



A MEMORABLE DAY AT ARUNDEL CASTLE WITH OUR PATRON

The Malayan Volunteers Group warmly thanks Her Grace, The Duchess of Norfolk for her generosity in hosting such a wonderful day for members at Arundel Castle on 16th March. It was a day members will always remember, not only for the time and interest Her Grace took in talking to everyone present, but also for her gracious hospitality; the personal conducted tour of both private and public rooms at the

Castle; and the visit to "The Collector Earl's Garden", with its exotic Italianate water features, green oak pergolas and "dancing coronet" in the replica of "Oberon's Palace". A full report of the day, written by **Jill Smallshaw**, is included as a separate feature of the newsletter.

Our special thanks also go to **Lisa Ho**, wife of our Malaysian Secretary **Andrew Hwang**, for the dedication of her SATB arrangement for the hymn "Abide with Me", to the Malayan Volunteers who fell in both World Wars, and for a copy of the score in a beautiful frame, which was presented to **Rosemary Fell**. This will eventually be displayed in the MVG Archival section which has been requested in the new building extension at the NMA. The MVG is planning to use this music at the V-J Day Service in August, if it is possible to record the 4-part score. **Lisa** is a choral arranger, music composer and conductor of her Choir **Cantus Musicus**.

We send our warmest congratulations to **Anthony Cooper** on being awarded **The Darjah Setia Tuanku Muhriz Yang Amat Gemilang (DSTM)**, which carries the title of 'Datuk'. This is a new award created by the Sultan of Negri Sembilan on the occasion of his 63rd birthday, and was conferred on Anthony at a special ceremony in Kuala Pilah in January.

Julie Summer's new book, "When the Children Came Home" was launched in London on 3rd March. The launch was attended by several members of the MVG, two of whom, **Felicity Bartleet** (nee Daly) and **Dr. Nigel Stanley**, were mentioned in the chapter on the evacuation of civilians from Singapore. The book is reviewed by **Jonathan Moffatt** in the book section. It has been announced that **Tanjong Pagar Railway Station** in Singapore (also known as the Keppel Road Station) is to close on 1st July 2011. The station, and its associated line as far as the Causeway, is owned by Malaysian Railways, and it has been bought by the Singapore Government. It is not yet clear what is to become of the magnificent station building with its wonderful murals depicting Malay life on the walls of the main hall. It would be sad if these were to be lost and the building destroyed – for it was from this station that the POWs left to travel to Thailand in WW 2. For more information about the station and the moves to preserve it – see the website section.

Congratulations to MVG and PHT member **Leslie James**, who was invited to be "Speaker on Board" on the Malaysian section of the new twice-yearly "Fables of the Hills" journey of the Eastern & Oriental Express luxury train from Singapore to Bangkok. His talks include references to the Malayan Campaign and the Battle for Singapore. The next journey is scheduled for October. [N.B. The Editor was fortunate to hear Leslie's verbal account of the first journey, which sounded fabulous!]

The MVG is sorry to announce that **John Pollock** is stepping down as MVG Secretary Australia for personal and business reasons. We are very grateful to him for all his help over the past 2½ years. We thank **Elizabeth Bunney** for agreeing to take over these duties in Australia after the Perth Group Lunch on 11th April – see notice for Australian members.

We are grateful to **Liz Moggie**, in her capacity as Honorary Council Member of the Badan Warisan Malaysia, for arranging **Rosemary's** talks on "The Malayan Volunteer Air Force" in KL at the BWM building, and in Penang at the Penang Heritage Trust office in Church Street, Georgetown. Present at the talk in KL were relatives of former MVAF pilots, including **Philip Tan** whose uncle **Dr. Oh Lock Heng** crash landed his aircraft in December 1941 and was captured by the Japanese, and almost killed as a spy. Fortunately his family was able to pay a hefty bribe to get him released. **Conrad Talalla**, only son of **Sgt. Hector Edwin Talalla**, brought with him all the original MVAF photos taken by his father; his father's war medals; pilot's logbook & other WW 2 papers; Tiger Moth manuals; and his father's successful post-war compensation claims.

Our thanks also go to **Andrew Hwang** for all his research work into Volunteer matters in Malaysia. His research work is wide-ranging from enquiries into the fate of the 11 yellow flame trees planted at the Victoria Institute in KL in memory of those who served and died in WW 2; to finding out where and what has happened to the Volunteer HQs in KL, Ipoh and Penang; to obtaining information about the Borneo Volunteers; and to liaising with the relevant authorities to restore the Kuala Selangor War Memorial. Andrew meets with other MVG members in KL to discuss with them how best to proceed with these matters.

Merilyn Hywel-Jones has kindly agreed to deal with MVG's plans to plant 5 x 8 inch crosses in the FEPOW section of the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey on the Thursday before Remembrance Sunday. Each cross will show one of the 5 Volunteer Badges. They have to be specially prepared and cost £20 each. There are sufficient funds to cover this cost, but if any member wishes to make a contribution towards the cost of each cross, we would be very grateful.

Finally, we send sincere sympathies to our New Zealand members for the destruction and sad loss of life in Christchurch during the earthquake. We hope and pray that no-one has lost any loved ones in the disaster.

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR AUSTRALIAN MEMBERS OF THE MVG.

As mentioned in the editorial, we are very sorry to lose **John Pollock** as MVG Australia Secretary. However, John feels that the secretarial duties should be taken over by someone who has more time to devote to organizing meetings; to promoting the MVG; to encouraging new members to join the Group; and to assist with our attempts to present a Memorial to the Australian people commemorating the Australian members of the Malayan Volunteer Forces. He also feels that, at present, he cannot give more of his time to MVG matters, and is aware of the great work done by Hon. Veteran Volunteer member **George Hess'e** and **Elizabeth Bunney** in organizing services and lunches for members in WA.

As most Australian members live in or around Perth, WA, John thought that, perhaps, duties could be taken up by a member living there, and we are delighted that **Elizabeth** has agreed to take over from John. She has said that she cannot take up the reins until after 11th April, when the second lunch meeting, which she and **George** have arranged, takes place for members in Perth, WA. At this lunch, **Elizabeth** will explain her new role to members and have the necessary forms available for signing up to the new MVG Account which she has arranged to open at her local Westpac Branch. Subscriptions for 2011 to 2012 fall due on 1st April (at A\$ 30 per family membership), but if you would, please, delay your payment until **Elizabeth** contacts you with the new bank details, it would make the change over simpler. If you have already paid your dues to John – he will transfer them to the new bank account. John is happy to assist the new secretary during the hand over and during her first year. May I encourage you, please, to pay your subscriptions promptly when you hear from **Elizabeth** – it will make her job very much easier!

We thank John very much for all the work he has done on behalf of the MVG in Australia since he started as Secretary in September 2008, and I am sure that our Australian members much appreciate his contribution to the Group.

[N.B. **Elizabeth** says that **Juliet Ludbrook** has a few more copies of her book "The Schoolship Kids" – which relates the stories of the many Malayan children, whose parents lived and worked in Malaya post-war, who were sent to school in Western Australia.]

"ABIDE WITH ME" – by Lisa Ho.
Music and words opposite.

This beautiful 4-part arrangement of the well known hymn, "Abide with Me" was composed by Lisa Ho and premiered on Monday 17th January at ABWM (Association of British Women Malaysia) House in K.L. at the memorial service for the late **Joanne Toshak**, who died tragically in a train accident at Marsden on 31st December 2010. Joanne was a contralto in Lisa's choir **Cantus Musicus**. Born in Kuching, Joanne's father served in Sarawak during the "Konfrontasi", and her son is currently serving with the RA in Iraq. Lisa has dedicated her 4-part (SATB) arrangement of this score to the Malayan Volunteers who fell in both World Wars.

A talented and well respected musician, Lisa conducts her own choir **Cantus Musicus**, arranges choral works for the choir and is a composer as well. She hopes that this new choral arrangement will be used at Remembrance Services where there is MVG representation, and it will be sung by the choir at this year's Remembrance Sunday service at the KL Cenotaph. It has also been copied to **Dr. John Roxborough**, a church historian in Dunedin, New Zealand for introduction into church services there.

The MVG plans to use a recording of the music at the V-J Day Service at the NMA on 15th August.

REPORT ON THE TALK AT BWM ON THE MALAYAN VOLUNTEER AIR FORCE – by Liz Moggie
[Written for the Buletin Warisan – and reproduced by kind permission of Badan Warisan Malaysia]

On Saturday, 15th January 2011, over 30 people gathered at the Heritage Centre at 11.00a.m. Almost a year after her talk "An Introduction to the Malayan Volunteers", **Rosemary Fell**, Hon. Secretary Malayan Volunteers Group (MVG) very kindly amended her holiday plans to speak once again at Badan Warisan Malaysia (BWM). This time her talk, entitled "Unarmed, Unescorted and Unwanted", told the story of the Malayan Volunteer Air Force (MVAF). **Rosemary** took us through the formation of the Flying Clubs, the basis of the MVAF, and the bravery and antics of the early pilots in their rather delicate-looking "flying machines". Her talk was well illustrated with power point photographs of both these men and their machines. In their light unarmed aircraft the MVAF crews flew over 2,000 hours in hostile skies of the 11 weeks of the Malayan Campaign. Reconnaissance, passenger service (both **Percival** and **Gordon Bennett** were frequent passengers) and intelligence gathering were some of the major roles of the MVAF.

The focus of the talk attracted a number of people who had family members associated with the Malayan Volunteers. **Dr. Henry Tung** whose late wife's uncle was the colourful **Flt. Lt. Loke Yaik Foo** had brought him to our attention at last year's talk. **Dr. Tung** has since collated more information and photos which **Rosemary** included in her talk. Members of the well known K.L. **Talalla** family were also present. They are related to the 2 MVAF brothers 'Jimmy' and 'Sonny' and their MVAF cousin **Hector**. Also present was **Datin Bahariah Md Yusuf** whose father, **Pte. Md Yusuf bin Harun** was a member of No.3 Platoon, A (M.G.) Company, 4/SSVF. BWM member **Dato' Anthony Cooper's** father (who died in captivity) **Major G.D. Cooper** of the Manchester Regiment was "attached to the Volunteers" possibly at Port Dickson. The **Dato'** attended the talk with his sister and brother-in-law. Their stepfather, **Pte 13876 Richard Middleton-Smith** of the 1/SSVF survived the war.

There was a question and answer session which raised a number of points. **Col. (Ret.) Max Theseira** of the RMAF queried whether some of the first Malaysians (of the Army Air Corps and the Auxilliary Air Force) might have been trained by former MVAF members. Another query was how "voluntary" were the Volunteers? Subsequent discussion on this confirmed that

Abide with Me

For the Malayan Volunteers who fell in the World Wars

Henry Francis Lyte

Moderate J = 92

William H. Monk, SATB arr. by Lisa Ho

SOPRANO

A - bide with me, fast falls the e - ven - tide; The dark-ness deep - ens,
 Swift to its close ebbs out life's lit - tle day. Earth's joys grow dim, its
 I need Thy pres - ence ev' - ry pass - ing hour. What but Thy grace can

ALTO

A - bide with me, fast falls the e - ven - tide; The dark-ness deep - ens,
 Swift to its close ebbs out life's lit - tle day. Earth's joys grow dim, its
 I need Thy pres - ence ev' - ry pass - ing hour. What but Thy grace can

TENOR

A - bide with me, fast falls the e - ven - tide; The dark-ness deep - ens,
 Swift to its close ebbs out life's lit - tle day. Earth's joys grow dim, its
 I need Thy pres - ence ev' - ry pass - ing hour. What but Thy grace can

BASS

A - bide with me, fast falls the e - ven - tide; The dark-ness deep - ens,
 Swift to its close ebbs out life's lit - tle day. Earth's joys grow dim, its
 I need Thy pres - ence ev' - ry pass - ing hour. What but Thy grace can

7

S.

Lord, with me a - bide!
 glo - ries pass a - way.
 foil the tempt - or's pow'r.

When o - ther help - ers fail and com - forts
 Change and de - cay in all a - round I
 Who, like Thy - self, my guide and stay can

A.

Lord, with me a - bide, a - bide! When o - ther help - ers fail and com - forts
 glo - ries pass a - way, a - way. Change and de - cay in all a - round I
 foil the tempt - or's pow'r, tempt - or's pow'r. Who, like Thy - self, my guide and stay can

T.

Lord, with me a - bide, a - bide! When o - ther help - ers fail and com - forts
 glo - ries pass a - way, a - way. Change and de - cay in all a - round I
 foil the tempt - or's pow'r, tempt - or's pow'r. Who, like Thy - self, my guide and stay can

B.

Lord, with me a - bide! fail and com - forts
 glo - ries pass a - way. all a - round I
 foil the tempt - or's pow'r. guide and stay can

12

S.

flee, Help of the help - less, oh, a - bide with me!
 see, O Thou who change - st not, a - bide with me!
 be? Thru cloud and sun - shine Lord, a - bide with me!

A.

flee, Help of the help - less, oh, a - bide with me!
 see, O Thou who change - st not, a - bide with me!
 be? Thru cloud and sun - shine Lord, a - bide with me!

T.

flee, Help of the help - less, oh, a - bide with me!
 see, O Thou who change - st not, a - bide with me!
 be? Thru cloud and sun - shine Lord, a - bide with me!

B.

until January 1940 men were truly "volunteers" – after that date able-bodied British males aged 18 – 55 were required to serve. The local-born were, of course, always volunteers. (Did this apply to Malaysians of the MCS I wonder?) There were no members of the Press present (so no publicity in the papers) but this was a godsend to **Rosemary** who was able to chat at length with members of the audience. New members were recruited for both BWM and MVG. BWM is honoured that **Rosemary**, accompanied by her husband **Donald**, flew in specially to give her talk. We trust that the interest generated by the revival of commemoration of those who served our Country some 70 years ago will see a renewed commitment to ensure the conservation and preservation of the Memorials in their honour.

POSTSCRIPT

Rosemary, Donald and **Liz** drove across to **Kota Bahru** where we spent some time looking at the areas of conflict of December 1941. A word of advice to those contemplating a visit to the beaches (**Kuala Pa' Amat, Sabak and Badang**) of the Japanese Assault – recent erosion has altered the coastline and one needs a guide familiar with the area. There are no information boards to assist. We located the airfields of **Pengkalan Chepa** (now **Kota Bahru's Sultan Ismail Airport**) and **Gong Kedah** (now a TUDM Airfield) but we did not have time to pinpoint the exact location of the former **Machang** Airfield. The **Museum Perang** housed in the former Bank Kerapu in K.B. contains a wealth of information with excellent maps, diagrams, photographs and captions in both Malay and English. One needs at least 2 hours to take it all in. Just around the corner on the riverbank in front of the Grand Riverview Hotel (ideally sited for walking to the Heritage Buildings area) is a WW11 Pillbox – the only one we saw in spite of various instructions that a number still remain.

Conscious that Railway communications played an important part in pre-war **Kelantan** we visited the stations of **Tumpat, Wakaf Bahru and Kuala Krai**. Official histories tell us that the retreating British troops were evacuated down the line from **Kuala Krai** to **Kuala Lipis** because "there were no roads". Yet the Japanese troops managed to advance down the coast using "rough cart tracks"...

Finally, after crossing the East West Highway, we arrived into **Penang** where **Rosemary** was kind enough to repeat her talk at the **Penang Heritage Trust** premises on 23rd January 2011.

