

From Tidal River to Timbered Knoll

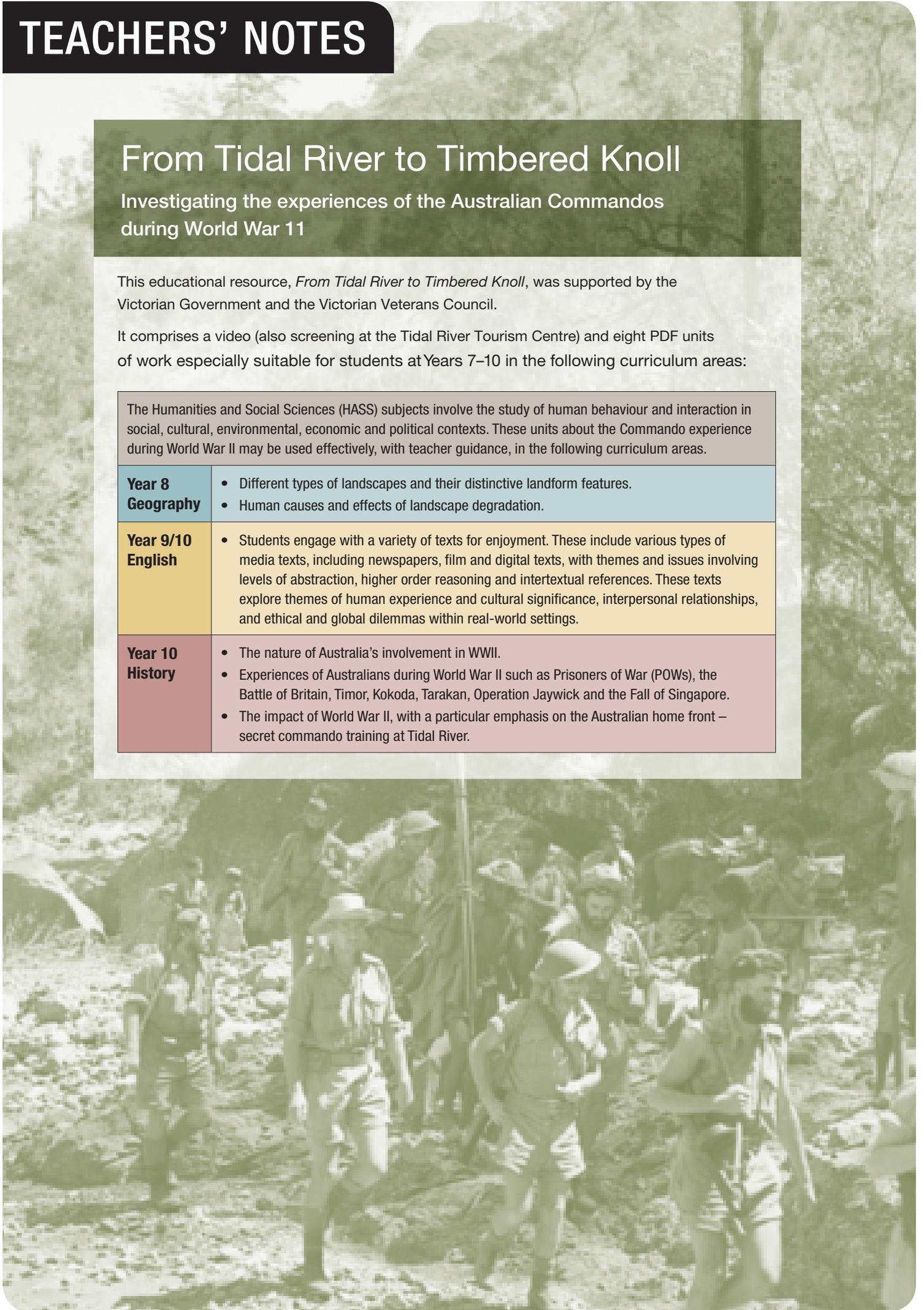
Investigating the experiences of the Australian Commandos during World War II

This educational resource, *From Tidal River to Timbered Knoll*, was supported by the Victorian Government and the Victorian Veterans Council.

It comprises a video (also screening at the Tidal River Tourism Centre) and eight PDF units of work especially suitable for students at Years 7–10 in the following curriculum areas:

The Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS) subjects involve the study of human behaviour and interaction in social, cultural, environmental, economic and political contexts. These units about the Commando experience during World War II may be used effectively, with teacher guidance, in the following curriculum areas.

Year 8 Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Different types of landscapes and their distinctive landform features.• Human causes and effects of landscape degradation.
Year 9/10 English	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students engage with a variety of texts for enjoyment. These include various types of media texts, including newspapers, film and digital texts, with themes and issues involving levels of abstraction, higher order reasoning and intertextual references. These texts explore themes of human experience and cultural significance, interpersonal relationships, and ethical and global dilemmas within real-world settings.
Year 10 History	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The nature of Australia's involvement in WWII.• Experiences of Australians during World War II such as Prisoners of War (POWs), the Battle of Britain, Timor, Kokoda, Tarakan, Operation Jaywick and the Fall of Singapore.• The impact of World War II, with a particular emphasis on the Australian home front – secret commando training at Tidal River.



UNIT 1 Double Diamond Video Worksheet

You can watch the video online or during a visit to Tidal River, Wilsons Promontory National Park. It is designed to provide students with an overview of the Commando experience during World War II before they choose a unit to investigate.

Suitable pre-visit or visit activity

UNIT 2 Exploring The History Of Tidal River, Wilsons Promontory Victoria

This unit encourages students to investigate past uses of the Tidal River landscape, why it was chosen as a Guerilla Warfare school for the commandos and what the training was like.

Excellent Tidal River visit activity

UNIT 3 Putting training at Tidal River into action

Students investigate where the commandos served and to what extent they were well trained for what lay ahead on the battlefields.

Classroom activity

UNIT 4 The Battlefront – Heroes of Timor

Why have members of the 2/4 Australian Independent Company been described as ‘Heroes of Timor’? And who were the creados? Were they also heroes?

Classroom activity

UNIT 5 The Battlefront – Timbered Knoll, New Guinea

Exploring battlefield topography, sequencing a battle action plan and burying mates – all part of the commando experience.

Classroom activity

UNIT 6 The Battlefront – Kaiapit New Guinea

Plotting the battle of Kaiapit. Will you be successful?

Classroom activity

UNIT 7 Behind Enemy Lines – Operation Jaywick

Why was this secret operation carried out so successfully? Students are asked to identify the skills and strategies that help explain the success of this extraordinary undercover operation.

Classroom activity

UNIT 8 Names on a memorial. What can they tell us?

Four groups of students each choose one name from the Tidal River Memorial and try to piece together the details of this commando’s wartime experience. They record their findings on a Commando Profile Sheet and then share this with the class. They get to understand the sorts of official records available and how they might go about researching a name on their own local war memorial.

Community research activity

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Deign: Polar Design Pty Ltd

Produced by Ryebuck Media for the Australian Commando Association- Victoria with the support of the Victorian Government and the Victorian Veterans Council.



Australian Commando Association -Victoria



Ryebuck Media
EDUCATIONAL INTERACTIVE MULTIMEDIA



UNIT 1

Double Diamond Video Worksheet

1 Mark where Wilsons Promontory is on this map.

2 List at least 4 different aspects of land use at Wilsons Promontory over the last 200 years.

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____



3 What is the stark reminder at Tidal River of 'a not so peaceful story?'

4 Why were young men brought to the 'Prom' in 1941? List the activities that they were trained to do?

5 Where were the commandos first sent in 1942? _____

6 Who were the Creados? _____

7 Why was 'Winnie the War Winner' so important to the war effort?

8 Describe the film footage shot by Damien Parer? How realistic do you find his images to be? How might they be received in picture theatres back home in Australia?

9 What happened to the Japanese Prisoner of War ship *Montevideo Maru*? Why is its named linked so significantly with the commandos?

10 What do you think the commandos really commemorate when they return each year to Tidal River?

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UNIT 2

Exploring the History of Tidal River, Wilson's Promontory Victoria

Wilson's Promontory is a wild and isolated place. For thousands of years the Boon Wurrung, Bunurong and Gunaikurnai people cared for its creeks, bays and rugged mountain landscape. In the 19th century Europeans arrived – cattlemen, sealers, miners, timbermen, and fishermen – to exploit the region's abundant resources.

But the natural beauty of the area was always an attraction and in the early part of the 20th century the Victorian Government declared Wilson's Promontory a National Park. For decades the main disruption to the animal and plant life of the 'Prom', as it became known, were groups of eager walkers and naturalists.

Today the 'Prom;' still welcomes walkers, surfers, naturalists and all who come to appreciate its dramatic land and seascapes. But there is also a reminder here of a not so peaceful story that is remembered close to the Visitor Centre at Tidal River.

Tidal River Training Centre

BACKGROUND BRIEFING

Mountains, plains, seascapes, sand dunes, mud flats, swamps, rivers, eucalypt forests, coastal scrub and open grasslands – all these are found in abundance at Wilson's Promontory. Such a place, as war came ever closer to Australia between 1939 and 1945, seemed ideal to the Australian government for the training required for a special new sort of soldier – the independent company soldier soon to be known as a 'commando'. The 'Prom', isolated and away from towns and cities, was a hard and challenging environment where men could be shown how to live off the land, find their way through trackless bush and swamp, get toughened up with early morning runs up mountain slopes, and acquire the arts of unarmed combat and similar military skills. The emphasis was on fitness and endurance. So, temporarily, the 'Prom' ceased to be a National Park and became No 7 Infantry Training Centre. The centre, soon renamed the Guerilla Warfare School, remained in use training the first eight Australian independent companies, as well as two New Zealand companies, until the end of 1942 when it was moved to Canungra in Queensland. As the Australian commandos were used almost exclusively in tropical and jungle conditions this seemed like a sensible move.



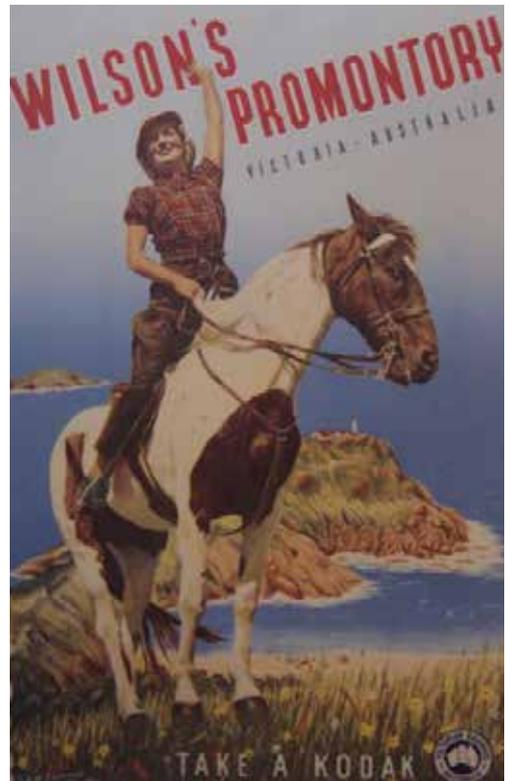
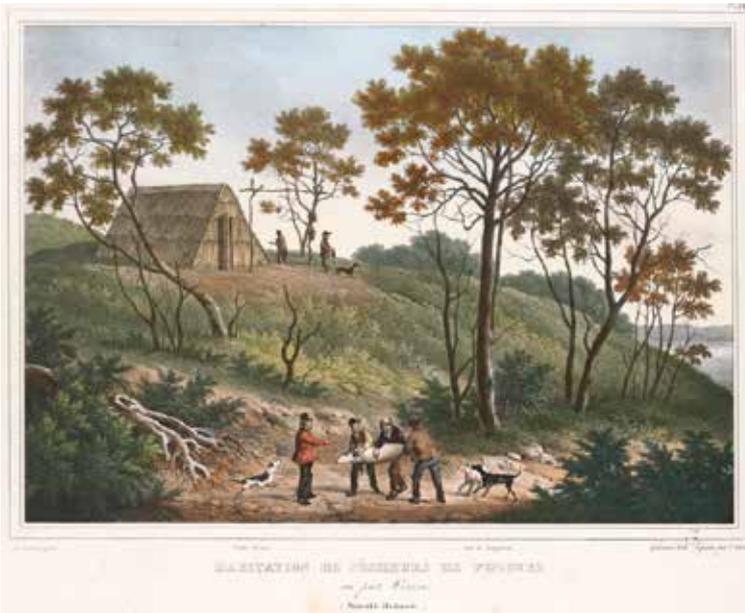
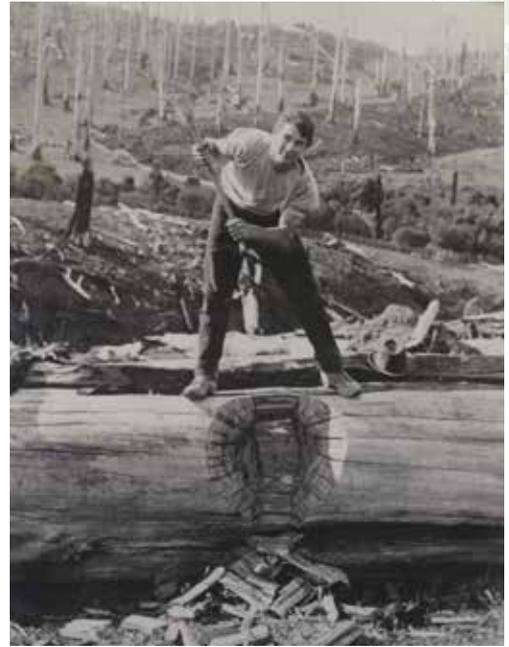
TASK 1 Exploring Tidal River

Go to Google maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@-39.0309398,146.3191076,1205m/data=!3m1!1e3>

- 1 Where is Tidal River?
- 2 Describe the landscape.



3 Look carefully at the photos and illustrations. How have people interacted with the landscape of Tidal River in the past?



**TASK 2 Who were the Commandos?**

In 1941 Tidal River landscape was put to a very different use. Read this extract from the *Daily News* Perth to find out why.

Daily News (Perth), 18 November 1944

HOW COMMANDOS WERE BORN (By One of Them)

In 1940, when the armies of Britain were hard pressed and the invasion of Great Britain was threatening, the first British Commando units were formed.

