

The Borneo Bugle



BORNEO PRISONERS OF WAR RELATIVES ASSOCIATION OF WA INC
A MUTUAL GROUP TO HELP KEEP THE SPIRIT OF SANDAKAN ALIVE

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OUR NEXT MEETING

STATE LIBRARY

SUNDAY AUG 15th 2004

AT 10.00AM

DETAILS ON PAGE TWO

SEE YOU THERE!

SANDAKAN DAY 2004

by Allan Cresswell

We invite all members and the general public to this years Sandakan Day that will be held at 11.00am on Sunday 29th August 2004 at Marri Walk in Kings Park.

Our service will again be held at the Sandakan Plaque/Tree which is located 100 metres from the southern end of Kings Park Tennis Club or about 300 metres north of May Drive.

This is the most important annual event in our association's calendar and we look forward to our members attending with their family and friends. At the conclusion of the service we invite everyone to remain for a picnic and a get together at the Sandakan Plaque location.



Bill Young, Steffoni & Bob Brackenbury placing the Borneo POW Relatives Group wreath on Sandakan Day 2003. Sapper Luke Gomboc standing at attention.

Photo Courtesy Mick Ryan

For any further details relating to Sandakan Day please contact Ken Jones or Allan Cresswell. This year we would like to see a great attendance by our members.

SANDAKAN MEMORIAL

by Keith Jones – Chairperson Memorial sub-committee

The sub-committee has held site meetings at Kings Park with our Site Engineer and Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority personnel where all facets of the project were discussed and any problems resolved.

All quotes for the construction of the Memorial have been received and the total cost will be \$18,444.00. The sub-committee met with the Department of Veteran Affairs and the Lotteries Commission and they have indicated that they could give \$4,000.00 each towards the Memorial construction.

We were advised to seek funding from some corporate entities and two have received written submissions, to date no replies have been received.

Some members have expressed a willingness to make a donation for the Memorial. We are now asking all members to make a donation of any amount they can afford, please make cheques/money orders payable to Borneo POW Relatives Association.

SANDAKAN EXHIBITION AT THE STATE LIBRARY

By Allan Cresswell

The State Library Board of WA has again invited the – ‘The Story That Must Be Told’ to be on exhibition in 2004 and as a curtain raiser to our Sandakan Day on August 29th.

The exhibition commences on Sunday August 15th (this coming Sunday) and concludes two weeks later on Sunday 29th August 2004. We invite all members to again attend this excellent exhibition compiled through the efforts of Ryan Rowland, Non Meston and many other contributing members of the Borneo POW Relatives Association.

If you missed it last year then here is your opportunity again to see a professional display of the Sandakan Story that is comprehensive and informative. I personally saw grown men with tears in their eyes at the exhibition last year.....and many had just walked in with a few hours to spare off the street. If you did come last year then I am sure you will again appreciate the visit this year. Plus there are new items on presentation this year.

Like last year we would appreciate assistance in having volunteers in attendance on each day. Ideally two people per day, to be available from 9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday and 10.00am to 5.00pm Saturday and Sunday. There only needs to be one person present at any one time so the hours will involve regular breaks. Expertise knowledge regarding Sandakan is definitely not a pre-requisite in being a volunteer. The need is for ensuring the security of the items on display, that those in attendance are invited to sign the visitor's book and that any specific requests for information or contact are directed to the right people. Please contact Allan Cresswell (contact info on page one) if you can assist with the exhibition. We need your support!

OUR NEXT MEETING – SPECIAL VENUE

Our next meeting will be held at 10.00am on Sunday August 15 2004 at the Alexander State Library – Mezzanine Floor – at the Borneo Exhibition. The format is that we will have our regular meeting at 10.00am followed by a ceremony to open the exhibition at 11.00am, then a few nibbles and drinks. The exhibition is then open to the public. We do hope to see you there.

President's Corner – Annual Report

by President Bob Brackenbury

Sandakan Memorial - In the space of the last year it has gone from an idea to a definite reality and is currently awaiting quotes on erection and plaque costs to enable submissions for funding.

Exhibitions - The first of our Sandakan Exhibitions was held in the State Library for three weeks; then at Boyup Brook, Mundaring and Midland.

