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Bill McRae, an Honorary Life Member of the Institute, died on 31 May 2019 aged 106 years.

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Collins of the Sydney: a life of Vice-Admiral Sir John Collins by Anthony Macdougall –
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The Frontier Light Horse in the Anglo-Zulu War 1879: an irregular regiment on campaign by Cameron Simpson – reviewed by Brad Manera ......... 27
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FRONT COVER:
A member of the Japanese Self Defence Force reconnoitring King’s Beach near Bowen, Queensland, during Exercise Talisman Sabre 19 on 21 July 2019. The importance of being able to conduct amphibious operations with allies in our neighbourhood is emphasised in the editorial on p. 4. [Photo: Lance Corporal Tanner D. Lambert, United States Marine Corps].
Welcome to the September 2019 issue of United Service, a highly professional journal that is now in its 72nd year of continuous publication. This issue contains interesting papers on quite diverse topics: power struggles in the Indo-Pacific; the Indonesian Armed Forces; the role of the Joint Defence Facility, Pine Gap, in intelligence sharing between Australia and the United States; and the Boer War and its influence on modern Australia. I am sure you will enjoy reading it.

Thanks to our small band of volunteers, we are now operating the Ursula Davidson Library in our new permanent home in the Centenary Extension of the Anzac Memorial in Hyde Park South, Sydney, four days a week. This is increasing our interaction, not only with our members, but also with a large number of local people, as well as with interstate and international visitors. It is also raising our profile in promoting an understanding of Australia’s defence and national security.

It is interesting how many inter-state visitors have no knowledge of the United Services Institute (USI) operating in their state or territory. This is something that all USIs need to address.

Thanks to the generosity of many of our members, we have embarked on a major book restoration project. We aim to repair and rebind several thousand books over the next few years. We are also continuing to expand the library collection with purchases of new books and donations of books.

With the generous support of the Historical Aircraft Restoration Society (HARS) in Albion Park NSW, we are also progressively scanning our extensive collection of maps.

We have continued our stimulating programme of lunch-time lectures and are recording these lectures as podcasts that can be downloaded from our website. We have also created a RUSI NSW YouTube channel that contains podcasts of our lectures, as well as an RUSI NSW Facebook site that keeps our members and members of the public informed about our events, publications, news and interesting defence and security matters.

Our next big challenge is to grow our membership, particularly from current serving members of the Australian Defence Force.

In the last edition of United Service, the Deputy National President spoke about the work being undertaken to ensure the future of the national body, the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies–Australia. I strongly support this work – a strong national body can only assist the on-going work of the individual USIs across Australia.

Paul Irving
Queen’s Birthday Day Honours 2019

The Institute congratulates the following members and associates of the Institute who were recognised in the 2019 Queen’s Birthday Day Honours:

Appointed to be a Companion (AC) in the General Division of the Order of Australia

Mr Dennis James Richardson AO, Griffith ACT, for eminent service to public administration through leadership roles in the national security, defence and foreign policy arenas, and to workplace cultural reform. [Mr Richardson delivered the Blamey Oration at the Institute's 3rd International Defence and Security Dialogue on 27 May 2015.]

Appointed to be an Officer (AO) in the General Division of the Order of Australia

Dr Alan Anthony Dupont, Paddington NSW, for distinguished service to the international community through security analysis and strategic policy development. [Dr Dupont has addressed the Institute on several occasions.]

Appointed to be a Member (AM) in the Military Division of the Order of Australia

Rear Admiral the Honourable Justice Michael Slattery RAN, NSW, for exceptional service in the field of military law, particularly as Judge Advocate General of the Australian Defence Force. [Admiral Slattery is the author of a paper we have published at pp. 17 – 20 of this issue.]

Awarded a Medal (OAM) in the General Division of the Order of Australia

Mr David Symon Wilkins Pyrmont NSW, for service to community history. [Mr Wilkins is a member of the Institute.]

Republic of Korea Honour

The Institute congratulates Mrs Olwyn Green OAM on the following posthumous award to her late husband:

Appointed to be a Member of the Military Order of Merit Eulji of The Republic of Korea

The Late Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Hercules Green DSO, Commanding Officer of the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, who died of wounds at Anju, Korea, on 1 November 1950 aged 30 years, having led the battalion with distinction through battles at Yongju, Kujin, and Chongju in the preceding week.

Upcoming Events

September Lunchtime-Lecture
Tuesday, 24 September 2019, at 1.00 – 2.00 pm
The Auditorium, Anzac Memorial, Hyde Park South, Sydney

Speaker: Dr Wesley Morgan
Adjunct Fellow, Griffith Asia Institute
Griffith University

Subject: “Impacts of climate change on Pacific Island communities”

October Lunchtime-Lecture
Tuesday, 29 October 2019, at 1.00 – 2.00 pm
The Auditorium, Anzac Memorial, Hyde Park South, Sydney

Speaker: Mr Peter Jennings
Director, Australian Strategic Policy Institute

Subject: “Taking charge of Australia’s strategic vision”

The Institute’s Annual General Meeting
Tuesday, 29 October 2019, at 2.00 – 3.00 pm
The Auditorium, Anzac Memorial, Hyde Park South, Sydney

Please refer to the Institute’s website at www.rusinsw.org.au for full details, including agenda, annual accounts and the board report for 2018-19.

November International Dialogue
Tuesday, 27 November 2019, at 1.00 – 5.30 pm
The Theatrette, Parliament House, Macquarie Street, Sydney

Subject: Managing strategic tensions in the South China Sea

Please refer to the Institute’s web-site at www.rusinsw.org.au for programme and registration details.

The Institute’s Christmas Luncheon
Friday, 6 December 2019, at 12.30 for 1.00 pm
The Adam Room, Level 4, Castlereagh Boutique Hotel
169-171 Castlereagh Street, Sydney

Reservations are essential. Contact the office on (02) 8262 2922.

December Lunchtime-Lecture
Tuesday, 10 December 2019, at 1.00 – 2.00 pm
The Auditorium, Anzac Memorial, Hyde Park South, Sydney

Speaker: Mr Andrew Greene
Defence Correspondent
The Australian Broadcasting Commission

Subject: The 2019 Sir Hermann Black Lecture: the year in review

The Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies New South Wales, Incorporated

The Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies, New South Wales, Incorporated was established in 1888. It seeks to promote understanding of defence and national security. Membership is available to anyone interested.

The Institute undertakes research and provides policy advice arising therefrom to government; schedules regular lectures, seminars and conferences; maintains a specialist library and a website which gives it a global reach; publishes a quarterly professional journal, a monthly defence and security e-newsletter, and fortnightly events notices; and arranges visits to sites of interest.

To allow us to continue to provide services to members and the community into the future, you could assist greatly by remembering the Institute in your will. The Institute should be referred to as the “Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies, New South Wales, Incorporated [ABN 80 724 654 162]”. Should you desire assistance with adding an appropriate codicil to your will, please let us know in case we need to communicate with you or your executors.

BEQUESTS
Defending Australia

China plays a long game and uses soft power wherever possible to achieve its strategic aims. Media attention recently has focused on China’s investment of billions of dollars in Cambodia as part of its Belt-and-Road initiative, including around the Ream naval base on the Gulf of Thailand. If developed in conjunction with a nearby airport (there are at least two from which to choose), it would provide the capability needed to support Chinese projection of naval and air power over the Gulf of Thailand, the southern reaches of the South China Sea, contiguous states and adjacent strategic waterways, including the Malacca Straits.

Such a base also would link well with similar Chinese bases in the South China Sea, at Hambantota (Sri Lanka), Gwadar (Pakistan), and Djibouti (near the entrance to the Persian Gulf). It also would be well-positioned to utilise/control Thailand’s planned Kra Isthmus Canal linking the Gulf of Thailand with the Andaman Sea, thereby enabling Chinese shipping to bypass the Malacca Straits. Importantly, all the bases mentioned are capable of military use, whether or not China currently intends to use them for military purposes.

As Andrew Hastie MP, chair of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security, reminded us in August, such developments must be seen in the context of China becoming a global power; its interference in Australia’s domestic affairs, primarily via manipulation of its diaspora in Australia; its conduct of cyber warfare against Australia; and the challenge it is posing to the United States in the Indo-Pacific region. Also relevant are President Donald Trump’s ‘America First’ policies and his tendency to unilateralism and isolationism. Consequently, Australian strategic analysts increasingly are questioning the efficacy of Australia’s current strategic direction and policy settings.

Not least of the questioners is Emeritus Professor Hugh White of the Australian National University. In his just published book, How to defend Australia (La Trobe University Press: Carlton, Vic.; 2019), White judges it inevitable that China will come to dominate the East and Southeast Asian periphery, ending America’s primacy, and leading to the collapse of America’s post-war security arrangements, such as the ANZUS Treaty. Middle powers like Australia must look after their own security without expecting support from America or other regional powers. He proposes the complete revision of Australia’s grand strategy, saying we should revert to defending the Australian continent through a strategy of ‘maritime denial’ using submarines, strike aircraft and long-range precision weaponry to deter would-be aggressors. The massive increases in defence expenditure necessitated by this self-reliant posture would be funded by disposing of unsuitable capabilities (including naval surface combatants and amphibious units) and increased taxation.

While most analysts seem to agree that it is timely to review Australia’s strategic needs, so far little support has emerged for White’s specific prescriptions. Much focus has been on his flagging of the possible need for Australia to acquire nuclear weapons, which is not something he is advocating at this juncture.

In their critique of White’s approach, retired Rear Admiral James Goldrick and Dr Euan Graham of La Trobe University question White’s rejection of alliances. They also consider that White’s fixation on state-on-state conflicts has blinded him to other important challenges such as: climate change – including new sources of interstate conflict induced by it; terrorism; and the capacity for a rival state to foment instability in our environs. Further, his specialised force designed for high-end warfare would be ill-equipped to respond to lower-order threats; his territorial focus would leave our lines of communication vulnerable; and he makes inadequate provision for our dependence on foreign sources of fuel, and for the vulnerability of his complex weapons systems to cyber-attack. In short, there is more to national strategy than fortress defence.

The Institute’s commentator on naval matters, Dr Ian Pfennigwerth, a former former defence attaché in Beijing, considers that no Asian country is in a position to “fight” China alone. We must learn to live with this reality, while preserving our interests as best we can in coalition with others.

This vital, urgent debate clearly has some distance to run. We are indebted to Andrew Hastie and Hugh White for bringing it so forcefully to national attention. They are correct in saying that we need to invest far more in national defence to create a defence force which is an effective deterrent. But, while “fortress Australia” may be a key component of the strategy, it will be insufficient to our needs which include neighbourhood, regional and global interests. We need to become much less dependent on trade with China and on foreign sources of fuel; and, as well as working with our Indo-Pacific allies, we need to do much more to support our neighbours in the South Pacific – which will necessitate, inter alia, addressing the causes of climate change, and a self-reliant defence force, including a much stronger army and a much more capable air force.

David Leece

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2Dr David Leece, editor of United Service, is chair of the Institute’s Special Interest Group on Strategy. These are his personal views.
Asia's economic transformation is reshaping the global distribution of power. Three of the world's four largest economies are in Asia, and the fourth, the United States, is a Pacific power. By 2025, two-thirds of the world's population will live in Asia, compared with just over a tenth in the West.

Just as significantly, tensions between powers in the region will define war and peace in the 21st century. We are moving from an open and consensual world order to one defined more by competition and zero-sum politics, certainly between the two largest players, the United States and China.

To make sense of these long-term trends, the Lowy Institute Asia Power Index was established in 2018 as an analytical tool that tracks changes in the distribution of power in the region using 126 indicators across eight thematic measures. In this paper, Mr Lemahieu describes the Index and uses it to assess the relative strengths of 25 regional nation-states, identifying two superpowers, two major powers and 13 middle powers. He examines 10 of these powers then briefly assesses what these trends may mean for Australia.

Key words: Asia Power Index; Asia; Indo-Pacific; Australia; China; India; Japan; Korea; Malaysia; New Zealand; Taiwan; United States; Vietnam; power; wealth.

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To make sense of these long-term trends, the Lowy Institute Asia Power Index was established in 2018 as an analytical tool that tracks changes in the distribution of power in the region. It aims to sharpen the debate on geopolitics in Asia. The Index ranks 25 countries and territories in terms of their capacity to influence regional events — reaching as far west as Pakistan, as far north as Russia, and as far into the Pacific as Australia, New Zealand and the United States. The project evaluates state power through 126 indicators across eight thematic measures: military capability and defence networks; economic resources and relationships; diplomatic and cultural influence; as well as resilience and future resources.

Overall findings of the 2019 Study

There are three overarching trends which emerge from our study that will shape the region in decades to come:

1. Under most scenarios short of war, the United States will not be able to halt the narrowing power differential between itself and China. Nor will China simply be able to replace the United States as a unipolar power. In fact, it is looking increasingly likely that neither superpower will be able to exert undisputed primacy in the region.

