



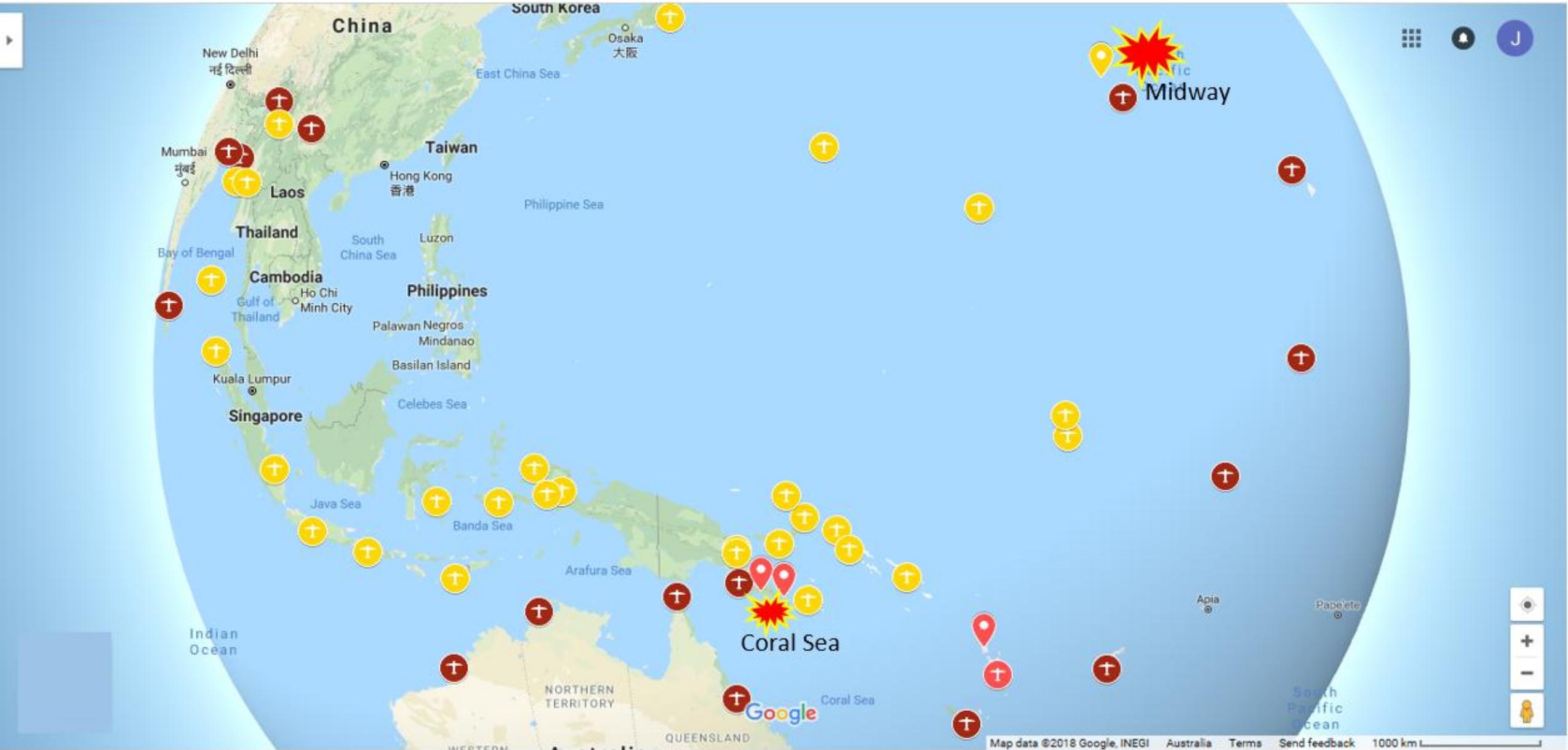
The War in the Pacific 3

From Lae to Tokyo Bay

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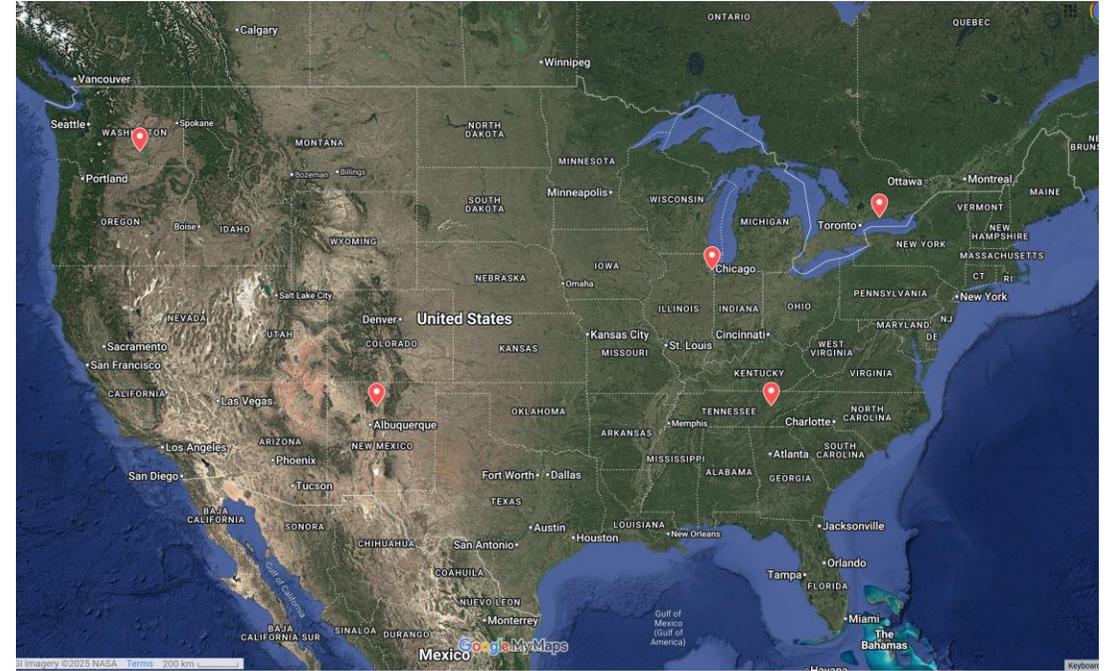
First Faltering Steps on the Road Back

Some Retribution



April 1943 – Manhattan Project

- April 1: Los Alamos laboratory is established.



1 April 1943 - Aleutians

- Of the two Japanese held islands, Kiska was the more important militarily. Containing the only operational airfield and having the better harbor, Kiska was scheduled to be recaptured first.
- For that purpose, Kinkaid asked for a reinforced infantry division (25,000 men). When not enough shipping could be made available to support so large a force, he recommended that Attu be substituted for Kiska as the first objective, indicating that Attu was defended by no more than 500 men, as opposed to 9,000 believed to be on Kiska.
- If the estimate was correct, he indicated, he would require no more than a regiment to do the job.
- Kinkaid also noted that U.S. forces based on Attu would be astride the Japanese line of communications and thus in a position to cut off Kiska from supply and reinforcement, which in time would cause Kiska to "wither on the vine."
- Kinkaid gained JCS approval on 1 April for the Attu operation (code-named SANDCRAB) and was allocated the needed shipping.

