

THE BRIBIE "BUGLE"

JANUARY 2022

A Newsletter of the Bribie Island R.S.L. Sub-Branch Library

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Produced and edited by Graham Bradshaw

IT HAPPENED IN JANUARY

1st JANUARY 1901

Two Companies of the Queensland Mounted Infantry Regiment combined with British and Canadian forces in South Africa attacked a Boer Laager at Sunnyside, near the Orange Free State border. The Queenslanders then suffered the first casualties of any Colony in the Boer War.

The Beachhead Battles

Buna was the second beachhead to fall on the **2nd of January 1943** after a determined defence by the Japanese forces, however, it was not until the **23rd of January** that victory was finally achieved and the remaining Japanese fled. Casualties were high on both sides and disease also took a heavy toll.

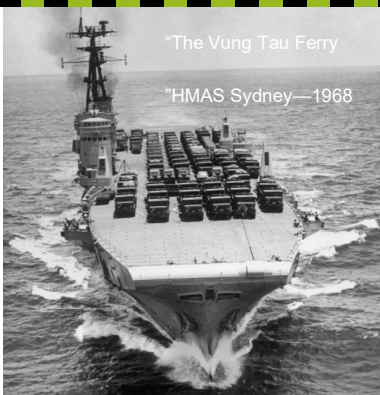


HMAS AUSTRALIA ATTACKED BY KAMIKAZE January 1945

In October 1944 HMAS Australia was the first Australian War Ship to be attacked by Kamikazes, however, whilst supporting operations in the Lingayen Gulf the ship was hit again on the **5th, 6th, 8th and 9th of January 1945**. In these raids 3 officers and 41 ratings were killed and 1 officer and 68 ratings were wounded. Although the ship did not sink it suffered severe damage and was sent to England for repairs. HMAS Australia was still in England when the War ended.



THE 2nd AIF SAILED FOR THE MIDDLE EAST on the 10th of January 1940.



January 1968

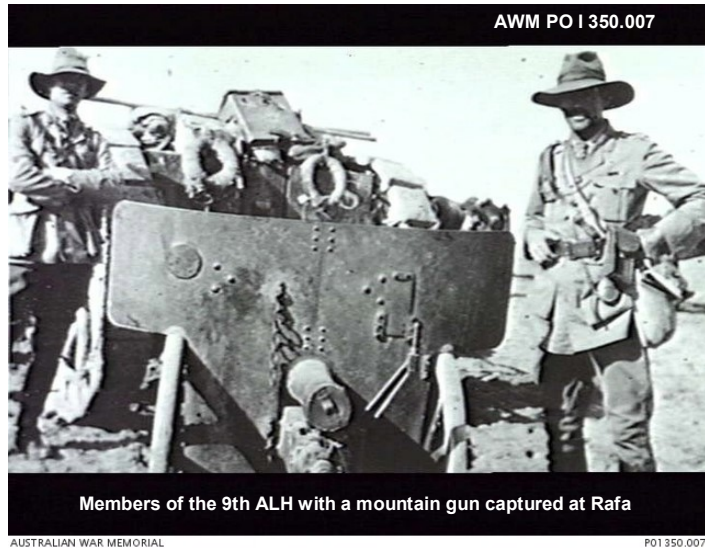
This was the month that the Australian Military Commitment to the Vietnam War reached a peak of 8,300 service personnel.

The Australian Involvement in Vietnam

ceased on the **11th of January 1973**. (By proclamation of the Governor-General) bringing to an end the longest involvement by Australia in any War. The War cost 500 Australian lives. There were 426 battle casualties and 74 non-battle casualties. 3,129 others were wounded or injured.

BATTLE OF RAFA

Following on from the earlier capture of Magdhaba the 9th Australian Light Horse Regiment, the New Zealand Mounted Rifles and British Yeomanry took the town of Rafa on the **9th of January 1917**. This was the 3rd and final battle for the Sinai Peninsula as the advance moved through Palestine. The attack was made possible because the rail line across the desert had reached El Arish on the **4th of January** making resupply easier.