2. Globalisation will still involve the United States and China, even if the two become less dependent on each other. Decoupling between the world's two largest economies is unlikely to result in two mutually exclusive spheres of influence in the sense of the last Cold War.

3. Countries will be reluctant to choose sides. Instead, a more hazardous variant of globalisation will be defined simultaneously by heightened interstate competition and continued economic interdependence. For this reason, there will be much more fluidity in the international system.

In a situation where two superpowers are effectively gridlocked, middle powers – including Australia – will become more important in determining the overall balance of power in Asia. They will have to come up with novel ways of working together to deal with the narrowing geostrategic predominance of the United States and the sharpening ambitions of China.

At a more granular level, the 2019 Asia Power Index reveals six big takeaways:

- The United States remains the dominant power but has become a net underachiever in 2019.
- The biggest challenger to China’s rise is not the United States but itself.
• Japan has become the leader of the liberal order in Asia, while India will not be the next China.
• North Korea's high-stakes power game pays off in 2019 but is far from complete.
• Malaysia, Vietnam and New Zealand are the most improved middle powers after North Korea.
• Australia has the comparative advantages required to forge a favourable balance of power in the region.

I shall now examine each of these findings.

The Superpowers

The United States claims the top spot in four of the eight Index measures and its overall power score – the only country to top 80 points – remains unchanged from last year.

America is still the dominant military power – reflected in the depth of its regional defence networks – as well as the most culturally influential power, as the leading study destination and source of foreign media in the region. Combined with strong demographic and geographic fundamentals, these results go some way to dispelling the notion that United States power is in absolute decline.

Nevertheless, the United States faces relative decline. A 10-point lead over China in 2018 has narrowed to 8.6 points in 2019. Current United States foreign policy may be accelerating this trend. The Trump administration's focus on trade wars and on balancing trade flows one country at a time, has done little to improve the glaring weakness of United States influence in its economic relationships. The obvious contradictions between Washington's revisionist economic agenda and its role, as a status quo power, providing consensus-based leadership, have contributed to its third-place ranking, behind Beijing and Tokyo, for diplomatic influence in Asia.

The United States has moved from a positive to a negative Power Gap in 2019, indicating it has become less effective at converting its resources into broad-based influence in Asia.

China, the emerging superpower, netted the highest gains in overall power in 2019, ranking first in half of the eight Index measures.

For the first time, China narrowly edged out the United States in the Index's assessment of economic resources. In absolute terms, China's economy grew by more than the total size of Australia's economy in 2018. The world's largest trading nation has also paradoxically seen its gross domestic product (GDP) become less dependent on exports. This makes China less vulnerable to an escalating trade war than most other Asian economies.

Access to Western markets will likely prove increasingly marginal to the global ascendancy of Chinese technology. The country's consumer base is making large-scale implementation of new technologies, such as 5G⁴, easier to achieve at home, before being rolled out into emerging markets.

Beijing has chosen to concentrate its military resources and modernisation efforts on its near abroad in contrast to America's global military posture and security commitments. Within its region, China's defence budget is 56 per cent larger than those of all 10 ASEAN⁵ economies, Japan and India combined.

Despite steady advances, however, Beijing faces political and structural challenges that will make it difficult to establish undisputed primacy in the region.

Beijing's hard power remains hobbled in key respects. China's ninth place for defence networks – up three places from 2018 – still constitutes its weakest performance across the measures of power. As the People's Liberation Army's presence in contested spaces grows, so too do efforts by other powers to create a military and strategic counterweight in response. President Xi Jinping's flagship Belt and Road Initiative faces growing degrees of opposition. In many cases – from Malaysia to Myanmar – this has resulted in renegotiations resolved in favour of the borrower.

Beijing also faces growing internal hurdles: China's workforce is projected to decline by 158 million people from current levels in less than 30 years. This likely presages societal and economic challenges. By mid-century, China's total population will also be approximately 20 per cent smaller than that of India, a growing potential regional rival.

The Major Powers

There is often a temptation to reduce the complexity of Asia's international order to a two-player game. In fact, the Indo-Pacific ecosystem is sustained by a much wider array of actors.

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⁴Fifth-generation cellular wireless network technology
⁵Association of South-East Asian Nations
Japan and India, the third and fourth ranked powers, are separated by oceans, distinct geopolitical contests and legacies, and vast demographic differentials representing young and old Asia. Both major powers, however, must contend with fading United States strategic predominance and the sharpening ambition of China.

Japan is the quintessential smart power, using the country’s limited resources to wield a top-four ranking across the four influence measures. It finishes in the top two, only six points behind China, for diplomatic influence. Maintaining a liberal order has become a key organising principle under the premiership of Shinzo Abe. Tokyo successfully resuscitated the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) in 2018, which became the TPP-11, together with 10 other economies minus the United States.

Japan also has proven a capable rival to China for infrastructure investment in South and Southeast Asia. Over the past decade, Japan has been the dominant foreign investor in strategically pivotal countries as varied as Mongolia, Myanmar, the Philippines and Thailand.

Whereas Japan is an overachiever in long-term decline, India is an underachiever relative to both its size and potential. Despite Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s ‘Act East Policy’, New Delhi trails in sixth and eighth place for economic relationships and defence networks and is down two places in diplomatic influence in 2019.

What India lacks in influence, it makes up for in scale. India’s economy is predicted to double in size and reach approximate parity with the United States by 2030.

Tokyo has cultivated strategic ties with New Delhi. Yet they are unlikely bedfellows. Unlike Japan, which operates within a United States-dominated alliance system, India will continue to cherish its strategic autonomy.

Moreover, India will not be the next China. New Delhi lacks the control over the allocation of economic resources which has been intrinsic to China’s rise. Yet, as the giant grows in uneven and incremental steps, so too will its ambitions.

The Middle Powers

A diverse set of middle powers have made gains in their overall power in 2019. North Korea overtook the Philippines, now relegated to 17th place, registering the largest increase in its overall power score after China. The nuclear power jumped five rankings in diplomatic influence, albeit starting from a low twenty-first place, in the year following the first-ever meeting between the leaders of North Korea and the United States.

Summit diplomacy in Singapore and Vietnam – ostensibly on equal terms with the United States – has elevated and partly normalised North Korea’s regional standing and ties. Pyongyang, however, remains a brittle power preoccupied by its survival. The risk of a lapse into further crises is high.

In a dynamic part of the world, North Korea’s economy is estimated to be smaller than that of Laos. Pyongyang’s nuclear weapons and intercontinental ballistic missile capabilities are one of the few credible sources of leverage it has to compete with larger powers. This raises questions about what can realistically be achieved on denuclearisation. The country has moved up one ranking in military capability, with the sixth most powerful conventional military force in Asia. Only China and India have larger standing armies.

If the risk of renewed conflict on the Korean Peninsula has receded, it is in large part due to the creative diplomacy of South Korea’s President Moon Jae-in. The larger, more democratic and prosperous Korea has moved up two places to fourth for diplomatic influence. However, the suspension of joint military training exercises announced by the United States as a concession to North Korea in 2018, has also seen South Korea drop one ranking for the depth of its alliance under defence networks.

Malaysia has fared better in the last year across the Index’s influence measures, where it has resumed its standing among the top 10 most diplomatically influential powers in Asia.

The return of Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad has refocused the government’s attention on the geo-economic security and bargaining power of middle powers who are faced with great power rivalry and turbulence in the Trump–Xi era. He has succeeded in obtaining more favourable terms for foreign-funded infrastructure projects while maintaining close ties to Beijing.

New Zealand’s improvement in diplomatic influence to 11th place in 2019 stands in marked contrast to a fall in Australia’s diplomatic standing – to eighth place, behind
Indonesia — following political infighting and a leadership change in 2018. Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern is ranked fourth among leaders in the region in terms of ability to advance her country’s diplomatic interests globally. With a fresh electoral mandate, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison will first need to prove his durability if he wants to form lasting partnerships with his regional counterparts.

Australia and New Zealand retain the most favourable strategic geography in the region: the same cannot be said of Vietnam or Taiwan, whose locations in contested waters south of China play directly into their strategic vulnerability. Vietnam has made rapid progress in strategic and economic spheres. Current trend projections place it tenth for future resources.

By contrast, Taiwan has become the only middle power in the Index to register a significant downward shift in overall power from 2018. The island – ranked 14th for overall power – is crucially important to the regional balance of power. Backed by the United States, it presents a formidable check on China’s aspirations to become a fully-fledged sea power. Taipei’s fall in power, which betrays its geopolitical significance, reflects its position as a political outsider.

Australia is a notable all-rounder in the Indo-Pacific, notching up top-ten performances across the Index’s eight measures of power: economic resources and relationships, military capability and defence networks, diplomatic and cultural influence, as well as resilience and future resources. Importantly, Australia’s power is stable over two years and we are trending upwards for military capability and economic relationships — the latter thanks to the TPP-11. The one setback was a drop by one ranking for our diplomatic influence following more leadership churn in 2018.

A high turnover of prime ministers, five in six years, has undercut the ability of Australian leaders to form lasting partnerships with their counterparts. However, this is a politically reversible, not a systemic, trend. Following his re-election, Prime Minister Scott Morrison has an opportunity to stabilise the country’s fluctuating diplomatic influence.

Australia’s second-place ranking for defence networks reflects not only the United States alliance but also investment in defence diplomacy with non-allied regional partners. As China’s presence in contested spaces grows, Australia is strengthening its links to countries such as India, Vietnam and Japan who share a desire to form a strategic counterweight to Beijing.

Given that modern power politics takes place below the threshold of conflict, Australia will need to do more to prepare for the potential exploitation of economic asymmetries for geopolitical gain. Thanks to its favourable geography and strong institutions, Australia is the fifth most resilient power in terms of our capacity to deter threats to our stability.

Our 30 per cent trade dependency on China, high but not abnormal by regional standards, is offset by a lower trade-to-GDP ratio than most Asian tiger economies. To trade is good and confers power both ways. However, to trade to a diverse set of export markets — including with the European Union with which Australia is negotiating a free trade agreement — will build additional resilience.

Yet, ironically as a net energy exporter, Australia imports more refined fuel than any other country in Asia, leaving us vulnerable to disruptions in sea lines of communication. It makes good sense for Canberra to establish a national fuel reserve as well as to invest in decarbonisation.

Australia also has a crucial role to play in diversifying the supply of critical minerals used in digital and renewable technologies. Australian rare-earth mining reached 15 per cent of global supply in 2017, second only to China’s 81 per cent.

Finally, we must continue to invest in a farsighted immigration programme. Australia is the sixth largest projected economic beneficiary from growth in the working-age population to 2045. That makes us the envy of ageing East Asia.

Conclusion

In summary, the challenges of great power rivalry present an opportunity for Australia, ranked 7th in overall power in 2019, to expand its role rather than draw up the bridge. The Asia Power Index suggests that Australia’s comparative advantages are only becoming more important to ensuring a favourable balance of power in Asia.

The Author: Mr Hervé Lemahieu is Director of the Asia Power and Diplomacy Programme at the Lowy Institute, where he developed the Asia Power Index as an analytical tool to semi-quantify power relationships in the Indo-Pacific region. He also co-chairs the annual track 1.5 Australia–France Strategic Dialogue. With a MA (St Andrews) in international relations and modern history, and a MSc (Oxon) in global governance and diplomacy, he developed expertise in geopolitical risk assessment at Oxford Analytica and then in the political economy and security of Southeast Asia at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, before joining the Lowy Institute in 2016. His commentary and analysis have appeared in a number of media outlets and publications. [Photo of Mr Lemahieu: Lowy Institute]
Indonesia plans to form three joint regional defence commands covering the west, central and eastern islands and their northern approaches; and is expanding its armed forces, the Tentara Nasional Indonesia (TNI), to achieve a 'minimum essential force' by 2024. In this paper, Bob Lowry outlines the intended composition of the minimum essential force and its component ground, naval and air forces.

Key words: Indonesia; Tentara Nasional Indonesia; TNI; Minimum Essential Force; Ideal Force.

In May last year, President Djoko Widodo (Jokowi) announced the long-anticipated formation of an additional navy fleet, an air force operations command, an infantry division, and a marine force. But, like his predecessor, he baulked at authorizing the three joint regional defence commands that consecutive defence white papers have proposed to take command of these forces. Later in the year, he called for a review of command arrangements. Subsequently, in January this year, perhaps as a test-bed for these arrangements or for more streamlined, less politically sensitive, operational command arrangements, he authorized the formation of a joint command to oversee an outpost line of integrated forward bases in the Natunas, Morotai, Biak, Saumlaki, and elsewhere if and when established.

With the formation of this new command, the Indonesian Defence Force Headquarters now has responsibility for both strategic and operational command of 28 formations and has to make ad hoc arrangements for the conduct of joint operations. If the three joint regional commands are established, the span of command would shrink to 10 or 11.

