HISTORY PROGRAM IN THE SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHICAL HISTORICAL AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Remembering the Bombing of Darwin

Making sense of war memories

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Notice 1

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Remembering the bombing of Darwin

How do veterans make sense of their war memories in a cultural milieu which offers a shifting, at times ambivalent, representation of their experiences? At the heart of this thesis is my analysis of the testimony of twelve Second World War veteran survivors of the first deadly bombing raid on Darwin in February 1942. This analysis adds to our knowledge of the way versions of the past are constructed. It shows the extent to which the present sculpts versions of the past and how the past is active in present lives.

My study of popular media, school textbooks, and public commemorative events, shows how, under the increasing influence of a dominant Anzac mythology, representations of the Darwin bombing shifted. Post-war indifference gave way to a gradual re-awakening of interest in the 1980s; negative perceptions were replaced with a positive account. This more positive conception of military history in general, and the Darwin story in particular, created a context that not only enabled veterans to finally share their Darwin war experiences but, to an extent, shaped the resultant narratives.

My research highlights the way the Darwin Defenders Group, acting as an 'agency of articulation', used an emerging 'Battle for Australia' trope to gain recognition for the Darwin veterans' narratives in the national Second World War story. The theory of 'composure' provides the main conceptual framework for my critical analysis of the veteran accounts. I found the veterans unconsciously structured a version of the past that they could live with, which made sense of their war experience; a version that reflected the myriad psychological and social influences operating at the time of its narration.

Key words: psychological 'composure', war remembrance, Darwin bombing, 'Battle for Australia', oral history.

Statement of Originality

I declare that this thesis contains no material which has previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university and to the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material that has previously been published or written by another person, except when due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Signed.....[redacted]

Date.....20 Feb 2013

Acknowledgements and explanations

This research was made possible by the veteran survivors of the Darwin bombing on 19 February 1942 who responded to my requests to share memories of this terrifying war experience. This analysis presents my interpretation of the veteran survivors' accounts. Variability and inconsistency in versions of the same event are not a cause for scepticism but indicators of the complexity of the forces shaping veteran testimony given seventy years after the event. It is the discrepancies between accounts that further our understanding of the memory process.

The author is indebted for the constant patient guidance from her supervisor Professor Alistair Thomson and associate supervisor, Associate Professor Ernest Koh. Their invaluable input has enabled this research to come to fruition.

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Note on punctuation, ellipses points used in interview quotations indicate missing words not pauses.
Double quotation marks are used to show direct speech and direct quotations. Single quotation marks are used where a term is recently coined or used in a specific way relating to this text for the first time.

INTRODUCTION

"We don't really talk about that one. It was a bit of a mess I believe, looting and running away and all."[1] So went Lloyd's response to my revelation that I was interviewing men who had survived the first and largest Japanese bombing raid on Darwin on 19 February 1942.

This study aims to understand how a group of elderly veteran survivors of the raid on Darwin that fateful day, have responded to the ambivalent and at times negative representations of their behaviour at that time.[2] It argues that the shifting nature of the Australian public narrative about, and representations of, the Second World War in general and of this event in particular, has had two major outcomes in relation to veteran testimony. Firstly, it predisposed these veteran survivors to come forward and share their experiences seventy years after the event. Secondly, it shaped the nature of their recollections. Analysis of their testimonies confirms that personal remembering cannot be dissociated from the effects of the public narratives prevailing at the time of its retelling.[3] This historiographical study maps and explains the development of Darwin bombing remembrance in the post war decades with reference to an overarching and dominant cultural template, the Anzac legend, which increasingly shaped the public narrative during this period.[4]

At the heart of this research is the analysis of the recollections of twelve veteran survivors of that terrible day. I analyse these testimonies using the paradigm of an active constructive memory model articulated through theories of the 'popular memory group'.[5] These veteran survivors make sense of this wartime experience by seeking psychological 'composure' between their personal experiences on the day of the bombing and the changing

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[1] Lloyd Thompson, comment to the author, September 2010.
[2] These testimonies were recorded by the author in Melbourne in late 2010 and early 2011.
[3] Graham Dawson, *Soldier Heroes: British Adventure, Empire and the Imagining of Masculinities,* Routledge, London, 1994, especially pp. 22-23.
[4] ANZAC refers to the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. Anzac is the form of the acronym used when referring to events, people and ideas emanating from or pertaining to mythology associated with the Gallipoli campaign in 1916.
[5] Especially as developed by Alistair Thomson in, *Anzac Memories: Living with the Legend,* Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1994, p. 8. Also in Richard Johnson et al. (eds), *Making Histories,* London, Hutchinson in association with the Centre for Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham, 1982, pp. 206-220.

representation of this event in popular media during the post-war decades.[6] A further aspect of this research has been an examination of the success the veterans have had, via their "agencies of articulation", and the fortuitous evolution of a 'new nationalism', in incorporating their own experiences of the bombing raid into the national Second World War narrative.[7] Popular media representations of this event have become part of the survivors' own narratives.

Oral history methodology, involving the critical interpretation of these veteran accounts, increases understandings of how, why, and to what extent, shifting public narratives, in conjunction with other factors, have worked to enable or hinder veteran composure.[8] Whilst acknowledging the epistemological dilemmas and complex issues surrounding the use of such oral testimony to write history, especially the inherent partiality of such sources, this thesis demonstrates how more fully understanding veteran remembering can unlock knowledge about the imbedded beliefs and mythologies that consciously and unconsciously sustain and re-form attitudes to, and depictions of, past military events, what Murphy describes as "societal self knowledge".[9]

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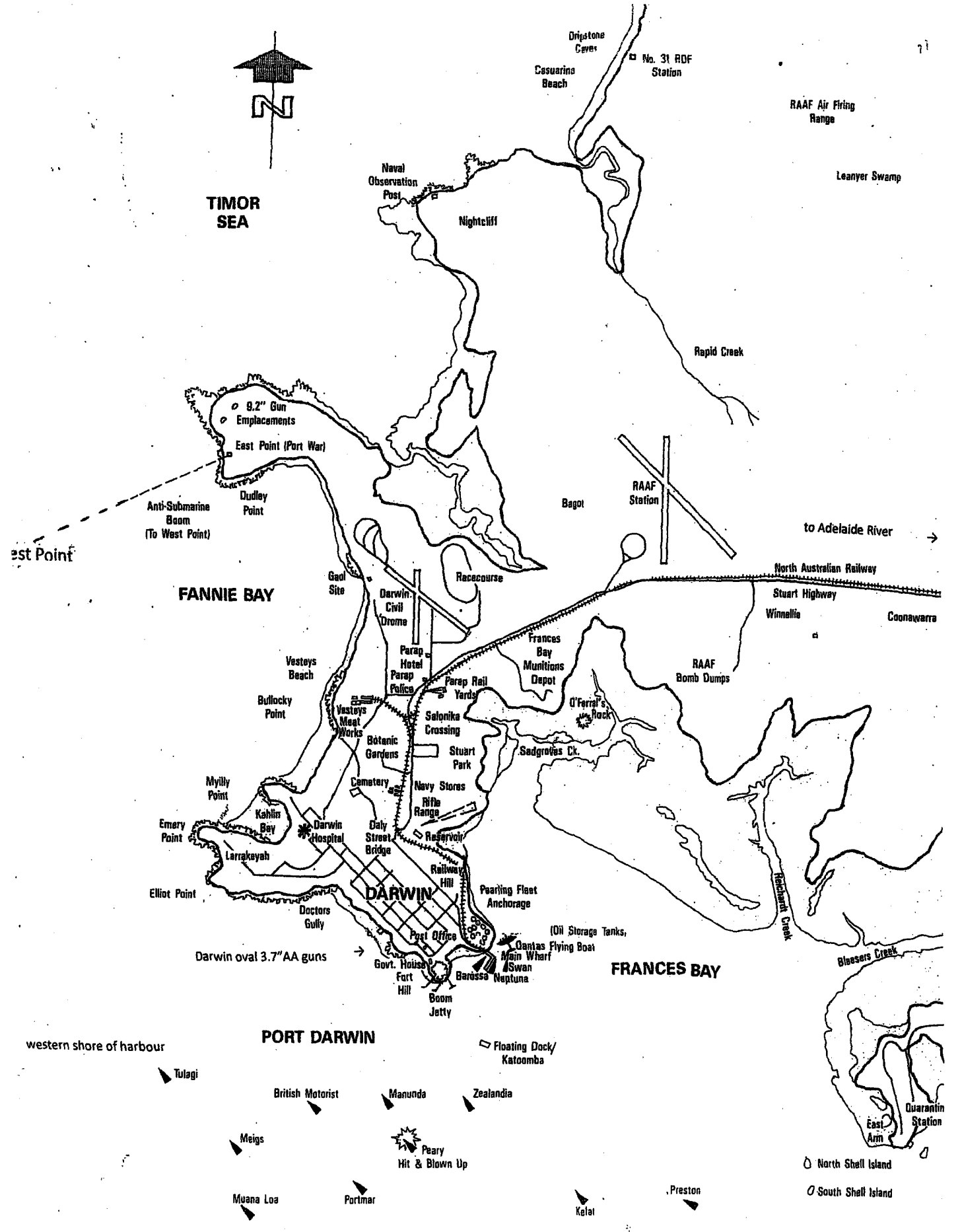
[6] Michael Roper, 'Re-remembering the Soldier Hero: the psychic and social construction of Memory in Personal Narratives of the Great War', *History Workshop Journal, 50, autumn*, 2000, pp. 183-184. Graham Dawson, *Soldier Heroes,* 1994, p. 25.

[7] Timothy Ashplant, Graham Dawson and Michael Roper, *The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration,* London, Routledge, 2000, p. 17.

[8] Thomson, *Anzac Memories: Living with the Legend,* pp. 8-10.

[9] John Murphy, 'The Voice of Memory: History, autobiography and oral memory', *Historical Studies,* (1986), 22:87. p. 175.



Scale: 1cm is approximately 0.6 Km

(1 inch equals 1 mile)

Darwin area showing locations alluded to in the text.

Based on map in Bob Alford, *Darwins Air War*, p.15.

CHAPTER I

THE RAID REMEMBERED

> "There are a lot of planes in the sky." A couple of us went out and looked up and said, "they're certainly not our planes, we haven't got that many!"
> And [then] we heard the bombs falling on the Harbour and on Darwin and we suddenly realised that it was a Japanese raid.[10]

> I heard a funny sort of noise, a roar, I looked up and saw white crosses in the sky but the first we knew they were Japanese was the firing of Ack Ack guns.[11]

> I looked up and there were all these planes, not just one or two but about twenty-seven, up very high, we wondered who they were.[12]

Thus Max Kenyon, Cyril Molyneux and Bill Foster describe the first inkling they had that the Second World War had reached Australian shores. At 9.58 am on Thursday 19 February 1942, just ten weeks after their attack on Pearl Harbor and four days after the fall of Singapore, more than 170 Japanese bombers and fighter planes arrived over Darwin. "A huge number of planes, in perfect 'V' formations flying with the sun behind them" destroyed the government buildings, the hospital, the commercial centre and a number of houses as well as wreaking terrible damage on the wharf area and harbour shipping.[13] "They went for the ships in the harbour, gave them a pounding."[14] "Then the zeros came, they strafed the camp, very low, they were over us, one [pilot] turned around ... he lent across and gave us a wave."[15] In interviews veterans consistently corroborated the fact that there was no warning siren before the planes arrived; "sirens started when the bombs hit the ground."[16] They also confirm that a second raid began just before midday when more than 50 bombers "in immaculate formation" concentrated an attack on the airport and RAAF base ... The bombs came out like rain."[17] By the time the all clear was sounded twenty minutes later, twenty-

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[10] Max Kenyon, interviewed by Valerie Bourke, Melbourne, 31 January 2011.
[11] Cyril Molyneux, interviewed by Valerie Bourke, Melbourne, 29 January 2011.
[12] Bill Foster, interviewed by Valerie Bourke, Melbourne, 31 January 2011.
[13] George Warr, interviewed by Valerie Bourke, Melbourne, 1 October 2010.
[14] Walter Kys, interviewed by Valerie Bourke, Melbourne, 18 October 2010.
[15] 'Zero' was the term the allies used for the Japanese Mitsubishi AGM Zero long range fighter aircraft in operation from 1940 to 1945.
[16] Bill Foster.
[17] Colin Horn, interviewed by Valerie Bourke, Melbourne, 23 September 2010.

two ships were damaged or sinking and burning oil on the harbour created a pall of black smoke. The official casualty rate was at least 243 killed and 350 injured.[18]

Veteran testimony about what happened in the aftermath of the raids is less consistent. Colin Horn, newly recruited to the RAAF, described what he recalls happened next: "When we saw half of Darwin going by and nobody was telling us what to do, that's when we decided to take what transport we had and get down to Adelaide River."[19] This unruly retreat south by dazed civilians and some service personnel, infamously dubbed the 'Adelaide River Stakes', later coloured press reports in the Southern capitals.[20] However, Max Kenyon, also stationed at the RAAF base, remembers taking part in no such evacuation south after the raid, instead he had "picked up the pieces and tried to resume our duties ... we had to stay ... We had a job to do ... [to] get things going again." Though Max does confirm that "a lot of blokes deserted ... it took a week to get everyone back again."[21]

Throughout the raids the anti-aircraft detachment on the oval fired at the planes whilst servicemen fought back with rifles and machine guns. Ships guns maintained a fierce barrage at sea.[22] Official and non-official records reveal examples of bravery and selflessness among the civilians and service personnel on the day, in particular those who commandeered small craft and fought through the fiery oil cauldron of the harbour to rescue hundreds of sailors from the burning sinking ships. As the *Neptuna,* her hold full of depth charges, burned alongside the wreckage of the wharf, veteran survivor Walter Kys (who had seen the *Peary* going down "by the stern and sailors jumping off"), gained the permission of his commanding officer to take "out a skiff and pick up half a dozen or so [injured] ... mostly Malays" who had jumped off the-about-to-explode ship.[23] Such courageous responses to the devastation and loss of life in the face of an anticipated invasion should have guaranteed the survivors a share

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[18] Bob Alford, *Darwin's Air War: 1942-1945. An Illustrated History.* Darwin, The Aviation Historical Society of the Northern Territory and Coleman's Printing, 1991, p. 17. The actual numbers may never be finalized. Whilst service personnel are accurately accounted for, merchant ships' manifests, especially of Asian crew members, were not accurate and/or not recovered.

[19] Colin Horn, interviewed by Valerie Bourke, Melbourne, 30 October 2010.

[20] *The Herald,* 6 October, 1945, p.1. (On the release to the public of the Lowe Commission report.)

[21] Max Kenyon, 31 Jan, 2011. Ellipsis points are used to indicate omission of words in quotations throughout.

[22] Douglas Lockwood, *Australia's Pearl harbour, Darwin 1942,* Melbourne, Cassell, 1966. pp. 86-87.

[23] Walter Kys, interviewed by Valerie Bourke, Melbourne, 1 October 2010. The USS Peary was a destroyer class warship.

in the legacy of gallantry and stoicism awarded to the heirs of Anzac and Kokoda.[24] Somehow, however, the tincture of cowardice, looting and retreat that tarnished accounts of the day, for decades after the war, made the Darwin survivors' bravery 'conditional', requiring a qualification.

In the days and weeks after the raid official reports released to the public were crafted, on the one hand, to give the enemy little cause for celebration, and, on the other hand, to stir the population to enlist their services to the war effort. The Australian public's first knowledge of the raids was furnished by newspaper reports the day after; these reports and subsequent newspaper articles published over the next month moderated both the raid's effects and its extent.[25] The release of the Lowe Commission of Inquiry Report in October 1945 was the next time the raid was given prominence in the press.[26] The media focussed attention on the sections of the report which gave a negative aura to the day. This adverse perception of the event was confirmed in 1955 by the 'day of shame' appellation dispensed by Sir Paul Hasluck, then the Federal Minister for Territories.[27] A 'best forgotten' attitude ensured knowledge of the raid was largely dropped from the prevailing public Second World War narrative for the next two decades.

The late 1980s saw a gradual revival of a public consciousness of this segment of our wartime history and by the mid 1990s a number of commemorations and a plethora of non-fiction accounts that included television documentaries and books brought the 'Darwin story' back into the public discourse about the Second World War. Throughout the first decade of the twenty-first century representation of the bombing in popular media increased, with heightened attention at the sixtieth, sixty fifth and seventieth anniversaries. The 2012 commemoration was featured in all television news broadcasts and capital city papers, while the Prime Minister declared 19 February a day of National Commemoration. Over the past seventy years the public narrative relating to this event had come full circle. No longer

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[24] Lockwood, *Australia's Pearl Harbour,* p. 61 and throughout, gives many first hand accounts of bravery witnessed.

[25] *Sydney Daily Mail*, Friday 20 February 1942, p. 1; *Brisbane Courier Mail*, 20 February 1942, p. 1; *The Argus*, 20 February 1942, p. 1.

[26] The *Herald,* Melbourne, 6th October 1945, p.1; The *Argus,* Melbourne, 6th October ,1945, p. 1; The *Sydney Morning Herald*, 6th October 1945, p.1. Similar headlines populated newspaper front pages across Australia.

[27] *The Canberra Times,* 26 March 1955, p. 2. Report of Paul Hasluck's speech opening new Legislative Council Chambers in Darwin under headline, "Darwin's Day of Shame"; *The Northern Territory News,* 29 March, 1955, P. 1.

'tucked away' from the public consciousness, the Darwin air raid has come to the centre of the national Second World War story.

Telling their story

The veterans who came forward to tell me their story of that horror-filled day were all self-selected, they had responded either to advertisements placed in the RSL magazine, *Mufti*, the *Notice Board* section of the Veteran Affairs Newsletter or the *Desperately Seeking* section of the *Herald Sun* Newspaper. Additionally, in August 2010, I addressed the Darwin Defenders Annual General Meeting at Bentleigh RSL (Returned and Services League) Club and three veterans, Theo Ferguson, John McKenzie and Norman Tulloh, contacted me after this appeal. Initially, not anticipating many respondents within my geographical reach, I interviewed the first veterans to contact me, Theo Ferguson and Colin Horn, twice, and George Warr three times. As many more veterans identified themselves to me, time considerations resulted in single interviews becoming the norm. As the various publications circulated throughout Australia, I received twenty five responses from veterans willing to share their memories of the day of the bombing.[28]

In statistical terms, these men form a skewed distribution, they cannot be said to be representative of all veteran survivors of the bombing raid. They are men who have coped with their war experiences and life in general; at the time of these interviews they were all living independently in their late eighties, most having out-lived their partners. They are survivors in the broadest sense.[29]

Although four of the veterans interviewed had known of each other, either during training or when posted to Darwin in the early 1940s, only two of them, George Warr and Theo Ferguson, had become reacquainted 50 years after the Second World War ended when they attended the Darwin Defenders formation meeting in 1995. Although Bill Foster and Cyril Molyneux had both served in the West Point artillery battery during the war, they had not

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[28] Geographically, it was impractical to interview all the veterans who responded to these published requests for witness accounts of the Japanese raid. Twenty-five veterans from regional Victoria and interstate who contacted me were sent a questionnaire to complete. Twenty-two did this. This data has not been used in this research.

[29] See appendix IV. *Biographical details table.*

been in contact since. Max Kenyon and Colin Horn had both been stationed at the RAAF base at Darwin during the raid, Max as a guard and Colin as ground crew but they had not known each other. These testimonies were made independently.

To investigate their remembering of the day, I conducted oral history interviews with 16 male veteran survivors of this first and most severe Japanese raid on Darwin.[30] For various reasons I did not use the testimony of four of the survivors interviewed.[31] The 12 men whose testimony was used were all in their late eighties or early nineties and had been deployed for military service in or near Darwin at the time of the raid.[32] These interviewees represented all three services; four were from the RAAF, two from the RAN and four from the Australian Army.[33] These pre-arranged discussions lasted about one hour and were all conducted, at the interviewee's choice, in their own homes, in three cases in the company of a family member or carer.[34] Each session was recorded and a timed synopsis and partial transcript was prepared. These interviews furnished the raw data for the analysis of remembering that forms the body of this research.

Official documentation was sent to the veterans prior to the pre-arranged interview sessions.[35] These papers arriving bearing the university letterhead set the context for the meetings, giving them a serious focus and me some legitimacy and authority as a researcher.

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[30] Of these sixteen interviews conducted between September 2010 and April 2011, fifteen were face to face and one was a phone interview. It became impractical to interview Kingsley Allen, RAAF, face to face so I conducted a phone interview for 30 minutes.

[31] Interview data not used comprised that of two veterans who were not at Darwin on the day of the raid and were interviewed in relation to the formation of *Darwin Defenders 1942-1945 Incorporated,* and that of one man who had become very muddled in his mind in the period between organizing and carrying out the interview and that of one man who had become very stressed as the interview progressed, this session was terminated. Data from twelve veteran's interviews were thus used.

[32] I have been unable to locate any female survivor veterans. Three factors mitigated against finding such survivors: women had to be a minimum age of twenty-five years before they were sent for active service during the war placing any survivors in their mid-nineties; the numbers of women in Darwin at the time of the raid were relatively small, and the complication of post-war marriage and subsequent name changes meant tracing survivors by name was extremely difficult.

[33] All four Army men were in the Coastal Artillery Unit and initially joined the Permanent Military Force but in 1942 were incorporated into the one force, the Australian Army.

[34] Bill Foster was accompanied by a carer, Gerry Griggs and Theo Ferguson (for his first interview only) by their daughters.

[35] Appropriate official documentation developed comprised: an *Explanatory Statement (*Appendix I*)*, a *Consent Form* (Appendix III) and an *Introductory letter* (Appendix II). The explanatory statement, reiterated the reasons for veteran participation, explained in more detail the nature and aims of the interview process and reassured the participants that they could withdraw their consent at various points during and after the interview.

Importantly the introductory letter outlined the areas to be explored during the interview though it did not detail any actual questions. To an extent, this information enabled veterans to prepare their narratives. At the beginning of each interview, I reiterated that a copy of a recording made of the interview would be sent to them and that eventually a copy would be archived at the Research Center of the Australian War Memorial. This underlined that their account would be 'on the record', adding an air of formality to the interview situation, broadening and formalizing the audience and necessarily influencing the veterans' responses, especially in the earlier stages of the interview. For instance, they were careful not to malign or blame, or accuse any individual fellow service personnel of poor behaviour, though some, especially RAAF veterans, denigrated 'officers' as a group. And a number made 'off the record' statements (when the computer was not recording) which did name leaders they felt were culpable on the day.

