



# THE VOICE

October 2020 Edition

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## Editor's Opening

For those of you living in Melbourne and selected adjacent areas, I don't need to tell you that it has been a rough few months. A city-wide lockdown and curfew. Glad I live in the country. Anyway, welcome back to (limited) freedom of travel and association. Assuming there is no further COVID-19 outbreak, that is.

Despite my believing there was no 27 July Korean War ceasefire at The Shrine, there apparently was one...sort of. It was a live-stream event with few actual participants, but given the circumstances, the best that could be hoped for. Our National Secretary sent a message to be read out. It is on Page 8.

On a more positive note, with the support of the local R.S.L., KVAA Committeeman, John Munro, held in June a small wreath laying service in Moama to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the start of the Korean War. "We were always known as the forgotten war", he told journalist Andrew Johnston, who covered the event, "but some wonderful Australians who were still only so young made the journey and many never came back. We have to keep their memory alive... I want the public to remember the conflict and take the time with us to remember them."

Additionally, both he and the National Secretary were interviewed by ABC Canberra on the 27th July regarding the 70th Anniversary.

On to KVAA matters... The State Government's current restrictions mean that no meeting at the Stella Maris is possible until December, which effectively means not until next year. Also unlikely to take place is the KVAA Christmas luncheon given the limited number of participants allowed.

There will, however, be a *Voice* in December. Speaking of which...

As mentioned previously, the photocopier used to produce *The Voice* and sundry other material is now 10 years old and no longer supported by Samsung. This means that certain components, most relevantly the

fuser, imager, and toner, are no longer produced. The toner and fusers are still available for a time (while stocks last); however, imagers are scarcer than honest politicians. Guess what? The photocopier has less than 8% life left in its imaging unit. After that, the photocopier is useless.

As of writing I'm still hunting for a imaging unit for the machine, with a decided lack of success, though I'm still hopeful that there are some still out there and available. However, until I secure one or we make other printing arrangements *The Voice* will drop to 12 pages. It may be necessary to make this permanent if only to limit wear-and-tear on the photocopier and conserve toner. Time will tell. Expect an update in the December 2020 edition.

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# Worms and Choppers: Welcome to Korea

by Tom Moore

The new war in Korea in the summer and fall of 1950 brought on many new problems for the U.S. military, especially for the U.S. Army Medical Corps, which had a significant deficit of surgeons. Most of the surgeons were very young, with much to learn in a theatre of war.

Clinical retraining was essential to “unlearn the principles necessary in civil practice” in favour of the rapid care of massive wounds and trauma. But, they had to learn “on the job.” For example, a new Army surgeon, following Eighth Army rules, would approach an abdominal wound in this manner.

First, he had to perform a “bold para-median incision,” a vertical cut extending from 3 inches above the navel to 3 inches below. Entering the peritoneal cavity, he arrested any visible bleeding. The surgeon then completely eviscerated the patient and examined the mesentery, the tissue holding the intestines to the abdominal wall, for bleeding vessels, which he ligated (joined together). Then, he marked and clamped intestinal perforations to prevent further contamination. Following that he performed the necessary suturing or resections of the bowel, cleaned out any oddments of food that had gotten loose, replaced the viscera, and sewed the patient up.

These young Army surgeons also found out early that, when working in the belly of a Korean soldier, as soon as they opened it up they had a belly full of worms over a foot long each. The worms would crawl into and block nasogastric tubes and start crawling out of the belly. Surgical nurses grabbed the worms, dropped them in a pail, and continued working.

On the battlefield, crushed or shattered fractures accompanied wounds. These types of wounds burdened the transport system of the wounded. This problem drew the attention of the Army Medical Department to the helicopter as a potential evacuation vehicle.

Colonel Chauncey Dovell, an Eighth Army surgeon, grew intensely interested in the helicopter. He requested an Air Force helicopter on loan for a test. In August 1950, in the schoolyard of Taegu Teachers College, amid telephone poles and some old buildings, a Sikorsky touched down, blowing dust into the eyes of the onlookers. Loaded with two litters, behind the pilot’s seat, the helicopter flew without trouble to the 8054th Evacuation Hospital in Pusan.

In Korea, the U.S. Air Force was the first to use helicopters for evacuation. In July 1950, a detachment of the 3rd Air Rescue Squadron arrived in Korea under the command of Captain Oscar N. Tibbetts. Its mission was to recover downed UN pilots and crews.

Captain Tibbetts started receiving requests from Army units to rescue casualties who could not be reached by ambulance. The unit soon found itself in the medical evacuation business. General MacArthur felt that helicopters should be in the T/O&Es, and should be a part of medical equipment, just as an ambulance. That was all that it took.

The Office of the Surgeon General requested two Helicopter Ambulance Companies comprising 24 small craft each. By 20 October 1950, eight helicopters were purchased for immediate airlift to the Far East Command; 4 detachments of 4 copters each were activated for medical use.

The rapid adoption of helicopter evacuation resulted from the nature of the Korean War and the Korean countryside. The broken terrain separated fighting units from their medical support. The poor road network, the prevalence of enemy guerillas, and the North Korean tactics of infiltration and envelopment contributed to the problem.

