



The Royal United Services Institute of Victoria, Inc.
Promoting National Security and Defence

A constituent body of The Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies Australia Limited

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RUSI VIC QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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Christmas 1918 - Minister of State of Defence – Victoria Barracks Melbourne

Christmas Greetings



Royal United Services Institute of Victoria Incorporated

December Newsletter

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Opinions expressed in the RUSI VIC Newsletter are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the Institute.

From the President:

Major General Mike O'Brien CSC (Retd)



As we all are aware we have had a difficult year. Our program of speakers has had to be cancelled. The substitute, a weekly newsletter of defence-related news, has been well received by our members. I would ask you all to distribute it to interested individuals so that we can maintain and increase our membership.

Our financial position is satisfactory. Our accumulated funds continue to decrease, largely due to the \$15 per capita fee we pay to RUSIDSS-A, our central coordinating body in Canberra. Its role, principally to represent state RUSIs to the Department of defence, is vital to our existence. Defence generously provides our premises, and its cooperation is the key to the provision of our speakers.

May I particularly thank members of RUSIV Council, our secretary-treasurer and our volunteers for their continuing assistance. While frequently remotely delivered, their help has enabled our continued survival.

We all look forward to a healthier 2022. On behalf of our Council may I wish you and yours a very happy Christmas and a prosperous and very-healthy-New Year. Thank you for continuing your support of RUSIV.

Mike O'Brien



From the King's Speech

The Oscar winning film *The King's Speech* (2010) has recently been shown again on free-TV. The film stars Colin Firth as King George VI, Geoffrey Rush as the Australian speech therapist Lionel Logue and Helena Bonham-Carter as Queen Elizabeth (the Queen Mother).

The film's climax is with King George VI's 1939 Christmas Message Empire Broadcast, which concluded with an inspirational poem.

At the onset of the Second World War, the King's words and the delivery of the speech were vital in maintaining morale. What particularly stuck in people's minds was the appositeness of the words of the poem. Everyone asked, 'who was the author of the poem?'

When he was Secretary and Editor of *RUSI News* the late Bill Wallach reproduced the text of King George VI's 1939 speech in the September 1996 edition but omitted the poem. He redressed this oversight by printing the text of the poem in the September 1997 edition, adding 'author unknown'.

The story continues, as the author was not only known but was related to a member of the Institute, Major Ian Haskins. A stylised and illustrated version of the poem was reproduced in the April 1998 *RUSI News*, together with an explanation of its providence. Here is the poem, unfortunately without the visual embellishment:

At the Gate of the Bear

And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the
year,
Give me a light that I may tread safely into the
unknown.
And he replied ...
Go out into the Darkness
and put your hand into the hand of God.
That shall be to you better than light and safer than
a known way.

From *God knows* – Minnie Louise Haskins 1875-1957

The poem was first published in 1908 as part of a collection entitled *The Desert*. The poem appeared in *The Times* in the months before Christmas 1939 and Queen Elizabeth (the Queen Mother) gave a copy to the King.

After King George VI died in 1952, she had the words engraved on brass plaques placed on his Memorial. The poem was read at the Queen Mother's funeral in 2002.

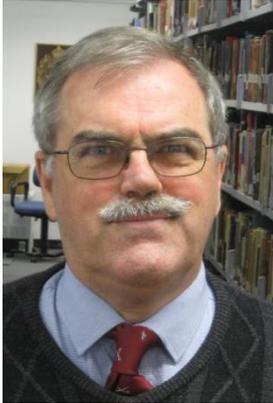
Mike Rawlinson

Opposite:

ZOOM AGM – L-R Vice President Neville Taylor,
President Mike O'Brien, Secretary/Treasurer Bob Hart

From the Secretary:

Lieutenant Colonel Bob Hart RFD (Retd)



We have made it through another year! Hopefully life will start to get back to a semblance of normality in 2022.

Due to the various lockdowns, we have not been able to offer the level of service that we had hoped, such as our Speakers. I hope the e-newsletters have partially made up for that.

Having said all that, may I offer you all best wishes for the Holiday season and I look forward to seeing some friendly faces in 2022.

The office will close for the season on Thursday 9 Dec 2021 and re-open on Monday 31st Jan 2022.

Membership-

Sadly, we have been informed of the passing of Merv Taggart

Bob Hart



Vice President Neville Taylor manages Book Reviews

Bequests

Royal United Services Institute of Victoria

The Royal United Services Institute of Victoria was established in 1890. It seeks to promote informed debate on and improve public awareness and understanding of defence and national security.

The Institute maintains a specialist library to assist in this, as well as scheduling regular lectures and visits of interest. The costs of doing so, however are becoming burdensome and are exacerbated by an ageing and declining membership.

To allow us to continue to provide services to members and the community into the future, you could greatly assist us by remembering the Institute in your will. Should you desire assistance in adding an appropriate codicil to your will, please contact the Secretary at secretary@rusivic.org.au. If you have added a bequest to your will, it would be of assistance to be advised of it (not the specific amount) in case we need to communicate with you or your executors.





MILITARY HISTORY AND
HERITAGE VICTORIA INC.

HARD FOUGHT: Australia in the Mediterranean War 1940-1945

*Two-Day Conference
9 & 10 April 2022
Melbourne*



Opinion: Nuclear Submarines – Built in Australia?

Mike Rawlinson

The Collins class Replacement Saga

On 15 September the Prime Minister announced the AUKUS partnership, under which eight US or UK nuclear submarines will be built in Adelaide. At the same time, at a contract way-point Australia discontinued the contract with French company Naval Group to design and construct 12 Attack Class submarines to replace the Collins class. Needless-to-say, the French were not impressed.



HMS Ambush (one of the UKs Acute class nuclear powered attack submarines)

The Collins class replacement saga began in 2007. The Navy would have preferred a nuclear-powered submarine for its long range, extreme endurance, high speed and the ability to stay submerged, which are an ideal fit for Australia's requirements. However, the government did not publicly entertain the purchase of nuclear submarines or the option of leasing US Virginia Class nuclear submarines. Federal governments of either Labor or Coalition parties were not willing to risk the opprobrium associated with nuclear power and had very strong political and industry policy reasons to build 'regionally superior' conventionally powered submarines in South Australia, despite a heavy cost premium.

The 2009 Defence White paper announced that 12 submarines to replace the Collins class would be built in the ASC Osborne shipyard in Adelaide.

Following many delays, in April 2016 the French designed Shortfin-Barracuda design was selected in preference to German and Japanese contenders. The Shortfin Barracuda was to be a diesel-electric variant of the Barracuda-class nuclear powered submarine. The first Barracuda was still being built. Extensive redesign and modifications would be required to convert the submarine to diesel/electric power. This submarine choice had extremely high technical and commercial risks that appear not to have been fully appreciated.