Juxtaposed with this formality was my demeanor. I was the age of their adult children and conversely, they were the age of my parents. This intergenerational gap made sharing information easy and natural for the veterans. My manner, in contrast to the official documentation that preceded me, was warm and friendly. I felt that this inclined the veterans to speak freely about the day despite the factors initially inclining to formality.

Structure of the interviews

The interviews followed a uniform format. I pursued the same areas of inquiry in the same order with each interviewee. This standardised structure imposed its own set of influences over what was likely to be recalled. I began each interview with a series of factual questions that I felt would put these elderly interviewees at ease. I asked them about their enlistment; the date, place and service as well as where they undertook their first training. This was followed by specific questions relating to their Darwin experience; the journey north, living conditions, their daily routine. A more open-ended question followed; "tell me what you can remember about that Thursday 19 February 1942." Most of the interviewees, perhaps primed by the Introductory Letter, were keen to give an exact, chronological list of events as they remembered them happening on the day of the raid. Little prompting was needed in this part of the interview. All those interviewed had their story of what had happened on the

day ready. Many had newspaper cuttings, books, diaries, maps and photos they had collected in the years since the raid, to which they referred to clarify points in their narrative. As explored below in chapter IV, they often had fixed particular narratives of that day in their minds.

If certain areas of interest were not addressed in the veterans' accounts, I followed up with specific questions. For example, referring to what had happened immediately after the two raids the interviewees were offered prompts such as, "What happened to your mates? Were you involved in any rescues? Did you see what happened to the civilians? Were you aware of the extent of damage to the RAAF base, to the town and to the ships in the harbor? Did you see/hear of looting and panic among the civilian, or service personnel?" This choice of interrogative style was guided by Alistair Thomson's work with First World War veterans, where he applied popular memory group theoretical considerations to his research. Following up a round of life-history interviews conducted four years earlier, Thomson, in his second tranche of questioning, made full use of the possibilities of interrogating personal remembering, encouraging veterans to take a more reflective approach.[36] Using a more dialogic approach in these follow up interviews, he gave his veterans less freedom to prioritize their own narrative as he probed the underlying influences shaping their stories.

Informed by these interrogative opportunities, the latter part of my interviews investigated the influence of the public representation of the raid on how it was remembered by the veterans. I questioned veterans directly about what they had known at the time about how the raid was represented in the newspapers down South: "When you went on leave had your families heard of the raid? Did they know its extent?" Questions tracked their knowledge of the public discourse relating to this event over the years since the war: "How have you felt this event has been treated in our history? Do you feel that the story of the Japanese raid has been tucked away in our history?" I often described the findings of my survey of school text-books and popular media, explaining how this revealed very little had been written about the event until the 1980s. Had they wondered at, or even noticed this lack of prominence given to this wartime event? Sensitive to this influence of the popular media, I

[36]Thomson, *Anzac Memories,* pp. 232-6.

probed about their exposure to television and film accounts of this event. This line of questioning revealed how I had brought my own set of shaping beliefs to the interview and had thus become an active agent in the process of creating the narrative responses. The analysis of veteran responses presented in chapter IV recognises this influence.

In order to investigate the strength of the various influences on the veterans' remembering, I designed the interview so that if the veteran did not raise the 'uncomfortable' issue of civilian and service personnel behaviour in the immediate aftermath of the second raid, I would exert a degree of authorial control and raise it. "Can you share with me what happened after the raid?" If needed I had a follow up question, "did you witness any looting, disorder, and unauthorized evacuations from the RAAF base?" I was aware that emotional discomfort could also manifest when what Thomson describes as 'fixed stories', narratives with which the men were comfortable or composed, were questioned and probed.[37] Asking about the part they had played in rescuing the injured or if they had seen any looting of the town stores were questions which required the veterans to explore areas that they did not often include in their proffered narratives.

Remembering war experience, especially of events that occurred under fire, can be discomforting, reviving unpleasant memories. So asking veterans to talk about their experiences under enemy fire entails risks and the documents preceding my arrival alerted the veterans to the possibility of emotional discomfort and the option of terminating the interview. Even though, as stated, these men had come forward of their own volition, all were to an extent still affected by painful memories of having actually seen, or having had described to them, the horrific results of the raid; the mutilated remains of civilians and the often burnt bodies of service personnel pulled from the fires on the harbor. The many issues raised when examining remembering 'under fire' are explored in chapter IV.

These oral history interviews are at the heart of this research. The testimony of these twelve veteran survivors who shared their often vivid, poignant stories of this once rarely spoken of,

[37] Thomson, *Anzac Memories*, p. 235.

violent wartime event, provided an opportunity to analyse the factors impacting on wartime remembering more generally.

Moreover, these interviews provide more than the veterans' stories; they also give us the outcome of the interaction between the researcher and the veteran. The narratives examined below are always to an extent a joint production. Despite procedures to lessen the formality of the research situation, the perceived audience of posterity can work to limit frankness and produce socially acceptable testimony. The interview structure described here was designed to reveal ways in which external cultural factors, such as the developing social mythologies and changing understandings about our military past, have subtly shaped these individual survivor narratives. However analysis of these narratives reveals a plethora of factors, both social and psychological, working on the remembering process.

The following chapter provides the research context for investigating such war memories.

CHAPTER II

APPROACHES TO ANALYSING WAR MEMORIES

To further understand the efficacy of theories about the relative importance of various influences operating on memory processes in general, and the remembering of wartime events in particular, it is important to place this study within a wider research context. Researchers have developed a model of memory that enables a better understanding of veteran remembering and re-remembering. However such a model illuminates the debates that the use of oral testimony as evidence generate.

Paul Thompson traces this rise and fall over the centuries of faith in the use of eye-witness accounts as a reliable raw material for history.[38] Personal testimony had been a traditional and trusted source of knowledge about the past; however, in the nineteenth century personal testimony was superseded by archival documents as the preferred primary source of historical knowledge. The invention of the tape recorder, together with a growth in the demand for a more democratic approach to history, saw a resurgence of the status and use of oral history evidence in the 1960s and 1970s. However, debates developed around the validity of using personal remembering in the constructing of history. Eric Hobsbawm's much quoted dismissal that, "most oral history today is personal memory which is a slippery medium for preserving facts", encapsulates the concerns of many historians about the subjective nature of individual memory as an historical resource.[39]

Since the 1970s research into the way memories are constructed has emphasised that memory is not a vehicle that gives us accurate details of a sequence of discrete events. Recognising this, oral historian Penny Summerfield has given an excellent explanation of why memory does not "constitute pure recall".[40] Oral historians now understand that the purpose of memory is to give us a pragmatic creative way to generalise, prioritise, and select

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[38]Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History,* Oxford, Oxford University Press, 3rd edition, 2000, pp. 25-81.

[39]Eric Hobsbawm, *On History,* London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1997, p. 206; Patrick O'Farrell, Oral history: facts and fiction, *Oral History Association of Australia Journal,* 1982-83, no.5, pp. 3-9; Penny Summerfield expresses concern that Hobsbawm is used as an exemplar against oral history approaches as he has "an otherwise innovatory approach to historical sources" in Summerfield, "Culture and Composure: Creating Narratives of the Gendered Self in Oral History Interviews", *Cultural and Social History,* Vol I Issue I, 2004; p. 61 (footnote).

[40]Summerfield, *Culture and Composure,* p. 66.

so that we can digest and make sense of the continuous stream of experiences and respond appropriately. In fact since the 1970s a number of historians including Michael Frisch, Alessandro Portelli, Trevor Lummis, Donald Richie and Valerie Yow, have written extensively of the need for oral historians to make awareness of the partiality and incompleteness of testimony the focus of their interpretative work.[41] Examining the influences operating on the 'act of remembering itself' helps us to make sense of the product of that act. In the case of the Darwin veterans, such an examination reveals as much about post Second World War attitudes to war remembrance as it does about the actual day of the bombing raid.

A constructive, creative model of memory

An understanding of remembering as a constructive and subjective process is integral to this research. Such a model of memory enables an understanding of the complex interaction between individual memories of wartime experience and the prevailing public narrative about the event. This interactive, responsive model of how memory works enables explanation of the influence of the myriad of external and internal factors acting on remembering. There is a rich body of research exploring the malleable and partial nature of memory and expounding the consequences of this for oral historians.[42] Neuro-biologists Daniel Schacter and historian Geoffrey Cubitt have reviewed the literature about how memory works.[43] Memory is shown to be not a mere process of registration but an active process of creation, of encoding and storage and subsequently strategic retrieval. Or as Alessandro Portelli succinctly summarised, "memory is not a passive depository of facts, but an active process of creation of meanings".[44] At each stage along the process of remembering social-cultural and psychological influences, both wilful and unconscious, cause

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[41] Michael Frisch, *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990; Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History*, Albany, State University of New York Press, 1991; Trevor Lummis, *Listening to History: The Authenticity of Oral Evidence*, London: Hutchinson,1987; Douglas Ritchie, *Doing Oral History: A practical Guide*, 2nd edition, New York, Oxford University Press, 2003; Valerie Yow, *Recording Oral History: A Guide for Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2nd edition, California, Altamira Press, 2005.

[42] Valerie Yow gives a comprehensive description of recent memory research in *Recording Oral History*, pp. 35-67.

[43] Geoffrey Cubitt, *History and Memory*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2007, pp. 66-90; Daniel Schacter (ed.), *Memory Distortion: How Minds, Brains and Societies Reconstruct the Past*, Cambridge (Mass.), Harvard University Press, 1955.

[44] Alessandro Portelli, "What Makes Oral History Different?", in *The Death of Luigi Trastulli*, p.52.

a reworking of memories.[45] In this interactive model of the cognitive system, incoming information is actively organised to fit into pre-existing concept hierarchies or conceptual scaffolding. Later retrieval or recovery of information is also subject to the operation of numerous factors that modify the original input. We unconsciously rework memories so they will conform to these existing conceptual hierarchies or schemas.[46] This is because the physiology of the cortex actually ensures changes to data as new neural pathways are created and incorporated into the established neural structures.[47] These explanations of the mechanisms involved in remembering highlight the malleability of memory. They give us insight into the multiplicity of influences that operate to shape our recollections. These understandings, in turn, pose questions about what is involved when a public event is remembered as a private experience.

Assessing the relative influence of dominant public narratives on this individual remembering has exercised the minds of historians for decades, though, within the literature, no scholarly consensus exists regarding the most appropriate terminology. The vocabulary used tends to reflect the ideological emphasis of the researcher. As early as 1925 Maurice Halbwachs challenged the notion of a stand alone individual memory that operates in isolation from its external social setting. His seminal 1925 work, *On Collective Memory* gave the term 'collective memory' currency.[48] The model of memory he developed stresses the importance of social factors in deliberately shaping individual recollection.[49] Barry Schwartz also speaks of 'collective memory' when he uses a more nuanced model in his study of shifting 'collective memory'. He explains that some events are "invested with extraordinary significance and assigned a qualitatively distinct place in our conception of the past".[50] Ronald Grele also emphasises these overarching belief systems that can structure the ways individuals perceive

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[45] Cubitt, *History and Memory,* pp. 81-82.
[46] Cubitt, *History and Memory,* p. 62.
[47] Ibid. p. 81.
[48] Maurice Halbwachs, 1925, *On Collective Memory,* (trans. and ed. Lewis Coser), Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1992, especially the introduction, "The Social Frameworks of Memory."
[49] See an exposition of Halbwachs in Hamilton, Paula, "The Knife Edge Debates" in *Memory and History in twentieth-century Australia,* Darian-Smith and Hamilton Paula. (eds), Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1994, p. 19.
[50] Barry Schwartz, "The Social Context of Commemoration: A study in Collective Memory", *Social Forces*, Dec., 1983, Vol.61 (2), p. 374.

their world.[51] These concepts are very relevant to this thesis which hypothesises about the influence of Anzac mythology on veteran remembering.

So too, Paul Connerton's model of memory employs the terms social and collective memory interchangeably in a theory that features a 'grand master narrative' able to set a template, or pre-existing cultural form, that can organise lower-order remembering.[52] Terence Ranger and Eric Hobsbawm's 1983 work introduced the term, 'invented traditions', to represent national versions of the past. These manufactured mythologies are available to be used for the political purpose of instilling social cohesion via common national memories, especially of wartime experiences.[53] Michael Roper writes in terms of 'public narratives' and 'cultural scripts' when explaining factors at work in the interaction between private wartime memories and public narratives.[54] Graham Dawson and other historians using the 'popular memory' approach, employ terms such as 'public narratives', 'dominant historical discourses' or 'dominant memory' to encompass those 'shared images' or stereotypes that are widely held and featured in popular culture.[55] Novels, textbooks, films and television and, increasingly, official commemorations are used to develop, reinforce and broadcast these 'public narratives'.[56] Whatever terminology is employed, these overriding narratives are themselves subject to modification.

Competing voices and shifting narratives

Over time, what might be termed the dominant or prevailing version of events, the collective memory, changes. Timothy Ashplant explains how such change occurs as the dominant

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[51] Ronald Grele, *Envelopes of Sound: the Art of Oral History,* ed. 2nd revised edition, Chicago, Precedent, 1985, p. 139. As early as the 1970s Grele drew attention to the influence that these national identities and ideologies have on individual remembering.

[52] Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1981, p. 1. This point is reiterated by Ashplant, Dawson and Roper, *The Politics of War Memory,* pp. 34-36.writing in 2000, speculate that 'pre-memories' or 'templates', that is existing cultural narratives or myths, can become 'frames' through which later conflicts are understood. Geoffrey Cubitt, *History and Memory*, p. 81, equates these templates with schema that determine to a large degree the way incoming new material will be encoded.

[53] Eric Hobsbawm and Terrence Ranger, (eds) *The Invention of Tradition,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993.

[54] Michael Roper, "Re-remembering the Soldier Hero: the psychic and social construction of Memory in Personal Narratives of the Great War", *History Workshop Journal, 2000, Issue 50,* p. 183.

[55] Graham Dawson, *Soldier Heroes,* pp. 22-23.

[56] Richard Johnson and historians of the Popular Memory Group, *Making Histories,* Minneapolis, University of Minnesota, 1982, p. 211; also detailed in Ashplant, Dawson and Roper, *The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration,* p. 13.

narrative is challenged by groups who wage struggles to gain recognition for their members' version of the past.[57] These rival voices may be those whose version of events is not currently accommodated within the prevailing national narrative. Jay Winter's research confirms that the dominant story is always under contestation as many competing groups strive to have their version of events incorporated into the national story. As Winter writes, at certain times some will "be closer to the microphone" and be heard more clearly than others.[58] He cites the attempts after the Second World War to understate the role of the Communists in the Resistance Movements in Western Europe as an example of competing voices, each with their own version of the past, contesting a place in the national wartime narrative.[59] Kevin Blackburn and Karl Hack found that the resistance role played by the Malaysian People's Anti Japanese Army (MPAJA) was similarly de-emphasized in the decades after the Second World War when an anti communist government was shaping the newly independent country's national story.[60] The ending of the 'Cold War' provided a changed context in which the role of the MPAJA could now be acknowledged, its voice heard. My research provides a potent example, in the Australian context, of such competition to secure a place in a shifting national war story during the two decades preceding 2012.

These groups challenging the dominant public versions of the past, these 'agencies of articulation', may be familial groups, veteran reunion groups or official support groups that will confirm the veteran's version of the past.[61] Jay Winter has called these "fictive kinship" groups, small groups sharing "cognate experiences".[62] Alistair Thomson, using the 'popular memory' approach, refers to "particular" as distinct from "general publics" to designate such empathetic groups.[63] These groups can act as a safe-house or supportive interface for an individual private memory on its journey to becoming part of the prevailing public narrative. The formation of Darwin Defenders groups in the mid 1990s provided a 'fictive kinship' group

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[57] Ashplant, Dawson and Roper, *The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration*, p. 16.
[58] Jay Winter and Emmanuel Silvan, *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press,1999, P, 30.
[59] Ibid., p. 30.
[60] Kevin Blackburn and Karl Hack, *War Memory and the Making of Modern Malaysia and Singapore*, Singapore, National University of Singapore Press, 2012, p.8-9, p. 340.
[61] Ashplant, Dawson and Roper, *The politics of War Memory and Commemoration*, p. 16.
[62] Winter, "Forms of Kinship" in Jay Winter and Silvan, E, *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century*,. p 40; also Ashplant et al., p. 29.
[63] Alistair Thomson, "Anzac Memories: putting popular memory theory into practice in Australia", in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (eds), *The Oral History Reader*, 2nd.edition, New York, Routledge, 2008, p. 245.

or substitute kinship group, for many Victorian soldier survivors of the Darwin bombing. These bombing survivors, hitherto without a 'comfortable' home for memories of their wartime experiences, now had a 'particular public' with whom to share their version of the event, to act as 'an agent of articulation'.

Despite the lack of consistency in the terminology used to define the prevailing public narrative, the terms most useful to this researcher emphasise the changing nature of the dominant discourse and its interconnectedness with private remembering. In their comprehensive critique of the whole field of wartime remembering, Timothy Ashplant, Graham Dawson and Michael Roper talk of memories "fitting into" and simultaneously creating a national, consensual "grand narrative". They use the terms "national narratives", "public memory" and "common memories" interchangeably. These writers define public memory as "those representations of the past that achieve centrality within the public domain".[64] This terminology is very useful as it draws attention to the fact that it is the representation of this dominant narrative that is important in influencing the partial and malleable remembering processes.

Ashplant, Dawson and Roper give a nuanced evaluation of the cultural and social factors and processes involved in understanding personal wartime remembering including the political aspects of public memory and commemoration.[65] They have designated as "unhelpful" research models that sponsor a single dominant-causal-factor. They see as "under-conceptualised", the "state-centred" invention of traditions perspective of Hobsbawm and the "social agency" style developed by Jay Winter.[66] Both these latter works ascribe too little recognition to the diversity of factors operating on individual remembering, and downplay the subjective internal elements at work in remembering. In Hobsbawm's case the deterministic power of the state is overstated and in Winter's 'humanistic' model, whilst emotional needs are recognised, they are portrayed as having an attenuated role limited to

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[64] Ashplant, Dawson and Roper, *The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration*, p. 34-36.
[65] ibid., pp. 3-85.
[66] ibid., p.10. Also Hobsbawm emphasises the power of the "official orchestration" of war remembrance, "collective memory is a socially engineered property of the state" in Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, p. 10; Jay Winter , *War and Remembrance*, p. 40-42, on the other hand focusses on the power over what is remembered by small scale groups, (families, veteran reunion groups, community clubs) taking 'locally rooted' social action as apposed to Hobsbawm's state manipulation of collective and hence individual remembering.

the bereavement process itself.[67] Whilst acknowledging the usefulness of these approaches that sponsor the primacy of social factors on war remembering, it is research that has investigated the interaction between the public representations of war events and individual psychological responses that proves most useful when making sense of veteran memories.

The 'composure' paradigm

To understand this complex interaction many oral historians have focussed on the way individuals strive, often unconsciously, to create a narrative of the past that makes sense of their personal experience, a version with which they are comfortable. Such a paradigm for understanding the complexity of the interactions between wider cultural influences (including official agencies of the state), and internal psychological factors operating to produce wartime narratives, can be found in the work of the popular memory group.[68] Writing in the 1980s, this collective of English social historians sought a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between individual memory (especially as revealed in oral history testimony), and the dominant cultural script in all its forms of popular representation.[69] The 'life-story' approach of this popular memory group inspired research among oral historians anxious to use the analysis of personal testimony to explore the complicated relationship between private remembering and the wider public narrative. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s Paula Hamilton notes there was "feverish" publication involving the use of personal narratives of wartime experience.[70]

The most potent expression of this aspect of the 'popular memory' paradigm is the concept of "composure". Graham Dawson explains the double meaning of this term: on the one level we fashion a narrative based on a combination of our past experiences, our current cultural contexts and present expectations. We compose a story. On another level this account will

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[67] Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, p. 263; Jay Winter, *War and Remembrance*, p. 10; Graham Dawson, *Soldier Heroes*, pp. 22-23; Richard Johnson and historians of the popular memory group, *Making Histories*, pp. 211-215, give a detailed critique of models of history interpreted as a political process.

[68] Richard Johnson et al. (eds), *Making Histories*, pp. 206-220. Motivated by a desire for a wider interpretation of what constitutes legitimate history, these researchers sought to reform previous oral history practice as well as to question existing professional academic histories.

[69] Ibid., p. 210.

[70] Paula Hamilton, "Knife Edge Debates" in *Memory and History in Twentieth-Century Australia*, Darian-Smith and Paula Hamilton, (eds) Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1994, p. 16.

be fashioned subconsciously to comply with our existing identity. The story will thus give us "relative psychic comfort".[71] This concept of composure is especially useful when making sense of wartime memories.

For example, Penny Summerfield uses the contrasting responses of male and female members of the Home Guard during the Second World War to illustrate the relationship between public narrative and the composure of memories. The men's experiences conformed to an acceptable available public discourse which enabled the comfortable development of their wartime narratives. However the women, whose service with the Home Guard was not widely known, had no such cultural framework in which to place their stories. Their memories of this time were restricted because of an un-affirming public discourse; they had difficulty finding the concepts with which to compose their memories. As a consequence female former Home Guard members, when referring to this time of their lives, were hesitant, halting and brief.[72]

This inability of some ex-service personnel to find a comfortable 'fit' between their personal war memories and the dominant public narrative has engaged a number of Australian researchers. In his group biography, *Anzac Memories: Living with the Legend*, Alistair Thomson analysed a series of interviews with First World War veterans. He explored the effects of the changing impact of the growing dominance of a particular version of the past on the way these veterans recalled their wartime experiences. Some of his interviewees felt marginalized, even excluded, when they attempted to reconcile their experiences with this prevailing collective Anzac master narrative. They were unable to gain 'composure'.[73]

Much of the Australian work on 'composure' has related to Second World War prisoners of war (POWs). Paula Hamilton investigated the memories of POWs who endured the South East Asian camps. For decades after the war these men and women did not speak or write about their experiences. A cultural change occurred in the 1980s with a gradual increase in the publication of personal accounts of POW experience entering popular culture.[74] Popular

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[71] Graham Dawson, *Soldier heroes*, pp. 22-23.
[72] Summerfield, Culture and Composure, pp. 92-93 and p. 71.
[73] Thomson, *Anzac Memories*, pp. 10-12.
[74] Patsy Adam-Smith, *Prisoners of War, From Gallipoli to Korea*, Viking 1999; Edward Weiss, *Under the Rising Sun, captivity and survival 1941-1945*. Pennsylvania, 1995; Joan Beaumont, *Gull Force, Survival and leadership in*

histories such as Edward Weiss's *Under the Rising Sun* and Joan Beaumont's *Gull Force* are redolent with the voice of the 'camp' survivors.[75] Writing in 1994, Hamilton contends that before these popular accounts gave a public voice to their war experience these men could not find composure. She argues "POW status had [hitherto] robbed these men of the chance to see themselves as real soldiers because they had not distinguished themselves in battle", they were thus unable to access the self affirmation granted by the Anzac mantle and so denied psychological comfort.[76]

Hank Nelson' detailed analysis of POW experiences during the post-war decades refines Hamilton's work.[77] His research shows the power of popular fiction in shaping national mythology, and the fate of those marginalised by such mythology. He distinguishes between the publicity given to two groups of POWs. One group, those imprisoned in Changi and on the Burma-Thailand railway, were able to gain a foothold in the national wartime narrative via the publication in the 1950s of such popular fiction as Nevil Shute's *A Town Like Alice* 1950, Pierre Boulle's *The Bridge on the River Kwai* 1952 and Betty Jeffrey's *White Coolies* 1954; (all were made into popular movies).[78] However, a second group of veterans, who experienced the horrors of Borneo and Ambon, for decades did not have their stories documented. Their experiences failed to nourish and shape the national mythology.[79] Their story was not widely known, nor immediately recalled at commemorative occasions. Their experiences, unlike those of the soldiers at Gallipoli, El Alamein, Kokoda and Changi had, have not become part of a common story shared by all Australians.[80] In the 1980s Hank Nelson and Tim Bowden made a series of radio programmes which for the first time bought

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captivity 1941-1945, Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1988; Courtney Harrison, *Ambon, Island of mist: 2/21st Battalion AIF (Gull Force) prisoners of war 1941-45.* North Geelong, 1988; Ailsa Rolley, *Survival on Ambon*, Beaudesert QL, 1994.

