



# *Una Voce News Letter*

RETIRED OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA  
P.O. BOX 452, ROSEVILLE NSW 2069

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FROM  
THE PRESIDENT AND COMMITTEE  
WISHING ALL MEMBERS  
A MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND  
A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR

No. 4, 1990 - December

Dear Member,

This issue is again two weeks early to remind you that the Association's Christmas Luncheon will be held on Sunday 2 December 1990 at the Mandarin Club and full details together with booking slip are on page 15. If you have not already done so, please send your cheque and booking slip to Treasurer, Bill Johnston (see address above), as soon as possible.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

Members are reminded that the 1991 annual subscription (\$8) becomes due and payable on 1 January 1991, unless, of course, you have paid in advance.

To ascertain your financial standing, please check the address wrapper from your current issue of Una Voce. At the right hand bottom corner of the address label is printed the year to which you have paid subscription/s, i.e., 1990, 1995, 2000, 2015 etc. If on your wrapper the year shown is 1990 you are financial until 31 December 1990 and we would appreciate you forwarding your 1991 subscription to the Treasurer without delay.

It was with great regret that early this year we had to remove the names of 22 members from our address list because they had not paid their 1988 or 1989 subscriptions. In September we removed from the list a further 17 names of members who had not paid their 1990 subscription.

Because of the increasing costs of printing, postage etc., your Committee has decided that in future members who are unfinancial will have their names retained on the address list for Una Voce only until June each year. However, depending on the level of rising costs, we may have to decrease this period of grace even further in the future, so please pay your subscriptions when they are due.

## ASSOCIATION CORRESPONDENCE

As from 1 January 1991 members are requested to forward all mail, including subscriptions, to:

P.O. Box No. 452  
ROSEVILLE NSW 2069

## 1991 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND LUNCHEON

Please note in your 1991 diaries that this will be held on Sunday 7 April 1991 at the Mandarin Club.

## VISIT TO BLUE MOUNTAINS

Even though numbers were down, due to some of our regulars being out of town, we had a most enjoyable day in the mountains on Monday 8 October. The weather was kind to us and the temperature about 'just right'.

This time we visited a delightful place, "Yester Grange", which is a museum cum art gallery cum tea room in a Victorian-period country house containing a lot of Victorian furniture & memorabilia of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The house (74 squares including verandahs) was built in 1986-88 of New Zealand Kauri with an iron roof. It stands majestically on 10+ acres of parklike grounds and bush on a ridge just above Wentworth Falls, with probably one of the best views in the mountains from the verandah.

We partook of a pleasant lunch in front of a big open log fire which was very much in keeping with the general surroundings.

Members who attended were: Les and Margarette Williams; Marjorie Marr; Syd Smith; Bonnie Dunn; Pamela Foley; Doug Parrish; Ted Hicks; Ken Gorringer; Alison Marsh; Aileen Giles; Mert Brightwell; Alistair Terrey; Bill and Nancy Johnston; and Corbett Kimmorley.

### VISIT TO CENTRAL COAST

2 February 1991 is still the preferred date, but the venue will depend largely on the number of people who would be interested in attending a Central Coast get-together. It would be appreciated if those interested would please contact our Secretary, Jo Nitsche, on 02.451.2475, or our Assistant Secretary, Pamela Foley, on 02.428.2078. Also suggestions for a venue would be most welcome.

### PNG DIPLOMATIC POSTINGS

PNG's longest serving diplomat, Sir Joseph Nombri, has been recalled after nine years in Japan. Others to be recalled are Ilinome Tarua (Sydney), Age Kila (Brisbane), Maimu Raka-Nou, roving Ambassador to the South Pacific based in Fiji, Andrew Lala (Jayapura) and Noel Levi (China).

Sir Joseph will be replaced by a senior officer of the Foreign Affairs Department Evoa Lalute from the Gulf Province. Other new appointments are Anthony Farapo as High Commissioner to Brunei Darussalem, Larry Hulo as Ambassador to China, Peter Tsiamalili as Ambassador to Fiji, William Nindim as Consul-General to Sydney, Aiwa Olmi as Consul-General to Jayapura, and Thomas Palume as Consul to Brisbane.

Meg Taylor, PNG's Ambassador to the United States, has also been appointed as Ambassador and High Commissioner to Mexico and Canada, respectively. Both these positions are currently held by Renagi Lohia, the Ambassador to the United Nations.

The changes are to become effective as from the New Year.

It was with great regret that we also learnt that the popular John Hunter from the Consul-General's Office would be leaving at the end of the year as the Publicity Branch is moving to Canberra. John has always been most helpful and has worked with our Committee to create and maintain an excellent relationship between our Association and the Consulate which has been of great benefit to both organisations. We will all miss you, John, many thanks for all your help in the past and our very best wishes for every success in your future endeavours.

### PAPUA NEW GUINEA FILM FESTIVAL

The Festival, held at the Doman Theatre of the Art Gallery of N.S.W on 6 and 7 October and sponsored by the P.N.G. Consulate General, Sydney, was a great success and plans are already under way for another next year.

Mr. Tom Aitchison, ex PNG District Commissioner and the Association's Honorary Auditor for many years, attended the first day of the Festival and brought with him three 16mm films he made some years ago. He thought that they would now be of historical interest as they date from 1964, two cover the Goroka and Mt. Hagen Shows and the third the elections of that year.

Tom considered that the films should now be in an appropriate archive and offered them to the Consulate-General's staff. They were happy to accept them and suggested that Tom make the presentation to the representative from the PNG Institute of Studies, Mr. John Humugu. This was done, with a short speech, during an interval in the festival programme and the films have now found a permanent home in Port Moresby. (More about Tom elsewhere in this issue. Ed.)

Our Association assisted at the Festival by selling tickets at the door and serving tea, coffee and biscuits. Those who assisted were Pamela Foley, Jo Nitsche, Isobel Ireland, Tony Pitt, Kevin and Joan Hain, Doug and Candy Parrish, Neil and Christina Grant and Roma Bates.

#### A SEPIK REUNION

There was a very happy reunion of 20 ex-Sepiks at the Roseville Restaurant, Newstead, Brisbane, on Saturday 6 October. The occasion was a surprise birthday party for Len Aisbett who, with wife Margaret, was visiting Len Bridgers in Brisbane, from their home in Geelong.

Their lovely daughter Lyn organised the gathering with the help of Len Bridgers. Lyn now lives in England and, unbeknown to her Dad, flew out especially for the occasion. Imagine the surprise when Len entered the restaurant to find his daughters, Lyn ex England and Cathy ex Melbourne together with so many of his old Sepik work mates and their wives.

Bob Cole reports that "it was a very happy evening for a very lovely couple (Margaret has not changed a bit) and believe me there was alot of fat chewed in those few hours finding out about the various children and how we were filling in our time. Most of us were in retirement, but there were a few of the younger fellows like 'Basher' still fronting up to work.

Those lucky to be there were Len and Margaret Aisbett and daughters Lyn and Cathy, Geoff and Pat Littler, Tony and Sandra Trollope, Ross and Noeline Allen, Max and Dorrie Allwood, Eamon and Eileen Gaffney, Harry and Betty Roach, Royce and Marj Webb, Len Bridgers, Bob Cole and Bob (Basher) O'Connell.

It is lovely to meet up with old friends like this and talk over old times which, to the majority of us, were the happiest of days. I do have very happy memories of those Sepik days, it was a very happy District.

I keep myself fairly busy these days with a few days of golf each week and looking after the birds and bees on my little patch of dirt. Not quite back to full swing at Legacy as yet but easing myself back gradually". (Bob, very best wishes from all your friends down this way. Ed.)

#### POO's REUNION

On the weekend of P.N.G.'s Independence, the Treasury Permanent Officers (POO's) held their third reunion in Ethuca, Victoria.

Unfortunately, previous and business engagements prevented many members from attending, but three states were represented. Ron and Josette Storer, Bob and Barbara Christiansen, from South Australia, Marie Day from N.S.W. and Maxine and Kevin Gallagher, with Ian McMahon went down from Queensland.

As it was years since the group had met, there was a lot to talk about and a most enjoyable weekend was had by all. The toast to the future of Papua New Guinea was drunk in the middle of the Murray River, at a luncheon on one of the cruise boats.

It looked for a while as if the NSW poker machines would be the big gainers for the weekend but very skillful play by Ron Storer with his secondlast coin set the bells ringing and the group finished just about all square. Already there is talk about the venue for the fourth reunion.

### HAVE YOU HEARD????

Jo NITSCHKE, our Secretary, recently visited sunny Queensland and looked up many friends. He visited John and Christina Downie in their new home at Currumbin Waters on the Gold Coast. Both John and Christina were still busy unpacking and planning for lots of things to be done inside the house and out in the garden.

While dining out with the Downies and Buthmans, ex Madang, at the Twin Towns Services Club he met Don Linton ex Education. He also admired the new home of John and Jane van Griethuysen at Mt. Tamborine (which they recently won through the Endeavour Foundation Art Union).