AWM PO I 350.007

Members of the 9th ALH with a mountain gun captured at Rafa

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P01350.007

JAPAN MOVES QUICKLY

The Japanese move into South East Asia was swift and decisive. After a rapid advance through Malaya a series of air raids on Singapore took place on the **10th of January 1942** in preparation the invasion. Tarakan Island was captured on the **11th of January** as the Japanese moved to secure the oil fields on the island. At Gemas, Malaya, on the **14th of January** the 8th Australian Division ambushed a Japanese Force in



Singapore Naval Yards on fire after the January Air raids

AWM: PO11182.010

Massive Coalition Air Attacks marked the start of Operation Desert Storm on the **17th of January 1991** as the attacks on Iraqi positions in Kuwait began.

Japanese Attack Rabaul

Air attacks against Rabaul, New Britain began on the **4th of January 1942**. The Japanese saw great strategic value in the natural harbour and the air fields on the island. Japanese forces finally took the island on the **22nd of January** after massive air attacks from carrier based aircraft. Most of the men of the small Australian garrison were killed or taken prisoner. The Japanese were then able to direct attention to New Guinea and landed at Lae on the **25th of January 1942**. Women and children had been



Military and civilian Evacuees from Rabaul

AWM: Photo

evacuated, however, the men were forced to remain. Six months later most had been massacred. It is a disgrace to the Nation that the sacrifices made by the soldiers and civilians on Rabaul have hardly ever been discussed or recognised in memorials or elsewhere. The Government did not want to publicise the battles nor recognise the fact that it was the first attack on Australian soil because it was a humiliating defeat for Australia.

The Sandakan Death March

The infamous Sandakan "Death March" commenced on the **26th of January 1945**. It is described by the Australian War Memorial as the greatest single atrocity committed against Australians in War. By August 2345 allied prisoners of war had perished on forced marches across Borneo.

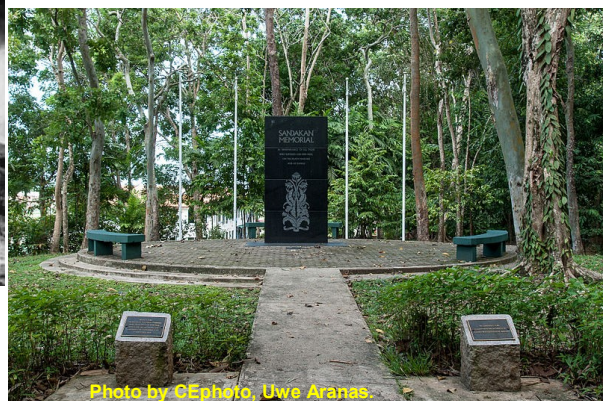


Photo by CÉphoto, Uwe Aranas

Seoul, South Korea Captured

Chinese forces captured Seoul for the second time on the **3rd of January 1951** in what was known as the 3rd battle for Seoul. The U.N. forces were forced to retreat and complete evacuation of the Korean Peninsula was seriously considered. The United Nations Command finally realised that the Chinese were over extended and were able to counter attack and eventually recapture the city by March.

“Rats” Capture Sio, on the Huon Peninsula, New Guinea.

The “Rats of Tobruk” Australian 9th Division which had landed at Lae destroyed the Japanese 20th Division and captured Sio on the **15th of January 1944**. This action drove the Japanese from the Huon Peninsula area. The 9th Division had fought long and hard and were exhausted and had lost over 1,000 men. It is believed that the Japanese 20th Division had lost 7,000 men.