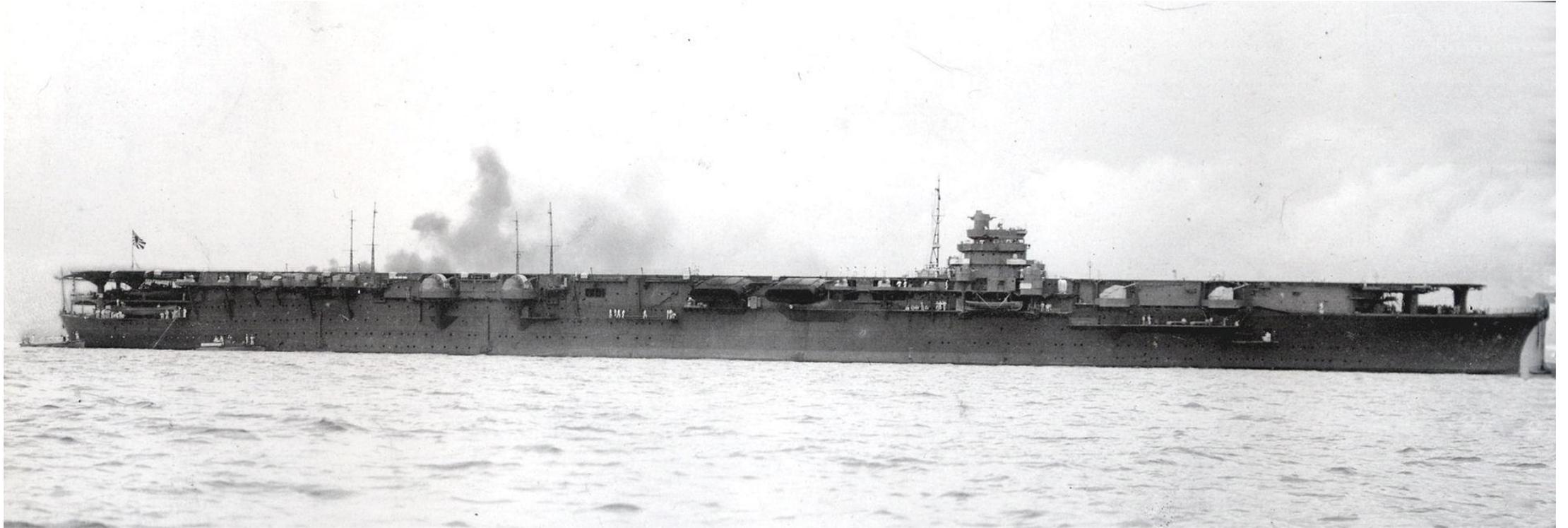


9 April 1943 - Torpedoes

- By August 1942, the faulty running depth situation with the Mark 14 torpedo had been resolved, and submarines were getting more hits.
- However, curing the deep-running problem caused more prematures and duds even as more hits were being achieved. The sinkings didn't increase.
- The deep running torpedoes would explain many warshot misses: a torpedo running too deeply under the target would not allow the magnetic influence exploder to detect the target. Getting the torpedoes to run at the correct depth would presumably fix the problem of the torpedoes failing to explode.
- The skippers, however, continued to report problems with the Mark 14. Suspicion about the magnetic influence exploder grew.
- On 9 April 1943, USS Tunny (photo) attacked an aircraft carrier formation. ULTRA intercepts disclosed that all three torpedoes fired at the second carrier were premature explosions. The commanding officer stated, "The shallow [depth] setting thus caused the torpedo to reach the activating flux density of the exploder some fifty meters from the target."



10 April 1943



- On 9 April, USS Pompano attacked Japanese aircraft carrier Shōkaku (photo), one of the six carriers which had attacked Pearl Harbour, by firing six torpedoes. There were at least three premature explosions, and the aircraft carrier was not damaged.
- On 10 April 1943, Bureau of Ordnance Chief Admiral Blandy wrote Lockwood that the Mark 14 was likely to explode prematurely at shallow depths. Blandy recommended that the magnetic influence feature be disabled if torpedoes were fired for contact hits.

April 1943 - Air

- The Japanese now made a series of large air raids aimed at the shipping and airfields supporting allied advances.
- 7 April 67 dive bombers and 110 fighters attacked ships at Tulagi and Guadalcanal and sank an American destroyer and tanker, and the New Zealand corvette Moa.
- 11 April about 50 Japanese dive bombers and fighters raided Oro Bay. Two transports and HMAS Pirie were damaged.
- 12th April the enemy made their 106th air raid on Port Moresby. Forty-three twin engine bombers and approximately 60 fighters crossed the Owen Stanleys and concentrated their attacks on the Port Moresby airfields. Four aircraft (one Beaufighter and 3 Mitchells) were destroyed and 15 others were damaged, some of them severely.
- 14th April in its twenty-fourth air raid, 40 to 50 bombers and about 60 fighters attacked Milne Bay 1216/14 and concentrated on ships in the bay. One transport was sunk and another damaged.

14 April 1943 - Air

- Allied radar was now proving its worth—many defending fighters were directed against the Japanese attackers by the air controllers and inflicted heavy losses.
- 1st Lt Richard Bong was directed to search for a large formation over Goodenough island.
- He sighted the Bettys just after they had bombed, positioned himself up sun and fired on the trailing bomber, hitting its cockpit and port engine. The wounded bomber fell away and was set on by RAAF Kittyhawks before it crashed in the sea.
- Bong was then attacked by Oscars but used his P38's superior diving speed to escape and go after the bombers again.
- He quickly overhauled the left hand bomber and fired from close range from the left rear quarter and it suddenly began to descend steeply.
- Bong was credited with a probable for the first and a victory for the second.



The victory was his tenth making Bong the first official double ace in the Pacific theatre.

15 April 1943 - Air

- CinCPac intelligence intercepted a schedule for CINC COMBINED FLEET's inspection of airbases in the Northern Solomons.
- Halsey determined his P38s had the range to intercept.
- Washington approved Operation Vengeance.
- To avoid detection by radar and Japanese forces in the Solomons the planners plotted an over-water flight south and west of the Solomons.
- This approach measured 600 miles, with 400 miles back.
- The 339th Fighter Squadron's P-38G Lightning aircraft, equipped with drop tanks, were the only aircraft with the range to intercept and engage. Eighteen P-38s took off from Guadalcanal at 07:25 on April 18 "wave-hopping" and maintaining radio silence.



The P-38s were equipped to carry two 165-gallon drop tanks. A limited supply of 330-gallon tanks was flown up from New Guinea, sufficient to provide each Lightning with one big tank to replace one of the small tanks. The tanks were located close enough to the aircraft's center of gravity to avoid any performance problems.

18 April 1943 - Sea

- The P38s arrived at the intercept point one minute early, at 09:34, just as Yamamoto's aircraft descended into view in a light haze.
- The P-38s jettisoned the auxiliary tanks, turned to the right to parallel the bombers, and began a full power climb to intercept them.
- Lanphier and Barber climbed toward the eight aircraft. The escort fighters dropped their own tanks and dived toward the pair of P-38s. Lanphier turned head-on and climbed towards the escorts while Barber chased the diving bomber transports.
- Barber banked steeply to turn in behind the leading bomber and began firing into its right engine, rear fuselage, and empennage. The Betty began to trail heavy black smoke, rolled violently to the left and crashed into the jungle.
- Barber headed towards the coast at treetop level and spotted the second bomber low over the water off Moila Point and shot it down into the water.



The last picture of Isoroku Yamamoto, taken shortly before his plane was shot down.

Yamamoto and all others in the first bomber were killed, Admiral Ugaki and two others survived the crash of the second and were later rescued.

April 1943 – Air

- Two Navy units, VF-12 (October 1942) and later VF-17 were equipped with the F4U.
- Early Navy pilots referred to the F4U as the "hog", "hosenose", or the "bent-wing widow maker".
- By April 1943, the F4U had successfully completed deck landing qualification.
- At the time, the U.S. Navy also had the Grumman F6F Hellcat, which did not have the performance of the F4U, but was a better deck landing aircraft.
- The CNO wanted to equip four air groups with Corsairs by the end of 1943.
- ComAirPacific had a different opinion, stating that "In order to simplify spares problems and also to insure flexibility in carrier operations present practice in the Pacific is to assign all Corsairs to Marines and to equip FightRons with Hellcats.
- VF-12 soon abandoned its aircraft to the Marines and the New Zealanders.



An early F4U-1 showing the "birdcage" canopy with rearwards production cockpit location.

23 April - Wau

- On 23rd April General Savige moved with his 3rd division headquarters to Bulolo. On the same day he took command of all troops in the area and Kanga Force ceased to exist.
- The 2/5th and the 2/7th Independent Companies were on their way out of the Wau/Bulolo area and the first battalion of the 15th Brigade, the 24th (from Victoria), was on its way in towards the end of April.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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GOODVIEW, NEW GUINEA. 1943-08-10. VX13 MAJOR-GENERAL S. G. SAVIGE CB CBE DSO MC ED, INSPECTING THE AREAS OF THE 17TH AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE, THE 15TH AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BRIGADE AND THE 2/3RD AUSTRALIAN INDEPENDENT COMPANY.

