



We're kicking off the final issue of the South Pacific WWII Museum newsletter for 2023 with the fantastic progress being made with our museum renovation.

Thanks to two very generous grants from The New Zealand High Commission to Vanuatu and the Reserve Bank of Vanuatu, we've been able to renovate the second half of our building in Luganville. (continued...)

Official Navara Sponsors

Air Vanuatu



Henry Cumines Pty Ltd

With builders and tradesmen in such short supply on Santo, it was not an easy task finding the people we needed. Luckily for us, Museum Chairman Bradley Wood secured the 'building talents' of Jacksio Wilbur, James Henry, Loic Malites and Willie Levu, with Willie's father Roger acting as foreman on the job – and what a job they've done.



The new museum space was in need of some serious work.

After demolishing the concrete wall between the existing museum and the new museum space, a rear door was cut out and the front door enlarged to double doors.

With the major construction complete, the conversion to a museum space required the removal of the windows, to minimise harmful sunlight and make climate control more efficient.



The air conditioning unit gets affixed to the rear of the museum.

An air conditioner was installed in the week leading up to Christmas and the new room was given a fresh coat of paint, in preparation for the installation of display cases and artifacts from our collection.

A huge thank you to Roger Levu and his build team for the fantastic work they did prior to the Christmas break. We couldn't have done it without you.

Following another week or two of final installations, painting and cleaning early in the new year, Marina, Lyn and Miranda will work with Bradley on the installation of the exhibits. We expect the unveiling of our new museum to take place mid- January.



The build team. From L to R, Jacksio Wilbur, James Henry, Museum Chairman Bradley Wood, Loic Malites, Foreman Roger Levu and Willie Levu.



Hi Everyone,

This issue is a big one thanks to some original letters we have reproduced from a sailor who was based on Santo during the war. The second letter in particular is a wonderful insight into life on the base during the war. We've also sprinkled throughout this issue some advertising from the early 1940's. They're a bit of fun to look back on how the war effort was woven into the fabric of everyday life.

This being our last issue of the year, the Museum Board and I wanted to take this opportunity to thank a number of people for all their hard work and support. Kevin McCarthy our former VSA volunteer, still assists us immensely with the writing of our Member's special newsletter, The Santonian. He also pens the Month in Military History and Everyday Hero stories in our monthly newsletter. Thank you Kevin, for all your hard work and fascinating tales from the Pacific.

Our museum staff are the public face of the Museum, and we can't thank them enough for all they've done. Marina, who likes being called our Support Officer, when in fact we like to call her our Museum Manager, has done an incredible job hosting visitors and school groups, answering all-manner of questions and keeping things going on a day-to-day basis. Of course, Marina is supported by Lyn, our Museum Assistant, who's done a wonderful job throughout the year and is now up to speed on our new database systems.

And finally Miranda Williamson our New Zealand VSA volunteer this year. Miranda has done an incredible job overhauling our collection databases and greatly assisted in securing the funding for our renovations from the Reserve Bank of Vanuatu and the New Zealand High Commission. A huge thank you and we'll miss you when you return home in mid-January.

We also want to thank Leighton Shearer and the team from Santo Hardware for all your support and assistance this year. And Steven Remy from Santo Earthworks, thank you for the donation of coral and sand for our renovations.

Our official Navara Sponsors, Tropex Exports, Henry Cumines and Air Vanuatu, we thank you for your amazing support this year.

We'd also like to thank Airports Vanuatu Limited, Ocean Logistics and Recyclecorp for the donation and shipping of our Dauntless wreck and engine to the Museum. Additionally, we'd like to thank Swire Shipping for our shipping container, which will be a huge help to us for storing our exhibits.

To our members, supporters, subscribers, friends, and those of you who've ever dropped something in our donation box at the Museum, a massive thank you for your support.

To our donors who share our dream of bringing to life and preserving the history of the Pacific, thank you for your artifacts, photographic collections and memorabilia you've passed on to us for safe keeping.

And finally, to our anonymous supporters. You know who you are, and we thank you most sincerely for all that you've done and continue to do.

All the best for 2024.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Jimmy".

Jimmy.



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Main Street,
Luganville, Vanuatu
+678 553 7000
info@southpacificwwiimuseum.com
southpacificwwiimuseum.com

December 1, 2023

Dear Friends,

As we bid farewell to 2023, we want to take a moment to express our deepest thanks for your unwavering support and genuine interest in preserving the rich history of the South Pacific during World War II.

Your generous support has seen remarkable artifacts, photographic collections and personal belongings from veterans and their families, donated to our collection. These invaluable donations are one by one, transforming our museum into a living testament to the heroism displayed during that critical period. Each exhibit tells a unique story, and we are honoured to share these artifacts with you.

The spirit of community that surrounds the South Pacific WWII Museum is truly inspiring. It's not just a museum; it's a shared space where history comes to life, thanks to the collective passion of individuals like yourselves. Your continued interest fuels our commitment to preserving the past for future generations.

As we embark on the journey into 2024, we are excited about the possibilities that lie ahead. Your ongoing support remains the cornerstone of our success, and we look forward to bringing you even more exhibits, exciting announcements, and opportunities to connect with the incredible stories of the South Pacific during World War II.

Once again, thank you for being an integral part of our museum family. Your support has made all the difference, and we can't wait to continue this incredible journey together.

Wishing you a joyous holiday season and a fantastic start to the New Year!

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bradley Wood".

Bradley Wood

Chairman



Richer, More Nourishing Soups for a Nation at War!

In grocery stores, in kitchens, wherever women chat about their family meal plans these days, the talk turns to the new, improved Campbell's Soups. There's ready and eager praise for them. Women have found the stepped-up nourishment and food value of these soups a bigger help than ever in their plans for wartime meals.

Each Campbell's Soup is today made to a new and improved recipe, in order to conform with the Government's wartime requirements calling for soups of greater nourishment. More of the good ingredients now go into the making of each soup. More of the fine meats and the plump, Government-inspected chickens. More of

the luscious, garden-grown vegetables. Because of this, you get more fortifying nourishment in each plateful, and deep delicious flavor in each spoonful.

Let the new, improved Campbell's Soups help you with your wartime meal plans. They're identified by a marker on the label reading "NEW AND IMPROVED RECIPE".



MORE CHICKEN IN THIS SAVORY SOUP OF THE SOUTH!

And more fine vegetables, too! It's an excitingly different chicken soup, thick with tomato, rice and young okra slices — deftly seasoned with savory herbs. Rich and delicious, and now — extra-nourishing for these strenuous times.