[75] A fuller discussion of this upsurge in public interest in personal recollections of war experience during the 1980s and 1990s is given in chapter III. The proliferation of POW stories is indicative of this heightened public interest.

[76] Hamilton, The Knife Edge Debates, p. 21.

[77] Hank Nelson, *Prisoners of war: Australians under Nippon*, ABC radio series, 1985. (ABC Enterprises, 1990).

[78] Pierre Boulle, *The Bridge on the River Kwai*, New York, Bantam Books, 1954; Nevil Shute, *A Town Like Alice*, Melbourne, Heinemann, 1950; Betty Jeffrey, *White Coolies*, Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1954.

[79] Rosalind Hearder in "Memory, methodology and myth: some of the challengers of writing Australian prisoner of war history", *Journal of the Australian War Memorial*, No 40, Feb. 2007, writes of the imbalance in the attention given to Changi POWs and speculates on the reasons for this.

[80] Hank Nelson, "Written and Spoken Lives and History", in Ian Donaldson, Peter Reid and James Walter(eds), *Shaping Lives: Reflections on Biography*, Humanities, Research Centre, ANU, Canberra,1992,p. 136

the experiences of these other POWs to public attention.[81] Bowden comments "there was a strong confessional element in these men's telling of their experiences as they related that they had not spoken of these experiences before".[82] Prior to the making of these recordings these South East Asian POWs had not experienced a sympathetic public discourse that could affirm their soldierly image. The reaction to the programme by many POWs was that this was the first time they had felt they could reveal long suppressed memories.[83] They now had a sympathetic public narrative they could tap into and to which their story could contribute. In Dawson's terms they could now achieve psychic 'composure'.

Beyond composure

Michael Roper argues that this 'popular memory' approach to making sense of veteran remembering, despite its inclusion of psychological factors associated with the narrator's need to find 'composure', does not give sufficient weight to other unconscious forces that structure what is remembered. He investigated the inconsistencies between the accounts of the same incident given at three different times in a veteran's post war life. Roper argues that using this analysis enables a more insightful understanding of the psychological processes involved in memory construction than that yielded by an oral history interview conducted at a single point in time. Acknowledging the influence an "overlay" of social norms and cultural representations has on the soldiers' narratives, Roper draws our attention to other unconscious "underlays" that act on memory.[84] This "psychic underlay" involves factors emanating from the actual war experience itself.[85] Factors such as trauma associated with what was (for the men interviewed for this research) their first experience of enemy fire; the fear of imminent death or capture by an overwhelming invading force; the sight of the casualties both civil and service; feelings of being let down and poor leadership. As I detail in chapter IV, Max Kenyon's interviews, one in 1992 and the other in 2011, show an evolving recollection of the day[86]. Max includes a description of extricating the bodies of dead mates from a trench in his later version. This recent inclusion reveals the possible

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[81] Nelson, *Prisoners of war: Australians under Nippon.*
[82] Tim Bowden, *Australians under Nippon,* ABC Radio documentary, 2007.
[83] Bowden, *Australians under Nippon.*
[84] Michael Roper, "Re-remembering the Soldier Hero", p. 184.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Max Kenyon, interviewed by an ABC reporter (identity not known) in Darwin February 1992 and interviewed by Valerie Bourke, Melbourne, 31 January 2011. Text detailed in chapter IV.

influence of stress control mechanisms Max has employed during the post-war decades to keep a "psychological distance" between himself and painful recollections. It is the way Max has "imposed control" on these painful memories.[87]

This 'psychic underlay' also involves influences arising from the interview situation itself. The narrator's imaginings of what the audience expects, what Donald Spence calls the influence of the "contexts of its retelling" on the story, determines to an extent what is remembered.[88] These shaping effects are germane to the interview situations investigated in chapter IV. Possibly influenced by the formal letterhead and the 'weight' of recording for posterity, Max overcomes his aversion to remembering the awfulness of the trench episode and adds it to his account.[89] Additions to Max's testimony illustrate the complex interaction of factors affecting narrative creation. Together with this life-cycle consideration, as examined in chapter III, by 2011 Max was the beneficiary of a sympathetic and understanding public view of stress disorders in veterans.[90] In this more empathetic environment Max is enabled to construct a narrative that articulates a painful and perhaps supressed memory.

Composure theory offers a conceptual framework with which to analyse the confusing array of factors shaping such remembering. Roper's analysis alerts us to the nuances involved when speculating about the psychological factors, some integral to the interview itself, effecting veteran narratives.

In summary, there is a wide field of research examining the multiplicity of influences acting on veteran remembering. Memory itself has become both the subject of study as well as the resource for the making of history. Despite ambiguities of terminology, researchers have developed a number of useful models for interpreting the interconnectedness between private memory and prevailing public narratives. This body of research informs the current investigation of veteran remembering about the bombing raid on Darwin. After decades of omission from the nation's wartime narrative the story of the bombing has finally emerged

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[87] Mark Roseman, "Surviving Memory: Truth and inaccuracy in Holocaust testimony", in Perks & Thomson (eds), *The Oral History Reader*, p. 236.
[88] Donald Spence in Michael Roper, "Re-remembering the Soldier Hero", p. 184.
[89] Max Kenyon, interviewed by an ABC reporter (identity not known) in Darwin February 1992 and interviewed by Valerie Bourke, Melbourne, 31 January 2011.
[90] This changing attitude is elaborated in chapter III.

from the province of private memory to become part of the larger national military story and larger national 'grand narrative'. The following chapter examines the shifting nature of Australia's grand narratives and demonstrates how these changes have influenced veteran remembering.

Chapter III

THE DARWIN BOMBING AND SHIFTING WAR NARRATIVES

This chapter explores the ways in which national narratives about the Second World War in general, and the 1942 bombing of Darwin in particular, changed in the post-war decades. Examination of the major forms of cultural transmission during this period makes explicit how these popular representations both reflected and initiated changes in public awareness of and interest in wartime narratives.[91] Each cultural form (text books, popular non-fiction works, film and television), followed a similar cycle of representation: indifference, unconcern and apathy in the post war period, followed by a reawakening of interest during the end-of-millennium decades. I have designated this initial loss of knowledge of this event from the public's perception, followed by an arc of steady upsurge in public consciousness and cultural representation in the 1980s and 1990s, then the almost over-abundance of attention in the first decade of the 21st century, as the 'J curve' of media representation. Deliberate official orchestration has combined with growing curiosity about individual veterans' war experiences to produce a general remilitarization of Australia's national narrative. Darwin bombing remembrance has been incorporated into this process.

Contemporaneous reports

The first public announcement of the raid came early in the afternoon of the nineteenth of February. From his hospital bed, Prime Minister Curtin reported to the nation "that a number of bombs were dropped on Darwin this morning."[92] No further details were supplied. As cable communication south was restored, fragments of information about this first attack on Australian soil found their way into the major southern papers the next day. "DARWIN BOMBED HEAVILY IN A TWO DAY RAID: 93 Enemy Planes In First Swoop: 4 Brought Down", trumpeted both the *Courier Mail* and its sister-paper the *Argus*. "DARWIN BOMBED BY JAPANESE PLANES: Face It, Curtin Tells Australians", remonstrated the *Sydney Daily Mail*.[93] In the small print Curtin is quoted as saying, 'Australian forces and civilians conducted

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[91] Cubitt, *History and Memory*, p. 215.
[92] *The Argus*, 20 February 1942, p. 1.
[93] *Sydney Daily Mail*, Friday 20 February 1942, p. 1; *Brisbane Courier Mail*, 20 February 1942, p. 1.

themselves with gallantry, Darwin has been bombed but not conquered'. The death toll was under reported. Only seventeen of the at least two hundred and fifty deaths were reported.

On 20 February, numerous other tragic events were competing for the public's attention. Such headlines as, "JAPANESE SUMATRA DRIVE ALONG COAST TO STRIKE JAVA", "DRASTIC POWERS TO MOBILISE ALL NATIONAL RESOURCES", "RANGOON DANGER NOW IN BURMA THRUST" and "AUSTRALIANS IN BOMBED CONVOY" jostled for space on the front page.[94] Coming as it did in the week that the supposedly unassailable Singapore, bulwark of the empire, was overrun, and the same day that the Bali airport fell to the Japanese, it is not surprising that the Darwin news was soon swamped by even more alarming events. The diminishment of the reported size and effects of the raid is evident in media accounts in the days after the bombing. By 23 February the *Sydney Morning Herald* had only a half column report tucked away on page four featuring a rather clinical eye-witness account by a Qantas flying boat captain. This report contained little mention of damage and no mention of casualties. The *Courier Mail's* estimation of the number of planes was only half the actual number of Japanese planes involved and there is no mention of casualties. Similarly the report on page three of *The Argus* on 12th March titled "HOSPITAL SHIP BOMBED" avoided any elaboration on damage to the town or casualties.[95] A *Movietone* newsreel shown in June 1942, that exposed the bombed town to movie audiences, side-stepped any mention of casualties and instead asked, "now who will doubt that war has come to Australia?"[96]

The newsreel's rhetorical question illustrates the Janus-like nature of the official response. On the one hand Curtin reported, 'the results of the raid were not such as to give any satisfaction to the enemy'.[97] On the other hand, the government wanted to encourage increased enlistment into the services. To this end a "Darwin has been bombed - but not conquered" recruitment pamphlet, encouraging all to, "gird our loins and steel our nerve", was circulated throughout 1942.[98]

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[94] *Brisbane Courier Mail*, 20 February 1942, p. 1.
[95] *Sydney Morning Herald*,23 February 1942,p. 4. *The Argus*,12 March 1942,p. 3.
[96] *Movietone News*,Vol.13, no. 28, 26 June 1942, National Film and Sound Archive.
[97] Grose, *An Awkward Truth*, p. 179; *Sydney Daily Mail*, 20 February, p. 1.
[98] *Recruitment Pamphlet* ,at www.awm.gov.au/atwar/remembering1942/darwin/documents.asp; *The Argus*, 20 February 1942, p. 1.

An ambivalent legacy

A Commission of Inquiry lead by Justice Lowe was convened in Darwin twelve days after the raid. Its final report was not made public for three and a half years when on 5 October 1945 it was tabled in Federal Parliament by Prime Minister Chifley.[99] Although this report commended many for their bravery on the day, and it took a 'lessons to be learnt approach', and mentioned failures of leadership which were blamed for the less than commendable post-raid behaviour among both civilian and service personnel. It was the mention of panic, widespread looting and fifth column activity that the southern newspapers picked up on.[100] Variations of the same theme appeared in the major capital city papers' front pages on the 6th October. The Melbourne *Herald* trumpeted "JUDGE ON DARWIN RAID PANIC-LEADERSHIP AND DELAYED WARNING BLAMED" with the sub-headlines, 'Rush from Town', and, 'Alien Stampede'. The *Sydney Morning Herald* featured, "DARWIN PANIC AND UNPREPAREDNESS". Similarly, the *Argus*, led with "JAP FIFTH COLUMN ACTIVE BEFORE RAIDS ON DARWIN, Leadership Criticised in Commission Report". The Melbourne paper elaborated with details of poor muster numbers at the RAAF base, even three days after the raid, and tellingly reminded the reader that the same unauthorised evacuation had occurred in RAAF bases in Malaya and Koepang. Reporting tended to concentrate on the 'Adelaide River Stakes' rather than the commended persistence of the gunners and rescuers to whom Lowe had given more prominence. 'The town-that-ran-away' was the label that stuck.[101]

As previously mentioned, in 1955, Minister Hasluck reinforced these rumours of 'poor form' and 'un-Australian' behaviour when, as Minister for Territories addressing the Northern Territory assembly, he referred to the nineteenth of February 1942 as 'a day of shame' as 'Australians ran away because they did not know what else to do'; he referred to a 'panic evacuation'.[102] Hasluck was disappointed that mismanagement had meant that this attack on Australian soil failed to provide an image of plucky fearless sons and daughters of Anzac

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[99] *Bombing of Darwin-Report by Mr Justice Lowe*, www.naa.gov.au/collection/fact-sheets/fs 195.aspx serial number 431. The full report including the transcripts of the individual testimony only became available to the public in 1992 when it was lodged in National Archives.

[100] The *Herald*, Melbourne, 6 October 1945, p. 1; The *Argus*, Melbourne, 6 October ,1945,p. 1; The *Sydney Morning Herald*, 6 October 1945, p.1; Similar headlines populated newspaper front pages across Australia.

[101] Ibid.

[102] *The Canberra Times*, see footnote 26 above.

standing unflinching before the enemy onslaught as demanded by a national self-identity infused with Anzac mythology.[103] Shame and guilt sat uncomfortably with the desired prevailing post Second World War public narrative of courage in adversity; a nation of heroes.

In the classroom

History textbooks provide a useful indicator of the extent to which versions of an event have secured a place in the national story. Keith Crawford and Stuart Foster refer to school history textbooks as "agents in the determination and assimilation of official and collective memory".[104] This section uses the amount of page space given to, and the nature of the description of, the Darwin raid, in widely used year 9 history textbooks, as an indicative measure of the representation of this event in school history curriculum over the post-war decades.[105]

The depiction of the, Darwin bombing in the immediate post-war texts is inconsistent and infrequent. This reflects and also reinforces the ambivalent public narrative about the event. This lack of representation is also part of a wider absence of depictions of the Pacific War in the 1950s and 1960s in Australian history textbooks. Wood's, *A Concise History of Australia*, first published in 1935 and revised throughout 1950s and 1960s does not cover the Second World War period at all, though Crawford's, *Ourselves and the Pacific's* 1947 edition does at least mention the war in the Pacific and Pearl Harbor though not the Japanese raid on Darwin. He refers to the sinking of the *Prince of Wales* as that "black Wednesday, when we realised our outer wall of defence was crumbling", and to the fall of Singapore as "Australia's

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[103] Thomson, *Anzac Memories*, pp. 46-72, traces the development of this Anzac mythology; Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, *What's Wrong with Anzac*, Sydney, University of New South Wales,2010,pp. 15-23, outlines the development of Anzac mythology at what they see as the expense of other aspects of Australian history.

[104] Keith Crawford and Stuart Foster, *War, Nation, Memory: International Perspectives on World War II in School History Textbooks*, Charlotte, Information Age Publishing, Inc., 2007, p. 8.

[105] The textbooks referred to here are the ones most widely used in Victorian and New South Wales schools in the half century following the Second World War. My research with both states' History Teacher's Associations and my own, as well as colleague's knowledge as history teachers in the period under discussion was used to compile this list. In Victoria and New South Wales Australian history was studied by all students at year 9 (form 3) for most of the period 1945 to 2000.

Dunkirk".[106] Kylie Tennant's *Australia: Her Story*, published in 1953, is unusual in that it mentions the bombing of Darwin, and uses this event to sponsor this same theme of an Australian awakening: "the bombs were falling on Darwin and smashing the fixed idea that the continent would never know the impact of invasion".[107]

The general neglect of the Darwin incident in particular (and the Pacific War in general), is evidenced by the absence of reference to it in texts published in the 1960s. Munday and Grigsby's, *Mainstreams in Australian History*, 1968, Edgar and Edgar's, *Australia and her Northern Neighbours*, 1962 (to 1967), and Connole's, *Australia and the Near North: The Commonwealth in the Modern World*, (the 1961 and 1965 editions), all widely used year 9 textbooks, made no mention of the Darwin bombing.[108]

Textbooks published in the 1960s and 1970s focussed on a more social history approach with an emphasis on home-front experiences during the First World War and little mention of the Second World War. Some recognition of the place of the Second World War in our history came with *The Turbulent Years: A History of Australia 1770-1975*, published in 1976, which had a half page write-up of this war, though there was no mention of Darwin.[109] However, by 1979 Bereson and Rosenblat's extensively used text, *Inquiry Australia*, contained two pages about the Second World War though only two lines on the Darwin bombing.[110]

So by the late 1970s a section relating to the Second World War was consistently included in year 9 history textbooks and a trickle of information about the Darwin bombings appeared in a few. However the coverage was brief, understated the intensity and consequences of the raid, and still tended to dwell on the negative aspects of service and civilian behaviour reinforcing the 'day of shame' scenario. In 1975 Mason's, *Experience of Nationhood: Modern*

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[106] Fredrick Wood, *A Concise History of Australia*, Sydney, Dymocks Book Arcade, 1943 and revised throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Raymond Crawford, *Ourselves and the Pacific*, Melbourne, MUP, (10 versions 1941-1967),1947, p. 251.

[107] Kylie Tennant, *Australia: Her Story*, London, MacMillan, 1953, p. 272.

[108] Benjamin Munday and John Grigsby, *Mainstreams in Australian History*, Cassell, Melbourne, 1968.
Don Edgar and Patricia Edgar, *Australia and her Northern Neighbours*, Halls book store , Melbourne, 1962.
PF*Connole, *Australia and the Near North: The Commonwealth in the Modern World*. Vol 2. Sydney Jacaranda Press, 1961, rev. 1965. *No given names found.

[109] John Grigsby, *The Turbulent Years: A History of Australia 1770-1975*, Melbourne, 1976.

[110] Itiel Bereson and Simon Rosenblat, *Inquiry Australia*, Melbourne Heinemann, 1979.

Australia since 1901, demonstrated this understating of the Darwin event. Despite the disparity in magnitude between the two events, he devoted half a page to the bombing of Darwin but two and half pages to the May 1942 submarine attack in Sydney harbour. The account did mention that the government censored the extent of the damage to Darwin but reported that "general panic had broken out not only among the residents but also among the troops stationed there".[111]

In 1979 Willis and Pryor's *The Changing Vision: Seven Themes in Australian History*, contained four pages on the Second World War and the Vietnam War, with a column on the Darwin bombing, including a photo and a letter from Merton Woods, a survivor. The book stressed the negative connotations of the day including, "the panic and looting which followed the raid helped to make this event one of the less creditable of Australia's war experience".[112] However the use of personal testimony was significant, and foreshadowed a style of writing that became more popular in the 1990s. It reflected a desire to involve the young readers with the lives of the people who participated in the war, and to enable the combatants to be seen as individuals. The early 1980s was a time when First World War veterans were beginning to tell their stories of their wartime experiences to a wider audience. Public interest in hearing their stories had been aroused by books such as, Bill Gammage's *The Broken Years* and Patsy Adam-Smith's *Anzacs*.[113] These books had focussed on the use of personal letters and diaries to bring to life and give authenticity to wartime experience.

Some texts used in the 1980s still failed to capitalise on this awakening interest in veteran the wartime experiences. In *Was it Only Yesterday? Australia in the Twentieth Century World*, (1983 with reprints to 1990), Coupe and Andrews wrote of the Darwin raid that "many people fled into the bush. Others went south in cars, trucks or anything they could drive or ride on. Airmen, soldiers and civilians started looting shops. They stole everything

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[111] Kenneth Mason, *Experience of Nationhood: Modern Australia since 1901*, North Ryde, McGraw-Hill, 1975, p. 198.

[112] Ray Willis, Geoff Pryor, *The Changing Vision: Seven Themes in Australian History*. Melbourne, Longman, 1979, p. 183.

[113] Bill Gammage, *The Broken Years: Australian soldiers in the Great War* Canberra, Australian National University Press, 1974 and many editions since, latest 2010. Patsy Adam-Smith, *Anzacs*, West Melbourne, Thomas Nelson, 1978 and many editions since, last one 2011.

they thought was valuable".[114] No use is made of personal testimony. Both reflecting and promoting a growing public interest in the Pacific theatre of the war, thirteen pages covered this sector and seven were given over to a description of the Darwin bombing raid. However the focus was still on the scandalous aspects of the day, the service personnel who survived the attack were not portrayed in a personal way heroic or otherwise.

Indicative of a changing public narrative in the 1990s, whereas Ronald Laidlaw's 1979 book *The Land They Found: Australian History for Secondary Schools*, devoted seven lines of its 249 pages to the Darwin bombing, the revised edition in 1994 expanded this to twenty-five lines and gives more recognition to the magnitude of the event; the casualty figure was updated from 238 dead to, a possibly more accurate, 325. This later version included a more thorough description of the damage done, noting that "The post office, telegraphic and cable office were all destroyed, thus cutting Darwin off from the world." Nevertheless, the hint of a shameful retreat was still presented when Laidlaw included, "the raid caused widespread panic, some airmen, believing a Japanese landing was about to be made and that it was their duty to escape, had headed for the bush. Some covered hundreds of kilometres and even reached Melbourne."[115]

Textbooks in the 1990s tended to have more generous accounts of the war in the Pacific in general, and the bombing of Darwin in particular. Keith Hallett's, 1993, *Now and Then: Australian History and Identity in the 20th Century*, contains twenty-five pages about the Second World War. The two page account of the bombing by a Japanese pilot who took part in the raid, not only underlined the growing interest in personal wartime memories, but illustrated that as the temporal distance from the war increases, wartime representations become more inclusive, embracing the former enemy.[116] There is a more consistent inclusion of the Darwin episode in textbooks published after 2000.

