

# APA KHABAR

Patron: Her Grace The Duchess of Norfolk

[www.malayanvolunteersgroup.org.uk](http://www.malayanvolunteersgroup.org.uk)



**45<sup>TH</sup> EDITION  
JANUARY 2016**



**Remembrance Sunday – 8<sup>th</sup> November 2015  
Members of the MVG marching past the Cenotaph**



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## LOOKING BACK ON A SPECIAL YEAR OF REMEMBRANCE AND REFLECTION – 70 YEARS AFTER THE END OF WORLD WAR 2 IN THE FAR EAST

*WISHING YOU ALL A HAPPY, HEALTHY 2016*

Victory over Japan on the 15<sup>th</sup> August 1945 brought to an end the long and brutal conflict in the Far East, and finally brought peace throughout the world. The 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this occasion was marked in 2015 by events not only in the United Kingdom but also in the Far East. Those veteran FEPOWs who attended V-J Day ceremonies in London and elsewhere are so richly deserving of thanks and admiration for their fortitude and courage. By virtue of their age when war came to Malaya, there are now very few members of the Malayan Volunteer Forces still alive, but let us not forget the invaluable contribution they made during the Malayan Campaign and especially in captivity. It is in their memory that MVG members took part in various events last year. These events were reported in MVG's quarterly newsletters issued during 2015. 2015 was a very busy and successful year for the Malayan Volunteers Group. Events took place in Australia, in the U.K., Singapore and Sumatra, commemorating the Fall of Singapore in February; V-J Day in August; the signing of the Japanese surrender and the opening of the Muntok Museum of Peace in September. The year was rounded off with an enjoyable annual luncheon at the RAF Club in October, and attendance at the Remembrance Sunday Service at the Cenotaph in November. In addition to these events, in June 2015 several members attended the 5<sup>th</sup> International Conference organized by the Researching FEPOW History Group in Liverpool's School of Tropical Medicine. Many eminent speakers, well known in their field throughout the world, gave delegates a week-end full of fascinating information about World War 2 in the Far East. It would seem to be an appropriate moment to reflect on the achievements of the Malayan Volunteers Group in the past 12 years since its inception in October 2003. Many of you may not know how the MVG started. It had a very low key beginning at a lunch in a Spaghetti Restaurant in London. The lunch was organized by **Sandy Lincoln**, who wanted to continue the tradition of an annual lunch started by her father for fellow Malayan Volunteers. A couple lunching on an adjacent table overheard the discussion on raising money to buy a bench for the National Memorial Arboretum in memory of the Malayan Volunteer Forces who had fought alongside the British, Australian and Indian Forces in the Malayan Campaign. They donated a £20 note, and from this small contribution sufficient funds were raised to buy 2 benches and a memorial stone for the Arboretum. Since that day, the MVG has continued to be privately funded, relying on the subscriptions and donations of its members. Its success is entirely due to the generosity of you, its members, and you are to be congratulated on your loyalty. A generous donation by BACSA to help with the restoration of the communal civilian grave in Muntok is the only charitable money received by the Group. All other plaques and memorials which have been presented in this country and in various countries in the Far East and Australia have been funded by the Group. This in itself is a remarkable achievement in a comparatively short time.

In addition to the funding for the presentation of these memorials, the MVG would not have succeeded without **Jonathan Moffatt's** extensive knowledge which has helped many members with their research into their relatives' wartime records. His meticulous records and database have enabled many members to find the information they had been seeking about their families. The continuing success of the MVG owes much to **Jonathan**, and the MVG is very grateful to him for the generous way he offers help to those seeking information. Other researchers, too, amongst the membership have helped to provide guidance in important areas where there has previously been little or only sketchy research done, such as the passenger lists for the many small ships which left Singapore in the few days before capitulation, and the names of civilians imprisoned in various camps throughout the areas of Japanese occupation where they were captured. The MVG thanks all those who give their time and information so freely to help raise awareness of the Malayan Volunteers, and the plight of the civilian internees. The Group also relies on its worldwide regional secretaries to carry out duties locally and to keep their members informed and involved with MVG activities. Thanks to **Andrew Hwang** in Malaysia for his reports on Remembrance Day services in Kuala Lumpur and Penang, and for his regular updates on events in Malaysia and Singapore. With a large membership in Australia, especially in Perth, WA, the MVG thanks **Elizabeth Adamson** for keeping the Group together and for raising its profile in WA, by attending Remembrance Services and other events, and for arranging lunches during the year.

Annually in July, the Malayan Volunteers Group usually sends out an up-to-date list of members. For various reasons it was not possible to issue a new list in July 2015, mainly due to the late payment of subscriptions. The list was finalized at the beginning of December, and is included with the current edition of the newsletter. It would help enormously if payments could be made in April when they become due, so that in future the list can be issued in July. The list does provide a very comprehensive source of information about members' families and their wartime roles, and you are urged to keep it for



reference as it does take a considerable time to up-date, and is expensive to print.

The work of the MVG will continue as long as it is needed. The 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of V-J Day in 2015 has awakened a renewed interest in the Malayan Campaign and in the fate of so many men, women and children who were caught up in the utter chaos of those last few days before Singapore fell. There is still more to do to achieve the four main aims of the Group – a reminder of these aims are given below:-

1. To educate and raise historical awareness of the Malayan Volunteers in the United Kingdom and worldwide, and to gain recognition for their unique role in the Malayan Campaign and in captivity.
2. To re-introduce former British Malayan Volunteer and Civilian families and other Volunteer and Civilian families of all races and creeds, who have lost contact over the years, and to help them keep in touch with each other.
3. To help these families and other interested parties research their own and/or other people's Malayan Volunteer and Civilian connections.
4. To raise money to commemorate the Malayan Volunteers, Civilian Internees and Evacuees, by the presentation of new memorials and the restoration of existing ones, both in the U.K. and in other parts of the world where Volunteer families have settled.

**Our membership is open to all Far East POWs; Civilian Internees; Evacuees; Auxiliary Services Volunteers; Groups with post-war connections; Historians and anyone with an interest in this theatre of WW2.**

### MVG'S ANNUAL REUNION AND LUNCHEON at the RAF Club, Piccadilly, 24<sup>th</sup> October 2015

**Report by Jonathan Moffatt**

Some 53 members, a good mix of old hands and new faces, attended this year's luncheon in the attractive RAF Ballroom. On display were wartime "Association of British Malaya" magazines together with similar South African and Australian/New Zealand Association newsletters containing lists of evacuees, internees and POWs. Members also brought in examples of 'good practice' research for display; a father's diary; a piece of research on St. George's Church in Penang; a compiled biography of a grandfather and the detailed work of a Palembang POW Research Group.

After an hour's chat over drinks, renewing old acquaintances and making new connections, we sat down to an ample 3-course lunch which began with the saying of grace and concluded with a toast to "The Volunteers!" Our speaker this year was **Sibylla Jane Flower**. **Jane**, the daughter of a highly regarded FEPOW, **Colonel Harry Flower**, 9<sup>th</sup> Northumberland Fusiliers, graduated from the Courtauld Institute of Art. From 1991 to 2015 she was Consultant on Archives & Historical Documents at Christie's and for many years worked closely with the late **Rod Suddaby**, Keeper of Documents at the IWM, assessing the acquisitions made by his department. **Jane** has conducted interviews all over the world with FEPOWs, members of the SOE and OSS and others associated with Far East captivity. Her talk to us focused on Volunteer Forces' Medical Officers in captivity, in particular two she had known well: **Dr. Ian MacIntosh FMSVF** and **Dr. Stanley Pavillard SSVF**.

**Jane's** FEPOW research began with her father and she soon learnt that there were no better witnesses than the Malayan Volunteers, many of whom were still alive then and meeting regularly for lunches, such as **Pavillard's** famous lunches near Windsor. **Dr. MacIntosh**, who had been diarist **Dr. Robert Hardie's** GP Partner in K.L. came to live near **Jane** in London and spoke a lot about his experiences. He took a microscope into captivity, the first one to arrive in Thailand with POWs in June 1942. **MacIntosh** worked at Chungkai where, by the end of 1943, there were ten thousand invalids. Wherever possible, **MacIntosh** wore long trousers which he believed protected him from mosquito bites, and therefore helped to prevent him contracting malaria.

**Pavillard** was medical officer to "D" Battalion, some 650 men with an average age of 35 and an average time in the Far East of 11 years. Quite a number of these "D" Battalion men were the fathers of MVG members today. They left for Thailand in October 1942. **Pavillard** had some success in treating cholera and his contact with Thai traders, together with **Colonel Lilly**, led to a plea for help to the Red Cross reaching their Geneva HQ. During the worst days of captivity, the Volunteers were true to their old pre-war nickname of "The Vultures", scrounging drugs and medicines with the assistance of the Chinese traders.

**Jane's** talk was well received and there was time for a number of questions and comments. Her eagerly awaited book "Surviving Under the Sun" is expected to be published in 2016 or 2017. The afternoon's events concluded with the Raffle, which raised £210 for MVG funds. Thanks to everyone who contributed prizes and attended. Next October, **Ruth Iversen Rollitt** will talk about her father's work entitled "Iversen: Architect of Ipoh and Modern Malaya," and the family's evacuation from Malaya.

[N.B. In April 2016 there is to be a joint MVG/British Malaysian Society Lunch in London – details to be announced.]



## REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY AT THE CENOTAPH IN LONDON – 8<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2015

The public turned out in their thousands to watch the annual Remembrance Sunday Service at the Cenotaph in the year marking the 70th anniversary of both V-E and V-J Days, events for which had taken place during 2015. The significance of the occasion was also reflected in the huge numbers who marched past the Cenotaph after the short service at 11 o'clock. Some reports stated that there were 10,500 marchers; other that there were 9,000. But whatever the final count may have been, there were thousands of marchers lined up in Whitehall, as well as thousands of onlookers, by the first stroke of 11 o'clock and the firing of the big guns in Hyde Park.

As we watched on the giant TV screens placed in Whitehall from our place in Column "M", the Royal Family, led by **Her Majesty The Queen**, filed out of the Foreign Office just before 11 o'clock. The huge crowd fell silent – as it does every year – and we remembered the fallen and those who had served in wars, particularly in the Far East in World War Two, during the two minutes silence. Standing alongside **The Queen** this year was **His Majesty King Willem-Alexander** of the Netherlands. His wife, **Her Majesty Queen Maxima**, watched the ceremony from one of the balconies of the Foreign Office, together with **HRH The Duchess of Cambridge**, **HRH The Countess of Wessex** and **Commander Timothy Lawrence**, husband of **HRH The Princess Royal**.

In an attempt to shorten the time that the Queen and the elderly Veterans had to stand while the wreath laying took place before the brief service at the Cenotaph, the three younger Royal Princes decided to lay their wreaths together. How sad to see that the politicians could not bring themselves to follow their example and lay their wreaths together. Instead they insisted that they should continue to lay their wreaths separately. By the time the Ambassadors and Service personnel had laid their wreaths, and the short service had been taken by the Bishop of London, there was very little time saved if any. How fortunate is this country to have such a truly remarkable person as The Queen as Head of State? It takes dedication and fortitude for anyone to stand silent and stock still for over 20 minutes, let alone for an elderly lady of almost ninety years of age. The Veterans had to stand for even longer, of course, but not as completely still with the nation watching. Surely it should be possible to shorten the time taken to lay the wreaths – especially by the Politicians, who could lay them at the same time.

After the Royal Party, Ambassadors and Politicians had left, we had a very long wait until it was Column "M's" turn to march. Luckily it was mild, and although grey and overcast it didn't rain. This year we only had 10 marchers, and it was good to have some of our regulars back with us again – **Karen Harney** and **Christine Cavender**. **Christine** brought her husband, **Mike**, who kept us entertained! Also marching were **Anthony** and **June Jackson**, who have now become regulars. We were joined as usual by **Merilyn Hywel-Jones**, who organizes the tickets for the Cross Planting Ceremony annually, and plants the MVG Cross in the FEPOW Plot. Her sister, **Jane Nielsen**, who lives in Denmark, marched for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time and brought her youngest son, **Peter**. All three of **Jane's** sons have now marched with us, and they have all said what a special occasion it is. The other two marchers were **Donald** and **Rosemary Fell**. We were sorry that **Pat Wilson** – one of our regular marchers – was unable to join us due to mobility problems.

**Eileen** and **Beverley Wright** were also unable to join us at the last minute.

Those of you who watched the ceremony on the BBC iPlayer may have seen the MVG contingent marching past the Cenotaph towards the end of the broadcast. Our 2 lines of 5 could be seen quite clearly just before and just after handing in our wreath, and **David Dimpleby** mentioned "The Malayan Volunteers" by name.

As usual, the salute was taken in Horse Guards at the end of the march by a member of the Royal Family. To the delight of some of our members, who caught his eye, this year the salute was taken by **HRH The Duke of Cambridge**. He smiled at us all!

After the parade was dismissed, we made our way through Horse Guards into Whitehall and on to the Embankment. It was quite a struggle to thread our way through the mass of humanity crossing Westminster Bridge in both directions, but we came through to meet up at the Premier Inn in Belvedere Road where we had a very enjoyable lunch amid much conversation, and the promise of meeting again in 2016 to march on this very special day. It is a great privilege to be able to remember our Volunteer relatives in such a public way, with larger and larger crowds gathering to watch each year.

After lunch, some members visited the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey on their way home. The mass of poppy crosses, each one representing a life lost in conflict, makes for very sombre viewing. The small FEPOW Plot contained more crosses than usual, including several for the Volunteers, and the large, black MVG Cross with its SSVF logo and wording to include the FMSVF and UFMSVF had been planted at the back.

Remembrance Sunday brought to a conclusion all the events which have taken place in this very full, yet rewarding, year to mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of V-J Day and the final end of World War Two.

Report by Rosemary Fell



MVG members at the Cenotaph



Peter Nielsen at the FEPOW Plot



## REPORT ON REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY IN KUALA LUMPUR – 8th NOVEMBER 2015

This Remembrance Sunday Service was held on a very bright and pleasant morning, but once again this service clashed with another major public run at the Lake Gardens surrounding the Cenotaph, causing traffic jams due to road closures and detours. The police had apparently not been properly briefed that Malaysians would also be attending the service and some of us were prevented from



**At the Cenotaph  
Andrew Hwang, Ian Richardson  
and Ivan Ho**

which was very well received indeed.

Reflections by **Mr. Autar Singh**, Secretary-General of the Coalition of Malaysian Sikh Organisations and the **Revd. Timothy Philips** of St. Mary's Anglican Cathedral, followed.

Departing from previous years, Lt. Col. John McCrae's *"In Flander's Fields"* and Robert Laurence Binyon's *"For The Fallen"* were read by student representatives from Tenby School, which also has an Ipoh connection, as it started out as the post-WW2 British School in Ipoh. Today, the school has branched out throughout Malaysia. Thirty-eight wreaths were laid in all, a smaller number compared with previous years, representing the various Commonwealth High Commissions, non-Commonwealth Embassies, the Malaysian Armed Forces, MVG, the Malaysian ex-British Army Association, NMBVA, the Penang Veterans Association, Warriors Association, the various British Loyal Societies, the Canadian Association of Malaysia, the Royal Commonwealth Society, the British Malaysian Chamber of Commerce, the Malaysian British Association, Coalition of Malaysian Sikh Organisations, various British International Schools, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church of Kuala Lumpur, St. Mary's Anglican Cathedral and HM Revenue and Customs.

