also know that, when all else fails, it is necessary to fight against the tyrannies that threaten liberty.

It is very fitting that we are gathered here this morning in this very place because this is where their spirit flows, in the heart of the organization they love and the land given to them by the Creator. It is here that we sense their presence. It is here that their call to us to build a nation worthy of their sacrifice is heard at its loudest.

We are especially mindful of the families of the men who gave their lives for our nation in Bougainville who are with us this morning. I am deeply appreciative of the opportunity to address you this morning on an occasion that resonates through our collective memories.

We remember too other members of the Defence Force who have lost their lives in commitments other than war or conflict.

Finally, it was their sacrifice that gave us our identity. It was their sacrifice that gave us the strength to endure. It was their sacrifice that laid the foundation for us to build and prosper. Therefore, in these days of great uncertainty let us be reminded of the ultimate sacrifice made by those who have gone before us. We must not let them down.

My National Service meeting with Mrs Susan Peacock in 1970

by (1735279) David Williams

I had completed a five-year apprenticeship as an Aircraft Engineer and, like many Australian twenty-year olds, I received notification of call up into the Army. I viewed the two years ahead of me with much anticipation and of course the burning question, where was my life headed?

After fronting at Enoggera Barracks at 9am on 29/1/69, I was identified and marshalled into waiting buses bound for Brisbane Airport and flown same day to Williamtown NSW then on the bus again to 3TB Singleton as part of the first intake for 1969. After more marshalling, yelling etc, "A" Company would be home for the next thirteen weeks. My life had now changed dramatically. Welcome to the Army.

After recruit training, I was fortunate to be allocated R.A.E.M.E Corps and posted to 1st. Aviation Regt. RAAF Base Amberley. My military experience improved ten-fold. The RAAF boys certainly had it good. The food was good. The facilities were good and the beer was good.

At the end of 1969 I was informed that in the following year I was being posted to 183 {Independent} Recce Flight at Lae in TPNG.

Early March 1970 I was on my way catching a 2am. TAA night charter flight direct to Lae on a Lockheed Electra. There were only two passengers and we were both Army. The four female hostesses showed us the food and bar and said they would be sleeping for the trip. This Nasho caper was improving all the time.

Arriving in Lae I was driven to Igam Barracks about 10km out of town. I recall being issued those wonderful Juniper Greens etc. The ORs Barracks were good and I settled in to have explained that for \$2 per week I could have a wash / iron boy. Army life was improving even more.

The first time I wore juniper greens was the 1970 ANZAC Day march in town. The second time was when I was told, along with another 183 Flight digger, that we would be the guard of honour for the arrival of the Minister for the Army, Andrew Peacock and, after that, drivers for both Andrew Peacock and his wife Susan.

On their arrival the accompanying Sergeant gave the orders to "present arms" etc. All over in seconds as a welcome function had been organized in air conditioning. The two of us were then driven into Lae to pick up the two Avis cars for us to drive the dignitaries where they wished. We drew straws and the other soldier drew the Minister, and I drew his wife.

The Minister's stay was for four days and my instruction was to arrive at their motel in Lae at 9am and drive back to Igam with Susan Peacock for the day's organized calendar of events. Andrew Peacock departed early each day, so he had already left when I arrived. While the Minister was primarily there for Army meetings, Susan's role was to visit the Igam

School, morning tea with Officers wives etc. Susan was always accompanied by the Base CO's wife. I did get the impression that Susan had no interest in the military schedule due to her reluctance to join Andrew on his inspections.

Naturally there were functions at night to attend usually in the base Officers Mess, but Susan would come out around 10pm or earlier to be driven back to the motel. Andrew of course loved to party, and my poor counterpart regularly drove Andrew back to Lae around 2am in the morning.

Picking Susan up for the day at 9am was great for me. It meant that my mornings were easy going. Every morning on my arrival to pick up Susan she was in the motel pool. I recall vividly seeing her climbing out the pool wearing a black one-piece costume with the centre split all the way to the navel. Of course, it was extremely rude of me to stare and notice these things. I had to be on my best behaviour!

We would then drive back to Igam Barracks and pick up the CO's wife and, if no more to do at Igam, drive back to Lae town. By the end of the second day, they both referred to me by my Christian name but I was always the well-mannered person that I am and I referred to each lady as Mrs.

After showing them the huge WW11 airstrip and complex at Nadzab, the Hospital Hill and explaining its WW11 history, the native markets, Lae Port complex and several other prominent Lae areas including the War Cemetery and explaining the Japanese occupation, I was out of ideas to entertain these two ladies.

On the third day after the regular pool encounter and driving to Igam for my other passenger, they asked, Where are we going today? I had given a great deal of thought to what I might do to entertain these Ladies. I responded with - it was to be a mystery tour. By day three we were all getting along like long lost friends.