Campbell's CHICKEN GUMBO



MORE HEARTY NOURISHMENT IN THIS RUGGED MEATY SOUP

A sturdier-than-ever meat stock, more vegetables and more tender pieces of meat make this a perfect answer to busy-day meal problems. A dish of bonny Scotland for active America!

Campbell's SCOTCH BROTH

A NEW RICHNESS IN THIS FAVORITE SOUP!

Dietitians say "Tomatoes for health!" And here is the garden goodness of sun-ripened tomatoes blended with fine table butter — stepped up now to new richness for extra nourishment.

Campbell's TOMATO SOUP



My family say I'm quite a cook. The secret's here — Just take a look!



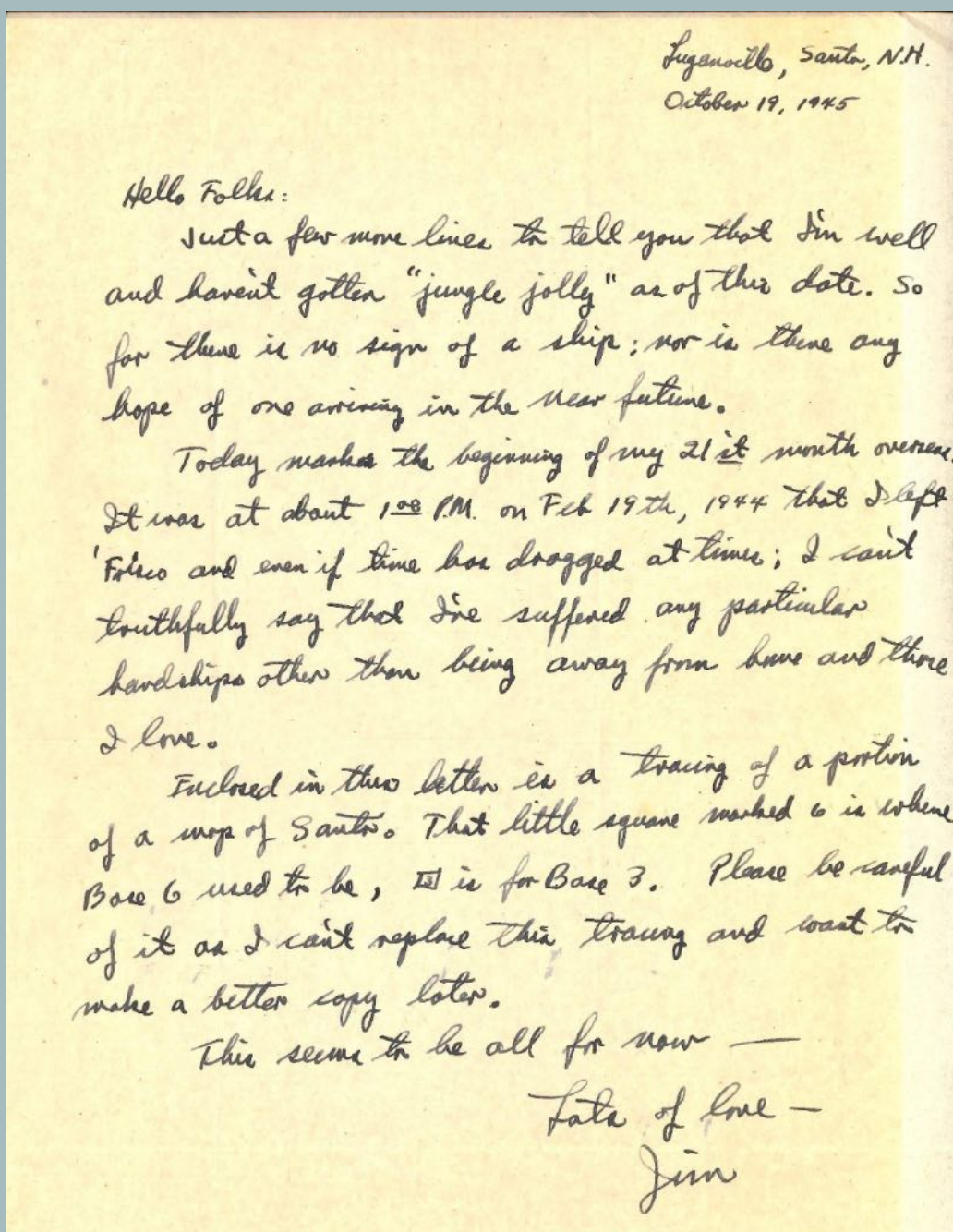
© 1942 THE CAMPBELL SOUP CO.

Wright you are

James Wright served as a Pharmacist's Mate and was stationed on Espiritu Santo at the end of World War II. A collection of his letters are now held by the Naval History and Heritage Command – the US Navy's archives. His letters chronicle his thoughts and activities as they relate to the end of the war, as he awaits a ship to take him home.

