



Rabaul & Montevideo Maru

Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Society

Memorial News 31

October 2011

PNG MATCHES AUSTRALIAN GRANT FOR THE MEMORIAL PHIL AINSWORTH

The first engagement of the visiting Papua New Guinea Prime Minister, Hon Peter O'Neill, was to lay a wreath on the grave of the Unknown Soldier in the Hall of Memories at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra. Next he visited the site of the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru National Memorial and presented the Society with a \$100,000 contribution for the Memorial.

In attendance was Mr O'Neill's wife, Ms Lynda Babao, His Excellency Mr Charles Lepani, High Commissioner of Papua New Guinea, Dr Katherine Lepani, His Excellency Mr Ian Kemish, High Commissioner of Australia to Papua New Guinea and Major-General Steve Gower AO, Director of the Australian War Memorial.



www.memorial.org.au

The Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Society was established to ensure national recognition and commemoration of the tragedies that ensued after the Japanese invasion of the New Guinea Islands in early 1942, including Australia's greatest maritime disaster, the sinking of the Montevideo Maru with the loss of more than 1,000 lives. The Society is registered in the Australian Capital Territory (No A04977). ABN 960 583 442 11

The Prime Minister thanked the Australian War Memorial for providing the site and looked forward to the completion and dedication on the 70th Anniversary of the ship's sinking on 1st July 2012.

This significant and timely contribution will allow the commissioning of James Barrett, a recognized Australian artist, to build and install the monument in time.



L-R: His Excellency Charles Lepani, Phil Ainsworth, PNG Prime Minister Hon Peter O'Neill, Major-General Steven Gower

Following the presentation, the Prime Minister met with more than 50 family and relatives of the victims along with members and friends of our Society, the PNGAA and the NGVR & PNGVR Association mostly living in the ACT. The attendees warmly welcomed Prime Minister Peter O'Neill and were moved by the generosity of the donation and the spirit in which it was given.

As a token of gratitude the Society presented Mr O'Neill with a set of John Schindler's DVDs which describe and depict those dark events.

That evening Andrea Williams, Don Hook and I attended a dinner at the Papua New

Guinea High Commission hosted by the High Commissioner Charles Lepani and Dr Katherine Lepani, longtime friends of the Society, in honour of the PNG Prime Minister.

It was attended by many Papua New Guineans from PNG and Australia and other friends of the Society and Associations mentioned, as well as members of the diplomatic community, government functionaries and Politicians. It gave your committee members the opportunity to meet and renew friendship with folk not seen for many years and was a most memorable evening.

FUNDRAISING HITS \$370,000!

Recent donations are greatly appreciated and have bounced the fundraising into solid territory. Continuing efforts are, however, still needed to ensure the Society meets the target in time.

PRIME MINISTER JULIA GILLARD WELCOMES PAPUA NEW GUINEA PRIME MINISTER

Included in remarks welcoming the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea to Australia on 12 October 2011, Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard said:

‘I do want to acknowledge, Prime Minister, your announcement yesterday of a generous contribution towards the memorial to mark the sinking of the Japanese transport *Montevideo Maru* in 1942. That awful tragedy saw the loss of more than a thousand prisoners of war, mostly Australians captured at the fall of Rabaul, when a US submarine torpedoed the Japanese ship unaware of her human cargo. Thank you for your generous support as we remember one of the saddest moments of the war.

2012 will be a time when both our nations commemorate the seventieth anniversary of many other sad and proud moments of 1942. Those hours when the best among both our peoples were quite literally arm in arm, those days when our freedoms were ours alone to save, that year when we set the course by which we prevailed.

RIO TINTO’S GENEROUS GIFT TO MEMORIAL PHIL AINSWORTH

Peter Taylor, the Managing Director of Rio Tinto (PNG) Limited, has facilitated a timely and generous contribution of \$20,000 for the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Memorial.

Peter, who is also President of the Australia Papua New Guinea Business Council (APNGBC), was instrumental in inviting Andrea Williams and I to an August meeting of the Council in Sydney and the opportunity of making a presentation about the invasion of Rabaul and its consequences to the 25 members attending. Several strong donations have been received as a result of this presentation.

Support from the APNGBC has been much appreciated.



