



The Royal United Services Institute of Victoria, Inc.
Promoting National Security and Defence

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RUSI VIC QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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AH – 64E Apache

Australia is acquiring 29 new-build AH-64E Apaches as part of the Army's Armed Reconnaissance Helicopter Replacement Project (Land 4501 Phase 1) to replace its existing 22 Airbus Helicopters Tiger Armed Reconnaissance Helicopters. The new helicopters will be delivered in 2025.

In service the AH-64Es will be based and operated by the two squadrons of the 1st Aviation Regiment, which will relocate from Robertson Barracks in the Northern Territory to RAAF Base Townsville prior to the new helicopters' arrival in Australia. A small number will also be based at Oakey with the Army Aviation Training Centre (AAvnTC).

**Royal United Services Institute of Victoria
Incorporated
June 2024 Newsletter**

RUSI VIC -2024

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From the President:

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Major General Mike O'Brien CSC (Retd)



Last week I was present at Fleet Headquarters in Sydney when the Admiral commanding presented a prize certificate to the winner of our 2023 RUSIV ADF Ethics Essay competition. Able Seaman Musician Emma Storey accepted the award which had come with a prize of \$2000. This sum had been separately donated to us by our members and the Joe White foundation, for which we are very grateful indeed. The competition will continue this year and is open to any Australian citizen.

I was disappointed at the poor attendance at our recent monthly lunchtime talks at ANZAC House. While occasionally a concurrence of factors prevents members attendance, if the RUSI of Victoria is to attract high quality speakers we need to ensure that a full audience makes it worth their while. I look forward to your attendance at our next meeting.

Mike O'Brien



**BRIG Mike Annett, CSC
National President Defence Reserves Association
Lunchtime Address
Thursday 30 May
The Defence Strategic Review – Perspective of
the DRA**

The RUSIV Prize Essay – Australian Defence Ethics

The Royal United Services Institute of Victoria (RUSIV) is conducting an annual endowed essay competition for individual Australian citizens on a specified topic relating to Australian Defence Ethics.

At a time when many perceive that ethical standards are altering and technological changes are providing unforeseen ethical challenges, it is singularly important for the Australian Defence Force to have a strong ethical underpinning. The purpose of this prize essay is to provide strong support to the development of this ethics framework.

The prize of \$A2000 will be offered in 2024.

The topic set for 2024 is:

“How will artificial intelligence affect the ethical conduct of the ADF in the future?”

Original essays of not more than 10,000 words (exclusive of footnotes) are to be submitted in a single pdf file (accompanied by a Microsoft Word file) to the Secretary of RUSIV (secretary@rusivc.org.au) by 1600 hours AEST on 29th November 2024. Potential entrants are asked to notify the secretary of their intention to enter by 30 August 2024. There is no entry fee.

The style of the essay is to follow that of the Australian Government Style Manual [1]. Essays must be the original work of their individual authors. Copyright in the essays will remain with their authors, though it is expected that the winning entry will be available for publication. A copy of each essay submitted will be held by the Library of RUSIV.

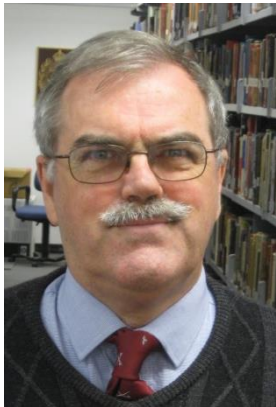
The Library of the Royal United Services Institute of Victoria's considerable collection relating to military ethics is available to assist entrants.

Judging of the essay will be based on criteria including readability, breadth, importance, accessibility and relevance. The decision reached by the independent judging panel will be final. All entrants will be notified of the judges' decision within two months of the submission deadline. RUSIV reserves the right not to consider entries which do not comply with requirements and the right not to make an award if no suitable candidate applies.

[1] Available at <https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/referencing-and-attribution>

From the Secretary:

Lieutenant Colonel Bob Hart RFD



It's June, it's winter and its cold. Membership is unchanged, and we have not been notified of the passing of any members since the last newsletter.

If your contact details alter, please remember to inform us promptly!

Bob Hart

RARE BOOK WEEK

FROMELLES

The literature of the Battle of Fromelles 1916

Speaker: Major General (Ret'd) Michael O'Brien CSC, MDA, BSc (Mil)

Australia's disastrous Battle of Fromelles has generated a large volume of literature over the last 100 years. It has caused a riotous assembly in Bendigo and accusations of a coverup. Mike will review the writings from his intimate experience with the twenty-first century re-burial and identification of Australia's lost soldiers from this battle.

Sectarian Riot? Coverup?

Royal United Services Institute of Victoria

TO REGISTER FOR EVENT

A booking at <http://rarebooksmelbourne.com/> is required

Date And Time

Friday 19 July 2024 at 5:00 PM

Location

Tonic House, 386 Flinders Lane, Melbourne

Bequests

Royal United Services Institute of Victoria

The Royal United Services Institute of Victoria was established in 1890. It seeks to promote informed debate on and improve public awareness and understanding of defence and national security.

The Institute maintains a specialist library to assist in this, as well as scheduling regular lectures and visits of interest. The costs of doing so, however are becoming burdensome and are exacerbated by an ageing and declining membership.

To allow us to continue to provide services to members and the community into the future, you could greatly assist us by remembering the Institute in your will. Should you desire assistance in adding an appropriate codicil to your will, please contact the Secretary at secretary@rusivic.org.au. If you have added a bequest to your will, it would be of assistance to be advised of it (not the specific amount) in case we need to communicate with you or your executors.

'B' Block – the History



'B' Block was originally the Guard House for the South Gate on St Kilda Road.

- **1862** Constructed as a guard house with cells
- Late 19th Century – converted to an ammunition store
- **1910-12** Altered to Chemical Adviser's Laboratory which tested and monitored the manufacture of explosives
- **1916-22** Central Research Laboratory of the Commonwealth Government Arsenal
- Later, Defence Regional Library, Printing Section and Barracks Officer's staff
- **1997** Completely refurbished, houses the VBM Heritage display. Office of the Corps of Guides.
- **2016** Office and Library of the **Royal United Services Institute of Victoria**

Opinion – On Submarines and the National Interest

Mike Rawlinson

The Australian government's first duty in the National Interest is to keep people safe. Also in the National Interest is the need to spend taxpayer's money wisely and get the best value for government purchases. Defence needs a long-range strike capability to deter a major adversary. Such a capability can be provided by submarines and/or aircraft armed with appropriate missiles or alternatively ballistic missiles.

Since the RAAF's F-111C aircraft was retired in 2010 the ADF has had a capability gap in long-range strike or as the defence minister puts it -impactful projection.



Although Australia's fleet of six Collins class submarines could be armed with Tomahawk cruise missiles, they had experienced serviceability and crewing problems.

Collins Class replacement Saga

In 2007 studies were commenced for the replacement of the submarines which were approaching their end of life. The Navy preference was for a nuclear-powered submarine with its long range, extreme endurance, high speed and the ability to stay submerged. These properties were an ideal fit for Australia's requirements. However, the government did not publicly entertain the purchase of nuclear submarines or the option of leasing US Virginia Class nuclear submarines. Federal governments of either Labor or Coalition parties were not willing to risk the opprobrium associated with nuclear power and had very strong political and industry policy reasons to build 'regionally superior' conventionally powered submarines in South Australia, despite a heavy cost premium.

The 2009 Defence White paper announced that 12 submarines to replace the Collins class would be built in the Australian Submarine Corporation (ASC) Osborne shipyard in Adelaide.

Following many delays, in 2016 a French design was selected in preference to German and Japanese contenders. This was to be a diesel-electric variant of a nuclear-powered submarine, the first of which was still being built. Extensive redesign and modifications would be required to convert the submarine to diesel/electric power. This submarine choice (Attack Class) had extremely high technical and commercial risks that appear not to have been fully appreciated.

Relations with the French builder Naval Group were not harmonious and there were contract problems, misunderstandings, delays, and cost blow-outs. By late 2021 construction had not yet commenced.

China – an emerging threat?

Meanwhile Australia's strategic situation had changed for the worse. China had become a looming threat to Australia's interests. While China has remained Australia's largest trading partner, politically it has changed from a liberalising one-party state to a hard-line Leninist, authoritarian dictatorship. Although this shift has happened progressively, China emerged as a threat to regional security and rival to the US. China has practiced an aggressive trade policy, grey zone activities and 'wolf warrior' diplomacy.

China's behaviour provided the motivation for the AUKUS partnership and is reflected in the willingness of the US to share its nuclear submarine propulsion technology with Australia.

AUKUS Submarines

On 15 September 2021 the Prime Minister announced the AUKUS partnership, under which eight US or UK nuclear submarines will be built in Adelaide. At the same time, Australia discontinued the contract with Naval Group.

Facilitated by AUKUS, deterrence would come from nuclear powered attack submarines operating from Fleet Base West. From 2027, four USN Virginia Class submarines will have rotational deployments from FB West alongside one RN Astute Class submarine. They would be progressively replaced by RAN nuclear powered submarines.



In 2032 the first of (3-5) RAN Virginia Class submarines are planned to arrive. Australia and the UK would share the development costs of a new AUKUS Class submarine for the RN and RAN. The first RAN AUKUS Class submarine (built in the UK) is expected in the late 1930s. AUKUS submarines built at Osborne will be delivered from the early 1940s with one being built every three years. On the planned schedule the new AUKUS Submarine fleet will just all be in the water by 2062-63.

Until a full complement of nuclear submarines is available, they will need to be complemented with conventional/ diesel-electric submarines.