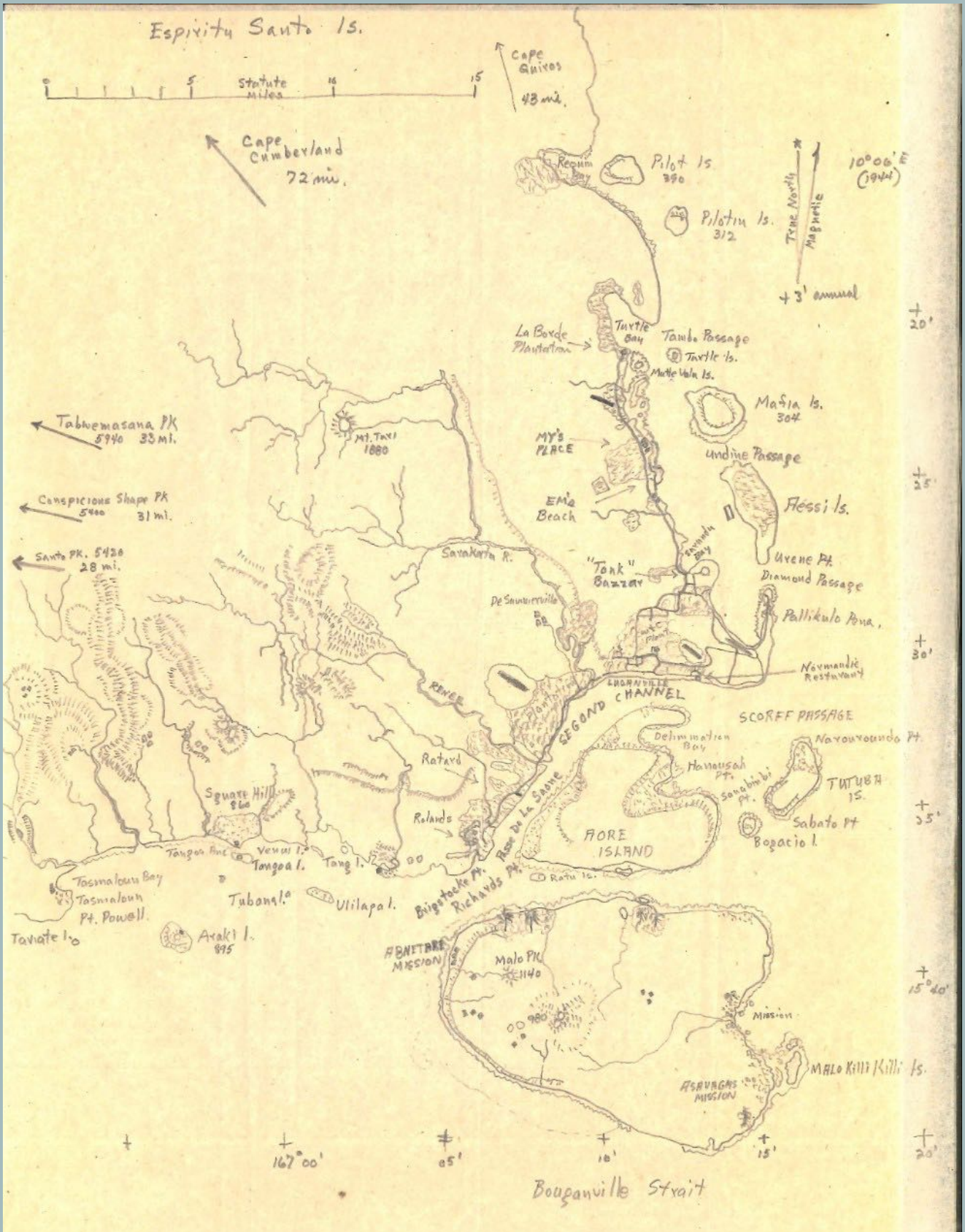
We thought we'd reproduce a couple of his letters to provide some insight into life at Base Button and his positive attitude to life in the Navy. Interestingly, his second letter is post-censorship, which allows James to go into far more detail about the hospitals on the island.

Following each letter you'll find a text version, if reading James' hand-written script proves difficult.



(continued...)

The hand-drawn map included with James' letter back home.



(continued...)

A text version of the previous letter from James.

Luganville, Santo, N.H.

October 19, 1945

Hello Folks:

Just a few more lines to tell you that I'm well and haven't gotten "jungle jolly" as of this date. So far there is no sign of a ship; nor is there any hope of one arriving in the near future.

Today marks the beginning of my 21st month overseas. It was at about 1:00 P.M. on Feb 19th, 1944 that I left 'Frisco and even if time has dragged at times; I can't truthfully say that I've suffered any particular hardships other than being away from home and those I love.

Enclosed in this letter is a tracing of a portion of a map of Santo. That little square marked 6 is where Base 6 used to be, 3 is for Base 3. Please be careful of it as I can't replace this tracing and want to make a better copy later.

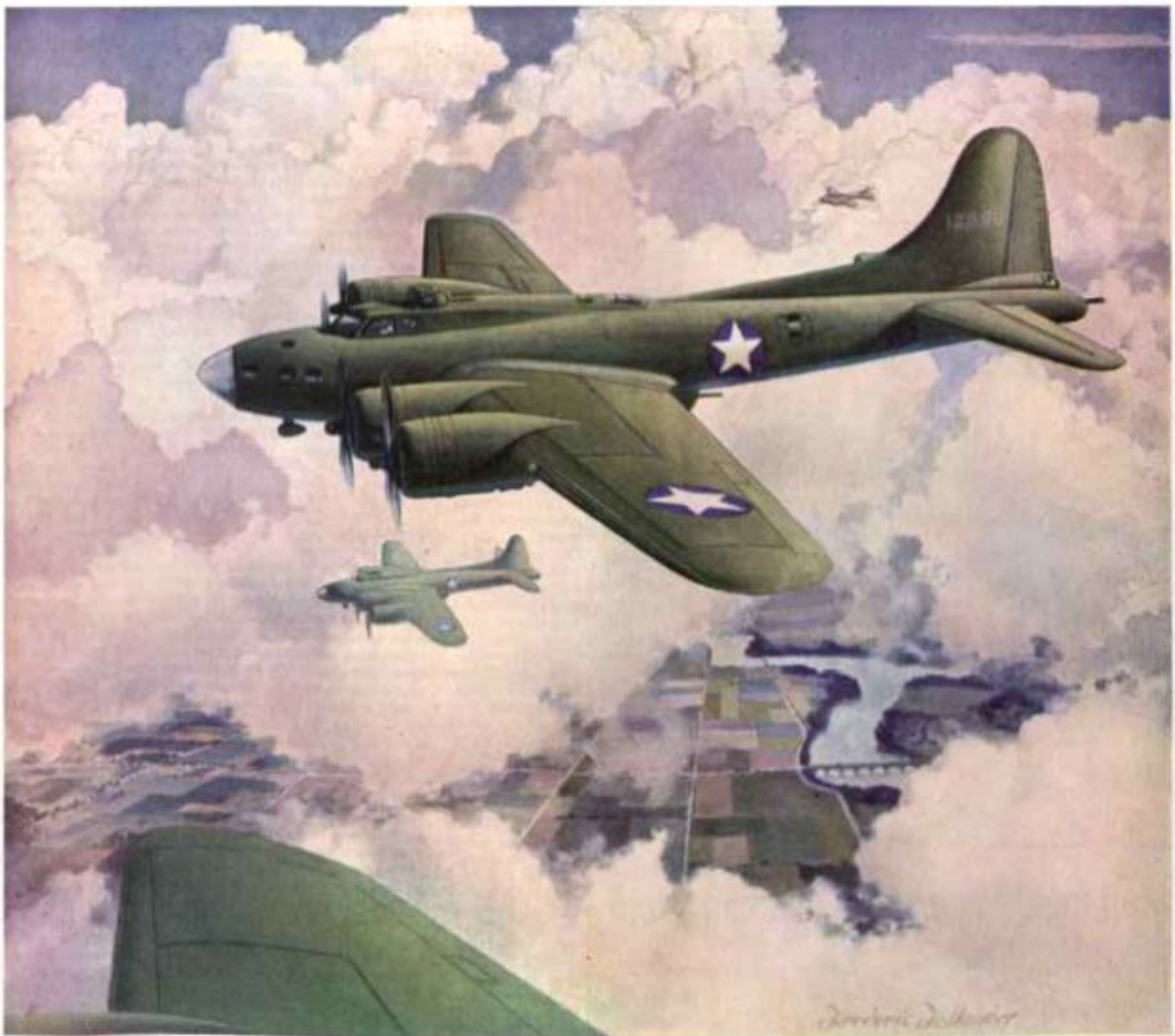
This seems to be all for now –

Lots of love –

Jim

From the Papers of James Wright, Archives Branch, Naval History and Heritage Command.

