



COMMANDO

THE MAGAZINE OF THE AUSTRALIAN COMMANDO ASSOCIATION

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WEBSITE: www.commando.org.au
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EDITORS: Mr Stephen Carter
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The Australian Commando Association's membership consists of Servicemen & women who have served with WW2 Independent Companies, Commando Squadrons & Regiments, "M" and "Z" Special units, 1st & 2nd Commando Company's, 1st Commando Regiment, 4 RAR Commando & the 2nd Commando Regiment. The Association also consists of Associate Members who have served in units who directly supported Commando units in time of war and peace and Social members who's direct family member was either Killed In Action, Died In Service or Killed in Training or a member of the ACA who has passed.

DISCLAIMER: Opinions expressed within this publication are those of the authors, and are not necessarily those of the Editor, Publisher, Committee Members or Members of our Association. We welcome any input as long as it is not offensive or abusive but if any member has a problem with a printed article we would like to be informed in order that the author may be contacted. We do encourage your opinion.

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PO BOX 682, SURFERS PARADISE QLD 4217
 PHONE: 0432 042 060

EMAIL: russell@commandonews.com.au

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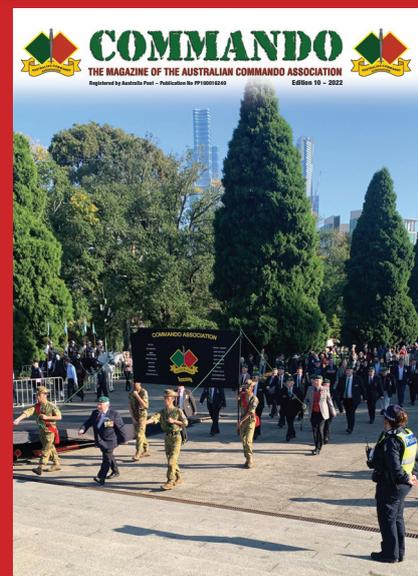


Deadline for next edition (Edition 11, 2022):

MONDAY, 4th JULY 2022

**All news on members and interesting articles accepted.
 (Subject to editors' approval.)**

Stephen Carter



Front Cover: Australian Commando Association - Victoria marching up the forecourt of the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance on Anzac Day 2022. Following close behind are members of the SASR Association Vic Branch.



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A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

My warmest greetings to all. Welcome to the 10th Edition of **COMMANDO – The Magazine of the Australian Commando Association**. After two years of serious dislocation to our ANZAC Service, I trust that you enjoyed the opportunity to share the company of comrades, old and new, in the commemoration of all Australian and New Zealand Veterans.

The Australian Commando Association exists to foster and perpetuate ties of comradeship amongst past and serving members of the Australian Commando and Special Force units and like-minded associations.

COMMANDO – The Magazine of the Australian Commando Association is a key communication channel that is designed to keep our members well informed and to foster the Commando esprit de corps which we have all enjoyed in our various times of service. As I have previously stated, the success of the Magazine is reliant on articles generated by our State Associations and members. I want to thank those who have made the effort to put “pen to paper” as every article advances our collective understanding of the rich history which is Commando.

On ANZAC day, I attended the Dawn Service at the RSL Doncaster Sub-Branch which was memorable for quality of the service and the number of people in attendance paying homage to our veterans.



In the cold first light, my thoughts turned to the Australian War Memorial and the extraordinary Roll of Honour which features 102,982 names of Service Personnel who made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of their country. In particular, I reflected on the immense cost of WW1 on a fledgling nation, as “the First World War remains the costliest conflict in terms of deaths and casualties. From a population of fewer than five million, 416,809 men enlisted, of whom more than 60,000 were killed and 156,000 wounded, gassed, or taken prisoner”. (The Australian War Memorial, The First World War 1914-18,

<https://www.awm.gov.au/articles/atwar/first-world-war>)

Of course, as with any conflict, there are those directly involved and those that wait behind patiently wondering about the wellbeing of their loved ones.

I have recently finished three books that deal with the angst that families endure during times of conflict.

Michael Sharkey’s anthology **Many Such as She: Victorian Australian Women Poets of World War One** (Walleah Press, 2018), is a wonderful collection of short poems. One of my favourites.

In many a cot the woman,
With the babe on her shelt’ring breast,
Is nursing his limbs for battle
A-crooning her son to rest.
All over the world the women
Give service, love, and life;
While over the world the tyrants
Are brewing the brew of strife.

Mary Fullerton 1868-1946 (ibid)



Mary E. Fullerton, photo by Marietta Studio, Melbourne. *Australasian*, 3 July 1925, p.14. State Library of Victoria.

Equally touching is **Here, There & Away – Voices of the families of those who served** (The Defence Force Widows Support Group ACT, Big Sky Publishing, 2012) which, through the voice of loved ones, tells of the price that has been paid by countless families and friends of those that have served in theatres of war since the Sudan and South Africa in the late 1800’s to recent combat zones.

The most haunting is the **Keeper of Miracles** by Phillip Maisel OAM (Pan Mcmillian Australia, 2021), in which the author details his ordeal at the hands of the Nazi’s in a squalid ghetto and several labour and concentration camps. He has committed the last thirty years to documenting and recording the testimonies of over a thousand survivors and their descendants as the “custodian of their memories.”



On the "lighter side" I also read a very amusing article "Endless itching: how Anzacs treated lice in the trenches with poetry and their own brand of medicine" (Royal New Zealand Returned and Services' Association Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, NZ Tiaki reference number 1/4-009458-G) which details the extraordinary efforts by the ANZACs to deal with one of their greatest foes – lice!

One of the preferred measures of dealing with the pest was "chatting" - popping the louse between the thumbnails. Lieutenant Allan McMaster told his family Newcastle it was "amusing indeed to see all the boys at the first minute they have to spare, to strip off altogether and have what we call a chatting parade."

The article highlights the endless capacity of soldiers to share information via their own networks (such as trench newspapers) and the ability to endure

the torment of life in the trenches.

COMMANDO serves many purposes and I encourage the submission of articles by the families and friends of members of the Association. As we all appreciate, most of our colleagues are self-effacing about their service and exploits. The untold stories are interminable, and I would encourage everyone in the Commando orbit to "put pen to paper" to ensure that these wonderful stories are captured for future generations. We have a duty to be the "custodian of their memories" so future generations can profit from the wisdom of those that have served their country.

Commando 4 Life

Stephen Carter

Editor - Commando Magazine

E: editor_commandomag@commando.org.au

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MAJOR STEVE PILMORE OAM RFD (Ret'd)

National Vice President
Australian Commando Association

Trust Welfare Officer
Commando Welfare Trust



In early July 2022 I will stand down from my role as Trust Executive Officer (TXO) of the Commando Welfare Trust having been in that job since the beginning (with a short break in the middle.) Given I have been around since the very beginning back in 2009 it is a significant decision - in my head at least.

I can think of no one more qualified nor suitable to take over as TXO than MAJ Paul Dunbavin OAM, who will take the Trust into its next phase from July 4th onwards.

I will stay on in my role as the National Vice President of the Australian Commando Association at the members' pleasure, so you have not got rid of me altogether.

As I begin my handover to Paul, there are some things I would ask of you all.

Look after your mates especially the ones who need an eye kept on them – you know who they are. The media environment regarding the outcomes of the IGADF Inquiry and ongoing defamation proceedings will get worse in my opinion before it even begins to get better. A lot of the revisiting of bad memories may be harmful for you and your mates so make sure the communication channels are up and running.

Should someone need support then share the matter with your local ACA Committee members and in other

circumstances see what the Commando Welfare Trust can do if the problems are getting serious for the former member or his family.

If there is a strong communication and welfare network within ACA members, then the battle is half won given that a chat maybe all that is needed. If its more serious then a cohesive ACA membership along with the processes and assets of the CWT can provide support and at least take away any financial pressures.

Talk to your State ACA Committee members and where applicable get someone to talk to the CWT.

For those of you who supported the CWT whilst I have been in the job, I am truly grateful. For those who have not yet done so, give it a thought. The Trust has helped over 65 families and more than 100 kids, so it is involved in the very best way within the Commando Community. Over \$4.5 million has been distributed to Commandos and Supporting troops or their families.

I wish you all the best and I hope to run into many of you in the future.

With my best wishes...

Steve
C4L

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PRESIDENT: Maj Paul Dunbavin
paul.dunbavin@defence.gov.au

VICE PRESIDENT: Mr Barry Grant
barrygrant1945@gmail.com

SECRETARY: Mr Bruce Poulter
secretary_nsw@commando.asn.au

WEB ADDRESS: www.commando.asn.au

CONTACT: secretary_nsw@commando.asn.au

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Commando community once again enjoyed ANZAC Day in Martin place following a number two years of COVID restrictions. The service at the Commando Memorial chair had a large crowd of serving/non serving, families and supporters of the Commando capability. Major General P Kenny Special Operations Commander Australia and Warrant Officer Class One J. Robinson Command Sergeant Major Special Operations laid wreaths to remember the sacrifice and service of Australian Commandos since World War Two and to the present day. Brigadier McNamara gave the Anzac Day address which emphasised the importance of the Commando capability to the Australian Defence Force and our regional security.

The ANZAC Day provided an great opportunity to reconnect as a community and Association for 2022.

ACA NSW will be holding annual mid-year Christmas in July gathering in Carnarvon which will allow the ACA NSW President to brief the members of ACA NSW developments within SOCOMD and ACA NSW.

25th November 22 – ACA NSW will be holding its annual Regimental Dining-in night at Randwick Barracks which will allow members to enjoy a regimental dinner supported by the 1st and 2nd Commando Regiments.



Paul Dunbavin

Major

SO2 Force, Family, and Veterans

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Transitioning to civilian life is a shared responsibility. When you decide to leave the ADF you should engage with your family, your Unit, and ADF Transition Support Services.

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- help you meet your administrative requirements
- help you leave with all documentation like service, medical, and training records
- facilitate connections to Defence and government support services

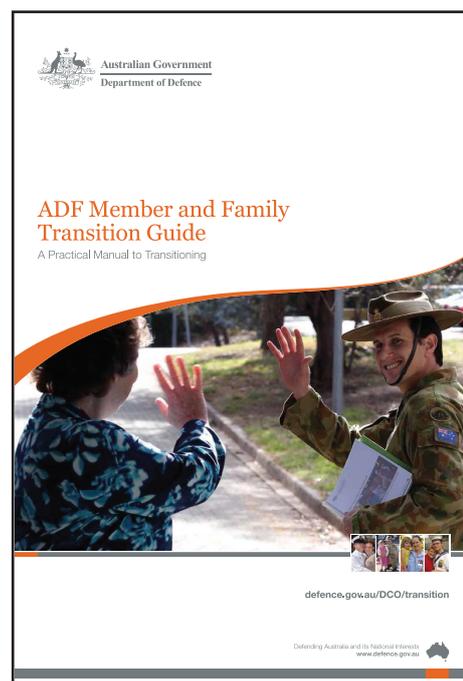
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You and your family can attend an ADF Transition Seminar at any time during your ADF career to help you prepare for your transition. Seminars are held

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ADF Member and Family Transition Guide

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Web Address: www.commando.org.au **Postal Address:** PO Box 628 Booval QLD 4304

Contact: SECRETARY: Mr John Davidson ~ acaql_d_secretary@commando.org.au

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

May 2022

Welcome to this edition of Commando magazine.

Our first gathering of the year was our Qld Branch AGM, held in early April. I was pleased to see some new faces step up and take on positions on the committee. I would like to thank former CO LTCOL John Davidson (Ret'd) for taking on the Secretary role. Richard Johnson (RLI CDO) has moved into the Events Co-ordinator role with Jeffrey McClean (1st CDO REGT) as Assistant Events Co-ordinator. Mark Stanieg (4 RAR CDO) has taken on Memberships with Luke O'Brien (4 RAR CDO) retaining the role of Treasurer. Peter McCaffrey (4 RAR, 1st & 2nd CDO) remains Vice-President.

Rob King (1st CDO Regt) and Justin Donnelly (4 RAR CDO) have joined us on the committee while I have been re-elected President for 2022.

The Queensland Association's numbers were down at this year's ANZAC Day parade and march mainly due to the wet weather. We once again marched as groups behind the Special Operation Forces Command banner, with Commandos followed this year by ASASR-Q and SOER members. The students from Mueller College at Rothwell, along with their head teacher, Mr Ben Stiller, once again provided an excellent banner party, also braving the weather with enthusiasm.

Mueller College students and staff put their support behind the Commando Association and have also raised substantial amounts of money for the Commando Welfare Trust over the last few years. I would like to thank them on behalf of the Association for this sterling effort.

Some of our regular attendees had family and personal commitments and we wish them well and hope to see them back amongst us at our next event in July.

Our next event is Operation Rimau & Special Forces Day scheduled for Sunday, 10th July 2022.

We are returning to the Queensland Maritime Museum and will once again be on the quarter deck of the HMAS *Diamantina*. This historic ship took part in operations in the SWPA during World War II. Order of service and invitations will be sent out by email by the last week of June.

We look forward to it being a great day of commemoration and remembrance and hope to see some new and familiar faces there.

A family BBQ and get together is being organised for later in the year, details to follow. I would encourage all our Qld members, old and new, to come along and say hi!

Regards,

Graham Gough



L to R. Graham Gough, Paul J, Rob King, Tony Mills and Mark Stanieg after the march. Long time member Frank Ried headed off directly after the march and missed the photo op.



HMAS *Diamantina* is located in the Queensland Maritime Museum dry dock on the Brisbane River.



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AUSTRALIAN COMMANDO ASSOCIATION VICTORIA

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

30 March 2022

RECENT ACTIVITIES

Now that COVID 19 restrictions within Victoria have been eased significantly there has been a reactivation of the Association's social and commemorative activities which were cancelled during 2021.

2022 RIP commemoration

The 2022 commemoration at Shortland's Bluff was well attended and was preceded by a spreading of ashes ceremony for 2 former 2 Commando Company members Private Joe Lamb and Private Bob Dunball both of whom passed away last year and requested their families to spread their ashes in the Rip to join their three comrades who perished in February 1960.



Peter Beasley reading the family tribute to Joe Lamb part of the Ashes Ceremony.

Source: Richard Pelling

Dedication of the Special Operations Memorial at Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance

Due to Covid restrictions this activity had to be postponed in 2021 and current planning is to attempt to conduct the dedication on Saturday 18th September 2022.

FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

2022 Anzac Day

ACA Vic members will be joining Melbourne-based personnel from the 1st Commando Regiment at the Williamstown Cenotaph, or the Dawn Service as it is not possible to conduct the usual ceremony at Fort Gellibrand Memorial due to ongoing renovations of the precinct.

Historical Collection Grant (with Museums Victoria) – Update

Due to Covid restrictions there has been a slowing down of data entry of the historical collection, however items are continually being entered onto the database.

To view the updates, go to...

<https://victoriancollections.net.au/organisations/australian-commando-association-victoria>

2020 Victorian Veterans' Council Grant

This project is nearing completion with only a few transcripts of the WW2 special operations oral history interviews. The digitisation of post WW2 M& Z Victoria association magazine 'Double Diamonds' of all editions held has been completed and it is intended to finalise the project by June 2022.

Tidal River Walking Track Open Space Development - Update

Following discussions in late 2021 with Parks Victoria, a proposal for ACAVIC participation in the development of a walking track and open space development has been submitted. In essence ACA Vic has offered to provide some financial support for the creation of up to five rest benches to be installed along the track, providing that these can be named after fallen Victorian commandos with suitable signage and story boards erected adjacent Commando Track in memory of its use during World War II for the initial training of Independent Company and Special Operations Australia personnel. Due to Parks Victoria process and planning requirements, it is expected that the track will be completed in the latter part of 2023.

WELFARE

ACA Victoria continues to liaise and attend regular meetings with the Victorian Veterans Council, Legacy, RSL and DVA network to promote ACAVIC's objectives/expectations and support requirements in the very crowded Welfare & Advocacy arena. There have been numerous requests for support from former members in the preparation and submissions to DVA for acceptance of liability for injuries sustained whilst in service. Many of these have been successful for former CMF/ARes members who are receiving surgical interventions and ongoing medical support for their injuries.

ACAVIC Memorabilia

For Unit Regimental Funds and interstate ACA Branches seeking to purchase bulk quantities of memorabilia from ACA Vic please contact the President or the Secretary as there will be a reduced pricing schedule for most items. Items can be purchased by individuals at the ACA Vic merchandise website at <https://www.austcdoassocvic.com/merchandise/>.

Doug Knight

President, ACA Vic

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT WESTERN AUSTRALIA

March 2022

The year got off to a rough start with our respected former Vice President, Rob (Paddy) Murray, moving on to Valhalla. Blue skies and fair winds brother!

Paddy, as he was affectionately known, both in his time at 1 CDO COY in the early to mid-sixties, and during his time with ACAWA, was a wonderful contributor to the branch, organising range and archery days, even throwing the idea at us about an axe-throwing event. As our elder statesman he certainly stepped up. You will be missed mate.



Rob, and his lovely wife Robbie at a catch up in Two Rocks in 2018

We are planning to step out in the Perth CBD Anzac Day events. Anzac Day events have not been run in Perth since 2019 so it will be a long-anticipated return.

After the march, the 2/6 Commando Association have organised a luncheon at the Good Earth Hotel where we will raise a glass and toast those who have gone before us, Lest We Forget.

Paul Shearer
President

Australian Commando
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...When it comes to job interviews, Navy, Army and Air Force candidates just don't see shades of grey. Ask any of the thousands of Defence members I've coached over the years and you'll almost always get the same response.

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'Do you have **EXPOSURE** to....(DESIRED SKILL)?'

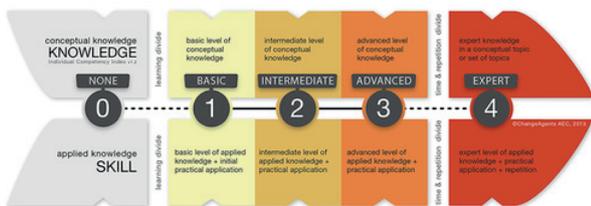
When we hear that little gem of a question our military training kicks into gear. In fact, the preferred answer to this common question is:

'Oh no... **I couldn't claim to be an EXPERT** in that...I'd be lying.'

After so long collecting the Queen's coin and working in an environment where integrity is paramount...we **self-impose a rule** that we need to be considered a Subject Matter Expert before we can stake a claim to even having 'exposure'.

Civilians aren't normally burdened by any such impediment: You can almost picture the worst offenders sitting across from the interviewer explaining, 'I've got a friend who knows someone that can spell that word...so I've had some exposure.' Sure, I'm exaggerating...but not by much if the latest research into resume fraud is to be believed.

So, we have two groups of candidates (military and civilian), each at different ends of the spectrum (black and white). The big question now is **'How do we get ADF folks to start seeing shades of gray and move them closer toward the other end of the spectrum whilst still holding true to their values.'**



Think about the reality of the situation. Even a soldier who graduated Kapooka yesterday has exposure to leading teams, since they can't graduate without being assessed as a supervisor even for a short period. So rather than say 'I'm not a supervisor' that sailor could say 'I've had some exposure to supervising teams in a training environment for specific work activities.'

Similarly, a Sergeant might be slow to claim expertise in human resources (perhaps due to an ADF understanding of what a civilian views as HR) but when prompted they typically agree that they have **exposure** to specific HR skillsets such as coaching, mentoring, training, counselling and leadership development.

At the end of the day saying that 'I've had some exposure to XYZ' could be validated by the fact that you've seen it done, maybe assisted once, and can read the policy if needed.

Opportunity helps those that help themselves

If you want to give your Defence transition the best possible chance of success, then you need to start seeing shades of grey. 'Exposure' is your new best friend.

Stop being your own worst enemy. Never claim what you don't have, but always claim what you do have...to the degree that you have it!

David Penman is a Certified Professional Resume Writer, ex-Commando and one of Australia's leading ADF career transition experts. Call 1300 112 114 to enquire about NJN's ADF resume services.

Nuance is the key

The answer lies in our willingness to accept that its okay to be 'less than an expert'...and that we do indeed have exposure to a great many skills that we can talk about in an honest fashion. Its simple. If you are an expert, then claim expertise. If you are not, then just claim whatever level of skill you possess. Here are a few suggestions for claiming different levels of capability:

- I do have an awareness of...
- I've had exposure to...
- I'm okay at...
- I'm good at...
- I'm very good at...
- I'm competent at...

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MAJOR PAUL DUNBAVIN OAM AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL OF SPECIAL OPERATIONS

Major Paul Dunbavin was born in Warrington, United Kingdom and educated in Brisbane at Indooroopilly State High School.

He enlisted in the Australian Regular Army on 07 April 1987. From the 1st Recruit Training Battalion he was allocated to the Royal Australian Infantry Corps and on completion of his Initial Infantry Training was posted to the 3rd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment.



Major Dunbavin spent six years at the 3rd Battalion achieving the rank of Corporal and in 1993 he was posted to the 1st Recruit Training Battalion as a Recruit Instructor. In 1995 he was posted back to the 3rd Battalion on promotion as a Platoon Sergeant.

In 2000 he was posted to the Parachute Training School and promoted to Warrant Class Two in 2001. In 2002 he attempted and was successful in completing Commando Reinforcement Training and was posted to the 4th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment as the Air Operations Warrant Officer. In 2003 he became Company Sergeant Major for Alpha Company and in 2006 he was again internally posted within the 4th Battalion as the Operations Warrant Officer.

In 2007 he was promoted to Warrant Officer Class One and appointed Regimental Sergeant Major of the Parachute Training School. In 2009 he participated in Exercise LONG LOOK as the Regimental Sergeant Major.

In 2010 he was appointed as Career Manager Special Forces at the Soldier Career Management Agency. In 2012 he was appointed as the Regimental Sergeant

Major of the 2nd Commando Regiment during which time he was the Regimental Sergeant Major for the Special Operations Task Group Rotation 19 in Afghanistan. In 2014 he took up the appointment as the Regimental Sergeant Major of the 5th Brigade. In January 2016 he was selected as the 5th Command Sergeant Major Special Operations Command Australia.

Major Dunbavin has travelled extensively within the Region, Europe, and the Middle East as part of the Australian Defence Force and has served operationally in the Sinai Egypt, East Timor, Afghanistan, Iraq and Timor Leste. Major Dunbavin was presented an Order of the Australia Medal for services as a Regimental Sergeant during Operation Slipper and in Special Operations Command Australia on the 26th Jan 2015.