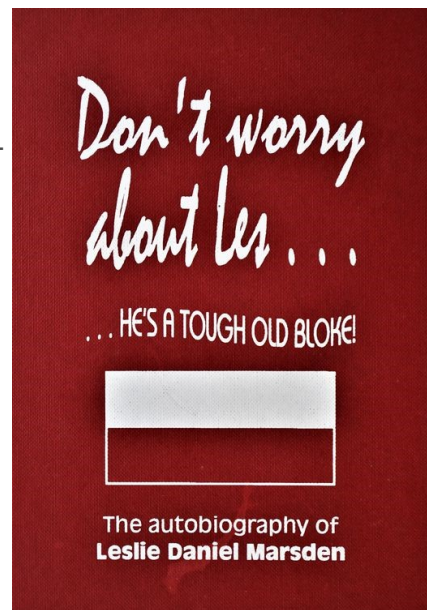
THE 6th DIVISION AT BARDIA

The first major action by Australian forces in World War II was fought by the 6th Division in an attack on the Italian held Libyan town of Bardia. The action began on the **3rd of January 1941** after a heavy artillery barrage had pounded the Italian positions. Supported by British tanks and bren-gun carriers the 6th Division quickly penetrated the Italian defences where they captured 40,000 Italian prisoners and a huge amount of food and war material which was in short supply. A large quantity of Italian wine was also found in the bunkers vacated by the Italian forces so I would suggest that a large party took place at Bardia after the town finally fell to the Australians on the **5th of January 1941**.



Australian losses were 130 KIA and 326 wounded. Leslie Daniel Marsden who spent around ten years of his retirement living in Bongaree wrote a book about his life (“**Don’t Worry About Les**”) which included his experiences at Bardia. After serving in North Africa Les was sent to Crete where he was eventually captured by

the Germans and he then spent the rest of the war as a POW working in coal mines in Poland. His book tells much about his hard life and the wounds and injuries he received as a soldier and a POW. After reading it I could hardly comprehend how Les managed to live so long. He was 87 in 2003 when he wrote his book at Bongaree. As his book says “**Les was a tough old bloke**”.



TOBRUK IS CAPTURED

After defeating the Italians at Bardia the Australian 6th Division and the British 7th Armoured Division advanced towards Italian Garrison at Tobruk. First contact was made on the **7th of January 1941** and by the **22nd of January** the defeated Italians had surrendered. Another 20,000 Italian POWs were collected along with tanks, artillery pieces and other war material. The 6th Division continued its eastward advance after Tobruk fell and the famous 9th Division “Rats” then took up position in the town. The 6th Division was quickly sent to Crete as the situation in Greece and Crete deteriorated. That is another story of bad management and disaster.

AWM: 005392



STALINGRAD SURRENDERS

German forces who were occupying Stalingrad surrendered to the Russians on the **31st of January 1943**. The Germany Army was starving and running short of ammunition when over 90,000 men surrendered. When the war finished most German POWs had died of starvation or were massacred and both sides has suffered massive losses during the long Stalingrad campaigns.

German POWs at Stalingrad

Public domain photo



Saigon burns during the Tet offensive



VC recruits being sworn in before the Tet offensive

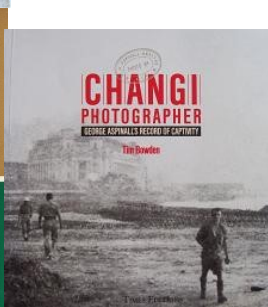
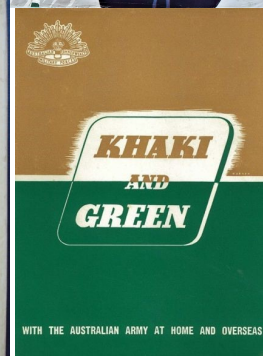
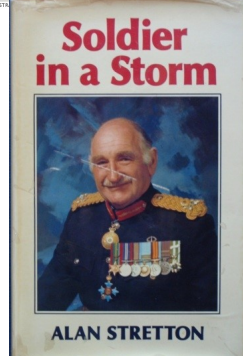
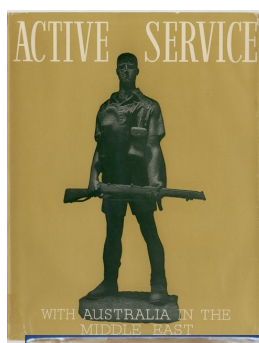
These photos are in the public domain

Significant battles which commenced during Tet were the Battle of Khe Sanh, **21st of January** and the Battle of Hue **31st of January 1968**.

RETURN HOME FROM KOREA

The last Australian troops arrived home from Korea on the **8th of January 1958**. Here we are 64 years later and the Korean Peninsula is still divided.

BOOKS FOR SALE ONLY \$5 ea.