28 April 1943 - COIC

N.S.W. Coast - At 0435/27 enemy submarine activity was evidenced in position $36^{\circ}20'S$ $150^{\circ}31'E$ (54 miles NE by N. of Twofold Bay) when an unsuccessful torpedo attack was reported by "MILDURA" on a convoy in this position.

At 1845/27 "LYDIA M.CHILD" was torpedoed in position $33^{\circ}08'S$ $153^{\circ}24'E$ (approx 83 miles E. by S. of Newcastle) - see Naval Incidents.

Submarine sightings in the vicinity of the attack on "LYDIA M.CHILD" were reported by aircraft as follows:-

0152/27 - $33^{\circ}31'S$ $152^{\circ}59'E$ (70 miles bearing 120° from Newcastle)

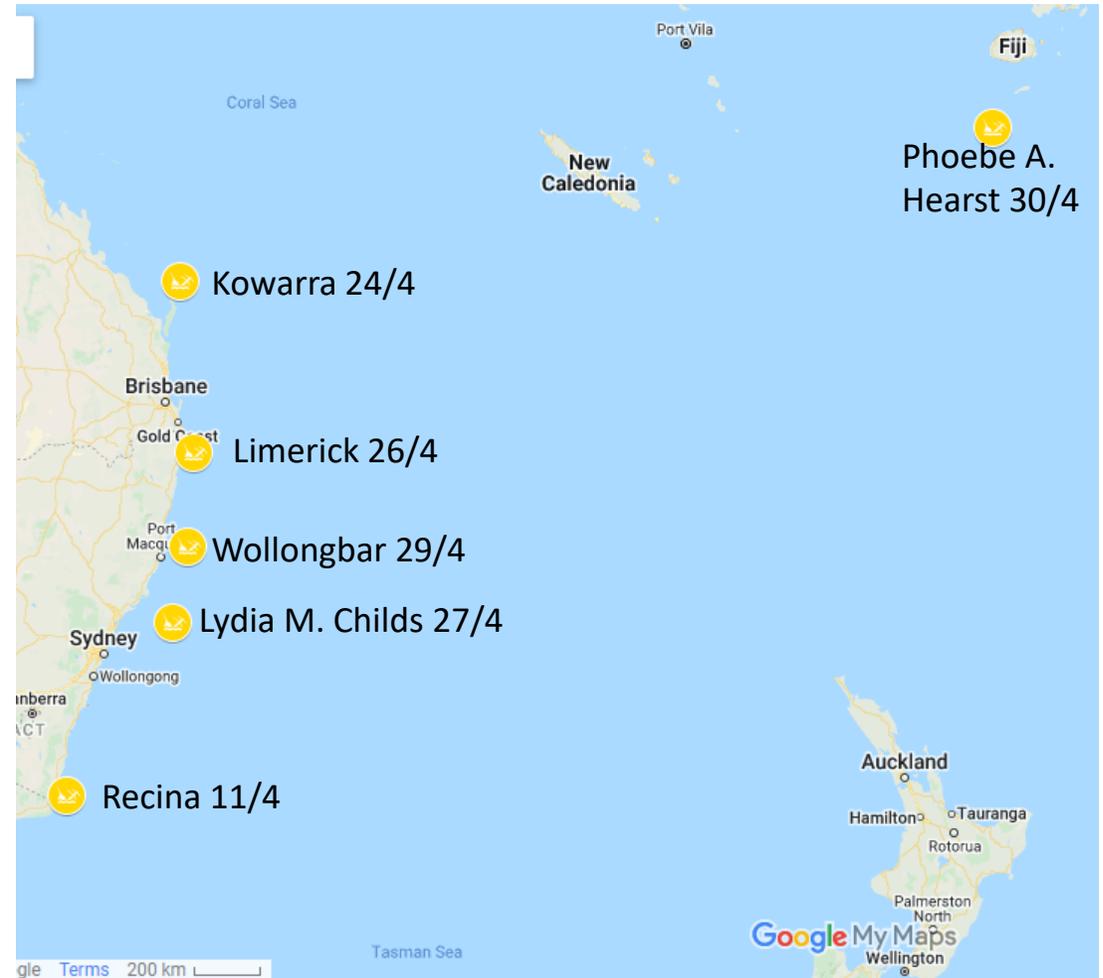
2026/27 - $33^{\circ}25'S$ $153^{\circ}10'E$ (75 miles bearing 115° from Newcastle)

0112/28 - $32^{\circ}41'S$ $153^{\circ}22'E$ (80 miles bearing 80° from Newcastle).

Relating these reports with the attacks on shipping on 24th & 26th April in the area, it would appear likely that one or two submarines are operating between Brisbane and Capricorn Channel, another one or two between Sydney and Brisbane and yet another south of Sydney.

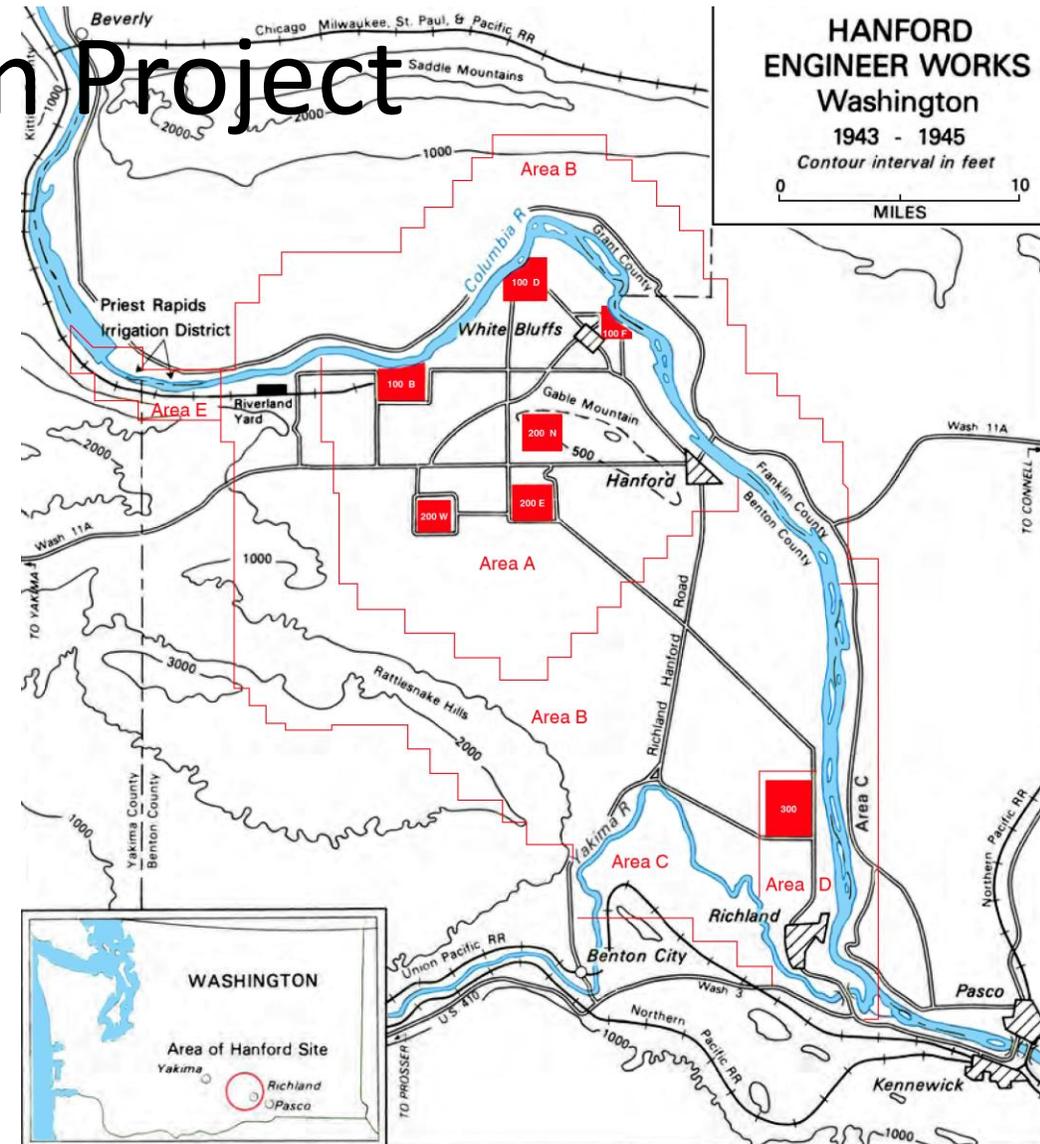
Four of these ships were sailing independently but two were in escorted convoys, each with two escorting corvettes.