In 2017 in response to a call from former PM Tony Abbott to consider nuclear submarines, Defence Minister, Marise Payne noted that

Australia does not have the qualified personnel, experience, infrastructure, training facilities and regulatory systems required to design, construct, operate and maintain a fleet of nuclear-powered submarines.

Relations with the French builder Naval Group were not harmonious and there were contract problems, misunderstandings, delays, and cost blow-outs. By late 2021 construction had not yet commenced.

Strategic Issues

Meanwhile Australia's strategic situation had changed for the worse. China had become a looming threat to Australia's interests. While China has remained Australia's largest trading partner, politically it has changed from a liberalising one-party state to a hard-line Leninist, authoritarian dictatorship. Although this shift has happened progressively, since Xi Jing Ping effectively gained 'President for Life' status in 2018, China emerged as a threat to regional security and rival to the US. China has practiced an aggressive trade policy, grey zone activities and 'wolf warrior' diplomacy.

China's behaviour has provided the motivation for the AUKUS partnership which reflects the willingness of the US to share its nuclear submarine propulsion technology with Australia.

Australia has always relied on special relationships with great powers for its security.

The dominant element in our foreign policy is, of course, to maintain friendly relations, to be good neighbours, to have powerful friends. Why powerful friends? Does anybody suppose we could in our own strength defend ourselves against a major aggressor.

Robert Menzies 1958

While now bolstered by Quad partners India and Japan, the ANZUS Treaty remains the cornerstone of Australia's defence policy. While Australia shelters under the US nuclear umbrella, the treaty does not prescribe an automatic response if there is an attack against Australia. Independent action by the ADF may be necessary. The ADF is unlikely to be able to defeat a major power but could deter aggression by having the military capability to inflict unacceptable losses.

Geography dictates that for deterrence Australia needs strike forces with a long reach. These should include strike aircraft with stand-off weapons, long-range missiles and submarines. Because of the great distances involved, and the capability of remaining undetected, nuclear-powered submarines would be a vital component.

Xi Jin Ping has publicly declared his intention to unite China and Taiwan. Taiwan is a democracy of 23 million people and is supported by the US. It appears highly likely that there could be some form of military confrontation over Taiwan within six years, and Australia could be drawn into this confrontation.

On this time scale China is not going to wait 20 years for Australia to build new submarines in Adelaide. The Navy needs to acquire its first nuclear powered submarine within 3 years. This suggests that it needs to be an existing submarine or one already in production.

Defence Industry Policy

For a combination of political, industry policy and sovereignty reasons the government wants to maintain a naval shipbuilding industry in Adelaide.

Sound sovereign defence industrial capability requires that Australia should be able to maintain, repair and modify all items of defence hardware and to manufacture ammunition and other high use consumable items. This includes all bullets, bombs, and missiles. Whether we manufacture other weapons and materiel depends on the numbers required and the costs involved.

From a sovereign capability point of view, submarines do not need to be manufactured in country. However, traditionally naval ships have been wholly or partly built in Australia. Industry policy is to ensure a steady flow of work through the shipyards to avoid the valley of (commercial) death for the ship building companies and the associated loss of jobs, skills and expertise.

It is generally accepted that building overseas designs in Australia generally involves a cost premium of about 30%.

By comparison almost all of the Air Force's combat aircraft are manufactured overseas. While Avalon in Victoria is the home of the classic Hornet, in fact the aircraft were assembled from kit sets produced overseas. Most Australian industry involvement was in the manufacture of components for the global Hornet build. These parts were sourced for all Hornets not just the RAAF aircraft.

The Attack class submarine purchase was historically Australia's most expensive defence acquisition. Recent estimates of the program cost are \$90 billion. The nuclear submarine alternative could be expected to cost much more. While the number to be acquired has gone from 12 to eight, the submarines are much larger, more complex and with more expensive technologies.

The likely contenders Virginia class (US) and Acute class (UK) have reactors that do not require refuelling for 25 years. This is good for a overseas build purchase but mitigates against local manufacture as the fuel is weapons grade uranium and strictly controlled.

Considering the lack of a nuclear industry to support the project, the cost of building the submarines in Adelaide is likely to be nearly double the cost of US or UK construction. In the US they are well down the learning curve with 19 Virginia class boats constructed and 11 more to be built, while the comparable figures for the Acute class are five and two.

The opportunity cost of the submarines is the quantum of alternative goods and services that could be bought with the cost of all or part of the submarine project. Comparison can be made with other strategic force elements, other elements of the ADF, infrastructure or welfare expenditure. Within the strategic category, the ability to manufacture and stock long range missiles would have to be a priority.

For a country with massive debts, pandemic recovery, an ageing population, and low productivity it is imperative that public money be spent wisely. At this time the premium necessary to build nuclear powered submarines in Adelaide is not justified.

Because of long running the Attack class saga, all of the Collins class boats now need to be life extended to avoid a gap in submarine availability. Adelaide's Osborne shipyards look like having their hands full with life of type extension on the six Collins class boats along with the construction of surface ships.

There is still a role for non-nuclear submarines, a less costly alternative for many tasks if based in northern Australia. Their viability is likely to be enhanced by new battery technology emerging from the world's uptake of electric vehicles. For the time being the Osborne Shipyards should specialise in non-nuclear submarines and surface ships. Nuclear submarines should not be built in Australia for a very long time.

Conclusion

Building nuclear powered submarines in Adelaide is a worthy aspirational goal, one that can be achieved after Australia has developed a nuclear industry. For strategic reasons the Navy needs to acquire its first nuclear submarines in the shortest time possible. This means that they must be built overseas.



USN Virginia class nuclear powered attack submarine

A CHRONICLE of Events, Decisions & Issues relating to Defence Matters

September 30, 2021 - November 27
(Covid lock-down continuing)

Michael Small

October 2-3 2021

Arguments about Australia's proposed submarine fleet continue to gather apace since the announcement of the AUKUS alliance September 15, 2021. To illustrate, Dennis Richardson is sceptical of Australia's ability to build them in Australia; Peter Jennings says they are unlikely to be built in Adelaide; and Senator Jim Molan thinks the new subs are too far off to have any effect on the strategic challenge posed by China. Former deputy PM John Anderson says it is unrealistic to think we can move easily from the *Collins-class* boats to nuclear-powered subs.