As was tradition, some of the assembled participants then adjourned to the British High Commissioner's residence for a cooked English breakfast and a chat. The High Commissioner was very interested in the Volunteer stories of my 2 great uncles, and those of **Ian Richardson's** father and father-in-law, and of **Ivan Ho's** father, and she asked me to compile the Volunteer families' oral accounts from our Malaysian-based members and have them sent to the British Defence Advisor, **Col. Stephen Hall**, so that the Volunteers could be specially honoured in the 2016 service.

**ANDREW HWANG**  
Kuala Lumpur

proceeding to the Cenotaph car parks and had to park miles away – as in 2014! Expatriates faced no such problems. The MVG contingent consisted of **Andrew and Lisa Hwang, Elizabeth Moggie, Anthony & Andrea Cooper, Ian Richardson, Joan Noble and Ivan Ho.**

The Service opened with Isaac Watt's rousing hymn, *"O God our help in ages past"* which was led by the Tenby School Choir.

The British High Commissioner to Malaysia, **HE Vicki Treadell CMG, MVO**, then delivered her Remembrance Sunday address which paid tribute to the brave Sikh soldiers who fought in both World Wars. It was not a surprising tribute given that the High Commissioner spent 8 years of her childhood in post-war Ipoh, the home of the largest Sikh community in Malaysia! The Sikh community sent a considerable contingent to this service on top of the all-Sikh **Sri Dasmesh Band**, Malaysia's best pipes and drums band,



**The Sikh Sri Dasmesh Band**



## REPORT ON THE REMEMBRANCE DAY CEREMONY IN GEORGE TOWN, PENANG – 15<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2015

The other notable Malaysian Remembrance Day ceremony held in November 2015 was the one at the Penang Cenotaph at the Esplanade in George Town, Penang on Sunday, 15<sup>th</sup> November 2015. MVG was represented by **Andrew** and **Lisa Hwang** and Volunteer Veteran **James Jeremiah** ("E" Company 3/SSVF).

Unlike the Kuala Lumpur service, this was a purely military ceremony, the 14<sup>th</sup> to be organized by the Penang Veterans Association (PVA). The guest of honour was the Chief Minister of Penang, **Y.A.B. LIM Guan Eng**. **Mr. Lim** has been an ardent supporter of Remembrance ceremonies since taking office in 2008. The most senior Commonwealth head of mission present was the Canadian High Commissioner **H.E. Judith St. George**.

The ceremony began at 0755 hours when the Catafalque Party was mounted. The superbly turned out Catafalque Party was from Rifle Company Butterworth of the Australian 2/30<sup>th</sup> Training Group.

The welcome address was given by the President of the PVA, **Major (Rtd.) Sivarajan K.M. Ramanathan**, who paid tribute to our Veteran Volunteer **James Jeremiah**, aged 91.

**Mr. Lim** then delivered a memorable speech where he remembered the late **Harold Speldewinde**, our former Veteran Volunteer from 3/SSVF, and spoke of the sacrifice of soldiers past and present, and the need to honour them. He stressed that "it should be the duty of every one of us to remember the men and women who gave their lives so that we shall live free in peace and with dignity."

*The Ode (For the Fallen)* by Lawrence Binyon was then recited by the Australian Defence Advisor, **Grp. Capt. Wendy Horder**. A recording of "Fallen Heroes," the song composed by Harold Speldewinde's Australian son-in-law, **Michael Kidd**, was then played. After the ceremony, **Michael** asked my wife, **Lisa**, if she could help to score the song properly and perhaps to arrange a choral version for future Remembrance ceremonies.

Besides the MVG, there were diplomatic and military representatives from the Commonwealth High Commissions, the Malaysian Armed Forces, the Malaysian Police, other Malaysian Veteran Associations, the Penang Eurasian Association, various civil organizations, Plantation Companies and Planters' Associations. Twenty seven wreaths were laid at the Penang Cenotaph. The MVG wreath not only commemorated the Volunteers but also the Malayan Medical Service.

The dismounting of the Catafalque Party at 0855 hours signalled the close of the ceremony and all guests were invited to a tea reception by the sea.

**Report by Andrew Hwang**

**Andrew laying MVG's wreath**

**Veteran Volunteer James Jeremiah Andrew & Lisa with Michael & Lauren Kidd**



## REPORT ON THE REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY IN IPOH ON FRIDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2015

The ceremony was held at the Ipoh Cenotaph outside the Railway Station on 25<sup>th</sup> June which marked the start of a week-end of activities in Ipoh and Batu Gajah to commemorate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of WW2. MVG was represented by **Andrew & Lisa Hwang** and some 40 veterans from Malaysia, the U.K. and Australia attended the event.

The ceremony started with the Malaysian National Anthem (*Negara Ku*) followed by the Perak State Anthem (*Allah Lanjutkan Usia Sultan*). An Australian Catafalque Party was present and the guard of honour was provided by the Perak Police. The "Last Post" was sounded and 2 minutes silence observed before a fly past of an executive jet & an aerial salute. The wreath laying ceremony was preceded by prayers recited by priests of various religions reflecting the diverse religious backgrounds of the fallen commemorated in Ipoh. MVG's wreath was a floral one instead of the usual poppy wreath. The new British High Commissioner **H.E. Vicki Treadell**, who had lived in Ipoh as a child, was Guest of Honour.

The event was the brainchild of the President of the *Persatuan Wira Malaysia*, **Dato R, Thambillay DPMP, MBE, AM**, a retired Superintendent of Police and a native of Ipoh. He had revived the ceremony after a long absence, and gave the Commemorative Address. [Ed. With apologies for omitting this report in October.]

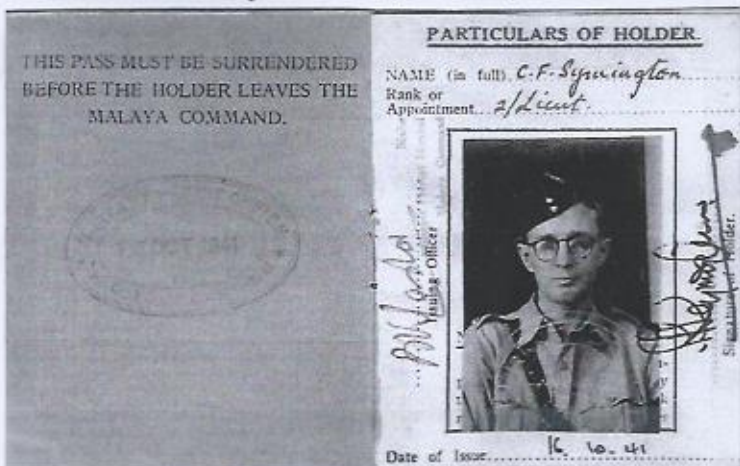
**Report by Andrew Hwang**



## 2nd Lt. Colin Symington - Escape From Singapore

With kind permission of his daughter, **Morag Walmsley**  
Compiled by **Douglas Walmsley**, from **Morag's** records.

**Colin Fraser Symington** was born in Edinburgh, Scotland. He obtained a degree in BSc in Forestry, Edinburgh, and took his post graduate at Oxford. In 1927 he was appointed by the **Colonial Service** to the **Malayan Forestry Service** and then as Botanical Assistant to **F.W. Foxworthy** in 1929. He was promoted to **Forest Botanist** at the **Forest Research Institute Kepong, Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, 1933-42** when **Foxworthy** retired. (*Two streets were named **Jalan Foxworthy** and **Jalan Symington** at the **Forest Research Institute** in their honour. The signs are still there today.*) **Colin** travelled and collected in the **Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Borneo** and the **Philippines**.



He married **Ellen Gibson Couper** of **Edinburgh** on 9.9.33 at **St Andrew's Church, Kuala Lumpur**. Twins **Morag** and **Ian** were born 24.5.37 at the **Bangsar Hospital (European Hospital), Kuala Lumpur**. **Colin** was a member of the **2/Federated Malay States Volunteer Force (2/FMSVF), Selangor, Armoured Cars** and was a **Lance Cpl.** when he was awarded an **Efficiency Medal** along with 24 other members (*Straits Times* 3.3.41). He was commissioned to **2<sup>nd</sup> Lt.** on 16.10.41.

When the Japanese began their invasion of northern Malaya on 8.12.41 he was sick in hospital with boils. He also suffered from malaria. He was released to join his unit but returned to hospital at least twice before they were forced to retreat.

He sent his family to **Singapore** on 26.12.41 and they were

evacuated on the "**Orion**" to **Melbourne, Australia** on 31.12.41.

In the early days of the invasion he acted as a guide in the jungle to British and Australian troops (*from his obituary in the Linnean Society of London, 1944.*) (*As they were forced down the Malayan peninsula **Colin** came to join **Dalforce** in **Johore**, a unit formed by **Colonel Dalley**.)*

**Colin Symington's** escape story begins with an article he wrote in **Nigeria, West Africa** for the **Nigerian Forester** three months before his death in 1943. The second part of the story is about his fishing trip in **Olokemeji, Nigeria** which is omitted. The following story sets the tone for the 2 subsequent letters he wrote to his wife during his escape.

### 1. Vol IV June 1943 No.2 Farm and Forest or Land Use and Rural Planning in West Africa Incorporating 'The Nigerian Forester'

#### Balm in Olokemeji by C.F.S. (*Colin Fraser Symington*)

It is just a year since he looked back from a junk on an oily sea at the pall of smoke that was Singapore. Since then he has travelled far and seen much, but something within him has been dead. Emotions – the constant fear of bombs and shells by comparison with which the decision to face a desperate escape was nothing. The escape – relief to be away, followed immediately by desperate anxiety to be back amongst it again. Jungle in **Sumatra**, the **Indragiri, Java** – to find **Wavell\*** gone! Too late – not wanted! To **Australia** in the only boat that got through, in bad company of men who had jumped on evacuee ship and ratted\*\*. Perhaps he hadn't ratted, but he had fled – no doubt about that – and left friends behind him. Strange land – no possessions, no money, no home. Family reunion! Others were there: they keep up their spirits by saying that they would get together in India and continue the fight. In their hearts they knew otherwise, and slowly it became beyond doubt that there would be no India. Any of them would have done anything, however desperate, but no opportunity came. They were not wanted. They took jobs but their hearts were not in them. At last an offer from the **Secretary of State for the Colonies, Nigeria!** "I suppose they had to send us somewhere." Decision to take the family to **South Africa**. Unexpected danger on the voyage – lucky escape. Another parting. "I hope you won't find it too terrible, dear."

#### NOTES:

\* Lt. Gen **Wavell**. "On 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1942, with Malaya lost and the Allied position in Java and Sumatra precarious, **ABDACOM (American-British-Dutch-Australia Command)** was closed down and its headquarters in Java evacuated." (*When **Wavell** departed Java, he left the British Troops under the command of Dutch Officers.*)

\*\* **Ratted** – dictionary definition: verb (used without object), ratted, ratting.

Slang: a) to desert one's party or associates, especially in a time of trouble.

b) to turn informer; squeal.

(*Colin* was probably referring to "Australian troops [44], deserters from the A.I.F. in Malaya" mentioned in **Frank Man's** story, below. They were arrested on arrival in Perth.)



2. Transcription of a letter from Colin Symington to his wife, Ellen, sent from Java after his escape from Singapore, to her in Melbourne, written on 25<sup>th</sup> February 1942, on the back of 13 utility receipts dated 1938.

My own darling Ellen,

There seems to be a chance that this letter will be delivered to you by an Australian whom luck has landed here with me. I have already sent you a cable and a letter from here and I have written to van Slooten to ask him to send a cable to you lest mine is not sent off. I am now at a place, **Poerwokerto** (*Purwokerto*), near the south coast of **Java**. I'll try to tell you how we got here.

I expect you have received some letters from me telling you how I came to join **Colindear**\*. That was shortly before we withdrew from **Johore** to **Singapore Island**. My first job was reconnaissance work in the **Mangrove Swamps** round the island, then I became liaison officer between the Brigade in the NW area and the first company of the Chinese army which we were hastily forming in **Singapore**. We had barely got the Chinese out when the Japs landed behind us. We had to withdraw and lost quite a lot of men but I was lucky only losing the remains of my kit. **Fitz** and **Doggo Fyfe** who were with us had exciting adventures before they got back. I was in one of the battles with bullets whizzing all around but I never saw a Jap. Two days later our Chinese army was disbanded and we had nothing to do but await the fall of **Singapore**. They were ghastly days and nights. Nobody slept and meals were irregular but I never felt really tired until it was over. Most of our friends (except the women) (*the women and children had been evacuated*) are still in **Singapore** and I know of no casualties during the latter fighting but during the last two days of intensive shelling and bombing I expect some were unlucky. **Robert Jagoe**\*\*<sup>\*</sup>, I hear, lost a finger and was in hospital at the end.

It was long evident to most of us that **Singapore** must go, but afraid policy was to refuse to admit that and nobody was allowed to leave with very few exceptions – specialists. **Colindear** struggled hard to get permission for those who were with him and eventually succeeded. We left on Saturday night – the night before capitulation. The Navy and any other official craft had long gone so we had to make our own getaway as best we could. Eventually we got a **Chinese junk** to take us. **Singapore** was a veritable hell of flames and smoke when we left. Shells were pouring into it from the Jap lines only about 2½ miles from the centre in any direction. All day flights of bombers were busy and explosions and fires were breaking out everywhere. The docks and waterfront were ablaze and the remains of shipping was under fire. Ghastly! Yet few people were hit and I was untouched.

We made for **Sumatra** but shortly after midnight ran aground on a coral reef and had to throw over our cargo of **attaps**\*\*\* before we could float again. We had an anxious time until 9 a.m. the next morning when she floated off on the high tide. We made **Sumatra** that night and during the next four days worked our way down the east coast then across the west to **Padang**. We had intended going to **Palembang** but the Japs forestalled us. At **Padang** a British Cruiser (**HMS Danae**) picked us up intending to take us to **Batavia**. (*North coast of Java*). But again Japs interfered. A naval engagement was going on off **Batavia** so we came to the south coast landing at **Tjilatchap** (spelling?). (*Tjilatjap – now called Cilacap*). We are now at **Poerwokerto** (*Purwokerto*), a small town about 30 miles inland. We are awaiting a convoy to take us to, we think, **India**, but nobody really knows what, when, or how we shall next move.

You will realize, dear, that having got out of **Malaya** on the grounds that we can form a nucleus for future training based on experience in **Malaya**, we must at once get down to that job and I expect we shall be sent to **India** to organize things. There is little hope of us getting to **Australia**. What would I not do to be able to join you, darling! I can't bear to think of it because I know that it is impossible just now. But it is something to live for. I take a very gloomy view of the immediate future of the Empire – I think there is much suffering ahead for us all. But luck has not entirely deserted us – not by any means. Most of our friends are in Jap concentration camps and I am free and quite fit. Only how I long for you my darling! How I long, too, to know how you are and for news of wee **Morag**. **Ian**, I am sure will be quite happy. (*Ian was mentally and physically handicapped due to a medical error at birth*).

Now for the future. I have already cabled and written to suggest you go to **America**. I think there is a strong probability that the Japs will include **Australia** in their programme in the near future. This is Feb 25<sup>th</sup> – 10 days since **Singapore** capitulated. Within the next fortnight a large scale attack will develop on **Java** which, in my opinion, cannot last more than a month at the outside. (*Java fell to the Japanese on March 8<sup>th</sup>*). By May an attack is probable on **Australia** by which time the growing offensives in Europe will be right at their height.

I really am not in a position to say what is best for you and the wee ones, but from my limited knowledge of our circumstances it seems to me the one best thing would be to go to **America** – if you can get there – and accept hospitality from your uncle. It is a rotten position to be in to ask for charity from anybody but it can't be helped.