(continued...)



Studebaker craftsmen again give "more than they promise"

The devastating bombing power and matchless fighting power of the Boeing Flying Fortress make comforting daily items in the war news. Much of the flying power for this invincible dreadnaught of the skies comes from Studebaker, long regarded as one of the foremost builders of motor car engines in the world. Studebaker, America's oldest manufacturer of highway transportation, is privileged to collaborate with Wright, America's old-



est producer of airplane engines, in this vital assignment. And Studebaker is also building much other war matériel including tens of thousands of big, multiple-drive military trucks for the United Nations. Today, as for generations past, Studebaker craftsmen make their watchword—"give more than you promise." Every Studebaker employee is justly proud of his organization's achievements in the arming of our Nation and its Allies.



War Trucks for the United Nations! Studebaker, famed for years for dependable transportation, has now become one of the largest producers of big, multiple-drive military trucks for the fighting forces of the United Nations.

Studebaker BUILDS WRIGHT
CYCLONE ENGINES
FOR THE **Flying Fortress**

James' incredibly detailed letter penned after censorship had ceased.

Section I
Section II in another envelope

USN Receiving Ship
Navy #1140, P.O. #10
San Francisco, California

September 8, 1945

Dear Folks:
Yesterday we were told that censorship was officially ended. It certainly seems good to know that I can seal the envelope and know that you are the next to read what I have written. Maybe I was unfortunate in knowing a couple of the reasons quite well; and they always betrayed (unconsciously of course) enough knowledge of other people's private business that I always hesitated to write anything that I wouldn't just as soon put on the bulletin board over my signature.

First: I do have my orders to report to one of the West Coast commands for further assignment; but as things stand at the present time I wouldn't be surprised if they were scuttled. (about 1 chance in 4 or 5). So far as I know I can get there in another thing; because we have the lowest priority known. First come the "positives"; then the "overage" (24 year plus); then men assigned to schools; then on emergency leave and at the tail end of the list come those of us who are travelling to fill the quotas of the "rotation" plan. With most of the ships being moving troops from the ETO and taking the occupation troops to Japan, we don't "rate" very highly when the few available berths do come along.

- 2 -

You are most likely quite curious about what I have really been doing the last 16 months. Well now I can really let down my hair. As Poppy Greaves most likely told you; Base Hosp #6 was the final development of the Fin One Medical Department. That means that the hospital grew like "topsy" from a depressing status. It was established as a 400 bed unit to care for the men of Fin One (which was the total name for the base camp personnel) and grew to an ultimate capacity of about 1300 beds (so we never knew for certain what our actual capacity could handle). When the Fin One hospital was enlarged to 1000 beds in August 1943 it became a separate command and received the name of Base Hosp #6. The purpose of this enlarged hospital was to care for the shore based personnel of this island. Base Hospital #3 which grew out of the Cub One unit was to take care of all men stationed aboard ships in the area. Base #3 was located about 7/8 mile west of Base 6 on the same road.

When I came to base 6; it was operating in a routine manner and the X-ray department was doing about 800 exams per month. (April '44) In August of that year we received ~~the~~ some of the casualties from Guam and Saipan and X-ray went on a 24 hour schedule for about 6 weeks. In October Poppy Greaves was "rotated" home and I became senior technician, with Bob Spangle, Tech, Bill Blairhill and "The" Edlberg as assistants (students). Wm Jell took care of all the records. Dr Melb Harris

(continued...)

- 3 -

of Spokane was the routeologist until mid December when he was relieved by Lt Roland Benson of Detroit, who stayed on until we closed. ~~It~~ The amount of work gradually tapered off to a minimum of about 300 manhours in January 1945.

In all other departments the work was proportional so it is easy to see why on Feb 2^d, 1945 we received orders to dismantle the hospital and prepare for shipment. The original destination was Manila (scuttbutt from Capt's messenger bag) and that was later changed to Okinawa (Capt Mott said Naha). It took about 5 weeks to completely demolish all but the key buildings and pack the materials. Since all but a very few of the buildings were Quonset type huts, it was a relatively economical procedure and there was very little building material that couldn't be saved. I worked for 3 weeks packing the X-ray machines and other X-ray gear and later Mr Schubert (the property and accounting officer) had me working in his storeroom for about 3 more weeks.

On the 9th of March, 1945; RE Yeager, R.J. Hall, Bob (Raych) Haynes and myself were appointed Sergeants of the Guard. Since our quarters at Base C had been torn down in the second week of February; we had been living in empty wards at Base #3, so we moved back to the Base #6 compound and settled down in the old Commissary Office for quarters. Our quarters (we started with 15) lived in the old barbershop. Yeager was the Sgt. and the rest of us adopted the title of Corporal.

- 4 -

Our duties were many. We acted in the capacity of messengers at home; we dispatched transportation; we acted as Officer of the Day; drove the Shipper car when necessary; issued the beer; helped receive the mail and anything else that happened along. We stood an 8 hr watch as Opl and then filled out the rest of a 16 hr day with the motor. Yeager was on 24 hr call and I personally don't know when he ever slept.

It was about this time that the "brown 50" began to shape up. Most of us had talked the situation over with the general officer in February; and as the orders came in; it was soon evident who was to remain with the hospital. We had a group of technicians (OR - X-ray - lab Pharmacy - Property & Accounting - Clinical) and then a basic group of plumber (shipfitter) mechanics (Machinist Mate) Carpenter, Storekeeper and seaman.