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[114] Sheena Coupe and Mary Andrews, (1983 and after) *Was it Only Yesterday? Australia in the Twentieth Century World,* (2nd edition) Melbourne, Longman Cheshire, (reprints to1990), p. 106.
[115] Ronald Laidlaw, *The Land They Found: Australian History for Secondary Schools*, MacMillan , Melbourne 1979 and 1994 edition, p. 229.
[116] Keith Hallett, *Now and Then: Australian History and Identity in the 20th Century*, Nelson, South Melbourne, 1993, pp. 86-87.

It is clear from this investigation that, with the exception of the first decade of the twenty-first century, the story of the bombing of Darwin during the Second World War, has never been prominent in textbook histories of Australia. However during the seventy years since the event there has been an evolution in both the extent and the character of its depiction. From the 1970s onwards, together with depictions of the Pacific War in general, this event began to make more frequent and more fulsome appearances in textbooks. The nature of the representation also changed as the century progressed. After the late seventies, the trend towards personal testimony, identified previously, permeates the books reviewed. This fluctuating representation illustrates the complex interaction between textbook content and prevailing national narratives. The national narrative appears to shape what is included in the textbooks. Conversely, what is included in the textbooks may help shape the national narrative. Whilst these textbook accounts reflect and influence a changing, more sympathetic, national narrative in relation to the bombing, nonetheless, as will be shown, these representations often sit uncomfortably with the preferred national story populated with stoic heroes who bravely defend their homeland.

Historians' representations

A similar pattern of exclusion in the post-war decades followed by a gradual acknowledgement and inclusion of references to the Darwin episode can be found in an analysis of both general histories of Australia in the twentieth century and specific histories of the Second World War. In the early decades following the war, this event achieved only a minor and uncomfortable place in the works of Australian historians. As with school text books, when the Japanese attack was mentioned, the magnitude of the event tended to be understated and there was almost always some reference to an 'unseemly' retreat south. Understandably, more popular brief general histories such as Manning Clark's 1969, *A Short History of Australia* and Shaw's 1983 *The Story of Australia* omit the event altogether.[117] However, Crowley's 1974 weighty 639 page, *A New History of Australia*, might have been expected to give the raid more than the following passing mention: "For the first time Australia's mainland tasted enemy action, as Japanese aircraft struck at Darwin, Broome and

[117] Manning Clark, *A Short History of Australia*, Tudor Distributors, Sydney p. 969; Alan (AGL) Shaw, *The Story of Australia*, Faber &Faber, London, 1955,(5th edition 1983).

other points along the northern coast."[118] He uses the Commission's conservative casualty figure and mentions a 'stampede into the surrounding bush'.[119] In the last few lines of volume four of the, *Oxford History of Australia*, (1986) Stuart Macintyre remarks, "Four days after the fall of Singapore Darwin was bombed." Geoffrey Bolton in Volume five of the series, begins with, "the fall of Singapore opens the battle for Australia", then, in the less than fifty words devoted to the Darwin event, manages to mention "much looting, mass exodus."[120] Blainey's more recent, *A Shorter History of Australia*, 2008, despite its brevity, does mention the bombing and acknowledges the ferocity and suddenness of the attack; the Japanese "came like a tidal wave."[121]

A survey of military histories of the Second World War confirms that before the 1990s, where the war in the Pacific is mentioned, there is an under-representation of both the size and the ferocity of the raid and a tendency to refer to the more salacious aspects. The Australian War Memorial sponsors the writing of *the Official War Histories;* these give detailed chronological accounts of all theatres of conflict. Volume II relates to the Second World War and Series I is a history of the Army. Published in 1957, it runs to 590 pages of text and has only an incidental mention of the bombing, when referring to the invasion of Ambon on the 19th of February, (the day Darwin was bombed). Similarly, Series II of volume II, the history of the navy in the Second World War, does not mention the raid in its 968 pages. Series III of the volume, the history of the RAAF, does give a seven page account of the raid.[122] As all three services were present at Darwin on the day of the raid, such a relatively extensive account may reflect the RAAFs' need to 'clear its name' after the publication of the Lowe Commission findings in 1945. Justice Lowe found that the RAN and The AIF acquitted themselves well on the day, but that the RAAF personnel demonstrated a lack of training and showed poor leadership in its response to the crisis.[123]

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[118] Frank Crowley's, *A New History of Australia*, Heinemann, Melbourne, 1974, p. 465.
[119] ibid.
[120] Stuart Macintyre, *Oxford History of Australia*, Vol. 4, 1901-1942, Melbourne, 1986. Geoffrey Bolton(ed.), *Oxford History of Australia*, Vol. 5, Melbourne, 1990, (and repeated in 1996 edition), p. 174.
[121] Geoffrey Blainey, *A Short History of Australia*, Vintage, (rev ed.), Milsons Pt., 2009.
[122] *Australian Official War Histories*, Volume II, Series I, Army, p. 450, series II, Navy, series III, RAAF, pp. 426-432.,at www.awm.gov.au/histories/, accessed 25 September 2011.
[123] Lowe Commission Report at www.naa.gov.au/collection/factsheets/fs195.aspx, serial number A431.p. 10.

As the analysis of school textbook renditions of this event have shown, by the 1990s there is a heightened interest in veteran's stories in general and stories of the Pacific war in particular. The telling of the Darwin story was swept up in this resurgent interest in Second World War history. Post-1990s volumes often demonstrate a more considered approach to the Darwin story. Drawing attention to the psychological impact of the raid, Joan Beaumont's *Australia's War* (1996) gives a brief but thoughtful account stating that, "no other enemy attack on the Australian mainland resulted in the same loss of life or had the same psychological impact on the Australian population as the initial bombing of Darwin."[124] The historical representation is more nuanced in Peter Dennis's 2008, 634 page *Oxford Companion to Australian Military History* (2nd Edition). Whilst only half a page is given to a description of the raid, which is placed in the context of Japanese strategy to take Timor and Java, Dennis does give the raid a place in the national narrative by inferring its psychological imperative: (it) "has assumed a special place in popular consciousness as a symbol of Australia's vulnerability". Noting "scenes of confusion and panic" he stresses that "later allegations of mass panic were exaggerated."[125] This empathetic depiction is in line with increased public interest in the importance of the Darwin event and an increasing belief in the 'battle for Australia' mythology. As is discussed below, the conviction that Australia was actually under threat of invasion in 1942 was to become generally accepted in the 1990s and the first decade of the 21st century.

At first a trickle, then a flood

First-hand accounts written during, or in the years immediately after the war, give un-critical eye-witness detail of the magnitude and horror of the raids, and provide ample instances of calmness under fire.[126] Despite McQuade-White's (1952) brief reference in her reminiscences to, "equipment lost not due to enemy action but apparently to looting", her account ,and that of Owen Griffiths in *Darwin Drama* (1947), would enable the behaviour of service personnel during the Darwin episode to be seen as conforming comfortably to the

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[124] Joan Beaumont, *Australia's War 1939-45,* Allen and Unwin, St Leonards,1996, p. 54.
[125] Dennis Peter et al., *Oxford Companion to Australian Military History,* Oxford Uni. Press, South Melbourne, 2008, p. 174-5.
[126] E Bennet-Bremner *Front Line Airline,* Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1944.
Owen Griffiths *Darwin Drama,* Bloxham & Chambers Pty Ltd, Sydney, 1946.

Anzac standards of Australian soldiering.[127] Despite the contemporaneous tabling of the Lowe Commission revelations of poor leadership, these early narratives seem immune from the taint of scandal that marks many later versions of the event.

The publication of popular non-fiction accounts of the day in the 1960s to 1990s exhibit the 'J curve' of public interest in the raid. There is a lack of interest in military stories in the 1960s and 1970s, with Douglas Lockwood's 1966, *Australia's Pearl Harbour* the only book about the episode published between McQuade-White's 1952 biographical account and 1980. Lockwood, a journalist who had been present on the day of the bombing, used his Darwin contacts to write a considered account of the day even though he was not able to use eye witness testimony from the Lowe Commission of inquiry.[128] In 1980 Timothy Hall's controversial version of the raid, *Darwin1942*, was the beginning of a flood of bombing books.[129] Hall's claims of public panic and general chaos, though contradicted by other writers, reinforced the public view that the day was not an event with which to be proudly associated.[130] Alan Powell, writing in 1983 made the point that Hall was right in subtitling his work *Australia's Darkest Hour*, though not for the military strategic reasons Hall had intended. Rather, it was because, psychologically, it was a low morale point for the Australian population. Powell thought it was a time when Australians felt that they had failed to live up to standards that were thought to define the national character.[131] He argued for a more balanced representation of the Darwin episode.

The 1992 fiftieth anniversary celebrations, the reunions in Darwin, together with the release of the Lowe Commission testimony transcripts in 1995, contributed to a flurry of publications over the next few years in the popular non-fiction genre. Jack Mulholland's book, with its ironic subtitle, *Use the 1916 Ammo First'*, indicated the 'need to put the record straight' character of the text. The foreword set out his indignant defence of both civilian and service personnel who were left undertrained and ill-equipped to deal with "one of the most

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[127] Edith McQuade -White, *Reminiscences of an Australian Army Nurse,* Eager & Lamb Brisbane, 1950 p. 50; Owen Griffith, *Darwin Drama,* Bloxham and Chambers Pty.Ltd., Sydney, 1947.
[128] Lockwood, *Australia's Pearl Harbour: Darwin 1942.*
[129] Timothy Hall, *Darwin 1942: Australia's darkest hour,* Methuen, Sydney, 1980 reprints to 1989. Powell, *Shadow's Edge,* criticised his over use of hyperbole. P. 83.
[130] John Hector, *Sun-Herald,* 14 February 1982. P. 3.
[131] Alan Powell, "The Darwin Panic', *Journal of the Australian war Memorial,*3.Oct.1983, pp. 3-9.and also, *The Shadow's Edge: Australia's Northern War,* Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1988, pp. 57-58, 76.

devastating bombings of the war."[132] In the last decade authors have shown a determination to follow Mulholland's lead and to work to shape a new public perception of the bombing. Bob Alford's 1991 illustrated book gives a visual depiction of what happened on the day, augmented with excerpts from many oral history interviews with survivors.[133] The book aimed to recover lost voices. It fed a public desire for personal wartime recollections.

In a similar vein, tackling the scandal mythology head on, Rex Ruwoldt, one of the founders of the Darwin Defenders group, published a collection of veterans' first-hand accounts of their war service in Darwin. The stated aim of this 2005 book was, firstly, to ensure that the people of Australia will never forget those who made such sacrifices to "protect their country when Australia was attacked by the Japanese in 1942" and, secondly, to:

> 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 ... [has] not been achieved without sacrifice by those who have gone before us.[134]

Ruwoldt is attempting to change the national narrative to include a prominent place for the Darwin episode, now rebranded as the first salvo in a battle for Australia.[135]

Peter Ewer's *Wounded Eagle*, 2009, also both reflected and sought to influence the public discourse. The book set out to put the record straight with regard to the response of the RAAF on that day. The 'Wounded Eagle' of his title was the RAAF, left injured and vulnerable by a series of poor government decisions in the 1930s.[136] The most recent publication, Peter Grose's *An Awkward Truth* (2009 and 2011), reiterated the past lack of a proportionate account of the bombing and its consequent absence from our national story. He asked his readers to consider this changing response of Australians to the Darwin bombings in terms of a shifting preferred self-image. He contends that in the decades after the Second World War Australians were not comfortable with portrayals of themselves as refugees in their own land, as people who would flee from the enemy, people who were "no more stoic than

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[132] Jack Mulholland, *Darwin Bombed: the unit history of 14 heavy anti-aircraft battery,* Loftus, Australian Military History Publications, 1999.
[133] Alford, *Darwin's Air War.*
[134] Rex Ruwoldt, *Darwin's Battle for Australia,* Darwin Defenders 1942-45 Inc., Clifton Springs,2005, p. 17.
[135] Discussed below, pp. 45-47.
[136] Peter Ewer, *Wounded Eagle: The Bombing of Darwin and Australia' Air force Scandal,* New Holland, Sydney, 2009.

anyone else."[137] He argued that we can interpret the changing nature of the representation of the raid over the decades as reflecting a change to the self-image Australians are prepared to embrace.

Popular media representations

Audio and video representations of the Darwin event show the same pattern of neglect after the war followed by a gradual re-introduction of the episode to the public's consciousness after late 1980s. Productions were usually timed to be broadcast at anniversary commemorations. After the initial *Movietone* and *Cinesound* newsreels produced during 1942, opportunities to showcase the Darwin bombing were largely ignored.[138] The 1947 Ealing Studios production of *The Overlanders*, with its scorched-earth theme of abandoning the north before an imminent Japanese invasion, provided an ideal context in which to bring the Darwin Bombings into the public domain.[139] The opportunity was forsaken. Two newsreels produced in the 1950s refer to the bombing, a *Darwin Remembers* segment in 1957 (to mark the fifteenth anniversary), and the salvaging of wrecks from the harbor (by a Japanese company), in 1959 which elicited a flashback newsreel.[140] Very few programs were made in the 1960s or 1970s with the exception of a 1967 audio recording made by Col Burgess to mark the 25th anniversary of the bombing, later revived in 1977 and used again in a 1992 program.[141] It is in the 1990s that radio and television programs begin to raise public awareness of the Darwin story, especially via the use of personal survivor testimony and reportage of commemorative events.[142] The 'J curve' pattern of neglect followed by gradual rediscovery and recent flurry of productions is repeated for audio and visual representations of the event.

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[137] Grose, *An Awkward Truth*, p. 204.

[138] Fox Movietone (Australia), *At the Ready on Australia's Northern Front; Australia at War; Bombing Of Darwin Aftermath of the Japanese Attack; Japs Raid Darwin;* National Film and Sound Archive. 1942. Cinesound Productions, *Darwin Bombing: Eye witness story, NFSA,1942.*

[139] *The Overlanders,* dir., Harry Watt, 1947.

[140] *Movietone News. Vol 31. No.02. Wartime flashback,* Show s the wreck of a warship being towed back to Japan for salvage, Fox Movietone (Australia).

[141] ABC Radio Australia, accessed at http://trove.nla.gov.au/work/38202821. Dated 1990 and 1992.

[142] ABC Radio, *PM*, 19th February 1992, Paul Keating used fiftieth anniversary of bombing of Darwin speech to expound upon Australia's need to re-orient herself towards Asia.

The extent to which the Darwin bombing episode has been given increased space in the popular media is illustrated by its inclusion in Baz Luhrmann's 2008 cattle run film, *Australia*.[143] In contrast to the earlier cattle run epic, *The Overlanders*, this film includes an elaborate bombing scene.[144] The Japanese raid is now represented as a part of the nations' wartime story. Video/film productions follow a similar pattern of famine followed by feast. The National Film and Sound archive lists two productions for the 1990s, with more frequent productions in the 2000s.[145] In July 2011 the bombing episode was reiterated on the channel nine program *In Their Footsteps*. A survivor, Les Semkem was filmed showing his grand-daughter about Darwin, interspersed with film from that 1942 *Cinesound* news footage of the Japanese raid.[146] Underwriting the prominent place the event now occupies in our national wartime story, a documentary, *The Bombing of Darwin: An Awkward Truth*, was screened to mark the 70th anniversary of the raid in 2012.[147] The event had now been bought to the national consciousness; it now has a prominent place in the Australian public's consciousness of their Second World War history.

The re-vivifying of Anzac mythology and remembrance

These changing patterns of cultural representation had their parallel in patterns of public sensibility about the Second World War history in general and the Darwin episode in particular. The years following the war saw a repeat of the 'J curve' trajectory of media attention about Australians at war: first a decline in public interest in matters military, however as veterans aged, there was a renewal of interest in stories of their wartime experiences. Just as individual identities are constructed and can be reconstructed, John Gillis has shown that national identities are constructed and reconstructed over time.[148] A number of researchers have mapped this post-war change in public identification with our military history. Analysing attendance at Anzac Day marches, Graeme Davison observed that

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[143] *Australia*, dir., Baz Luhrmann, 2008.
[144] *The Overlanders*, dir., Harry Watt, 1947.
[145] National archives sound and video collection at, http//:trove.nla.gov.au/music/result?q=Darwin%20bombing.
[146] *In Their Footsteps*, Channel 9, 3 July 2011.
[147] *The Bombing of Darwin: An Awkward Truth*, Artemis International and Screen Australia, Foxtel, The History Channel, 19 February 2012.
[148] John Gillis, (ed.) *Commemoration: the Politics of National Identity*, Princeton, Princeton University Press,1994, p. 18.

"since the mid 1980s the ratio of marchers to spectators has changed from 1:1 to 1:4."[149] Davison makes the point that this ratio has changed not only because of declining numbers of veterans, but because the number of spectators has increased dramatically. Further he speculates that this shift from participation to observation has been influential in transforming the meaning of the day towards a more all-encompassing, more nationalistic public expression.[150] Historian, Ken Inglis, has also noted this widening of the day's appeal. In his early research in the 1970s he had observed the exclusivity and masculinity of the dawn service at the Shrine in Melbourne, which the Returned Services League (RSL) then insisted was solely for ex-servicemen.[151] By 1994 this service had been diluted, "suddenly everybody was welcome: men women and children."[152] Jenny Macleod, writing on the shifting appeal of Anzac Day, concurs with Inglis that this relaxing of the RSL's control over the march and Shrine services during the seventies and eighties was both a gauge of a growing and broadening of interest, beyond veterans and their families, and simultaneously a cause of the Day's increasing appeal.[153]

The reasons for this resurgence of interest in the nation's military history are complex.[154] A number of historians argue there has been a conscious re-creation of the nation's knowledge of its military past, and that this memory has been deliberately enmeshed with the Anzac

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[149] Graeme Davison, "The Habit of Commemoration and the revival of Anzac Day", *Australian Cultural History,* (Special Issue) Vol. 22, 2003, p. 80.

[150] Davison, The Habit of Commemoration and the revival of Anzac Day, p. 80.

[151] The RSL has had a number of iterations since its formation in 1916. From 1965 RSL referred to the Returned Services League, since 1990 the acronym has referred to the Returned and Services League.

[152] Ken Inglis, "Remembering Anzac." In John Lack (ed.), Introduction by Ken Inglis, Jay Winter, *ANZAC Remembered: Selected Writings* by K. S. Inglis. Melbourne: University of Melbourne, Department of History, 1998, pp. 136-146. University of Melbourne history monograph 23, p. 6-7. :http://search.informit.com.au.ezproxy.lib.monash.edu.au/documentSummary;dn=729914476035107;res=IELHSS>ISBN: 0732515505. [accessed 29 Sep 11].

[153] Jenny Macleod, "The Fall and Rise of Anzac Day: 1965 to 1990", in *War and Society,*Vol.20, Number 1 (May 2002), p. 151.

[154] Rodney Walton, "Memories from the Edge of the Abyss: Evaluating the Oral Accounts of World War II Veterans", *Oral History Review* 37, Number 1 Winter/Spring, 2010,pp. 22-23. Walton contends the anti-militarism environment of the 1960s and 1970s discouraged many veterans from mentioning their war time experiences. This reticence was acerbated by the anti-war sentiment generated by the Vietnam War in the 1970s and the subsequent US defeat. However, Walton asserts a surge of patriotism developed under the Reagan presidency during the 1980s enhanced by the ending of the Cold War and the defeat of Iraq in 1991. Joan Beaumont, "Prisoners of War in Australian National memory", in B. Moore and B. Hately-Broad (eds), *Prisoners of War, Prisoners of Peace: Captivity, Homecoming and Memory in World War II*, Berg, New York, 2005, pp. 191-2. Whilst the re-vitalization of the Anzac story and its refinement to a set of national characteristics is particular to Australia, Beaumont has suggested that there is a global dimension to the 'unfreezing of memories of war'. She points to the freeing up of remembrance when 'ideological constraints' were removed at the end of the Cold War.

story.[155] The 1960s saw public debates about the meaning of Anzac Day play-out in the press; was its purpose honouring those who fought and died or was it glorifying war? The ambivalent meaning of this day in the public's mind, together with the anti-Vietnam War sentiment of the early seventies, influenced the RSL to move to purposefully widen the appeal and cultural significance of Anzac Day and to engineer a more all-encompassing Anzac mythology. As the actual number of Anzac veterans began to dwindle an education campaign was developed. Its purpose was to refocus and broaden the meaning of Anzac Day towards traits of mateship, resourcefulness, even larrikinism and contempt for authority, qualities to be seen as embodying a broader Australian spirit or identity. It was to become a day for all Australians.[156]

During the eighties this growing inclusivity and popularity of Anzac Day was complemented by an increasing interest in the personal experiences of veterans, especially First World War veterans.[157] The aging of these First and Second World War veterans generated anxiety that the veterans' personal memories would soon be lost. Personal accounts of wartime experiences, not only of Gallipoli veterans, but also of Turkish, Aboriginal, and even Gurkha veterans in turn sponsored a resurgence of public interest in the nation's war stories. Paula Hamilton notes the proliferation of these 'egocentric' histories.[158] These individual eye-witness accounts gained authenticity; and were used as the raw materials to build the wider collective memory. The interest in Gallipoli stories morphed into a more general interest in stories of Australians at war. Peter Stanley sees this proliferation of veteran memoirs as contributing to the revival of a "modern nationalism" enabled by "a combination of the war generation's retirement and desk-top publishing."[159]

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[155] Macleod, "The Fall and Rise of Anzac Day", p. 158; Mark McKenna and Stuart Ward talk of the "commodification of Anzac" pilgrimage to promote a new 'soft patriotism' McKenna, Mark and Ward, Stuart, "It was really moving mate: the Gallipoli pilgrimage and sentimental nationalism in Australia", *Australian Historical Studies*, 129 (April 2007), p 144; Paula Hamilton writes of a deliberate shift to a 'memorial culture' as a way of interpreting the past, Paula Hamilton, "Sale of the Century-memory and historical consciousness in Australia", in *Contested Pasts: The politics of memory,* Radstone, Susannah and Hodgkin, Katherine, (eds) (2003), New York London, Routledge.p. 136.
Peter Stanley, *Invading Australia: Japan and the Battle for Australia 1942,* Camberwell, Viking, 2008, p. 235.

[156] Macleod, "The Fall and Rise of Anzac Day", p. 158.

[157] Ibid., p. 156

[158] Hamilton, "Sale of the Century", p.141.

[159] Stanley, *Invading Australia,* p. 235.