Photo: Phil Ainsworth with Peter Taylor

BENDIGO REMEMBRANCE GROUP TO DEDICATE PLAQUE

On the 11th November 2011 a special Lark Force/Montevideo Maru plaque will be dedicated after the Service of Remembrance at the Bendigo RSL. If anyone would like to join this service they will be most welcome.

Please contact Lois Newman with any queries on: phone 03-5446 3277 OR Email: ejn40@bigpond.com

ABC News on 11 October 2011 carried excellent coverage about Papua New Guinea's donation of \$100,000 to the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Memorial.

See:

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2011-10-11/memorial-set-for-pow-ship-sinking-png/3498772>

<http://www.radioaustralia.net.au/pacbeat/stories/201110/s3335906.htm>

<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/news/local/news/general/png-comes-to-aid-of-memorial/2320858.aspx>

<http://news.smh.com.au/breaking-news-national/png-gives-100000-to-wwii-ship-memorial-20111011-1lixi.html>

<http://news.brisbanetimes.com.au/breaking-news-national/png-gives-100000-to-wwii-ship-memorial-20111011-1lixi.html>

MEMBERS LOG-IN ON WEBSITE

A Members-only area on the website has recently been developed. It currently holds additional photos and recently archived newsletters.

Members should, by now, have received their own membership log-in. If you haven't received yours or have any queries please Email:
admin@memorial.org.au

This section of the website will continually be updated and improved.

FILM SHOWING THE US ATTACK ON RABAU, 1945:

<http://www.britishpathe.com/record.php?id=23293>

Description: Battle for Rabaul. Various shots of task force at sea. Various shots of Liberator bombers over Rabaul, they drop bombs onto jungle areas and shock waves can be seen around the explosions. L/S U.S. warships off the coast laying down a barrage over New Britain.



ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP of the SOCIETY Due 1 September

Help commemorate an important part of the history of Australia and Papua New Guinea by continuing your membership of the Society or donating to the memorial. *Memorial News*, the monthly newsletter of the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Society, is available only to financial members. Life members will receive a Certificate recording their special membership of the Society.

How to join the Society:

Electronically:

Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Society
BSB 082-401 Account No 16-083-2367.

Please notify the deposit to Richard Saunders: Richard@isaunders.com.au

By mail. Post a cheque to the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Society:

PO Box 1743, Neutral Bay NSW 2089.

By credit card - please complete form at end of newsletter.

The Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Society is committed to applying all funds to the establishment of a Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Memorial.

Membership

One post or email address - \$50

Gold membership - \$100

Life membership - \$500

BIRTHDAYS ON 1 JULY PATRICK BOURKE

In researching the men an interesting fact emerged - seven men who died on the *Montevideo Maru* had birthdays on 1st July:

Peter Biden	NX191444
Colin Cook	NX 191446
Arthur Hill	VX21429
Oliver Morris	VX30759
Harold O' Connor	NX191439
Alan Starkey	NX59082
Robert Walker	VX47917

MODERN DIGGERS PROVE “LEST WE FORGET” NOT JUST WORDS

TIM WHITFORD

In 1940, the site of what is now the Trawool Winery was the training ground of the newly formed 2/22nd Battalion. As part of their physical training program, the Diggers of the unit were made to run up the side of the steep slope behind their camp, rocks and paint tins in hand, to create “2/22” in giant numerals almost 25 metres tall. Over 600 members of the Battalion were later to die in combat at Rabaul, or as captives of the Japanese.

Notably, many members of the unit were horrifically murdered after capture; bayoneted at the infamous Tol Plantation massacre. It became worse for the doomed unit, when hundreds of Diggers who had survived the massacre were later drowned when the ship “Montevideo Maru” carrying them to work as slave labour in the coalmines of Japan, was sunk by the Allied submarine, USS Sturgeon in what has become one of Australia’s worst maritime disasters. Only a handful of survivors of the 2/22nd Battalion are still alive, the majority are well over 90 years old.

Local military history identity Tim Whitford, with the assistance of Tallarook schoolchildren, friends and family has been quietly maintaining the roadside memorial to the 2/22nd Battalion for a number of years, and has seen the large white “2/22” on the nearby hillside left by the Diggers in 1940 slowly disappear as it became overgrown and the white paint on the rocks from which it was formed faded over the years. The group did not want to see such an important part of our military heritage simply vanish, but the task of restoring the numbers was just

too large for them to complete on their own.