Because it felt that the natural genius of the Australian soldier – his fighting qualities and his initiative – would fit him specially for this new type of warfare, a secret Military Mission came to this country to select men and initiate their training.

So in 1941, behind barbed wire entanglements, and hidden in the deepest secrecy, the first Australian ‘Independent Companies’ were born. Here is the tale of those early days.

Back in the dark days of 1941, something new and vital to the Australian war effort was born in the bush in South Gippsland, in a remote part of Wilsons Promontory, hidden by forests and heathlands, and camouflaged by the euphemistic title of No. 7 I.T.C’ – No. 7 Infantry Training Centre – the first Australian Commando School was formed. The story of it has never been told.

These were dark days for Australia. The menace of the Japanese invasion loomed in the background.

The threat was never far away. Here at Wilsons Promontory, readiness for the desperate need might face Australia at any moment a few picked men were being trained in a completely new type of warfare.

They had to be trained to carry on a campaign of infiltration and sabotage aimed at the enemy’s lines of communication, or of operating in conjunction with normal formations of troops.

In essence, they were being trained in the tactics of Robin Hood brought up to date.

- 1** What was happening in Australia at this time?
- 2** Why and how were the Australian Commandos born?
- 3** Why do you think this place was chosen to train the commandos?



**TASK 3 Principles of Guerilla Warfare**

The newspaper account described 'secret missions' and a 'campaign of infiltration and sabotage' also known as Guerilla Warfare. The following Training Notes were given to all men who volunteered to train to become commandos. Read these and answer the following questions.

- 1** Briefly describe what Guerilla Warfare is.
- 2** What skills and attributes do you think men would need to be good at Guerilla Warfare?
- 3** How might you train men in these skills if you were in charge? For example, where would you train and what exercises might you conduct?

PRINCIPLES OF GUERILLA WARFARE

1. Select for attack targets vital to the enemy. Exploit his weak points, attack his HQ, centers of communication, supply routes, etc.
2. Force the enemy to weaken himself by taking precautions against threatened action. Make raids well behind his lines and at widely dispersed points and force him to use his manpower on guard duties.
3. Do not engage in pitched battles. The object is to achieve maximum destruction with the minimum of losses, NOT to win ground.
4. Have superior information on the enemy. Never lose the initiative. Plan carefully.
5. Exploit surprise to the full. Move by night. Vary your tactics. Ambush.
6. Be cunning, ruthless, and audacious. Disguise. Use civil agents.
7. Maintain a high standard of training and discipline. Each man must be able to operate independently, but he must also be able to carry out his orders implicitly.

- 4** Match each basic skill from the list with the corresponding essential principle of Guerilla Warfare.

Principles of Guerilla Warfare
1. Concealment and Camouflage
2. Keeping Direction
3. Observation
4. Camp or site selection
5. Field Sketching
6. Reconnaissance
7. Weapon expertise
8. Placing charges (explosives)

Basic Skills – being able to:
Locate a hidden area protected from the elements
Recognise targets and fire instinctively and accurately
Darken faces and hands and hide shiny objects
Learn to notice detail
Use watch to find north from the sun
Stagger and set explosives to blow inwards
Choose high ground with wide views of the area
Draw accurate sketches of target areas

5 Carefully examine the following photos and list beneath each which skills you think are being taught or practised.



↑ This photo shows:



↑ This photo shows:



↑ This photo shows:



↑ This photo shows:



↑ This photo shows:



↑ This photo shows:



↑ This photo shows:



↑ This photo shows:

**TASK 4** Commando Memories

- 1 Carefully read the memoirs of the following commandos to get a better understanding of training at Tidal River. Try to identify in these accounts some of the basic skills that were honed during their Guerilla training.

For example: *Celestial navigation (referred to by Cyril Ayris) taught them about reconnaissance.*

CYRIL AYRIS – No 2 Australian Independent Company (2/2nd Commando Squadron)

Source A

The training was long, vigorous and varied. The men were out of bed by 5.45 a.m. when the desolate promontory was still cloaked in darkness and the mountains were black shapes that blocked out the stars. Constant exercise in the form of P.T. and eight-kilometre runs through the wild countryside toughened the young men, stripping surplus weight from their bodies and hardening their muscles. Spencer Chapman led them along different routes, leaving them to navigate their way back. He made them negotiate land obstacles such as Tongue Point by diving into the sea and swimming around them. The men often staggered to the top of a hill to find him waiting for them to give them a lesson on celestial navigation. Sometimes he shadowed them, creeping close enough to hear what they were saying, without being seen. If they disbelieved him he would repeat their conversations. He taught them to live off the land by snaring birds and small animals, how to carry loads over long distances and how to infiltrate enemy lines.

They learned how to split up into small parties and establish OPs (observation points). They were taught how to defend themselves with their bare hands against knife or bayonet attacks.

They practiced ambushes. They engaged in coastal sabotage operations, using small craft while wearing “necklaces” of gelignite and carrying time-pencil detonators. They made Molotov cocktails, antitank weapons and explosive devices that could blow up a road.

Calvert, who ran special “toughening up” for PT for the officers, had only one philosophy – do something until it hurts and then keep going. His favourite form of torture was to make his men run to Darby River on a bitterly cold morning and then order them to swim across. It was unanimously agreed there was no colder water in the world than Darby River.

LIONEL VEALE

Source B

‘And down at Tidal River at Wilsons Promontory there was an old bridge you see and it wouldn’t stand the work that had to be put onto it because of the army. So they built a new bridge. So they were doing exercises and all that and it was decided that they, commandos could blow this bridge. But to blow the bridge they had one group protecting it and the others had to blow it. This was pretty hard because you know they didn’t have much cover to work on. So they got all the top brass down on the big hill to watch this manoeuvre you know. Any rate there was a young lieutenant and a couple of the boys, they said, we’ll do it.

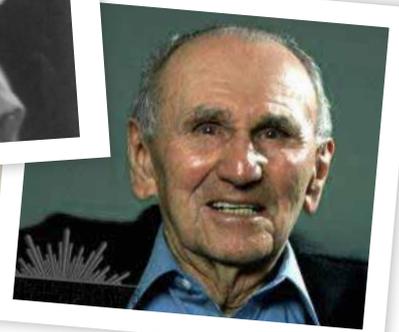
They got gelignite and they put it in hessian straps around their stomach and they got a snorkel and they drifted down this creek, cold as hell you know, under it. And when they got to the old bridge, they put all this explosive on it. But the lieutenant said we gotta give them a good show, the brass is up there watching us. So they tripled the charge see and away they went. Next thing, up went the bridge and there was that much force that it blew up the bridge to pieces and got the new bridge and threw it on its side. And there was hell to pay about it. These are the kind of things that happened.’



ALEXANDER McNAB

Source C

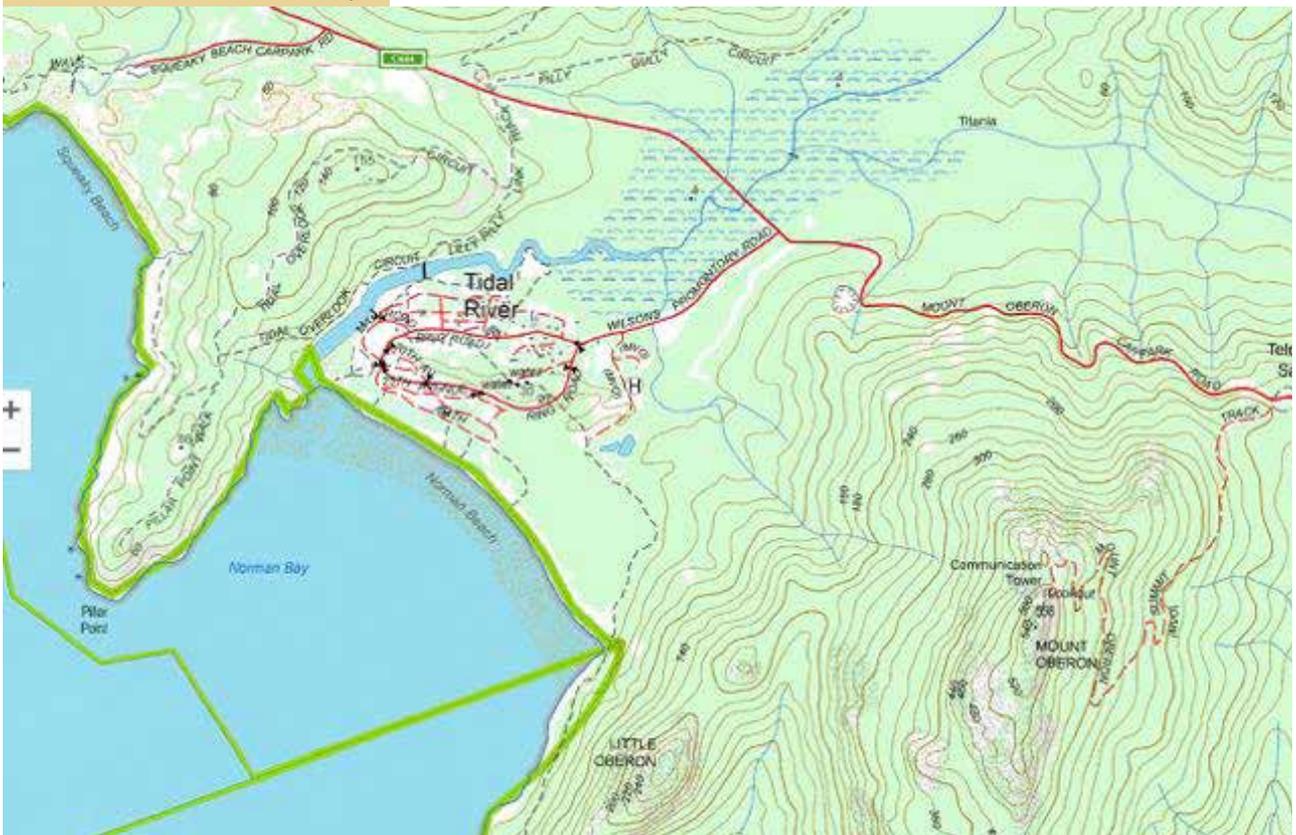
‘That was one thing. We had to do a terrible lot of, well, for instance mapping. We had to do what they call ‘panorama sketches’. You’d get up on a hill and you’d sketch the outline of the coast or wherever you’re looking at and I remember once we had to climb up Mount Latrobe, which was long day’s climb. We went up there to do a panorama sketch and we got up the top and the clouds went out. So we didn’t see anything and I think we went up about three days before we got a thing.’



2 Imagine that you are one of the commando trainers. Using this mud map, plan a training program to get your men both fit and skilled for wartime action. List on the map the type of activities you would set and the locations you would use to achieve your aims. For example: Use numbers to mark the spots on your mud map.

Training Program	Locations at Tidal River
1. Concealment and Camouflage	
2. Keeping Direction	
3. Observation	
4. Camp or site selection	
5. Field Sketching	
6. Reconnaissance	
7. Weapon expertise	
8. Placing charges (explosives)	
9. General fitness	
10. Hand to hand combat	

Source D Tidal River Mud Map



**TASK 5** Tidal River after World War II

Carefully read these newspaper extracts and answer the following questions.

- 1 What happened to Tidal River after the war?
- 2 Did the Commando training facility cause any long-term environmental damage?
- 3 What do the cartoon and photo tell you about how the commando experience was remembered at Tidal River after the war?

'News of the Day – Campers' comeback', **Source A**
(Melbourne), 20 December 1947

CAMPERS' COMEBACK

A commando training camp during the war, National Park, Wilsons Promontory, reverted to its more leisurely purpose yesterday, when it was reopened as a camping park. The embryo of a modern holiday ground is provided at Tidal River, where space for cars and tents is a minor part of the facilities. Buildings of five large rooms, fully furnished and with all the "mod cons" of the city are booked out until January 9. Bookings for later dates will be handled by the park committee, Land department, Melbourne. The facilities will soon be increased. Two large flats will be built in the middle of January. Maybe one or two commandos will visit the area and find hot baths in place of iron buckets.



Daily Mercury (Mackay Queensland), **Source B**
20 March 1948

WILD WOODS OF ENCHANTMENT NEAR THE SEA

Recently opened again for tourists, for the first time since the war, Wilsons Promontory – a wonderland of contrasts and surprises – is one of the most attractive show places of Victoria.

Camping park

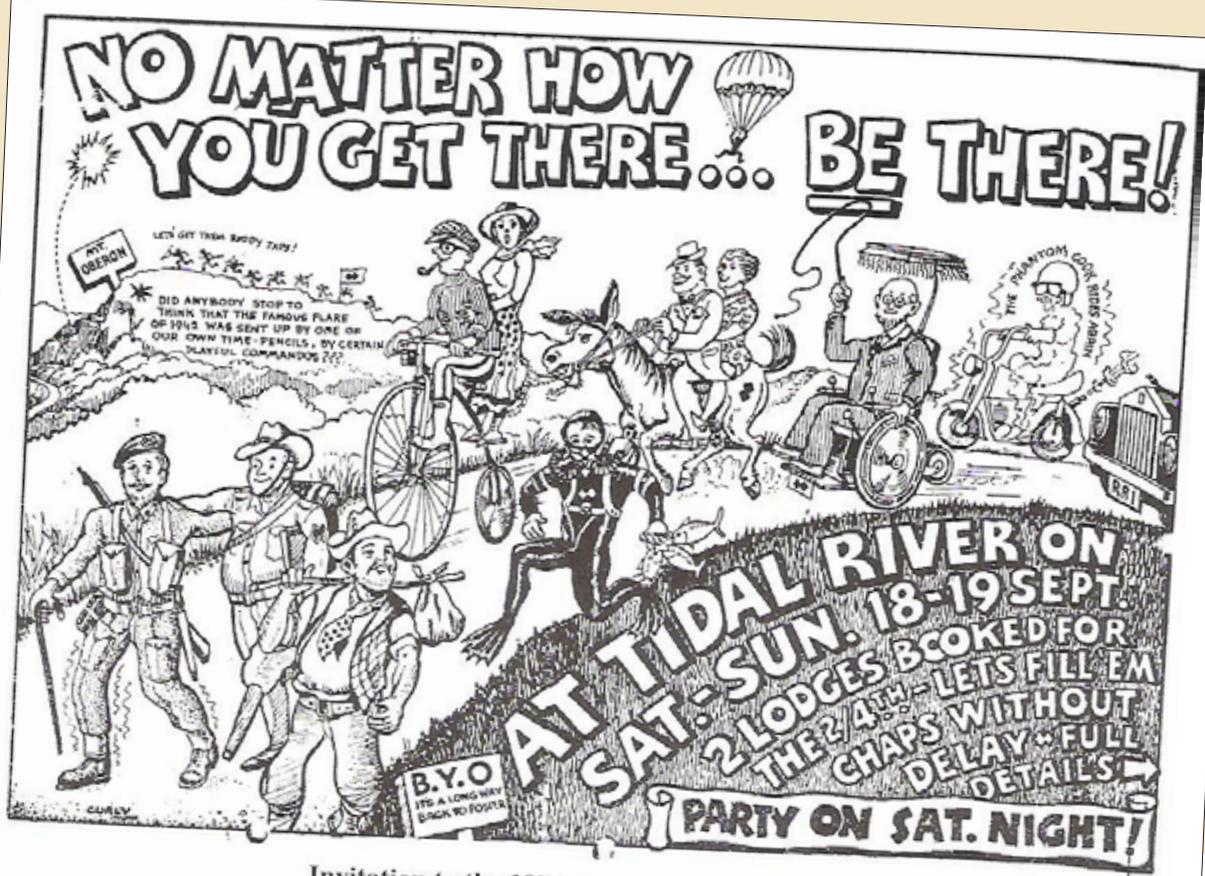
From the well appointed camping park at Tidal River, well defined tracks lead out to all points of interest; these tracks are being kept open by the Forest Rangers.