Macleod identifies the Australian War Memorial Research Centre's spear-heading of a federally-funded campaign to educate school children and the wider public about Gallipoli, as well as sponsoring the writing of military histories as factors along the path to Anzac re-invigoration.[160] This Centre encouraged and enabled prolific academic research into Australia's war history. However, it was Peter Weir's 1981 film *Gallipoli*, to which Macleod attributes most influence over public perceptions and attitudes towards the Anzac story, via the distilling of those characteristics said to be intrinsically Australian.[161] "The powerful communication of a national myth is the film's principal achievement."[162] The culmination of this educational drive came in 1990 with the distribution of an RSL/Australian War Memorial kit, encouraging study of this film, to every school in Australia. On the same theme, Marilyn Lake highlights the increasing role being played by another official agency, the Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA), in funding this mythologizing and militarization of Australian history. She outlines the growing number and cost of commemorative programmes in the years after the 'Australia Remembers' programme marked the fiftieth anniversary of the ending of the Second World War in 1995.[163]

Responsive to this re-mythologizing and revivifying of the Anzac story, crowds at Anzac Day parades have continued to grow throughout the last decade of the twentieth century and the first decade of the twenty-first century. This development of the Anzac legend into a prism through which all Australians' wartime experiences can be viewed and explained is well illustrated by the propagation of the 'Battle for Australia' story in the 1990s.

Birth of the 'Battle for Australia'

The birth of this story was part of this plethora of state-sponsored commemorative events, battlefield pilgrimages and anniversaries initiated in the 1990s by the Department of Veteran's Affairs. The elaborate 1990 federally funded pilgrimage to Gallipoli by Prime Minister Bob Hawke, and Prime Minister Paul Keating's 1992 ceremony at the Kokoda Track, signaled the conjoining of these war events and their deployment to serve contemporary national political purposes. Keating recast the Pacific War as the 'Battle to save Australia'

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[160] Macleod, "The Fall and Rise of Anzac Day", pp. 163-5.
[161] *Gallipoli*, dir., Peter Weir.
[162] Macleod, The Fall and Rise of Anzac Day, 163-5.
[163] Lake and Reynolds, *What's Wrong with Anzac?*, pp. 135-156.

from Japanese invasion and tied this Battle for Australia firmly to the Anzac story; an Anzac story now freed of any connotations of fighting for empire.[164] Such annual repetitions of commemorations focus collective attention and enhance the event's status and its saliency for individual remembering.[165]

Private memories were also put at the service of this official Battle for Australia myth-making as veteran pilgrimages on fiftieth and sixtieth anniversaries concentrated interest on personal war stories. Stanley contends that "veterans' memoirs and newspaper articles based on them [have been] the most effective vectors for the spread of the invasion myth."[166] The 1998 formation of the 'Battle for Australia Commemoration National Council', with its aim to honour all those who took part in the myriad actions that collectively comprised the 'Battle for Australia', gave a new Asian-Pacific-centred and less imperial focus to war remembrance, more suited to the needs of a nation asserting a republican image. Liz Reed's study of the 1995 *Australia Remembers* programme, revealed the use of symbols and rituals to construct a history of the war that suits current national purposes.[167] At a global level, Ashplant, Dawson and Roper have detailed many instances whereby the state, by constructing "a national frame of remembrance" exerts its influence over what is remembered.[168] This construction is used to privilege remembering of some battles whilst knowledge of other conflicts, considered less helpful to contemporary needs, are left to languish or is even erased.

The power of this evolving Battle for Australia nationalism is shown by the way popular media re-badged products to 'fit' this new 'cultural script'.[169] The 1966 penguin version of Douglas Lockwood's popular factual account of the Darwin bombing, reprinted throughout the1970s and 1980s, was titled *Australia's Pearl Harbour*. This title puts the raid into the context of the other, traumatic events that chronologically surrounded it, stating that "it was soon forgotten" as other Pacific battles in the Solomon Islands and New Guinea captured the

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[164] Liz Reed, *Bigger Than Gallipoli: War, History and Memory in Australia,* University Western Australia Press, Crawley, 2004, p. 121; Stanley, *Invading Australia*, p. 246.
[165] Cubitt, *History and Memory,* p. 221.
[166] Stanley, *Invading Australia,* p. 246. Stanley persuasively uses post war Japanese documents to show the Japanese command planned no such offensive.
[167] Reed, *Bigger than Gallipoli*, p. xiii.
[168] Ashplant, Dawson and Roper, *The Politics of War Memory,* pp. 55-56.
[169] Roper, *Re remembering the Soldier Hero,* p. 183.

public imagination. He cast the raid as Pearl Harbor "without the treachery." By 2005 a new edition, despite identical tables of content, is cast in a different tone. This version sports the title, *Australia Under Attack,* in large letters, and in much smaller print, *The bombing of Darwin-1942*. The newly added introduction stresses that Australia "was now vulnerable to invasion."[170] The book title has been remodelled to align with the emerging national narrative about the Battle for Australia. Not surprisingly the 1998 Chris Masters' documentary about Kokoda also aligned itself with this evolving Pacific War narrative with the title: *The Men Who Saved Australia*.[171]

In line with this Battle for Australia trope, the veteran survivors of the Darwin bombing formed the *Darwin Defenders* group in Melbourne in 1995. This group acted as an 'agency of articulation' for the Victorian Darwin veterans enabling them to make sufficient political noise during the late 1990s and early 2000s to secure a place for their stories within this newly evolving Pacific War narrative. For these Darwin veterans, in the slip-stream of the Battle for Australia paradigm, the stem of the 'J curve' of public consciousness of the bombing was now completed. Official commemorative activities combined with interest in individual veteran testimony to create added public recognition which reached its zenith at the seventieth anniversary commemorations in February 2012. These ex servicemen were no longer veteran survivors but Darwin defenders who had been in the forefront of the battle to save Australia. The Darwin veterans, many of whom had served only on Australian soil, could now frame their experiences so as to be compatible with the Anzac image of soldiering. To emphasize their integration with this new Battle for Australia story line, the Darwin survivors published their stories under the title, *Darwin's Battle for Australia*.[172]

In summary

This review of popular media representation of the Darwin bombing shows a pattern of post-Second World War indifference followed by a gradual resurgence, a pattern mirrored by the trajectory of public interest in Australia's military history in general. This resurgent interest indicates not only heightened curiosity about the war experiences of individual soldiers and

[170] Lockwood, *Australia Under Attack 1942,* p. x.
[171] Chris Masters, *The Men Who Saved Australia,* 1998.television documentaryabc.net.au, Four Corners Archives at : http://www.abc.net.au/4corners/stories/s12899.htm. Accessed June 2012.
[172] Ruwoldt, *Darwin's Battle for Australia.*

changing tolerances of what is an acceptable soldierly image; it also reflects a deliberate official programme over the last two decades to give prominence to the military aspects of history. This evolution of a national wartime narrative sympathetic to the stories of the Darwin veterans may not only have inclined these men, previously reluctant, to share their wartime experiences, but may also have influenced the content of their narratives. These influences become explicit in analysis of the veteran testimonies.

CHAPTER IV

SPEAKING HISTORY: VETERANS REMEMBER THE BOMBING

Within this cultural milieu sympathetic to their wartime experiences, my research set out to investigate the way survivors of that first deadly Japanese raid on Darwin remembered the event. The veterans interviewed for this research all wanted to share their stories of that day and most said they had not previously been formally interviewed about this event. Two factors, working interactively, can explain this readiness, after seventy years, to finally give their account. As discussed in Chapter III, they may now sense a more sympathetic and interested audience for their personal wartime recollections. In addition their stage of life may well be a factor influencing participation; they may perceive this interview to be their last chance to leave their families and the wider public their version of the event and what had gone wrong. For them it may well be a last attempt at setting the record straight about what was, until recently, a neglected part of the nation's wartime story.

The new-found narrative space afforded by the emergence of the Battle for Australia mythology, together with a resurgent interest in personal wartime remembering, facilitated the telling of the 'Darwin story'. The intersection of this shifting trajectory of popular representation about the bombing with private memory is explored here as these veterans create their own narratives. Among the complex array of factors that affect the nature of these accounts, are matters integral to the interview situation itself. As oral historian Alessandro Portelli reminds us, the nature of responses will depend on the interviewer's questions and the resulting dialogue.[173] Furthermore, the interview situation sets up a dynamic relationship to which all parties bring their pre-conceptions and biases.[174] I came to the interview with a pre-conception about the influence that the public discourse relating to this event would have on the veteran's remembering. This guided the structure and nature of the interviews. The veterans in turn had their views of what I would want to hear. They

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[173] Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli*, p. 54.

[174] Valerie Yow, "Do I Like Them Too Much", in Perks and Thomson, *The Oral History Reader*, pp.54-67; Frisch, *A Shared Authority*, among many who examine the inter-subjectivity of the interview situation; Mary Chamberlain, "Narrative Theory", in Thomas Charlton, Lois Myers, Rebecca Sharpless, (eds.) *Handbook of Oral History*, Lanham, Alta Mira Press,2006, pp. 384-407, gives a detailed analysis of the influences operating in the interview situation.

were also aware that there was a wider audience, posterity, as the recordings were to be archived. The very act of constructing and telling their story about the day of the bombing to a sympathetic audience moulded the outcome. This analysis of the veteran narratives has given consideration to these subjectivities, including the inter-subjective relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee.

My research is undertaken in the consciousness that the making of history involves presumptuously giving meaning to the words, written or spoken, of others. What follows is my interpretation of the accounts shared by these survivors of the bombing. In this analysis variability and inconsistency in versions of the same events are not viewed as reasons for scepticism but as indicators of the complexity of the forces shaping veteran testimony seventy years after the event.

Consistencies: "white crosses in the sky"

The veteran narratives revealed a high degree of factual consistency in relation to what actually happened on 19 February. As personal testimony does not provide a simple replay of events, and it is seventy years since this event took place, this factual congruence was surprising. Furthermore, the interviewees were keen to outline the simple chronological sequence of the incidents on the nineteenth. Describing what happened on the day was the part of the interview in which the veterans appeared most comfortable. Their responses came quickly with few hesitations, suggesting a well-rehearsed storyline.

All respondents confirmed there had been no advanced warning; they became aware of the raid when bombs began to explode. George Warr, at Emery Point, had thought a plane falling into the water was the "Americans playing to get practice."[175] Bill Foster confirmed there was no warning, "sirens [only] started when bombs hit the ground."[176] Another testimonial consistency was the admission of an initial assumption that the planes were American, coming, at last, to reinforce the small number of RAAF planes. As George Warr put it, the "sun was behind the planes so we still thought they were Americans."[177] Stationed at

[175] George Warr, interviewed by Valerie Bourke, Melbourne, 1 October 2010.
[176] Bill Foster, interviewed by Valerie Bourke, Melbourne, 31 January 2011.
[177] George Warr, 1 October.

West point as part of the coastal defence, Cyril Molyneux, a lieutenant, saw "the white crosses in the sky" but the "first we knew they were Japanese was the firing of Ack Ack guns."[178] At Emery Point, with a view over the town, George "realised they were Japanese [planes] when a great pile of dust and rubbish came up over the town."[179] There was also uniformity in the respondents' expressed admiration for the disciplined nature of the Japanese formations. Colin Horn, at the RAAF base, used the term "Immaculate formations ... they pattern-bombed Darwin."[180] George described "a huge number of planes, in perfect 'V' formations flying with the sun behind them ... I saw the three 'V's making a larger 'V'."[181]

Another common theme was the proximity of the Japanese planes. Ray Enright mentioned Japanese 'Zero' pilots flying low and strafing those on the ground.[182] Bill Foster also talked of a Japanese pilot leaning across and waving to them as he used his machine gun to strafe them. Max Kenyon mentioned Japanese flying very low, "you could feel that you could touch it ... I could recognise that he was Japanese".[183] All those interviewed also claimed to have believed that an invasion was imminent. Theo Ferguson at East Point, who claimed that they continued bayonet training after the raid, expressed this common recollection when he mentioned an invasion was expected on the night of the raid.[184]

These narrative consistencies may indicate factual truths, memories that, even all these years later, represent an accurate rerun of the day's events. However, it needs to be considered that all remembering is subject to cultural influences.[185] Alistair Thomson and Nigel Hunt both provide examples of the integration of existing public versions into veteran memories. Thomson found incidents from the film *Gallipoli* had been adopted into the First World War memories of some of his respondents and Hunt noted his Second World War veterans provided "detailed memories about a battle that they could not have seen directly".[186] The

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[178] Cyril Molyneux, interviewed by Valerie Bourke, Melbourne, 29 January 2011.
[179] George Warr, 1October.
[180] Colin Horn, interviewed by Valerie Bourke, Melbourne, 23 September 2010.
[181] George Warr, 1 October.
[182] 'Zero' was term the allies used for the Japanese Mitsubishi AGM Zero long range fighter aircraft in operation from 1940 to 1945.
[183] Max Kenyon, interviewed by Valerie Bourke, Melbourne, 31 January 2011.
[184] Theo Ferguson, interviewed by Valerie Bourke, Melbourne, 3 September 2010
[185] Research cited in footnotes 46 to 51 above.
[186] Thomson, *Anzac Memories*, p.8; Nigel Hunt and Sue McHale, "Memory and Meaning: Individual and Social Aspects of Memory Narrative", *Journal of Loss and Trauma*, 13:1, 2008, p.45.

points of general agreement found in this veteran testimony had, over the nearly seventy years, been canvassed widely in published accounts. The Lowe Commission Report was made public and featured on the front page of newspapers in October 1945.[187] Peter Grose's *An Awkward Truth*, published in 2009 contained a summary of the Commission Report.[188] *Darwin's Air War: an Illustrated History*, often referred to by veterans, outlines the events of the Nineteenth in a way that is recognisable in these veteran accounts.[189] Descriptions published during the early 2000s may in turn have been influenced by the many books relating to this event that were published in the 1990s. The congruities revealed in the narrations of the Darwin veterans may thus have been the result of the interweaving of their experiences with these published accounts. Boyd Tyner who was a stoker on HMAS *Karangi*, even deferred to an account by Harry Dale, an able seaman on the same ship, published in, *Darwin's Battle for Australia* Volume II, when asked for his version of the day.[190] George Warr's testimony provides an example of integrating others' accounts into his own memories, when he refers to seeing the blown apart bodies of the women who had been working in the Post Office:

> for youngsters like us, I'd never seen the attractive end of a woman's stocking unless it was on a clothesline ... to see those broken bodies it was a bit of a shock, quite a shock.

Yet George has stated in other sessions that he did not go down to Darwin after the raid but remained at Emery Point, where:

> for the rest of the day we had to go over the cliff to recover three bodies we saw floating ashore [and then] making sure our guns and search lights were ready for whatever would happen next.

He could not have seen any women's bodies himself and must have heard about the Post Office switchboard girls' deaths via others. He had subsumed these accounts into his own narrative in the years that have elapsed since this event.[191]

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[187] *The Herald,* 6 October 1945, p.1. Similarly, *The Argus,* and *The Sydney Morning Herald.*
[188] Grose, *An Awkward Truth,* p. 230.
[189] Alford,*Darwin's Air War,* Darwin, 1991.
[190] Ruwoldt, *Darwin's Battle for Australia Vol II,* Clifton Springs, 2009, p. 180.
Boyd Tyner, interviewed by Valerie Bourke, Melbourne, 25 October 2010.
[191] George Warr, 1 October. Alan Powell, *The Shadow's Edge: Australia's Northern War,* Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1988, p. 89 describes the mangled bodies.

Another feasible explanation for these congruities of recall, though not the 'add-ins', could lie in the way our brain responds when we experience emotionally powerful events. Alice and Howard Hoffman describe a form of long-term memory designated as 'archival'.[192] These are memories "that are readily recalled, change little, if at all, with the passage of time", and possibly owe their persistence to the way our mind operates under highly stressful conditions.[193] Schacter postulates that memories formed in periods of high emotional arousal such as dangerous life-threatening wartime events activate brain structures that result in persistent accurate recollections; unforgettable episodes.[194] Supporting this hypothesis, in research interviews with Battle for Okinawa veterans, Rodney Walton found "the veterans [he interviewed] provided honest and overwhelmingly accurate information." He believes that battlefield memories "are often burned into the veteran's mind."[195] Further, Walton confirmed that the veterans he interviewed provided the most comprehensive details of experiences that occurred early on in the battle. "Memories of events later in the campaign were less vivid."[196] This was the first experience of action for the Darwin survivors. These first impressions of being under enemy attack may simply have remained vivid down the years, even though some saw action in other theatres of war in the months and years that followed this initial episode. This 'primacy effect' may help explain the regularities in the veterans' memories. Concomitant with this primacy effect, Walton draws attention to "memory gaps" veterans often have in relation to later experiences under fire. As soldiers become more focussed on survival, concentrating on the present, their sense of time can become distorted or even irrelevant, they were, perhaps, "tuned out".[197]

Seeing it differently: "Nobody was calling the shots"

Whilst I found consistencies in the respondents' accounts of the general sequence of events on the nineteenth, there was greater individual variation in the veterans' testimony about their reported reactions during the surprise attack. Rumours of desertion from the RAAF

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[192] Alice Hoffman and Howard Hoffman, "Memory Theory: Personal and Social", in T Charlton, L Myers and R Sharpless, (eds.), *Handbook of Oral History*, Oxford, 2006, p. 281.
[193] Hoffman and Hoffman, "Memory Theory: Personal and Social, p. 281.
[194] Daniel Schacter, *The Seven Deadly Sins of Memory*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 2002, p. 187.
[195] Walton, "Memories from the Edge of the Abyss", p. 24.
[196] Ibid., p. 27.
[197] Ibid., p. 27-28.

base and of few men being present at a roll call, even three days after the bombings, were confirmed by a number of the interviewees. The Lowe Commission Report, made public in October 1945, and widely featured in papers at that time, mentioned these unauthorised evacuations from the RAAF base: "On 23rd February, the muster showed 278 men missing."[198] Three of the interviewees were RAAF veterans. Their responses relating to the actual events of the 19 February illustrate the teleological nature of the narratives formed in oral history interviews. In such interviews, respondents seek to construct accounts that make their behaviours appear understandable and plausible to the audience. Those details and events unconsciously selected for inclusion in the narrative lead the audience to, and justify, a certain preferred conclusion.[199]

Colin Horn was with the RAAF maintenance crew at the Darwin base on the 19 February. He was interviewed twice for this research. Asked to describe what had happened on the day, his responses list details that inexorably lead to the conclusion that it was best for the men at the base to make an evacuation south after the second heavy bombing raid had destroyed the planes and the surrounding buildings. Describing how difficult it had been to decide what to do, Colin says emphatically, "the hierarchy got out before the raids" and stresses that they should have stayed: "we who were left behind, we had no idea what to do." Further he states "I was a sergeant, but I didn't know anything."[200] This lack of leadership is again referred to in his second interview, "nobody was calling the shots", the "officers had fled south ... they left in aircraft before the raid." [201] And later in that interview, "nobody seemed in control, we were just lost souls, you felt hopeless, nobody was calling the shots."[202] Therefore, when he tells the interviewer that he "got on his bike", and joined the civilians heading to Adelaide River after the second raid, this appears a sensible thing to do. He reiterates this point later in the interview, "When we saw half of Darwin going by and nobody was telling us what to do, that's when we decided to take what transport we had and get down to Adelaide River." It becomes clear that Colin left, on his own, before his comrades: "I

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[198] Lowe Commission Report, www.naa.gov.au/collection/fact-sheets/fs195.aspx serial number A431, p. 11 (on-line p. 56). This report is reproduced in Grose, *An Awkward Truth*.p. 230.

[199] Jaber Gubrium and James Holstein, *Handbook of Interview Research: context and method,* London, 2001, p. 719. Also Alice Morgan, *What is narrative therapy? An easy-to-read introduction,* Adelaide, Dulwich Centre Publishers, 2000, p. 10.

[200] Colin Horn interviewed, 23 September 2010.

[201] Colin Horn interviewed 30 September 2010.

[202] Ibid.

got ahead of them and was going to go down by myself."[203] Later, the others caught up with him in a truck and he "hung onto the truck on my bike." Colin was a sergeant in a leadership position, so it was important for him to structure his narrative so that his actions are likely to be viewed as sensible and appropriate rather than as those of a quitter running away from the enemy.

Max Kenyon was a guard at the same RAAF base as Colin and had been asleep after night shift when the raid began. His narrative initially focuses on digging out the bodies of the six men in the trench that took a direct hit. He had stayed in a trench during the second raid and after the raid had "picked up the pieces and tried to resume our duties." Twenty five minutes into the interview and after some prompting, Max responded to my speculation about an informal evacuation south. He said "a few blokes cleared out, it was chaotic, hard to describe." Later he said "there were a few blokes missing, we didn't know whether they had been killed or cleared out." But he is quick to reassert that he did not clear out, "we had to stay, but a lot of blokes deserted ... Some were caught up with and finished in the clink." Those who went bush "may have been maintenance crew". It "took a week to get everyone back again." He stayed on and rebuilt the aerodrome at Darwin. Whilst he confirms that they were left to their own devices he does not need to construct a scenario that culminates inevitably in the need for an evacuation south. His account centres on staying at your post and carrying on. This commentary suggests he derived his self-esteem from fulfilment of his duties, "we had a job to do." He spoke of improvising to repair pipes, dig trenches and "get things going again."[204]

Kingsley Allen, a photographer with No. 13 squadron, was also at the RAAF base on the Nineteenth, working in the darkroom. He heard the air raid siren just as the bombers were overhead and raced to put on his gas mask and get into a slit trench. Kinsley's narrative appears well rehearsed in that he had a set of ready anecdotes to support and enrich his explanation of the day's events. Although he had only been 18 years old at the time, he stressed that his training in the school army corps meant that he "knew about tactics." When the second raid alert sounded he realised it would concentrate on the aerodrome so

[203] Colin Horn 30 September 2010.
[204] Max Kenyon 31 January 2011.

he "went into the bush" rather than into the slit trench. After the raid he returned to camp and asked a squadron leader what to do. He told Kingsley he was to "go down the road a mile or two and gather there." Kingsley spent the night in the bush and returned the next day. He then spoke of later regrouping in Daly Waters and later again a couple of them were moved to Hughes Air Base. He makes no comment about any unauthorised evacuation. Kingsley's narrative paints the picture of a very thoughtful and confident eighteen year old who handled the two air raids calmly; there is no sense of chaos, panic or lack of leadership in his account. There is no need to account for or even acknowledge a hasty retreat south. Kingsley went on to have a business career and became a member of the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce. It is possible that his remembering of his orderly conduct is informed by his later station in life as a successful leader, a theme explored in detail below.[205]

Brave soldiers serve in distant lands: "Darwin didn't sell newspapers"

The interviews reveal that one of the issues these veterans were dealing with was an underlying feeling that their service within Australia was not valued as highly as overseas military service. Not being sent overseas like their peers was perceived as a lesser service, not the true Anzac way. Unsolicited, respondents recounted their disappointment at being posted to Darwin rather than abroad. They mention that service within Australia had diminished their worth in the public's mind. Within the first minute of his narrative about enlistment and training, Ken Davison explained, "to my disappointment my colleagues were posted to places like Singapore and far away places, I found myself posted to the RAAF station at Laverton to work in the signals office there." Later he was sent overland to Darwin. Further into the interview, Ken again mentioned that "being in Australia was not as important."[206] He had brothers in New Guinea about whom he believed his parents were more concerned.