My first stop was outside the Chinese Trade Store, Yuk Chee Wong. Will we be safe they asked? This store had everything from clothing to sound systems to - you name it they had it. Well, who would argue that women love shopping? Susan loved the lace table settings and the silk bed sheets and bought up big. She commented how inexpensive everything was. The CO's wife told me she had never been in a local Chinese Trade store in her two years at Igam. I learnt a lesson in life that day and vowed not to shop with women again.

So we went into another three stores and at Cedric Chee's Susan bought a rather expensive top of the range Ladies Seiko watch after Cedric explained that his watches were cheaper than duty free. In the course of the day I can't recall anything purchased for Andrew not even a pair of socks. To be honest I was all shopped out and glad the day was over.

There were only two evening functions that Susan attended and she finished both early while Andrew enjoyed the socialising. That was fine by me because I then had the rental car to visit the young TAA Air Hostess I was dating, and it didn't matter what time I returned to barracks. On the last night Susan thanked me for my time and said that she enjoyed the Lae experience.

I must say that in no way did Susan Peacock ever speak to me or treat me in a common way, even though it was expected that she behave as per her social standing. True enough Susan was ever the Lady but between us we had many casual conversations on our road trips, and I showed her due respect. Sometimes I have dreams about that one-piece swimsuit!!

My two-year tenure as a Nasho was a lesson in life that helped me to mature and placed me in good stead for my future. I will never forget those days. Bring back National Service I say.

by a proud Nasho and digger

P.S. Dave returned to PNG straight after his Discharge in January 1971, to work in Aircraft Engineering at Goroka then Lae. He married that TAA Hostess and his eldest daughter was born in Lae in 1972. He returned to Brisbane in January 1974 to find the historic floods had ruined his tea chest (of PNG souvenirs and photos) left under his parents' home at Chelmer.

Dave's Lae-born daughter is now a successful Architect who is currently the designer and Project Manager for upgrading Lae's ANGAU Hospital in which she was born.



Lae War Cemetery (image by Dave Williams)

Gumi-ing

Gumi is the Melanesian word for rubber and gumi-ing was the use of a rubber truck tube to negotiate the downstream rapids on some of Papua New Guinea's faster rivers.

Just east of Lae, capital of the Madang Province running down from the Atzera Range is the Butibum, a substantial river that became a fast running, rock filled torrent after a reasonable rain. As servants of HMQE2, Wednesday afternoon was generally recognised as recreation/sport time and a number of the (fool)hardy in the unit took this time to perfect our downhill river running skills. The lower reaches of the Butibum River could be reached by road from Lae and crossed at a concrete bridge so with 4 inflated truck tubes tied to the roof of a 1961 Volkswagen and 4 lumpy lads unstrapped inside we would set out for our afternoon "sport". The road soon turned to track and track to path where we would abandon the Vdub and walk about a mile further up a tributary of the Butibum. This part of the river was quite shallow but very fast running and proved to be a very good intro to the river. When possible, we would cajole an additional "volunteer" to drive the "early model Porsche" back to the bridge. Wives are a wondrous invention.

Gumi-ing technique involved sitting in the truck tube arms and legs askew and allowing the river to take you downstream. WRONG! Allowing your bum to project any lower than the bottom of the tube generally meant substantial rectal rehabilitation when your arse was scrapped severely over the floor of the tributary or rammed into rigid rocks. Neither did you just hang the extremities over the edges of the tube as the river had an uncanny habit of running you up against the mid river rocky protrusions and tipping you asunder (the water). Depending on the river height the larger rocks created a vortex of water behind them that sucked backwards into the rock or with higher water, creating a shining, tube attracting, smooth water lump in midstream, then a whitewater turmoil trap immediately behind it. The technique to avoid or recover from these traps was varied but how do you learn these things, that's right, cold hard experience!

My first attempt proved fortunate if only to emphasise the "fool" part of hardy. A number of "servants of the Queen" set out from the upper tributary, only to be tipped out, turned turtle, or tossed aside by the intolerant torrent. I managed however to negotiate my way down the tributary with major fortune, to get propelled out into the Butibum proper. Now this was a different cauldron of concern altogether. The water was a dirty shade of khaki from the upstream soil it was transporting to the sea but it had bloody great waves in it ! Now looking at the waves from the bridge downstream when we did our recce didn't seem too great a challenge but when you are viewing it from water level be assured, they take on a status worthy of caring attention. By this time I had got ahead of the other troops and I was on my own in the river. The squelch of the rushing, crashing water was *undertoned* with the baritone sound of the rumbling maelstrom of boulders that bounced along the river floor. With my mouth full of water and my heart pumping I thought I may have bitten off more than was chewable at one sitting. I was right. The river ran me directly over the first shiny water mogul and dumped me and my firmly gripped gumi downside up into the eddy trap on the lower side, head down, r sup and struggling. A slippery wet gumi isn't an easy thing to keep the fingernails in and it soon went its own way. No helmet, no lifejacket, only shorts, shirt and sandshoes. A river wide and deep and rushing is no place to play, but survival instincts and a large lashing of adrenaline set me half swimming, flailing legs defending myself from the rocks, to the river bank, where I had a little lay down and waited for my thumping heart to abate. I then set out to track the river downstream to the bridge to hopefully meet up with the

