



BATTLE FOR AUSTRALIA

Association NSW Inc.



Patron: His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd) Governor of New South Wales

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NEWSLETTER

BATTLE FOR AUSTRALIA ASSOCIATION CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

COMMEMORATING THE DEEDS AND SACRIFICES OF OUR PREDECESSORS IN THE CENTURY OF ANZAC



When we reflect on some of the above we are reminded:

- That the first shot in Australia in World War II upon the Declaration of War, saw Fort Nepean, Victoria firing on the German freighter attempting to leave Port Phillip Bay
- That HMAS Sydney was lost on the 19 Nov 1941 to a German raider off the West Australian Coast with the total loss of her crew of 645 RAN personnel
- Japanese submarines attacked Sydney and Newcastle, Sydney on 31 May – 1 Jun 42 by the three Midget submarines and we remember the 21 Naval personnel killed when HMAS Kuttabul was sunk by a torpedo
- The Japanese submarine I 21 on the night of 8 June 42 fired some 24 shells at Newcastle and in return was engaged by guns on Fort Scratchley. The Fort is a member of the BFA Association
- That Darwin, Broome, Townsville and Coastal areas suffered some 92 air raids during 42/43 many of which were defended by the RAAF. We remember the Defence and civilian personnel lost in the air raids.
- That HS CENTAUR was torpedoed off the Queensland Coast 14 May 43 with the loss of 268 crew and Medical personnel.
- That some 30 Merchant ships were lost to mines and or enemy attacks around our coast.

Last year I paid tribute not only to those who served, but also to those who waited; who lost love ones, and who by their efforts made a considerable contribution to the Defence of Australia.

I pay tribute to the many Nations who will be represented at the Commemorative Service and who stood with us in our time of need. Australia remains grateful.

I remain grateful to the Executive and all members of the Association who by their efforts ensure that the BFA Commemoration is a fitting tribute to all who served.

Again, activities such as the Commemoration and your presence give substance to –We will remember them.

Warren Glenny AO RFD ED
Major General (Rtd)
President of Battle For Australia Association (NSW)

Battle For Australia Commemorations remind us all of the challenges we faced as a Nation when for the first time conflict came directly to our shores. All three of our forces were involved in overseas theatres, at Sea, in the Land Battles of The Middle East and Europe and the Air Battles of Europe and the UK, when hostilities first came to Australia and its region.

The nation experienced for the first time direct threats to Australia and its territories and in my message last year I mentioned many of the actions/battles that bought conflict to Australia, involving all three services, our Merchant Navy and our civilian population.

- The Battles of PNG, Singapore/Malaya, Timor.
- The bombings of Darwin and other coastal cities
- The submarine attacks on Sydney and Newcastle
- The submarine attacks on our Merchant Navy around the coast
- The sinking of Hospital Ship Centaur off our coast on the 14 May 1943

Again at the Commemorative Service we will be joined by our Senior Defence representatives and the Diplomatic representatives of all the nations who stood with us. On your behalf, I thank them. The presence of Unit Associations, RSL sub-Branches that are members of the BFA Association at The Commemorative Service is another way that they remember the service and sacrifice of their members.



His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd) Governor of New South Wales will be the speaker at the annual remembrance service for the Battle for Australia at the Martin Place Cenotaph on Wednesday, May 2.

The former Chief of Defence Force, 60 year-old General Hurley, who was born on Wollongong, became the State's 38th Governor in October taking over from a former patron and speaker at the Battle for Australia, Dame Marie Bashir.

General Hurley graduated from the Royal Military College at Duntroon in 1975 and was swiftly promoted through the force's ranks, becoming Chief of the Defence Force in 2011. In 2010 he became a Companion of the Order of Australia for eminent service to the defence force. He has also been awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for service in Somalia.

The Premier, Mike Baird said the appointment reflected General Hurley's "incredible career".

"It is great to have a Wollongong boy in the top job and it is great to have someone who has led a military in difficult times ... every single hour he has been about dedicating his life and cause to the service of the people of this country."