Minimum Essential Force and Ideal Force

The possible creation of these new commands should be seen in the broader context of the development of what President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) termed the ‘Minimum Essential Force (MEF)’ in January 2005. The composition of this force was outlined publicly in the 2008 Defence White Paper. The white paper projected a gradual increase in defence spending from less than one per cent of GDP to 2 per cent within 10 years. It also called for the revival of defence industry devastated by the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis, and imposed a freeze on personnel increases (now about 480,000 including about 60,000 civil servants) to make more room for capital expenditure.

In short, the MEF would comprise: joint operational commands, as mentioned above, and a 160,000-man general reserve force to be split among the three services. The Army also wanted one additional infantry division, a brigade in each military area command (Kodam), and a new 350,000-plus militia force, on the basis of one infantry battalion per district. The Navy wanted a 274-ship navy, an increase of about 120 ships, as well as the replacement of most of the existing fleet. The Air Force wanted nine fighter squadrons. Of course, they wanted much more to complement these forces, but the list is illustrative of the scale and scope of the proposed MEF. All this was to be achieved by 2029.

Continuing financial stringency, however, meant that there was no meaningful increase in the defence budget and it soon became clear that service wish-lists would have to be pruned and reprioritized. As a result of a series of strategic defence reviews initiated early in President SBY’s second term (2009-14), wish-lists were cut and two whole categories of defence spending, reserves and national support, were deleted from the programme. With these changes, the MEF was to be achieved by 2024 and the remaining items on the wish-lists were pushed beyond that deadline into what would become the ‘Ideal Force’.

The President also approved a one-off top-up of about US$5 billion for the capital budget for his second-term five-year defence plan. The new defence minister became so excited that he and the TNI chief talked of acquiring 180 Sukhoi fighters of various classifications and 12 Kilo-class submarines from Russia, and of achieving the MEF five years ahead of the target date. Rising oil prices and the heavy cost of subsidies, however, saw other government expenditures restrained, putting paid to such euphoria. Despite this, some new acquisitions were made and displayed at his last Armed Forces Day Parade on 5 October 2014 – in particular: Apache attack helicopters; Leopard tanks; additional F-16 and Sukhoi fighters; and new Landing Platforms Dock (LPD) able to support marines and
humanitarian relief operations. Due to serendipity in the gifting or concessional pricing of some weapons systems, it was claimed that they were on track to achieving the MEF by 2024.

In his presidential election campaign in 2014, Jokowi promised that, if elected president, he would raise defence spending to 1.5 per cent of GDP once national GDP growth reached 7 per cent per annum. Growth, however, remained static at just over 5 per cent for his first term (2014-2019) and defence spending continued to average under 1 per cent of GDP. Nevertheless, significant improvements have been made in conditions of service and some important acquisitions have been made. Three new submarines have been acquired from South Korea; participation in a joint fighter project with Korea continues; and more aircraft, ships, armoured vehicles, and munitions are being produced domestically. Today (2019), despite the shortfall in the budget, the Minister for Defence and the TNI Commander are both claiming that they are still on track to achieve the MEF by the end 2024.

So, what will the MEF look like? The map below shows the boundaries of the three proposed joint regional defence commands. The army area commands are also shown and the respective navy fleets and air force operational commands coincide with those of the proposed joint commands.

Map: Indonesia, showing the boundaries of the proposed West, Central and East Joint Regional Defence Commands (blue) and the Army area commands (red). Note: The regional command headquarters are located in Pekanbaru (West), Makassar (Central) and Sorong (East), respectively – each headquarters is indicated by a green house. [Source: The author]

**Ground Forces**

The army comprises about 330,000 regular troops and is divided into: army troops; two centralized commands – Army Strategic Command (Kostrad) and Special Forces Command (Kopassus); and territorial commands embracing Indonesia’s 34 provinces. Army troops comprise five helicopter squadrons, four engineer construction battalions, and five service battalions. Kostrad is expanding from two to three infantry divisions with the third headquartered in Sorong, West Papua, while the other two remain in Java. Kopassus comprises four group headquarters and 12 battalions and will not be expanded but their capabilities are continually monitored and upgraded under separate arrangements.

The territorial commands employ about half the army’s personnel and shadow local government structures from province to village level. They have a complement of combat and service units as the first line of ground defence against external and internal security challenges, including extensive responsibilities for ground-based air defence. Each of the 15 Army area commands has a quick-response battalion and, when established in the remaining four area commands, will have a brigade battle-group to support their operations. If an invasion occurred, the territorial commands also would provide the framework for leading guerrilla warfare in areas where conventional defence either is not a priority or is not possible, pending a strategic counter offensive.

Given that the threat of invasion is assessed to be very low, it would seem logical that much of the territorial force be composed of reserves. Indeed, trial units were formed in the 1990s for this purpose, but they were discontinued because of concerns about how reserve training might be exploited by groups contemplating the use of violence for political purposes and by the conflicting loyalties and repercussions that reserves might experience if called out to maintain order in their own communities.

In addition to the army, the navy and air force have extensive ground forces. The Marines were authorized to expand their forces from two to three Marine Forces Commands, sometimes called divisions. They comprise a brigade battle-group and a varying number of naval-base defence battalions. The new command is based in Sorong but has yet to be fleshed out and the pre-existing commands will remain in Java. Each command will have sufficient naval and amphibious support to put one battalion ashore in the first wave.

The Air Force Special Forces comprises three wings each with three battalions and specialized detachments. They are supplemented by two wings for ground-based air defence from close-in guns to short, medium and long range surface-to-air missiles. The latter two have yet to be acquired.

In summary, the land forces of all three services, including the marines, comprise the equivalent of four strategically-deployable divisions; a potent special forces contingent; and considerable territorial and fixed-asset protection forces to provide the initial response to either threats to national sovereignty, or, when called on to do so, to internal security and natural disasters.

**Naval Forces**

The navy has about 60,000 service personnel, including about 25,000 marines, and sufficient ships, but wants to vary the composition of the inventory and replace many of its current ships. The rationale for the 151-ship target by 2024 was that they needed: 38 ships for sea control of two trouble spots at once; 50 ships to put ashore concurrently two battalion combat-teams
and, administratively, an army battalion; 44 fast patrol-boats for maritime security; and 19 support vessels. Given that the 50 ships for landing operations include support ships, Table 1 compares current ship numbers with 2024 and post-2024 Ideal Force targets.

Table 1: Commissioned naval vessels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Force</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2024 MEF</th>
<th>Post-2024 Ideal Force</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strike</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrol</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>167</strong></td>
<td><strong>151</strong></td>
<td><strong>274</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most potent compositional change is the projected acquisition of 12 submarines for the strike force. Three new boats have recently been acquired from South Korea and orders have been placed for another three, but these will not be delivered until the mid-2020s. So, it is unlikely that the 2024 target of six new submarines by 2024 will be achieved, unless an off-the-shelf option is adopted. Similar challenges for frigate production are also evident. But there have been significant advances in the production of vessels that support marine corps operations and, more critically in the short-term, disaster relief.

The navy, along with other agencies, also has a major role in maritime security and commands an extensive coastal and seaborne radar network to assist in regulating traffic, particularly in restricted areas like straits and major harbours and their approaches.

The fleet air arm (Table 2) is also being re-equipped with more modern aircraft to fulfill its surveillance, anti-submarine and logistic functions. The projected formation of another anti-submarine squadron seems to have been delayed pending the acquisition of more aircraft to fill out existing squadrons.

Table 2: Naval air squadrons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wing</th>
<th>Squadron</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Aircraft</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Puspenrath</td>
<td>Surabaya</td>
<td>400 Anti-submarine</td>
<td>Airbus AS 565 MBe Panter</td>
<td>11 (2017-19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>600 Tactical Transport</td>
<td>NC-212</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Puspenrath</td>
<td>Tanjungpinang</td>
<td>800 Maritime Patrol</td>
<td>CN-235-200 MPA (5) NC-232-200</td>
<td>For targeting rather than surveillance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>200 Training</td>
<td>Bonanza G-36 (6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Air Force

An effective and resilient air force is critical to the successful conduct of conventional operations by the army and navy (Table 3). The air force’s personnel strength is about 30,000, including the base-defence forces mentioned above of about 8000. Only one more fighter squadron will be added by 2024. It is to be home-based in eastern Indonesia. This will bring its combat strength to seven fighter squadrons, one ground-attack squadron, and one fighter-conversion squadron. Squadron 14 has been without aircraft for two years while awaiting the arrival of 11 Su-35 fighters from Russia.

Indonesia has a 20 per cent stake (50 aircraft) in the joint production of a South Korean 4.5 generation fighter due to begin production post-2024. Indonesia is expected to negotiate to take 24 aircraft from the first production run. So, at least 16 aircraft are needed from another source to equip the projected seventh fighter squadron by 2024. It might also need more to replace another source to equip the projected seventh fighter squadron by 2024. It might also need more to replace another two Hawk squadrons if the South Korean project is delayed.

A maritime-reconnaissance squadron is centrally based in Makassar and a locally-produced unmanned-aerial-vehicle surveillance drone squadron is based in Pontianak to cover the South China Sea. One heavy and one light transport squadron were formed this year, and one helicopter squadron will be added this year or next, bringing the total number in each category to three, three, and four respectively.

Several air bases beyond the home bases in Java also will be upgraded to support air operations across the archipelago. Among them will be air facilities for four outer-island outposts manned by small integrated (joint) forces located on Natuna Island, Morotai, Biak and Saumlaki. New home bases also will be opened on Biak for a light transport squadron and in Jayapura for a helicopter squadron.

Two-thirds of its projected radar network of 32 stations is in place linked to the four sector commands under the National Air Defence Command – they also have links to the civil aviation radar networks. To demonstrate their prowess, they have intercepted and forced down several aircraft in recent years for allegedly entering Indonesian air space without proper flight plans and clearances.

Table 3: Air Force squadrons

| Type of Squadron | 2017 | 2024 MEF | Post-2024 Ideal Force | Notes                                                                 |
|------------------|------|----------|-----------------------|                                                                     |
| Fighter          | 6    | 7        | 11                    |                                                                     |
| (Squadrons 1, 3, 11, 12, 14, 16) | | | | |
| Ground Attack    | 1    | 1        | 1                     |                                                                     |
| (Squadron 21)    | | | | |
| Fighter Conversion | 1   | 1        | 1                     | Assuming acquisition of simulators as well.                         |
| (Squadron 15)    | | | | |
| Maritime Reconnaissance | 1 | 1 | 1 | Corresponding simulators |
| (Squadron 5)     | | | | |
| Airborne Early Warning & Control | 1 | 1 | 1 | Corresponding simulators |
| (Squadrons 31, 32, 33) | | | | |
| Heavy Transport  | 3    | 3        | 3                     |                                                                     |
| (Squadrons 2, 17, 27) | | | | |
| Medium & Light Transport | 3 | 3 | 3 | Corresponding simulators |
| (Squadron 8)     | | | | |
| Helicopter       | 4    | 4        | 4                     | Squadron 9 raised by 2019-20.                                      |
| (Squadrons 6, 7, 8) | | | | |
| UAV              | 1    | 2        | 2                     |                                                                     |
| (Squadron 51)    | | | | |
| VIP/VVIP         | 1    | 2        | 2                     | 17 Squadron also used for VIP/VVIP purposes. 45 Squadron has helicopters. |
| (Squadron 45)    | | | | |
| Training         | 2    | 2        | 2                     |                                                                     |
| (Squadron 101, 102) | | | | |

Defence Industry

Defence industry gradually rebounded during the SBY years, especially during his second term (2009-14). Beginning from a low base, plans call for defence industry to meet 40 per cent of capital requirements by 2024 and all of the Ideal Force requirements beyond
that. As well as achieving defence self-sufficiency, the emphasis on defence industry is also justified on the basis of its contribution to the growth of high-technology industries more generally and the potential for exports.

Significant projects include joint ventures with a number of foreign companies: including with South Korea for the supply of fighter aircraft (mentioned above), submarines and landing platforms dock; with Turkey for the supply of medium tanks; with the Netherlands for the supply of frigates; with China for the supply of surface-to-surface missiles; and with Airbus for the supply of light transport-aircraft and helicopters. Where joint manufacturing is not undertaken, offsets are demanded, such as the barter arrangements with Russia for the supply of 11 Su-35 fighters.

Obviously, all these projects include significant supply of foreign components and modules, but it does advance skills development and industrial capacity for defence and the general economy. History, however, indicates that the costs of these programmes often are underestimated and the benefits exaggerated, and service chiefs have complained periodically about quality and tardiness. Only time will tell whether Indonesia has the balance right.

Residual Political Role

The armed forces gave up their last political posts in 2004 and no longer play an active formal role in retail politics. To help preserve their cohesion and prevent political parties from wooing their support, members of the armed forces are denied the right to vote. They retain significant political influence, however, due to the concept of total people's defence that underpins defence policy and their continuing role in internal security.