With few roads, traffic was forced onto a few main routes that enemy artillery could interdict. The roads were extremely narrow, sharply winding, and steep in ascent and descent. They imposed much added suffering on the wounded soldiers – and the ambulances. The constant bumping caused their chasses to break. Speed was vital, but the medics and drivers did not want to bump the wounded.

By contrast, the smoothness of the helicopter ride prevented many hemorrhages and reduced the danger to soldiers suffering from head and spinal cord injuries. The rotary-winged aircraft was swift. That, combined with its ability to land and take off in constricted areas, made it an ideal vehicle for transporting wounded personnel.

The military helicopter began its career in medical evacuation in the summer of 1950. Most patients were, and would continue to be, moved by train or ambulance. The new link to the century-old evacuation chain, in time, would transform the system radically. In wars to come it would make the chain itself obsolete.

From the beginning of the medical helicopter’s career in the Korean War, it was associated with the MASH. Its normal route of travel was from the aid station or clearing station to the surgical hospital, bearing the critically wounded (the so-called “nontransportables”) to immediate, often radical, stabilizing treatment.

Typical of the early days, was the experience of 2nd Infantry Division surgeon Col. Donald E. Carle with helicopter medical evacuation. The division was the first to arrive in Korea, direct from the United States,

*(continues on Page 4)*

*Worms and Choppers (continued from Page 3)*

debaring at Pusan 10-20 August 1950, moving to Miryang, site of the 8076th MASH, as well as of the division's own forward command post.

On 1 September 1950, as the enemy's "Great Naktong Offensive" hit the line, Col. Carle asked the Eighth Army for helicopter evacuation. Two choppers were placed at his disposal. The division surgeon then dispatched the helicopters on call to various clearing stations, but only for patients whose head, chest, or abdominal wounds made evacuation by field ambulance undesirable.

The helicopters, too fragile and too scarce to be risked, were not allowed to evacuate battalion aid stations, or even regimental collecting stations "due to their vulnerability to small arms fire." Their contribution was qualitative: to bring the worst injured cases to the MASH in the first hours after wounding.

The courage of people, unarmed or little trained in the use of arms, who either brought casualties out, or worked to save them, was amazing. Company aidmen, battalion surgeons, collecting and clearing station personnel, MASH personnel, and many others withstood the pressures, bore the dangers and, on occasion, lost their lives aiding the wounded.

At Chonui, a hamlet north of Chochiojon, Pvt. Jack Bolen of the Medical Company, 21st. Infantry was awarded our country's second highest military award, the Distinguished Service Cross, for conspicuous heroism. Pvt. Ronald R. Dusek, a company aidman, and Pvt. Donald V. Bailey, a battalion ambulance driver, were both awarded the Distinguished Service Cross at the defence of the Kum River.

Near Changnyong, on 6 September 1950, Pfc. Richard L. Fleischmann of Anaconda, Montana, an aidman with a machine gun platoon, of Company "H" 23rd Infantry, 2nd Infantry Division, pulled two wounded men to safety. Then, wounded, he took their place at the gun until he was killed. He was awarded posthumously the Distinguished Service Cross. He had been awarded the Silver Star on 31 July 1950.

Source: *The Graybeards* magazine Vol.28, No.3, May-June 2016

## The International Corps

I and IX Corps were truly international in their compositions. At the beginning of 1951, I Corps comprised the U.S. 25th Inf. Div., the ROK 1st Infantry Division, the Turkish Brigade, and the 29th British Infantry Brigade.

IX Corps consisted of the U.S. 1st Cavalry and 24th Infantry Divisions, the ROK 6th Infantry Division, the 27th British Commonwealth Brigade, and the Greek and Philippine Battalions. They faced 7 Chinese communist armies and 2 North Korean corps in the central sector at that time. Each Chinese army was equivalent in strength to one U.S. corp.

## Digging Ditches

The Soviet Union was unprepared for the speed and power of the German offensive in 1941, but recovered quickly enough to begin preparing a series of defensive lines in front of the German advance. An average of more than 100 miles of defenses were prepared each week, primarily through the efforts of conscripted and poorly-equipped civilians. The greatest endeavour was made before Moscow, where, according to then-General Georgi Zhukov, 250,000 women and teenagers shifted three million cubic meters of earth with hand tools alone.

Source: *Strategy & Tactics* magazine No. 289 Nov.-Dec. 2014

## A Decidedly Mixed Blessing

Japan used a variety of submarines during World War II, including some advanced designs. One innovation not included until late in the war was radar, used to find surface targets and warn of incoming aircraft. In one particular case radar proved a mixed blessing. The taxonomically improbable *USS Batfish* [now there's an animal I'd love to see! – Editor] was cruising the strait between Luzon and Taiwan on 10 February 1945 when it detected radar emissions. Homing in on them, *Batfish* found and sank the Japanese sub *RO-115*. *Batfish* repeated the process the following day to sink *RO-112*, and completed the hat trick on 13 February by sinking *RO-113*.

Source: *Strategy & Tactics* magazine No. 287 Jul-Aug 2014

## Collateral Economic Damage

During WWII, the economies of other countries, even those not directly engaged in the war, could be badly disrupted by the conflict. Trinidad moved from high unemployment to acute labour shortages as United States construction work expanded. So serious was the situation that sugar production, which provided the main export, slumped as workers went to earn higher wages elsewhere. On the South Pacific island of Tonga, copra production fell 80 percent because the population could make much more money renting out bicycles to U.S. troops for black-market dollars. By 1943, Honduran banana exports were at 10 percent of their 1930 level and national income had fallen by a third because the U.S. Navy requisitioned a large number of banana boats.