Unfortunately, I don't think you will be able to take more than a nominal amount of money into **America**. In which case send the remainder to Dad and ask him to open an account for you in your name in the Chartered Bank in **London**. I hope you have got all the money I have sent to you. I have sent the following –

£100 to Bank of N.S.W. **Sydney**. £350 (approx.) = the balance of our P.O. accounts etc. to you at 2, Grange Rd, **Melbourne**. These amounts together with the £100 you took with you should keep you comfortably until the future is less obscure. I shall, of course, try to get in touch with the **Colonial Office** or **Malayan Govt.**, if any have escaped from **Singapore**, and see about sending you a regular remittance but you cannot bank on anything from these sources for a long time to come. I expect there are others in **Melbourne** in the same position as yourself – and many worse off financially. Possibly some agency is being or has been established in **Australia** to deal with the **Malayan** evacuees. You must find out about that yourself, dear.

I wish you could get home, dear, but I think the seas around **Britain** are much too dangerous just now and will be even worse as spring advances. But if you go soon I think the voyage to **America** should be safe enough. In **America** you should be able



to find a home for **Ian** and perhaps you could get a teaching job with the help of your uncle. Incidentally, if you are near **Berkley, California**, look up **Dr. Foxworthy**. His address is: 1005, (or something like that) Arlington Buildings. He would, I am sure, help you if you needed it. You could show him my manuscript, but if you get it to **America**, I would like you to send it to **Dr. Merrill** at Harvard University explaining what it is and asking him to keep it for me.

Another thing – **John Wyatt Smith\*\*\*\*** has just asked me to ask you to see if you can get any news in **Australia** of whether evacuees from **Manila** are there. His father, mother and sister were in **Manila** when the Japs attacked and he had heard nothing of them since.

I can give you no news of **Corner** (*EJH [John] Corner*) or of **Frank Walker**. All I know is that none of our friends, except **Baldock & Dolman** are missing (**Cairns** and **Robert Jagoe** are slightly wounded). Most of them are still in **Singapore** where they will probably be until the end of the war. The following I know to be free – **Colindear, Wyatt Smith, Fitz, Doggo Fyfe, Foston, Carson, Carrion, Addison**.

I expect you will hear many stories about the fighting in **Malaya**. Don't believe too many of them if they make out that the **Australians** were let down. It was the other way round.

Now, darling, how are we to keep in touch? I shall continue to write to you at the National Bank of Australia, **Melbourne** – so inform them of any change of address. I expect to be in **India** somewhere but write to me c/o **T.A. Strong**, Conservator of Forests, **Colombo**. I'll ask him to forward any letters. But also write to me through Dad and keep Dad up to date concerning your movements. I'll do the same.

I'm giving this letter to an **Australian** who is likely to leave us for **Melbourne** and has offered to deliver it. We expect to move at 5 a.m. tomorrow and it is now 10 p.m. so I'll stop.

Darling, keep your head up for I am sure we shall get together again – perhaps sooner than we expect. I expect the future to be hard for us all but together we will face it and find much happiness again.

Goodbye for now my dearest.

Ever and always your own, **Colin**.

#### NOTE A.

\***Colindear: Jonathan Moffatt** [*Malayan Volunteers Group (MVG) Historian, Archivist & Author*] and I could not find this name and agreed that it was probably a code name for **Colonel Dalley** of **Dalforce**. **Jonathan** wrote:

*"I know from the IWM interviews of Frank Brewer, MCS/Dalforce, that Dalley spent those last few days at Singapore ensuring his Dalforce officers got away before taking a last party out – including Brewer."*

**Colonel Dalley** did not remain free, as this information **Jonathan Moffatt** sent me indicates:-

**DALLEY J.D.** [John Douglas] JP b.1900. To Malaya 1920 as FMS Police Probationer. FMS Police Superintendent/Colonel. Commissioner of Police, Trengganu. KL Special Branch 1939. Senior Superintendent, CID Dept. FMS 1940. Married **Margaret C. Layard** 1925 KL. Living in Bellamy Rd. KL. Committee Singapore Polo Club. Lt. Colonel [General List] 12.41. C/O **Dalco** then **Dalforce, Singapore**. Left **Singapore** on the launch **Mary Rose** 15.2.42. Captured at **Muntok** 17.2.42. Escaped from **Muntok** with **E.A. Eno** and others. Recaptured. POW **Glodok, Tanjung Priok** then to **Singapore** 9.43 To **Shirakawa, Formosa** then **Miata, Japan** then **Mukden** 4.45 – 9.45. Wife **Margaret**, sister of **Mrs. De Moubray**, was born in **Ceylon**, & was a Red Cross VAD in WW1 and came to **Malaya** 1924. She was evacuated on **Narkunda** arriving **Fremantle** WA 24.1.42. Son **Peter** killed in a flying accident while serving in **Malaya** 14.2.58. Daughter **Mary. Margaret** died 8.4.65 **Sherborne, Dorset**. **J.D.** a member of **BAM** till 1973, died 10.1.83 [82] **Dorchester**. Papers with All Souls' College, **Oxford**.

\*\***Robert Jagoe** was a colleague and good friend of **Colin**. His son **Robin**, and wife **June** were **MVG** members.

\*\*\***Attaps** – from **Jonathan Moffatt**. "Attaps were cut palm branches/leaf for roofing used to construct huts – palm leaf thatch – a material very familiar to POWs who had to construct their own huts.

\*\*\*\***John Wyatt Smith** was also a **Dalforce** officer who escaped **Singapore** separately from **Colin**. They caught up with each other again in **Padang**. **Wyatt Smith's** name is mentioned several times in **Lieut. Col. P.A.B. McKerron's** story of his escape: <http://www.britishempire.co.uk/article/escapefromsingapore.htm>

#### NOTE B.

1. Sometime between 10 p.m. on Feb 25<sup>th</sup> when **Colin** wrote the above letter to his wife, and 5 a.m. on the 26<sup>th</sup>, **Colin's** group found out that they would not be going to **India** because the convoy he mentioned never arrived.
2. **Colin** arrived in **Padang** on 19.2.42 the same day as **Frank Man**. They travelled separately up the **Ingragiri River** and over the **Sumatra mountains** to **Tawah Luentong** [Editor: now called **Sawahlunto**]. It is most likely they caught the same train to **Padang** from there. They sailed the next day on the **HMS Danae** & arrived in **Tjilatjap, Java** at 15.00 hrs on 22.2.42.

**Frank Man** wrote a story of his wartime exploits called, "THE FALL AND EVACUATION OF SINGAPORE," which should be read in conjunction with this story. I have been in touch with his son **David Man** in **New York** who has published his father's story on his website. He has very kindly given **Morag** permission to use it here:

<http://www.manfamily.org/PDFs/EVACUATION%20OF%20SINGAPORE.pdf>

[To be continued in April 2016]



## AS I REMEMBER IT

By P.M. DAVIES [S.R.N. & wife of HARLEY BOXALL.]

By kind permission of her daughter Sallie Hammond.

Having heard that the Army were looking for nursing Sisters, owing to the inadequacy of Q.A. supplies (the Q.As. were the Army nurses), I reported to the headquarters, was interviewed and accepted, and given a rail warrant for **Amah** and myself to leave Singapore that night. When I got back to the hospital, I found **Harley** had arrived, and somehow found us, and I had to break the news to him about the V8. He took it with unusual calm.

**Amah** and I left on a terribly crowded train and arrived in Singapore early next morning. We obviously had Jap prisoners on the train, because I remember seeing British Tommies treating them none too gently on the railway platform. Unfortunately, the roles were all too soon to be reversed.

I took **Amah** to Robinsons (a very large Singapore Department store) and ordered breakfast in the Dining Room. I waited for them to make a fuss about serving **Amah** there, and was prepared to go into battle, but nobody said a word. We then hailed a taxi to take us to the Singapore Hospital, where I was to report (it must have been 12/13 December). And after being treated to the usual British indifference, was shown upstairs to a bedroom on the second floor of the Nurses' Home. On opening the window, my complacency was somewhat shattered to observe big drums of petroleum on the ground below. However, we were not allowed to unpack, but were speedily sent off across the causeway to the Johore Hospital, a many-storied edifice of immensely long stone corridors. Here, for a day or two, **Amah** and I shared a room, until I rebelled at the pickled and odiferous Chinese delicacies she stored there, whereupon a room was found for her in the servants' wing.

Despite being one of "Queen Alexandra's Young Ladies," the hours were very long, the work hard, and the food just abominable. The pay was apparently likewise, but in the chaos and mismanagement, I was not lucky enough to sample that. My Australian airmen caught up with me again and a couple of members of 62 Squadron. Then one morning, when we came on duty, they had all been spirited away, and new occupants arrived. Our equipment was pathetic, and a sepsis of the "by guess and by God" variety. Our ward had one tiny sterilizer, and two sandbags, and everything had to be flamed in spirit. I don't recall any deaths. **Sallie Scarf**, formerly a Q.A., was enrolled again, and once more we crossed paths in Johore.

When the Japs started getting too close to Johore, **Harley** insisted on my coming over the causeway to Singapore, but before that I spent the Christmas of 1941 in Johore, and went on Christmas night with **Harley** and some RAF types to Raffles Hotel, where we witnessed the Bright Young Things, in full evening dress, dancing. I was very annoyed with **Peggy Usher** (now **Ward** – or as she was then, **Hutchinson**), who, ignoring me completely on introduction, was badgering **Harley** for news of **Hutch**.

After moving to Singapore, I took a job with a clinic in Chinatown, and obtained a bedsitter in a block occupied by **Bertie** and **Mary Keegan**, also of 62 Squadron. **Mary** was a reporter on the "Malay Times", and very full of herself, as so many of these spoilt young women were.

On the second night of my duty in Chinatown, there was a terrible air-raid, and on reaching my flatlette, discovered it was badly damaged, and faithful **Amah** cut with flying glass. We took refuge with **Tess Payne** in Tanglin House for a couple of days. **Harley** was called up late one night to leave for Sumatra. I stayed on, trying to help run Tanglin House, since **Tess's** nerves were affected by the incessant air-raids, and in between whiles, sallied forth to obtain vaccination for leaving and replace passports. These errands were most time-consuming, due to incessant interruptions, lack of transport which disappeared at the sound of a siren, and distances involved. Vaccination could only be obtained at a camp right near the Naval Base, which the Japs never left alone.

**Jimmy Fish** then contacted me that the RAF were pulling out with families and we were to be at the docks early on 8<sup>th</sup> Feb, with some food and one suitcase. I handed **Amah** over to **Sallie's** care and never saw her again, though she has often been in my thoughts. When I told her I was going, she, unknown to me, went out in the midst of an air raid to get me fruit for the voyage. I wanted her to come with me, but she preferred to stay with her own Kongsis, so I gave her a stretcher, a bag of rice and an electric torch.

We finally embarked at 9 a.m. and had no sooner done so than the Japs came over. The familiar crumps hit a hospital ship in front of us at the docks, and we slid past with smoke streaming from her. I was told that she had not yet loaded casualties, which I hope was true. Strangely enough, we were not bombed again, but all slept on deck that night as we zig-zagged towards Sumatra. I seem to recollect that we disembarked there in the evening and were loaded into buses to go to an hotel accommodating us, because I distinctly remember seeing **Harley** standing by the side of the road under a light, and I screamed and got the driver to stop. It was purely coincidental that he was there at that time, since



they were posted somewhere up in the Sumatran jungle, and he had come into Palembang with some dispatches. We stayed at a Dutch Hotel whose owner was in the familiar green uniform of their Army, but whose hotel was run like clockwork. Unfortunately, we were not allowed to stay there long, perhaps two days(?), when we were warned that the Japs were coming down the river to where there were vast oil depots, and we women and children were to be flown out to Java. My impression is that we went to an airfield which seemed like a clearing with trees all around and boarded a Dutch troop-carrying plane. Inside, it was stripped bare of seating – just benches along each side and a small porthole through which poked a small gun manned by one of the crew. As we took off, I noticed all our men folk gazing skywards and there was much activity with the gun. It was only after we landed that we heard that there had been a Jap reconnaissance plane on our tail, but fortunately they did nothing about us.

We got into more buses on arrival at Batavia and were taken to Buitenzorg, in tourist days famed for its splendid Public Gardens, but which also housed a roomy prison to where we were now escorted. The “cells” and bedding were spotless; wardresses attended to us and locked the cells nightly. During the day, we sat around in the courtyard where food was served, and I have memory of a stew with carrots followed by bread and “Konfeyt”, a sugary confection like jam. Mothers of children were worried as the well water disagreed with small tummies and diarrhoea became rampant. Fortunately, somebody contacted the British Consul in Batavia, and he paid a visit, did not like what he saw, and arranged for us to be billeted all over the town. All races came forward with offers of accommodation, and **Tess Payne** was boarded in a Chinese house, and occupied the most spotless of bedrooms. I was sent to the house of a British Bank Manager, a spacious home of high ceilings and vast rooms.

Unfortunately, my lot was cast with the very young wife of an RAF officer and her two-month old baby. The child was on bottle feeds, but was having green stools and was generally upset and fractious. The mother was ‘*of the country*’ useless, having always relied on an efficient Amah. I tried to get the child off all feeds, and on to boiled water, which this silly young mother persistently ignored. She had been told that she was booked to go to South Africa, and with this in mind, she frequently dumped the wailing baby on me and went on shopping sprees in Batavia, buying sun dresses and the like for her forthcoming trip. Finally, thank God, she sailed, and life became slightly more peaceful, until the air raids started in Batavia. The Bank Manager with whom I had boarded was a very sick man, suffering from a duodenal ulcer, with the result that the food provided in the house was very bland, which proved very good for all of us. One night, he took me and the wife of a Singapore Bank Manager to the famous club in Batavia, the doors of which, they boasted, had never closed in the last two hundred years. Poor man, he was taken prisoner after we left, and died in a POW camp, probably due to the shocking food on which they had to survive.

I had one shopping day in Batavia, where they had the smartest continental boutiques, and because of the imminent collapse, goods were being sold at very reasonable prices. I bought four very smart outfits and a white turban, which later was a godsend in rationed Australia and India, where “chic” was often lacking, but even that day was interrupted by an air raid. Shortly afterwards, I was contacted by the RAF to embark on the [Dutch ship] “*Oranje*” sailing to Australia. Prior to departure, and on official advice, I handed in the service revolver which had travelled with me.

**Harley** was not a bit pleased when I told him later. **Tess Payne** was travelling with me but was going on to Sydney, whilst I disembarked at Fremantle. Just before the ship sailed, **Harley** came aboard. I had completely lost touch with him after we flew off from Palembang to Java, and it was a great joy to know that he was still safe. The journey to Australia was uneventful and the Dutch were very good to us.

Three weeks after I arrived in Australia, **Harley** joined me having had a hair-raising journey in bright moonlight on a small unarmed vessel from Java. He was terribly thin and arrived in his only clothing, khaki shirt and shorts, on foot, having walked from Perth (to which he had got a lift from Fremantle) to Mt. Lawley where I lived about six miles away, in complete blackout and feeling the numbers of the houses on their gates.

And the rest is another story!

#### SOME WEBSITES TO VISIT

<http://digital.soas.ac.uk/LOAA000025/00001> - “Churches of the Captivity” can now be read online. Also mentioned is the local priest **Revd. Jesudian** who assisted **Padre Duckworth** & fellow POWs in Pudu Gaol

<http://gu.com/p/3tnzq/sbl> - Guardian article about actress **Jane Seymour** and her Dutch mother **Mieke van Trig** who was in a POW camp in Indonesia, but which camp is as yet unknown

[en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jane\\_Seymour\\_\(actress\)](http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jane_Seymour_(actress)) - Wikipedia biography on **Jane Seymour**

<http://muntokpeacemuseum.org> - **David Man** grandson of **Gordon Reis** is preparing a website with information about the Muntok, Palembang and Belalau Camps. If anyone has any material relating to the internees and a brief biography of them, it can be sent to **JUDY BALCOMBE** at [jdbalcombe@gmail.com](mailto:jdbalcombe@gmail.com) Judy will forward it to David. The website will be an excellent source of information for families wanting to know about the internees and the Camps.