There is still a role for non-nuclear submarines, a less costly alternative for many tasks if based in northern Australia. Their viability is likely to be enhanced by new battery technology emerging from the world's uptake of electric vehicles.

Although doubt exists on the capability of ASC to undertake the life of type extension of Collins class submarines, the government has announced that it will proceed with the life extension of all six but with scaled back upgrades. However, due to technical and cost issues the life extended Collins will not be equipped with Tomahawk missiles. HMAS Farncomb will commence the program in 2026.

Defence Industry Policy

For a combination of political, industry policy and sovereignty reasons the government wants to maintain a naval shipbuilding industry in Adelaide.

Industry policy relates to investment, federal finance, new technology and employment – jobs, jobs, jobs. The politics are that two marginal federal seats could be decided on the outcome of decisions relating to the Osborne shipyard.

From a sovereign capability point of view, submarines do not need to be manufactured in Australia. However, traditionally naval ships have been wholly or partly built here. Industry policy is to ensure a steady flow of work through the shipyards to avoid the valley of (commercial) death for the ship building companies and the associated loss of jobs, skills and expertise.

Despite being generally accepted that building overseas designs in Australia generally involves a cost premium of about 30%, building 12 conventional submarines of a proven design had some credibility as the Collins class boats were built at the Osborne shipyard.

Sound sovereign defence industrial capability requires that Australia should be able to maintain, repair and modify all items of defence hardware and to manufacture ammunition and other high use consumable items. This includes all bullets, bombs, mines and missiles. Whether other weapons and materiel are manufactured in Australia depends on the numbers required and the costs involved.

There is minimal if any strategic rationale for building the submarines in Australia. This is Industry Policy masquerading as Defence Policy.

By comparison all the Air Force's combat aircraft are manufactured overseas. For the F-35, Australian manufacturing participation is to produce components for the total production run, not just the RAAF aircraft.

The Attack class submarine program was to cost \$90 billion, historically Australia's most expensive defence acquisition. The nuclear submarine alternative will cost much more. While the number to be acquired has gone from 12 to eight, the submarines are much larger, more complex and with new and more expensive technologies.

Building AUKUS Nuclear Submarines in Australia

In context, US shipyards have constructed nuclear submarines since the 1950s and UK since the 1960s. The US shipyards are backed by extensive infrastructure and a nuclear industry. They have built hundreds of submarines and have experience that cannot be easily transferred. The UK shipyards have had similar experience albeit at a smaller scale.

The US Navy currently has 69 commissioned nuclear submarines including 19 Virginia class attack boats. Virginia class (US) and Acute class (UK) have reactors that do not require refuelling for 25 years. Presumably the new AUKUS Class will as well. This is good for a overseas build purchase but complicates local manufacture as the fuel is weapons grade uranium and strictly controlled.

Building nuclear-powered submarines in Australia is not a good idea but with the assistance of its AUKUS partners Australia can be expected to be up to the challenge. Program delays and cost blow-outs are to be expected. Considering the lack of a nuclear industry to support the project, the cost of building the submarines in Adelaide is likely to be nearly double the cost of US or UK construction.

Construction of nuclear-powered submarines in Australia represents a major misallocation of resources. The opportunity cost is of the order of tens of billions of dollars. The National interest would be better served by investing in the capacity to produce high technology defence expendables, particularly long-range missiles. There is also the option of acquiring a long-range strike platform for the RAAF if a suitable aircraft becomes available.

Adelaide's Osborne shipyards look like having their hands full with life of type extension on the six Collins class boats along with the construction of surface ships.

From the aspect of politics and industry policy, South Australia has expectations and needs to be compensated. While Osborne would remain the repair and maintenance shipyard for Australian nuclear submarines, on a broader industry policy front there are several federally funded manufacturing activities that could be located in South Australia. They include missile manufacture, a nuclear power station, factories producing modular homes and in the fullness of time a factory producing small modular reactors.

Continued Page 19



Rally Round - Are we Ready?

Our times are now compared to the rise of the dictators in the 1930s, when the democracies delayed rearming until it was almost too late. The Russian invasion of Ukraine and the Hamas terrorist attack on Israel, both of which have led to enormous loss of life and national treasure, show what might happen in our region should China decide to occupy Taiwan by force of arms.

The question is: are we ready? A difficult question: given time the weapons can be produced but will seldom be sufficient, as the war in Ukraine has brutally shown, so our mental preparedness becomes paramount. Andrew Hastie recently wrote about this in *The Australian* newspaper and referred to Laurence Olivier's 1944 technicolour film adaptation of Shakespeare's *King Henry V* that provided hope and fortitude after five long years of war. King Henry was a strong leader and his stirring words before the walls of Harfleur can still inspire today.

*Once more unto the breach, dear friends,
once more; or close the wall up with our
English dead,*

and before the Battle of Agincourt, where an exhausted and hungry English army awaited attack by a French army that outnumbered it by five to one:

*We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
for he to-day that sheds his blood with
me shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile"
and finally "All things are ready if our mind be
so.*

There are reported to be some 5,000 vacant positions in the establishment of the Australian Defence Force, and this situation is similar throughout the Anglosphere. The USA and the UK are failing to meet recruiting and retention targets and the Canadian Armed Forces has over 7,000 unfilled establishment positions. This poses a critical problem for both readiness to meet the shock of sudden combat and the availability of cadres to provide sustainability (that word again!) when the stockpile of weapons has been depleted and every trained woman and man ("The single most important factors in war") counts.

These statistics represent the combination of failures to recruit and to retain: essentially why our youth either choose, or are persuaded, not to join and why serving men and women decide that a life spent serving their country is not for them. The latter failure is largely, although not completely, the responsibility of the armed forces themselves and is beyond the scope of this note.

Given the international situation, why are young people not queuing up to join: Is it because a favourable employment market provides better options, because they are too self-centred and undisciplined, or because they have been let down by their education and find their countries unworthy of their support? The unemployment rate is beyond our control, but the latter two possibilities are legitimate concerns. An optimist, however, would find the famous Oxford Union Debate of 1933 instructive: the Union, whose members would go on to shed their blood in the Second World War, resolved by a vote of 275 to 153 "That this house will, under no circumstances, fight for its King and Country".

Roger Buxton

Capability Generation and the Key Role of the Defence Reserve



Brigadier Mike Annett's address to RUSI Vic's May meeting provided an overview of the submission provided by the Defence Reserves Association (DRA) to the Defence team conducting the Reserve Strategic Review. A full article covering this submission will be published in RUSI's National Journal. This short article provides the conclusions of the DRA submission.

The Reserve consists of a range of inter-related and critical capabilities in the context of a capable ADF with depth and resilience. Factors impeding Reserve optimisation have been identified in successive Defence Reviews and Reports into Reserve matters (a total of 46 since 1972) and at many annual DRA National Conferences.

The DRA has long advocated for a better resourced and more integrated Reserve component to boost ADF capacity and capability, both in current and contingency operational tasks. The effectiveness of Reserve in recent regional deployments and in domestic disaster relief operations has often been acknowledged and praised but no one would contend that resourcing of the Reserve or integrated planning for their optimisation has been a priority at the strategic centre in Canberra.

A larger and more flexible Reserve component has the potential to mitigate some of the current permanent force recruiting challenges in Navy, Army and Air Force as well as open the only viable pathway for Defence to grow and sustain capabilities in Cyber and Space.

By incentivising more young Australians to serve part time, especially utilising their civil skills and qualifications, and getting more ex-permanent ADF people to stay engaged, will go a long way towards creating the essential base on which to build a national mobilisation plan should our security situation require an all-in effort for National Defence.

Ghost Bat - a Loyal Wingman

Mike Rawlinson

A **loyal wingman** is a proposed type of Uncrewed Combat Air Vehicle (UCAV) which incorporates artificial intelligence (AI) and is capable of collaborating with the next generation of manned combat aircraft, including sixth generation fighters and bombers such as the B-21 Raider. Also, unlike the conventional UCAV, the loyal wingman is expected to be capable of surviving on the battlefield but to be significantly lower cost than a manned aircraft with similar capabilities. In the US, the concept is known as the Collaborative Combat Aircraft.

The concept of the loyal wingman arose in the early 2000s and countries including Australia, China, India, Japan, Russia, the UK and the US have been developing the necessary design criteria and technologies. The loyal wingman is controlled by a parent aircraft to accomplish tasks such as scouting or absorbing enemy fire if attacked, as well as operating independently. The pilot or crew member of the crewed aircraft acts as mission commander of the loyal wingman, leaving AI to operate under their tactical control as high-skill operator of the robotic aircraft.

The **Boeing MQ-28 Ghost Bat**, previously known as the **Boeing Airpower Teaming System (ATS)**, is a loyal wingman class stealth, multirole, uncrewed aerial combat vehicle in development by Boeing Australia for the RAAF. It is designed as a force multiplier aircraft capable of flying alongside crewed aircraft for support as part of an integrated system including space-based capabilities and performing autonomous missions independently using AI.

The Ghost Bat uses a modular mission package system in the nose of the aircraft. The entire nose section can be removed and quickly swapped for another with a different payload for various missions including combat, force reconnaissance and electronic warfare.

Ghost Bat will support and protect crewed RAAF aircraft, such as the F35-A, F/A-18F, E-7a, P-8A and KC-30A. It has a 2000-mile ferry range or 900-mile combat radius.