Jo said, "It was lovely seeing John and Pam Brooks and Mrs. Parry again and to watch Pam calling out "pussy, pussy, pussy" and along come all the kookaburras and butcher birds waiting to be fed". He also visited Ron Ford, ex DASF, at Coolangatta and said that it was great to see Ron again and to know that he was feeling better.

The Schindlers, Ganes, Ora Smyth and Pat Gray were visited in Brisbane and the Gaffneys, whose home was once again his home whilst visiting Brisbane. He saw Doug and Pam Franklin, their lovely Arab horses and all the new improvements to their home.

Called on Barry and Beverly Beil on their farm at Victoria Point where lots and lots of snowpeas were growing as well as plenty of other produce for the Brisbane markets.

Also popped in at Maurice Wilson's "Botanical Garden" at Landsborough, spent a couple of peaceful days with Bob and Pat Duncan at Burrum Heads by the sea and then headed to Woodgate to stay with Lothar Bruckner, ex STC Lae, where kangaroos roam around the village and outnumber the residents. Jo had never seen so many kangaroos in their wild state as at Woodgate, he said that it was better than any reserve or Zoo.

Bob and Mary PULSFORD, from Northbridge NSW, have returned from a trip to Central Queensland visiting daughter Susan Spencer and family at Biloela. On the way they renewed contact with many friends made in PNG. Bob writes:- "The National Trust is restoring "Dalwood", the neglected and partly vandalised grand old stone built homestead, which was the first home of the Wyndhams of Wyndham Estate near Branxton in the Hunter Valley. Gwenyth Fardon is a Wyndham and she invited Mary and me to meet Ian and herself for the opening of this project and then to go on and stay with them at Armidale. We discovered that the reconstruction was very much the result of the initiative and drive of another Wyndham, Margaret Kelly. We met Margaret and Bill there!

At Armidale we stayed in the beautiful home built by Ian's own hands and surrounded by imaginative tree plantings and a magnificent garden which they have both created. I went with Ian on the 200km mail run he does occasionally as assistant to the regular contractor. As we left, with the help of neighbours and a shearer he was shearing his small flock of fine wool sheep.

We went on to stay with builder, Syd, and Marion Hume. Syd was in the Army at Wewak (Bomb Disposal). He has made a beautiful home on the ridge of a hill with a vast view, in the Kyogle Shire (Back Creek Road, Bently, 2480). He is retired because of a back injury. In spite of this he is the District Scout leader and has established a small block of coffee with advice and guidance from Ian Downs.

On the way to Mudgeeraba we called in on Grahame and Sue Corfield who live in a beautiful old farm house on a block just out of Uki (2484). Mary had worked with Sue in the Biology Dept. UPNG and it was a great reunion. While we were there her sister Jan, whom we had met in Port Moresby, called. Grahame has an unobtrusive sign on his rural front gate post: "Accountant and

HAVE YOU HEARD????(continued)

Tax Agent". Those with problems beat a track to his office near the house! Pam (Barrie) Brooks and John, in Mudgeeraba, gave us the red carpet treatment and drove us around the sites of the Gold Coast. Our old friend Mrs. Parry, Pam's mother, was there and it was a delight to meet up with her again. Pam and John are great gardeners and tree planters.

John and Helen Findlay of FigTree Pocket gave us a base from which to make sorties into Brisbane, John is Senior Geologist in the Dept. of Resource Industries and Helen is teaching. We were delighted to become acquainted with two of their three, now grown up children, Elizabeth in 4th year medicine and Andrew, teacher training. While in FigTree Pocket it was exciting to call on Thelma Price.

A memorable evening was spent with Peter and Marion Cahill, and John Herbert! It was one of those occasions when there should have been a tape recorder to make permanent the wide range of reminiscences covered and the wit and good humour of the raconteurs! The Corfields keep in touch with this group. I would like to be a fly on the wall!!

It was wonderful to meet up again with Fred and Mary Reitano, our friends of Wewak, Lorengau, Rabaul and Port Moresby, to find them so well and to go over the times we have had together and catch up with the children's progress!"

Val and Ken CONNOLLY, from Concord NSW, also made a recent visit to Queensland and managed to see quite a few ex-PNG friends but Ken said that, like all holidays, they were not able to catch up with everyone. He reports:-

"Val and I arranged to meet Peg and Frank McCrudden at the "English Pub" at Jupiters and had a most enjoyable few hours catching up with their news (apart from a beaut informal lunch complete with an Irish Folk Singer!). The McCruddens have recently returned from a six weeks trip to Ireland and are convinced that Australia is in an economic recession as most of their 'one talks' are doing very well in Ireland. They tell me that Cam Fleay is well in WA but have no details. Frank is still with Social Security on the Gold Coast.

Spoke to John Herbert on the phone but he and Kathy are both well - John working on a part time basis as an Industrial Advocate, Kathy now a Parole Officer of all things!

Visited Mary Wardrop, widow of Owen Wardrop ex Poligolo Plantation, as James, their youngest, celebrated his 21st Birthday on 6 October and this was the main purpose of our visit.

We had dinner with Prue Dixon and her mother and Scott. All are fit and well but we did not catch up with Ron (ex Treasury).

Took a trip up to Bribie Island and caught up with Lois Baker, Lou Hogg and Margaret Goodger. Jack Baker is still working in PNG for Brian Bell and son Wagh (now married with two children) skips his own fishing trawler in North Queensland. In the late afternoon called in to see Bob and Pat Greeney and ended up having dinner with them and catching up on old times. Bob has retired from the Uni. of Queensland and also now lives at Bribie.

Aub and Ancie Schindler visited us from Brisbane and spent the day. They have recently returned from a six weeks car trip with Ivan (who is a vet) and family and it is possible that they will be at the Christmas Luncheon.

As for Val and I, we are both plugging along OK. Val is very fit - plays tennis twice a week (apart from walking) - I can't keep up with her these days, so don't try. My knee operation has been a complete success, I am still working and get around alright. Derek and Renee are in Melbourne - Derek in the hotel industry and part owner of a pub, while Renee is of course nursing.



HAVE YOU HEARD????(continued)

Russ TURRILL, from Robina Qld and ex-PNG Department of Labour, recently became a member and it was great catching up with him again after so many years. Russ is a Training Consultant with the Queensland Apprenticeship Commission based in Southport and spends a lot of his time travelling. His family is all grown up and going their various ways whilst he and his wife, Gloria, are well established at Robina after moving there two years ago from the canal estates at Rio Vista.

I was most grateful to receive from Russ a copy of the Volcanic Issue of the Rabaul Times, 4 June 1937 and I have written it up elsewhere in this issue.

Frog EVANS, from Western Samoa, wrote to say that until recently he had for some time been teaching English, Social Studies and Geography at the Latter Day Saints College which has excellent conditions, classrooms, gymnasium and sports grounds. He also believes that the standard of education on the island is higher than NZ or Australia and 90% of the students, particularly the Polynesian girls, really want to learn.

He has just returned from a four months trip around the world via PNG, Suez, France, Germany, Panama and French Polynesia. He saw Rabaul, Madang and Lae. Madang, he reports, is almost the same except lots of boats with outboard motors in the harbour. Now there are 2000 Europeans there compared with the 800 when we were there, but he was told that within 5 years they will be gone, particularly the women. The Madang Hotel behind the Coast Watcher's beacon makes the approaches look like a factory with a big white chimney. They call it the Coast Watcher Hotel and you can obtain crocodile steaks there.

Lae, Frog says, is now the largest port and has a farm for 10,000 crocodiles which they eat and can for export. He writes "Crime is abundant and they have the cheek to call criminals "Rascals", not crooks. Madang is still the most beautiful place and they say the safest.

Rabaul has improved but my old shipping office has gone, when I was Manager of the PNG Shipping Service. There is a new wharf and good roads right out to Kokopo and round the back of the peninsula.

Give my Salaams to those kind and friendly brother officers to whom I must have at times been a pain in the posterior with my ideas.

Frog also took a trip to Malaysia to see his old friend Tunku Abdul Rahman and writes "They gave me a full page with photographs in the English Newspaper. The Gun Battery I fought the Municipality for is now the Malayan Navy H.Q. They headed the article "A Friend in Frogs" and the Tunku, who is the father of Malaysia, gave me the VIP treatment. I stayed at the Residency at Kuala Lumpur and also at Penang with him. He is now 86 but still the most important MP in the Government."

(Frog, all your friends down here return your Salaams and it was great hearing from you. Forget about work and take it easy for a change because at 82 it is time you thought about retiring! Ed.)

