

The Borneo Bugle



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

October 1st 2006 Volume 5, Issue 1

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OUR NEXT MEETING

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
IRWIN BARRACKS KARRAKATTA
SUNDAY 22nd OCTOBER 2006
COMMENCING AT 10.00am

SANDAKAN DAY COMMEMORATION SERVICE- 2006

by Ken Jones

In contrast to previous years the weather was clear and cool for the service which was attended by over 300 people. Prior to the start our President, Allan Cresswell, and Carine Senior High School (CSHS) Principal, Paul Ganderton, met and welcomed the invited guests. They were shown to their seats by Year 11 and 12 students while other students took their wreaths to the wreath table and later acted as wreath marshals for the wreath laying ceremony.

The layout and design for the eight page program was compiled by CSHS staff who also arranged the printing of over 300 copies. The programs were distributed by School Prefects prior to the commencement of the service.

Topical addresses were given by Paul Ganderton, the Colonel Commandant Western Region, Geoffrey Simpson and CSHS Head Boy, Sze Howe Koh. Each made their point and provided thoughtful messages. One of our long standing members, Steffoni Brackenbury, recited our Ode which has been adopted by our Association from a poem written by Dame Mary Gilmore and features on the Memorial. Prayers were given by our Chaplain, Captain Andrew Robinson, of 16 Royal Western Australia Regiment.

During the service teacher Tony Williamson of CSHS together with students, Darryn Visagie and Nathon Webber, photographed the service in its entirety, resulting in over 330 wonderful photos. Some of their excellent photography is displayed within this edition of the *Borneo Bugle*.



Head Boy Sze Howe Koh and Head Girl Nia Connop of Carine Senior High School at Sandakan Memorial Dedication Service August 2006

Photo courtesy Tony Williamson's Group CSHS

Continued on Page 9

In our last edition of the Bugle we ran an item written by Mary Aird Bath about her 2005 journey to Sabah and her discovery of the Sandakan story. Mary returned there again this year with her husband Tony, and her visit was reported in the Sabah *Daily Express* and our local *Wanneroo Times*. This is Mary's story of her trip.

Keith Jones

FLAG RAISED TO HONOUR THE DEAD

by Mary Aird Bath

My second visit to Sabah would certainly be one to remember. It was twelve months exactly to the day since we found this tropical paradise. However this time we were on a mission.

I was asked by Jack Wong Sue to promote his book *Blood on Borneo*; a book about the forgotten heroes of Sandakan, of whom there were only six who escaped and lived to tell the tale.

The Federal Parliamentarian Hon Graham Edwards, member for Cowan, asked me to raise the Australian flag at the resting place of all the fallen heroes in Labuan. This I did and I diligently, respectfully and humbly raised the flag to the blue skies above. As a mother of three sons it was the least I could do for the Mothers of the fallen but not forgotten diggers of the last world war.

There was also a request from a local lady in Padbury to see if I could find the resting place of her uncle, David Annand, her Dads brother. He left behind a wife and two children, and no doubt a Mother. This family are awaiting the outcome of my very traumatic and at times challenging research, which I hope will bring peace to the Annand family in Campsie NSW.

To do all these duties we travelled far and around the state of Borneo. Labuan is a beautiful little island off the coast of Sabah, accessed only by ship or plane. We sailed across and down the South China Sea and returned at night by plane.

The following week we hired a car and drove to Sandakan, about seven hours over roads that are not fit for cattle. Apart from that the locals do not seem to have any road knowledge, stop signs etc are for city folks! Passing the beautiful mountain of Kinabalu, the highest mountain in South East Asia, made it all worthwhile. Still it was all very nerve wracking, as much as the people are doing their best to update their roads nature itself stands in their way. The tropical rainfalls bring down landslides that hamper their efforts daily. It is another world; one has to experience it to write about it.