In 2019 he was commissioned as a Major and posted to Australian School of Special Operations as the SO2 Human Performance Optimisation and Family Force Veterans. He has completed a Bachelor's Degree in Organizational Leadership and has completed the Summit Course at the Joint Special Operations University in Tampa Florida.

He is married to Nicolle and has two boys, Ky and Levi.

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COMMANDO COMMEMORATIONS AROUND THE COUNTRY AND OVERSEAS

by Doug Knight

Anzac Day has significant meaning to members of the Australian Commando Association, the many families and friends who had friends and relatives who served in the Australian Independent Companies/commando squadrons and Cavalry (Commando Regiments), as well as those Australians, New Zealanders and Allied personnel who served with Special Operations Australia also known as the Allied Intelligence Bureau and the various supporting units and services.

There were a number of Commando related commemorations around the country on Anzac Day 2022 and some are as follows:

Hobart



Former commandos join with other Tasmanian personnel marched behind a Special Operations Command Banner.

Source: Bruce Parr



Former commandos join with other Tasmanian personnel with former Navy personnel at the marshalling point prior to commencement of the march.

Source: Bruce Parr

Perth

A small number of Association members joined with and marched in front of members of the Double Reds (2/2nd Independent Company) Association.



Members of ACWA march behind their banner in front of the 2/2nd and 2/8th Commando Squadron banners.

Source: Ed Willis



The proud Association flag bearers at the Perth Anzac Day march were 'B' Gosper and her mum Rhian Gosper - Joe Poynton's daughter and granddaughter.

Source: Ed Willis

WX12552 Corporal Joseph William Poynton. Joe was awarded a Distinguished Conduct Medal and a Dutch Bronze Cross (The highest award given to Foreigners by Holland) for bravery on Timor. (<https://doublereds.org.au/history/men-of-the-22/wx/joseph-william-poynton-r10/>) and of the double Reds associate carrying the 2/2nd Commando Squadron Banner

TIMOR LESTE

Due to current COVID issues in Timor Leste day the Australian and New Zealand Embassies joined to hold a private ANZAC Day dawn service in Dili.





A temporary memorial in the grounds of the Australian Embassy compound in Dili for the 2022 Anzac Day Dawn service ceremony.
Source: Australian Embassy Dili account.



A military member of the embassy addresses Dawn Service crowd which includes Major Guy Warnock and his wife Lieutenant Colonel Caroline Warnock both former members of 2 Company, 1st Commando Regiment.
Source: Australian Embassy Dili account.



The Australian Ambassador to Timor Leste, Mr Bill Costello, addresses Dawn Service with the catafalque party in the background as the sun rises over Dili.
Source: Australian Embassy Dili account.



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- AURTGA001 Drive and manoeuvre trailers

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Heavy Rigid Non-Synchronesh	\$400 / \$425	\$425 / \$450	Not applicable
Heavy Combination Synchronesh	\$425 / \$450	\$450 / \$475	\$1500 / \$1600
Heavy Combination Non-Synchronesh	\$450 / \$475	\$475 / \$500	Not applicable
Multi Combination	\$475 / \$500	\$500 / \$550	Not applicable





2022 ANZAC DAY IN MELBOURNE

by Doug Knight

Dawn Service at Williamstown

It was a chilling 9° when members of the Victorian Branch, ACA joined with serving members of 2 Company, 1st Commando Regiment at the 2022 ANZAC Day Dawn Service conducted at the Williamstown Cenotaph and hosted by the Newport RSL. The usual Anzac Day ceremony conducted at Fort Gellibrand was not possible as renovations of the depot are still underway.

The Hobsons Bay Yacht Club kindly sponsored the pre-ceremony 'Gunfire Breakfast' and the Post ceremony breakfast. In the absence of the Officer Commanding 2 Company, the Company Sergeant Major 'Hutch' officiated and welcome ACAVIC members and families. There are approximately 3000 local Williamstown residents who attended the Dawn Service (the MC was a recently retired SASR major) and one of the highlights was the singing of the Australian and New Zealand national anthems by local amateur performers.



Williamstown War Memorial Cenotaph

Source: <https://vwma.org.au/explore/memorials/3360>

ANZAC Day March

The Melbourne Anzac Day March, which is organised by RSL Victoria, is not yet back up to pre-Covid standards and there was considerable confusion around the start point and frequent stops during the March of marching elements.

More than 40 members of the Association marched along with several family members of World War II veterans, and we were pleasantly surprised when Australian Cadet Corps members from Melbourne High School approached us at the rally point and volunteered to carry the banner Association banner for the March and they did a very good job.

At the completion of the March, they were collected by school bus and returned to the March start point to collect another unit banner and again march. The Z Special Unit banner was carried by current and former members of 301 Signal Squadron.



The Z Special Unit and Commando Association banner during the March.

Source: Major Tony Kelly, RACT Assn.

2022 ANZAC Day Lunch

The 2022 ANZAC Day lunch was down in numbers from previous years with 72 attending which included numerous VIPs. There was a new venue due to the usual venue being used by the Victorian State government as a COVID quarantine site.

The Association was very pleased to welcome George Tahija, his wife Laurel and daughter Julia to our luncheon as George is one of two sons of former operative Captain Julius Tahija who was a WW2 member of the Netherlands East Indies Army Intelligence Service (NEFIS).

NEFIS was one of the six branches of Special Operations Australia also known by its cover name as the Allied Intelligence Bureau (AIB) and as Julius was administered by Z Special Unit during his service with the SOA.

Julius served on Operation PLOVER, an Australian Dutch operation 1942 in which Sergeant Tahija was awarded the Military Order of William, Knight 4th class which is the Dutch equivalent of the Victoria Cross and he later served on several SOA operations.

Part of Julius's World War II service was published in 'Commando' Edition 15, 2019 and following further research, another article will appear in the next edition of 'Commando'.





Military Order of William,
Knight 4th class medal



Captain Julius Tahija in 1945

Source: Tahija collection

ACAVIC President Doug Knight made the following presentations to George Tahija:

An SOA/AIB plaque in recognition of his Father's service to Australia and a World War II commando statue for inclusion in the Julius Tahija museum in Jakarta.



Doug Knight, President, ACAVIC presenting an engraved SOAIB plaque to George Tahija in commemoration of his father's service with NEFIS and SOA.

Source: Richard Pelling

Another group of VIPs were staff and visitors from John Holland Pty Ltd, an Australian-based global engineering company, and several staff and British visitors from the Military Engineering Programme (MEP). The MEP hosts and conducts professional development training for Australian and British military engineer officers on civilian construction and design projects and provides civilian experience towards their professional accreditation. The program is for up to 12 month's period.

Joining us for the lunch were the following:

- Dean King – MEP Executive Sponsor & Royal Australian Engineers Liaison Manager
- Oliver Crowther – MEP UK Royal School of Military Engineering (RSME) Liaison Manager
- Lieutenant Colonel Mark Teeton – Chief Instructor, RSME Liaison Manager
- Major. Gary Allen –Senior Instructor, RSME.

The participation of the John Holland guests has significant meaning to the older members of the Association as, when on May 16 1949 Sir John Holland commenced field operations for a new Australian engineering and construction company known as John Holland & Co. What many Australians did not know was that apart from being a very successful Army engineer officer during World War II, Sir John also served in Special Operations Australia (SOA) during the period 1943 to 1945 which included two periods of secondment to the UK Special Operations Executive in the United Kingdom to gain a better understanding of the tactics, procedures and equipment are undertaking special operations missions which he later shared with SOA as a senior officer in the Planning and Operations Directorates.



Doug Knight, President, ACAVIC presenting an ACA plaque to Lieutenant Colonel Mark Teeton, Chief Instructor, Royal School of Military Engineering (RSME) United Kingdom.

Source: Richard Pelling

Also at the lunch were two World War II Special Operations Australia veterans: AKQ6 Corporal Elizabeth Mackenzie nee Drummond, HQ Z Special Unit accompanied by her daughter Judith Jesser and Navy Coder Dixie Lee and his wife Mem. Dixie served in numerous RAN vessels before becoming a Coast-watcher with M Special Unit. Also attending were numerous members of the Black family (2/4th Independent Company) and families from the 2/5th and



2/6th Independent Companies. Also joining us the first time were members of the Special Operations Engineer Regiment Association.



Former RAN Coder and Coastwatcher Dixie Lee 98, AKQ6 Corporal Elizabeth Mackenzie nee Drummond 97, HQ Z Special Unit and Captain Don Bregman, 2 Commando Company 93 sharing a laugh at the ACA Vic Anzac Day luncheon. Elizabeth is wearing the honorary green beret presented to and worn by her late husband AKS 23 Lieutenant Gilbert Mackenzie, a long serving member of the Allied intelligence Bureau (Special Operations Australia).

Source: Richard Pelling

Unfortunately, as they were both overseas, the Officer Commanding (OC) 2 Company 1st Commando Regiment, and the acting OC were unable to join with the Association at any of the Anzac Day functions.

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ACA Wilsons Promontory camp weekend

March 18-20, 2022

It was yet another memorable weekend spent with friends at the Prom, 19 in total, and it was time to show off new tents and equipment. This year all the tents remained upright thanks to the fine weather, cool, but with some nice periods of warm sunshine which encouraged some to don their bathers and have a swim in the crystal clear water. However, due to a full moon, the tide was 100 metres out necessitating a fair walk out and back to actually swim in water deep enough to swim.

This year we had some new faces join the group and share their stories around the camp table with a glass of their favourite, and a beer or two.

Our group consisted of David & Serena Land with their two young ones Chloe & Lucas (David is the son of WW2 2/10th Commando Squadron Bill Land, of the Aitape-Wewak Campaign); Dick & Sandy Pelling; Glenn MacDonald, his brother David & Glenn's grandkids Ben & sister Zoe; Marc Preston & Sauron with their friends Vathou & Mark; Ross & Tarnya Walker; Jimmy M (serving) & partner Bronte and the intrepid 70-time Kokoda trekker, Richard Godden.

Various walks were done during the day. A few hardy people scaled Oberon and looked a little weary on their return (except the kids). Saturday's dinner was again at the Fish Creek Pub. Unfortunately, Richard had left his mobile behind with his evidence of his vaccinations and was, unlike a few of us who were not checked in, not allowed in. You are too honest Richard!

Jimmy M became the Good Samaritan, and arranged for Richard to use his room in the Pub and waited on him with fish and chips, while the rest of us had a very enjoyable meal downstairs.

On the trip back to Tidal River, Sandy and I were treated to some wild life sightings, when we had to



Prom scene and Glennie Island in the distance.



About to depart Norman bay



Relaxing



Burn off



Zoe at Skull rock

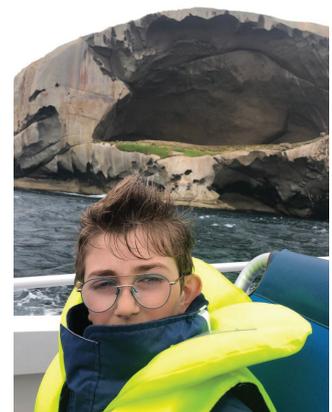
stop our vehicle to allow three elegant emus in no big hurry to cross the road, crossing one behind the other. We also saw a few wallabies, plus a powerful owl standing in the centre of the road as we drove past it.

On Sunday, we were blessed with sunshine and a flat sea which allowed many in the group to venture out on the water with Wilsons Promontory Cruises, operated by Pennicott Wilderness Journeys, who take daily tours straight from the beach at Tidal River in their world-first design amphibious craft. These 2.5-hour cruises are an experience that no nature lover should miss.

Launching from the beach into the turquoise water of Norman Bay, these amazing boats take you to the southernmost tip of mainland Australia passing sea eagles and large seal colonies and out to the spectacular Skull Rock. Tasmania's Rodondo Island can be seen clearly, and the bonus - no one was sick.

About mid-day on Sunday, Parks Vic decided to do a burn off, unbeknown to campers, on the opposite side of the camping area across the Darby River and along the ridge from Pillar Point. Flames popped up and smoke filled the sky covering the sun. The appearance of the helicopter aroused interest as the fire proceeded along the ridge till a late afternoon wind change brought it back again where spot fires were left glowing in the dark and through the night. In the morning a number of Park's fire management crew were on the scene to ensure it didn't 'jump' the river.

Many thanks to Marc and Glenn for coordinating this year's trip.



Ben at Skull rock



Who was Sam Carey of AIB?

An autobiography of Sam Carey and edited by Doug Knight

PART 3 – Developing Special Operations Parachuting

The difficulty I had encountered in getting submarine transport for AIB operations had convinced me that other methods of entry and retrieval had to be developed. The Americans, Willoughby and Ind at GHQ, both gave a strong priority to the Coastwatchers' and they got the only submarine support available. This was understandable because the Coastwatchers had been of enormous help to the American operations in the Solomon's, and certainly had turned the tide of the air and sea battles there. So, I proposed that AIB operatives should be trained as paratroops, as an alternative option of getting to our targets. I was strongly supported by Major Holland, and the proposal was adopted by Colonel Chapman Walker

So, in early September 1943 I went to the paratroop school at Richmond, NSW¹, where the 1st Australian Paratroop Battalion was training. I took Sergeant Gordon Mackenzie with me, and we went through the full training course, along with the newly appointed Medical Officer of the battalion, and their Padre, who of course was nicknamed "Jumping Jesus". The training was rigorous, but after our SCORPION training, we took it easily.

Long marches, normal quick march, interspersed with marching at the double, marching on the heels, marching on the toes, marching on the sides of the feet all to strengthen the ankles; wrestling, boxing (especially hard for me because my arms were much shorter than any opponent of the same weight or height. I had always needed the widest possible shoes for their length, and shirts which fitted my neck were several inches too long in the sleeves).

Training in landing without banging the head—we stood on a platform eight feet above the floor with a parachute harness attached to the apex of the gym high above us, let go and swung like a pendulum to reach the floor at considerable horizontal speed where we had to take the impact first on our feet, then with the calf and thigh muscles, then on the side of the buttocks, then on the shoulder as we rolled with the head tucked in. Having mastered these landings face forwards, we repeated this training leaving the platform sideways, and finally went through it all again leaving the platform backwards and landing and rolling without hitting our heads.



Trainees at the RAAF Parachute Training Unit. RAAF Richmond fitting the British X Type parachute equipment prior to training. Note that reserves were not worn and that this canopy was still in use in Australia in 1972. Source AWM

Training in exiting the aircraft door, first from a dummy fuselage three feet above the ground, facing forward, looking toward the horizon, body straight, legs together; then from a dummy fuselage eight feet above the ground; then from the high fuselage forty feet above the ground; this time the parachute harness was attached to pulleys on a high wire; it took steel nerves to jump off, fall freely until the flying fox arrested your fall just as your feet were about to hit the ground, whipped you back into the air, as the pulleys rolled down the flying fox until you hit the ground fifty feet further down, where the landing roll procedure had to be followed to save a stunning blow on the head. Most trainees agreed that it took more nerve and will to jump from this high fuselage than for any of the subsequent jumps from aircraft.

Training in management of the descent. Normally paratroops jump from a height of 500 feet, which means that they have thirty seconds from exiting the aircraft and hitting the ground, and so much has to be done that there is no time to think about the possibility that enemy might be firing at you. First check the attitude of the body, then check the rigging lines that they have deployed properly and are not twisting (in a bad exit the body might be turning, and the parachute would not be turning so that the rigging lines would wind up until the skirt of the chute was reached, the chute would collapse so that you would "roman candle" to your death! All parachutists are trained in how to correct this situation. During subsequent experimental work this happened to me three times).

In a bad opening of the parachute a rigging line may be caught over the top of the chute, which then looks like Cleopatra's brassiere instead of like half a sphere; we were trained in how to correct this. Next,

¹RAAF Parachute Training Unit PTU.

check the canopy for blown or torn panels, for any holes there will cause your chute to drive you slowly in the direction away from the holes; Next, check oscillation; when the parachute first opens, the body is on about the same level as the chute, so you then swing down like a pendulum, and would continue to oscillate until you hit the ground, which could be fatal if the downswing of the oscillation was added to the normal vertical descent. The oscillation might be forward and backward or sideways. All paratroops are trained in how to dampen and stop the oscillation. Next check which way the wind is carrying you; by putting the boots together and looking through the gap at the instep, the direction relative to the ground is seen.

Landing is safer if you land facing forward, so you must turn into drift by pulling down on one riser, causing the body to turn slowly, until you face in the right direction. Next check the point where you will land, allowing for the drift; you don't want to land on a barbed wire fence, on the back of a bullock, into water, or worst of all on the side of a tall dead tree. By this time most of your 30 seconds have passed, so you prepare to land, feet together and knees slightly bent, and hands gripping the rigging lines high above the head; as the ground blurs, haul down strongly, which takes you up the chute; if the timing of this is just right, your speed up the rigging lines nearly cancels your descending speed, so hit the ground quite gently; but of course bad timing means you hit like a bag of bricks!

A wind machine consisting of an aircraft engine and propeller mounted on a tractor trains you to get up when the parachute drags you head first and flat on your back; it is useless to bend the knees and attempt to stand; the only way to escape, with the tractor keeping the wind dragging you, is to spill the wind from the chute by hauling in the bottom rigging lines until the parachute collapses. They start with a moderate wind, and as your skill increases, so does the wind velocity by opening the throttle. As the wind speed doubles, the wind force quadruples.

Finally, the live drops. First a solo exit from 1000 feet and as soon as you exit the aircraft, you hear the sergeant major bellowing through his loud hailer to do this or do that or correct this or that until you hit the ground; next a slow pair, with two of you from 1000 feet; next fast pair with less than a second between the two exits; then a stick of eleven paratroopers from 1000 feet, followed by a stick of eleven from 500 feet. The last man out sees ten men lined up in front of him down the aisle, but three seconds later they have all gone, and he is rushing down the aisle at full speed and out the door, and 25 seconds later he would be on the ground, because the aircraft with feathered propellers drops a bit during the jumps. We also had to pack and repack parachutes under the critical eyes of the skilled WAAF² parachute packers, and by custom

the fourth jump had to be made with a parachute we had packed ourselves. After seven successful jumps, you get your wings and the right to wear the dull cherry beret.

While at Richmond I also did AIB experimental work. Because AIB landings would be into water on moonless nights and there would be difficulty in finding the stores, I linked together with sixty feet of one-inch manilla rope store-packages, each with its separate parachute, to see how daisy chains of parachuting stores would behave. This was quite successful. In another test we dropped a Folboat package from a height of 900 feet on a statichute³ and Mackenzie and I followed it immediately on statichutes, and within three minutes from leaving the aircraft we had the Folboat assembled on the ground.

The para-battalion did not train for water jumps, but that would be necessary for AIB. Water jumping can be dangerous for a number of reasons. If you come in with the wind, your feet hit the water first, you enter flat on your face, and the parachute from your shoulders forces your face down and you drown. In that situation, by grabbing the risers above your head and crossing them over, this whips you around so you hit the water backwards heels first and you go in flat on your back, with the parachute lifting your head out. But the parachute probably comes down on top of you with a great tangle of rigging lines, and you are likely to drown under the wet parachute, because if you lift it up, the water rises also (even to a height of 32 feet, the weight of the air pressure). As there would be no rescue pick-up boat in AIB operations, it was necessary to get out of the parachute before hitting the water. So, we used parachute harness with a quick-release box. This is a round aluminium box at your navel which locks the four webbing straps one over each shoulder, and two round the hips from the base of the parachute bag. Turning the disc on the box ninety degrees unlocks it, then a sharp tap lets the four straps drop out and you are free. This must not be done too high, or the water impact will be fatal, so at about a hundred feet up you turn the disc and give it the tap at about ten feet. The wind carries the chute away, ripping the cover off the K-type rubber dinghy worn between the parachute and your back. With the cover gone the dinghy drops out, but its painter is attached to your belt, so when you come up the dinghy is at your chest ready to be inflated by the small carbon-dioxide bottle. The dinghy has an open flat at the bow which stops it running away as you climb in.

However, it is difficult to estimate the height above the water even in daylight, but in AIB night operations it is very difficult indeed, but this must be mastered.

³During the war the term statichute was used to describe the parachute that was activated by a static line whereas parachute was activated by the individual, such as a pilot escaping his aircraft. Post-war the term statichute was no longer used and was replaced by static line parachuting.

²Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF).



There was no suitable water near Richmond for this training, so we had to use a dam not far from the airfield. It was only about one hundred feet wide and had a barbed wire fence across the middle of it. Also, the whole of the effluent from the septic tank system drained into it. Mackenzie and I jumped from 1000 feet, managed to guide ourselves into the dam, and at one minute and 54 seconds from leaving the aircraft we were in our dinghies. It so happened that as I was boarding the aircraft for this exercise, I was handed an urgent telegram to say that my wife had delivered a son. So, he has to live down the fact that when his father was told of his birth, he jumped out an aircraft into a dam. I had hoped to get back to Melbourne before this birth. We still had a night drop to do before leaving Richmond, so I arranged it for 8 p.m. (the third jump for Mackenzie and me that day) and boarded an RAAF aircraft for Melbourne that night.

The policy of the Para battalion, and hence of the Richmond Training School, was that no emergency chute was ever worn. The philosophy was that in operation, each man had so much else to carry down that there was no room for the emergency chute, he would be less than 30 seconds in the air, and there would be little time anyway to open the emergency chute if it were needed, and if the men trained with emergency chutes which were denied him in the real operation, his inevitable battle anxiety would be further increased. For my part, I never wore an emergency chute (even while testing new equipment) until civil parachuting after the war, when an emergency chute was compulsory in all countries.

Beautiful Betsy

The parachute training, I had completed at Richmond was all done from VH-CRF a Douglas DC2 transport aircraft named "The silk merchant". Clearly a transport aircraft could not be used for AIB operations deep within enemy held territory. After discussing this with Holland and Chapman Walker, I was given the assignment to examine all the aircraft types available in Australia which might be suitable. It had to be a long-range operational bomber, which could accompany a bombing raid, then peel off to drop its parachutists, then have sufficient self-defence to return to base unescorted. I chose the B24 (Liberator), a heavy four-engine, long range, heavily fortified bomber. At that time the only Liberators in Australia were American although a squadron of Liberators were expected for the RAAF under the lend-lease program. So, an order was sent from MacArthur's Headquarters to the Commander of the American 380 Bomber Group operating from Bachelor⁴ in the Northern Territory to make a Liberator, complete with full operational crew,

available to me for development of transport and dropping of parachutists.