The Lands Departments' policy of preservation of native flora and fauna is rigid, and when one looks at this policy broadly, it is a commendable one. Contrary to popular belief that was current following the war period, there has been no wholesale slaughter of animal life there; the Commandos who trained there during the war did not wipe out all the animal life.

Deer, wallaby, wombats and koala bears abound today in increasing numbers. In fact, in one afternoon in the valley bound by Mount Wilson range and Martin's Hill, we counted fourteen deer grazing in the lush grass. They do appear to have been unduly disturbed by the Commandos. You can walk to within 100 yards of the deer and they just amble off. With wind favorable to us, we walked to within 15 feet of one old buck.

Invitation to the 1971 Reunion at Tidal River

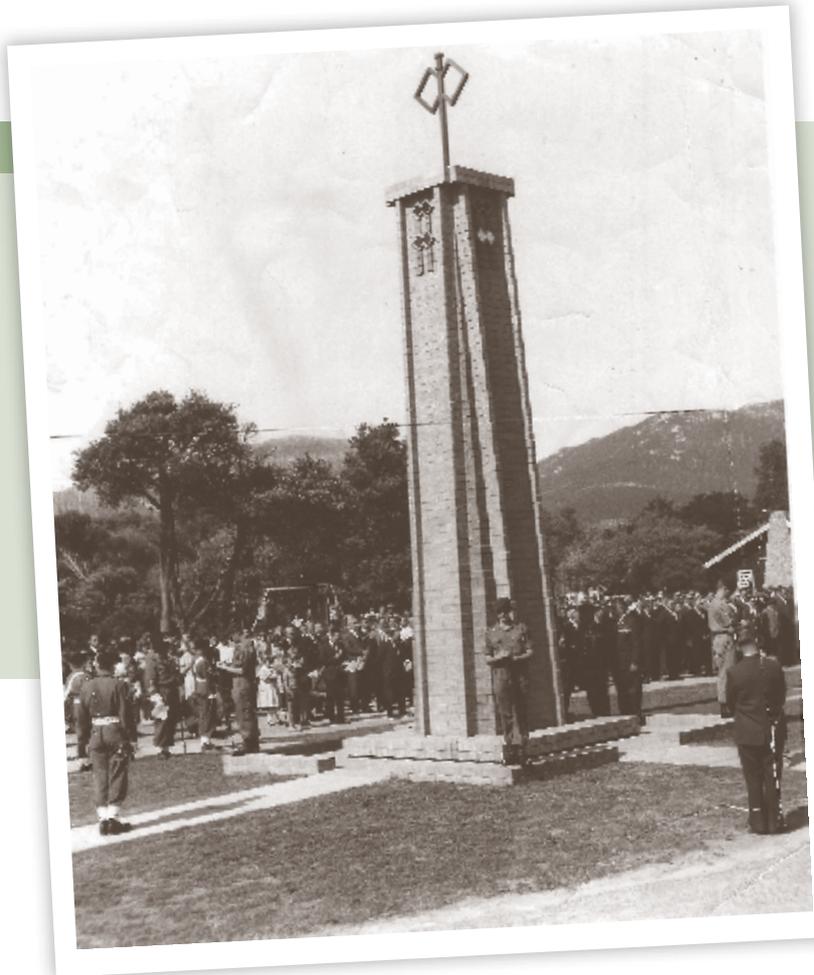
Source C



Invitation to the 1971 reunion at Tidal River

Unveiling of the Tidal River Memorial

Source D



UNIT 3

Putting training at Tidal River into action

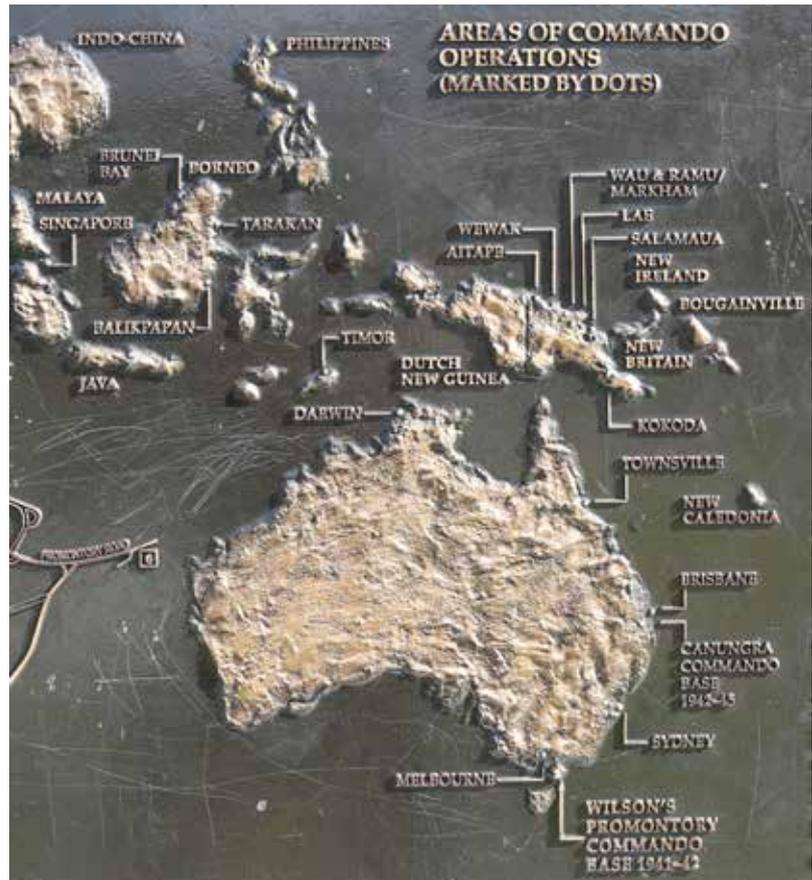
GOOD UNIT TO BE DONE ON SITE



TASK 1 Area of Commando Operations

Look carefully at this map, cast in bronze, on the Commando Memorial at Tidal River.

- 1 List the two commando training bases in Australia.
- 2 What is the southern-most area that the commandos fought in during World War II?
- 3 What is the northern most area?
- 4 Compare the climate and topography of the fighting areas with that of Tidal River. Would the commandos be well prepared for this northern climate?
- 5 Why do you think a second commando training base was later set up at Canungra in Queensland?
- 6 List the places outside Australia where commandos served during World War II.



TASK 2 What was it like on Patrol?

The great majority of Australians who joined the Independent Companies and later the Commando Squadrons fought against the Japanese between mid-1942 and war's end in August 1945 in Papua and New Guinea. Much of their time was spent on reconnaissance and fighting patrols, and on long marches, in a rugged environment – in the heat, along narrow jungle tracks and sometimes in difficult mountain terrain. The following images and descriptions give some idea of those difficult conditions. The image captions are the originals from the Australian War Memorial collection.

- 1 Make a list of the training skills being put into action that you see in these sources.

Members of 2/6th Australian Independent Company crossing one of many creeks between Wanigela and Pongani, acting as advance party.

Source A



AWM 127501 : Buna-Gona area, New Guinea, October 1942.

Trooper N A Pursche, 2/10th Commando Squadron, partially hidden by jungle undergrowth, at one of the many halts made during the mountain climb by the patrol.

Source B



AWM 083071 : Babiang, New Guinea, 7 November 1944.

Australian Commandos at Timber Knoll in New Guinea during World War II.

Source C



Wikimedia.com

Members of the 2/3rd Independent Company fire a Vickers medium machine-gun on the Komiatum Track, New Guinea. Lieutenant Hubert "Hugh" Egan (left) was killed a few days later on 21 July 1943.

Source D



AWM 127970

Bougainvillean scouts point to map features held by Lieutenant Howard "Daubler" Roberts (centre) and the 2/8th Commando Squadron's commander Major Norman Winning (right), at Morokaimoro, in Southern Bougainville, 7 June 1945.

Source E



Tactical-survivalist.com

Intelligence gathering in the mountains of the mountains of Portuguese Timor.

Source F



AWM 013764



TASK 3

Investigating the Trek by C Platoon from Black Cat to Wau in Papua New Guinea

- 1 Read sections of the official report and write a short progress summary including the date and time beside each of the locations on the Trek map. The class could share the task of reading.
- 2 How long did the trek take?
- 3 What was the weight of rations each man carried?
- 4 What was the average weight of the load including weapons carried by each man?
- 5 What dangers and difficulties did they face?
- 6 What do you think was the hardest part of the trek?
- 7 Do you think they were well trained for a trek such as this?

Location	Date/Time	Notes
Black Cat Mine		
Bitoi River		
Fraser's Camp		
House Coppa		
Wypali		
House Mambu		
House Banana		
Skindewai		
The Summit		
Ballams		
Kaisinik Creek		
Wau		

(2)

4th day

15 Nov 42

0730

Moved off again with heavy packs as most sleeping bags got wet with rain ~~the~~ previous night.

0930

After travelling for some time Pte DAY had a nasty fall, hurting his leg - he was moved to the front of the Platoon and assisted

1100

up the mountain - this slowed the pace considerably so I decided to leave him with 2 L/Cpls with 2 days Kia and get boys to

1300

come back from WYPALI to help them on. We continued past HOUSE MAM COPPA along a track which seemed to go straight up and then swung

left to a very pronounced Kunai knoll from which could be seen the sea to our direct front and half right 2 or 3 native villages

on different spurs some 3 or 4 miles away. The closest I took to be WYPALI. From here we descended down a long steep spur for nearly

3 hours until we came once again to the BITOI - here we had to negotiate a very difficult patch round a landslide

which overhung the river which now was a raging torrent - crossing another very strong creek we began once again to

1800

climb and after a terrific gruelling we made the spur which I had taken to be WYPALI but which proved to be only an offshoot

of the main village. Every one was done in after 10 hours travel. The natives here were very friendly and in return for salt and

2000

chocolate supplied us with Kau Kau, taro and water. Voices being heard near the river and recognising them I sent

2 native boys down with a torch to assist this party to our bivouac area - the three men I had left that morning after resting

had pushed on and travelled till dark one man carrying 2 packs and the other 2 TSMG's and a rifle while the injured man without

pack and rifle found he could travel slowly. These three men deserve the highest praise as they had to

travel over some terrible country.

5th day

16 Nov 42

0800

Set off ~~from~~ WYPALI after natives had brought more Kau Kau and water for breakfast. Two boys accompanied us - one carrying ~~the~~

the pack of the injured man (who with use of a stick said he could ~~make~~ make it). I contacted Patrol Officer WATSON on the

way to WYPALI and he told me that NIPPON had hunted one of our OP's out and were sending patrols out in that area - he also pointed

out different features and informed me that Major MacADIE'S ~~MAN~~ party had left WYPALI that morning. Passed through WYPALI AND

1000

found the track very bad and heavy going.

1200

Reached main LABABIA - KAISINIK track just below HOUSE MAMBU.

An unhappy incident occurred here - when the two boys I had agreed should come as far as HOUSE MAMBU ran into 2 men from

No 5 Coy unexpectedly one of them apparently surprised jumped up and scared the natives. I made the mistake of getting them

to go past HOUSE MAMBU a short way as it was tactically sound to halt the Pl. at this point until HOUSE MAMBU had been

cleared. However when I came up the track the boys had left

the pack on the track and gone bush. I realise that this

happening may affect the good feelings of the natives towards us

in that area.

Continued →

(3)

The going now that we were now on the graded track was much better but every man was feeling the strain of the heavy going and heavy load and travelling was slow and rests had to be taken frequently. At HOUSE BANANA No 5 Coy personnel supplied us with tea which was very much appreciated.

1500 We contacted Major MacADIE and Sjt. JUBE here and they went on to SKINDEWAI to get things under way for us when we arrived. ~~MMM~~
 1800 The first party reached SKINDEWAI 3 hours later and the rest of the Pl came in a little later. The day had been our longest yet and part of it over very rough tracks. Every man though cheerful was terribly weary.
 5 Coy had mess ready for the men and after a good meal spent an uncomfortable night owing to heavy rain, sleeping in the open.

6th day
 17 Nov 42

1100 Left SKINDEWAI for SUMMIT and made the trip in easy stages.
 1500 Arrived SUMMIT.
 Men slept under cover here and had two good hot meals - recovering their strength quickly.

7th day
 18 Nov 42

0800 Left SUMMIT and took tap track which branches off to left ~~MMMMM~~
~~MMMMM~~ 100 yds after coming on to main track - the going was good and we made BALLAMS in 2 hours.
 1000 Tea served at BALLAMS and we went straight on past KAISINIK and ate our remaining rations at KAISINIM CREEK.
 1200 Left for WAU and ~~MMMMM~~ marching in easy stages: completed the
 1300 trip in three hours every man finishing well.
 1600

ADMINISTRATION.