Apparently the escorts failed to detect the submarines either before or after the attacks.



April 1943 - Manhattan Project

- Although progress on the Hanford reactor design at Metallurgical Laboratory and DuPont was not sufficiently advanced to accurately predict the scope of the project, a start was made in April 1943 on facilities for an estimated 25,000 workers, half of whom were expected to live on-site.
- Like Los Alamos and Oak Ridge, Richland was a gated community with restricted access, but it looked more like a typical wartime American boomtown: the military profile was lower, and physical security elements like high fences and guard dogs were less evident.



4 May 1943 - Brisbane

- The General Headquarters press announcement on the raid on Darwin on 2nd May (Communique No . 386) after referring to the ground damage caused by the Japanese as being negligible, went on to say that "our own air losses were heavy".
- News of the fight was given wide publicity and the Japanese made propaganda use of it in broadcasts.
- The Melbourne Argus of 4th May stated : "This is the first occasion that any communique issued in this area has reported heavy losses."

Veteran correspondents considered the communiqués, which MacArthur drafted personally, "a total farce" (Time 15/1/51) and they attracted wide spread mockery.

*"My battleships bombard the Nips from
Maine to Singapore
My subs have sunk a million tons;
They'll sink a billion more.*

*My aircraft bombed Berlin last night."
In Italy they say
"Our turn's tonight, because it's right in
Doug's Communiqué . . ."
And while possibly a rumor now,
someday it will be fact
That the Lord will hear a deep voice say
"Move over, God—it's Mac."
So bet your shoes that all the news
that last great Judgement Day
Will go to press in nothing less than*

DOUG'S COMMUNIQUÉ!

6 May 1943 - Air

- While the Beaufighters attacked the float-planes at Taberfane on 6th May the bombers attacked enemy airfields, Mitchells attacked Dili, in Timor and the Liberators bombed Manokwari and Kai in Dutch New Guinea, and Saumlaki.
- The Catalinas of Nos. 11 and 20 Squadrons added to the weight of the bombardment effort when they attacked Babo.



7 May 1943 - Brisbane

- On 7th May General MacArthur (photo) issued an instruction based on his orders from the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington, outlining the offensive which the forces of the South-West Pacific and South Pacific would carry out in 1943.
- As part of these operations New Guinea Force was given the task of seizing the Lae, Salamaua, Finschhafen and Madang areas.
- Provision was made for an operation in the Salamaua area to take place as a "feint" on 30th June when other operations were due to take place on Kiriwina and Woodlark Islands and on New Georgia in the Solomons.



8 May 1943 - Sea

- On May 8, 1943, Admiral Lockwood ComSubPac (photo) made a list of torpedo failures gleaned from ULTRA intercepts.



11 May 1943 - Aleutians

- The 7th Infantry Division stationed near Fort Ord, California, was selected to recapture Attu.
- Because of shortages in cold weather equipment most of the men would enter combat wearing normal field gear.
- While senior commanders realized that the troops would suffer from the weather, most believed that within three days the fight for Attu would be over, particularly since the assembled naval support for the landings included three battleships along with several cruisers and destroyers.



Major General Brown at the invasion of Attu, Alaska, May 1943.

11 May 1943 - Aleutians

- Attu is 35 miles long and 15 miles wide, with snow-capped peaks that reach upward to 3,000 feet.
- Steep slopes extend down from the peaks to treeless valleys below, carpeted with muskeg, a "black muck" covered with a dense growth of lichens and moss.
- Because the Japanese current has a moderating effect on temperatures, much of the time in the outermost Aleutians the muskeg is barely firm enough for a man to cross on foot.
- The same current accounts for the pea-soup fogs, the constant pervading wetness, and the frequent storms that make the outer Aleutians so forbidding.



Attu village at Chichagof Harbor in 1937. It was occupied by the Japanese in 1942/43.

11 May 1943 - Aleutians

- An excessively complicated landing plan was carried out with great difficulty in the all-pervading fog. Visual signalling was impossible. The Sicard and MacDonough collided. The Sicard was to have been boat control ship in the Holtz Bay area.
- Delays necessitated the postponement of H-hour to 0940, and finally to 1040. Had it not been for SG radar equipment, any formation of approach divisions would have been impossible. according to Capt. Corn, commanding officer of the Pennsylvania.
- At 1606 the beach was sighted, and, with typical Aleutian fickleness, visibility suddenly lifted to 1,500 yards. Other waves were then dispatched.
- By 2130, 1,100 troops were ashore at Red beach, 2,000 at Yellow and Blue, and 400 at Scarlet.



14 May 1943 - Aleutians

- Weather and terrain as well as the enemy continued to frustrate the American advance. Surface ships continued to bombard reported enemy positions ashore but close air support was extremely limited due to incessant fog that engulfed the island.
- Each attack quickly bogged down.
- As U.S. losses continued to mount, front-line positions remained about the same as those gained on D-day.
- That evening in a report to higher headquarters, Brown summarized the four days of fighting, concluding that "progress through passes will, unless we are extremely luck(y), be slow and costly, and will require troops in excess to those now available to my command."