George Warr's older brother had enlisted before him and was serving in the Middle East when George was sent to Darwin. He recalls that his parents had thought he was

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[205] Kingsley Allen interviewed by Valerie Bourke, Melbourne, 24 October 2010. The influence of present self-image on remembering is discussed in the section headed *Life trajectory and self-identity* below.
[206] Ken Davison, interviewed by Valerie Bourke, 12 April 2011.

exaggerating when he told them that he had had "500 Japanese just over my head trying to kill me."[207] The fact that newspaper reports had understated the size of the raid reinforced his view that his family worried about brother Robbie but not him. He was angry that he had not been sent to the Middle East.

> Anyone who had been in the Middle East, the papers blew it up ... Darwin didn't sell newspapers. Our army was all overseas. People left at home were only chaff, didn't rate much beside overseas service.

In the third interview, George again spoke of his "disappointment that he didn't go overseas", and his admiration for the Anzacs as heroes, he said he "felt he should go" because of the Anzacs and what these men he admired had done for their country. Fifty minutes into this last interview George reiterated his disappointment that he was not sent overseas.[208] "Two corporals and three sappers had to go to Darwin." The rest of the men were sent up to Rabaul.

The testimony of two respondents, Bill Foster and Cyril Molyneux, both members of the coastal artillery stationed at West Point, underscores this self-consciousness about remaining in Australia. Both were quick to mention that they had initially been sent overseas, north to Kavieng (in Papua New Guinea). "We went further north, but we didn't stay there long we were put back on the ship and sent to Darwin."[209] Three times Bill mentioned that he had been initially sent to Kavieng. People "thought not going overseas was soft". To emphasise this, Bill mentioned that "all the 'L' battery, dropped off at Rabaul, were captured and all lost."[210] Cyril also spoke of wanting "to go to the Middle East but they had too many lieutenants so he was sent up to Kavieng."[211] He also mentions that the other Special Force 'L', which but for the toss of a coin, he would have been in, were all captured or killed in Rabaul.[212]

Veteran unease about their Darwin service indicates the all-pervasive influence of a powerful shaping factor when veterans assess their wartime experience. This idea of a dominating

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[207] George Warr, 1 October 2010.
[208] George Warr, 8 October 2010.
[209] Bill Foster, interviewed by Valerie Bourke, Melbourne, 31 January 2011.
[210] Bill Foster.
[211] Cyril Molyneux, interviewed by Valerie Bourke, Melbourne, 29 January 2011.
[212] Ibid.

template that shapes memory features in the work of a number of researchers cited previously.[213] Timothy Ashplant's research takes this explanation further when he notes that "responses to war are formed in relation both to personal experience and to pre-existing narratives". He speculates that "pre-memories or templates", that is, existing cultural narratives or myths, can become "frames through which later conflicts are understood".[214] As the interactive model of memory explains, incoming information is "fitted" into existing neural schemas, even if this requires "reworking" of the original schema.[215] Ashplant highlights the universal nature of the relationship between these internalised accepted representations of the past, especially past military events, and present preferred male warrior self-images.[216]

For the Darwin veterans such a powerful priming template for framing military remembering was provided by the Anzac stereotype of stoic endurance and mateship at war.[217] Service overseas and travel to faraway places became part of this Anzac model of soldierly behaviour from its earliest incarnation. As Daley states, "Gallipoli is just more alluring because of its mournful narrative of sacrifice overseas".[218] The Anzac ideal privileges overseas service. The exclusion from the Returned Soldiers and Sailors Imperial League of Australia (RSSILA) of returned soldiers who had not seen 'Active Service' overseas, on its formation in 1916, emphasised this aspect of Anzac mythology. So integral was this overseas service component of the Anzac model of a warrior that it remained part of the eligibility criteria for RSSILA (later RSL) membership until 1983.[219] Not serving overseas relegated soldiers who had volunteered to the same status as conscripts who were permitted to serve only on the Australian mainland and her territories.[220] Being posted within Australia severely restricted Darwin veterans' ability to embrace fully this powerful warrior mythology. Self-consciousness about serving in Australia as opposed to overseas is apparent in the testimony of many Darwin

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[213] Roper, "Re-remembering the Soldier Hero", p. 183. See the background to these ideas in Dawson, *Soldier Heroes,* pp. 34-44; Thomson, *Anzac Memories,* pp. 8-11; Summerfield, "Culture and Composure", pp. 65-93.
[214] Ashplant, Dawson and Roper, *The Politics of War Memory,* pp. 34-36.
[215] Cubitt, *History and Memory,* p. 81; Summerfield, Culture and Composure, p. 68.
[216] Ashplant, *The Politics of War Memory,* pp. 34-36.
[217] Thomson, *Anzac Memories,* p. 128-142.
[218] Paul Daley, "Anzac: Endurance, Truth, Courage and Mythology", *Meanjin,* September, 2010, Vol.69:3, p. 45.
[219] Keith Rossi, librarian Anzac House, *email,* 22 March 2011.
[220] The *Citizens' Military Forces Act* of 1943 extended this area to enable conscripts to serve south of the equator in SE Asia.

veterans interviewed. Ken Davison, George Warr, Cyril Molyneux and Bill Foster's attempts to rationalise not initially serving overseas are driven by a need to protect their soldierly self-image, to maintain their status. They are stressing that it was not of their doing that they were not fighting overseas. They can thus achieve a measure of psychological composure.

The town that ran away

The Darwin bombing episode, as we have seen, has been shrouded in negative connotations since the day of the Japanese raid. At the time of the raids, the nature of the damage and casualties was down-played.[221] After the findings of the Lowe Commission of Inquiry became public in October 1945, newspaper reports of the findings concentrated on the lack of warning, the poor leadership shown by some in authority and the panic evacuation south. This was exemplified by newspaper sub headings such as, "Alien Stampede" and "Rush From Town".[222] As previously mentioned, ten years later, the qualified nature of Darwin's place in the nation's war history was further underscored by Paul Hasluck, then Minister for Territories, who referred to the nineteenth of February as "not an anniversary of national glory but one of national shame. Australians ran away because they didn't know what else to do".[223]

My research aimed to understand how the veterans interviewed have responded to the ambivalent and at times negative portrayal of behaviour of service personnel during the Darwin bombing raid in post war representations. Some respondents did express a wish "to set the record straight" in relation to some aspects of the reporting of the event. For instance some talked about understatement of the actual number of fatalities in the papers. The lack of effective leadership on the day, the failure of warning systems and the general lack of preparedness, were also issues about which they felt the public should have been made aware.

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[221] *The Sydney Daily Mail,* 20 February 1942, p. 1.

[222] *The Herald,* 6 October 1945, p. 1.

[223] *The Canberra Times,* 26 March 1955, p. 2. Report of Paul Hasluck's speech opening new Legislative Council Chambers in Darwin under headline, "Darwin's Day of Shame". *The Northern Territory News,*29 March 1955. P. 1.

A number of those interviewed employed defensive blame-attribution to explain what they perceived as unfavourable coverage of their efforts on the day. They were keen that any blame was sheeted home to those in authority, rather than staining the character of the average young recruit. This lack of atonement by those in authority mattered to them, and had rankled over the years. They had resolved any possible psychic discomfort arising from adverse public perceptions about post-bombing behaviour by transferring any culpability up the command chain. In this way these veterans have buffered themselves against any assault on their soldierly identities imposed by an unflattering public discourse.

Accordingly, Ken Davison explains that "the lack of leadership was [my] biggest disappointment with the RAAF in these early days". Ken thinks that this poor quality of officers was a consequence of the rapid expansion of the RAAF and to so many experienced officers being overseas in early 1942.[224] Theo Ferguson, who was stationed at East Point speaks disparagingly of 'pen-pushers' with no experience in charge of the air force.[225] Speaking of his own leadership training in the RAAF, Colin Horn, confesses, "I didn't know anything ... we had no idea what to do".[226] Israeli researcher Edna Lomsky-Feder found veterans of the 1973 Yom Kippur War had a similar tendency to express disappointment with leadership.[227] The end point in both cases is the construction of a narrative that depicts a past the veterans can live with.

Darwin veterans struggled to deal with accusations of looting in the wake of the raids. The Lowe Commission of Inquiry Report had stated:

> On the night of the 19th looting broke out in some of the business premises and sporadic looting occurred thereafter even to the time when the Commission was sitting in Darwin [three weeks later]. This looting was indulged in both by civilians and members of the Military Forces.[228]

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[224] Ken Davison, 12 April 2011.
[225] Theo Ferguson, 16 September 2010.
[226] Colin Horn, 23 September 2010.
[227] Edna Lomsky-Feder, "Life Stories, War, Veterans," p. 96. This dissatisfaction with their leaders replaced expressing any frustration with the actual war itself enabling them to support the ideology of the nation. The social assumptions justifying the war were "taken for granted" so any discontent could be safely channelled at the military leadership. "The hysterical commanders [who] don't command but lose control".
[228] Report of Lowe Commission of Inquiry, www.naa.gov.au , A 431, p. 11 (p. 56 on-line). Report reproduced Grose, *An Awkward Truth,* pp. 229-230.

My interviewees gave diverse responses in answer to probing about whether they had witnessed or heard of looting in the period after the civilian exodus. Some acknowledged and defended this behaviour as being necessary to deprive the enemy of useful resources in view of an imminent invasion. Theo Ferguson explained, "no use leaving it for the Japs, fans and things ... It was Rafferty's Rules" in Darwin. RAAF recruit, Ken Davison mentioned there was a, "lot of criticism about the Army's handling of the take over of civilian property." He talked about the need to get food out of fridges as the electricity was off. Prefacing his remarks with "I never did", he joked about the RAAF officer who was surprised when crockery from his Darwin home 'turned up' in the officers' mess.[229] The negative emphasis caused by representations of this post-raid commandeering led the veterans to seek to justify and defend their behaviour.[230] What might have been seen as poor form (at best) has been presented as a sensible pre-invasion strategy. The respondents' soldierly identities have been preserved by these ways of framing their recollections.

Life trajectory and self-identity

Initially, this research was underpinned by the premise that as the veterans progressed along life's trajectory the nature of their memories about the bombing would be affected by the fluctuating public perceptions relating to it. However, analysis of these narratives strongly suggests that a number of additional factors, both internal (psychological) and external (cultural), have also shaped the veterans' remembering. Michael Roper's research shows how the First World War memories of Lyndall Urwick changed as Urwick aged and his social status and ambitions grew, so that his recollections altered to suit his rising social standing.[231] His memories relating to the adequacy of senior officers transformed from dissatisfaction to admiration as his distance from the war increased and his own social ambitions rose. He identified with the officer class now that he was himself a leader.

Just as Urwick's narratives were tailored to suit his self-image at different life stages, so Cyril Molyneux's story may be seen to have been structured to affirm a self-identity that related to

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[229] Ken Davison, 12 April 2011.
[230] *The Sydney Morning Herald,* 6 October 1945, p. 1.
[231] Roper, "Re-remembering the Soldier Hero", p.183.

the social standing he had developed over a lifetime.[232] His testimony mentioned that he had had a "disciplined upbringing" in the Scotch College cadets and the militia. "Boys that went to those schools, it was the done thing to do something for your country." When war was declared he had "no hesitation in volunteering". By the time Cyril was sent to Darwin he was a lieutenant. Cyril's testimony paints a picture of Darwin before the raid as a "cut off frontier town" where drinking was rife and "troops became laid back" and there were "stacks of empty bottles in the streets." Cyril explained that he was responsible for running the West Point coastal artillery camp and that he was proud that there were no casualties on the day of the air raids. In contrast to the testimony of other respondents, Cyril states that, "there was no looting, what happened was the army took charge of the town, they took over all supplies that were in the shops, refrigerators and things that were needed." He is sympathetic to those in leadership positions on the day and explains away the reported panic and chaos. "The Post Office was destroyed ... this destroyed the command lines." Cyril was appointed Adjutant of Darwin Defenses four months after the bombing, a post he held for twelve months. He described his role as "restoring order to the fixed defenses." After the war Cyril played a prominent part in the life of the Berwick community in Melbourne's East. An oil portrait of him in his mayoral robes dominated the room in which the interview was conducted. Cyril's narrative cast himself in the role of leader and organizer, a role which would be expected of a man who became an active civic leader. Cyril remembers those instances and events that reflect and reinforce his present identity; as an upholder of order and discipline, as a leader.

Bill Foster, also a gunner in the same coastal artillery battery at West point, remembers the events involving the unit rather differently.[233] Speaking of his arrival in Darwin in August 1941, he referred to the mutiny that 'M' force staged when their ship docked. This standoff was triggered by the prospect of the battery being split up on disembarkation. Bill mentions the hostility and anger of the men in 'M' force and that they held out all day refusing to leave the ship until the administrator, Abbott, promised to have the dispersal of the unit reappraised. Only then did they disembark to the wharf. Though Cyril Molyneux was a

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[232] Cyril Molyneux, interviewed 29 January 2011.
[233] Bill Foster, interviewed 31 January 2011.
[233] Cyril Molyneux, interviewed 29 January 2011.
[233] Bill Foster, interviewed 31 January 2011.

member of the same 'M' force, his memories omit these details. He simply says, "'M' battery was split up." Bill did not find the camp as well organized as Cyril. "Slit trenches were full of water and snakes." Further, he recalls in reference to the day of the raid, "there was panic, we're all gunna be wiped out." He modifies this statement by adding, "but as well everyone was a bit relieved that something had happened." When asked about Cyril, Bill remembers him, not as his Commanding Officer, but as the person who put on wonderful musicals. He spoke at length about Cyril writing scripts for *The Little Mill Girl*.

Cyril had created a narrative that supported his post war persona of a community leader. Some aspects of his wartime experience, which did not serve this later persona, were not included in his narrative. Bill Foster, by contrast, lived out his post war life as a dental technician in the Western district town of Hamilton. He was a keen sportsman and took an active part in the sporting life of the community. His narrative of wartime Darwin highlighted the great basketball matches against the "Yanks" that attracted five to six thousand spectators and the boxing matches he had organized. These memories were congruent with his later-in-life identity and interests and to an extent freed him to express memories more critical of army life in Darwin at the time of the raid.

"Luck of the draw": survivor guilt

The veterans made unsolicited mention of the fact that they had been lucky and had only by chance survived the war. Ray Enright considered himself fortunate to be in Darwin; he pointed out that the "attrition rate for air crews over Europe" was very high.[234] Cyril Molyneux and Bill Foster both drew attention to their luck; they had been selected into Special 'M' force and ended up at West Point battery in Darwin. Initially it was intended that they be deployed further north. The sister unit, Special 'L' force was sent north to the islands, where "they were cut to pieces by the Japs, those who survived were put on the *Montevideo Maru* to go to Japan and the ship was sunk by a US torpedo."[235] Max Kenyon described it as "luck of the draw" that he had been on guard duty and sleeping in the guard house so was not in 'his' slit trench when the raid occurred. He had helped dig out six men

[234] Ray Enright, 19 October 2010.
[235] Cyril Molyneux, 29 January 2011.

when that trench took a direct hit.[236] Walter Keys, though distressed by seeing the chap shot on the *Kookaburra,* still thinks how lucky he was not to have been on the torpedoed *Centaur,* or any of the many ships sunk around the Australian coast.[237] Colin Horn thought himself lucky that he "just went to Darwin. Some who had been to the Middle East, their nerves were gone ... [they] had to be gotten out of the Air Force."[238] Theo Ferguson mentioned the chaps he had trained with at Queenscliff who had been put in "Lark" force and been captured and "suffered atrocities".[239] Gerry Griggs sadly pondered the fate of his mate, Darky, who had been burnt when the oil tanks were hit.[240] Boyd Tyner especially remembered his brother who was killed in Syria, "he was killed and I came back."[241]

Research suggests that this need to express concern for those who did not survive is an adaptive mechanism.[242] Robert Lifton writes of Vietnam war veterans, that "their struggle with guilt was strikingly related to their survival of their buddies' deaths".[243] The work of both Judith Herman and Martha Wolfenstein explains why many veteran survivors feel the need to include in their wartime narratives descriptions of their luck in surviving. Wolfenstein contends that speaking about discomforting guilt assists the narrator to gain control over the traumatic event. The disastrous happening can be made "more tolerable".[244]

"Bottled up" memories

Gerry Griggs kept quiet about his Darwin experiences, "kept it bottled up".[245] He was typical of the Darwin veterans interviewed; for decades they did not speak of their wartime experiences but a confluence of factors allowed them finally to release these caged stories.

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[236] Max Kenyon, 31 January 2011. This part of his testimony is examined in detail below.
[237] Walter Keys, 18 October 2010.
[238] Colin Horn, 30 September 2010.
[239] Theo Ferguson, 19 September2010.
[240] Perhaps confused with a later raid.
[241] Boyd Tyner, 25 October 2010.
[242] Robert Jay Lifton, "The Concept of the Survivor", in Joel Dimsdale, (Ed.) *Survivors, Victims, and Perpetrators, Essays on the Nazi Holocaust.*1980, Baskerville, Hemisphere Publishing, USA.p. 120
[243] Ibid.
[244] Martha Wolfenstein, *Disaster: A Psychological Essay,* London, Routledge, 1957, p. 139; Judith Herman, *Trauma and Recovery,* London, Basic Books, 1992, pp. 37-42. Herman explores the use of dialogue to help veterans reconnect with ordinary life.
[245] Gerry Griggs, 30 January 2011; Colin Horn, 30 September 2010.

Colin Horn said that "no one was interested; no one wanted to know anything about it".[246] All of the veterans confirmed that they had not talked about their Darwin bombing experiences to their families in the years immediately after the war. The release of the Lowe Commission report in October 1945 exposed the Darwin veterans to headlines of looting and desertion.[247] Was this unflattering public discourse the reason for veteran taciturnity? Or was this reticence part of a more widely shared postwar silence? Ken Davison summed up the experience of many of the interviewees, explaining that during the war they were trained not to talk about military activity for fear of aiding the enemy. After the war:

> there was no encouragement to think about Darwin, there had been a Royal Commission with a depressing outcome ... [we needed] to get on with our lives ... no big story to be told, no one was interested, no one has ever asked me about Darwin, I never talked to my wife about it, [back then] there was a lot of war things going on, we didn't know what was coming next.[248]

Similarly, Theo Ferguson did not talk much after the war, explaining that he had baby girls and thought it inappropriate to talk about his wartime experiences.[249] He confirmed George Warr's comment, that they only talked about Darwin to other veterans at reunions.[250] These reunion groups provided 'fictive kinship' groups for the veterans, operating as 'particular publics' for their stories.[251] They offered an empathetic audience that had shared their experiences. The veteran testimony suggests, that until the 1990s brought a change in the general public discourse surrounding the bombing, their families were not included fully in this particular circle of understanding.

Yet these veterans did all voluntarily come forward to speak to me about this wartime experience. After nearly seventy years they finally wanted to put their stories on the public record. Why did they want to speak about this day after all these years? In his oral history research with US survivors of the Second World War Battle of Okinawa, Rodney Walton found a similar reluctance to speak of war time experiences until decades after the event.

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[246] Colin Horn, 30 September 2010.
[247] *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Saturday 6 October 1945. And many other newspapers on 6 October 1945 see the Report of the Lowe Commission website cited above, for copies of headlines of the major papers on 6 October 1945.
[248] Ken Davison, 12 April 2011.
[249] Theo Ferguson,30 September 2010.
[250] Ibid, and George Warr interviewed 8 October 2010.
[251] Winter, *Forms of Kinship*,p. 40; Thomson, Anzac Memories in *Perks and Thomson*, p 245

Veterans interviewed often waited till late in life to recount their memories.[252] In addition to the 'getting on with your life' scenarios articulated by the veterans I interviewed, Walton also noted the influence of cultural factors on willingness to speak of wartime experiences. Walton's research confirmed the pattern of behavior exhibited by the veterans interviewed for this research. In the post war years, settling back into civilian life, getting a job or an education, a spouse, a car and a house and starting a family occupied veteran lives. Their 'baby boomer' children "sympathised with a counterculture which rejected many forms of militarism". Walton contends this environment discouraged many veterans from mentioning their wartime experiences in the 1960s and 1970s. This reticence was acerbated by the anti war sentiment generated by the Vietnam War in the 1970s and the subsequent US defeat. Walton hypothesises that in the United States a surge of patriotism developed under the Reagan presidency during the 1980s, enhanced by the ending of the Cold War and the defeat of Iraq in 1991. This created an ideological climate in which people were keen to hear veterans' stories.[253]

Did the increased Australian public focus on wartime reminiscence, and the revival of what Stanley designates "modern Nationalism" in the 1990s, create an environment in which veterans felt enabled to speak out about their experiences? [254] Were the Veterans who answered my call to share their war time recollections about the bombing raid on Darwin responding to this more enabling public discourse? The determined use of state-auspiced pilgrimages and memorializing associated with the fiftieth, sixtieth and now seventieth anniversaries, outlined in chapter III, has created arenas in which the Darwin Defenders group has been able to recuperate the 'Darwin story', now re-badged as part of the first shot in the honourable Battle for Australia. Begun in 1995 in Melbourne, the Darwin Defenders group promotes awareness of the Darwin story. It successfully argued for the striking of a Darwin Service medal in the 1990s and published two volume collection of wartime anecdotes in 2005, as well as providing regular speakers for schools and sponsoring the erection of memorials dedicated specifically to those who died serving in Darwin. The group organises regular cross-service reunions and assists Darwin veterans make the long trip back

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[252] Walton, "Memories from the Edge of the Abyss", p. 21.
[253] Ibid.
[254] Stanley, *Invading Australia*, p. 235.

to commemorations services in Darwin. It has provided an organized voice for those who served in Darwin and enabled once "bottled up" memories to be recounted and shared.

Max Kenyon 're-remembers' the bombing

Comparison of a diary entry made on the day of the raid, and two interviews made respectively fifty and seventy years later by bombing veteran, Max Kenyon, enable further investigation of the internal and external agents acting on memory processes.