On arrival at Bachelor the Commanding Colonel promised me all assistance, because parachutists had never been dropped from Liberators, and the proposition interested him, but he foresaw problems. There are no doors on a Liberator (the crew enters through the bomb-bay), so I proposed to exit through the belly camera hatch. I told him the inboard motors would need to be throttled back and feathered to reduce the turbulence as the men exited. He told me that that was impossible, because the Liberator would stall at 140 knots, and that the parachutists would have to accept that as the minimum exit speed. He would reduce turbulence to a minimum by partial feathering and partial reduction of revs on the inboard motors.

I replied that I would experiment with a wooden dummy to see how the parachute behaved at this speed, before attempting live drops. Whereas crew had often bailed out at much higher speeds, they waited until the air drag had reduced their speed before pulling the ripcord. Moreover, a parachute takes the load more slowly with the pilot chute coming out first which then gradually draws out the canopy, vent first and skirt last. A statichute, opened by the aircraft though a static line which we would use, was packed backwards with the rigging lines coming out first, followed in turn by the canopy, skirt first, and vent last, with a much more severe jolt on the shoulders.

The American Colonel assigned to me the Liberator "Beautiful Betsy" under Captain Craig USAF, with a crew consisting of a navigator captain, engineer, and maintenance mechanic. He said Beautiful Betsy had completed a number of bombing operations, and the crew was due for a rest. The aircraft would be under my command for operations and movements, but of course Captain Craig was in command in the air.

The camera hatch was a Perspex panel in the belly midline just aft of the tail skid. It could be used to



Left to right-Sergeant Clapison (parachute packer) Captain Craig, 380 Bomber Group US Army (aircraft Captain) Flight Lieutenant Cook, RAAF attached to SRD (co-pilot) and 3 members of the aircraft crew. Northern Territory 1944.

Source: Mackenzie Collection.

⁴Batchelor is located 100km south of Darwin alongside the Stuart Highway, just 10km North of Adelaide River township.

mount either a camera or a belly machine gun. Once out, there were no obstructions of any kind to foul the exit or the return of the bags—cleaner than the DC2s, for I had watched the tail plane go over, a foot or so above my head. I designed a shovel-shaped slippery-dip to guide the parachutist into the opening. The clearance for the sitting man from the slide to the aft end of the opening was less than three feet, so I protected that edge with foam rubber, and developed the routine drill that he would slap that edge with both hands to force his head and shoulders back.

While my slide was being constructed from the fuselage duralumin of a wrecked aircraft, I had the jump control red and green signal lights installed in Beautiful Betsy and drilled the crew in their operation. I also requested the making of a wooden dummy five feet long and weighing 200 pounds. I dressed her in WAAF clothing and named her ACW⁵ Wood.



Preparing for a trial jump of exit slide. Left to right: Flight Lieutenant Cook RAAF, Sergeant Clapinson (parachute packer) RAAF, Lieutenant Lees, Captain Carey, Lance Corporal Taylor and Sergeant Mackenzie. Pell Field Airstrip⁶, NT 1943.
Source: Mackenzie Collection.

Meanwhile, the successful progress in developing parachuting for AIB operations had led SRD headquarters to build up the necessary support staff following adoption of my recommendation to include parachuting as an alternative method of entry. Flight Lieut Frank Cook (a former experienced airlines pilot who had been flying DC2's at Richmond dropping paratroop trainees) was transferred to SRD to become Liaison Officer between SRD and the RAAF, and Sergeant Clappinson (a senior parachute packer from Richmond Paratroop Training School). So, I was joined at Batchelor by a parachuting test team, consisting of four experienced parachutists—my loyal Sergeant Mackenzie, Lance-Corporal Taylor, and Lieut. Lees (both transferred to AIB from the Para-battalion), Corporal Filewood, an AIB signaller, Sergeant Clappinson, RAAF, and Flight-Lieut. Cook, RAAF.

⁵Aircrafts Women.

⁶Pell Field airstrip is located south-east of the Bachelor airstrip. The airfield was constructed in 1942 as an aircraft salvage, repair and servicing facility and was abandoned shortly after 1945.

The first task was to train the parachutists in the routine to be followed in exiting from the Liberator. When the signal light flashed red, No.1 jumped into the slide, No.2 stood ready to follow him from the port side, No.3 did the same from the starboard side, and No.4 was ready behind No.2. When the light flashed green, No.1 slid down and the others followed. With the parked Liberator the opening was about eight feet above the ground so our vertical velocity on hitting the ground was about the same as in a normal landing. We drilled this procedure until we got the exit time down to one per second, implying a linear separation of seven yards per man. This was important because in operations especially at night, it was undesirable to have the party widely scattered.



Sergeant Gilbert Mackenzie ready to exit the Liberator with Captain Sam Carey on the left and Lance Corporal Taylor on the right. Pell Field Airstrip, NT 1943.
Source: Mackenzie Collection.

Next was to test the operation of parachutes under these conditions. So, on December 26 we let ACW Wood go down the slide at 500 feet, while photographing the development of the chute as seen looking down the slide. As the vertical speed was about the same as the forward speed of the aircraft, we could see ACW Wood down the slide until the opening of the parachute. All looked satisfactory. As a further check on December 27, I flew abeam of Beautiful Betsy in a Curtis Falcon flown by an American pilot, and again I watched critically the development of the chute. Again, all was satisfactory. So, I ordered the first live drop for the next morning. I went as No.1, followed by Lees, Mackenzie, Filewood, and Taylor. Alas! Each of us found we were spinning soon after the opening of the chute, which would be fatal if the twist reached the canopy, which would surely happen if we did not correct it. This we each did by sending a counter twist

to overtake the first. When this happens, there is quite a jolt as the risers snap apart.

In the debriefing, I identified the cause of the twist as the curvature I had placed in the slide better to guide us into the opening. ACW Wood was so rigid that she slid out straight, so her chute opened normally, but our supple bodies rolled, and the twist followed. So, I redesigned the slide with plane bottom and angles at the sides. Subsequent jumping tests showed that this redesign had corrected the problem.

In the next live drop, planning to land from a thousand feet onto a disused form airstrip near Adelaide River, another problem surfaced. In normal procedure, parabolic gives the exit signal to the parachutists in the body of the aircraft who can't see outside at all. As the pilot reduces speed, he turns on the red light (the red and green lights are very similar to traffic signals) and the men immediately prepare to exit. At the appropriate moment the co-pilot turns on the green light, and the men immediately commence exiting.

But in the Liberator the pilot and co-pilot cannot see the ground for more than a mile ahead, and the co-pilot gave the exit signal much too early. I was No.1, and as soon as I was out, I knew that I had no hope of reaching the clearing of the disused airstrip.

With the more modern TU chutes which leave out entirely the silk right down the central rear gore and from the lowest panels right round the rear half of the chute, the jumper can drive himself in any chosen direction at about 10 knots, and modern rectangular chutes give a great deal more control, but in the army standard Dominion 30 ft. statichute then in use we had only a little control of horizontal movement. Pulling down the front pair of web risers above our shoulders collapsed the front half of the chute, driving us in that direction at about two knots.

As I had no hope of reaching the clearing, I concentrated on avoiding the tall "stags" (dead gum trees, killed off many years before by bush fires, and now rising fifty feet above the scrub). I landed without harm in the scrub. No.2, Corporal Filewood, snagged his canopy in a high branch of a stag, which held up while the air rushed out through the vent, but the dead branch broke when the full weight came on, and Filewood dropped to the ground and broke his leg. No. 3, Taylor, managed to reach the clearing, as did the rest of the stick.

In conference with Captain Craig, I arranged a new procedure whereby the navigator who was also the bomb-aimer should take control through the approach and dropping stage. His station is right forward in the perspex nose of the Liberator, where he can see the whole terrain ahead right back to the ground immediately below. He also has a viewing screen which shows the absolute direction of the craft's motion including lateral wind drift as the ground moves through his screen.

So, we developed a drill whereby the pilots at the

flight deck, the bomb-aimer in the nose, and the engineer in the body aft watching the paratroops were connected on the intercom. As the dropping zone came into the pilot's view, he said "Your ship". "Roger" replied the bomb-aimer. "Half feather inboard" from the bomb-aimer. "Half feathered" replied the pilot. "Starboard five degrees" from the bomb-aimer, as he adjusts the ground path to the wind drift. "Roger, five degrees starboard", replies the pilot. "Red light" says the bomb-aimer, pressing the switch. "Red light" acknowledges the engineer as the red light comes on at the jump station. "Green light" says the bomb-aimer. "Green light" acknowledges the engineer. "One gone, two gone, three gone, four gone, all gone" says the engineer as the paratroops exit down the slide. "Deck control" says the pilot as he resumes control of the ship. With a little drill, this procedure worked perfectly and was adopted permanently. With practice the bomb-aimer learned to drop us with great precision.

Next, I had to perfect the dropping of stores in storpedoes⁷ from the bomb-bay. A storpedo is a cylinder of half-inch thick paperboard and seven feet long with a steel ring identical with the ring on a bomb so that it is carried and released exactly like a bomb. The conical nose bursts on impact greatly reducing the landing shock. A sixteen-foot hessian statichute is packed at the other end. The trajectory is much steeper than that of the men with normal statichutes, and my problem was to release the stores so that they could not hit the men but would be as near as possible to them on landing.



Loading a storpedo. Source AWM

After studying the trajectories of the men and the storpedoes, I decided that it was best to release the stores as a rope-linked cluster immediately after the last man had gone. For the first three seconds the men almost keep pace forward with the aircraft, but the forward speed is lost within five seconds of the opening of the chute. The trajectory of the storpedo is

⁷A Storepedo, or alternately storpedo, is a cylindrical storage container with an attached parachute.

much steeper and the descent faster, so that it reaches the ground before the first man. To make sure, I tested this by dropping ACW Wood and a storpedo.



*A dropped Storpedo fitted with a canvas parachute canopy.
Source: Mackenzie Collection.*

As the training proceeded, further snags appeared arising from the casual attitude of the Americans. They were friendly and cooperative but could not be relied on to follow instructions precisely. A procedural instruction I had given, was that immediately after take-off, the light signal system must be checked by the bomb-aimer switching it on and the engineer (in the belly of the aircraft near us) acknowledging. We had been flying north for perhaps half an hour when the red light came on. As I was No.1 and believing that we must have reached the DZ (drop zone), I jumped into the slide ready to exit, and the others took station ready to follow me. Then the light went green, so down I started. But my legs were already partly out when I saw the light go red again! I just managed to grab the aft edge of the exit hole and the others hauled me out.

The crew had forgotten to do the mandatory light test after the take-off and decided that they should do it. Down in the rear of the body of the aircraft, the paratroops can't see anything, and are trained to obey the lights absolutely. If I had gone out, the parachute would probably have been ripped off my back, because the aircraft was flying at some two hundred knots. If I had survived that, I would have landed in the scrub, miles from anywhere, without water or food, with little chance of being found or getting out alive. On a later

occasion, described later, I was lucky to escape death, again through negligence of the American crew.

Apart from lining up on the catwalk through the bomb-bay for take-off and landing, the men normally travelled in aft in the belly of the Liberator, but a special pleasure was to crawl under the pilot's deck and stand up in the nose— no engine noise, and a fine view all round through the perspex. Returning from Pell Field to Bachelor, Pat Lees was up there enjoying the scenery, and seeing Bachelor ahead, he decided it was time to go back. At the same time the pilot decided it to prepare to land by lowering the wheels. Imagine Pat's fright when crawling back, to find the floor opening under him and a three-ft diameter nose wheel starting to push him out! Fortunately, the engineer, whose station is half a deck below the pilots, saw Pat's predicament, and retracted the nose wheel, and Pat crawled out, as white as a sheet!

When I was satisfied that the equipment and procedures were acceptable, it was time to take Beautiful Betsy to Maryborough in Queensland to convert to Liberator jumping and water jumping a considerable number of AIB men who had followed me for standard paratroop training at Richmond. Maryborough was chosen because an AIB Commando Training School had been established on Fraser Island in October 1943, and the small lakes there could be used for water jump training with good security.

The American crew of Beautiful Betsy were delighted at this prospect. They had been in the Northern Territory for long time, with many bombing missions, and no women. They persuaded me to allow them to go first to Sydney (they had heard about Kings Cross), then to Maryborough. We flew non-stop from Bachelor to Sydney. On approaching Mascot aerodrome, the air control directed us to land, not on the longest runway but on the other runway. Captain Craig argued that the Liberator needed the long runway, but the air control was adamant, much to Craig's annoyance, which clouded his attention so much that he started to come in downwind.

In a Liberator, all persons aboard must come forward and stand on the catwalk beside the bomb-bay for all landings and take-offs. Frank Cook, next to me on the catwalk, was like a cat walking on hot bricks. As an airline captain, he had landed a thousand times at Mascot⁸ and he could see that we were coming in downwind. Craig saw that he did not have enough runway at the groundspeed of his approach, and gunned her off again, then to Cook's amazement started to approach downwind again. This time he saw his error, circled, and came in properly landing without difficulty.

At Maryborough the American crew went really wild! They had been sequestered for so long from

⁸Mascot airport in Sydney.

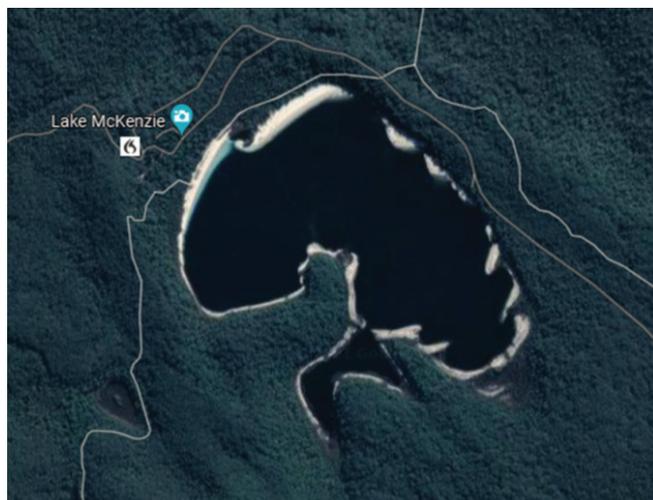
female company, and this was a RAAF Base with lots of WAAFs, and lots of barmaids and regular prostitutes. They had accumulated plenty of cash, so there was no shortage of willing girls. It was not my place to interfere, so long as they maintained Beautiful Betsy properly and met the needs of my training program. My assignment was as Chief Instructor to train the AIB men in jumping from the Liberator and in jumping into water. For this purpose, I proposed to use Lake Mackenzie on Fraser Island, quite small, but excellent training, both for the men and for the Liberator crew. Sergeant Clappinson, the expert parachute packer had come from Bachelor with me.

For most jumps I acted as jumpmaster, hauling in the webbing static lines with the parachute bags after the men had gone. In the first night jump, I followed the men out, and overshot the small lake, but I landed in the bush without difficulty. The Liberator crew were a little nervous of a night landing on Maryborough runway (which lacked instrument approach facilities) so they flew around until daylight.

Finally, I had a party of eight (which included my brother Walter), ready to leave on an operation, which needed a fully operational practice jump including the dropping of four storpedoes and two Folboats. I hung two storpedoes on the bomb-hooks on each side of the bomb-bay. The Folboats did not have rings to hang on the bomb-hooks, so I wrapped them in canvas and ran plaited wire round them and formed the wire into a ring to hang in the bomb-hooks, one on each side below the storpedoes. I connected all six (storpedoes and Folboats) with a one-inch manilla rope so they would come down as a cluster. Then I tied together the six static lines of the hessian parachutes. I went as jumpmaster, and the parachute packer, Sergeant Clappinson went along to see how Liberator jumping worked. Little did he know what was in store for him!

Everything was normal on the approach run to Lake Mackenzie⁹. In the aft belly of the Liberator, I heard the intercom: "Your ship". "Roger, dead ahead, feather inboard motors." "Roger". "Red light". "Red light"(from the flight engineer near us). "Green light". "Green light. One gone, two gone, three gone, four gone, five gone, six gone, seven gone, eight gone... Stores g... Christ! Bomb-bay malfunction!!" I was about to haul in the eight bags now flapping under the tailplane, but clearly there was trouble! It transpired that although I had given the order on arrival at Maryborough that the aircraft must be maintained in full operational status, the crew had serviced the engines and flying-related parts in accordance with the manual, they had neglected maintenance of ancillary functions, including the bomb release mechanisms, for greater indulgence in the carnal pleasures of Maryborough. So, when the lever was pushed to

release the stores, the jaws holding the rings only opened partially—enough to let the two Folboats go, but not enough to release the storpedoes. The plight of the aircraft was now critical in the extreme. Ground clearance was less than 500 feet and the ground was rising ahead. The speed had dropped almost to the point of stalling. Two Folboats dangling from two hessian parachutes were being towed like drogues on one inch manilla ropes, plus eight parachute bags flapping under the tail.



*Aerial view of Lake Mackenzie in 2021,
Source: Google Earth*



*A wartime photo of Lake Mackenzie drop zone.
Source AWM*

The four parachutes on the storpedoes had developed in the bomb-bay and billowed as a great cauliflower under the belly of the aircraft. By all expectations we should have crashed. But Craig gave the throttles full power and managed to clear the ridge.

Clappinson and I got on to the catwalk to drag in the four flapping parachutes, while the engineer inched the bomb bay doors down as we tugged. Our position was most precarious. The catwalk is the keel of the aircraft, about ten inches wide. With the bomb-bay doors open, there is open space three feet wide on each side of the catwalk, so if we lost our balance we

⁹Lake Mackenzie is 1,200 metres long and up to 930 metres wide. It is approximately 150 hectares in area.



would fall straight through. With the plane now flying at 200 knots, rigging lines and the parachutes lashed our faces. Bit by bit we dragged the flapping mass in, as the engineer gradually closed the bomb-bay doors—or nearly, for Beautiful Betsy still had some of her shirt hanging out when we landed.

Notwithstanding this near disaster, this Maryborough conversion assignment firmly established the practicability of using Liberators for AIB operations.

Later, back in Darwin, we had a night operational test drop with storpedoes into Darwin Harbour, in which I also jumped. Each of us had quite a bulk to get through the opening, with a K-type dinghy under the parachute, Austen gun, automatic pistol, ammunition, explosives, hard rations and a pair of paddles like Ping-Pong racquets, but all the men and stores got down satisfactorily, and into our K-type dinghies in good time; crocodiles abound in these waters, although this did not really concern us, because, faced suddenly with a strange situation, crocodiles take off. But the storpedoes leaked at the junction, which raised a problem of sealing them with luting.

On 13 August 1944, Beautiful Betsy dropped Lees and Taylor (of my Bachelor test group), with Sergeants A. N. Thompson and L. H. Duffus into lightly timbered rainforest near the junction of Kelasack and Warsoemsoem Rivers in the Vogelkop (Bird's head) area of western New Guinea¹⁰. Alan Powell states on page 192 of his book *The Shadow's Edge*: 'The aircraft, veteran B24-D Beautiful Betsy, left Darwin in the late evening darkness of 26 February [1945]. Lieutenant William McDaniel captained her. She carried crew of six - and was lost. Somewhere in the sea of darkness an unseen flicker of flame marked her end in the stark Gulf country or the Queensland ranges¹¹.'

But the role of USAF 380 Bomber Group was long range bombing, and whereas they had co-operated willingly in the development of Liberator parachuting techniques, the continuing role of dropping operatives and stores on the scale visualized by AIB was outside their intended function, so AIB should seek its own Liberators from the group about to arrive for the RAAF. This led to the establishment on 15 February 1945 of RAAF Flight 200 (Special Duties), twelve Liberators (A72: 159, 169, 174, 180, 182, 185, 187, 191, 192, 195, and 373) assigned primarily to AIB duties, and based at Leyburn Queensland.

Flight 200, in addition to continued training of crews and parachutists, completed 130 special missions into Timor, New Guinea, Borneo, Sarawak, and other islands to the north of Australia. Two of the Liberators 159 and 191 were lost with their crews and operatives.

The records show that AIB conducted more operational parachute jumps than any other unit in the Australian Forces.

Panda Sari Refinery

The Panda Sari refinery built on a 200-yard square reclamation extending into Balikpapan Harbour in south-east Borneo, was reported to be Japan's principal source of high-octane fuel. Repeated American bombing had damaged it but because of the random nature of the damage, Peter could be robbed to pay Paul, so that substantial production could be resumed very rapidly. I therefore proposed to lead a party to do identical damage to all the units through the plant. Specifically, the crude feed valve to each of the pipe stills could be turned off by a single operator, which would in a few minutes destroy all of them by meltdown. Replacement would be long delayed because the interior lining must be high grade magnesia firebricks, which were not available locally.

A high mesh fence ran right round the perimeter of the refinery, but intelligence disclosed that an 80 cm drain from the centre of the plant ran straight to its outlet on the southeast side. Approaching by Folboat, this offered the best entry. But at low tide there was a wide stretch of soft mud, in which a man would bog down deeply. So, I asked MGO (Master General of Ordnance) to supply two pairs of snowshoes. "Snowshoes? What do you want snowshoes for?" "Please read the Standing Order concerning requests from Z Special Unit" "But snowshoes! There is no war in the Antarctic!" "Please read the Standing Order again!" "There are no snowshoes in Australia." "There is a pair at Kosciusko, please get them and copy them".

In addition to Panda Sari, there were older refineries at Balikpapan, and a vast array of oil tanks over the northeast slopes to the harbour—easily accessible, and an ideal target for wreath charges. A hole cut out by a wreath charge would let the oil go, but the damaged tank could be repaired rapidly. Each tank is surrounded by a bund to contain leakages. If this is fired, the tank is totally destroyed to a heap of twisted metal. Raw crude would possibly take fire in the wreath charge explosion, but refined oils would need to be fired by a tar-baby. Two operatives from one Folboat could destroy six tanks, and the streams of flaming oil could do further damage downhill. So, I contemplated a party of six with three Folboats, a convenient load for one Liberator.

The party could parachute into long water reaches between uninhabited mangroves swamps in the delta of the Kutai River fifty miles to the north, from which one night's paddling would take the party to a good mangrove hideout on the southwest side of Balikpapan harbour, opposite to the target.

This mission did not get the approval of GHQ. They maintained that saturation bombing was contem-

¹⁰SOA Operation PERCH.