<http://mosaicsscience.com/> - Wellcome Trust's online audio documentary based on Meg Parkes' book “*Captive Memories*”



## HUGH LAWSON'S DIARY (EDITED) FROM 1<sup>st</sup> JANUARY TO 30<sup>th</sup> APRIL, 1945 – PART 5

By kind permission of his nephew Bob Davidson

### NEW YEARS DAY      JANUARY 1945

MON 1<sup>st</sup> Kunji – Veg Soup & Rice Spinach – Kunji & Bun. No Fatigues. Public Holiday. No Roll Call. Variety Concert. Sugar Issue 6ozs Semi White.

TUES 2<sup>nd</sup> Half Holiday (9am – 12noon) 6ozs Curry Powder & 1 spoonful Salt. **Rowswell** removed to acute annex ward.

FRID 5<sup>th</sup> 7 Dutchmen admitted to Camp alleged from Palembang.

SAT 6<sup>th</sup> 700 letters, no luck. Death of **Mr. Jepson**. Clean out & bug hunt as well as usual Garden Fatigue.

SUN 7<sup>th</sup> **Rowswell** posted on the dangerously ill list. No visitors. Sits up all night.

MON 8<sup>th</sup> Bad attack yesterday **Brown**. **Rowswell** passed a quiet night no change.

TUES 9<sup>th</sup> No Roll Call. 8 new internees admitted to Camp from working outside (British).

WED 10<sup>th</sup> **Rowswell** keeps the same. Extensive Air Activities over Singapore causing great excitement in the Camp during the morning.

FRID 12<sup>th</sup> **Rowswell** keeping better but still on the danger list.

SAT 13<sup>th</sup> Allowed to see **Rowswell**. **Rowswell** keeps the same. Rainy Cold Weather. Severe Chill & Cold in the head, chest & body otherwise (NBG). Free Issue 20ozs Shag.

SUN 14<sup>th</sup> **Rowswell** feeling better but looks terribly ill.

MON 15<sup>th</sup> Kunji – Veg Soup & Rice – Kunji & Bun. Cold in the head & chest generally off colour.

TUES 16<sup>th</sup> Rainy weather. Chilly & bleak. Got a severe cold.

WED 17<sup>th</sup> Kunji – Veg Soup & Rice – Veg Hash & Bun. Concert. WT 8st. 6lbs.

THURS 18<sup>th</sup> Death & Burial of **Mr. Ferrier**.

FRID 19<sup>th</sup> WT 8st. 4lbs. Halfday Holiday (Jap Celebration).

SAT 20<sup>th</sup> WT 8st. 3lbs. Death & Burial of **Mrs. Graham White**.

SUN 21<sup>st</sup> Sugar Issue: 6ozs Semi White. First Injection Vitamin B.

TUES 23<sup>rd</sup> Kunji – Veg Soup & Rice – Bun & Fish Paste. WT 8st. 2lbs. Curry Powder Issue: 8ozs. 3<sup>rd</sup> Injection Vit. B.

THURS 25<sup>th</sup> ¼ Pint Palm Oil Issue. 5<sup>th</sup> Injection Vit B. No Roll Call.

MON 29<sup>th</sup> Kunji – Veg Soup & Rice – Kunji & Bun. Heavy rains. AM Final WT 8st. 6lbs. Clean out & bug hunt before fatigue.

TUES 30<sup>th</sup> **Rowswell** doing as well as possible.

### FEBRUARY 1945

THURS 1<sup>st</sup> Kunji – Veg & Fish Kedgeree – Kunji & Bun. Great Air Activity this morning, 91 planes seen passing over the Camp. Salt Issue One spoonful. All quiet above except one alert (Solo Recon).

MON 5<sup>th</sup> **1085 DAYS** Ulcer Operation on **Bert Templeton** successful. Change of Moon usually brings heavy rainy weather. **Rowswell** still keeps cheerful although must be very weak.

TUES 6<sup>th</sup> Heavy Rains. **Darbyshire** killed by a fall of earth outside at Dunern Road.

FRID 9<sup>th</sup> Kunji – Veg & Fish Soup & Rice – Cottage Pie? Heavy Rain. 20% Reduction Rice Ration per Internee, Sugar, Salt & Tea.

SUN 11<sup>th</sup> Death of **Mr. Hasler**. Warned that a further reduction in foodstuffs would take place.

MON 12<sup>th</sup> Internees with over \$100 to hand over balance.

TUES 13<sup>th</sup> Short Rations. Heavy Rain. No Roll Call. No Half Holiday for Gardeners & Construction Workers.

FRID 16<sup>th</sup> No Roll Call. Heavy Rain. 3<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of Internment. Concert.

SAT 17<sup>th</sup> No Roll Call. Heavy Rain. **Rowswell** very ill no change. Half Holiday. Weekly clean out.

FRID 23<sup>rd</sup> Kunji – Veg & Fish Soup & Rice – Kunji & Fruit Tart. Great Air Activity about 130 planes in relays, except for AA no opposition. A real hearty sight for us all, although I watched the whole raid I was so ill I had to go to bed for the rest of the day afterwards.

SAT 24<sup>th</sup> Much better this morning & well enough to go on fatigue.

SUN 25<sup>th</sup> No Roll Call. Visited the sick in Hospital. **Rowswell** looks very ill but cheerful & hopeful of getting out. **Templeton** well on the road to recovery.

MON 26<sup>th</sup> Fine Weather. No Roll Call. Reconnaissance Plane over nearly every day.

TUES 27<sup>th</sup> **Mr. Scott** brought back from Gestapo Custody & admitted to Hosp. Beri-Beri.

WED 28<sup>th</sup> Pay Day:- \$12/40 – 60CTS = \$11/80CTS for 31 Days.

### MARCH 1945

THUR 1<sup>st</sup> Kunji – Veg – Fish Soup & Rice – Kunji Spinach & Bun. Great Activity Overhead. Visited by 54 PLANES. No rain or roll call.

SAT 3<sup>rd</sup> Burial of **Mr. Wallace** (Old Age).

WED 7<sup>th</sup> Death & Burial of **Mr. Lynd**.

THUR 8<sup>th</sup> Slight Rainfall. Notified of reduction in rice ration from Sun 11<sup>th</sup>.



- FRID 9<sup>th</sup>** Heavy Squalls of rain. No Roll Call. Free Issue: 6 Cheroots. 1 1/3 roll Tobacco. Death & Burial of **Mr. Gilfillan.**
- SAT 10<sup>th</sup>** Kunji – Fish & Veg Hash & Rice – Savoury Spinach & Bun. Cold rain squalls. FREE ISSUE: 4ozs Shag Tobacco. On starvation Diet. No Roll call.
- SUN 11<sup>th</sup>** Cold miserable wet weather. Air Activity Overhead. Thirty odd Planes visible.
- MON 12<sup>th</sup>** Lean Poor Rations. No Roll Call. Sugar Issue: 4ozs White. Death & Burial of Mr Pattara aged 69
- FRID 16<sup>th</sup>** Kunji – Fish & Veg Soup & Rice – Kunji. Usual daily rain fall. No Roll call. **1124 DAYS.** Owing to the meagre food ration advised to lie prone when possible??? Tooth Powder Issue = 1oz
- SUN 18<sup>th</sup>** Garden: Perks in Tobacco: 6 cheroots = \$1.80
- MON 19<sup>th</sup>** Another 9 Cheroots = \$2.70 issued in garden.
- TUES 20<sup>th</sup>** Garden:- 8ozs Gula Malacca = \$8.70. Killed 10 piglets at the Camp Farm. 1 pig and a leg for the Jap officials and the rest weighing 151lbs for over 3,500 Internees. 1 pig weighed separately = 19lbs. 28lbs of pork issued to our Area for 600 Internees so can imagine what slap up feed will be dished up in stews!!!
- WED 21<sup>st</sup>** Certain Huts vacated for incoming internees.
- SAT 24<sup>th</sup>** Heavy Rain. Approx 750 Singaporeans (All Nationalities & Sex) Interned.
- SUN 25<sup>th</sup>** Kunji – Fish & Veg Rissoles – Kunji. Cropping Leaf in heavy rain. Palm Oil Issue: 11ozs (Sweet Jar) = \$1.35
- MON 26<sup>th</sup>** Red Cross Parcels brought in from St. Andrews School.
- TUES 27<sup>th</sup>** 200 FMS Orangs (All Nationalities) Interned. 12 Cheroots = \$3.00
- WED 28<sup>th</sup>** Heavy Rains. The Sky ablaze by two big fires caused by air raid (3-5 am).
- THUR 29<sup>th</sup>** Death & Burial of **Mr. Atkinson.**
- FRID 30<sup>th</sup>** Cropping. Heavy Rain. Sky still ablaze in both places – (PM). About 100 Penangites (All Nationalities) Interned.
- SAT 31<sup>st</sup>** Rainy Weather. Concert. One blaze still going strong (PM).
- APRIL 1945**
- SUN 1<sup>st</sup>** Cropping. Rainy Weather. Easter: Mother 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday. Special Combined Service. Postponed by Rain. Sugar Ration: 5ozs White. Innoculated.
- MON 2<sup>nd</sup>** Special Comd. Service. Memorial & Burial of **Mr. Graham** (Sunkai).
- TUES 3<sup>rd</sup>** Kunji – Fish & Veg Stew – Hash & Bread. WT – 8st.
- WED 4<sup>th</sup>** Fine Weather (change). The new internees are all coloured nationalities and sexes mostly women & children. Good Friday & Easter Sunday declared public holidays except “Croppers.” **1143 DAYS.** Treated for “**PELLAGRA**” and received **MULTIPLE VITAMEN TABLETS.** 3 tablets per day for 6 days.
- FRID 6<sup>th</sup>** Fine Weather. Camp Strength: 4500 Internees all nationalities.
- TUES 10<sup>th</sup>** Additional 12 VIT TABS @ 2 per day.
- THUR 12<sup>th</sup>** Death & Burial of **Mr. Bolton.**
- SAT 14<sup>th</sup>** Kunji – Veg & Stew – Kunji & Bread. (Group Photographs Taken). Cropping despite holiday for meeting of relatives in Orchard. (General’s Visit).
- SUN 15<sup>th</sup>** **Trevor Hughes** died. Burial service of **Mr. Trevor Hughes.**
- MON 16<sup>th</sup>** Bought ½ Kati Gula Malacca - \$16.00
- TUES 17<sup>th</sup>** Kunji – Veg Stew – Kunji. (Pigs at H Y Farm get better food). Tobacco Issue: 11 Cheroots = \$3.08 [**Note: H Y Farm refers to Hall Yard Farm in Northumberland, the home of Hugh’s future wife, Doreen.**]
- WED 18<sup>th</sup>** Kunji – Veg Stew – Ragu Kunji & Bread. (Bloody awful meals).
- THUR 19<sup>th</sup>** Kunji – Fish & Veg Stew – Ragu Kunji & Scone. (Pretty Bloody).
- FRID 20<sup>th</sup>** Still got the left ear discharge & examined every other day by **Dr. Johns.**
- SAT 21<sup>st</sup>** Examined by **Dr. Landor** & received another 14 VIT TABS = 2 per day.
- SUN 22<sup>nd</sup>** Pellagra & Swelled Legs.
- MON 23<sup>rd</sup>** **ST. GEO DAY:** Issued with 1 British Parcel date 1942. Condensed Milk, Chocolate and Sugar. Condition good except Con Milk.
- TUES 24<sup>th</sup>** Enjoyed a sample of English Tin Food. American Parcel in best condition & packed. Canadian 2<sup>nd</sup> & British 3<sup>rd</sup>. 6 PKTS Cigarettes in USA parcel. USA 130ozs. Canadian 136ozs. British 126ozs. **1163 DAYS.** 1-10ozs Tin Gelatine of Meat with Veg Stew very tasty. (At Nips Request: 57 Canadian Parcels were given to the Officials & Staff in charge of Internees in Singapore).
- WED 25<sup>th</sup>** Sugar Issue: 6ozs White. Selling price \$3.00 per oz.
- THUR 26<sup>th</sup>** Rainy Weather. Planting potato cuttings & cropping as usual.
- SAT 28<sup>th</sup>** Firewood rationed to 3 tons. Nips King Emperor’s Birthday. Meeting of relatives in Orchard.
- MON 30<sup>th</sup>** Kunji – Fish & Veg Stew – Spinach & Bread. Rainy Weather.

[To be continued.]



**GEORGE DEVERAUX TEMPLER – JOHORE VOLUNTEER ENGINEER 1918 – 1943**

**Pre and post war correspondence.**

*By kind permission of his niece Carol Rundle*

*[Editor: The following is a selection of letters which Chris and Carol Rundle gave the MVG permission to publish in Apa Khabar. George Templer was an Assistant Rubber Planter, and the 73<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of his death at Songkurai, on 21<sup>st</sup> August 1943, was commemorated last year.]*

**Copy of George's Last Letter to his Mother.**

The Rubber Estates of Malaya,  
Kota Tinggi,  
Johore.  
28<sup>th</sup> November, 1941.

My dear Mummy,

Thank you for your letter posted on 6<sup>th</sup>, September, which reached here 28<sup>th</sup>, November. About my forthcoming leave next September 1942. What I propose doing is to join up as a Sub. Lieutenant in the Navy here if the war is still going, which I think will be pretty certain. I shall have fulfilled my obligations with the company, and will be more or less free to do what I like. I could not bear the idea of enjoying myself for six months while there are other more important things to do. So what I propose doing is to get the company to guarantee me my passage after the war is over, which thing I feel sure they will do. I shall sell up all my effects here including car and radio and all things in the house and transfer proceeds into my provident fund which will give me a tax free rate of 3 per cent and will bank my six months leave pay which they will pay next September. I shall also bank two year's bonus which will fall at that period. I have got two useful endowment policies taken before the war, these I shall keep running as they cover me in all war risks. I will also make a will turning all these over to you, in the event of me being "rubbed out" in order to help with James if he wants it. I made a good buy with my car and hope to clear about \$600 on the purchase price when I sell it next September as the demand steadily exceeds the supply. I only managed ten days local leave, which time I spent touring around Malaya, and visited Penang and Fraser's Hill. I took and passed my Tamil exam. in K.L. on the way through, which rather pleased me. I just learn languages naturally and never had a teacher for this. I put it down to a methodical knowledge of English and Latin grammar taught at Wey. Coll. God bless them it was a jewel of a place in Mr. Pitas' time. I shall always remember what a fine example and leader he was. I do wish that I could have stayed for another year and gone through the sixth form with him as form-master.

I am learning to speak Dutch, it seems quite an easy language but rather difficult with the pronunciation as it is very easy to lapse into German, it seems a useful language to know in the East as the Dutch are all over the place. We had rather fun in a volunteer parade the other day, there were some old concrete piles in the sea just off the road opposite the Johore Bahru General Hospital, which had to be demolished by explosive charges. I had to man a pneumatic drill, it was very heavy and kicked like hell, it was fun though standing up to the waist in the warm sea with the sun scorching on to my bare back and clouds of dust and grit billowing around every time I blew out the rubble from the hole with compressed air; the blowing up was not very impressive though.