A cry for help to the School of Armour at Puckapunyal received overwhelming support, and many volunteers stepped forward to help bring the memorial back to life. With the kind permission of the landowners of Trawool Winery, the modern Diggers set about a job of practical remembrance.

Painting rocks is not normally high on the list of favourite activities for soldiers but this was different; this was an act of commemoration. On Wednesday the Puckapunyal Diggers proved that “Lest We Forget” is more than just a phrase. On the wettest September day in decades, they climbed the steep slopes of the Tallarook Ranges to honour the Diggers of the past. With buckets of paint, rakes and shovels in hand the soldiers, assisted by staff and students from the Tallarook Primary School, spent the afternoon cheerfully working in the rain, wet to the skin, to restore and repaint the large numerals “2/22”.



Many of the participating soldiers were themselves veterans of more recent conflicts. “To see these modern Australian soldiers honouring the Diggers of a previous generation in such a practical way is absolutely humbling; I am so proud of them. The spirit of ANZAC is very much alive in our current

generation of Diggers.” Tim Whitford said.

The roadside memorial to the 2/22nd Battalion can be found on the Upper Goulburn road, and from the new rail-trail between Trawool and Tallarook, with the giant “2/22” numerals now standing out proudly from the hillside nearby. It is hoped that in the years to come many people continue to visit this lonely but important reminder of our nation’s sacrifice in war.

ZENTSUJI PHOTOGRAPH ROD MILLER

I thought our readers might enjoy the story of how the photograph of the Australian officers at Zentsuji (Memorial News_30 p7) came about. One of the officers in the photograph David Hutchinson-Smith wrote:

‘On 12th June, 1943, a Japanese civilian complete with a reflex camera went about the camp photographing odd individuals at work, and as he was paying particular attention to backgrounds and picking the fittest looking prisoners, it was obvious to all of that his studies would be used for propaganda purposes. Bitter arguments developed as to the wisdom of voluntarily submitting to be photographed, but after the opinions of the senior officers had been sought, it was judged to be of very limited assistance, as even the best conditioned prisoners were gaunt and generally ill clad.

A group photograph of Australians was taken underneath one of the gum trees after the photographers mission was complete several of the Australians got him aside when no guard was about and, in halting, ungrammatical Japanese, asked him if it would be possible to obtain copies of the group at a good “black

market” price. He chuckled a bit and then asked in perfect English “Do you know King’s Cross”?, which staggered the would-be purchasers. It then transpired that he had been a commercial photographer at King’s Cross, Sydney, for about fifteen years and, according to his story, was very sorry he had ever left, was sick of the war, and dearly wanted some Australian food again. He didn’t have the patent rights of those sentiments, as will be readily appreciated, although we were noncommittal, not trusting any Jap. He did, however, present to each member taken in the group photograph a copy free of charge!’ [AWM MSS1293]

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

Ross Tucker wrote in Memorial News 25, April 2011, about locating his uncle’s name in a set of books near the Great West Door, which is the exit door at Westminster Abbey. There are seven books in total and held within the volume titled ‘Civilian War Dead’, starting on page 2832, is a list of names of those on the *Montevideo Maru*. Attendants in the Abbey will open the book to a name requested by a visitor and place it on display in the glass cabinet above.

AGM - 14 September

Apologies to Jan and Janice Steinfurth OAM who had sent apologies in for the AGM held on 14 September but their names were missing from the September newsletter.

NOTE:

If you received this newsletter by post and you have an email address which could be used, it would be appreciated if you could let us know please. This will save both costs and time. Please email: admin@memorial.org.au

FIRST 50 CALLERS - AIR NIUGINI SPECIAL FARES

Exclusive discounts are available for Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Society members wanting to travel to Papua New Guinea with Air Niugini (only for bona fide members.)

- Limited to first 50 callers only
- Bookings must be made by 30 October 2011 and direct through Air Niugini's Brisbane office only on 07 3221 1544. Brisbane callers can dial 1300 361 380.

If you dial 1300 361 380 from other states you get Air Niugini's local office. This is a special arrangement with the Brisbane Air Niugini office only.

- Fare and discount will vary according to availability
- Members must quote their membership when making the booking otherwise normal fares will apply.

Air Niugini reservations staff will quote both the normal fare price plus the discounted fare price.