Ken BROWN, from Budgewoi NSW, wrote to me some time ago to say that their son Ken Jnr. had paid a visit to PNG with a Rotary F.A.I.M. Team and in the June issue I suggested that Ken Jnr. might care to write about his trip. Ken wrote to me recently saying "I passed on to the young fellow your hope that he might write a few notes on his recent Bogia/Madang experience. I'm afraid it is a little like getting blood out of a stone at the moment as he has just become engaged. He did mention that he ran into a former fellow school student of Ela Beach Primary (early 1970s), none other than Bertha, daughter of Sir Michael Somare. He took a photo of the old District Office in Douglas Street which was all boarded up. He knew it well as he would

HAVE YOU HEARD(continued)

walk up from school to get a lift home with the old man. His two quick tours of Moresby and environs did not give him much of a chance to form any views but he hopes that he will get another opportunity to see more of the country.

Our No. 2 daughter Bridgette was married at Terrigal on 6 October to a local medico. Geoff Baskett (Bridgette's godfather) and Bob and Pam Barnes were guests. Bob Barnes was DMO at Saiho and Kundiawa and left in 1966 after being RMO Wewak. His wife Pam is cousin to Pat Ure (Welfare).

(Ken, our best wishes to yourself and Rosemary and please convey our congratulations to Ken Jnr. on his engagement and Bridgette on her marriage. We look forward to seeing you both at the Christmas Luncheon. Ed.)

Jack TREMBATH, from Noosa Heads Qld, in reply to a letter from our A/Secretary, Pamela, wrote "Your letter brought back memories of wartime and its aftermath in Rabaul, and later 20 years with Admin., retiring 22/2/70 on my 56th birthday.

.....From time to time people I knew in PNG turn up here and say good-day. Quite a few ended up at Airlie Beach and Sally Pang and a half a dozen Rabaul Chinese - Seetos and Chans - are at beach resorts between Cairns and Mossman. I go north for the winter - Innisfail, Cairns, Mossman and Mareeba...."

Jack was returning to Mareeba last month for a family occasion and said that he always sees Shorty Jordan when he goes there. His doctor will not allow him to drive there now, but he says the train trip is very comfortable, ...."sleepers, bar and meals".

(Jack, best wishes from all your friends down here. Please give my regards to Shorty and tell him that he should be a member of ours. Ed.)

Harry COEHN, from Darwin NT and ex PNG Department of Education, is a new member and a very warm welcome to our ranks. Harry recently wrote "It is a pleasure to read the newsletter and catch up on so many friends. I was also prompted to put pen to paper when I noted that my old DC Harry West was on your Committee. This small anecdote relates to the time when Harry was DC East New Britain and I was Headmaster of Vunamami Boarding School just outside Kokopo.

At the end of year examinations, one of my brighter students responded to a Social Studies question in this style: Please note the PNG logic!

Question: If Harry West is the District Commissioner for the East New Britain District, who is the District Commissioner for the West New Britain District.

Answer: Harry East. (The emphasis is mine)

Arthur Carey would not have been all that amused or impressed but nonetheless he would have been equally impressed with the logic!

.....I should also note that my class then included two very celebrated PNGians in Rabbie Namaliu and Sinai Brown (now Premier of ENB)."

(Harry West returns your best wishes and congratulations on your fine effort recorded elsewhere in the issue. Do look us both up when you are next in Sydney. Ed.)

Russ MERRITT, from Fairy Meadow NSW and ex Madang PNG, wrote to me in answer to "Whatever Happened to" in our last issue: "Last week when I was in Queensland visiting one of our ex New Guinea friends, I was handed your magazine and advised to look at a page which said "Whatever etc." Well it was a surprise that in the twenty nine years since I left Madang this is the first time anybody has enquired about me.

....I did also note in your magazine that Bernie Porter was at Stafford in



HAVE YOU HEARD (continued)

Brisbane and Bernie was best man at our wedding in the Lutheran Church on 1st March 1958. He was working for PWD then.

Peg and I are still happily married with four children, Jim and Kathleen were born in Madang and Dave and Frank were born in the Wollongong area.

Jim was married in February 1982 but died from a C.V.A. (brain haemorrhage) in November 1984. Kathleen was married in Perth in September 1989 and David is getting married at the Jamberoo Resort on 5 January 1991. Frankj, our youngest one, is still on the run."

(Bernie was the culprit who initiated the enquiry, Russ, and it was nice hearing from you. I will send you a copy of this Una Voce and hope that you might become a member. Ed.)

Visiting North Queensland, Mr. R. DUZER, French Ambassador in Canberra, presented to our member, John HUON de NAVRANCOURT in Atherton, the Violet Insignia of Chevalier in the ORDER of PALMES ACADENIQUES. This is an award specially reserved for writers, professors or artists and John was nominated for 40 years of cultural activities around the world, mostly in PNG and Australia. He founded the Alliance Francaise of Goroka and, at his retirement, the Atherton Branch, of which he is the current President. As an Australian, he received in 1985 the Queensland Award for services to ethnic communities and was made the first Life Member in the Far North of the Queensland Justices Association.

On the social side, John said he met recently in Cairns his former colleague in PHD, L. Auchettl, returning for a while from his residence in Andorra (on French-Spanish border), then, Keith Richardson formerly in Govstores Daru, Lae etc.

John and wife Helen were also recently visited by Father K. English MSC, from Woodward Island Mission, a member of the well known English family at Miranda.

Ricky ANGELL, from Kalamunda WA, wrote to me recently saying: "I enjoyed the last edition, so many names of people I had met over the years just felt I had to write.

In the very early 50's, when we were stationed at Biepa in the Mekeo, we visited Tapini and I stayed a few days with the Zigas's when Vin was at the hospital there. I'll never forget the hair raising air strip there, I don't know if it has improved since then.

A lot of us did imbibe rather more than we should have I guess but I certainly don't agree with Caroline's statement re the suicides. I knew her when she was Mrs. Hagon and was on a coffee plantation near Mt Hagen.

Fancy Bobby Gibbes still flying, we had many Rum Negritas with him at Banz or Hagen.

Why is it that as we get older we seem to look back so much, is it because there's no knowing how much future there is or because of the state of things these days, so much crime, vandalism, kids out of work etc. etc. I for one often long for the good old days where you could go out without fear of being mugged or having your car stolen.

When we were at Finschhafen I often used to go on patrol with Geoff into the Dedua, Kimbe and Hube mountain areas for weeks at a time. My eldest child was then a baby and was carried in a cane cot slung on a bamboo pole like a patrol box!! She would often arrive at the destination well before us. Those villages, you could see them from one mountain top, but to get there you would have to go down to the ravine then up the other side, this would usually take three to four hours.

When I think of those walks, I wonder how I ever did it - then of course we have a lot more energy in our 20's than middle age, don't we? (cont'd)

HAVE YOU HEARD (continued)

Kalamunda is a lovely spot in the hills overlooking Perth, at the moment with spring the wild flowers are coming out and it is very pretty. The fine weather bring many visitors at the weekend for barbecues and picnics in the Parks. (We have visited friends at Kalamunda and it certainly is a very attractive place. Ed.)

Cyril KING, from Duncraig WA and ex PNG Department of Education, writes: "Peggy's many friends will be pleased to know that she is now much improved. She had suffered some odd "turns" while in PNG, which was eventually diagnosed as MS some ten odd years ago. She managed to get along pretty well for some time and we learnt to handle the odd traumas, till she had to go in for a patella op -- it had been smashed up and she was not aware. "Ten days and you will be up and running", said they. Well in ten days there was still a gaping hole and Peggy was in line to lose a leg. Two further ops and some months later she was home, splints, pain and all and enough pills to blow anybody's brain. It was a disaster and some of our members would know all about that. Eventually, last year she went into Rehab. again and with close pathology monitoring got the pills sorted out pretty well. She'll have to go in again soon, more pathology and physiotherapy, but she's a million per cent better and is getting around the place reasonably well, even though she gets exhausted. The place is far too much for us really, but we all know how the market is these days. (Cyril, we were very pleased to hear from you, but very sorry to hear about Peggy and we sincerely hope the going is not so rough for her from now on. Your kind regards to all your friends are reciprocated. How are all those fine offspring of yours these days? Ed.)

Eve BARTLETT, from Brighton-le-Sands NSW, shocked us when she rang Bill Johnston during September to say that she is dying of lung cancer and has only six months to live. Bill said that she sounded cheerful and was not letting the news depress her but adopting a wait and see attitude. (Eve, we sincerely hope that the news has got better and you will go into remission for a long time. Our very best wishes for a marked improvement in your condition and I am sure that all your friends will be saying prayers that this will happen. May the Good Lord be kind to you! Ed.)

Nan WATKINS, from Surfers Paradise Qld, returned from her trip and advised: "....enjoyed my second trip to the Canadian Rockies and cruising the Gulf of Alaska. Landing by float plane and walking on a glacier was an experience. But then so was a recent balloon flight over Surfers Paradise which is a nice place to be."

Grace HARTLEY, from Ormiston Qld, wrote again to Bill Johnston with another very generous donation to the Association. Grace, you are over generous and we thank you very very much once again!