SECRETARY'S TALK IN GEORGE TOWN, PENANG – by Leslie James

On Sunday afternoon 23rd January 2011, MVG Secretary **Rosemary Fell** gave a talk on the Malayan Volunteer Air Force (MVAf) to members and friends of the Penang Heritage Trust (PHT). The audience comprised local and expatriate members of the PHT and included PHT President and leading local historian **Khoo Salma Nasution**. **Rosemary** was introduced by MVG member **Leslie A.K. James** who is also editor of the PHT Newsletter.

Entitled "Unarmed, Unescorted, Unwanted – The Malayan Volunteer Air Force", **Rosemary's** talk was supported by an interesting power point presentation with contemporary photographs of MVAf pilots and their aircraft. Of particular interest in the development of the MVAf was the role of the early flying clubs in Penang, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and elsewhere in Malaya which not only popularized flying and trained pilots but also formed the basis of the fledgling air force in the pre-war years. **Rosemary** also drew special attention to the fact that the MVAf attracted volunteers from the local community as well as Europeans, two of the most famous local volunteer pilots from the Kuala Lumpur Flying Club being the **Talalla** brothers **Henry** and **Cyril** who joined the Malayan Volunteer Air Force, and after advanced flying training with the Commonwealth Air Training Plan in Canada, flew with the RAF in Europe. **Cyril** was awarded the DFC and bar. **Henry** was killed when his Typhoon was shot down over Normandy in July 1944.

RETURNING TO THE U.K. ON S.S. SARPEDON IN 1945 – Was anyone else on this ship asks John Hay?

There are some big-time enquiries going on about returning POWs. Here's one enquiry about families returning at the end of the war. It may have been a less intense time for some, but it was a worrying time for wives and mothers returning home. My father sent his wife and her 3 children from Malaya to Melbourne in very good time. He became a POW on the Railway. Although Victoria was a much-loved haven during the war (a retreat to Marysville when panic about a Japanese invasion of Australia sent coastal residents scattering, was an idyllic farm visit for we kids), my mother took us back to the U.K. just as soon as she could.

We embarked on the Blue Funnel Liner S.S. Sarpedon in Melbourne, sometime in late summer 1945. She was painted grey, with her gunners still on board. When we reached Fremantle, all the returning expats were sent off for the day. We were returned late in the evening to see the ship's funnels repainted and floodlit, a brilliant blue. 65 years later I still remember it vividly.

When we reached Durban, excited mothers gathered round a notice board, rejoicing as they saw their husbands' names listed as released POWs. Our mother, in what she later described as the worst day of her life, took us down to our cabin to tell us that our father was not coming back. For us children, the 9 weeks on the S.S. Sarpedon was a wonderful romp, with 50 children constantly entertained by gunners who had themselves survived the horrific dangers of merchant convoys and were finally heading home. I still feel deeply guilty about it.

My mother's courage was finally tried to the limits while we sat on the Liverpool docks in the icy dark while our luggage was dragged last of all from the hold, as the customs officers trawled her purse for her last shilling to pay duty on the fruit she had brought back for what remained of her family (one husband, one brother, one brother-in-law, one parent, two parents-in-law gone since she had last been in England). We boarded the late night train which rattled through the fog towards London. Arriving there around midnight, with her three wretched children and the remains of 4 years in Australia, her purse emptied by the Liverpool customs, she must have felt as helpless as a very unhelpless woman had ever felt. A total stranger took us to

the nearest hotel lobby and went out to find a taxi on an impossible night. He finally sent us on our way in a taxi that, literally, could not see either side of the road in the depth of the night in a practically impenetrable London pea-soup fog. We arrived in the early morning in the shattered household of her sister-in-law, where we, the spoilt children of war years in the paradise of Australia, turned up our noses at the semolina served by relatives who had lost a father but had finally survived the war.

Is there anyone out there who also travelled home on the S.S. Sarpedon? Do you remember the dates?

[Editor: If anyone can help John, he can be contacted through Jonathan or Rosemary if not directly.]

DATO' ANTHONY COOPER

As mentioned in the editorial, we are delighted to report that **Anthony Cooper** was among 25 people who received State Awards from **The Sultan of Negeri Sembilan, the 11th Yang Dipertuan Besar of Negeri Sembilan, Tuanku Muhriz ibni Almarhum Tuanku Munawir** on 14th January 2011, on the occasion of the Sultan's 63rd birthday. **Anthony** has been awarded the title of "**Datuk**" for his services to Malaysia as Price Waterhouse Malaysia's senior partner. At a glittering investiture at the Palace in Kuala Pilah, there were only 2 other recipients with **Anthony** of the newly created award of the **Darjah Setia Tuanku Muhriz Yang Amat Gemilang (DSTM)**.

PHOTO OF ANTHONY WITH HIS FAMILY MEMBERS ON EITHER SIDE OF THE SULTAN AND HIS WIFE



"MANNING THE BUSES" – AN INCIDENT DURING THE JAPANESE INVASION OF MALAYA IN 1942

An account by J.G Cornwell – dated 26th May 1959 and written in Ringlet, Cameron Highlands.

On the evening of 16th January 1942, a call came over the radio at Singapore for 50 Europeans who could drive lorries to go on a secret mission to remove some P.W.D. stores required elsewhere. They were asked to call at the Traffic Licensing Office, where they would receive further information and instructions, so next morning I went to the Office and entered my name as one of the Volunteers. My name was 67th in the list, but only about a dozen Volunteers were on the spot. The rest had gone to get clothes for a couple of days away from home. We were told it was not lorries we were to drive but passenger buses. We were to go to **Kluang, in Johore**, and report to the P.W.D. engineer there. We would get further instructions from him. It was soon evident that there were not going to be 50 Volunteers to drive the buses, because nearly all of those who had volunteered, having given their names, returned home and did not reappear. So it was decided that the Chinese drivers and attendants, who normally worked for the Bus Company, should take the buses, the attendants accompanying their drivers on the bus as usual. Fourteen European Volunteers were

all that could be found to go with them, so the buses were formed into six sections of eight buses each and two European Volunteers were allocated to each section.

I was given No.1 Section and my orders were to keep in front and take my Section to the P.W.D. Engineer at their Stores in **Kluang**. It was midday before we set out, each of the other Sections also having been placed under the orders of two Europeans and each to follow the other at a distance of a couple of chains, to allow other traffic on the road to pass. We were held up at the causeway on the Singapore side for about half an hour to allow a **Tong Kang** (lighter) to pass though at the **Johore** end of the causeway. It was about one o'clock by the time we left the woodlands for **Johore** and we proceeded through **Johore Bahru** and out on to the main road at an average speed of 35 m.p.h.

It is about 57 miles from **Johore Bahru** to **Ayer Kunning**, the crossways leading to **Malacca**, **Gemas** and **Kluang** and having passed through **Ayer Kunning** at about 3.00p.m. we arrived at **Kluang** P.W.D. Stores at about 4.00p.m. We found everything locked up and no-one expecting us. We left the buses at the P.W.D. compound and went to the Rest House to get a meal. It was 6.00p.m. before we tracked down the P.W.D. Engineer on the golf course, but when we told him that 50 buses had arrived for him, he was astonished to hear it. Earlier in the day he had been told that a fleet of buses would be passing through **Ayer Kunning** at about noon and that he should send a reliable man to **Ayer Kunning** with a written message to be handed to the European on the leading bus. These were instructions that the buses were not to continue to **Kluang** but to go to **Labis**, which was about 47 miles along the **Gemas** road. On arrival there, the buses were to enter the **Labis Oil Palm Estate** and be handed over to the Colonel of the **Maratta Indian Regiment**, encamped under the palm trees on the estate. Travelling at night by road could not be done, so we could not leave **Kluang** that evening. Still, we got our buses lined up on the Main Road ready to return to **Ayer Kunning** at dawn, which we did, setting off at about 6.30a.m. despite not having received the letter instructing us to go to **Labis**, all but one bus, which had been having engine trouble since soon after leaving **Singapore** and had now broken down completely.

We arrived at the **Oil Palm Estate** at about 8.30 a.m. and I went immediately to the Colonel to explain what had happened (though we never discovered what had happened to the 'reliable' messenger) and tell him that 49 buses were at his disposal. The Colonel had lost all his transport in the retreat before the Japanese down through Malaya. He now had 17,000 men and no vehicles and had asked **Singapore** for help. "I don't want any of your drivers, or any of you," he said, bluntly. "I've got plenty of men who can drive. I just need all the vehicles I can get." When I asked him where he was going, he replied, "Either north or south, it depends on whether or where we can stop the Japanese. My latest information this morning is that they have passed **Gemas** and are only 15 miles from **Labis**, so we shall have to get a move on."

I told him we were about 100 Chinese and 14 Europeans, who had come with the buses and we needed two of them to get back to **Singapore**. Fortunately for us he agreed immediately (he did not want to waste any time arguing) and we set off at once, my bus in the lead. We soon realized the danger we were in, for the Japanese could easily bomb us off the road if we were sighted. We stopped at a Chinese village just before **Scudai**, to get something to eat, which took about an hour, and then continued on our way to **Singapore**. As we neared the causeway we could see that the naval base lay under huge clouds of black smoke, rising from the oil tanks. That was why we had had no trouble on the road. All the Japanese planes had been concentrating on bombing the naval base.

We got to the Traffic Office at about 5.00p.m. and I reported to the officer in charge that we had delivered our buses as per instructions and asked what was next. "Nothing," he replied. "You have done your job. Now you can go home. We made no plans to use you for anything else for we never expected to see you again. We thought you would have been blown to pieces long before you reached **Labis**."

We were not a little put out on hearing this rather cavalier remark and there was some grumbling as we went to a restaurant for a meal. Nevertheless we were conscious of having done a good job and I felt I had finished the year in style. **I was 73 the following day.**

James George CORNWELL ('Jack') was a true Volunteer and 'Malayan' in the broadest sense. Born in 1869, he went to Malaya in 1899 as an Assistant Engineer with Malayan Railways until 1924. He then became a Vegetable Farmer/Planter in the Cameron Highlands until the Japanese invasion. After his "secret mission" to deliver the buses, he escaped to Australia on the 'Gorgon', arriving in Fremantle WA on 20/2/42. He farmed in Australia for 2 years, returning to the U.K. in 1945 before returning to Malaya. Post-war he became a planter on the Allington Hill Estate, Tapah Road, Perak, where he died in May 1960 aged 91. He is buried at Connolly Road Cemetery, Ipoh. Having spent 61 years in Malaya he was the oldest European resident at the time of his death. He had two sons Leonard and Sidney, who was in the MRNVR and lost at sea on 'HMS Stronghold'.

A VISIT TO MALAYSIA'S NORTH EAST COAST

By Rosemary Fell

In July 2010, Liz Moggie and I visited the RAF Museum at Hendon. It was a fascinating visit, and we found a section in the Museum which gave the history of the Straits Settlements and Malayan Volunteer Air Forces. Having recently given a talk to the RAF Butterworth and Penang Association on the Malayan Volunteer Air Force, Liz asked me if I would deliver the same talk to the Badan Warisan Malaysia [Malaysian Heritage Society] during our next visit to Malaysia, and join her in a trip to the north east coast of Malaysia to explore the invasion beaches and look for the various air fields used by the British and Australians to defend the coastline from enemy aircraft. And so the outline of a plan was hatched as we journeyed back to London from Hendon. This came to fruition in January 2011 with our visit to Malaysia.

On Saturday 15th January, my talk on the MAAF was delivered to the assembled audience at the Badan Warisan Malaysia's Heritage Centre, and the following day, Liz, Donald and I set out on our trip to the north east coast of Malaysia. I think I can say without hesitation that it was quite an adventure, and we would like to express our grateful thanks to Liz, not only for doing all the driving, but also for her careful planning so that everything went like clockwork and we saw as much as possible in the time we had there.

Heading out of Kuala Lumpur at about 10a.m. we eventually found ourselves on the right road to Kuala Lipis, travelling up through the heart of the peninsula and into the mountainous jungle covered areas of inland Malaysia. There was still plenty of evidence of newly planted rubber trees amongst the many oil palm plantations, indicating that there is a resurgence of the rubber industry. Our first stop was just outside Bentong, where we visited a friend of Liz - an elderly American teacher and widower who was living alone in a spacious ex-planter's house, packed full of colonial furniture and artifacts from a bygone age. Huge airy bedrooms with walk-in anti-mosquito cages and windows all round. We marvelled at his varied and interesting collection of antiques, and each came away with one of his sizeable collection of traditional earthenware cups for catching the rubber latex (nowadays this container is made of plastic or is even simply a plastic bag) and a few rubber seeds. We had a delicious lunch in the local Rest House in Bentong - a very much more traditional Malaysian town than the more modern cities on the west coast. We learned that there are only 2 European ex-pats now living in Bentong, and Ted Miles is one of them.

Leaving Bentong, we came to an interesting small town called Raub with a Rest House and Padang. Being Sunday the town was mostly closed, and we drove on without stopping long, but we did learn that there were silver and gold mines in the area. We thought it would be interesting to have a look at the "Avocet" Gold Mine, but when we saw armed guards at the end of a long, dusty un-made road leading to the mine, we decided to re-trace our steps! We arrived in Kuala Lipis at about 5p.m. Kuala Lipis had been an important centre during the colonial and war-time eras. It looked a little bit run-down now, but the station still remained in the heart of the town, and it was through this town that troops were evacuated by train from the front line at Kuala Krai, there being no well defined roads to use. The line is still narrow gauge and the rolling stock we saw looked pre-war, but probably wasn't - just old! Much of the town was also closed by the time we arrived, but we managed to find a small Chinese stall cooking noodles, which we enjoyed for our dinner.

Kuala Lipis still has its old colonial-style black and white Rest House - also closed when we drove into the car park on Monday morning. Catching a glimpse of a railway bridge, we drove down a very narrow street which ended at the railway line which crossed the river via an old iron bridge. Liz and I thought we would walk across this bridge via the wooden footbridge which ran on one side of the track. Health and safety would have had a field day! When there were more gaps than wooden boards, we decided to return before the footbridge collapsed altogether! However it's still hard to visualize this rail track as being the one and only main line of retreat for the troops stationed up in Kota Bahru*.

Driving out of Kuala Lipis, we noticed from the map that the road more or less follows the line of the railway through the hills for many miles, and indeed, we kept on catching glimpses of the railway as we drove along. We saw a train only once when we stopped for coffee (Malaysian style - strong and black with condensed milk at the bottom) at Merapoh, a rest stop, seemingly miles from anywhere, for long distance coaches. The train rattled past us as we sat drinking our coffee. The countryside was lovely, mostly palm oil plantations with some rubber being grown - all interspersed with secondary jungle. At the town of Gua Musang, the road crossed over the railway line and headed north east to Chiku, while the railway followed a different route to Kota Bahru. It was a long drive, and Liz kept her concentration up hill and down dale through beautiful scenery. The roads are good but not dual carriageway, and the local people do drive very fast, so one has to be aware of this. We arrived in Kuala Krai in time for a late lunch. We found a small coffee shop under a former hotel - now closed - and asked what they had to offer. Strictly self service was the answer, but they could do 'chicken chop' for 3 - a traditional colonial-style dish of fried bread-crumbed boneless chicken, served with chips and a bit of salad and tomato. Excellent. At Kuala Krai the railway once again caught up with the road, but the station looked very rundown and the railway buildings where the staff once lived were almost derelict. Apart from that, the town was in the traditional style of parallel streets with shop houses and walkways under the shop arches. It was to this railway station that the entire British North-Eastern Defence Force fled for their escape south by train in December 1941- along the very line we visited. The old Sultan Ismail Railway Bridge outside Kuala Krai, across which the men fled, still survives, but we did not find this, although its structure is similar to the old colonial bridge we saw at Kuala Lipis.