¹¹The wreckage of Beautiful Betsy and her crew were found in Kroombit Tops National Park, Queensland on August 2, 1994.



plated, which would deal adequately with Balikpapan. Besides there was uneasiness in AIB about my own involvement. The policy of AIB was that so far as possible operation groups should be isolated from each other and should have minimum contact with AIB headquarters. If captured alive (notwithstanding the cyanide capsule), men cannot reveal under torture what they do not know. I had too much knowledge of so many things, that I should not lead another operation.

The Last Training Party

The last party which I trained through this schedule, was going into Timor, commanded by Captain Grimson, who had been one of my original SCORPION team. Grimson's party went in by Fairmile (fast torpedo boat) and a signal had been sent to a party already on Timor to make contact. Unfortunately, the code had already been compromised and the Japanese were waiting for Grimson's party and killed them all on the beach¹².

Discharge from the Army

By September 1944, General MacArthur had already commenced his strategy of bypassing enemy strongholds and establishing new bridgeheads well forward, leaving the bypassed enemy to be mopped up later when their supply lines had entirely dried up. With the success of this strategy the established role of Z also dried up. It is true that AIB parties continued to operate, but rather as ordinary commandos, not as special service saboteurs. It was dear to me that the war was drawing to a close, and that my special role had ended. At this time the Tasmanian Government advertised for a Chief Government Geologist, so, with the approval of AIB command, I applied, and was appointed. I was discharged and took up the appointment in October 1944.



Coral Sea Commemoration Townsville 1983, Sam Carey in white jacket.
Source: Carey collection.

After the war, Carey was a highly regarded contributor to geology and his many contributions to the emerging theories and proposals were often in advance of the accepted view. Maps and data produced from his field work in New Guinea were sought after by engineers and fellows. He is widely regarded as making substantial contributions to the field of tectonics and having considerable influence in the initial acceptance of continental drift over a static model. In 1946, he became the founding Professor of Geology at the University of Tasmania. He retired from this position 30 years later in 1976 and died on 20 March 2002 aged 90.

In the Australia Day Honours list of 1977, Sam Carey was awarded the Officer of the Order of Australia for his services to the field of geology.

He was a very active member of post war Z Special Unit Association.

Note. Despite being posted into the Directorate of Research, Captain Carey was actively involved in training and particularly pre-mission training for operational parties during his time with SOA. With his extensive experience in the jungle of New Guinea he also produced an extensive array of training material to assist operatives.

Areas covered included

- Hideouts
- Mangroves
- Uninhabited Islands
- Abandoned Mine Workings
- Unserviceable Aircraft
- Limestone Caverns-Captain Carey developed a one-week cave training course at Mt Etna, twenty miles north of Rockhampton, Queensland, for eight operatives at a time, and several parties were subsequently trained.

Anyone interested in obtaining these materials should contact acavic_president@commando.org.au



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¹²SOA Operation ADDER.



Defence Personnel Primed to Thrive In Franchising

Kerry Miles, Director, FranchiseED

While entering the world of franchising may not be top of mind for most Australian Defence Force personnel planning a transition to civilian life, it is a career path that presents many synergies and can play to your proven strengths.

The battleground of franchising requires strict adherence to systems and procedures, hard work, dedication, leadership and teamwork to achieve the shared mission of business success.

This makes those leaving the Australian Defence Force perfect candidates to conquer the challenge of franchising when returning to civilian life. The structure of a franchise system provides franchisees with the ability to work to set policies and procedures while at the same time allowing the independence to lead, inspire and develop their own teams to achieve shared goals.

These are all concepts very familiar to those who have train and served in the Australian Defence Force, and ones that make you suited to forging your own path to business success in franchising. Indeed, the transition from defence to the franchise sector can be a 'win win' situation for franchisors and franchisees alike.

Franchise businesses are actively seeking out high quality and committed candidates as franchisees, while you may be targeting a new autonomous career where you are calling the shots and putting your considerable skills to good use.

Where others may fail, those trained in the Australian Defence Force bring an appetite for hard work, a hunger for success, the proven ability to lead teams and the discipline to adhere to set systems to survive and thrive in the world of franchising.

Your life experiences and skills sets could be highly suited and transferrable to owning and operating your own franchise business, of which there are countless options to choose from. Everything from fitness franchises, food franchises, home improvement franchises and everything in between are available. It all depends on what you love doing and where you see yourself thriving.

There are over 1200 franchise systems operating in Australia, from the world's biggest consumer brands to local success stories and up-and-coming franchisors providing just about every product or service imaginable. Within these systems, there are nearly 100,000 franchise units in Australia, which are local and usually individually owned and operated businesses.

The opportunities are endless in franchising and whatever path is chosen, it is one in which the owner-operator is in charge and driving their own destiny, with the security of a set plan of attack and supporting systems for long-term sustainable success.

As former Australian Defence Force personnel are



comfortable with following systems and procedures in order to successfully complete a mission, you are therefore very well equipped to deal with the challenges of franchising and make a new owner-operator business work.

While having the right skills set, experience and attitude is a competitive advantage in franchising, they do not alone guarantee success. Just like in the Australian Defence Force, preparation is the key to setting the course for victory.

Knowledge is power and nowhere more so than in the world of franchising where new franchisees are taking the ultimate leap of faith into owning and operating their own business.

Thoroughly researching the sector, the options that are available and are best suited to each individual circumstance, and fully understanding and managing the financial and lifestyle expectations and demands, should be the starting point in any franchising journey. I cannot emphasise this point enough. While there are considerable opportunities in franchising, you need to work out which one is right for you and to ensure the franchise you choose is both ethical and sustainable.

While a franchise provides a set structure to follow, compared to buying an independent business, this in itself is no guarantee of success. Seeking out quality information and resources on franchising in order to make informed choices, and exploring the reality of being a franchisee, is the logical starting point for any former Australian Defence Force personnel considering their future career options.

If you are wanting to educate yourself about franchising, there's a lot of free information at www.franchise-ed.org.au.

If you are looking at buying a franchise and would like to understand how FranchiseED can help you, book a free 15-minute conversation with Kerry at <https://calendly.com/kerry-franchise-ed/meeting-with-kerry-miles-1>

About the Author:

Kerry is at the forefront of understanding what it takes to create thriving franchises with a comprehensive perspective encompassing both the franchisor and franchisee. Shifting from 5 years owning a business within the franchise sector, to more than 10 years heading up Griffith University's Franchise Centre as General and Business Manager Kerry's work is unique and driven by maintaining an independent perspective. Her clients include prospective franchisees, large and small franchise organisations and not-for-profits looking to scale up their operations. For more information visit www.franchise-ed.org.au. You can connect with her via LinkedIn www.linkedin.com/in/kerry-miles-franchiseed/



How InXpress packs a punch for franchisees – huge revenue potential and a fast return on investment

Freight and logistics is a multi billion dollar global industry. InXpress, a solutions provider for small and medium sized businesses, has an international footprint, with 450+ franchisees operating across 14 countries.

Yet despite its reach it captures less than one per cent of the total market, says Ryan Bohm, franchise development manager, Asia Pacific.

That's exciting news for franchisees because there is so much potential, he says. "If you want to be in the wholesale freight business, you're really in an open-ended market. When we look at the metrics of our franchisees they do exceptionally well, with the market penetration still leaving so much opportunity out there."

The enormous scope of the business potential is due to a great extent to the very distinct business model that sees franchisees act as consultants to business clients.

Franchisees leverage InXpress' global partnerships with the likes of DHL, TNT and UPS to achieve great delivery outcomes for their clients.

"Our franchisees take a consultative approach. We are value adding," says Ryan. "One day a business customer wants to move a parcel within Australia so the franchisee recommends the appropriate carrier and service to use. The next day the client wants a document sent overseas and the franchisee easily finds another effective solution," he explains.

Clients can also directly obtain a quote online once they are set up as an account and become familiar with the options.

InXpress follows logistics trends, maximising its potential by targeting new areas where its carrier partners are best represented.

The nature of the professional service means franchisees are able to operate from home, a cafe, a client's office.



"We are not tied to a retail location and that gives us flexibility to be where the client needs us to be."

Ryan says franchisees can scout for clients all over Australia, servicing both inbound and outbound freight requirements.

"This is a good business option if you want low overhead costs, the flexibility to work from a location that's not fixed, a great return on investment, and a relatively low entry level – a \$65,000 franchise fee.

"Others might have similar upfront fees but we have no further capital costs so franchisees are able to generate a much faster ROI. It's really effort-based. You've got to work hard to cut through in the business," Ryan points out.

Logistics is what Ryan describes as an "invisible industry"; people are familiar with distribution as consumers if they've all shopped online but they do not necessarily realise they can tap into the booming market themselves.

Ryan advises potential franchisees to think about how big InXpress could be.

This is a business that has scooped up awards from Global Franchise and was named International Franchisor of the Year 2021 by the Franchise Council of Australia.

"It's nice to know your system is recognised by industry authorities as a sophisticated franchise choice," says Ryan.

He readily admits it isn't what is traditionally expected of a franchise – there is nothing tangible like a bricks and mortar location that marks franchise ownership. What franchisees do own is a database of their clients and that drives revenue and margin.

"And that's the beauty of it. If you follow the model and the framework, this stacks up as an industry worth getting into.

"Park the idea of what you own and don't own," he suggests. "Break with traditional thinking and ask yourself, how do I play a part in an entire industry?"

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Buying a franchise can be an exciting experience. However, before you commit to a franchise opportunity, it's important that you understand your rights and obligations under the Code.

- Franchise agreements
- Before entering a franchise agreement
- Doing your due diligence
- Know your 'cooling-off' rights
- Marketing funds
- Sourcing stock and services
- What is 'churning'?

Franchise agreements

A franchise agreement is a contract (written, verbal or implied) under which:

1. one party (the franchisor) grants another party (the franchisee) the right to carry on a business in Australia supplying goods or services under a specific system or marketing plan substantially determined, controlled or suggested by the franchisor or its associate
2. the business is associated with a particular trademark, advertising or a commercial symbol owned, used, licensed or specified by the franchisor or its associate
3. the franchisee is required to pay, or agree to pay an amount to the franchisor or its associate before starting or continuing the business (this excludes certain payments).

If an agreement meets this definition, it will be covered by the Code regardless of whether it's referred to as a 'franchise' or not.

Note: A motor vehicle dealership agreement (including a motor boat dealership agreement) is taken to be a franchise agreement even if the above definition has not been met.

Before entering a franchise agreement

The Code requires franchisors to provide you with certain information, including:

- a short document setting out some of the risks and rewards of franchising.

The Information statement for prospective franchisees (PDF 102.79 KB | DOCX 53.38 KB) must be given to you when you formally apply, or express interest in, buying a franchised business.

If you decide to proceed with the franchise, the franchisor must also provide you with:

- a disclosure document
- the franchise agreement (in its final form); and
- a copy of the Code.

You must receive these documents at least 14 days before you sign an agreement or make a non-refundable payment.

Note: Make sure you receive, read and have a reasonable opportunity to understand each of these documents.

Doing your due diligence

When considering a franchise opportunity you should also:

- seek advice from a lawyer, accountant and business adviser with franchising expertise
- speak to current and former franchisees about the system and their relationship with the franchisor
- take steps to identify it's a genuine business and reconsider a business opportunity if you see warning signs
- undertake some franchising education to help you assess business opportunities and decide whether franchising is right for you. For example, FranchiseED offer a Free franchising education program.

Know your 'cooling-off' rights

You are entitled to terminate a new franchise agreement (not a renewal, extension or transfer) within seven days of:

1. entering into the agreement (or an agreement to enter into a franchise agreement); or
2. making a payment under the agreement.

Note: The cooling-off period will commence from whichever of the above occurs first.

If you choose to exercise this right, you are entitled to a refund of the payments you have made. The franchisor must provide this refund within 14 days, although they may keep an amount to cover their *reasonable* expenses if the franchise agreement allows this.

Marketing funds

Marketing fund income must be kept in a separate bank account from other money held by the franchisor. Under the Code, the marketing fund can only be used to meet expenses that:

- have been disclosed in your disclosure document
- are legitimate marketing or advertising expenses
- have been agreed to by a majority of franchisees; or
- reflect the reasonable costs of administering and auditing the fund.

The marketing fund financial statement must be prepared, and audited, within four months of the end of your financial year. Copies of these documents must be provided to contributing franchisees within 30 days of their preparation.

Note: It's the franchisor's responsibility to provide these documents. A franchisee shouldn't have to request this information.

The marketing fund doesn't have to be audited if 75 per cent of franchisees who contribute to the fund vote against undertaking an audit.

Sourcing stock and services

In franchising, it's common for franchisors to request that franchisees purchase products or services from either the franchisor, a related entity or a specified third party.

Such arrangements are illegal if they *have the purpose, effect or likely effect of substantially lessening competition in a market.*

In most situations, franchisor-imposed limitations are unlikely to raise competition concerns.

What is 'churning'?

Churning is the repeated selling of a franchise site by a franchisor in circumstances where the franchisor would be reasonably aware that the site is unlikely to be successful, regardless of the individual skills and efforts of the franchisee. Although churning is not prohibited under the Code or the Competition and Consumer Act, a franchisor's conduct may raise concerns if it is false, misleading, or unconscionable. If you suspect churning, you should contact the ACCC.



Allied Intelligence Bureau (AIB)²⁹

The Campaign in New Britain 1942-1945

(PART 2)

By Noah Salittle³⁰

Reorganisation of the Coastwatchers

In order to provide legal and administrative cover and entitlements, by April 1942, Coastwatchers in enemy areas were afforded RAN status and ranks.

Furthermore, as of 6 July 1942, the original RAN Coastwatching Organisation was folded into the newly created AIB, eventually becoming the North East Area Section (NEA). LCDR Eric Feldt, who had run the RAN Coastwatching Organisation, remained in charge of this new Section, as the Supervising Intelligence Officer (SIO).

First AIB Party Back to New Britain

With the withdrawal of Coastwatcher's Bell, Douglas and Olander in July 1942, there was no way of collecting intelligence on the Japanese in New Britain or monitoring the attitudes of the locals. It was decided therefore to insert an officer S/LEUT Malcolm Wright, RAN for a short duration mission. He was inserted alone via inflatable craft off USN submarine S42 on 12 July 1942 in Adler Bay about 65 km south of Rabaul. He made contacts with locals and some Chinese and over the course of the following week collected some intelligence regarding the Rabaul defences and more importantly on the favourable disposition of the locals towards Australians. He was extracted by submarine.^{31,32}

Disastrous November 1942 to January 1943 Deployments to New Britain in Support of Allied Operations Against Lae.

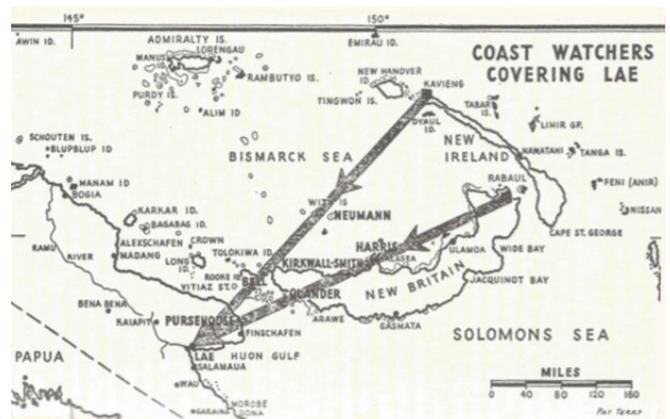
In November 1942, 5 NEA parties were inserted back into New Britain and nearby islands of Umboi and Vitu. These parties included two of the original 3 stay-behinds. The 5 parties were deployed to New Britain and nearby islands by a mini flotilla of launches, from the New Guinea mainland:

- LEUT L.J. Bell, RAN and one other on Umboi island in the Vitiaz Strait.

- WO2 V. Neumann, AIF (former missionary) and one other on Witu Island.
- WO2 A Kirkwall-Smith AIF³³ and 2 others at Cape Gauffre, east of Cape Gloucester, on the north coast.
- S/LT A.R. Olander, RAN and one other on the SW coast; and
- CAPT G.C. ("Blue") Harris, AIF with 2 others and 2 native police at Talasea.

A sixth party consisting of CAPT L. Pursehouse AIF and LEUT K.H. McColl RAN was deployed to set up an OP near Finschhafen on the mainland to complement the sightings of the New Britain parties.³⁴

The parties were deployed in order to track Japanese aircraft launching from Rabaul and Kavieng (New Ireland) attacking Allied forces in their attacks on Buna and prospectively Salamaua and Lae on the New Guinea mainland.³⁵



Map 4 - Parties on New Britain and mainland PNG providing air warning for Allied operations on the mainland in late 1942.

By December 1942 however, all of these parties were under pressure from the Japanese who were seeking to expand their footprint on New Britain, in order to support a future counterattack against the Allies on the mainland:

- Bell left Umboi island to medevac his companion to the PNG mainland.

²⁹This organisation was created on 6 July 1942 to collect intelligence on the enemy in the SWPA; weaken the enemy by sabotage and destruction of morale; and assist local efforts to the same end in enemy occupied territories.

³⁰The pen name of a former 2 Commando Company officer of 14 years service, who joined the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and still serving.

³¹The Coastwatchers pp. 180-184

³²"Spy Ring Pacific", Alison Ind, Weidenfield and Nicholson 1958 (Spy Ring) pp. 69-78.

³³Kirkwall-Smith was an AIF veteran from WW I, reaching the rank of SGT. He joined the New Guinea Volunteer Rifles at the start of WW II, reaching rank of WO2. In late 1943, he transferred to the RANVR with the rank of LEUT.

<https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/39781850/lt-andrew-kirkwall-smith-dsc-mm>

³⁴Spy Ring pp. 87-93 for an account of the activities of these six parties.

³⁵The Coastwatchers pp. 198-199



- Neumann's party at Witu island was having difficulties with the locals who resented his presence as it would bring unwanted Japanese attention on them. He relocated to the mainland near Cape Gauffre.
- Kirkwall-Smith lost his 2 companions to enemy action and managed by chance to link up with Neumann who had come ashore near to his location.³⁶ Kirkwall-Smith left with Neumann's party on Neumann's boat.
- Olander and the other member of his party were both killed;³⁷ and
- Harris and his party made their way to Witu Island (which Neumann had not long before left) and managed to arrange evacuation by Catalina flying boat in January 1943.³⁸

Buna fell in Jan 1943, but the Allied move on Salamaua and Lae had to be postponed, due to exhaustion of the Allied troops.

The NEA deployments to New Britain had been planned on a short-term basis to meet the requirements of the planned rapid advances on the mainland and hence a quick end to operations in New Guinea. These deployments, although well planned and organised, to support an advance that did not materialise had ended in almost complete failure, with all the parties either killed or driven out of New Britain. There was no quick end in sight to the fighting and NEA now had to consider the implications of a drawn-out campaign, in particular a deterioration in the attitude of the locals towards the NEA parties.³⁹

The First Permanent Base

By early 1943 the Japanese held the east and south coast from Rabaul to Wide Bay (about 90 km directly south of Rabaul and had posts on the south coast at Palmalamal, Gasmata and Arawe. The Japanese had a vigorous patrolling program in other areas on the island.

It was decided nevertheless to insert a party into the Cape Orford area on the south coast. Mountainous and with large unpopulated areas, the hope was that a party inserted there would escape notice of the Japanese. Starting ca, 28 February 1943 a party of 4 – LEUT M.H. Wright RAN, CAPT P.E. Figgis AIF, LT H.L. Williams AIF and SGT Simogun of the native police, together with around 1,000 kg of stores were inserted over a few nights by Folboat and rubber boats off the submarine USS GREENLING into Baien Bay, near Cape Orford. It took about a month to establish a camp and an OP in a suitable position to observe the coastline.⁴⁰

³⁶WO2 A. Obst, AIF (former missionary) was killed. Sgt W.A.H. Butteris, AIF was captured and later beheaded. The Coastwatchers p. 204

³⁷S/LT A.R. Olander, RAN and PO W.L. Tupling, RAN were both killed. The Coastwatchers pp. 387-408

³⁸The Coastwatchers pp. 202-206

³⁹The Coastwatchers pp. 209, 210

⁴⁰Spy Ring pp. 94-97

The party reported shipping and air movements – 70 submarine sightings, over 100 aircraft and “many barges” many of which were intercepted by Allied aircraft or patrol boat. They also debriefed locals who had travelled from Rabaul.

The party was resupplied by airdrops from Catalinas⁴¹, requiring around 900 kg of supplies per month for its 4 members plus around 30 locally recruited natives.⁴² This was to be the first permanent NEA base in New Britain, established a little more than a year after the Japanese had forced the Australians out at the beginning of the war. It was also to become 7 months later the entry point for the significant reinforcement of NEA parties in advance of the US landings on the western end of the island.

Supporting the US offensive – Arawe and Cape Gloucester – December 1943

Prior to the start of the US offensive in December 1943, the only NEA party on the ground in New Britain was the intelligence collection party at Cape Orford.

In mid-1943, AIB began a major effort to support of the US Sixth Army's upcoming role in the 1943-1944 offensive. NEA prepared parties for the US Amphibious Force for beach recons⁴³ as well as parties to provide real-time warning of enemy air movements, the latter being essentially a repeat of the activities of the ill-fated parties in November 1942-Jan 1943. Personnel for these parties were assembled and by the end of July 1943 they were being trained at the newly formed AIB training camp at Tabragalba, Queensland (about 60 km south of Brisbane, near the town of Beau-desert).⁴⁴

Three NEA parties were put ashore on New Britain for beach recons, as follows:

- In late Sep 1943, a party under (now) LEUT Kirkwall-Smith RAN, with 4 US servicemen and 4 locals was put ashore by PT Boat in the vicinity of the proposed USMC landing site near Cape Gloucester. After 12 days ashore the party was extracted with vital intelligence on the area.⁴⁵ NEA Report noted “their patrol was reasonably successful in in gaining information regarding enemy coastal dispositions but was unable to penetrate the rearmost defences;”⁴⁶
- In early October 1943, the party of LT L.C. Noakes AIF was landed by PT boat in the vicinity of Gasmata on the south coast, but due to the

⁴¹The Coastwatchers pp. 314-323

⁴²“North-eastern Area Status Reports – Coastwatching” at naa.gov.au. NAA Item 509465. Page numbers according to the page counter. (NEA Status) p. 61

⁴³The “Amphibious Force” is presumably a reference to the USN “Amphibious Scouts” set up in July 1943 but disbanded in December that same year.