The aircraft is the first combat aircraft designed and developed in Australia in over half a century. A full-scale mock-up was revealed at the 2019 Avalon Airshow. The first real aircraft was rolled out in May 2020 and moved under its own power for the first time in October 2020, conducting low-speed taxi tests at RAAF Base Amberley. The first test flight of the prototype occurred at Woomera in February 2021. Two more test flights were conducted at Woomera in early November 2021 where a prototype successfully raised and engaged its landing gear while a second prototype completed its first test flight.

The RAAF initially planned to buy three Airpower Teaming System (ATS) systems, as part of the Loyal

Wingman Advanced Development Program. The three drones were built at Fisherman's Bend. After the first flight the order was increased to six. In May 2023, the Australian government confirmed its commitment to funding 10 aircraft for the RAAF, not including three prototypes. This took the government's total investment in the Loyal Wingman program to over A\$600 million. The uncrewed platforms are scheduled to enter service with the RAAF in 2024-25.

In September 2021, Boeing unveiled the launch of a new manufacturing facility for its Loyal Wingman uncrewed aircraft at Wellcamp airport in Toowoomba. Boeing will only produce the aircraft in Australia with the RAAF as lead partner on the program.

An official naming ceremony was held at RAAF Base Amberley in March 2022 to announce the Loyal Wingman will be known as the MQ-28A Ghost Bat in RAAF service, named after an Australian bat found in northern parts of the continent.

In February 2024 the Australian Government announced a further A\$400 million in funding for three more aircraft, built to the new "Block 2" standard. The announced improvements included developments to the sensors, mission payloads, integrated combat system and the autonomous systems.

General characteristics

- **Crew:** None
- **Length:** 11.7 m
- **Wingspan:** 7.3m

Performance

- **Range:** 2,000 nm
- **Combat range:** 900 nm

In May 2022 Prime Minister Scott Morrison said "This is a truly historic moment for our country and for Australian defence innovation. The Loyal Wingman will be pivotal to exploring the critical capabilities our Air Force needs to protect our nation and its allies into the future."



Book Reviews

This newsletter has 12 Book Reviews. On behalf of members the Editor thanks the reviewers. The Royal United Services Institute of Victoria Library thanks authors and publishers for providing copies for review.

If you would like a hard copy of a review, please contact the Secretary.

The Truth of War

Lethality in Combat, a study in the /Real Nature of Combat

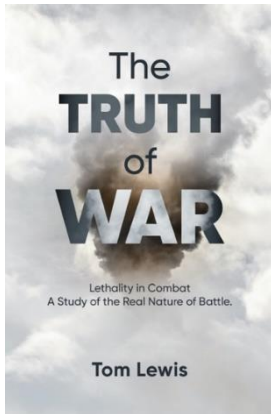
Tom Lewis

Newport, NSW: Big Sky Publishing, 2023

Paperback 368pp RRP: \$32.99

Reviewer: David Hardacre, May 2024

As Lewis concludes: 'This study has cited many examples where the truth of battle contradicts the so-called rules of war.' (p.285). Initially he recognizes that



the real nature of battle commonly affects relatively small numbers mainly from the fighting arms. He identifies three features in the true nature of war, centring around enthusiastic warriors as the necessary face of war, prisoner-taking and the reality of combat, and targeting civilians - who is the enemy? He uses six major conflicts of the twentieth century as the

basis for this study.

In the first part consideration centres around combat euphoria, the necessary enthusiasm for combat in leadership behaviour, revenge as a motivator, aggression in flying tactics, the prevalence of lethal behaviour and ultimate discipline in battle. He also considers whether desecrating the dead is military necessity or abhorrent behaviour. The analysis looks aspects frequently remaining unknown to outsiders, observing that 'real combat behaviour is largely unknown to anyone who has not engaged in tactical fighting' (p.9), and that with increasing experience comes acceptance of the fact that 'it is him or me' and the 'true nature of their terrible but necessary occupation' (p.28). Combat being very stressful, adjusting to dead bodies may dehumanise the enemy, while the pressure of not letting comrades down bonds groups.

Prisoner-taking and the realities of combat raise several sensitive issues. While taking prisoners is a militarily sensible goal, it also detracts from taking military objectives. Prisoners can be a genuine danger, and surrendering must be done properly. What do you do with prisoners once taken? Specialist members of military forces often get dealt with more harshly by the

enemy, and surrendering to a hot-blooded enemy is very risky, as is treachery and cruelty. For some in hopeless situations, refusal to surrender raises other values issues and quandaries for their opposition. Is killing in revenge an understandable behaviour? Thirst for revenge is a powerful motivator, but what does one do in those situations? Rules of Engagement will be overlooked or ignored. Do we condemn troops for doing what anyone of us could have done? Likewise, killing in cold blood for military necessity raises questions, when countries have policies of never surrendering, as exemplified by the Japanese or Hitler's philosophy of 'Victory or Death'. Killing helpless soldiers will haunt those involved for years to come. Likewise, resources problems exist in handling prisoners as this reality weakens forward troops. These highlight shortcomings in the Rules of War: no objective values exist, and conventions may not cater for the realities of specific situations.

In 'verification of the enemy - who is the civilian', Lewis raises the issue of whether a civilian's action in giving help to one side makes him/her become a combatant. Other issues considered include those taking up arms or being a partisan, combatants disguised as civilian, and the tactics of infiltrating soldiers disguised as civilians. Associated items relate to misidentified targets, and that not shooting first can become fatal ('shoot first and survive' may become the practice). Targeting civilians for military necessity, collateral damage or spillover effects, military units being placed among civilians are among other complexities. International conventions may mean nothing to one side, but this disadvantages the other side. Targeting civilians ranges across a spectrum of warfare, ranging from legitimate (because they are collaborators) to trusting no-one. Thus Lewis suggests that in Vietnam both sides had their 'My Lai's' (massacres) but one side's were highly publicised, the others were continuous throughout the war and after, largely dismissed, ignored, defended or rationalised by brave intellectuals.

Sometimes this has been described as 'misconduct stress behaviour', the consequences of placing constraints on soldiers - damned if they do fire and damned if they don't fire - because the suspected enemy may indeed be a civilian (p.284). If soldiers are classically trained infantry, it is difficult for them to react other than in the way they have been trained.

This study raises various (unresolvable?) questions involving the Rules of War and the associated International Conventions: the significance lies in their recognition. Provided training can be inadequate or impossible for the actualities of combat situations. Thus the values in this study are that Lewis raises issues and alerts readers, and potential decision-makers to the impossible choices which may be faced in combat.

The Battle of the Beams

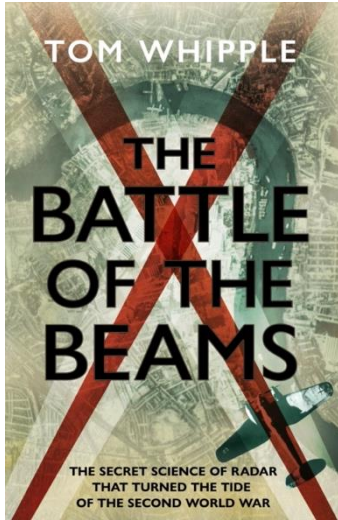
The Secret Science of Radar that turned the tide of the Second World War

Tom Whipple

North Sydney, NSW: Penguin Random House, 2023
Paperback 320pp RRP: \$35.00

Reviewer: Robert Dixon, March 2024

In 1939 the Germans were more technologically advanced than the British as they didn't just have radar to detect planes entering their airspace, they had ground-based radio beams to guide their own planes into enemy airspace. This allowed German bombers to operate effectively at night. The system also allowed the bomber crews to know exactly when they were over their intended targets.



It was Reginald Jones, a British scientist working in the Air Ministry, who realized that the Germans had developed a radio navigation system which enabled an aircraft to fly along a chosen heading with great accuracy by following radio beam transmissions. With the support of Winston Churchill Jones was able to obtain the resources he needed to discover the exact method being used by the Germans including the frequency they were transmitting on and to then develop very effective counter measures.

This '*Battle of the Beams*' continued throughout the war as both sides developed new measures to enhance the ability of their own bombers to find their targets and to reach them with minimal losses while at the same time trying to thwart their enemy's ability to do the same to them.

This book covers advances in electromagnetic warfare on the British side up to the landings in Normandy with a focus on the contribution of Reginald Jones who is primarily concerned with: (i) obtaining detailed information on new navigational aids being used by the German bombers and finding ways to render them ineffective, and (ii) developing new navigational aids to allow RAF bombers to find their targets and to do so without their location and heading being accurately determined by German radar.

Clearly the book deals with an important aspect of RAF and Luftwaffe bomber operations in the Second World War and the scientific 'war' taking place in the

background. *The Battle of the Beams* is well written and entertaining but a potential reader should note that Reginald Jones himself has written a superb autobiography titled *Most Secret War: British Scientific Intelligence, 1939–1945* which not only covers the topics to be found in *The Battle of the Beams* but much, much more besides.

For those who have not read Jones' autobiography this book will be a good 'light' read and hopefully will serve the purpose of encouraging them to read *Most Secret War*, a copy of which is to be found in the RUSI library. For those who have read Jones' autobiography before reading *The Battle of the Beams* it will be obvious that *The Battle* draws heavily upon the material in the autobiography. Comparing the two books there are some important differences I should draw attention to.

First, *The Battle of the Beams* is considerably shorter (half the number of pages) than the autobiography and has a more reader-friendly font size. However, the difference in length is mainly because there is much of interest in the autobiography not covered in *The Battle* and also what is covered in *The Battle* is not covered in as much detail as in the autobiography.

Second, unlike the impression given in the autobiography, in *The Battle of the Beams* the Germans were ahead of the British on almost every aspect of waves research invention and innovation (radar and windows, to take just two examples).