General Hurley said the "themes" of his five-year tenure would emerge in time. He signaled an interest in advancing the role of women in the workforce, assisting soldiers suffering post-traumatic stress disorder and increasing opportunities for youth.

"One of the great things about the role of governor is you are in the position to be able to create opportunities for people, because you can knit communities to opportunity, to resources - you have a very broad view of what's happening in the state," he said.

LAKE, PNG PILGRIMAGE

In 1964 the 7th Division Association determined to build and fund Situm Memorial School in Lae, Papua New Guinea. It is here that the Division along with PNG forces pushed back and defeated the Japanese army in 1945.

Battle for Australia Committee member and senior vice president of the 7th Division Association, Signaller Norm Ensor, 90, recently led a pilgrimage to Lae to inspect his Association's work.

The pilgrimage was to reassure veterans that almost 50 years of donations had maintained and sustained the school. "The school is functioning well," Norm reported. He was taken by surprise when he was hoisted into a jerry-rigged litter or sedan chair and carried through a reception of thousands of villagers.

"I was absolutely stunned – a stunned mullet," he said. "It was the most wonderful feeling. I told them I felt I had become part of their extended family."

Ensor was accompanied by his grandson, Jason Gunton, and Julie Stephens, whose uncle was Squadron Commander, John Jackson, and members of the Lae Huon Gulf Rotary Club.

According to Gunton, "over the years the school has grown and developed to cater for the children of the area. In 2012 the Situm School accommodated 800 children across 20 rooms. It's thought that over the 50 years it has been running it has educated three generations."

Gunton continues, "I will never forget that day for many reasons but one that will always stay with me is the vision of our car pulling up at the front gate, Pop being led by the arm to a huge bamboo sedan chair. He was then hoisted up by about 10 local villagers and chaired to the school to the beating of drums. I know that Pop was shocked, joyous and overwhelmed all at once."

Approximately 800 school children and another 1200 villagers had turned out to see a returned veteran and thank him for what his mates had done.

"After we were seated there were speeches in pigeon English, dancing, singing and the presenting of gifts."

"I'd been told that PNG was famous for its 'Sing Sing' and there was Pop, centre of attention, an absolutely awesome moment. The 7th Division Association had previously made a donation of cash via the Lae Huon Gulf Rotary Club and they had purchased a laptop and printer for the principal of the school. Judie Stephens, a member of the Association, brought an encyclopedia set and I packed a few footies and a pump in my bag."

The school loved these gifts. Pop then went for a tour and got chatting with his newly 'adopted family'. The school is functioning very well and it seemed that the cottage hospital was in need of some assistance, in particular their lighting issues."

Gunton concluded: "I was hesitant about going to Lae, particularly with an 89 year-old man who isn't as fit as he used to be but I'm glad I did and its memories that I know I will have and am sure Pop will have for the rest of our lives."

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Photo by Ryan Pike

JOHN ALLEN – A TRIBUTE



John Allen, who died recently aged 88, was an outstanding contributor to the Kokoda Day Committee (as it first was) and then Battle for Australia. For years he would enter Martin Place with his wife Heather on his arm and a neat dark brown trilby hat and buy arms full of Wattle to be laid on the Cenotaph during the ceremony he did so much to devise.

John Allen was the proud son of Major-General Arthur Allen, known as 'Tubby' Allen, who was the famous commander, first of the 16th Brigade, the heroes of Bardia in Libya, and then the still more famous General Officer Commanding the 7th Division. He was the architect of victory on the Kokoda Track, when for the first time ever, the Imperial Japanese Army was forced to retreat from territory it had occupied. His father was his inspiration for the service of remembrance.

John Allen's banking career had its grounding in Jesselton (now Kota Kinabalu) in what was then British North Borneo, now Sabah. He was manager for the Hong Kong Bank there.