As I wrote you at the time; I asked to stay with personal gain in mind because at that time; it was possible to get waiver on time in rate for advancement in rating. With a waiver I could have gone up for Chief PHM on or after June 1, 1945; (but as it turned out; that waiver deal was stopped by the Bureau; effective June 1, 1945) and in a group where I was passed; a waiver would be easy but if I got a change of station it would be pretty difficult. So you can easily see where my heart lay. Now with the war over; I'll never get another chance at that hard-billed hat; but

(continued...)

Section II - 5 - Section II in another envelope
 at the time it seemed mighty important.
 About the first of June, we received our shipping code markers (BIVE-56/6) and began marking the crates and boxes. Excitement was running high; but ran higher when we received an issue of Marine gear (similar to the Seabee fatigue clothing) plus the standard cold weather suits, rain clothing, and the basic items of battle equipment such as helmets, canteen mess gear and sheath knife. At no time did we receive any firearms because in an advanced base; PHM's and GHT's are non-combatants and are never armed (even at that a lot of the fellows manage to lift .45 cal automatic and wear them). We were all prepared to leave on or about the 25th; when orders came in transferring all but one PHM to Base Navy #3 and all the non-medicals to the Rec. Ship. Base #6 was dead!
 On the 26th of June 1945 we were transferred to Base 3 and assigned to a special guard detail on the old Base Six compound because the Base 3 PHM officer had assumed responsibility for all the gear stored there. Acting under his direction; with help from the non medics who were both for temporary duty; we loaded (helped by Seabees) the gear on board cargo ships and saw most of it start northward. By the 10th of July I was fed up with guard duty (even as corporal which is a sitdown job) so asked for release. I got it and was assigned no further duty until 15th of August

- 6 -
 when I was transferred to the Receiving Ship. Since then I've cut a little grass; picked up coconuts and the dropped foods; but at no time have I overworked.
 Navy #140, % F.P.O. San Francisco, is the so called "secret exercise base" in the Hebrides. It is located on Paganville; (I should say ~~that~~ overlie, surrounds and surrounds Paganville) on Sagard Channel; on the South east corner of Espinler South; Sagard Channel is deep and has a satisfactory current through it at all times. It is fairly well protected against storms; and makes a fine anchorage. Palihulu Bay at the rear; looks fine at high tide; but isn't very useful except for loading with lighters; while the Sagard side is deep enough to make wharves practical.
 If the Sagard river was divided into thirds; the junction of the middle and eastern thirds would approximate the location of Base 6. We were about 1/4 mile back from the bay; about 365 ft above sea level about 1/4 mile back from the edge of the hill. This fact and the closely planted coconut palms effectively cut off any view we might have enjoyed; but incidentally made the hospital almost invisible from the air.
 There were several French restaurants operated by the military doctor; the most famous being Charles' stand, which received a mention in the Sat Eve Post; but I never ate there. I liked the Normandy and Mij's Place.

(continued...)

Both the Normandie Restaurant and Miji Place were fairly lovely; and better yet; operated on the theory that \$3.00 should pay for all that a man can stuff down his gullet. I'm afraid that I made a hog of myself; but I never suffered for it. The usual meal is steak and french fried potatoes preceded by soup and salad and followed by fruit; then coffee. The steak and potatoes keep coming back until refused. (How does that sound in a land of rationed meat?)

The French and British plantation owners (some were overseas but kind like owners) were friendly; but not on an open-house basis. If you had contact with them; it was understood that you could drop in whenever you wanted; but to relative strangers: NIX! I met Mr. & Mrs. Retard through Dr. Homic; Mr & Mrs Roland through Captain Mott and M. Laback and his Chinese mistress (Poupetee) thru Lt. Schuback.

We have a network of good roads; central power system; base water system and nightly movies. The ships store only needs magazines to be a diversion and I must admit I miss them quite a bit since the Army PX closed up.

I'm sorry now that I told you to stop writing; but since it looks as if I'll be here for quite a while; my address is as it was before: USN Receiving Station Navy #1440 % E.P.C. San Francisco. Please don't send

anything that can't be easily replaced as it might get lost in transit. By the way the reason the package didn't arrive was because all mail addressed to base 6 went to Okinawa and the books weren't forwarded back down here. So - At the same time I couldn't change my mailing address until I did because it was supposed to be a secret that base 6 was moving.

Guess I've raved on for enough this time. Hope this finds you well.

Summer is in the offing down here and the days are getting warmer. It rains fairly often now and I guess it won't be too long till the regular rainy season sets in. By now its too warm for a blanket at night; but sleeping base is rather cool. Guess I'll have to scrounge up a sheet over at the hospital. We have a good dog hut and there are only four of us in it so we have plenty of room. (Pyramidal tent with wooden walls and floor) I think that will be able to get one of the Seabees from next door to fix the radio either tonight or tomorrow.

P.S. How do you like ^{the} taste of Love's honey these long letters? It certainly feels good to speak freely again!

Jim

(over)

A text version of James' letter.

Section I

Section II in another envelope

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Navy #140 c/o F.P. O.

San Francisco, California

September 8, 1945

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(continued...)

Guess I've raved on enough for this time. Hope this finds you well.

Summer is in the offing down here and the days are getting warmer. It rains fairly often now and I guess it won't be too long till the regular rainy season sets in. By now it's too warm for a blanket at night; but sleeping bare is rather cool. Guess I'll have to scare up a sheet over at the hospital. We have a good dry hut and there are only four of us in it so we have plenty of room (Pyramidal tent – with wooden walls and floor) I think that we'll be able to get one of the Seabees from next door to fix the radio either tonite or tomorrow.

Lots of Love – Jim

P.S. How do you like these long letters? It certainly feels good to speak freely again! - Jim

From the Papers of James Wright, Archives Branch, Naval History and Heritage Command.



Photo of Pharmacist's Mate 1/c James Wright in the Pacific. Photo Naval History and Heritage Command.



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© R. J. Reardon Tobacco Company, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

WHEREVER HE IS...

The favorite cigarette with men in the Army, Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard is Camel. (Based on actual sales records.)

BUY WAR BONDS STAMPS

Walter's Pacific odyssey

We do love sharing the stories of those who served in the Pacific Theatre during World War II – particularly if there is a connection to Espiritu Santo. This is one of them.

Walter C. Ninneman was born on a Minnesota farm in 1905, Walter's early years were shaped by adversity, losing his mother at a tender age. Raised by his grandparents until his father's remarriage, Walter's connection with the natural world began to flourish during his solitary explorations along the creek that meandered through the family farm. His rural education extended only to the eighth grade, but the woods became his classroom, fostering a deep appreciation for the untouched beauty of nature.