On we drove, through Machang where one of the 3 war-time airfields in the north east had been sited, but is no longer there. We arrived in Kota Bahru at about 5p.m. and found the Grand Riverview Hotel very easily, with its prominent position overlooking the river. Time to explore the town. The hotel was within walking distance of all the main areas of historical importance. We found the Padang with the WW1 War Memorial, and on the far side was the War Museum, the Royal Museum (*Istana Batu*), the Royal Customs Museum (*Istana Jahar*) and Merdeka Square, but by this time they were all closed. More difficult to track down was the night food market, but we did find it eventually and tried out some Kelantan specialities

*N.B. Note spelling of Kota Bahru as per Media Masters WW2 Battlefield Guide

including chicken satay with blue coloured rice and sambals followed by typical Kelantan *Kuih*, which were delicious. Our visit to the *Muzeum Perang* - War Museum - the following morning was very interesting, and we spent 2 hours there. Sadly we were the only visitors. Outside there were some wartime relics including a damaged aircraft propeller from an allied warplane (possibly a Hudson) and an iron landing barge used by the Japanese to land their soldiers on the beaches. Designed for 10 men plus bicycles, we wondered how and where they would all fit in. No wonder so many drowned in the rough monsoon seas as they came ashore. Fortified with a dish of *roti canai* - pancakes of Indian origin - we made our way to the State Museum where we saw Shadow Puppets, Spinning Tops and the traditional Kites as well as many other interesting local carvings.

The afternoon was spent in following the railway line once more. Our main objective was to drive to Tumpat - the town at the end of the railway line, north of Kota Bahru. Here we found the station yard with engineering sheds and some old rolling stock. No-one questioned us as we parked the car and had a good look round, walking through the engineering shed and across to watch some work being done on a carriage coupling. As we watched, an ancient-looking diesel locomotive came in with a few carriages and was coupled up to the repaired carriage. The engineer came over to chat to us in perfect English. Then it was back to the coast to look for the beaches where the Japanese had landed, and signs of any remaining pill-boxes or wartime fortifications. We came to a beach called *Pantai Seri Tujoh* - Beach of the 7 Lagoons - now a popular tourist area. Although this was not an area where the Japanese had landed, we had read that there were remains of fortifications there, but we could not find any signs of these. It had been a very interesting day, as we returned to Kota Bahru full of enthusiasm for more exploration.

With very few signs to help anyone trying to find the invasion beaches, we set off on Wednesday morning, determined to discover the beaches where the Japanese had landed. Before leaving Kota Bahru, we had been directed to a wartime pillbox not far from our hotel, on the riverbank. It was almost obscured by the new embankment which was being constructed all along the river side - and it was full of rubbish! What we didn't know then, but do now, is that the sea has encroached inland for a distance of about 2 kilometers since December 1942. Thus most - if not all - of the pillboxes and fortifications on the beaches have been swallowed up by the sea, as shown in the *New Straits Times* article (on page 10) dated Thursday 3rd February 2011. This beach, called *Kuala Pak Amat*, was one of the areas where the Japanese first came ashore from their transports, although the beach was in fact an 'islet' in the river mouth, and not part of the mainland. The main invasion beaches were *Badang* and *Sabak* beaches, but the coastline has changed considerably since December 1942, as the above newspaper report details. *Sabak* beach still has one preserved pillbox - according to the "Media Masters' WW2 Battlefield Guide" which details the Japanese Conquest of Malaya and Singapore, but we didn't find it.

As we drove towards the coast, the first beach we came to was *Pantai Cahaya Bulan* (the Beach of Brilliant Moonlight) but this had not been one of the invasion beaches. In 1942 it was called *Pantai Cinta Berahi* (the Beach of Passionate Love) but re-named because the locals felt the name was inappropriate! However, with its initials the same as in December 1942, it is still known as PCB! Today this beach is a lovely sandy beach, with its life guard watch tower, where tourists flock to swim and enjoy the seaside. To the south of the tourist beach, the coastline has been saved from erosion by a long sea wall of granite boulders. The villagers, living in small kampongs on the coast under the shadow of the huge granite wall, are almost below sea level, and could be swamped at any time by tsunami waves. Although we came out to the coast at *Kampung Sabak*, we could not recognize the Invasion Beach as shown in books. We did find an area beyond the boulders where we could walk across a small beach and along a low cliff by the sea, and at the end of a short spit of land, where yet another tributary of the Kelantan River entered the sea, we found the remains of what appeared to be a section of a pillbox. It was certainly a structure made of reinforced concrete, but whether it was a wartime structure or post-war, we had no means of finding out. Returning to the car, we drove back inland through other kampongs and found a small *kedai runcit*, seemingly in the middle of nowhere, where we had a traditional black Malaysian coffee with condensed milk.

A short '*meronda*' through more kampongs inland from the coast brought us back to the area near the airport at Pengkalan Chepa which was the main wartime airfield where the Australians were based with Hudson aircraft. We had been invited to have lunch with Dr. John Newton, an ex-pat friend of Liz, who had designed his own house beside an inlet of water, part of the numerous waterways which flow into the South China Sea. In crossing one of the numerous bridges over these lagoons we saw a large '*biawak*' (monitor lizard) trying to steal fish from cages in the lagoon where fish are reared for food. We saw another in the Dr. John's lovely garden which runs down from his house to the lagoon. Between 5 and 6 foot in length, one would be rather nervous to find it as a swimming companion in the lagoon! After a long, leisurely and delicious curry lunch, our plans were to return to the coast and head south to look for one of the other wartime airfields at Gong Kedah where the *Vildebeeste* torpedo bombers had been based. As we left the airport perimeter, we came across the Japanese War Memorial, which we had read about. It was in a small, rather scruffy, park with a children's playground. Originally it had been constructed of 4 tall pillars holding a 4-sided clock between them at the top. With the clock now looted, it was in a poor state of repair. It seemed completely incongruous to find such a memorial to the Japanese dead here, after their devastating and overwhelming invasion of Malaya. Continuing on our way, we carefully following the road map, and were puzzled by the lack of signs to the airfield, but eventually found the sign and turned into a small road leading to it. The road was a narrow country lane and as we turned a corner, we realized the reason for the secrecy surrounding the location of the airfield. Gates across the road were manned by armed guards, and despite our polite request to 'have a look at a wartime airfield' we were politely told that it was now a Royal Malaysian Air Force Base and out of bounds to the public. We had to return the way we came, but at least we had found the airfield, which still exists. The third airfield was at a place called Machang, which, with Gong Kedah, acted as a satellite airfield to the main one at Pengkalan Chepa. Machang airfield is no longer there, we were told. We returned to Kota Bahru via the coast road - a much quieter and more rural route through the countryside, and small towns. Our final day in Kota Bahru took us retracing our steps southwards down the coastal road to Kandis, where we visited another friend of Liz - a lovely Malay lady called Wati - widow of Nik Rashiddin, who ran the *Akademi Nik Rashiddin*. His wood

carvings are renowned in Malaysia, and in particular his carvings of the handles for Malay Kris in wood and ivory. These intricate handles have a story to tell, and the importance of the owner can be determined by the type and intricacy of the carvings. Apart from the guided tour of the carvings, we were also shown round a traditional wooden Malay House with its structured living arrangements for family life. We reluctantly left Wati's house and headed south along the coast road to Kuala Besut, the port for Perhentian Island. After a late lunch at a local *kedai kopi*, where we met an English lady who was living near the town, we set off to drive across the peninsula via the East-West Highway to Penang. The road is good and fairly fast unless one gets behind one of the huge log-carrying lorries which creep up and down the steep hills in the mountainous hinterland regions of the peninsula. There are passing places on the hills, but waiting to reach these can be frustrating. The countryside is truly spectacular - vast areas of unending jungle covered hills, with wonderful views from the tops of the hills across the green mountains in the distance and incredibly steep valleys below the road bridges which cross them. Mile after mile of wonderful scenery went by as we first climbed up through the mountain region and then started to descend towards *Tasik Temenggor*. We were heading for *Pulau Banding* a small island in the lake where there is a delightful hotel called the Belum Rainforest Resort, where we spent the night. As the name implies, the hotel is very much in keeping with nature in its construction and running. There are guides who take visitors on jungle walks; on boat trips to look for *Rafflesia* flowers for example; and on other nature trails in the area. As a captive audience at dinner, we were entertained by an attractive display of Malay Dancing.

Friday, 21st January brought us almost to the end of our adventure and our arrival in Penang. However, we had one more visit to make in the town of Baling. For it was in Baling where the famous Talks were held in 1955 between the Malayan Federation led by Tunku Abdul Rahman (then Chief Minister) and the Communists led by Chin Peng. The talks were held in the Baling English School (now Tunku Putra Primary School) and although the School was closed as it was a Friday, the Caretaker showed us around. We saw the classrooms which were used for the talks, and the building where the CPM negotiating team slept at night. It was another fascinating piece of history to see personally. A further coincidence happened 2 weeks later on 6th February, when an article appeared in the New Sunday Times entitled "I could have shot Chin Peng". It was about an Iban Tracker called Jarum Antot who was a member of the Sarawak Rangers attached to the British Army during the Emergency. Jarum was ordered to track Chin Peng and carry out surveillance, but not to shoot him. He is now a *temenggong* (headman) in his village in Meraban, Sarawak.

Following the report in the 24th Edition of Apa Khabar about the parlous state of the Western Road Cemetery in Georgetown, and the notice in the local paper from the Municipal authorities for family members to come forward to claim their burial rights, we decided to visit the Cemetery to see what the situation was for ourselves. The situation did not seem as bad as we had feared. The cemetery was in a reasonable good state and most of the graves seemed well cared for. We were assured by the caretaker that the graves were not going to be dug up and the ground used for building. Next we visited the Protestant Cemetery in town, where Francis Light's grave can be found. Although the cemetery has been cleaned up, and many of the inscriptions on the graves re-painted so that they can be read, the cemetery still looks rather unkempt and in need of further attention. Much of the work done to date has been carried out by the Penang Heritage Trust, which has the enormous job to preserve and care for the many heritage buildings on the Island, and it does fine work with the help of its Volunteer members. Sunday afternoon, saw us at the Penang Heritage Trust Headquarters in *Jalan Gereja* for my second talk on the MVA. Here we met MVA members Harold Speldewinde and Leslie James plus PHT President, local historian Khoo Salma Nasution and secretary Clement Liang. It was a fitting end to a most fulfilling and fruitful week.

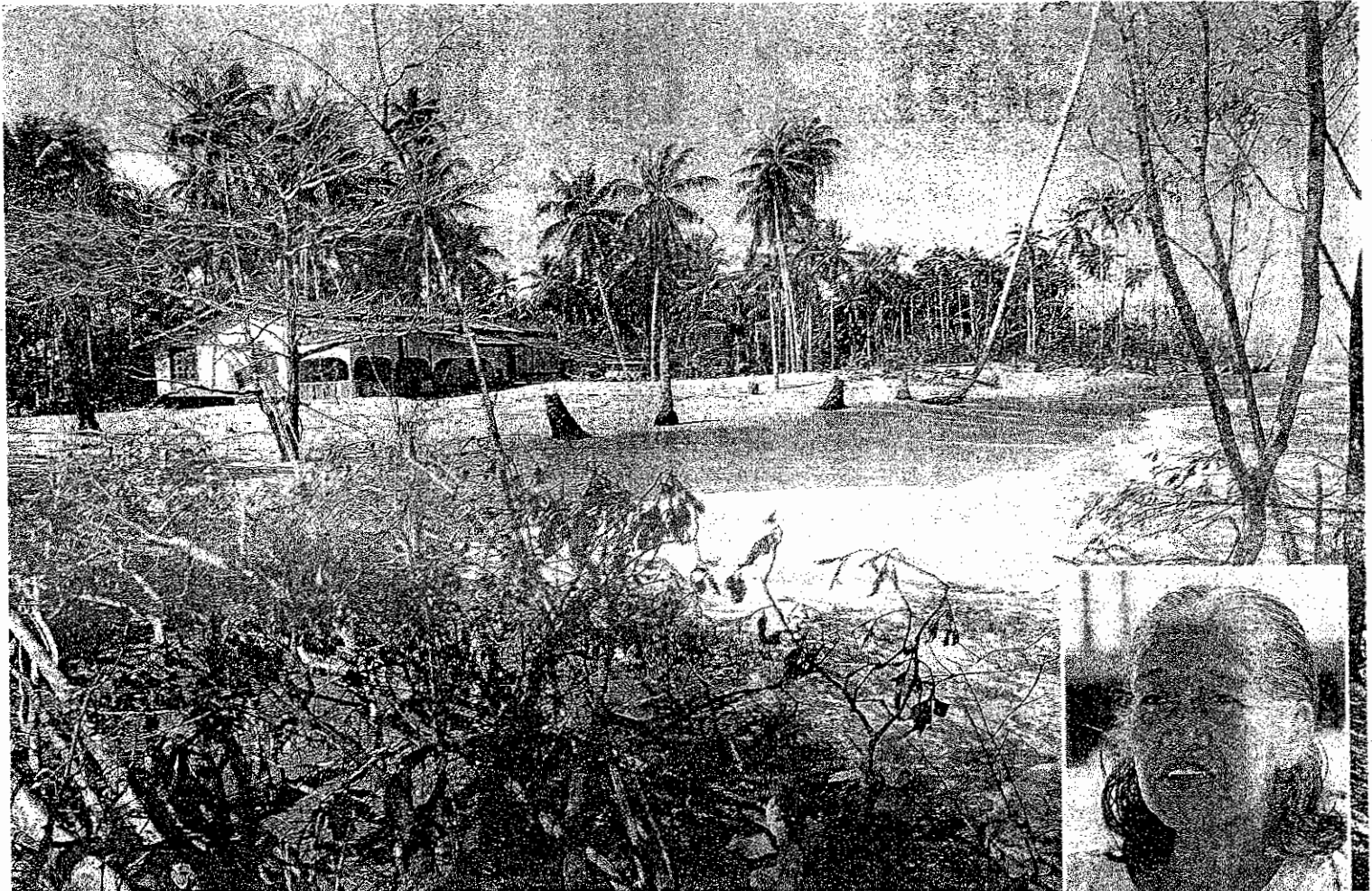
Kota Bahru still has plenty more to offer and a return visit is definitely on the agenda. Once again, our grateful thanks go to Liz Moggie for enabling us to visit this north east corner of Malaysia, and for planning such an interesting itinerary.

Christine Cavender's hotel guide to Malaysia - March 2011

In March I was fortunate to meet my sister who lives in Canada and together with our husbands we hired a car and spent 3 weeks touring Malaysia. We decided not to pre-book any hotels as we wanted to visit areas where we had spent our childhood between 1950 & 1955 and didn't want to be tied down to a schedule. Before we went we did some research on the computer and had an approximate idea of the standard and price range we wanted to pay each night. The only 2 hotels we booked in advance were for our first night in Kuala Lumpur and our last night in Penang. We started our trip by driving from KL to Kuantan and after visiting the elephant sanctuary we stayed just outside at The Holiday Villa Beach Resort and Spa at Cherating. A lovely hotel right on the beach with excellent facilities and very friendly staff. Before we left this hotel, the reception staff recommended 'The Primula Resort Hotel' in Kuala Trengganu, so we booked 2 nights in advance. Once again, this hotel was directly on the beach with lovely sea views and excellent facilities. We were even invited by the Sultan's brother to join in the BBQ and celebrations for his nephew's 7th birthday, and had a wonderful evening.