AURORA EXPEDITIONS PNG -

70th commemoration voyage

RABAUL ANZAC Day 2012 –

To acknowledge the 70th anniversary of Australia's entry into the Pacific War and Papua New Guinea's entry into World War II, *Aurora Expeditions* offers a special commemorative voyage:

Lost in Paradise - Our Fallen Heroes.

Aurora's historian shines a light on the courage and tragedy of Australia's unsung heroes - Lark Force - in the Battle of Rabaul, and the ensuing loss of lives, both troops and civilians, on the *Montevideo Maru*.

With moving dawn ceremonies at Tol and Rabaul, this cruise will reawaken the true courage and sacrifice of WWII.

Aurora Cruises offer two historic voyages to the New Guinea Islands in April 2012 - see box for details.

The PNG brochure is currently online at:
<http://www.auroraexpeditions.com.au/papuanewguinea2012>

Further information and brochures are also available from: *Aurora Expeditions* +61 2 9252 1033 or 1800 637 688 (free call within Australia)

Note: *Aurora Expeditions* support the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Memorial.

There is already considerable interest and it is suggested that you consider options as soon as convenient.

VOYAGE 1:

2-14 April 2012

Island of Smiles

Alotau, Dobu/Ferguson Is, Trobriands/Kitava, Lababia, Wannam/Tami group, Madang, Murik Lakes, Mandam, Karkar, Siassi Island (Tuam), Tufi, Weddau/Dogura, Alotau
For those wishing to explore the islands and coastline of New Guinea, and to experience the diverse array of customs, snorkel, swim, bird watch, or perhaps go on village walks or join in a football match.

VOYAGE 2:

70th Commemoration Voyage:

14-26 April 2012

Lost in Paradise - Our Fallen Heroes

Alotau, Milne Bay/Samarai, D'Entrecasteaux islands - Dobu & Fergusson Is, Egum Atoll and Gawa Is, Trobriands, Lindenhafen near Gasmata, Palmalm/Jacquinet Bay, Karlai/Wide Bay, Tol (pre-dawn landing and ceremony), Lambon & Lamassa - New Ireland, Duke of York Is, Rabaul.

This voyage, visiting key historical sites and beautiful beaches and coral atolls, will arrive in Rabaul in time for a special **70th ANZAC Day service** on 25 April 2012 before disembarking 26 April.

There is also an option to experience the 65km **Lark Force Wilderness Trek from Vunga, near Rabaul, to Tol** - admire the courage of Australian soldiers as you follow their footsteps on the jungle route to escape overwhelming numbers of Japanese in early 1942.

Options for the voyages also include kayaking and scuba diving.

PRIVATE SYDNEY McGREGOR VX24423

MARGARET RUXTON

No-one wanted Dad to enlist. Not his own family, his wife of a mere 11 years, or his daughters all of whom loved him dearly, but he was determined to 'do his duty'. So, on June 3, 1940, mother and we three girls waited in vain for Dad's return from work. We stood on the verandah speculating on the reasons he was so late - he was working late, or missed his train, he had called in for a haircut, all sorts of reasons but Mother was becoming more and more distressed. Ultimately we had to accept he had finally done it, and that was the end of our 'normal life'.

Dad was a prolific letter-writer, sometimes writing several times a week, although once he moved to Rabaul the letters would arrive in bulk loads. Each letter was duly saved to be treasured always. Mother saved all of hers, as did we three. So now I can read them and feel the love, the pining and the distance between a loving father and his family. The letters continued until January 1942, I haven't managed to find any after that date, although some are undated. The last one mentions a 'chap in the calaboose', maybe that was a way of saying they had been captured, I simply don't know'.

Our postman was sympathetic to all his people waiting for news of their loved ones. When the letters stopped in vain we would say "any for us?" but the answer was always "sorry, not today'.

On one memorable day our Postie met us on his way back from deliveries.

'You got one today' he called to us. We found that hard to believe, but rushed home to check. Sure enough, there was the letter, forwarded from the Red Cross, and written from POW camp.

After that nothing... not until the telegrams arrived, first 'missing believed POW', then 'missing believed dead'. That was the day the bottom fell out of our world.