A young Walter Ninneman in his Navy uniform. Photo Norman Ninneman.

Seeking independence, Walter left home at a young age, traversing the expanse of North Dakota and Canada, working in wheat harvest fields, lumber camps, breaking horses, and mining coal in eastern Montana.

A brief stint in the Minnesota National Guard foreshadowed his destiny—Walter's heart yearned for the sea. Enlisting as an Apprentice Seaman in the United States Navy in 1921, he embarked on his first seafaring adventure aboard the USS Seattle, the fleet's flagship.

His naval journey unfolded across various assignments and ships. From the USS Tanager's scientific expeditions to minesweeping duties in Hawaiian and Samoan waters, Walter's experiences were diverse.



USS Alcor (AD-34) tending destroyers at Pearl Harbour in early 1945. Photo Naval History and Heritage Command.

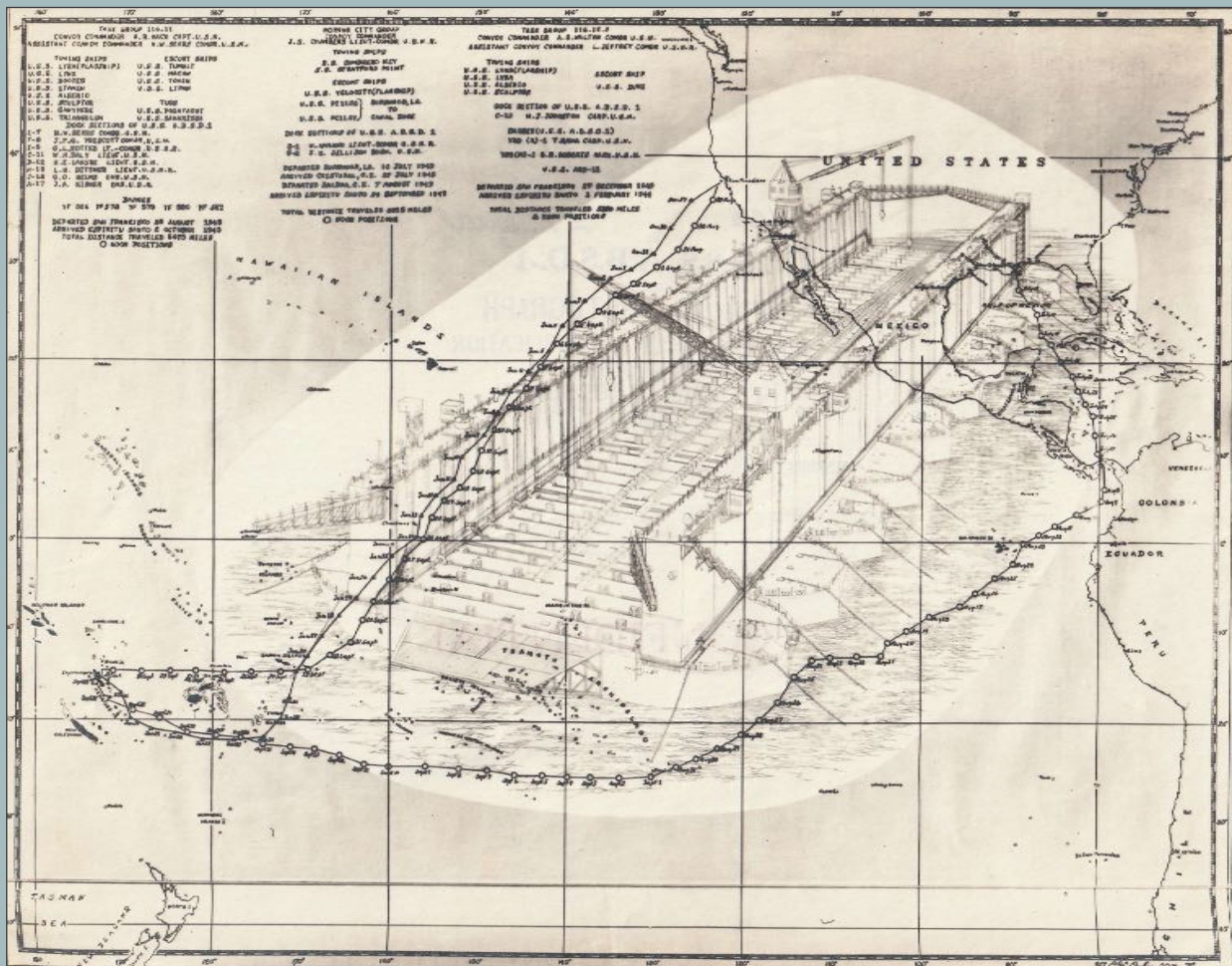
His service on the USS Lexington, an aircraft carrier nearing completion and later, the USS Erie in the Special Service Squadron stationed at Balboa, Canal Zone, broadened his horizons. The latter assignment allowed him to explore Central and South American countries, including the Galapagos Islands.

The turning point in Walter's naval career occurred on December 7, 1941, when, aboard the USS Alcor en route to Portland, Maine, the attack on Pearl Harbour was relayed to the crew via radio and marked a pivotal moment that propelled him into the heart of World War II.

Walter's wartime service was marked by his significant involvement with the Advance Base Sectional Dry Dock #1 on Espiritu Santo. (continued...)

The Advanced Base Sectional Dock-1, abbreviated as ABSD-1, stood as a colossal steel floating dry dock that embarked on its journey to Espiritu Santo in two separate convoys spanning from July to October 1943.

This configuration afforded the dock an effective length of 827 feet (252m), a clear width inside the wing walls spanning 133 feet (40.5m), and an impressive lifting capacity of a staggering 90,000 tons.



The amazing journey of the ABSD-1 in 10 individual sections is shown on this map. Five went north, while the other five went south via the Panama Canal. Illustration from Norman Ninneman.

This engineering marvel comprised ten distinct sections, meticulously crafted in the United States between 1942 and 1943 at four separate shipyards across the country.

Each section boasted impressive dimensions, measuring 256 feet (78m) in length and 80 feet (24.3m) in width, with a nominal lifting capacity of 10,000 tons.

The assembly of the ten sections involved the intricate welding of each piece side-by-side, augmented by 50-foot (15.2m) outrigger platforms at either end.

The completed dry dock emerged as a staggering structure, stretching an awe-inspiring 927 feet (282.5m) in length and 256 feet (78m) in width.