Sandakan had not changed since our last visit, steamy hot yet a beauty only a free thinking person could see. The tourists come from far away Singapore, some seeking the truths from the past. There were Americans but their destination or highlight of their trip was to visit the Orang-outangs. That was also our initial drawcard to this very isolated part of the world, however it lead me down many paths and opened my eyes and heart to the abyss of a very sad part of Australian history.

The fetid virgin jungle was a very uninhabitable place for an internment camp that held nearly eighteen hundred Australians, many of whom were young and yet to live an adult life. They had no chance to grow old and weary sit on a veranda and watch the sun go down. The enemy brought them from Singapore to build an airstrip. Their spirits of bravado helped them to sabotage their so called contribution to the invading forces, but sometimes at great expense. You would have to read *Blood on Borneo*, the book bears witness to the truth and author Jack Sue saw the events.

Sandakan overlooks the Sulu Sea, not too far on lies the Philippines. I was not sorry to leave this now very spectacular yet sad place behind. We travelled back to Sabah with our hearts full, but we still had one more place to visit. Ranau. There is one of the saddest places on earth. It has many commemorative stones and plaques recalling the bravery of Australian diggers. **Lest We Forget.**

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

The membership subscriptions 2006/2007 for our association are now due. The Management Committee have set the subscription to remain at \$15.00 annually. The majority of our costs are the printing and sending out of the Borneo Bugle, arrangements for the Sandakan Day Ceremony and the purchasing of wreaths.

Payments can be mailed to our Treasurer, Colin Prior, whose contact details are on the front page. Alternatively payments will be accepted at the AGM on October 22 2006.

President's Corner

by President Allan Cresswell

Our Annual Sandakan Day Service held at Kings Park on 27th August 2006 was again a resounding success. Special thanks go out to Ken Jones for co-ordinating the service and ensuring that everything went to plan. Well done again Ken! The involvement by the Carine Senior High School this year by way of participation in all aspects of the service was very pleasing indeed. Many comments were received by me on the day as to how well the service was presented and that the program was so dignified in commemorating our POW servicemen. Our thanks go out to School Principal Paul Ganderton, his Staff and his Students for their contributions to the Sandakan Day Service.

There were also many other people who were involved on the day or behind the scene in the preparation of this service. Ken Jones has submitted an overview and summary within this edition of the *Borneo Bugle*, commencing on page one. A big thank you to all those who assisted, especially those of our members who are not individually named.

On Sunday 22nd October 2006, commencing at 10.00am, we will be holding our **Annual General Meeting** at Irwin Barracks Karrakatta. We urge all members to attend this important meeting. Our association holds just three meetings a year and it needs the attendance and contribution by all our members. The Carine Senior High School have made available free to our members a professionally compiled cd of a collection of photographs from the 2005 Sandakan Day Service. Limited copies will be distributed to those attending the AGM. The cd is for those people who have a pc and is viewable on a pc only.

In December we will again be holding a Christmas luncheon for our members and guests, with details in the next *Borneo Bugle*. This edition will be posted out promptly by the 1st of December 2006. Last year was a resounding success and we look forward to a great day and get together this year.

On Tuesday 12th September 2006 I attended the Boyup Brook Sandakan Service. A report on the service and photographs are on page eight of the *Borneo Bugle*. On Thursday 31st August 2006, Bob Brackenbury, our Vice-President, attended the State War Memorial for the Annual Merdeka Day Service and represented our association.

I am updating the map I designed for the Borneo Exhibition that depicts where the Western Australian Soldiers died. I hope to have the map available for purchase by our Christmas Luncheon. If I print them myself the cost will be \$17.00 each with \$5.00 from that amount donated to our association. If I arrange commercial printing it will only be if I can obtain it for a lower price.

Please do remember that we are always seeking articles for the *Borneo Bugle*. Our thanks go out this month to our contributors, Reg Blewett, John Oldfield, Frank Murray, Mary Bath, Keith Jones and Ken Jones for their submissions.