John HOWARD, from Yomba Madang Province PNG, has written as follows: "...I am finishing work as Principal of the Administrative College Regional Training Centre here in three weeks and leave Papua New Guinea mid-December for Sydney." (Our very best wishes and hope to see you when you get down to the 'big smoke'. Ed.)

Phil OAKLEY, from Main Beach Qld, has joined the Association and many members will remember him as one of the Qantas pilots post war who were our lifeline throughout PNG for some considerable time and did a magnificent job. Phil writes: "I arrived in PNG on the Grumman Widgeon, which I flew on

HAVE YOU HEARD (continued)

secondment from Qantas to A.P.C. and of course subsequently flew Sea Otters, Catalinas, Beavers on floats and wheels, Otters on floats and wheels and finally DC3s.

.....I'm pleased to join the Association, although I am not often in Sydney these days. My wife Nan (nee Nance Sefton) was born at Koitaki Plantation in the Sogeri District, as was her brother Colin and they of course have a lifetime association with PNG, terminating in Nan's case in 1960 and later in Colin's case."

(A very big welcome, Phil, to our growing band of people ex-PNG and I am sure that you and Nan will know many of those I write about. Ed.)

Keith DYER, from Victoria Point Qld, wrote this week with some interesting comments, some of which are dealt with elsewhere in this issue. One of his comments was: "Travel concessions in Queensland are a real fizzer as far as I am concerned, which is disappointing after the efforts I made over the past few years and which I believe resulted in the National pre-election commitment for a seniors card for the over 60's. The Labour Government 'Senior's Card' only applies to the over 70's so Gwen and I have a few years of patient waiting yet!! To gain benefits between 60 and 70 (means tested) one has to already have a social security card of some sort which effectively rules out superannuants. Though we use the Brisbane City transport on some occasions we do not qualify for concessions as we reside just outside the city limits.

(Many thanks for your remarks and, if I do not get around to answering your letter in the near future, very best wishes from Candy and yours truly for Christmas and the New Year. Ed.)

Paul RYAN, from Torrens ACT, recently underwent a serious operation at St. Vincent's Hospital in Sydney but is now fully recovered and he tells me he is feeling fine. Take care, Paul, and best wishes from all your friends here in Sydney.

Pat JONES, from Mosman NSW and also a member of our Committee, has had a hip replacement and, as we go to the printer, she is currently in hospital recuperating. We understand that the operation was most successful and Pat all the other members of the Committee and your many friends send you their best wishes for a very speedy recovery.

Colleen NEVILLE's fourth son, Michael, on 20 October at the Catholic Church in Nerang on the Gold Coast, was married to Wendy Flower and the wedding was attended by some 120 people including a number of our members.

The following day, Colleen's new granddaughter, Natasha, was christened at the same church. Natasha is the daughter of Colleen's second son Peter and his wife Vicki. Peter and another son, Timothy, live at Alotau in PNG from where they supervise a number of projects they have under contract in various parts of PNG.

Colleen tells me that her immediate ambition is to see as much of Australia as she can. She has recently visited WA, is shortly paying a visit to Lord Howe Island, is spending Christmas in PNG and then visiting Cairns. Good on you, Colleen, a lot of other Australians would do well to have a good look at their own wonderful country before traipsing off overseas. Australia is a very big country and there are a lot of magnificent places to visit, which I am sure you will enjoy and no doubt take quite some time to get to see them all. Happy and safe travelling!

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## NEWS FROM AUSTRALIAN AND PNG CORRESPONDENTS

Brisbane (Doug Franklin, Tel 07 289 4496)

Syd and Heather Saville and Pam and Doug Franklin made a quick visit to Sydney in October to attend the Seventh National Reunion of the Royal Australian Navy Corvettes Association. Over 1500 ex RAN sailors and wives sat down to lunch at the State Sports Centre, Homebush, on Saturday 21/10/90. Next day a Church Service followed by a lavish BBQ was held in the grounds of HMAS Watson at Watson's Bay. The Bishop of North Queensland, Rt. Rev. John Lewis, ex HMAS Ararat led the Service. It was moving to take part in the singing of "Eternal Father Strong to Save", the naval hymn, sung by the huge gathering.

Doug said the 90 strong Queensland group had travelled from Brisbane to Sydney by rail, First Class on the XPT train. It leaves Roma St. at 0740 and arrives at Sydney Central at 2140. It was a marvellous trip - we saw the country and it brought back memories of when we all used to travel interstate by rail. Many of the ex sailors were in their seventies and the crew service on the XPT was excellent. Better than Doug had experienced on a Qantas flight last year when it came to helping passengers with their cargo. The return journey to Brisbane was made in two Westbus coaches, stopping at Tamworth overnight.

Carl Mayoh has spent many months, assisted by Peter Long, in putting together a book of the best poems written by Carl's father Mick, between 1906-74. For anyone interested in Australiana told in verse with feeling, and where necessary great wit, this hard cover book is a must. It makes a lovely addition to collections of Australian poetry, described in the foreword "as a Kaleidoscope of the Australian scene - humour, bush, life, politics, history, reflection.....Mick Mayoh adds another strong voice to to already distinguished chorus composed of Henry Lawson, Banjo Paterson, Judith Wright and many others."

(We will try and include one of Mick's poems in the next issue but in the meantime if anyone would like to obtain a copy of the poems contact Carl Mayoh on 07 390 8847. Ed.)

Western Australia (Margaret Clancy)

On Independence Day in Perth some of the PNG people resident in Perth held a church service and Muumuu to celebrate. The church service was held in St. Jude's Catholic church at Lynwood and the Muumuu followed in the church hall and grounds. There was a crowd of about two hundred people. It is amazing how many Papua New Guineans are living in Perth - most of them studying at one or other of the tertiary institutions here. The service was conducted by a Catholic priest from New Ireland who is working in the area where there is a large aboriginal population, and a pastor from the Four Square Gospel in the PNG highlands who is now a pastor in the WA wheat belt.

It was great to see people we hadn't seen for years. Some of the people we saw were Eric and Marmie Phillips, who are soon moving to Sydney, Jean and Barry Hadlow, former missionaries at Lake Murray Ningerum and Tari, Brian Pearce, formerly in PWD at Lae and Goroka, Valmai Gallard from the Asia Pacific Christian Mission, formerly UFM in Tari. Valmai now lives in NSW. Also present were Winnie and Kevin Dwyer, formerly of Stafford Allen in Mount Hagen now living in Perth. Kevin is now a Biological Chemist at Royal Perth Hospital. Winnie is studying Sociology at UWA. Another member of the party was ex-magistrate Theo Bredmeyer. Theo has the dubious distinction of being Brian Heagney's cousin.

NEWS FROM AUSTRALIAN AND PNG CORRESPONDENTS (cont'd)

It was great to see Colleen Neville who was here in the West on a bus holiday. Colleen certainly doesn't look a day older than the last time I saw her fifteen years ago. She gave us all the news from Queensland and was in a hurry back for son Michael's wedding.

At about the same time we were able to spend a couple of hours at the Esplanade Hotel in Fremantle with Geoff and Pat Littler who were also here on holiday. Pat looked great too and it was really good to see the Littlers again.

Des was at the presentation of the McKell Medal, an important National conservation land care award where he met Bob Allen, a kiap at Kagua (1972-74). Bob is now farming at Lake King in WA and is on the executive board of the Western Australian Farmers' Federation.

Northern Territory (Jim Toner)

Wantoks mentioned in my previous notes have on relocation from PNG to the NT pursued their already chosen professions. Not so Harry Coehn who executed a surprising - to public service eyes - volteface.

Harry was from a well known prewar Rabaul family who decided to put his energies into PNG Education. After training at ASOPA in 1958-9 he taught here and there, including the golf course at Wewak where young Michael Somare was grateful for guidance with his swing. Harry was at one time Head of the Bavaroko Primary School, within spitting distance of the well-loved Boroko RSL (RIP). On going South in 1976, Harry found his way to Darwin and decided to take a bread and butter job as temporary Clerk Grade 1 in the NT Administration. To the consternation of fellow staff he put in a deal of unpaid overtime to bring his work area up to his standards and, to further raised eyebrows, was made O.I.C. Recruitment after nine months. Following that he has been Administrative Officer of the Electricity Commission; an Equal Opportunity Commissioner; and is currently Director of Administration in the Attorney-General's Department.

On one interviewing committee where a candidate blithely claimed to have been in charge of two hundred co-operative societies - all on Manus Island! - Harry was in a position to explain to other members that this information was less than candid.

I remember when Harry first returned to Rabaul from ASOPA and played outside centre for Works. His high knee action and determination on the burst was straight out of the Sydney Rugby League textbook. Clearly that drive is still there and the NT Public Service has recognised it. Harry and his wife are stalwarts of the Darwin Golf Club where he has been Captain for two years (having trained for the job as Captain of the Rabaul Golf Club in the 60s).