The ministry of defence remains a military fiefdom, the commander of the armed forces remains an ex-officio member of the cabinet, territorial commanders retain close links with respective regional governments, and nation-wide indoctrination campaigns continue to promote their concept of the state and the role and obligations of citizens for defence and security.

The armed forces continue to hang for statutory powers to deal with internal security and counter terrorism, blocking the passage of legislation that would close this option and update the laws governing the employment of the armed forces in these roles. They are not subject to civil law for civil crimes and retain enough political influence to prevent an accounting of past human-rights abuses.

Nevertheless, the armed forces remain the most respected agency of the state and, through their retirees, retain considerable influence in most political parties, parliament, and the ministries and agencies of the state. Elites remain fearful that pushing for further military reform or allowing an accounting of past abuses, might open cracks in the prevailing political consensus that could be exploited by radical opponents of the state.

Conclusions

None of the developments outlined above indicate any change in Indonesia's free and active non-aligned foreign policy. The same is true for its self-sufficient defence policy of total people's defence. What it does do potentially is strengthen Indonesia's conventional defences, increasing its deterrent effect and its capacity for combined operations with partners.

Without significant increases in defence budgets, however, it will be impossible to meet the quantitative and qualitative targets set for 2024. Much has been done to improve conditions of service, but there are still major shortfalls in the funding provided to maintain the asset and to attain the level of training and operations of all the capabilities needed by modern conventional defence forces. The other option, of course, is to reduce the size or composition of the force to fit what governments are realistically prepared to spend.

Despite recent changes in regional and global strategic circumstances, Indonesian defence policy planners sees little prospect of invasion and remain much more concerned about defending the nation's founding myths, maintaining national cohesion, and securing national development. Hence, the army will remain the dominate service for some years to come.

The Author: Robert W. (Bob) Lowry is a defence and security analyst and a member of the United Services Institute of the Australian Capital Territory and of the Senior Advisory Group of the Indonesia-Australia Defence Alumni. He is the author of: The armed forces of Indonesia (Allen & Unwin, 1966); Fortress Fiji: holding the line in the Pacific War, 1939-45 (R. W. Lowry, 2006); and The last knight: a biography of General Sir Philip Bennett AO KBE DSO (Big Sky Publishing, 2011). Following service in the ranks and graduation from the Officer Cadet School, Portsea, he was commissioned into the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery. His service included deployments to South Vietnam, Singapore and Indonesia. He retired as a lieutenant colonel after 30-years’ service in 1993. Since then, among other roles, he has been acting national director of the Australian Institute of International Affairs and associate director of the Australian Defence Studies Centre. In 2001, he was a senior analyst with the International Crisis Group in Jakarta doing policy-orientated research on military and police reform, and on military operations in Aceh. In 2002-03, he was adviser to the Timor-Leste National Security Adviser; and, in 2004, he chaired the Fiji National Security and Defence Review. [Photo of Colonel Lowry; the author]
Perhaps no other relationship in Australian history has been as controversial as the presence of the Joint Defence Facility at Pine Gap just outside Alice Springs. Established by a treaty signed in 1966 during the short time when Harold Holt was Prime Minister, it became operational on 19 June 1970 with the launch of its first satellite, codenamed Rhyolite. For Australians, Pine Gap has always been shrouded in secrecy, with misleading initial claims that it existed to conduct ‘upper atmospheric research’, a vague term that avoided disclosing its true mission: using satellites to intercept wireless transmissions from the former Soviet Union.

Opposition to Pine Gap began early in its history, with concerned citizens protesting about Canberra’s lack of access to the intelligence gathering going on there. Around 1980, though, this situation changed when Australian officers were given equivalent roles to United States personnel and the position of Deputy Chief – to be held by an Australian – was established, commencing the joint American-Australian leadership structure at ‘The Base’, as it is known internally.

Protests would continue, however. Fears held included that Pine Gap (and Alice Springs) was a target for America’s nuclear-armed adversaries; there were claims that it was being used to direct drone strikes that were causing civilian deaths; and a further claim that its intelligence-gathering role in the United States-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 caused many more civilians to be killed. Nevertheless, The Base continued to quietly perform its role, gaining in size and importance as satellite technology became increasingly more complex.

Unsurprisingly, Pine Gap maintains a low profile and remains unknown to many Australians, particularly younger generations, although information about it is readily available on the internet. And it appears in news stories from time to time, most sensationally when former U.S. National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden exposed the U.S. National Security Agency’s domestic surveillance programme – a development that launched a worldwide debate about the legality of governments seeking to access individual personal and/or telecommunications information. It is, therefore, important that Australians know more about Pine Gap: its purpose; what it does; what it does not do. In this paper, I shall endeavour to answer these questions.

The Joint Facility And The Intelligence Benefit

Pine Gap is an intelligence-collection facility located in Alice Springs. In the news, it only appears occasionally, usually during publicised protests against its presence. These tend to occur when rumours link its capabilities to an offensive military action involving civilian casualties. These rumours, in turn, cause journalists or conspiracy theorists to express concern over Australian culpability in this action. Intelligence from Pine Gap, however, is not used in isolation, and The Base has no capability or responsibility in making decisions to initiate offensive strikes.

Although it is sometimes reported that innocent civilians have been killed in operations such as drone strikes, the information and intelligence contributed by Pine Gap in any such scenario is used to minimise harm and eliminate the unnecessary deaths of non-combatants. To achieve this goal, electronic intelligence normally is fused with human intelligence, overhead imagery, and any other available source of relevant information.
In fact, most of the signals intelligence collected at Pine Gap is associated with weapons testing and communications systems, and, although The Base supports military operations, it only has a passive role in collecting signals intelligence. It does not play a tactical role in any offensive military missions and its target countries are all outside the Five Eyes intelligence-sharing community of the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and their territories. Pine Gap conducts surveillance on countries that produce weapons that may be used against the United States and Australia, such as Russia, China, Iran and North Korea, or on communications systems that might help to identify individuals who pose a threat, such as those in a terrorist network.

Pine Gap also may be tasked to collect signals that are a threat to the United States or Australia, such as communication signals linked to the Iraqi leadership prior to, during, and after the initial Gulf War in 1991; weapons-related signals, such as radars, that are used to guide surface-to-air missiles into their targets; and telemetry on board weapons undergoing testing and development. The Base was on the frontline of intelligence collection during the fall of South Vietnam, the end of communism in some regions, the two wars in Iraq, the Balkans conflict, Afghanistan, Al-Qaeda, the war on terror, and the emergence of Islamic State.

The facility is jointly led by the Chief, an American, and the Deputy Chief, an Australian, who share the equivalent executive rank. A phrase often quoted to describe the shared decision-making at Pine Gap is that everything is done with the ‘full knowledge and concurrence’ of the Australian and United States governments. Both countries can equally and equitably task Pine Gap to collect signals intelligence, but the bulk of the tasking comes from the United States as its military is larger and has a greater global presence. In spite of this, both countries have equal access to signals intelligence collected by the Pine Gap satellites, a situation that has existed since the 1980s when Australians were granted access to The Base’s signal processing centre.

This level of intelligence sharing has produced an enduring relationship – there are no secrets within the walls of Pine Gap regarding any signals intelligence collected by the Pine Gap satellites, a situation that has fostered a trusting, collaborative and co-operative environment between the two countries at Pine Gap. It is at the heart of Australia’s intelligence-sharing partnership with the United States.

The mission also comes at an incredibly low financial cost to Australia, last disclosed as $14 million in 2011-2012. For that small amount, Australia’s security benefit is immense – Australia may task Pine Gap to collect information on anything it believes is necessary for its security. Some information may be unique to Pine Gap, and so The Base remains a crucial part of Australia’s defence strategy.

The Need For Satellites

When Pine Gap was initially constructed, its mission was to collect intelligence from the Soviet Union, the United States’ most powerful adversary in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. The Soviet Union was a closed landmass to the West that spanned 11 time zones. Electronic intelligence from the interior of the Soviet Union was typically only accessible by aircraft overflying its airspace, or, alternatively, developing satellite technology that could more safely collect data and relay it down to the ground site without risk to personnel or aircraft. The U2 spy plane frequently overflew the Soviet Union, taking photographs and utilising electronic eavesdropping equipment, but when Francis Gary Powers was shot down on one of these missions on May Day 1960, the United States realised it needed an alternative to the U2 or risked more shoot downs.

Satellites could close the intelligence gaps with the Soviet Union by safely collecting electronic signals, transmitting them to a ground site, analysing and interpreting them, and presenting the results to intelligence planners. Importantly, the capability of satellites was needed, because weapons testing primarily occurred well within the border of the Soviet Union. Collecting signals intelligence associated with these tests was a main objective of Pine Gap.

The Decision To Select Alice Springs

So, why select the small town of Alice Springs in remote inland Australia to host the ground site for such new, sophisticated satellites?

Politically, the choice of a location in Australia to host the ground site for the satellites, from an Australian perspective, was wise, as it would help to solidify the post-World War II alliance with the world’s most powerful country. From a United States perspective, Australia was a trusted ally. There was already a defence agreement in place between the two countries, both countries being signatories to the ANZUS Pact of 1951. More importantly, Australia had signed the United Kingdom-United States of America Signals Intelligence Sharing Agreement in 1956, making Australia a member of the eventual Five Eyes community. This treaty formed the basis for signals-intelligence sharing between the two countries, but, as most Australians know, the bedrock of the alliance with the United States goes much deeper than simply signed agreements. It has been an historically supportive, continuing and enduring relationship between the two countries – one that is ever present in spirit and kinship, the countries having gone

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3https://ukdefencejournal.org.uk/the-five-eyes-the-intelligence-alliance-of-the-anglosphere/
into battle together and its soldiers having died along-side one another as brothers-in-arms.

Australia’s geographic location on the opposite side of the globe to the United States also played a significant role in the selection of Alice Springs to host the new ground site. A ground site on the Australian land mass could maintain 24 hours a day/7 days a week coverage of a satellite that can see into the western part of the Soviet Union. This is not possible from the continental United States as Russia is on the other side of the globe.

But Australia had many more hospitable places for the Americans to construct its ground site, so why choose Alice Springs? Firstly, it is an established town with schools, organised sporting activities, entertainment and an infrastructure that could support the Americans who moved there, particularly families with children. It is also remote and isolated and had a relatively low population in the late 1960s – around 6000 to 7000 people. From a security perspective, this was acceptable to the United States government, because a location with few people would constitute less of a security risk than would a location with many people, as the latter would more readily enable a person who posed a risk to The Base to blend into the crowd. The relatively low population made the detection of threats more likely, e.g. of someone setting up an operation to tap into the beam being transmitted down to the ground site by the satellites; or of someone who might be there to collect information about The Base or about the people who work at Pine Gap.

From the town’s perspective, Pine Gap has provided a ‘second-stream’ economy to Alice Springs, helping the town to grow and prosper with the millions of dollars spent each year by Americans who moved to Alice Springs, and by locals who were hired to work at The Base or in support jobs. Regardless of protests against Pine Gap throughout the years, the town of Alice Springs has always supported The Base’s presence due in part to the economic support provided to the town by Pine Gap and to the good relationship that continues to exist between the townspeople and the Americans.

Politics And The Future Of Pine Gap

The leadership of the United States and Australia will determine the future direction of Pine Gap. The current agreement permitting Pine Gap to remain operating now requires one country to give the other three-years’ notice to terminate operations at the joint facility. Previously, the facility’s presence had been renewed at ten-year intervals. Only once in its history has there been serious consideration by the Australian government of terminating the operations at Pine Gap – during the prime-ministership of Gough Whitlam in the early 1970s.

As communications technology advances and broadens, and the use of various social media platforms expands, lawmakers and the laws that govern communication intelligence may not always be able to keep pace with these rapid changes in how people communicate. This includes the oversight processes in place to regulate potentially intrusive communications surveillance.

When Edward Snowden released information showing that the U.S. National Security Agency was collecting what appeared to be excessive communication information on its own citizens, possibly in violation of United States law including the fourth amendment to the Constitution, public outrage and mistrust of the National Security Agency by United States citizens and some federal lawmakers reached a climax. Pine Gap, however, was not a part of this domestic eaves-dropping as the satellites do not collect communications information from the United States, Australia or other Five Eyes member countries or territories – directives and agreements limit its use of satellites to collecting electronic signals from outside these territories. In the 18 years the author worked inside operations at The Base, Pine Gap adhered to these agreements; and there were no plans in place that had been made known to the workforce to change the status quo.

Politically, this is the correct course for Pine Gap as it would be untenable for either country to utilise the Pine Gap satellites to collect communications from citizens or residents of either country. To do so would violate the very directives and agreements in place to prevent that from happening. In addition, it is highly unlikely that either country would allow individuals from the partner country to access communications information from its own citizens at Pine Gap. Preventing Pine Gap from collecting communication signals from United States and Australian citizens and residents has historically contributed to maintaining the trusting relationship that exists at Pine Gap, and this is unlikely to change.