Our Dad was highly respected by his employers, Sands & McDougalls, and by those with whom he worked. A gentle-man with a good sense of humour, a loving out-going personality, he smoked a pipe but we felt sure he switched to cigarettes after enlistment, although there is a mention of 'going to the store for tobacco' in one or two letters. Our father never drank alcohol, he had a deeply committed Christian faith which he imbued to his wife and daughters, a faith which upheld us in the lonely and grieving times.

Some of the names Dad has mentioned in his letters may be of interest. There seems to have been a group of 'Scots' and a group of teetotallers, whether the same group I haven't yet managed to discover, but then I still I have a lot of letters to read. Jock Cameron, Charlie Robins, Ted Fisher, Harry Stewart, Horrie Newman are the names I've found so far, more may be there yet.

My sisters, Helen, Marjorie and I are so glad the Society is speaking out on our behalf. The Lark Force story needs to have a recognised place in Australia's history.

Those of us who lived through it are very grateful for your dedication.

Thank you.

LETTERS FROM RABAU SUE PASCOE

There are references in letters from Frank Pascoe to his wife, Sadie, in 1941 about the Beckett and other families who showed wonderful hospitality to the soldiers in Rabaul. Frank and the others arrived about 23rd April.



29/4/1941

Tuesday:

Last night I met a man and his wife by the name of Conroy. He is a wealthy coconut planter, and lives 50 miles south of Rabaul. There are no roads, so they come up in their 40ft. motor ketch for supplies. They took us out in a dinghy to where she was anchored. There are three children, a boy, 14 ½ who is breaking his neck to join the RAN, and twin girls, 11. The children have been at Sydney boarding schools for 3 years. We spent a very pleasant evening talking and listening to 3DB, BBC news and a Japanese news bulletin in English. Conroy said that 60 or so had enlisted for the AIF from here, not bad for a small place.

6/5/1941

Tuesday:

Last Friday-Sat, I had charge of a guard some distance from camp. During the evening, a Mr Derbyshire came over and introduced himself. He and his wife provide supper for this guard each night, and they all sign in the visitor's book. He now has 250 names in it! All the civilians are amazingly good to the soldiers here.

The Conroy's are still in Rabaul, and I see a good deal of them as they are just opposite the camp. Chas (*MacLean*) always comes with me and we never fail to have a good time. They have also introduced us to friends of theirs, so we are never stuck for hospitality. We had leave on Sunday, and spent most of the time with the Conroy's on their launch. If ever the chance of a few days' leave occurred here, Conroy's have offered to take us down to their plantation 50 miles away by boat. Of course, there is very little chance, but it's worth remembering.

13/5/1941

Three of us had tea with the Conroy's and, later, supper at the Beckett's. They are both very refined couples with young children so, you see, I'm in my element! Mrs Beckett gave us a pile of magazines and papers to take back to the boys, also a large tin of home-made cream cakes. These did not last long, I can assure you.

20/5/1941

Sunday:

At 4.30pm, myself and two others went for a stroll around the town and finished up at Beckett's for tea. They are only one of the many householders who give us soldiers a wonderful spin. Nothing seems to be too much trouble for them.

23/5/1941

Saturday:

This week Mrs Beckett had three of us to dinner and we certainly enjoyed ourselves. The meal, which we had at the fashionable hour of 7.30, was perfect in every detail. Afterwards, we played cards and finished up with a very tasty supper.

Sunday:

I and a couple of others were granted 12 hours' leave from lunch time, and visited the Beckett's. They both took us for a wonderful drive, (something like the Kokopo trip), to places called Wunawutung and Keravat. We saw copra plantations by the mile, and some beautiful views. We visited friends of theirs, and had afternoon tea there. They are Melbourne people and besides copra, grow chiles, peanuts and various kinds of vegetables. Chiles are bought by OT Ltd, Melbourne. They have a lovely bungalow, with a crazy path lined with a dozen varieties of cannas leading up to the front door; whilst the garden is filled with hibiscus and poinsettias. They saw us away with large stalks of bananas, paw-paws and sweet corn from their own plantation.

On the way back, we called in at another of their friends' places. This garden is also filled with cannas, which, by the way, practically grow wild on the island. They also have a large number of variegated bushes, yellow, green red, blue etc. Your father would be enthralled with some of the gardens. They're simply magnificent.