RATIONS The 7 day ration per man carried was as follows :

1 tin emergency rations	12 ozs.
3 " bully	36 oz
Rice	16 "
Sugar	22 "
Coffee	6 "
Chocolate	8 "
Salt	3½ "
Beef extract	4 "
Fruit	8 "
Flour	8 "
Cheese	4 "
Biscuits	8 "
	<u>8 lb. 7½ oz.</u>

PACK Each man carried his pack which contained:

Bed Sall	Billy and Burnzo
Ground Sheet	½ Mess tin, Knife fork and spoon
Sleeping Bag	String and/ or wire
Mosquito Net	Rations.

(4)

ADMINISTRATION (contd)

AMMUNITION

Riflemen	40 rds .	
TS MG	60 "	
Bren	6 mags	
Pistols	40 rds .	

Each man carried 1 4-sec grenade (36)

LOAD Rations were distributed on a "man-load" basis and cooking was carried out by sections .
 Average load carried by man including weapons approx. 46 lbs.

SEC. MEDICAL ORDERLIES Sec. medical orderlies travelled with their secs and Pl. medical orderly (attached) with rear sec.
 Each of these orderlies carried their full medical outfit.

**TASK 4** Who were the 'fuzzy wuzzy angels'?

The inhabitants of Papua New Guinea, and islands like Bougainville, helped the Australian soldiers of the Independent Companies and Commando Squadrons in dozens of different ways on treks like this as they battled with the Japanese between 1942 and 1945.

- 1 Using the following sources write a short description of some of the ways this help showed itself. The captions on the images are the originals from the Australian War Memorial photographic collection:

After days of traversing thick jungle, without sight of the sun, a native carrier-line with supplies for Kanga force emerges near Wau into the heat of the kunai-covered lower slopes of the hills.

Source A

AWM 127956 – Wau, New Guinea. April 1942.

Native carriers crossing the Kunda bridge over the Francisco river ... the two native bearers in the centre of the bridge are carrying a bush stretcher.

Source B

AWM 127969: Near Bobdubi, New Guinea. 1 July 1943.

Stretcher bearers evacuate a wounded soldier through the Sanananda area.

Source C

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/247064729533498003/>

Carriers transport supplies through trackless jungle.

Source D

kokodahistoricalsociety.com.au

A carrier receives medical attention at an Allied forward outpost.

Source E



Supply carriers paddle a boat bearing supplies.

Source F



kokodahistoricalsociety.com.au

- 2 Describe the weather conditions on the Mubo Trail.
- 3 What was the most-feared ever present danger?
- 4 What do you think was the most important task carried out by the Indigenous people, the ‘fuzzy wuzzy angels’?

Source G

Daily News (Perth, WA: 1882-1950),
Thursday 8 April 1943, page 6

MUBO TRAILS AS BAD AS KOKODA

WAR CORRESPONDENT, P. A. RAYNER

Our Troops in the Mubo area of New Guinea are being severely tested before they meet the enemy.

They are wearied by the arduous mountaineering advance: they are wracked with cold in the higher regions and almost always wet in the rain soaked, dripping jungle; they live in the same stinking sticky clothing for days on end.

Scrub typhus, which is caused by the bite of the minute mokka, is not unusual.

And in this almost malaria-free zone some of the boys suffer recurring bouts of malaria fever which they contracted in other parts, because of the hardships and privations they must withstand.

One aspect of the Mubo area and patrols carried out by our advanced forces is the ever-present danger of ambush and possibility that snipers might be planted in the heavy veil of scrub which overhangs the sodden trails on every hand.

Ambush on both sides has occurred but there is evidence of our superiority in this vital aspect of jungle warfare.

MORE “ANGELS”

Just as Papua did before it, New Guinea now is producing its own fuzzy-wuzzy angels patiently plodding the tortuous trails of the Mubo region, slipping and sliding forward with supplies, and slipping and skidding back again with sick or wounded.

Topographically, the Mubo country is so like that which our men trudged through on their way to Kokoda and beyond that if you blindfolded the most seasoned veteran of the Kokoda Track and set him down there he would think he was back where he was six months ago.

It requires 16 natives to carry a patient down the dangerous mountain paths and on some precipitous tracks the patient boys stand shoulder to shoulder relaying their sick charge from hand to hand like a living traveller belt.

After one recent patrol skirmish 216 boys were needed to carry out eight men who had been wounded.

The responsibility of carrying wounded over these trails, which sometimes skirt twisted turns dropping away 200 feet below, is a test of endurance even for those sure-footed men who are born to these mountainous paths.

UNIT 4

The Battlefield – Heroes of Timor

BACKGROUND BRIEFING

In late 1941 and early 1942 victorious Japanese forces successfully invaded and occupied many of the countries to Australia's immediate north. On the island of Timor they defeated a small Australian force known as Sparrow Force taking many prisoners. One Australian unit, the 2nd Australian Independent Company, later joined by the 2/4th Australian Independent Company, took to the mountains and, with the aid of the local Timorese, waged a successful 'guerilla' campaign against their enemy until evacuated from the island in late 1942 and early 1943.



TASK 1 Why were the Independent Companies so successful?

- 1 Carefully read this newspaper account. Why are the commandos described as heroes?
- 2 Would you accept this as a fair account of what was happening?
- 3 Might the reporter have motives other than accurate reporting of the war situation? Explain.

Sun (Sydney, NSW: 1910-1954), Thursday 31 December 1942, page 4

Source G

HEROES OF TIMOR

The heroic story of the A.I.F. pocket in Japanese-occupied Timor stands out in high relief against many of the episodes of Allied defeat and surrender in the Eastern war.

At odds of 100 to 1, these gallant Australians, lightly armed, and filled with the offensive spirit which alone can lead to victory, are taking toll of the enemy, and holding their own in a manner which is one of the miracle-stories of a war filled with miracles.

That stern, unbreakable spirit of Australian courage is manifest in similar guerilla-resistance to overwhelming odds wherever Australians have fought. In Yugoslavia the sons of the Anzacs are fighting with patriot bands, in Greece they maintain themselves with the hardy and unconquered mountain guerillas, and in Crete they are a thorn in the side of the German troops.

These men are an inspiration to all of us in their contempt of the easy way of surrender and compromise. They show us that death is a terror only to cowards, and that to fight to the end is the only way for man to keep the integrity of his own soul.

They have exposed the legend of Japanese invincibility by beating the Japanese in their own tactics of jungle fighting. If they were ten times as many, they might have driven the enemy out of the island altogether.

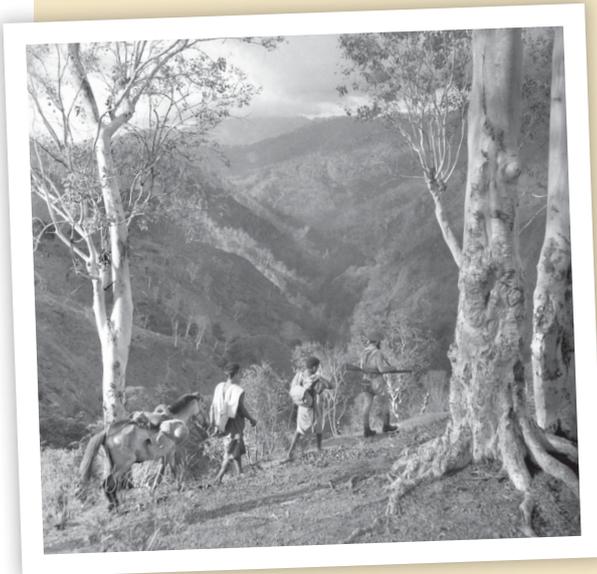
Let the Australian people count among its blessings the fact that they have forgotten their own petty inconveniences, in an attempt to realise just what hardship and peril this epic of Timor means in sheer courage and sturdiness of spirit, against odds which only heroism of the highest kind can afford to despise.

Look carefully at the selection of photographs.

- 4 Describe the terrain. To what extent is it similar to the Tidal River landscape?
- 5 List the various activities you see happening in the photographs.
- 6 Are the commandos being helped by anybody?

Australian 'guerillas' in Timor. Natives lead a pack train of Timor ponies.

Source B



AWM 013771

A small patrol of Australian soldiers moving through the typically rugged and heavily wooded Timorese terrain on 9 December 1942.

Source D



AWM 013772

Portuguese Timor 18 December 1942. This valley was the scene of many ambushes and skirmishes between men of the 2/2nd and 2/4th Independent Companies and the Japanese during 1942.

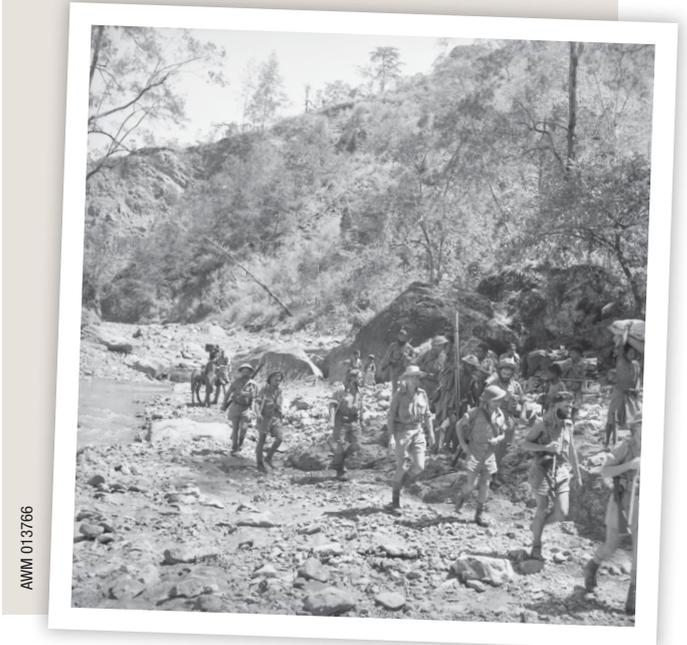
Source F



AWM 121517

Australian 'guerillas' moving out from their creek bed camp in Timor, 9 December 1942.

Source C



AWM 013766

Australians 'guerillas' set an ambush.

Source E



AWM 013826

**TASK 2** Who were the Creados?

Japanese forces landed on Timor on 20 February 1942. An Australian force was soon overrun but one unit, the 2/2nd Independent Company, later reinforced by the 2/4th Independent Company, fought on befriended by the Timorese. Individual soldiers often had a *creado*, a personal helper and servant, who stuck with them, helped carry their equipment, guided them, and found them little luxuries to eat.

Most *creados* were boys, average age 13: one Akiu was just nine. Years later, General Sir Peter Cosgrove, Governor-General of Australia, made a simple assessment of those who had assisted the commandos – ‘Without their help the Independent Companies on Timor would have lasted no more than five minutes’.

Look carefully at the following sources.

- 1 List the various tasks that the *creados* carried out.
- 2 What messages about the relationship between *creados* and commandos do you think Curly Papworth is trying to convey in his sketch?
- 3 How would you describe the relationship between the commandos and their *creados*?

Descriptions of the *creados***Source A**

‘Barana, is a strapping 12-year-old who can walk any man – black or white – off his feet! He is thrilled with the military aspect of our existence together, and at the first hint of my looking tired, he grabs my Tommy Gun, slings it over his own shoulder and proudly declares: “Tuan Barana Australian soldado!” Yes, if courage, skill and loyalty count for anything at all, then Barana is indeed an Australian soldier a fair dinkum Double Red! He is as close to me as a blood brother.

And I know that the men, not only of my section, but throughout the entire Company, hold their own Timorese *creados* in similar esteem. These are not mere “native guides”... they are friends, allies, and comrades.’ (Campbell 1995:79-80)

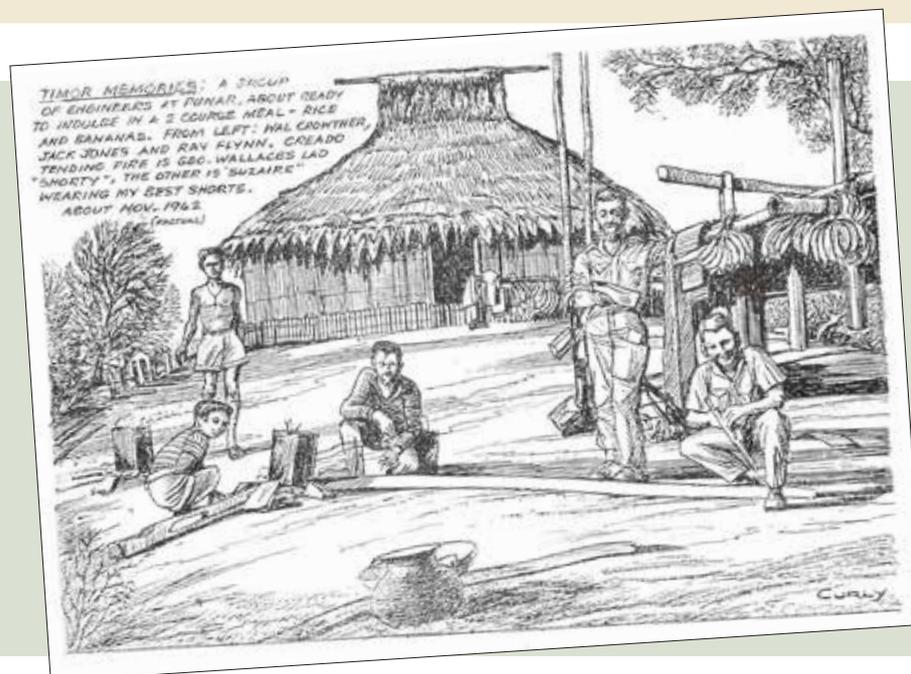
The *creados* thought it was an honour to work for us. We had no soap so of course we got lice. The Timorese would wash and dry our clothes then go through them cracking the lice or their eggs between their thumbnails. (Stan Sadler, Cyril Ayris, *All the Bull’s Men*, Hamilton Hill, WA, 2006, pp.157/163)

‘My boy was called Tetti Huna. He was about 12, very clean and a bloody good cook with rice. He would go away with his mates and gather bananas, pawpaw, mandarins, sweet potatoes and even coffee. I would have starved if it hadn’t been for him.’