Conclusion
The political and strategic relationship between the United States and Australia historically has been strong, enduring and based on long term goals. This has been true regardless of who has been prime minister or president. The relationship always has been stronger than one individual. Indeed, for almost five decades behind the scenes, Pine Gap has been helping to strengthen the ties that bind the United States and Australia as allies. Looking to the future, leaders will come and go in both countries. At any given time, though, the leaders of the day would be wise to value and to continue the special relationship at Pine Gap as it benefits the security of both countries.

So, Pine Gap's future seems assured, regardless of any individual leader's foreign policy ambitions. The United States and Australia will continue to need the intelligence collected by the satellites. Although no one can guarantee whether Pine Gap will still be there in 10 or 20 years, the satellites designed today are, and in the future will be, 'future-proofed', i.e. designed to detect signals the intelligence community is expecting, even while the technology to transmit these signals is yet to be developed. In short, Pine Gap is likely to remain a part of the United States-Australia intelligence partnership well into the future.

The Author: David Rosenberg, an engineer, mathematician and electronics intelligence analyst, was a United States National Security Agency officer for more than 20 years. From 1990 to 2008, he was posted to the Joint Defence Facility, Pine Gap, where he was responsible for identifying, evaluating and reporting the military capabilities of countries that posed potential threats to the United States. He established an advanced training programme for new analysts in the signals intelligence community and managed teams that evaluated the function, capabilities, performance, and vulnerability assessment of all types of radar and weapon systems, such as surface-to-air missiles, ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, and associated countermeasure tactics and techniques. Subsequently, he wrote Pine Gap: the inside story of the NSA in Australia (Hardie Grant: Richmond, Victoria, 2018) and was a Technical and Creative consultant to the Netflix/ABC television series, Pine Gap, 2018. [Photo of Mr Rosenberg: Colonel J. M. Hutcheson MC]

Further Reading

BOOK REVIEW:
The Victoria Cross: Australia remembers
by Michael C. Madden
Big Sky Publishing: Warriewood, NSW; 2018; 459 pp.; ISBN 9781925520989 (hardcover); RRP $79.99; Ursula Davidson Library call number Q813 MADD 2018

Since 1856 when the award was created by Queen Victoria, 100 Australian servicemen have been recognised with the nation's highest award for valour, the Victoria Cross (VC). The VC is awarded to a person who, in the presence of the enemy, displays the most conspicuous gallantry, or daring, or pre-eminent act of valour, or self-sacrifice, or extreme devotion to duty.

The book provides a separate profile of each Australian VC recipient. Rich colour is added to the profiles by the inclusion of perspectives of families and friends on how the award affected them and their communities. The book also provides a short history of the VC award and its significance.

Madden, who has a deep passion for writing and for Australian military history, is an award-winning novelist and the son of a totally and permanently incapacitated Vietnam veteran. He travelled across Australia and around the world to interview Australia's four living VC recipients and the families, peers and friends of these 100 remarkable Australians from diverse walks of life. He weaves together official sources with the records of family members and other people who were close to the 96 Australian VC recipients who have died.

The book, which includes a list of sources and several hundred high quality images, is finished with gilt-edged pages and makes a handsome addition to coffee tables, but it might have been further enhanced with a gloss-finished cover. It has been produced as a not-for-profit venture. All proceeds from its sale will go to the Totally & Permanently Incapacitated Ex-Servicemen & Women's Association of Victoria Inc. for the ongoing support and welfare of its veteran members, their families, dependants and the broader veteran community.

The book is a fantastic record and provides an interesting perspective on an icon of military service.

Marcus Fielding
We each carry inside ourselves an image of what it is to be an Australian. Our images are all subtly different. But they have many common features that we see across our continent. To be Australian is to be fair, to be tolerant, to be courageous, to care for others and to value freedom; among many other qualities.

The Boer War helped form parts of our modern Australian character and institutions in startling ways. When I take you to some of them shortly, you will instantly recognise them. But our journey of national self-insight about the influence of the Boer War upon us is actually only quite recent.

Perhaps, the most important step in that journey began in 1952. It was the year that Federal Parliament extended the Charter of the Australian War Memorial in Canberra for the first time to recognise the sacrifice and service of Australians in all wars. Partly driven by the effects of the Korean War, the War Memorial’s mission was expanded. Its new role is “to provide a complete history of the wars in which Australians have participated”.

Until then, official Australia had itself operated under a kind of blind spot: a belief that the Great War (World War I) was the first moment which Australians should commemorate as proving themselves, identifiable as Australians, on an international stage, by their sacrifice in battle and by their service in war.

The Boer War did not generate an Anzac legend. But it remains, even today, the most-costly conflict outside either World War in which Australia has ever been involved. Its casualties represent a cost about twice that of the Vietnam War. The Boer War deployed Imperial armies of just under 300,000 troops in the field across modern-day South Africa and neighbouring countries; a theatre of war well exceeding in scale and numbers our modern conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Since 1952, the significance of the Boer War for us has grown. In 1963, when the War Memorial dedicated its Honour Roll of Australia’s Victoria Cross recipients, it began of course with Neville Howse, the first Victoria Cross winner of the Boer War. More recently, on Boer War Day two years ago, 31 May 2017, through the extraordinary dedication, fundraising and personal sacrifice of many of you here today, the Boer War Memorial was dedicated on Anzac Parade in Canberra.

In this paper, I shall dwell on a few features of the Boer War, in which we can see parts of our modern Australian heritage, our character and our institutions.

Understanding the Boer War

First, we need to understand this war. The Boer War was short when compared with the wars from World War I onwards. It began on 11 October 1899. After almost two-and-a-half years, it concluded with the Treaty of Vereeniging that we commemorate today.

The war was conducted in three phases. In the first phase, between October and December 1899, the British Army, mainly infantry, were defeated or besieged by highly mobile Boer mounted troops, who were seeking to protect the independence of two Boer Republics, the Transvaal and Orange Free State, from absorption into the British Empire. In the second phase, from December 1899 until September 1900, the British counteroffensive resulted in the capture of most of the major towns and cities of South Africa. But in the longest phase, from September 1900 to May 1902, the war descended into a relentless guerrilla conflict between British mounted troops and Boer irregulars.

During this this last phase, on 1 January 1901, the six self-governing British colonies in Australia were proclaimed as states of a single federation of the Commonwealth of Australia. So, they went to war as British colonial troops and returned as Australians. Like troops from all other Australian colonies, the New
South Wales Mounted Rifles kept wearing their New South Wales Military Forces uniforms after 1 January 1901, but were issued with Australian rising sun slouch hat badges. All of them remained under British command as part of the Empire. As their new Australian Constitution said, they were all subjects of her Majesty the Queen. It still does.

The Australian Contribution to the Boer War

A total of about 23,000 Australian men and women served in the Boer War. Nearly 1000 Australians paid the ultimate price for their service. Over 16,000 Australians served in official contingents, the rest as irregulars. Of the latter, some were volunteers, like the Imperial Bushmen, raised in private militias, who submitted themselves rather loosely to British command.

Over 6,500 men and women went to the war from New South Wales. One indication of the remote and inhospitable nature of this testing theatre of war is that as many soldiers died from disease and accident, as died from their wounds.

This simple statistic also shows the importance of nursing care for Boer War soldiers. This was the first war in which Australian women would serve in Australian uniform. And the first Australian woman died on active service in this war.

Also, the first Aboriginal men to serve on active service would do so in this war, many of them with the uniquely useful skills of trackers. One of these was Robert Charles Searle who volunteered to join a West Australian contingent.

Australia’s six colonies separately prepared for this war raising their own individual contingents. It is difficult to believe today, but, in 1899, both Sydney and Melbourne had their own separate defence ministers, each lobbying London for money, ships and support. And it will not entirely surprise you, I am sure, that in raising troops for the war there was healthy competition between these two cities about how many and what kind each could raise: a contest they approached as differently as the two dominant codes of football they each played.

In one unusual way, the Boer War was Australian in character like no other overseas war we have ever fought. This is because men and women were volunteering to fight to help out many fellow Australians. What tends now to be completely overlooked is that, because of similarities of climate and way of life, many Australians had settled as farmers and horsemens in the Boer States long before the war. Known as uitlanders (broadly translated as ‘outsiders’), the Boers had denied them the vote, because they were not citizens of either Boer Republic. Some of them, men like Karri Davies from Western Australia, formed local Bushmen militias, and they fought side-by-side with the Bushmen militias that had been raised in Australia.

Courage, Daring and Independent Thinking

If you see courage, daring and independent thinking as central to our Australian character, you need see no finer example than Australian Brigadier-General ‘Pompey’ Elliott. You will know him best as a brigade commander of the in the Battle of Fromelles on 19-20 July 1916. But Elliott represents one of so many Boer War veterans who, like Lieutenant-General Harry Chauvel and Commander Leighton Bracegirdle, formed a core of experience in the First Australian Imperial Force and the Royal Australian Navy in World War I. He, like so many other Australian Boer War veterans and World War I leaders, were university educated and came from outside the regular military: two factors that allowed them later to think outside the box to escape the stalemate of World War I trench warfare.

But, in 1900, Elliott had enlisted in the 4th Victorian Imperial Bushmen as a corporal and there his courage was evident already. On the night of 28 February/1 March 1901, Captain Dallimore, Officer Commanding D Squadron of the Imperial Bushmen, with only 15 troopers, including Corporal Elliott, tracked a party of Boers to the junction of the Orange and Sea Cow Rivers. Although outnumbered, Dallimore chose to attack with Elliott’s support. Elliott and several other troopers crept into the Boer lines at night, and, with just a little bit of horse whispering, quietly removed all the Boers’ horses. At dawn, Dallimore’s force attacked. The Boers found themselves unable to mount and ride away. Heavy aggressive rifle fire from the Australians, coupled with bluff by Dallimore, convinced the Boers to surrender. His little party of 15 captured 27 Boers, 6 African servants and 54 horses. Elliott was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for this encounter.

Following the Boer War, he returned to university and completed a LLB, an LLM and BA. He was then called to the Victorian Bar and set up his own legal firm. In 1914, at the outbreak of war, Elliott was appointed to command the 7th Battalion in the 2nd Brigade, Australian Imperial Force.

Nursing Sister Nellie Gould

If you see an assertive sense of equality as part of our Australian identity, then let me tell you about Boer War nurse Nellie Gould. She was the first Lady Superintendent, as they were then known, of the New South Wales Army Nursing Service Reserve sent to the Boer War. As matron of the 13 other nurses in this group, she led the first nursing group that went to South Africa, a journey she took with the second Contingent of the New South Wales Army Medical Corps on 17 January 1900. In total, 60 Australian nurses went to South Africa.

Nellie was born in 1860 in Wales, and was a teacher and governess in England. At age 24, she moved to New South Wales and trained as a nurse at Sydney’s Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. In 1898, with 14 years’
nursing experience behind her, and only 45 years after Florence Nightingale founded modern nursing, Gould was invited to oversee the formation of the New South Wales Army Nursing Service Reserve, the first military nursing service in Australia, and only the second in the Empire.

And in this war, like almost no other later war, our nurses did not just serve in hospitals behind the lines. In a guerilla war, they were often left alone, in unguarded farmhouses being used as makeshift infirmaries, exposed at times to Boer attack. It took a special kind of resilience to make this work. Gould and her sisters, among 120 Imperial nurses, did just that. They and their New Zealand sisters not only were given the honorary rank of Lieutenant, but back home they had something even more powerful: they had the vote, unlike British women of the time. And they gained a reputation for standing up for themselves. On hearing of their imminent arrival, one British doctor recorded in his diary: “My God, New South Wales nurses – now what are we going to do?”

She returned from South Africa to Sydney in late 1902. She too served in Egypt, caring for Gallipoli wounded in 1915 and early 1916. There, she famously stood her ground against the British doctors commanding her who insisted, in Egypt’s 45-degree heat, that her sisters wear woollen serge uniforms. She refused. Her sisters were finally allowed to wear cotton instead. She was awarded the Royal Red Cross in April 1916 for her distinguished nursing service.

**Australia’s Institutions and Legal Practice**

Australia’s institutions and legal practice in war were also shaped by the Boer War.

It is not well appreciated now that Australia owes an important part of our present Constitution, section 74, to the bravery of our soldiers in the Boer War. The Constitutional Conventions that led to the final settling of the Constitution were wrapping up just as the war started. In May 1900, Australian politicians for the six Australian colonies were gathering in London to negotiate the final form of the Constitution and push it through. A sticking point was whether the final court of appeal for Australia would be the High Court or the Privy Council.

The British government wanted the highest Australian appellate court for all matters, including the interpretation of our Constitution, to be the Privy Council in London. Australian delegates, and much of popular opinion in England and Australia, wanted it here in Australia.