Source: Ponting, Clive, *Armageddon*, Sinclair Stevenson, 1995

## Memories of Hill 1051

by Fred Liddell

I was on Hill 1051 from 16-18 May 1951. I was a squad leader in the 2nd Platoon, 2nd Squad of F Co., 2nd Bn., 38th Inf., 2nd Division. My memory of events may not be in chronological order, but I am sure someone will straighten that out.

F Co. was placed in Corps Reserve on 16 May 1951, I believe. We were there to refit as there were only 85 men left in the company. We arrived at a location and started to set up camp. Mail was distributed and we started to relax when word came to “saddle up.”

Two-and-a-half trucks took us to an area close to 1051, on the east side. As we started up the hill, the Dutch battalion was coming down, saying (in Dutch) “many Chinese, many Chinese” I have never been able to understand why the Dutch battalion left the hill only to be replaced by a way-under-strength company. Upon reaching the top of the hill, where we were to set up, we learned that the 1st Battalion was ahead of us and would come through us. We were instructed to hold until they did.

Several years later, in 1985 or 1986, I revisited Korea with Col. Conley Clarke and we went to Hill 1051. He showed me his Command Post, which was already behind us.

Back to 1951, I had returned recently from the hospital in Japan. While I was processing back to the company, Sgt. Bill Roberts of the 702nd Ordnance issued me a sniper rifle. We had gone to Hill Military Academy in Portland, Oregon together.

On 1051 I could see soft-capped troops on a hill to our left, south (I believe) of where we were set up. They were basically behind us. My company commander, Capt. Postan, told me they were Rangers holding that hill. I knew better; I could see them with my scope.

My position on the hill was right flank man. My four-man squad was deployed before nightfall. In the dark, we could see movement across the hill above us. Our company could only cover the lower part of the hill. We assumed those people were members of the 1st Bn. – until Capt. Postan came up and advised us they were Chinese.

We opened fire, which caused them to go higher on the hill. Trying to acquire a target at night with sights on an M-1 is difficult, to say the least. We did fire, though, which drove them even higher up the hill. The next morning more men had joined us. We were now on the right. Two of the soldiers with me were Dan Cohen and the ominously named Norman Deathridge.

We enjoyed watching a strafing and rocketing run by our Air Force as we waited. One rocket hit a man 20-30 feet in front of me. There was nothing left

*(continues on Page 6)*

## Battle for 1051 and Chaun-ni

by Byron W. Dickerson

I became involved in the battle for Hill 1051 and Chaun-ni on May 16 or 17, 1951; I'm not sure which day. We, the Hq. Co. 2nd Bn., 23rd Infantry Regt., were on perimeter guard the night of the 17th. There were several fire fights around Bn. Hq. throughout the night.

The Chinese had infiltrated our perimeter in several places during the night. In the early morning hours, around 3-4 a.m., they withdrew. Around 0600 on the 18th we went to the mess tent that had been set up in the village of Chaun-ni.

Unknown to us, a South Korean unit on our right flank had withdrawn during the night. Before we could get through the chow line we started receiving fire from all around. Several of us went on a ridge line just behind the Bn. Hq.

One of the guys had grabbed some C-rations, which we were enjoying. There were several Marine Corsairs supporting us, along with Air Force and Navy planes. I think there were some South Africans supporting us as well.

One of the Corsairs had been hit on his strafing run. He was trailing smoke as he came back across us. The pilot opened his canopy and bailed out just south of the village. His chute never opened.

I was eating a can of fruit cocktail (my favourite) when the first Chinese hit our position. One guy with a burp-gun was firing at me. I never did see him, but he never hit me. A sergeant across the gully kept hollering at me, “He's right behind you.” By this time, two other guys and me were in the cross-fire of one hellacious battle.

I don't know what happened to that fruit cocktail, but to this day I have never eaten any more. If I just see it, I am immediately on that hill in that battle. (When my wife and I were first married I came home from work one day. She had fixed supper that included fruit cocktail. When I told her I didn't eat fruit cocktail, her feelings were hurt. So, I had to tell her the story.)

I could hear the bullets hitting each other. The thought went through my mind that none of us on either side were going to get out of this.

We dove into a foxhole that had two entrances. This firefight lasted about two hours. Then our unit backed off and a Chinese unit moved on the hill – with us blowing their bugles! The Air Force came in and bombed and strafed the hill.

I thought I had gotten through the Chinese okay – and now our own guys were going to kill us. The air support finished off their runs with napalm, which burned to the edge of the hole we were in. I learned later that eight Chinese divisions (12,000 men each) had hit our front. I think all 96,000 of them came

*(continues on Page 6)*

of him.

Our wire communications to Bn. went out. Because I had been Commo Sgt. prior to my hospital stay, Capt. Postan wanted me to go fix the line. I explained to him that I did not have any test equipment, tools, or tape. I assured him that someone would be on the way as soon as they realized that the line was out. I believe now that was when the Bn. was overrun.