NEW MEMBERS

Since Sandakan Day we have welcomed ten new members:

John Lynch, nephew of **WX6317 Corporal John Joseph Lynch** of 2/6 Field Park Company RAE.

Leonard Doyle, son of **NX66892 Sergeant Leonard Harold Doyle** of No.2 Company AASC.

Edward McAppion, son of **WX7015 Sapper Henry Edward McAppion** of 2/6 Field Park Company RAE and Edward's partner **Joy**.

Peter Jones and Geoffrey Jones, grandsons of **NX65363 Craftsman Denzil Herbert Jones** of 73 Light Aid Detachment RAEME, Peter's wife **Dale** and Geoffrey's partner **Jacqui**.

And a previously registered relative who has returned from overseas, **Lorraine Hartree**, grand daughter of **VX18536 Gunner Leo Lancelot Doherty** of 4 Anti Tank Regiment RAA and Lorraine's husband **Graham**.

Nola was doing some research for me in the press archives at the Alexander Library and came across this article of interest. It appeared in *The West Australian* on 22.9.1945.

By Keith Jones

BORNEO MEN.

MAIL NOT DELIVERED -10,000 Letters Withheld.

MELBOURNE, Sept 21.--Nearly 10,000 letters for British and Australian troops, most of whom were prisoners of war in Borneo, are being sorted by the Ninth Division postal staff at Labuan. Six thousand are for British troops, including a proportion for civilian internees and about 4,000 for Australian troops.

Much of the United Kingdom mail was written early last year but some of the letters are three years old. Most of the Australian mail originated in October last with odd letters written in January of this year. Some of the letters sent to British civilians have been delivered to their owners.

It is a mystery why the Japanese failed to distribute the mail as it arrived or why they did not release it to survivors once it became clear they had lost the war. Some of the letters have already been handed to former prisoners now on Labuan and those addressed to other survivors of Japanese imprisonment will be delivered as soon as possible. The letters were recovered from Japanese headquarters at Kuching and although some had suffered rain damage most of them were in good condition.

SANDAKAN SERVICE SYDNEY NSW AUGUST 27 2006

Photographs courtesy Frank Murray



Sandakan Day Service Sydney NSW



Bill Young (Sandakan POW and Outram Road Survivor), Frank Murray (son of Private Richie Murray of 2/19 Battalion who died at Ranau), Tony Wilkins (2/12 Field Reg in Borneo Liberation Campaign) with Sheila (who wrote about her time as a prisoner in Changi titled, *Diary of a Girl in Changi*)

KUNDASANG WAR MEMORIAL

by Allan Cresswell

Part 6 of our ongoing articles re various Borneo Memorials throughout Australia and Borneo (Sabah and Sarawak)

At the foothills to Mount Kinabalu stands a memorial park dedicated to those Australian and British servicemen who died as POWs in Sandakan and on the Ranau Death Marches during World War Two (then known as British North Borneo). The memorial also pays tribute to the local population who risked their lives to assist the POWs. This is a magnificent tribute that was built in 1962. A New Zealander, Major G.S. (Toby) Carter, D.S.O. who enlisted in the Royal Australian Engineers and organised native resistance in the Kelabit Highlands of Sarawak initiated, and was the driving force behind, the establishment of the Memorial and the Park.

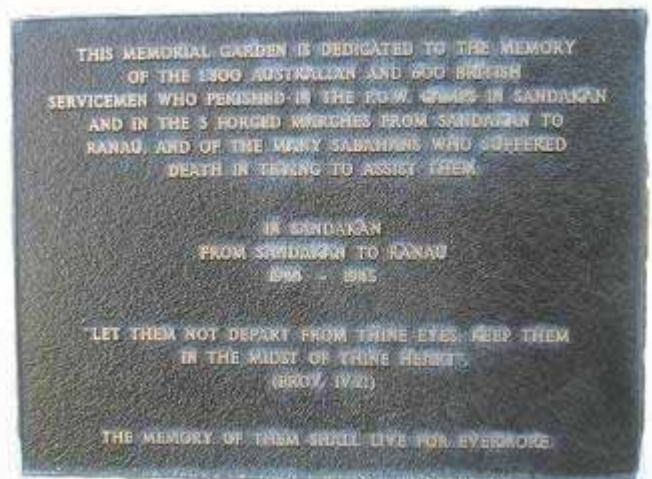
In recent years the memorial gardens have been restored to their original beauty through the effort and dedication of the guardian of the Kundasang War Memorial, Sevee Charuruks.