But in the middle of the negotiations, Australian troops were closely involved in the relief of the Boers’ siege of Mafeking. This victory was of immense strategic significance, freeing up the railway line between then-Rhodesia and the Cape. The role of Australian troops in Mafeking’s relief made British government opposition to Australia’s judicial independence impossible to defend. Joseph Chamberlain, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, dropped his opposition. When a federated Australia was proclaimed on 1 January 1901, Britain agreed that final appeals about important aspects of our Constitution (but not other matters) would be heard in the High Court in Australia, not the Privy Council (unless the High Court certified otherwise).

**Australians’ Sense of Fairness**

One aspect of our national sense of fairness was forged in the Boer War. All Australian troops were placed under British command during the War. One consequence of this was that they faced court-martial and executions under the British Army Act of 1881. The well-known executions of Breaker Morant and Peter Handcock after a British court martial are two examples of this. Contemporary Australian outrage at these actions caused a strong Commonwealth Government reaction, that has shaped Australian policy ever since.

In World War I, once again, Australian troops were subject to the British Army Act 1881, which permitted the execution of soldiers court-martialled for serious offences, such as desertion. But, after the experience of the Boer War, the Australian Defence Act 1903 was passed that prohibited the execution of any Australian soldier without the approval of our governor-general. Despite Field Marshal Haig’s requests, the governor-general’s consent was never given in World War I. In contrast, the British executed 361 of their own soldiers and the French 660 of their own soldiers. We have never done so.

**Horsemanship**

By late 1901, the Australian Bushmen’s horsemanship and endurance were growing in fame, but being tested to the limit. But what Australian soldiers did achieve would have done the man from Snowy River proud.

The New South Wales Mounted Rifles reported in the last five months of that year an extraordinary rate of effort. They recorded trekking across the veldt almost 3000km, and were involved in 13 skirmishes with the loss of five dead and 19 wounded. They reported killing 27 Boers, wounding 15 and capturing 196.

But, at the same time, they cemented a reputation for mental toughness at every level. Apart from their military achievements, these men spent long periods in the saddle with few opportunities to bathe or change their clothes; as a result, lice and disease were their constant companions.

**The Treaty of Vereeniging**

The Treaty of Vereeniging that we commemorate as “Boer War Day” ended the war. But it was not the cause of rejoicing on the streets of this city. The news reached Australia on Monday, 2 June 1902. In contrast in
Melbourne, the governor addressed a large crowd at the Town Hall. Once again, these two great cities showed their differences, as they do today. Indeed, the New South Wales Government of the day decided not to lead any local celebrations, leaving our citizens to their private reflection. There was no dancing in the streets. Rather, Sydneysiders focused on the returning troop ships, bringing home soldiers, nurses and civilians.

But like the great armistice of 11 November 1918, the Treaty of Vereeniging hardly honoured the sacrifice of the Australians who died during the war. As we know, the Treaty of Versailles laid the foundations for World War II. The politicians who negotiated the Treaty of Vereeniging made different mistakes. They controversially agreed to pay off some of the Boers’ war debts; probably not bad thing for future reconciliation. But, against the wishes of Joseph Chamberlain, the Treaty permitted the Boer republics to continue to defer giving civil rights to their black citizens, a decision with long-term disastrous human consequences. And of course, the new government of the Australians who had risked their lives in the war, had no say in the terms of that Treaty, which was negotiated only by Imperial representatives.

It was only in 1994 that the new President of the Republic of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, was elected for the first time by black voters. He had negotiated for the restoration of the civil rights of all his fellow citizens, so that the injustice created by the Treaty could begin to be redressed.

Charities

In the last year of the war, something else quite remarkable, but recognisably Australian, began to happen. Today, many of our fellow citizens volunteer to work for charities as doctors, nurses and teachers in war zones, in refugee camps, and after natural disasters. This part of the Australian character was as prominent then, as it is now. The day of the Boer surrender represented the high point of a brutal Imperial war policy, which many Australians helped alleviate.

Soon after the Boer War started, Imperial forces established concentration camps to control the Boer civilian population. The policy placed whole Boer families behind barbed wire. By 31 May 1902, the date of the Boer surrender, more than 17,000 Boer children were being educated in Transvaal concentration camps and another 12,000 in Orange Free State camps – more children indeed than those States had educated before the War. Some 39 teachers volunteered from the Empire to work in this informal camp education system, a large number of them from Australia. Most of these came from New South Wales and Victoria, with four from Queensland and six from South Australia.

Miss Ida M. Robertson was a teacher typical of these. She grew up in the Australian bush and began teaching at seventeen, later working in a large school in Sydney. Her brother had been killed in November 1901, while serving in South Africa with the New South Wales Mounted Infantry. According to her referee for this work, it was his death that had “turned her mind to this work ... she is ambitious to do her small part in helping the Motherland”.

Conclusion

In closing, may I look to the words of another remarkable, courageous and creative Australian, a young solicitor and journalist covering the Boer War. He reminds us of the losses of so many Australian men and women in a war so wrongly called ‘the forgotten war’. But he was more famous as a poet than as a solicitor. He learned his lyrical craft at home and at Sydney Grammar School. In his verse, which was to prefigure the heartbreaking poetry of World War I, Banjo Paterson speaks gently to a soldier of the burden of that war, in these words that are inscribed on the Boer War Memorial in Canberra:

“When the dash and the excitement and the novelty are dead,
And you've seen a load of wounded once or twice,
Or you've watched your old mate dying, with the vultures overhead,
Well you wonder if the war is worth the price.
And down along the Monaro now they're starting out to shear,
I can picture the excitement and the row;
But they'll miss you on the Lachlan when they call the roll this year,
For we're going on a long job now”.

We remember all those men and women of the Boer War for whom Banjo Paterson wrote these magical words.

The Author: Rear Admiral, the Honourable Justice Michael J. Slattery, AM, QC, RAN, a justice of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, is the Judge Advocate General of the Australian Defence Force. He was admitted as a barrister in 1978, made a Queen’s Counsel in 1992, and appointed a justice of the Supreme Court of New South Wales in 2009. He joined the Royal Australian Naval Reserve as a lieutenant (legal) in 1990. Promotion followed to lieutenant commander in 1996, commander in 2000, and captain in 2006. He served in the Northern Persian Gulf in 2003; and, in 2005-06, was the principal counsel assisting a Navy Board of Inquiry into a fatal helicopter crash. He was promoted to commodore and appointed Deputy Judge Advocate General – Navy in 2010; and to rear admiral and Judge Advocate General – ADF in 2014. He received an Admiral’s commendation for his service to Navy in 1994 and 2007; and was made a member in the Military Division of the Order of Australia in 2019.
BOOK REVIEW:

Anah’s War

by Johanna van Rooy

Book Pal: Cooper’s Plains, Queensland; 2010; 287 pp.; ISBN 9781921791499 (paperback); RRP $19.77; Ursula Davidson Library call number 437 ROOY 2010

The Ursula Davidson Library contains several books written for the younger reader. One of them is Anah’s War by Johanna Van Rooy, which displays the hardships that people had to face in occupied Europe during World War II. Similar to The Diary of Anne Frank, it shows the development of a girl to a young woman in Nazi Netherlands.

The novel, written like a diary by “Anah”, starts before the Second World War breaks out. Anah is still a young girl at this point and she fills her diary with fun with her friends and her adventures with her siblings. The context of the diary abruptly transforms as Anah’s beloved home, the town of Nijmegen, gets invaded by the German Army and the country becomes controlled by the Nazis. Being a known Jew, her life changes significantly, as she tries each day to survive the war.

This book shows another perspective of what so many civilians had to do, in order to stay alive – that was to hide. For years, Anah had to stay in the homes of trusted friends. With little access to necessities, such as food and clean clothes, Anah had only her diary to resort to. These entries are well detailed and show how Anah is transformed by her experiences.

Although a novel, Johanna van Rooy has crafted it from her parents’ experiences in the war while living in Nijmegen. Throughout the book, the readers can see how the war impacted Anah’s adolescence and how she becomes so grateful for what she has. This novel has a feeling of truthfulness, giving a human side to what we know from historical facts, something which I like most about the book. It shows the reality of those times and does not “air-brush” the truth.

This novel is well suited for teen to adult modern history lovers; however, it has content that could be confronting to some people. I would love for more people to read the book and find the same love for the novel as I have.

Emma Kent

OBITUARY:

Squadron Leader W. W. (Bill) McRae, DFC, AFC

William Wallace (Bill) McRae, an Honorary Life Member who had joined the Institute in 1951, was born near Lismore, New South Wales, on 14 January 1913 and died in Sydney on 31 May 2019 aged 106 years.

When World War II broke out in 1939, Bill, then 26-years-old, was serving with the Bank of New South Wales in London. He immediately enlisted in the British army and, after officer training, was commissioned into the Royal Regiment of Artillery. He was posted to an anti-aircraft unit and thence to the Royal Air Force as an army artillery observer.

In 1940, he transferred to the Royal Air Force, underwent pilot training, and, after posting to the Desert Air Force in Egypt in 1941, became a Wellington bomber pilot. During the Allied campaign to drive Field Marshal Erwin Rommel’s Afrika Corps from north Africa, Bill and his crew in 1942 bombed key enemy infrastructure in rear areas and flew close air support missions over Egypt and Libya from a base near Cairo. Many missions were flown at night, as the Wellingtons were equipped with sophisticated radar equipment. In 1943, now based in Malta, they flew bombing missions over German-occupied Tunisia and Libya. In all, they flew 43 missions, surviving some close calls, despite sustaining battle damage. Bill was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for gallantry during a successful attack on an enemy transport and concentration area in December 1942.

Bill returned to Britain in late 1943. He spent the rest of the war training French aircrews in northern Scotland for missions over Germany. At war’s end, he was awarded the Air Force Cross for “displaying great keenness in instructional duties”.

After the war, he resumed work at the Bank of New South Wales in London. In 1947, he and his wife and daughter returned to Australia. He continued to serve with the bank in Sydney and Brisbane in various roles, but primarily as an accountant, before eventually retiring in Sydney in 1969 aged 56.

In 2015, 70 years after the war ended, he was appointed a Chevalier of the French Légion d’Honneur for his contribution to the liberation of France.

David Leece

Emma Kent is a Year 10 student at Tara Anglican School for Girls.
This is a history of a British Territorial Force infantry division, the 51st (Highland) Division, which fought during the Great War on the Western Front from 1915-1918. It is an updated and more objective version of Major F. W. Bewsher's *The History of the Fifty First (Highland) Division, 1914-1918* (William Blackwood: Edinburgh, 1921). The new version draws on more-recent research, official records and first-hand accounts; and it challenges the Division's post-war critics.

The Division arrived in France on 5 May 1915. It took part in an unsuccessful attack at Givenchy in June, which revealed weaknesses in training. The rest of the year was spent relatively quietly in the Somme Valley and, from March 1916, on Vimy Ridge. In 1917, by now regarded as a leading assault division, it fought on the Somme at High Wood and Beaumont-Hamel, at the Battle of Arras, at Third Ypres (Belgian Flanders) and Cambrai (November). In 1918, it faced two of the German spring offensives; and, in the build-up to the final allied offensive, in an attack with the French and the Italians in the Champagne in July. During the final 100-days offensive, the Division fought in the Second Battle of Arras, 26-30 August, and at Valenciennes in October. Interestingly, some Australian doctors were posted to the Division during its time in France.

The Introduction notes, refreshingly, that the perception of accuracy and lack of bias in unit and formation war diaries could be flawed. Many other histories have used the war diaries as ‘gospel’.

The author, Colin Campbell, is a fervent Scot. He has provided statistics on percentage enlistments and casualties from Scotland compared to the rest of the United Kingdom. There are a number of Scottish quotes – some can be easily understood by Australians, others less so.

When training in Bedford, the Division was gutted by the transfer out of six of its infantry battalions and some medical units. Organisation charts, which would have assisted the reader, are not provided to illustrate these and subsequent organisational changes (such as the linking of battalions and the re-designation of infantry battalions as pioneer battalions). Such re-organisations can affect the fighting cohesion of units and formations, but it is not explained how the Division built up teamwork and spirit.

The character of a division is usually moulded by its commander. During the Great War, the 51st Division had four commanders. The first was a regular soldier, Major General Colin John Mackenzie, who had raised the 51st Division in the Territorial Army in 1911. Mackenzie was replaced on 23 August 1914 by Brigadier-General Bannatine-Allason. The book does not explain why this occurred, but Mackenzie’s subsequent record suggests incompetence – inclusion of a brief biography of Mackenzie may have evidenced this. Major-General George M. Harper became the Division’s third commander in September 1915 and successfully led the division during the majority of its fighting. He left early in 1918 to take command of IV Corps, to be succeeded by Major-General G. T. C. Carter-Campbell.

Harper led the first successful attack by the Division, the capture of Beaumont Hamel on 13 November 1916. It had been a first-day objective on 1 July 1916. Harper promoted the capture of Beaumont Hamel by the Division both to raise the Division’s morale and to enhance his own reputation.