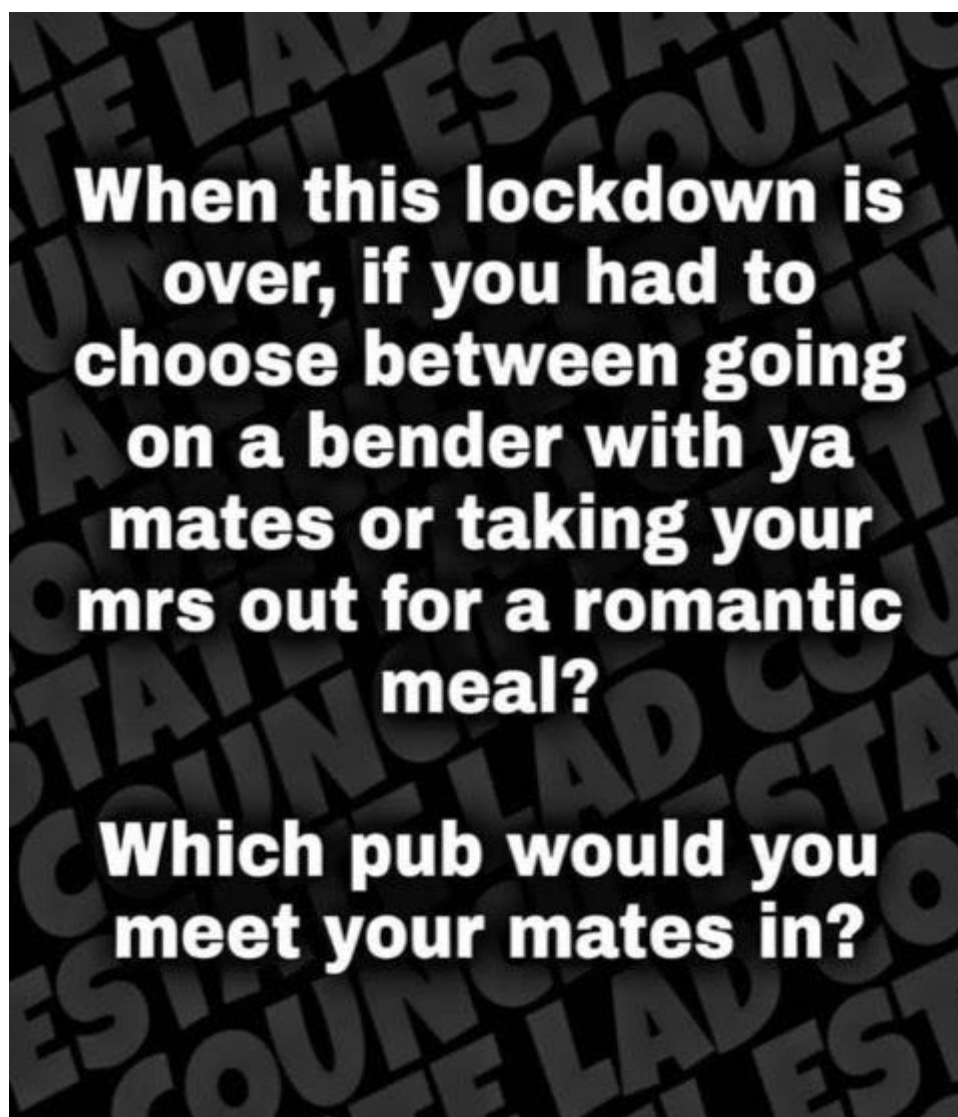
others. No such luck. I was on the wrong side, jungle down to the water, unclimbable cliff and no track. Only option was back into the khaki cauldron, swimming, kicking and hoping I would make it. Needless to say, I did and after recovering I stumbled my way back to the bridge to fight another day, or sport another Wednesday.

Roger Dundas

Lt., 183 (Indep) Recce Flight 1972-74

Returned to PNG 1975-77

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Defence Cooperation Program 14

[An extract from “**With Skill and Fighting – Craftsmen of the Australian Army 1942-2014**”
courtesy of Brigadier Ross Grant AM (Retd)]

RAEME has had a long involvement with a major Australian Government initiative, the Defence Cooperation Program (DCP) which grew out of Australia’s bilateral defence relationships with Singapore and Malaysia during 1963. DCP’s intent was to: strengthen the defence capabilities of nations within Australia’s strategic sphere of interest; promote regional stability; and enhance broader security interests, including diplomatic and economic considerations.