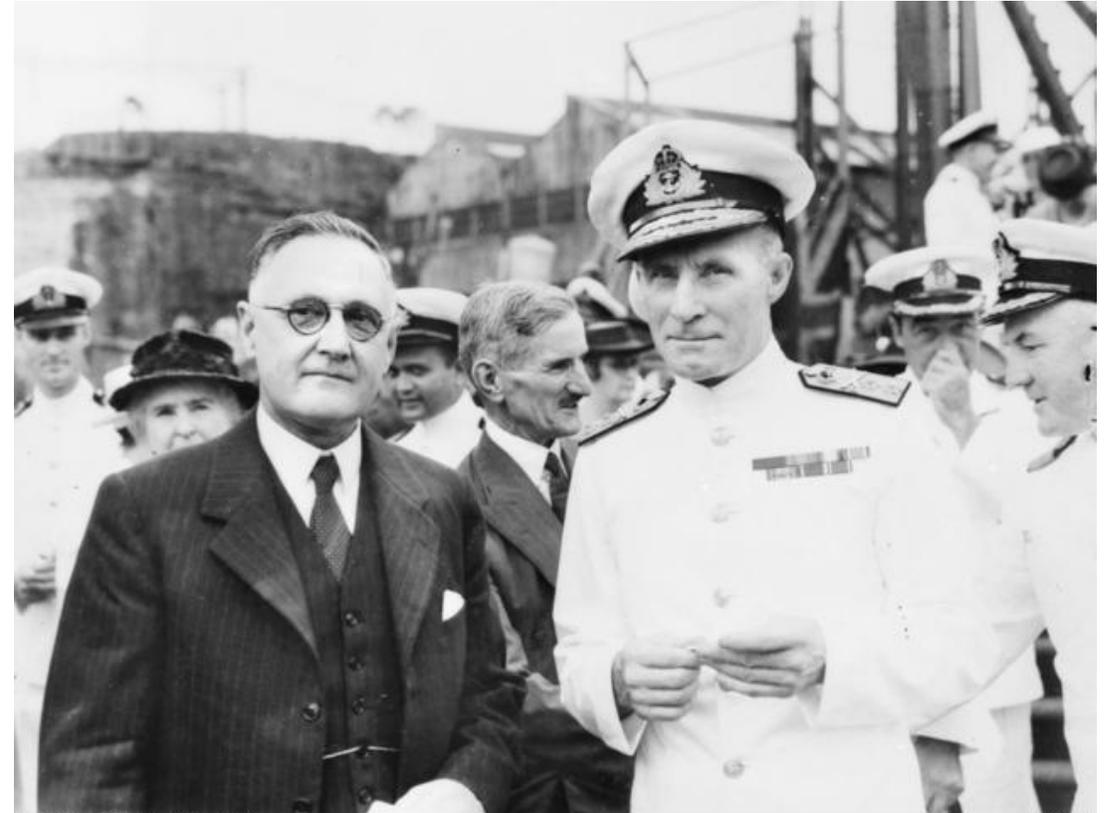
16 - 18 May 1943 - Aleutians

- Kinkaid replaced Brown and appointed Maj. Gen. Eugene M. Landrum to take command on the 16th.
- An advance by North Landing Force broke the deadlock on Attu the same day Landrum assumed command.
- A foothold on the northern end of Moore Ridge had been won in the center of Holtz Valley, thereby gaining control of the entire ridge.
- The Japanese, greatly outnumbered by the Americans and in danger of being taken from the rear, withdrew that night (16-17 May) toward Chichagof Harbor.
- The north and south forces linked up on the 18th and set about the slow business of taking the machine-gun and mortar nests left manned on the heights by the retreating Japanese.
- Eventually the combined American force, reinforced with a battalion of the 4th Infantry, drew a net around Chichagof Harbor.



13 May 1943 - Government

- On 13th May Admiral Royle, told the Advisory War Council that, following representations by the Shipping Control Board and the Department of Commerce, it had been decided to revert to double convoys, each of which would be provided with four escort vessels, "the maximum protection that could be provided with present resources".



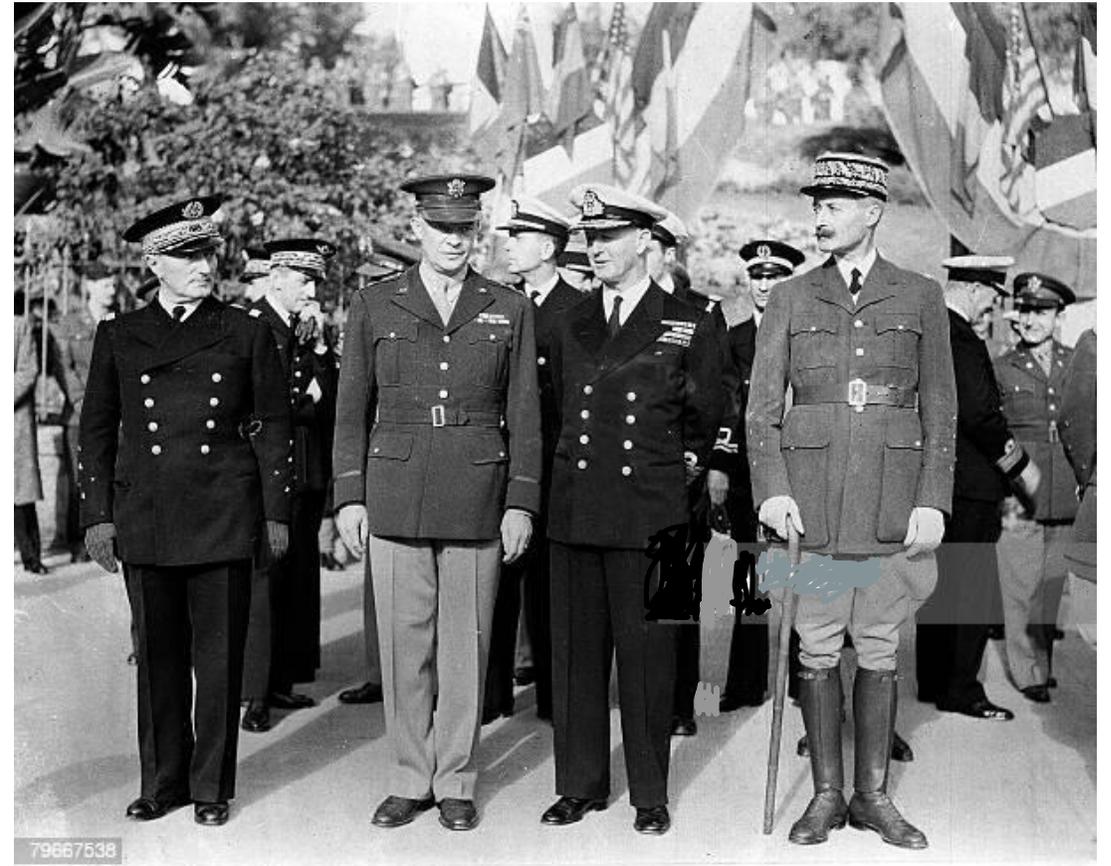
AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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LAUNCHING OF H.M.I.S. MADRAS. THE MINISTER FOR THE NAVY (MR. MAKIN) WITH VICE-ADMIRAL SIR GUY ROYLE.

13 May 1943 – North Africa

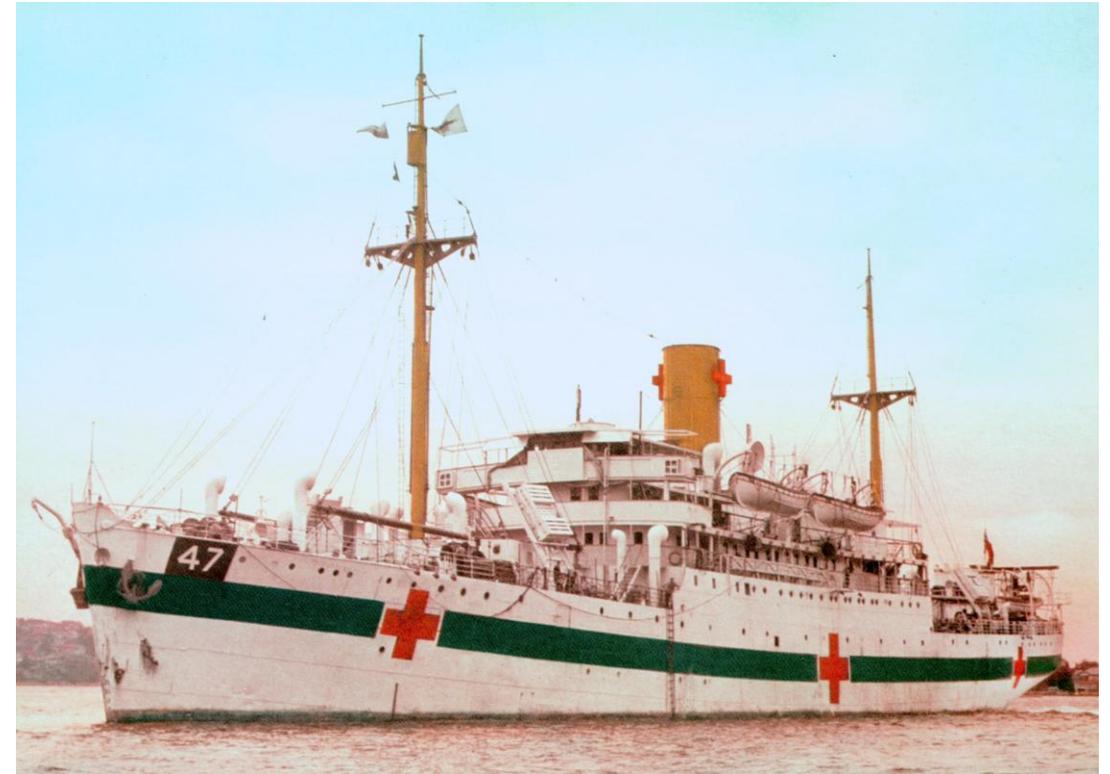
- After two years of demoralising disasters, a British Empire army, with the 2nd New Zealand Division in the van, has defeated the Afrika Korps at 2nd Alamein in October 1942 and pursued them into Tunisia.
- The Anglo-American landings (Operation Torch) in North-West Africa in November 1942, have compelled Vichy French forces to change sides, and completed the encirclement of quarter of a million Axis troops in Tunisia.
- The Allied armies squeezed the Axis forces into the north eastern tip of Tunisia and on 13 May 1943 forced them to surrender, collecting over 275,000 Italian and German prisoners of war.