Interestingly, in relation to windows (aka chaff) both sides knew how to use it to jam the other side's radar but had both refrained from doing so for fear that this would inform their (assumed ignorant) opponent of the technique and they would reply in kind. This (mistaken, but understandable) fear delayed its deployment by both sides for more than a year!

Third, the intention of the authors is quite different. In the preface to *Most Secret War* Jones writes that his manuscript 'has been pruned of undue anecdote'. This approach is totally different to that adopted by the author of *The Battle of the Beams* who writes (p 266) 'My book does not pretend to provide a definitive historical account. More than anything, I want the book to be read. ... This is, most of all, a book I want people to read and enjoy – a racy story of clever people doing important things, packed with anecdotes and tales ...'. A good example of the author's approach is in the sixteen pages devoted to the famous Bruneval Raid (aka Operation Biting), which took place in February 1942. (Jones' book also has a chapter devoted to this Operation.) The Bruneval Raid was a very successful Combined Operations raid on a German radar installation situated on the northern coast of France. The aim of the raid was to seize parts of the radar equipment to be taken back to England for examination. While the author does provide an accurate description of the raid as it unfolded space is also devoted to recounting the thoughts and

experiences of a number of the individuals involved. Thus the reader is told in some detail about the songs which various participants sang at different times and the behaviour and thoughts of the paratroopers on the aircraft before they reached the drop zone, including details of the inevitable consequence of their drinking copious amounts of tea during the flight – this is mentioned a number of times! Personally, I find such material distracting but others, and especially younger readers, might find it entertaining.

Tom Whipple, author of *The Battle of the Beams*, is the science editor of the (London) *Times*, a post he has held since 2012. As would be expected he writes extremely well and his explanations (not that there are many) of the relevant theoretical physics and his descriptions of pieces of scientific equipment are very clear. The book has eighteen illustrations - mostly very useful drawings but some photos, 21 pages of helpful endnotes and a two-page bibliography which draws the attention of the reader to many important works published since Jones's autobiography appeared.

The Butt Report

An aside: This book, along with any study of RAF bombing operations in the Second World War, gives passing mention to the 1941 *Butt Report*. This was a study which showed that in the summer of 1941 only 5% of the aircraft which set out on bombing raids actually bombed within 8kms of their target and of the aircraft which claimed to have successfully reached the target only 33% bombed within 8kms of their target. Also given the high costs in men's lives involved in these operations things clearly had to change. Directly or indirectly the *Butt Report* led to the introduction of much improved navigational methods to be used by Bomber Command (amongst other things, the RAF adopted and improved on the 'beams' method). It also led to a change in the leadership of Bomber Command and to adoption of a policy of 'area bombing'. The reason I am devoting a paragraph of this review to the Butt report is that there is rarely any mention of the author, David Bensusan-Butt (1914-1994), someone who spent much of his working life in Australia. He was an English economist who worked alongside Churchill's scientific advisor (Frederick Lindemann) and it was in that capacity that he was asked to conduct a review of the activities of Bomber Command. As mentioned above, the review led to major changes in the leadership and operations of the Command. After the war Butt moved to Australia and was appointed a Professor at the ANU, a position he held for fifteen years until his retirement in 1976. While at the ANU he spent much of his time writing about economic growth and advising the Australian Government on tax reform.

WALLABY AIRLINES

Twelve months flying the Caribou in Vietnam

[The Australian Air Campaign Series - 5]

Jeff Pedrina

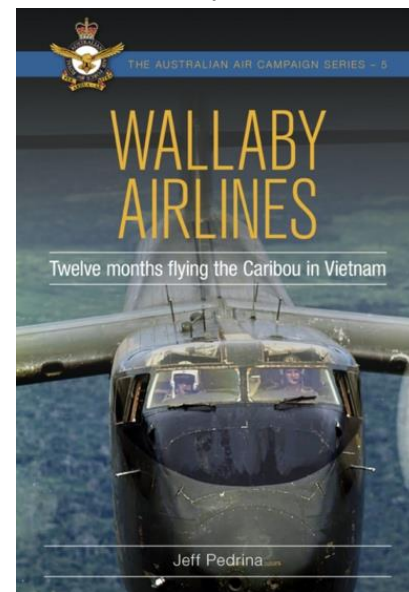
Newport, NSW: Big Sky Publishing, 2023

Paperback 224pp RRP: \$19.99

Reviewer: Rob Ellis, February 2024

This is a short and well-written account of the author's twelve-month deployment to Vietnam, as a pilot with an RAAF air-lift squadron, flying DHC4 'Caribou'.

Flight Lieutenant Pedrina was a permanent-service officer, recently married, when he was deployed to



35 Squadron RAAF, flying in personnel, food, ammunition and other supplies to the Australian troops serving alongside

American, New Zealand and South Vietnamese forces against the North Vietnamese Army and their irregular Viet Cong allies.

It is clear, from the author's account, that this was not the role

that was expected for service pilots and aircrew. The Caribous were not jet-engine combat aircraft, but propeller-driven freighters [2 x Pratt & Whitney Wasp R-2000 radial engines] capable of lifting just over four tonnes (or 30 passengers or 22 stretchers), with a maximum speed of 187 knots with a range of 2,000kms and operating from improvised air-strips of less than 400m in length.

The crew, usually two pilots and a load-master, were exposed to many of the same risks as were combat pilots and were especially vulnerable to ground fire. They operated in weather conditions that would be dangerous for combat aircraft, and the aircrew members flew longer hours in a 'working day' than would be expected of pilots flying combat missions or operating with civil air-lift aircraft operators. Despite this, almost all completed their year's deployment and returned to Australia safely.

The book gives a clear and honest account of the unpublicised work done by non-combat pilots in RAAF service, especially their ability to support Australian combat troops serving in Vietnam, and of the difficulties they had to overcome because of lack of support from higher command, which often entailed 'scrounging' spare parts from American squadrons, which were also using Caribous in Vietnam, and had

much better support from maintenance crews and equipment and, parts availability.

Over the years, the Caribou saw service with the air forces of some 20 countries, and at least 25 civil operators in nearly 20 countries. They were similar in both performance and capacity to the much better-known Douglas DC-3, the 'Dakota' which had served a similar role in many air forces and airlines in the years between 1940 and 1950. The Caribou was a worthy replacement for that classic aircraft.

DREADFUL LADY OVER THE MEKONG DELTA

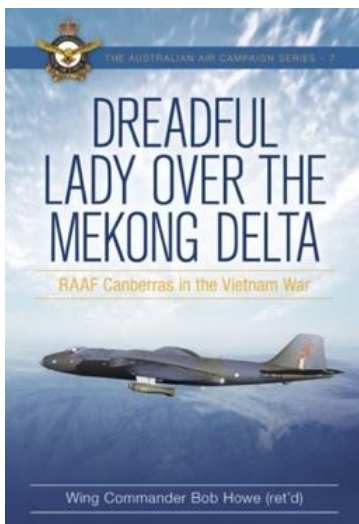
RAAF Canberras in the Vietnam War
[Australian Air Campaign Series – 7]

Bob Howe

Newport, NSW: Big Sky Publishing, 2023
Paperback 223pp RRP:\$19.99

Reviewer: Adrian Catt, May 2024

Re-worked for a new generation of reader, this comprehensive work details the background of No2 SQN (RAAF) deployment from 1967-71 to Vietnam War in the Mekong Delta region, as told by a former serving navigator/bomb aimer.



Beginning with a history of conflict in Vietnam, the book covers and explains the full picture of the conflict in this period such as US involvement and Command and Control structures, Rules of Engagement (ROE), Vietnamisation, RAAF Deployment, Mission restrictions and ROE, Air Operations (AO), descriptions and purpose of various types of naval and riverine vessels, their type and function, and the structure of marine and riverine objectives and teams.

AO for 2SQN included tasking of 'frag' sorties, and also missions that were mostly air strike or photo-recon (PR) tasks. These were an accompaniment, or in lieu of, USAF/VAF dive-bombing, or B-52 Lightning strikes, and were achieved by co-ordination with Forward Air Controllers (FACs), (usually air-borne in 'bird-dog' aircraft), which would drop smoke rockets to mark targets for the RAAF Canberras.

The Canberras had advantages such as level bombing, low altitude, stability, and slower airspeed over dive bombers and fast-strike jets. Weaknesses included problems with inaccurate sights, and limitations of the 'green satin' doppler radar which provided groundspeed information.

Further, ordnance issues were numerous with faulty electrics within bomb racks. There were problems with both old and new types of munitions/stores such as hang-up's, fuse and delay faults, stick-stacks, tail types and performance, and corkscrewing.

Smoke marking was done by FACs so the Canberras could create clear landing zones (LZs) for 'slicks' and gunships, as well as clearing vegetation from near waterways, in support of riverine operations. Tasks were also to destroy ground targets such as sampans, hooches (thatched huts), canals, tunnels, caves, munitions dumps, supply depots, rice stores, and tax collectors.

Bombing and navigation techniques used by 2SQN included the use of low-tech resources such as butcher's paper, and chinagraphs. The crews also developed a technique of adjusting the altimeter to compensate for the effect of the Mekong Delta atmosphere, thus enhancing bombing success, which was officially measured in terms of Bomb Damage Assessment (BDA), and accuracy. These critiques were based upon photo or cine evidence collected by the Canberras themselves.

2SQN's performance is illustrated by evidence tendered by the author, and from official squadron histories. The final analysis is that the deployment of 2SQN Canberras was a success, though the War itself is now considered a failure. Only one Canberra was lost by the RAAF when a crew was on a night mission in the I Corps Combat Tactical Zone.