Alexander Thompson, Cyril Ayris *All the Bull’s Men*

Source B

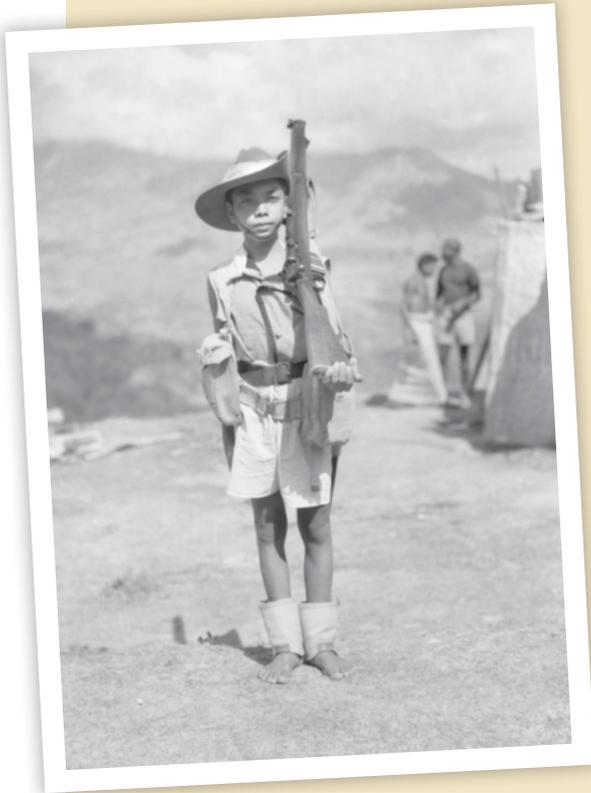
Timor Memories





Source C

Akiu, a half Chinese-half Timorese boy, a 'creado' with the 2/2nd Australian Independent Company, kitted out in Australian slouch hat and scaled-down uniform, Timor, 11 December 1942. Tortured by the Japanese he refused to give up his Australian friends.



AWM 121422

Source D

Timorese bring fresh fruit to Australian soldiers, Timor, 1942.



13799

AWM 013799

Source E

Timorese building a hut for Australian commandos of the 2/2nd Australian Independent Company, Timor 1942.



AWM 013763

**TASK 3 Winnie the War Winner**

Read the following sources describing a fascinating story about the importance of communications during wartime and try to answer these questions.

- 1 Why do you think the commandos were ‘written off as missing or dead’?
- 2 Why do you think this act of communication was described as ‘historic’ and ‘an amazing story’?
- 3 To what extent do you think that the commandos’ training at Tidal River might have played a part in the story of ‘Winnie the War Winner’?

Daily News (Perth, WA: 1882-1950), Thursday 31 December 1942, page 3

Source A

TIMOR COMMANDOS ‘SCROUNGE’ A RADIO

Official War Correspondent Bill Marien who recently visited Portuguese Timor
“Force intact. Still fighting. Badly need boots, money, quinine, tommy gun ammunition.”

This was the first official message received in Australia from the lost
 A.I.F. commandos of Portuguese Timor, who for 59 days after the
 Japanese landing on the island had been written off as missing or dead.

The signal came to Darwin on the night of April 19 this year. It was transmitted by “Winnie the War Winner,” a crazy contraption built from scraps of wire and tin and pieces for long-discarded radio sets.

Behind this historic message is an amazing story of experimenting with odd parts of discarded gear and raiding Japanese lines for missing links.

When the commandos showed me the incredible Winnie it was easy to recapture the scene of that night of April 19.

In the thin air of a Timor mountain hideout, four bearded, haggard Australians were working by the smoking stinking light of a pig-fat flare. Three of them watched anxiously as the fourth thumbed a morse key.

Weak batteries sent the dots and dashes across the Arafura Sea to the Northern Territory. The operator strained his ears for a reply. At last a reply came.

From February 19, when the Japanese landed at Dilli, nothing had been heard of the A.I.F. commando force which had been in Portuguese Timor since December 17, 1941. And the commandos as heard nothing from the rest of the world.

They did not know that Dutch Timor had fallen until other Australians fought through to Portuguese Timor and told them. There was little prospect of building a radio. There were no parts, no new batteries. The sets they had were too weak to raise Darwin.

But among those who came from Keopang, were 2 signalman, Corporal John Sargeant, of Bonshaw, N.S.W., and Lance-Corporal John Donovan, of Lindfield, N.S.W.

These men got together, working under Captain George Parker of Earlwood, N.S.W., with signallers Max (Joe) Loveless, of Hobart, and K. Richards, of Victoria, two members of the original commando force, and agreed that Darwin must be raised.

OUT OF ORDER

On March 8 the four men got to work, Loveless just out of sick bed and Sargeant just recovered from Malaria.

Three days later a Dutch sergeant, exhausted, stumbled in. He carried what he thought to be a transmitter receiver 40 miles through some of the roughest country in the world. Loveless saw it was an ordinary American commercial medium wave receiving set, out of order.

Loveless, whose knowledge made him No. 1 man of the team, thought he could build a one valve transmitter from parts of this set and of another small and weak set. All the commandos were asked to be on the lookout for anything that might serve as a radio part.

Corporal Donovan went scrounging at Attamboea, on the north coast while his companions recovered an abandoned army set.

Continued →

Source A continued

The parts of the three sets were unsoldered and a bamboo used to catch all the melted solder for reuse. Loveless had carefully preserved two small batteries, but they needed re-charging. A generator was taken from an abandoned 10-year-old car and rigged to a series of wooden wheels, with a master wheel four feet in diameter, which a native was persuaded to turn. The set was completed on March 26. It would not work.

The four signallers had been working with inadequate tools — a tomahawk, pair of pliers and a screwdriver. They had no means of establishing a calibration for the set which would give them a known transmitting wave length.

JAPS TOO CLOSE

On March 28 Donovan returned from Attamboa. He had the power pack from a Dutch transmitter, two aerial tuning condensers, 60 feet of heavy aerial wire in short lengths and a receiving set. When Loveless saw the receiving set he cheered. He had just built one himself, eight inches by six, but was not sure of it. The next day the men had to move all their precious gear and bits and pieces of sets. The Japs were getting too close.

SIGNALLED DARWIN

While Sargeant went to investigate a report that another set had been found Loveless got to work on a second transmitter. This transmitter was twice as big as the first, and was built into a four-gallon kerosene tin.

Next, a battery charger was recovered from enemy-held territory. To get it, 14 commandos went through the Japanese lines to the old Australian headquarters at Villa Maria.

There, within 100 yards of Japanese sentries, protected by only the dark, they dug up the charger which had been buried when the headquarters were evacuated.

On April 10 the signallers heard Darwin on the receiver and they knew then that the town was still in Australian hands.

Disappointment followed this good news. The second transmitter was also a failure. Again the fault was calibration.

But Loveless, undiscouraged, had another idea. He would hook up the powerful, uncalibrated transmitter to another weak set with a range of only 30 miles. To do this they needed more batteries. Four were found.

Then the supply of petrol ran out and the charger could not be kept running.

So they raided the Japanese lines and carried off tins of kerosene. This they mixed with diesel oil also captured from the Japanese.

Finally the charger was started on kerosene and run on diesel oil.

With batteries at full strength they signalled Darwin on April 18 but got no reply.

They did not know that their message had been picked up on the Australian mainland and passed on to Darwin, that all transmitting stations had been warned to keep off the air and to listen to Timor the following night.

On the night of April 19 they got an answer from Darwin. Then their batteries failed again. But the four signallers celebrated by smoking a tin of tobacco which they had saved since leaving Attamboa.

On the night of April 20 they again got Darwin. But Darwin was suspicious; demanded proof of their identity. So questions and answers like these were rushed across the Arafura Sea:

“Do you know Bill Jones?”

“Yes, he’s with us.”

“What rank, and answer immediately?”

“Captain.”

“Is he there? Bring him to the transmitter. What’s wife’s name Bill?”

“Joan.”

“What’s the street number of your home?”

Back came the right answer, and the mainland accepted the fact that the commandos were still fighting. The commanding officer of the force told me with feeling that but for the amazing job done by these four signallers they would not have been able to contact Australia.

“I don’t like to think what might have happened if we had not got through,” he said.

Three of the men who helped build 'Winnie the War Winner' radio in Timor in 1942 – Signaller Keith Richards, Corporal John Donovan and Sergeant John Henry Sargent. All belonged to the 2/2nd Australian Independent Company. Timor, 1942

Source B



Wikiwand.com

'Winnie the War Winner', the improvised wireless with which the 2/2nd Australian Independent Company was able to contact Australia from Timor so letting Australia know that the Company was still fighting on in Timor months after the Japanese occupation of the island in February 1942.

Source C



Source D Extract description of 'Winnie the War Winner' from Cyril Ayris.

The set occupied a room about ten feet square and there were bits and pieces spread around benches and joined by wires trailing across the floor. Batteries were charged by a generator taken from an old car and driven by a rope which passed around a small grooved wheel attached to the armature of the generator and around a similar

wheel about 18 inches in diameter. Attached to this latter wheel was another wheel around which a further rope passed onto a wheel about four feet or more in diameter and to this large wheel were fixed handles by which four natives turned the machine.

**TASK 4** Your Official Despatch

Imagine that you are asked to write a short despatch outlining what you regard as the key reasons/strategies for the commandos' successful guerilla campaign in Timor. List your top 6 reasons explaining why you have chosen these.

Reasons / strategies	Explanation / significance
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

UNIT 5

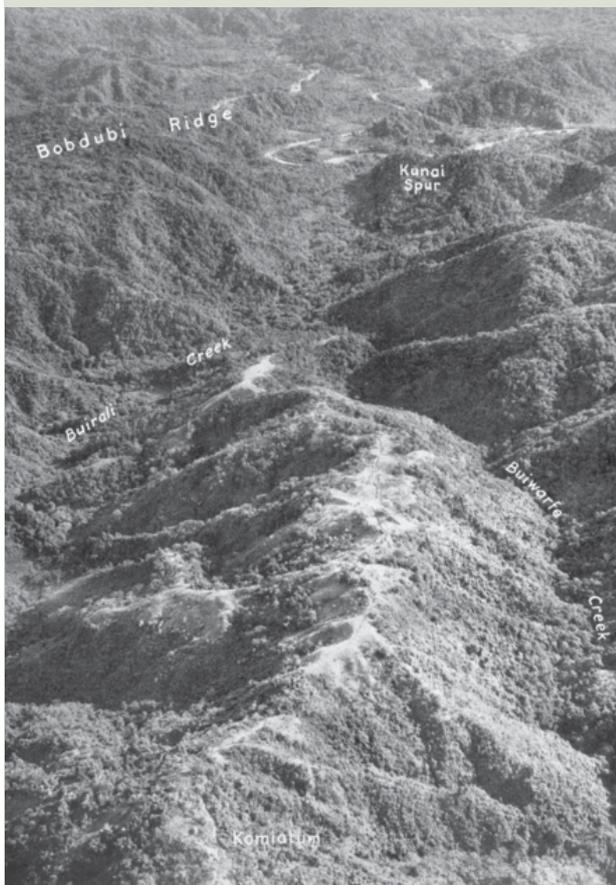
The Battlefront – Timbered Knoll, New Guinea

BACKGROUND BRIEFING

Between mid-1942 and mid-1943 Australian Independent Companies fought the Japanese in the jungle and mountain ranges to the immediate north west of Port Moresby. Places like Wau, Salamaua, Mubo, Old Vickers, Bobdubi and Ambush Knoll cropped up all the time in Australian newspaper reports of the fighting. The name Timbered Knoll did not appear in the newspapers yet it was one of the best-recorded actions fought by any Independent Company in New Guinea.

This is an aerial image of the country around the Bobdubi Ridge in New Guinea looking north to the Francisco River which can be seen at the top of the photograph. Timbered Knoll, captured from the Japanese by the 2/3rd Australian Independent Company on 29/30 July 1943, lay on the slopes of Bobdubi Ridge.

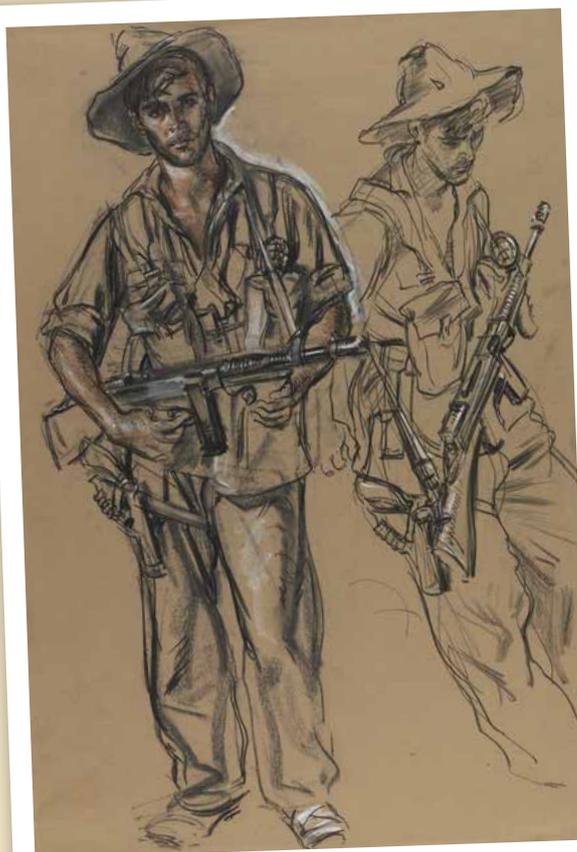
Source A



AWM C48345

'Portrait of Private Peter Patrick Pinney, NX38335, of the 2/3rd Independent Company in Salamaua, New Guinea', Ivor Hele.

Source B



AWM ART26053

**TASK 2** Sequencing a battle action

1 Sequence the following battle account so that it reads in the correct order.

BOBDUBI 29 JUL 43
2/3 Independent Company War Diary
Account of Timbered Knoll action.

Time
1545
1600
1745
1750
1755
1800
1815
0530 (30 July)

Summary of Events and Information

With artillery and mortar support A PL attacked TIMBERED KNOLL. 1 section was pinned down by Jap machine guns and pillboxes; 3 section attacked from the south to north and cleared 20 yards of foxholes before contacting numbers 1 and 7 sections which were attacking from north to south.

Truck moved from Isthmus to area north of church

Our mortars and vickers opened up on the Jap positions.