Sandakan Day - Held at our plaque/tree on the 24th August 2003 with the British Consul in attendance together with Boyup Brook Scholarship winner, Carmel McLean, and Sandakan survivor Bill Young.

Tours - Four of our members were on the annual Ted McLaughlin tour to Borneo, others included Mr and Mrs Joe McLaughlin, current Boyup Scholarship winner Alex Vaughan and Barbara Stace from Bakers Hill Primary School. As well as remembrance ceremonies at various memorials, contact was further cemented with locals at Kuching, Sandakan and especially with Sanzac College at Kota Kinabalu.

A reconciliation tour to Japan included one of our members, Colin Prior, and an ex member, Vic Tyrell.

ANZAC Day - Simultaneous attendances at Dawn Services in Sandakan and here in Perth with wreaths laid in the name of our Group. Locally we had 16 of our Group under our banner in the Anzac March.

Other Involvements - Representations at NMBVA Memorial Service at State War Memorial, 2/4 Machine Gun Battalion and Ex-POW's Association. Services at Boyup Brook and Fall of Singapore Day at Kings Park, the POWs of Japan Annual Meeting at Mandurah RSL and the dedication of a new memorial at Floreat Park to the fallen from World War Two to the present day. Organiser and M.C. for this dedication was one of our ex-members, Vic Tyrell.

Recently the students of Mt Lawley Senior High School put on their annual dedication for the Ex-POW's Assn at their Memorial at Kings Park – included in the thank you from the Assn. was the presentation to the school library of Dr Kevin Smith's book on Borneo. Other school involvement was at Boyup Brook with their Sandakan Scholarship program and at Bakers Hill Primary School Pre-Anzac Day Service.

Many members contributed to the Peace Windows Project at Sandakan initiated by historian Lynette Silver.

Liaison continued with the usual other veteran bodies including new association with – United and Kindred Assn and Honour Avenue Committee in Kings Park.

Social - Apart from a few enjoying the usual hospitality extended by the Engineers Assn and 13 Field Squadron, the only other occasions were the Christmas Picnic Meeting at Kings Park and the Sausage Sizzle/Garage Sale which raised a little over \$600 towards Group funds.

Membership - Now stands at 89 with new members attracted by the Sandakan Day Service and the four exhibitions. Sadly we lost one with the death of Huw Cadwgan. Another who passed away during the year was Sandakan survivor, Rod Wells.

Other - Australian POW History has been recognized throughout the year with Order of Australia Medals (OAM) presented to 'our' Bill Young and Lynette Silver from NSW for both promoting the Sandakan story; Bill Haskell and Keith Flanagan, both from WA for their contributions to the Thai-Burma Railway and recently two more Group friends in Western Australian, Arthur Leggett, President of the Ex-POW's Assn and from NSW, Dr Kevin Smith – all in the one year.

At the conclusion of our year and my turn as President I would like to thank members for their support and the individual efforts of the Management Committee, welcome Keith Jones back into the sharp end and offer my support and best wishes to our new President, Allan Cresswell.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2004

by Ken Jones

At the Annual General Meeting held in June the election of officers resulted in:-

PRESIDENT- Allan Cresswell

VICE PRESIDENT- Bob Brackenbury

SECRETARY- Ken Jones

TREASURER- Colin Prior

LIAISON and RESEARCH OFFICER- Keith Jones

At the subsequent Management Committee meeting the sub-committee chairmen appointed were:-

MEMORIAL- Keith Jones

SANADAKAN DAY- Ken Jones

The Community Education sub-committee chairman will not be appointed until it's future policy and direction is decided.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

by Treasurer Colin Prior

Subscriptions are now due and with estimated expenditure for the year less than last year the payment will be \$15.00 per family unit.

Please make cheques/money orders payable to Borneo POW Relatives Association.

ANZAC DAY 2004 – The Borneo POW Relatives Group



Borneo POW Relatives led by President Bob Brackenbury at Anzac Day March 2004
Photo Courtesy Mercer Laidley



Kieran Rosser, 1st great grandson of Snowy Jensen, who is wearing Sno's medals at Anzac Day 2004.
Photo Courtesy Mercer Laidley



The Borneo POW Relatives Wreath at the Irwin Barracks Dawn Service 2004
Photo Courtesy Mick Ryan

NEW MEMBERS

We are pleased to welcome three new members and the return of one of our original members since our last 'Borneo Bugle':-

Jodi Bavin whose relative is **Sapper Donald Marshall** of the 2/6 Field Park Company, Royal Australian Engineers, her husband **Bob** and daughter **Caetlin**.

