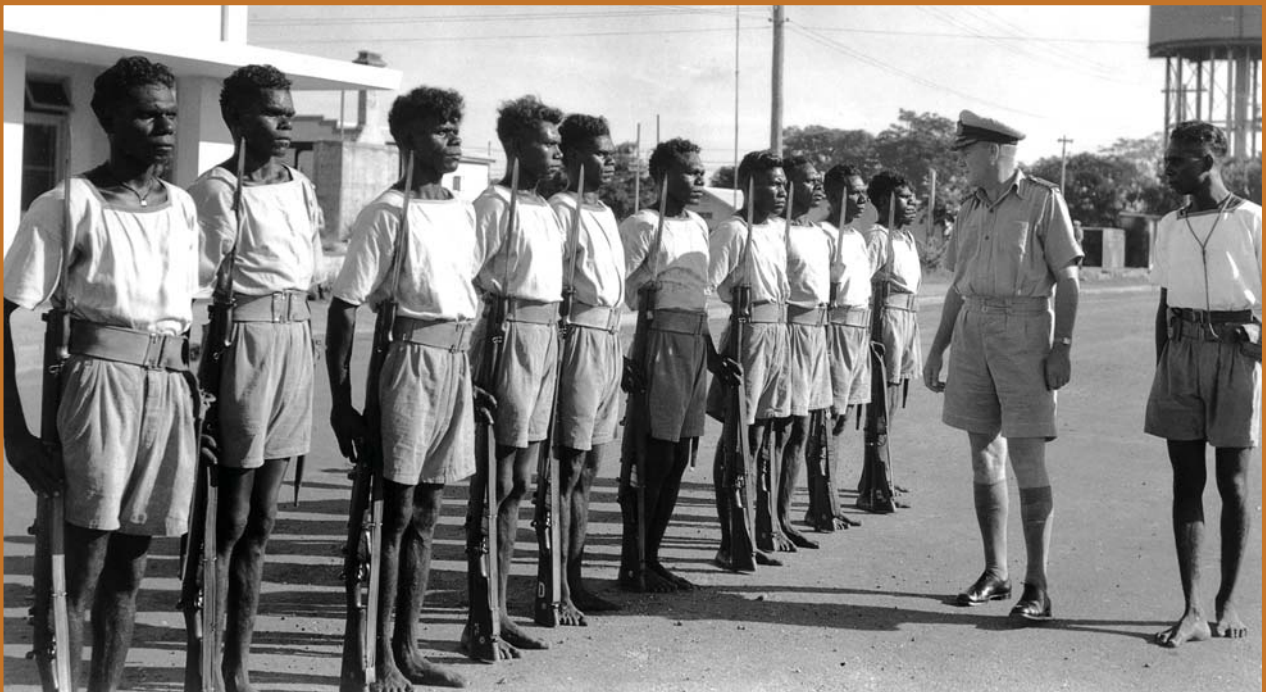
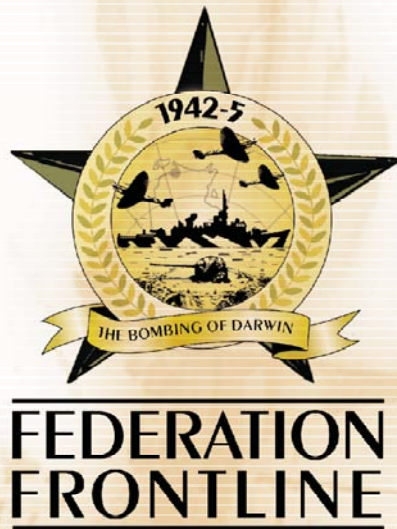


*A Secondary School Education Resource on the*

# Bombing of Darwin





## **Federation Frontline**

### **A Secondary School Resource Package on the Bombing of Darwin**

ISBN 0-646-43838-7

Written by Elizabeth Mountford

Designed and Printed by Hollands Print Solutions

With thanks to all of the teachers and students who so willingly engaged in trials of the materials: Judy Boland and her Year 10 SOSE students from Darwin High School, Jane Ellem and her Year 6/7 class from Batchelor Area School, Jacintha Francis and her Year 9 Dripstone High School English students and Kathryn Hill at Katherine High School and her Year 10 SOSE students.

The Discovering Democracy project officer, Loraine Caldwell was of invaluable help.

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#### **Cover photograph**

Tiwi warriors, on parade in front of the Hotel Darwin, 22 December 1943, for inspection by Captain S. Baldwin of HMAS Melville (HQ, RAN Darwin area).

From left – Harry One, Holder Adams, Ali Miller (Mungatopi), Francis Butcher (Tippaklipa), Victor Adams, Charlie One (Tippaklipa), Melon, Brownie Araku, Man Fong, Charlie Two, Ginger Two, and Ginger One (on far right)

(Courtesy of the Australian War Memorial, negative number 062385)



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# Teachers Guide

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*A Secondary School Education Resource on the*

## Bombing of Darwin

# Federation Frontline Secondary School Education Resource

Federation Frontline was a project of the Centenary of Federation in the Northern Territory. Its focus was on the bombing of Darwin in 1942. As part of its lasting legacy the project included the publication of a book, *Federation Frontline. A people's history of World War II in the Northern Territory* by Peter and Sheila Forrest. This education package is part of the lasting legacy. It provides materials and approaches to help teachers explore some of the themes of the book in their classroom.

## Rationale

Through the use of this text, students will be encouraged to explore information about the people, ideas and events surrounding the bombing of Darwin during World War 2 and to engage in critical thinking strategies while processing this information.

The questions and tasks have been created using the Taxonomy created by Benjamin Bloom<sup>1</sup> to provide a structure to categorise intellectual outcomes.

Students will be encouraged to gather, interpret, apply, analyse, synthesise and evaluate information from a variety of sources in order to develop information literacy and higher order thinking skills.

## Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Levels

### Table of Verbs

1 Knowledge	2 Comprehension		3 Application	
list name identify show define recognize recall state	summarize explain put into your own words interpret describe compare paraphrase	differentiate demonstrate visualize find more information about restate	solve illustrate calculate use assess record report show transfer	chart interpret relate manipulate apply classify modify put into practice
4 Analysis	5 Synthesis		6 Evaluation	
analyze organize deduce choose contrast compare distinguish discriminate differentiate focus prioritise	design hypothesize support schematize write report discuss plan devise compare create construct	adapt anticipate categorise combine communicate integrate initiate model modify validates	evaluate choose estimate judge defend criticize justify appraise conclude confront decides	

## Learning Goals

This text is designed to develop students'

- Capacity to achieve effective historical understandings by reading and viewing sources, visiting sites, talking, listening, answering questions and constructing imaginative responses about the experiences of human beings involved in the bombing of Darwin and the war in the Northern Territory.
- Skills in critical literacy in relation to the craft of historical inquiry
- Ability to understand and communicate historical concepts, values, perspectives and issues
- Insights into ways of thinking and living at the time of the second world war
- Insight into the contributions of individuals and groups to Australia's history
- Abilities to clarify their own values about issues, events, people and things.

<sup>1</sup> Bloom, B.S., Englehart, M.D., Furst, E.J., Hill, W.H. and Krathwol, D.R.(1956) Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Handbook 1. Cognitive Domain. London.Longman

## Skills of Historical Inquiry Review

*Throughout this study students will be given the opportunity to identify, explain and use historical concepts of*

- ☐ Time, Continuity, and Change,
- ☐ People, Places, and Environments,
- ☐ Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

through analysis of sources, the construction of reasoned historical arguments and creative responses to historical events and issues

Time, Continuity, and Change.	Task	Unit
Demonstrate an understanding that different scholars may describe the same event or situation in different ways.	Shipping in Darwin Harbour - witness recreation Darwin Women Were All Heroines – Analysis task	1 3
Identify and use historical skills necessary to reconstruct and reinterpret the past such as <input type="checkbox"/> identifying and analysing primary sources	Source Analysis –a soldier remembers Source analysis - Photos as historical evidence Source analysis – Cemeteries as a Historical Resource	2 2 4
<input type="checkbox"/> identifying and analysing secondary sources,	Magazine articles as evidence Feature Films as evidence	2, 3 1, 2
<input type="checkbox"/> weighing evidence	Argument about heroism of nurses –The Nurses The postal workers – Exploring the nature of heroism	2 3
<input type="checkbox"/> considering reliability of sources	The cover-up Nurses – considering the nature of evidence	1 2
<input type="checkbox"/> understanding chronologically organized information	Chronology of prelude	1
Apply key concepts such as <input type="checkbox"/> Chronology	Chronology of prelude	1
<input type="checkbox"/> Causality	Darwin's Strategic importance	4
<input type="checkbox"/> Change	Changes caused by bombing -Refugees The Cenotaph's changing inscriptions	3 4
<input type="checkbox"/> Context	World context Experiences of aboriginal people The Darwin Cenotaph The Adelaide River War Cemetery	1 3 4 4
<input type="checkbox"/> Conflict	World, Australian and local conflict, studied throughout, conflict in interpretation.	Throughout
<input type="checkbox"/> Complexity	Refugees & Internees - Synthesis	3



<input type="checkbox"/> Explain, analyse, and show connections among patterns of historical change and continuity.	Darwin & Pearl Harbor –comparative study	1
	Internal enemies – Dunera Boys, Snow Falling on Cedars comparison of experiences	3
Show how the study of history leads to an understanding of contemporary beliefs, values, problems and issues.	Map of Darwin Harbour – issues raised by bombing of Manunda.	1
	Letter to Minister of Ed	1
	Sister cities	1
	The Darwin Cenotaph The Adelaide River War Cemetery	4 4
	Darwin Defenders – personal charter	4
<b>People, Places, and Environments:</b>		
Read maps, demonstrate an understanding of relative location, direction, latitude, longitude, measurement	The Japanese Advance	1
	Map of Darwin Harbour Shipping in the harbour	3
	Betty Fisher's story The Adelaide River Cemetery	4
Assess ways that historical events have been influenced by, and have influenced, physical and human geographic factors in local, regional, national, and global settings.	Promote a city	1
	Darwin's Strategic importance	4
<b>Individuals, Groups, and Institutions</b>		
Identify and analyse examples of tensions between individuals and groups	Internees & Refugees	3
Identify and analyse examples of efforts to promote social conformity.	The cover-up	1
	Internees & Refugees	3
Identify and describe examples of role of history in creating belief systems and values.	The Darwin Cenotaph	4
	The Adelaide River War Cemetery	4
Apply concepts such as rank, role, gender, status, and social class in describing the connections and interactions of individuals, groups, and institutions in society.	Internees & Refugees	3
Develop empathy through an understanding and appreciation of the role of particular individuals and groups.	Internees & Refugees	3

# War comes to Australia

Unit 1



*A Secondary School Education Resource on the*

## Bombing of Darwin

# War Comes to Australia

## Overview

In these units students will develop understandings of the historical, political and geographical context of the destruction brought by an enemy for the first time to Australian soil – the first Japanese attack on Darwin on 19 February 1942.

They will be able to consider some initial responses to the attack, real and propagandist, and to compare this attack to that launched on Pearl Harbor a mere 3 months before.

Students will be encouraged to engage in critical thinking strategies by processing information effectively: that is they will be encouraged to gather, interpret, apply, analyse, synthesise and evaluate information from a variety of sources in order to develop information literacy and higher order thinking skills.

To enhance student understanding of the context and issues in this unit, it is recommended that they read chapters 1 to 4 and 9 of Federation Frontline, the book.

Bloom's Taxonomy	Content	Learning Outcomes – students will
	<b>Part One - Context</b>	
Knowledge	World context	Cite and explain
Comprehension	The Japanese advance	Interpret
Application	Chronology of the prelude to World war Two, and the War in the Northern Territory	List and report
Analysis	Map of Darwin Harbour 19 Feb. 1942	Distinguish and deduce
Synthesis	Shipping in Darwin Harbour during the first air raid, 19 February 1942	Construct/compose
	<b>Part 2 –The Cover Up</b>	
Comprehension, analysis, synthesis and evaluation	Newspaper and other accounts of the raid	Complete a source analysis
	<b>Part 3 Comparative Study</b>	
Analysis and synthesis	Comparative study – Darwin Harbour/Pearl Harbor	Complete a comparative study





# World Context

---

## *Knowledge*

What was the world like in 1942? In order to fully understand the bombing of Darwin and its significance it is important to take some time to understand what was happening in various parts of the world.

### **Task: Find and understand information.**

Students work in 6 groups. Each group is to research one of the topics below and prepare a presentation for the class. The presentation may take the form of a talk or a visual presentation.

#### **Australia**

- Who was the Prime Minister of Australia in 1942?
- Describe Australia's relationship with Britain and with the United States of America.
- How was Australia involved in the war in Europe?
- Describe Australia's relationship with other countries in the Asia Pacific region.

#### **United States of America**

- Who was the President of the USA at this time?
- Explain the isolationist policy of the United States.
- What had happened to change this policy?

#### **Britain**

- Who was the Prime Minister of Britain at this time?
- In what ways was the British colony of Singapore considered important to Australia's defence?
- What was the impact of the war on Britain?
- What dramatic event changed Britain's relationship with Australia?

#### **The War in Europe**

- Which leader and party led Germany at the time?
- Who were Germany's allies?
- Who were Britain's allies at the time?
- Which country seemed to have the upper hand at this time?

#### **Japan**

- Who was the Emperor of Japan?
- How influential was the military?
- Why did Japan have a policy of expansionism?
- Why did Japan attack Pearl Harbor?

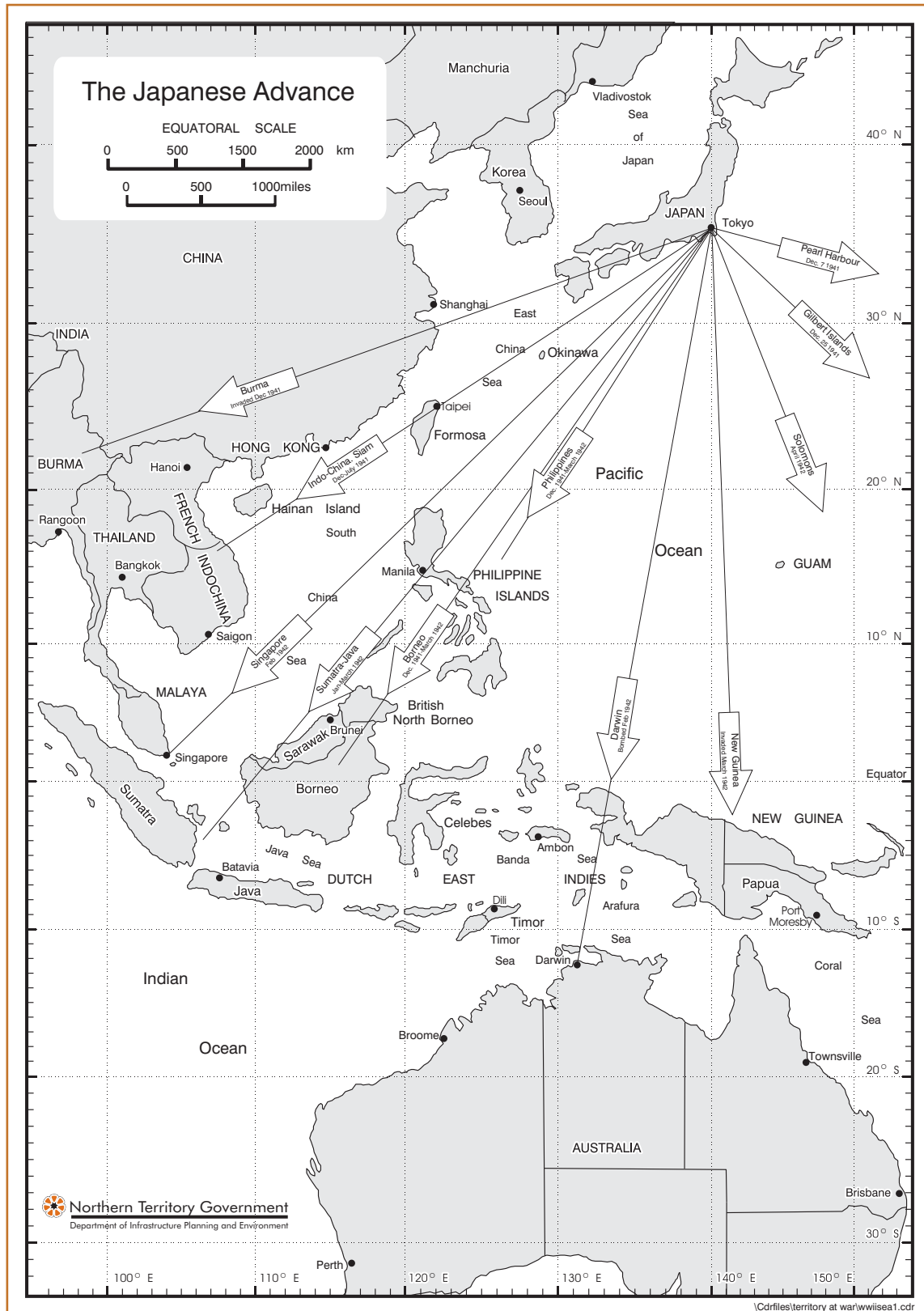
#### **The Northern Territory**

- Who governed the Northern Territory at this time?
- What were the reasons behind the military build up in the Northern Territory?
- Why did the Japanese bomb Darwin?
- What was similar about the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the bombing of Darwin?