American artillery fired on bridge and area slightly north

A PI consolidating on Timber Knoll and looking down on Jap positions. L/SGT Muir, CPLs Hooks and Buckingham killed and three others wounded. Report from Timbered Knoll – weapons and enemy documents captured and 15 Jap bodies found. Enemy well dug in deep trenches, underground communications and pillboxes. Although supporting fire a big factor in success, hand grenades were responsible for most of success.

57 Japs reported moving north and 7 south.

A PI consolidating on Timber Knoll and looking down on Jap positions. L/SGT Muir, CPLs Hooks and Buckingham killed and three others wounded. Report from Timbered Knoll – weapons and enemy documents captured and 15 Jap bodies found. Enemy well dug in deep trenches, underground communications and pillboxes. Although supporting fire a big factor in success, hand grenades were responsible for most of success.

13 Japs reported moving south and 65 north across bridge.

A PL at Timbered Knoll cleared 3 more Jap foxholes bringing total Japs killed in this action to 18.

**TASK 3** Battlefield Burial of Three NCOs

- 1 Use the following sources to write a short note to the parents of Donald Jack Buckingham describing the circumstances of his death, his burial and the impact he had upon his men.

'Battlefield burial of three NCOs',
2/3rd Independent Company, Ivor Hele.

Source A

AWM 013771

As dusk and rain fell, Major George Warfe's 2/3rd Independent Company men buried the dead and prepared to meet a possible Japanese counter attack.

As the men gathered around the graves Hele (war artist) pulled out a pad from his map case and sketched the dead men being carried to the burial site, and the bodies lying in the foreground as men dug graves.

Unusually for official art the sketch showed Australian corpses. It testified to the waste of war without losing their humanity or intruding on the privacy of grief.

Returning to Australia later in 1943, Hele worked the sketches into an oil painting, carefully crafting the striking scene of this powerful work 'Battlefield burial of three NCOs'.

Colonel Ron Garland, *Nothing is Forever, The History of the 2/3 Commandos*, Malabar Heights, NSW, 1997, p.245

Donald Jack Buckingham was one of the older members of the 2/3 and was killed at 35 years of age. He was greatly respected by his men as a caring and courageous leader.

Source B

Photo courtesy of his daughter Mrs Shirley Blake



Burial service for three Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) of 2/3rd Australian Independent Company conducted by Father English (second from left), whose prayer book his batman, Private Francis Ryan, 3/24th Battalion, HQ Company (on the far left) is protecting with his groundsheet. Three wooden crosses mark the graves. The men were: Acting Corporal Donald Jack Buckingham, Lance Sergeant Andrew Stewart Muir and Acting Corporal Percival Arthur Hooks, who were killed in action on 29 July in an attack on the Japanese stronghold at Timbered Knoll.

Source C

(Film still from F01866): AWM 127986

UNIT 6

The Battlefront – Kaiapit New Guinea



BACKGROUND BRIEFING

In 1943 the Japanese were pushed slowly back in New Guinea by Australian and American operations. In September of that year the plan was for a significant advance from Lae up the Markham/Ramu river valley towards the Finisterre Range. To quicken the pace of this advance the 2/6th Australian Independent Company was flown up the valley in American transport aircraft landing on a bumpy airstrip close to the village of Kaiapit. Their orders were to capture and hold the village which would allow large Australian troop reinforcements to be flown into Kaiapit. On 19 September 1943 the 2/6th took Kaiapit in a swift attack. They did not know that a large Japanese force was heading towards them to hold up the allied advance but on 20 September they successfully defended the Kaiapit position against this much larger Japanese force.

Source A



AMM Peter Stanley



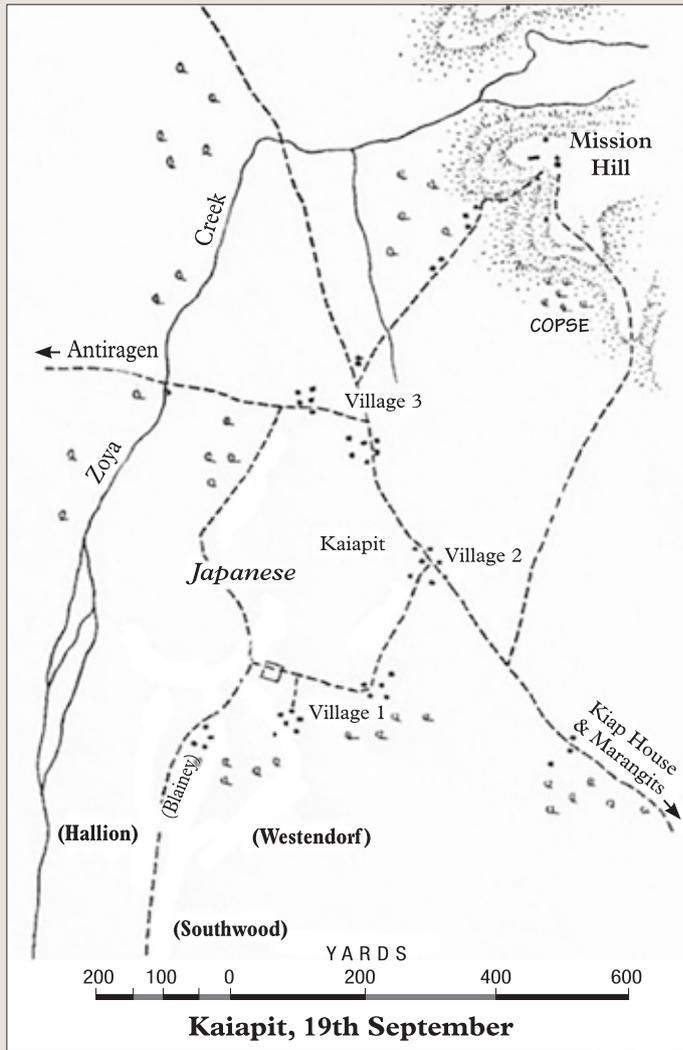
TASK 1 Where is Kaiapit?

- 1 Find Kaiapit on the map. Is it north or south of Kokoda?
- 2 Is it nearer to Wau or Port Moresby?

**TASK 2****How did the commandos manage to capture Kaiapit?**

- 1 Carefully read the following account and try to sketch the platoon movements on the map. When you have done this you can compare your version to the actual battle sketch plan at the end of this unit.

Map of Kaiapit attack: Based on 2/6 Independent Company War Diary

Source B

AWM 52 25/3/6/9

Source C**19 September 1943****1515**

- Company formed up in flat kunai on the edge of a swamp about 1200 yards from Kaiapit.
- Captain G.C. Blainey's platoon advanced on a wide front.
- Lieutenant Westendorf's section advanced on the right.
- Lieutenant Hallion's advanced on the left.
- Lieutenant Southwood's remained in reserve at the rear.

1550

- Blainey's section fired on from foxholes, 150 yards from Village 1.
- The platoon (all sections) went in hard and cleared the first village.

1605

- Westendorf's section swung out to the right and with the help of the other sections cleared the foxholes behind the first village.
- Hand to hand combat ensued with the use of bayonets and grenades.
- Westendorf killed leading a charge.
- Eleven Japanese killed.
- Enemy broke and fled to the northwest abandoning Kaiapit leaving behind weapons and 30 dead comrades.
- Commando casualties – 3 dead and 7 wounded.

20 September 1943**0605**

- Japanese attacked with machine guns and mortar fire.
- Captain W Derek Watson's platoon counter-attacked and surprised the Japanese.
- The platoon captured Village 3.
- Village 2 also captured and a platoon pushed on towards Mission Hill and seized the ground.

0900

- Japanese were soundly defeated and retreating.



Lieutenant
Albert Westendorf,
killed in action,
Kaiapit, New Guinea,
19 September 1943

AWM P03583.001

Source C



2 Sources E to I all represent different aspect of commando warfare. Beneath each of the images/documents write what you think the image conveys about the experience of the commandos fighting in New Guinea.

Source E
 'A brilliant action',
 General Herring: Telegram,
 2/6th Independent Company War Diary

AWM 52 25/3/6/9

MESSAGE FORM						Serial	SECRET
CALL AND INSTRUCTIONS		IN	EXPIRE	SECRET	GR.	OFFICE DATE/STAMP	
TO 7 Aust Div		(ABOVE THIS LINE FOR SIGNALS USE ONLY.)					
FROM 1 Aust Corps		Originator's Number	Date	In Reply to Number			
Personnel	FOR	Gen	YAGNY	From	Gen		
MESSAGE	STU	Message	SECRETARY TO	For	No		
7/6	Index	COY	on	Chair	NATIONAL		
Action at		KAIAPIT					
THIS MESSAGE MAY BE REPEATED AS WANTED BY THE SENDER		THIS MESSAGE MUST BE REPEATED BY THE SENDER IN FULL AFTER EVERY READING		CLASSIFICATION OF MESSAGE		TIME OF MESSAGE	
BY AIR (GROUP) 1 MESSAGE		BY SIGNALS (GROUP) 1 MESSAGE		CLASSIFIED BY		1860	
REMARKS: "OPERATIONS AND MESSAGE" AND "SECRET"		REMARKS: (BELOW THIS LINE FOR SIGNALS USE ONLY.)		CLASSIFIED BY		T.H.I. 1470	
System	Time	Rate	Rate	System	Time	Rate	T.O.R. 1500

This image tells me that... →



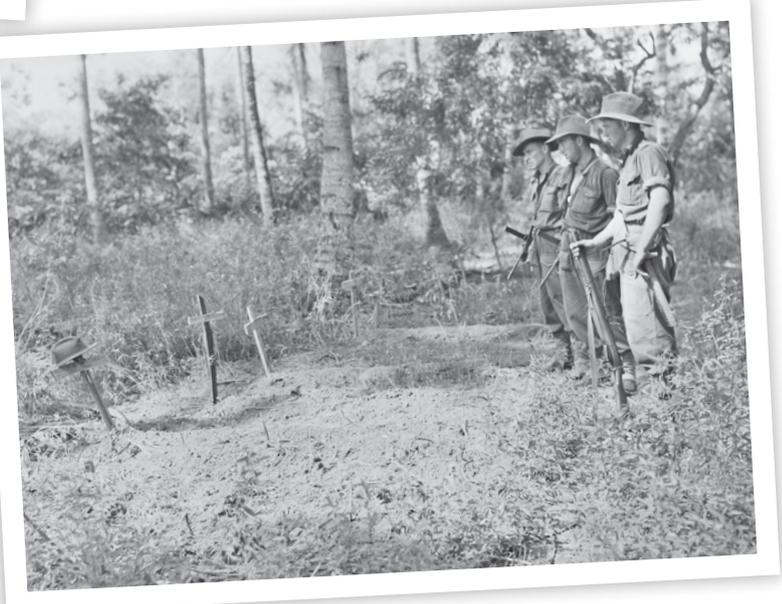
Source F
 Soldiers of the 2/6 Australian Independent Company with a Japanese flag captured after their successful capture of Kaiapit, New Guinea on 19/20 September 1943

AWM 52 25/3/6/9

← This image tells me that...

Source G
 Three soldiers of the 2/6th Australian Independent Company looking at the graves of three of their mates who were killed in action at Kaiapit, New Guinea on 19/20 September 1943

AWM 057504



↑ This image tells me that...

Captain Gordon King DSO 1918–2009

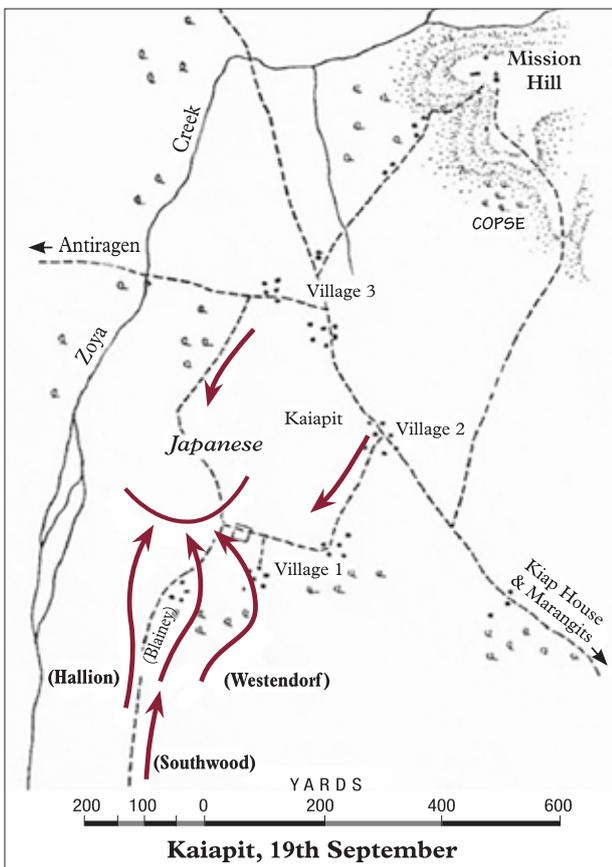
Source H



kokodahistoricalsociety.com.au

↑ This image (and the obituary, Source I) tell me that...

MAP OF KAIAPIT ATTACK:
Based on 2/6 Independent Company War Diary



Source I

Obituary, Gordon King, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 July 2010

‘A TRUE HERO WHO LIVED HIS LIFE SERVING OTHERS’

Gordon King 1918–2009

GORDON KING was quiet, reserved and unassuming, and those who did not really know him would never have suspected that between 1942 and 1945 he led a commando squadron.

In 1941 he was posted as captain instructor to the School of Guerrilla Warfare. In 1942 he helped to raise the 2/6 Independent Company (later 2/6 Commando Squadron) and the unit was posted to New Guinea with King as second in command. He was 24 and most of the troops were 18 to 20.

In September 1943 the squadron, with King now in command, was airlifted to a jungle landing ground in the upper Markham Valley ahead of the 7th Division, with the task of capturing and holding Kaiapit and its small airstrip, 24 kilometres ahead.

The squadron of 150 captured the village and destroyed the enemy garrison. The citation for his award of the Distinguished Service Order, normally reserved for majors and above, records that Captain King, although wounded in the leg, organised the defence against the inevitable counter-attacks. Two minor attacks during the night were repulsed but at 6am the enemy in superior numbers, made a determined attack.