Word came to us that we were to evacuate the hill at 5:50 pm on 18 May 1951. The artillery was going to saturate the hill at 6 pm It started five minutes early.

At 5:55 pm the artillery started raining down just as we were starting off the hill. It was hectic as we tried to get ourselves and our wounded off the hill during the shelling.

Capt. Postan was killed, several other men were wounded, and many were captured – including me and Dr. Graveline. (I met Dr. Graveline after our capture and I remember well his fondness for Fanny Farmer white chocolates.)

The responsibility for Dr. Graveline’s death rests with a GI who accused him at the “mine camp” (Suan) of the one who was “responsible for the deaths of all the men on the hill.” He made that statement during a Kangaroo Court for the doctor. As a result, Dr. Graveline was placed on hard labor and forced to dig ditches and latrines with others, including two Rangers, Lester V. McPherson and Thomas A. Ward.

Franklin Pierce was in F Co. on Hill 1051. He escaped capture. He told me when we met later that only fifteen men were left in the company after 18 May 1951. I can account for six of us captured. I am sure there were more. I just don’t know of them.

Source: *The Graybeards* magazine Vol.25, No.3, May-June 2011

Q: What is so delicate that saying its name breaks it?

A: Silence.

across that hole we were in.

This battle was on Friday the 18th. We stayed in this hole with Chinese in holes all around us until Saturday night. By this time we were behind the lines about ten miles. We got out of the hole after dark on the 19th and started our trek back to our unit. It took us until the following Wednesday morning to reach our lines.

We ran into Chinese units several times on our way back. As a matter of fact, I almost stepped on a Chinese machine gunner who had been wounded. There were two of them in the hole, both wounded, and there were more Chinese around there than in China, I think.

We had to keep down to avoid being strafed by our own guys. We had nothing to eat during this time and were very tired. The last night we walked beside a Chinese Mortar Platoon and they did not see us. About three a.m. we came upon a tank; the gunner had been wounded.

We could see them clearly, but they did not see us. We did not know who they were, enemy or our own. I was elected to call out to them. I drew a deep breath. Nothing but wind came out!

The other two guys with me asked, “Are you chicken?”

I said, “You holler.”

They both replied that they would stay all night before they yelled.

I drew another breath and talked fast. I told the tankers that, “We are GIs, and we are coming through, okay?”

The tank’s .50 calibre gun and several BARS were trained on us immediately. They told us to “come on.” We slithered under the barbed wire like three snakes.

I have never been happier in my life. I don’t know the total number of casualties in this battle. In my company alone, only 48 out of our 125 members got out of it.

Source: *The Graybeards* magazine Vol.26, No.6, Nov.-Dec. 2011

## Getting There On “Empire” Ships

by Les Peate

Most of the British troops in the 1st Commonwealth Division made the (approximately) 30-day trip from the United Kingdom to Korea (or, in some cases, Kure, Japan) by one of the “Empire” vessels. In comparison to the horror stories I receive from Canadian veterans who travelled from Seattle on the *Marine Adder* and other vessels, we enjoyed comparative luxury. The troop decks were fairly spacious, bunks were roomy and two-tiered, and we enjoyed many amenities, including a beer canteen. The food was good; we ate in three shifts in a comfortable mess. Shore leave in Port Said, Colombo, Aden, Singapore and Hong Kong helped break the monotony of the voyage. I was a passenger on the *Empire Fowey* and the *Empire Orwell* (the troopships were named for English rivers). These vessels were former German cruise liners seized as reparations in 1945. As a sideline, when I first sailed to the Far East [Hong Kong] we moored in Colombo alongside a French vessel, the *Felix Roussel*, which was taking Foreign Legion troops to Indo-China. The same ship later conveyed the “Battalion francais de UNO” [Le Piton], to Korea.

Source: *The Graybeards* magazine Vol.25, No.5, Sept.-Oct. 2011

## Warm Welcome For Diggers In Korea

From Massey Stanley, in Korea

No troops who have landed in Korea, with the exception of the British, have undergone more intensive training than the 3rd Battalion of the Royal Australian Infantry Regiment.

The Australians are more fortunate than most equivalent American and British battalions in having a solid leavening of battle-experienced men in their ranks.

The result of this was already obvious when I saw the 3rd Battalion in its assembly area near Taegu.

The area was a battlefield only a fortnight earlier.

My experience has been that members of the average American unit would have dropped all other precautions but the wearing of steel helmets when so far from the actual battle zone. Not so the supposedly casual Australian.

Every concealment opportunity had been taken, every camouflage ruse exploited. Fox-holes were skilfully dug and distributed, guards were well placed and alert.

If a sudden air raid had occurred I am satisfied there would have been few casualties, if any, in the Australian lines, and little damage. I'd hate to think what would have happened to the adjoining American installations.

The Australians have since gone forward with no illusions. They were told, almost brutally, by Brigadier B. A. Coad, Commander of the British brigade in which they are serving, that their mopping-up programme offered little prospect of glory, though it was dangerous and nasty work.

Over a lunch of frankfurts and pickled cabbage from the American rations, and Australian scones and tea, Captain B. S. O'Dowd and some rank and file members of his H.Q. Company said they were resigned to the "dull" time predicted for them.