⁴⁴NEA Report p. 2

⁴⁵The Coastwatchers pp. 328-340

⁴⁶NEA Report p. 3



terrain they were unable to reach their objective. They did however manage to debrief some locals who were able to provide some information about Japanese positions around Gasmata. After 3 weeks the party was extracted by PT Boat;⁴⁷ and

- In early December 1943, a party under CAPT L. Pursehouse AIF was put ashore by PT boat with 5 natives in the vicinity of Arawe on the south coast but had to be extracted after only an hour ashore since they had been detected by the Japanese.⁴⁸

These 3 parties had not been entirely successful and had suffered from unrealistic planning. Shortly after, NEA parties were detached from the Amphibious Force, "to the relief of both."⁴⁹

The air-warning parties were to be inserted via the already established base at Cape Orford (Wright, Figgis, Williams and Simogun). On 28 September 1943, 16 Australians and 27 natives were therefore landed at Cape Orford from submarine USS GROUPEL. The parties were move from there by foot over, in some cases, considerable distances to be in position by 1 November 1943, as follows:⁵⁰

- The base remained at Cape Orford – Figgis, Johnson, SGT A.D. Bliss AIF. Call sign 7 FE;⁵¹
- 3 parties deployed across the neck of the gazelle peninsula between Wide Bay and Open Bay – MAJ R.I. Skinner AIF, CAPT L.J. Stokie AIF, CPL M.B. Foley AIF to Wide Bay with 5 natives. Call sign 3 SS⁵²; MAJ A.A. Roberts AIF, CAPT W.M. English AIF, SGT D.G. McEvoy AIF and 5 natives. Calls sign 4 RE⁵³ to Open Bay; LTCOL C.D. Bates AIF, LT J.L. Gilmore AIF, CPL H.V. Pyke AIF plus 5 natives in the middle area, call sign 5 BM;⁵⁴
- A party went to the north coast, south of Hoskins Peninsula at Nakanai – LEUT M.H. Wright RANB, CAPT H.L. Williams AIF, CAPT K.L. Searle AIF, SGT J.W. Marsh AIF and 7 natives. Call sign 2 MW;⁵⁵ and
- Gasmata – CAPT J.J. Murphy AIF, LT F.A. Barrett AIF, SGT L.T.W. Carlson AIF and 7 natives set out for a long trek of more than 210 km (as the crow flies). They were intercepted by the Japanese en route and killed/captured, but with some native survivors.⁵⁶ Call sign 6 MB.⁵⁷

Between them the parties reported on enemy air operations against the landings at Arawe (15 December 1943) and Cape Gloucester (26 December 1943) with "mechanical precision."⁵⁸ As noted in a GHQ Daily Summary at the time: "AIB agents gave warning of oncoming formations thirty to sixty minutes in advance, enabling Allied fighters to meet the enemy at the most advantageous altitude. Four raids were intercepted over the beaches the first day with disproportionate losses to the enemy. On 26-27 December in two missions of 70 to 90 fighters and bombers, the enemy lost over 75 planes as compared with 5 of the Allies. It was estimated that over 180 enemy planes were destroyed from 23-27 December."⁵⁹ The NEA Report noted further "their advanced air warning messages, which were passed to the relevant Fighter sectors ... within 6 minutes of the aircraft being sighted by the reporting station, enabled fighter units to secure large bags."⁶⁰

NEA also deployed in December 1943 to March 1944 two "interceptor stations" with the US forces – at Arawe (call sign 1 AP); and at Cape Gloucester. Call sign 2 DK). The role of these stations was to pass on to local US commanders in almost real time intelligence reported by the field parties.⁶¹

By January 1944, the Japanese forces in New Ireland and Bougainville were sealed off. Rabaul harbour and its airfields were empty, and the Japs were left impotent on the ground.⁶² There was now little need for the initial model of "Coastwatching" – the provision of early warning of enemy sea and air movements. Many of the NEA personnel who had been with the Coastwatchers from the beginning were stood down or transferred out.

Supporting the US offensive – Talasea 6 March 1944

An NEA officer – a former New Britain based expatriate – FLT G.H.R. Marsland RAAF, together with a USMC officer and 2 natives were put ashore ahead of the USMC landings at Volupai (near Talasea, in the area where the Harris party had been from November 1942 to January 1943) to collect intelligence on the area. On the night of the landings 6 March 1944, he guided the lead vessel onto the beach. Once ashore he led many local patrols through areas he knew intimately. The NEA report noted "the patrol furnished valuable information on enemy movements and defences."⁶³

NEA also deployed an intercept station with the US and later Australian forces in the Talasea area in April 1944 to at least June 1945, with call sign 5 XW.⁶⁴

⁴⁷The Coastwatchers pp. 330,331

⁴⁸The Coastwatchers p. 331

⁴⁹The Coastwatchers pp. 331-332

⁵⁰The Coastwatchers pp. 341-346

⁵¹NEA Status p. 130

⁵²NEA Status p. 130

⁵³NEA Status p. 130

⁵⁴NEA Status p. 130

⁵⁵NEA Status p. 130

⁵⁶LT F.A. Barrett, AIF and SGT L.T.W. Carlson, AIF were both killed. CAPT J.J. Murphy, AIF was captured. The Coastwatchers pp. 387-408. See Spy Ring p. 99 for commentary of Murphy's post-war court-martial

⁵⁷NEA Status p. 130

⁵⁸The Coastwatchers p. 346

⁵⁹As per G-2, GHQ, SWPA Daily Summary No. 644, 26/27 Dec 43 quoted at Reports p. 131, footnote 49

⁶⁰NEA Report p. 3

⁶¹NEA Status p. 217

⁶²The Coastwatchers p. 312

⁶³NEA Report p. 5

⁶⁴NEA Status p. 309



With the capture of Talasea, the US advance ceased. The Allied strategy had been to capture the east side of the Vitiaz Strait and to isolate Rabaul and both objectives had been achieved.

From "Coastwatching" to guerrilla warfare

By early 1944 the Japanese forces on New Britain were in disarray, suffering significant defeats due to the US landings at the western end of the island and the US landing at Talasea on the central part of the north coast, loss of their own air support and their forces were scattered throughout the island distant from the main base at Rabaul, which was now focussed on defending itself.

The parties and the locals amongst whom they lived however soon came under increased Japanese pressure, especially on the north coast. The NEA Report noted: "During January and February, the enemy reacted strongly to the presence of our parties in east New Britain, this reaction consisted of strong patrols which, led in most cases by pro Jap natives, caused our parties to keep changing positions. Where possible the Allied air forces gave assistance to the harassed parties by staging strafing and bombing attacks on reported positions of enemy patrols."⁶⁵

In what became a reversal of the former NEA policy of intelligence collection without coming to notice, the leader of the north coast party Wright now sought and received from AIB weapons to start arming the natives and commence resistance against the Japanese.

NEA also decided, with the permission of GHQ, to organise a guerrilla force of approximately 250 native soldiers which would provide each party in the area with 50 trained native soldiers. Training was undertaken at the AIB camp at Tabragalba and in late February and early March 1944, 100 of them, under leadership of Australian military, were inserted by submarine and surface craft into New Britain to reinforce the parties.⁶⁶ By the middle of March 1944 each party in New Britain had a force of 25 native soldiers trained in Australia, in addition to 25-30 local recruits, reinforced by Australian NCOs.⁶⁷

Groups from all over the island soon began asking for weapons. Wright's group – with a strength of around 200 armed locals – began ambushing Japanese stragglers trying to make their way to Rabaul. In two months, Wright's "Nakanai Force" killed 286 Japanese for the loss of only one guerrilla.⁶⁸ The armed guerrillas around the base camp at Cape Orford became known as Mengen Force. The 3 parties running the cordon on the neck of the Gazelle Peninsula were busy directing

Allied airstrikes on Japanese sea movements and stragglers making their way back to Rabaul, collecting intelligence and receiving downed US and Australian airmen.

In March 1944, NEA parties were reinforced, and personnel were beginning to be rotated out. Figgis, for example – who had commanded the base at Cape Orford – had been on New Britain for over a year.

The field parties were reorganised into two groups:

- CAPT B. Fairfax-Ross AIF took over all parties on the south coast, with a team of 15 Australian members; and
- CAPT E.D. Robinson AIF had a team of 12 Australians on the north coast.

Both teams had around 200 armed natives each. Each required around 5,000 kg of resupply each month.

By April 1944 the parties on New Britain had killed more than 400 Japanese. Officers in command of air groups were seeking at this time worthwhile targets for airstrikes and parties rose to the occasion marking targets by placing laplaps in nearby trees or throwing smoke grenades.⁶⁹

On 1 May 1944, the south coast parties were reinforced. By this time aerial resupply could not keep up with demands, so resupply was also now carried out by surface craft landing at secure locations.⁷⁰

By August 1944, the parties were further rationalised into groups as follows:⁷¹

- Robinson – base (2 XL) and three patrols (3 SS and 9 DG, one without radio) on the north coast. 13 Australians, with approximately 100 armed scouts; and
- Fairfax-Ross – base (7 FE) and 4 patrols (6 OL, three without radios. One later gained call sign 6 HT) on the south coast. 16 Australians, plus approximately 100 armed scouts.

In the words of the previous SIO of NEA, Feldt, "Ferdinand" was no longer operating behind the enemy lines but holding the front line in New Britain. The situation was that 28 Australians and around 400 armed locals were essentially bottling up 90,000 Japanese in the Gazelle peninsula, who were now immobilised and had lost command of the sea and air.⁷² The Australian official history noted: "Building on the foundations laid by earlier AIB parties in 1942, 1943 and early 1944 the guerrilla force had achieved remarkable results in gaining information, winning the support of the natives, and driving the enemy's outposts out of about one-quarter of the island. In the whole operation only two New Guinea soldiers were killed."⁷³

⁶⁵NEA Report p. 5

⁶⁶Small numbers of natives had already been trained at Tabragalba for previous missions, together with their Australian team members.

⁶⁷NEA Report p. 5

⁶⁸The Coastwatchers pp. 341-354

⁶⁹NEA report p. 5

⁷⁰NEA Report p. 5

⁷¹NEA Report p. 5

⁷²The Coastwatchers pp. 362, 363

⁷³New Britain p. 248



According to a US official history, prior to the relief of US forces on New Britain by the Australian 5th Division, "in August 1944 there existed the same kind of tacit truce as on Bougainville and the New Guinea mainland. In each area American garrisons guarded their air bases, the main Japanese forces had been withdrawn to areas remote from the American ones, and, in the intervening no-man's land, Allied patrols, mostly of Australian-led natives⁷⁴, waged a sporadic guerrilla war against Japanese outposts and patrols. In August 1944 one American regimental combat team was stationed in the Talasea-Cape Hoskins area on the north coast, one battalion group at Arawe on the south, and the remainder of the 40th Division, from which these groups were drawn, round Cape Gloucester at the western extremity. The main body of the Japanese army of New Britain—then believed to be about 38,000 strong (actually about 93,000)—was concentrated in the Gazelle Peninsula, but there were Coastwatching stations farther west. In the middle area—about one-third of the island — field parties directed by the Allied Intelligence Bureau were moving about, collecting information, helping the natives and winning their support, and harassing the enemy either by direct attack or by calling down air strikes."⁷⁵

Landing of Australian 5th Division

Parties on the south coast were instructed in September 1944 to begin clearing Japanese forces from a beachhead to be used by the incoming Australian 5th Division at Jacquinot Bay. This task was completed "with such efficiency" that by the time the 5th Division had landed enemy forces were concentrated in force in the area of Tol on the northeast side of Wide Bay. "A few roving bands of Japanese further south inland from Jacquinot bay were being pursued and mopped by a small guerrilla patrol."⁷⁶

Elements of the Australian 5th Division landed at Cape Hoskins on the north coast on 8 October 1944 to relieve US troops there; and the main force landed at Jacquinot Bay on the south coast on 4 November 1944. NEA established an intercept station with the Australian forces at Jacquinot Bay from November 1944 to at least March 1945 – Wright, call sign 4 EG.⁷⁷

In February 1945 approval was finally gained to formalise the raising of trained AIB natives into the "M Special Unit Battalion". The strength of the battalion was set at 750 and this caused some difficulties as around 1500 natives had by then been trained. This was solved by considering the excess numbers to be "carriers and partisans". By the end of hostilities these partisans numbered around 2,000.⁷⁸

By May 1945 the New Britain guerrilla parties had had little opportunity for guerrilla operations since December 1944 since the Japanese had ceased patrolling south of the Warangoi River (only about 30 km south of Rabaul. NEA parties had however developed effective intelligence networks in the Rabaul area enabling the Australian 5th Division to form a comprehensive and accurate plan of Japanese defences around Rabaul.⁷⁹

The Australian official history notes: "...the achievements of the 5th Division and the AIB parties on New Britain were remarkable. On the one hand was a Japanese army of over 53,000, most of them in veteran fighting formations, and over 16,000 naval men. On the other was a division of relatively raw troops, although commanded down to unit level by widely experienced officers. Employing only one brigade in severe fighting, General Ramsay had secured (and General Robertson maintained) a grasp on the central part of New Britain, already virtually cleared of the enemy by the AIB parties, had captured the enemy 's forward stronghold round Waitavalo, and had established an ascendancy over the Japanese so complete that they offered no great resistance to fairly deep patrols in the last four months of the war. This was done at a cost of 53 killed, 21 who died of other causes, and 140 wounded."⁸⁰

The End

By the cessation of hostilities in August 1945, NEA disposition on New Britain was 2 parties – Searle's party on the north coast with call sign 2 RS: and English's party on the south coast with call signs 6 HT and 6 OL. Australian numbers were now somewhat reduced—each party consisted of 3 officers, 4 NCOs and 150 "Native Infantry Battalion" members.⁸¹

After war's end, the NEA presence on New Britain was swiftly dismantled – partisans and carriers were paid off, the M Special Unit Battalion was formally dissolved on 30 Oct 1945 and all Australian members of NEA (from all over the SWPA) were returned to their parent Ships or Units by 28 November 1945. Two days later, on 30 November, NEA section of AIB ceased to exist.⁸²

According to the NEA Report – and figures vary slightly from source to source - NEA (in all its areas of operations, not just New Britain) accounted for almost 7,000 enemy casualties, and 74 prisoners. It rescued more than 600 airmen, sailors and some POWs.⁸³ On or near New Britain, NEA lost 14 Australian members – 6 from the RAN, 6 from the AIF and 2 civilians – and half of those losses occurred in the chaos of the Japanese

⁷⁴i.e., those led by NEA parties

⁷⁵New Britain p. 241

⁷⁶NEA report p. 7

⁷⁷NEA Status p. 397

⁷⁸This refers to all NEA operations, not just those on New Britain.

⁷⁹NEA Report p. 10

⁸⁰New Britain p. 269

⁸¹NEA Report p. 11

⁸²NEA Report p. 11

⁸³NEA report pp. 8, 9



invasion in February to April 1942.⁸⁴ Those figures give an indicative estimate at least of its gains and losses on New Britain.

Conclusions

From this story of the coast watching/guerrilla warfare (GW) operations carried out by NEA on New Britain 1942 to 1945, we can make a number of observations and conclusions that are still valid today.

First, "no plan survives first contact with the enemy". The AIF's LARK Force with its HQ in Kavieng (on the nearby island of New Ireland) was swept away with its members killed, captured or fleeing. With the speed and determination of the Japanese attack on New Britain, the long-prepared coast watching system there virtually disintegrated, along with its regional HQ in Rabaul. The Coast Watchers themselves were almost entirely civilians who, for the most part, exercised "common sense" and decided to leave when they could (with the exception of three of their number). Indeed, the RAN had foreseen this possibility since the Coastwatcher's had no official status, there was no way to compel them to stay and there were no substantive plans in place to support them if they did stay behind. The Coastwatching system had to be rebuilt, although admittedly with the assistance of a brave few expatriates who had taken advantage of the new policy of providing Naval rank and proper training and who were then able to go back to areas where they already had local knowledge.

The fate of LARK force and the Coastwatcher's on New Britain was not atypical – GULL Force in Ambon suffered an even worse fate; and SPARROW Force in Dutch and Portuguese Timor suffered a similar fate, although the 2/2nd and later 2/4th Independent Companies in Portuguese Timor rebadged as LANCER Force did hold on for a year after the Japanese attack.

The reestablishment of the Coastwatching and later guerrilla warfare infrastructure in New Britain went through some painful periods:

- Three original Coastwatcher's did hold on until June 1942, achieving results which are not immediately obvious.
- There was the brave submarine/Folboat insertion by a lone RAN officer for a week in July 1942; and
- There was the well intentioned, but apparently not well thought through, program of inserting 5 parties ashore in late 1942 to provide air warning for the attacks by Japanese aircraft on Allied forces at Buna (on the New Guinea mainland).

For those who weren't killed or captured, this activity lasted until only January 1943 at the latest.

NEA's luck only began to turn for the better with the insertion of the 4-man party at Cape Orford on the south coast in February 1943, more than a year after the Japanese attack. This party provided intelligence on Japanese air and sea movements. The party however only really came became successful when it served as the entry point for the ambitious insertion in September that year of multiple parties to work in support of the US landings at the western end of the island in December 1943.

Second, the NEA had the good fortune of doing work that directly coincided with US interests, until at least October 1944. The US commanded the GHQ SWPA (there were no Australians in any positions of responsibility on its staff) and commanded all operational Naval and Air forces (including Australian and Dutch). NEA for most of the period carried out operations either indirectly or directly supporting MacArthur's strategy to eventually liberate the Philippines and then invade Japan. The insertion of parties on New Britain to provide air warning of Japanese attacks on Buna in late 1942 coincided directly with US interests and the insertion of parties to support the US landings on the western end of New Britain in late 1943 were likewise in support of the Allied plan to dominate the vital sea route of the Vitiaz Strait. Support of the landing at Talasea by US forces on the central north coast was too a contribution to the Allied strategy to isolate the Japanese bastion at Rabaul. Unlike SOA who seemingly had great difficulty in catching US attention on a consistent basis, NEA were able to do so and were generously supported by GHQ. This is not to say that US interests were not overall congruent with Australia's interests, but it certainly helped if whatever an organisation wanted to do neatly fitted in with US plans. The fact that members of NEA took risks and did, what we would call nowadays, their share of the "heavy lifting" would not have been lost on GHQ SWPA. The air warning in support of the US landings on Cape Gloucester and Arawe was particularly appreciated, as was NEA's harassment and isolation of Japanese forces, prior to the Australian 5th Division's landing.

Commenting on the value of the work on NEA section overall the Brief History of G-2 (intelligence) staff of GHQ SWPA noted:

"G-2, SWPA, recognized the intrinsic value of this organization immediately and gave it prompt and continuous support for rapid expansion.⁸⁵... The Coast

⁸⁴According to the list of members who served at Coastwatchers pp. 387-408. These may have been figures accurate as of 1946, when Feldt's book was written. It is possible that there is a fuller and more accurate list available now.

⁸⁵It is interesting to contrast this with the difficulty SOA often had in securing GHQ support, especially long-range sea and air transport, for its operations.



Watchers, though its predominant interest originally was in naval targets, was by far the best organized and most productive of all intelligence agencies operating in the SWPA before the establishment of AIB. Integrated into AIB as the "North-east Area Sub-Section", later becoming the "Northeast Regional Section" this unit continued to render increasingly spectacular service. Later in the war the Australian Army, charged with eliminating the Japanese forces still in the New Guinea area, depended heavily on AIB-NEA for field intelligence, particularly for the routes of escape defeated troops were taking. In July 1945, the Commanding General of the Australian forces, while mopping up in New Guinea and New Britain, reported that more than 50 per cent of his total field intelligence in that particular area came from AIB-NEA sources. As this stalking phase of operations became established, the NEA was permitted to organize an infantry battalion composed of Papuan natives, many of whom had served so faithfully on Coastwatching assignments. Trained in Australia and in the field, these units, led by Coastwatcher personnel, became strikingly efficient in tracking down, isolating and decimating units in Papua, New Britain, and the Solomons."⁸⁶

NEA's work was also valued by Australian authorities, because:

- It operated against the enemy in Papua and in New Guinea, for both of which Australia had direct political responsibilities and in both of which there were extensive Australian commercial and private interests.
- It was almost exclusively staffed by Australians and was built on an existing, Australian-born organisation from before the war.
- Unlike SOA, there was no question of it having a parallel and sometimes opaque agenda with the UK and an often-quarrelsome relationship with AIB and GHQ itself; and
- It shaped the environment for the landing of the Australian 5th Division in New Britain from late 1944 on, and directly supported that Division's activities until the end of the war.

Third, NEA in its guerrilla warfare phase was particularly cost-effective. Although it did require constant air and sea resupply, this commitment of no more than 30 or so Australians at any one time, working with local forces and leveraging Allied offensive air support, achieved remarkable results.

Finally, it was interesting to note how Coastwatchers/NEA morphed over the course of almost 4 short (or long, depending how you look at it) years from a RAN-run, civilian bunch of well-intentioned and often capable, idiosyncratic expatriate amateurs, operating on a shoe-string budget, to a well-resourced

and valued military guerrilla warfare and intelligence organisation which was an integral part of the Allied intelligence structure in this theatre of war. As noted by Feldt in his personal account after the war: "Early, the Coastwatchers had been an irregular organization. But, as with everything military, formalism infiltrated into it, until at last it became more important to know the wording of a financial directive than where the Japs were. The Coastwatchers, like all pioneers, fitted uneasily into the New Order they had helped create ... So, all who could, went to the guerrillas, and carried on their war in their own way".⁸⁷ This is a perhaps understandable comment from someone who was in early on the development of the Coastwatcher's and hankered for the old times. It also possibly detracts from the far more significant work this organisation did, when time and tide turned its way, as part of a multi-national command in a world war.

⁸⁷The Coastwatchers p. 383

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⁸⁶"A Brief History of the G-2 Section, GHQ, SWPA and Affiliated Units", G2, GHQ, Far East Command 8 July 1948 pp. 39,40



DAMIEN THOMLINSON

Standing in front of an audience, Damien Thomlinson cuts an impressive figure with a steely gaze. He is built out of battle, and his philosophy is worth listening to.

The former soldier served in Australia's 2nd Commando Regiment – Special Forces – and he can tell his audience about how some of the most intense, pressurised military training in the world prepared him and his comrades to survive in deeply hostile enemy environments.

One of his favourite pieces of advice comes directly from that training: *"Be comfortable in dropping the ball."*

At first, this sounds simply like a 'be kind to yourself' moment, until you think more about the actual wording. In the midst of great danger, in a place completely alien to you, at a critical moment, someone in your Commando unit will drop the ball. Hell will break loose. Your task is to learn to be comfortable in what happens next. As a motivational speaker, Damien shows others how to be a 'Commando for Life', to help us cope well with the 'what's next?'