Captain King continually moved among his troops, encouraging and directing them. When ammunition was running low he ordered an attack with the bayonet. The enemy were routed and 214 of their dead were later buried while the squadron lost 14 with 23 men wounded. The airstrip was enlarged by cutting down the tall kunai grass, and at 3.30pm on September 21 forward elements of the 7th Division were flown in, completing an advance of 80 kilometres.

King always maintained that the DSO was really awarded to the squadron. The Battle of Kaiapit is regarded as something of a classic and is still taught at Duntroon and in Special Forces officer training in Britain.

King retired in 1978 and until 2009 attended nearly every Anzac Day march in Sydney, leading the Special Forces contingent. In 2009 he attended the service at the Special Forces memorial in Martin Place but did not march. He celebrated his 90th birthday by revisiting Kokoda, Mission Hill and Kaiapit with some of his family, and in Kokoda he unveiled a plaque in the museum to commemorate the 2/6 Commando Squadron.

UNIT 7

Behind Enemy Lines

Operation JAYWICK

BACKGROUND BRIEFING

The Allied Intelligence Bureau (AIB) and its cover name the Services Reconnaissance Department (SRD) was a top-secret organisation formed in 1942 to gather intelligence and carry out sabotage right at the heart of the enemy. Its members were sworn to secrecy about their operations, and were highly trained as silent and effective killers. Code named Operation JAYWICK (after Jay Wick, a powerful deodoriser that removed smells from Singapore homes), the aim of the raid was for a group of Australian and British operatives to sneak in to the Japanese stronghold of Singapore Harbour, and attach time-delayed limpet mines to as many ships as possible. The raiders would try to escape before the ships exploded using collapsible canoes called Folboats.

THE KRAIT

Singapore was hundreds of kilometres inside Japanese dominated territory. How to approach the port unseen? The key would be the small ship, the *Krait*. This was a former Singapore-based ship, named the *Kofuku Maru*, that had been seized and used to transport many refugees during the fall of Singapore. It was later sailed to India, where it was re-named after a deadly Malayan snake, the Krait. The little fishing boat was a bit over 20 metres long, less than three metres wide, with a top speed of six-and-a-half knots, and a range of thirteen thousand kilometres.



TASK 1 How was this operation carried out?

- 1 Read the following account of the journey and mark in the route and relevant dates on the map.

On 8 August 1943 the *Krait* set out on the 4 000 kilometre trip from Cairns in Queensland to Exmouth Gulf in Western Australia. The crew of 14 ranged in age from 20 to 43, with most in their twenties. They included four soldiers and ten sailors—two Englishmen, a Welsh coalminer, a Northern Irishman, and ten Australians, from every State except Tasmania.

The *Krait* was stocked with necessary supplies for the trip and military equipment for the raid—including cyanide suicide pills for each man. Care was taken to make as many of the goods as possible Japanese made — sunglasses, for example, which might be recognised at a distance, pencils, paper, cooking pots, even toothbrushes. If any of these fell overboard they would not indicate anything suspicious. At Exmouth Gulf they took delivery of four special collapsible canoes flown out from England. The Commandos would paddle these into Singapore Harbour at night, and attach the mines to the ships' sides.

She departed Exmouth on the evening of 1 September and promptly broke a propeller extension shaft. USS *Chanticleer* assisted with the repairs and *Krait* departed again the following afternoon, her route taking her through Lombok Strait, across the Java Sea, along the southwest and west coasts of Borneo and then west to the Lingga Archipelago and the islands south of Singapore where they landed on 18 September.



2 What tactics did the crew employ to avoid detection by the enemy?

They flew a Japanese flag as part of their disguise. The crew stained their bodies brown, dyed their hair, and dressed in sarongs so that they would appear to any casual observer to be Malays or Japanese. None could speak the language, so the risk was that if any Japanese warship became curious and decided to take a closer look, the crew would have had to fight to the death. Once in Japanese waters they took extraordinary care that there would only ever be one or two men on deck, and that no rubbish of any sort – even a match – would be thrown overboard.

3 Read the following account and then write a brief radio message to be sent to headquarters in Australia describing the success or otherwise of the operation.

RADIO MESSAGE

To:

Message:

.....

.....

.....

From:

Date:

Urgent Non urgent

Source B

On 18 September the *Krait* slipped into one of the small, heavily vegetated islands near Singapore Harbour, and unloaded the three teams of canoeists and their equipment. The commandos had twelve days to get to Singapore Harbour, sink as much shipping as they could, hide out until the expected furious search for them had eased, and get back to the waiting *Krait* nearly one hundred kilometres away.

On the night of 26 September the three two-man crews silently glided into the harbour at different points, quietly selected their targets. After the physically arduous task of paddling into the harbour, their nerves were now strained by the closeness of the enemy—one noise in attaching the mines could have led to a curious sailor raising the alarm. Even if one person aboard a ship had idly looked over a railing or through a porthole in the right direction, the saboteurs could have been seen—which would have led to the failure of the mission, and their capture and certain death. Fortunately their training and luck held, and nobody saw them in the shadows of the hulls of the target ships.

The crews then silently paddled out of the harbor towards their chosen hiding spot, and, despite the exhaustion and tension of more than eighty kilometres of paddling in enemy waters, listened to hear the roar of their mines destroying the enemy ships early the next morning. The explosions came, nine of them, and the harbour erupted into uproar. Japanese planes and ships

started searching for the saboteurs, but the men stayed hidden until they could move out secretly to rendezvous with the *Krait*—after another ninety kilometres of paddling. Once having finally boarded the *Krait* they now had to travel out of enemy waters, this time with the Japanese much more likely to be alert and suspicious.

On 19 October the *Krait* anchored safely off the American base in Exmouth Gulf. It had been 48 days and 8000 kilometres since the *Krait* had headed north for Singapore—and 33 of those days had been spent deep inside enemy waters. The raid was a great success—both in physical destruction or severe damage to seven vessels representing nearly 40 000 tonnes of Japanese shipping; and also psychologically for the raiders, and for the Allied prisoners of war in Changi. All 14 raiders returned home safely, though five were in a group chosen to try and repeat the raid in the 1944 Operation RIMAU which sadly ended in disaster with all members either killed in action or executed by the Japanese.

Every JAYWICK Member is now commemorated in the names of the streets of Exmouth. At the end of the war the *Krait* was used to carry timber on Borneo rivers until it was bought as a war memorial and returned to Australia in 1964. The *Krait* is now permanently moored in Sydney Harbour, part of the National Maritime Museum collection at Darling Harbour.

The crew stained their bodies brown, dyed their hair, and dressed in sarongs so that they would appear to any casual observer to be Malays or Japanese.

Source C

A/MM 067336



Source D

Krait, length 21.3 metres, diesel-engined, speed 6 1/2 knots, range 8000 miles.

A/MM 067338



AWM 067336



Source E
 Small canoes, known as 'Folboats' (folding boats), launched from the *Krait*, were used by the men of Operation JAYWICK to paddle into Singapore Harbour with their 'Limpet' mines which they attached to individual Japanese merchant ships.

Lieutenant Robert "Bob" Page and Able Seaman Arthur "Jo" Jones are shown placing limpet mines on a ship's hull. Seven Japanese ships were sunk or badly damaged as a result of the raid.

Source F

AWM Art 27649



4 List the strategies, skills and tactics that you think were keys to the success of the JAYWICK operation.

SKILLS
E.g. map reading
STRATEGIES / TACTICS
E.g. no waste overboard

Source G
 The crew of 14 ranged in age from 20 to 43, with most in their twenties. They included four soldiers and ten sailors – two Englishmen, a Welsh coal miner, a Northern Irishman, and ten Australians, from every State except Tasmania.



AWM 045424

AWM 134349



Source H
 Brisbane, Queensland, November 1943. After their return from Operation JAYWICK, some of the crew of the *Krait* enjoy a beer.

UNIT 8

Names on a memorial – what can they tell us?

The 1st Australian Independent Company was raised in 1941 and trained at Tidal River on Wilsons Promontory. Late in the year the company (comprising some 280 men) was sent to various locations in the islands off New Guinea, more especially to Kavieng on New Ireland to defend the airport. The unit was disbanded in late 1942. Why?



TASK 1

What happened to the 1st Australian Independent Company?

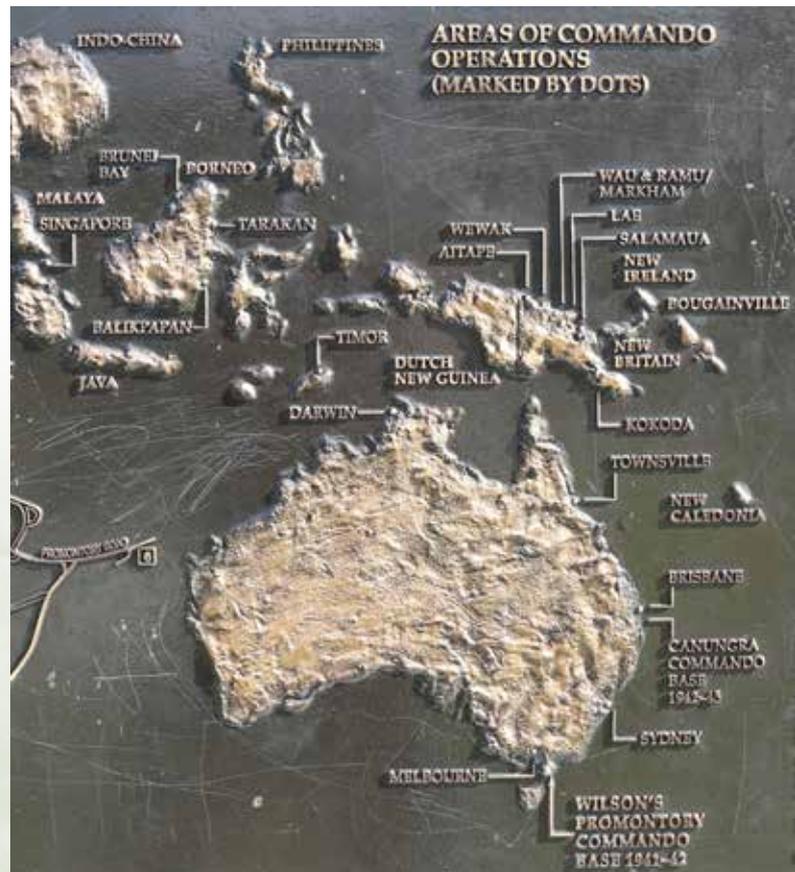
- 1 Discuss with your classmates possible reasons why the unit was disbanded.

Names on a memorial can tell us a lot about the past if we do some research.

Roy Harman, Arthur George, Dudley Ainsbury and Ronald Fraser are four names on the Tidal River memorial. They were all men of the 1st Independent Company (commando) unit to be trained at No 7 Infantry Training Centre, Tidal River, Wilsons Promontory in 1941.

From the documents provided see if you can work out what happened to them, and to 129 of their mates when they went to war against the Japanese in New Guinea in early 1942.

- 2 Locate on this map where most of 1st Australian Independent Company served.



3 Divide the class into 4 groups.

Each group should choose one of the commandos to investigate. Use the Commando Profile to record the information that you find about your person. Also include the Source that provided the specific information. You will not only find out why the unit was disbanded, you will also learn about the wartime experience of your commando.

COMMANDO PROFILE

INFORMATION		SOURCE
Name		
Names of Parents/Siblings		
Company/Squadron		
Rank		
Home Town		
Age at Enlistment		
Trained at Tidal River	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Wounded	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Main Area of Fighting		
Prisoner of War	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Bravery Awards		
Circumstances of Death		
List any information that helps explain why the unit was disbanded.		

Glen Innes Examiner (NSW: 1908-1954), Thursday 8 November 1945, page 4

Source A

THE LATE PTE. ARTHUR J. GEORGE

News was received from the Minister for the Army on October 20, of the death, of Pte. Arthur John George, third son of the late Edward George and of Mrs. George, of Mosman Street, Glen Innes.

Pte. George was taken prisoner while serving with the 1st. Independent Company, which was operating on New Ireland.

He joined the A.I.F. five years ago last September and was only 20 years of age at the time of enlistment.

A letter 'was received from him in September 1942, advising that he was a prisoner at Rabaul, but since then no more word was received until the official news of his death on July 1, 1942.

Apart from the great loss to his mother and all members of his family, the young soldier's passing will be keenly felt by his many friends.

His pleasant manner and keen sense of humor were well known and appreciated by all with whom he came in contact.

Pte. George is survived by his widowed mother, and four sisters: Mrs. G. Popje (Queanbeyan), Mrs A. Duff (Shannon Vale), Miss Agnes George (Glen Innes) and A.C.W., Una George (Sydney); and two brothers — Eric ex-AIF., and Noel George (Glen Innes). His eldest brother, Fred, died a few months before war broke out.



*Private Arthur George,
1st Independent Company,
of Glen Innes, New South Wales*

image: ANMM P07940.001

National Library of Australia <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article165408176>*Cairns Post* (Qld.: 1909-1954), Tuesday 11 December 1945, page 6

Source B

ROLL OF HONOUR. CPL. D. B. AINSBURY.

Cpl. Dudley Royes Ainsbury, son of Mr. and Mrs. G. T. Ainsbury, Maryborough, who was well-known in Cairns, was a victim of the *Montevideo Maru* wreck in June 1942, when the Japanese transport was torpedoed off Luzon, en route from Rabaul to Japan.

Cpl. Ainsbury, who enlisted at 18, had the honour of being in Australia's first "commando" unit, the First Independent Company, which was formed and trained by British specialists on Wilsons Promontory, Victoria, in 1941.

Referring to the heroism of this Company, a southern paper stated: "It fought, fell and was disbanded when New Ireland was swamped by the Japanese. It hadn't a slender chance, though surviving elements carried on the struggle long after the company had ceased to be regarded as a unit."

Cpl. Ainsbury was wounded in action in New Guinea before he was taken prisoner. Captain D. Milliean, Ainsbury, a commanding officer, who was recently repatriated after imprisonment in Japan, in notifying Mr. and Mrs. Ainsbury of their son's fate paid a fine tribute to his conduct as a soldier. Cpl. Ainsbury had one brother in the R.A.A.F, a sister in the A.W.A.S., a brother living in Maryborough, and another, Mr. John Ainsbury, of Cairns.

National Library of Australia <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article42449621>



Private Ronald Angus Fraser,
1st Independent Company,
of Boggabri, New South Wales,
possibly taken at his home.