However, many of the younger men were downcast. World War II veterans – like battalion R.S.M. W. J. Harrison, of East Coburg, Melbourne, who has seen too much fighting to regard anything the North Koreans provide as any novelty – were philosophical.

"The odds are we won't miss out in the finish," was a typical comment. "We have signed on for three years' service wherever sent, and it isn't too much to hope that there will be somewhere else to send us after Korea washes up."

Highest compliment so far paid to our troops and their C.O., Lieut.-Colonel G. H. Green, of Grafton, N.S.W., was the expression on the face of brigade-commander Brigadier B. A. Coad when he reviewed them at a parade organised in his honor.

"I'm just staggered by their wonderful appearance and fitness," he said later to Colonel Green.

Australian ground forces have been building up steadily – at first secretly – for a month. The advance parties had their share of adventure bringing supplies

and laying the foundations for the later arrivals.

One of the most exciting adventures befell nine Australians on board the 60ft. diesel-engine craft *Unkasen*, bringing a cargo of 100 tons of supplies, a three-ton truck, and two jeeps from Japan to Korea.

The passengers were Lieut. E. G. Alford, of Carlton, Sydney; Sgt. T. Mason, of Warrawool, N.S.W.; Cpl. A. Lane, Scarborough, N.S.W.; Spr. W. A. (Buddha) Balmer, Bairnsdale, Vic.; Dvr. L. Hong, Camperdown, Sydney; Pte. K. Merriman, Camberwell, Melbourne; Pte. J. Salvia, Glebe, Sydney; Pte. A. Criscoll, North Melbourne; and Pte. S. Ebert, Prahan, Melbourne.

The *Unkasen* left Kure with every prospect, according to weather predictions, of a good passage across the Korean Strait.

Heading out to sea, she suddenly ran into a cyclone. Huge seas threatened to suck her down, but the Australians weren't drowned. Instead they became temporary castaways.

The *Unkasen* made for Tsushima Island, in the middle of the Korean Strait. Corporal Lane has recorded the story of those few days in laconic but graphic war diary entries. Here are some extracts:

16th. Cyclonic storm. Will have to make for Tsushima. As we turn, all rations washed overboard. We had two days' rations for only seven men, though nine aboard. Jap crew has own rations. Took shelter at Mizusake. Signalled coastal patrol for help. Don't think they saw. No radio. Nothing to eat.

17th. Pool all possessions. Buddha Balmer and Keith Merriman take these and go in search of food. Result was interesting mixture of purchase and barter. One rooster equals 1/4 chocolate bar, one bar of washing soap, 2oz. of tobacco, and 100 yen; 1 onion equals 2 packets of cigarettes and 1 bar of toilet soap. "Without costs," Buddha obtained quantity of carrots.

18th. Left Mizusake 0900hrs., but compelled to put into another inlet – Nita Wan. Not even "living off land." No money or goods for further barter. Hong and Salvia volunteer to go on habitation-to-habitation canvass. From various sources they get haversack of rice. Balmer also "liberated" one fairly large pumpkin. Quiet day.

19th. Left Nita Wan 0700hrs. *Lady Shirley* (formerly General Robertson's yacht), pressed into supply-carrying service, passes us on the way back to Kure from Pusan. Reached Pusan without further trouble at 1100hrs.

The Australian advance party in Korea, numbering 60, was commanded by Major Leslie Hopton, of Adelaide. He's a Tobruk Rat who has remained in the Army since 1939. With bulldozers and hard physical labor, Major Hopton and his men transformed a former municipal dump into an excellent camp site.



## 27th July Ceasefire Speech

(Delivered on behalf of the KVAA Inc. at The Shrine of Remembrance on 27th July 2020)

Last month on June 25th, 2020 was the 70th anniversary of the start of the Korean War and all our Australian Korean War Veterans could do was to stand solemnly and silently to remember their mates...

To remember the service and sacrifice of 17,808 Australians who fought as part of the United Nations force defending South Korea from a North Korean invasion. Those numbers divided up with 5,771 members of the Royal Australian Navy, 10,844 members of the Australian Army and 1,193 were members of the Royal Australian Air Force.

Our young servicemen of the Navy, Army and Air Force personnel who served in the Korean War gained international respect for their courage, endurance, and combat skills.

But not only did they represent our country with high esteem, they fought for Korea, whose weather challenged them on a whole different level. They say that the winter came early in 1950, and they found the cold to be just as deadly as the North Korean enemies. Frostbite was invading the soldiers brought on by the cold weather. Soldiers also suffered from frozen rations and icy terrain.

Soldiers had an even harder time keeping their weapons working in the treacherous cold, having to find the best way possible to keep rifles and machine guns from freezing up and becoming inoperable.

During the summers, the heat and humidity was nearly unbearable in the heat of battle.

We must always remember our 358 comrades, who paid the ultimate sacrifice during their service in Korea. They did not get the chance, for age to weary them, nor the years to condemn, like the few, who are left. Also, especially the 42 personnel who are still listed as missing.

The Korean War also saw more than 150 Australian nursing sisters serve both in Korea and in a base hospital in Japan.

The major units involved in the war included the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Infantry Battalions from the Royal Australian Regiment, *HMAS Anzac*, *Arunta*, *Bataan*, *Tobruk*, *Warramunga*, *Condamine*, *Culgoa*, *Murchison*, *Shoalhaven* and *Sydney* (including Royal Australian Navy 805, 808 and 817 Squadrons) and Royal Australian Air Force No. 77 Squadron.