Standing there on two prosthetic legs, it is advice Damien has had to follow himself long after leaving the Army. Sometimes he makes light of his leg and brain injuries, but he still needs the resolve to cope with the mental struggles of being a survivor. For there were friends around him who didn't make it back.

The bomb went off on the road in Afghanistan in April 2009. The soldiers, and medics who arrived on the scene, had to work hard just to keep him alive, saying it was a miracle that he pulled through. He would lose both legs, brain and arms battered. He was close to death many times in the following days.

A little later:

"My nerves were shattered. My face still felt a bit crap. I kept my teeth, I didn't break my back. But other critical parts didn't get blown off, that's always helpful.

"I can remember just thinking, 'I'm alive. My family are here.' And you can see distress in people's faces. So I was trying to just joke with them. There are



pictures of me, blood on my teeth, still smiling, trying to tell everyone it's going to be fine."

In the decade that followed Damien used all the energy and determination from his Commando training to grasp back life, to walk again and look to the future. He has written a book, studied acting and earned a part in the movie 'Hacksaw Ridge', directed by Mel Gibson. He has represented national veterans' charities, navigated rally cars in professional races, walked the famous Kokoda Memorial Trail with the father of a lost comrade, snowboarded for Australia in the World Cup, swam for his country in the Invictus Games and met and charmed the Royal Princes William and Harry.

Out of that whirlwind, two constant loves today are from quieter areas of life, his young family, and golf. Golf is the game that helps him keep his head level, combats the stress disorder still very much inside him, and makes him want to get out there in the sunshine every morning, listening to the birds sing. And after a great deal of hard work, Damien now plays off a 5.4 golf handicap.

He had been an athletic, energetic young lad growing up near Sydney in Australia but his father was worried he wasn't heading anywhere. Then one day Damien saw an advertisement online for the Australian Defence Force Commandos; he was at his mother's computer and on her desk was a picture of his grandfather, a decorated and twice-injured soldier from World War II. Damien signed up in 2005 aged 24 and was delighted to be accepted on the demanding



training programme, surprising many people in his neighbourhood.

He says: "When I got qualified, I had a sense of accomplishment that was, I think, on a different scale to anything that I'd ever felt before. Not only had I achieved what I wanted to as a goal, I knew that you're looking at 99 out of 100 guys that you speak to, the same guys who were laughing at you before you went; well, they couldn't do it in their wildest dreams."

Damien learned early on not to listen to the negative views of others but to trust himself.

"Most people's opinions are just their anxiety coming to the surface, or their fear, thinking that they couldn't do it.

"I had people laugh at me when I was going on Special Forces selection; they'd say, 'Yeah, I bet you're exactly what they're looking for, mate, have fun with that'. So it was really satisfying to then drop a Commando's beret on the table when you're at a Christmas dinner, and say, 'I guess I am what they were looking for after all'."

This was a hugely positive and defining chapter in Damien's life, where he made a circle of the closest of friends, trusting each other with their lives. However, the page turns and in April 2009, Damien was driving a modified Land Rover on night patrol in the south of Afghanistan when they drove over the IED bomb planted by the Taliban.

"I was driving it, it was a Special Reconnaissance Vehicle. The guy who was literally an arm's length from me ended up with a couple of scratches and a blown-out eardrum. The bomb took my right leg clean off. My left leg was really badly damaged to halfway up the shin. My arms were shattered, my left facing a weird direction."

Damien's head was also badly injured.

He adds: "And that obviously rattles your brain. It's like getting punched by Mike Tyson, if he was the size of a dinosaur, but as fast as lightning.

"One of my unit had both hands on my chest, and I was trying to punch him to get him off. And he said it's the most sickening thing he's heard. He still wakes up to it now. Because in this arm, both bones were shattered. This elbow was hanging out. Everything was broken in it. The wrist and the hand were broken too.

"It still just amazes me that they could keep me alive. It's hard to really rationalise it."

Damien was transported to a hospital in Germany.

"I would wake up, sometimes just writhing in pain. So I had just enough of my brain to know what was happening."

Doctors and therapists traditionally move very cautiously at times like this with a survivor, and families urge their loved ones to take their time. This thinking wasn't in the Special Forces playbook.

"The entire system is essentially built around extremely difficult tasks, but especially when you're in training, you're given an unrealistic timeline. You're given unachievable tasks to do.

"And it's about training your mind to deal with the process of doing everything that you have to do, paying attention to every single one of those one percenters, to ultimately know that you're going to be somewhere five minutes late, which then means that the hostage is dead and you have to start the whole process over again.

"It's a common thing for guys from my unit to recover quickly. I mean, I was walking within six weeks, and I was pretty messed up. I'm saying, 'Look, let's strap the prosthetics on. Let's get this moving'."

Damien wanted to be walking, not in a chair, ready for three months later when he would meet some of the returning comrades who had saved his life.

"I look back at pictures now, and I look really young. It's a 28-year-old kid, who's just been ripped apart. You're trained to be self-sufficient and operate in the most testing environments in the world, when your life's on the line."

Playing sport is often a successful part of the recovery process. While cricket and athletics were big things for Damien growing up, golf was always in the background.

"Golf for me, it was literally the conversation at the table where I grew up. My parents both were just mad golfers; that was their sport. Mum was a reasonably successful amateur. She played in Germany in a leading amateur tournament. My dad was always a reasonably good player. Before my injury, I was never really interested in the game. I could always hit the ball a long way. No one really taught me the ins and outs of



Damien in service



Damien playing golf



what you're trying to achieve, which is each individual shot going where you want it to, to then reach an overarching goal.

"When I came back to Australia, a lot of people were really, really good to me. I wanted to do something that could make up for what my parents went through a little bit. And they love golf. I thought, 'Well, I'll go out and that will be my thing. This'll show them that I'm still me. I can still do the things that I could do before I had such drastic injuries.'"

We were speaking to Damien after he had been on his home course that day at Magenta Shores Golf and Country Club, just north of Sydney, where he is enjoying being an ambassador for the Club alongside European Tour professional Dimitrios Papadatos.

"I think the satisfaction for me, in preparing and doing stuff, was the same as it is now. Today I didn't putt well. My stroke was reasonable, but I still did time on the putting green before I got into my car, before I came home, because it's one of those things. You're not going to fix the problem by sleeping."

Snowboarding was Damien's first great challenge after his injuries, scratching the itch of the thrills and spills of army life. "But I was literally racing against guys who are missing half a foot, which is pretty much a scratch. And you're wondering why they're so far ahead of you and there's only so much you can do."

Damien continues: "But about four years ago now, just before my daughter was born, I got new prosthetic feet. And both of those feet had a range of movement of about 26 degrees, as opposed to the 12 or 13 you get out of a normal [prosthetic] foot. And when I first tried them, I looked down and I thought, 'It feels like I'm bending my knees. I could probably get a putting stroke out of this'. And that's where it started. Then I went onto the golf course, seeing if I could keep the ball on the fairway. And each Friday night, me and my dad and one of his good mates would play together."

Damien still suffers from a stress related illness, though it's difficult to explain it to others. Golf, however, continues to help him with this.

"I actually did a radio show with a lady who was in the London tube bombing. And she lost both legs as well. She was asking herself questions like, 'What would have happened if I had not had my coffee that day?' And she's got all of these 'whys'. For me, I have never had to ask myself why. I know why I was doing what I was doing. It's not like you do a job in the most dangerous country on the face of the earth, doing the most dangerous thing you can, and you don't realise that there is risk associated with it.

"Through the phase of recovery, there were battles that you go through, and the way that your mind works is odd. And some things triggered me in different situations that I'd had to deal with. The hard thing is it is getting worse. It's weird. Right now, I know how to find the middle ground. I have to be active. I have to be healthy. There's a lot of different things I can do that can assist me in dealing with it.

"Last night, I had a moment where just one train of thought ended up taking over what was happening. And I had a physical reaction to it, which is the hardest thing. Because it wasn't hot, but I was sweating. And it was a really... I knew what it was... God, the worst anxiety you could get."

And at other times, Damien says: "One minute you feel like you're just angry, you're aggressive... And then two seconds later, you're literally crying like a child."

He adds: "I've found that for me to be able to deal with that, the game of golf has worked as a perfect leveller to give me something I'm working towards. And to take me off the loop of things that are happening in my mind. It's given me something... I just find it works for me as like, I guess, a type of meditation, to go out and try and hit one of those shots. Just pick one and then go out and just drill it until my body can't do anymore."

He tries to explain further: "I've got a stress disorder that came with the recovery time of the injury more than the war time, and having to deal with some of the challenges. And golf was the perfect remedy for that. It works really well. As you know, the game can be really satisfying and then the next shot can be extremely humbling. The good thing about the game was it helped emotionally to deal with some of those bad breaks. Because I want to shoot par every time I go out and I haven't shot it yet.

"I hit the gym every day... I like training at times when I know other people aren't. It's a little bit strange like that. If it's the nighttime and I can't do anything, there's a few guys I know who do stuff at night. Or I'll be reading something. It's like the endless quest to get just that little bit better every day."



Damien adds: "I think the good thing now is being at the stage of my game where the mental side of things actually comes in. You've got to make the right choice at the right time and do a lot of different things that... I think it's hard... It's one of those that's impossible to explain to people who don't play golf, but everyone who does, knows the exact moment and those mistakes. They're always really easy to see when you look back on what went wrong."

Recognising how golf mirrors life, the sport is part of Damien's philosophy today as a public motivational speaker. It's a role he takes seriously, looking to give others confidence while reminding them what it means to serve your country, the hard lessons of being a Commando. Damien has lost friends in war and also in the aftermath when life had become too difficult for them to continue.

"People have different levels of things they struggle with... And to me, I think Australians are pretty proud of what our service men and women do. So it's really good to be able to take to them a story that reinforces how good a job our guys do.

"I think when my parents first heard about it, it was like a three or four per cent chance of me surviving. Doctors were baffled that I came through. They had a space blanket on me. If I couldn't hold my body heat, I was going to die. It was that simple, and my parents were told this.

"The process of getting me into that position is a story that Australians need to hear, about the type of men and women that we have over there, because in the Special Forces, you operate in the dark.



"So it's good to give people that little bit of perspective. I do get a big kick out people who say that just hearing the talk changed the way they look at adversity."

For more than three years Damien studied acting professionally. His big break came in the much-acclaimed 2016 war movie 'Hacksaw Ridge', where Damien was cast alongside Andrew Garfield, Vince Vaughn and Sam Worthington. The film was nominated for Best Picture at the 2017 Academy Awards. Importantly for Damien, acting was also therapeutic.

"I found it fun that you could go in, and you could laugh, scream, cry, do whatever, while you were working on a piece. And you could essentially escape who you were. I think this phase of my life was me working out who I was, what really made me tick."

The film led Damien to gain a spot on the very popular Australian reality TV show, 'Survivor'. Geoff Nicholas' wife watched it and it caught Geoff's attention, who is a much-loved Australian professional golfer; seen as the Godfather of golf for the disabled by other players. The two men met and have become great friends, Geoff encouraging Damien into the competitive side of the game. Damien, who was playing off around a 14 handicap, would look at fellow golfers with disabilities like Mike Rolls (also a double amputee), Shane Luke, Stephen Prior and Geoff Nicholas himself, who are all low single figure players or better. This really inspired Damien to up his game and he thanks Geoff for being a key figure in his development.

"In Australia, it's kind of frowned upon for you to voice your ambition. But if I'm competing against golfers with disability, I want to be the best one on the planet. I want to be ranked world number one. That's just my goal.

"And now, in my mind, the way that I walk myself through things, it's just a matter of time, effort and dedication to see whether I get there."

To reach these goals Damien has the best possible support from his loving family, including partner Abby, who is a teacher, and the young kids he dotes on, Ari Jay and Isla Rose. "They're amazing. Isla's like me, she's an absolute pain in the arse. Every time I tell my dad a story about her, he's literally just laughing, going, 'She's the exact same as you!'"

Damien's 2013 memoir 'Without Warning' charts his progress of rehabilitation and he doesn't hold back from criticising himself for being far too impatient with doctors and nurses at times early on. He still commits his time as an ambassador for charities DefenceCare, Soldier On, and the Commando Welfare Trust, which raise awareness and funds for injured soldiers and their families. Looking ahead, he will seek to play more EDGA tournaments, and striving to get to the top of the World Ranking for Golfers with Disability (WR4GD) will be Damien's next great challenge, but also his daily therapy as he continues to look after his mental well-being.

"I like golf because it seems so simple, but it's such a broad and complex game. Everything from technique with shots, to the choice of shot, to the conditions that you're playing them in. It's just such a learning cycle where I think you've got to do something that, as any adult, you have to get comfortable with making the wrong decision. You have to literally be comfortable being the person who drops the ball.

"I love saying that during my talks. People talk about teamwork and what it takes to be in a team and all this sort of stuff. To me, the most important asset you can have as a team member is just to know the fact that at some stage, every single player on that team is going to drop the ball. It will happen. People are human.

"From there, how you deal with someone dropping the ball, ultimately assigns you a value as a team member. I really love the way that golf as a game re-



inforces that. You're always ultimately the one that's responsible, even for some of the bad breaks that you get. But I find that golf's been one of those things that continually teaches me and reinforces the life lessons and things that I've dealt with in the past."

Damien adds: "Ultimately, it gives me something to strive for. I mean, success lasts for 10 minutes. You know what I mean? That's how long it lasts if you win a grand final or when you get your Commando beret. There's those things that are really major that last for a day. I don't know whether golf's one that you can ever, ever, perfect. You're always chasing the dragon. I really love that about the game. And I just like the fact that it's me who is accountable for everything that happens."

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THE STORY OF ARTHUR "ROBBIE" ROBINSON BEM, DCM

I would like to share with you the story of one the "Senior" members of our Association.

Arthur "Robbie" Robinson enlisted in the British Army in 1945 just prior to the end of WW2 undergoing training at Winchester with the Rifle Brigade, but at the end of the War was trained as a Gunner Mechanic.

However, at the completion of his training, was trained as an assistant PTI with the rank of Lance Corporal, and after further training he graduated as a Sergeant Instructor in the Army Physical Training Corps at the age of 18 years old.

He was later posted to Egypt and served with the British Protectorate Troops, Betchuna, Basuto and Swazi responsible for the fitness of the various Units doing Guard Duty on the Suez Canal.

In 1948 he was sent home for demobilisation.

Robbie did several civilian jobs but could not settle down and eventually rejoined the Army in 1950 and was sent to Arborfield Apprentice School as a Corporal PTI.

At that time Australia started advertising for ex British Army Instructors as the Korean War had started. Robbie secured release from the British Army and on the 10th of October 1950 became a member of Australian Regular Army and was posted to 1 RAR at Ingleburn.

He was not allowed to go to Korea but in May 1951 was promoted to Sergeant and sent to 19 National Service Training Battalion, (later known as P&RT) as a PTI.

At a later tour of duty in 1953 at Kapooka where the Battalion was stationed, he was sent on a Parachute Course, and in December of that year made up to a temporary WO2.

At the School of Land Air Warfare completed the first Parachute Jump Instructors Course run in Australia at the newly formed Parachute Training Wing by the RAAF.

Robbie later instructed on courses designed for Special Forces including 1 Commando Company, also trialling new equipment and was the first Instructor to do a water jump.

For his dedication to Parachuting Robbie was awarded the British Empire Medal.

He also hoped to be transferred to the newly formed SAS, but was sent to North Head Military Gymnasium, where he requalified as a PTI, but in an



accident on a vault horse, broke his neck.

He was then posted to 1 RTB until September 1963 when he again discharged from the service, took up swimming coaching in New Zealand, but came back to Australia to join the Regular Army Reserve Force.

Later rejoined the Regular Army in Kapooka, where he did various courses in Language, Small Arms, Heavy Weapons, Infantry Tactics and Communications.

In December 1967 he was posted to Vietnam with the AATTV, took part in approx 40 operations.

During his tour of duty, he was awarded the **Distinguished Conduct Medal, the USA Silver Star, ARVN Cross of Gallantry Gold Star, Bronze Cross of Gallantry, Armed Forces Honour Medal, 5 letters of commendation from various US Army Commanders and one from CO of the South Vietnamese Rangers.**

Robbie is also the only non-American to be inducted into the Ranger Hall of Fame in 1999.

On return to Australia in various Units he decided to once again leave the Regular Army and after service in the CMF, finished his service in 1976.

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LATENT COMMANDO SERVICE 'KICKS-IN' – CAIRO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 1970

September, 1970

As Qantas Air crew we always underwent a pre-flight briefing ex Sydney. As such, the briefing was always comprehensively assembled to cover all pertinent points relevant to our flight. In this case: Sydney/London/Sydney via intermediary international airports, including mandatory crew rest layovers at some of these. In those days Qantas was utilizing Boeing 707-338C aircraft on the majority of its global flight operations.



There were no 747 operations in those days.

The main thrust of this particular briefing focused heavily on the recent high-jacking and destruction of three of four commercial airliners by terrorist members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). The three aircraft were forced to land at Dawson's Field, a remote desert airstrip near Zarqa, Jordan, formerly Royal Air Force Station Zerqa, which then became PFLP's "Revolutionary Airport".



Three airliners were destroyed by explosion at Dawson's Field on 12 September 1970.

Location	Dawson's Field, Zarqa, Jordan
Coordinates	32.1059°N 36.1567°E HYPERLINK HYPERLINK HYPERLINK HYPERLINK dlat:32.1059°N 36.1567°E
Date	6–13 September 1970
Target	TWA 741 , Swissair 100 , El Al 219 , Pan Am 93 , BOAC 775
Attack type	4 successful aircraft hijackings , 1 foiled, hostage crisis
Weapons	Firearms and hand grenades



The briefing officer stressed that Qantas was not interested in joining that club. So vigilance was to be the name of the game from here-on in. Qantas training in this respect was very much differed to what my military service had trained me for.

My commando mind instantly went into tactical offensive/defensive mode. I was cognisant of what type of bastards these hijackers were, and what they were capable of, particularly when brandishing weapons to falsely strengthen their resolve to terrorize innocent people. In these situations and, without weapons, they were just another bunch of turkeys as far as I and others were concerned. I was trained otherwise by my mentors who were proven battle hardened "Independent Company" soldiers of WW2.

Early on during the west bound leg of the flight I remember noticing that one of the crew members displayed certain mannerisms. The more I studied him the more convinced I became. I confronted him and he gave me a stony-faced stare. Yep, I thought, I'm right. Both of us were ex 1RNSWR Cdo. For reasons of confidentiality, we'll refer to him as Smiley. He said "Nice to see you again Charlie, you ugly bastard". We quickly got down to discussing pending business that may necessitate our intervention and expertise, if required.



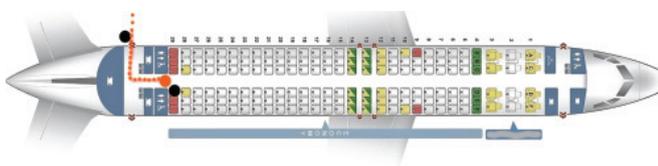
Without going into detail, we tried to covered all possible terrorist attack scenarios and concluded that they would most likely try to:

- "storm" the aircraft via the rear economy class cabin doorway, this being our area of responsibility. For this they would have to
 - a) steal a set stairs or
 - b) wait until the ground crew had positioned a set in place. As the whole Middle East was on high alert due to the recent hijackings, the latter was the considered option if they wanted to seize the aircraft without attracting airport security. We would have to be vigilant as to any suspicious vehicles and their direction of travel, particularly if a vehicle made a sudden turn in our direction.



In that event we would hopefully have time to close and secure the rear aircraft door.

- In the event they were successful in attempting entry via stairs positioned by ground crew, one of us would remain on picket immediately outside the rear door at the top of the stairs. From there he could alert the man inside who would be situated in a pre-selected ambush position within the aircraft.
- **Close Quarter Combat:** This was considered our next best option for the following reasons.
- Due to the constricted configuration of the rear cabin in-flight service area comprising the galley: bar and dry goods cabinets etc., the access passage way to the economy class cabin was some than thirty inches plus wide. Therefore, boarding passengers had to enter in the economy class cabin in a "single file" formation. This effectively formed a "bottle neck" area, which we considered was a prime ambush location. We would able to effectively stymie any terrorist lateral movement and engage them in close quarter combat in confined area.
- To explain: the last row of seating in the economy class cabin was row 28. Seats A, B, and C which were across the aisle from seats D, E and F on the right. Behind both sets of seats was the aft cabin bulkhead. Behind seats D, E and F and the bulkhead however, was enough space for crew to store their cabin bags. If the bags were relocated, then it was possible to for someone to stand behind seat D and the bulkhead. Therefore a person assuming this position would be obscured from view of anyone entering via the rear passenger door.
- Hence, from this position a lightning-quick strike (swiftly) was possible.
- We were without firearms, and we desperately needed them. One would suffice initially.
- If successful, terrorist congestion would quickly follow in that narrow. We had to capitalize on that eventuality and very quickly dominate the situation. Failing was not an option. CRASH... BANG.... WALLOP!



Schematic Notes. Black dots indicate the pre-assigned in-cabin ambush position (located behind seating row 28D), including the exterior picket position outside the aircraft door at the top of the stairs. Small red dots indicate the direction of travel a possible intruder would have to take to enter the cabin. The large red dot being the "intruder" as he unwittingly approaches the ambush area.

Fast forward to Ex-London, U.K.

As it so happened, our return flight route to Australia was changed. This change necessitated us to

fly and land at Cairo, Egypt. The standard stopover duration was forty-five minutes. And from the flight continued on to Bahrain, which is located in the Arabian Gulf.

We landed at Cairo in the evening at "last light". Our passenger load was light, approx. forty-eight economy class passengers. As the aircraft taxied to and came to a stop at our remote apron parking position (there was no direct "finger" loading passenger ramps from the main terminal in those days) and the engines began to wind down, Smiley and I glanced at each other and nodded. Nothing was said. Like days of old, we both knew it was "game on"! Our "stand to" was about to commence.

Boeing 707's does not have APU's (auxiliary power units) positioned in the tail of the aircraft as do modern day airliners. Instead, they have to wait until ground engineers connect a mobile power cart (electrical generator) to the aircraft. It usually is the first unit to arrive, if not already waiting for an arriving aircraft. With the daylight fading fast, power was need to illuminate the passenger cabin and to activate a host of other vital aircraft functions. As we only were scheduled for a standard forty five minute "turn around" time before again departing, it is critical for this unit and all other ground services to be on site. The area was devoid of any ground services. Nothing! Maybe they were all simply running late.