Discrepancies between these three narratives demonstrate not only the partiality of our recollections but also the selectivity of remembering. As Roper showed with his analysis of Lyndall Urwick's changing versions of his wartime encounters, there is a strong relationship between the remembered experience of war and the "context of its narration".[255] The differences between Max's initial diary entry and later retellings confirm the findings of historian Fred Allison.[256] Allison contrasted a soldier's two accounts of the same event made thirty-four years apart, and found that the rendition of the event was shaped both by temporal distance from the incident and by the circumstances of its retelling. Allison found the initial version was brief, to the point and impassive; the marine tries to give a factual 'for the record' account. The later oral history interview contains more detail, a fully developed story; actions taken are justified, and an emotional dimension is added.

Max's verbatim diary account of the Japanese bombing raid on Darwin was written on the 19 February a few hours after the bombing.[257]

> Well, we copped it. Bombed us and machine gunned us. Hangers gone. Oil tanks and I think Vesteys too. As I write this I can still hear ammo exploding in hangars. Bullets through our hut and shrapnel on the beds, Boy was I shaking. High level bombing very accurate over harbor. Dive bombing on aerodrome. High level bombing over aerodrome half hour later- about fifty planes. One bomb landing 25 feet from our trench. We take to bush and sleep for the night with Jack Browning and Bert Darnell.

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[255] Roper, *Re-remembering the Soldier Hero,* p. 181.
[256] Fred Allison, 'Remembering a Vietnam War Firefight' in Robert Perks & Alistair Thomson (eds.),*The Oral History Reader, 2nd ed.,* Abingdon,Routledge,1998, pp. 221-243.
[257] The excerpts were later typed up.

This is a concise business-like entry perhaps penned late on the day of the raid. Its intention is to outline the facts of what happened. It is only briefly embellished with a reference to Max's emotional state and includes no speculations of any sort. The subsequent laconic entry for the 20 February, "Quiet day. Resumed duties" underlines the succinct, unreflective nature of these written accounts made 'under fire'. Max's next recorded account of the day was made in 1992 when he was in Darwin to attend the fiftieth anniversary commemorative activities, was interviewed by an ABC reporter.[258] The transcript of the first four minutes of this ten minute interview comprises Max's account of his experiences during the raid:[259]

> As far as I can remember the first raids commenced on the 19th February, I'd been on guard duty the previous night and came off duty about 8 o'clock in the morning, went to mess for breakfast, came back to the hut, we'd had a bunch of mail sent to us, we sat down and sorted the mail out and, ah were reading most of that, when one of the fellows called up from down below, "there are a lot of planes in the sky". A couple of us went out and looked up and said, "they're certainly not our planes, we haven't got that many!" And ah, then they, we heard the bombs falling on the Harbour and on Darwin and we suddenly realised that it was a Japanese raid and then the siren on the old *Platypus* sounded and ah, we took off and got in the trench not far from the hut behind the guard room and sat there while they dive-bombed the hangers and machine gunned the area. The main recollection I have, we couldn't understand how steeply the dive-bombers came upon us, came down almost vertically. That's just the impression I had at the time. Finally it ceased. It commenced just before 10 o'clock in the morning and ah, when that ceased, we went back to the hut which they had ruined of course and ah, we ah, wondered what we were going to do from then on. Before we could make up our minds the second raid occurred and ah, that was it. All I can remember of that really was that two flights of bombers, 27 in each flight, crossed over the drome and that was about as much as I can recall then. After that they said we can't live on the drome in case they come back, so we went across the road from the guard house into the bush, set up a camp there and stayed there for about three nights. But we still came back to the guard house on duty.

This retelling provides a factual and, as with the diary entry, chronological account of the day. It is devoid of emotion, lacking even the young man's bravado acknowledgement of fear- "boy, was I shaking"-evident in the written account. There are noteworthy differences between the two versions of the day. The 1992 account makes no mention of the oil tanks or

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[258] http://trove.nla.gov.au/work/38202688. The Northern Territory library supplied a CD (now held by the researcher) of this interview made from a reel to reel tape recording. No details of the interviewer or the circumstances of the interview (other than the date and Max's name) were recorded. ABC archives has been unable to furnish any additional information about the recording or to supply their own transcripts. This interview was most likely 'off the cuff', in response to a request from a local ABC reporter who had came along to record the commemoration events. It is probable that Max and other veterans approached would not have had time to prepare for such an interview and Max may not have taken his transcribed wartime diary with him to Darwin. These transcripts include non lexical expressions "ah," and other discourse markers.

[259] Transcript made by Valerie Bourke from the recording, March 2012.

Vestey's meat works (by then converted to barracks), being hit, rather it describes bombs falling on the harbor and Darwin. This re allocation of bomb damage is possibly influenced by later popular accounts of the raids which make clear that the oil tanks were not damaged in the first raids and focus on descriptions of the burning harbor and ruined government buildings in Darwin. The account also reflects the possible influence of later publications in the detail of the number of planes in formation, the *Platypus's* siren and even in the oft' repeated humour, "they're not ours, we haven't got that many".[260] Both accounts are definite about the dive bombers and about the need to set up camp that night in the bush. The fifty years between these two re-tellings have enabled the fleshing out of the original hastily written diary entry. However congruities between the accounts support research relating to 'archival' memories formed under stressful conditions.[261] The terror engendered by the screaming dive bombers, the claustrophobic confinement of the trenches and the night of trepidation in the bush waiting for the expected invasion, have left persistent, consistent memories, subject to little revision down the years.[262]

Whilst a brief written entry is predictably different from a verbal account given fifty years later, my research also found marked differences between the two verbal accounts of this event given, respectively fifty and seventy years, after the event. These differences expose the varied influences operating on oral history testimony; on how narratives of the past are constructed.

In 2011, twenty years after the ten minute 1992 ABC interview, Max gave a more developed version of the bombing raid. Here is a small segment of a sixty minute oral history interview conducted by me as part of this research project. (My questions are indicated in italics).[263]

> If we go to the first air-raid, I was on guard duty all night, I'd come back to the guard house to have a sleep and ah, in the morning when I woke up, ah, at 9.50 am was the first raid on Darwin on the airstrip.
> *What was your first inkling there was a raid?*
> I didn't know there was a raid coming, or a raid was going to happen, I was in the guard house, I was asleep in bed I got up got dressed collected me gear to go back to the hut, and

[260] Powell, *The Shadow's Edge,* p. 80; Mulholland, *Darwin Bombed,* p. 92; Lockwood, *Australia's Pearl Harbour,* p. 97; Grose, *An Awkward Truth,* p. 90.
[261] Hoffman and Hoffman, "Memory Theory: Personal and Social", p. 281.
[262] Walton, "Memories from the Edge of the Abyss:", p. 24; Schacter, *The Seven Deadly Sins of Memory,* p. 187.
[263] Transcript made by Valerie Bourke of an interview with Max Kenyon 31 January 2011.

I got as far as the door on the guard house and an aeroplane flew past, down low, oh yeah, it almost, you feel as though you can touch it, it just went whew and I could see the bloke in it, I could recognize he was a Japanese, that was the first inkling we had of the raid.
And no alarm?
There was no alarm that sounded at that stage, I just stood at the door, he went fast, then someone said gee that's a jap, I can still see this bloke standing [not discernible] said Jesus!

The additional material about the low flying plane passing by the guardroom door makes this a more dramatic story. Accounts of the raid published in the 1990s and after did describe the Japanese planes as being low enough to recognize pilots.[264] It is possible that Max has either incorporated such descriptions into his own narrative or that these accounts have reminded him of actual details of the day. Max had had some weeks to prepare for my interview and had gathered together his diary and newspaper clippings about the day of the bombing. He had come forward to tell his story of this day and recognised the value of enhancing it with interesting details, such as the sound of the Japanese plane flying past the guardhouse. These details were not included in the earlier Darwin ABC interview, for which he may not have had any time to prepare. The 1992 interviewer doubtless asked if any of the veterans would be willing to tape a short interview about their experiences in Darwin before they headed south. Max's 2011 story is pitched to his audience, the researcher, an enthusiastic and interested listener and, via the recording, to his family and to the wider audience of the Australian War Memorial archives.

Max also changes his 2011 narrative when describing what happened after the second raid.

Yes but they did come back, so what happened how did you know when they were coming back was there an alarm?
Ah well they got a bit more organized and there was a warning siren.
Did you go back into your trench or did you run into the bush this time ,some others I've spoken to went into the bush?
No we went into the trench. Hard to explain, my posting and my job was more or less on guard duties and those sort of things, these other fellows might have been mechanics or maintenance crew or something, they had their trenches all set up wherever they were working but as a guard you were put, you could be anywhere.
What happened when those bombers finally left?
We picked up the pieces and tried to resume our normal work or duties.
You didn't have any instructions to go bush and fend for yourself?
No, we didn't even have a hut to go back to ... I don't know where I slept that night, I tried to remember that but it's gone.
Were you aware that a number of the airforce personnel had gone bush?

[264] Grose, *An Awkward Truth,* p.116; Alford *Darwin's Air War,* p.19; Lockwood, *Australia Under Attack,* 2005, p. 84.

Ah yes, I went across, the airfield was there, the railway line was there, the road to Darwin was there, now if you got out of here and crossed the road , crossed railway line, you were almost in a swamp area which was good cover. *Did many air force personnel go south to Adelaide River?*
Ah, no not really, I don't think so, we didn't, quite a lot of escort work to the south, we weren't to go too far. They weren't allowed to go very far. A few blokes cleared out. It was so chaotic, hard to describe.
So that night what would you have been doing, did they provide a meal?
No we went back to huts but all walls were gone, cleaned away the asbestos sheet and tried to get some sleep. Can't remember a meal. We had a meal, [the] bottom part of mess hut [was] not destroyed. Just a case of grab what you could, no organized meals for a couple of days really.

The confusion over what had happened on the night of the raid evident in Max's later interview is illuminating. His diary entry for the nineteenth mentions one night spent in the bush and the 1992 ABC interview has him staying three nights in the bush. As with other veterans interviewed, it was important that Max establish himself as separate from those who "ran away" or "went bush". This unauthorized retreat to the bush had been one of the stains on the character of the RAAF personnel detailed in the findings of the Lowe Commission. By the 2011 retelling of the day's events, Max has firmed up his self-identity as one who stayed at his post no matter what. He has moved away from any imputation of desertion or lack of discipline that a night in the bush might insinuate.
As with Allison's Vietnam veteran, Max articulates more fully his emotional involvement with the event in this latest retelling.

So what did you do?
Went for a trench.
You all had an allocated trench?
Yeah six of us in it. Six blokes killed in a trench a few yards away, yeah a slit trench with about we six of us in it and, ah, there we stayed while the raid went and a trench from about here to those trees away with another six blokes in it got a direct hit with a bomb, all killed.
They're the names on this piece of paper here?
They're all mates.
That was in that very first raid?
There was no alarm, there was me standing at the guard room, I can still see it, something I'll never forget I suppose, I just talked to the blokes sitting in the guard room the plane went weeh, just like that, he was going past there and I was sitting here.
You were up high? Sort of.
So what happens next you were in the slit trench?
Yes six of my mates were killed, If I hadn't been on guard duty that night and sleeping in the guard house, I would have been in this other trench where these six blokes were killed, they were all mates, lived in the same hut and er, so I, just luck of the draw, so anyway.

There follows a sentence about the damage to ships in the harbour which Max must have learnt about from other sources after that day. My next question takes Max back to the trench casualties.

> *Just going back to your experiences on that day did you, you were in the slit trench, you stayed there till that first raid was over and then what happened, you would have come out surveyed all terrible damage?*
> Well we started to dig these other six blokes out of this trench which was hit, which was not a very pleasant experience. And heck, I don't know what we did after that we just sat round I think, hoped they wouldn't come back.

Twenty minutes later in the interview Max again reflects upon the fate of the six airmen and on his close escape.

> We started to try to dig these fellows out, but of course, there was no hope of getting out alive which upset me a bit, they were all fellows I knew, just because I was on duty, guard duty, I missed out, so you know.

Neither Max's diary nor his 1992 interview mention the death of the six mates with whom he has shared a hut, or his distress at helping dig out their bodies. In the later interview he has reflected on the day and has considered his good fortune at being spared, he has seen the fortuitous nature of his survival.

Published versions of the day mention four or five RAAF men being killed in the trench during the first raid, though often six men in total are said to have died at the base in that first raid.[265] It is possible that these accounts have become incorporated into Max's own memories of the day. Perhaps more likely, as the detail rings true, in the years since 1992, with increased publicity about the bombing raid, especially at annual commemorations, Max has been reminded of the memory of the trench deaths and included them in his narration because it adds depth and value to his story.[266] Also, as noted in chapter I, the interviewee will sometimes shape his narrative to suit his preconceived notions of what the audience would want to hear.[267] During the war servicemen were discouraged from mentioning casualties in their correspondence, so it is not unusual for the brief diary entry to omit the trench deaths. Similarly Max may have considered that speaking of the deaths of his mates

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[265] Powell, *The Shadow's Edge, Australia's Northern War,* p. 86, "Six lives lost at the base in the first raid"; Alford, *Darwin's Air War, 1942-1945. An Illustrated History,* P. 20, states four men killed in trench at RAAF base; Grose, *An Awkward Truth,* says seven were lost at the base but does not specify where. P. 189; Ruwoldt, *Darwin's Battle for Australia,* pp.152, 171, 275 all mention deaths in trench at RAAF base, but four not six.
[266] Chapter III has outlined the recent plethora of publications since the late 1980s, recounting the story of the raid.
[267] Yow, "Do I like Them too Much", in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson, pp. 54-72.

in the 1992 commemorative compilation radio interview was not appropriate. However the chance, perhaps the last chance, to tell his account of the day in a longer interview to be recorded for his family and for posterity may have encouraged inclusion of the fate of his less fortunate mates.

The work of a number of researchers suggests other possible explanations for Max's addition of the details about his chance survival and the deaths of his mates. Was this stressful memory unavailable to Max in his earlier recollections? Work by Van Der Kolk and Van Der Hart suggests that some experiences are so overwhelming that they cannot be integrated into existing mental frameworks or existing schema; they are instead dissociated, not added into the neural network in a conscious way.[268] They conclude that, to be integrated, these experiences need to be reproduced in words. Writing down or talking about the traumatic experience may well enable even such dichotomous life threatening experiences that have been buried in the sub conscious to be remembered.[269] The 1992 fiftieth anniversary celebrations gave Max perhaps his first chance to construct a narrative about all the events of that day. Conceivably this interview began a process for Max that eventually enabled the remembering of this stressful experience?

It may also be that shifting understandings of and attitudes towards so-called traumatic experiences during the last three decades have made it easier for Max to recover these more stressful experiences of the nineteenth. Fassin and Rechtman have analysed these changing public approaches to and perceptions of trauma. They noted that until 1980, when a clinical description of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) was developed, stress or symptoms of trauma were widely viewed as signs of character weakness, and as such, a victim responsibility, or else as they were viewed as attempts to gain benefit involving patient complicity.[270] They argue that the re-evaluation of stress away from being a charge on the

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[268] Bessel Van Der Kolk and Onno Van Der Hart, The Intrusive Past: The Flexibility of Memory and the Engraving of Trauma, in Cathy Caruth (Ed),*Trauma: Explorations in Memory,* Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, 1995. pp.158-182. He has reviewed research on stress and, what since the 1980s has been called post traumatic stress disorder, using knowledge of the reconstructive model of memory.

[269] Van Der Kolk and Van Der Hart, "The Intrusive Past", p. 167.

[270] Didier Fassin and Richard Rechtman, *The Empire of Trauma,*(Trans. Rachel Gomme), Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2007, p. 276.

individual is related to holocaust victims beginning to tell their stories throughout the seventies

Hamilton evokes broader reasons for this shift in public sensibility. She relates it to social changes taking place in Australian society in the post war decades. [271] Growing affluence, rising levels of education, disillusionment with war and increasing democratisation of society have led to an enhanced evaluation of an individual's life. Indicative of this change has been a heightened interest in individual remembering, and personal war stories.[272] The public has become accepting of and sympathetic to the symptoms of trauma.

These researchers confirm that present social mores or public discourse can shape the way our memory and, more broadly, our minds work. "The truth is trauma does not lie in the psyche, the mind or the brain, but in the moral economy of contemporary societies".[273] Researchers, Katherine Hodgkin and Susannah Radstone have pointed out that rather than the outcome of a stressful experience, trauma is better described as a "product of the inner workings of the mind" that has been shown to be sensitive to the cultural environment in which it occurs.[274] Thus a shift in the public discourse or cultural environment about traumatic experience has possibly enabled the lifting of self imposed restrictions that may previously have curtailed veteran narratives about stressful wartime experiences. Max could now become effusive about the more stressful aspects of his experience because by 2011 it had become more acceptable to talk about trauma.

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[271] Hamilton, "Sale of the Century", p. 141

[272] Ibid. p. 141.

[273] Didier and Rechtman, *The Empire of Trauma*, p. 77.

[274] Katherine Hodgkin and Susannah Radstone, (eds.) *Contested Pasts: The Politics of Memory*, London, Routledge, 2003, p.97.

Conclusion: making sense of war memories

The testimonies of these veterans, given seventy years after the event, confirm the pervasive influence of public narratives. A shifting perception of what is stressful and what constitutes acceptable soldierly behavior may well have influenced Max Kenyon to finally speak of finding the bodies of his dead mates. The growing curiosity about individual veteran's war experiences, within a culture of increasing militarisation of Australian history since the last decade of the twentieth century, has at last provided a positive environment for veterans to come forward to share their war experiences with the wider public.

George Warr and Ken Davison, in particular, had felt their service in Darwin was not viewed as being as worthy as that of those who were posted overseas. However during the last two decades a shifting conception of what constitutes an acceptable soldierly image may have inclined these men to tell their Darwin story. George and Ken became foundation members of the Darwin Defenders organisation, working throughout the second half of the 1990s to gain greater recognition for those who served in Darwin and endured the 19 February air raid.

The composure paradigm explained in chapter I, can be seen at work in the various versions of the Darwin bombing that populate veteran survivor narratives. Seeking composure, Cyril Molyneux and Kingsley Allen crafted narratives that suited their post-war personas as civic leaders. These contained none of the chaos and post bombing lawlessness described by lower ranked men such as Bill Foster who, as well as mentioning a minor pre-raid mutiny, had memories of the day that were both critical of the poor management and the lack of leadership that ensued in the period after the bombing. Colin Horn's version of events painted a picture of a unruly retreat south: a version that allowed him a degree of psychic comfort as he, along with many RAAF men, had participated in an unauthorised withdrawal to Adelaide River. Nearly all the veterans with 'psychic safety' vouched for the lack of proper warning of the raid.

The veteran recollections examined here reveal the influence of the present as well as the past. They underline the adaptive, though not fictional, nature of memory as the veterans

construct a past that is useful to them in in the present. The very act of taking part in these formal interviews highlights the 'life stage' imperatives that are a major influence on veteran willingness, after seventy years, to finally put their story on the public record.

Employing a constructive model of memory, the composure paradigm, has proven to be a useful analytical tool for making sense of these complex veteran narratives. This model accounts for the influence of external cultural scripts as the veterans seek to locate their experiences within broader narratives. The value of distinguishing between 'general publics' and 'particular publics' is demonstrated by the emergence of the Darwin Defenders group which, as well as affirming the Darwin survivor's experiences, has provided an 'agency of articulation' for the incorporation of these experiences, via the newly emergent Battle for Australia story into a wider Second World War story. Additionally, composure theory foregrounds the psychological factors that interweave to produce the fabric of these veteran narratives. It explains the need for individual veterans to subconsciously choose from the range of feasible narratives which will nurture their present self-identities.

However, the Max Kenyon case study, illustrates that a more nuanced understanding of the composure paradigm is needed to fully explain the complexity of veteran constructions of the past. Discrepancies between his versions of events, over time, draw attention to the additional influences at work on individual remembering that emanate from the traumatic nature of the event itself. To accommodate this trauma, Max employed a number of strategies across the decades, to achieve a sense of composure.

This study has highlighted how in the decades that followed the Second World War, Australians changed their perspective on war-time remembrance in ways that facilitated veteran willingness to share their memories. During this period, a sense of indifference about military narratives was replaced with the creation, both with official connivance and individual curiosity, of an all-pervasive national narrative based on an updated, more inclusive, Anzac mythology. Soldier remembrances of their personal war experiences became more socially-valued and these decades also saw changing attitudes towards what constitutes acceptable soldierly reaction to the stresses of their war experiences. The

ambiguous and unflattering representations of the performance of service personnel were swept up in more positive portrayals of war service in general.

This study suggests further research opportunities. How have the Darwin Defenders group articulated with the powerful Victorian branch of the RSL; what have been the points of contestation? There is scope for a more comprehensive study of the development and operation of the Darwin Defenders group. More generally, what are the commonalities with other veteran 'fictive groups'? What factors lead to the formation of these groups and how have these organisations worked to secure a place for 'their' veterans' versions of the past within a landscape of an ever-evolving national wartime narrative and changing social attitudes to soldering? What factors enabled them to become "closer to the microphone?"[275]

Future research might also explore the part that official Committees of Inquiry, exemplified by the Lowe Commission, have played in the way veterans have, over time gradually, made sense of their wartime experiences. The Chilcot Inquiry into the participation of Britain in the US-lead intervention in Iraq is a case in point.

My research for this dissertation suggests there is scope for a comprehensive survey and analysis of perspectives on the Second World War in Australian history textbooks during the post war decades. The part this particular means of cultural diffusion has played in the creating and re-creating of a national past warrants analysis.

Oral History is by its nature intrusive. This research owes a debt to the veteran interviewees who came forward, seventy years after the event, to share their poignant and reflective accounts of that terrible day. To an extent there is (and always will be), a tension between respecting the memories of these individuals 'as told' and the need to use our knowledge of the creative and partial nature of memory to interpret their narratives. Studying the consistencies and inconsistencies revealed in these veteran testimonies enables the historian to gain insights into the influences shaping remembering.

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[275] Winter, *War and Remembrance,* p. 30.

As Mark Roseman explains in his analysis of a Holocaust survivors' testimony, it is not disrespectful to point out discrepancies in versions of the past, rather it "helps illuminate the very processes of memory we are seeking to understand."[276]

[276] Mark Roseman, "Surviving Memory: Truth and inaccuracy in Holocaust testimony", in Perks and Thomson (eds), *The Oral History Reader*, p. 242.

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APPENDICES

MONASH University

School of Philosophical, Historical and International Studies
Faculty of Arts

Explanatory Statement

Title: Remembering the 1942 Japanese Bombing of Darwin: Influence of Prevailing Public Discourse

This research involves interviewing survivors of the 1942 Japanese bombing of Darwin.

