

# Papua New Guinea Frequently Asked Questions

## **World War**

### **Montevideo Maru Memorial Text?**

In July 2012 a new memorial was dedicated in the grounds of the **Australian War Memorial in Canberra**. Designed by noted Melbourne sculptor James Parrett, it commemorates those Australians who died in the defence of Rabaul, and those who later died as prisoners in the sinking of the Montevideo Maru. - I do not have any text on that meorial

-- <https://www.awm.gov.au/visit/visitor-information/sculpture-garden/rabaul-montevideo-mar-memorial>

The text reproduced below is located on the Montevideo Maru Memorial near the center of the POW Memorial complex at the Ballarat Cemetry in Victoria Australia states:

#### **Memorial to those who died on the *Montevideo Maru* 1st July 1942**

On the 23rd January 1942 Japanese forces invaded Rabaul, on the island of New Britain, and quickly defeated the small Australian Garrison - **Lark Force**.

About 160 of the Australian soldiers who surrendered were massacred in February at Tol Plantation.

On 22nd June 1942, the Japanese ordered 852 Australian Prisoners of War and 208 civilian internees to board the Japanese ship, Montevideo Maru, for transport to Japan. The ship bore no markings to indicate that it carried Prisoners of War.

The Prisoners of War included members of the 2/22nd Battalion. 1st Independent Company, Fortress Artillery, Engineers, Signal Units, No. 17 Anti/Tank Battery, Anti/Aircraft Battery, No. 19 Special Dental Unit; detachments from: New Guinea Volunteer Rifles, 2/10 Field Ambulance. Ordinance Corps, 8 Division Supply Column, Canteen Services HQ NG area, Royal Australian Airforce and the Royal Australian Navy. The 2/22 Battalion Bandsmen were all members of Salvation Army Bands.

On 1st July 1942 an American submarine, the **USS Sturgeon**, attacked and sank the Montevideo Maru unaware that more than 1000 Prisoners of War were locked in the holds. There were no survivors - No indication of the sinking, nor of the tragic loss of life, was given by the Japanese Government.

The sinking of the Montevideo Maru is the largest maritime disaster in Australian History.

Quoted from

<http://www.ballaratgenealogy.org.au/research/ex-prisoners-of-war-memorial>

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