Other views suggest that the new subs will be obsolete by the time they arrive in 20-30 years; leasing one or two nuclear-powered subs does not seem to be in favour; and upgrading the present *Collins-class* subs will take time. One suggestion which has been favourably received is that Australia should acquire a number of new diesel-electric subs for operational availability by the early 2030s. Arguments for and against acquiring the new subs, and whether or not they will be *Astute-class* or *Virginia-class* can be expected to continue.

October 6 2021

RAN could acquire a version of a RN *Astute-class* submarine in preference to a USN *Virginia-class* submarine. US could be reluctant to share the reactor plant with Australia. *Virginia-class* subs (115m. long, displaces 7,900 tonnes, submerged speed of 25 knots and a crew of 125) are also bigger and more expensive than *Astute-class* subs (97 m. long, displace 7,000 tonnes, submerged speed of up to 30 knots and a crew of 98).

October 17 2021

Collins-class submarines may have to keep going for another 30 years. Some of them could be refurbished again from 2038 after major 'life-of-type' (LOTE) extension from 2026. Vice-Admiral Jonathon Read has 18-months to work out how to put Australia's nuclear-powered submarine plan into action. A future submarine force of about 2,300 personnel would be needed including officers with high-level nuclear qualifications and NCO engineers with training and hands-on nuclear experience.

October 26 2021

British and American companies are vying for contracts to produce Australia's future nuclear-powered fleet. Debate is now emerging about the type of submarine (US *Virginia-class* or UK *Astute-class*) which would be the most appropriate for Australia.

PM Morrison said that Australia would acquire a range of missiles and other key capabilities worth up to \$105 billion. For example: (i) Robotic and autonomous systems (29.0); (ii) Missile upgrades for RAN *Hobart-class* air-warfare destroyers (24.2); (iii) Deployed ballistic & high-speed missile defence (23.7); (iv) Space capabilities (13.4); (v) Hypersonic missile (9.3); (vi) Integrated undersea surveillance system (7.4); (vii) Joint air-surface stand-off missile – extended range (5.2); (viii) Deployable mine countermeasures (5.0); (ix) High mobility artillery rocket system (4.8); (x) Sovereign guided weapons and explosive ordnance enterprise (1.1); and (xi) Spike IR2 anti-tank missile (\$??).

October 31 2021

HMS *Artful* an *Astute-class* submarine has visited HMAS *Stirling*. *Artful* has been part of a task group with HMS *Queen Elizabeth* on her maiden voyage through the Indo-Pacific. RAN personnel are expected to go to sea in *Artful*.

Defence Department has to decide which of two armoured vehicles it will purchase for the Army. Cost is estimated at between \$18bn-\$27.1bn. Vehicle 1 is the *Lynx* from German company *Rheinmetal*, and would be made in Queensland; Vehicle 2 is the *Redback* from South Korea's *Hanwha* conglomerate, and would be made in Geelong. The 450 vehicles will be the largest purchase ever made by the Army. Three vehicles from each supplier have been tested in a series of trial around Australia. The vehicles are designed to complement the Main Battle Tanks. They will replace the M-113, the Vietnam War era APC. The two vehicles are similar in size and shape, but there are differences in turret design and armaments.

Technological change and the geo-strategic situation are transforming the Australian Army. New capabilities, structures, ways of training, and approaches to assess talent, recruiting, and retaining people are being tried out. The Army is experimenting with alternative ways of operating in the new strategic environment *e.g.* strengthening land forces in WA; raising the level of command of SASR to colonel; and reforming 10th Light Horse Regiment. The geography of the Australian continent presents the Army with challenges which have to be met.



MQ-4C Triton Unmanned Maritime Surveillance Aircraft

The RAAF will base its new MQ-4C *Triton* maritime surveillance aircraft in the NT. RAAF Tindal will be upgraded at a cost of around \$200m. This is, in addition to the \$1.7bn, allocated for the arrival of the *F-35A* Joint Strike Fighters, and any future deployments of US Air Force combat aircraft. The *Triton* is a high-altitude long-endurance (HALE) remotely piloted aircraft. *Triton* is roughly the same size as a Boeing 737 airliner, and can cover 2.5 million sq/km of ocean during a 24 hour mission.

November 2 2021

Summary of a Saga: (i) November 2014 - French Minister for Defence (Jean-Yves Le Drian) attends the G20 meeting in Brisbane accompanied by French President François Holland. (ii) Head of French Naval Group was Herve Guillot. (iii) Defence Minister Le Drian appoints Marie-Pierre de Bailliencourt to be Herve Guillot's 2 i.c. (iv) Marie-Pierre de Bailliencourt leads discussions about a new French/Australian submarine. (v) September 2015 - Malcolm Turnbull becomes PM. (vi) April 24, 2016 - Defence Department persuades National Security Committee to accept the French (*i.e.* Marie-Pierre de Bailliencourt's) proposal costed at between \$20bn-\$25bn in 2016 dollars. This was slightly more than German and Japanese bids. (vii) April 26, 2016 - PM Turnbull announces the French/Australian submarine deal. News about French involvement with the construction of a new Australian submarine fleet appears in French press. Five years later, the content matter of these two announcements is seen to be at variance. (viii) Former Minister for Defence (Jean-Yves Le Drian) is now Minister for Foreign Affairs. (ix) September 15, 2021 – announcement of AUKUS alliance and a new submarine deal omitting the French Naval Group.

November 6-7 2021

Nuclear-powered submarines: (i) Admiral Mead's task-force will now submit their recommendations about the new subs in 12 month's time (see item October 17, 2021). (ii) A "mature design" will be sought. (iii) The new sub could be British with US combat system. (iv) If a number of conventional subs were to be acquired, as a temporary measure, it would be at least eleven years before they appear. (v) The nuclear-powered subs would not be here until the 2040s (approximately 25 years away).

November 20 2021

The three-year investigation into alleged war crimes in Afghanistan may have been compromised because detectives unwittingly obtained tainted information. Detectives are banned from using witness transcripts if they are infected by disclosures from soldiers who have since become police targets.

Rivalry between the Commando Regt. and the SASR has once again surfaced. Various recommendations for key reform in the special forces have largely been ignored. It is said that defence officials have been distracted by the French submarine saga and the AUKUS alliance.

November 22 2021

Australia will sign a treaty with UK and US formalising access to the allies' nuclear submarine secrets under the AUKUS strategic partnership. Defence Minister Peter Dutton, US Chargé d'affaires Mike Goldman and UK High Commissioner Vicki Treadell will sign the "*Exchange of Naval Nuclear Propulsion Information Agreement*" in Canberra.