Two sections of ABSD-1 have had their 'wing walls' raised and welded into position in Pallikulo Bay. Photo US Archives.

(continued...)

During the construction phase, the wing walls were typically erected in an upright position to optimise time efficiency. However, in preparation for towing at sea, the wing walls, anchored by a series of hinges, underwent a strategic transformation – lowering into a horizontal position. This ingenious manoeuvre served to reduce



Walter Ninneman standing, on the far left in the Officer's Bar of ABSD-1. Photo Norman Ninneman.

wind resistance and lower the centre of gravity during the sections' journey to their ultimate destination for final assembly and welding.

Upon reaching the advance base, where the dock was destined for active service, the wing walls experienced a reversal. They were once again raised to their standard upright position. In this state, the walls underwent meticulous bolting and welding to the pontoon, ensuring watertight integrity around their entire perimeter.



An aerial photograph, taken 9 March 1944 of the Brooklyn Shipyard. USS Missouri (BB-63) is fitting out in the centre. The carrier at the bottom is most likely USS Bennington (CV-20). Photo Naval History and Heritage Command.

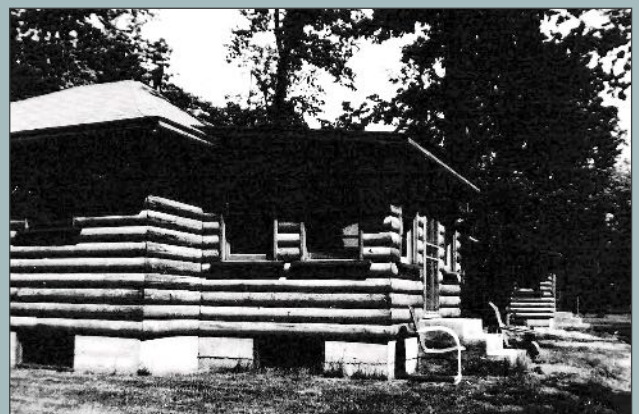
Walter, part of a crew of 50 men, undertook the arduous journey of transporting one section of ABSD-1 from Morgan City, Louisiana, to Pallikulo Bay in Espiritu Santo. This 47-day voyage from Panama, marked Walter's longest time at sea.

His responsibilities included assembling the dock's sections and later serving as Block-Setting and Division Officer. Walter's promotion to Chief Warrant Carpenter, though prestigious, came with its share of challenges, as it did not entail automatic promotions like other commissioned officer ranks.

Post-war, Walter continued to serve the Navy at the Brooklyn Naval Shipyard as an Inspector of Ship's Construction Work. He was soon ordered to the USS Whetstone, nearing completion at the Boston Naval Shipyard, and duty on board when commissioned.

However, tragically Walter's wife was diagnosed with cancer while the Whetstone was under-going acceptance trials, and he was discharged from the Navy May 16, 1946, to enable him to care for his wife.

His wife recovered a little temporarily. And since the Navy hospital had done all they could for her, Walter took her to her daughter's home in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. She passed away not long after.



One of the lakeside cabins, built the old-fashioned way by Walter. Photo Norman Ninneman.

Returning to Minnesota, Walter sought solace in family and nature. Acquiring land, he built lakeshore cabins that stand today as enduring testaments to his craftsmanship and love of nature.

Meet the mind behind your wi-fi

Hedy Lamarr, the silver screen star turned tech pioneer

Back in the 1930s and 1940s, Austrian-born actress Hedy Lamarr graced the silver screen with her captivating performances and unparalleled beauty. She was the muse for iconic cartoon characters like Snow White and Catwoman, and her allure earned her the title of the "most beautiful woman in the world."



Once described as the most beautiful woman in the world. Hedy Lamarr in 1942.

Fast forward to today, and you might be surprised to learn that Lamarr is not just a Hollywood legend but a trailblazing inventor whose work laid the foundation for modern technologies like Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, GPS, and more.

The Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery recently acquired an Italian poster from Lamarr's World War II film, "Conspiratori" (The Conspirators), showcasing her timeless beauty. Yet, there's more to Lamarr than meets the eye. Beyond the smouldering performances and

glamorous image, Lamarr was a brilliant inventor with a knack for turning ideas into reality.

Her journey into invention began at the tender age of 5 when she dismantled and reassembled a music box. Later in life, Lamarr collaborated with the eccentric

composer George Antheil to create a ground-breaking technology during World War II. Their invention, known as "frequency hopping," aimed to secure torpedo guidance signals against enemy interference.

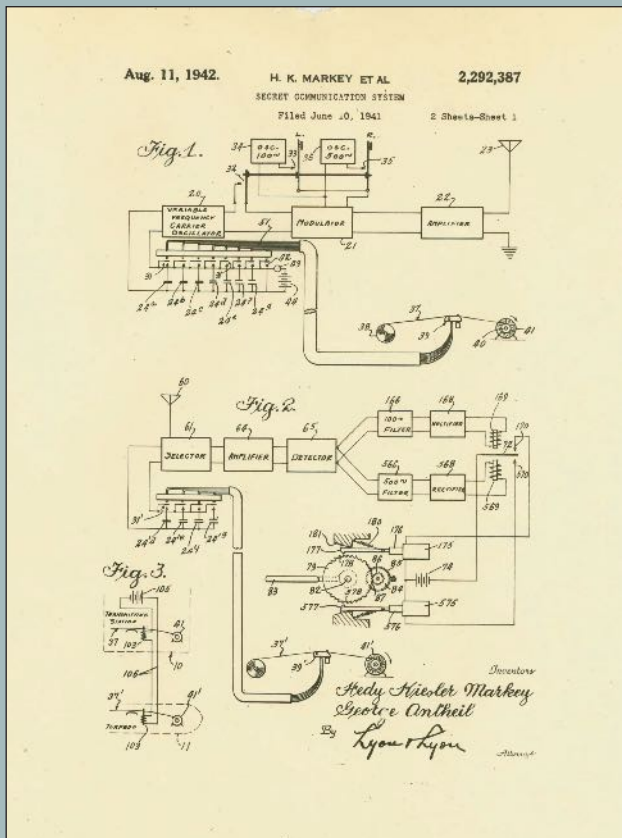
Despite their innovative approach, the U.S. Navy initially rejected their invention as too cumbersome. It wasn't until the 1950s, with the advent of lightweight transistors, that Lamarr's concept found its way into military applications. The "frequency hopping" system played a crucial role in the Cuban Missile Crisis, showcasing its effectiveness.