The chapter on the Battle of Cambrai is headed ‘CONTROVERSY Cambrai’. Over the years, other writers have blamed the Division for many of the failures of the battle. The author raises a number of good points defending the Division’s reputation, but does not push the case for the Division hard enough. Cambrai was an all-arms battle that was fought without adequate communication or co-operation.

The book has several deficiencies in addition to those already mentioned. In any war history, maps help the reader understand the manoeuvring of the units over the terrain – the maps herein are generally less informative than the maps in Brewer’s 1921 version of the history. Also, the book has repeated the often-quoted view that, after Third Ypres, Lloyd George withheld reinforcements to Haig – a number of recent authors have discredited that view. The writer has incorporated a number of first-hand accounts into the narrative, not all successfully. While some of those accounts enhance the history by adding detail to a particular event, other accounts add confusion as it is not clear whether the described circumstances applied only to a platoon or applied more broadly to a whole brigade.

This book’s outstanding feature is that it explains some of the issues that researchers face when consulting primary sources such as unit and formation war diaries. It also explains the convention extant at the time that ‘blue-on-blue’ incidents were not to be mentioned.

The book will appeal to descendants of men who served in the Division, to members of units or affiliated units associated with the Division, and to readers interested in the conditions suffered by the soldiers on the Western Front. The book, however, does not add significantly to the existing information about the battles in which the Division participated.

John Hitchen
Collins of the Sydney:
a life of Vice-Admiral Sir John Collins

by Anthony MacDougall

 Clarke Editions: Mudgee, NSW; 2018; 532 pp.; ISBN: 9780992279301 (paperback); RRP $39.95; Ursula Davidson Library call number 710 MACD 2018

Tony MacDougall has taken on the necessary but difficult task of researching and writing a biography of the first Australian officer to command the Royal Australian Navy (RAN), Vice-Admiral John Augustine Collins KBE, CB. The necessity springs from the central role Collins played in the development of RAN capabilities in operational, organisational and international fields. He is probably best known to Australians today because of the class of submarine named after him. However, between his acceptance into the RAN College as a member of its first entry in 1913 through to his retirement in 1955, John Collins was associated with almost every stage of the RAN's progress: from a small element of the mighty Imperial Royal Navy; to an independent and regionally significant maritime force in its own right. The difficulties arise because the RAN has been far from assiduous in preserving its own records and because John Collins was a notably private person, creating and leaving nothing substantial as a documentary trail of his life, its events and his reflections on them. So, the first plus for this book is that it was written at all.

The author has deployed his considerable skills to explore a wide range of material and anecdotal sources in his efforts to present the whole of Collins' life, including his family's history and the interactions of his mother and older siblings with John, the youngest. Collins' selection for the RAN College in 1913, his experiences and achievements there and his subsequent service with the Royal Navy's Grand Fleet in 1918 are recorded. Clearly a 'comer', John Collins absorbed well the lessons learned from his operational experience and specialist Gunnery courses to become a highly-regarded Gunnery expert. His career thereafter led though several operational postings and service in the British Admiralty to command of the light cruiser HMAS Sydney in 1939. As the book's title suggests, his name was forever linked with that ship because of her exploits in the Mediterranean in 1940 under his command, notably the sinking of the larger Italian cruiser Bartolomeo Colleoni.

Great though these achievements were, less prominence has been given to Collins' pivotal role in Singapore in 1941-42 in first planning for the eventuality of a Japanese attack on British, Dutch and United States colonial possessions in Southeast Asia and then in saving as much as possible from the wreckage of the Allies' failure to honour their commitments to the plan. Many of the vessels and survivors who reached the safety of Australia after the fall of Singapore in February 1942 owed their lives to the quiet but effective measures taken by John Collins. Personally, he remained mindful of those he was not able to save, including the men of Perth and Yarra lost to superior Japanese forces.

The author carefully charts Collins' path from his posting to Western Australia after his return from Java, via command of the heavy cruiser Shropshire and active service in the South West Pacific Area, to his posting in command the Australian Squadron in June 1944. Severely wounded by the kamikaze attack on his flagship, Australia, in October 1944 at Leyte Gulf, he returned to his command after convalescence to lead the Squadron into Tokyo Bay for the Japanese surrender in September 1945.

MacDougall notes that Collins' later progression to become the first Australian officer to command the RAN was, in significant part, through the reputation he had gained in senior political circles for his ability to meet any challenge placed before him, which counted more in his favour when the decision became necessary than his alleged lack of senior command experience.

Throughout John Collins' tenure as Chief of Naval Staff from 1948, which was extended twice to 1955, he built upon the foundations laid by his predecessors to set the RAN on a course towards strategic independence and development of a force structure suited to Australian circumstances. Although thoroughly steeped in the British way of doing things, he had enjoyed and appreciated his wartime exposure to the United States Navy and saw clearly that the post-war development of Pacific co-operation was more important than retaining traditional ties with the Royal Navy. This phase of his career clearly caused the author some anguish. It would be fascinating to learn how Collins argued his case and influenced his colleagues and political masters towards adoption of his views, but the surviving records simply do not provide this information. Famously reticent about his service and personal life, Collins left us to speculate on this.

Collins' final appointment was as High Commissioner to New Zealand. There he served effortlessly and effectively before retirement in 1963.

Tony MacDougall presents John Collins as a modest man who knew his own worth and applied his considerable capabilities to good effect throughout a glittering career, in and out of the RAN, in more than 50 years of service to Australia. The book is easy to read and should appeal to all readers interested in learning more of this important figure in Australia's national and naval history.

Ian Pfennigwerth
Vietnam’s Final Air Campaign describes a two-part air campaign conducted by the United States in North Vietnam in 1972 to bring the Vietnam War peace talks to a satisfactory conclusion.

The author, Stephen Emerson, has worked as an intelligence analyst covering political-military affairs in Africa and the Middle East. He has served as chair of security studies at the National Defence University’s Africa Centre for Strategic Studies and as an associate professor at the United States Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island. He holds a PhD in international relations/comparative politics from the University of Florida.

In 1972, America was faced with a massive anti-war movement that was tearing apart the fabric of American society. The war in Vietnam dragged on with a continuing high cost in lives and economic power. The Paris Peace Talks had stagnated. President Nixon was facing an election at the end of the year. To placate the American populace, Nixon had implemented a process requiring South Vietnamese forces to carry the ground war – known as Vietnamisation – while withdrawing United States forces from South Vietnam and extricating America from a war that was unpopular and appeared unwinnable.

Sensing Nixon’s quandary, the North Vietnamese Politburo believed the time right to deliver a final blow and win the war. The Easter Offensive in March launched attacks along the length of South Vietnam aimed at overthrowing American and South Vietnamese forces while capturing territory and extending the reach and influence of the North Vietnamese Government. In the initial phases of the offensive, it looked like a winning punch. The Politburo was also seeking to improve its bargaining position for the peace talks.

The only tool available to the United States to effectively counter the offensive was air power. Stung by the offensive, which was launched while peace talks were in progress, Nixon retaliated with an air campaign against North Vietnam to bring the peace talks to a favourable conclusion and win America an honourable peace.

The United States employed air power to neutralise, and then destroy, the attacking North Vietnamese forces – but it would take several months. The campaign was codenamed Linebacker I and it targeted installations in and around Hanoi and its port of Haiphong, both areas defended by a strong fighter force and an intensive surface-to-air missile and anti-aircraft artillery capability.

Linebacker I was conducted primarily by United States Air Force tactical fighter and strike aircraft launched from bases in South Vietnam and Thailand; and by United States Navy aircraft launched from a carrier force on station off the North Vietnamese coast. It was halted when a favourable outcome from the Paris peace talks looked like being achieved. The South Vietnamese Government, however, refused to accept the conditions of the peace agreement, so the bombing halt had to be reconsidered.

With failure at the peace table, but success at the United States presidential elections in November 1972, Nixon launched Linebacker II on 18 December with the express objective of forcing Hanoi to return to the negotiating table. Linebacker II was conducted primarily with B-52 strategic bombers. It was planned and led by professional airmen, unencumbered by the limitations imposed by the White House on the way Linebacker I was fought. Linebacker II lasted until December 30. It forced Hanoi reluctantly back to the negotiating table and a peace agreement was signed on 27 January 1973.

Linebacker II was decisive and had a devastating effect on Hanoi, Haiphong and the North Vietnamese military forces. The cost to the United States was 107 aircraft, including 15 B-52 strategic bombers, and the lives of 93 pilots and crew. The Vietnamese Peoples Air Force lost 68 fighter aircraft.

The blockade of Haiphong by United States Navy ships and air-delivered sea mines, along with the interdiction of the Chinese supply routes to Hanoi, not only reduced the ability of the North Vietnam to counter the attacks by American aircraft, it reduced its ability to supply its forces on the battlefields in South Vietnam.

Emerson provides context for the air campaign by describing the political landscape of the time clearly, and, with the advantage of hindsight, enables sense to be drawn from what was a challenging period – confused with antiwar movement proclamations and disorder, enemy propaganda and ambiguous reports flowing from the Paris peace talks.

The book provides a glossary of terminology, weapons, aircraft and military technology. It is well-illustrated with diagrams, maps, and an excellent collection of colour plates; and it has a bibliography and an index.

This well-researched, cogent and easy-to-read history of the air campaign includes excellent descriptions of fighter and bomber missions flown during Linebacker I and II that enable the reader to glimpse the complexity and lethality of fighter tactics and defensive counter-air defence measures. It is a most suitable book for the student of the application of air power. As an informative, interesting and a thoroughly engaging read, it is also suited to the general reader.

Bob Treloar
BOOK REVIEWS:

Allied coastal forces of World War II. Volume 1: Fairmile designs and US submarine chasers

by John Lambert and Al Ross

Seaforth Publishing: Barnsley, South Yorkshire; 2019; 256 pp.; ISBN 978152674449; RRP $61.50;
Ursula Davidson Library call number 722 LAMB 2018

The coastal forces referred to herein are the small warships designed for use in coastal waters such as motor torpedo boats, torpedo-armed patrol (PT) boats, motor gun boats, launches, submarine chasers and the like. Such warships served in World War II as patrol boats, convoy escorts, minelayers, minesweepers, harbour defence vessels, light landing craft, air-force rescue boats, and transports for agents and clandestine operations.

This volume is a reprint of an edition originally published in 1990. It provides technical detail in words, photographs and drawings, of the small wooden, mostly prefabricated, warships designed by the Fairmile Marine Company together with the smaller 72-foot Harbour Defence Motor Launch and the larger United States Navy 120-foot Subchaser. As such, the volume is of particular interest to Australians as Fairmile ships, mostly Type B motor launches and harbour defence motor launches, were built under licence in Sydney during World War II. Subsequently, they served with the Royal Australian Navy in the coastal waters of Australia, New Guinea and the islands of the south-west Pacific from 1943 to 1945. Their shallow draft, effective armament, speed and manoeuvrability made them a unique part of the navy's war effort.

The author, the late John Lambert, gained detailed technical knowledge of warships in the Royal Navy and later undertook research on small warships and naval weaponry. He combined this knowledge with his excellent technical drawing skills to produce books on the subject of which this is one. His co-author, Al Ross II, also is the author of several books on small warships and produces technical drawings skills to produce books on the subject of which this is one. His co-author, Al Ross II, also is the author of several books on small warships and produces plans for modellers of small warships of the World War II and Vietnam eras.

The first half of this book describes each of the vessels in detail: the Fairmile A and B-type motor launches (including the Canadian B-type), C-type motor gun boat, D-type motor torpedo/gun boat, and F-type motor gun boat 2001; and the 72-foot harbour defence motor launch and the SC 497-class 110-foot subchaser. There is, though, no mention of the Fairmile H-type landing craft.

The second half of the book provides details of equipment – depth charges, anti-submarine equipment, radars, camouflage, engines, engineering, and habitability; and selected weapons systems – Holman projector, PAC rocket, 2-inch rocket flare, smoke-making apparatus, 0.303-inch Lewis machine-gun, 0.303-inch Vickers gas-operated machine-gun, 3-pounder Hotchkiss gun, 2-pounder Mark XI and XII guns, and 2-pounder Vickers 40mm gun.

Additional data are provided on other weapons and minelaying systems, the deployment of motor launches during the war, and the depot ships and shore bases they used. There are also 12 appendices which focus on the ship builders and ship performance. There is a good bibliography, but, unfortunately, no index.

I was, though, unable to find any reference to the building of Fairmile ships in Australia and only a minor reference to those used by the Royal Australian Navy. For those interested, I would recommend The Fairmile ships of the Royal Australian Navy (Australian Military History Publications: Loftus, NSW) Volume 1, by Peter Evans, 2002; Volume 2, by Peter Evans and Richard Thompson, 2005.

Allied Coastal Forces Volume 1 could be read from cover to cover, but readers may prefer to use it as a reference book, locating items of interest via the contents as there is no index. The photos and drawings are of good to high quality; and the technical detail and data appear to be sound, although I am unqualified to comment on marine engineering.