This week two differing views on the China/US strategic position were published. Hugh White urges (extreme) caution. Last year, he writes, PM Morrison compared the dangers of today to those of the late 1930s. Defence Minister Dutton warns of the risk of war with China over Taiwan. If America goes to war, Minister Dutton says he thinks it "inconceivable" that Australia would not follow. One hopes our political leaders are taking this as seriously as they should. We are in an acute strategic crisis. The risk of war between America and China over Taiwan is quite high, and they (our political leaders) seem to understand that the implications for Australia are exceptionally grave.

November 24 2021

Peter Jennings takes a very different line and says White is fundamentally misguided about China, the US, the region, the balance of military power, and he is wrong, too, about Australia. Jennings says, *inter alia*, the US is not leaving the Asia-Pacific. The US economy is still the world's largest. US military remains strategically dominant. That is why China is so focused on stealing US and allied defence intellectual property. White is mistaken. He says allies are not important: "Whether Australia, or even Japan, joins the fight makes very little difference." But the combined weight of the democracies significantly over-matches China, which has no true allies, setting aside loopy "little brother" North Korea and to some extent a suspicious Russia.

Australia is not useless. We have the capacity to shape policy and win international support – precisely why China wants to punish us for rejecting its 5G technology and calling Beijing out on Covid-19. If we are agile enough, we can strengthen our military, reinforce regional deterrence and shape a coalition of friends and allies to push back against China.

None of this is easy and White is right to worry about the costs of conflict, but we don't need to capitulate. We need self-confidence, some grit and a willingness to stand up for what matters about our country and way of life.

Post-Script: Australia's population is 25.69 million. Shanghai's population is (est.) 26,917,322 million, Beijing's is 20,381,745 m. and Guanzhou's is 13,238,590 m. China has a total (estimated) population of 1.402 billion.

Book Reviews

This newsletter has seven Book Reviews. On behalf of members the Editor thanks the reviewers. The Royal United Services Institute of Victoria Library thanks authors and publishers for providing copies for review. If you would like a hard copy of a review, please contact the Secretary.

Courage Under Fire

An extraordinary soldier, an extraordinary day, a lifelong legacy

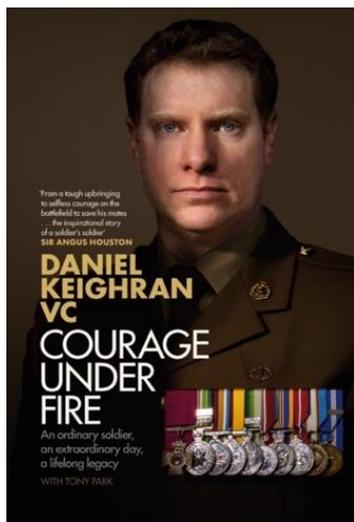
Daniel Keighran VC with Tony Park

Sydney, NSW: Pan Macmillan, 2020

Hardback 384pp RRP \$44.99

Reviewer: Neville Taylor, October 2021

Born in Nambour in 1983, Daniel, with his mother and sister, spent his early years in an orderly and quiet



life with his grandparents nearby. His favourite pastime was fishing in his World War II veteran grandfather's tinnie on the Maroochydore River. The life skills and values passed on during these fishing days became the cornerstone of Daniel's life and ethics.

When eleven years-old, his father appeared in Daniel's life for the first time and ripped them 400 kilometres to Lowmead

(about 80 km north-west of Bundaberg to live in a bush humpy in appalling conditions. Father, being a drunkard and a bully normally operated outside the law, saw life became a test of fortitude and survival for the family. Finishing high school in 2000, and taking part in the Olympic Torch Relay, Daniel then sought certainty and orderliness by joining the Australian Army.

He thrived in the environment in recruit training and was posted to D Company 6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (6 RAR). 2001 was Daniel's first-time outside Australia with company training at Butterworth, Malaysia. Two years later he served as a UN peacekeeper in Timor Leste, where he qualified as a driver – preferring to ride rather than walk. By 2006, now a lance corporal, he was posted to Iraq as a Bushmaster Protected Mobility Vehicle driver.

Three weeks before his first tour to Afghanistan in 2007, he met his future wife, Kathryn. He had the same the same role in Afghanistan, but with the Special Operations Task Group. Whilst constantly being fired at,

Daniel never returned fire for his entire tour. Promoted to corporal in 2009, Daniel's second tour in 2010 saw him fitting out newly-delivered Bushmasters, before, as disembodied infantry mentoring elements of the Afghan Army in Uruzgan Province.

It was on 24th August 2010, during a firefight with insurgents at the village of Derapet, that his colleague was wounded. To draw attention away from those attending the casualty and to identify the location of enemy fire, Daniel deliberately exposed himself to enemy fire on numerous occasions. The force was then able to withdraw without suffering any additional casualties.

Discharged from the Army soon after his return and joining the Army Reserve, Daniel worked for a drilling company in Kalgoorlie. A small house was acquired, and Kathryn moved to Kalgoorlie, working at the local TAFE, while Daniel secured work as a truck driver in the Frog's Leg Gold Mine. The couple were married in November 2011. A number of Daniel's Derapet colleagues received gallantry awards in the 2012 New Year's Honours List, but Daniel was not mentioned. In September 2012 Lieutenant General Morrison, then Chief of Army (CA) by phone informed Daniel he had been nominated for a bravery award. A fortnight later Daniel was summoned to the Kalgoorlie Airport where he presented the couple with a letter from the Governor General Dame Quentin Bryce informing Daniel that the Queen had approved he be awarded the Victoria Cross for Australia and including an option to accept or reject the award. The CA's comment: "This is going to change your life.'

The ADF 'sanitised' Daniel's past before the investiture and organised many of his colleagues to attend the ceremony on 1st November 2012. As a VC winner, Daniel had become public property. Thus began a non-stop series of commitments both locally, interstate and overseas. Daniel was appointed to the Australian War Memorial Council in 2016. In January 2017, Jack was born, but absences saw the couple divorce in 2019. Meeting Dame Quentin Bryce in 2016, she suggested Daniel do an MBA (which he subsequently completed in August 2020).

Daniel Keighran has always demonstrated a quiet self-confidence, and the desire to help anyone in a time of need, irrespective of the potential personal cost. He has thrived on life's challenges and has never turned away from danger.

A well-written and enjoyable account of an extraordinary life.