Admiral Darlan, General Eisenhower, Admiral Cunningham and General Giraud.

14 May 1943 - Sea

- The Hospital Ship Centaur left Sydney on her second voyage to New Guinea on 12th May, the 257 military personnel on board comprising 65 medical staff and the 2/12th Field Ambulance.
- At about 4 a.m. on Friday, 14th May, she was off Brisbane, with Point Lookout bearing W.S.W. distant 24 miles, when she was struck by a torpedo.
- The weather was fine and clear, and visibility good. Centaur was brightly lit and properly marked in accordance with the Hague Convention for the Adaptation of the Principles of the Geneva Convention to Maritime Warfare.
- The torpedo struck well down in an oil fuel tank on the port side abaft No. 2 hatch, and the ship caught fire immediately, and sank within two or three minutes.
- Centaur made no signals, and there was no time to launch any boats, though two broke adrift from the ship when she went down. Most of those on board were asleep and had little chance of escape.



AHS Centaur.

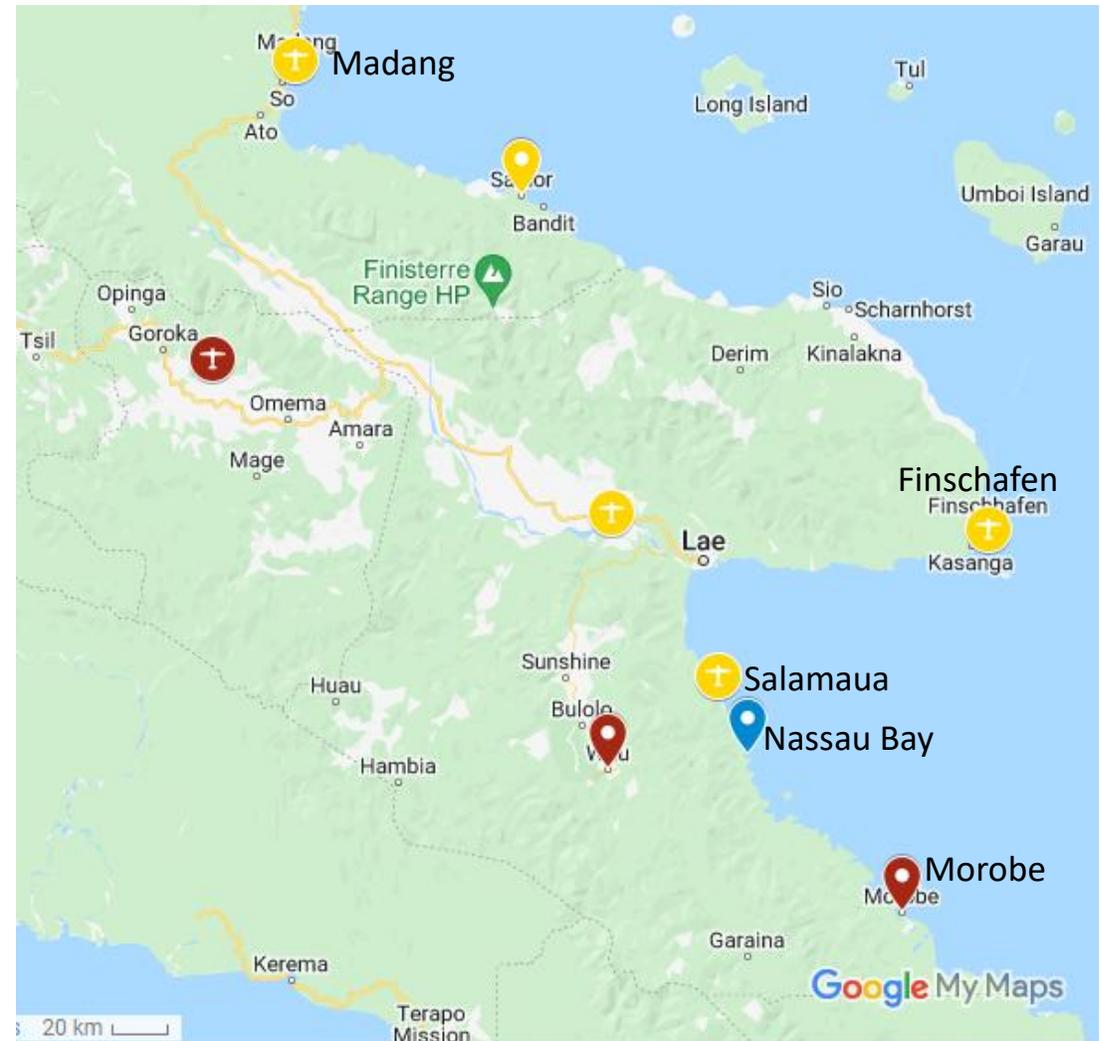
15 May 1943 - Sea

- At 2 p.m. on the 15th USS Mugford was escorting a steamer clear of Australian coastal waters when a lookout sighted survivors from the Centaur on a group of rafts.
- The work of rescue proceeded "amidst the usual flurry of reported 'periscopes', 'disturbed water', 'torpedo wakes'. Although none proved authentic, minimum time was spent stopped."
- In a search continued throughout daylight over a large oval area roughly seven by fourteen miles, Mugford (photo) rescued 63 men and one woman: 29 ship's crew; 34 army medical personnel, including one nurse, Sister Savage; and one Torres Strait pilot.



16 May 1943 - Strategy

- On the 16th (May) Blamey and Herring had a long conference with a model of the Salamaua and Lae areas before them.
- Blamey explained his plan, which provided for two phases; first the capture of Lae and the Markham Valley and its airfields, second exploitation round the coast to Finschhafen and Madang.
- To capture Lae a seaborne landing would be necessary. This in turn, demanded the prior seizure of a shore base within 60 miles of Lae, this being the maximum range of the landing craft which would carry the troops by night to the assault.
- Nassau Bay was selected as the area most suited for the purpose since its capture would also enable a junction to be made with the forces at Mubo, reducing their supply problem.
- Herring summed up the matter when he wrote that Blamey "wanted the operation against Salamaua to serve as a cloak for our operations against Lae, and to act as a magnet drawing reinforcements from Lae to that area."



May 1943 - RAAF

- In May 1943 No. 24 squadron RAAF began converting to a dive bomber squadron equipped with Vultee Vengeance aircraft.



A Vultee Vengeance dive bomber, Max speed 275 mph, ceiling 22,500 ft, bomb load 1,500 lbs.

20 May 1943 - Air

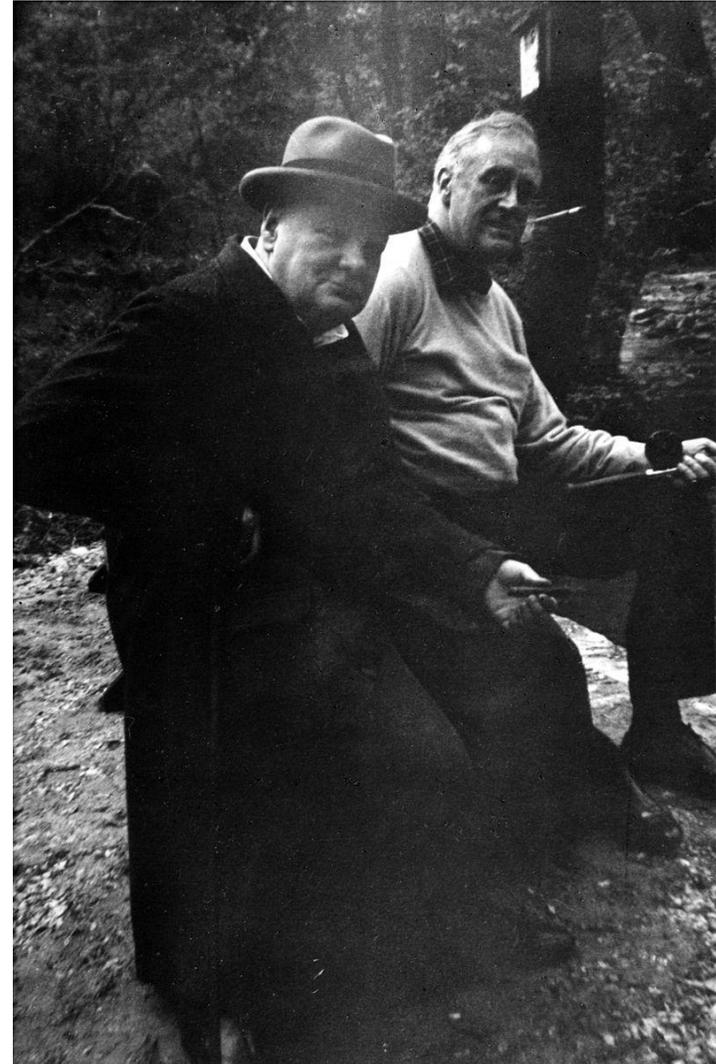
- Kenney wrote to Bostock on 20th May:
- In order to assist the New Guinea offensive and to further increase confusion in the enemy's plans you will take the necessary measures to increase the show of force in Northwestern Area.
- It is desired therefore that you concentrate your strength against Koepang, Kendari, Ambon and Babo with particular emphasis on Koepang.
- It is requested that you institute a plan for carrying out such a program during June and July, with maximum effort during the first part of July”.