Lamarr, born into a Jewish family in Vienna, was driven by a desire to contribute to the Allied war effort, denying her ancestry to actively engage in the fight against the

Nazis. Beyond her inventive genius, she played a public role in selling war bonds and supporting servicemen, highlighting her commitment to the cause.

Despite her six marriages and Hollywood fame, few knew of Lamarr's intellectual prowess. While she never profited directly from her inventions, her "frequency hopping" concept, estimated to be worth \$30 billion, became a cornerstone of wireless communication systems today.

(continued...)



Page 2 of Hedy Lamarr's patent in the US Patent Office. She changed her surname to Markey on the patent to hide her identity.

In 1997, Lamarr received the Pioneer Award from the Electronic Frontier Foundation, acknowledging her significant contributions to technology. Joyce Bedi of the Smithsonian's Lemelson Centre notes that Lamarr's work paved the way for various applications of spread spectrum technology.



The illustration acquired by the National Portrait Gallery was used in a film poster to promote the film 'The Conspirator'. Her leading man in the right of the image is Paul Hedreid.

The National Portrait Gallery's new poster captures Lamarr's beauty and her connection to World War II. The image, based on a publicity photo, adds a touch of passion and sultriness, emphasising Lamarr's cinematic allure.

Beyond the glitz and glamour, Hedy Lamarr's legacy lives on in the everyday technologies we often take for granted. Her story is a testament to the unexpected intersections of beauty, talent, and brilliance in the unlikeliest of places.



The honorary grave of Hedy Lamarr at Vienna's Central Cemetery with an original memorial sculpture by artist Mario Heger.



"Please help bring my Daddy home"

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4th WAR LOAN
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TOLEDO 1, OHIO

THIS MONTH IN MILITARY HISTORY

Vitrified victory

Answering the call for war crockery

Not our usual MIMH this month, featuring a date in history. No, this time, we are talking ceramics – of a strictly wartime nature.

Every so often in Vanuatu people can still come across shards of broken crockery, perhaps stencilled as to where they were made and by whom.

Often the most noticeable thing is how solid even that shattered piece is, This was stuff made to last as long as possible. In fact, it's a fair bet some of it remains intact and perhaps still in use.



A US military services vitrified porcelain bowl – circa 1943 – part of the collection of Te Papa Tongarewa, National Museum of New Zealand.

There was of course nothing produced domestically, no industry that could turn out tens of thousands of cups, mugs, bowls, and plates for hundreds of thousands of men and women serving in the islands during the war years.

But rather than ship them from the United States at the expense of bullets or weapons in invaluable cargo space, why not tap a source much closer.

For example, in New Zealand, somewhere like the Amalgamated Brick and Pipe Company in the city of Auckland. As the name suggested, they knew very little about making crockery. But they'd been deemed an essential industry, and alerted to the need to produce bowls, plates, and mugs. (continued...)

As the New Zealand National Museum Te Papa relates: These had to be strong enough to withstand harsh treatment, particularly onboard ships where they were almost shovelled into huge dishwashers. To achieve this, 'Amalgamated' made them from vitrified porcelain, which is fired at a higher temperature than earthenware and is much more robust.



An ashtray manufactured by the Amalgamated Brick and Pipe Company Limited, between 1945 and 1960. National Museum of New Zealand.

'Amalgamated' had a very short timeframe to produce the thousands needed, but it gave the company the opportunity to get into mass-produced vitrified ware. Its factory wasn't set up for mass production and there were huge gaps in the company's technical knowledge. But in a very short time, they developed a vitrified clay body, set up enough hand-operated jiggers to make the tableware, and built more kiln space to fire them in. The resulting bowls and mugs were not particularly nice to look at, but they were made on time and to the Americans' specifications.

As the author of the Crown Lynn Collector's Handbook, Valerie Ringer Monk, relates, the mugs did not have handles – as the company had not learnt how to fashion them.

Out of the wartime output grew something almost as durable as the said crockery, and much more famous. A subsidiary under the name Crown Lynn began to make domestic crockery – no doubt less solid, but much more pleasing to the eye.

By the 1960s and 1970s, Crown Lynn was a national icon – with dinner sets in virtually every New Zealand home, and many Australian ones as well. While the company succumbed in the 1980s, Crown Lynn remains in use, and is highly collectable, although US Navy 1942 bowls are very hard to come by! If you do have an example at home, the Museum staff would love to see it.

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- SAY THE PILOTS

Nobody had time to name this Lockheed fighter plane when it was born. They just called it by a number, P-38.

Then the pilots sent it climbing over eight miles straight toward the stratosphere, up where even the highest-flying bombers couldn't go. They brought it screaming down out of the clouds like forked vengeance. They jammed down the throttle and it flew faster than any fighter ever flew before. They pressed the trigger-button and saw how *concentrated* fire-power from its cannon and machine guns could rip apart anything on wings--and there was only one name for it: *Lightning*.

So that's its name, a name it's earned from British and American pilots alike, a name to watch: Lockheed *Lightning*. Lockheed Aircraft Corporation... Vega Aircraft Corporation... Burbank, Calif.

**for protection today, and
 progress tomorrow. look to**

Lockheed

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Inspiring everyday heroes

Many people everywhere put a high priority on finding out what the weather is going to be like.

But in Vanuatu, that's even more important to know – in a country that's been sorely tested by devastating cyclones in the past few years, including just in the last couple of months.

One of those keeping an even closer watch is Moirah Matou, who became the Vanuatu met service's first female weather forecaster.

She has been with the department since 2006.

Her work and those of others has been highlighted recently in a Radio New Zealand Pacific news item.

She said when she first started, she was working with five other male weather forecasters. They were supportive, which helped her also raise a young family at the same time. That encouraged her to pursue her master's degree in science.

Matou told the network that when she was growing up, career paths for women with a science background were quite limited. She now wants to show young people that a background in science can take them interesting places, such the meteorology field.

Now she is the project manager for Van_KIRAP, which works in the area of readiness for climate change effects.

Matou told RNZ Pacific that when she started, Vanuatu never experienced cyclones of 4 or 5 strength, and extreme weather was becoming more common.

You can read more about her work at www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news



Moirah Matou – keeping watch for Vanuatu's sake. Photo RNZ Pacific.

Inspiring Everyday Heroes is our Museum brand and means how the stories of yesteryear and our project can inspire today's new generation.



South Pacific WWII Museum
Unity Park, Main Street,
Luganville, Espiritu Santo
Vanuatu

email: info@southpacificwwiimuseum.com
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