Frank Prior whose relative is **Craftsman Leslie Prior** of the 2/10 Ordnance Workshops, Royal Australian Corps of Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

VISIT TO SYDNEY

by Allan Cresswell

In July 2004 my family and I travelled to Sydney to attend a relatives wedding. Whilst there we had the opportunity to catch up with our Sandakan mate, Bill Young, who had caught a train from his home into Sydney to visit us. Bill had met us all previously when he attended Perth last year to be at the Borneo Exhibition and for Sandakan Day.

We had lunch at a Chinese Restaurant in the heart of Chinatown. Bill had recently returned from Kuching in Sarawak and he just had to jot down an article on the recollections that this visit brought back to him of days past. Bill, along with others, had been brought to Kuching from Sandakan to be tried for escaping. He was convicted and sent back to Outram Road Prison in Singapore, a hell hole of a place, but far better than the outcome for all his mates back in Sandakan.

Bill's seventeen page article, 'Once Upon a Time in Kuching', was still damp off his printer and was so appreciated by our family. With the kind permission of Bill, this great article will appear in the next 'Borneo Bugle', over 3 or 4 editions.



**Bill Young, Allan Cresswell, Caetlin Cresswell, Jodi Bavin, Jean Cresswell in Sydney.
Photo taken courtesy of the other member of our party, Kirsty Cresswell.**

POW PROFILE



Ted the Police Officer



Ted the Footballer



Ted the Soldier

**Edward James
(Ted)
KEATING
L/Corporal
WX8818
2/6th Field Park
Company
R.A.E.**

**Written by
Steffoni
Brackenbury**

The story of my Dad, together with his two mates, Don Marshall and ‘Snowy’ Jensen, attempting to escape from Sandakan in Borneo and the subsequent tragic ending has been told previously, so here is another side of Ted Keating with me relying on dates, photos and distant memories of my mother telling me little things about Dad. My Mum died in 1966.

Edward James Keating was born on 25th November 1907 in Fremantle and my Mum, Olive Vera Counsel on 11th January 1904. When Dad was 24 and Mum 27, they were married in St Georges Cathedral on 5th December 1931.

Dad’s great sporting love was football, and he was very good. At 6 feet 6 inches and sixteen stone, obviously a Ruckman. He had two nick-names – ‘Tiny’ – of course, and ‘Goog’. I have a studio portrait of the entire members of the Postal Institute Football Club, dated 1930. They played in the ‘B’ Grade Football Carnival at Bunbury and Dad was awarded ‘Fairest and Best’ for the season. There is also a treasured photo of a tall young footballer in his Postal Institute footy gear, and written across the corner ‘Yours Sincerely’ which he gave to his sweetheart – Mum.

Dad was a Clerk when he and Mum married, however he joined the Police Force on the 13th July 1933 and his regimental number was 1733. It was 27 years later that my husband, Bob, was given his Police Number 3232. Dad was stationed at Fremantle, and it was there, in a private hospital in Burt Street, just down from our family home, that I was born on 10th May 1935. Dad left the force in September of that year.

The following years we lived in various places, including Kalgoorlie, where my brother Alan was born on 13th June 1937. We finally ended up at Norseman, where Dad found employment at Norseman Gold Mines, as well as some private prospecting.

Dad was a gregarious man, very popular with his mates – possibly too popular, according to Mum. She told me he often had to take me with him when he went to the local hotel, because she knew he would always bring me back by teatime. Still playing football, he played for Norseman Goldmines and was awarded the Philpot Challenge Cup in 1940. As a five year old I would get very upset if any opposing players tackled him roughly!

The next date I have is a form titled ‘Notice to Attend for Enlistment’ 8th October 1940, advising him to report to Norseman Railway Station, 10.00am 21st October 1940. I have photos of the train decorated in streamers, and another of Dad and his mates, standing proudly and with the hope that he and thousands of other servicemen joining up, would keep their families safe back home. The rest is history but to me, my Dad, Ted Keating, will always be the ‘Fairest and Best’.