Jerry McBrien 2026



25 May 1943 - Government

- The decision of the Trident conference was to invade Sicily but the conference also approved an outline plan for the advance on Japan. This plan called on the commanders in the Pacific, Burma and China to accomplish the following aims in 1943-44:
 - 1. Augment supplies to China via Burma.
 - 2. Conduct air warfare in and from China.
 - 3. Eject the Japanese from the Aleutians.
 - 4. Seize the Marshall and Caroline Islands.
 - 5. Conquer the Solomons, the Bismarck Archipelago and the Japanese-held parts of New Guinea.
 - 6. Intensify activities against enemy lines of communication.
- The strategy was that Japanese forces must be worn down and subjected to continuous and increasing attacks so as to prevent them strengthening their hold, and that the Allied forces must obtain positions in readiness for full-scale attacks when these could be undertaken.
- The grand strategy of beating the enemy in Europe first, while holding the Japanese at bay in the Pacific, had been modified to some extent.



Roosevelt and Churchill fishing at Shangri-La, in between the Trident Conference discussions.

29 May 1943 - Aleutians

- On the night of 29 May most of the surviving Japanese, about 100 to 1,000 strong, twice charged madly at the American lines, screaming, killing, and being killed.
- The Japanese survivors staggered back to the base of Engineer Hill. Several small groups made their way back to the caves of the high ground, where they were eventually cornered and eliminated by American search teams.
- Most simply clutched a hand grenade to their chest and scattered themselves across the tundra.



30 May 1943 - Aleutians

- As the fog lifted, the morning sun revealed a grisly sight. Over 500 Japanese bodies lay horribly mutilated at the foot of Engineer Hill. Several hundred more bodies, American and Japanese alike, were littered across the crest and down the long slope of the ridge.
- That day the Japanese announced the loss of Attu, as American units cleared out surviving enemy pockets.
- The Americans reported finding 2,351 enemy dead on the island.
- Only 28 Japanese surrendered.
- Out of a U.S. force that totalled more than 15,000 men, 549 had been killed, 1,148 wounded, and about 2,100 men taken out of action by disease and nonbattle injuries.
- Trench foot was the most common affliction. Most of the nonbattle casualties were exposure cases, victims of the weather and inadequate clothing.



Japanese dead at the base of Engineer Hill

31 May 1943 - Australia

- By May 1943 the Volunteer Air Observer Corps (VAOC) had a membership of 38,000 manning 2,639 observation posts from Cairns to Ceduna and from Albany to Geraldton.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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Two members of the (VAOC), who like hundreds of other volunteers, maintain this duty continuously, fitting it in with their everyday work.

8 June 1943 - Government

- A report to the War Cabinet on reciprocal Lend-Lease administration to 30th April 1943, submitted to the War Cabinet on 8 June, placed the position squarely before the Government:
- Broadly speaking, the position seems to be that if we are to continue and expand service and supply to an increasing American force it can only be done effectively either
 - (a) by the United States accepting responsibility for manning some of the facilities which are being created, e.g., engine repair workshops, shipbuilding and repair yards, etc., or
 - (b) by a reduction in the Australian forces and diversion of this manpower to production for the remaining Australian forces plus the United States forces.

10 June 1943 - Sea

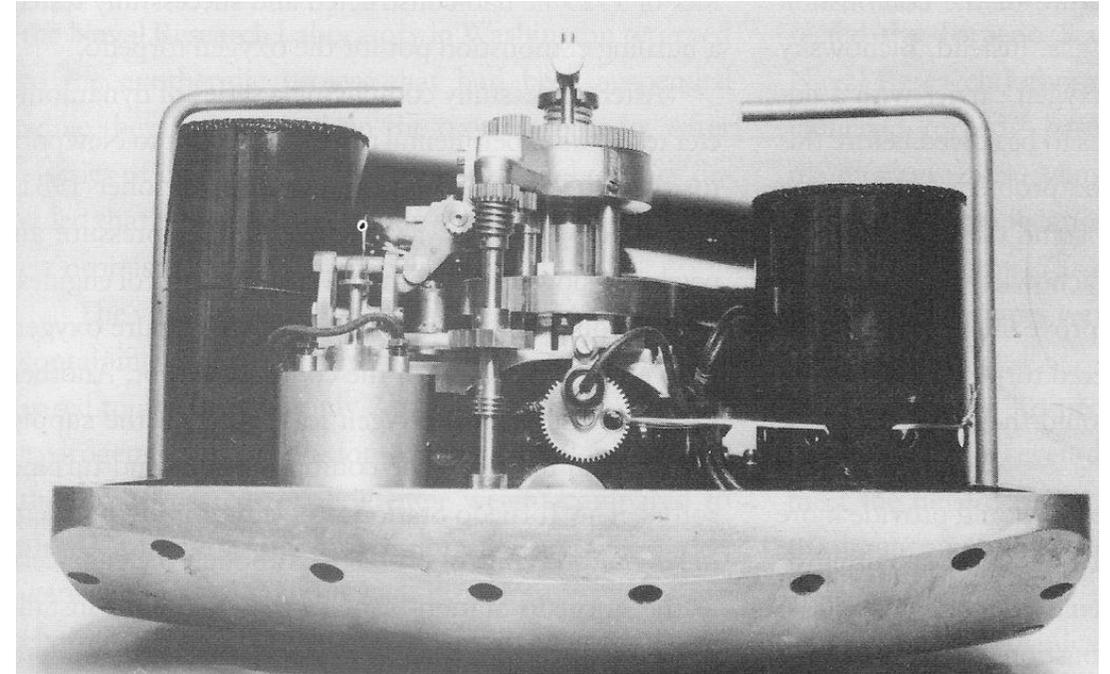
- On 10 June 1943, USS Trigger, alerted by Ultra, intercepted and fired six torpedoes from 1,200 yards at the aircraft carrier Hiyō.
- Two torpedoes missed, one exploded prematurely, one was a dud, and two hit. The carrier was damaged but made it home.
- Many submarine commanders in the first two years of the war reported explosions of the warhead with little to no damage to the enemy. The magnetic exploders were triggering prematurely, before getting close enough to the vessel to destroy it.
- Earth's magnetic field near NTS, where the trials (limited as they were) were conducted, differed from the areas where the fighting was taking place.
- BuOrd concluded the Mark 6 magnetic influence feature was less effective below 30°N latitude and did not recommend its use below 30°S latitude.
- BuOrd also concluded that the Mark 14's arming distance of 450 yards was too short; an arming distance of 700 yards would be needed for most torpedoes to stabilize their course and depth.