The Korean War is renowned as the Forgotten War and because of today's pandemic of COVID 19, it truly feels this way because of the restrictions leaving us to cancel all commemorations thus far, this year.

So please pause with us today to remember our ageing Korean War Veterans, and to acknowledge the 70th anniversary of the start of this conflict, WE WILL REMEMBER THEM and the dedication and sacrifice of all the Australians who served in the Korean War.

From the *Northern Star* (Lismore, NSW), Monday 11 June 1951, page 1

### U.N. Drive In Korea Continues

Tokio, Sunday (AAP/Reuter).—U.N. troops drive a small wedge into the Communist "Iron Triangle" in central North Korea yesterday.

A U.S. Eighth Army spokesman said Allied troops broke through the enemy defences along the base of the Chorwon – Kumhwa – Pyonggang plateau area, but he did not disclose the depth of the penetration.

Other U.N. forces, supported by tanks and massed artillery, prepared all-out attacks on Chorwon and Kumhwa, the eastern anchor of the triangle.

Some Communist troops retreated northward from Chorwon and Kumhwa, but left strong rearguard units to try and fight off the advancing Allies.

Both towns were still in Communist hands this morning and there were increasing signs that the enemy intended to put up a hard fight.

Allied pilots reported that at least 3,000 Chinese troops were digging in around Chorwon, but thousands of others were falling back from the triangle area towards Kumsong, north-east of Kumhwa.

U.N. infantrymen advanced three miles towards Kumhwa yesterday, and an 8th Army spokesman said the vanguard units were within four miles of the town.

A.A.P. says that the U.S. Navy announced yesterday that a South Korean regiment held positions in the Wonsan area on the east coast of North Korea.

Wonsan is over 100 miles inside North Korea.

Reports some time ago had said that South Korean Marines had raided islands in Wonsan harbour, but it had not been known whether they had remained in the position.

Allied warships have been shelling the Wonsan area daily for months.

Apparently, the South Korean regiment is holding an isolated harassing position under the protecting guns of the Allied fleet.



# This Tree Didn't Grow In Brooklyn

by Tom Moore

August 18 1976 saw the killing of two U.S. Army officers, Captain Arthur Bonifas and First Lieutenant Mark Barrett, as well as the wounding of eight UN soldiers by North Korean soldiers in the Joint Security Area (JSA) located in the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). The two officers had been part of a work party trimming an 80 foot Normandy poplar tree planted 35 years earlier during the Japanese occupation of Korea.

A provision of the Armistice Agreement gave the UN the authority to trim or remove any obstruction of view of all areas within Panmunjom, "The Peace Village." The North Korean action was thus a serious breach of the Armistice Agreement. The poplar tree had grown and spread so that our observers could not view the "Bridge of No-Return" and the guard boxes that were placed at the bridge. The U.S. had notified the North Koreans ahead of time of their intentions and reasons for the action.

After the trimming began, 15 North Korean soldiers appeared, led by Lieutenant Pak. They observed the activities for fifteen minutes before Pak ordered that trimming be stopped, saying the Great Leader Kim Il Sung had planted the tree, and it was untouchable. Lt. Pak then gave orders to kill, and the North Koreans set upon the tree trimmers and their security guard.

Four hours after the attack, Kim Jong Il "co-incidentally" addressed the Conference of Non-Aligned Nations in Colombo, Sri Lanka. He said the melee was instigated by the U.S., and called upon the participants to endorse the withdrawal of U.S. Forces and the United Nations Command from Korea. Cuba seconded the statement and it was passed.

The day after the killings, the New York Times headline read: "Americans Slain By North Koreans In Clash At DMZ." Following the withdrawal of U.S. Forces from Vietnam the year before, the DMZ was then the only place in Asia where American combat troops directly confronted communist forces.

President Ford issued a strong protest, calling the killings "a callous and unprovoked murder." The State Department demanded amends. After crisis talks with top advisors, President Ford decided on a strong show of force, just short of war, was required to retaliate for the murders and injuries, as well as to underscore American resolve.

On August 21, a convoy of 23 American and South Korean trucks commanded by U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel Victor Verra rolled unannounced into the DMZ as part of Operation Paul Bunyan\*. Each truck carried a team of military engineers equipped with chain saws. There were two 30-man security platoons from the JSC, armed with pistols and axes. South Korean special forces were deployed as well. One of the South Korean troopers was the later South Korean President, Moon-Jae In.

Circling the assemblage were 27 American helicopters carrying U.S. and South Korean troops. The gunships were backed up by a number of B-52 bombers launched from Guam, along with several dozen USAF F-4 Phantom II jets and South Korean F-5 and F-86 fighters. A US Naval Aircraft Carrier Battle Group was dispatched to the East Sea (Sea of Japan). US Army and South Korean infantry and artillery gathered near the DMZ. All of the 41,000 US troops in Korea were put on DEFCON 3, the third highest state of military readiness, by President Ford.