# The Japanese Advance

## Comprehension – Interpreting Data

Closely study the map of the Japanese advance. Using the information provided in the arrows, and the scale, construct a timeline or graph showing the speed and extent of the advance.



## Chronology of the prelude to World War Two, and the War in the Northern Territory - Application

Study the chronology which appears in pages 18 and 19 of the Federation Frontline Book.

Find three pieces of evidence which suggest Australia's ties with Britain.

Find two pieces of evidence which indicate a growing alliance between Australia and the United States of America.

Month / Year	Event
1890s	Defence put forward as a major rationale for Australian federation.
1905	Japanese defeat of Russia causes concern in Australia.
1911	Visiting British defence expert suggests that Australia's north should be defended against possible Japanese attack; naval base at Darwin suggested.
1919	"Singapore strategy" for defence of British interests in "Far East" put forward.
1923	Work begins on naval base in Singapore, but soon suspended for financial reasons.
1924	Australia commits to construction of naval oil fuel storage tanks in Darwin to supplement Singapore; coastal guns suggested to defend the tanks.
1925	Australian navy begins survey of northern waters.
1928	First four oil tanks completed.
1931	Japan begins aggression in Manchuria.
1932 – 3	Thursday Island garrison moved to Darwin; installation of four inch naval guns at coastal positions begins – later replaced by six inch guns.
1933	Hitler comes to power in Germany.
	Darwin's non-Aboriginal population 1572.
	Planning begins for development of military base at Larrakeyah (in Darwin) six oil tanks complete.
1934	Decision to establish naval depot in Darwin.
1936	Patrol boat Larrakia sent to Darwin to prevent Japanese pearlers' entry to northern waters.
1937	Naval defence in Darwin area stepped up.
1938	Work begins to establish RAAF base in Darwin.
1939	Darwin Mobile Force, a militia unit, arrives to replace the Darwin Garrison.
	Work begins on victualling stores to provision Darwin in case of emergency.
	Development of Larrakeyah base accelerated.
	RAAF No.12 Squadron established at RAAF base.
	Darwin's non-Aboriginal civilian population 3653
	Limited reticulation of town water begins.
1940	Work begins on staging fields and "Advanced Operational Bases" for aircraft.
	Industrial disputes on Darwin wharf causes serious cargo delays; work begins to upgrade overland routes
	Work Begins on boom net defences to keep hostile ships out of Darwin harbour
	Air Raid Precautions and civil defence organisations set up in Darwin but doubts about their legal powers.
	Work begins to establish Parap camp, (mainly iron huts) for Darwin Mobile Force; camp used post war for civilian re-housing.
	Australia attempts direct diplomacy in effort to avoid war with Japan; open talks with the Dutch to establish a "Malay Barrier" in the East Indies as a shield for Australia.
1941	Australia lobbies Britain and United States in an effort to have them take the Japanese threat more seriously.
February	Australia resolves to send troops to Ambon and Timor immediately war breaks out; undercover advance parties sent beforehand.
July	US imposes embargoes on Japan after Japan refuses to withdraw from French Indo-China (Vietnam); close observers now regard war as inevitable.
	US Defence planners look to Northern Australia as alternative supply route to Philippines; staging routes for aircraft developed.
December 6	Australian Army and RAAF units move to Ambon and Timor



December 8	War begins with Japanese attacks in Northern Malaya, then Pearl Harbour.
December 10	British ships Prince of Wales and Repulse sunk off Malaya – a huge blow to Britain, and causes much apprehension in Australia
End December	Churchill flies to Washington, with US President Roosevelt forms alliance committed to defeat of Germany ahead of Japan; the leaders resolve that the war must end in unconditional surrender of both enemies.
December 12	Order to evacuate Darwin; civilian population then about 5,800
December 15	Japan begins campaign to take Hong Kong, the Philippines, Malaya, Dutch East Indies, and to cut sea lanes to Australia.
December 27	Curtin writes “turning to America” appeal
December 1942 January	Rapid Japanese advances everywhere between Burma and New Guinea; landings in Ambon and at Rabaul seen as a grave threat to Australia.
January February	Japanese submarines and reconnaissance aircraft operating in Darwin area.
February 4	Australian forces in Ambon surrender.
February 15	Singapore falls.
	Allied convoy leaves Darwin to reinforce Timor; comes under almost immediate air attack and is forced to turn back.
February 19	First Air Raids on Darwin; 242 enemy aircraft drop 683 bombs, devastating the town and leaving over 243 dead.
February 20	Japan invades Timor.
March 9	Allied surrender in Dutch East Indies.
March 17	General MacArthur arrives in Australia, landing at Batchelor.
March	USAAF 49 <sup>th</sup> Fighter Group defends Darwin with Kittyhawk fighters; gradually they win aerial ascendancy.
May 7-8	Battle of Coral Sea is inconclusive, but the result prevents the Japanese taking Port Moresby by sea.
June 4-7	Battle of Midway ends Japanese Naval supremacy – it is the first significant victory over Japan.
June	Coonawarra Naval base assumes responsibility for communications with submarines in area north to Philippines.
July	Secret Intelligence base (Lugger Maintenance Section) established at East Arm in Darwin harbour; from December 1942 the base is used for many secret and dangerous missions, with high loss rates.
July	Battle for Kokoda Track begins as Japanese try to approach Port Moresby overland.
August September	Australian victory at Milne Bay (New Guinea) is first land victory against Japan
September October	Australian Squadrons flying Kittyhawks take over northern fighter defence; 31 Squadron brings Beaufighters to Coomalie base – by December 1944 the squadron has destroyed 83 enemy aircraft, damaged 73 others, sunk 58 ships, and inflicted much other damage, for loss of 37 men.
October	Australian Hudson squadrons awarded Presidential Citation for bombing operations from the north; from March 1942; Hudsons also used in re-supply missions to Australian troops in Timor.
1943	The Japanese have at least 334 aircraft and between 60,000 and 100,000 men in Timor area.
January	Spitfire aircraft arrive.
January	NEI –RAAF no.18 Squadron arrives at MacDonald airstrip.
January	USAAF Liberators to Fenton airstrip.
May	Work begins on underground oil storage, in tunnels. The work is incomplete when the war ends.
June	More USAAF Liberators arrive, first based at Manbulloo, then Long
July	About 35,000 Australian Army personal in NT.
July	Allied counter-offensive in Pacific and New Guinea begins.
November 12	Last air raid over Darwin area.
1944 July	Reductions in NT Force strength.
1945 May +	Australian landings in Borneo, supporting broad American advance to Japan.
August 15	Japan announces unconditional surrender, following dropping of two atomic bombs.
1946 February	Civilians permitted to return to Darwin

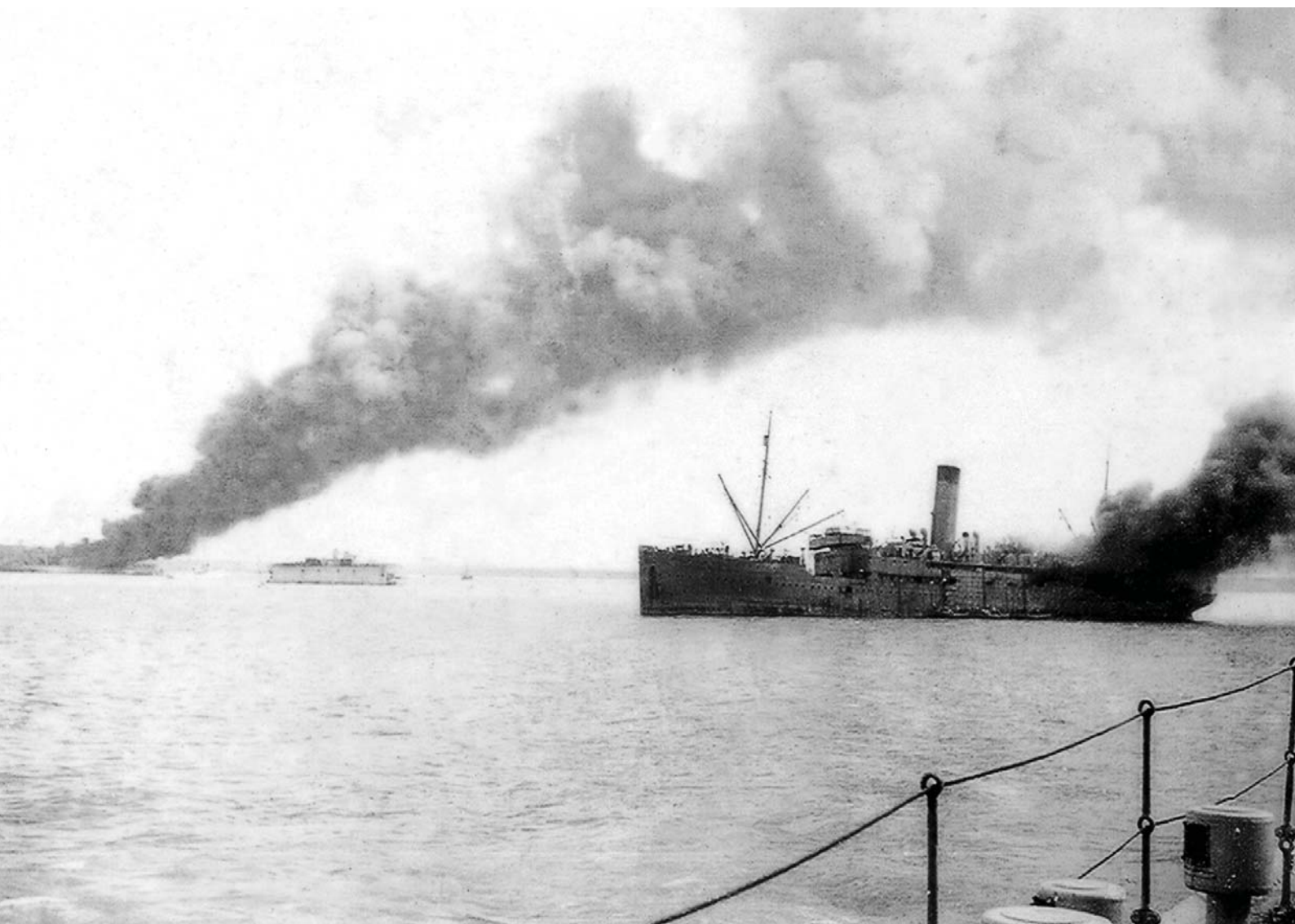
## Shipping in Darwin Harbour during first air raid - *Synthesis*

Closely study the list of ships as they appear on page 50 of the Federation Frontline book, or make a list from the following map, and then what happened to them. Refer also to the map for the locations of the ships.

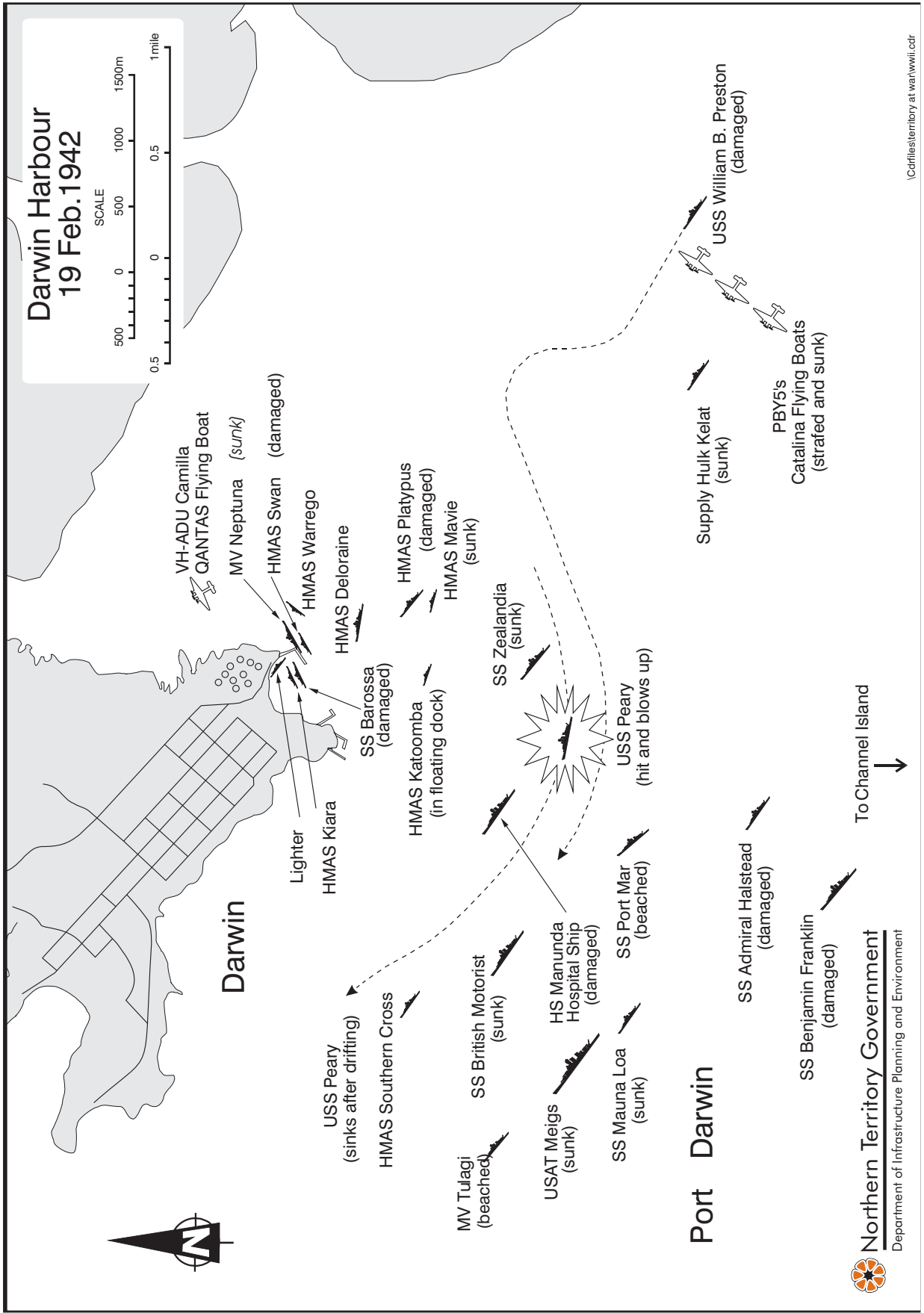
Imagine that you were in Darwin at the time of the first raid. From your vantage point overlooking the harbour, you were able to see much of the raid. Describe what you witnessed. You may like to construct a diary entry, letter or dramatic monologue.

## Map of Darwin Harbour 19 Feb.1942 – *Analysis*

1. Make a table that categorises the types of ships in the harbour.
2. What inference can you draw from the presence of non-Australian war ships in the harbour?
3. Do you think there may have been other ships in the harbour, not mentioned on this map? Explain.
4. In what ways is the Manunda a different kind of ship to the others that were hit? What issues do you think arise from the attack on the Manunda?



# Darwin Harbour 19 Feb. 1942





# The Cover Up

ALL-IN EDITION - Page 1

Largest  
Net Daily  
Sale in  
Australia  
264,823

## The Sun

NEWS - PICTORIAL

No. 6058

Melbourne: Friday, February 20, 1942

20 Pages. 2d.

Berlin Gives Singapore  
Casualty Figures

LONDON, Thursday, A.P. — Berlin Radio, quoting Tokyo, said that 2179 men had been killed and 4975 injured in the battle for Singapore. Enemy aircraft losses were 200 to 250, and 1254.

## JAPANESE RAID DARWIN TWICE

### 93 Bombers Used With Fighters: Four Shot Down

**SYDNEY, Thursday.** — In the first enemy attack on Australian territory powerful forces of Japanese aircraft today launched two heavy raids on Darwin.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Curtin) announced tonight that the raids caused considerable damage to property, but reports so far to hand do not give precise details of this damage, nor is there accurate information as to loss of life.

Earlier reports, however, indicated that there had been casualties in the first raid.

The first raid was launched at 10.5 a.m. Darwin time (10.35 a.m. Eastern Australian time). It lasted about 40 minutes.

The attackers comprised a force of 72 twin-engined bombers, which came in waves. They were protected by a screen of fighters.

The second attack was made early in the afternoon by 21 twin-engined bombers. No information has been received to show how long this raid lasted, or whether the attackers had fighter support.

The bombers and their escorts encountered vigorous resistance, and it is known for certain that four enemy aircraft were shot down.

The fact that the bombers were heavy machines indicates that they are operating from a land base, probably one established in some part of the East Indies now occupied by the Japanese.

[When fighters accompanied the bombers engaged on the New Guinea raid last month it was assumed that they were operating from an aircraft-carrier. The range of fighting aircraft is normally strictly limited, and ordinarily it would not be sufficient to enable them to fly from the Japanese land bases nearest to Darwin, support a bombing raid over Darwin and then fly back to their bases.]