I am very sorry to hear about cousin Hope's death, he was a great chap and I liked him a lot, I saw him several times in London when I was working there, many of the views which he then held have since proved right. We get so used to hearing in the news "two of our bombers failed to return" that we forget what the real loss must mean to someone waiting at home. I hope I can play a more active part by next September, it is very easy to forget all about the war when you are as yet untouched by it. I suppose at home in a remote country district now that there are not many planes over that the people will get careless and not take proper care when the raids begin to come again. If Japan attacks us, I hope she does, there will be the hell of a reception waiting for her in Malaya, still I must say it is not a pleasant climate to fight in.

I hope the last letter I wrote to you on 2<sup>nd</sup> November arrives alright. One or two evenings in my local leave there were some good parties in the local cabarets, (it must have been very dull before they were introduced out here). The trouble is that a lot of the Chinese are not very good dancers, the best one are the Filipino and the Eurasians. I found someone who could dance very well and we managed a few hot rumbas and tangoes, it seemed such a relief to let yourself go and be thoroughly happy and talkative after the gloominess of the estate.

Well, I hope that things continue to go well with you all at home, give my love to all the others. I have written to them all this month, we shall all have a grand reunion one of these days – boy, oh boy what a thought.

With lots of love,  
From your loving son, George D.

Mummy dear,

Your letter of 16<sup>th</sup> Sept. reached me before shutting this on the 29<sup>th</sup>, thank you so much for your presents. I hope my two letters will reach you, one on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and this one. All love, *George.*



**Copy of a reply from the Colonial Office to Mrs. Beatrice Templer's enquiry into her son's death on 10/1/1945**

COLONIAL OFFICE,  
(Enquiries and casualties Dept.)  
2, Park Street,  
W. 1.  
(Tel. MAYFAIR 8166)  
10<sup>th</sup> January 1945.

C.O ref. 10001/45  
(G.D. Templer)

Madam,

In reply to your letters of 6<sup>th</sup> December, I am directed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to say that a further report has now been received from the Bureau of Records and Enquiries, Singapore, which confirms the information given in your letter, that the case of your son's death was Diarrhoea, and that his Grave is No. 117. The date is, however, again given as 21<sup>st</sup> August, 1943.

It is regretted that it is not possible to trace members of the Volunteer Forces who may have been with your son in Thailand.

I am to assure you that any further information regarding Mr. Templer that may be received in this department from returned prisoners of war or from any other source will be forwarded to you as quickly as possible.

I am, Madam,  
Your obedient Servant.  
(signed) N.R. Wilkins.

**Copy of a letter from the Commanding Officer of the Johore Volunteer Engineers on 1/11/1945**

C/O of the Johore Volunteer Engineers,  
Church Cottage,  
Hickling,  
Norwich.  
1.11.45

My dear Mrs. Templer,

I cannot tell you how very distressed I was at the death of your son, who died at Kami Sonkrai in Thailand in 1943. He was a friend of mine and a very popular member of the J.V.E. and will be badly missed both in the unit and in Johore. One cannot say much it is all so sad, we lost twenty fine young fellows and as Commanding Officer of the J.V.E. I feel it very badly and also the fact that I could do so little to prevent it. I was not in the same Camp as your son at the time, but I am sure you will hear from friends of his in the J.V.E. who were. When I get information about the government's plans for the upkeep of various cemeteries in Thailand, I will let you know and if there is anything I can do for you in further information, please do not hesitate to write to me.

Please accept my deepest sympathy and that of the whole J.V.E., your son was a most charming boy, and I am deeply sorry for you in your loss.

Yours very sincerely,  
(signed) N.K. Crosse.

**Copy of a letter from a member of the J.V.E. who knew George also dated 1/11/1945**

Highclere 102

Woolton Lodge,  
Woolton Hill  
Newbury,  
Berks.  
1.11.45

Dear Mrs. Templer,

I must apologize for not writing sooner, but I thought it better to wait a little until I knew what my movements were likely to be, and as I have now heard from the Colonial Office I know where I am.

George was on a party of 200 volunteers which was sent from Changi about the beginning of June to the Race Course in Singapore and had quite a reasonable time cutting grass and baling hay for the Jap cavalry horses - how long this lasted I do not know but he was on the ill-fated "F" Party, which included 205 volunteers, which was sent up from Changi to Thailand about the middle of 1943 (I think this is correct). This party went right up the river ahead of all other existing parties toiling on the railway to a place called Nikki.

Conditions were pretty bad up there and a lot of poor fellows lost their lives. The Volunteers' party of 205 came back



110 strong, and what was left of the party returned to Malaya.

I met them coming down the line and was shocked to learn the news that George had died only just before the order came for them to be sent down. I think he must have died about November 1943 in or near Nikki Camp in Thailand, with "F" Party from Singapore. [Editor: His death has now been confirmed as 21/8/43.]

I am afraid I cannot put you on to any other volunteer who was with him but an appeal in the Telegraph as you suggest should bring in some information.

I do not think there is the slightest hope of anything of George's being recovered from Malaya, his goods are sure to have been looted by the natives if not stolen by the Japs, and probably his bungalow is also in ruins, but the best thing to do is to write to Francis Peek's office at 5/7, Eastcheap, and ask them to write out to their people in Malaya and make enquiries on the spot. In the event of anything being lost as it is the case with my wife and I (including our wedding presents and so on - we were married in Singapore in 1939) you can make a claim for compensation, I believe, if you know more or less what he had. We might be able to help you there. You should write to:- The Controller General, Trading with the Enemy Branch, Treasury and Board of Trade, 24, Kingsway, London W.C.2 and ask them for a form for claim for compensation for goods lost in Malaya.

In case you haven't got it, Mrs. Kent lives at St. Waleric, Park Road, Winchester.

I am pretty sure neither Mullen or Boddington saw George in Thailand. If you would like to write to Boddington who was George's Manager on R.C.N. his address is:- G.H. Boddington, White Hill, Goring-on-Thames. I saw him in London on Tuesday and he is very fit.

Please let me know if the Friday will be convenient and if not we can make it Thursday. I will leave it to you. The best wishes from my wife and myself,

Yours very sincerely,  
(signed) Alec Archer.

MAYfair 9400 Ext.



E/14075/AG13

Your reference.....

The War Office, (AG13),  
Curzon Street House,  
Curzon Street,  
London, W.1.

July, 1946

Dear Madam,

In reply to your letter of 26th June, 1946, forwarded to this Directorate by Graves Registration and Enquiries (Records) S.E.A.C., I am to say that your son Sapper G.D. Templer, Johore Volunteer Engineers, has been reburied in THANBYUZAYAT WAR CEMETERY, Plot B6, Row C, Grave No.19.

In due course, a photograph will be taken and two prints will be sent to you as next-of-kin, as soon as they are received in this country.

Yours faithfully,

*C. M. ...*

Director.  
Graves Registration and Enquiries.

Mrs. B.E. Templer,  
6 Saint Stephen's Mount,  
Richmond Hill,  
Bournemouth.

15.



ROBINSON -  
at Christ Church,  
WILLIAM ALFRED ROBINSON, to B.E.A. ...  
LOWERY. Present address: 21, Lytle-st.,  
Bishop, Co. Down.

ON ACTIVE SERVICE

de WINTER. - On Dec. 15, 1945, whilst on  
being duties, Pte. Sgt. Rex, husband of Joan,  
and son of Cecilia and the late Louis de  
WINTER, of 78, Salmon-st., N.W.9.

GARRETT. - Previously reported missing,  
now presumed killed in action against the  
Japanese on Java on March 24, 1942. Lt.-  
Col. STANLEY L. GARRETT, R.N.R., H.M.S.  
Anker, elder son of Mrs. Garrett and the  
late Leonard T. Garrett, of Cringlford, Norwich.  
A gallant son and worthy officer of the Royal  
and Merchant Navies.

HYDE. - On Dec. 6, 1945, suddenly, in Suez,  
HOWARD VICTOR WILLIAM CLARENDON HYDE,  
Lt.-Col., R.N.R., dearly loved husband of  
Muriel Hyde.

FRYOR, RONALD WILLIAM (Bill), Pilot  
Officer, R.A.F., 115 Sqn., failed to return  
from night operations over Germany, Aug. 4/5,  
1940, now officially reported killed in action  
and is buried at Uithuisen, Holland, precious  
beloved only child of DOROTHY and Cecil  
FRYOR, 10, Sandymount-drive, Wallasey.

ROBERTS. - Previously reported missing, now  
officially presumed to have lost his life in  
January, 1945, Lieutenant D. D. ROBERTS,  
R.N., his Majesty's submarine Porpoise, much  
loved husband of Barbara (nee Colingwood),  
23, Wellington Court, Knightsbridge, and only  
son of Mr. and Mrs. S. Roberts, Heath Cottage,  
Burrhead, Perthshire.

TEMPLER, GEORGE DEVEREUX, Johore V.E.  
and Rubber Estates of Malaya, officially con-  
firmed died of dysentery while p.o.w. in Japane-  
ese hands, Kamisonkral Camp, Thailand, Oct.  
21, 1945, elder son of the late GEORGE  
TEMPLER and Mrs. Turner, 6, St. Stephen's  
Mount, Richmond-hill, Bournemouth. "Never  
doubted clouds would break."

WRIGHT. - Previously reported missing on  
air operations, now officially presumed to have  
lost his life on April 5, 1945, Pilot Lieuten-  
ant NORMAN WILLIAM WRIGHT (66566),  
beloved husband of Marjorie, 125, Ridge-lane,  
Watford, Herts. and dearly loved son of Mr.  
and Mrs. W. L. Wright, 52 Highview-gate,  
Edgware, Middx.

Daily  
Telegraph  
17 Dec  
1945



## THE BARRY DUKE BROTHERS

From Cork to the Death Railway of Thailand-Burma

By Kind Permission of Amanda Crowley

[Editor: Amanda is from Cork & while researching the Barry Duke Brothers for a university dissertation, was struck by the lack of commemoration of them in their home city. This is her tribute to 2 very brave young men.]

[George and Emily Barry Duke resided with their children in Cork City at the turn of the twentieth century when Ireland was still a dominion of the British Empire. They had three sons, Esmonde, Richard and Basil and two daughters, Dorothy and Gaberte (Pip). Richard, their second son, fought in World War One when just seventeen, he falsified his age and enlisted with the 9th Battalion Royal Munster Fusiliers. His older brother, Esmonde, who had emigrated to South Africa in 1913, fought with the 2nd Regiment of the South African Infantry and was killed in battle at Messines on 11 April 1918. Luckily, Richard survived and returned to Cork in 1919. Cork was soon in the throes of the Irish War of Independence, followed by the Irish Civil War, caused by disagreement over the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921. This disagreement split the same army that had been so cohesive against the British in the War of Independence. The official Irish Army was pro-treaty and it was this Army that Richard now joined. The Civil War ended within a year when the anti-treaty side laid down their arms, and for the first time in a decade, peace settled upon the country. Richard remained in the Irish Army, serving as a Captain in Collins Barracks, Cork. Meanwhile, the youngest Duke brother, Basil, had become an engineer and sailed from London on the *Kalyan* to British Malaya in 1923. It is believed that Basil worked initially for Dunlop in Penang, later becoming a Planter with Malayan American Plantations (MAP).]

### Richard Barry Duke



Basil enjoyed a wonderful lifestyle afforded to white Europeans in Malaya and urged his brother to join him there, telling him of opportunities to be had. Hence, in 1924, Richard resigned his commission in the Irish Army and was employed as a Secretary by Dunlop, later also joining MAP in the Kedah area of North Malaya. He worked on the Harvard and Dublin Estates. Richard returned home on leave every few years, and on one of these visits he met Cecilia Hayes, who would claim his heart. In 1937, at The Cathedral of the Good Shepherd in Singapore, they were married. The wedding reception was held in Raffles Hotel, Singapore, and the couple returned to the Harvard Estate, Kedah, Malaya to begin married life. Their marriage was reported in the *Irish Independent* and *Southern Star* newspapers.

This was a very peaceful interlude. Cecilia and Richard went on to have two sons, Brian born in 1938 and Rory in 1941. Both Richard and Basil were members of the Kedah Volunteer Force (KVF). As the Japanese invaded Malaya, Basil and Richard were serving with the KVF, Cecilia was at home in Kedah with the children. In early December 1941, Cecilia got word to evacuate. She describes the panic in a letter home to her parents:

*"...Dick had only been in camp 3 days when I got an hour's notice to be on the road with as much luggage as I could take ... the very next morning at 5.30 am the boy came to my room with a chit from the Manager to be off ... I had to drive myself ... we left a back way though the rubber, over a new pile bridge which had had 3 days of rain, my knees were trembling ... I drove 140 miles without a stop."*

Eventually arriving in Singapore, where they were under constant attack, she says:

*"... 3 bombs fell 50 yards from the shelter, I will never forget it. I thought my last end had come, we could smell it afterwards, the laundry got a direct hit and 3 people were killed ... This of course finished Brian. He was terrified ever after ... in raids afterwards ... I used to be on top of Brian and he used to cry silently saying 'Mummy, Mummy'."*

Word came that they were to be ready to sail, the scene on the docks of Singapore was terrifying:

*"... we had 10 air raids and, of course, they were after our ships ... The Empress of Japan ...we packed everything into*



*the car and went to the Dock to find it pouring with smoke and fire ...poor Dick was nearly demented ... Never will I forget it, the heat, the crowds of women and children, the infants, poor Dick, wet through with perspiration limping on and off the ship as his right foot was giving him trouble ..."*

Cecilia despondently recorded: *"... said goodbye to Dick. I never before saw Dick so moved, so awful looking, so haggard."* The *Empress of Japan* sailed out of Singapore on 31st January 1942 and made it to Durban, South Africa. Cecilia and the children disembarked here, heeding the advice of an Irish sailor who suggested it would be more pleasant to pass the duration of the war in South Africa, away from the rationing and bad weather. Cecilia had concerns about the boys' health and wanted to remain in a warm climate, it also meant she would be nearer to Richard to reunite with him when the war ended.

Richard and Basil returned to their units and fought on until Singapore was surrendered by General Percival on 15th February 1942. The KVF had disbanded at Ipoh on 18th December 1941 and Richard joined the Royal Indian Army Service Corps and was commissioned as an Officer. Cecilia mentions Richard joining the 'Chinese Gorillas' (sic), a reference to Dalforce in one of her letters. Basil joined the Armoured Cars Division of the Federated Malay States Volunteer Force (FMSVF) when the KVF disbanded. Basil was wounded in the fighting at Tengah Aerodrome and was being treated in Singapore when it fell. He may have been treated at Alexandra Hospital and if so, survived the massacre there. Fellow Volunteer, Harry Mallett, mentions Basil in his diary entry of 20th February 1942, describing the set up at Changi:

*"The next house, No. 3 was similar to ours and housed some 88 Officers – mostly those commissioned during the War and a few KVF amongst the latter ... and Dick Duke - his brother Basil was slightly wounded in the armoured cars."*

Life in Changi settled into routine. Fellow Volunteer, Dan Wright, wrote in a letter to Cecilia after the war:

*"As you know, Dick and I were together most of the actual campaign and a grand friend he was to me. After the capitulation we joined forces again in April at Changi and many was the evening we sat out on the hillside talking of you and Hannah and the boys. It was a great comfort to both to recall the happy times we had had together and we used to go to bed all the happier for it."*

On 28th October 1942, after six months in Changi, Richard was sent to Thailand as part of Work Party "U". The journey by rail took four and a half days in tremendous heat, they were packed into steel trucks. There was no room to stretch out so men took it in turns to sleep. The only ration carried was Red Cross issue. Rice was given in fire buckets which they tied to the outside, water was the same. The men existed on two plates of boiled rice per day, sometimes augmented with some stewed marrow. They de-trained at Ban Pong, thirty five miles west of Bangkok. After two days rest, they were bussed to Kanchanaburi. From here, carrying all their remaining possessions, they marched through the monsoon rain, wading in mud up to their knees, for over 110 kilometres. They slept in the open, always wet and fed only the minimum of rations before arriving at Kanyu Camp. On arrival they built basic bamboo and attap shelters as no accommodation was provided for them.