In response, several hundred North Korean troops were dispatched into the JSA, and began setting up machine gun positions. Lt. Col. Verra got on his radio, and on cue, dozens of American and South Korean helicopters and fighter jets appeared over the horizon. That was sufficient to persuade the North Korean force to stand down. The tree cutting teams commenced their work. Forty minutes later, the poplar tree had been reduced to a 20-foot stump.

Several hours after this allied show of force, Kim Il Sung issued a formal statement of regret, something he had never done before, and no member of the Kim dynasty has done since. Though the statement fell short of the formal apology or amends that Washington wanted, it was as close to an apology as had ever been received from North Korea. The tree stump was replaced by a monument in 1987.

All told, around fifty Americans have died in DMZ skirmishes, along with over a thousand Koreans from both sides. The 550-yard long Joint Security Area was often the centre of the skirmishing; it was the only area in the DMZ where both UN and KPA troops enjoyed freedom of movement. At the time of these two officers' murders, 160 American and 75 South Korean soldiers were assigned to the elite UN Joint Security Command that guarded the JSA. All volunteers, the troops were specially picked and (when they were allowed to) carried .45 calibre pistols.

*\* Paul Bunyan was a legendary (read mythical) giant lumberjack of the north woods of the United States and Canada. The many lakes of Minnesota were supposedly formed when the footprints of Bunyan and his giant blue ox named Babe filled with water.*

# Kapyong

by Tomas Hamilton

We thought all wars were banished,  
when they dropped the mushroom bomb;  
And peace would finally shroud the world,  
but we'd never been so wrong.

A new peril rose from the flames of hate,  
so once more we went forth,  
To defend a weak and helpless land,  
from its brothers in the north.

Most of us didn't come,  
to loyally serve the crown.  
After fighting in New Guinea,  
we just couldn't settle down.

We stood out from the others,  
dressed in jungle green,  
So we traded our gear with the Yanks,  
to make us harder to be seen.

Bullets weren't our only foe,  
there was snow and the blizzard's gale,  
Which cut you to your very core,  
but we knew we dare not fail.

And in spring the mud and rain,  
would bog you down for days,  
And the refugees would all stream past,  
with their carts and bullock drays.

The U.N. pushed back bravely,  
and thought the threat dissolved,  
Till the forces of Red China,  
somehow became involved.

They took back all the gains we'd made,  
it was time to show some spine.  
So at a place called Kapyong,  
we finally drew the line.

We were the proud 3 RAR,  
just one battalion strong,  
With the Canucks and the Kiwis,  
we faced the charging throng.

We fought on like the hounds of hell,  
and dared not show some slack,  
Till finally on an Anzac Dawn,  
the enemy fell back.

More Aussies fell at Kapyong,  
than have ever fallen since,  
And if you think they died in vain,  
my soul you won't convince.

The only token that I have,  
of that fatal test,  
Is a presidential citation,  
worn proudly on my chest.

In the War Memorial,  
there's a painting I recall,  
A memory of Kapyong,  
hanging on a wall.

Captain Reginald Saunders,  
is a warrior his troops thank,  
The first from First Nations,  
to hold commissioned rank.

I think of all my cherished mates,  
entombed 'neath Pusan's loam,  
Forever to lie in that foreign land,  
'cause they would not bring them home.

When I hear someone complain,  
they're not happy with their lot,  
My thoughts fly to Korea,  
and the war the world forgot.

## Crossroads

Operation Crossroads was the codename for a series of tests the US conducted in 1946 to determine the combat power of atomic bombs. The test was conducted near Bikini Atoll in the Pacific Ocean, using a fleet of obsolete US and captured Axis warships as targets (including the aircraft carrier *Saratoga*, the Battleship *Arkansas* and the Germany heavy cruiser *Prince Eugen*). It included two tests: Able, using an airburst from a bomb dropped by a B-29, and Baker, using a bomb detonated underwater. A projected Charlie test was cancelled owing to concerns about radiological contamination. Among other things, the tests resulted in the publication of a now famous photograph showing a mushroom cloud dwarfing the task force of target ships. Able and Baker Were, respectively, the fourth and fifth atomic detonations.

Source: *Strategy & Tactics* magazine No.371, Nov.-Dec. 2011

## Sinkings? What sinkings?

The Soviet submarines L15 and L16 were on their passage to England via the Panama Canal; they were to be refitted there with the latest British advance in electronic detection devices. On 11 October 1942, these submarines, proceeding on the surface in American coastal waters off California, were attacked by the Japanese I25 whose crew had mistaken them for American boats. L16 was struck aft of the control tower by a single torpedo and sank in minutes. The resulting explosion also sprang all of the I25's rivets and it too sank. Given that the Soviet Union and Japan were both officially at peace and wanted to keep it that way – for the time being, the diplomatic repercussions were dampened by the two governments; in other words, buried along with the subs.

Source: *The General* magazine Vol.19, No.6, 1983

## We Are the Survivors

This is an article for those born before 1940...

We were born before television, before penicillin, polio shots, frozen foods, xerox, contact lenses, videos, frisbees and the pill. We lived before the radar, credit cards, split air conditioners, drip dry clothes, and before man walked on the moon.

We got married first then lived together – how quaint can you be? We thought “fast food” was what you ate in Lent. A ‘big mac’ was an oversized raincoat and crumpet we had for tea. We existed before house husbands, computer dating, dual careers: when a meaningful relationship meant getting along with your cousins and sheltered accommodation was where you waited for a bus.