Provision of a fighter convoy can be regarded as a tribute to the efficiency shown by R.A.A.F. machines in the Rabaul area during operations earlier this week.

A full statement concerning the raids will be made to Federal Parliament in the secret session which will begin in Canberra tomorrow. First news reached Sydney while the War Advisory Council was sitting.



Continued — Page 3



GUNS LIKE THESE were in action against the Japs yesterday. Australian-made anti-aircraft gun at Darwin.

### RED ARMY Birthday With Victories

**LONDON, Thursday.** — Russia will announce next Monday—the 23rd anniversary of the foundation of the Red Army—new victories in all sectors, Moscow Radio says.

Meanwhile, today's Russian communique says the Red Army is continuing to advance on the front east of Smolensk. There are agency reports of severe and extensive fighting on the northern front and in the Leningrad area there has been a particularly severe battle.

Moscow claims that the Russian offensive here, which is increasing in violence, cost the Germans 1100 killed in one day.

Axis reports admit tremendous pressure along the entire eastern front.

In the Bryansk and Kharkov areas the Russians continue to hold the initiative and great new battles are developing in the Crimea.

(See Back Page)

### Axis Submarine Loss

**LONDON, Thursday, A.P.** — The Navy had taken a particularly heavy toll of German and Italian submarines in the Mediterranean, the First Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Alexander) said in a speech today.

In three months to the end of January, the Navy and the Air Force had destroyed 148,000 tons of merchantmen and warships on the supply route to Libya and the good work was going on.

### Nine Die In Overseas Airways Crash

**LONDON, Thursday, A.P.** — Nine people were killed, including a senior American officer and British personnel, when a British Overseas Airways plane travelling to Britain crashed on the south coast of England.

### Hitler's Army Purge

**LONDON, Thursday.** — According to reports reaching London, Hitler has now dismissed 20 generals and 62 colonels since he started his Army purge last December.

The generals are reported to comprise 14 divisional commanders and six corps commanders, including three panzer experts.

Other reports say that 58 colonels have been promoted, mostly to major-general, but with a few lieutenant-generals, indicating a tendency to entrust divisional commands to relatively young officers.

### Japanese Push Into Burma: South To Java

Special Sun Service and Australian Associated Press

**LONDON, Thursday.** — The Japanese are pushing their forces west into Burma, threatening Rangoon, and south from Palembang, threatening Java.

Latest reports from Rangoon say that the Battle for Burma has begun in earnest. The invaders, in spite of severe losses, have obtained a foothold on the west bank of the Bilin River. Fighting continues with undiminished ferocity.

It is stated authoritatively in London that there is no reason to think that our forces in Burma are not holding their positions. British and Indian troops are fighting side by side.

The Chinese forces, who are stated to have invaded Thailand from the South Shan States, are reported to be still progressing in the direction of Chiangmai.

In Sumatra the Japanese are driving from Palembang to Oosthaven, the port of Telok Betong (on the southernmost coast of Sumatra), which will bring them to within 150 miles of Batavia and give them command of Sunda Strait, between Java and Sumatra.

The Japanese are now believed to be striking most heavily in the direction of the town of Bilin, where the railway from Martaban to Rangoon approaches a gap in the Paung Luang mountains.

They apparently aim at skirting the southern end of the mountains, and possibly will support a westward drive with landings from the sea which, however, would not enjoy the protection of jungles and mangroves, because the coast between the Bilin River and the Rangoon River is flat and alluvial.

The Japanese are believed to be massing air strength at Meikong and Mawlaikong for an attempt at a break-through to Toungoo, on the railway.

The Japanese say that they have crossed the Bilin River some 60 miles north of Moulmein, in spite of heavy enemy counter-attacks.

Yesterday fighting extended along the whole front, with the Japanese bringing forces from Thabon into the battle, says last night's Rangoon communique.

The new Burma front is described as a series of strong-points rather than a continuous line, enabling the defenders to draw the invaders into the open, where they cannot use infiltration tactics. Also British artillery can be used more effectively.

The main British line ends on the frontier east of Pagan, about 100 miles south-south-west of Meikong-saw.

Japanese occupation of the Burma Road would place China in a precarious position and, although other supply routes undoubtedly are available or could be improvised, there are no other roads capable of carrying so directly the vast quantities of goods needed to equip China.

The Rangoon civil evacuation department began moving employees to the interior yesterday. The department is assisting in the evacuation of all civilians from Rangoon.





**KEITH HUMPHRIES SHOES**

Save This Paper For The Controller Of Salvage.

**The Herald**

Hundred and Third Year

MELBOURNE, FRIDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 20, 1942

8 PAGES Price 2d.

**The Herald**

Hundred and Third Year

MELBOURNE, FRIDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 20, 1942

8 PAGES Price 2d.

**The Herald**

Hundred and Third Year

MELBOURNE, FRIDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 20, 1942

8 PAGES Price 2d.

**It's Fine When It's Wet in a "Bramac"**

# 15 KILLED, 24 HURT IN DARWIN ATTACKS

## Nine Women Among Dead

### DAMAGE DETAILS OF RAIDS ON TOWN AND SHIPS

### Hospitals Bombed

From our Special Correspondent

**CANBERRA.**—So far as can be ascertained, 15 people were killed (including nine women) and 24 injured in yesterday's raids on Darwin.

Darwin had another alert today, but there was no raid.

Earlier it was officially announced in Canberra that a third raid was in progress, but no details had been received. This was contradicted later by the official R.A.A.F. communique.

In giving the first detailed description of the attack on Darwin yesterday, a R.A.A.F. communique issued today by the Minister for Air (Mr Drakeford) states:

There were two separate raids. The first, about 10 a.m., was made by a force of 72 twin-engine aircraft, with a fighter escort of Zero type single-seat fighters.

"This force split into two parts, one of which concentrated on the town, wharves and shipping, while the other part flew inland towards the aerodromes.

"Several ships were hit, and damage was done to wharves and buildings. No vital service installations were destroyed.

"During the attack on the town, civilian buildings were hit, and some Commonwealth employees were killed. So far as is known, the total killed in the town numbered nine women and two men.

"About noon a second raid was made, and was directed mainly at R.A.A.F. installations by a force of 21 bombers unaccompanied by fighters. Several buildings and aerodromes were bombed and machine-gunned and some damage was caused. There were four confirmed casualties to service personnel. Damage to aerodromes was not serious.

"During the raids, several hospitals, both service and civilian, were bombed and machine-gunned. Some patients were wounded, and one is known to have been killed.

"Of other casualties not mentioned above, there are known to have been three killed and 20 injured.

"Some of our aircraft were damaged on the ground. At least six enemy aircraft were shot down, but it is not yet clear whether by our fighters or anti-aircraft guns.

"Some of the enemy aircraft involved are presumed to have come from an aircraft carrier standing off the North Australian coast."

## Evacuation Advanced

Evacuation of most of the women and children from Darwin was practically completed yesterday, the Minister for Air (Mr Drakeford) announced today.

Mr Drakeford said that a large number of women and children had been evacuated from Darwin to other parts of the country.

"I am very proud of this achievement," he said, "and I am sure that the evacuation of women and children from Darwin will be a landmark in the history of our country."

"The evacuation of women and children from Darwin is a very important step in the defence of our country," he said, "and I am sure that it will be a landmark in the history of our country."

## Attempt on Koepang?

The heavy attacks on Darwin may be the prelude to the launching of an invasion attempt on Koepang, in Timor, according to a statement made today by the Minister for Air (Mr Drakeford).

Mr Drakeford said that the attacks on Darwin were a very serious threat to the security of our country, and that they were a prelude to the launching of an invasion attempt on Koepang, in Timor.

"The attacks on Darwin are a very serious threat to the security of our country," he said, "and they are a prelude to the launching of an invasion attempt on Koepang, in Timor."

## News Stirs London

LONDON, Thursday.—News from Darwin is causing a great deal of concern in London, according to a statement made today by the Minister for Air (Mr Drakeford).

Mr Drakeford said that the attacks on Darwin were a very serious threat to the security of our country, and that they were a prelude to the launching of an invasion attempt on Koepang, in Timor.

"The attacks on Darwin are a very serious threat to the security of our country," he said, "and they are a prelude to the launching of an invasion attempt on Koepang, in Timor."

## VICHY "WAR GUILT" TRIAL OPENS

### BLUM ATTACKS COURT, INDICTS GAMELIN

Australian Associated Press

**VICHY, Thursday.**—The greatest—and most prejudiced—trial in the history of France since the violent days of the Revolution opened at 1.30 p.m. today in the Riom Court-house, where the former Allied Generalissimo, (General Gamelin), four former Ministers and a former Secretary-General for Defence were arraigned on charges of "war guilt leading to the collapse of France."

Those arraigned, apart from General Gamelin, are: TWO FORMER PRIME MINISTERS, M. Daladier and M. Blum; TWO FORMER AIR MINISTERS, M. Cot and M. La Chambre; A FORMER SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR DEFENCE, M. Jacquot.

## "ALREADY CONDEMNED"

Ten carriages drew up before the gaol room where the accused were quartered at 10 a.m., and accused were quickly escorted to the courtroom cells.

The neighbouring streets were crowded. Police blocked the entrances to the Court, admitting only ticket-holders, namely, officials, participants in the trial and journalists.

M. Daladier entered the Court looking a dejected Blue. General Gamelin, who looked very weary, was escorted to his quarters by a military escort.

After the black-robed clerk had read the indictment, Gamelin asked permission to present his defence. He said he had been considered guilty, but had not been given the opportunity to defend himself.

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## BRITISH FIGHTING BACK GRIMLY

### IN S. BURMA

### Battle of Bilin River

Australian Associated Press

**LONDON, Today.**—The Japanese offensive in southern Burma, on the Bilin river, is meeting with very strong British resistance.

Although the Japanese crossed the river north of the town of Bilin, their attacks on the British right flank failed, and they were driven into the river.

A later Rangoon communique says the Japanese forces, after crossing the Bilin River, are pressing forward. The United Press learns that the Japanese vanguard is 45 miles from the vital railway junction of Pegu and adds "informed circles expect that the climax of the great Burma battle is approaching."

The Chinese Government spokesman at Chungking announced yesterday that the vanguard of the Japanese army made contact with the Japanese at a point on a tributary of the Mekong River. The battle lasted two hours, and the Japanese were driven across the river to the south bank.

Chinese troops are now ready to help in relieving the pressure in lower Burma, added the spokesman.

The Mekong River runs through northern Thailand and along the border of Burma. Chinese aid, where the Chinese were reported to have attacked in an invasion of Thailand, is on a tributary of the Mekong. Chinese aid, where the Chinese were reported to have attacked in an invasion of Thailand, is on a tributary of the Mekong.

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## UNIONS SEEK CONFERENCE

A conference of the various unions in the Australian Capital Territory is being held today to discuss the proposed new industrial relations legislation.

The conference is being held at the Australian Capital Territory House of Representatives.

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## Heavy Losses

Fighting continues heavily in the middle of the Bilin River, where the Japanese are making a serious attempt to break through the British lines.

The R.A.F. is reported to have inflicted heavy losses on the Japanese forces.

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## Vital Battle

Allied forces, including new American warplanes, are fighting a vital battle in the middle of the Bilin River, where the Japanese are making a serious attempt to break through the British lines.

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The day after the first bombing of Darwin the southern newspapers claimed that 15 people were killed and twenty four hurt. The later Royal Commission came up with an official death toll of 243 killed and 300 wounded. Some of those who were in Darwin on the day claim that the death toll was much higher.

The newspapers also claimed that 93 planes were used in the attack. There were in fact 188 carrier borne aircraft and 54 land based bombers from Ambon. It was the same force, with the same commander that had previously bombed Pearl Harbor.

## Read Chief Officer Tom Minto's account of the raid.

The first air raids on Darwin were over by 12.40 p.m. on 19<sup>th</sup> February 1942. At least 292 people were dead or dying – 22 on the Darwin Wharf, 17 in the town area, 177 on the harbour, seven at the RAAF base, four in the air, six other service personnel, 18 on the *Florence D* and *Don Isidro*, and 41 others either on the *Manunda* or in unclear circumstances. We will never know how many people may have died but were not taken into account.

Eight days later, the *Manunda* berthed in Fremantle. There Chief Officer Tom Minto heard Prime Minister Curtin's announcement that Darwin had been bombed and 35 people were injured during the two raids. "Funny thing that." Tom Minto thought. "We had 200 wounded on board the *Manunda*." Curtin also said "the results of the raid were not such as to give any satisfaction to the enemy". "Well the enemy must have been very hard to please", Tom Minto mused.

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Forrest, Peter and Sheila (2001) *Federation Frontline. A people's history of World War II in the Northern Territory*. Centenary of Federation Northern Territory, Darwin, p 60.

## Source Analysis

**Examine the sources of information provided, then answer the following questions.**

### *Knowledge*

1. What messages were the Australian public, not in Darwin, being given about the bombing of Darwin?

### *Comprehension*

2. Why do you think they were being given this information?

### *Synthesis*

3. Imagine you are one of the people who were under fire. Explain how you feel about the information being given to everyone about your experiences?

### *Evaluation*

4. Do you think such a distortion of the truth was justified?

### *Evaluation*

5. Do you think propaganda in war is essential? Why?



## Extension Activities

### *Analysis*

1. Compare the American Government's response to Pearl Harbor with the Australian Government's decision to cover up the impact of the Japanese attacks on Darwin. Why were their responses so different?

### *Evaluation*

2. To what extent can it be argued that the Australian Government's decision to play down the events of 19<sup>th</sup> February 1942 resulted in an ongoing lack of awareness of the Bombing of Darwin and its significance to Australia's war history.

### *Synthesis*

3. From what you now know about the Bombing of Darwin, write a newspaper article detailing what really happened on the 19<sup>th</sup> February 1942.





## Darwin and Pearl Harbor: Comparative Study

Pearl Harbor	Darwin
Attacked 7 December 1941.	Attacked 19 February 1942.
Surprise attack signals the beginning of Japan's involvement in WWII.	Japanese advancement in South East Asia Expectation that Darwin would be the first line of defence. On 12 December 1941 orders were given to evacuate civilians.
USA enters WWII.	Australia asks Britain to return Australian troops for homeland defence.
Early warning	Early warning of the attack given by radio report from Bathurst Is.
Task force which attacked Pearl Harbor was commanded by Vice-Admiral Nagumo Chuichi.	Task force which attacked Darwin was commanded by Vice-Admiral Nagumo Chuichi
Captain Misuo Fuchida led the attack on Pearl Harbor.	Captain Misuo Fuchida led a force of 36 Zero fighters, 71 dive-bombers, and 81 level bombers
Casualties 2400 dead.	Exact casualties unknown
US Government used the attack on Pearl Harbor to influence public opinion against the Japanese and to justify America's entry into WWII.	Australian Government covered up the extent of the attack on Darwin claiming that only 15 lives were lost and 24 people hurt.
Americans are aware of Pearl Harbor.	Few Australians are aware of the extent of the Japanese bombing campaign in Australia.

### 1. Analysis

Create a Venn diagram which compares and contrasts the events of the bombings of Pearl Harbor and Darwin Harbour. You may need to do more research. What conclusions can you draw about the main similarities and the main differences between the two events?

### 2. Synthesis - Letter

Write a letter to the Minister for Education explaining why school students should be taught about the Bombing of Darwin

### 3. Synthesis - Bombing of Darwin – The Movie

**View the film *Pearl Harbor* (rated PG)** starring Ben Affleck, Josh Hartnett and Kate Beckinsdale. Compare and contrast the bombing of Darwin with the attack on Pearl Harbor. *NB Prior to undertaking this activity Teachers should ensure that they comply with the relevant policies and practices of their jurisdiction, in regards to the viewing of PG rated movies.*

Would the story of the bombing of Darwin make a good film?

Imagine that you are a film director. You have been approached to make a major motion picture about the bombing of Darwin. You will need to make some decisions. Answer the following questions to get you started.

#### **The Story.**

- What parts of the story will you put in your film?
- From whose perspective will the story be told?
- When will the action start and finish?
- Construct a time line of events that you will include in the film?

#### **The Sets**

- Where will the action take place?
- What did Darwin look like in 1942? (Use the *Federation Frontline* book to help you)

#### **The Characters**

- Will you use only factual characters in your film or will you add a couple of fictional characters?
- Who will be the main characters?

#### **The Costumes**

- Research how people dressed at this time. Remember Darwin is a tropical city and the Bombing took place during the wet season.
- Research military uniforms and insignia.

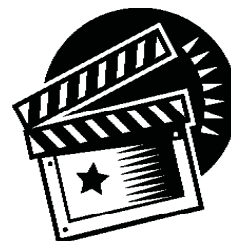
#### **The Actors**

- Who will you ask to act in your film? Why? You may choose famous actors or allocate the roles to your classmates.

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### *Synthesis - Extension Task*

Develop a story board showing how you will film the events of the first raid of 19<sup>th</sup> February 1942. Be sure to show both the big picture as well as detailing what happens to individual characters.