Island off the Coast of Asia

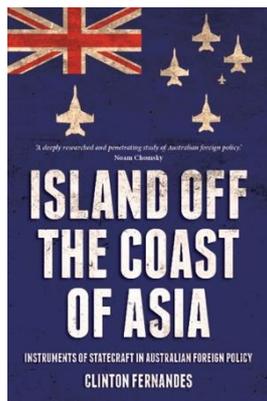
Instruments of Statecraft in Australian Foreign Policy

Clinton Fernandes

Clayton, Vic: Monash University Publishing, 2018
Paperback. 236pp RRP \$29.95

Reviewer: Bruce Brown, November 2021

On 1 September 2021 Prime Minister Scott Morrison moved a motion in the House of Representatives to acknowledge the 70th Anniversary of the ANZUS Treaty arguing that *Our relationship now spans security and defence, diplomacy, trade, intelligence, shared facilities space and cyber, future defence capability, and the shared and deep ties of people, culture and outlook.*



Australian foreign policy, in other words, now incorporated dimensions other than security and defence which had justified earlier military engagements in Malaya, Korea and Vietnam. In this context, Clinton Fernandes has provided an outstanding insight into the way Australia has pursued its national interest through various

instruments of statecraft such as legal processes, investment, research, negotiations and espionage.

Fernandes is also a realist about Australia's place in the world. Written during the first half of the Trump administration he observes that *'From March 2009 to March 2018, U.S. President Donald Trump tweeted 37,100 times but mentioned Australia only thirty times and only nine times after winning the presidential election'.*

Formerly an Australian Army officer, Fernandes has subsequently pursued an academic career at the University of New South Wales in Canberra. An appealing feature of his work is his ability to combine forensic research and analysis with a very readable writing style. In the 11-chapter volume readers will no doubt find some chapters of particular interest such as how Australia responded to Indonesia during the Sukarno and Suharto regimes and the way the Hawke and later Keating governments transformed Australia's foreign relations with a reorientation of trade, investment and migration toward Asia.

An enthralling chapter focuses on the way the Australian government engaged with Timor-Leste over maritime entitlements in the Timor Sea. Responding to concerns that the Australian government had too close a connection with major Australian corporations on this issue, then Foreign Minister Alexander Downer was frank: *'The Australian government supports Australian business and Australian industry. The Australian government unashamedly should be trying to advance the interests of Australian companies.'*

The book concludes with a chapter discussing 'Current Policy Priorities'. Overall, Fernandes has provided both the scholar and Informed general reader

with an excellent means through which to understand the evolution of Australia's foreign policy.

Letters to Lily Vale

The life and letters of Ernest Latchford MC MBE in France, Persia, and Russia, 1916-1919

Mark Latchford

St Marys, SA: Openbook Howden, 2020
Paperback 328pp RRP \$30.00

Reviewer: Rob Ellis, October 2021

This book is, in two senses, a 'labour of love'. The author has laboured to produce an account of his grandfather's life and career as a permanent soldier in the Australian Army in two world wars, and to tell the story of Ernest William Latchford's love for his fiancé [and later wife] Linda Marie Denhart. He has done this well, producing the tale of a man of fairly humble origins, who served as a member of the Australian Military Forces in Australia, Britain, France, Mesopotamia, and Siberian Russia for over 30 years.

Ern Latchford was born into humble origins in Echuca in 1889, the fifth child of the 10 born to Richard George Latchford [1861-1901] and Ada Doran [1862-1938]. His youth was spent in Echuca, Deniliquin, and Launceston, largely as a ward of his uncle, William Latchford. His father, Richard, was seldom in permanent employment, and was frequently away from home, leaving his mother, Ada, the responsibility of raising her nine surviving children.

In 1906, at the age of 17, Ern moved from Launceston to Melbourne, to live with his aunt Emily Thake, and her husband and two children. The son, Eric Thake became a lifelong friend of Ern to the time of his death.

His military career had started at sixteen years of age, as a cadet with a Militia Regiment in Launceston, and on moving to Melbourne, he transferred to the 6th Infantry Regiment. By the age of 19 he had achieved the rank of corporal, and was working at the iconic Melbourne institution, EW Cole's Book Arcade, where the sound education he had received under his uncle's guidance enabled him to indulge his passion for reading. He was described, by his employer, as 'attentive, punctual, honest and intelligent', which gelled with his Commanding Officer's description of Corporal Latchford as 'a steady, sober, reliable Non-Commissioned Officer'.

Ern's career at Cole's came to an end when he resigned to become a permanent member of the Militia's Instructional Staff. There was a need for competent staff, at the time of semi-compulsory military training for Cadets, aged 14 to 18, and the various Citizen Military Forces units being formed across the country. Ern Latchford had found his future.

Within the Service, Ern made many friends, among them David Williamson and his wife Martha,

Letters to Lily Vale (continued)

orchardists at Doncaster, and it was through them that he met Linda Marie Denhart [1895-1976],

Like Ernest's Latchford ancestors, the Dehnert family were of Germanic origin. The Latchford had migrated from the Palantine, in the Rhineland of Germany, to Ireland, in the late 1700s, and his grandfather, also Richard George (Dick) Latchford had arrived in Australia in 1850. The Dehnert family had moved from the largely ethnic-German province of Silesia [now part of Poland] to Kent. Linda's grandfather, Reinhold Denhart, and his brothers migrated to Australia between 1854 and 1857. Reinhold prospered with an orchard and vineyard in Doncaster, living to 102 years of age.

In the 1890s, Denhart purchased some 500 acres of grazing land north-west of Ballan, and set up his second son, also Reinhold [usually known as Reiny] at 'Lilydale', where he raised sheep and Hereford cattle. In 189 he married Anna Maria Hanke, and it was there that Linda was born, to be followed by 2 brothers. [The farm is still in the Dehnert family, being now managed by Reiny's grandson, Ian.]

Ern and Linda first met in 1909, but there was little regular contact until 1912, so that when Ern volunteered for service with the Australian Imperial Forces in 1914, their relationship had not progressed beyond close friendship, although by June 1916, it is apparent, from his first letters, that Ern's mind was made up – he and Linda would marry.

This letter, the first of many, which together take up more than half the book, was written from the troopship Runic, on 20th June 1916. The last, dated 10th October 1919, was written from Irkutsk, in Russian Siberia. So, between June 1916 and October 1919, Ernest travelled to Britain, France and Belgium, Mesopotamia, Siberia, and numerous points between.

His experiences and adventures during this near 3½ years make enthralling reading. From August 1916, he was training, training, training – in everything an infantryman would need to know when his unit [the 38th Battalion, AIF] would be deployed to France, as part of the 3rd Division, then being formed in Britain. He was commissioned about this time, and was involved in fighting at Messines, 3rd Ypres, and other places. His expertise as a commander of a machine-gun unit earned him promotion, and a Military Cross.