As usual it rained again but this did not spoil the outing. The latter people's name is Bunney, and they insisted on us having cool drinks, and sampling some of their cold roast duck. How long is it since I've tasted that! By now it was 6.30pm and of course pitch dark, so we set off again for home. About 8 o'clock we sat down to cold meat and salad followed by apple pie and cream. Yes, I was pretty full by then alright! About 10pm we made our way back to camp, thoroughly tired, but thoroughly satisfied.

Monday:

By the way, I showed Mrs Beckett my wife's photo; and she was thrilled with it. Was amazed to know my age, [25, SP] and still more amazed that I was married at all. She has two delightful children - Nancy 10, and Susan 4. The latter would not go to bed last night till she had kissed everybody, us three soldiers included! So - I wonder if a cleft in the chin does mean anything.

LAST TWO LETTERS FROM CPL BARRY O'NEIL

CAROLE WORTHY

I have recently obtained a photo of Corporal Barry Richard David O'Neil, VX19523 in uniform. David and I visited Sue and Harold Read in Shepparton last August. Sue's father was Barry O'Neil's cousin and we were put in touch through the ABC after Sue heard me speaking on Macca's show. The photo was passed on to them by Barry's sister who also served in the Armed Forces, but who died in the late 1980's.

Barry is not in uniform in the other two photos that he sent to my mother when he was in Rabaul.

There are also two letters sent by Barry in December 1941 to my mother, probably the last two he wrote to her. They give insight into army life in the Rabaul camp and some poignant hopes of returning home to renew friend and family ties.

VS 19523
Cpl B O'Neil
'B' Coy
2/22nd Bn AIF
Rabaul



Sunday 14th [Dec 1941]

My dear Grace

Have just completed three weeks camped out in the bush and have had a fairly easy time for a change - did ourselves pretty well in the Christmas parcels ...everything here is under control although very very busy (this is the first proper rest I've had since the fun started) and of course frightfully hush hush so news will be rather scarce in future so my letters might not be quite so regular in future. There are probably a great number of rumours floating around down there now but don't take any notice of them, the boys further north will take care of them so I have fears I will yet return a non-retained soldier - any rate time will tell.

From now on we will get more than our share of the open air life - last night a rather humorous incident occurred. About 12.30pm I was awakened by something on my chest. It then started to creep up, deciding the next move was up to me. I knocked it off and groping around found my torch, switched it on and saw to my dismay the largest and most ferocious coconut crab sitting on my bed. It immediately assumed the offensive but after a short sharp encounter was dispatched. Honestly it was as big as a dinner plate with nippers about 3" long. They take about three minutes to rip their way into a coconut, so I hate to think what it would have done to me. The rain is very constant every afternoon and right now, it settles the dust but the humidity next day is terrific - mosquitoes are very numerous so once again our old friend quinine is to the fore. I'm pleased John and Mu aren't getting married for another year - I might be back in time for the wedding - would make a great reunion for us all. By the way tell your mother that I quite approve of her idea about the bottles - I sure will need it, especially as the town is now practically dry - got to keep the boys sober to dash around at any moment. Well sweet that's about all and any rate it's getting too dark to see and I won't have another chance to write again before the mail closes - it's now Tuesday night. So sweet dreams love and all the best for Christmas.

31 Dec [1941]

Received your card a little while ago and having lots of spare time decided to do some letter writing. At the moment I am in hospital - nothing to worry about just a touch of tummy trouble - too much rich food I don't think. Not quite the place to be spending New Years' Eve but it's hardly less cheerful than the rest of Rabaul - a veritable place for the dead. We are quite comfortable in our dorm quarters. The boys are very ingenious in making things more home like. The cooks turned on quite a fair dinner for Christmas. Got away a bit from the usual tinned stuff and we supplemented it with a few fowls we got from the coons, one of us an ex-cook so they were done to a turn. The beer ration has been cut down to half a bottle per man daily and an extra one free for Christmas so you can see that they were not scenes of excessive gaiety - however we made do and had rather a good evening out under the stars. We had a rest too, something special these days, however hard work breaks the monotony but I suppose we will soon settle back into the old lethargy - a few bombs would probably wake us up. I think I saw Capt Groves [?] up here but it is difficult to say as we are always seeing new faces. They come and go very quickly. I suppose Salt will do its job. The scheme of AES is jolly good, but I hardly think the paper is in keeping. Of course that's only my opinion and rather candid too. By the way I want you to thank your Mother and Father for that telegram. It really was a fine gesture on their part - makes me feel that I am still in the 'family group' as it were. I heard the Geo had done his first solo flight. He'll soon be going to an operational station at the rate he's going.