## Should Darwin and Pearl Harbor become Sister Cities? What are Sister Cities?

*Sister Cities are where two communities agree to a formal link which offer the following:*

- ❖ Each Community – its citizens, its organisations and the municipality itself – a chance to participate in the fascinating and rewarding field of international relations.
- ❖ Each community an opportunity to establish an identity as a member of the family of man involved in the constructive process of building world peace.
- ❖ An educational and cultural program with a very real and participating partner in a world area of your choice. Language, art, ideas, music, youth programs and dozens of other activities can be carried out by any individual or organisation in the community.
- ❖ An opportunity to understand another culture and another people from first hand experience not distorted by the news of the day, and not confused by hundreds of different impressions and fragmented ideas we receive about other nations. By truly gaining a respect and understanding of one culture, we begin to see the world and its many cultures as less confusing and more cohesive, and we begin to see ourselves better.
- ❖ A lesson in the economics of world trade and your community as both a consumer and supplier of vital goods and raw products. Many cities have benefited from the program this way.
- ❖ A way for the many and diverse elements of every community to come together to enjoy and profit from a co-operative program outside the day-to-day problems that beset cities throughout the world.

### 4. *Synthesis -Tasks*

Do you think that Darwin and Pearl Harbor, Honalulu should become sister cities? Write a letter to the Darwin City Council explaining why it should or should not develop a sister city relationship with Pearl Harbor.

Promote your city/community. Write a promotional pamphlet to sell your city to tourists. Include any natural, social and historical attractions.





# War Stories

Unit 2



*A Secondary School Education Resource on the*

## Bombing of Darwin

# War Stories

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## Overview

In these units students will develop understandings about the experiences of soldiers and nurses who served in the Northern Territory during the war. They will further develop understandings about the impact of the bombing on the city of Darwin, its people, infrastructure and terrain.

In this section students will be encouraged to more closely consider different types of evidence and the nature of evidence. They will be given the opportunity to consider the value of memoirs, maps, photos, magazine articles and feature films to an historian.

Students will continue to develop their critical thinking skills.

Bloom's Taxonomy	Content	Learning Outcomes – students will study
	<b>Part One – The Soldiers</b>	
Knowledge, comprehension analysis, synthesis and evaluation	A Soldier Remembers	Memoirs as evidence
Comprehension	The Bombing of Darwin- Map	Maps as evidence
Analysis	Photos	Photos as evidence
	<b>Part Two –The Nurses</b>	
Knowledge, comprehension and evaluation	Miracle of Nursing	Magazine articles as evidence
Comprehension, analysis and evaluation	Hospital under canvas	Magazine articles as evidence
Analysis and evaluation	Nature of Evidence - Paradise Road	Feature films as evidence

# A Soldier Remembers

*Edited extracts of a transcript of interview with William (Bill) Thomas Dedman, OAM*

## Background

My name is William Thomas Dedman. I was born on the seventeenth of the second, 1920, in Kalgoorlie, Western Australia.



... I obtained my junior certificate, and then, like a lot of lads in those days, went searching for work. However, these were the days of the Great Depression (1935) and jobs were hard to come by. I managed to find farm work

in Morawa and Gutha (in the Northern wheatbelt of WA, some 200 km north of Perth) for ten bob a week and my keep. After eighteen months of heavy physical labour, I made my way back to Kalgoorlie.

I worked for a Miss Cummings who owned a brewery in Kalgoorlie. She asked me to become an apprentice brewer, but I had previously applied to join the army. At the same time my father had arranged for me to join the railways as a cleaner. So we tossed a coin and it came down heads. My fate in the army had been sealed. I waited until after my eighteenth birthday (on the 17<sup>th</sup> of February) and joined the permanent army on the 19<sup>th</sup> May 1938 at the R.A.A. barracks in Fremantle.

The Australian Government, fearing a world wide conflict, consulted with the Inspector-General of the British Forces, Lieutenant General E K Squires, with the aim of strengthening the northern parts of Australia. His report included a strong recommendation for the creation of regular army units to be placed at strategic locations

around Australia. The only one to be formed was the Darwin Mobile Force. An application form appeared in Army correspondence, calling for volunteers for a mobile unit to be based in Darwin. I am aware that some three thousand applied and, out of that, two hundred and fifty six were selected to form the unit.

The initial training was at Liverpool which is about 42 miles (approx 60 km) south of Sydney, New South Wales. Training was from December 1938 until March 1939, with the force under the command of Major A.B. (Bandy) MacDonald.

The unit left Sydney on the 14<sup>th</sup> March, 1939 aboard the troop ship *Montoro*. I believe this was the first troopship to leave the Australian coast since the First World War. I remember sailing to Thursday Island, staying there overnight and then on to Darwin, arriving there on the twenty eighth of March. All personnel stayed on board that night.

## Life in Darwin

The next day we paraded in town, and were welcomed by the Commandant of the 7<sup>th</sup> Military District Lieutenant – Colonel Horace C. Robinson. I was surprised at the large gathering of people, including to local garrison that turned out to watch the parade. The only visible signs



of defence were the gun emplacements at East Point and Emery Point.

The Unit was kept on full alert at all times. Alarms would sound at all hours of the night, and we would all turn out in



full kit to our allotted tasks. This was before War had been declared, and formed the major part of our training.

Other tasks that were completed included erecting barbed wire fences at the oil tankers and at Rapid Creek, conducting reconnaissance and building roads.

Most of the time was taken up with training and various guard duties. But we were given leave passes every now and then. These passes would expire at 2359 hours, and you wouldn't want to be caught coming in late. Most of the troops would wander the streets, meeting the locals and joining in with activities in and around town. Sometimes we would go to the local theatre (the Star Theatre) to watch films.

The Dripstone Caves were our social meeting place, where, on moments of leave, a group of us would meet up with the local girls.

These were very pleasant times, and as we sat around the camp fire enjoying a few beers, talking, singing, reminiscing and dancing on the beach sand, the war seemed to be a long way away.



Rapid Creek was a popular spot for picnics, although we were always conscious of the small crocodiles that abounded there. The local families would gather there for foot racing and loads of other activities and entertainment. Naturally enough many of the men would join them.

Football was another popular pastime. Our Commanding Officer believed that sport was a wonderful way to be fit and there were some wonderfully gifted athletes, cricketers, swimmers and footballers present.

In general the members of Darwin Mobile Force were well received by the local population. It was generally regarded that these men were hand picked and highly thought of as a dedicated, proud body of men, highly principled and gentlemen all.

Vestey's Meatworks had closed down in 1929 or thereabouts. It was reasonable accommodation and I remember the tank at the bottom of the drive. It came in handy for the occasional dip to refresh ourselves. Not far down the track was Mindil Beach, where a lot of the men would go swimming. I guess the thing that I remember most was the pythons. They were everywhere and would often shed their skins in our quarters. However, they did not worry us as they were not poisonous and did not

harm any one. Quite often little bandicoots would be seen running through the area too. Bunks were provided with straw mattresses (palliassees) to sleep on. We also had mosquito nets.

A normal day would begin with reveille at 0600 hours, exercised at 0630 hours, followed by showers and getting ready for the day. Breakfast would be at 0730 hours followed by the morning parade at 0900 hours. Then we would participate in a variety of activities until 1200 hours. These could be lectures, drills or reconnaissance missions. Because of the hot conditions in Darwin we followed the local custom of knocking off from 1200 hours until 1500 hours for an afternoon rest period. Then from 1500 hours to 1630 hours other assigned work would be completed. At 1630 hours, unless we were on duty, the rest of the time was ours to do as we pleased. Sometimes though, we were

required to attend night lectures after the evening meal.

Prior to Japan entering the war, we always ate well, with bacon and eggs on the breakfast menu and fish, buffalo, beef, steaks or stews available at night. Most of the vegetables came from Adelaide River, and

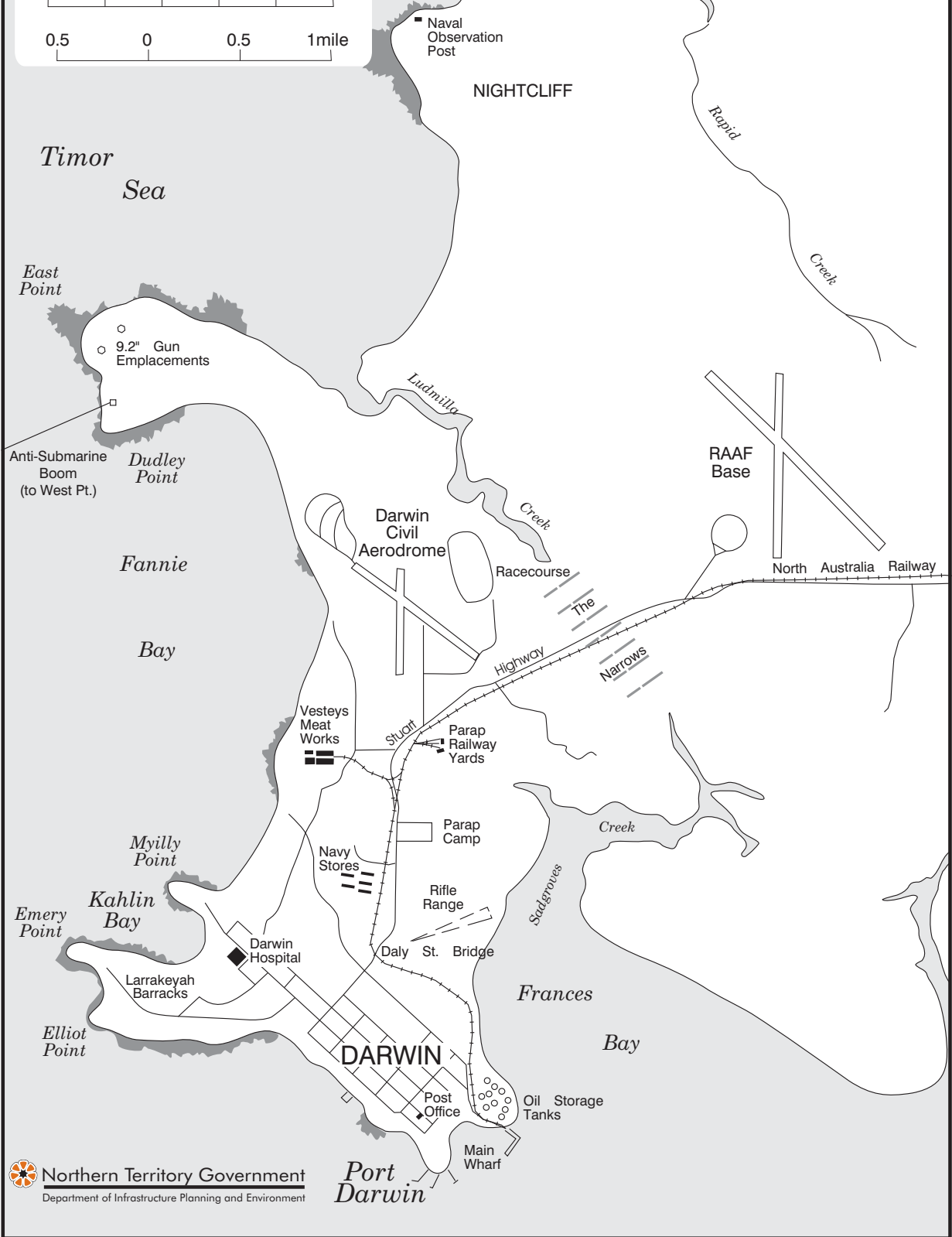
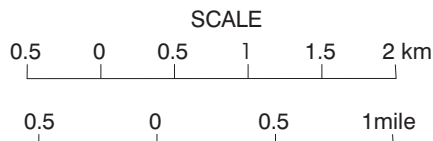
were in plentiful supply. Afterwards though it was mainly bully beef and biscuits.

The Darwin Mobile Force would conduct training schools for members of the unit to gain promotion. I attended a training school at Pine Creek and I graduated to Corporal. Later I was promoted to Sergeant.

Despite all the activity in Darwin there were never any thoughts of Darwin being bombed. I can remember on the day of that first raid when we saw the planes coming overhead, we thought they were the Americans coming to defend us. You can imagine the surprised looks when the bombs started falling. Despite having been promised lots of things, such as trucks and equipment, it was well known that nothing ever arrived. When that first raid occurred, if it had been followed up with an armed troop landing, I feel sure that it would have been successful. We would have been lucky to possess one belt of ammunition between us at the oil tanks on that day. There would have been little hope of surviving and most of us would have been killed or captured.



# The Bombing of Darwin



## Source Analysis - *A Soldier Remembers*

### Memoirs as historical evidence

#### *Knowledge*

1. The memoir suggests that Darwin was both prepared and unprepared for the Japanese attack of 19 Feb. 1942.
  - a) List 2 pieces of evidence that show that Darwin was prepared for war.
  - b) List 2 pieces of evidence that show that Darwin was unprepared for war.

#### *Comprehension*

2. Study the map The Bombing of Darwin.
  - a) What infrastructure indicates that Darwin was prepared for war?
  - b) Is there anything on the map that indicates Darwin was not prepared for war? Explain.

#### *Analysis*

3. Do you consider the map or the memoir to be more useful to an historian studying Darwin's preparedness for war? Explain.
4. What things can affect the reliability of memoirs as evidence?
5. What things affect the reliability of the map as evidence?

#### *Synthesis*

6. Design a recruiting poster to attract troops to the Darwin Mobile Force. Use some of the details about the nature of the job that Dedman has provided in his memoirs.
7. You are a reporter based in Darwin in 1942. You are angry at the way events of the bombing of Darwin have been distorted and covered up. You decide to write your own account of events to be published at a later date. Include details provided by Dedman as part of your story.
8. Oral History  
Interview a war veteran or civilian survivor of war. Write a biography.

#### *Evaluation*

9. How would you justify the use of personal memoirs as a valuable resource for historians?

# Photos as Historical Evidence



1.



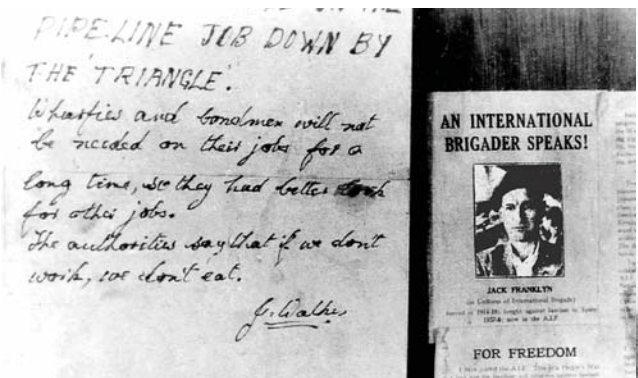
4.



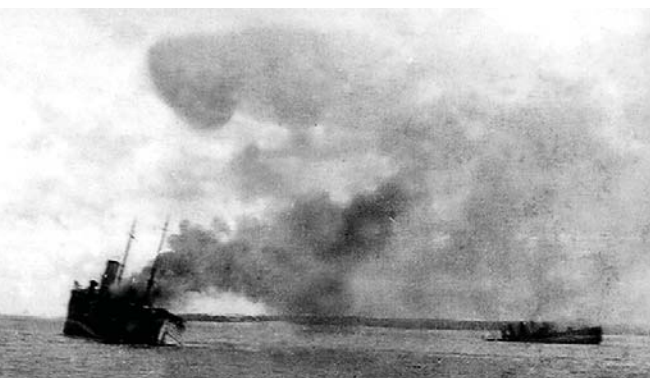
2.



5.



3.



6.

## Source analysis - *Photos as historical evidence*

### Analysis

1. Look closely at photos 1&2 and fill in the chart below

What do the photos show the viewer about life in Darwin prior to the war?	What further inferences can be drawn about pre-war life in Darwin?	What are the limitations of the photos to an historian studying life in Darwin prior to the war?

2. Closely study photos 3, 4 & 5 which depict the results of the bombing, then fill out the table below.

What do the photos show about the bombing of Darwin?	What do the photos infer about the effects of the bombing of Darwin?	What are the limitations of the photos to an historian hoping to understand the effects of the bombing of Darwin ?

### Evaluation

3. Look at the photo of the sign addressed to the wharfies. What does the sign show of the attitude of the authorities to the workers whose place of work had been bombed and whose workmates had been killed? How does this attitude compare to the attitude of authorities described by Dedman?



# Nurses in the war in the NT

*Magazine articles as historical evidence*

**“Miracle of Nursing” - Australian Women’s Weekly Article about nurses in the war in the NT, October 10, 1942**



## Background Briefing

Over 41,000 nurses served in World War Two, and their experiences often placed them in the front line, and under fire and as prisoners of the enemy. The nurses who served in the Northern Territory worked aboard hospital ships, like the Manunda, where nurse Sister de Mestre was killed in the first bombing raid on Darwin, and in canvas and corrugated iron temporary hospitals at Darwin, Katherine, Batchelor, Adelaide River and Alice Springs. In the north, the heat, the flies, the lack of power and water, the isolation, the rain, the Japanese air raids and the nursing of serious battle injuries made nursing very difficult, but rewarding.