The DCP was at its inception, and continues today, to be diverse in method and broad in geographic range. DCP support includes Australian loan personnel (ADF and civil), combined exercises, training/study visits and project/equipment assistance to PNG, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Solomon Islands, Fiji, Vanuatu, Western Samoa, Tonga and the Marshall Islands.

Under the DCP for example, the Army provided technical and personnel support with 12 Sioux helicopters to Indonesia during 1978 as well as Nomad N22 and N24 fixed wing aircraft to the Armed Forces of Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines during later years. Army involvement with the DCP continues and a significant element of that involvement has been provided by the Corps of RAEME.

A contemporary example involving RAEME and DCP is provided in the following account by Major John Halstead. It is important to note that John twice served in PNG, first for two years during the mid-1990s on an exchange posting with the PNGDF. Then on his second trip for three years from 2009, John served as the SO2 Training PNGDF, a DCP position which, as this story demonstrates, he clearly enjoyed. However, his account also demonstrates the conditions often faced by those engaged in DCP project work and of the sense of achievement that usually accompanies a job well done.

I was lucky enough to achieve a second DCP posting to PNG in 2009. My job for the second posting was as an embedded position in the PNGDF Training Command Headquarters. The PNGDF consisted of a Headquarters in Port Moresby, two Infantry Battalions and one Engineer Battalion. There was a major logistic unit referred to as a Force Support Battalion (FSB) which included the workshop facility; a training facility called Goldie River Training Depot (GRTD) modelled on our Recruit Training Battalion, and a Defence Academy modelled loosely on RMC. GRTD is located approximately 20 kilometres north of Port Moresby. The PNGDF was tri-service so there was an Air Transport Squadron (ATS) and a Maritime Element. The ATS leased two Bell Helicopters and had operated fixed wing assets during the 12 months prior to my arrival. The maritime element had four Pacific Island patrol boats and two un-seaworthy LCH. The Infantry Battalions were based in Port Moresby and Wewak while the Engineer Battalion operated from Lae. Both Wewak and Lae are on the coast north

of the Owen Stanley Range and depend on sea lanes and air for supply to and from the capital.

I found on the whole PNG Nationals were capable people who dealt with significant daily frustrations and demonstrated patience of which I could only dream. For example, a young PNGDF Captain who worked with me was a school Teacher, a direct entry officer posted to HQ Training Command. Over some weeks I observed he was despondent, so I quizzed him. He explained he hadn't been paid so I asked for how long he had been unpaid. His response: 'Sir, I have not been paid since I joined four months ago'. I later discovered this is not uncommon.

Housing was provided to PNGDF at a nominal rate. However, there was no central repair or maintenance program. The standard was not high but most senior officers owned houses and rented them out while remaining in service-provided accommodation. It was not uncommon to find young families living in the OR's lines due to a shortage of housing. Power outages were frequent and could last for days. During those periods the PNGDF would melt away. Often, when the PNGDF could not meet financial commitments, the messing contract for living-in-personnel was affected. In spite of these hardships the members of the PNGDF generally had a good work ethic and acquitted themselves well on deployment.

During 2012, the number of students sent to attend Australian courses increased from 28 to 62, most were fully sponsored and some took their families. This meant that DCP paid for training, accommodation and travel while the PNGDF continued to pay the member's salary. My role was to assist with selection and administration of PNGDF and Department of Defence personnel accepted to attend training in Australia. This included training at the Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies, RMC, Army Logistic Training Centre, School of Military Engineering and Land Warfare Centre detachments around Australia. I found most of my available instructor base had lost its effectiveness through years of weak ineffective leadership. There were a few diamonds in the rough and course outcomes could be surprisingly satisfying at times. The individual training year consisted of two recruit courses totalling approximately 300 trainees of 16 weeks duration. These courses were managed by a Royal Australian Infantry Warrant Officer Class Two. Once Corps allocation was granted, soldiers moved into initial employment training. An RAE Warrant Officer provided oversight for this training for engineers and two Warrant Officers managed logistic training. By way of partnering, the PNGDF provided a fulltime Apprentice Master and the ADF sponsored 20 all trades apprentices on an ongoing basis.

Before my arrival during 2009, the PNGDF accepted its first intake of female recruits and the ADF sent female Recruit Instructors to PNG to make up the platoon staff. During my DCP posting, two PNGDF females qualified as recruit instructors. One successfully completed her Junior Leader's Course²⁷ and was on track to becoming the first female SNCO/ WO member of the PNGDF. 2013 represented the first year the PNGDF would deliver a first appointment 18 month Basic Officer training course of platoon strength. It is plain that we are making a difference in this training element of the PNGDF.²⁸

DCP with Australia's near neighbours remains an important element in the development and maintenance of positive regional relationships. RAEME can be justifiably proud of the role the Corps plays in the delivery of positive outcomes for many of these DCP projects. RAEME's achievements in all of the activities and operations (including DCP) have never been left to chance or good luck. Rather the dedication to service and the technical excellence consistently applied by members of the Corps has a firm foundation in a highly successful training regime.