(Barry Johnston, ex-Lands, was referred to as Brian in a previous issue and has been invited to call me Richard).

Bribie Island (Geoff Masters)

Have just returned from PNG - lead a group of veterans back to the Bay for a 48th anniversary of the battle - good time was had by all. I know I've said it before and I have to say it again, it never ceases to amaze me as to the high rise buildings that keep going up in POM. The latest one is wedged between the rear of ANG House and the old hospital, later House of Assembly.

NEWS FROM AUSTRALIAN AND PNG CORRESPONDENTS (cont'd)

Never knew there was a block of land there - Ron Galloway tells me it was probably on the site of David Fenbury's house. Also noticed numerous unit-type buildings going up on the Ela Beach side of Paga.

Whilst in POM took the opportunity of opening the cases of arms donated to the Milne Bay War Museum by the Australian Govt. and received some good media coverage, 7 mins on EM TV, plus front page on Post Courier and an interview on Kalang Radio. The Australian High Commission staff went to great lengths to assist in this coverage.

The Gurney airstrip is u/s again, apparently has sunk just past 1/2 way point towards the eastern end - limited to Dash 7 and smaller aircraft. Talk of K10 million to fix it, but no funds.

On same plane north and south as well as to Gurney and return was Colleen Neville. She was on her way to see son Peter who is involved in a company called Coecon at Alotau.

This time I noted that the Provincial Government still had done nothing about removing the remains of Turnbull's Kittyhawk from the crash site to memorial park so with assistance from the Bishop of Milne Bay, Des Moore MSC, it is to be removed within a month to the memorial park.

It appears that the Provincial Government does not have funds to construct war museum so suggested that they agree to allow 'Masurina' to add an additional room to their proposed Hotel on the waterfront to house our war material.

No rain in the country for some months and as a result we were able to take our bus all the way to Owers Corner - note the villagers have returned to Uberi and are making gardens on the hills. The Government has banned the import of fresh vegies - the Airbus has till now flown to Cairns each Tuesday to pick up fresh food - the hope is that the locals will be able to grow enough to fill the gap. Brian Costello and Ron Leppard now ensconced in Compass Airway's new offices.

Letter from Guy Black giving me full details of original New Britain Entertainments - my first instalment of the POM theatres was published in September issue of Theatre Historical Journal. Note from Jim Glinderman (who was early DCA Airways Surveyor) advising that he was flying Melbourne to North Queensland in his home made aircraft and hoped to catch up with me en route - not as yet.

Betty Eakin and son John have returned to Cairns - John was being treated for cancer at Wesley Hospital for many months.

Interesting person at Milne Bay upon arrival was Michael Ryan who as a Captain in Intelligence was sent to the Bay early in 1942 to reconnoitre escape routes in case the garrison could not hold a Jap landing - tells me he walked from Gili Gili to East Cape and return then across to Mullins Harbour and then to Kanakopi and in all that walking only came across one European - Coleman - who was in the Sagari Valley.

Managed to catch up with Lance Taylor at Sogeri High. He wrote the booklet 'Sogeri During the War' and is now writing a post-war history of the area.

(continued on page 16)



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THE ASSOCIATION'S CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

will be held on

SUNDAY 2ND DECEMBER, at 11.45 a.m. for 1 p.m.

at: THE MANDARIN CLUB

cnr Pitt and Goulburn Streets, Sydney

Please note: The venue will be the Oriental Room - on the 4th Floor

Cost will be \$20.00 per head which will cover a banquet style meal and a ticket in the door prize. Drinks at club prices :-

Beer	\$7.00 per jug
Wine	\$8.00 per bottle
Soft drink	\$6.00 per carafe

Drinks (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) will also be available by the glass.

The Council car park, corner Goulburn and Castlereagh Streets will be open from 10 am to 4 pm. for a charge of \$4.00. The Club is not far from Town Hall, Central and Museum Stations. Anyone needing assistance with transport could please ring Pamela Foley on 428 2078 or Harry West on 498 2271.

Seating arrangements will receive special attention to help those attending alone or those who feel they may not know many people. If you wish to be seated with your friends please let us know who they are when you make your booking. **PLEASE BOOK EARLY!** It is most important that we know in advance how many are coming so that we can liaise efficiently with the Club, and not have to pay for meals booked for and not used. If it is necessary for you to cancel, a full refund will be made if Treasurer Bill Johnston is phoned on 529 4974 by noon on Friday 30th November.

Make your cheque payable to R.O.A.P.N.G and send with the Booking Slip below to Bill Johnston, 25 Hillview Street, Sans Souci, NSW 2219.

=====

LUNCHEON BOOKING

NAME:.....(Please print Christian & Surname)

I will be accompanied by.....

.....  
(Please print full names (for name badges)

If possible I would like to be seated with.....

.....  
Enclosed please find my cheque / money order for \$.....

NEWS FROM AUSTRALIAN AND PNG CORRESPONDENTS (cont'd)

The Japs have apparently built a memorial to their dead at Efogo No.2. A friend who recently walked the track/trail sent me back some photos of the memorial built last year.

Still find justice hard to fathom in PNG. Latest is that a national who robbed a mission of money and cheques was caught and charged - a priest went to get the money and cheques and was told that it was evidence and would be available after the court case - somehow the rascal (criminal) got off and went to police and asked for his somethings - they gave him all the cheques and cash and he goes on his way - again.

The Japs are building a new hospital alongside the present one on Taurama Road.

VICTORIA (Laurie Le Fevre)

The Caroline Laws' statement is so clearly untrue that I wonder if somehow it was taken out of context.

Ron Galloway's comment at the Bribie Island reunion about the need to get experiences down on paper to be strongly supported. I think the recent member reaction to the question about personal reminiscences and contributions to "Vale" supports this.

Clive Single - those of us who knew Clive in Milne Bay in the early '60s will remember that, among his many accomplishments, he wrote under the name Robert Clive and was often published - PIM etc.

Finally, the matter of Independence Day celebrations, which was raised recently. Members in Victoria will be aware that the Papua New Guinea Australia Association has an Independence Day Ball each year. It is always a great success, with a door prize of two air tickets to Port Moresby very generously donated by Air New Guinea. Perhaps other states could do something similar.

(continued on page 17)

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NEWS FROM AUSTRALIAN AND PNG CORRESPONDENTS (cont'd)

The Papua New Guinea Australia Association is particularly strong in Victoria because of the Melbourne headquarters of Radio Australia (with its strong PNG associations), and the numbers of Papua New Guineans undertaking tertiary studies here. This makes for a rewarding ongoing cultural exchange between Papua New Guineans and Australians, and is a useful context for Australians who like to think they spent time in PNG as guests.

I have recently been appointed to head up the new "Purchase Australia Office", (one of the government's initiatives in economic structural reform). Consequently I have turned into something of a commuter between Melbourne and Canberra. However, I have not turned into a total recluse, and I am pleased to report a little news, even if it revolves around some of my social doings.

Getting together in Melbourne in September were Jim and Val Cox of Devonport, Pat and Laurie Le Fevre of Melbourne, Mavis ("Jimmy") Ernst of Perth and Paul and Linley Vellacott of Melbourne. Val (Jeannes), Pat (Farnan) and "Jimmy" all nursed at Samarai in the early '60s. Jim and Paul were both with DASF in Milne Bay at the same time. The Le Fevres also caught up with Paul and Joan Allan in Canberra in September. Paul was also with DASF in the late '50s and early '60s, working at Kavieng and Kundiawa.

Paul Allen was last in PNG two years ago attending an international soil conservation conference. He retired last year as an Assistant Secretary of the Department of Primary Industries and Energy (Canberra).

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HELP REQUIRED

Harry Jackman is a Ph.D. student at the University of Adelaide, supervised by Dr. W. L. (Bill) Gammage, whom many of you will know as he taught at U.P.N.G. Harry's thesis topic is 'The Interaction between the Elema and the Government: a history to 1975'.

He would much appreciate it if former kiaps, medical assistants, education officers, agricultural officers, etc., who were stationed at Kerema, Ihu or Kukipi at one time or other would contact him at:

Harry H. Jackman  
PO Box 320  
ANGASTON SA 5353  
(tel. 085 64 2755).

RESULT OF ENQUIRIES

We have been provided with the following addresses:

Mr. Des Collins  
12 Laura Street  
BANORA POINT NSW 2486

Mr. Russ Merritt  
26 Helenbrae Avenue  
FAIRY MEADOW NSW 2519

Mr. Max Denehy  
7 Diford Street  
CAPALABA QLD 4157

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PAPUA NEW GUINEA NEWS

40th Anniversary of Mt. Lamington Eruption - 21st January 1991

It will be 40 years on 21/1/91 that Mt. Lamington erupted in a disastrous explosion. Thirty-five expatriates and 2907 nationals were killed. About 6000 villagers were injured, many suffering terrible burns. Glass medicine bottles in a village Aid Post near Saiho melted into distorted shapes, such was the intensity of the heat.

