

MARCH 2023

THE BRIBIE "BUGLE"

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IT HAPPENED IN MARCH

VICTORIA CROSS AWARDS FOR MARCH APPEARED IN EDITION 6—MARCH 2022

THE "BUGLE" IS 18 MONTHS OLD



This March 2023 edition is the 18th edition I have produced since the first one appeared in October 2021. As you can see its format has changed and it has become the more professional looking publication it is today.

These attacks also failed to force the Dardanelles and led to the beginning of the Gallipoli land campaign in April.



GERMAN FINAL OFFENSIVE BEGINS

Near Amiens, France, on the **21st of March 1915**, the Germans began their final offensive of World War One. Their aim was to push the British Forces back into the English Channel. After some initial success by the Germans, the Allies began to drive them back towards the Hindenburg Line. The Australian Divisions were only too pleased to be out of the stinking trenches and be on the move again. They moved swiftly with deadly effect at times although losses were high.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE

The Federation of the six Australian States was completed on the 1st of January 1901, the date when the Commonwealth of Australia came into being, however, it was not until the **1st of March 1901** that the Naval and Military Forces of those States came under Commonwealth control.

THE 1st MAORI WAR

The Maori wars, sometimes called The Land Wars, were fought between the New Zealand Government and the Maori people and their allied supporters mainly because of the selling of land to white settlers. These wars began on the **11th of March 1845** and continued until 1872. Australians and British Imperial units in Australia were sent overseas in 1845 to help the New Zealand Government quell the uprisings and restore order.

DARDANELLES ATTACKS

Although the first attacks had failed, the Allied command believed they could force their way through the Dardanelles with continued Naval bombardments. A combined attack by the Allied Navies began on the **18th of March 1915**.

WOMEN JOIN AIF

The first two women from the Voluntary Aid Detachments (VADs) enlisted in the AIF on the **15th of March 1940**, however, the majority transferred to the Australian Women's Medical Service after August 1942. Initially, VADs were not nurses and they worked in hospitals mostly doing menial jobs like ward cleaning and kitchen duties.

KATHERINE BOMBED

Katherine was bombed only once with one man killed. Japanese aircraft attacked the town on the **22nd of March 1942**. Approximately 90 bombs were dropped mainly on the airfield with little damage caused. This was the most southerly point on the Australian mainland reached by the Japanese bombers



Fragments of a Japanese bomb dropped near Katherine : Photo by Ashley Matic

AUSTRALIANS AT BLOEMFONTEIN

Members of the New South Wales Mounted Rifles reached the Orange Free State capital, Bloemfontein, on the **12th of March 1900**. This action was designed to take the war into the Boer territories and the first major battle began on the **31st of March**.

METEORS Vs. MIGS WAR ENDS

Because the RAAF Meteors were no match for the Russian MIGs in air to air combat they were transferred to ground attack and support rolls in 1951 and the last engagement with the MIGs occurred on the **27th of March 1953**. The RAAF No. 77 Squadron suffered badly at the hands of the faster more superior Russian fighters. By the end of the Korean War they had lost 40 pilots and 54 of their 90 Meteor jets.



77 Sqn. Crews in Korea.

BATTLE OF THE BISMARCK SEA

The Battle of the Bismark Sea took place in the South West Pacific area beginning on the **2nd of March 1943**. It involved aircraft from the RAAF, the RNZAF, the Netherlands EIAF and the US Fifth Air Force which attacked a Japanese convoy of ships carrying troops to Lae. Most of the convoy was destroyed in the battle and only 1,200 of the 9,000 troops on board made it into Lae. Eight Japanese transports and four destroyers were sunk and twenty aircraft downed.



An Allied Beaufighter over the Bismark Sea, March 1943

BATTLE OF MATAPAN, GREECE

The Battle of Cape Matapan, the Italian Navy's greatest defeat, took place on the **27th-29th of March 1941** when ships of the British Mediterranean Fleet intercepted and attacked the Italian fleet, sinking several ships and damaging many others. Australian ships involved were HMAS Perth, HMAS Vendetta and HMAS Stuart.