Smiley and I kept watch out of the windows. Nothing appeared unusual so far. As time wore on tensions began to heighten, as did our antennas. In fact we had been on the ground now for approx. fifteen minutes and precious little ground services had arrived to tend the aircraft. No stairs, no catering or traffic officers nor cabin cleanersnothing! Twenty minutes of our forty five had now elapsed! Eventually the stairs arrived, but alas still no ground service staff. I didn't like it, and glanced at Smiley. He nodded. We both exited the aircraft and stood on the top of the stairs. "Let's play it by ear and be extra vigilant mate" he implied as he began to position the stair wing slides against the outer aircraft fuselage. I quickly descended half way down the stairs and looked under the aircraft and performed a quick a 360 degree scan of the surrounds. Nothing unusual. From there I re-entered the aircraft to and assumed my pre-assigned ambush position behind seat 28D. I had a clear view of the whole cabin including the First Class cabin.

All the passengers were still in their seats quietly chatting amongst themselves, totally oblivious to our apparent perilous situation.

My mind was racing, as at that juncture our aircraft still had not been provided with acceptable scheduled ground services coupled with time and the last rays of sunlight fading fast and the passenger cabin darkening accordingly. Plus it was all too bloody quiet for my liking. We were isolated on a tarmac apron like a sitting duck. Was all this part of a pre-arranged plan I thought, with help from the Cairo's very influential Moslem



Brotherhood pulling strings with airport staff? Stranger things have happened.



Note: Forward looking view from the aft economy cabin bulkhead ambush position behind row 28D. Note: In those days the overhead luggage rack was devoid of bin enclosure doors.

Although all the above description of events including my thoughts since I re-entered the cabin may appear to have absorbed an inordinate period of time, it was in fact only about ten seconds had elapsed, at most.

Then..... **LOOKOUT CHARLIE HE'S GOT A GUN!!!!**

The contact warning was sharp and clear, as would be expected from a former commando. With lightning speed I glanced over my left shoulder and saw the muzzle of an AK 47 assault rifle rounding the corner of the aft cabin bar area. I quickly pulled back to avoid compromising my position. I hadn't seen him, just the muzzle of his weapon, and therefore he hadn't seen me. We are talking Nano seconds here! In a flash he entered the narrow passageway and was about to enter the rear of the economy class cabin. My right hand shot out under the barrel of his weapon and thrust it upward. I was now facing him and like a good soldier he clung to his weapon. Whilst simultaneously seizing the "small" of the weapon's butt I jerked him toward me. A quick combined vicious head-butt to the face and knee to the groin crumpled him. We had our weapon! I immediately spun him around and jerked the weapon up under his throat and ejected him from the cabin onto the top landing of the stairs. Once outside I saw Smiley in the process of dismantling a figure who appeared to be a military officer. At the same time I observed three military attired armed men at the foot of the stairs. As I said, all this was taking place at the speed of light. The "officer" exhibited the look of utter horror upon his face; I suspected that this was due to the sudden turn of events including the excruciating pain being inflicted upon him by Smiley. The sight of his bloodied comrade now being hurled head first down the steps didn't help either. Compounding all this was the barrel of a loaded the AK-47 now being shoved into his face. A quick authoritative demand was

made of him to immediately stand down his men down, lay down their weapons and to take ten paces backwards, or else they would find themselves being suddenly re-acquainted with their ancestors! With that achieved, we had seized complete and utter control of the situation at hand. At that juncture he was informed that all crew members on Qantas aircraft were armed (as a strategic disinformation tactic) and that if he or any other rag-tag mob harboured future visions of attacking an Australian aircraft, they would be dealt with in a similar manner and/or shot on site. He nodded profusely in acknowledgement. When further questioned as to he and his men's presence, he mumbled something about his wife being a disembarking passenger and that he was merely provide an armed escort for her as she de-planed. Only trouble with that was, and anybody who has flown before realizes that when an arriving aircraft comes to a halt at the airport terminal, those disembarking rise from their seats and begin to retrieve their belongings from the overhead rack. We had been on the ground for over twenty minutes by this time and not one passenger had enacted these motions. Nice try Mohamed, sounds more likely to be a "dry run" by certain malcontent organisations or terrorist cells to check on Qantas aircraft security to me.

But no doubt the said "dry run" could have quickly turned into an "active" situation for them had their boarding action been successful. Other terrorist group support cells would no doubt been close by in that instance just awaiting a signal in that instance.

There were no other observable attackers at this juncture. As with his men, he was similarly attired in military khaki fatigues. None of which bore no identifying military patches. He wore a black forage officer's cap, whilst the men wore black berets. Again, none of which bore any identifying unit cap badge.

Eventually ground services arrived. The position was explained to the on-duty traffic officer. He called for a vehicle which spirited the vanquished away. After their departure I cleared and handed him the weapon.....minus the magazine.

The aircraft Captain soon arrived and was appraised of the events surrounding the situation. He immediately placed a total "gag" order on all aspects of the action.

Within thirty minutes of this action the big Boeing 707 338C was nosing its way up and into the warm and dark star studded Arabian sky.

And the passengers, as before, totally oblivious to their perilous brush, continued to chat quietly amongst themselves.

To this current day precious few have any knowledge of this incident. I am fairly certain that neither Qantas security, flight operations nor senior management are cognisant of this saga.

Epilogue:

Being the world's number one airline in those days,



it was known amongst air crew that global terrorist elements were keen to seize a Qantas aircraft. However, they never attempted it. Maybe the message, as intended, was effectively filtered down and respected.

Well Bazza, there it is.

Love & Kisses to all and sundry,

Chikka



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The Positive Relationship between Physical Activity and PTSD

Exercise has a positive clinical effect on depressive symptoms and may be as effective as psychological or pharmaceutical therapies for some individuals with PTSD.

Rosebaum *et al*, 2014 suggests Physical activity/exercise is a highly effective method in reducing symptoms of depression and for people experiencing other mental health disorders.

Evidence demonstrates that an appropriate exercise intervention can achieve significant benefits to symptoms, depression, anxiety and stress, changes in body shape and sedentary time associated with PTSD, and non-significant trends for sleep quality improvement according to Rosenbaum, 2013.

The associated symptoms and the improvements may be related to psychosocial benefits of the intervention, rather than functional capacity, but there is also a strong empirical (observational) link between improvements in functional capacity and psychological status according to the author, 2016.

People with PTSD are four times as likely to have type 2 diabetes (Lukaschek *et al*, 2013) and rates of overweight and obesity are as high as 92%.

To add to these statistics, sufferers of PTSD are shown to be less physically active due to a number of factors including pain, dysfunctional and general lack of desire or both, according Boscarino *et al*, 2004.

Adding some form of regular physical activity can have a significant effect on a sufferer of PTSD. It's important to note, the type of activity doesn't matter, what matters is that the person is moving and also having fun doing it.

If you would like to become physically active again and help to combat some of your PTSD related symptoms then please consult your GP and discuss your options for referral to another health care professional (exercise physiologist or physiotherapist) for help with your other associated or co-morbid conditions ie lower back pain, arthritis and or obesity.



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WW2 Australian Special Operations and Commando Badges and Insignia

Doug Knight

During many years of service in the Australia Special Operations military community and frequent engagement with World War II veterans of the various Special Operations units¹ and their families on social media, I've seen many badges and insignia which purport to be original but in fact are 'fantasy or reproduction' badges produced for collectors or they were unofficial badges produced by unit personnel or post war associations and were never officially endorsed or approved.

There has also been significant post war confusion regarding terminology of the various military organisations and units *i.e.*, the so-called "Z Force" and this paper seeks to redress these misunderstandings. A future article will cover post war Association badges and memorabilia.

It should be noted that the term "special operations" refers here to Australian and Allied forces engaged in.

- a. Independent company/commando squadron operations or in support of these operations; and
- b. members of Special Operations Australia (SOA²) including Army members posted to Z Special Unit and Army members posted to M Special Unit. It also includes RAN or RAAF individuals, or units directly involved in or supporting the SOA.

Reference books and materials

In compiling this paper reference has been made to many publications and sources including WW2 veterans, Army History Unit (AHU), the Australian War Memorial (AWM) resources and the three comprehensive works on this vast and complex subject:

- a. Distinguishing Colour Patches of the Australian Military Forces 1915 - 1951 - A Reference Guide, by Keith Glyde (published by K Glyde, Australia, 1999, ISBN 0-6460-36640-8).
- b. Australian Army Colour Patches and ribbons of the Second World War-published by The Sun newspaper. NLA obj-97709285.
- c. Army Colour Patch Register 1915-1949, published by Director of Publishing, Department of Defence.

A number of informal interviews were also conducted with former WW2 personnel who served in Special Operations units and Australian military insignia collectors.

The book 'Distinguishing Colour Patches of the Australian Military Forces 1915-1951' written by Keith Glyde in 1999 is considered by many, including the Australian War Memorial (AWM) staff, to be the best reference on this subject to date. I recently contacted Keith regarding the badges included in this paper to seek clarification on a few specific concerns, however he was unable to provide any additional information. Within his book, whilst not exact copies of the real patches, every effort was made to reproduce the patches in colours close to their original and the photos are not to scale.

This article seeks to cover all Australian military units and organisations that were involved in the conduct of Special Operations during World War II including Royal Australian Navy and Royal Australian Air Force personnel. The insignia worn by Allied personnel who were members or attached to Australian units are not covered in this paper.

Background to Colour Patches and Army and AIF badges

There are some thousands of Australian Army colour patches, each signifying the different units that were in existence and formed between the introduction of colour patches in 1915 and the abandonment of the early system in 1949 (replaced by embroidered regimental and corps titles and formation signs); and the reintroduction of a colour patch system within the Australian Army in 1987.

Worn on the sleeve and puggaree (hat band) or helmet cover, colour patches have always been a useful means of unit identification. In the First and Second Australian Imperial Forces (AIF)³ these patches became a form of unit badge, with all the unit identity and esprit de corps normally associated with regimental hat badges. With the reintroduction of colour patches in the late 1980s Army units were encouraged to adopt the patches of earlier AIF units for whom some form of lineage could be established.⁴

The colour patch system was used as a means of formation, unit, and arm of service identification on the

¹This term was not widely used during WW2.

²Also known by its wartime cover name of Allied Intelligence Bureau (AIB).

³Forces exclusively raised for overseas operations during time of war.

⁴Only Army Reserve units are eligible to have WW2 lineage.



uniform between 1915 and 1921 by Australian forces raised specifically for war service overseas, and then between 1921 and 1949 by the whole of the Australian Military Forces at home or abroad.

Introduced in early 1915 by a Divisional Commander of the A.I.F. as a simple but secure means of identification for units of his own formation, the system had by 1918 spread throughout the force which had expanded to comprise almost seven Divisions, with additional Corps, Army, and Line of Communication (LoC) units, and had assumed such a status amongst the members of that force that Lieutenant-General Sir John Monash, GOC Australian Corps, was to record in mid-1918 that;

"...The badge is highly prized by the individual soldier as the only means of identifying him with his Unit or Service, and is a most powerful factor in esprit de corps and the pride of the soldier in his Regiment.... [it] is a most important factor in the maintenance of discipline and also in training.... organization before and during battle, and re-organization after battle are greatly facilitated.... The loyalty of the Australian soldier to his regimental badge is to be experienced in the Field in order to be fully appreciated...."⁵

It was the desire, more than any other reason, to perpetuate the achievements and sacrifices of the 1st AIF which led to the introduction of the colour patch system to the reorganized Citizen Forces in 1921⁶. The unit colour patch had by this stage assumed the same status as the regimental badge of the British Army, for instance the Programme of Drills for the 40th Battalion stated in 1939 that...

" The colour patches you wear are similar [sic] to those worn by the 40th Battalion, A.I.F. Live up to the reputation of that battalion".

Although a practical concept when first introduced, the factors which led to its success during the Great War could not be duplicated during subsequent reorganization and expansion of the Australian Army and by late 1942 it was recognised as becoming unworkable. A major overhaul of the scheme was begun in late 1944 but the end of the Second World War and the rapid demobilisation of the AMF led to its replacement in 1949 with a system of embroidered regimental and corps titles, and formation signs.

It is not the purpose of this article to examine in detail the vast array of Australian Army colour patches but to address the colour patches and insignia worn by

all Australian personnel, including Navy and Air Force, who were involved in Australian-controlled Special Operations in the Pacific theatre.

Uniform Insignia

Army

During World War II it was usual for all male Army personnel wear the following insignia:

- a. An Australian Military Forces (AMF) Rising Sun metal badge either large or small with the larger version being worn on the left-hand side of the Slouch Hat⁷, with the smaller version being worn on a peak cap or beret.
- b. A metal 'Australia' badge was affixed to the base of each epaulet identifying the wearer as a volunteer for overseas service and member of 2nd AIF.
- c. On Service Dress uniforms a small AMF metal badge was affixed to each lapel of the jacket.
- d. A Unit colour patch was affixed to the uniform sleeve 1.4 cm (1/2 inch) below the epaulet on both sides. Where the colour patch had multiple colours there were 2 versions available being for the left and right sleeves. This was relevant for the Cavalry (Commando) Regiments. When a miniature colour patch was worn this would be 1.4 cm (1/2 inch) below the epaulet and the normal size colour patch would be positioned 1.4 cm (1/2 inch) below.
- e. A Unit colour patch was affixed to slouch hat and was positioned on the right side of puggaree, as for ceremonial occasions. This is because the left-hand side of the slouch hat was turned up. However, there are numerous wartime photos which show colour patches on the left side of the puggaree. In some cases, a left arm colour patch was also worn on a beret and positioned in line with the front of the left ear. See photo 11 below.
- f. Where appropriate badges of rank and trade insignia i.e., wireless operator or signaller were worn and those personnel who qualified as parachutists wore the qualification badge which will be covered in detail later in this paper.
- g. Australian Imperial Force Overseas Service Stripe. One chevron was worn for each complete year's service in the AIF from the date of embarkation in Australia; but no badge would be issued to any man who, during the 12 months, has incurred a regimental entry (i.e. an entry involving forfeiture of pay) in his pay book.

⁵HQ Australian Corps Letter No. 20/75, 17.7.1918. AWM 25, item 187/4. Lt-Gen. Monash to the Commandant, AIF HQ, London, dealing with the unsatisfactory position regarding the supply of colour patches by the British authorities and their apparent misunderstanding of the importance to the AIF of this nature of distinction.

⁶The term 'privilege' used by MO 206/1921 was somewhat patronising considering that it was these same CMF units which had provided almost all the original nucleus of the AIF in 1914, and that by 1921 the CMF was almost entirely officered by former AIF personnel.

⁷This is because the left-hand side brim is turned up for ceremonial occasions.



Time absent from the unit in hospital or elsewhere on account of wounds or sickness, not the result of misconduct, would count as service towards earning the badge⁸.



Photo 1. Australian Imperial Force Overseas Service Stripes for 2 years overseas service.
Source: Authors collection.

Female members of the Army wore similar insignia with the only difference being in lieu of the 'Australia' badge on the epaulet the AWAS (Australian Women's Army Service) shoulder title was worn.

Photo 2. A Studio portrait of WX11483 Lieutenant and later Lieutenant Colonel (Lt Col) Donald George Melbourne (George) Matheson⁹. The AMF hat and collar badges can be clearly seen.
Source: AWM



Photo 3. A Studio portrait of Private and later Corporal Elizabeth Mackenzie (nee Drummond) a Movements Clerk with Headquarters, SOA. Note the large size collar badges and AWAS shoulder title.
Source: Mackenzie Collection

⁸It is rare to see this on WW2 commando and special operations personnel in photos as many incurred disciplinary issues and became ineligible.

Photo 4. A Studio portrait of Captain Rex Lipman, 4th Independent Company and later 2/7th Cavalry (Commando) Regiment. Note the small Double Diamond signifying his operational service with 4th Independent Company and the larger unit colour patch of 2/7th Cavalry (Commando) Regiment. He is also wearing a black beret as the Regiment was technically Armoured Corps.
Source: AWM



Royal Australian Navy

There was only one specific unit insignia which was the cap tally band for HMAS Assault which was the Joint Overseas Operational Training School. Naval Beach Commandos who trained here also wore this tally band. There were no other unit insignia or embellishments worn by members of the RAN who undertook Special Operations duties.



Photo 5. HMAS ASSAULT tally band
Source: Authors collection

Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF)

There were no specific unit insignia or embellishments worn by members of the RAAF who were attached to Special Operations units or who undertook Special Operations duties.

Australian Independent Companies

The Australian Independent Companies commenced forming in July 1941 and a total of 12 Companies (later renamed Commando Squadrons) were raised.

⁹Matheson was born on 19 July 1904 in Waiha, New Zealand but settled in Western Australia working in the mining industry. He enlisted as a private in the AIF in April 1941 and commissioned in June 1941. Major Matheson was posted to form the 3rd Independent Company (later 2/3rd Cavalry Commando Squadron) and commanded this unit during operations on New Caledonia. He was seconded as a temporary Lieutenant Colonel to the United States forces as a jungle warfare and commando instructor in the Solomon Islands where he was killed on Bougainville on 30 January 1944.

The Double Diamond colour patch was designed by Major J.W. Gordon who was on the staff of Army Headquarters at the time. The double diamond colour patch was surrounded by a 4.8 mm dark grey edging to signify that the wearer was a volunteer for overseas service and also a member of the 2nd AIF¹⁰.

In 1942 The Adjutant General¹¹ directed that there be a standard size of 3.5 cm for all colour patches and double diamonds were 6 cm wide, not including the grey border and were manufactured using coloured felt. Initially all colour patches were manufactured through the Commonwealth Clothing Factory, located in Melbourne, however in 1942 due to high demand Australian contractors were engaged to manufacture colour patches. Due to security issues overseas local manufacture had been banned by HQ AIF in 1941.

In August 1946 a new system colour patches had been introduced and all stocks of previous designs were declared obsolete and disposed of.

It is not known how the colours for the individual Independent Company colour patches were arrived at but the specifications for the badges shown below as No's 1052 to 1060 (see diagram 1), appear in the Master General of the Ordnance (MGO) 1945 Branch Line Drawings, p14, while number 1061 is referred to in the Australian War Memorial AWM Colour Patch file card register.

It should be noted that all WW2 manufactured Independent Company colour patches held in the Australian War Memorial and Australian Commando Association Victoria historical collection, the double diamonds are cut out and not two squares over stitched, as seen in postwar replicas as shown below;



Photo 6. Post war 2/2nd Independent Company replica patch.
Source: Authors collection

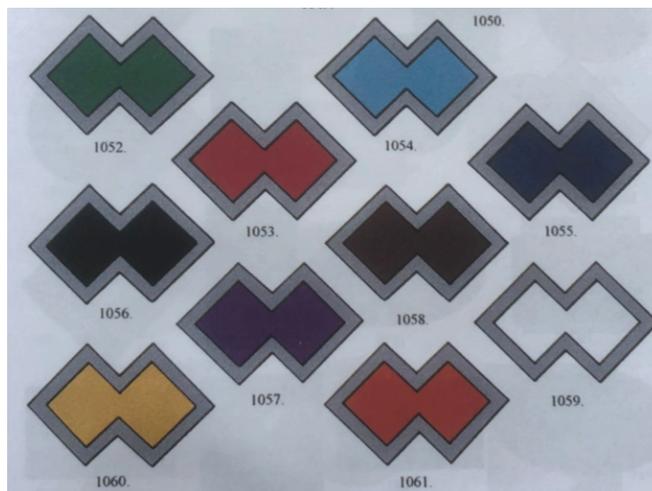


Diagram 1. Independent Company Colour Patches.
Extract from *Distinguishing Colour Patches of the Australian Military Forces 1915 to 1951-A Reference Guide* by Keith Glyde.

Code to Diagram 1

1052 Green. 1st Australian Independent Company 1941-1942¹². A significant number of the unit were captured on land or at sea escaping from New Britain and went down with the *Montevideo Maru* when it was sunk by the *USS Sturgeon*. Many also went on to become coast watchers and in the 1942 unit was disbanded with the remaining members were transferred to the 2/5th Independent Company then on operations in New Guinea.



Source: Author's collection

1053 Red. 2nd Australian Independent Company 1941-43, 2/2nd Australian Commando Squadron 1943-1945.



'The Double Reds'
Source: Author's Collection

¹⁰Glyde, p 22

¹¹The Army Organisation responsible for Supply and Ordnance matters.

¹²Note that this unit was always referred to as the 1st Independent Company as the prefix 2 representing membership of the 2nd AIF was not implemented until after the unit had deployed on operations in 1941 and was rendered ineffective due to battle losses in New Guinea 1942. 1st Independent Company was disbanded in mid-1942.



1054 Light Blue. 3rd Australian Independent Company 1941-1943. Then replaced with 2/7th Cavalry (Commando) Regiment.



Source: AWM Collection

1055 Dark Blue. 4th Australian Independent Company 1941-1944. Then replaced with 2/9th Cavalry (Commando) Regiment colour patch.



Source: Author's collection

1056 Black. 5th Australian Independent Company 1942-1943. Then replaced with 2/7th Cavalry (Commando) Regiment colour patch.



'The Double Blacks'
Source: AWM Collection

1057 Purple. 6th Australian Independent Company 1942-43. Then replaced with 2/7th Cavalry (Commando) Regiment colour patch.



'The Purple Devils'
Source: Author's collection

1058 Brown. 2/7th Australian Independent Company 1942-44. Then replaced with 2/9th Cavalry (Commando) Regiment colour patch.



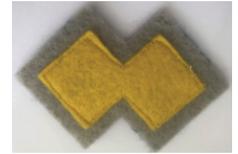
'The Double Brown'
Source: Author's collection

1059 White. 2/8th Independent Company 1942-43. The unit history states that initially a yellow colour patch number 1060 was allotted but an appeal by all ranks resulted in the reallocation of No.1059, White Double Diamonds¹³.



Source: Author's collection

1060 Yellow. 2/9th Australian Independent Company. Designed and manufactured but never issued. Then replaced with 2/6th Cavalry (Commando) Regiment colour patch.



Source: Author's collection

1061 Dark Red. 2/10th Australian Independent, designed and manufactured but never issued as personnel wore insignia of 2/6th Cav (Cdo) Regt¹⁴.