We then moved on to Kota Bahru and stayed at 'The Perdana Resort Hotel' in chalet style accommodation on the beach. This resort was looking slightly tired but had good facilities and was great value. We stayed 2 nights and then took the East-West Highway to Taiping, but broke our journey by staying at the excellent Banding Lakeside Inn which commanded stunning views of Lake Temenggor. We only stayed one night but had a superb boat trip around the lake and rainforest. After a couple of hour's drive we arrived at Taiping and checked into the new Flemington Hotel which offered stunning views of the Lake Garden and was within easy walking distance of the local highlights. As Taiping was where I spent my childhood we had many places to visit so stayed for 4 nights. This is a very historic town well worth visiting and still has many former colonial buildings.

From there we made our way to Penang for 4 nights before we left to return home. All these hotels had excellent facilities with swimming pool and all included breakfast and ranged in price between 140 - 190 Malaysian Ringgit, which, with an exchange rate of nearly 5MYR to the £1, was very good value. We had a wonderful time and would recommend anyone visiting Malaysia to visit the East Coast as it hasn't been hit by too much tourism yet. Taiping was much as I remembered it as a child. If anyone would like more details on the hotels - contact me on 01474 825172 or chrismikec@hotmail.com



The house belonging to Saudah Ibrahim (inset) is barely 30m from the beach in Kampung Pulau Pak Amat which has advanced two kilometres inland over the past 50 years due to erosion. — NST picture by Zaman Huri Isa

Waves threaten houses

By Nik Imran
news@nst.com.my

KOTA BARU: Saudah Ibrahim can hear the waves gently lapping on the beach when she goes to bed every night at her home in Kampung Pulau Pak Amat.

But the sound does not put her to sleep as many would expect.

Rather, she lies awake most nights fearing the moment when the waves would wash her house away.

Saudah's home is barely 30m from the beach which has advanced two kilometres inland over the past 50 years due to erosion.

While many have relocated deep-

er inland over recent years, Saudah has chosen to continue living there as she does not have the means to move.

"I do not have anywhere else to go as the house is the only property I own," she said, adding that she feared most for her 11 children and grandchildren who share her home.

She said the past week had been the worst as about 1.5m of sand had washed onto her front porch.

She said sea water would usually flood her porch by late afternoon when high tide and strong winds lashed the village.

"It is frightening to hear the sound

of winds and the waves that have crashed near my house every night over the last few days.

"I have sleepless nights when this happens.

"For the last three nights, we have been sleeping at a relative's house nearby," she said, adding that the water sometimes entered her home.

Saudah, who inherited the house from her parents, remembered that she had to walk about two kilometres to reach the beach when she was in school.

Then, she said, the area leading to the beach from her house had been covered with thick jungle.

"Even tigers and other wild an-

imals roamed the jungle when I was small."

Decades ago, she said, the villagers cultivated padi besides engaging in fishing activities.

But now, the rice fields are only a distant memory having been taken over by the advancing sea.

She said she had heard that the authorities planned to build a temporary embankment using sandbags soon to mitigate the erosion.

Her neighbour, Siti Zabariah Yusof, 60, said she also faced the same problem.

"It has been normal over the past week to be wading in ankle-deep sea water in our house."

UPDATE FROM ROD SUDDABY AT THE IWM

Rod has informed the MVG that he holds the papers of 2 other Malayan Volunteers, to add to the list given in A.K.24 (Oct):-
Major H.R.F. Mason – East Surrey Regiment attached to the SSVF during the Malayan Campaign.

C.H. Short – 1/SSVF "B" Coy – father of the late Frances Francis.

Although retiring soon, Rod says that he will be at the IWM for 2 days most weeks over the next 12 months, and is happy to assist with any queries from members. He can be contacted by e-mail:- rwassuddaby@hotmail.co.uk

EXTRACTS OF LETTERS FROM RICHARD PEALL – contd.
SEPTEMBER – NOVEMBER 1941

In memory of Richard ('Dick') Peall – 23/9/1907 – 15/2/1942 – by kind permission of Elizabeth Bunney

Monday, 8th September

It certainly looks as if conditions are likely to remain unsettled for awhile yet, and if you feel you want a decision now about returning, then it will have to be "stay put". But I think we can leave it until a bit nearer the time before actually deciding. But if **Dalgety's** start pressing you for a definite booking and payment etc. then you must tell them to cancel the passage for the time being. There should be little or no trouble in getting another passage later on when things are clearer. The remaining weekends this month are reserved for Volunteering and several evening parades as well, of course. Last night I went to **Afza's** wedding – **Dollah's** daughter – at the Boyan Kongsu House off Ipoh Road. It was quite entertaining, and, of course, cost me \$5 for a wedding gift! The bride and groom were both beautifully dressed (hired for \$15 from the local Malay 'Moss Bros') and sat side by side without stirring or speaking and I was given a special chair up by the "happy couple" while the rest of the males sat around chanting and singing. Behind me was a thin curtain shutting off the women (dozens of them) all giggling and scuffling around and presently an old hag (just my luck) popped her head through the curtain and invited me to go and inspect the bridal chamber. I followed her through to a small room containing a very large double brass bedstead all draped round with scarlet and pale blue silk hangings and curtains, scarlet sheets and bolsters and gold pillows and very elaborate ornaments all round the place. Most impressive and sinful-looking with all that scarlet! I was followed by all the women and half the men giggling and chuckling and nudging each other in high delight. The atmosphere was getting a bit overpowering by this time, so I pushed off shortly after.

Glad to hear on the news tonight that the R.A.F. have given Berlin the heaviest walloping yet; that's the stuff. And the old Russos seem to be holding out jolly well and dealing the Hun armies some very shrewd buffets. I wonder what **Roosevelt** is going to say in his broadcast on Thursday, coming on top of the "**Greer**" episode it might be something worth listening to.

Saturday am, 13:9:41

As I have a weekend camp starting midday today finishing at 8pm tomorrow – and am also on duty as an "umpire" to the L.D.C.* from 5pm until midnight on Monday and Tuesday, I am scribbling few hurried notes now so as to get some sort of letter off anyway. After the above, I have a parade on Wednesday evening, one on Friday evening, and another weekend camp next Sat/Sunday. Might as well join the Army and be done with it!

Lots of "black-out" practices starting Monday, for four days, hence my being roped in for L.D.C. exercises. Was up at **Bretherton's** (B' Coy Commander) on Wednesday evening for *pahits* to discuss the weekend show. Met **Mrs. Bretherton** who says she has heard of you from **Mrs. Bain** in Perth (Education Dept. **Bain**).

Good old **Roosevelt** seems to be getting a move on at last with his "Shoot at sight" orders. The Expression "Rattlesnakes of the Atlantic" is particularly good. **Adolf** and **Admiral Raeder** will just about go blue in the face.

*LDC – Local Defence Corps

Saturday, Sept. 20th

You will have seen from my cable and last letter that I really think it would be wisest to stay on down there for a bit longer, as I think the situation is no clearer now than it was when you left. I also still think it unlikely that we shall be invaded or raided, but I should feel easier with you both safely away from the possible risk for a little while longer. If we had no **Elizabeth** I might have said "return", but I honestly don't think we should run her into any risks for the sake of our being together again a couple of months earlier. And naturally you can't leave her there and come back alone. I suggest you fix a booking for the first boat leaving in the New Year, which means arriving here about mid January instead of mid November, a delay of two months. By the end of the year we should definitely be able to tell whether anything is likely to happen or not. It will be a pretty dud Xmas without you both, but of course if things clear considerably before then we might be able to rush you back in time to put you both in my Xmas stocking!

Tuesday, 23rd

Am now a year older than I was when I started this letter, and consequently a year wiser, and I still favour your staying on for a bit longer. Another reason is that it will be doing young **Liz** a power of good, and Heaven only knows when we shall get our next leave.

Have been very fully occupied since I last wrote – weekend camp on 13th and 14th in K.L. and then I "umpired" the L.D.C. from 5pm to midnight on 15th and 16th during the practice blackouts when all our various passive-defence

organisations held exercises. One good story (I don't vouch for its truth) is of a chap who volunteered to act as a "casualty" for the First-aid squads to practice on. They bandaged him and put him in splints and tourniquets and Lord knows what – and then dropped him off the stretcher and broke his leg!! Tickles me immensely.

Friday another parade, and then this last weekend still another weekend camp (with lots more rain) at Tanjong Malim. We were originally to sleep out in the open under our ground sheets, but in view of the weather we were finally quartered in the Sultan Idris College, which is now in use as a military hospital. I was put out on a "patrol" until about 1am and we got back pretty soaked and weary, but before going out I had spotted a room with 6 beds and only 3 patients in it, so I stripped and had a good rub down and crept off quietly in clean dry clothes and slid quietly into one of the empty beds – it was Jolly Gooood! All the others were sleeping on hard tables or the stone floor in the Dining Hall! I was acting in accordance with wise sayings of two eminent authorities, (a) our late R.S.M. "**Ossie**" who was always extolling "foresight, boy, a little bit of foresight" and (b) our **Brigadier Moir** who once remarked to us at camp – "any b.y fool can be uncomfortable"!! However, I was hauled out at 5.30am as the battle started again at dawn, and had to eat breakfast (sausage and mash! Pah!) at 5.45. We eventually got back to K.L. at 4.30pm and I found **Bob** and a few pals just finishing a curry tiffin – so I was in time for a jolly good meal, for which I was duly grateful.

Yesterday after tea I had a little doze in my chair and was in bed by 9.15, and today I am feeling grand. I expect to be pretty busy in the office from now on as **Henry Doig** has just gone to Singapore for a month's training with the V.R.A.F.* or something – and **Parkinson** (in Singapore) goes on a fortnight's local leave early next month!

Fortunately we have no parades next month as it will be "**bulan puasa**". [Ed: **Ramadan**]

Bob may not be going to Penang after all – not sure. I am still snowed under with work at the office but fortunately Volunteering has ceased during the "**bulan puasa**" except for mornings and evenings with the European N.C.Os. The Colonel has informed me that he wishes to see me at 6pm on Monday, so perhaps at long last he is prepared to listen to my request for a transfer, as I can't think of any "crime" that he would want to "mat" me for! Will let you know the outcome.

*VRAF – Voluntary Royal Air Force. [Ed: **N.B. Henry Doig was in the MVAF "C" Flight**]

Tuesday, 7th October

Saw the C.O. last night and he offered me a Commission – which I accepted! So no doubt it will go through in the near future and I shall then change my rank from C.S.M. to 2nd Lieut. He talked a lot of guff about the last time I was offered one (about 1936 or 1937) and said that my promotion from L/Cpl to C.S.M. had prevented them from making a similar offer again in 1939 but now things in the Bn. were more organized I "could be spared from C.S.M. and would probably be more use as a 2/Lt." Actually, of course, 'B' Coy is now short of two officers, **Capt. Bretherton** has joined the Malay Regt. (for the duration) and **Lt. Brown** has been transferred, so that **Walker** is now acting O/C Coy.

Tuesday, 14th October

Bob left for Penang on Thursday so am on my own again now. Still very busy at the office and have not been able to get down to S'pore yet as **Doig** is still away.

20th October

Don't suppose **Bill** is feeling too pleased about **Phil's** return in view of the latest Jap developments. I think that at the moment things look just about as black as they ever have been in the Pacific and Far East in general. Certainly I am relieved that you and **Liz** are still down there, and I'm afraid you must hang on for quite a time yet. I have always been pretty optimistic about peace out there but am not nearly so confident just now. So don't under any circs. start back unless I have agreed to it beforehand.

Tomorrow evening I'm going away for a holiday. I "won" Teluk Kemang Bungalow" (P.D*) in the draw and have it all to myself from Tuesday evening to Friday evening; can't get anyone else who can get away so am just going on my own anyway. **Doig** is back today so he can do my job for a few days. Tried umpteen people, but no luck. **Margaret B** and **Margaret W** and the kids are at another bungalow a bit further on so will be calling on them for a drink.

*PD – Port Dickson

Friday, 24th Oct

I believe I told you that our O.C. 'B' Coy (**Bretherton**) had joined the Malay Regt. and is here with them in P.D. in the barracks. He has asked me up to the Mess for a *pahit* tomorrow evening.

Saturday morning

I see that you want a snap of me in my "new uniform". Must wait until the Commission comes through first as I have heard nothing more since the interview with the C.O. Do you want it with sword or without!? And on a horse or off!? (Selangor Ricardo rides again!!)

Sunday evening, 9.45 Back in the flats K.L.

On Saturday evening **Bretherton** collected me and we went back to the Malay Regt. Mess and had a few snifters. He loses one "pip" by becoming a "regular" and is now Lt. instead of Captain. He is getting a very fine house allotted to him – up on the hill looking out to sea, and his wife and youngster are joining him there shortly. She is very pleasant indeed.

Saturday, Nov. 1st

Yesterday I had a ¾ hour flight around K.L. and the environs of the aerodrome in a club plane. **Harry Doig** took me up at my request. I have done so much foot-slogging on and around the aerodrome and cemetery that I wanted to get a "parachute-troopist-eye view" of the place. Very interesting it was, too.

Monday, 10th November 1941

Last week it rained every afternoon and so washed out 3 games of tennis that I had fixed. Consequently, sitting and reading every day from tea time to bedtime gave me a fine liver which I was able to work off on parade on Saturday and Sunday – as an officer, having duly received my Commission. The latest semi-official report regarding our next embodiment in camp is that it will probably be about March – for the usual two months. So I don't know what the devil to think about your return. Even if things clear up enough for you to come back in the New Year, it seems daft to arrive just as I go to camp for 8 weeks. On the other hand, not to see you until the end of April seems a Hell of a long time. I suppose we must just wait and see how things go on.

Tuesday, 11th Nov

Played singles yesterday evening with a **Capt. Smith** from East Camp; we managed to finish just one game before the rain pelted down again and then, of course, we had to run for it.

The Cameron Highlands schools are in trouble again. Infantile Paralysis this time! Four cases have been rushed down to hospital and one case has already proved fatal – a little girl aged 11 named **Davies**. Don't know which school is involved. Terrible business, isn't it? The other three kids are going on fairly well apparently. They had another Diphtheria scare recently, too! Nuffield's iron lung was used for the first time.

Churchill's speech at the Lord Mayor's Banquet (the one I can never take you to if you blow in your soup, or throw your cheese about!) must have given the old Japs a bit of a jar. War declaration within an hour of hostilities with U.S.A. and our ability to send a strong fleet out here. That's the stuff to give 'em. Your Aussie Prime Minister says Nov. 15th will be an historic date when the Jap Diet meets again. **Churchill's** warning came at a very appropriate moment. Reinforcements keep arriving in Malaya and I think perhaps my original optimism may have a better foundation than my recent pessimism after all. However, we should soon see now.