Allied aircraft over burning Italian Ships

7th DIVISION ARRIVE IN ADELAIDE

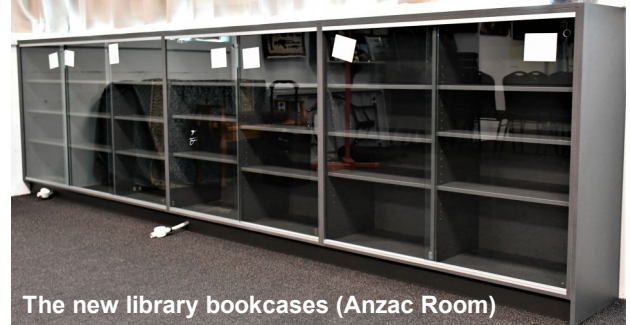
Having been recalled from the Middle East due to the Japanese threat to Australia the 7th Division AIF arrived back in Adelaide on the **9th of March 1942**. They would later serve with distinction in the New Guinea campaign.

NOTICE: NOW THAT THE NEW BOOKCASES HAVE BEEN INSTALLED IN THE ANZAC ROOM I WILL BE DEVOTING MOST OF MY TIME TO RE-ORGANISING THE LIBRARY, THEREFORE, THIS WILL BE THE LAST MONTHLY "BUGLE". I HOPE TO CONTINUE TO WRITE ON A QUARTERLY BASIS OR WHENEVER I CAN FIT IT IN.

WIRELESS SIGNAL SQUADRON

The 1st Australian Wireless Signal Squadron taking part in the Mesopotamian campaign arrived in Baghdad on the **11th of March 1917**. They used Marconi crystal shortwave sets.

Wireless Signal Squadron in Baghdad 1917



The new library bookcases (Anzac Room)

RETIREMENT AFTER 32 YEARS



RAAF long serving **Bribie Island Sub-Branch member**, FSGT Wayne Bradshaw, an RAAF Engineer, Project Manager, retires at RAAF Richmond, on the **17th of March 2023** after 32 years service. Wayne originally enlisted in the RAAF as a plumber and while serving he attended several TAFE building/construction courses, became a

Works Supervisor, and studied engineering at University. Wayne's overseas war service includes tours of East Timor (1999), Bougainville (1999), Afghanistan (2007), Al Minhad, Dubai (2010), (2014), and (2018). Over the years in Australia Wayne served at RAAF Bases in Laverton, Townsville, Katherine (Tindal), Darwin, Williamtown, Amberley and Richmond. Well done son.

JAPANESE OCCUPY JAVA

The Japanese occupation of Java, (Dutch East Indies), was completed by the **7th of March 1942**. after they had been landing at several points along the coast almost unopposed. Initially, the Japanese were welcomed as liberators by the Indonesians, but as time went on they became overlords. It was during this time that Sukarno began his rise to power.

BATTLE FOR PORT MORESBY

The major air battles for Port Moresby began on the **21st of March 1942** following the arrival of Kittyhawk fighters of 75 Squadron, RAAF. The Squadron then lost eleven aircraft in the first nine days and by the time the Battle of the Coral Sea, which began in May, had directed Japanese attention away from Port Moresby, 75 Squadron was down to just three serviceable aircraft. By then they had lost twelve pilots and 21 aircraft. They were backed up at the end of March by aircraft of the United States Army Air Force. During February and the most of March there were no aircraft based in Port Moresby and all defence was conducted by Australian anti-aircraft batteries and machine gunners. Port Moresby endured almost 100 Japanese bombing raids which were directed mainly at airfields, anti-aircraft defences, the port and township. These raids were made mainly by Mitsubishi G4M1 Betty Bombers.

Port Moresby bombing, 1942 . A transport ship is visible between the plumes of spray.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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A Mitsubishi G4M1 Betty bomber