Received your letter this morning and devoured the news eagerly. I'm back on the job again and feeling pretty good. So you've been having a bit of hot weather eh. Well that's a change for Melb. We have had it very hot here too and plenty of rain so the mozzies come around in swarms now - plenty of quinine is the order of the day.

Well sweet that's about all except that we had a raid but our chaps were well away from it, so things might be a bit more lively now. Tons of love Barry



Above L-R: High Commissioner Charles Lepani, Phil Ainsworth, Lynda Babao, Hon Peter O'Neill, Maj-Gen Steve Gower AO, High Commissioner Ian Kemish
Below: Margaret Henderson with Prime Minister Peter O'Neill



Hon Peter O'Neill and Major Kelvin Alley



L-R: Phil Ainsworth, Prime Minister Peter O'Neill, Andrea Williams, Don Hook

11 October 2011
PNG Prime Minister visits site of Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Memorial to present Society with \$100,000



Frazer Harry with Hon Peter O'Neill



Above: Peter and Betty Muller with Prime Minister Peter O'Neill
Left: Josie and Les Drew with granddaughter Rebecca and Samuel KENNETH DREW-Haigh (named for his great-uncle who was on the Montevideo Maru)

WEBSITE

www.memorial.org.au

Have you any old photographs or letters, stories, or historical documents of the service men or civilians who lived in Rabaul and surrounding islands before WWII?

Photos of Rabaul pre-war would also be welcomed. This information will help provide insights to the story of Rabaul, the New Guinea Islands and the Montevideo Maru.

We thank those of you who have already sent them in.

Please Email: andrea.williams@bigpond.com

RECRUIT PEOPLE AS MEMBERS

The Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Society has over 360 members. Each membership contributes to the memorial. Please encourage family and friends to join and to receive this monthly newsletter by emailing Andrea Williams andrea.williams@bigpond.com or writing to the Society c/- Jackson Wells Pty Ltd, PO Box 1743, Neutral Bay NSW 2089

DVD: THE FALL OF RABAU & KAVIENG

4 hours over a 2 disc set, High Definition format. Cost: A\$43 incl p&p within Australia

This 2-disc edition of "The Fall of Rabaul & Kavieng" features over 10 in-depth interviews with those who survived Rabaul in 1942 - plus extensive coverage of the events at Parliament House, 21st of June 2010.

Schindler Communications has pledged \$3 per unit donation for every copy sold to the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Society towards the building of the memorial.

To purchase this DVD visit: www.thefallofrabaul.com or phone: 0418 740182

FEEDBACK

PHYLLIS SMITH

Just thought I'd let you know how much I enjoyed the story of Gladys Baker in the August Memorial News. What a woman! How fantastically brave.... all those men she helped; with humour and some tragedy; and strength. A real hero (heroine!) I salute her.

VERICA PINI

KHANCOBAN NSW

Here is my donation for the memorial fund on behalf of my 21 year old brother Clifford Peter Deppeler VX46521 lost so long ago. He was my elder brother whom I loved dearly. He had auburn hair, stocky build, brown eyes and freckles which got him the name of Specks at school. We were great mates in those days. 'Alice Fay' was his favourite singer while I enjoyed Nelson Eddy. We went around his rabbit traps and argued most of the way. I loved him dearly. Hope this small donation somehow keeps his memory alive.

PHILLIPA ANDREW

WATSONIA VIC

I would like to make a donation to the Montevideo Maru Society. A close relative Anthony 'John' King, born 1920, had been with the Post-master General's Department in PNG Rabaul when the Japanese invasion took place. He was on board the Montevideo Maru and so consequently lost his life.

JILL GAY
DEVON NORTH VIC

I was interested to read of the Montevideo Maru Memorial in the Uniting Church Crosslight paper. I am enclosing a membership fee and small donation.

My uncle - Private Alan Arthur Cocksedge of the 2/22nd Battalion is listed as one of those lost on board in a book by Don Wall called Heroes at Sea. *Cont. over...*

A friend and author, Peter Stone, has written a wonderful book called 'Hostages to Freedom: The Fall of Rabaul' and I am privileged to own a copy. [Ed - see info below]

My uncle was not married at the time of his enlistment and my grandmother was pretty certain that his life had been lost at sea on a ship destined for Japan - but it was not until Peter Stone's book that we felt any certainty.