²⁷ The equivalent of Subject One for Corporal course

²⁸ Contribution to the RAEME Corps History Project by John Halstead

[Australia's Defence Cooperation with its Neighbours in the Asian Pacific Region, The Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, AGPS, Canberra 1984: (Senate DCP Report, 1984)]

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PNG announces Trans-Island Highway

The government's Connect PNG Project seeks to divide the nation's twenty-year National Road Network strategy into a series of five-year projects that will result in a more connected nation. David Wereh, Secretary of the Department of Works and Implementation said that the first of these would be the Trans-Island Highway. This would start from Nine Mile Junction near Lae and finish in Malalaua in the Gulf Province. Existing roads would be upgraded to two lanes of new road, 302 km long.

The ambitious project, when completed, would mean that driving between Lae and Port Moresby would be possible for the first time. According to *Business News*, 4 May 2021, the Australian Government will contribute K190 million to the Trans-Island Highway component of the Connect PNG project. PNG will contribute K16 million and additional funding will be provided by the Asian Development Bank.

(courtesy of *PNG Kundu*, September 2021)

Editor's note: Readers may recall that the centrepiece infrastructure project for Indonesian-controlled West Papua is called the Trans-Papua Highway. It is the first major road connecting remote highland areas of West Papua to the coastal cities. Indonesian President Joko Widodo campaigned in 2014 on promises to heal the troubled relationship between Jakarta and West Papua. But his vows remain largely unrealised. Critics say the Highway is primarily intended to accelerate the exploitation of natural resources such as forests, minerals and gas. Sections of the Highway are now being built by the military according to *The Monthly*, November 2020.

ARMY PILOTS IN THE NATIONAL SERVICE ERA

by Neil Leckie, OTU Class 3/68

When the government introduced conscription in 1964 in an effort to boost the numbers in the Army to meet the growing threat from Indonesia, they realised that they would need to train a lot of junior officers. Given that the Army was to increase by 8,000 men a year for two years, and then maintain that increased number of 16,000, working on an infantry platoon equivalent of one officer in every 34 men, almost 3% of the men would need to become junior officers. Then with the commitment to Vietnam of the fully ARA battalion (1 RAR) needing to be replaced after a year's tour the need for Infantry Platoon Commanders to make up the shortfall in available junior officers to fill a further eight battalions, there was seen to be a great need for junior officers.

The Officer Training Unit (OTU Scheyville) was raised on 1 April 1965 to train the approximately 250 junior officers needed each year. At this time, the Army realised that putting its pilots through an Infantry Officer's course would be very useful. An Infantry trained pilot flying in direct support above an infantry battle and talking directly to the Infantry Platoon Commander would certainly bring many advantages to the battle.

When the first class of OTU Cadets (Class 1/65) arrived at Scheyville on 16 July 1965, the class included seven Air Cadets – ARA soldiers selected to train as Army Pilots. As well as the Air Cadets, some National Servicemen at Scheyville were also selected to become Army Pilots. Once graduated from OTU, the selected officers would undertake a Basic Flying Training School (BFTS) Course at Point Cook in Victoria, and when that course was passed the officer would then undertake Advance Flying Training (AFT) on either Fixed Wing or Rotary Wing Aircraft at RAAF Amberley in Queensland.

OTU graduated 1,881 2Lts. This was made up of 1,693 National Servicemen and 108 Air Cadets (total 1,803), 68 OCS/OTU and 10 CMF. Many OTU trained Army Pilots, along with many other graduates, went on to long careers in the Army! After the thirtieth, and last, class graduation at Scheyville on 18 April 1973, the numbers who went through the Army flying training from OTU were calculated as:

Air Cadets (incl Ex NS):	Graduated from OTU	108
	Completed BFTS & AFT	75 (69%)
National Servicemen:	Graduated from OTU	69
	Completed BFTS &/or AFT	48 (73%)

In later years National Servicemen who were selected for Army flying training and held a 'Commercial' Pilot's Licence were tested and some were offered AFT without needing to undertake the BFTS Course.

Of the 108 Air Cadets, there were 5 former NS who re-enlisted as Air Cadets. One died in flying training, one was a medical withdrawal and three did not complete their flying training. In addition, 2 Air Cadets and 10 National Servicemen went to AAAvn in Non-flying roles (such as Air Traffic Controllers). In all 186 Air Cadet and National Service OTU Graduates served in AAAvn after OTU.