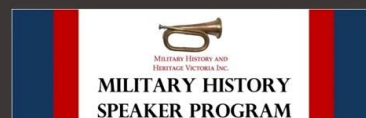
A very informative and educational read which will hold the interest of any student or buff of Military or Aviation history. Well recommended.

THE KILLER BEES

**Australian Independent Companies And
Commandos At War 1942-1945.**

Speaker: Gregory Blake

MHHV Zoom Speaker Event
Wednesday 17 July 2024 7:00PM-8:00PM



Deceptions of World War II

From camouflage techniques to deception tactics

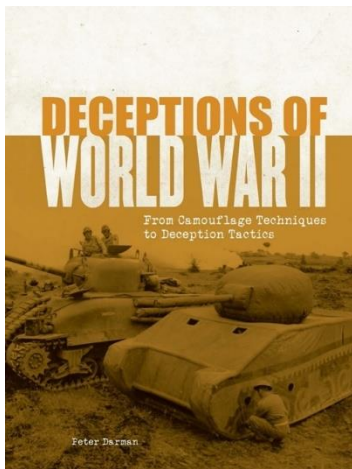
Peter Darman

Gosford, NSW: Exisle Publishing, Apr 2024
Hardback 224pp RRP: \$39.99

Reviewer: Neville Taylor, March 2024

This is one of a boxed pair from Exisle Publishing. Its companion is *Secret Heroes of World War II*.

Its six chapters are between 30 and 40 pages in length and each consider one aspect of deception from both the Allied and Axis powers. Defensive deception and deception by intelligence are included, along with the four major theatres during the entire conflict.



Each chapter has its own peculiarity, from amazing characters to incredible subterfuges that required massive manpower to achieve the desired level of deception. Employed in many of them were co-opted personnel from the props departments

of major film producers and camouflage units became part of the order of battle. Tanks in the Western Desert 'became trucks.

After Germany's *Barbarossa* (June 1942), it became a mandatory part of Russian orders to include a deception plan. Phantom armies were created, necessitating physical evidence of their existence as well as 'phantom' radio traffic having to be scripted and run to add to the realism.

Photographs are of excellent quality, as are the battle maps that clearly illustrate the positions and moves of the belligerents. Beside each map is a key indicating the name of the operation, its duration and location, the objective(s), outcome and details. There is a comprehensive *Further Reading* list and an easy-to-follow *Index*.

This is a most agreeable read, seeing how each side tried, and usually succeeded, to create an advantage for themselves whilst throwing the opposition off guard. So often was the strategy of one side influenced by a believable deception – resulting in a reduced and/or unprepared opposition.

A highly commendable publication.

Guts Glory and Blunder

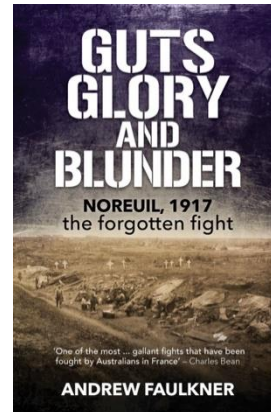
Noreuil, 1917 the forgotten fight

Andrew Faulkner

Newport, NSW: Big Sky Publishing, 2024
Paperback 292pp RRP: \$32.99

Reviewer: Robert Dixon, May 2024

The central chapters of this excellent book provide a detailed account of the 50th Battalion's assault on the French town of Noreuil in April 1917. The assault was



successful in that within days of the attack the German defenders withdrew to the Hindenburg Line. Unfortunately, this success came at great cost, over 50% of the Australian soldiers involved were killed, captured or missing.

While some chapters of the book deal with the assault itself (more on that below)

there are chapters dealing with the prior experience of many of the soldiers at Gallipoli (tragically, many who survived Gallipoli would later die in Noreuil and other French battles); the difficulties experienced by the 85 members of the Battalion who became prisoners of war, and; the impact of the many deaths and casualties resulting from the battle upon their families in Australia.

As the author points out in his introduction, the story of a single day's action involves 'hardened Anzacs and green rookies' in fighting that 'ebbs and flows like the tides'. The fighting involved 'hand-to-hand combat, bomb and bayonet fights' with 'men carrying on against enormous odds'. At one point in the battle the Germans used captured Australians as 'human shields'. While one man's gallantry on the day led to the award of a Victoria Cross, the action also saw a case of 'fragging' (yes, fragging) and a number of Australians killed by 'friendly fire'. All this in a single day!

This book is well researched and extremely well written. It includes many 'in-text' photographs (mostly portraits), five maps (although given the importance of the location of a valley in the battle it is a pity that the (too) few contour lines drawn in one of the maps are so faint as to be almost invisible), nineteen pages of endnotes, an excellent index, and a very helpful bibliography. Highly recommended.

Andrew Faulkner is an Adelaide-based journalist and author. His first book, *Arthur Blackburn VC: An Australian hero*, was shortlisted for the 2009 National Biography Award.

Softly Softly

Capturing Hitler's Spies

Tony Matthews

Newport, NSW: Big Sky Publishing, 2024
Paperback 352pp RRP \$32,99

Reviewer: Robert Dixon, May 2024

Relying almost entirely upon previously highly classified MI5 files, this book tells the dramatic stories of five German spies. In each case the author provides a very detailed account of their capture and subsequent fate.



Unfortunately, in some of the cases, I think the account is far too detailed. Let me give you one example: I begin with some background. One of the spies had been discovered by young farm labourers in a field near Warboys, a village in Huntingdonshire. When discovered he had a parachute and a German pistol. The boys alerted a

member of the Home Guard named James Godfrey who went to the scene. The spy was taken into custody and after some months was tried, sentenced to death and executed. After the execution a number of newspaper reporters tried to find out more about the capture of the spy. They also wanted to take a photo of the Home Guard person involved. That meant travelling to Warboys.

At this point in the story the author (p 52 of the book) writes: 'A reporter for the *Daily Express* spoke with a man named Alfred Ilett of Warboys who gave him James Godfrey's name. The reporter was then driven in his chauffeured car to the house of William Pittuck who was the Huntingdon representative of the *Daily Express*. The reporter was attempting to engage a local photographer. Pittuck introduced the journalist to Miss Ada Bullen, a photographer's assistant who worked just across the road in High Street at the photographic business owned by Mr Whitney. Returning together to see Mr Alfred Ilett, it was Ilett who told the reporter where to find Godfrey. Ilett just happened to be one of Godfrey's friends. In fact Ilett invited them inside and his wife telephoned Godfrey's mother and then passed the phone to the reporter so that he could speak to her personally. Soon afterwards both the reporter and photographer drove to the Godfrey family home and interviewed Godfrey who was dressed in his Home Guard uniform at the time. Having taken the required photograph, Miss Bullen handed the film to the reporter and Miss Bullen was returned home.'

It is a pity that off-putting material like this has found its way into the book as the stories of each of the spies are very interesting. The author shows that the security services withheld relevant information from a court trying one of the spies with the result that he was executed when, had the court been given the information, he might well have been spared the death sentence. It is findings like this that will attract the interest of readers keen to learn more about the activities of British counter-espionage agencies in the Second World War.

The font size is very 'reader-friendly' and the book has endnotes and a useful index, but no bibliography or guide to further reading.

Tony Matthews has dedicated almost his entire adult life to writing and researching Australian history. He also writes extensively on military and espionage history with a specific emphasis on both world wars. He is the author of more than 30 books including several historical novels.

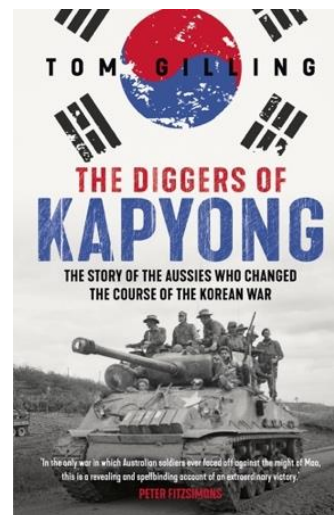
The Diggers of Kapyong

The story of the Aussies who changed the course of the Korean War

Tom Gilling

Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2024
Paperback 288pp RRP: \$34.99

Reviewer: Adrian Catt, May 2024



This easy-to-read and engaging book focuses upon the involvement of the men of the Third Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (3RAR), and those re-deployed from British Commonwealth Occupation Forces – Japan (BCOF), to the war between North and South Korea in the period of 1950-51; especially detailing the Battle of Kapyong.

Beginning with an outline of the lead-up, whilst identifying the key nations and personalities that would become involved in the Korean War, the reader is told how and why the aggressors and defenders both thought and acted prior to, and indeed during conflict, and what their strategic goals and fears were; and also why these roles were reversed on a number of occasions [Seoul changing hands Four times].

The North initially invaded the South with the backing of the People's Republic of China (PRC), and presumably the tacit approval of the Soviet Union. The South was defended by a hastily formed UN coalition

Secret Heroes of World War II

Spies, scientists and other heroes

Eric Chaline

Gosford, NSW: Exisle Publishing, Apr 2024

Hardback 224pp RRP: \$39.99

Reviewer: Neville Taylor, March 2024

This is one of a boxed pair from Exisle Publishing. Its companion is *Deceptions of World War II*.

It has presented eight 'Backroom' (read scientist/engineer) heroes, eighteen "Espionage" heroes, sixteen 'Resistance' heroes and three 'Escape' heroes. It is not a collection of Allied heroes – there are a number from the Axis powers.

Either four or two pages explores the contribution each made with a person photograph for most, and frequently additional photographs of them or their location. An historic insert comes with each providing additional background on local situations at the time.