**Close Study of SOURCE** Read the article *Miracle of Nursing: How devoted team of Sisters saved the “Burns Boys”* published in The Australian Women’s Weekly, October 10, 1942, then answer the questions below.

## MIRACLE OF NURSING: How devoted team of Sisters saved the “Burns Boys”

*Whole hospital watched grim fight for lives of Darwin raid heroes*

*By Merton Wood (Our special representative at the advance operational base)*

Three young soldiers – nicknamed the “Burns Boys” – are recovering in a Victorian military hospital from frightful burns received when Japanese bombers set fire to oil near their gun position at Darwin.

They owe their recovery from the ordeal that earned them that nickname to the work of a team of wonderful nurses and the doctors and padre at a hospital in this area.

How they saved the “Burns Boys” without proper equipment or facilities is an epic in the annals of army nursing.

The girls who played the principal part in tending these boys were Sister Peg Cunningham of Roseville, NSW; Sister Doris Bell of Strathfield, NSW; Sister Jane Irvine of Adelaide; Sister Olive Bedoe, of Newcastle; Sister Elsie

Williams of Cessnock, NSW and Sister Mona Henry of Tully, Queensland.

Padre who helped them was Rev E. Kenneth Leslie, formerly of Melbourne.

One of the “Burns Boys” is Gunner Wilbert Hudson of Merrylands, NSW who won the military medal for gallantry at Darwin on February 19.

Up here we don’t call him Wilbert or Hudson. “He’s just Ducky – one of the “Burns Boys” – a title that destined to stick to him and the other two, Ron Crake, 18 of Fremantle, WA, and Jack Ryder, 21 of Manly, NSW although they will carry no scars because of the skilful nursing they received.

Hudson, Crake and Ryder were first saved from frightful

death by Lieut. Donald Brown, of Mosman, NSW. They were cut off by a sheet of flame. Lieut. Brown dragged them out before the fire reached them, but they were badly burned by the intense heat.

The blaze destroyed all their clothes and belongings, and Crake lost 50 pounds in cash.

Sister Cunningham, who was with the Sydney Board of Health before becoming an army nurse, told me most of the story. "They handed the "Burns Boys" over to me a few hours after they had been injured", she told me

"After a couple of days we handed them over to the almost exclusive care of Sister Bell.

"I'll never forget my first sight of them. They'd been covered with triple dye and were black from head to foot. They were all badly burned and shocked.

"We immediately began treating them with pooled human serum given similarly to blood transfusion. We gave six little bottles to one boy and it takes a lot of blood transfusions to make up a bottle of this stuff. Because of their burns, some of their veins had collapsed, and at the start we had trouble in making serum transfusions.

"For the first few days they just lay in bed receiving these transfusions almost continuously. They didn't want food, and we had to force as many fluids on them as we could.

"We did not bath them during these first days. Then we carried a 16 gallon tin bath into the 15 bed tent ward where they were and lifted them into it one after another.

"First we swabbed the bath out with lysol, then filled it with 1% solution of saline, cut off their bandages, and lowered them into the bath, black dressings and all.

"The pain would have been unbearable had we tried to remove the dressings first. It was much better to let them soak off in the saline.

"Their burns were so bad that if they did not do exercises there was a grave danger of their muscles becoming seriously contracted.

"We compelled them to do exercises in the bath. At first they cried so much at the pain that some of the other patients in the ward were upset.

"But we made them do exercises. We stood over them and bullied them. It wasn't any fun for us, for they were only kids, and our hearts were full of sympathy for them. It was my worst experience of being cruel to be kind.

"Most of this work fell to Sister Bell. It took a lot of nerve and plenty of guts for her to do it. We made the waggle and stretch their burnt fingers, made them lift their burnt legs and try to touch their ears with their toes and their buttocks with their heels.

"Now they are better, and they're glad we made them do it. Each boy stayed in the bath each day from thirty minutes to an hour. Then we lifted him on to a sterile sheet on the bed for his burns to be dressed.

"At that time our hospital was besieged by hordes of flies, and we then didn't have a fly proof dressing room. Orderlies and other patients had to fan the "Burns Boys" with Red Cross bamboo fans and newspaper to keep the flies away while their burns were being dressed. First we lightly powdered them with sulphanilamide, and then we dressed their wounds with pieces of old mosquito net, we'd cut up ourselves, sterilised and soaked in vaseline. We even melted the vaseline down ourselves. It's a secret where we got it!

"Once the dressings were over we tucked the boys in the mosquito nets. It was hot under them, but at least we kept the flies off. During the first few days they were sick and unhappy, but Hudson was a corker kid. He never lost his nerve once, never got really down-hearted for a moment. After a few days he wanted to get up, but it was a few weeks

before he could do that.

"When he did, he made straight for the cookhouse in a wheelchair and came back with a bag of oranges tossing them to his mates and the other patients in the ward. Then he went back and returned with a plate of hot scones. "As they began to get better they started to hate having to do their exercises, but Hudson urged them all on. They obeyed as if his word was law.

"Because of their burns

they had to be fed and extra protein diet of eggs and meat. At first we had simply to force food down their throats. Padre Leslie was wonderful. He helped us hand feed them, and wrote their letters home. Then came the lovely day when they were all able to get up into wheelchairs. For us at the hospital it was a day of "Burns Boys" on parade. Shielding them with umbrellas, we wheeled them out and took their photos.

"That night Darky Hudson acted as self-appointed warden for Padre Leslie's church parade. . . . when he got better Darky used to roam all over the hospital in his wheelchair..

"Then came the great day, and a rather sad day for all of us, the day the "Burns Boys" left.

Sister Doris Bell told me: "I'm glad I had the luck to treat the "Burns Boys". It was a man's job, for it took all of every morning to bath and dress them, but it was an experience I would have hated to miss.



## Source Analysis – Magazine Articles as historical evidence

### Knowledge

1. This story is about how a group of nurses saved the “Burns Boys” without proper equipment or facilities” Quote 2 pieces of evidence from the passage, that indicate that the nurses worked without proper equipment or facilities.

### Comprehension

2. The ANZAC legend is one of mateship. How is mateship displayed in the tent hospital?

### Application

3. What qualities are displayed by the nurses in the statements below? You may like to choose from the list below, or write your own adjective.

*Compassionate, Resourceful, Purposeful, Forceful, Thankful, Sensitive, Hopeful, Courageous, Dedicated, Devoted*

Quote from Nurses	Quality Displayed
We immediately began treating them.	
We compelled them to do exercises	
Some of the other patients in the ward were upset.	
It wasn't any fun for us and they were only kids and our hearts were full of sympathy	
It was my worst experience of being cruel to be kind.	
Then came the lovely day when they were all able to get up into wheelchairs	
I'm glad I had the luck to treat the “Burns Boys”. It was a man's job, for it took all of every morning to bath them and dress them, but it was an experience I would have hated to miss.	



# HOSPITAL UNDER CANVAS: *A.I.F. nurses at forward station*



AUSTRALIA'S only hospital completely under canvas; in Northern Territory under active-service conditions.



BLACKOUT, pet goat, with his owner, Sister Kiel. His predatory habits make him unpopular with many.



NURSES have many pets. Mary Haynes holds Junior the 'roo, Jean Johnson, Pinocchio the pooch, and Phyllis Rogers has Jean, the hospital's only hen.



TWO NURSES on their morning rounds of the soldier patients in one of the many tent wards of the hospital. EVERY DAY is washing-day in this climate, nurses say.



OFF TO WORK. Nurses travel between their living quarters and hospital on this specially adapted lorry.



LUNCH-TIME in the nurses' mess. These girls share all the hardships and discomforts common to the fighting forces at forward battle stations—but they still smile.



MASSEUSES who are attached to the hospital: Misses E. Lemerle, E. Way, H. Watson, and K. Lynch.—Photos: Department of Information.

“Hospital Under Canvas: A.I.F. nurses at forward station”,  
published in The Australian Women's Weekly, November 7, 1942.



### Comprehension

1. Describe in your own words the living and working conditions of the nurses.

### Application

2. The hospital is described as “under active service conditions”. Given the date of the article, and the location of the hospital, what do you interpret this phrase to mean?
3. Using evidence from the article, describe the attitude of the nurses to their living and working conditions.

### Evaluation

## Considering the Nature of Evidence - For discussion

The Australian Women’s Weekly showed many aspects of nursing in the war in the NT. Consider why this kind of evidence is useful for a historian in the study of women’s experiences. Would it give a different picture to, for example personal letters, and official documents and photographs? In what ways is this evidence limited in describing the experiences of nurses in the NT in World War Two.

### Synthesis

## Choose one of the following questions

- 1 Find *Australian Women’s Weekly* articles about nursing in WW2. Use them as a model for your own *Australian Women’s Weekly* style article about NO1 Medical Receiving Station at Batchelor, Adelaide River hospital, the story of Sister de Mestre or any other story of nurses you might like to write.
- 2 You are a nurse stationed somewhere in the north in World War Two. Write a series of diary entries (include sketches, photos etc if you wish) describing your working conditions, how you feel about the war, the importance of your task etc.
- 3 Use the stories of the nurses in this section to write the following essay:

*“Nurses are heroes too and their stories should be told and their lives and actions commemorated.”*

Write an argument supporting this point of view.





# Nature of Evidence – Paradise Road

## Feature Film as Historical Evidence

### *Analysis and Evaluation*

Students may investigate the question:

*To what extent does the film Paradise Road accurately represent the fate of the 65 Australian nurses who were evacuated from Singapore aboard the British ship Vyner Brooke?*

## Step One

Because of the M rating of the films teachers could confine their study of the film to selected segments and issues appropriate to their student's ages. Teachers should ensure that this activity complies with the policies and procedures of their jurisdiction.

View the film **Paradise Road** directed by Bruce Beresford.

## Step Two - Analysis

Students may then investigate in pairs, various aspects of the history and compare the film's representation of those aspects. The pairs may then present their findings to the whole class.

Suggested areas for investigation

1. The fall of Singapore
2. The evacuation of the Vyner Brooke
3. The attack by Japanese aircraft
4. The landing on Banka Island
5. The massacre on the Beach
6. Individuals – eg Vivian Bullwinkel
7. Survival in the prison camp
8. Social life – eg the voice orchestra
9. The women and children of other nationalities
10. The 'comfort women'
11. The Japanese soldiers
12. Survival

## Step Three - Evaluation

Teacher can then lead a discussion on the Nature of Evidence, discussing in particular the list of things below that can impact on the historical accuracy of a feature film.

Demands of the film genre – length, star system, studio politics and language  
Compression of facts, characters, events, time which may lead to distortion  
Omission  
Increasing contrasts for conflict  
Simplifying complexities  
Expectations of audience  
Romanticising such things as desperation, boredom, sordid realities of life  
Attitudes to violence  
Constraints of audience classification  
Prescribed space and budget  
Beginning, middle and end  
Need for coherent whole that develops scene by scene

## Step four

Students may then work in small groups to brainstorm the usefulness of feature films to those studying history. Groups then share their finding with the class.

## Step five

Students to write an essay justifying or criticising the use of feature films in the study of history. They may use their findings on **Paradise Road** to support their viewpoint.

# Territorians at War

Unit 3



*A Secondary School Education Resource on the*

## Bombing of Darwin

# Territorians at War

## Overview

In these units students will explore how the bombing of Darwin and the War in the Northern Territory affected civilians: essential service personnel, Aboriginal people women and children, evacuees who became refugees in their own land, and those who were declared “enemy aliens” and were interned for the duration of the war and beyond.

In this section students will be encouraged to develop the skill of empathy and develop their awareness of the cultural context of the war. Students will be encouraged to consider the threat that war poses to aspects of democracy such as civil liberties and citizens’ rights.

Students will continue to explore the ways wartime fears exacerbate regional and racial stereotypes and how propaganda and government policies exploit these fears and stereotypes. Chapter 7 of the Federation Frontline Book is recommended as reference reading

Bloom's Taxonomy	Content	Learning Outcomes – students will
	<b>Part One – The experiences of civilians</b>	
Analysis, evaluation and synthesis	Postal workers	Read about essential service personnel
Analysis, Evaluation and synthesis	Leper colony heroine	Explore the language of bias and persuasion
Analysis and Evaluation	Darwin Women were all Heroines	Find evidence to support a view
	<b>Part Two –The experiences of aboriginal people</b>	
Analysis, Synthesis, Evaluation	Daisy Martin & Matthias Ulungura	Read aboriginal views
Synthesis	An Aboriginal Elder's Story	Develop empathy to individual and cultural differences
Comprehension and analysis	Betty Fisher's story and map	Develop knowledge of the terrain in the north
	<b>Part Three – The experiences of evacuees and internees</b>	
Comprehension, Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation	Democracy Under Threat: Refugees	Develop empathy and explore the way wars affect civil liberties
Comprehension, Analysis, Synthesis	Democracy Under Threat: Internal Enemies	Develop awareness of how wartime fears exacerbate stereotyped and racial views.

### *A Cultural Warning*

People of Aboriginal or Islander descent should be aware that the images and names of deceased people appear in the following pages.

# The Postal Workers

Read pages 51-56 *Federation Frontline: A People's history of World War II in the Northern Territory*, by Peter and Sheila Forrest.

Postmaster Hurtle Bald started work with the Post office in 1909, postmaster in Darwin from 1928 to 1934, and again from 1934.

Alice Bald came to Darwin with her husband Hurtle in 1940. She refused to be evacuated and volunteered to work as a telephonist

Iris Bald, only daughter of Hurtle and Alice, worked in the tax office in Darwin.

Emily Young had been a telephonist but was forced to resign when she married. Later she volunteered to return to work to help overcome staff shortages.

Eileen and Jean Mullen were telegraphists. Eileen came to Darwin in early 1941 to operate the new trunk line exchange, Jean followed in August 1941. The sisters were on duty together in the telegraph exchange when the air raid began.

Archibald "Bro" Halls. A First World War veteran, worked in remote locations in the Territory before coming to Darwin as telegraph supervisor just five days before the raid.

Aurthur Wellington, postal clerk, agreed to come north in 1940, following a call for extra help in Darwin. His wife and baby daughter were evacuated but he chose to stay.

Walter Rowling, foreman mechanic based at the post office, was mortally wounded and died aboard the *Manunda* during the voyage from Darwin to Fremantle. He had been in Darwin less than a fortnight before the raid.

Fay Stasinowski, telephonist since 1925. Because of her special expertise, she was asked to come to Darwin to operate new equipment.

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Forrest, Peter and Forrest, Sheila (2001) *Federation Frontline. A people's history of World War II in the Northern Territory*. Centenary of Federation Northern Territory, Darwin pp 52 - 54

## Exploring the nature of heroism.

### Analysis

1. Why do you think some of the postal workers refused to be evacuated?
2. Why do you think the Post Office was targeted?
3. In your opinion are the post office workers heroes? Explain.

### Synthesis

1. Write an obituary for one of the Post Office workers
2. Write a news story for "The Postal Workers Gazette" about the bombing of the Post Office and the loss of lives that resulted from the raid.



# Leper Colony Heroine



**The Australian Women's Weekly** of April 25, 1942 carried a story entitled "Leper Colony heroine tends Darwin wounded" and described how a 19 year old girl on the Channel Island leper colony tended to wounded seamen after their blazing ship had run aground.

1 How beautiful Madge Gaden lived up to her reputation as heroine of Darwin leper colony in the ruthless bombings of the first Japanese air raids on the Australian mainland is now revealed in a delayed message.

2 When she was pronounced cured of leprosy on her 19th birthday last year, after eight years in the colony, she announced her intention of devoting herself to alleviating the sufferings of lepers, and she was still at the colony when the raids began.

3 While the raiders continued their onslaught Madge tended to the wounded seamen who had reached Channel Island, where the leper colony is situated, after their blazing ship had run aground. Madge told her story at Pine Creek, the tiny township 150 miles south of Darwin, where she is now staying -with her mother and sisters. . . .

she

4 Her story of the first Jap raid was that she had a grandstand view of the whole bombing from the safety of a hill on Channel Island, which was not attacked. . . "I went to the highest point of the island and watched the big Japanese bombers go over," she said. "We could hear the roar of bursting bombs and see flames and debris leap far into the air. All the native patients in the colony were terrified by the raid, and immediately hid in the bush. That night they were given rations and willingly went bush by crossing to the mainland at low tide.

5 "I saw the Japanese dive bomb the ships in Darwin harbour. One ship, blazing fiercely, was steered toward Channel Island and ran aground in the mangrove swamp nearby.

6 "A number of the crew got away from the ship in a motor launch and landed near our shelter shed. Two of the crew were suffering from bullet wounds – one a major in the last war and the other a boy of about 19, who was badly hit in the knee. "While the Japanese were flying high over Darwin to make their second raid . . I tended the wounded.

7 "After the raids a naval launch came out and took the wounded away. "Meanwhile the captain of the ship and several of the crew had run aground in a launch in the mangroves and did not get out until the next day.

8 We could not leave as we had no fuel for our launch. "In the tremendous confusion in Darwin after the raids we were somehow forgotten. Finally, Mr Jones (the curator) and my father rowed out to the ship, which had now burnt itself out, and found some petrol on board.