It has four separate gardens on different levels. An Australian Garden, a formal English Garden of roses, a Borneo Garden with wild flowers of Kinabalu and at the top level is the 'Comtemplation Garden' with a refection pool and pergola.

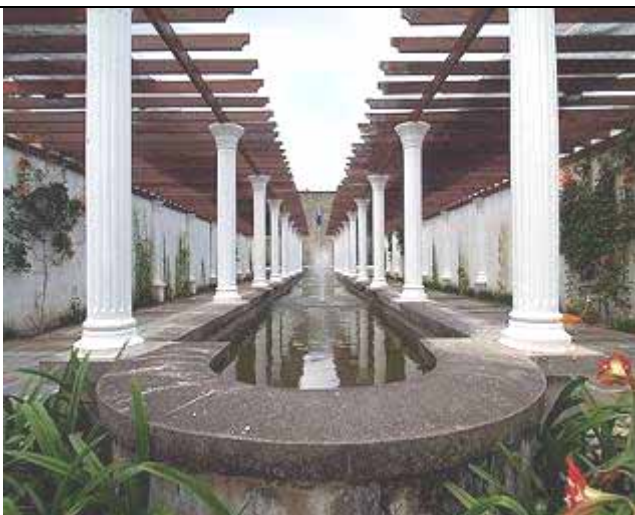
Jean and I visited Kundasang War Memorial when we travelled to Borneo on our pilgrimage a few years back. We were so impressed by the whole concept and layout of the walled gardens and the various levels culminating in the spectacular outlook over the surrounding countryside. Numerous impressive plaques dedicated to the servicemen and the citizens of Sabah are erected throughout the various levels. This complements the well designed gardens and the beautiful plants and flowers. A credit to all those involved in continuing this living tribute to those who died in Borneo.



THE AUSTRALIAN GARDEN



ONE OF THE MANY PLAQUES AT THE GARDENS



THE REFLECTION POOL AND PERGOLA



AT THE TOP AND THE BEAUTIFUL OUTLOOK

AUSTRALIAN EX-PRISONERS OF WAR MEMORIAL

Photographs and concept courtesy John Oldfield

In October 2006 our member, John Oldfield, and his partner, Jenny, went on a holiday to Victoria. From Melbourne they travelled by bus to Ballarat and had an enjoyable time indeed, visiting many historical venues associated with the miners riots and the subsequent famous Eureka Stockage Uprising. They also visited the Australian Ex-Prisoners of War Memorial that is situated in the Botanical Gardens at Ballarat. John rang me to say how impressed they were with the whole concept and design of this memorial and subsequently provided all the photographs for this article. What so impressed John was the serenity of the area and the poignant inscriptions on the memorial.

This memorial honours more than 35,000 Australians who were held prisoner from the Boer War and right through to the Korean War. The official dedication of the memorial took place on Friday, 6th February 2004. It is a place of national honour, remembrance and healing for all Australians. The intention is to provide ex-prisoners of war, their descendants, visitors and future generations with a reflective experience where they can pay homage to those who endured so much.