Saturday, 15th

I had a very nasty and unpleasant shock this morning when I got to the office and learned that poor old **Harry Doig** was killed yesterday evening in a flying crash. He was piloting a K.L. Flying Club plane about 6pm and had an Army officer – **Capt. Landray** – as passenger. They crashed a few miles outside K.L. and apparently both must have been killed instantaneously. I attended the funeral this afternoon – a joint military funeral for them both. No explanation yet as to how or why it happened – broad daylight and good weather, and **Henry** was an excellent pilot. Poor chap, very keen indeed on his flying, and always such a decent and cheery bloke. When we left the office yesterday afternoon about 4.30 he was in his usual cheerful mood, and then, 24 hours later, 6 ft. under the ground. Pretty grim, isn't it? Rotten bad news today too about the "Ark Royal" – thank Heavens only about a dozen men missing. On the other hand the passing of the revisions to the U.S. Neutrality Act will make an enormous difference to the Home supplies problem and is as good as a smashing naval victory in about three different oceans. As for the Japs and the Pacific in general, the position is rapidly reaching a head and we shall know what Fate has in store for us. If they climb down and patch up some sort of "understanding" with America, I shall probably cable "Pack up and come home", even if I do have to go to camp as soon as you arrive! Being an unmarried husband is a role I never want to play again! I see that the separated husbands and wives of Hong Kong are still holding mass meetings of protest – it's really rather funny; one recent report said that there were 34 divorces pending and several wives in Australia had been told by doctors that they would not "get better unless they rejoined their husbands!" Coo-er!

Sunday, 16th

Have just listened in to the news and hear that Canadian troops have been landed as reinforcements in Hong Kong. Thailand seems to be getting the wind up properly these days, don't blame her either, as I should imagine she is the most likely battlefield in this part of the world.

Sunday, 23rd Nov

Played tennis on Tuesday and was Volunteering on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Haven't yet been issued with a

horse so still have to march with "the men"! Tough, eh? I shall insist on a magnificent black Arab charger with a splendid dazzling shining coat and long main and tail (Both useful for hanging on to, by, for and with!) The Western Desert battle seems to be going pretty well, and perhaps by the time you get this some really big results may have been achieved; let's hope so. A good clean up there would have a tremendous effect on the whole situation – including Japan, probably. I seem to regard everything these days from the point of view of its effect on Japan – because that directly affects the date of your return to me.

Not much more news, so will start looking up a piece of Volunteering for Wednesday evening's parade. It will probably rain like blazes which will mean getting indoors and talking to them about something instead of getting them to do something outdoors. The rain just lately is amazing.

Sunday, 30th Nov

Well, of course, this weekend seems to mark a pretty critical stage in the Pacific situation, and everything here in Malaya is quietly and efficiently being put on a basis of "immediate preparedness" for anything that might crop up. Military leave cancelled, everyone "standing by" and even the L.D.C. called out quietly this afternoon! I was supposed to be playing bridge at the Club this evening with **Whit** and **Mearns** and an Army bloke, but the Army bloke has been recalled and **Whit** (in the L.D.C.) is on duty somewhere until 6am tomorrow morning! We in the Volunteers are on "6 hours notice" i.e. must report for mobilization within 6 hrs of receiving the call, so we have all our kit laid out ready to jump to it. We are now going back to the stage of listening in to each and every news bulletin wondering when poor old Thailand is going to get it from both sides, or whether we shall simply be told that air raids have started. I was on parade yesterday afternoon and evening and all this morning, and it is clear that all preparations are "in train" for mobilization – which, of course, still may not materialize. Anyway, meanwhile altho' it's still "business as usual", Malaya is not going to be caught napping. "B" Coy's war station is still the same place where we spent a week at the end of the last embodiment, so that's where we will go if the balloon goes up. Very comfortable too, with a clubhouse and a bar available for officers' use!

The which, by association of ideas, brings me to the office position re: **Henry Doig. Wallis**, of course, cabled **Harrisons Crossfields** in London asking for a trained replacement, but apparently there is not much chance of getting one, either from Home, China or Ceylon or anywhere **Harrisons Crossfields** organization functions. So **Harrisons Crossfields** asked the Ocean HO* to loan me to them for a few months to carry on, and my HO have cabled their willingness. **Wallis** says that obviously, as it will mean a lot of extra work for me, they (**H.C. & Co**) will try to make the "burden a little easier to bear" by a spot of extra financial assistance. Which, of course, suits me nicely. **Wallis** has phoned up **Col. James** and suggested applying for my exemption in the event of mobilization, and **James** with his usual suave and cunning methods, told him not to apply officially, and that he, **James**, would see that if the occasion arises, the matter would receive their very sympathetic consideration. **Wallis** had to be content with that, but after that "Klang strikes" racket, I reckon that such an assurance from our friend **Col. Jimmy James** means precisely Fanny Adams! Who cares?

There really is not much more news this week. I actually got a game of tennis on Friday when the rain failed to make its usual appearance. Last night after parade I had a bit of office work and Volunteer work to do so did not bother going to a flick. I regret to state that I am reverting to pyjamas in the house after my evening bath instead of shirt and trousers – we grass widowers in Malaya soon lose caste!

Heard a grand new military story today, about the young officer standing on an English South Coast defence post gazing out across the Channel through his field glasses, Says to his orderly, "Orderly, take down this message: – large fleet of invasion barges in sight, about 10 miles S.S.E., escorted by seven destroyers and numerous E boats. Up above, an armada of troop carrying planes with large fighter escort. Weather good. Sea calm. Slight mist S.S.W., visibility pretty good. Wind fresh from S.W. Got all that?" "Yes sir," says the orderly scribbling away. "Well get that information phoned through immediately to H.Q." "Very good sir," says the orderly, hurrying off. He reaches a phone and rings up H.Q. and the following message is given – "That you, Alf? Bill speaking. You can ring all them b-dy bells, the b-ds are 'ere!" Another allegedly true Cockney remark that appeals tremendously to me made by an old charwoman in the East End of London to a crony of hers whilst they were both searching around in the debris of their shattered house after a very heavy air-raid – "Blimey, Mrs Iggins, there 'ere blitzes don't 'alf take your mind off the war, don't they?"

Got a letter from **Auntie Alice** last week, all well, and she says she is sending me the "Overseas Daily Mail" for 6 months as an Xmas present, and it should make interesting reading, if it arrives!

*HO – Head Office

The third part of this Diary will be included in the July edition of Apa Khabar.

BARBARA EVERARD – Sussex Artist and one of the World's leading Botanical Painters

An article about **Barbara Everard's** Botanical Paintings appeared in The West Sussex Gazette on 16th March 2011. It was about the remarkable work of the artist in this her centenary year when a new exhibition and online gallery will look back on her work.

Born **Barbara Mary Steyning Beard** in Sussex on 27th July 1910, she produced some 2,000 plant studies and other floral paintings during her life. She received many awards from the RHS, and was a member of many botanical societies. She was also a landscape painter and meticulous in her portrayal of colour and accuracy of her botanical drawings.

In 1936 she obtained work at a fake antique business in Soho, where she learned the art of making false Chinese wallpapers, and was later commissioned to work at Fortnum and Masons painting murals and decorating tea tables. She also worked in the homes of the wealthy touching up furniture, gildings and fabrics. The training she received in Soho and at night school provided the techniques she would employ later in life in her botanical watercolour work.

In 1938, she worked as a lady's companion to Lady Davis at Chilham Castle in Kent, and secretly married **Raymond Wallace Everard**. Shortly after the wedding, **Raymond Everard** accepted an appointment as an assistant manager in the Singapore's Cold Storage, but he had not informed his employers that he was married, and **Barbara** was forced to stay in England. Later, she did manage to join him, and their son **Martin** was born in July 1940. As war loomed over Malaya, **Raymond** joined the Malacca Volunteer Force and when Singapore fell in February 1942 he was taken prisoner by the Japanese. Before this happened, **Barbara** and **Martin** were evacuated from Singapore on the **S.S. Duchess of Bedford** and eventually returned safely to England.

After 3 ½ years as a FEPOW, during which he worked on the Burma-Siam Railway, **Raymond** was repatriated to England. After a short period of recuperation, he returned to Malaya to help open up rubber plantations for Dunlop, and in 1946 **Barbara** and **Martin** joined him, sailing out on the **RMS Mauretania**. It was during this time on rubber estates near Malacca that **Barbara** began collecting and painting tropical plants and, in particular, orchids. She started painting large still life watercolours on the bare walls of estate bungalows to liven them up, and she began to exhibit her work and collections of living plants at flower shows in Singapore, Malacca and KL. – the first being in Singapore in March 1950.

The **Everards** returned to England in 1952 (where **Martin** was already at boarding school). During the 1950s and 60s, they lived in Nutbourne, near Chichester at the Thatched Cottage, which, at that time, was on the main road. The cottage was threatened with demolition when a new road was planned and **Barbara's** campaign to save the cottage was featured in The Chichester Observer. Her campaign was successful and the cottage is still there with the road going behind it. At this time, while in Nutbourne, she exhibited a collection of paintings of Malayan Orchids at the Royal Horticulture Hall in London, where she was awarded the first **Grenfell Gold Medal**. Later she was awarded many more medals, and for the next 30 years she worked as a commercial botanical artist, completing many private commissions of floral paintings, as well as illustrating coffee table books, botanical publications, gardening magazines, greeting cards and commemorative plates.

A major commission she undertook was for **John Gurney** at the **Medici Society**, when she was asked to paint the studies of the wild flowers of Britain. This took her 10 years to complete and resulted in about 950 plates being painted. Sadly, this work was never published, although it was intended to be a companion to the **Bentham and Hooker's Field Guide**. During this time her second son, **Anthony**, was born.

In 1975, she was awarded the **Winston Churchill Travelling Fellowship** and using it she returned to Malaysia to draw and paint endangered plant species, including the **Rafflesia** on **Mt. Kinabalu** in **Sabah**. On completion of her work there, she was made a Lifetime Member of the Trust.

By the time of her death on 17th June 1990, **Barbara Everard** had become one of the world's leading and highly praised botanical artists.

Her son **Martin** plans to celebrate her life by publishing her autobiography, "Call Them the Happy Years", online, together with an exhibition he is putting on as part of the RHS London Orchid and Botanical Art Show on 19th & 20th March. **[Ed: Sorry that this is now over]** Many of the paintings on show had rarely if ever been seen in public and were from Private and family collections. However, the **Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew** have around 250 paintings and sketches and are showing a selection of them, together with the **South London Botanical Institute**, the **Orchid Society of Great Britain** and the **RHS Lindley Library**. Other painting and drawings have been donated to other botanical societies, including 150 to the **Herbarium at Kew Gardens**.

Martin has set up an online gallery of **Barbara's** work, which can be viewed on:-

www.barbara-everard.com

Our thanks to Michael and Christine Edmondson for a copy of the West Sussex Gazette article, and to Jonathan Moffatt for the Wikipedia excerpt.

REPORT ON THE UBF IN THE BORNEO HERALD – 31ST JANUARY 2011

The Headlines read:- “UBF: Allied Forces War Heroes Deserve National Remembrance Day and Awards”

United Borneo Front (UBF) leader, **Datuk Dr. Jeffrey Kilingan**, was made Guest of Honour at an Australia Day celebration on Wednesday (26th January) hosted by **David Weinman** at The Aussie Barbeque and Bar in Kota Kinabalu.

In his speech, **Dr. Jeffrey** mentioned some of the names of notable Australians who had ventured into Borneo and left a legacy in the annals of North Borneo's colourful history, including the Prisoners of War and Allied Forces heroes of World War II from the 8th and 9th Australia Division, most of whom died in the Death Marches; the Australians who helped re-establish civilian administration and rebuild post-war infrastructure and control 21,000 Japanese troops; the Z special unit in 1945; the 3rd and 4th Australian Battalion of the Royal Australian Army, the Royal Australian Air Force and the 1st and 2nd Squadrons of the SAS during the Confrontation of 1965-66; as well as famous authors from Australia like **Lynette Silver**.

“We are very much indebted to Australia for the assistance rendered by their troops in times of war. These heroes gave up their lives and left their families in Australia to save the lives of the people of Borneo, especially in Sabah. Many of us who survived the war and the Confrontation will always remember this part of history with great fondness and sadness. I know that they hold Remembrance Day in Labuan and other parts of the State but we must observe an official Remembrance Day throughout Malaysia as a mark of respect for the members of the Allied Forces who died as war heroes which include the British and American forces and thousands of Indonesian civilian labourers who assisted in war efforts. All these people should also individually be honoured with Malaysian and Sabah awards for the greatest act of heroism,” said **Dr. Jeffrey** in his press statement.

He added that sharing the joy of Australia Day with fellow Australians helps foster greater cultural understanding between the two countries. “A lot of Sabahans received their tertiary education in Australia, some under the Colombo Plan in the past and some under State Government scholarships. There is a great deal of camaraderie between Australians and Sabahans and I have a lot of respect for the many Australians who choose to live in Sabah today and contribute to the development of our tourism industry; amongst them researchers, academics, scientists, businessmen, journalists and writers. I hope one day they will be remembered for their contribution to the overall development of our State. These are the type of people that we should recognize and honour,” he said. Australia Day is the official National Day of Australia, held annually on 16th January, marking the first fleet that landed at Sydney in 1788 proclaiming British sovereignty.

Guests included UBF's legal and economic advisers and co-founders, **Nilakrisna James** and **Zainal Ajamain**, and some members of Sabah's expatriate communities from Australia, New Zealand and Great Britain as well as Malaysian supporters.

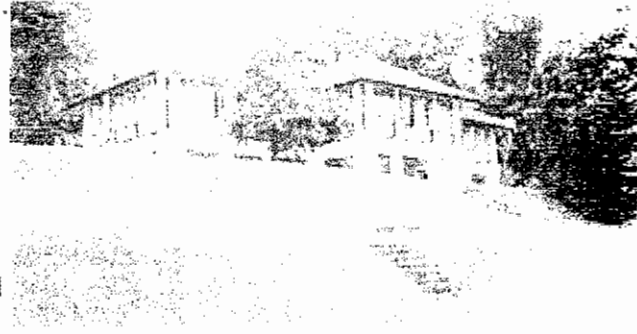
SINGAPORE HERITAGE SOCIETY

In January 2009 “The Adam Park Project” (TAPP) was established. Its aim was to assess the potential for WW2 battlefield archeology in Singapore in a collaborative venture between the Singapore Heritage Society, the National University of Singapore and the Battlefield Archeology Centre at Glasgow University.

Adam Park was the site of a very intense period of fighting in Singapore as well as being the site of a POW camp. Today, the colonial “black and white” houses, built around 1928, forming the estate, have been left virtually untouched by the surrounding urban development – a veritable time capsule. Yet, this was the site where men of “C” Coy 1st Battalion Cambridgeshire Regiment [called “The Ten Tigers”] held off repeated attacks by Japanese troops from the 41st [Fukuyama] Regiment for over 3 days. Arguably this was the only Allied Unit to defend its territory throughout the weeklong invasion, and when they were finally told to surrender, they left behind a scene of total devastation. The houses were razed to the ground, lawns pot-

marked with shell holes, slit trenches, and some unburied dead. However, 2 months later, 2,000 Australian and 1,000 British POWs were sent to Adam Park as part of a 10,000 work force to build a Shinto Shrine by the MacRitchie Reservoir and overlooking the Country Club Golf Course. The POWs turned the bombed-out buildings into living quarters, and provided they produced the required number of men each day, they were more or less left alone by the Japanese. Under camp CO

Lt. Col. R.F. Oakes a military barracks was created with a surgery, dentist, canteen, orderly room, admin building, chapel and camp theatre “The Tivoli”. By Oct. 1942 the Shrine was completed and the men were sent to the Burma Railway or to work in Japan. [Funding is required for specialized equipment & operators to survey the site]



A restored Adam Park house today.

INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Eileen Wright writes:-

"While staying in Douglas, the Isle of Man, last year, I looked at the War Memorial there. I was very interested to read on it, "Federated Malay States, Volunteer Force, **Pte. Moore DEF**". Do you know about Pte. Moore? [Ed: Initials are O.E.F.] ... I have a book "Priest in Prison" by **Canon John Hayter** about his life just before and during internment in Changi and Sime Road with **Bishop Wilson** and other clergy. I wonder whether anyone may be interested in reading it? ... What I found interesting was reading about a different aspect of life in Changi of an ecumenical group. Different as compared with the account by **Mary Thomas's** "In the Shadow of the Rising Sun" which to my mind is an excellent book.

... I was pleased to see that **Ronald Cork** is now a new member. Seeing our name on the list of members, he phoned thinking he had found an old friend from Singapore days with whom he had lost touch. During the course of our conversation, we discovered that Ronald and I were near neighbours, living only a few doors apart; his father and mine were Officers in the same prison.

... I wonder if you would insert a piece for me in the next newsletter? I am writing about the life of my sister and I in Singapore, our evacuation and then life in Australia – at the request of my sons. I remember attending the **Tomlinson Hall School** but that is all and I wonder if there is anyone out there who attended the same school and has more details about it? I would be very grateful if they would contact me with any information. Incidentally, I found in the book "Out in the Midday Sun" by **Margaret Shennan** mention of **Tomlinson Hall School**, Singapore, which was attended by **Derick Cullen** and run by his **Aunt Molly** (p.200). **Margaret Shennan** got this information either from an interview with **Derick Cullen** or from his private papers. Does anyone know about him – and is he a member of the Group?*

[Ed: Jonathan gives the following information about Pte. O.E.F. Moore:-

MOORE O.E.F.[Olaf Ernest Fine] b.1903 Cuddalore, S. India. To Malaya 1934 Planter, Terentang Estate, Anglo-Malay Rubber Co. Ltd., Sungei Gadut NS[1940]. Pte.7441 1/FMSVF POW Singapore to Thailand with F Force. Wife Ivy. He died in captivity 9.11.43 [40] Burma Railway. Grave at Thanbyuzayat.

*The Hayter book – see Book section.

****Derick Cullen's** father is **Alexander CULLEN**. Asst. Assessor, Singapore Municipality. Capt. 1/SSVF POW sent to Thailand, died 26.6.43 Kanyu. Please contact Eileen if you have any information.]

Liz Moggie writes:-

Another Singapore Evacuation.

"I am in touch with 3 people, children at the time, who were evacuated from Singapore approximately 20th January 1942. None of them is clear about the vessel, but it was a fairly dilapidated boat – possible a condemned fishing trawler. The name was something like "**Lye Ee Moon**".

The boat was bound for Australia but after leaving Singapore it was torpedoed (or bombed). No-one was badly injured, but the boat was damaged and so it turned round and limped its way to Ceylon.

Roddy (Roderick) and **Michael Dewe** (aged 6½ and 1½ at the time) were in the care of **Mrs. Peggy Frampton**. She may have used the name **Dewe** as she was at the time engaged to the boys' father, **Major D.P. Dewe** of the Indian Medical Service (IMS) who was stationed at Kuantan. (He became a POW, was on the Burma/Siam Railway and then on the Mergui Road, survived the war and wrote a report for the Australians.)

Peggy's daughter, **Rachael (Rae)**, who was 11 years old, had been at school in the Cameron Highlands. The group subsequently went on to Bombay and spent the rest of the war in India. Later on **Peggy** married **N.A. (Norman)**

Marjoribanks of 2/FMSVF and lived in Kuala Lumpur.

Should anyone recognize the names of the passengers or the name of the boat please contact:-

Liz Moggie, 4, Lorong Jarak Kanan, 50490 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. E-mail: elizabeth.moggie@gmail.com

Jonathan Moffatt writes:-

THE HOBBLETS

"The 3 little **Hobblets** from Kuala Lumpur performed a miniature cabaret act at various social events of 1936-1938 including the Coronation Ball at the Seaview Hotel, Singapore, the Australian Ball & at Raffles Hotel. They also sang on MBC Radio. The Hobblets [**Neal, Joyce & Audrey**] were the children of Australian racehorse trainer **R.N. Hobbs**. **Neal**, who lives today in Brisbane, was later interned with his father in Sumatra.

MVG member **Judy Balcombe** would welcome any recollections of the **Hobblets** to pass on to **Neal**, who has now become an Honorary Life Member of MVG. He does not have an e-mail address, but can be contacted through Judy.

A photo of the **Hobblets** can be viewed at:-

<http://newspapers.nl.sg/Digitised/Article.aspx?articleid=straitstimes19370520.2.137.3&sessionid=6af762b733074b38871a5d7aa2ab43187keyword+the+Hot>

OTHER WEBSITES TO VISIT

<http://www.malayanvolunteersgroup.org.uk/node/42> -- Arundel Castle Visit Photographs

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tanjong_Pagar_railway_station Info on Singapore railway station, & below "Keep Station" Article

<http://www.independent.co.uk/travel/news-and-advice/fate-of-historic-train-station-stirs-nostalgia-in-singapore-2109127.html>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v3oy2Aq6QcE&feature=related> -- Video about Singapore Station

<http://www.captivememories.org.uk/> - Meg Parkes' new website for Liverpool Dept. of Tropical Medicine [LDTM]

www.otago.ac.nz/alumni - University of Otago – March copy of the University Magazine available online

3 websites about plans to demolish the Bandar Hilir English School in Malacca (now called SK Bandar Hilir):-

<http://www.thestaronline.com/news/story.asp?file=/2011/1/5/nation/7734324&sec=nation>

<http://www.starproperty.my/PropertyScene?TheStarOnlineHighlightBox/9442/0/0>

<http://thestar.co.my/metro/story.asp?file+2008/7/8/southeast/21746000&sec=southeast>

Julie Summers' new book (see in Book Section):-

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/home/you/article-1362571/Julie-Summers-talks-evacuees-Second-World-War-life-changing-experiences.html>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/reviews/when-the-children-came-home-stories-of-wartime-evacuees-by-julie-summers-2246884.html>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/military-obituaries/air-force-obituaries/8379382/Jack-Plant.html> - Jack Plant's obit

OBITUARIES

RICHARD YARDLEY – born 15/12/1915 – died 1/2/2011.

Frederick Richard 'Dick' Yardley was born in Leeds in 1915. Following a grammar school & technical college education he followed his father into Marconi's Wireless & Telegraph Company in 1936 and was posted to Bucharest where he produced portable man-pack wireless equipment for the Romanian police. In March 1941 he married **Barbara** and shortly afterwards set out for Malaya. The plan was for **Barbara** to join him but events conspired against this and she remained in Chelmsford. **Richard** was appointed Assistant Controller [Radio] Post & Telecommunications in Kuala Lumpur. He enlisted in the FMSVF as Lieutenant 14004 Signals Battalion FMSVF [Colonel S.P. Morton] attached to the Royal Signals. Mobilized at Kuala Lumpur, the Signals Battalion had four tasks:

1. To supply the FMSVF Lines of Communication HQ with a Signals Section.
2. To man 17 wireless sets at key points such as the aerodromes at Taiping and Sitiawan and to supply wireless for the armoured car companies.
3. Heavy maintenance & repair work.
4. General liaison and filling in gaps in the P. & T. Department FMS.

Brigadier Moir reported that "The work of this unit throughout operations was beyond praise".

On 15th February 1942 the P. & T. Engineers in the Signals Battalion were given shift duties on the Singapore Automatic Telephone Exchange in Hill Street. **Richard** was on the night shift under **Bill Stubbs**. They spent most of the day carrying wounded men into the Fullerton Building before heading for Hill St. where they heard on the radio news of the surrender announcement. They returned to the Fullerton Building where several planned their escape from Singapore. Not selected for the successful escape party, **Richard** entered captivity in Changi POW Camp. In September 1942, he was sent to camps in Thailand including Kanchanaburi, Chungkai & Wan Lun. For some time he was, at great risk, in possession of a wireless hidden in a water bottle.

In May 1944, parties of POWs were assembled at Chungkai for transportation to Japan. Returned to Singapore, **Richard** was responsible for 150 of the 738 POWs crammed into the Japanese freighter Asaka Maru, known to the POWs as Osaka Maru. The ship already had a cargo of bauxite. They left Singapore on 4th July 1944, calling at Miri in North Borneo, Palawan & Manila. Off Luzon in August 1944, the ship encountered a typhoon which lasted 4/5 days, sweeping the ship onto rocks off Formosa & throwing men into the sea. On August 18th the typhoon subsided. Survivors were rescued by a Japanese destroyer and transferred to the Hakasan Maru which eventually docked in Moji, Japan. The horrific journey had lasted 4 months. Two years later, **Richard** was called as a witness at the Singapore War Crimes trial of the Japanese captain of the Asaka Maru and junior officer in charge of the POW guards. Despite the terrible conditions aboard the ship and severe discipline, **Richard** always regarded these two men as victims of circumstance.

Richard was a POW at a grim camp at Amagasaki where men laboured in an iron foundry, then ended the war at Oeyama, where POWs worked in the nickel refinery, Oeyama mine & at Miyazu harbour. In 2003 he recorded his captivity experiences in a book, 'The Amonohasidate or The Gate of Heaven'.

He was repatriated via Manila to San Francisco on the USS Yarmouth; across the USA by train, eventually arriving on the Queen Mary in thick fog at Southampton on October 26th 1945. In 1946, he & Barbara returned to Singapore where he was appointed Assistant Controller, P. & T. Singapore.

Returning to the UK in 1947, **Richard** joined Rediffusion Limited as Chief Overseas Engineer. Although based in London, he spent much of his time in West Africa and the West Indies before settling with his family in Malta in 1959. Here he was responsible for establishing the Malta Television Service (part of Rediffusion). In 1964 he was appointed General Manager of Rediffusion (Wales) Limited where he remained until retiring to Abergavenny in 1978. He was involved with various charitable organizations, particularly the Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen Families Association, until he retired again in 2008. He met Prince Charles on several occasions: at Cardiff Castle in 2005 when he was presented with the Queen's Silver Jubilee medal for services to Wales; at the re-opening of the historic tithe barn in Abergavenny (he was treasurer of the fund-raising group responsible for renovation costs); and at the 65th anniversary of the V-J Day Service in London.

Richard was an early member of the Malayan Volunteers Group. He died aged 95 on 1st February 2011 at Abergavenny and



his funeral service was held at St. Mary's Priory Church, Abergavenny on 10th February. Sadly, his wife **Barbara** died on the day following the funeral. During the war, **Barbara** served with the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (the FANYs) and she was still in uniform when, in breach of regulations, she arrived in Southampton by train to meet the Queen Mary. After some delay, she was eventually allowed to meet her husband at 11pm at night – after nearly 5 years apart.

We send our very sincere condolences to their 3 children, **Michael, Elizabeth and Caroline.**

Jonathan Moffatt

TUN IBRAHIM ISMAIL – born 19/10/1922 in Johore and died 23/12/2010

Tun Ibrahim Ismail, who died on 23rd December 2010 aged 88, was a Special Operations Executive Officer who pulled off a daring 10-month triple-cross while a prisoner of the Japanese during WW 2. Postwar he joined the local army in Johore before serving with the Royal Malay Regiment from 1951. He rose to the rank of battalion commander and used his SOE training to help fight the communist insurgency in his own country, and served during the Confrontation in Indonesia. He later went on to be head of Malaya's armed forces. In 2000 he was appointed a Grand Commander of the Order of the Crown of Malaysia which conferred on him the honorific title "Tun".

During WW2 **Ibrahim** was in charge of the only all-Malay team in SOE's Force 136 preparing to recapture Malaya in 1944-45. Called "Operation Oatmeal", the mission was designed to set up a sabotage and observation team on the west coast of Malaya at Trengganu. After the first aborted attempt to land, he set off again from Ceylon, and with 2 other men, was landed on Perhentian Island on the night of 30th October 1944 in a Catalina flying boat. However, the Japs had been alerted and when they finally managed to get ashore they were captured. They decided to "twist the story and chance that things would work out well".

During a month of interrogation, they managed to convince the Japanese that they wanted to work with them, but managed to transmit a message to SOE in Ceylon without the security code, thus letting the British know that they had been taken prisoner. **Ibrahim's** code book had also been captured but he managed to convince the Japanese that the codes were false and that he had memorized the genuine security checks.

By mid-November, the 'Oatmeal' team was being used to "double cross" Force 136, but the British were well aware of the situation. To gain time, the officers in India demanded that the 'Oatmeal' team should travel to Penang through the jungle – some 300 miles away – to "investigate U-boat activity". In fact, the Japs flew the 3 men to Penang where they requested a "contact" be flown in from Ceylon to assist them. Instead, supplies were flown in, as the Japanese congratulated themselves on fooling the British. These supplies lacked vital components (a "packing error"), and the 'Oatmeal' team continued to feed erroneous information to the Japanese about the location of where the invasion forces were due to come ashore during Operation Zipper. However, before the operation was put into practice the atomic bombs were dropped and Japan surrendered unconditionally. The 'Oatmeal' team was released by the Japanese and managed to make contact with the British forces when they landed in early September.

ANTHONY BROOKE – born 10/12/1912 – died 2/3/2011

For more than a century, the Kingdom of Sarawak was ruled by 3 generations of the **Brooke** family, known as "the White Rajahs", only ending with the invasion by the Japanese in WW2. **Anthony** was the last member of the family to administer Sarawak's government and was known as the **Rajah Muda** or Crown Prince, although this title was to be removed and then reinstated by his uncle the Third Rajah, **Sir Charles Vyner Brooke**, twice.

Son of **Bertram Brooke**, (the younger brother of **Charles Vyner Brooke**), **Anthony** was educated in England and attached to the Malayan Civil Service from 1934-36 and then to the Sarawak Civil Service from 1936-39. He was appointed District Officer in Mukah in 1939, and his uncle the 3rd Rajah then granted him the title of **Rajah Muda** and Officer Administering the Government, during his leave in England. During this time in charge, **Anthony** carried out many much needed reforms in the country, creating a favourable impression on Sir Shenton Thomas in Singapore, and the Colonial Office in London, which felt it could do business with him, unlike his increasingly eccentric uncle. It was also left to **Anthony**, in his uncle's absence to support Britain's proclamation of war on Germany and Italy.

However, when **Vyner** returned to Sarawak in 1939, **Anthony** was away on his honeymoon, and members of the Sarawak Service gave a less than flattering account of his leadership, aided and abetted by **Rance Sylvia**, the Rajah's unreliable wife. The Rajah removed **Anthony's** title of Rajah Muda, and **Anthony** left the service in Sarawak. After the row subsided **Anthony** returned to Sarawak as District Officer in early 1941, and was due to be reinstated as heir, but he was again expelled for objecting to various aspects of a proposed new constitution. Sarawak fell to the Japanese in December of that year.