We were before day centres, group homes and disposable nappies. We never heard of FM radio, tape decks, electric typewriters, artificial hearts, word processors, yoghurt and men wearing earrings. For us ‘time sharing’ meant togetherness, a chip was a piece of wood or a fried potato, hardware meant nuts and bolts and software wasn’t a word.

Before 1940 ‘made in Japan’ meant junk; the term ‘making out’ referred to how well you did in your exams; a stud was something that fastened a collar to a shirt and ‘going all the way’ meant staying on a double decker bus until it reached the depot. Pizzas, McDonalds and instant coffee were unheard of. In our day cigarette smoking was fashionable; grass was mown; coke was kept in a coal house; a joint was a piece of meat you had on Sundays and pot was something that you cooked in. Rock music was a grandmother’s lullaby; El Dorado was an ice cream; a gay person was the life and soul of the party.

There were three grades of toilet paper – the *Argus*, the *Australasian* and the *Sun News Pictorial*. A money box was called a penny gas meter. People had the toilet outside the home and ate their meals inside the home. Transportable lightweight baths could be used in any room of the home. A porn was a pawn shop; a handkerchief was a coat sleeve. Footwear was constructed of leather, iron and wood. A disc jockey was a National Hunt jockey with a back injury. The recycling unit was known as a ‘rag and bone man’. An alarm was known as a ‘knocker up’. The NHS was known as a doctor’s bill of sixpence a week. Debt and illegitimacy were secrets. McDonald only had a farm. Central heating was a wood stove in the kitchen. The top ten were the Ten Commandments.

We who were born before 1940 must be a hardy bunch when you think of the ways in which the world has changed and the adjustments we have had to make.

No wonder we are so confused and there is a generation gap.

But by the Grace of God we have survived...  
Hallelujah!

## An Awful Way To Go

Two guys in a bar – one says “Did you hear the news – Mike is dead!”

“Whooh – what the hell happened to him?”

“Well, he was on his way over to my house the other day and when he arrived outside the house, he didn’t brake properly and boom – he hit the pavement and the car flips up and he crashed through the sunroof. Went flying through the air and smashed through my upstairs bedroom window.”

“What a horrible way to die!”

“No, no, he survived. That didn’t kill him at all. So, he’s landed in my upstairs bedroom and he’s all covered in broken glass on the floor. Then, he spots the big old antique wardrobe we have in the room and reaches up for the handle to try to pull himself up. He’s just dragging himself up when bang, this massive wardrobe comes crashing down on top of him, crushing him and breaking most of his bones.”

“Oh, what a way to go...that’s terrible!”

“No, no, that didn’t kill him – he survived that. He managed to get the wardrobe off him and crawls out onto the landing, then he tries to pull himself up on the banister – but under his weight, the banister breaks and he goes falling down on to the first floor. In mid air, all the broken banister poles spin and fall on him, pinning him to the floor, sticking right through him.”

“Now that is the most unfortunate way to go!”

“No, no, that didn’t kill him, he even survived that. So he’s on the downstairs landing, just beside the kitchen. He crawls in to the kitchen, tries to pull himself up on the cooker, but reached for a big pot of boiling hot water, and...whoosh, the whole thing came down on him and burned most of his skin off.”

“Man, what a way to go!”

“No, no, he survived that, he survived that! He’s lying on the ground, covered in boiling water and he spots the phone and tries to pull himself up to call for help, but instead he grabs the light switch and pulls the whole thing off the wall, and the water and electricity didn’t mix and so he got electrocuted – wallop – 10,000 volts through him.”

“Now that is one AWFUL way to go!”

“No, no, he survived that, he...”

“Hold on now, just how the hell DID he die?”

“I shot him!”

“You shot him? What the hell did you shoot him for?”

“He was wrecking my bloody house.”

*It is fatal to enter any war without the will to win it – Douglas MacArthur, 1952.*

# Profound Thoughts

Lead me not into temptation (I can find the way myself).

The more you complain, the longer God lets you live.

Monday is an awful way to spend 1/7th of your week.

Get a new car for your spouse – It'll be a great trade.

An unbreakable toy is useful for breaking other toys.

I just got lost in thought – It was unfamiliar territory.

Why do psychics have to ask you for your name?

I'm not a complete idiot. Some parts are missing.

Depression is merely anger without enthusiasm.

If a word in the dictionary were misspelt, how would we know?

Do droughts occur because God didn't pay his water bill?

Learn from the mistakes of others. You can't live long enough to make them all yourself.

Consciousness: that annoying time between naps.

That the people you care most about are taken from you too soon. (And all the less important ones just never go away.)

If you lend someone \$20 and never see that person again, it was probably worth it.

It is not what you have in your life that counts, but how much you have in your bank account.

People who want to share their religious views with you almost never want you to share yours with them.

# HMAS Wort

by Ian Hughes

A series of cartoons which appeared in *Navy News* in the 1980s & 1990s



My boss was complaining in a staff meeting the other day that he wasn't getting any respect. Later that morning he went out and got a small sign that read, "I'm the Boss." He then taped it to his office door. Later that day when he returned from lunch, he found that someone had taped a note to the sign that said, "Your wife called. She wants her sign back!"