In late 1917 he was personally selected by General Sir John Monash, for a special duty – as part of 'Dunsterforce', a mission to be led by Brigadier General Lionel Dunsterville. The main objective of this operation was to prevent the Turks allowing the Germans access to the oilfields of what is now Iraq and moving on through Persia [Iran] to threaten India. It was also charged with protecting Christian Armenian refugees who were being forced out of Turkey and Syria, and of ensuring that the civil war between the Bolsheviks and White Russians did not spill into Iraq and Persia [now Iran].

When Dunsterforce had completed its mission, and the Great War finished in 1919, Latchford volunteered to serve as a Training Officer with the British Military Mission in Siberia, helping train White

Russian troops in their war with the Bolsheviks.

After the withdrawal of this British Military Mission, Ern wound his way slowly homeward, uncertain of his future, as his AIF. Service was officially terminated on 26th April 1920.

As the Australian Army was being reconstituted on a reduced scale post-war, Ern, who wanted to be a permanent soldier, was offered only his substantive war-time rank, Warrant Officer 1st Class, although he had been promoted to captain towards the end of the war. This demotion affected his income, and his long-awaited marriage was delayed, not taking place until 3rd May 1921.

The happy couple settled in Randwick, not far from the School of Musketry at Randwick Barracks, where his life was typical of the peace-time soldier – training courses, both in England and Australia, and a widening of his skills in new weaponry and tactical doctrines. He and Linda had their only child, Kevin, who later attended Duntroon and had a distinguished career with the Australian Defence Force, where he rose to the rank of major general.

In 1929, Ern, now commissioned as captain, was awarded a Long Service and Good Conduct Medal, and in 1938, an MBE. When the Second World War started, rose to become Commandant of the Army's Small Arms School, with rank of lieutenant-colonel.

In 1949 he retired from the Army, aged 60, with the rank of colonel. But, unable to sit back and do nothing, Ern became a Judge's associate at the Victoria Supreme Court, and continued being active in this role until 1961, when he finally retired to a life of gardening, bowling and being a loving grandfather to Kevin's four sons.

He died in November 1962, after an active life of 73 years, and was buried with honour at Springvale, mourned by the many members of his extended family, and by comrades from both the Australian Defence Force and colleagues from the Supreme Court.

In compiling this memoir of a competent and honourable man, his grandson, Mark, has given the reader an excellent insight into the life and times of a man of humble origins, who rose to significant rank in his chosen profession, and left an important legacy to his family, his friends, and his country.

The accounts of Ern's experiences in France, Mesopotamia and Siberia widen our knowledge of service in two world wars and illuminate two little-known sidebars of Australian Military service – small ventures which he and a very few other Australians served with distinction.

Much of the book is devoted to Ern's many love letters to Linda, and these give us a clear and vivid picture of his life, his interests, and his military service. They also tell us, clearly and unequivocally, of his love for his wife of 40 years, and of the integrity which he displayed in all things. The very clear maps of his travels across Europe, the Middle East and eastern Asia/Siberia make it easy to understand the extent of his service over three-and-a-half years.

Pacific Adversaries

Japanese Army Air Force and the Imperial Japanese Navy vs The Allies

Volumes 1 to 4

Michael John Claringbould

Kent Town, South Australia: Avonmore Books, 2019 - 2021

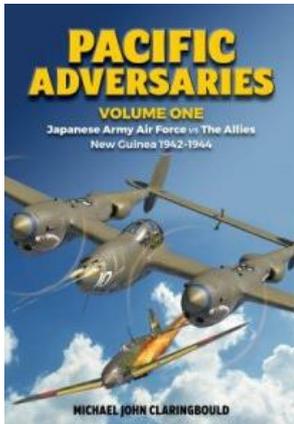
Reviewer: Neville Taylor, November 2021

The *Pacific Adversaries* series presents detailed accounts of aerial warfare in the Pacific. The underpinning selection criteria is that both Allied and Japanese records have been able to be matched so accurate presentations have been made compared to frequently exaggerated claims made in the past. Close attention has been made to establishing the actual aircraft involved. The volumes can stand alone and read as individual works. Michael has been instrumental in locating downed aircraft and identifying lost crews of both sides of the conflict and uses his skill as a digital 3D aviation artist to great advantage.

All volumes contain a brief introduction that includes relevant maps, a *Glossary and Abbreviations*, and a list of Japanese Army and Navy aircraft types appearing in that specific text. Chapters include photographs of the airmen involved, the aircraft on the ground (sometimes located after crashing) and airstrip locales. Whilst the aircraft and tactics used by both Japanese forces differed, the Navy used land- and carrier-based aircraft and float planes.

Volume 1: *Japanese Army Air Force vs The Allies New Guinea 1942-1944*

1 June 2019. Softcover 112pp RRP \$34.95

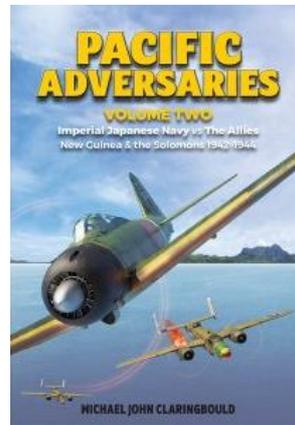


After decisive defeat at Rabaul in January 1942 the RAAF *Wirraways* were immediately withdrawn as fighter aircraft. In December a *Wirraway* did down an enemy *Oscar* fighter - it now resides in the Australian War Memorial. In May 1943 another *Oscar* collided with a USAF *Flying Fortress* with both aircraft being lost. Another American downed pilot was found one month after parachuting into dense jungle and was subsequently hidden for six months in a local village. This pilot returned in 1964, having raised funding for the establishment of two schools in West New Britain.

Volume 2: *Imperial Japanese Navy vs The Allies New Guinea & the Solomons 1942-1944*

1 June 2020 Softcover 108pp RRP \$34.95

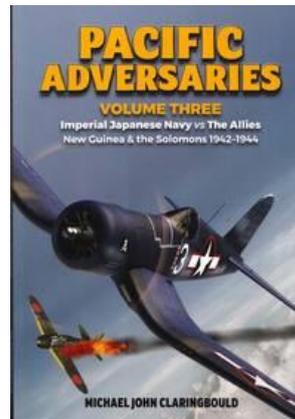
Two Japanese *Vals* attacked Gurney Airfield on 27th August 1942 after leaving Buna, but both were dispatched into the sea by RAAF *Kittyhawks*. Next month a Zero pilot crashed into the sea, swam to an islet was found by local natives. The took him to Kitava Island, having made sure members of an Australian outpost located nearby would be there on his arrival. He was executed and buried there, with natives still tending his grave. An American who survived a crash-landing



was beheaded by local natives living under Japanese control near Popandetta.