9 On the day after the raid we all went to the quarantine station at another point in Darwin harbour. I was anxious to get to Darwin to see what damage the bombing had caused, but was told it was not safe for me in Darwin.

10 "I arrived at the quarantine station in a white dress, and soon afterwards the 'alert' sounded. I was standing by a slit trench when someone yelled out. "Take off that dress". I shouted back, "I've got practically nothing

on underneath it!” “Well leave it on but get out of sight”, came the answer. . . as soon as the ‘all clear’ was sounded I was forced to wear a khaki shirt and trousers. . . . I had just made myself neat when Jap fighters began to machine gun Darwin. . I had to go into a slit trench. There was a few inches of water in the bottom, and it was full of mosquitos and ants. I was mud from head to foot when I emerged.”

11 Driven from the colony that has been her home for eight years. well-educated and self-possessed Madge Gaden cannot at this uncertain stage make plans for her future. But she is almost certain that her days in the leper colony are over.

12 When asked what calling she would like to follow she revealed intimate glimpses of her life among Darwin’s lepers.

13 She confided that she had written a large part of a full-length novel which she had intended to enter in The Australian Women’s Weekly Novel Competition “I filled up several school books, on a typewriter that a well-wisher sent me, she said. “Unfortunately, in the rush to leave the colony, I burned these along with most of my other possessions.”

14 “I also taught myself to do shorthand and touch-typing. “Mr. Jones instructed me to operate a Morse Code Aldiss lamp. And before the Japs came into the war I often talked by lamp to bored soldiers at camps around Darwin. “If they were bored, I was not. I always found plenty to occupy me in the colony

## Close study of SOURCE *(paragraphs are numbered for your convenience)*

### Analysis

- 1 Madge is described as “beautiful” and the Japanese as “ruthless” in the first paragraph of this article.
  - a) What sort of language is this?
  - b) What effect does the author wish these words to have on the reader?

### Evaluation

- 2 What adjective would you use to describe the kind of person Madge is, after reading the second paragraph?

### Analysis

- 3 Read paragraph 3. Quote a word which describes the Japanese actions and a word which describes Madge’s actions which continues the contrast set up in the first paragraph.

### Application

- 4 Paragraph 4 describes the reaction of the ‘native’ patients to the raid. They are described as “terrified”. What evidence is there that Madge did not share their feelings?

### Evaluation

- 5 Why do you think the ‘natives’ were willing to cross to the mainland at low tide? Why do you think they had not left the colony earlier? Why do you think the non aboriginal people did not go with them?
- 6 Give evidence from the source that Madge has the following attributes
  - > Resourcefulness
  - > Courage
  - > Confidence
  - > Curiosity
  - > Observation skills
  - > Education
- 7 Is there anything about the language, style or content of this article that makes you aware that this piece was written in 1942? Explain

## Darwin Women were all heroines

**The Australian Women's Weekly of March 7, 1942 carried an article with the headline "Darwin women were all heroines...They behaved like soldiers as the bombs rained down."**

Despite the evacuation of many women and children, there were women in essential services and others yet to be evacuated who came under fire, and survived, or were wounded or killed in that first bombing raid on Darwin on 19 February 1942 and in later raids.

This story give Mrs Gwenda Hansen's account of the raid. She was at her secretarial post in Qantas Airway's Darwin Office when the first bomb fell.

### *Secretary's story*

"We dashed out of our glass fronted office to go to ground," sad Mrs. Hanse.

"Ground" was the nearest gutter – a very dirty one.

"We saw a bomb hit the lovely old sandstone post office. During a lull we set out to run there to see if we could help anyone, but the planes came over again and we dived flat in the nearest paddock."

"Several of us from the office lay there for, I think, about an hour.

"The planes were so low we could see the rising suns under the wings.

"As long as I live I shall never forget the awful rat-tat-tat of machine-gun fire.

"As soon as the 'all clear' came we ran to the car and I drove several of our pilots down to the wharf.

"I shall never forget the sight of men swimming and wading ashore.

"Some were only half-conscious. Most of them, their clothes stripped off by explosions, or by themselves to help them to swim, were badly burned by oil.

"While I watched them, wondering if I had the courage to help give them first aid, a naval man rushed up to me.



"For God's sake drive me to naval headquarters," he said.

I drove him to naval headquarters, leaving our pilots discussing the flying boat.

"We had decided that as I was the least grubby and least alarming in appearance I should drive out to the hospital to see how our hero Captain Koch was, and reassure him.

"I found him on the beach below the hospital, cheering up other people.

"On my way back there were wires down on the road, near a big bomb-crater. Remembering that electric wires are thicker than telephone wires, I got out to investigate. I heard someone call out and saw a man with his arm almost torn off at the shoulder. I know practically nothing about first aid, but knew enough to realise that I had to stop the bleeding somehow.

"I tore up some of my under-clothes and made a



ligature as best I could. He was almost unconscious and I wondered how on earth I was to get him into the car.

“A man came along, on a bicycle and helped me and I drove the wounded man to the hospital.

“When I returned to the harbour there was no sign of our flying-boat – or Capt. Hussey.

“Everyone knows now the story of how he took the plane to safety and brought it back. It was one of the most heroic actions in heroic little Darwin that day.

“The nurses at the hospital were magnificent. When their disorganised day was over they had to set to to evacuate all their patients as we expected more raids the next day. They worked all night to see their charges safely on the train.”

## Exploring the Nature of Heroism

### *Analysis*

1. The people of Darwin were accused of cowardice after the bombing of Darwin, and some officials claimed that there was undue panic and chaos.  
Is there any evidence in the article above of the cowardice or undue panic?  
Is there evidence in the article above of courage and level-headedness in the face of dramatic circumstances?

### *Evaluation*

2. In what ways might the officials who were critical of the actions of the residents be biased?
3. In what ways might the Women's Weekly story be biased?





# The Experiences of Aboriginal people



## Background Briefing

Miss Daisy Martin was a part-Aboriginal girl who had been brought up at Kahlin Compound in Darwin and was employed as a maid at Government House in Darwin. On 19 February 1942, during the Japanese bombing raids, she sheltered with the Abbott family and other staff at Government House.

Daisy was killed beneath falling masonry and concrete when the office received an almost direct hit from a 1,000-pound high explosive bomb. She was buried in a temporary grave at Kahlin Beach the next day, but was exhumed and reburied at Berrimah War Cemetery on 30 June 1942. Her body was later transferred to the Adelaide River War Cemetery.

A plaque in memory of Miss Daisy Martin was installed near the spot where she was killed.

Read this extract from a poem written by John Muk Muk Burke in response to the headstone of an aboriginal woman, Polly Mop or Mine written after he visited the cemetery

## Some Lines for Reading

### *A war cemetery*

Bones of Polly Mop or Mine  
Below  
the last plaque on the grass:  
blasted into death  
there's now no flesh  
but her still fresh name has stopped me.  
Fouteen runes I read  
'POLLY MOP OR MINE'

Her secrets buried deeper  
than J F Simon's,  
Corporal, twenty,  
Whose familiar letters  
burn bullet hot in the tropic glare  
but tonight will share with Polly  
all the grave black air  
beneath a clouded moon —<sup>1</sup>

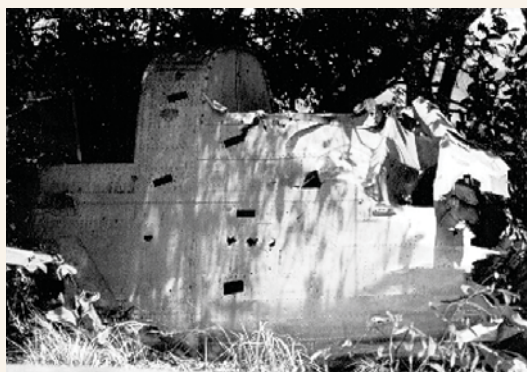


Many aboriginal people were killed in the Japanese bombing raids on the north  
Read this account of the bombing and strafing of Milingimbi, told by an Aboriginal Elder.

## An Aboriginal Elder's Story

### *Bombing and Strafing at Milingimbi*

That thing, thing happened before, long time. First we were living out bush. There was no war. We were out bush when the war started. the second war, army and American air force. They were fighting at Yurrwi (Milingimbi). We didn't know what was going on. There were three balanda missionaries at Milingimbi, Glen, Bob and Mr Will, in war time. We saw the army and the fighting and we ran, all of us, women, girls and old men, everyone, through the bush and dived under the water to get away. The war was getting worse. The war with the Japanese. The Japanese were shooting at us. The war went on for ..... maybe eight weeks, at the mission. The balanda mob mission, they were there. They were witness. A telegram come on the wireless. Some people were at Burdiya and the Japanese attacked us. Another mob were at Miwatj and another mob were at Ngalingicherra. They were hiding there. I was with some people at Balma. We were hiding there in the jungle. We were running around everywhere and they were shooting down at us.



*World War 2 Hudson Bomber, wrecked near the Milingimbi School. . (Photo by J. Boland)*

War. The war was getting worse. All the people from Gartji they crossed the water to go back to Gartji. They were frightened of the war. We all went into the jungle, everybody. People from Ramingining, Nganggalarla, and Miwatj. Also Yirrkala, Bindjuwa and Lake Evela. Everywhere. And also Langarra. People from all these places were at that mission. Burarra people from Gamurr Guyurra and Kunabidji people from Maningrida and Anbarra people. They were all at that mission because it was the only place that had tobacco. You could buy it at the mission. We were buying tobacco while they were shooting at us. The army was still shooting at us and one man was killed. The man who was killed was Galmatta. He was killed by a bomb.

His uncle's name was Djowa. Some people were playing cards under the mango tree. When that bomb came down all the people scattered ; and that when Galmatta was killed. Galmatta was blown to pieces by the bomb. Every body ran away they ran back to their country; to Mwaq; to Ngalingicherra; to Gartji ; near the billabong; Magambal; Djimidja and Burdiya. Also we ran away. We all ran back bush. We had to cross every creek because it was an island and the bombs were coming down everywhere; coming down on us.



*World War 2 Hudson Bomber, with local Milingimbi School Students. . (Photo by J. Boland)*

They were shooting down at us .... Everyone scattered. They ran away. Nobody was there. Still everyone was alive except for one man. He was a young fella, a young fella like Andrew [Campion] here. He was torn apart by the bomb. A young fella, Djowa's nephew. The plane was shooting down at us. Nyooowww tat-tat-tat-tat. He went 'round again and came back swooping down at us.

Nyoo tat-tat-tat-tat. Some people ducked down under the water to hide and some people hid behind

the rocks. The rocks were smashed by the bullets. Some people were hiding behind the trees in the jungle and some people hid in the mangroves. The bomb scared them. Some people ran to the river, some people ran to the creek. From that bomb, now. Afterwards, some of us men went to check up and while we were on our way we suddenly saw the plane coming back down. We said to each other “Hey! That plane, he’s going to shoot us, shoot us!” Then we ran flat out and threw ourselves into the river. We stayed under water for a short while. When we came up our bodies were dripping with mud. Everywhere mud. We were covered in mud. We looked at each other and laughed and laughed.<sup>2</sup>

Not only were communities under fire, but many Aboriginal people also worked for the armed forces as coastguards, or helped the military to live off the land, or served in the forces as soldiers, sailors or airmen. The first Japanese prisoner of war was captured by an Aboriginal man, Matthias Ulungura on Bathurst Island.

Read the account of the capture below:

## Matthias Ulungura

At about 5 o’clock the afternoon of 21st February 1942, Tiwi Aboriginal man Matthias Ulungura was walking through light forest on Melville Island, towards a group of people gathered in a bush camp. Matthias saw that the Tiwi people had strange company in the camp – a Japanese man.

Matthias approached, and hid behind a tree. As the Japanese man walked past, Matthias crept up behind him, then seized his right arm. Matthias then grabbed a pistol from a leg pocket in the strange man’s flying suit.

Stepping back, Matthias pointed the pistol at the man and said “Stick ’em up, right up. Two hands up!” The Japanese instantly obliged, and was then stripped to his underwear and searched. Matthias had captured Zero pilot Hajime Toyoshima, the first prisoner of war to be taken on Australian soil

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Forrest, Peter and Forrest, Sheila (2001) *Federation Frontline. A people’s history of World War II in the Northern Territory*. Centenary of Federation Northern Territory, Darwin p 10

## Exploring the Aboriginal Experience

### Synthesis

Choose one of the following tasks

1. Carefully read the Aboriginal Elder’s story. Create a storyboard or sketch that depicts part or all of the Elder’s story.
2. Create the front page of a newspaper that reports on either the bombing of Darwin, or the bombing and strafing of Mililingimbi
3. Create a front page story for a modern Australian newspaper which tells the story of the capture of Australia’s first Japanese prisoner of war.

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### (Footnotes)

<sup>1</sup> Burke, John Muk Muk, *Night Song and other poems*, (NTU Press, 1999), p37

<sup>2</sup> from *The Warfare Workshop, Maningrida 1-4 April 1996*

Read Betty Fisher's story and study the map "Defending the North".

## Betty Fisher's Story

**Betty Fisher describes how she and other Aboriginal children walked from the mission on Croker Island to Pine Creek and finally spent the rest of the war thousands of kilometres from home.**

"Croker Island was a beautiful place, good fishing, we had our own cattle and goats, and an airstrip there where the plane used to bring in the mail.

Then the war broke out. I was about ten when it happened. All we knew was that the Japanese had bombed Darwin and they'd been telling us if aeroplanes came over we had to run into the jungle. We were only young kids and frightened. We used to keep saying "oh Japanese, Japanese coming!" We were scared but we didn't even know what it meant.

We waited day by day for news of what we had to do next. And word came. We were lucky we had one of the mission luggers that came with our food, so we could go across to the mainland and get off at Oenpelli from the South Alligator.

Before we left Croker all the children had to pick up stones and make a big cross and paint it white so that they could see it was a mission field, a mission station.

When we went across to Oenpelli, we didn't know what was happening. We lost one child there in Oenpelli. From there we had that big walk. The Oenpelli mob lent us a horse and so the rest of us children had to walk forty odd miles to some trucks that were supposed to come out and meet us from Pine Creek.

All the kids went, maybe a hundred kids. We had only one old ute that carried Mrs Adams, and she'd just had a new-born baby, plus they had to put in all our tucker and all our gear. So all the Children had to walk many miles each day and then we had to camp. Then we'd start off the next day.

While we were on the track walking across the continent I went to sleep under a tree and nearly got left behind. Every time we camped they used to count up the children, they found one was missing and that was me. So Mr Wale, one of the missionaries, came back on horseback. Luckily he found me because the grass was so tall – you know- spear grass. He found me lying under this tree and picked me up. The horse rump was that big and I couldn't put my little short legs over and I was crying. I was frightened of the horse! I'll never forget that!

Then we walked and walked until we met two or three trucks that came out from Pine Creek.

From there they took us in army trucks to Alice Springs. And from Alice Springs we were sent to a place on the south coast of NSW called Otford."

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(Talking History, *Land Rights News*, March 1989)

### Comprehension

1. Research to find out about the terrain the children walked through. Describe it as shown in the atlas. Give two pieces of evidence from the extract about the terrain. In what ways was the terrain dangerous for the children?
2. Use the scale on the map and Betty's description and estimate how far the children walked. Does the extract support your findings?

### Analysis

3. Look at the airfields indicated on the map by small plane symbols. Why do you think there are so many airfields? What do these airfields suggest about other dangers the children may have faced?





# Refugees

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Just as the war in Europe and Asia, people in Australia became refugees, in their own country. In the Northern Territory women and children were made refugees in their own country, and because Darwin was a place of great racial variety, some of non British descent were treated particularly poorly by officials

The common experience of physical hardship, being under fire, being separated from loved ones, losing homes and possessions, the mistreatment by officials, and racism made the war experience quite similar for many Australians and other refugees.

The following information and extracts are taken from Janet Dickinson's book *Refugees in Our Own Country: A Story of Darwin's Wartime Evacuees*, unless otherwise noted.

**Few Australians today are aware that their own countrymen and women were war-time evacuees in their own country** <sup>1</sup>

In times of war, it is not only those who go to battle who have to pay the price for peace – in Darwin during the Second World War, the women and children evacuated from Darwin were among those who suffered most. When the order came, there was no choice but to leave husbands, fathers, sons, homes and possessions . . . More than a thousand women and 900 children had to leave – mostly by ship with the ever present danger of mines or enemy attack. Some made the long journey overland. Some went by air. Some never returned.

*Address by Chief Minister of NT  
Hon Marshall Perron, 15 February 1992*

In fact Marshall's mother with his older brother was one of the first to fly out, because she was almost due to have her second child. They had no choice of destination, and like everyone else, left all their possessions behind except for one suitcase of clothes. Thus Marshall was born in Perth.

Many were evacuated by ship. Glad Litchfield describes her experience. "We were loaded into trucks and taken to the wharf where we stood with hundreds of other women and children, for hours in the hot sun without so much as a drink of water, waiting to board the ship."