The reader can make a choice – read about those already familiar, read the unknown individuals, or leisurely read the volume from cover to cover. [Rather like a monthly digest that has been published since before most of us were born.]

Most of the escape heroes were non-military people who facilitated 'escape lines' for hundreds of individuals who had no chance of escaping the purges of the day. It was refreshing to see these individuals being classified as heroes and their efforts being brought to our attention after all this time.

Whilst enjoying the presentations, a couple of them fell quite short in detail. Where was Captain Ewen Montague's photograph and why was a half-page photograph of Major Martin's 'girlfriend' used when the text could have benefitted from greater volume? There is more detail on Operation Mincemeat in the companion volume than here. Claus von Stauffenberg was the key conspirator, and no one else was prepared to make the attempt on Hitler's life. The fact that only half the planned charge was able to be prepared in time and failed to kill Hitler has been totally overlooked.

The presentation of *Secret Heroes* is a credit to the publisher. It is extremely well presented with high resolution photographs on the highest quality paper. A very enlightening and good read that brings to light quite a number of unknown heroes.

of Nations led by US Supreme Commander General Douglas MacArthur. MacArthur directed a number of successful manoeuvres which drove the Northern Forces beyond the 38th Parallel, driving the aggressors as far North as the Yalu River.

From this point, MacArthur appears to have made mistakes personally, as well as ignoring field intelligence which was being 'shaped' or concocted by his Intel Aide, General Willoughby, in order to pander [allegedly] to the ego and reputation of MacArthur.

MacArthur failed to believe the PRC would re-group and attack the South a second time, but a bitter onslaught *was* fought in the most appalling and miserable cold conditions of winter. The warriors on all sides faced frostbite, hypothermia, snow blindness, and death from the weather, as well as from hard-fought battles. The North had a seemingly endless supply of troops, but the UN Forces had air-superiority, napalm, tanks and 3RAR!

Gilling describes the battles which coalition forces fought prior to Kapyong. 3RAR also saw action at the Battles of Apple Orchard, the Falling Bridges, Chongju, Twin Tunnels, and finally the most significant battle (because it changed the outcome of the Korean War to eventually become a stalemate) the Battle of the Kapyong Valley.

Fought from the 23rd to the 25th of April 1951, the Battle of Kapyong was won courageously by 3RAR against PRC forces dug in on the spurs and ridgebacks of mountains overlooking the Kapyong Valley and the Kapyong River. Fighting was bloody and relentless and often at close quarters. The odds were stacked against 3RAR, but their deft tactics, including directing the use of US tanks and close air-support, they eventually secured victory at Kapyong. This battle was vitally important because the victor controlled the vital conduit pass through the mountains that allowed men and materiel to flow from the North directly into Seoul some 30 kilometres away.

The war saw MacArthur sacked by President Truman and ended in a stalemate 'Cease Fire' between North and South, which is still in place at the 38th Parallel some 70 years later. Gilling asks whether anything of value was really achieved by either side? Was all the death and destruction and the waste of billions of dollars worth the effort?

This is a well-written and factual account of the Korean War which enlightens the reader to many facts and much detail. Nicely done! One disappointment feature was the basic and simplistic maps in the *Forward* which lacked detail/markings of key locations often mentioned in the text, and failed to show the important UN strategic lines of Utah, Kansas and Wyoming. Nevertheless, an enjoyable and authoritative read based upon the official diaries of 3RAR, and veterans' accounts, which can be appreciated by all readers.



Bloody Buna

The Battle for the Beachhead New Guinea 1942-43

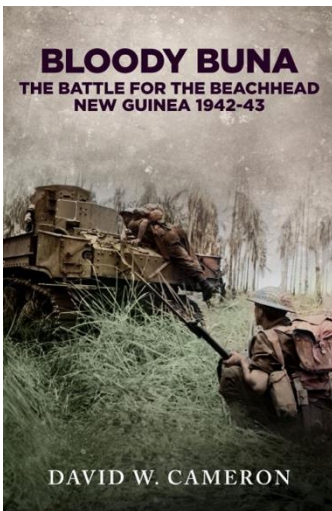
David W. Cameron

Newport, NSW: Big Sky Publishing, 2023

Paperback 440pp RRP: \$32.99

Reviewer: Rob Ellis, May 2024

David Cameron, author of more than 20 books on various aspects of Australian involvement in both the First and Second World Wars, has, in this case, produced a detailed and well-researched volume on



one of the most significant battles of the Allied campaign against Imperial Japanese forces in New Guinea, at the end of the first year of Japan's attempts to establish its 'Greater East Asian Co-prosperity Sphere'.

The re-capture of Buna was the first joint American-Australian land forces operation in the South-West Pacific Command under its Commander-in-Chief,

General Douglas MacArthur. The American commander in the field, Lt-Gen Robert Eichelberger, in his reports to Gen MacArthur, claimed that "...the 32nd Division alone took Buna – No one else did". The American troops involved were the three Infantry Regiments of the 32nd Division, which was without its artillery (except for 1 x 105mm howitzer), anti-aircraft unit and armoured vehicle component.

The Australian Brigade Group (the equivalent of one American regiment), was made up of three Australian battalions, part of a battery of 25-pounder [87mm] gun-howitzers, and a part-squadron of light 'Stuart' tanks. The Royal Australian Air Force provided most of the Allied air cover, making frequent attacks on Japanese positions. It was Australian-crewed 'Dakota' transports that flew in supplies of all types. RAN freighters and small ships also provided substantial logistic support to both American and Australian troops.

Eichelberger overlooked that during the six weeks of the campaign, the US units took 1,954 casualties from a force approximately 4,9090 strong, whereas the Australians lost 863 casualties from a force that numbered, at most, approximately 1,400.

In this battle Australian troops were rewarded with one Distinguished Conduct Medal, two Military Crosses and 2 Military Medals. Members of the somewhat larger American contingent received two Congressional Medals of Honour, and nearly 30 Distinguished Service Crosses, (as well as one Silver Star, awarded to their

senior officer, Lt-Gen Eichelberger).

The Japanese forces in the Buna-Sanananda area were believed to have numbered, at most, 8,000 men [although this included some Korean 'indentured' labourers]. In the area of the battle of Buna it is estimated that about 3,500 troops were committed. Dead Japanese, counted after the battle, numbered 1,580, and many others were never found. There is no estimate of wounded or missing; only a very few were captured. Post-war Japanese estimates were that the losses in the area reached 70% of the troops committed, so that it is possible that total Japanese casualties in and around Buna, in killed, wounded and evacuated sick numbered in the region of 3,800 to 4,000. [Replacements were brought in during the battle so the total committed was larger than the estimate given above]

Throughout the six weeks of this campaign there was bitter fighting for every inch of terrain occupied by the Japanese, and their bunkers were well-sited to give fire-support to each other, so each bunker, weapon-pit and trench had to be painstakingly cleared by troops who were often tired, hungry and exhausted by six weeks of hard fighting with little or no relief from the on-going stresses of fighting in a swampy jungle environment. It is no wonder that some of the inexperienced troops of one American battalion broke in the face of strong Japanese defences and had to be temporarily withdrawn for re-organisation and reinforcement.

Throughout this battle, the pressure on the troops was extreme, and many had to be evacuated due to sickness, as well as from battle wounds. There were continual changes of command, especially at platoon and company level, as junior officers became casualties. At one stage, an Australian infantry company had only one of its six officers fit for active service, and all three platoons were commanded by Sergeants.

At no stage did the Japanese give ground unless outnumbered or out-fought, and the Australian and American troops found it difficult to gain ground in a battle that was fought over a small triangular area no more than six kms long and two kms deep, covering an estimated 4.5 square kms of jungle, swamp, head-high kunai grass and coconut palm plantations, and intersected by muddy creeks. There were no roads – only narrow tracks, often knee-deep in mud.

Few or no details are given of the numbers of troops involved, beyond some estimates of the strength of the often under-strength units involved in particular actions, or of the casualties suffered in total during the battle, which lasted from 19 November 1942 to 3 January 1943 – just short of eleven weeks of poor rations, almost continuous rainfall, lack of rest or sleep, and constant danger from artillery, aircraft and an enemy dedicated to fighting to the death to hold ground. A timeline for the period of the battle, and of events leading up to the initial action would have made it easier to follow the ebb and flow of the action and give perspective to particular incidents of attack and counter-attack.

How to Win an Information War

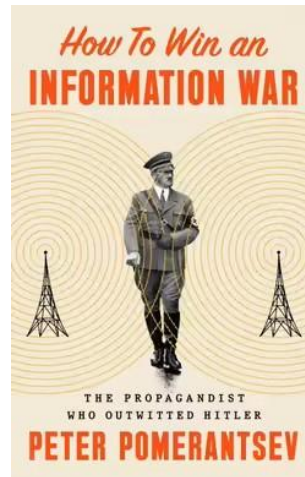
The Propagandist who Outwitted Hitler

Peter Pomerantsev

London : Faber & Faber Limited, 2024

Hardback 304pp RRP: \$49.99

Reviewer: David Rees, May 2024



This is a book more about fighting a hidden war with information and disinformation rather than fighting a war with hard weapons. It explains how propaganda in war became more important as a soft weapon following the improvements in the technology of radio and telephonic transmissions in the Second World War.

The book appears to have been written as a resource for researchers interested in the New Guinea Campaign, and the country over which it was fought, but unfortunately the few maps are hand-drawn (it would appear) and not easy to follow. Some locations are identified only by a 6-digit map reference numbers, but the maps in this book do not have the numbered grid lines which would enable the reader to identify any particular location, which makes it difficult to follow the course of action on the maps.