The POW monuments' design uses the basic idea of a journey through and an experience of time and place. The start of the pathway is long and straight heading off into the shape of railway sleepers, a reference to the Burma Railway. Running parallel to the pathway is a polished black granite wall, 130m long etched with the names of all the Australian POW's. Standing in a reflective pool are huge basalt obelisks up to 4.5m high with the names of the POW camps. The columns are out of reach and across the water symbolizing that all the POW camps were away from Australian shores. Further on there is another wall with the words 'Lest We Forget' engraved, allowing for an area of contemplation and reflection after the "journey".



Continued on page seven

AUSTRALIAN EX-PRISONERS OF WAR MEMORIAL

Continued from page six

**INSCRIPTION ON THE MEMORIAL**

THIS MEMORIAL TO AUSTRALIAN PRISONERS OF WAR TAKES THE OBSERVER ON A JOURNEY. MORE THAN 35000 AUSTRALIAN MEN AND WOMEN WERE HELD CAPTIVE AS PRISONERS BY THE ENEMY DURING THE BOER WAR, WORLD WAR 1, WORLD WAR 2 AND THE KOREAN WAR. THIS MEMORIAL HONOURS THEM.

THE JOURNEY BEGINS ON A LONG PATHWAY DESIGNED TO CREATE A STRONG VISUAL PERSPECTIVE THAT EMPHASISES THE GREAT DISTANCE AUSTRALIANS TRAVELLED TO WAR.

THE PAVING STONES FORMING THE PATHWAY ARE SHAPED LIKE RAILWAY SLEEPERS IN RECOGNITION OF THE IONIC PLACE OF RAILWAY JOURNEYS IN THE HISTORY OF AUSTRALIAN PRISONERS OF WAR.

A ROLL OF NAMES OF ALL THE KNOWN AUSTRALIAN PRISONERS OF WAR IS ETCHED INTO A BLACK GRANITE WALL RUNNING PARALLEL TO THE PATHWAY. THE ROLL GIVES NO RANK, NUMBER OR ENLISTMENT DETAILS, IN RECOGNITION THAT SACRIFICE, SUFFERING AND DEPRIVATION ACKNOWLEDGE NO PERSONS STATUS. THESE MEN AND WOMEN ARE EQUALS.

IN A BREAK IN THE WALL A ROW OF STONE OBELISKS STANDS SENTINEL IN A SHALLOW POOL OF WATER. EACH BEARS THE NAMES OF COUNTRIES WHERE AUSTRALIANS WERE HELD AS PRISONERS OF WAR. THE OBELISKS ARE OUT OF REACH ACROSS THE WATER, SYMBOLISING THAT ALL THE PRISON CAMPS WERE OVERSEAS, FAR FROM HOME AND THE COMFORT OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS. THE SIZE OF THE OBELISKS AND THEIR POSITION IN THE WATER CREATE A POWERFUL IMAGE AND OFFER A PLACE FOR REVERENCE AND REFLECTION.

THE OBELISKS FORM A SILENT LINE OF GUARDIANS WATCHING OVER THESE PRISONERS OF WAR FOREVER. THE FALLEN STONE HONOURS ALL THOSE MEN AND WOMEN WHO DIED AS PRISONERS OF WAR.

A ROLL OF NAMES ON THE GRANITE WALL CONTINUES TOWARDS A LARGE STONE AT THE END OF THE PATHWAY. THE STONE RESTS ON A SMALL GRANITE WALL, AND BEARS THE TIMELESS INJUNCTION, 'LEST WE FORGET'. THIS IS THE END OF THE JOURNEY – AN INTIMATE SPACE FOR CONTEMPLATION.

WATER SPRINGS FROM BENEATH THE 'LEST WE FORGET' STONE THEN FLOWS DOWN THE WALL INTO THE NARROW WATERCOURSE IN FRONT OF THE FIRST GROUP OF NAMES AND INTO THE REFLECTIVE POOL, THEN CONTINUES PAST THE SECOND GROUP OF NAMES, FINALLY IT DISAPPEARS UNDER THE PATHWAY, RETURNING TO ITS SOURCE UNDER THE 'LEST WE FORGET' STONE TO START THE JOURNEY AGAIN.