Anthony returned to England and joined the Army. In 1944 he joined Lord Louis Mountbatten's staff in Ceylon and was invited by his uncle to head a provisional government of Sarawak in London. With his title of **Rajah Muda** restored, **Anthony** refused to agree to the British Government's plans for Sarawak to join the Empire. After the war, the British put the same plan to the Rajah, who agreed to cede Sarawak to the British Crown in return for a financial settlement. He then removed **Anthony's** title once again.

Despite opposition to the plan in the State Council in Kuching, Sarawak became Britain's last colonial acquisition on 1st July 1946. For 5 years after that, there was a campaign in Sarawak to revoke its colonial status, helped by **Anthony** in Singapore, but he urged the campaign to be non-violent. His legal challenge to the cession was dismissed by the Privy Council in 1951 and he finally renounced all claims to the throne of Sarawak. In 1963 Sarawak was included in the newly independent Federation of Malaysia, and the last claimant to the title of **White Rajah** became a self-styled traveller for world peace. He settled in New Zealand in the latter part of his life with his second wife. He died in NZ on 2nd February 2011.

It is with great sadness that we report the deaths of MVG Honorary Member **George Hess's** sisters-in-law **Cynthia Missal** and **Glenn Edmonds**. We send our sincere condolences to their youngest sister **Hyacinth**, **George's** wife. **Cynthia** was 84, the widow of an officer in the RAMC, and had been ill for some time. **Glenn** was 88 and the mother of MVG members **Colin** and **Gordon Edmonds**, to whom we also send our heartfelt sympathies. **Glenn's** husband, **Lionel**, was shot by the communist terrorists, and **Glenn** was left with 4 children to bring up. **Lionel Edmonds** was Assistant Manager on Vimmy Estate in the Sungei Buloh area of Kuala Selangor, and an Auxiliary Police Officer. At roll call on 28/11/1948 he was attacked by the terrorists, and, with other Auxiliary Police Officers, fought them off until their ammunition ran out. As he ran back to the Ammunition Store in the rubber smoke house, he was shot in the back and then the head as he fell. Our thoughts are also with **Colin Edmonds** on the death of his wife.

We are also sad to announce the death of **Chris Buckingham**, who died on 19th January this year. Serving with the Royal Norfolk Regiment, **Chris** was captured by the Japanese and imprisoned in Changi. One of his neighbours was **Russell Braddon** who mentions **Chris** in his book "The Naked Island", and records his daring escape plan with one of the Korean guards at Changi, who wanted to steal an aircraft and have it flown by a crew of British POWs. Incredible as it was, **Col. Dillon** gave it his blessing, but when **Buckingham** was seen talking to the Guard (**Kio Hara**) the administration panicked and put him in solitary confinement in the cells – to the disgust of the whole camp. Post war, **Buckingham** went on to study medicine as a result of his experiences in Changi & became a GP in Luton.

Jack Plant has died aged 92, and we send condolences to his family. Captured on Java where he was acting as an RAF medical orderly, he survived the horrors of Haruku (including the voyage on the 'hell-ship' **Amagi Maru**) and the Sumatra "Death Railway". As a medical orderly, his efforts took a great toll on his own health and he nearly died. He was mentioned in dispatches for his work, and it took him nearly 2 years to recover. He was a dedicated supporter of the FEPOW Association and at the age of 82 he launched a project at the NMA to create a Memorial to the POWs and Romushas who died building the Sumatra Railway. This was dedicated on V-J Day in 2001. Despite the suffering he had seen & endured, he was philosophical about his time as a POW and harboured no bitterness.

A custodian of the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery at Hodogaya in Japan, **Len Harrop** died on 7th February 2011 aged 95. He became supervisor of the cemetery in 1951 and spent more than 50 years in Japan. As well as landscaping Hodogaya to a very high standard, he also worked tirelessly to find the places in Japan at which POWs died, to record the facts of their deaths and to publicize those facts. He also arranged for former POWs to visit Japan and the cemetery. He was appointed MBE in 1978 for services to the British Community in Japan.

The death of **Diana Geddes** was announced on 22nd February 2011 aged 84. At the outbreak of war, she was sent back to India from England, and when the Japanese invaded Burma, she volunteered as a nurse, aged 16, in the army base hospital. With very little medical knowledge, but an impressive faked CV she was taken on as sister (and only European nurse) in charge of the local staff. The base hospital quickly became a front line aid station as the Japanese advanced, and she was rescued by her mother who decided to return to India. They escaped in a cattle truck on a goods train, and ended up in a hill station in western India, where in 1944 at the age of 17 she married **John Geddes**, who was sent to lead convoys of tanks to join the fighting in the Arakan. **Diana** would stow away on supply planes to visit him. She is survived by a son.

BOOKS

"WHEN THE CHILDREN CAME HOME. Stories of Wartime Evacuees". By Julie Summers [Simon & Schuster UK 2011. 345 pages plus photos. Cover price £18.99 ISBN: 978-1-84737-725-8

Following her exploitation in "Stranger in the House" of the theme of returning World War 2 servicemen from the perspective of their wives and children, Julie Summers now returns her attention to the experiences of child evacuees and how they coped when they returned to their families.

Child evacuees are an abiding image in the popular perception of World War 2 on the Home Front. Evacuation affected the lives of over 3 million children, half of whom, in Operation Pied Piper, were first evacuated from Britain's industrial cities in three days in early September 1939. This was not short term planning but the outcome of years of discussion and planning going back to the 1920s and accelerated as the nature of aerial bombing and 'Total War' became increasingly evident.

Having carefully explained the historical context, **Julie Summers** tells the story of numerous evacuees, often in their own words, describing what most recalled as an overwhelmingly positive experience. **Dorothy Carlile**, evacuated, aged 7, to the countryside from Manchester, acquired a great love of the countryside and a respect for other ways of life. Like most children, she went to a foster family. Some child evacuees gained from a far superior education in the countryside though disruption of education was clearly an issue for many.

The chapter, 'Reading from a Dark Lamp' describes the deeply negative experiences of some child evacuees; the damaging effects of their sudden evacuation; cruel, uncaring host families; bullying at school. Another chapter deals with the CORB [Children's Overseas Reception Board] Scheme, which sent children to Australia & Canada. The tragic story of the children aboard 'The City of Benares', sunk by a German U-boat while en route to Canada, is told. In the Far East in 1941-1942 some 8,000 women & children were evacuated from Malaya and Singapore and

some 3,000 from Hong Kong. Some received a hostile reception in Australia from neighbours who blamed the British for Australian losses in Malaya. All experienced the dislocation of their lives and deep uncertainty about their future. A number of Malayan Volunteers Group members were interviewed by **Julie Summers**, and in Chapter 8 "Orphans of Empire" she focuses on the stories of 4 of these: **Robert Arbuthnott, Felicity Bartleet, Audrey McCormick, & Nigel Stanley**, all of whom were evacuated from Singapore, three of them never to see their fathers again. Given the positive nature of this book, it is, perhaps, worth quoting evacuee **Don Murdoch** at length:-
"I am eternally grateful to those kindly couples who took me into their homes, shared my joys & sorrows and made me a temporary member of their families at a time my own family was under tremendous pressure. My subsequent life and career was, I believe, profoundly influenced for the better by my experiences as an evacuee. Perhaps one day, the nation will acknowledge the thanks it owes to the many thousands of good-hearted ordinary country folk who, for scant reward, upset their domestic arrangements to accommodate children from the cities". Altogether, an interesting read and a very well researched book. It adds new dimensions to a familiar theme and makes an important contribution to the History of Child Evacuation in World War Two.

Reviewed by Jonathan Moffatt

"SLAVES OF THE SON OF HEAVEN". By Roy H. Whitecross. Corgi Books – probably only available 2nd hand.

This is an amazing personal story of an Australian POW of the Japanese during the years 1942-45. His travels as a POW took him to Changi; to the Tavoy Road, Burma; to the Burma-Thailand Railway; and finally to Japan on a hell-ship. In Japan he endured 9 months of slavery in sub-zero temperatures. The author sets down the events in his life as they occurred – the horrors, the brutality and the tragedy.

"Every word", he says, "is the truth. The incidents are real; all the characters were, and some still are, living men who acted out the drama as I have set it down".

"PRIEST IN PRISON. Four years of life in Japanese-occupied Singapore 1941-45". By John Hayter. Printed by Graham Brash, Singapore. ISBN 9971-49-268-7 An extremely interesting book – based on diary entries.

Educated at Lancing College, **John Hayter** decided while at school, that his calling was to the ministry and in particular to overseas service. He served his curacy at Romsey Abbey and then went out to Singapore. When the Japanese landed in Kota Bahru in December 1941, **John Hayter**, aged 26, had only recently been transferred to KL to be in charge of the parish until the New Year. But as the news of the invasion became increasingly dire, **John Hayter** was anxious to return to his duties in Singapore, and with the arrival of the **Revd, G. S. Clarke** from Taiping, he was given permission to hand over the parish to **Revd. Clarke** and return to Singapore on 20th/21st December. His work in the following 2 months involved helping with the hundreds of refugees who were flooding into Singapore on a daily basis from up-country, sorting out accommodation for them and passages on ships leaving the colony, and many other problems. After the surrender, the Japanese issued 3 permits for clergy to remain free in Singapore to attend to the Church duties and carry out services. **John Hayter** was chosen as one of these clergy by Bishop Wilson, along with the Australian the Revd. R.K. Sorby Adams. They remained free for 13 months from Feb '42 – March '43, until there was a change of mind by the Japanese and on Monday 29th March, they were driven to Changi, where the author was interned for the rest of the war.

"MEMORIES OF MALAYA". By June Meyer. Available online at www.Lulu.com and soon on Amazon.com and Amazon.co.uk Also available for downloading as an eBook or in book form. Paperback 133 pages. Download \$7.18 A£4.75

"Memories of Malaya" gives a personal account of colonial life prior to the independence of Malaya in 1957. The book paints an interesting picture of the many cultures, the way of life and how different nationalities lived side by side in the 1930s and 1940s. An interesting personal account is given of the harrowing escape from the Japanese invasion in 1941. The story continues with an insight into life during the Communist Emergency years which followed the Second World War.

June Meyer's father **Leonard Crichton** arrived in Singapore with his family from India around 1897. His father **James McLean Crichton** had been managing various coffee plantations in the Tamil Nadu district of Madras during the 1880s until the coffee blight in the mid 1890s forced him to move to find work. **June's** father was an engineer. He worked as manager on a number of various tin mines and rubber plantations in both Perak and Selangor from 1915 to 1960 when he retired to Port Dickson.

Two new books by **Mark Felton** have just become available with **Pen & Sword Books**. Each gives an insight into aspects of the Far East War which have not been as well documented as some of the others:-

"CHILDREN OF THE CAMPS. Japan's last Forgotten Victims". This tells the heart-rending stories of Caucasian and Eurasian children who were imprisoned within the Japanese internment camps in Asia in WW2.
"THE FINAL BETRAYAL. Mountbatten, MacArthur and the tragedy of Japanese POWs". This book provides sensational new evidence about the little known but shameful delay in rescuing allied POWs between the unconditional surrender of Japan on 14/8/45 and the arrival of the Allied liberation forces after 2/9/45.

THE LONDON REUNION AND LUNCH - PLEASE NOTE THE NEW DATE – SATURDAY 29TH OCTOBER 2011

Hugh Chaplin is pleased to announce that he has been able to book the **Ballroom at the RAF Club for the London Reunion and Lunch on Saturday 29th October**. Hugh says that this is the only Saturday in October when the Ballroom is free. It was felt that the smaller room in the basement, which he provisionally booked for Saturday 8th October, would not be large enough to accommodate everyone who may wish to come. As usual, there will be a bar where pre-lunch drinks and wine may be purchased, and the set menu 2 course lunch is a chicken dish and fruit salad with coffee and petit fours to follow. Unfortunately, due to the increase in VAT etc. the cost is set at £31.50 per person. Please let **Hugh know in good time** if you wish to book – even provisionally – so that he has some idea of numbers. Further details in the July newsletter.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

SUNDAY – 8TH May 2011 – ANNUAL SERVICE AT THE FEPOW CHURCH IN WYMONDHAM, NORFOLK.

Would any MVG member, who lives near Wymondham, like to attend and represent the MVG at this service, and lay a wreath on behalf of the Volunteers? Please contact Rosemary for more details, or write to:-

The FEPOW Secretary, 1, Norwich Road, Wymondham, Norfolk NR18 0QE

SATURDAY – 4TH JUNE 2011 – SPRING MEETING AT THE NMA.

We have a few volunteers for this meeting, but please let Rosemary know if you wish to come, so that we don't miss you in the crowds! The plan is to meet at about 11a.m. for coffee – do some work in the Memorial Garden – and have lunch together or at your own arrangement. There is a land train if you wish to have a conducted tour of the Arboretum. N.B. Parking charges are now £3 per day.

MONDAY – 15TH AUGUST 2011 – V-J DAY SERVICE AT THE NMA.

The short, informal service to commemorate V-J Day will be held in the MVG Memorial Garden at noon. Please let Jonathan or Rosemary know if you wish to attend and also if you are happy to take part in the service. I have to notify the NMA about numbers. We plan to have a picnic lunch afterwards in the NMA grounds – weather permitting!

SATURDAY – 29TH OCTOBER 2011 – ANNUAL REUNION AND LUNCH IN LONDON – RAF CLUB, PICCADILLY.

Please see above for details. Cheques to Rosemary BY 1st October 2011 – made out as for your subscriptions. (See below)

SUNDAY – 13TH NOVEMBER 2011 – REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY AT THE CENOTAPH IN WHITEHALL, LONDON.

Please let Rosemary know if you would like to join the regular marchers at this moving ceremony. Ticket numbers are limited so book early. More details will be sent to you later, plus your ticket which is needed to gain access to Whitehall. We have a long, leisurely lunch and chat afterwards at "The All Bar One" near the London Eye.

Please note:- I am sorry to report that it has not been possible to arrange a Remembrance Day Service in **Malacca** this year.

WEDNESDAY – 15TH FEBRUARY 2012 – 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FALL OF SINGAPORE.

No further details are available as yet. **You will be notified by e-mail/post as soon as they are made public.** The MVG hopes that it will be well represented at this important event. You are advised to book flights and accommodation early. The MVG plans to follow the commemorations planned by the Changi Museum, through Jeya its Director.

MVG SUBSCRIPTIONS – DUE IN APRIL 2011

Annual Subscriptions are now due for the year 2011-2012. The subscription charge is **£15 PER FAMILY MEMBERSHIP.**

Cheques payable to:- Mrs R. Fell Malayan Volunteers Group (Millbrook House, Axminster, Devon EX13 5EE)

Please let me have your dues in good time – and let me know if you **do not wish** to renew your membership.

Australian members – please pay **Elizabeth Bunney** (see details below) – **A\$30 per family membership**

Malaysian members – please pay **Andrew Hwang** – **RM75 per family membership**

Members in other countries may pay cheques in their own currency to avoid bank charges at the current exchange rate for £15 sterling. Receipts for subs will not be sent but donations acknowledged to the best of my ability

NEWSLETTERS – password for access on the website is "dindings".