There are occasions when the focus of this book slides away from its main theme - the recovery of the village of Buna and its missionary centre, and becomes involved in minor issues, which are not necessarily relevant to the main theme of the book. For example is it relevant to the description of the battle for Buna, to know that Private Stanley Martin, aged 29, had been a stockman in civil life before joining the 2nd AIF, or that Corporal John McKitterick had been a motor mechanic before enlisting. However, this information on age and pre-war civil occupation is given for almost all the Australian personnel named as having been involved in the battle, but American personnel are mentioned only by name, rank, appointment and unit.

This reader noted that the situation was complicated by the tendency of the senior American officers to dominate the command structure, despite the fact that many Australian officers were of equal rank and had more experience in combat and were better- trained to manage troops in jungle conditions, which their American opposite numbers were not. Also, some Americans of lower rank had little or no combat experience, whereas many of the Australians had fought in North Africa or had fought their way across the Owen Stanley Ranges against strong Japanese resistance.

Also, the author recognises the difficulties of command of troops, especially when the officers and other ranks of the larger contingent are not necessarily as experienced in combat, or in dealing with an alien environment than are those of the smaller force, which in this case was providing almost the entire support of artillery and armoured fighting vehicles, as well as aerial support and logistical transport.

This is a book for the serious student of the New Guinea campaigns, to be read along with Raymond Paull's classic *Retreat from Kokoda*, (Heinemann, Melbourne, 1958) the story of the 39th Battalion of the CMF in *Mud over Blood*, edited by Carl Johnson & Owen Jenkins (History House, Blackburn, Victoria 2006), and Paul Ham's *Kokoda* (Harper Collins, Melbourne, 2004), and the many other books and archival papers mentioned in Mr Cameron's extensive bibliography.

Most of the book is devoted to covering the background of Sefton Delmer and the big impact his ideas had on British propaganda when he became a director of a secret service known as the Political Warfare Executive (PWE). Sefton Delmer's parents were Australian. Sefton's father was from Tasmania and had been a Professor of English Literature at Berlin University. Both parents had lived in Berlin prior to and during the First World War before returning to England towards the end of the war. Sefton was born in Berlin in 1904 and brought up by his parents in Germany. He therefore spoke German fluently which was a great asset to the PWE.

The book is interesting to read as it not only covers Delmer's role as a propagandist, but also his early development as a dual-national. It describes some of the difficulties he had as a schoolboy in England, where he was not easily accepted by his fellow students at St Paul's school because of his earlier education in Germany. He still spoke English with a slight German accent. Nevertheless, he persevered and obtained a first-class degree from Oxford University before working as a foreign correspondent for the *Daily Express* newspaper. This involved postings to Germany and Portugal.

As a journalist in Germany before the Second World War, he was able to meet many of the Nazi hierarchy and travel around with Hitler as part of the foreign press corps. He therefore was able to assess Nazi political strengths and weaknesses at close hand as well as meet people who were outside the political circle but who could provide useful propaganda material later. When the Second World War broke out, he was posted to neutral Portugal as a foreign correspondent of the *Daily Express* where he

developed useful contacts through some German expats before he was asked to join a British secret service.

By way of background, the British secret services in the Second World War were often referred to as the departments for dirty tricks. There were lots of them with very dubious reputations. When Churchill became Prime Minister in May 1940, he wanted to bring together some of the departments associated with espionage, sabotage and propaganda under one organization reporting to the Minister for Economic Warfare. It was given the name of Special Operations Executive (SOE) and was operational by June 1940. It worked very closely with the other secret service departments such as MI5, MI6 and the three arms of Military Intelligence.

SOE's responsibilities were to coordinate espionage, subterfuge, political warfare, deception and psychological propaganda against the enemy as well as aiding local resistance groups in the Axis occupied countries. However, by August 1941, the growing importance of propaganda meant that the SOE's propaganda staff were transferred to a new Political Warfare Executive (PWE) organization to which Sefton Delmer was recruited and later became a director.

Under Delmer's leadership, the main aim of the PWE was to disseminate propaganda that would damage enemy morale and sustain the morale of the people in Nazi occupied countries. The organization therefore required staff who didn't need to be military but had to have a flair for deception, language fluency and acting. So, many of them were people like actors, novelists, priests, journalists, etc. and BBC staff. The PWE used three radio channels to broadcast disinformation to the Germans and people in the Axis-occupied countries, The radio channels such as *Gustav Siegfried Eins* initially provided a British counter to the Lord Haw-Haw broadcasts, but they later developed their own genre.

Many books have been written about the SOE and its clandestine operations but few about the PWE and its more subtle form of hidden warfare. Peter Pomerantsev has carefully researched previously unavailable secret records from the Second World War to trace Sefton Delmer's background and the history of the Political Warfare Executive. As an exiled Ukrainian, Pomerantsev argues that many of the propaganda ideas and processes used by Delmer could still be used effectively in the current Russian-Ukrainian war. Hence the title of his book.

Chasing Bandits in the Badlands

Australian Soldiers adjusting attitudes in Somalia 1993

Bob Breen

Newport, NSW: Big Sky Publishing, 2023

Paperback 264pp RRP: \$29.99

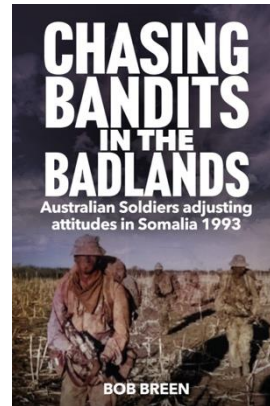
Reviewer: Mike Arnett, May 2024

Bob Breen, a well-known historian of recent Australian military campaigns, has written a detailed, insightful and easily read account of the deployment of the 1st Battalion, Royal Australia Regiment (1 RAR) to Somalia in 1993. This was the first deployment of an infantry battalion group on warlike service since Vietnam and was commanded by David Hurley, who of course went on to be Chief of the Defence Forces and is our current Governor General.

The operational experience of Somalia was very significant in the context of the Army moving from a long period of peace-time training and multi-national UN peacekeeping operations to what proved to be the beginning of a long era of complex stabilisation and warfighting operations, either under UN auspices or as part of coalition operations led by the US.

Breen picks apart the complexities and challenges inherent in commanders achieving mission success in a broken society riven with lawless gangs and factional warlords, while also attempting to protect the Australian force elements, both physically and reputationally, in a very confused and uncertain environment. There are some fine character studies of both the senior leaders and those at the pointy end of the mission, and their flexibility and adjusting attitudes as they learnt on the job is instructive and broadly reflects well on all those in Somalia, at whatever level. Breen reflects less positively perhaps on the orders and directives from home throughout the deployment that were often ambiguous, unrealistic or just plain unhelpful to the command team in the field. No surprises there some might say!

As mentioned, the detailed accounts of the performance of individuals, from the Commanding Officer to the so called "strategic corporals" and a host of characters in between are balanced, insightful and informative and clearly based on extensive primary source research and the analysis and reflection of a writer who has the lived experience of military life. The still-evolving understanding of the techniques and imperatives of low-level stabilisation and security



operations in a contested environment is well portrayed in Breen's work and is particularly interesting for those who served during this period and like me perhaps, knew or served with some of the individuals involved.

While especially pointed in some places, Breen clearly feels that the First Battalion Group performed very well in a new and uncertain environment, with great adaptability as well as creative flexibility and junior leader decisiveness on the ground, often in the absence of useful higher doctrine or guidance. They did not always get it right first time, but they were quick learners!

The author makes it clear he believes the unit deserved higher recognition than it received and that the root cause of this was a lack of understanding by senior Army and Defence leadership at home of the true nature of the operational environment and the challenges that all ranks had to grapple with, both collectively and at their respective levels.

Seeking Bandits in the Badlands is an insightful and fitting tribute to an Australian fighting force that broke new ground for the ADF in the post-Vietnam journey from deep peace to the higher intensity stabilisation and war fighting operations in joint and coalition settings of recent times.

China's Third Aircraft Carrier

PLA-N Fujian

China's third aircraft carrier, the 80,000-ton *Fujian*, launched in 2022, has completed its maiden voyage. *Fujian* is a Chinese designed, conventionally powered, flat deck carrier with three electromagnetic catapults. *Fujian* is yet to be commissioned into the People's Liberation Army – Navy (PLA-N). PLA-N's two existing carriers the Soviet designed *Liaoning* and *Shandong* are 60,000 tons and have ski-jump decks. The flat deck/catapult *Fujian* will be able to launch much heavier aircraft - aircraft with a longer range and full weapons load. *Fujian* will also be capable of launching its own Airborne Early Warning (AEW) aircraft.

In size comparison, the two RN Queen Elizabeth Class ski-jump carriers are 65,000 tons. US Nimitz Class super carriers are about 100,000 tonnes. The first ship of their replacement class the *Gerald R. Ford* at 100,000 tons, is the world's largest warship.

Some see *Fujian* as a significant instrument of power projection by the CCP. For others it is a high value target.

Continued from Page 6

On Submarines and the National Interest

Conclusion

The acquisition of nuclear-powered submarines and other acquisitions under the auspices of AUKUS will place a heavy financial burden on the Australian economy, already saddled with record debt, an ageing population, demanding health and welfare expenditures and low productivity.

In the National Interest it is imperative that public money be spent wisely. The premium necessary to build nuclear powered submarines in Adelaide is not justified.

Building nuclear powered submarines in Adelaide is a worthy aspirational goal, and possibly one that can be undertaken after Australia has developed a nuclear industry and the Navy has considerable experience operating the Virginia and AUKUS class submarines.