I would love to have any available information.

My own Dad died as a Japanese Prisoner-of-War on the Burma Railway. He died in October 1943 and my Mum did not hear until the war had ended, but this is another story of course. Congratulations on what you are doing with the memorial and I do hope it all turns out well.

Ed - Peter Stone has been a great supporter of efforts by the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Society. In the 2009 submission to the Australian government Peter also allowed the Society carte blanche access to use information from his book. His book is an outstanding work, highly regarded and recommended as a 'must have' for any library! It is available from Oceans Enterprises, Melbourne.

Hostage to Freedom: the Fall of Rabaul

ISBN 0 646 24124 9

Large format - A4 size (297mm x 210mm). Hardcover - Full colour 130 gsm Gloss Art cover jacket over gold-blocked front and spine of case. 592 pages plus endpaper (Japanese map of Rabaul region). Quality 115 gsm Gloss Art Paper. 561 photographs. 24 maps and diagrams. Fully produced and printed in Australia. \$120

Published by Oceans Enterprises, 303 Commercial Road, Yarram, Vic 3971, Australia.

Phone: (03) 5182 5108. Fax: (03) 5182 5823. Email: peter@oceans.com.au

<http://www.oceans.com.au/oehtf.html>

70th ANNIVERSARY OF THE EVACUATION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN FROM PAPUA NEW GUINEA IN DECEMBER 1941

The annual Christmas Luncheon of the Papua New Guinea Association of Australia will be held on Sunday 4 December 2011 at the

Killara Golf Club, 556 Pacific Highway, Killara (Sydney) NSW from 11.30am
Please RSVP by: 13 November 2011

Everyone is welcome. If you have any memorabilia and/or photos to share it would be appreciated. Please let Juli Allcorn know so that the displays can be planned. Could you please put photos on a labelled disc and send them in beforehand so they can be collated to be shown at the luncheon.

The cost is **\$52.50 per person** and needs to be **paid in advance, by 13 November 2011**. This does not include liquor or soft drinks which will be available from a cash-only bar. Seating is for tables of 10.

For further information please contact Juli Allcorn on Tel: (h) 9416 1430 (m) 0405 625 912 or email: j_allcorn@hotmail.com

MEMORIAL NOTICEBOARD

DONATIONS

Donations towards the memorial have been gratefully received from:

Rio Tinto (PNG) Ltd, NGVR/PNGVR Ex-members Association, Richman, Sibraa, Doyle, Pini, Andrew, Gay, Gillespie, Penshurst RSL, Tumut RSL, Bomaderry RSL, Narromine RSL, Narooma RSL, Auburn RSL, Thirroul RSL

CONTRIBUTIONS TO MEMORIAL NEWS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

E: andrea.williams@bigpond.com Or P O Box 1743 Neutral Bay NSW 2089

REGISTER YOUR MEMORABILIA

Register your New Guinea Islands, Rabaul and *Montevideo Maru* memorabilia with Lindsay Cox at The Salvation Army Heritage Centre. Contact lindsay.cox@salvationarmy.org or write to PO Box 18137, Collins Street East, Melbourne VIC 8000.

SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Life membership - \$500 Gold membership - \$100 Ordinary membership - \$50

HOW TO REMIT FUNDS TO THE SOCIETY

BY INTERNET: Transfer funds to the Society's bank account BSB 082-401 Account No 16-083-2367. Notify your deposit in an email to tharyjanto@jacksonwells.com.au

BY MAIL: Cheques to Rabaul & Montevideo Maru Society at PO Box 1743, Neutral Bay NSW 2089. All funds devoted to constructing a memorial at the Australian War Memorial

BY CREDIT CARD:

CREDIT CARD AUTHORISATION FORM



Card type:

Credit card number: _____

Expiry date: ____ / ____

CVV: _____

Last 3 digits on back of credit card

Amount to be charged: \$ _____

Complete mailing address:

City: _____ State: _____ Postcode: _____

Email Address: _____

Name on card: _____

Signature: _____

Description of what is being paid for:

Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Society, PO Box 1743, Neutral Bay NSW 2089, Australia