Printed copies of the newsletters are **posted** to UK & European members. They are **e-mailed** to all other overseas members **unless** a printed copy is requested. Please let us know of any changes in your **postal address or e-mail address.**

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MALAYAN VOLUNTEERS GROUP VISIT TO ARUNDEL CASTLE

Wednesday, 16th March 2011

Report by Jill Smallshaw

On a perfect spring morning in blazing sunshine, a group of 38 MVG Members were invited by our Patron, Her Grace The Duchess of Norfolk, to visit Arundel Castle for the day. As the cars slowly wound their way up through the grounds, whose slopes were ablaze with daffodils and spring flowers, we were overawed by the splendour of the Castle and the beauty surrounding it. We drove over the impressive wooden drawbridge, which crossed a vast deep dry moat and parked in the Castle Quadrangle.

We were shown into Her Grace's private Drawing Room where coffee was being served. Her Grace greeted us there, and spent well over an hour mingling with members and chatting to everyone. It was a lovely relaxed and happy occasion. The Duchess then personally escorted us on a tour of the Castle, pointing out all the wonderful art and treasures on display, and since the Castle was still closed to tourists, we felt very privileged to see it as a home, which is lived in by her family. We were amused by Her Grace's little Jack Russell, called Poppy, who never left her side during the entire day, as if guarding her!

Arundel Castle is a Norman Castle founded on Christmas Day 1067 and is very well preserved with a Keep, Gatehouse, Barbican and curtain wall combined with a very large Victorian country house. It is one of a chain of defensive fortresses along the south coast erected by William the Conqueror's followers as a deterrent to future cross-Channel invasions. It is in an immaculate condition.

The first room we visited was the magnificent Library. Created by the 11th Duke, it is one of the most important Gothic rooms in the country dating from around 1800. The stamped red velvet set of mahogany seat furniture was provided by George Morant for Queen Victoria's visit in 1846. It houses a collection of 10,000 books collected by the 9th and 11th Dukes, and contains manuscripts and material relating the Catholic history. From the Library we proceeded into the Ante Library, with its fabulous collection of miniatures and portrait of the "Collector" Earl and his wife – the 14th Earl of Arundel.

Also on our tour, we visited the vast Baron's Hall which is 133 feet long and 50 feet high with a magnificent hammer-beam roof made of oak from the Estates. The stained glass, as in the chapel, is by Hardman of Birmingham, and represents the history of the Fitzalan Howard family from the 12th to the 19th centuries by means of heraldry in the east windows, and historical vignettes in the west. In the Hall there are beautiful pictures, tapestries, furniture, the 9th Duchess's sedan chair and a beautiful large German rococo sleigh.

We then walked through the Picture Gallery, which was added to the Castle circa 1708, and is where all the historical portraits of the Dukes and Duchesses of Norfolk hang, and some of the Earls of Arundel. We visited the Armoury, where the collection is one of the few surviving Victorian assemblages of its kind, brought together largely by the 15th Duke of Norfolk in the 1880s.

The beautiful Dining Room occupies the shell of the medieval chapel and the 11th Duke converted it into a dining room circa 1795. The arched ceiling is inspired by the old Bishop's Chapel at Mayfield, East Sussex.

From there we went down a narrow stone staircase and entered The Chapel, which is still used by the family, and is the finest Victorian room in the Castle, and one of the most perfect monuments of the 19th century Catholic Revival in England. The Archbishop of Southwark laid the foundation stone in 1894, and the floor columns are made of Purbeck marble from Dorset. The striped ceiling vault is of chalk and Painswick stone, and nearly every moulding and surface in the Chapel is richly carved. The stained glass in the windows is by Hardman. It was inspired by that at Canterbury Cathedral, and it depicts scenes from the Life of Our Lady. Other treasures and pictures on display included silver altar vases and two rare sets of English candlesticks on the side altars. In the turret above the Chapel is a set of bells made especially at the Whitechapel Bell Foundry. All the present Duke's and Duchess's children were baptized in the Chapel.

An hour later, having toured the Castle, we had pre-lunch drinks in the official Drawing Room, with its superb heraldic chimney-piece above a roaring log fire – much appreciated by Her Grace's little Poppy! The Duke joined us for drinks and we had time to mix and chat again before being ushered into the Smoking Room, for a delicious lunch. With the tables beautifully laid and decorated with huge vases of daffodils, and a pre-arranged seating plan, we found our named places without any problems. We all enjoyed reminiscing about old times and experiences in Malaya, and hearing many tales of the traumatic exodus ahead of the Japanese Invasion in 1941/42. It was amazing how many members' lives had crossed during that time, and there were many new friendships formed. We were honoured that His Grace The Duke was able to have lunch with us as well as the Duchess, and when lunch was over, following much conversation and laughter, a vote of thanks was given by Anthony Cooper, during which an invitation was given to the Duchess to attend the MVG annual lunch. Her Grace was then presented with a small posy of yellow roses and other spring flowers. In her reply, she said how delighted she was to meet members, and to be able to invite the Duke to one of her own gatherings!

After lunch, a few people toured the Keep, one of the oldest parts of the Castle, built of Caen stone in 1138. A staircase of 153 steps gives access to the wall-walk from which one was able to admire the magnificent views towards the coast to the south; the town; the Cathedral to the west; the Park to the north; and along the river to the Arun gap to the east.

Meanwhile, the Duchess (still with Poppy at her heels!) took the majority of the group on a tour of the beautiful gardens which she herself has spent a lot of time planning. She has created several new gardens, but the garden she took us to see was the "Collector Earl's Garden", designed by Julian and Isabel Bannerman based on an idea by the Duchess herself. Conceived as a Jacobean formal garden and as a light-hearted tribute to the 14th Earl of Arundel, it is a stunning garden, of which she is justly proud, and it was opened in 2008 by HRH The Prince of Wales. One enters through a pair of large gates and is confronted by a pair of huge green oak pergolas, which divide the formal terraces and water features from a sunken lawn, in the centre of which is a 'mountain' of rocks interspersed with palms and unusual ferns. At the far end is a green oak version of "Oberon's Palace" based on the original design by Inigo Jones. It contains a shell-lined interior with a stalagmite fountain and gilded coronet dancing on a jet of water which Her Grace switched on for us. It surprised us all as it rose up, and looked truly beautiful in the afternoon sun. We left via the organic kitchen and flower gardens and briefly saw the Victorian wrought iron greenhouses, restored and replanted in 1995.

Finally, we visited the Fitzalan Chapel, which was most impressive and immaculately kept. It was founded in 1380 by Richard, the 4th Earl of Arundel, as a collegiate Chapel served by secular canons. In the reign of Henry VIII the college was dissolved and the Chapel and other buildings returned to the family, where they have remained as private property ever since. The Chapel was badly damaged in the Civil War in 1643 and suffered from neglect, but during the 19th century the building was restored; a mausoleum added by the 14th Duke; and a major restoration undertaken by the 15th Duke in 1886. It is still used as the burial place of the Dukes of Norfolk, and the tombs of both the Earls of Arundel and the Dukes of Norfolk lie in the Fitzalan Chapel. The beautiful east window is Victorian stained glass handmade by John Harman to the instructions of the 15th Duke of Norfolk in 1891, as a memorial to his first wife Flora. The small Lady Chapel was equally impressive.

We finally departed around 4 p.m. having had a wonderfully relaxed and enjoyable day, and we were all extremely grateful to Her Grace for having given up so much of her time, and for her interest as Patron of the MVG. We hope she will be able to join us for our Luncheon on 29th October in London. Our special thanks also go to Rosemary Fell for organizing the outing.

Her Grace The Duchess of Norfolk is the granddaughter of Charles Francis Ewart Mounsey, who went to Malaya in 1928 as Estates Agent for the Societe Internationale de Plantations et de Finance [SIPEF]. He enlisted in the VF in 1930 and was a gunner with the FMS Light Battery before his promotion to 2nd Lt. 2/FMSVF attached to the 1/13 Frontier Force Rifles. He was captured in Singapore and sent to work on the Burma Siam Railway in November 1942, luckily surviving to return to Malaya post-war. It was through her grandfather's connections with Malaya and his time as a FEPOW that Her Grace accepted the MVG's invitation to become its Patron.

A sample of the lovely comments received from members who visited the Arundel Castle on 16th March:-

"... wasn't the weather just perfect... we never imagined the Duchess would spend the entire day with us! ... we felt very honoured that (The Duchess) took so much trouble in escorting us everywhere."

"... such a splendid day ... it was absolutely perfect in every way, and we thoroughly enjoyed the tour of the house and garden and the delicious lunch so kindly served."

"... we both appreciated the visit ... at the invitation of the Duke and Duchess and to see it in its domestic capacity was something quite special."

"... Georgina was such a nice hostess – the look of glee when she put the fountain on and the crown rose majestically up was a sight to behold."

"... a wonderful day, and everyone, including our Patron, thoroughly enjoyed themselves... the Duchess was brilliant, and made us all very welcome."

"... a very special, memorable day – we did enjoy it."

"...such a marvellous day... It all went so well and we felt very honoured that our Patron was so interested in all the stories she heard. Isn't it nice that we have someone who understands - one of those rare and very special days."

"... I enjoyed every minute of the day ... what a lovely lady, who made the day so special. It was really good to meet so many other members and listen to their stories about the past."

"... Her Grace is very natural and a marvellous hostess. Lucky to have her as our Patron."

"... The Duchess was so generous with her time and her hospitality. What a lovely lunch too. Altogether a very enjoyable day."

"... a memorable day at Arundel Castle. It was all just magic, the sun shining, the daffodils and primroses were a show and the Castle was just amazing, let alone meeting both the Duke and Duchess who were charm themselves."

"... a most enjoyable day and one we will remember for a long time."

MALAYAN VOLUNTEERS GROUP VISIT TO ARUNDEL CASTLE



ARUNDEL CASTLE QUADRANGLE



ARUNDEL CASTLE MARCH 2011



EAST WING OF ARUNDEL CASTLE



"COLLECTOR" EARL'S GARDEN



HER GRACE WITH THE "DANCING CORONET"



MEMBERS MEETING IN THE DRAWING ROOM



MEETING HER GRACE FOR COFFEE



THE HISTORY OF ARUNDEL CASTLE



"POPPY" ENJOYING THE FIRE BEFORE LUNCH



LUNCH TIME CONVERSATION



LUNCH WITH THE DUKE & DUCHESS



A VOTE OF THANKS FOR HER GRACE



PRESENTATION OF A POSY TO HER GRACE

**MALAYAN VOLUNTEERS GROUP
NEW MEMBERS – JANUARY TO APRIL 2011**

BANKS, Peter.

10, Arthur Road, Farnham, Surrey GU9 8PB.

Tel: 01252 710894 Mobile:- 07831 242808 e-mail: peter@peterbanks.eu

Son of **Ronald G BANKS**, who joined the **SSRNVR** in Penang in 1939. He was captured after the fall of Singapore and sent to work on the Railway. After the war, he rose to the rank of Captain, as CO of the Singapore division of the MRNVR.

BERKHOUT, Pauline. [HONORARY LIFE MEMBER]

47-2-1, Gurney Drive, Cantonment Road, Georgetown, 10250 Penang, Malaysia.

e-mail:- pgpauline@hotmail.com

Interned as a child with mother and sister in Kamp Tjideng in Batavia, Java.

HOBBS, Neal. [HONORARY LIFE MEMBER]

Evacuated with father on the "Mata Hari"

17, Spinnaker Boulevard, Wurtulla, Queensland 4575, Australia.

Tel:- 0754 931017

Born and brought up in Kuala Lumpur. Captured aboard the "Mata Hari" 14/2/42 with racehorse trainer father. Mother and two sisters evacuated on the "Charon" 10/1/42 and spent the war years in Perth WA. Self: Born 6/7/1924. After surviving prison ordeal in Muntok Jail, Palembang Jail, and Belalau Camp in Sumatra, I returned to Malaya late 1946 and left for good in early 1965 to settle in Sydney, and in 1989 moved to the sunshine coast of Queensland.

LANKESTER, Sara (nee ATKINS).

Littlers, Ropers Lane, Wrington, Somerset BS40 5NQ

Tel:- 01934 862251 e-mail:- sara.lankester@btinternet.com

Daughter of **Alfred Percival 'Admiral' ATKINS. Lt. 2/FMSVF.** Rubber Planter in Selangor. Died of his wounds 24/1/42 aged 40. Evacuated with mother **Kay** - ship and date not known - and came to England.

MUTHUSAMI, Kenneth.

42, Fleetwood Circuit, Melton, Victoria 3337, Australia.

Tel:- 0403 282 460 e-mail:- kmuthusami@gmail.com

I am interested in British Colonial History in India and Malaya as well as World War 2 history, especially Malaya during the Japanese Invasion and Occupation.

VAUX, Dr. Hugh and Susan (nee COOPER).

Evacuated on the "Duchess of Bedford"

Greenhill House, Otham, Maidstone, Kent ME15 8RR.

Tel:- 01622 861245 e-mail:- susanvaux@btinternet.com

Daughter of **Major G.D. COOPER (Manchester Regt.)** - interned as POW in Changi, then Burma-Siam Railway. Died in captivity 1943 and buried in Kanchanaburi, Thailand.

Self: evacuated with brother **Anthony Cooper** in care of Nanny **Kathleen Hesman** on the Duchess of Bedford. Stepdaughter of **Richard Middleton-Smith MCS and 1/SSVF** also POW on the Burma-Siam Railway who survived.

WATSON, Judy (nee WILLACY).

Schoolship Kid.

Creekside, Restronguet, Mylor, Falmouth TR11 5ST.

Tel:- 01326 372722 e-mail:- pwatsontr11@btinternet.com

Daughter of **Robert WILLACY, JVE.** Planter Chamek Estate. POW in Changi. Mother **Joy** evacuated with self and brother **Tony** to Perth, WA. (Ship not known) Post-war, family returned to Malaya & father retired in 1954. Grandparents **Jack ANSELL** (escaped to Java & then Perth by yacht) and wife **May** and daughter **Con** evacuated to South Africa. Son **John ANSELL** (The Loyal Regiment - North Lancshires) aged 19 captured by Japs & never seen again. **Con** married **W.R.H. 'Billy' SCOTT, JVE** seconded to **Malay Regiment** as 2nd Lt. Survived Railway.

Awaiting details from:-

BURGESS, John.

40, Greenacres, Preston Park Avenue, Brighton, W. Sussex BN1 6HR.

Tel:- 01273 552767

FREEMAN, Wendy (nee HARTLEY).

61, Loyalist Road, Islington, Ontario M9A 3PA, Canada.

Sister of **Christine CAVENDER** and daughter of **Melville HARTLEY SSVF.**

AMENDMENTS and DELETIONS

NEW SECRETARY IN AUSTRALIA – see P22 in April newsletter.

BUNNEY, Elizabeth.

New e-mail address:-

bunneyelizabeth5@gmail.com

DOBBS, David and Fiona.

e-mail address:-

fionadobbs@btinterbet.com

FLETCHER, Julia.

New address:-

3, Bonaly Gardens, Edinburgh, Scotland EH13 0EX

HYWEL-JONES, Ian and Merilyn.

e-mail address:-

ian_hj@hotmail.com

KASSIM, Daniel.

e-mail address:-

danielkassim@gmail.com

LINDNER, Gerald and Pat.

New e-mail address – as from 14/1/2011:-

glindner@freeolamail.com

NELSON, Mason.

New e-mail address:-

mason.nelson@xtra.co.nz

WALMSLEY, Douglas and Morag.

New address & correction to e-mail address:-

P.O. Box 881, Pouce Coupe, B.C. V0C 2C0. Canada.

e-mail:- domore2@xplornet.ca

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