Volume 3: *Imperial Japanese Navy vs The Allies New Guinea & the Solomons 1942-1944*

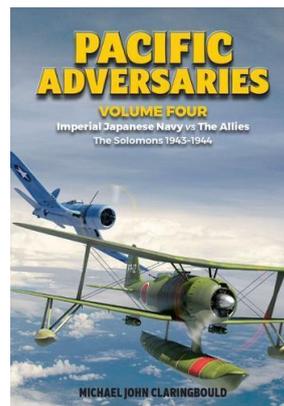
1 June 2020 Softcover 102pp RRP \$34.95



In November 1942 the first combat version of the *Lockheed Lightning* was put into service and overshooting its land target the bomb landed in the water at the end of the Lae runway causing a huge geyser. One *Zero* flew into it, thus becoming the first 'kill' for the new *Lightnings*! December 1942 saw a Zero lose its tailfin after cutting a *Flying Fortress* in two. The Zero pilot nursed his plane to a landing, but the tail-gunner was the only survivor after a struggle to free himself of his aircraft and parachute into the sea near Choisel Island.

Volume 4: *Imperial Japanese Navy vs The Allies The Solomons 1943-1944*

13 May 2021. Softcover 112pp RRP \$34.95



A US *Liberator* attacking a floatplane base on Shortland Island on 13 February 1943 was set upon by two floatplanes that knocked out its outer port engine and set fire to its starboard wing. At this stage, unbeknown to the two pilots, four of its crew bailed out. The inner starboard engine was knocked out as the *Liberator* flew across Choisel Island. The fighters gave up the chase and the pilots were able to ditch within view of Choisel - reaching the shore nineteen hours later. Sailing by night, their eventual evacuation by *Catalina* organised by a coastwatcher saw them back at Henderson Field on 4 March. A total of 62 USAF and RNZAF fighters engaged 60 *Zeroes* attacking the two airfields on the Russell Islands on 7 June 1943. Both sides lost nine aircraft, with all Allied, but no Japanese pilots surviving.

The author should be truly proud of his work, and his readers most grateful for these first-class accounts of the air battles in the Southwest Pacific during World War II. A military aviation fan's delight.

Blood Lust, Trust & Blame

In the National Interest Series

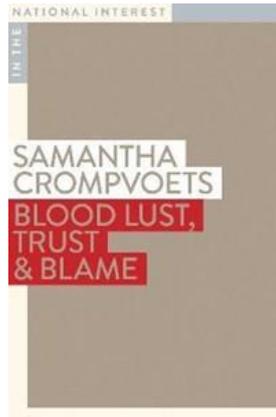
Samantha Crompvoets

Clayton, Vic: Monash University Publishing, 2021

Paperback 96pp RRP \$19.95

Reviewer: Neville Taylor, October 2021

Whilst this impressive and important monograph concentrates on the wrongdoings in Afghanistan by Australian Defence Force (ADF) members between 2009 and 2013, it considers the labelling of inappropriate behaviour, the often-failed attempts to correct them, and a more balanced approach that has a far better chance of altering future outcomes.



The author has, for two decades, been a consultant and researcher for the ADF and security industries. Headlines from early 2021 involving problematic cultures occurred in the following areas: banking, defence, the Church, professional football,

government, and the performing arts. When asked to do a 'culture review', Crompvoets asks for the issue to be described with the exclusion of the word 'culture'.

Early interviews with ADF members indicated disquiet and a 'lack of trust'. The *Afghanistan Inquiry Report* referred to a 'cultural disconnect'. The command structure of the ADF has been outlined, but it was the difference between actual and nominal command authority that was significant in the events that occurred and the consequences of accountability. Examination of the relationship between power and accountability, social networks and organisational climate will unravel how and where misconduct occurs and spreads. How organisations respond to a crisis can be far-reaching and long-lasting – the alleged 2019 rape in the Defence Minister's office and cricket's 'Sandpaper Gate' are two examples. If undesirable behaviours become institutionalised, they are embedded in organisational memory, routines, and structures; the more elite, secretive, and cloistered a group, the greater the risk of deviation.

Time, money, and effort on culture change programs will only produce temporary change, whereas altering the structures determining people's behaviour will provide permanent change. Crompvoets quotes Audre Lorde: 'The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house' to reinforce the need for difference and structures necessary for change. Since 1950 there have been moves to achieving a 'total force' in the ADF. The 'bound to render' construct in the Defence Act of 1903 needed to be altered to enable a members to serve in different, more flexible, and valued ways. The 'tools of the master' (being the mantra of unrestricted wartime capability) were bypassed by two Reservist Major Generals Justice Brereton (*Afghanistan Inquiry*

Report) and Justice Garde using their tools of law and justice in legislation introduced in 2015..

For the Special Forces to address its misconduct, suspect distribution of power and faulty accountability, there must be major structural change and targeted actions to create sustainable change capable of enduring through many generations of leadership at all levels. Small sustainable changes are needed to dismantle the 'organisational scaffolding' that perpetuates dysfunctional power structures.

Unfortunately, the author has been publicly and personally vilified since the release of *Blood Lust, Trust and Blame*, despite all the material it contains already being in the public domain.

The Art of Sacrifice

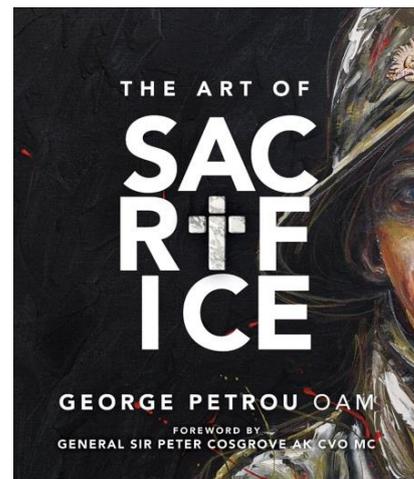
George Petrou OAM

Crows Nest, NSW: Big Sky Publishing, 2021

Hardcover 400pp RRP \$69.99

Reviewer: Neville Taylor, November 2021

There is only one way to describe *The Art of Sacrifice* – a wonderful concept presented in magnificent style - honouring those inspiration and courageous Australians included within its pages!



Petrou struck down by cancer in 2010, was inspired him to use his artistic talent and those of his

collaborators to produce works that shone a light on those who showed the typically Australian Anzac spirit. In late 2012 he was at the Australian War Memorial and viewed a photographic exhibition Remember Me: *The Lost Diggers of Vignacourt* based on Ross Coulthart's book *The Lost Diggers*. Coulthart was amenable to Petrou using some of the photographs as subjects for his paintings, as was Kerry Stokes who purchased the thousands of unearthed negatives created by the photographers (the Thuilliers) and donated them to the Australian War Memorial, This led to Petrou's exhibition that toured in 2015-16, the *Victoria Cross Collection* touring in 2017-18 and *Twelve Great Australian Stories* which toured in 2019-20.