Source C

AMM P06180.001

- 4 Describe how you would feel reading about the death of a loved one in the same column as local social event

Cootamundra Herald (NSW: 1877-1954), Friday 30 November 1945, page 2

Source D

PERSONAL

Constable Ken Fraser of Cootamundra has received word that his brother, **Cpl. Ronald Angus Fraser**, who enlisted from Cootamundra in January 1941, and was taken prisoner posted as 'missing, believed killed' in July 1942.

It is believed that he was on a Japanese boat which was torpedoed when taking prisoners from Rabaul. Deceased was a single man.

His mother is now stopping at Cootamundra with Constable and Mrs. Fraser.

A happy lot of people in the Assembly rooms last Friday evening celebrated the coming of age of Miss Joan Dempster who is nursing at the Young District Hospital.

She had come to Cootamundra that morning to spend the birthday with her family at 150 Murray Street. As she entered the hall, to the singing of 'Happy Birthday to You!' accompanied by Bill Mewburn.

Joan was presented with a lovely bunch of flowers by her aunt Mrs. I. Boyd.

Games and dancing were the order of the evening, until 11, when all sat down to a dainty, prepared supper, the centre of attraction being the lovely two-decker cake made by Mrs. Dempster, and beautifully decorated by Mr. Cyril Morris. Several telegrams of good wishes were read.

Mr. Bert Osmond (chairman) spoke very highly of the guest both as a young lady and a nurse. Her health was drunk with musical honors.

In a neat speech, the guest of honor responded, and in doing so thanked everyone for the lovely array of presents. Mr. Ian Boyd proposed 'the Dempster family', and thanked them for the nice evening.

Circular Head Chronicle (Stanley, Tas.: 1906-1954), Wednesday 31 October 1945, page 3

Source E

ILL-FATED UNIT

First Commando Company **Cpl. Roy Harman** of Stanley, whose death in July 1943, was recently announced, was a member of Australia's first commando unit, known as the 1st Independent Company.

Wearing a green double-diamond color patch, the company was trained in 1941 at Wilsons Promontory by British specialists. The unit, heavily outnumbered when the Japanese swamped New Britain, didn't have even a slender chance.

The captured survivors were lost at sea when the *Montevideo Maru* was torpedoed near Luzon in June 1943.

A few men who escaped capture carried on the struggle in New Britain long after the company had ceased to be regarded as a unit.

After nearly four years' silence the name of the company appears again now— in records of the fate of its members, who were all picked men, and regarded by officers "as probably the finest bunch of stalwarts that ever left Australia".

Source F

Starboard side view of the Japanese passenger ship MV [Motor Vessel] *Montevideo Maru*. On 22 June 1942 an estimated 845 prisoners of war (POWs) and 209 civilians captured by Japanese forces embarked from Rabaul, New Britain, aboard the Japanese transport ship MV *Montevideo Maru*. The POWs were members of the No. 1 Independent Company, 2/22 Australian Infantry Battalion, and men of other units. Civilians included officials of the New Guinea Administration and missionaries. The ship sailed unescorted for Hainan Island. On 1 July 1942 all the prisoners died when the *Montevideo Maru* was torpedoed by a US Navy submarine, USS *Sturgeon*, off the coast of Luzon Island in the Philippines



AWM 303640

Source G

Roy Harman: page from Service Record showing died at Rabaul, 1942 and Pay Book photos

B883, National Archives of Australia

Harman
B
MEDICAL EXAMINATION

I have made full and careful examination of the above-named person in accordance with the instructions contained in the Standing Orders for Australian Army Medical Services. In my opinion he is—

1. Fit for Class A. *ASAP*
2. Temporarily unfit for Class B—
3. Unfit for military service—

Place *TOWN HALL, MELBOURNE* Date *10th July 1940*
Signature of Examining Medical Officer *[Signature]*
*Classification which are susceptible to be open are.

C

OATH OF ENLISTMENT

Roy Arthur Harman swear that I will well and truly serve our Sovereign Lord, the King, in the Military Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia until the cessation of the present time of war and twelve months thereafter or until sooner (wholly discharged, dismissed, or removed, and that I will resist His Majesty's enemies and cause His Majesty's peace to be kept and maintained, and that I will in all matters appertaining to my service faithfully discharge my duty according to law.

So Help Me God.

Signature of Person Enlisted *R. A. Harman*
Subscribed at *Royal Park* in the State of *Victoria*
this *thirteenth* day of *July* 19*40*
Before me—
Signature of Attesting Officer *[Signature]*

I Person who takes or takes on each may make an affidavit in accordance with the Third Schedule of the Oath Act, in such that the above form will be attached thereto and retained by the Attesting Officer.

RECORDED
DATE *1-7-44*
INDEXED *Rabaul*
NATURE OF INDEX *Planned to be read*

[Signature]
Lieut.
Officer in Charge
Victoria Education and Records

Sun (Sydney, NSW: 1910-1954), Friday 5 October 1945, page 1

Source H

1000 POW LOST WHEN JAP SHIP TORPEDOED

CANBERRA, FRIDAY

Carrying 845 Australian prisoners of war and 208 civilians from Rabaul, the *Montevideo Maru* was torpedoed near Luzon about June 22, 1942, with total loss.

The Minister for External Territories (Mr. Ward), who announced this in the House of Representatives today, said 316 civilians, including administration officials and missionaries, who had been at Rabaul and other parts of New Guinea, had not been accounted for.

The Minister for the Army (Mr. Forde) announced that Mr. Harold Page, brother of Sir Earle Page, MHR, who was Government secretary and deputy administrator of New Guinea at Rabaul, was among the number missing.

Mr. Harold Page's son, temporary Captain Robert Charles Page, who was awarded the DSO for a secret operation, was also missing in the Pacific area.

Mr. Ward said: "At the time of the Japanese invasion of Rabaul and other parts of New Guinea in January 1942, there were a considerable number of administration officials, missionaries and other civilians in the area.

"Some escaped, but, despite all efforts, it has not been possible to obtain any information about the fate of a large number. "Investigation in Japan has confirmed the Government's fears that the majority of the Australian prisoners of war and internees captured in Rabaul and still missing lost their lives at sea.

"The Japanese Navy Department informed the Tokio prisoner of war information bureau on June 6 1943, that the *Montevideo Maru* sailed from Rabaul on approximately June 22, 1942, and that It was torpedoed with total loss.

"Among the prisoners of war embarked were members of the first independent company which had been operating in New Ireland.

"A roll which contains the names of the personnel aboard the *Montevideo Maru* is being translated in Japan. "There is a total of 1053 persons to be traced, It is anticipated that some time will elapse before all names are available, but next-of-kin can be assured that names will 'be released as they- become available.

Extracts from Report of Major H S Williams, Recovered Personnel Division, Australian Army, 6 October 1945, about the sinking of the *Montevideo Maru* on 1 July 1942

Source I

Recovered Personnel Division
 FROM: Major H.S. Williams, Australian Officer attached
 Recovered Personnel Division, Tokyo.

REPORT RE JAPANESE STEAMER "MONTEVIDEO MARU" TORPEDOED
 OFF LUZON, 1 JULY 1942

1. PREFACE. From information received it was known that about 1000 Australian PW and civilian internees taken by the Japanese in RABAUL were shipped from there during June 1942, to a destination unknown.

As Japan did not transmit the names or any information whatsoever concerning the abovementioned persons many enquiries were made by the Australian authorities to Japan through the Protecting Power and IRC, Geneva, but without effect.

This matter has accordingly been investigated, and the following report which is based on inquiries personally made at the Huryo Joho Kyoku (Prisoner of War Information Bureau) Foreign Office, the Navy and Army Ministers, Swiss Legation, International Red Cross, Japanese Red Cross Society and the Osaka Shosen Kaisha (owners of SS *Montevideo Maru*) is submitted for information, with the suggestion that it possibly offers an explanation as to why many Allied PW are still not accounted for.

2. DESCRIPTION OF CASUALTY. (based on information provided by Navy Dept). The SS "*MONTEVIDEO MARU*", owned by Osaka Shosen Kaisha and chartered by Japanese Navy left Rabaul on 22 June 1942, bound for HAINAN ISLAND carrying 845 PW, 208 civilian internees, the crew and a naval guard comprising an ensign, a medical orderly and 63 naval ratings.

Before dawn on 1 July 1942 whilst proceeding without escort, she was torpedoed at a point about 7 miles off BOJEAADOR Lighthouse on north west corner of LUZON.

It is said that as the vessel sank instantly there was no time to launch any lifeboats or to radio a distress message. However the Captain and "more than 10" of the crew boarded a cutter that had floated off the sinking ship, and they eventually landed at BOJEAADOR, where the majority of them, including the Captain, were killed by guerilla forces. Five of the party escaped and set out on foot for Manila, two died en route and the remaining three reached Manila after 10 days wandering. On arrival there they reported the sinking to the Japanese authorities, whereupon, according to the Navy Dept "an immediate search was ordered, but due to the lapse of time no trace of either ship or men could be found. It is possible that some of the prisoners of war may have been able to land somewhere".

Information as to the casualties among the crew have not yet been confirmed, but this information is being sought from the owners of the vessel.

3. NOTIFICATION OF CASUALTY. On 20 July 1942 the Navy Dept reported the sinking of "*Montevideo Maru*" to the owners.

On 6 January 1943 the Navy Dept. forwarded details of the sinking to the PW Information Bureau, together with a complete nominal roll of 848 PW and 208 civilians who were on board and presumed lost.

It is to be particularly noted that the later information was not communicated by the Information Bureau, and remained hidden in the files of the Bureau until discovered by the writer on 28 September 1945.

4. ENQUIRIES MADE BY IRC ON BEHALF OF AUSTRALIA. Many written enquiries were made by the IRC Delegate in Tokyo to the Prisoners of War Information Bureau, culminating in a communication dated 20 April 1945, referring to a telegraphic advice from the Committee in Geneva that "information from Japanese Official sources of present welfare of enemy civilians and/or PW detained at Rabaul, New Britain is singularly lacking" and seeking information.

Continued →

Source / continued

2

The Information Bureau took exception to the use of the phrase "singularly lacking" as conveying criticism, dissatisfaction, mistrust or suspicion and threatened a discontinuance of their information service including facilities for visits by IRC delegates to PW camps. Despite the Delegate's assurance that the phrase had been used by way of presenting a comparison, the Bureau demanded that the IRC Committee in Geneva should clarify their views in a manner satisfactory to Japan.

Despite the fact that the Bureau had withheld the information which it had received as far back as January 1943, it has persistently informed all enquirers that all known information had been transmitted.

5. ENQUIRIES MADE BY JAPANESE FOREIGN OFFICE. Owing to the destruction of the Foreign Office's records, full details of the enquiries made by the Foreign Office at the request of the Swiss Legation acting as Protecting Power for British interests are not available. However the Information Bureau has admitted that an official enquiry was received on 31 May 1944 from the Foreign Office concerning 199 named civilians taken by the Japanese in Rabaul. The Bureau did not transmit any reply to the Foreign Office, nor apparently did the Foreign Office press for a reply.

6. ENQUIRIES MADE BY SWISS LEGATION ON BEHALF OF AUSTRALIAN AUTHORITIES More than 7 formal interventions were made by the Swiss Legation in an effort to secure information from the Foreign Office. In addition the legation made numerous verbal enquiries and calls both on the Information Bureau and the Foreign Office. The Information Bureau gave no information and the Foreign Office generally ignored the enquiries. The only definite reply that was given to the Legation was to the effect that "it seems that none of the persons referred to are in the hands of Japan and it is believed that all may have taken refuge in the hills".

It will be noted that while the true facts were withheld, a story, which must have been known to have been false, was given out instead.

7. THE INFORMATION BUREAU'S RESPONSIBILITY. Lt Gen TAMURA, Director of the Information Bureau, admits that the full details were in the possession of the Bureau since January 1943. He expresses regret that the information was not transmitted to Australia, but claims it was due to an oversight.

8. LETTERS ADDRESSED TO THE 1053 PERSONS WHO WERE LOST. The relatives of the PW and civilians who were lost have over a period of nearly 3-1/2 years, been despatching mail in the belief that their men folk were alive. Evidence is available from recovered PW who were working in the PW mail sorting centre at Omori Camp that a great deal of such mail reached Japan. In reply to my enquiries the Bureau has stated that all such mail has been forwarded from Japan to Rabaul. I have declined to accept that explanation and have made a demand for full details of the manner in which such mail was handled and disposed of and also its present whereabouts.

9. Investigations on other aspects of this case are continuing.

Major H.S. Williams

- 5 How does the report describe the fate of the *Montevideo Maru*?
- 6 How would loved ones of the deceased have felt when they heard that the captain and some of the crew managed to survive the sinking vessel?
- 7 How might they have felt when they learned that US Navy submarine, USS *Sturgeon*, sank the *Montevideo Maru*?

**RESEARCH ACTIVITY****Exploring a name on a memorial**

- 1** There are war memorials all over Australia. Whether you live in a suburb, a town, or the country, there will be a local memorial near you.

An interactive from the R.S.L. website shows you how to find out about a name on your war memorial.

<http://www.servingaustralia.info/education/#interactives> 

It works through one example and you can then use these same steps to research a name of your own choice. It might be a relative, or a stranger. But once you start researching a name you will find that the name starts to become personal to you. You will then want to think about how you can commemorate that person.

- 2** Can you identify any indigenous or non-European commandos from your local memorial?

In both World War I and World War II there were many indigenous Australians and newly arrived non-Europeans who served and at the time on enlistment documentation only a place of birth was required. There was no requirement to include race or ethnicity. It is known that of the many indigenous Australians who served there was a New South Welshman, Trooper Clive Upright, 2/7th Commando Squadron, who was awarded the Military Medal for his actions in attacking the village of Sauri, New Guinea, in May 1945; Trooper Upright stood up in full view of the enemy to better direct machine-gun fire onto an enemy position, saving the lives of his comrades.





BIOGRAPHY SUMMARY PAGE

Here is a summary page for recording information about your person and creating a biography:

Before enlistment	Name	
	When born	
	Where born	
	Family details	
War experience	When enlisted	
	Where enlisted	
	Why enlisted	
	Physical appearance	
	Qualities	
	When served	
	Places served	
	Experiences	
	Attitudes	
	After the war	Job
Health		
Family		
Anything else		