John Allen had earned at first hand from his father the qualities that made General Allen such a magnificent leader of men: encouragement, team leadership, clear vision, common sense and the ability to work together towards a common goal, as Stuart Braga (also a former member of the Battle for Australia committee) said in his eulogy.

He rose to be Group Staff Controller in this large international bank. He received several different postings, rising to Group Staff Controller in the large international bank. A posting after Jesselton was to



Bangkok, where he met Heather Nairn, working at the British Embassy. They met beside a swimming pool. Heather was asked:

"Was it love at first sight?"

"No," she said, "it was love at first splash." From then on Heather was a much loved companion and support.

He joined the committee of the Barker College Old Boys' Union and quickly became President.

Allen's careful and detailed work in organising each year's Kokoda commemoration at the Sydney Cenotaph has given this ceremony much prominence, and paved the way for the successful approach by the National Council of the Battle for Australia some years later which resulted in the proclamation of the Battle for Australia Day each September.

COLONEL IAN HUTCHISON DSO OBE MC ED

Author Susan Ramage

Susan Ramage is Ian Hutchison's daughter and over the past several years Susan has been writing a historical story about her father. LTCOL Ian Hutchison MC was the first CO when the 30th Battalion NSW Scottish Regiment was re-raised on the 1st July 1948. He was also a pre-war officer in the NSW Scottish Regiment.

The book is called "Kokoda Secret, Ian Hutchison: AUSTRALIAN HERO".

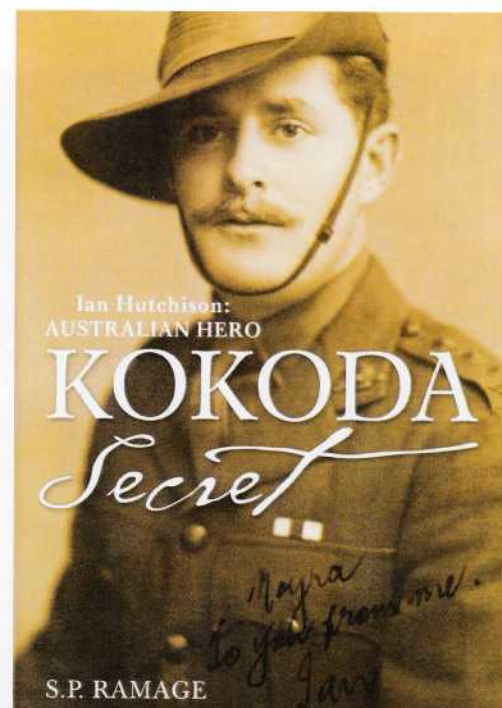
Colonel Ian Hutchison, DSO, OBE, MC, ED, was one of the great figures in Australian military history. His command in the Kokoda Campaign, crucial to ensuring Australia's security in the Second World War, exemplifies this. Suddenly thrust into command on the Kokoda Trail at 7.00 am on 27 October 1942, he reinvigorated the morale of the 2/3 Battalion and by his inspiring leadership and tactics, broke the stalemate which had existed at Eora Creek for the previous five days. In military parlance, Hutchison's command was at the tactical level. Inspirational leadership at this level can, at times, save a campaign from disaster. The Battle of Eora Creek Ridge was one of those times.

For the smashing victory achieved by the Australians on Eora Creek Ridge forced the Japanese to fall back from their enormous and well entrenched forest fortress. A recent publication by Dr Peter Williams has claimed that because of events on Guadalcanal, the Japanese were in the midst of withdrawing. However, more detailed, ground-breaking research shows that he is obviously mistaken. This book details the whole truth of what occurred on Eora Creek Ridge, the key defensive position on the entire Kokoda Trail, and by careful analysis, explains why the victory achieved by Hutchison and his men was the turning point of the fighting in the whole Kokoda Campaign. It also explains why Hutchison's heroic command has never received adequate recognition or full understanding. Australian battalion commanders have been largely neglected and there is a need to redress this omission. Additionally, there is a need to rectify those errors, distortions, mistakes and omissions with regards to Hutchison's life. He is not well known to the public, despite the fact that throughout his career he was highly regarded by Australian, American and British high command and equally esteemed by the men under his command, who still speak of him today with respect, admiration and affection.