WATER SYMBOLISES THE ESSENTIAL NATURE OF MAN, SACRIFICE, SUFFERING, SPIRITUALITY, HEALING, CLEANSING, BIRTH AND RE-BIRTH. IN THIS MEMORIAL IT FORMS A CONTINUOUS CYCLE BONDING ALL AUSTRALIAN PRISONERS OF WAR TOGETHER FOR ALL TIME.

THE MEMORIAL IS CREATED FROM NATURAL MATERIALS AND IS DESIGNED TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE BALLARAT BOTANICAL GARDENS, AND TO CREATE A SENSE OF TIMELESSNESS, DIGNITY AND RESPECT.

THIS MEMORIAL IS DEDICATED TO ALL AUSTRALIANS WHO BECAME PRISONERS OF WAR WHILE FIGHTING THE ENEMY.

THE NAMES OF ALL KNOWN AUSTRALIAN SERVICEMEN AND WOMEN WHO WERE CAPTURED BY THE ENEMY ARE LISTED.

MORE THAN 8,600 AUSTRALIANS DIED IN CAPTIVITY. THESE DEATHS WERE MAINLY THE RESULT OF BRUTALITY, STARVATION AND DISEASE.

ALMOST 4,000 AUSTRALIANS WHO DIED IN CAPTIVITY HAVE NO KNOWN GRAVE. THIS MEMORIAL HONOURS THEM.

THE NAMES OF ALL THE COUNTRIES ON THE COLUMNS ARE THOSE WHERE AUSTRALIANS WERE HELD CAPTIVE AT THE TIME.

THIS MEMORIAL WAS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF ALL AUSTRALIAN EX-PRISONERS OF WAR
BY
GENERAL PETER COSGROVE, AC MC
CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE FORCE
6TH FEBRUARY 2004

BOYUP BROOK SANDAKAN MEMORIAL SERVICE

Article and photographs courtesy Allan Cresswell

On Tuesday 12th September 2006 I attended the Boyup Brook Sandakan Memorial Service, in company with my daughter, Jodi Bavin, and granddaughter, Caetlin. Prior to the commencement of the 11.00am service, I attended a civic reception held by the Boyup Brook Shire Council to meet the representatives of Sanzac College in Kota Kinabalu (Principal Ms Norul Mohd Taib and two of her staff) and Ms Catherin Chua from the Sandakan Municipal Council. Catherin was dressed in traditional Sabah clothes and looked great. I had a chance to talk with all the four representatives from Sabah. Catherin commented on her awareness of our newsletter, the *Borneo Bugle*.

The Sandakan Service was well attended and was excellently presented by MC, Grant Wardle. A chartered bus had arrived from Perth containing members of the ex-POW Association which assisted to ensure a good representation of ex servicemen and their families. Items were presented by St Marys School and Boyup Brook District School which were well received. Jordan Nix, the recipient of the Ted McLaughlin Memorial Scholarship in 2005 gave an account of his experiences in Sandakan and the winner of this years scholarship, Phoebe Frost, gave a presentation of her winning entry. Both were very impressive in their presentations. Ms Norul Mohd Taib spoke of the importance of the Sanzac College and of the strengthening bond between Boyup Brook and her College, and of the friendship that exists between both our countries.

Numerous wreaths were laid within the Council Hall to the backdrop of the wonderful new mural painted by our member, Non Meston. Although I did not think it possible to achieve, this mural is even more stunning than her previous mural. I laid a wreath on behalf of our association. After refreshments we transferred the wreaths from the Council Hall and laid them at the nearby Sandakan Memorial.

In addition to my family, other representatives from our association present at the service were Stef and Bob Brackenbury, Ben Hart, Trevor Brandis and the Rowley families from Narrogin.