Donations to your Library Fund are Tax Deductible

Help to maintain the Institute's Library as the best collection in Victoria on defence and military related subjects by donating to your RUSI VIC Library Fund. The RUSI VIC Library Fund is a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) approved by the Australian Taxation Office, and monetary gifts to the Fund over \$2 are tax deductible by the donor.

Please make cheques to the 'RUSI VIC Inc Library Fund'. Receipts will be provided.



Perceptions of AUKUS

Downside – AUKUS binds Australia closer to the US and results in an effective loss of sovereignty.

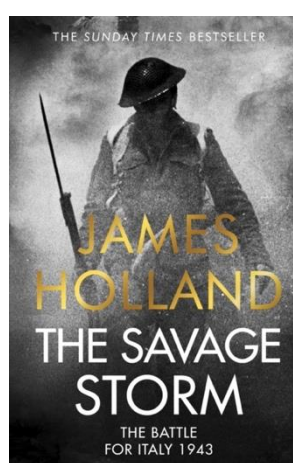
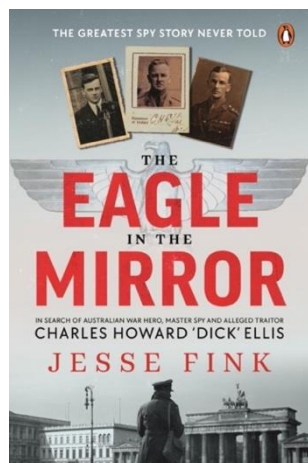
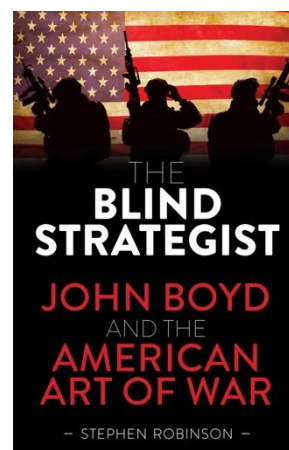
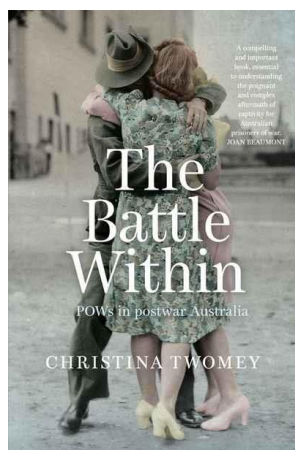
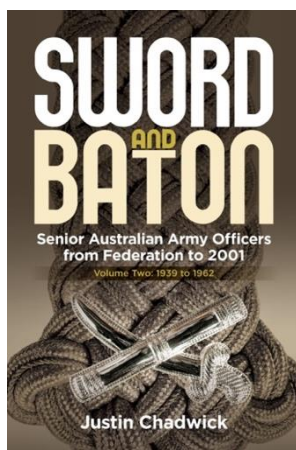
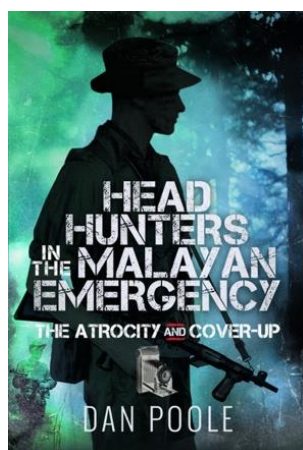
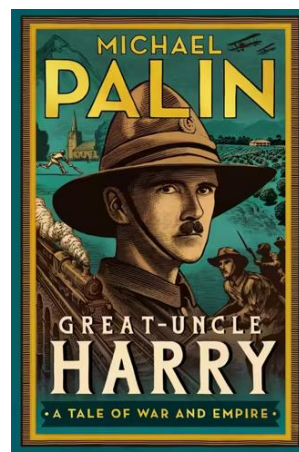
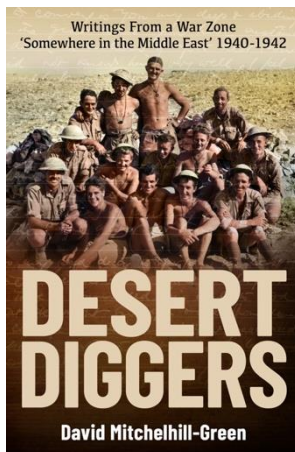
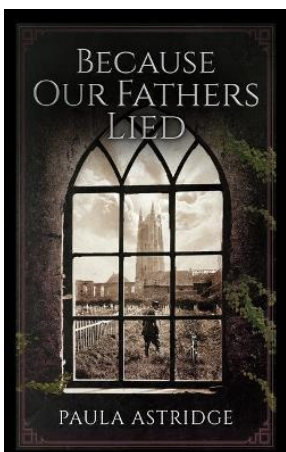
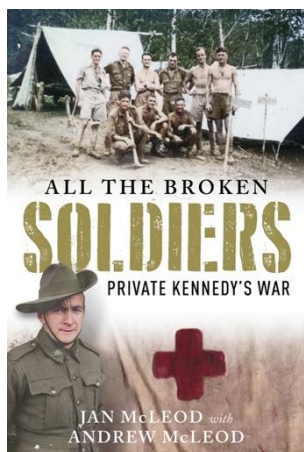
Upside – AUKUS binds the US closer to Australia

More Book Reviews

Due to the exuberance of our book reviewers, there are eleven reviews that could not be fitted into this *Newsletter*.

Below are the covers of those books. They are not 'interactive'. The reviews are ready to view on our website:

rusivic.org.au/book-reviews



Library Notes

During the last 3 months we have hosted a hard-working Intern Ms. Navodi Charuka who has made extensive use of our library. She has written a research paper "**Exploring How Australia's Security Strategies Have Evolved: Lessons from the Past and Challenges in Cyber Warfare**"

This is a very worthwhile and topical subject. Our President is currently reviewing it and it is available to any member who would like to read it, just ask for it and a download link will be provided. A considerable number of our rare Pamphlets and Books have now been scanned to PDF or JPG as appropriate and are now stored digitally as well as physically. A short list of some of them appears below. Further lists will appear in subsequent newsletters. These are also available for download on request.

Examples of Rare items backed up in digital format

At Scarlet Beach The story of a Soldier Pvt. V.E. Graham published 1995.pdf
 Australian Military Forces HQ Staff 1901-1909.pdf
 Australian Repatriation Scheme.PDF
 British Special Service Squadron Programme Melbourne March 1924.pdf
 Colours and Standards in the Royal Air Force.pdf
 Control of Manpower in Australia 1944.pdf
 Dept of War Organisation of Industry what it is and what it does 1943.pdf
 Japanese Scrapbook Aeronautical and Naval WWII.pdf
 Journal for the use of Midshipmen Mr J Cody HMAS Canberra 1932 HMS Royal Sovereign 1933 HMS Anthony 1933 3 Parts.pdf
 Journal USI Vic Vol.III No.VI October 1894.pdf
 Legal Service Bureau free legal assistance to members and discharged members of the forces and their dependants.pdf
 Australian Military Uniforms 1914-1973.pdf
 The Form of Service for the Dedication and for the Laying up of the Queen's Colour for the RAF 20 June 1987.pdf
 Scrapbook diary about Air Commodore AB. Cobby CBE, DSO, DFC RAAF.pdf
 Control of Manpower in Australia 1944.pdf
 HMAS Perth North-West Indian Ocean Deployment 1982 .pdf
 Album of Photographs of Naval Ships visiting Melbourne c 1924.pdf
 Independent Company Operations in Timor World War II.pdf

Best wishes to all members

Brian Surtees

Hon Librarian

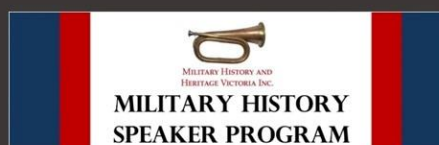


THE KILLER BEES

Australian Independent Companies And
 Commandos At War 1942-1945.

Speaker: Gregory Blake

MHHV Zoom Speaker Event
 Wednesday 17 July 2024 7:00PM-8:00PM



New Acquisitions (since February 2024)

Books reviewed in this *Newsletter* have not been included

Title	Author	Subject
<i>Retaking Kokoda</i>	David W Cameron Gorari	The Battle for Templeton's Crossing, Eora Creek and the Oiv positions.
<i>Veterans' Entitlements and Military Compensation Law 4th Edition</i>	Robin Creyke and Peter Sutherland	
<i>Girt by Sea</i>	Rebecca Strating and	Re-Imagining Australia's security. Joanne Wallis
<i>Sister Viv</i>	Grantlee Kieza	The life of Sister Vivian Bullwinkel.
<i>A Very Different War</i>	Owen Zupp	<i>RAAF Operations in the Korean War.</i>
<i>Judgement at Tokyo</i>	Gary J Bass	Second World War war crimes tribunals.
<i>Kokoda Legend</i>	David Howell	Captain Sam Templeton.
<i>Let the Bastards Come</i>	David W Cameron	The Battle for Korea 23 - 25 April 1951.
<i>Australia's Lost Heroes</i>	Damian Wright	Anzacs in the Russian Civil War 1919.
<i>More than Bombs and First World War.</i>	Kirsty Harris	Australian Army nurses at work in <i>Bandages</i> the
<i>The Killer Bees</i>	Gregory Blake	Australian Independent Companies and Commandos at war, 1942 – 1945.
<i>Crawl to Freedom</i>	Darren Prickett	Australian POW escapes of the World War.