Hutchison's biography is valuable for many additional reasons. His experiences in the Syrian Campaign shed new light on this ferocious, but little known campaign. Most significantly, in following Hutchison's career in Syria, this book follows the 7th Division in two consecutive campaigns through Syria and onto Kokoda. This reveals new information about key figures of command in the 7th Division. Until now, the Kokoda Campaign has always been studied in isolation.

After Eora Creek, Hutchison commanded the 2/3 Battalion for almost five critical weeks on the Kokoda Trail in the battles of Oivi and Soputa, and also at Sanananka. As a result of his outstanding leadership, he was subsequently given permanent command of the battalion in 1943 on the Atherton Tablelands after the battalion's return to Australia. He re-raised, trained and led the 2/3rd into combat again in the Aitape-Wewak Campaign in New Guinea in 1944-45. His tactical ability was responsible for the destruction of many enemy strong posts including the capture of the Japanese Divisional Commander's Headquarters. Mount Hutchison in this area commemorates him. For his leadership and tactical ability he was awarded the Distinguished Service Order. Much controversy over the necessity for fighting the Aitape-Wewak Campaign has obscured the savage nature of the fighting. This book presents fresh evidence and by detailed analysis, argues that the Campaign was necessary and that recognition of the Australians' achievements is long overdue.

As NX100 and a Thirty-Niner, Hutchison was appointed a foundation member of the 2/3 Battalion and rose on merit to become its last and longest serving Commanding Officer.



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Consequently, Hutchison's story makes an important contribution to the historical record in that it gives a comprehensive and chronological account of the 2/3 Battalion which so many members have wanted written. Only an anecdotal account currently exists. Of all the Australian battalions which fought in the Second World War, the 2/3rd is one of only two which can proudly claim to have fought all the King's enemies: the Italians, the Germans, the Vichy French, the French Foreign Legion and the Japanese.

Hutchison also raised, trained and led a battalion into combat in the Korean War. This was the 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, who fought the Chinese and North Koreans from 1951-53. A master of the art of patrolling, Hutchison formulated a patrol program during the Static phase of the war which the General Officer Commanding 1st Commonwealth Division, General Sir James Cassels, described as "The perfect example of perfect patrolling". For his "wise leadership and considerable experience" in commanding 1 RAR in the Korean War, Hutchison was made an Officer in the Order of the British Empire.

Hutchison raised, trained and commanded battalions in both war and peace. In fact, he is the only officer in the Australian Army to have successfully commanded a battalion in the AIF (the 2/3 Australian Infantry Battalion), the CMF (the 30th Battalion, NSW Scottish Regiment), the ARA (1 RAR) and a national service training battalion (13 National Service Training

Battalion). Moreover, for a short period, he commanded a battalion of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force (BCOF): the 67th Battalion which later went on to become 3 RAR.

The breadth of Hutchison's military career is also illuminating in that it mirrors much of the development and issues of the Australian Army in the twentieth century. Born in 1913 only two years after the establishment of the Royal Military College, Duntroon, Hutchison was a member of the Militia pre-war, the AIF during the Second World War, and the CMF post-war before joining the Interim Army. As mentioned, he trained and commanded a National Service battalion and as a member of the Australian Regular Army, raised, trained and commanded 1 RAR.

Following the Surrender of the Japanese at Cape Wom, Wewak, on 13 September 1945, Hutchison was appointed a Member of the War Crimes Tribunal which heard two cases in Wewak, New Guinea. No other biography of a commander includes similar information. Additionally, through a remarkable collection of letters to his wife, Moyra, as well as many written articles, we can hear Hutchison's voice and are given great insight into the mind and development of a front line infantryman, a happy marriage of 45 years, and a battalion commander in war and peace whose heroism sets a timeless example for future generations.

A GLANCE BACK