The work was torturous, slaving with picks and shovels, and in heat as high as 118 degrees Fahrenheit, the handles of the tools were scorching hot, instantly causing blisters and sores. The men suffered from illness such as malaria, dysentery and beri-beri. The walk to work was often several miles, leaving at dawn and returning well past dusk every night with no days off. Richard had survived war before and his disposition was such, he did not dwell on the misery of it but instead tried his best to lift the spirits of his comrades. Dan Wright wrote in his letter to Cecilia:

*"In October '42 we were sent up to Thailand to build this railway and there our troubles began in real earnest. Dick, Lock, Bancroft, Simpson of Seremban and myself went up in a kongsi and we all agreed that Dick was the best man of the lot of us. Always cheerful and good humoured even at our worst times, he was always thinking up gadgets and working to make conditions more comfortable for the lot of us. He and I did the cooking for the party and his ingenuity in making the most of the very limited materials available was amazing. Many was the laugh we had at the dishes turned out but they were all amazingly good!"*

In March 1943, things took a turn for the worse, this was the start of the 'Speedo' period. To exacerbate the situation it coincided with Monsoon season. The men were now made to work twelve to eighteen hour days. Dan Wright wrote:



*"hewing granite and heaving large boulders off the track with the aid of crowbars. The food was quite inadequate and we were full of malaria and most of us had other complaints like dysentery, beri-beri and jungle sores."*

It was at this time that **Richard's** health also dramatically declined. In his diary entry, dated Monday 3rd May 1943, **Harry Mallett** described the conditions:

*"... The work itself is just killing in the open cuttings – the heat beating down in almost visible waves – the handles of the tools becoming almost red hot – even the wooden shafts, but the crowbars being iron and heavy as hell anyhow – just blisters one's hands as one picks it up! Working on granite rock face, we somehow manage to shift the stuff – it's almost a miracle ... We work in pairs and my buddy is dear old **Dick Duke** – looks thoroughly patriarchal in a full square beard! I myself manage to shave on an average once a week but I still have a few razor blades and **Jo's S.A.** parcel shaving soap. Well, I suppose we can survive this business but about 3 p.m. out on the job I often begin to doubt my own ability to hang on – but of course I just **MUST** and that's all there is to it. Our gang of Officers started with 57 on Easter Monday and today we are down to 44. I'm O.K. so far but I only started yesterday."*

**Richard** was officially noted as being ill on 11th May 1943 at Kanyu Camp, Thailand. His dear friend, **Dan Wright**, wrote:

*"... **Dick** began to complain of his heart but the M.O. found nothing wrong with it or not enough to get him off work at a time when the Japanese were forcing people with temperatures of 102 to go to work. He carried on without a murmur for several weeks but we could see the effort it was costing him and when he finally went down with dysentery, he was so exhausted that he had no reserve of strength left. He put up a grand fight for almost a week but on the night of Friday 28th May when I took a beaten-up egg across to him at the hospital after we got in from work he refused it for the first time. I tried to cheer him up by talking of you and the boys but was sadly worried when I left him to go to bed. Next morning at work we heard of his death and **Lock** and I were allowed to help to carry him to his grave in Lower Kanyu cemetery, a rather beautiful spot high above the river with a view of the Hills of Burmah (sic) in the distance. We shall never forget that day as long as we live nor shall we ever forget one who set such an example of cheerfulness and unselfishness to us all. **Bancroft**, too, lies in that cemetery above the river and they were both in our thoughts at the end when the Allied flags were hoisted in the camp and we sang the National Anthems and the Doxology."*

In April 1943, the Japanese ordered another Work Party from Changi but not enough fit men remained in Changi to meet the quota, so the Japanese ordered that "F" Force include 30% unfit men. The men were lured with false promises of improved conditions, better food, accommodation, surroundings; no marching and little work would be required of them. Singapore was by now suffering shortages in food and medicine. After over a year in captivity, malnutrition and its various ailments were rife. "F" Force consisted of 7,000 men, approximately 3,400 British and 3,600 Australian. The journey to Thailand was arduous, thirty five men packed into rail trucks for five days and nights in sweltering heat. **Basil Barry Duke** was on Train 11. From Ban Pong, "F" Force had to march for 300 kilometres in the dark through dense jungle using elephant tracks, whilst up to their waist in monsoon rain and mud.

#### **Basil Barry Duke**



*"The parties always marched at night. The monsoon broke in earnest soon after the march began and conditions rapidly worsened. Everyone was loaded to capacity. Men toiled through the pitch blackness and torrential rain, sometimes knee-deep in water, often staggering off bridges in the dark."*

After marching for seventeen nights, 1,680 men reached No. 2 Camp Songkurai, Thailand which 'will stand out as the horror hell of Prison Camps.' **Padre Duckworth** said, "from this 1,680 less than 250 survived to tell the tale." **Basil** managed to meet his brother **Richard** on the long march up country as "F" Force passed through Kanyu Camp. **Dan Wright** wrote:

*"I can give you little news of **Basil**, I'm afraid, except that he died a fortnight or so after **Dick** at a camp further up the river. You will be glad to know*

*that **Dick** saw him a short time before his death as he passed our Camp on the way upriver and had a few minute's talk with him."*



One can imagine what **Richard's** thoughts were upon seeing his brother.

*"POWs working in these camps at the time of "F" Force passing through have been known to say that they thought their own plight was insufferable, but that of "F" Force could never be described, hundreds of them, passing through the camps for days, dead on their feet, dead in their expression, not seeing, just moving one leg in front of the other, staggering to keep up or they were lost, dragging themselves on and on ..."*

Conditions at Songkurai when the British troops arrived were appalling. **Padre Duckworth** recorded, *'found only desolation and decomposing bodies of Malayan workers who had died of cholera.'* Work was relentless. Songkurai Camp was located nine kilometres south of Three Pagodas Pass. **Lt. Col. Hirateru Banno** was in charge of the prisoners' care but he exerted no control over the Engineers degeneracies. Official requests to improve conditions, rations and the work environment from Allied Officers such as **Lt. Col. Harris** were ignored. **Basil's** suffering, alongside his fellow POWs, was further compounded by the existence of **Lt. Abe**, the Japanese Railway Engineer in charge of the camp's working parties. **Lt. Abe** was described as *'brutal and completely insensible to any decency'* even his own Senior Officer found him very difficult.

*"So severe were the demands on them by the engineer officer-in-charge, Lieut. Abe, that men unfit to walk had to be carried on comrade's backs to parade and thence to work on the bridge, where they were forced to haul logs and beams from a sitting position."*

The Japanese would not recognize *'debility, weakness, malaria, beri-beri and trench feet'* as illnesses sufficient for a man not to work. The size of a working party was dictated by the Engineers and failure to meet demands meant they would enter the hospital and drive ill men from their beds to work. The regime was fierce; the Japanese army and Korean guards served violence on each other, on civilians and on the prisoners with the least provocation. Escape was ill-advised; hiding among the natives was impossible and running into the jungle assured death. Captured escapees were tortured and this was considered worse than the inevitable death that followed. For some, death was a welcome release from the horror of their existence. **Padre Duckworth** said:

*"Never in my life have I seen such tragic gallantry as was shown by those men who lay on the bamboo slats and I speak now as a priest who administered the last rites to all of them. Yet they died happy. Yes, happy to be released from pain, happy because our cause would not be suffered to fail among the nations of the earth."*

Men suffered terribly with tropical ulcers. Bamboo was everywhere and used for building everything. It splintered easily and was the cause of many cuts. Within hours a simple cut could become ulcerated. Witnesses to the Ulcer Parades recall the horror of medics attempting to halt the infection by scraping away the pus and rotten flesh with only instruments such as teaspoons. **Reg Jarman**, a Medical Orderly at No.2 Camp said:

*"Tropical Ulcers – There is no pleasant way to describe draining oodles of pus from under the skin, whilst coping with the terrible stench associated with tropical ulcers. Following this process we would cover the wound with banana leaves to keep the flies away. Tropical ulcers would devour the flesh at an alarming rate, revealing the bones of a leg in a couple of days. While not a daily occurrence, an amputation was sometimes necessary to give someone a fighting chance of surviving, if they had no other diseases. In this situation the patient would be taken out of hospital and laid on a bamboo bench where at least eight orderlies restrained him while the medical officer did the scalpel work. The orderlies would cut through the femur with an old carpenter's saw at the appropriate stage in the procedure."*

**Brian Denson** records conditions at Songkurai in his diary entry August 1943:

*"Large number of Death cards for Tokyo ... Conditions in Sonkrai (sic) deplorable. Complete lack of medical treatment. Rain most of the month."*

There were 268 deaths recorded at No: 2 Camp Songkurai alone on August 1943. A Japanese commander, **Lt. Col. Wakabayashi**, arrived in August 1943 and made some improvements. Sadly, this was too late to save **Basil** and he died from tropical ulcers on 19th August 1943. He was 39 years old when he died and was buried at No: 2 Camp, Songkurai. **Richard's** wife **Cecelia** only learned of his death when the war ended. She had stayed in South Africa believing him to be alive and upon receiving the devastating news of his death she returned to Ireland with their two sons, **Brian** and **Rory**. **Basil** was survived by his two unmarried sisters **Dorothy** and **Gaberte** – the evacuation list of the *Empress of Japan* lists a **Mrs. B.B. Duke** alongside **Mrs. R.B. Duke (Cecelia)** but, as of yet, I can find no evidence to support the belief that **Basil** had married. The **Barry Duke** line, almost wiped out by war, continues through **Richard's** sons, **Brian** and **Rory** and their many children and grandchildren. Sadly **Brian Barry Duke** recently passed away on 14th June 2015.



## NEWS FROM AUSTRALIA

Robert Gray, Patricia Guidice, Rhuwina Griffiths, Bill Adamson.

Janet Robinson, Kaye Bruechle, Patricia Wood, Tony Brand



### WA MVG CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Some of the West Australia members of the MVG in the Perth area met at the Left Bank Restaurant, South Fremantle for a pre-Christmas get-together. Those present were: **Robert & Glenice Gray, Patricia Wood, Tony Brand, Patricia Guidice, Rhuwina Griffiths, Bob Paterson, Warren & Janet Harvey, Janet Robinson, Kay Bruechle, Bill and Elizabeth Adamson.** Photos and maps of the trip to Singapore, Sumatra and Banka Island were shown to those who did not go. We found that as some members were unable to attend the lunch due to other end-of-year arrangements, perhaps a date in November would be better for 2016.

Greetings for the New Year to all MVG members wherever you may be.

Report by Elizabeth Adamson.

### FRED RANSOME SMITH'S EXHIBITION "THE ART OF SURVIVAL" - Report by John Pollock

Some 60 people attended the launch of **Fred Ransome Smith's** exhibition "*The Art of Survival*" at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance in December 2015.

**Fred**, now 96, was a POW of the Japanese, having been captured at Singapore in February 1942 and then sent to work on the Thailand-Burma Railway. During his three and a half years of captivity he took the opportunity, at great personal risk, to draw incidences of the appalling treatment of his fellow POWs.

Some of the artwork exhibited was produced as a Lieutenant POW in camps on the Burma/Thailand Railway, whilst others were drawn later from memory.

**Fred** was born in 1919 in Westminster, London. In the late 1930s, he attended the Chelsea School of Art, London, where one of his part-time lecturers was **Sir Henry Moore**, a sculptor & artist best known for his semi-abstract monumental bronze sculptures. Another lecturer was **Graham Sutherland OM**, an English artist notable for glass, fabrics, prints and portraits.

**Fred** joined up as a Lieutenant with the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Suffolk Regiment and, despite originally being destined for the Middle East, arrived in Singapore in late January 1942, which he described as being "in a bad shape when we arrived."

After the war, and influenced in part by POWs he had met in captivity, **Fred** went into the field of advertising, a career he pursued both in the UK and Australia, when he emigrated from the UK in 1964.

In his retirement, he lectured at La Trobe University in Bendigo, Victoria, a job he got a lot of pleasure from and a career, on reflection, he would have liked to have pursued earlier as he enjoyed the learning environment.

As **Fred** highlighted in his opening speech, "Many of my drawings are not pleasant to look at, as we were subjected to inhumane, uncontrolled brutality and treated as expendable slaves. All manner of punishments were inflicted upon us and while some might consider the drawings confronting, they are a visual record of black times and I believe have a place in our memories. Some, however, are humorous and show that even in the midst of great suffering and inhumanity the lighter side of life still existed."

**Fred** also described how he was asked to help design stage sets for several camp productions and remembers producing life-sized heads of Beethoven and Chopin for one of these.

**Fred** heaped praise on the medical services for doing a 'magnificent job' throughout their captivity. **Fred** was often given the task of drawing some of the medical cases, which presented themselves and he saw many infectious conditions and terrible cases of malnutrition.

In conclusion, **Fred** said that his drawings had been his way of both remembering those years and for coming to terms with them. However, he felt that this part of history should be recorded, remembered and understood.

His exhibition will certainly go a long way towards achieving those ends. The exhibition runs until the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2016.

Also see: <http://www.shrine.org.au/Exhibitions/Temporary-Exhibitions/The-Art-of-Survival>



## OUR CHRISTMAS, 1942

Kindly transcribed and edited by Judy Balcombe, Melbourne, December 2015

[From Chapter 8, "By Eastern Windows," by William McDougall (wartime American journalist, Sumatran internee and post-war Catholic Priest.)

The Women's Camp crowned a low hill on the outskirts of Palembang. Every day our working party of fifty men passed within a few hundred yards of it on the hike from gaol to the camp we were building for ourselves. In pre-war Palembang, what was now the Women's Camp had been a group of fourteen medium-sized houses comprising a compact little residential section of



Betty Jeffrey's drawing of the Australian Nurses' House, Irenelaan Women's Internment Camp, Palembang, Sumatra, 1942.

Dutch families. The Japanese had strung barbed wire around the hill and turned the area into an internment camp, packing in women and children forty to a house and ten to a garage. Between the lower houses and the barbed wire fence was a low retaining wall and an open space where women gathered daily to wave and call to the working party as it hiked past ...

The day before Christmas, I marched out with the working party. As usual we began to wave and shout when in sight of the Women's Camp. But the women were silent, standing motionless in the open space. Their stillness silenced us. We slowed to a halt and asked each other, in whispers, what was wrong.

The answer came in song. Across the no-man's land which separated us sounded the melody of "O Come All Ye Faithful." Our guards were as astonished as we were and let us stand there listening. The music softened on the second song, "Silent Night, Holy Night", and grew stronger on the third, a Dutch carol. Leading the singers was a woman in the habit of a nun. Her arm rose and fell, as though waving a baton... We walked, moving quietly and slowly in order to hear those voices as long as possible...

Seldom have I appreciated Christmas more than that day as a war prisoner in a gaol beside Sumatra's Moesi River, two degrees south of the equator. Different as was that Christmas to all of us, there was

something which brought us closer to the real significance of the day than many of us had ever been. We had Christmas in our hearts, instead of on an electrically lighted tree or in gaudily wrapped packages from a department store.

On the day after Christmas, we reciprocated the women's serenade. **Father Bakker** led his choir out as members of the working party. When within earshot of the Women's Camp the choir began to sing, first a verse in Dutch then a verse in English, "O Come All Ye Faithful." The women were waiting, standing silently in the open space between their houses and the fence... "O Come All Ye Faithful" was followed by "Silent Night, Holy Night." The Women's Camp was no longer in sight when the song ended but the choir swung into another melody, for singers knew the women could hear them still and would be listening even after the last note died.