This information sheet is for you to keep.

My name is Valerie Bourke and I am conducting a research project with Professor Barbara Caine in the Department of Philosophical, Historical and International Studies towards a Master of Arts at Monash University. This means that I will be writing a thesis which is the equivalent of a several magazine articles, (about 20,000 words).

It is possible that as a result of this research I might also publish articles in Oral History Journals, local and or regional papers and newsletters of various relevant organizations such as Veteran Affairs, the RSL or the Australian War Memorial. Your name would not be used in any such articles without your permission.

Why you have been asked to participate?

I have invited you and other survivors of the Japanese Bombing of Darwin on the 19th February 1942 to be involved in this research project. I am grateful that you have indicated your willingness to share your memories of this event.
I have placed advertisements in local and regional newspapers and contacted relevant Survivor organizations such as the Darwin Defenders and various RSL clubs to assist me make contact with other survivors.

The purpose of the research is to investigate the way this event has been remembered over the sixty-eight years since its occurrence. Your recollections and those of other survivors will assist greatly to uncover any change in the way this event has been perceived over time.

Possible benefits to you.
Interviewees such as yourself very often find that having the opportunity to talk about an aspect of their life is a positive experience. It is interesting for people in general to realise the part played by the wider society in the way events are remembered.

What does the research involve?

The study involves audiotaping of a semi-structured interview. A general outline of the questions will be sent to you ahead of the interview date. A transcript may be compiled of parts of this interview. A CD of the interview and any summaries or transcripts made will be sent.

How much time will this research take?

This interview should take up to three hours in total, but no more than *one hour* in at any one session. Any change to this total would be by mutual agreement.

I do not anticipate that you will experience any discomfort during this interview:
This will be an opportunity to tell your story of an important historical event to an interested and trained listener and to make a recording for yourself and if you wish, for posterity. You will not be pushed to answer questions you find too personal or intrusive. However painful and/distressing memories may come to the surface. You are able to stop the interview so that you can compose yourself if emotion overtakes you. If discomfort is too great the interview will be discontinued. I will make available to you appropriate counselling services should you after this experience wish to make use of their services.
The VVCS-Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service provides free professional counselling services

Australia wide. After hours the contact number is 1800 011 046

Your local service is:

Can I withdraw from the research?

Being in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. However, if you do consent to participate, subject to the choices you make and the conditions you set on the Consent form you should only withdraw prior to the recording of the interview and the approving of the recording (CD.) and interview summary.

Confidentiality

If you choose to remain anonymous, no reference to your name will remain on the recorded interview or in the transcript. The CD cover will specify the date of the interview and that you were a survivor, whether you were service or civilian and your age at the time of the interview.
It should be noted that: the content of your account of events can sometimes lead to the interviewee being identified and anonymity cannot be totally guaranteed with an audio recording as voices may be recognisable to a person of you acquaintance.

You may choose to be named as the author of the interview. Many interviewees are happy to have their name" on the record". The Consent form invites you to choose whether you wish to be named or not.

Whichever level of anonymity you choose will be respected in any other publication that may arise from this research. This might be a local paper article or the Oral History Association Journal.

Storage of data

Storage of the data collected will adhere to the University regulations and kept on University premises in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet for 5 years. If you sign the "permission for use" form section that allows for the keeping of a permanent archive record, then the recording (CD) will be donated to the appropriate public archive after this period and be available for other researchers. See consent form.

Results

You will be posted a recording of our interview (CD format) and a summary of any transcript made.

If you would like to contact the researchers about any aspect of this study, please contact the Chief Investigator:	If you have a complaint concerning the manner in which this research <Remembering the Japanese Bombing of Darwin. project number here> is being conducted, please contact:
Professor Alistair Thomson [redacted] PH[redacted]	Executive Officer Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC) Building 3e Room 111 Research Office Monash University VIC 3800 Tel: +61 3 9905 2052 Fax: +61 3 9905 3831 Email: muhrec@adm.monash.edu.au

MONASH University

Consent Form for Survivors of the Japanese Bombing of Darwin

Title: **Remembering the 1942 Japanese Bombing of Darwin: Influences of prevailing public discourse**

NOTE: This consent form will remain with the Monash University researcher for her records

I agree to take part in the Monash University research project specified above.
I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the *Explanatory Statement,* which I will keep for my records. I understand that the researcher is investigating the changes in the way this event has been perceived and remembered over time.
I understand my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw my consent up until I have received and approved of the interview CD and any transcript made.

Procedures relevant to your data collection

I agree to be interviewed by the researcher ☐ YES ☐ NO

I agree to allow the interview to be audio-taped ☐ YES ☐ NO

I agree to make myself available for a further interview if required ☐ YES ☐ NO

I understand that I will be given the recording of the interview and a summary of any transcript made for my approval before it is included in the write up of the research.

Procedures relevant to the storage and ownership of interview data.

I understand that any transcripts or audiotapes made of my interview will be available for use by the researcher and then securely archived within the School of Philosophical, Historical and International Studies at Monash University (SOPHISMU) for five years.

I AGREE to have my contribution made identifiable ☐ YES ☐ NO

I agree that after five years at the discretion of the SOPHISMU any transcripts or audio tapes made of my interview may be donated to the Australian War Memorial Research Centre for the use of future researchers. ☐ YES ☐ NO

I understand that anonymity cannot be completely guaranteed with audio recordings as voices may be recognisable. ☐ YES ☐ NO

Subject to these conditions, I hereby assign the copyright of my interview contribution to the School Of Philosophical, Historical and International Studies at Monash University.

Participant's name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

School of Philosophical, Historical and International Studies
Faculty of Arts

MONASH University

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Date

To:

Dear

My name is Valerie Bourke I am a Masters student at Monash University undertaking research about survivor's memories of the bombing of Darwin on February 19th 1942. I would like to meet with you and record an interview about this event

Below is an outline of the areas about which I would like you to share your memories.

- What you were doing in Darwin, your role in the days and weeks before the attack
- What life was like in Darwin in those days, social life, weather, how people felt about being in Darwin, knowledge of the Japanese threat.
- The actual day of the bombing, what happened, when?
- How many raids were there that day?
- What places were hit and what did the survivors do?
- Who helped the injured? Did you realise the extent of the raid at the time?
- What happened in the immediate aftermath of the raid? What did you see? What were you told?
- Did you evacuate to Adelaide River? Describe how you travelled south, what you and others took with you?
- Have you talked about this event often since the war?
- Did you feel that you could comfortably talk about this event to your family, the public in general, other veterans?
- Are you a member of any reunion group ? For example for your battalion or more recently the Darwin Defenders group
- Over the years have you felt that this event (the bombing of Darwin) has been given sufficient recognition in the history of WWII?
- Do you feel there is any need to "put the record straight"? If so why is this needed to be done?
- Have you been distressed by the lack of recognition this event received(i) at the time,(ii) at the end of the war,(iii) throughout the last fifty years until the mid nineties?
- Do you think there has been sufficient public recognition of the magnitude and severity of this attack since the Darwin defenders was formed?

An oral history interview should be an enjoyable occasion. It is an opportunity for you to talk about your own historical experiences with a skilled and interested listener, and to make a recording for yourself and, if you wish, for posterity. The interview is likely to take between one and one and a half hours, and would be recorded at a comfortable place of your choosing, which might be your own home but could be another place such as a private room in a local library. If at any point the interview causes you discomfort or distress it will be discontinued if that is your wish. If you agree to be interviewed I will make a copy of the interview for you to keep and a summary or transcript of the interview.

After you receive this introductory letter I will contact you by phone to discuss arrangements for the interview. Please note that if you prefer not to participate in an interview I will respect your decision.

Please also note that you be able to determine the use of your interview by completing a 'consent form' in which you can list any conditions for use. The form will ask you to give permission for me to use the interview as a resource for my Master thesis. The interview will contribute to society's historical understanding of this event. You will also be able to choose whether or not the interview might be offered for permanent storage in an historical archive (such as the Monash Archive, the State Library or the Migration Museum), subject to any

conditions of use you might wish to impose. I will discuss that option with you. If you decide that you do not wish your interview to be offered to an archive then it will be destroyed after five years storage in the School of Philosophical, Historical and International Studies. You will, of course, retain your own copy of the interview.

I hope that you will agree to participate in this oral history interview. At the interview you can discuss any questions or concerns with me. If you would like to contact me before or after the interview to discuss any aspect of this project, or if you have a complaint concerning the manner in which it has been conducted, then please do use the contact details listed below:

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study, please contact the Chief Investigator:	If you have a **complaint** concerning the manner in which this research **project** is being conducted, please contact:
Professor Alistair Thomson **Email** [redacted] **Tel:** [redacted]	Executive Officer Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC) Building 3e Room 111 Research Office Monash University VIC 3800 Tel: +61 3 9905 2052 Email: muhrec@adm.monash.edu.au

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely

Valerie Bourke
[redacted]

Biographical details of interviewees

Name	Date interviewed	service	story
Kingsley Allen Service number 40645. Born 1923.	24 Oct.2010 (recorded phone interview) Alerted by Vet Affairs newsletter.	RAAF 13 squadron Photographer. *He was unable to keep an appointment for a face to face interview and so I set up a recorder and completed a phone interview.*	Born and grew up in Melbourne. He joined RAAF at 18 though he knew his poor eyesight would prevent him training for air crew. He saw a poster asking for photographers and enlisted. In Darwin for five months before the raid. Was warned about planes minutes before and sheltered in slit trench. Went into bush during second raid where he spent night returning to base the next day. Moved down to Hughes RAAF base within days. Did not see any more action in the war but served at various bases in Australia. After the war he returned to a life of business in Melbourne living in Toorak where he had grown up. He at one stage was president of the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce. He has not attended any reunions of men who were stationed in Darwin.
Ken Davison Service number 18538 Born 1921	12 April. 2011 Office bearer in Darwin Defenders Association (I was recommended to him by Norm Tulloh). He had just relinquished his wife to a nursing home and was in a melancholic and reflective mood the day I spoke to him.	RAAF 2 Squadron Signals *I spoke to him in relation to the formation of the Darwin Defenders Group. He had been the president of the Melbourne branch of this organisation since its inception.*	He enlisted in 1940 after completing an Aircraft electrician course at RMIT and was posted to Signals Division. He was sent to Darwin in January 1942 as part of new NW Area Head Quarters. (Disappointed that he was not sent overseas). He was housed at civil aerodrome and spent early days digging trenches where he stayed during the raids. After the second raid he retreated to the bush. He and others were fed and slept out that night. The next day, he was rewiring the base. In March he was moved to Townsville. After Darwin he was moved to 2 Squadron. Ken was very reflective about what had happened at the RAAF base after the raid explaining that the young, inexperienced personnel were more like 'civilians in uniform' and were part of a very rapid expansion of the RAAF in response to the war with Japan. Such experienced airmen and ground crew as Australia had, were in the middle east. This was also a point made by the Lowe Commission report. He was sent south to Ballarat for much of the war and spent the last months of war in Bougainville. He formed an RAAF reunion group in 1970s as well as being a founding member of the Darwin Defenders Group and a president for some years.
Ray Enright Service number V12325 Born 1923	19 Oct.2010	Australian Army Originally joined RAAF.	Was at Noonamah army base (about five miles from Darwin) on the 19th. He had defied his mother to enlist in AIF and because of his age, was placed in a non combatant role working in dentistry at Kahlin hospital. After the bombing his mother had intervened to have him sent south as he was under 18 years old. In 1943 he transferred to the RAAF and when he was 18 returned to Darwin and other Northern Australian sites working as a driver and mechanic. He did not serve outside Australia. He was all ready with newspaper cuttings of 1942 papers and a copy of Bob Alford's, *Darwin's Air War* when I arrived. He thought he had had 'an easy war'. He had not attended reunions.
Theo Ferguson Service number 3103869 Born 1919.	3 Sept.2010 16 Sept.2010 Darwin Defenders member	Australian Army Fortress Engineer Sapper East Point Battery	Theo was an apprentice engineer at Finlay Bros. when the war broke out, as a reserved occupation he could not at first enlist. Later there was a general call up and he joined Coastal Defences and trained with Port Phillip Coastal Artillery. He was one of five who volunteered to travel north to Darwin. He had a view of the harbour and ships being attacked on the day of the attack. He heard bombs (five miles away) falling on the airport. He kept a diary and his wife Elsie wrote to him every day. He showed me the part of a Japanese plane wing he had

			souvenired. He has attended reunions of Sappers over the years and is a member of the Darwin Defenders Group. He is philosophical about the way the Bombing of Darwin is represented in Australian history. He also has a brief factual diary entry made on the day. I interviewed Theo twice. He saw the Darwin Bombing as relatively unimportant in the whole war effort. Does not think Australians today are aware of the dangers that we face and he wanted to tell his story to warn us about again being too unprepared up north. He had seen the 2008 film *Australia,* in which his grandson had a part in the bombing scene.
Bill Foster Service number Vx116402 Born 1921.	31 Jan.2011	Australian Army Darwin Coastal Battery	Bill was joined by his carer, June, throughout the interview. They were well prepared with sandwiches and a cup of tea ready. His initial training was at Queenscliff as a gunner in the Coastal Artillery Service part of PMF he later changed to AIF in 1942. He was part of M Battery special forces, (L battery were sent to Rabaul, all killed or captured) he went to Kavieng before being sent to Darwin to the West Point Battery. He had a view of the ships being attacked in the harbour. Talks of pilot flying so low that he gave him a wave. His testimony makes an interesting comparison with that of Cyril Molyneux his commanding officer whom I also interviewed. He repeatedly returned to speaking of the fate of L battery at Rabaul. He had been to the 50th reunion in Darwin but generally has not been to many reunions over the years. He spent all the war in Darwin and was discharged in 1946. He trained as a dental technician after the war living in Hamilton until he moved down the Peninsula in his retirement.
Gerry Griggs Service number NX160262 Born 1923.	30 Jan.2011	Australian Army	His daughter Robyn was present for the interview. Born in Norfolk UK and came to Australia as a St Bernardo's child migrant arriving when he was 11 years old. He worked on farms in country NSW. After enlistment and a few weeks training in Sydney he was stationed at Berrimah (Darwin) as an artillery gunner. He confirmed the problems with the range-finders they endured in the early raids. He spoke of burying many bodies on the day of the raids, though this may have been the next day. His battery was moved back to Adelaide River a few weeks after the raid. After his time in Darwin he was retrained for jungle war in Sydney but the war ended so he was not sent overseas. He is a member of Darwin Defenders and had seen the numbers of Darwin survivors decline. He was philosophical about the pointlessness of wars, "all for nothing, we were back dealing with them within years". As with a number of the men, he expressed the view that the people of Darwin knew about the bombing whereas other Australians did not.
Colin Horn Service number 8238	23 Sept. 2010 30 Sept 2010	RAAF	Colin was ready with photos and maps of his time in Darwin. He had initially wanted to join the RAN, however, when he went to enlist in Brisbane in January 1940 only the RAAF was taking recruits. With his limited education he knew he would not be trained as a pilot so he joined the maintenance division. He arrived in Darwin in November 1941. He sheltered in the trenches throughout the first raid, but hid across the road in bushes during the second. He spoke of confusion and lack of leadership after the raid. He rode his bike down south to Adelaide River when everyone seemed to be heading south. He never returned to Darwin. He stayed in Melbourne for a while and was later sent to Toowoomba RAAF base. He did not serve outside Australia. In the post war era he worked until retirement for the Herald Sun. He started as a typesetter and by the time he retired he was responsible for getting the afternoon edition out. I interviewed Colin twice, partly for practical reasons, he lived within walking distance of my home, but also because he had been an officer at the RAAF base that was so

			heavily bombed. He had 'left' the base "not knowing what else to do". He became uncomfortable when I questioned him about those killed in the trenches at the base and any rescue attempts that were made. Despite the fact that he had contacted me to talk about that day, he seemed to have wanted to forget the whole event. He said he was not interested in setting the record straight and did not feel the event had been downplayed in our history. His granddaughter lived with him and perhaps his motivations were more about leaving a record for her. He was a Warrant Officer at discharge and had been offered officer training if he had stayed on in the RAAF at the end of the war. He took discharge and completed an apprenticeship in Burwood and worked there till his retirement. He lives in the house he built post war with his wife now deceased. He had not attended reunions and had not heard of the Darwin Defenders Group.
Max Kenyon Service number 18186 Born 1920	31 January 2011	RAAF	Max was waiting with his enlistment papers and diary/log book written during the war. He referred to this log when we spoke to ensure he had the correct dates. A Maffra boy, Max and a mate took the train to Melbourne to enlist in 1940. He trained as part of the ground crew at Laverton. In Darwin he was a guard at the RAAF base. His interview makes an interesting comparison with Colin Horn's interview as both were at the same RAAF base. I later discovered in the NT library an audio interview he had made at the time of the 50th anniversary of the Darwin bombing. This enabled a comparison of the two interviews which were 20 years apart. Two weeks after the bombing raid, Max was sent to Millingimbi Mission until June. He returned to Darwin and was stationed at nearby air strips till mid November. He then travelled south to report for duty at Laverton in late December. He was then moved around within Australia till June 1945 when he was sent north to Morotai and Balikpapan. He returned to Australia in late December. He explained the difficulties of the war being over but not over as many Japanese on remote islands didn't know for some weeks.
Walter Keys Service number 20377 Born 1917	18 October 2010	RAN	Walter enlisted in 1934 at 17 in the depression; the navy was still recruiting and jobs were difficult to find. He was in Darwin for eight months as part of the Boom defence in Darwin harbour. He was the youngest petty officer in RAN. He was not worried about the 'press' given to the Darwin story. He feels rather for the crews of the ships that were sunk around our shore-line by mines; these are his unsung heroes. In his interview he is able to speak about events happening in the town as he was not on the boom ship, *The Koala*, during the raid but at the sailors' quarters in town. He was involved in rescuing men from the water, mostly Malays from *the Neptuna*. During the second raid he was in a Darwin shelter. He had the same stories of planes being mistaken for returning US planes. When the army retreated south; the RAN stayed and manned the ships. He did not attend reunions nor was he a member of the Darwin Defenders.
Cyril Molyneux Service number VX114227 Born 1918	29 January 2011	Australia Army	Cyril was ready, prepared for the interview with a number of books relating to the bombing, including Grose, Hall, and Lockwood on the table. He said that Griffith's account was the most accurate. A competent and expansive speaker. Cyril had been interviewed and given talks on the raid a number of times. He had lived in the Berwick area where he settled with his wife after the war. He had prospered and was civic-minded; an oil portrait of him in his mayoral robes looked down on us. Cyril had been in the PMF (Militia) which he joined at 18 and trained at Pt. Napean. He was assigned to a special artillery unit and found himself in Darwin by May 1941 following a brief excursion up to Kavieng. As with Bill Foster, he was sent to West Point artillery

			battery. He confirms the story about the alternate special force 'L' that was captured in Rabaul, then drowned on their way to Japan as POWs.
James Tevlin Service number 401159 Born 1917	22 December 2010	RAAF	James enlisted in January 1941 in Melbourne where he has lived all his life. James lives with his wife Molly who was intermittently present at the interview. He had a number of books ready when I arrived, including both Darwin Defenders books as well as Bob Alford's *Darwin's Air War*. Initially in the AIF, Jim changed to RAAF, training at Point Cook then Port Pirie in Signals. He was disparaging of the left-over Dutch planes (Kitty Hawks) that they had in Australia because they had been considered too slow for use in Europe. He had many wartime stories and he launched on these with gusto. James was not in Darwin on the 19 February, he was interviewed mainly about the establishment of the Darwin Defenders. He explained that he had decided to do this after reading letters to the editor raising the Hiroshima bombing. The main aim of this group has been to educated school children about the day. He has been able to get money to bring kids to the shrine.
Service number W/1504 Born 1920	25 October 2010	RAN	Boyd enlisted when 19 as a stoker in the Navy. As with Walter Keys, he was assigned to a boom laying ship, the *Karangi*, and he was on this ship after arriving in Darwin when the first raid came. He referred me to the Terry Dale (fellow *Karangi* sailor) account in the Darwin Defenders publication, as he saw very little being below decks with the engines at the time of the raid. After the raid they left Darwin and went south to Brisbane. He did not return to Darwin spending the rest of the war in Williamstown as a driver. He says he had 'a cushy' war. Whilst he doesn't think the Darwin bombing had enough recognition, his brother was killed in Syria and this has ensured his own wartime experiences were put into perspective within his family. He was on some *Westralia* patrols before his brief Darwin experience. He went to that ship's reunions occasionally over the years but not to the Darwin Defenders. He worked in his father's grain supply business until he retired.
George WARR Service number VX100383 Born 1922	24 September 2010 1 October 2010 8 October 2010	PMF then AIF Sapper in 4 field Co. R A Engineers 3 Division, and in Nov. 1942 1st Aust. Adv. Reinf. depot	George joined up in 1939 to escape depression joblessness. He trained at Queenscliff in coastal artillery. He was posted to 7th Fortress Company at Emery point Darwin. Here he manned the giant search lights to monitor movements on the harbour. George had an extensive range of materials ready for me when I arrived. He was always at pains to explain that others I might speak to would exaggerate and make up untruths whereas he had meticulously checked all his facts. He claims to have talked about the day only to other service men. George sustained a number of injuries during his stay in Darwin, a bomb shard in his left foot as well as constant hunger. He has memories of men calling for help in the water and of oil soaked bodies and body parts. George was involved perhaps with the burial of the post office staff and reports the Reverend Goy wrapping their nakedness in curtains. He had a photo of himself in Darwin before the raid that was published 'down south'. It was made by the Department of Information for use to boost the 'war effort'. He had made notes on all the questions I had sent in the introductory letter. He spoke candidly on the 1st Oct. about his place as the middle son and how this meant you were not as loved. His brother's Middle East wartime experiences were what occupied his parents' minds as he was thought safe, just up in Darwin getting a tan. He accurately pin pointed the number of false alarms that they had had previously as a reason why there may be a reluctance to sound the alarm until absolutely sure on the 19th. He defends the Japanese bombing of hospital as red cross on roof of Kahlin hospital was "not easy to see". George was interested to read some of the books I had. Hall, Grose, Lockwood and especially the book that had a photo of the young army nurse, Margaret de Maestre killed on the *Manunda*. He was very interested in her and had visited her grave at Adelaide River, He was also interested enough in Justice Lowe to visit his courtroom and look at him in 1946 when he was working in the city. He had been among the founding members of the Darwin Defenders Group and attended reunions, and met Theo Ferguson through this group. He saw my add

			in *Desperately Seeking* section of the Herald Sun. He worked for Australia post for his working life post Second World War; living in the house he built after the war in which he had raised his family.