By a stroke of fate the eruption took place in January when the boys at Martyr's Memorial School were home on holidays. The famous school suffered extensive damage and casualties.

One village woman, who was running, tripped and fell on a track among bushes. It saved her life for the blast of the flaming gas and fire passed over her. She suffered shocking burns on her back.

A large cemetery and memorial was built in the centre of Popondetta to record the names of those who lost their lives. It was unveiled by the Hon. Paul Hasluck M.P., Minister of State for Territories, on 24/11/52 before a large crowd of dignitaries and local people including survivors. A number of people were awarded decorations, including the George Cross, for their part in the emergency which followed the eruption.

Mt. Lamington has remained dormant ever since but jets of scalding steam come out of the ground near the cone of the volcano. The smell of sulphur abounds. Hiking enthusiasts can reach the top of the mountain in four hours from the nearest road end at the base, starting from Popondetta. Many of the athletic and active community at Popondetta used to climb Mt. Lamington at a weekend, camping at the summit on Saturday night in order to catch the magnificent view at dawn the next day.

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(The foregoing was provided by Doug Franklin from information he obtained from the Australia Papua New Guinea Society Inc., a Brisbane based association of which he is a member.

I have, however, been given to understand, from someone who was involved in the rescue operations immediately after the eruption of Mt. Lamington, that in excess of 4700 Papuans died in the eruption and there very few survivors. The majority of those in the area affected by the blast died whilst those outside survived.

It has also been said that the Memorial in the centre of Popondetta is not also a cemetery as there are no human remains buried there, but perhaps my information is incorrect or it could be a token cemetery because some bodies were never recovered and many were unrecognisable.

This presents an interesting conundrum and the matter should be resolved whilst the people who were involved in the rescue operations are still alive. It would also be a pity if the history of the eruption, as currently recorded, remained in question, so I would appreciate information from anyone who has first hand knowledge of the event and its aftermath, but I am not interested in any hearsay information. I would also be interested in receiving details of the wording on the Memorial Plaque unveiled by the then Minister for Territories, the Honourable Paul Hasluck, M.P., on 24 November 1952.

I will report any worthwhile information I receive on the subject in the March, 1991 Una Voce and subsequent issues if necessary. Editor.)

## THE RABAUl TIMES

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No. 633

Friday, June 4, 1937

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Gratis

### OUR VOLCANIC ISSUE

We owe our subscribers and advertisers an apology this week for being unable - owing to force of circumstances - to publish our usual issue. It is only due to the great kindness and courtesy of the Catholic Mission at Vunapope that we are able to issue this small sheet and right here we wish to record the wonderful work done by the Mission all through this harrowing period and congratulate His Lordship Bishop Vesters, and his untiring staff, on the excellent organisation and display of Christian spirit.

At this particular moment we refrain from commenting on the possibilities of the future. Even the most usually serene individual is suffering from the reaction of nervous strain, after the happenings of the past few days, and his outlook has become distorted and abnormal. Whether the capital of the Territory is to remain at Rabaul or be removed to some other locality is not a question to be finalised at this juncture. Both the volcanoes and our mental state must be allowed to cool off. In a month or so - perhaps more - we can then better decide such a momentous question.

We must remember this: Rabaul, the Garden City, has disappeared and there only remains an ugly mud-covered town. It is this drastic change which is so liable to affect our judgement and make of us pessimists. There has been no physical panic, but a certain amount of mental panic. Chins up and carry on! Let hasty decisions be avoided.

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Printed at the Catholic Mission, Vunapope and published by  
Gordon Thomas, Publisher and Editor.

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(The above is a reproduction of the front page of this historic edition of The Rabaul Times. There are 8 other pages and if we decide to print a "bumper" issue of Una Voce each year in future, as we are contemplating, I will try and reproduce the remainder of the issue. What happened in the following article was, in a way, a consequence of the above event."

### NAVY VISIT TO SALAMAU by Bert Weston

The September 1987 issue of the Naval Historical Review contains an article by the late Rear-Admiral J.S. Mesley giving a run-down on the activities of the sloop "HMAS Swan" during the period following its commissioning in January 1937 until November 1938 and while he was its navigating officer. I can add a little to his story.

He recounts the ship's visit to Salamaua in New Guinea in company with the cruiser "HMAS Australia" and having as passengers the Governor-General Lord Gowrie, Lady Gowrie, Lord Ranfurley and the Administrator of New Guinea, Lieut-General Sir Walter McNicoll together with the Director of Public Works, Colonel Field.

### NAVY VISIT TO SALAMAUA (cont'd)

Following the 1937 eruption at Rabaul it was decided that the capital should be shifted to a less shaky location and among the several places on the short list was Salamaua.

The only thing in its favour was its sheltered harbour and anchorage otherwise it was limited in area and hemmed in by malarial mangrove swamps; however the Prime Minister of Australia, Billy Hughes, although he had never seen the place, was obsessed with the idea that Salamaua should be the new capital and this was the reason why the Vice-Regal party was sent to make an on-the-spot inspection of the place.

I had been a resident of Salamaua for almost ten years prior to their visit; Guinea Airways had the job of flying the party to various places in that district and also providing motor transport when necessary. At Salamaua, apart from a few trucks, I had the only sedan car available, this being a new 1937 Chevrolet imported direct from USA at the then price of 320.0.0 pounds sterling.

I was hired to drive the visitors about inspecting the area during their stay in port and they were very soon convinced of the unsuitability of Salamaua as the site for a future capital.

On the first evening the navy was invited to send a party of sailors ashore to attend a dance in the newly built court house and as AUSTRALIA was under quarantine due to an outbreak of measles aboard, the SWAN provided the sailors under the care of two of its officers, Lt. Cmdr W. Harrington and Sub-Lt. R. Kerruish; the former to become Adm. Sir Hastings Harrington.

The sailors, with sly grins, warned us that Harrington was in a foul mood as while attempting to lay "SWAN" alongside the cruiser that morning he had hit the cruiser an almighty thump to the great glee of both ships' companies. Apparently he was a man who did not take kindly to being laughed at.

Before the ships left we locals played a soccer match with a team from SWAN led by a bunting tosser named Pretty and with me as our captain. Played in rain the ball was as heavy as lead and it was nil-all until the final minute when I headed it into the net.

I ended up with mild concussion and spent the next two days in hospital where from my bed of pain I watched both warships sail away unknowing as to the active service that was soon to come their way.

For several years thereafter I perused the Imperial Honours List for some evidence of recognition of my service to Vice-Royalty, others had been knighted for less. However, I was doomed to disappointment, I thought that perhaps I would have been permitted to have "Under Vice-Regal Patronage" emblazoned on the doors of my car but this did not eventuate.

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### ARTICLES CONTRIBUTED BY MEMBERS

My apologies to those members who have contributed articles which have not as yet been printed. Please be patient as the majority of them will be printed in due course. So far space has been the deciding factor, because due to postage and printing costs we have limited each edition to 28 pages. We do hope, however, to print an extra large edition during 1991. Ed.



9P5

"In Defence of PNG"

(I propose to deal with the Mrs Laws and Mrs Douglas matters together and the following are quotes from some of the comments we have received. Ed.)

"As one of your correspondents the point made by Mrs Janetta Douglas is well taken. Please reassure her that none of our Members feel anything but absolute loyalty and faith in the future of Papua New Guinea, and none of us left feeling we were indispensable. In fact a good percentage willingly handed over our jobs and desks to Nationals we had helped to train.

Living away from a country and trying to keep up to date is never easy. Often as not news is gleaned from the media or from wantoks, National and expat, still resident in PNG. What is happening in Bougainville, to TALAIR, to Pious Kerepia tends to surmount the latest from Porgera, Kutubu, the Bottom Pub site and so on.

We do our best and we help in many indirect ways to support all of you who are still in PNG. Often it is by providing accommodation and transport to Nationals and expats visiting Australia. If we worked in PNG in a past era that is something the new generation of workers should accept. The first roads, schools, hospitals, airstrips, University, National Department Heads, the Highlands Highway, were our contribution.

Thank you for giving us a bouquet for what we achieved. The ball is in your court now and we are in the audience on the sidelines. Keep up the good work and God bless you all."

Doug Franklin

"First of all "Caroline - Life with Laws" and her comment re half the women drinking themselves to death or suiciding. I knew Carrie fairly well in Mount Hagen as she was a neighbour, a friend and we had children of similar ages, BUT I think you might be getting hot under the collar for what could be a throw-away remark. I was so impressed with Moresby Hospital in 1950 that I had the next two in Australia, but then I got used to it and had the next three in the Territory. Those of you from the Western Highlands must remember the RUM RUN from Hagen to Minj where you were offered a drink of rum or something better if you could afford it, at 10 in the morning? I think most of us liked a tipple which helped us ignore the trials and tribulations of labour inspections, overdrafts, lack of facilities, money etc. Where's the sense of humour gone???