Source: Glyde p.45

Australian Cavalry (Commando) Regiments

In May 1943 seven Independent Companies were absorbed into three Cavalry (Commando) Regiments and were progressively redesignated Cavalry Commando Squadrons from January 1944. At this point several Independent Companies lost their individual colour patches and wore the colour patch of the newly formed Cavalry Commando Regiment in which they had been raised. A further four squadrons were raised at the end of 1943, comprising of many men who had previously served in the Cavalry Regiments in the Middle East.

2/6th Cavalry (Commando) Regiment 1944-46

From January 1944 this Regiment comprised 2/9th and 2/10th Australian Commando Squadrons which had been raised from original volunteer personnel from the Cavalry Regiment and were joined by the 2/7th Australian Commando Squadron. Brown is on the left side when worn on the right shoulder. Note colour variations in patches.

¹³Commando White Diamond, Astill p.5

¹⁴Glyde, p 137



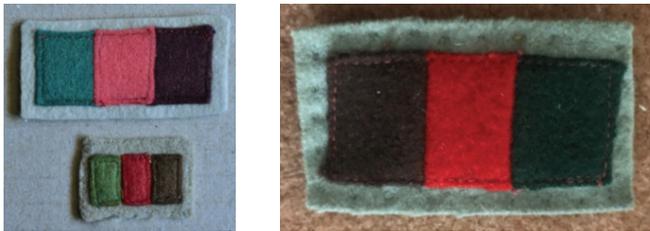


Photo 7. Original colour patches of the 2/6th Cavalry (Commando) Regiment.
Source: ACA Vic Historical Collection

2/7th Cavalry (Commando) Regiment 1943-46

This unit was originally reorganised in 1943 to provide an administrative headquarters for the seven existing Independent Companies, and as such had submitted a design of a colour patch for approval which comprised the Double Diamond in cavalry colours. This was rejected by Land Headquarters (LHQ)¹⁵ who directed the original headquarters would wear the LHQ colour patch¹⁶. After further consideration the colour patch below was approved to replace all existing patches worn by regimental HQ and Independent Companies. The regiment was reorganised in late 1943 to comprise the 2/3rd, 2/5th, and 2/6th Australian Commando Squadrons all of whom wore this colour patch. Red is on the left side facing rearwards when worn on right shoulder.



Photo 8. Original colour patch of the 2/7th Cavalry (Commando) Regiment.
Source: ACA Vic Historical Collection

2/9th Cavalry (Commando) Regiment 1944-46

From January 1944 this Regiment comprised 2/11th and 2/12th Australian Commando squadrons which was raised from original volunteer members of the Cavalry Regiment and joined by the 2/4th Australian Commando Squadron. The patch comprises equal width stripes of brown, red and green on a grey background. The brown section should always be towards the

wearer's front and required sets of patches to be made. The "T" shape was to indicate the involvement of the original unit in the Siege of Tobruk.

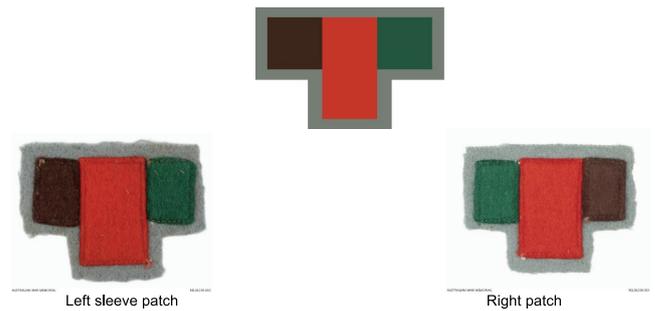


Photo 9. Original colour patches of the 2/9th Cavalry (Commando) Regiment.
Source: AWM

Miniature Colour Patch

In August 1941 approval was given by the Military Board for members of the 2nd AIF to allow personnel who had served overseas in units to wear a miniature colour patch of that unit. The miniature patch was 3.5 cm in width compared to the larger colour patch which was 6 cm.



Photo 10. Khaki battle dress jacket which belonged to VX78043 Corporal Lea-Smith. The jacket is in original configuration. It is complete with 'Double Diamond' miniature colour patches of 2/6th Commando Squadron and full-sized colour patches of 2/7th.
Source: AWM



Photo 11. Khaki battle dress blouse of Corporal Charles Hazel. The jacket is in original configuration and complete with 'Double Diamond' miniature colour patches of 2/3rd Independent Company and full-sized colour patches of 2/8th Commando Squadron.
Source: Johnson private collection

¹⁵LHQ (CGS) Memo No 90863 3 June 1943.

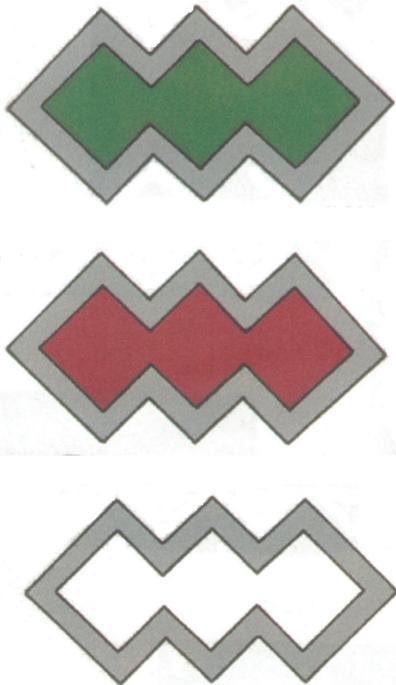
¹⁶Glyde p.77





Photo 812 Studio photo circa 1943 of Swiss born Trooper Charles Junod of 2/5th Commando in battle dress with miniature colour patches of possibly the 1st Independent Company and full-sized colour patches of 2/5th Commando Squadron. Note also overseas service stripes on his right cuff and the Double Diamond badge on his slouch hat puggaree. Source: Craig Lovejoy private collection

Unknown Badges. The three badges shown below were manufactured for Army Ordnance during WW2 in NSW. The Australian War Memorial or National Archives has no detailed Army records as to what unit these colour patches were allocated for. There are records of these patches being manufactured in NSW and are in the Ryan Collection at the Australia War Memorial¹⁷. Being a triple diamonds design, they may have been proposed for the newly created Cavalry (Commando) Regiments in 1943 however there has been no evidence found to support this theory.



Unknown triple diamond colour patches Source: Glyde plate 67

Other Special Units with Double Diamonds Colour Patches

Independent Companies were not the only WW2 units to wear the Double Diamond colour patch.

Northern Australia Observer Unit 1940 -1945

The 2/1st North Australia Observer Unit (2/1st NAOU) was an Australian Army reconnaissance unit of World War II. Nicknamed the "Nackeroos" and "Curtin's Cowboys", the unit was formed in early 1942 in the Northern Territory and was a light horse mounted unit that was tasked with providing early warning of Japanese activity in northern Australia at a time when an invasion of the country was expected. As the threat of Japanese invasion dissipated the unit's operations were curtailed in 1943 and it was eventually disbanded in the early months of 1945. The unit is a predecessor of modern-day Regional Surveillance Force units of the Australian Army. The colour patch number 1048 below was initially ordered in 1942 however badge number 1049 was supplied in error, and it was not until late 1943 that the correct badge was issued¹⁸.

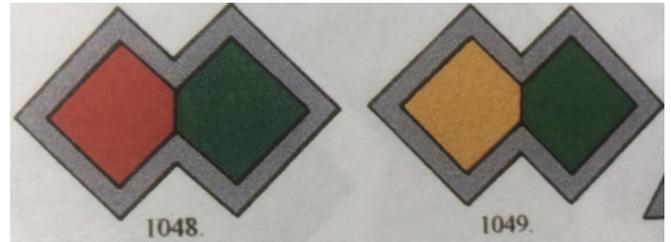


Photo 13. 2/1st North Australia Observer Unit Source: Glyde Plate 45

New Guinea Air Warning Wireless Company 1944 -1945

Initially known as No 4 Company, 18th Line of Communication Signals (NGAWW Company) (1941-43) was renamed in 1943 to the New Guinea Air Warning Wireless, also known as the "New Guinea Air Warning Wireless Company", "NGAWW", or "The Spotters", was a unique signals unit of the Australian Army formed in January 1942 in Port Moresby, Territory of Papua to provide early warning of Japanese air attack, and subsequently providing surveillance of shipping and ground-based troops.

In October 1943, the unit was given "Separate Independent Establishment" status under the control of New Guinea Force^{19, 20} becoming one of only two non-commando independent companies. Prior to this they had been known as No. 4 Company, 18th Line of Communication Signals (NGAWW Company). They were subsequently authorised to wear the "double diamond" colour patch in 1944²¹. The unit colour patch

¹⁸Commando White Diamond, Astill p.5

¹⁹<https://www.awm.gov.au/unit/U55951/>

²⁰According to the Australian War Memorial this occurred in October 1943.

²¹Lord, Cliff; Tennant, Julian (2000). Anzac Elite: The Airborne and Special Forces Insignia of Australia and New Zealand. Wellington, New Zealand: p 15 and 97.

¹⁷Glyde, p202



was made up of the double diamonds of the independent companies (later commando squadrons) in purple (denoting divisional engineers or signals) on a grey background with the white over blue flash of the Corps of Signals, initially in a zigzag pattern forming a "W" (badge 782 below), but later as a rectangle in the centre of the field (badge 783 below)²².

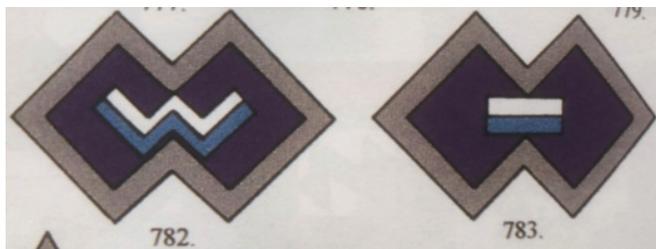


Photo 14. New Guinea Air Warning Wireless Company
Source: Glyde plate 34



Photo 15. NGAAW first style colour patch.
Source: Royal Australian Corps of Signals Museum

Headdress

The address of personnel undertaking special operations was generally that same as their respective service and corps. Initially in 1941 the usual headdress was either a slouch hat or peak cap and it was only later that woollen or cotton berets were worn.

Photo 16. VX38890 Captain (Capt) David St Alban "Dade" Dexter, initially of 2/2 Independent Company (Sparrow Force) wearing a service peak cap and the colour patch of 2/4 Independent Company which he commanded at the Tarakan landing in Kalimantan. Dexter was wounded five times during his service²³.



Photo 17. 2/8th Commando Squadron khaki beret with both AMF and unit colour patch.
Source: AWM



Photo 18. New Guinea. July 1943. Members of the 2/2nd Australian Independent Company, which later became the 2/2nd Australian Commando Squadron in the Weisa-Waimariba area, New Guinea, about July 1943. Note the khaki woollen berets.
Source: AWM



Photo 19. Armoured Regiment black beret worn by Corporal Lea-Smith, 2/7 Cavalry (Commando) Regiment.
Source AWM

Other Specials Unit Badges and Insignia

Z Special Unit

There was no official entitlement to a colour patch for Z Special Unit as being an administrative unit encompassing Army members of SOA it was not on the Order of Battle and therefore not an operational unit and therefore not allocated a colour patch. It is understood from discussions with personnel who were formerly with SOA that no colour patches were worn on either the uniform or headdress. However, there are photos of some Army personnel who were posted to SOA wearing colour patches of their former units. This is particularly the case with those who came from the Independent/commando companies.

²²Glyde, p111

²³He was one of the five serving sons of Padre Walter Ernest Dexter DSO MC DCM, a mounted trooper in the Boer War and a military chaplain in the First World War. Following the war David Dexter wrote Part VI of the Official War History, The New Guinea Offensives.



There was an unofficial colour patch worn a few weeks in late 1943 by AWAS personnel serving as typists and stenographers with the unit at Victoria Barracks, Melbourne. This badge was a black/brown Z over a square badge with horizontal green, white, green²⁴.



Photo 20. Z Special Unit colour patch
Source: Glyde, plate 61

The author, Lorna Ollif²⁵, refers to the colour patch in her history of the AWAS²⁶, stating that HQ unit personnel were ordered to replace them with the LHQ colour patch as they were "exciting comment and enquiry". A letter originating from Lorna found in early 2021 explains:"

"One day, into our DORCA²⁷ office at LHQ, Victoria Barracks, Melbourne, a male messenger from the Camp Commandant's office entered- the old RSM, I think it was. To the two or three girls working there for "Z" Special, he made an important presentation. Each of us, who all wore the broad red and blue bands of LHQ, received a new colour patch. It was comprised of two bars, one white and the other green, and fight across it went a large dark brown 'Z', a patch which is now quite familiar to most who have had any connection with the Australian Army.

To us it was completely new, and we were fascinated. Of course, we wanted more details, and we were told it was the brand-new patch of the important new "Z" Special Unit. It had just come off the press, as it were, and as a reward, the few AWAS attached to "Z" Special were the first to receive the patch, which had not yet been issued to anybody else.

We were delighted, and of course, we knew what to do with a new colour patch. The next day it was proudly displayed on the shoulders of our uniforms. We were the centre of admiration and speculation from all and sundry of the other AWAS we encountered in the grounds of the Barracks.

But our pride was short lived. Two, or three weeks passed, and the messenger reappeared. His instructions were that we were to immediately take down the new patches and revert to the blue and red of LHQ. Dismayed, we demanded to know "Why?". His explanation was that there were few AWAS in the Unit, and therefore, only a small number had received the patches - nine, I think he said. However, we had all immediately displayed them, and already the citizens of Melbourne were demanding to know who were these girls parading around with a new and beautiful and intriguing colour patch?

Why did these few have what nobody else had? Not wishing to give Melbourne, and of course, elsewhere an explanation at that stage, the easiest thing to do was to demand that our beloved patches disappear immediately.

I kept my colour patches for many years, until finally they disappeared completely, courtesy of the moths of Sydney, as the patches were of woollen material²⁸.



Photo 21. LHQ Colour Patch worn by SOA HQ staff in Melbourne
Source: AWM

M Special Unit

According to former Coastwatcher Sergeant Jim Burrows, OAM Army personnel were posted to M Special Unit for administration purposes whilst training or deployed with the SOA but wore the badges relevant for their service²⁹. Many Coastwatchers were awarded Honorary Officer RAN status, with the objective that the enemy might not accuse them of being spies, if captured - a forlorn hope as many were captured and killed. In the field personnel only wore their national military identity insignia such as shoulder flashes, Australia badges etc. There was no official Army insignia for M Special Unit.

²⁴Glyde (1516).

²⁵A Sergeant in the Australian Women's Army Service, attached to the Directorate of Research and Civil Affairs (DORCA) at LHQ, Melbourne and was periodically attached to SOA.

²⁶A Sergeant in the Australian Women's Army Service, attached to the Directorate of Research and Civil Affairs (DORCA) at LHQ, Melbourne and was periodically attached to SOA.

²⁷Directorate of Research and Civil Affairs

²⁸Undated letter from Lorna Ollif to Elizabeth MacKenzie both of whom were wartime members of the Allied Intelligence Bureau and administered by Z Special Unit.

²⁹Email contact with author of April and November 2021.





Photo 22. Then Corporal Jim Burrowes in 1942 in uniform in family home backyard prior to heading north in 1942. Courtesy Jim Burrowes. Note the only badges or insignia being worn is Australia shoulder tabs. Source: <https://thelastcoastwatcher.wordpress.com/>



Photo 23. WW2 Army summer and field dress 'Australia' shoulder badge. Source:AWM

Parachute Qualification Badges

Many Australian and Allied Special Operations personnel who undertook parachute training at the Australian Parachute Training Unit which at the time was run by the Royal Australian Air Force at Richmond, New South Wales³⁰. They participated in parachute training alongside other Army personnel who were destined to join the 1st Australian Parachute Battalion and other Army parachute units. In 1945 SOA established its own parachute training facility at Leyburn in Queensland co-located with Flight 200 who provided the Liberator aircraft to undergo the training.

³⁰The school was initially raised in Laverton, Victoria on 3 November 1942 and relocated to Tocumwal, New South Wales the following week. The unit again relocated to RAAF Base Richmond on 13 April 1943.

This specialist training was required as these aircraft with the only ones capable at the time of flying to operational areas in North Borneo. Flight 200 conducted 26 personal drops comprising 93 paratroop operatives.

In January 1943 the Master General of Ordnance requested 400 British Army design parachutist badges, from the UK for use by Army personnel. However, these were never made available, and a local Australian local variant was designed and then produced by J&J Cash Australian Weaving Company the initial provision of 1000 badges. There are many versions of this badge as due shortages many were locally and produced by tailors.

The badge was worn on the upper right arm. Personnel who had undertaken operational parachute jumps wore the badge on their left breast above their medals³¹.

A metal version was requested for wearing on summer uniforms but was never approved. The Australian badge was superseded by the British pattern in 1952³².



Photo 24. Three versions of issued Australian Parachute wings. These were formally owned by a parachute qualified SRD operative. Source: Authors' collection.

³¹This was a practice adopted in the UK for personnel of the Special Operations Executive.

³²Glyde, p 201.





Photos 25 and 26. SRD operatives wearing the Australian Parachute wing on their breast indicating operational parachute jumps.



Photos 27. SRD operative Sgt John Frederick Hartley (NX78025) AK181 wearing the Australian Parachute wing on his right breast indicating operational parachute jumps. Unknown as to why it is on this side.

Source: Hartley collection

Other Parachute Qualification Badges

There were numerous SOA personnel who were attached to other allied missions and in particular Force 136, which was the Ceylon-based element of the British Special Operations Executive (SOE) and undertook operations in Southeast Asia, many in Malaya and Dutch East Indies. Captain John Morrison, formerly of 2/8th Independent Company, was one of the Australians who served with Force 136, and they undertook their parachute training at the newly established Indian Army No. 3 Parachute Training School, which was then located at Chaklala in what today is in Pakistan. The Indian Parachute qualification badge awarded was very similar to the British badge and distinctly different from the Australian parachute badge.



Photo 28. Captain John Morrison (back row on left), Posted to SOA and after further training he was detached to Force 136 (UK Special Operations Executive) operating in Malaya with fellow members of Force 136.

Source: AWM

Conclusion

Hopefully this article will provide new detail and context for readers. By better understanding the past, we honour the hard work and sacrifices of the members of those units and the anxieties of their family and loved ones at home.

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Letter of the 2nd/2nd troops on Timor from the Japanese

Vanessa Perez (Machin) came into the possession of some documents when Alan Luby passed away some years ago.

Alan was the medic with the 2nd/2nd Independent Company. He was responsible for saving many lives in Timor.

The Japanese lost approximately 1400 troops to the losses of about 40 on the Australian side.

The Japanese sent a note to the Australians demanding that they surrender, The Australians answered in the usual manner, and I will leave it to your imagination the words they used in their reply.

It reads:

*To the Australian and Dutch officers and soldiers.
The War is over. N.E.I fell in our hand in succession.*

*On March 9th all the allied forces surrendered to us
without any conditions.*

On Timor Island about 1,100 Australians and 100 Dutch soldiers under Lt Col Legat and Detiger did the same.

They are enjoying life and awaiting for you being supplied with bread, meat and fresh vegetables. Your movement and present location are reported to us through Rajahs.

If you continue fighting against us, there's not (sic) way but to conquer you. So come to us with this information and await for the return of peace with your friends.

Japanese Army March 14, 1942

No wonder the Aussies told them to 'Get Stuffed!'
The Japanese wording is a little strange, but you will get the picture.

CASUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY ADF ROLE PLAYER SUPPORT

Next Peak Pty Ltd is an Australian Veteran Owned Business (AVOB) that is committed to supporting the veteran community by offering meaningful employment opportunities to those who wish to continue their service out of uniform.

We are seeking expressions of interest from veterans who are interested in being employed as role players for ADF exercises. Rates are highly competitive and we will handle all of the administration and logistics.

To be considered you must have separated from the ADF on good terms, verify that you are physically and psychologically capable of performing the role, show evidence of vaccination against COVID-19, hold a baseline clearance or higher and not be currently serving as SERCAT 5-7 in SOCOMD.

The first training evolution is 15 June - 01 July 22 in Victoria. You would be required to commit to the full period.

This is a great opportunity to be around like minded veterans who want to continue to contribute to our national security. If this sounds like something you are interested in, please reach out to us at contact@nextpeak.com.au for more information.

Steve Wakelin
Director and Co-founder
Next Peak Pty Ltd



LEAVING THE ADF? BE YOUR OWN BOSS



Innovation Transport Services

Consistently Quicker

Contractor Opportunities

This is an opportunity to join Innovation Transport Services (ITS) as your own boss. ITS is a tailor-made service, local family business, specialising in transport and logistics solutions since 1999. ITS Transport provides various local freight services like parcel freight services, road freight transport and pallets freight services with pick up facility. Not to mention all of the other matters that come along with transportation like tracking the goods and making sure that they get safely to their destination. ITS provide the following services:

- Local Freight Transport Services
- Interstate Freight Transport Services
- Intrastate Freight Transport Services

Using the latest technology solution for operation like Intellitrac GPS Satellite Navigation System, ITS provide a service second to none. ITS provide all of the infrastructure for you to own and run your own transport business.

Key features include:

- Contract to award winning company
- Runs from Sydney to South Coast
- Price includes the truck and work contract
- 1st year guaranteed income
- Guaranteed work 38 hours per week
- Plenty of overtime
- Opportunity for growth
- Essential Service
- Ongoing contract
- Be your own boss
- Finance available to approved applicants

HR / HC Owner driver positions

ITS Transport Services is offering the opportunity to be your own boss. They supply a vehicle with work (that you purchase), a guaranteed income and an ongoing contract. This is an ideal opportunity for anyone from the Illawarra area or looking to relocate to the Illawarra area to transition back into civilian life with certainty. ITS is an established business with over 20 years of service and the packages come from 8 tonne crane trucks to semi crane truck and trailer combinations. On the job training provided, but you do need, truck driving experience, a HR or HC driver's licence and a c6 crane certificate (we can help organise) to apply.



Please contact **Christina Comelli** on **0402 811 002** or **Daniel Connolly** on **0427 382 043**.

www.itstransport.com.au

Thank you to the following companies for supporting Commando.





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- Multi-Engine Class & Instrument Ratings
- Diploma of Aviation (Commercial Pilot Licence - Aeroplane) AVI50219*
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*Townsville Flight Training provides training and assessment of these qualifications on behalf of TAFE Queensland (RTO 0275) who will award the qualification upon successful completion.



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- Commercial Pilot Licence - Helicopter
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