In 1972 OCS Portsea began sending classes to OTU, known as the OCS Wing. From those three classes, four OCS Wing men also went through the Army flying training, with three completing the courses and one withdrawing. Total OTU Graduates to become pilots: 126.

REST IN PEACE

(Honouring ADF Servicemen who flew in PNG)

Postscript on Thomas William Guivarra MID

Following the Tribute to Tom Guivarra in the last Newsletter (page 11), we have received extra information about Tom from Ian Hendrick (3/72 OTU Scheyville):

I was born in Lae ('47) and spent some 22 years there including as a Pilot before returning to Aust. During my flying years there I got to know a number of AAAN pilots such as Tom Guivarra, Lyn Herron, Ross Goldspink and Louigi Hassett. While they all stood out as exceptionally professional men, I suppose Tom had the greatest influence on me because he was also a very funny bloke and a true raconteur.

I do recall a story (although I didn't witness the incident) of Tom deciding to see if he could fly an Army Cessna 180 underneath the Markham Bridge! I think a ground recce indicated that it could be done if the FM aerals were removed from the aircraft after which he apparently flew the sortie! I crossed the bridge many times and I would have to think that Tom's exotic complexion would have been decidedly paler after a stunt like that!!

Note on Lyn Hummerston

Following the mention and photo of Lyn Hummerston in the last Newsletter (pages 3-4) Dave Williams (183 Indep. Recce Flight) has advised us:

Lyn Hummerston of 183 Recce, 1973 – 1975, was sadly killed in an Army GAF Nomad while training a PNGDF pilot. Lyn had been flying for the PNGDF Aviation Squadron.

Tribute to Terry Hayes DFC

Following the mention of Terry Hayes in the last Newsletter (pages 2-3) we add an historical tribute to Terry from Ian Loftus:

I was saddened to hear in December 2019 of the passing recently of Terry Hayes DFC, formerly of the Australian Army Aviation Corps. A decorated helicopter pilot from the Vietnam conflict, Terry's efforts in 1972 are largely unknown.

A RAAF Caribou aircraft carrying three crew and 26 passengers had disappeared whilst flying between Lae and Port Moresby on the afternoon of 28 August 1972. A search operation was started late that afternoon involving a range of RAAF, Army and civilian aircraft.

Lieutenant Terry Hayes from the Army's Lae-based 183rd Reconnaissance Flight had been involved, flying a Sioux helicopter, in the search for the missing Caribou since the morning of 29 August 1972. Hayes had previously flown Sioux helicopters in Vietnam and had been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) for safely landing after his helicopter had been shot down in November 1970.

On 31 August 1972 he was flying Army Sioux A1-640 and had taken off from Wau in Morobe province at 1.36pm to search the local area. After searching the area allotted to him, he had

some fuel remaining and decided to do another search of the Korpera River valley area south of Wau. The Army aviators had been unhappy with the level of effort given to searching the Korpera River valley and Kudjeru Gap areas earlier in the week and decided to do a further search of the area.

The search was a slow process and conducted at a relatively low height above the jungle canopy. Hayes later recalled:

I was working my way down the river valley on the southern side of the gap. The gap is around 9,500 ft, and I was down to tree top level at about 8,000 ft, circling over the canopy using rotor wash to blow away the trees in order to see the ground, well below.

At around 3.00pm that day Hayes spotted smoke near the banks of the Korpera River about 33 kilometres south-southwest of Wau. The smoke caught his attention, and he flew closer to investigate, spotting two people. He later recalled:

The jungle canopy covered the terrain as far as the eye could see, with no breaks at all, never mind places to land. The first thing I saw was smoke drifting through the treetops, and on moving to that area, saw two boys in jungle green shorts and shirts, waving frantically.

One of the survivors, Patrick Tau-Gau (George Medal 1973), later recalled that Terry Hayes waved from his helicopter and threw red and yellow powder onto the foliage near where they were standing.

Unable to land because of the jungle and without any ability to rescue the boys, he radioed for support, and two Army Pilatus flew to the area. Hayes recalled that the first Porter probably arrived within fifteen minutes. It then circled above Hayes' Sioux helicopter to relay radio messages as the Sioux's VHF radio was not effective in mountainous terrain. The Porter relayed a message to the Rescue Co-ordination Centre:

A703 SIGHTING IN MIDDLE OF KUDGEROO OF SQ H TWO YOUNG FELLOWS IN ARMY ISSUE SHORTS ONE WAVING A RED FLAG AND ONE A BLUE SHIRT.

Another Pilatus Porter aircraft went in search of the RAAF Iroquois helicopters which were also involved in the search, as he had been unable to make radio contact with them. The Iroquois helicopters were each fitted with a winch and carried a crewman and were the only option available to rescue the survivors. The RAAF Iroquois subsequently arrived in the area and winched the survivors to safety. They were then able to guide the searchers to the Caribou crash site several kilometres away near a mountain ridge.