Some tried to be inconspicuous in Darwin in the hope that they would be left alone. Lydia de Julia tried to go to Adelaide River, but the authorities blocked the road. Then she was told she would be evacuated by truck. After many nights of waiting, the truck never came.

Eventually,

"Police came for me and took the children and myself nine o'clock in the morning and drop us at the gate. Young man, no more than 20 opened the gate to the wharf. So I walked up there. He didn't want my husband to go...My husband worked on the wharf but he wouldn't let him go. So I went with the children and somebody from the ship came down and said "You're not allowed to go." I wasn't the only... woman from Darwin. There were several there on the ship..."We are unloading now. It will be too much trouble. You better go home." So I went and this young man wouldn't open the gate for me. I said what do I do? "Oh well you can sit around here." In the sun. No log, nothing to sit on. We sat on the rail... He was so rude. We sat there".

There was a nearby shed and Lydia asked if she could sit in the shade of it but the guard made her stay where she was. By then it was midday and hot and the children were tired and thirsty. Finally Father Henschke came down and intervened and Lydia and her children were allowed to sit in the shade and Father Henschke went and got them food and drink. Finally at five o'clock, Lydia and her five children aged from 2 to 11 years old were allowed to board the ship. Her husband was not allowed to see her off.<sup>2</sup> This was the last time she was to see her husband, as he was one of the wharfies killed on 19 February 1942, the first Japanese bombing raid on Darwin.

Many people did not wish to evacuate, and leave behind all of their precious possessions, with no safe guards to protect them. They had good reasons to be worried. Lorna Lillie who was working in Paspalis' Rendevous Café in Smith Street describes a Friday night in Darwin, when tensions between the American and Australian troops resulted in a 'riot'.

"They went over to Lorna Lim's. They started on her place and they wrecked everything that was in her shop... it was very sad. Lorna Lim used to mend all their clothes... She was a lovely person, very kind, and they just wrecked her shop... Then they decided that wasn't enough so they came back... into the hotel... they pulled the doors off and wrecked everything and took the scotch."

The weather was also an enemy, being the cyclone season. The *Marella* had to contend with a cyclonic storm. It was also extremely hot.

For many, leaving their menfolk behind was heartbreaking and very worrying. Some were not even given the chance to say goodbye. The men could come home from a day at work to find their family gone, and they wouldn't even know where.

Despite the fact that the women were forced to evacuate, and to leave all their possessions behind, many women were made to pay their own fares. Some had to borrow the money. They were told they would get a refund, but for most, their applications were refused. When they reached their destinations, they received no assistance of any kind, although the evacuees from Java and Singapore, mainly Dutch and British, who arrived in Perth at the same time as those on the *Koolinda*, from Darwin received assistance from the government.

## Exploring the Evacuees' Experience

### Synthesis

1. Imagine that you had to leave your home for an unknown destination. You are only allowed to take one small suitcase. Make a list of the items you would place in it.
2. You get to the evacuation point and are told that the one small suitcase was per family. Interview family members to find out what would be their most important items. Rewrite your list

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#### (Footnotes)

<sup>1</sup> Dickinson, Janet *Refugees in Our Own Country*, Historical Society of the NT, (1995), page v

<sup>2</sup> Dickinson, Janet *Refugees in Our Own Country*, Historical Society of the NT, (1995), page 15

# Internees

The Australian government decided that some of its own citizens were enemies and needed to be rounded up and incarcerated. Thus those they considered to be racially or politically “impure” spent the war in internment or prisoner of war camps.

## **A secret Report explains why the people of the North could not be trusted.**

“There is ample evidence, old and new, to support the fact that the Northern Territory and adjacent areas have been a hotbed of Japanese espionage and that Darwin has become the centre of collation and communication of information. It would seem to be highly probable that enemy agents are being landed at present by parachutes from aircraft coming in over the Gulf of Carpentaria. The possibility of these agents being clothed in Australian, USA, NEI (Netherlands East Indies Dutch Forces) uniforms should not be ignored”.<sup>1</sup>

This report suggested that the Japanese had penetrated “to the aboriginals and half-castes for the purpose of: spreading terror amongst the whites; attacking whites if and when landings were attempted by the enemy; fifth column work generally. Also, it claims the personnel of German and Spanish Missions in the north had “militant tendencies” and were guilty of “subversion of blacks and half-castes”. It recommended “rounding up all uncontrolled aboriginals and half-castes” and “all low whites and breeds”.<sup>2</sup>



The highly emotive terms of this report shows how suspicious many in Australia were of the Northern Territory and it was this attitude that led to the very poor treatment of so many of the citizens of the Northern Territory.

## **Some women and children of Darwin and the Northern Territory spent the war years and beyond in internment camps, accused of being Japanese spies.**

The Murakami family had lived in Australia since 1897. Murakami had become a leading citizen in Broome and had developed and patented a prototype of modern scuba gear, because of heavy loss of life on the pearl luggers. In 1943 an engineer, Emile Gagan patented scuba apparatus identical to that of Murakami, but Murakami could do nothing to protect his patent because he was arrested in 1941, and in 1943 was an internee of Tatura Internment camp, Victoria.

Shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Japanese and their families were rounded up and arrested. Army Police came and took some of the children from school.

The Murakami family of six boys and two girls had lived in Darwin for many years. They were amongst the Japanese children who were taken unceremoniously from their classes by soldiers “brandishing bayonets”.<sup>3</sup>

The Murakamis found soldiers guarding their homes in Darwin, and when Kathleen asked why, the soldiers said it was for their protection.

<sup>1</sup> Australian Archives, Victoria: Department of Defence and the Department of the Army; MP729/6, Secret Correspondence files taken from Walker, R and Walker, H, *Curtin's Cowboys: Australia's Secret Bush Commandos*, Allen and Unwin, 1986, p 3

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*



Later they were taken by truck (no seats, they sat on the floor) to Adelaide River. Kathleen was five months pregnant and she had her husband and small son Peter with her. After being held in Adelaide River with her mother, father, brothers and sisters and other Japanese families, they were taken back to Darwin. Here they found their homes looted, everything of value stolen.



They eventually boarded the HMAS Zealandia, which sailed from Darwin under martial law on 20 December 1941. On board were 542 women and children evacuees, 100 ship's crew, 200 troops to guard the 300 internees, already being called POWs by some, one ship's doctor, two army doctors and three army nurses.

The ship was overcrowded. There was fear of enemy attack by sea or air. It was hot. Food and water was scarce. Some crew cut their water ration so the children would not suffer.

The internees were kept below decks except for an hour or two in the fresh air each day during a time when no other passengers were seen. It was very hot below deck because of the time of the year and because the port holes were closed and shuttered due to blackout regulations.

The Zealandia internees arrived at Tatura internment camp in January 1942, which was to be home for many of them until 1947.

Some male Japanese internees were reclassified as POWs and this is what happened to Kathleen Murakami's husband Yoshio and her brother Francis. Kathleen's father, Yasukichi Murakami died at number 4 camp Tatura on 30 June 1944 and Theresa was unable to tell her son Francis that his father had died.

Camp life was hard. It was cold, and the people from the tropics had to make themselves skirts and dresses from old army blankets. The reclassification of sons and husbands as Prisoners of War, and their transfer to other camps was hard to bear.

The end of the war did not mean freedom to these people. The government still did not know what to do with them in January 1947. They also felt no obligation to return them to their homes. Some were still under threat of deportation to Japan.

Finally, they were released. In 1947 Theresa Murakami left Tatura camp widowed, penniless, thousands of miles from home and with a brood of young children to care for. They suffered greatly from racial discrimination. Kathleen's sons were beaten up at school, stones were thrown at her home and someone tried to shoot her husband and two of her sons on the beach at Cossack. Those on charges of being spies, like the noted pioneer Yasukichi Murakami who died at Tatura, have still not had their names cleared.

Finally, some of the Murakamis found their way back to Darwin where they found acceptance in the community...<sup>4</sup>

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### Picture Captions

Mr Yasukichi Murakami Ph0096/0028

Mrs Murakami, baby Bernadette, in front Margaret, Frank, Sydney, Richard, Kathleen Ph0096/0015

Mrs Theresa Murakami, died Darwin 1980, born Cossack WA 22/8/1897 Ph0096/0017

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### (Footnotes)

<sup>3</sup> Dickinson, Janet *Refugees in Our Own Country, The Story of Darwin Wartime Evacuees*, Historical Society of the Northern Territory, 1995

<sup>4</sup> Information taken from *Japanese Pioneers of Northern Australia*, written by Fay Kilgariff, which includes information from interviews with Kathleen Murakami, conducted in 1984

## Exploring the Evacuees' Experience

### *Comprehension*

1. In what ways were people of Japanese origin discriminated against during the war? Use evidence to support your answer.

### *Analysis*

2. Do you think the Australian Government was justified in deciding to place Japanese citizens in internment camps?
3. Why do you think the government did not release the internees as soon as the war was over?

### *Synthesis*

4. Imagine you are a reporter for 'The Bulletin' magazine during WWII. Prepare a Bulletin style magazine special edition on the war in the Northern Territory.
5. Create a **dual narrative**, one from a refugee's perspective, one from the perspective of an Australian citizen who experienced the war in an Australian city far from the bombing. In your narrative you must show your understandings of the similarities and differences of the experiences, and the effect of propaganda on Australians' views and understandings of the war.
6. You are a Japanese-Australian internee. The war has been over for six months but you are still in detention. Write a letter to the Australian Government, describing your background, the conditions in the camp and explaining why you think you should be released.

## Extension

### *Analysis*

7. Watch **The Dunera Boys (PG)** (Ronin Films 1990) or **Snow Falling on Cedars (M)** and compare the experiences of the war time internees in the film, with those described above.

*NB Teachers are advised to ensure that they comply with the relevant policies and procedures in their jurisdiction in regards to the viewing of (PG) and (M) rated films.*



# Counting the Cost of War

Unit 4



*A Secondary School Education Resource on the*

## Bombing of Darwin



# Counting the Cost of War

## Overview

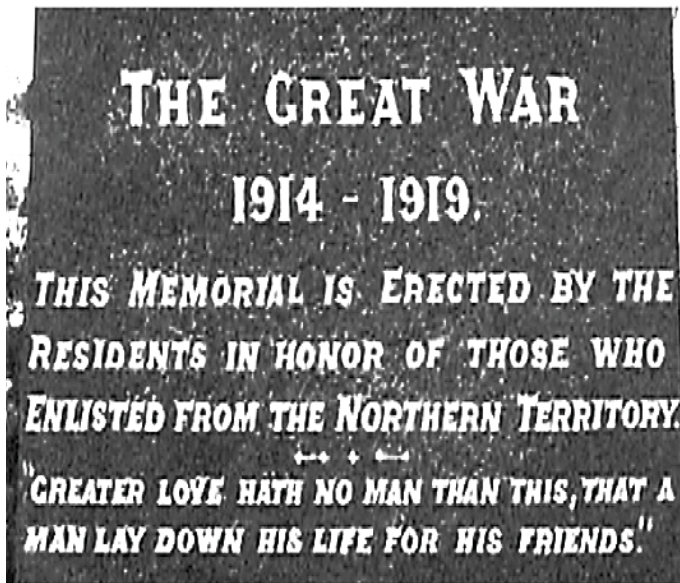
In these units students will explore the ways we commemorate the loss and sacrifice made by soldiers and civilians in the war in the Northern Territory. They will be encouraged to visit cenotaphs and war cemeteries in their own region and to clarify their own values about these sites.

In this section students will be encouraged to consider their own attitudes to the commemoration of past wars and to develop awareness of the symbolism and protocols associated with commemoration.

Students will be encouraged to reflect on their understandings about the bombing of Darwin and the War in the Northern Territory..

Bloom's Taxonomy	Content	Learning Outcomes – students will
	<b>Part One – The commemoration of the dead</b>	
Comprehension, analysis and evaluation	The Darwin Cenotaph	Clarify their own values
Knowledge Comprehension and application	The Adelaide River War Cemetery	Understand the symbolic aspects of cemeteries
Knowledge, comprehension, analysis, evaluation	Cemeteries as Historical sources	Develop ability to “read” cemeteries as an historical source. Develop understandings of protocols for visiting cemeteries
	<b>Part Two – Symbols</b>	
Synthesis	The Flag	Clarify attitudes to symbols
	<b>Part Three –The survivors</b>	
Synthesis	Darwin Defenders	Explore own understandings of the effect of bombing on individuals. Clarify own attitudes to commemoration
Analysis	Darwin's Strategic Importance	Develop an understanding of the significance of Darwin relative to their community

# The Darwin Cenotaph



## The Cenotaph

### *Comprehension*

1. What do the names and the words tell you about the events that each plaque commemorates?

### *Analysis*

2. Look at the inscriptions on the Cenotaph. What does each message have in common?

### *Evaluation*

3. Consider the words "Their King and Country" which are on the WW2 plaque. Why do you think it is not on the Vietnam inscription? How does this indicate a change in the world view of those who wrote the inscriptions?
4. The inscription for the Vietnam War uses much less formal language than that used to commemorate WW1. Why do you think this is so?
5. What do they tell you about the attitudes or values of the people who created each plaque?
6. Whose message or voice comes through the Cenotaph memorial to you?



7. Look at the designs below of other war memorials. Circle the one you like best and say why you like it. Do you prefer it to the Darwin Cenotaph? Why? Why not?



*National War Memorial, Malaysia*



*Gettysburg Battlefield*



*National Cenotaph Wellington*



*Korean War Memorial, Washington DC*

8. Why do you think people deface memorials such as these?  
Do you think they would be less likely to do it if

- They had a parent or other relative who have served in the military forces
- If they had studied more about the war at school
- Other? (explain below)



# The Adelaide River War Cemetery

## Beginnings of the Cemetery

The bombing of Darwin, including the hospital, and hospital ships marked with the Red Cross, and the killing and wounding of nurses and patients, convinced the authorities that they needed to move the hospital out of Darwin, and it was on 7 March 1942 that the nurses and the patients were transferred to Adelaide River.

The hospital and nurses quarters were tents and huts. From here they tended to many wounded and dying service men and women, civilians injured in bombing raids and refugees. The Adelaide River War Cemetery was begun after the hospital had moved there.

The Adelaide River War Cemetery is now an impeccably maintained site and is the largest war cemetery in Australia. It is the resting place of 63 civilians and 434 service personnel who were killed in the bombing of Darwin and the war in the north. It is unique in Australia in that those who are buried in it were casualties in the region.

Read Delfin Cubillo's account of digging the first grave.

“At Adelaide River Cemetery I was one of the volunteers to dig the first grave there. It was on Good Friday, (1942) a RAAF bloke had been killed in one of the bombing raids. He wasn't killed outright, he was taken to Adelaide River where they tried to save him, apparently as he lay in a ditch, a daisy cutter had sliced off part of his back. On Good Friday, the Army doesn't work, so on Friday they called for volunteers to dig this first grave. . . .”<sup>1</sup>

Daisy Martin, the Post Office Workers and many seamen who were killed in the first bombing raid on Darwin on February 19, 1942 are now buried in the cemetery, and their deaths were before that of the first grave described by Delfin Cubillo. Read the passage below, where Delfin describes what happened in Darwin the days following the first bombing.

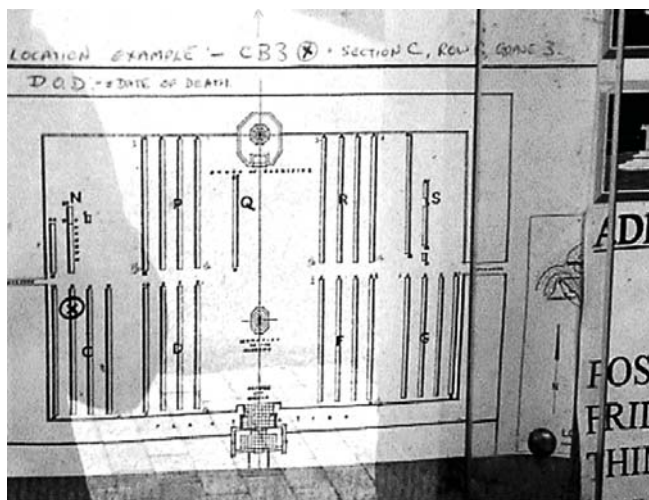
“Eventually the animals were rounded up because a lot of bodies were coming in and out with the tides for weeks. The police had to shoot all the animals. . . .There was some suggestion of a mass grave at Mindil Beach, but that was not true, it was at Kahlin Beach. They bulldozed a big hole and all those people who were killed at the Post Office – including Hurtle Bald, the Postmaster, his wife Alice and their daughter Iris, typist and women telephonists, and all the bodies that were picked up, were put in the mass grave. A lot of the bodies were washed up on Mindil Beach, and the Authorities just rolled them on to canvas and dragged them up to the high water mark as it was soft they dug a big hole and they were buried there. They weren't taken to the war cemetery until much later on.”<sup>2</sup>

Delfin watched all of this because he spent the weeks after the raid looking for his brother Juan who had been on the wharf the day of the bombing. Juan's body was never found.



Look at the map of the cemetery that is mounted at the entrance.