I recommend the book to those interested in this fascinating class of small warship.

David Leece

Frederick Whirlpool VC: the hidden Victoria Cross

by Alan Leek

Pen & Sword Military: Barnsley, South Yorkshire; 2019; 248 pp.; ISBN 9781526759108; RRP $49.99 (hardcover); Ursula Davidson Library Call No. 501.2 LEEK 2019

This book is a biography of Humphrey James, who was born on 17 July 1831 in County Carlow, Ireland. Following education at a Protestant school, he enlisted in the army of the Honourable East India Company as ‘Frederick Whirlpool’. He arrived in Bombay in 1855 and was posted to the 3rd Bombay European Regiment. During the Indian Mutiny, in April 1858 at Jhansi, he was involved in heavy fighting during which he rescued two wounded men. In May, during an assault on Lohari, he saved the life of a wounded subaltern, but sustained 17 severe sword wounds, which ended his military career. For these two separate acts of valour, he was awarded the Victoria Cross.

In 1859, he migrated to Australia. His Victoria Cross was pinned on him on 20 June 1861 by the wife of Victoria’s governor in Melbourne. At the time, he was
BOOK REVIEWS: (Cont’d)
Frederick Whirlpool VC…

serving part-time in the Hawthorne and Kew Volunteer Rifles. Shortly after, repulsed by fame, he moved to Tasmania and later moved to Sydney where he died on 24 June 1899 after living as a recluse for several years. Despite having been awarded the Victoria cross and having lived in Australia for much of his life, there was only one mourner at his funeral. As the author points out, Whirlpool deliberately obscured much of the facts of his life and this was the result. His Victoria Cross is now displayed in the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.

The reasons why Humphrey James chose to enlist as ‘Frederick Whirlpool’ will never be known, but, while he later wished to revert to his correct name, his military pension, being in the assumed name, made this impossible.

I have had an interest in Frederick Whirlpool since a friend asked me to pick up Whirlpool’s Indian Mutiny medal from Customs many years ago. I must compliment the author on writing a most readable and instructive book on a little-known Victoria Cross winner. Quite apart from giving us the best possible biography of Whirlpool, the book also contains a very good general history of the Indian Mutiny which is well worth reading in itself.

I recommend this book to anyone with an interest in the Indian Mutiny and the Victoria Cross, but also to those interested in the life of a man whose life was altered by his military experiences.  

Sergio Zampatti

The sniper encyclopaedia: an A-Z guide to world sniping

by John Walter

Ursula Davidson Library call number 880 WALT 2019

Sniping can be regarded as the epitome of one branch of the infantryman’s art – his skill at employing his rifle to specifically target an opponent, particularly a key person such as an officer or radio operator. At various times, as at the beginning of the Great War, doing so was regarded as unacceptable, but this usually changed as wars progressed and casualties mounted. Today’s sniper has a high public profile: no longer the pariah; more the hero.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the term ‘sniping’ was derived in the early 19th century from the notion of ‘shooting at men as one would a game-bird’ and the ‘sniper’ was ‘one who snipes, or shoots from concealment’. Men and women skilled in sniping have been variously known as snipers, sharpshooters and/or marksmen.

This encyclopaedia of sniping addresses each of the main components of the sniping art: the sniper; sniper rifles; sniper ammunition; and sniping aids, such as telescopic sights and rangefinders. It contains personal details of hundreds of snipers, both men and women, drawn from many nations; and the history and development of the many specialist sniper rifles, specialist ammunition, aids and accessories, including optical sights and laser rangefinders. It also describes specific campaigns and places where marksmen have influenced the course of individual battles.

The author, John Walter, is an expert on small arms and has published more than 70 books on rifles, handguns and gunmakers. His most recent book, Snipers at war: an equipment and operations history (Greenhill: Barnsley, S. Yorkshire; 2017), is a history and analysis, from the Crimean War to the present, of the equipment, tactics and personalities of the ‘sniping world’. This encyclopaedia is a companion to Snipers at War and provides detail on personalities and equipment that could not be included in the more broad-brush history.

As an encyclopaedia, subjects are listed alphabetically, not chronologically or by topic. Hence, the book needs to be used as a reference book when one seeks detailed information on a specific topic. No encyclopaedia can be comprehensive, but the author has chosen well in deciding what to include and what to omit. Coverage of issues is comprehensive and is generally indicative of individual personalities, weapons and equipment that did not make it into the volume.

I was fascinated by some of the biographies, especially those of Russian women snipers and their almost unbelievable achievements on the Eastern Front in World War II. There also are feature articles on specific subjects – rifles and accessories; special topics; personalities; and units and insignia – spread through the volume and helpfully colour-coded by category.

There is no index, but there are ready-reference lists, one on each of 10 specific topics, such as anti-matériel rifles, female snipers, male snipers, sniper rifles and snipers in a specific war. While these assist readers find less well-known entries in the encyclopaedia, I did not find them nearly as convenient as a conventional index.

In some parts of the volume (e.g. pp. 252-255), there are also horizontal arrows scattered through the text. They are usually associated with proper names and appear to be typesetters’ annotations which were not intended to appear in the final document. I found them quite off-putting at times.

These deficiencies notwithstanding, this is a very well researched encyclopaedia and I recommend it to anyone interested in the art of sniping.

David Leece
BOOK REVIEW:

The Frontier Light Horse in the Anglo-Zulu War 1879: an irregular regiment on campaign

by Cameron Simpson

Asseggai Genealogical Research: Cape Town; 2018; 307 pp.; ISBN 9780620772839;
RRP Rand 299; Ursula Davidson Library call number: 554.1 SIMP 2018

Alphonse du Neuville’s epic painting Defence of Rorke’s Drift has been stopping crowds at the Art Gallery of New South Wales for almost 140 years. Fifty-five years ago, the motion picture, Zulu, created cinema queues around Australia and has remained a popular film ever since. Today, Australian military historian and combat veteran, Cameron Simpson, reintroduces that period of the history of the British Empire with his latest book, The Frontier Light Horse in the Anglo-Zulu War 1879: An Irregular Regiment on Campaign. The book is a fascinating read and a valuable contribution to scholarship.

As the title suggests, the book is a unit history. At first glance, The Frontier Light Horse may appear to be a study of one of the obscure colonial units raised in South Africa to fight the wars of Empire in the late 19th century. On closer examination, however, the reader discovers that the Frontier Light Horse was the spearhead of one of the three columns that Lord Chelmsford launched into Zululand to initiate the war and was still fighting in the final battle at Ulundi (oNdini). Simpson devotes entire chapters to two of the most significant battles of the war, Hlobane and Kambula. The descriptions of these battles are not restricted to the role of the Frontier Light Horse. At Hlobane, the description of the retreat down Devil’s Pass is as gripping as any adventure novel. In his account of the Battle of Kambula, in which a little over 2000 British and Imperial troops faced a Zulu army some 17,000 strong, Simpson observes with typical understatement that: “as the Zulus swept across the open veldt they were heard to be proudly chanting we are the boys from Isandlwana, a means of intimidating the British and at this point the anxiety amongst the young infantryman that lined the perimeter of the garrison must have been high”.

More than half of the text is devoted to appendices. In these we discover Simpson’s passion for genealogical research. The first appendix will satisfy a predictable curiosity for the Victoria Cross. The second introduces the reader to the terminology of the period.

It is in the third that Simpson shares his extraordinary research into the men of the regiment. What a fascinating bunch of people they are. The unit was made up of adventurers from all over the British Empire, Europe, even the Americas. There are gentlemen’s sons, clerks, sailors and others from every possible walk of life. Drawn together by war, some went on to live long and eventful lives while others faded into obscurity or lie in some lonely or unmarked grave in the African bush. Simpson provides accounts of the endurance and acts of bravery of many of these soldiers, as well as descriptions of punishments for desertion, drunkenness or cowardice.

As a student of the Second Anglo-Boer War, I was interested in Simpson’s attitude to the flawed Major (later General) Redvers Buller. Simpson’s descriptions of Buller’s performance in and out of battle with the Frontier Light Horse provided a very different perspective on his personality and courage.

Among the more than 400 sets of biographical notes are notes on a number of Australians including two of whom who served in the New South Wales Military Forces and were part of the contingent that went to the Soudan in 1885.

Irish born Fred Bulmer was one of them. Said to be university educated, he fought in several frontier wars rising through the ranks until commissioned. After South Africa he moved to Australia and served in the New South Wales Mounted Police with parallel service in the military forces, including the deployment to the Soudan. In March 1906, Bulmer ended his own life with a bullet through the brain. He had not turned 53.

The other was another Irishman, William Fawcett, who, after fighting with the Frontier Light Horse in the Zulu War, moved to New South Wales and served in the Soudan then returned to South Africa to see action with the Scottish Horse during the Second Anglo-Boer War.

These are but two of the stories revealed in the biographical notes that are one of the great strengths of the book. Other strengths are the lavish footnotes and the thorough indexing. Also, conveniently located at the front of the work, are campaign and battle maps that are superb in their simplicity. The photographic section combines historical images with modern photographs of the old battlefields taken by the author and his mates as they walked the site.

I recommend The Frontier Light Horse to any historian interested in the wars of Empire – it should be an essential addition to their library. I recommend it as well to those just looking for a great story well told.

Brad Manera

*Bradley Manera is senior historian/curator at the Anzac Memorial, Hyde Park South, Sydney.

United Service 70 (3) September 2019
This book is a history of the Army Survey Regiment from its creation in 1932 as the Drafting Sub-Section of the Australian Survey Corps until the Regiment's closure in 1996. In 1942, the then Land Headquarters Cartographic Company moved from Melbourne to Bendigo in central Victoria, where it evolved into the Army Survey Regiment. It would grow to become the largest mapping entity in the Southern Hemisphere.

The Survey Regiment had a unique operational peacetime role in that it was tasked with mapping northern Australia, Australia's territories and other countries in the south-west Pacific. It produced maps for the Australian Army, aeronautical charts for the Royal Australian Air Force and printed hydrographic charts for the Royal Australian Navy.

At the start of World War II, the Australian Survey Corps had produced military topographical maps that covered only 1.3 per cent of Australia; another aspect of Australia's reliance and misplaced confidence in Imperial defence between the wars. An emergency mapping scheme was set up, but maps of the vital areas could not be produced in time to meet a possible Japanese threat. So, a strategic mapping scheme was set up focused on the eastern coastal strip from Townsville to Port Augusta; the western strip from Geraldton to Albany; and some areas around Darwin and in Tasmania.

The Bendigo survey connection began in late 1941 when the officer commanding the Land Headquarters Cartographic Company, while en route from Melbourne to Mildura where he anticipated finding ideal space and light for a major mapping installation, inspected a rambling mansion on 15 acres during an overnight stay in Bendigo. This was Fortuna which had been developed by George Lansell who had become wealthy in the 1850s gold mining era. His search ended immediately as suitable for his needs.

Fortuna was accepted. In 1951, the Commonwealth purchased Fortuna for 11,000 pounds ($22,000). The Vietnam War returned the Survey Regiment to theatre control in the operational area as a basis for theatre grid, prepared overprint amendments, produced sketch maps and map enlargements, held and distributed maps for the Australian Task Force and advised on survey matters. The Bendigo facility produced enlarged maps at short notice. As the only Regular Army unit in northern Victoria, it also was required to report casualties to soldiers' families and conduct some military funerals. By 1971, anti-Vietnam sentiment caused soldiers to no longer wear uniforms in public.

Surveying techniques and products are vital to all navigation, personnel safety, the co-ordination of fire power and predicted fire. The current plethora of global positioning system (GPS) and smart-phone applications which aid navigation, has made perfect survey all but taken for granted. But the pioneers of survey deserve enduring respect. Moreover, their methods and standards will need to be replicated should cyber threats or human errors related to GPS applications be realised. Just as many mariners retain charts, sextants and associated skills, so land-based warriors should not lose their map reading and compass acuities.

There are other studies of army survey from 1915 until 1996. This work, however, provides a formal record of the Army Survey Regiment's contribution to the mapping of Australia, a clear discussion of changing technology, and a social history of regimental life and the personalities involved. The association of army surveyors with Bendigo continues – a good reason to reflect on the long-term costs of the Army's current stance on public engagement.

There are helpful photos; useful appendices, including one on printing technology; and an impressive bibliography. This work deserves attention by students of cartography, surveying and Australian military history – cartography because the Land Headquarters Cartographic Company became the largest map making entity in the Southern Hemisphere during World War II.

Our thanks are especially due to Colonel Don Swiney MBE (Ret'd). A former commanding officer of the 1st Survey Regiment and later Director of Survey, he donated the volume reviewed herein to the Ursula Davidson Library. This study is well and respectfully written by a local historian, with the aid of Survey Corps veterans and is informed by prodigious research. I recommend it to all interested in the history of Australian map-making, especially military map-making, in the 20th century.

Ken Broadhead

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