Hayes' decision to persist in the search for the missing Caribou was undoubtedly the single factor that saw the survivors rescued and the crash site located. The two RAAF Iroquois commanders were subsequently awarded the Air Force Cross (AFC) for their work in the rescue and recovery effort and several Army personnel were made Members of the Order of Australia (AM) for work in the rescue and recovery at the crash site. The contribution of Terry Hayes was largely forgotten.

Tribute to Kevin Shoppee from Neil Leckie (3/68 OTU Scheyville)

4721921, Kevin Damian Joseph Shoppee was born on 21 February 1951 in Melbourne. He completed his secondary education at Sacred Heart College in SA. Before entering the Army as a National Serviceman, he was employed a self-employed photographer and journalist. He graduated with Class 3/70 on 19th December 1970 as Graduate Number 1277 and transferred to the Australian Staff Corps. He was allocated to the Royal Australian Infantry Corps and posted 3rd Training Battalion, Singleton.

On 10 Jan 1972 he commenced Long Term Schooling (flying training) at Point Cook, completing Basic Flying Course 13/72 and Advanced Flying Course 15/72. He was posted to 1 Aviation Regiment on 1 Dec 1972. Kevin was flying Army Sioux helicopter A1-722 when it crashed into Mt Wilhelm, New Guinea, on 29th November 1973. Kevin died in the crash. He was buried in Centennial Park Cemetery in Adelaide on 5 Dec 1973.

Torokina Airstrip revisited by D. Ian MacDonald

I found the photos by Lt Jack McIntosh on your Website of interest in that as a Patrol Officer I reopened Torokina Airstrip in 1972. A picture is attached. This is the inland bomber strip. I had an Army map of the period that showed 5 strips - two bomber and 3 fighter strips. The other bomber strip was on the beach opposite the island. It was used by Qantas for a number of years on their Rabaul to Honiara route. It was a coconut plantation when we were there. The other strips had returned to the jungle.

We transported a dozer in on a barge and pushed the accumulated debris and low scrub off. Underneath the Marsden matting looked as good as new but was removed for ease of maintenance. The large culvert (4 foot or so) across the centre of the strip had been blocked over the years and a deep gully had been scoured across the strip. However, we were able to restore some 2,500 foot of strip which was more than enough for light aircraft.

We had with us a PWD man Peter Robinson who welded together a steel drag grader. Peter had served at Torokina during the War. He and his mates has buried a new Jeep and gear for future retrieval. Try as we might we could not locate the site. The jungle growth had blurred all the features.



BOOK REVIEW

Robert H. M. Gibbes, *You Live But Once: An autobiography*, self-published, 1994

ISBN 0646184431

Some Australian Servicemen posted to PNG Command during the 25 years leading to Independence, would have known or heard of Gibbes Sepik Airways, founded and managed by Wing Commander (Ret'd) Bobby Gibbes DSO* DFC and Bar, OAM (born 1916, died 2007).

Second World War Service



*On 21 December 1942, Wing Commander Bobby Gibbes was leading his squadron of Kittyhawk fighter-bombers on a strafing attack against an Italian airfield in the Western Desert. During the attack, several aircraft are destroyed on the ground, two by Gibbes, but his formation comes under heavy anti-aircraft fire. One of their number is shot down and a second is forced to crash-land a few miles from the target. Although his own aircraft has been hit by shrapnel, Gibbes goes to the aid of his downed fellow pilot.

With the rest of his formation providing cover, he lands and taxis his single-seat Kittyhawk across the rocky desert for a mile until stopped by a depression. He jettisons the external fuel tank to reduce the weight of his aircraft before pacing out a take-off strip as his comrade evaded Italian troops and ran to meet him. Gibbes ditches his own parachute to allow the other pilot to sit in the seat before climbing in after him and sitting on his lap.

Then, as he took off, his undercarriage hit a small ridge and he watched in horror as the port wheel fell off. Escorted by his squadron pilots, Gibbes headed for base. With fighters in short supply, he decides against a belly landing but comes down on his one remaining wheel thus causing minimal damage to his aircraft.

Recommended for the Victoria Cross for this action, Gibbes was instead awarded the DSO which was promulgated on 15 January 1943 and cited his “outstanding qualities of leadership and enthusiasm”.

(Text by Suzy Neve, Australian Military History, cited in *Harim Tok Tok*, April 2021)

Post-War Flying

The post-War enterprises of Bobby Gibbes, and his team of pilots, in TPNG will interest not only Army aviation Servicemen but also those Servicemen posted to Moem Barracks, the Highlands or Igam Barracks. Below are several extracts from Gibbes’ autobiography, highlighting the spectacular landings achieved by pilots of Gibbes Sepik Airways. (Copies of this book are scarce so long extracts are provided for those who may not be able to locate a copy of the book.)