It indicates that the rows are north-south but the graves are east-west. Read Delfin's account of that first grave being dug.



“The bulldozer had just gone around and made a firebreak right around the area, so when we got there, we chose the area and grabbed a pick each, and started digging, when I was down to a certain level, the Padre came over and said, “sorry boys, but in the army the graves are north-south”, O wow! We were digging east-west.”

## A point of interest about graves

Christian burials were usually aligned on an east-west axis with the headstone facing east, so that the occupant lying in his or her “bed” would be ready to reawaken with the blowing of the celestial trumpet and face the resurrection which, like the sun, would arise in the east.

Alignment of the grave is often for cultural reasons. “Lesser sinners, suicides and stillborn infants were mostly buried outside holy ground, but some were buried inside churchyard walls. They lay north of the church, their eternal punishment shown by reversed headstones aligned north to south.”

Other reasons for unusual alignment in Medieval times included:

- Witches buried outside holy ground, face down
- Priests buried facing the congregation in order to watch over them
- Suicides, murderers and other criminals buried at crossroads, sometimes with a stake through the heart
- Insane and actors are buried outside of consecrated ground

## Questions to Consider

### Knowledge

1. Why was a Cemetery established at Adelaide River?
2. Why does the earliest date of death not equate with the first burial?
3. In Delfin's first quote he mentions a *daisy cutter*, what do you think this was?

### Comprehension

3. Why do you think Delfin dug the first grave east-west?
4. Why do you think the Padre told him to dig north-south?

### Application

6. Do you think Delfin re-dug the grave at the padre's request?

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#### (Footnotes)

<sup>1</sup> Cubillo, Delfin *Keeper of Stories*, April 2000, Inez Cubillo Carter, p286

<sup>2</sup> Cubillo, Delfin *Keeper of Stories*, April 2000, Inez Cubillo Carter, p286

# Cemeteries as Historical Sources

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## Questions that can be asked about Cemeteries

*How does the Cemetery layout reflect community attitudes?*

Are there different areas for different groups? How are these groups differentiated?

Are the grave aligned? What does the alignment suggest?

Is there a gateway, general monument, flower garden? What do these suggest?

*How do the grave indicate cultural and religious differences?*

What do the materials used in the headstones or their design suggest about religion, culture, status, values?

What do the inscriptions or symbols suggest about religion, culture, status, values?

What does the grave's alignment suggest about religion, culture, status, values?

Does the headstone describe more than one death? Does the arrangement of information suggest a difference in status or other difference between those on the headstone?

*How do the inscriptions give clues about population health or tragic events?*

Are there a number of people who died at or around the same time?

Are the events causing death described or indicated?

Does the arrangement of graves or a similarity of inscriptions suggest a shared tragedy?

*What do the epitaphs tell you about the person buried?*

What does it tell you about their age, gender, occupation, reason for death?

What does it suggest about the dead person's relationships with others?

Do the epitaphs and inscriptions suggest a shared relation ship with others buried in the cemetery?

What does it suggest about the dead person's attitudes to events, ideas, values?

What does it suggest about the person's beliefs?

Do the epitaphs and inscriptions suggest shared attitudes with others in the cemetery?

*What do the epitaphs tell you about those who buried them?*

What does it suggest about their relationship?

What does it suggest about their feeling about the person buried, or about their death?

What attitudes and values are being expressed about religion, death, beliefs, the value of human life?

*How does the current up-keep of the cemetery indicate its importance to the community?*

Is the cemetery still in use?

Is it carefully maintained?

Is there evidence of recent visits to the graves? eg fresh flowers?

Are there damaged headstones, graffiti, evidence of neglect?

*How do the inscriptions, layout and headstones suggest continuity and change in society?*

Are there similarities of symbols, phrases, headstone design across a period in time?

Is there as similarity of layout and design across a period of time?

Do there appear to be similar attitudes to death across a period of time?

Are there similar disasters or common causes of death across a period of time?

What's changed – attitudes, cause of death, religious beliefs, culture, design, language, layout?

### *Protocols of Visiting Cemeteries*

Please remember that many people are very sensitive to the deaths of their loved ones or ancestors or to the religious symbols of their faith. Treat the cemetery with respect. Do not walk on graves or climb or clamber over gravestones, even if they are broken. Do not speak loudly or yell from one end to the other.

## **Extension task**

### *Analysis*

Visit a cemetery in your local area as an historical source about your community. Consider using the questions in “Cemeteries as historical sources” on page 63 of this resource to assist with your analysis.

### *Synthesis*

Visit a cenotaph or cemetery in your own region. As a class plan a small commemorative service that you will conduct at the site. You may individually or in groups wish to do some preparatory research about those who are named or buried at the site and to include wreath laying or information sharing activities.

# The Bullet Torn Flag

Extract from the unpublished memoirs of Hilda Abbott, wife of the Administrator of the Northern Territory at the time of the bombing of Darwin

Also, refer to Forrest, Peter and Forrest, Sheila (2001) Federation Frontline. A people's history of World War II in the Northern Territory. Centenary of Federation Northern Territory, Darwin, p 57

On Saturday 14 March I handed the bullet torn flag from Government House Darwin to the Minister for the Interior at Canberra.

The Administrator had sent me away from the Territory for a few week's rest and had given me this mission – to carry the flag first fired on on Australian soil to the minister.

It now hangs in the war memorial in Canberra for all to see.

## *Synthesis*

1. Write a letter to the Australian War Memorial arguing a case for the war torn flag to be returned to Darwin. Then write the reply from the Australian War Memorial, explaining why the flag should remain in Canberra.
2. Write a narrative in which a bullet torn flag becomes an important symbol.





# Darwin Defenders

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Darwin Defenders 1942-1945 is the first incorporated association to promote national recognition of the efforts of those who defended Darwin, and Australia, against enemy attack during this significant but largely unknown period in Australia's wartime history.

Survivors of the Japanese attack on Darwin on 19 February 1942, all have a remarkable story to tell.

Yet, while many of the civilian survivors have shared memories of that fateful day with family and friends, the stories from those who were there to defend them – the soldiers, sailors and airmen – were rarely, if ever, told after the war.

The obvious reason is that war is ugly and it is often easier to forget than to remember. It is even harder to remember though, when your efforts have gone unnoticed by the people you served to protect because they never knew the full story.

This was the fate of those who defended Darwin, in Australia's Northern Territory, during World War II.

It is a national wrong that a dedicated group of veterans, their families and the families of veterans who have died since the war, and of those who died defending, has been attempting to set right since August 1999.

19 February 1942, was the first attack on Australian soil and it was also the first time Australian blood had been spilled on home soil in an act of war. Veterans dispute today's figure of 243 killed on 19 February saying the number is more likely over 1000.

However, while Australians battled to keep the enemy at bay in the North, other forces were working to keep the full truth from causing panic among the Australian people. A full-scale invasion by the Japanese was a real threat.

Wartime censorship ensured that even the soldiers, sailors and airmen were ordered not to talk about the events in Darwin during World War II.

Even today, many Australians know nothing of the 13,000 soldiers, sailors and airmen who stayed in the Darwin area immediately after the first air raids. Nor do they know that the Japanese threat of invasion was real until late 1942 when about 60,000 Allied personnel were serving in the Northern Territory.

And many Australians still do not know that following the first bombing attack these brave defenders suffered a further 63 Japanese air raids – the last taking place on 12 November 1943.

But Darwin Defenders like Rex Ruwoldt, who served with Australia's 19<sup>th</sup> Machine Gun Battalion in Darwin from January 1942 to early 1944, have no trouble recalling events.

Rex was only 17 when he enlisted in 1940 – a year below the legal age – after faking his date of birth to help secure a part in defending his country. He was 18 when he arrived in Darwin – a very different living environment to that he, and others, had been used to.

“There were millions of mosquitoes, spiders and creepy-crawlies of all description, including scorpions as big as yabbies, and plenty of centipedes up to 15 centimetres long,” Rex said.

“If you stayed in the shade under the trees, the mossies ate you alive. If you went out on the beach, the sandflies took over.

“Toilets were holes in the ground; bathing initially was a swim in the estuary of Leanyer Creek, until one day we found a 14-foot crocodile sleeping on the bank waiting for his dinner. After that, we swam in the surf when the tide was in, until a shark shot out of a wave and gave us one hell of a fright, so we finished up staying in the shallow water.”

Darwin veterans don't dispute that they were unprepared for the first Japanese air attacks, or that a small few

deserted in the aftermath. After all, a soldier given ammunition to last only five minutes can't be much of a threat to an enemy on the ground let alone in the skies.

These young men were volunteers. But, despite all this, and the impact of the first bombing attacks, 13,000 of them stuck to their guns.

"We led a very hard life up there," Rex said. "But you make a lot of mates and you like to stick together. It's pretty hard to describe the bond that comes from our experience."

It was a sacrifice, Rex says, that all Darwin Defenders knew had to be made regardless of the odds.

"It was hard," he said. "But looking at what Australia, and particularly Darwin, have become today, it was worth every minute of it."

Darwin Defenders was incorporated in August 1999, enabling Rex, and hundreds of other Darwin veterans, to tell their stories – some 57 years after the end of World War II.

Since 1999, Darwin Defenders 1942-1945 has attracted hundreds of members who include defenders from Australia, and the United States, through an official newsletter that aims to set the record straight by publishing their stories before they are lost forever.

During the Centenary of Federation, Darwin Defenders across the Nation succeeded in organising official ceremonies to commemorate the Bombing of Darwin around Australia and to honour those Australians – white and Aboriginal – who armed themselves against a forceful enemy to defend their country and their people.

The charter for Darwin Defenders 1942-1945 reads:

*We are those who in the early months of 1942 endured the bombing, the food and material shortages of the fixed defences at Darwin.*

*We are those who in the later months were part of a large striking force, denying the enemy the use of safe shipping lanes and harbours.*

*Many of the records of the first 2-3 months were lost, were never kept or were deliberately destroyed. The years left to us are few, as are our numbers.*

*Our aims and objectives are:*

- 1. That we ensure that the people of Australia will never forget those who left their friends, families and all that was dear to them, endured hardships and dangers, and were prepared to sacrifice their lives to protect their country when Australia was attacked by the Japanese in 1942.*
- 2. That we do everything we can to reinstate the teaching of Australian history in our schools, so that those who come after us will understand that the preservation of our way of life and the heritage of our great country have not been achieved without sacrifice by those who have gone before us.*
- 3. That the membership not be restricted to Darwin veterans but be extended to include other veterans, family and friends of veterans and other interested persons.*
- 4. That annual memorial services be held at appropriate places on or about the 19<sup>th</sup> of February and that schools and the general public be invited to participate.*

## Lest We Forget

### Synthesis

- 1 Write a charter for your school, or a personal charter for yourself or your family setting out your goals and strategies for the commemoration of those lost in wars.
- 2 Attend or organise a commemoration on 19 February.
- 3 Invite a war veteran to your school to talk about their experiences.

# Darwin's Strategic Importance

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*Since its foundation, Darwin has been the nation's gateway to Asia.*

In the early 1990s the Australian Government introduced a policy of 'forward defence' which involved moving the Army's First Brigade (some 3,500 soldiers and their families) forward from Sydney to Darwin. They would boost the existing Defence forces already in the Top End — six Navy patrol boats based in Darwin, and RAAF bases at Darwin and Tindal. The Army's move was completed in 2000.

Since then four more Navy patrol boats have been moved to Darwin, and the Army's 1<sup>st</sup> Aviation Regiment, re-equipped with armed reconnaissance helicopters.

However, these are merely the latest military developments in a city that owed its very creation to government defence planning.

Darwin Harbour was first surveyed in 1839 by HMS BEAGLE during its second voyage of discovery. It was the crew of HMS BEAGLE that named the harbour after their former shipmate Charles Darwin, who would eventually use the observations he made on the first voyage to develop his famous theory of evolution.

It would be another 30 years before Darwin was founded. The impetus behind the new settlement was government fears of Russian and French imperial expansion, and the risk of their setting up rival colonies in the north of the continent.

Darwin's strategic importance escalated with the laying of the telegraph cable from Australia to Britain. The cable left Australian shores at Darwin, and some 220 Territory volunteers formed the Cable Corps to defend the cable and its equipment from enemy attack. By 1911, defence experts were recommending the installation of 6 inch gun batteries at the harbour mouth to defend against any naval threat.

During the Second World War, Darwin was the only Australian mainland city to come under enemy air attack. The Japanese air raid on 19 February 1942 was the first of over 60 raids but they failed to stop Darwin becoming a key supply base and departure point for men and equipment moving forward.

In 1999, as events in East Timor moved violently towards independence, Darwin's key strategic position again proved vital. The city first became a refuge for East Timorese fleeing the unrest, and then the major forward base for the troops of Australia and 21 other nations serving under the UN flag. The city also became front-page news around the world thanks to the arrival of some 400 international media who descended on Darwin to cover the story.

The move of Defence resources has certainly boosted the Top End economy and contributed to industry growth. The immense mineral and agricultural wealth, offshore oil and gas mean Darwin and the Top End are as strategically significant today as they ever were, and will remain so for the foreseeable future.

## Exploring Darwin's Strategic Importance

### *Analysis*

1. Write up a table that contrasts Darwin's strategic importance to another capital city in Australia. Do you agree that Darwin is of strategic importance?

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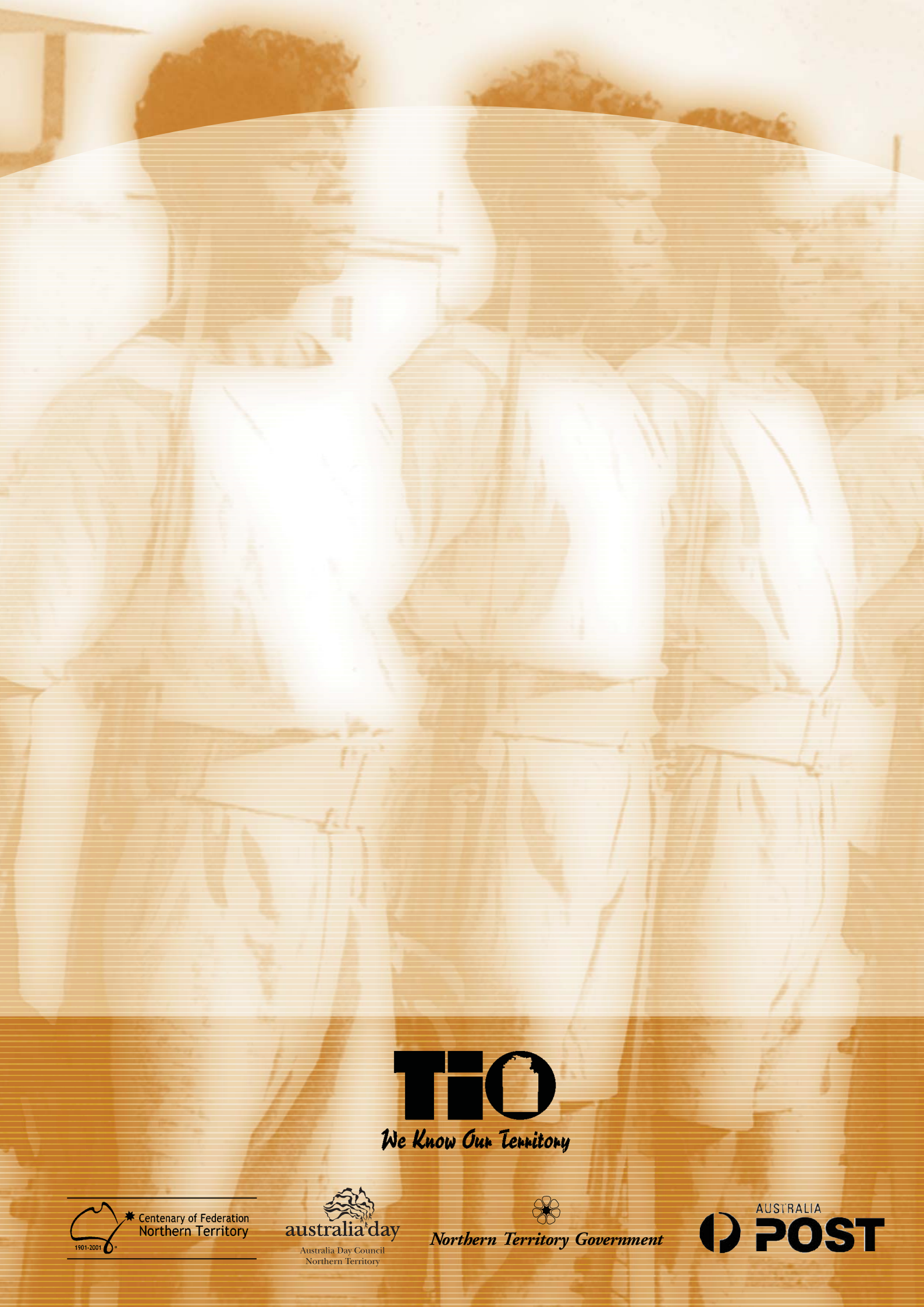
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*We Know Our Territory*