That's one tail twitch and brings me to the letter from Mrs Janetta Douglas and brought back many memories. It was a hot steamy night and six or eight of us plus children took ourselves down to Bootless Bay mud crabbing etc. and stayed in the oldest house in Moresby. That night we sat up with the mozzies and bemoaned the fact that we had to put up with the BEFORES who were always whingeing about the way the BEHINDS were ruining the Territory. Everything BEFORE THE WAR was done in a proper manner and those new ones will never last, they are too chummy with the natives AND that high ranking official's wife who was gardening in SHORTS and HALTER TOP. Remember? Now we have become the "BEFORES" and are giving the ones still in the Territory, as I still call it, a hard time. METHINKS WE MAY HAVE "OLD TIMER'S" DISEASE."

Dawn Levy

(continued next page)

PTO

"In Defence of PNG" (continued)

"I agree with your comments (the Editor's) about the quote attributed to Mrs. Caroline Laws. I didn't find chronic alcoholism a problem - many women did suffer from lack of exercise and boredom. If correctly quoted Mrs. Laws has done a great disservice to them many women who gave great service to PNG and to their husbands who worked there. She may have been a victim of the media for whom I have no respect these days. What do you think of this little gem from an article in the Brisbane Sunday Mail 4 November about Dennis Buchanan entitled "The Battler Airline Hits a Rough Patch":-

"Determined to open up areas in the spectacular mountains that had been thought inaccessible other than by foot, he put down grass strips and flew planes to them over dizzy passes that today still strike fear into the heart of the passenger...."

The main thrust of the article was of course quite different and fair enough but the thought of Dennis building the airstrips rather stunned me! - and maybe the patrol officers who mainly built them!"

"I do find myself in sympathy with what Mrs. Janetta Douglas said "in defence of PNG". There has always been excessive gloom and doom predicted about PNG. I still marvel that a country so diverse as PNG has managed still to hold together as well as it has, despite massive problems. My own view is that the adverse law and order problem was foreseeable years ago by a system of Justice quite unsuited to PNG needs. There have been years of excessive legalism and very little Justice. Naho Rooney at one time tried to do something about changing this and brought on a revolt of the Supreme Court Judiciary!! Perhaps she did not make her points very well but at the time I had much sympathy with what she was trying to change - or talk about changing. The strange policy of giving people a choice about local government and the granting of Provincial governments were other mill stones that have been inherited by the current regime. However I won't go further on my "hobby horse"! Despite great problems there are still a lot of very fine people in PNG and I credit them with a fair amount of common sense."

Keith Dyer

I believe, like Doug Franklin, that none of our members feel anything but absolute loyalty and faith in Papua New Guinea, but don't let us all put our heads in the sand like Mrs. Douglas and others. PNG is currently going through a very rough patch and all is not a bed of roses despite the many tall buildings in Port Moresby referred to by Mrs. Douglas. PNG has a host of problems, not the least of which is that of law and order which is a very serious issue in any country and not just a 'colonial issue' as inferred by Mrs. Douglas.

The throwaway line that "one Kina worth of PNG exports costs Australians \$1.30 to buy" is entirely irrelevant, considering the very high cost of living in PNG compared with Australia.

I have a number of correspondents living in PNG and a number who visit there, some on a regular basis. The reports I receive from them are very similar but I have been loath to print them in Una Voce because of my great love of PNG and my great desire that it will ultimately have a well ordered and prosperous future. We should, however, face up to the current situation and the following is typical of the reports which I receive. The writer has spent many years in PNG both pre and post independence and is currently a resident there. I have included the Mrs. Laws issue in the above.

(continued next page)

The Editor

"In Defence of PNG" (continued)

"I agree with your comments (the Editor's) about the quote attributed to Mrs. Caroline Laws. I didn't find chronic alcoholism a problem - many women did suffer from lack of exercise and boredom. If correctly quoted Mrs. Laws has done a great disservice to them many women who gave great service to PNG and to their husbands who worked there. She may have been a victim of the media for whom I have no respect these days. What do you think of this little gem from an article in the Brisbane Sunday Mail 4 November about Dennis Buchanan entitled "The Battler Airline Hits a Rough Patch":-

"Determined to open up areas in the spectacular mountains that had been thought inaccessible other than by foot, he put down grass strips and flew planes to them over dizzy passes that today still strike fear into the heart of the passenger...."

The main thrust of the article was of course quite different and fair enough but the thought of Dennis building the airstrips rather stunned me! - and maybe the patrol officers who mainly built them!"

"I do find myself in sympathy with what Mrs. Janetta Douglas said "in defence of PNG". There has always been excessive gloom and doom predicted about PNG. I still marvel that a country so diverse as PNG has managed still to hold together as well as it has, despite massive problems. My own view is that the adverse law and order problem was foreseeable years ago by a system of Justice quite unsuited to PNG needs. There have been years of excessive legalism and very little Justice. Naho Rooney at one time tried to do something about changing this and brought on a revolt of the Supreme Court Judiciary!! Perhaps she did not make her points very well but at the time I had much sympathy with what she was trying to change - or talk about changing. The strange policy of giving people a choice about local government and the granting of Provincial governments were other mill stones that have been inherited by the current regime. However I won't go further on my "hobby horse"! Despite great problems there are still a lot of very fine people in PNG and I credit them with a fair amount of common sense."

Keith Dyer

I believe, like Doug Franklin, that none of our members feel anything but absolute loyalty and faith in Papua New Guinea, but don't let us all put our heads in the sand like Mrs. Douglas and others. PNG is currently going through a very rough patch and all is not a bed of roses despite the many tall buildings in Port Moresby referred to by Mrs. Douglas.

PNG has a host of problems, not the least of which is that of law and order which is a very serious issue in any country and not just a 'colonial issue' as inferred by Mrs. Douglas.

The throwaway line that "one Kina worth of PNG exports costs Australians \$1.30 to buy" is entirely irrelevant, considering the very high cost of living in PNG compared with Australia.

I have a number of correspondents living in PNG and a number who visit there, some on a regular basis. The reports I receive from them are very similar but I have been loath to print them in Una Voce because of my great love of PNG and my great desire that it will ultimately have a well ordered and prosperous future. We should, however, face up to the current situation and the following is typical of the reports which I receive. The writer has spent many years in PNG both pre and post independence and is currently a resident there.

(continued next page)

Editor.

"In Defence of PNG" (continued)

"The comments by Mrs Janetta Douglas were certainly thought provoking, and I find it difficult to come up with a simple or single response. I guess the last sentence says it all - it conveys the idyllic image of a balmy day in the lush tropical surroundings of Bootless Bay, quietly day-dreaming in a lazy chair, sipping a cool gin and tonic, a gentle seabreeze rustling through the tree tops, the soft sound of an incoming tide lapping the shore, broken only by an occasional swooping flock of parrakeets screeching in pursuit of insects.

It is the tragic contradiction of PNG circa 1990. A land that is once tranquil, as befits a Pacific island, and volatile, as the pressures of political, economic and social turmoil threaten to explode, like a Vulcan or Lamington. What does the future hold? No one knows. History does not offer any guiding precedents for PNG. Hawke comes to PNG and makes it plain that Australia has washed its hands when it comes to tackling the enormous problems that exist here.....

The bottom line is not the value of the Kina against the Aussie Dollar - it seems quite meaningless when a basket of groceries that you pay the equivalent of K46 for in Sydney costs us K65, according to a recent survey by our Chamber of Commerce. No, to me the bottom line is the answer to the question inherent in Hawke's statement: can PNG solve its own problems? I would like to say: yes.... but all the evidence I have witnessed in the past many months leads me to believe that, short of a miracle, it is just not possible. The country is in an awful mess - law and order, education, health, primary industries, almost every facet of government activity, at all levels, is in chaos and disarray. Walk into any hospital, primary or secondary school, police station, government outstation, the scene is dismal - no control, no organisation, no equipment, no funds, no discipline. The standard of public servants has declined as the standard and quality of education and training has deteriorated over the past 15 years. The educators of today are of a lower standard than their predecessors, and in turn produce a crop of poorly trained teachers for the next generation of students. And so it goes on. This is a generalisation, of course, there are exceptions, but insufficient to make any impression.

.....So my response to Mrs Douglas would be to suggest that she has her head buried deep in the sands of Bootless Bay - I don't blame her really, because it is infinitely more pleasurable to enjoy the glorious physical landscape of PNG than to analyze the terrible mess the politicians are making of its government. I do it myself, in fact you need to do it in order to keep going."

I have received other similar reports but I consider the above says it all. Nevertheless, I still firmly believe that, given time and a helping hand from Australia and people like ourselves, PNG will ultimately solve its many problems and be better than ever. It is a wonderful and fascinating country, young and still developing, so lets give it all the help we can. Some of the closing paragraphs from a speech by the Prime Minister, the Rt Honourable Rabbie Namaliu CMG MP, to the Port Moresby Chamber of Commerce in June this year give me great heart and to quote just two of them:

"We are also committed to addressing the law and order problems which threaten not only the private sector, but the whole fabric of our society."