Wreaths at the Boyup Brook Service 2006



Sabah visitors with Jim Elliott & Arthur Leggett



Grant Wardle with Sabah Representatives



Bob & Stef Brackenbury with Catherin Chua

SANDAKAN DAY COMMEMORATION SERVICE - 2006 Continued from page one by Ken Jones

The Linties Choir, which had 24 members in attendance and very capably led by Catherine Ritchie, sang beautifully the 23rd Psalm, Finlandia and The Great Southland, and they also sang three Psalms during the wreath laying ceremony. They were accompanied by Ailsa Raymond on the keyboard.

The School Ensemble, consisting of 14 pupils who are members of the Senior Band and range from years 9 to 12 play woodwind and brass instruments. They gave excellent renditions of 'God Save the Queen', a Hymn Spiritual 'They Led My Lord Away' and 'Advance Australia Fair'. They are under the direction of Ross Brennan.

The Catafalque Party, which has been provided by the 13 Field Squadron RAE for the past four years, was directed by acting SSM Michael McGrath. They were led by Corporal Aaron Chandler and they carried out their duties to perfection.

The 'Act of Remembrance' was conducted by RSL Director of Corporate Affairs, Ian Mulholland and was assisted by Bugler, Lance Corporal David Scott who played the 'Last Post' and 'Rouse' expertly. The Flag Marshals were World War II veteran Peter Hummerston and Year 11 student Joel Campbell.

A poem, 'Sandakan March' written by Vic Tyrrell, who was one of the founding members of our Association was well read by Year 11 student Sonya Stamatou.

The closing address was given by our President, Allan Cresswell and in it he stated, "This is the first time since the Memorial was dedicated and placed in the custodianship of Carine Senior High School that our Association and the School have jointly planned and carried out this Service. It augurs well for the future that we have the youth of today, who are the adults of tomorrow, taking such a strong interest in the Memorial and the history that surrounds it". He read a message from military historian and author and good friend of our Association, Lynette Silver, who concluded with these lines-

'For there are deeds that should not pass away, and names that must not be forgotten.'

He thanked the participants and various organizations for their attendance on the day and for their ongoing support.

My thanks to those that have assisted in making this service possible and to my assistant MC, Year 11 student Chris Chesky.

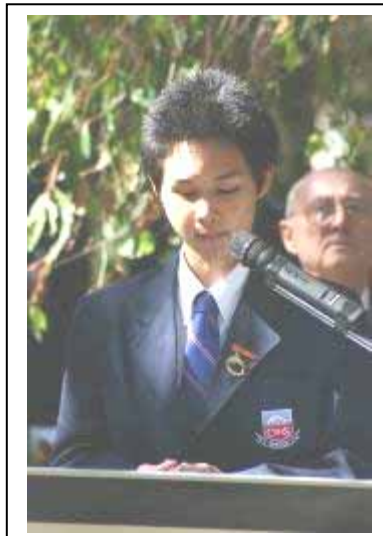
At the conclusion of the ceremony some of the Sandakan families remained behind to have a picnic lunch, a few refreshments and exchange comments about the service. After packing away all the chairs and equipment the area was tidied and vacated by 2.00pm.

SANDAKAN DAY COMMEMORATION SERVICE – 2006 PHOTOGRAPHS

All photos courtesy Mr Tony Williamson, Darryn Visagie and Nathon Webber of CSHS



Flag Marshall Joel Campbell



Student Address Sze Howe Koh



Assist MC Chris Chesky

Photos continued on pages ten and eleven



Wreath Laying Head Boy & Head Girl Bugler Lance Corporal David Scott Closing Address President Allan Cresswell



Music Ensemble Director Ross Brennan Address Col Comm Colonel Simpson Master of Ceremonies Ken Jones



**Principal CSHS Paul Ganderton Our excellent photographers Chaplain Andrew Robinson
Photos continued on page eleven**



Poem – Sandakan March read by Sonya Stamatiou



Wreath Marshals



Catafalque Party



Carine Senior High School Principal and Prefects



Linties Choir led by Catherine Ritchie



The CSHS Ensemble led by Ross Brennan



The Official Party



Left Section of the Crowd in Attendance

POW PROFILE



**Cecil Bertie
BLEWETT**
Lance Sergeant WX 8159
2/6th Field Park Company
R.A.E.

Written by Reg Blewett

My father, Lance Sergeant, Cecil Bertie Blewett WX8159, was born in London on the 5th of August 1901. He was the son of Eliza and John Blewett, who was a Police Sergeant in the London Police Force.