### MORE WEBSITES TO VISIT

<http://au.news.yahoo.com/video/watch/30344705/former-world-war-two-prisoner-of-wars-opens-exhibition-of-pictures-he-risked-his-life-to-draw/> Fred Ransome Smith's interview with Channel 7 News - taking 30/45 minutes

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/work/31682788?q&versionId=38424509> Photographs taken by Revd. Hamilton Aikin, Military Chaplain, 1<sup>st</sup> (Perak) FMSVF (1934-1941)

[http://c.yimcdn.com/sites/tts.site-ym.com/resource/collection/91BDA283-464C-4557-AAB8-4FA1C66B2B42-Cameron\\_Highlands\)Boarding\\_School\\_Susan\\_Wouters\\_and\\_Tony\\_D\\_version2.pdf](http://c.yimcdn.com/sites/tts.site-ym.com/resource/collection/91BDA283-464C-4557-AAB8-4FA1C66B2B42-Cameron_Highlands)Boarding_School_Susan_Wouters_and_Tony_D_version2.pdf) Memories of Cameron Highlands Boarding School written for the Tanglin Trust School Alumni Association by Susan Wouters and Tony Daintry.

<http://www.viweb.freehosting.net/talalla-bros.htm> The story of brothers Flight Lieutenant Cyril Talalla and Warrant Officer Henry Talalla recorded on the website of Victoria Institution, their alma mater in Kuala Lumpur.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DIPAD8WD2BE> Trailer of a History Channel documentary about Henry Talalla's story, "Lost Over France: Malaysia's Unsung Hero."

<http://vimeo.com/141922630> Video clip of the Talalla Clan's ten-yearly visit to honour Henry and Cyril Talalla in Normandy. Both brothers were members of the MAAF before joining the RAF and moving to England where they saw action over France. The video was edited by Martin Chung, son of Chung Chee Min a former member of the MVG who lives in Canada.

<http://www.itv.com/news/2015-07-23/mitsubishi-urged-to-apologise-to-british-prisoners-of-war/> ITV interview with Sandy Gibson - former FEPOW.

<http://www.vintag.es/2013/10/colour-photos-of-singapore-military-in.html> Colour photos of military in KL & Singapore about 1941. These are extraordinary in that there are few colour photos of these 1941 garrisons.

<http://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/marking-70th-year-of-end-of-ww11> Article about the Kranji Service on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2015 in the Straits "Sunday Times" newspaper.

<http://www.facebook.com/1496587907285169/videos/vb.1496587907285169/1688623454748279/?type=2etheater> Australian Nurses Newsreel



## THE DIARY OF GEORGE WILLIAM SOMERVILLE 1902 – 1984

By kind permission of his daughters Jill Staples and Barbara Parsons  
With thanks to Ruth Rollitt for her research

[Editor: This account was typed by George Somervilles' wife from letters which her husband wrote immediately after his escape from notes he made at the time in a notebook. It is written in the third person.]

### Precis of G.W. Somerville's diary detailing his escape from Singapore.

1st December 1941, mobilized with the rank of substantive Major in the 4<sup>th</sup> Bn. (Pahang) FMSVF (Federated Malay States Volunteer Force).

15<sup>th</sup> December 1941 – 15<sup>th</sup> January 1942, Commanding officer 4<sup>th</sup> Bn. FMSVF during MACFORCE.

15<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 2 i/c remnants of 4<sup>th</sup> Bn. FMSVF.

23<sup>rd</sup> January, Singapore Fortress Small Units Training Officer.

1<sup>st</sup> February, hospitalised, due to malaria.

9<sup>th</sup> February, bombed out.

10<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> on staff L. of C. Brigade, including command of certain positions.

15<sup>th</sup> February 2030 hours, surrender of Singapore.

Escape from Singapore

Map – tracing made from a Dutch chart, after arrival in India, shows progress 15<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> February.

### 15<sup>th</sup> February

After hearing at about 1930 hours that the white flag was to be raised at 2030, **Brigadier Moir** approved of escape attempts being made. A party of Volunteers went to the docks to obtain water transport and later found a tongkang. **GW** drove to the docks through deserted streets and blazing oil stores, then sent a party ahead while he remained to guide others who might wish to join the escape. **Major Hayward** arrived and it was agreed that **GW** should remain as guide, with the tongkang due to sail at 0300.

### 16<sup>th</sup> February

Shortly before 0230, a party of 8 or 9 FMSVF and SSVF men arrived and found that the tongkang had already sailed. (The party included **Sgt. Shrubshall**, whose wife **GW** met later in Johannesburg.) Voices from the vessel could be heard by those on shore, who hailed but were ignored. **GW** was told later that **Major Hayward** had given the order to sail, not to answer the hailing, and not to turn back!

Two of the party then went back to Singapore, the rest, including **GW** searched for a vessel, found a dinghy but it sank. At this, all but **GW**, **Sergeant Nias** and **Sapper Way** said they had tried hard enough and left to get some sleep. The trio found another dinghy and at 0415 started rowing, having nothing with them except what they stood up in – i.e. no compass, no map, no provisions, no water and no spare clothing. They rowed north-east, against the tide, as **GW** thought they might be caught by the Japs if they rowed towards Alexandra. They passed the boom defence about dawn, after hard rowing and bailing, then passed along the outside of Blakan Mati and eventually they reached Pulau Sakeng near Pulau Bukom, having kept about 3 miles out to sea as the Japs might have occupied Blakan Mati.

About 0830, they rowed over to a sampan they saw floating and in it found two rifles and an unmarked set of equipment, namely cleaning materials, \$45 in Malayan currency, 2 cigarette cases, a few Chinese and a few Malayan silver dollars, an harmonica and a very welcome full bottle of water. These were shared and the sampan was abandoned.

Soon afterwards, they saw a canoe with one man in it, **Gunner Dobree**, who joined the trio on Pulau Sakeng which they reached at about 0900. Here they caulked the dinghy and made certain purchases. A party of seven Volunteers had just been fitted out with Malay dress and provisions but the local Chinese were still willing to help the new arrivals. Provisions, a red blanket and an old mat or two were bought, in order to disguise the Party from the air, and water was put into kerosene tins which **GW** bought.

They left the island at about 1115, rowing south but soon had to turn up into the wind blowing from the north-east. They made as much easting as possible to get away from Singapore from which seven large pillars of smoke were rising. The oil stores on Pulau Bukom were burning well by then but three freighters, anchored off the island, seemed to be undamaged though the biggest had a list to port. For at least seven miles from Singapore, the sea had a scum of burnt oil.

In the afternoon, **GW** decided that they were far enough away to avoid a lighthouse, the Raffles light, which might have been taken over by the Japs, so **GW** and **Nias** lashed a paddle crossways to an oar, then lashed this to a seat in the dinghy and hung a red blanket on this. They then sailed south as nearly as possible, the heavy following sea making continuous bailing necessary.

That evening, very tired, they landed at a small 'pimple' of an island, probably Pulau Taking, where they were joined by three men who had got away in a very seaworthy, small, red sampan. These three were not used to sailing and, in retrospect, it was amusing to see them trying to get ashore in the face of the swirling tide!



At about 1700, they were joined by six men, two of whom were wounded, who had travelled from Singapore in an over-loaded kolek, all of them, including **Captains Oldridge** and **Thomas**, coming under the command of **GW**. All food was pooled and a meal was cooked. **GW** formed a recce party which, before dark, reported that on the other side of the island they had found a sailing dinghy resting above the high tide mark. An old mast and sail were also found. **Nias** and **Way** found some pieces of rope and made a sail for "**Thistle**" as the new acquisition as named. With help from **Dobree** and **GW**, this was made as ready as possible by 2300. After dark, three Australians arrived, had some food then left immediately. The rest of the food was divided into three lots according to the number of men in each boat. Three of those on the island decided to continue in their sampan and reached Sumatra safely, four others, including one of the injured, sailed in their kolek, and seven men, including **GW** and the other two injured, sailed in "**Thistle**." From 2330, it took until 0100 to get "**Thistle**" waterborne, then the share of stores allocated for her 'crew' were put on board.

#### 17<sup>th</sup> February

**GW** made breakfast at 0300, "**Thistle**" was re-floated at 0330, continuing this until 0815 as, at daylight, they discovered that they were on a coral flat, with occasional channels not deep enough for "**Thistle**." At dawn, **Sergeant Nias** had spoken to a CSM and five Australians in a sailing boat, then, just before finally getting "**Thistle**" off the reef at 0815, they were hailed by an FMSVF party.

After leaving the island, their course in "**Thistle**" was south-east, across the main channel but, as the boom would only swing to starboard, and no-one knew how to use the centre board with which "**Thistle**" was fitted, it was very slow going. On their way across the main channel, they came across a lovely red and cream cabin cruiser floating upside down.

Later in the day, contact was made with the four who had sailed in the kolek: they had prevailed upon a Malay to take the party to Moro in a large perahu, towing the kolek which provided the fare for the passage. From the perahu, one Malay went on board "**Thistle**" as guide. During the afternoon, they passed several parties of troops in various types of craft, two being in large ship's lifeboats, and they were passed by two majors in a sailing kolek with a Malay crew. Due to a very strong ebb tide, they failed to make Moro by about five miles, so anchored for what was left of the night.

#### 18<sup>th</sup> February

**GW** and his party arrived on Moro at about 0600 and found numerous British troops already there, wondering how they would get any further. **GW** left his crew making purchases and went to find the **Amil**, who was as anxious to get rid of the arrivals as they were to go and promised to be helpful. As far as can be ascertained, Moro is marked as Soegi Bawa on the charts and the village is at its south end.

At about 0800, **GW** met a **Haji** who had been stationed there by a **Captain Lyons** and had with him written sailing instructions for the next leg of the escape, i.e. to Perigi Raja in Sumatra. **GW** sent runners to tell everyone to meet him at 0930 under cover behind the school. He discovered that the two (un-named) majors who had passed them the previous day had already seen the directions but had not passed them on but had continued to make arrangements for their own evacuation! These included payment of \$250 to a Malay to sail them to Perigi Raja.

At 0930, **GW** read out the sailing directions to all troops then began arranging transport. This was complicated by the payment made by the two majors as no-one had anything like that sum of money with them. However, with the assistance of the **Amil**, **GW** was able to get everyone away by 1235 (the tide being suitable at noon), after which time **GW** and his party left. In the meantime, **Sergeant Blair Kerr**, formerly a solicitor in Singapore, and his bride, a nursing sister, had been sent, in a kolek, to Batu Belobang, across the channel, where a small dump of rations and medical supplies had been established, presumably by **Capt.**

**Lyons**. (The **Blair Kerrs** had been married on the beach in Singapore, outside his pillbox, probably on the 12<sup>th</sup>). In addition to buying food, **GW** bought two or three old sarongs and a moth-eaten travelling rug. The two boats sailed in company across the channel, but had left Moro too late to reach the small inlet where the dump had been established though managed to land round the point. **Mrs. Blair Kerr** dressed the wounds of the two injured men, all **GW's** field dressings having been used already. Another escapee had been running a high temperature but, fortunately, **GW** had aspirin with him. A few extra tins of food were acquired from the dump and repairs were made to "**Thistle's**" sail and lashings.

At 1700, the party sailed for Sumatra, with **Blair Kerr**, **Thomas** and three Australians in the dinghy and **Mrs. Blair Kerr** in "**Thistle**" to attend to the two wounded. This meant that there were seven people in "**Thistle**" including **GW**. By dint of five people huddling together, the injured two could lie down and rest but very uncomfortably.

Unfortunately, the current was against them and the breeze very light and variable so only with hard paddling was it possible to keep abreast of Batu Belobang and off the coral shoals. At 2300, a favourable breeze blew up and they were able to set course towards the Broeder Lights. One man had a compass which enabled them to keep south.

#### 19<sup>th</sup> February

At about 0200 they passed the Northern Broeder light; the man steering at the time turned too quickly so



that they found themselves drifting fast towards the rough water and shoals between the two lights. **Nias, Way, Dobree** and **GW** paddled hard till 0500, **Mrs. Blair Kerr, Oldridge** and **Rowland** taking turns at steering. Eventually, the tide turned and they sailed on to Sumatra, making Sungei Gunting (Goenting on the chart) at 1600. Among the purchases made at Moro had been a small, charcoal brazier, and an early morning cup of tea, brewed on board, tasted very good indeed! They were all very tired.

While others arranged for a meal and shelter for the night, **GW** interviewed the **Amil, Raja Mandaloen**, who was very helpful and arranged for a tonkang and Malays to sail it round to the Indragiri. The party slept at Sungei Gunting(Goenting).

#### 20<sup>th</sup> February

In the morning, **GW** interviewed all the parties which had arrived and made sure that they could get away. Some had decided to go overland and the rest had boats except for nine who had no boats, rations or money. These were taken on **GW's** tongkang for which he had to pay \$80 Straits (dollars) in addition to leaving "**Thistle**" and the dinghy behind. The party, which now numbered 21, sailed at 0830. Just after leaving, they saw the local natives fishing a khaki-clad corpse from the water.

**GW's** malaria had been showing itself as backaches for two or three days and now produced a rigor with a temperature of 103.6 degrees F. Luckily, he had been able to obtain some quinine from the local dispensary at Moro.

The remainder of the day was spent at sea, going south down the Sumatran coast. No-one was allowed on deck during the day. Since leaving Singapore, Jap planes had been passing overhead so, on each occasion, those in "**Thistle**" or the dinghy covered themselves with old sarongs and no plane even came low to take a look as they presented a small and unattractive target.

#### 21<sup>st</sup> February

The equator was crossed off Tanjong Dato then they turned into the Indragiri River in the early morning and, shortly afterwards, they were overtaken by two Dutch launches.

At 1315, they arrived at Perigi Raja and made contact with the Dutch controller, who was very helpful. The crew of three did not wish to carry on to Tambilahan which was the next stop up the river, but the Officer produced a guide and signed a chit providing extra cash and kind. They then left but had to anchor the boat at about 1700, owing to a strong ebb tide.

#### 22<sup>nd</sup> February

At 0245, they weighed anchor and drifted upstream on the tide.

Since Sungei Gunting, **GW's** temperature had been up and he had been taking 30 grains of quinine a day. The two wounded had progressed well and their wounds were clean and healing nicely. **Mrs. Blair Kerr** had been very good to all three. **Sgt. Nias** had been a tower of strength all through the trip, combining the work of quartermaster and general handyman in addition to doing more than his share of any hard work that required doing. Largely due to his tact and sense of discipline, there had been no narking or quarrelling. Since **Capt. Oldridge** had joined the party, he had been **GW's** 2 i/c and had done very good work, especially considering the shrapnel wound in his thigh and damaged tendon in his leg.

The party arrived at Tambilahan at 0830 and, after the wounded had received attention at the local dispensary and they had all had a meal of rice and eggs, they left in a launch which was towed by **Reynolds** in his Japanese fishing cruiser. [**Ed: later known as "Krait"**] They left at 1045, with Rengat as their destination. **Grp. Capt. Nunn** and most of the PWD who had got away from Malaya on the 13<sup>th</sup> February were on the towing launch.

Night on the launch was very crowded and uncomfortable. **GW** was still running a temperature of 99.8 but had a small tin of bully beef, a biscuit and a cup of tea.