Vanimo

Peter’s next prang was at Vanimo, a Patrol Post within a short distance of the Dutch New Guinea border. The airstrip had been constructed across a narrow neck of land joining the government station to the mainland. It was a short airstrip with sea on the very edge of each end of the single runway and a Norseman pilot had to carry out a powered-approach with his airspeed just above the stall, to ensure that he would be able to brake to a stop before running into the sea. Normally we carried out a low circuit, turning to the left in order to give a maximum view, unrestricted by the large radial engine, when turning onto the final approach to the strip.

For some unaccountable reason, on this occasion, Peter carried out a right-hand circuit, and on the final approach onto the airstrip (probably due to the engine blotting out his view as he made a very short turn on final) he failed to see a 12-inch stump protruding above the beach, the remains of a

coconut palm which had been cut down when the aerodrome was constructed. He was too low and one wheel clipped the stump. The jack behind the undercarriage leg broke, letting the wheel turn sideways, and the aircraft on touchdown ended on its back, skidding for some distance in a cloud of dust just before coming to a rest. Peter and his Defence Force passenger, Major Dick, clambered out unhurt but the aircraft was badly damaged and had to be dismantled and rafted back to a Mission Station, from where it was later shipped back to Wewak for repair. The only damage to either occupant was to the Major's uniform by the battery, beneath his seat, dripping acid.

Angoram and Telefomin

One day I landed my first and only Norseman (VH-BNE) at Angoram, a Patrol Post on the banks of the Sepik River. As I taxied in, my wheels suddenly broke through the crust of the aerodrome surface and the aircraft tipped onto its nose, bending one blade of the propeller badly. (Tommy Briggs had left Wewak at the same time in the only Auster plane based in Wewak on a flight into Telefomin.)

I surveyed the damage with both dismay and disgust and cursed my rotten luck. The soft area which I had found in the middle of the airstrip was above an old bomb crater which had been filled with timber and then covered with soil. The timber below the surface had rotted. I went into the radio room and sent a message for Tommy to come in to rescue me – but at the same time, a radio message came in from Telefomin advising me that he had turned his Auster onto its back and asked me to rescue him!

I was in one hell of a spot but fortunately I had a good friend on the station, Rhys Healey, who came to the rescue. He produced two lengths of heavy-sawn timber which he bolted onto each side of the bent propeller blade and recruited a team of locals to add their weight to the process, while he belted the timber with a sledge hammer until the blade was more or less true. I ran the motor, which vibrated quite badly at low revs – but when revolutions were increased, the flexing at the end of the blade provided reasonably true tracking without undue vibration. I sent a telegram to John Arthur advising of the incident and asked for permission to fly the aircraft into Telefomin to pick up Tommy, and then to fly it back to Wewak and on to Lae for a propeller change. At the same time, I cabled for a replacement (propeller) to be air-freighted from Sydney by Qantas.

While in Telefomin, I arranged to have a shelter built over the badly-broken Auster. It had been carrying a native Policeman, and after hitting a soft spot on the airstrip, while travelling at some speed after landing, it had flipped over onto its back. The sole passenger had ended up on top of Tommy, and his all-together-somethings ended dangling from his open lap-lap almost on Tommy's face. Tommy assured me that he hadn't been tempted to give them a bite.

The aircraft was insured by a Sydney company and, after a prolonged battle, I managed to get a partial payout and I purchased the wrecked aircraft for a possible rebuild sometime in the future. At the time, I did not have a qualified engineer to repair it. A year or so after this accident, I managed to have it repaired by my engineers and flew it direct to my newly-established workshop in Goroka.

If you can locate a scarce copy, this book is a great read about civilian flights in TPNG.



Overturned just short of the airfield, Mount Hagen on 4 October 1956.

The Collection

by Gregory J. Ivey

(photos courtesy of *Harim Tok Tok* newsletter)

An oldie but a goodie...

Hi, Max. This is Richard, next door.

I've been riddled with guilt for a few

months and have been trying to get

up the courage to tell you face-to face. When you're not around, I've

been sharing your wife, day and

night, probably much more than you.

I haven't been getting it at home

*recently. I know that's no excuse.
The temptation was just too great. I
can't live with the guilt and hope
you'll accept my sincere apology and
forgive me. Please suggest a fee for
usage and I'll pay you. - Richard.*

Max, feeling enraged and betrayed,
grabbed his gun, went next door,
and shot Richard dead. He returned
home, shot his wife, poured himself
a stiff drink and sat down on the
lounge. Max then looked at his
phone and discovered a second text
message from Richard: *Hi, Max.*

*Richard here again. Sorry about the
typo on my last text. I assume you
figured it out and noticed that the
darned spellcheck had changed*

'wi-fi' to 'wife'. Technology, huh? It'll be the death of us all.

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