"We have a unique opportunity to really change Papua New Guinea for the better. Out of adversity will come strength and a new commitment to making the very most of the outstanding opportunities Papua New Guinea has."

The Editor

## RADIO DAGUA

by Bob Pulsford

In 1953 I was planning to marry and to take my bride to live in Urip village in the Dagua area thirty miles along the coast west of Wewak. There was an airstrip there and a walking track to Wewak, but no road or communications. I asked Larry Dwyer the Director of DASF for a tele-radio for my station for the safety not only of the airstrip and those who lived in the area but of my new responsibility soon to arrive. He said that I would have to estimate for the apparatus one year and requisition for it the next. I called on the Director of Civil Aviation. I told him I supervised an airstrip that had several services a week at times and if he gave me a radio I would advise DCA in case of accident to aircraft. I also told him of my personal need! He said that he could only supply me with a crystal to work the DCA emergency frequency but not the set to plug it into. But he thought that I should approach the Assistant Director Posts and Telegraph, Radio Communications. He asked me if I could charge batteries. When I said I could he told me to be sure to tell that to the engineer, when I met him.

The latter told me that he had a transmitter, a receiver and batteries, but no chargers. "I can charge batteries" I said. With this, he told me he would send me a radio if I got a letter from my Director saying I needed it. Encouraged by this success I asked him to send the equipment direct to Dagua through Gibbes Sepik Airways and not through Government Stores, lest someone along the way deemed they had more need of it than I!

A week later back at Dagua the equipment was duly delivered by a Norseman aircraft. Giant bamboo poles were cut and erected carrying the aerial on high. The earth peg was sunk into damp soil. Getting the receiver going was easy, soon I was receiving Radio Wewak, but tuning the transmitter without previous experience, from the manual instructions was daunting. At last the receiver was saying "Any other stations wishing to contact Wewak come in now." "Wewak, Wewak this is Dagua", I tried, but there was no response. I spent the time till the next sked going over the instructions and turning dials and noting dips of the meter. Next time I tried, to my astonishment came back the reply: "Dagua, Dagua, where in the bloody hell is Dagua?" I shot back in great excitement, "Roy, it is me, Bob!"

A month later on the day of my wife's arrival at Dagua, we had evening dinner with June and David Powys, the school teacher and his wife at Dagua. After the meal walking back to our house, my wife trod on a death adder which left two beads of blood on her ankle. June was a nurse and we had a most anxious night with a tourniquet which had to be released every fifteen minutes. I was getting no response on the radio all night, till at dawn, back came a reply to my Mayday from Lae, who contacted Wewak by Morse. Within an hour Dr Roth with antivenine was in our house at Dagua. Mary recovered after a few days in the Wewak hospital. Subsequently the radio proved invaluable in a number of health crises with the village people. We had two aircraft accidents, and then there was the arrival of our baby to organise!

## VALE

With deep regret we record the passing of the following members and friends. On behalf of the Association the Committee extends our sincere sympathy to their families.

Mr. Clive Vallack SINGLE (30 June 90 aged 65 years)

A member of one of Australia's oldest families (Singleton takes its name from it), Clive served with the RAAF in World War II, as navigator-airgunner in the Z Force Support Group. He joined the PNG Administration as a Patrol Officer in 1947. Although he did not regain good health following a severe illness contracted while seconded to a Commonwealth Government Agency in SE Asia in the 1950s, he remained a kiap until the 1970s when he was 'localised'. His favourite posting was Baniara in Milne Bay Province, with ex-Sgt Ibara of Sir Hubert Murray's legendary Constabulary his special mate. During his last posting, at Port Moresby, he was on the foundation board of the Badili Vocational Centre and continued being what he had been throughout his service: a highly esteemed friend of the local people. Sir John Guise made a special point of this in his condolences to Clive's sister. The Premier of Milne Bay Province broadcast a eulogy. His peers remember him as organiser of the whimsical William MacGregor Club, as contributor to the Red Pages of 'The Bulletin' and, most important, as a gentle, courteous and steadfast friend.

(Reported briefly in the September issue. Ed.)

Mr. John STEWART (21 October 90)

John was well known in and around Wewak and New Guinea. He was an associate of Mr. Corrigan and handled much of his shipping and stevedoring work. It was while supervising the loading/unloading of the MV Busama in Wewak that he was severely injured when empty fuel drums aboard the vessel exploded. However, he made a remarkable recovery and continued with life in PNG until 1973 when he and his wife Marie (Bob Geelan's sister) moved to Mount Isa Queensland. John worked there (engineering stores and warehousing) for some years until a malignancy of the throat was diagnosed. He was always the same cheerful John that his PNG friends will remember - when Bob Geelan saw him last in Mount Isa he took him in a four-wheel drive vehicle on a trip around the area and Bob could not help but admire his courage. The inevitable result occurred and John was buried in Mount Isa. He is survived by a sister and his wife, Marie, who continued to nurse him throughout his illness while continuing with her job as a school teacher.

Gwendolene James GOUGH (19 September 90 aged 74 years)

Gwen was the wife of George Gough who spent many years in PNG, both pre and post war, in charge of the Bomana Gaol just outside Port Moresby. She had been ill with cancer for a long time and during this period was lovingly cared for by husband George. She is survived by husband George and children Bernie, David, Michael, Thomas and Catherine.

Annie Doris PASCOE (7 September 90)

Widow of Ronald John Pascoe who passed away in 1942. (No further details)

John Joseph CAMERON (7 September 90)

John was a single man and served as an Instructor in the PNG Department of Education. (No further details)



Ivor Alfred WOOD (25 September 90)

Ivor served in the PNG Department of Lands Surveys and Mines and when he retired in June 1969 was Chief of Division. It is understood that he died in Greece whilst on holidays but no further details are known.

Reginald Ernest Carlingford SMITH (18 August 90)

Reg went to PNG in 1958 and served with the Department of Posts and Telegraphs as a Technical Instructor until he retired in 1971. He is survived by his wife Molly Eva.

Barbara Annie MCLAUGHLIN (28 July 90)

Barbara joined the PNG Department of Education 17 June 1947 and was a Chief of Division when she retired in December 1968 but no further details are known.

Douglas Francis LOVE (30 August 90)

Went to PNG in May 1957 and served as a Technical Officer with the Department of Lands Surveys and Mines. He retired in 1972 and is survived by his wife Anna.

(Many hours are spent endeavouring to obtain the history of ex PNG people who have passed away but often to no avail, particularly when the deceased has not been a member of our Association.

None of the people listed above were members and I have had great difficulty in obtaining any information about them.

I obtain the names from many different sources but details are usually very sketchy. So it would be very much appreciated if members would inform me of the names of persons ex PNG recently deceased with some details of the person's history and/or the names of friends or relatives of the deceased who may be able to supply more details. Ed.)



WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

DR. R. BARNES	265 Avoca Drive	GREEN POINT	NSW 2205
MS. C. BOURKE	7/2 St. Neot Avenue	POTTS POINT	NSW 2011
MR. H. BUTHMANN	P.O. Box 388	TWEED HEADS	NSW 2485
DR. P. CAHILL	7 Wynyard Street	INDOOROOPIILLY	QLD 4068
MR. H. COEHN	120 Yanyula Drive, Anula,	DARWIN	N T 0812
MR. E. GODDEN	PNG Electricity Comm. PO Box 1105	BOROKO	P N G
MR. J. HERBERT	11 Lytham Street	INDOOROOPIILLY	QLD 4068
MR. P. OAKLEY	60/3554 Main Beach Parade	MAIN BEACH	QLD 4217
MRS. M. STEWART	P.O. Box 445,	MT ISA	QLD 4825
MR. R. TURRILL	16 Carlingford Place	ROBINA	QLD 4226

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MEMBERS' NEW ADDRESSES:

MR. J.F. BROWNE	77 Highfield Stret	LINDFIELD	NSW 2070
MR. R.M. CLARIDGE	P.O. Box 630	SOUTH YARRA	VIC 3141
MR. P.H. CLARKE	Villa 33, Compton Gardens		
	97 Albany Creek Road,	ASPLEY	QLD 4034
MR. K.R. DOHERTY	P.O. Box 67, Westcourt	CAIRNS	QLD 4870
CAPT. J.H. EVANS	P.O. Box 1661, Apia	WESTERN SAMOA	
MR. L. PRONK	Unit 54, 28 Curagul Road	TURRAMURRA	NSW 2074
MR. J.P. SINCLAIR	5 Yoomba Crescent	ALEXANDRA HEADLAND	QLD 4572
MR. D.F. WAIGHT	91 Oakwood Village, Cessnock Rd.	GILLIESTON HGTS	NSW 2321

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HAPPY

FESTIVE SEASON

Enjoy the holidays but please drive carefully.

*Doug Parrish*

EDITOR