#### 23<sup>rd</sup> February

The party arrived at Rengat early in the morning and went ashore. Cooking was started, the Dutch having given them some vegetables. **Capt. Oldridge** had gone to hospital and **GW** was feeling too weak to carry on so handed responsibility over to **Capt. Thomas**. **GW** was later sent by motor lorry to the transit camp at Ayer Molek. This camp had been improvised from a rubber factory and they had crude rubber sheets to lie on. Meals were quite good with fresh cabbage, and fruit such as chikus, bananas and pineapples could be bought. Some people were also able to buy towels and mugs in the village.

#### 24<sup>th</sup> February

At Ayer Molek

#### 25<sup>th</sup> February

At 1015, the party left for Solluk by motor bus and arrived at 1945, Solluk being the railhead for the small West Coast railway. **GW** was still ill so was sent up to Sawa Loentoh (Sawahlunto) to a school hostel where **Madam Chwan der Goes**, the matron, was very good to him.

#### 25<sup>th</sup> February

At Sawa Loentoh.

27<sup>th</sup> February – at 1250, the party left by train for Padang arriving at 1830. [**To be continued.**]



## OBITUARIES

### CYRIL WILLIAM PEARSON (BILL) – 28/2/1914 to 21/10/2015

As one of our few remaining Volunteer Veteran members, we are sad to announce the death of **Bill Pearson FMSVF** and member of **No: 2 'Stay-Behind Party.'**

**Bill** died aged 101 just after the October newsletter (Edition 44) went out. His funeral service was held at the Lawnswood Crematorium in Leeds on Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2015, and the MVG was represented at his funeral by **Sandy Lincoln**. Our sincere sympathies have been sent to his daughter, **Tina Hibberd**, & family. **Bill's** wartime exploits have been printed over several editions of *Apa Khabar*, starting in October 2014 and January 2015 with his story of "No: 2 Stay-Behind Party", and ending with his "Captive Memories" in April and July 2015. We salute a very brave man.

A précis of his military service is given below:

- 1934-1938 Sapper – Royal Engineers serving in Aden and Malaya.
- 1939-1941 Warrant Officer – Malayan Territorial Forces, Perak.
- FMSVF Sergeant H.Q. battalion (6 months) – promoted to rank of C.S. Major (1939)
- 1942 Japanese invasion of Malaya. Volunteered for operations behind enemy lines S.O.E. Stay Behind party No: 2 Promoted to 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant FMSVF
- Operated in Pahang State. Party ambushed in jungle on the banks of the Pahang River whilst en route to Singapore. 3 men killed in ambush. Suffered gunshot wound to left elbow in shoot out with Japanese. Taken prisoner.
- 1942-1945 held as POW in various camps – Pudu/Changi/Kanchanaburi/Bangkok.
- Worked on the construction of the Thailand-Burma Railway. Suffered from malnutrition and malaria.
- Made contact with the Free Thai Movement (Resistance)
- Betrayed by a fellow POW and arrested by the Kempeitai – Japanese Military Police. Interrogated and tortured.
- Released on defeat of the Japanese and attached to the 7<sup>th</sup> Indian Infantry Brigade H.Q. as an Interpreter (spoke fluent Thai and Malay).
- Repatriated April 1946 and took discharge. (On 6 years reserve).
- Re-enlisted for service in Egypt 1954. Served with East African Pioneer Unit, & later transferred to Royal Engineers – with rank of Captain - in the Canal Zone. After the end of the Egyptian Treaty was relocated to Cyprus. Served in Nicosia and Famagusta 1958/59, then repatriated and discharged.



### PROFESSOR HERBERT GILLES – Born Port Said, Egypt 1921 & died 20<sup>th</sup> November 2015 in Devon, UK.

The death of **Professor Gilles** was reported in The West Australian newspaper on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2015. He was a physician of international standing and a leading expert on malaria – having worked as a senior consultant on malaria for the World Health Organization. His interest in tropical medicine saw him appointed lecturer at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine in 1958 and promoted to Professor of Tropical Medicine between 1978-83. He also served as Dean to the LSTM (1978-1983) and he was appointed Emeritus Professor after his retirement in 1986. While in Liverpool in the late 1950s, with **Professor Brian MacGraith** and **Dr. Dion Bell** he helped the LSTM to take a national lead role in the care and screening of FEPOWs, many of whom were suffering from serious health problems associated with their years of captivity, especially those at Tamarkan Camp in Thailand who built the infamous bridge over the River Kwai. These recurrent health lapses were subsequently discovered to be due to amoebic dysentery or malaria.

He was also associated with the military as consultant in malariology to the army (1974-1986) and consultant in tropical medicine to the RAF (1978-1986). He received honours for his work in the UK, Malta and in Thailand. He published more than 150 scientific papers and wrote several books on tropical medicine and malariology. One of his books, "A Short Textbook of Public Health Medicine for the Tropics," which was first published in 1973 is still in print today. He was an entertaining lecturer – once producing a thank you note from a patient addressed to "shit collector" due to the patient being required to collect samples of his own faeces for analysis.

During the latter part of 2014 and in 2015, other notable obituaries have been printed in The Daily Telegraph & other papers. They are too numerous to include in detail, but a brief mention follows with our condolences to their families:

**William 'Bill' MOYLON (98)** – FEPOW on the Thailand-Burma Railway and Chelsea Pensioner at the Royal Hospital 1999.

**Capt. Terence 'Pablo' PERCY (95)** – distinguished naval airman flying torpedo bombers from *Formidable* - British Pacific Fleet.

**Lt. H.T.A. 'Tom' WADE (94)** – Served as 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. I.T.A. 2<sup>nd</sup> Battn. Loyal Regt. FEPOW. Wrote, "Prisoner of the Japanese: From Changi to Tokyo"

**Gordon GRAHAM (94)** – Awarded 2 MCs in Burma - the 1st for patrols around Kohima and 2nd for a crossing of the Irrawaddy under fire.

**Tony 'Lofty' ELDRIDGE (91)** – led the last human torpedo attack of WW2 from the sub Trenchant, which sank 2 Japanese ships off Phuket

**Elizabeth McIntosh (100)** - American O.S.S. agent who used letters & fortune-tellers to undermine Japanese morale in India and China.

**Lt.-Col. John DAVIE (94)** – served in Western Desert & Malta in WW2 & in 1948 MC with 1<sup>st</sup> Battn. Seaforth Highlanders in the Emergency

**Maj. Grahame VIVIAN (95)** – Awarded 2 Military Crosses – 1<sup>st</sup> in Burma in 1944 (action on Dhobi Hill) & 2<sup>nd</sup> in Malaya in 1956 fighting C.Ts

**Professor CHEAH Boon Kheng (76)** – Author of "Red Star Over Malaya" & historian. Falsely accused of having Communist sympathies.

**Lt.-Col. Mark Elliot LEGG (89)** – served with the Army Air Corps & awarded a DFC for operational flying in Malaya during the Emergency.

**Sqn. Ldr. Stan DIXON (95)** – flew as a teenager in WW2 & awarded DFC for dropping supplies from low-levels during Malayan Emergency

**Maj-Gen Ronald McALISTER (92)** – stationed in India at the Force 136 training school & Burma in WW2; served in Hong Kong post-war.



### THE LIFE AND TIMES OF STANLEY PAVILLARD – by Sibylla Jane Flower

[Stanley Septimus Pavillard MBE. Medical Officer on the Burma-Thailand Railway 1942-45. Born in Las Palmas, Canary Islands 19<sup>th</sup> January 1913 and died in Brighton on 24<sup>th</sup> July 1997 aged 84.]

The contribution Stanley Pavillard made to the welfare of his fellow prisoners of war in Japanese captivity was two-fold. First, he skillfully improvised medical care, though he had only the most primitive instruments and the minimum of medical supplies. The men in his camp were suffering from cholera, dysentery, tropical ulcers and the deficiency diseases which resulted from the Japanese decision to keep them on rations that sustained life but not health.

Secondly, at great personal risk, he sent the British Government an account of the desperate circumstances in which prisoners on the Burma-Thailand Railway found themselves in June 1943, when the monsoon had broken. His appeal for help was the first intimation the Allied governments had of the conditions in which the prisoners were held: in disbelief, the Dutch government-in-exile asked for assurances that the information was genuine.

The men of Pavillard's battalion in Thailand were of mixed origin – European, Commonwealth and Eurasian – but with his expansive personality and good humour, he transcended divisions of race and rank, and helped to bind the unit together. In the preface to Pavillard's account of his experiences, "*Bamboo Doctor*," (1960) Sir William Goode, who shared much of the captivity, and was later Governor of Singapore, described the respect in which Pavillard was held: "In his book he tells much of the story of those days. But he has not brought out the faith we all had in him, our confidence that if he was there things would be alright."

Stanley Septimus Pavillard was the seventh son of Victor Eugene Pavillard, a British subject of Swiss descent, and his Spanish wife, Susana. He was educated at Liverpool Institute and Ellesmere College, Shropshire. In 1939, he qualified in general medicine at the University of Edinburgh.

Pavillard volunteered for war service in 1940, and was appointed to a civilian medical post in Penang, Malaya, which carried with it the position of medical officer of the local Volunteer Force. He soon transferred to Singapore where he became a full-time medical officer. A secondment to the Bedong Group Hospital was cut short after a matter of days when the Japanese arrived, and Pavillard was captured in Singapore on 15<sup>th</sup> February 1942. His earliest task as a prisoner of war was to assist at the Alexandra Hospital in the aftermath of the massacre by the Japanese of Allied medical staff and patients. In October 1942, he accompanied a battalion of 650 prisoners of war to Thailand, spending 12 months in the jungle camps on the Burma-Thailand Railway, and then working in the hospitals in the base camps until his release in 1945.

Between 1946 and 1955, he was in private practice in Singapore, where many of his first patients were men who had endured captivity alongside him in Thailand. Later, in 1956, he received from the University of Madrid the medical qualifications that enabled him to practise in Las Palmas until his retirement in 1989. In 1993, he came to live in England, latterly at St. Dunstons, Brighton. He was a familiar figure at reunions of prisoners of war, and he was much feted in 1995 at the commemorations of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the war with Japan.

In 1947, he was appointed MBE for his services as a prisoner of war and in the following year he received the Territorial Decoration. He was married in 1950 to Irene Templeton, who died in 1992. He is survived by their three daughters.

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

#### SUNDAY – 14<sup>th</sup> February 2016. Service at Point Walter Reserve, Bicton, Perth WA.

Annual service at the Australian Army Nurses Memorial in Perth. The Nurses were lost in the sinking of the HMS Vyner Brooke on 14<sup>th</sup> February 1942 and the subsequent massacre of survivors on Radji Beach, Muntok, Banka Island, Sumatra. The service is at 10.45 a.m. at the Memorial, attended by the Choir and bagpipes. **Robert Gray** has kindly offered to be the person to contact if you wish to go. Please let him know on 08 9356 2027 or Mobile: 0400 691 700

#### MONDAY – 15<sup>th</sup> February 2016. 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Memorial Service in the City of Stirling Memorial Gardens, Perth WA.

Please contact **Elizabeth Adamson** for details, and timings and let her know if you wish to attend and lay a wreath. The service is usually followed by a barbecue and other refreshments.

#### SUNDAY – 15<sup>th</sup> May 2016. Annual Memorial Service at Wymondham FEPOW RC Church of Our Lady and St. Thomas.

Please let **Rosemary** know if you would like to attend this service and lay a wreath on behalf of the MVG. Entrance to the Church for the service is by ticket only. These can be obtained from: [administrator@fepow-memorial.org.uk](mailto:administrator@fepow-memorial.org.uk) The service starts at 12.30 p.m. and is followed by a buffet lunch in the church rooms. More details will be given in April.

#### MONDAY – 15<sup>th</sup> August 2016. Annual V-J Day Service at the National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas at 12 noon.

This year we revert to holding our annual service in the MVG's Memorial Garden, weather permitting. In view of the building works taking place at the Arboretum to extend and improve the Visitor Centre, it may not be possible to have our joint picnic lunch as usual. By all means bring a picnic lunch if you wish, but it may be easier to have lunch in the excellent Arbour Restaurant, which will be open as usual during the alterations. We may have more details about the construction work in April. Please let **Rosemary** know, in due course, if you wish to come.

#### SATURDAY – 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2016. Annual Reunion and Luncheon at the RAF Club, Piccadilly, London – noon to 4p.m.

Please put this date in your diaries. It was the only date available in October for the Ballroom. Apologies to those members who requested an earlier date in October to avoid half term week. Unfortunately the Club's function rooms do get very booked up for weekends, and the Ballroom is the only one which is big enough for our numbers.

#### THURSDAY – 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016. Cross Planting Ceremony and Service at Westminster Abbey.

Please note this date. We thank **Merilyn Hywel-Jones** for organizing the tickets and planting of the MVG Cross at these ceremonies. Please contact **Merilyn** for tickets in good time – usually by August.



**SUNDAY – 13<sup>th</sup> November 2016. Remembrance Sunday Service and March Past in Whitehall, at the Cenotaph.**

Please let Rosemary know in good time if you wish to attend. Tickets also have to be applied for in August.

**SATURDAY – 10<sup>th</sup> December 2016. Anniversary of the sinking of the HMS Prince of Wales & HMS Repulse – NMA**

We have been reminded that an annual service takes place at the NMA on this date, in memory of all those who were lost at sea when these two Capital Ships were sunk by the Japanese and the survivors who became FEPOWs for 3½ years.

**FEBRUARY 2017 – SINGAPORE. 75<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE FALL OF SINGAPORE IN WW2.**

The MVG is planning to attend the events in Singapore which are being arranged to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this tragedy and its disastrous consequences, not only for the POWs but also for the local population which nearly starved during the 3½ years of Japanese occupation. More details will be given as soon as we have them.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS**

This is a reminder that subscriptions are due in **APRIL**. The subscription will remain at **£20 sterling**, and may be paid by cheque, by standing order or by BAC payment. If paying by standing order, please ensure that the bank order is for **£20 sterling**, and payable in April. The subscription letter will be sent out in April, and there is a tear-off section which should be returned with your cheque, or details of other forms of payment can be e-mailed to me. Bank details will be given in the subscription letter. Cheques should be payable to:

**Mrs. R. Fell Malayan Volunteers Group [See address below.]**

**Australian members** – please pay **Elizabeth Adamson AUS\$30**. An extra **\$15** is requested for printed copies of the newsletter.

**Malaysian and Singaporean members** – please pay **Andrew Hwang RM\$125** –or as arranged by him.

**SERVICE IN THE NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM ON 10<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2015. Report by Bob Hall**

HMS Prince of Wales and HMS Repulse were sunk at approximately 1.15 p.m. in the South China Sea by Japanese aircraft. My father, who was a Royal Marine, survived the sinking of the Prince of Wales, and subsequently joined the remainder of the Southern Argylls in a composite battalion called the "Plymouth Argylls" and fought in the defence of Singapore. He escaped at the fall of Singapore but was later captured in the Banka Strait and became a POW in Sumatra for 3½ years. These photographs were taken at the Service held in the National Memorial Arboretum on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2015, in rather damp conditions.

Although our numbers are dwindling, we must continue to remember those who perished and others who later suffered internment under the brutal hands of the Japanese.



**NEW LIST OF MEMBERS**

The up-to-date list of members is included with this newsletter. Please check your entry carefully and let Rosemary know if there are any errors, or if you wish to alter your entry. This will be done when the list is next updated. The list is 6 months late due to the late payments of subscriptions. Sometimes this cannot be avoided, but a quick e-mail of explanation would be helpful! At the risk of nagging, please pay your subs promptly this year, so that we can produce the new list as usual in July.

**PASSWORD FOR ACCESSING BACK COPIES OF THE NEWSLETTER ON THE WEBSITE: "vultures"** [all lower case.]

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