WITHDRAWAL TO SINGAPORE

After losing the mainland battle for Malaya the last Allied forces crossed the Causeway into Singapore on the **31st of January 1942**. Engineers blew up the Causeway hoping to slow the Japanese advance from the Malayan mainland. During the retreat down the Malay Peninsula Lieutenant Colonel Charles Anderson of the 2/19th battalion was awarded the Victoria Cross for his action at the Battle of the Muar River. When I served in Malaya with 3RAR in 1963/65 I saw wrecked tanks and other war debris still lying in the fields near the Muar River bridge. More next month.

TO PURCHASE A BOOK CONTACT THE OFFICE.
DONATIONS OF BOOKS ARE ALWAYS APPRECIATED. CHECK WITH ONLINE CATALOGUE.

THE MEMORABILIA - PAGE

Compiled and Edited by Graham Bradshaw with the grateful assistance of Col "Taffy" Phillips, Memorabilia Curator



The collection monster for this month is the 40mm Bofors Gun which stands guard over Bongaree in the Club grounds near the creek. The Mk1 Bofors is a light anti-aircraft gun capable of firing 120 2lb.(1 kilo) rounds per minute and was used extensively in airfields defence. Note that the description plaque with the gun states that the calibre is 44 mm (not 40). This could be a mistake made by the people who restored the gun and made the plaque.



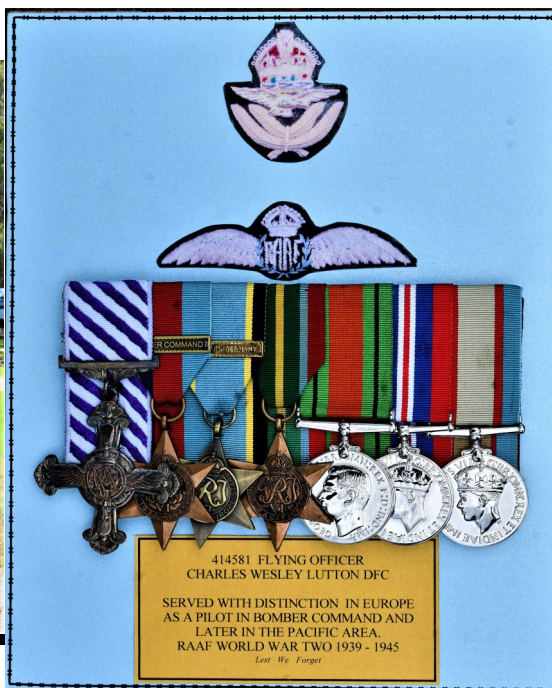
Photo: Graham Bradshaw 2021

Saddle used by men of the Light Horse Regiments. Many items including some personal ones were attached to the saddles. These included horseshoe holders, water bottles, rifle scabbard (bucket) and saddle wallets. Bedding/clothing rolls were also attached to the front and back of the saddle. This item may be viewed in the ground floor glass display cabinets.



Photo: Graham Bradshaw 2021

The Bribie Island RSL Sub-Branch has an impressive collection of donated medals most of which can be viewed in the Anzac Room cabinets or in the ground floor glass display cabinets. The medals featured here belonged to 414581 Flying Officer Charles Wesley Lutton DFC. Charles was born in Rockhampton on the 16th of January 1915 and was a sawmill proprie-



tor at Imbil when he enlisted in the RAAF in 1941. In England he joined the famous Bomber Command squadron number 460 Squadron where he flew 30 missions as pilot or co-pilot of a Lancaster. He received the

Distinguished Flying Cross for action over Germany. Although most of his flying was done in Lancaster Bombers he also flew, DH 88s, Airspeed Oxfords, Wellingtons, Stirlings and Dakotas.



Photo: Graham Bradshaw 2021

I called my newsletter "**The Bribie Bugle**" partly because we have a collection of rare, interesting and valuable instruments. These Bugles are on display in the ground floor glass cabinets. The instrument shown here carries the badge of an Artillery Regiment. It also has an elaborate tassel attached.

MEMORABILIA DONATIONS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME. CONTACT "TAFFY" THROUGH THE OFFICE.

Happy New Year