Dad had two brothers and a sister. He and his brothers used to polish the brass radiators and lights on the early motor cars for pocket money and he was always interested in motor bikes and motor cars. On leaving school, he served his apprenticeship as a ships boilermaker, during and after World War One. They were tough times.

In the early 1920's he changed his job and started working with Barclays Bank in London, as a teller. He had an Altercation with his older brother which led to his decision to migrate to Australia.

Dad arrived in Albany aboard the *S.S. Themistocles* on the 26th of July 1925, 10 days before his 24th birthday. Not a lot is known of his movements and jobs in the first year of his arrival. Unfortunately I never asked my mother for the full details. Mum told me he worked on farms in the Narambeen District, as a labourer. He enjoyed sport and was a keen tennis player and a good boxer. He joined the North Perth Masonic Lodge on the 3rd of May 1927, and remained a member until his death, attending some Lodge Meetings in Singapore before it fell to the Japanese.

Some time in 1927, shortly after the Bank of New South Wales amalgamated with the West Australian Bank, Dad, due to his previous banking experience joined the Bank of New South Wales. He became one of the youngest managers at that time. He served in various country towns, Mt Magnet, Northam, Narambeen, Tammin, etc.

Mum was born in Kanowna in 1903 and spent her life nursing, and was a Triple Certificate Sister, when she was married in 1935. I was born in Northam in 1937 and my brother, Robert, was born in 1939.

Dad enlisted while he was a Bank Manager, at Tammin, on the 16th of August 1940, at the age of 38 years. He did his training in Western Australia, before sailing on the *Zealandia* on the 30th May 1941. My mother and I watched the smoke from the *Zealandia*, as she disappeared over the horizon, from the verandah of the CWA Hostel, in Avonmore Terrace Cottesloe.

My youngest brother, David, was born on the 19th December 1941 and never saw his Father. Dad's reply, on hearing the news that he had a third son, just before Singapore fell, was that he was starting a football team.

From 1941-1949 we lived at Greenbushes, as Dad had told Mum to get out of Perth, in case it was bombed. The Greenbushes Shire, let us live in the old Greenbushes Hospital rent free, if Mum held a clinic once a week, for the Bridgetown Doctor, and that she rendered assistance to anyone in the district, who was sick, had an accident or required her help. Mum would take them to Bridgetown or Bunbury Hospital if they needed urgent medical attention.

From 1942-1945, as far as I can remember, Mum only received three briefly worded POW cards. The last card said, "Alive and well and looking forward to early re-union". Then some short time later, news came that he had been dead for six months. When Mum received news of his death, to cheer herself up, she brought a pretty china vase, which I still have.

In 1949-1950, we moved to Perth. I recall the Christmas Holiday Camps at Rottneest Island Army Barracks, which were organised by the Legacy Club and the Combined Forces. They were great times. My two brothers followed in their Father's footsteps and became Bank Managers and I became an Automotive Engineer.

Dad died in Sandakan on the 23rd March 1945. We may not have had a Dad, but my Mum made up for what we had missed. SHE WAS A WONDERFUL LADY ONE IN A MILLION.

FOOTNOTE: On the anniversary of my Father's death, on the 23rd March in 2002 my wife and I were involved in a horrific accident, when a semi-trailer ran over the back of our vehicle. We escaped virtually unscathed. Someone was watching over us.