After an historical introduction to the creation of the artwork, the balance of the book is devoted to four distinct groups of subjects. The first is based upon both twelve identified soldiers and six unidentified from the Vignacourt collection. The second group is a selection of 21 from Australia's 101 Victoria Cross recipients, whilst

the third group consists of ten easily-recognizable great Australians including 'Banjo' Paterson and Sir Sidney Kidman. The final sixteen subjects have, as Australian citizens, over the past 120 years displayed bravery or contributed to the health, welfare and remembrance of our service personnel.

For each of the subjects a background has been provided by a descendant, or an historian who has met the descendants or thoroughly researched available historical records. Petrou provides his comments about what he has endeavoured to portray in his work on each subject. For many subjects, Petrou's portrait is photographed being held by a descendant in a sensitively significant environment – a very fitting touch indicating they and their efforts have not been forgotten.

Weighing in at 2.8 kilos, this beautiful work is strictly a coffee table book. It urges us to return to it over and over so we may experience both the exploits of the individuals and the consummately sensitive artistic skill of George Petrou.

The Battle of the Bismarck Sea

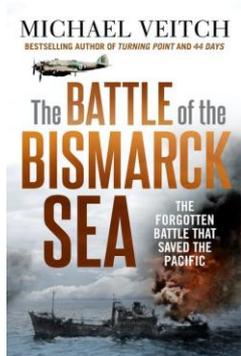
The Forgotten Battle that Saved the Pacific

Michael Veitch

Sydney, NSW: Hachette, 2021
Paperback 352pp RRP \$32.99

Reviewer: Robert Dixon, November 2021

The Battle of the Bismarck Sea is the latest book by Michael Veitch. He is the author of a number of critically acclaimed books, including two about the war in the Pacific. One, titled *44 Days – 75 Squadron and the Fight for Australia* is about the role of the RAAF in the defence of Port Moresby in early 1942. The second is *Turning Point – The Battle for Milne Bay 1942, Japan's first Land Defeat in World War II*. I must begin this review by urging potential readers not to be put-off by the rather odd subtitle of this work as the book is both well written and covers an important event in the Pacific War.



The Battle of the Bismarck Sea took place in early March 1943 and involved a force of land-based Australian and US aircraft attacking a Japanese convoy made up of eight cargo ships carrying 6,900 troops, ammunition, and fuel together with eight navy destroyers. The convoy was sailing from Rabaul at the northern tip of New Britain to Lae on the New Guinea coast and had a fighter escort. The attack on the convoy resulted in the sinking of all eight cargo ships and four of the destroyers. The Battle of the

Bismarck Sea is of interest not only because of the success of the attack but also because of the number of different types of aircraft involved (Bristol Beaufort torpedo bombers, multi-role Bristol Beaufighters, B-17 heavy bombers, P-38 Lightning fighters and A-20 Havocs (aka Bostons) & B-25 Mitchells, both medium bombers), the different weapons used to attack the ships and the number of different bases the aircraft were operating from. These factors introduce such enormous complexity in planning and in execution that it is rare in the history of aerial warfare that we even see such an operation being attempted – let alone carried out with such success. In this case it was an RAAF officer, Group Captain Bill Garing, who argued in favour of launching a simultaneous attack with different types of aircraft operating at different altitudes, approaching the convoy from different directions and attacking in a particular order. One of the most attractive features of *The Battle of the Bismarck Sea* is the amount of time devoted to events which took place prior to the actual attack itself. For example there are chapters devoted to the Naval codebreakers in Melbourne and Washington, the pioneers of skip-bombing, the conversion of Mitchells and Havocs into gun-ships and their use in an anti-shipping role and the important role of the senior staff from the RAAF and the USAAF who planned the attack.

The book includes twelve B&W photographs, many taken during the attack together with two very useful maps. One shows key locations Northern Queensland, Papua & New Guinea while the other shows the area between Rabaul and Lae in more detail. It is particularly useful as it shows the position of the convoy when it was first sighted and also the locations where it was attacked. Unfortunately, one of the airfields mentioned in the book, Dobodura, is not shown on either of the maps. The book also has sixteen pages of endnotes, a four-page select bibliography and a very comprehensive index. Importantly, both the font and the font size are very 'reader friendly'.

Book Reviewers Wanted

Due to the generosity of Australian and overseas publishers, RUSI – Vic Library finds itself swamped with copies of books that are required to be reviewed. To lighten the load and spread the workload, we are urgently seeking members who are prepared to assist with this task.

It matters not that you have never review a book before – we can provide you with easy-to-follow guidance. As benefactors of their generosity, we have an obligation to the publishers. They are often looking for a review to include in their publicity for the launch of a new title – so timeliness (a reasonably short turnaround time) is expected.

If you feel you can assist, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Please contact the Secretary Bob Hart, on 9282 5918

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Library Notes:

Library staff have returned to work in November. In fact, the President, when allowed, has been attending and cataloguing throughout the latter half of the year.

It is due mostly to his efforts that we were able to upload, this week, over 400 new records to our catalogue in the cloud www.thecollectingbug.com/rusivictoria/

Some new donations have been received and these are now almost all catalogued.

There are many excellent books available for sale at very attractive prices and as, hopefully, conditions continue to improve we hope members will visit the library and take advantage.

Barracks personnel continue to visit and buy duplicate books.

We expect to send many Vietnam books to the Vietnam Museum on Philip Island.

We wish all our members a merry Christmas and a happier New Year!

Brian Surtees

Hon Librarian

New Acquisitions (since October 2021)

Books reviewed in this *Newsletter* have not been included

Title	Author(s)	Subject
<i>Edith Blake's War</i>	Krista Vane-Tempest	The only Australian Nurse killed in action in the First World War.
<i>Dasher</i>	Michael C Madden	The Kevin Wheatley VC story.
<i>When He Came Home</i>	Dianne Dempsey	The impact of war on partners and children of veterans.
<i>No One Left Behind</i>	Keith Payne VC	A memoir of Korea, Vietnam and life beyond the battlefield.
<i>Rogue Forces</i>	Mark Willacy	An explosive insiders' account of Australian SAS war crimes in Afghanistan.
<i>Passchendaele</i>	Nick Lloyd	A new history.
<i>Niche Wars</i>	John Blaxland, Marcus Fielding, and Thea Gellerfy (Eds)	Australia in Afghanistan and Iraq, 2001-2014.

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