Japanese Carrier Hiyō

10 June 1943 - Sea

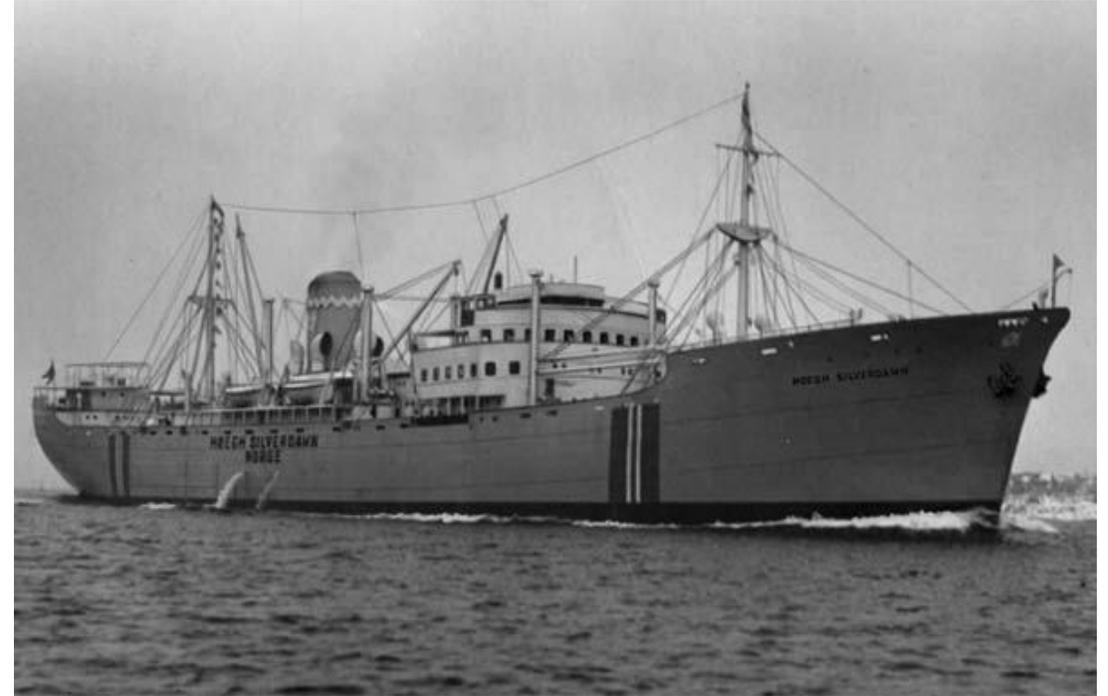
- There were two common types of premature explosions.
 1. The warhead exploded just as it armed. These were easily discerned by the submarine because the torpedo exploded before it had a chance to reach its target.
 2. The warhead exploded just before reaching the target ship but far enough away that it did no damage. The skipper, looking through the periscope, could see the torpedo run right to the ship and see the explosion. Everything would look OK except that the target would get away with little or no damage.
- Both premature explosion types could result from the magnetic influence exploder. If a torpedo was still turning to get on course or had not stabilized its depth when the warhead armed, the exploder could see a magnetic field change and detonate. As the warhead approached the target, it could sense a change due to the ship's effect on the earth's magnetic field. That's a desired effect if the torpedo is set to run under the ship, but not a desirable effect when the torpedo is set to hit the side of the ship.
- The second type of premature explosion masked contact exploder failures. Skippers firing the torpedo for a contact exploder hit on the side of the target would see an explosion and believe the contact exploder worked, but the explosions were triggered not by the contact feature, but rather by the magnetic influence feature at a distance far enough from the hull to cause little or no damage.



Mark 6 Mod 1 exploder used early in the war. Later on it was replaced with the Mark 6 Mod 5.

15 June 1943 - Sea

- The Norwegian cargo ship, Hoegh Silverdawn (10,550 tdwt, 1940) en route Fremantle, Australia, to Abadan, Iran, with ammunition and general cargo, was shelled and sunk in the Indian Ocean south east of the Coco Islands (25°40'S 92°00'E) by the German raider Michel with the loss of 36 of the 58 people aboard.
- Three survivors were saved after 11 days on a raft. Another 14 survivors arrived in India after 32 days and 3,100 nm in a damaged lifeboat.



Høegh Silverdawn

16 June - Sea

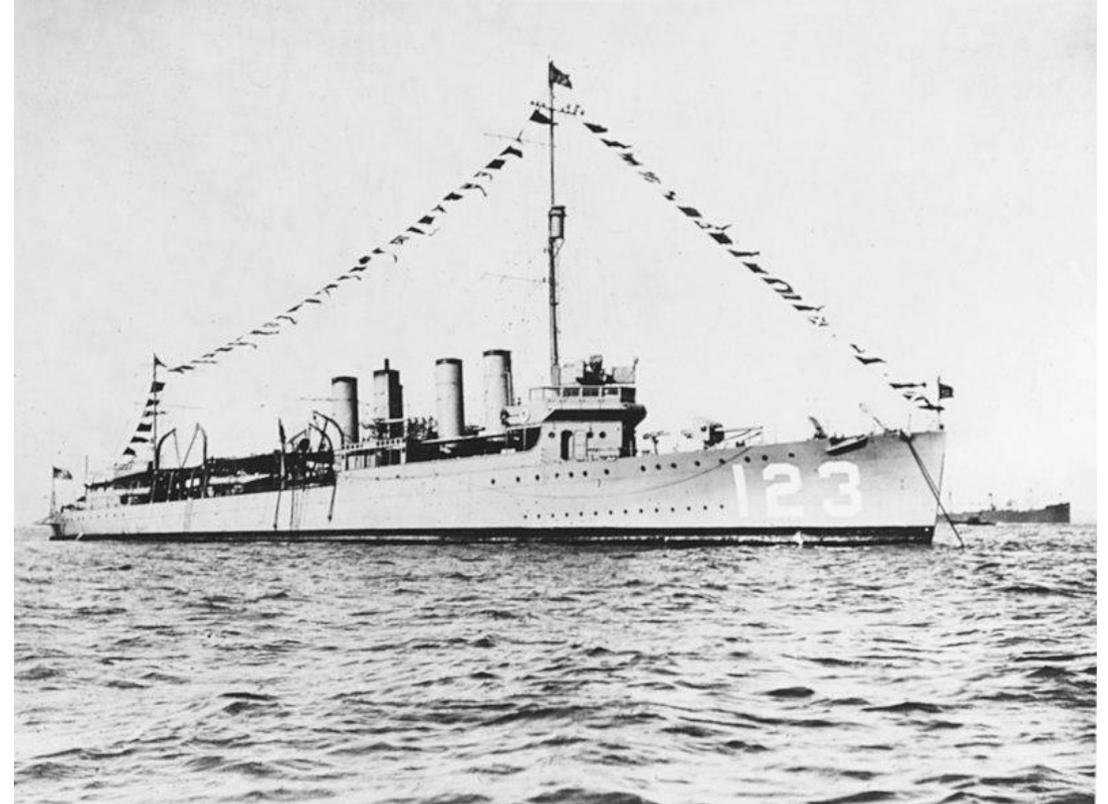
- In “GP55” Portmar (5643 tons, 1919) had straggled badly, and when the convoy was 35 miles east of Smoky Cape at 5.15 p.m. on the 16th, she was trying to pick up station and was just passing to port of LST469 to take up position ahead of her.
- She was slightly abaft the beam of the L.S.T. when that ship was struck by a torpedo on the starboard quarter, and those in Portmar saw another torpedo approaching from abaft the starboard beam.
- Before evading action was effective this torpedo struck Portmar in the wake of No. 1 hatch. The ship, with a cargo including petrol and ammunition, burst into flames, was abandoned, and sank in about ten minutes with the loss of two lives.
- Seventy-one survivors were picked up by Deloraine, while Warrnambool and Kalgoorlie carried out depth-charge attacks until contact was lost.



USS LST-469 during the landing at Lingayen Gulf on 9 January 1945

16 June - Sea

- LST469 though badly damaged and immobile—and with 26 killed and missing and 17 injured—remained afloat. Deloraine took her in tow, but deteriorating weather parted the tow, and Deloraine took the Portmar survivors and the L.S.T's wounded to Coff's Harbour, leaving the L.S.T. in Kalgoorlie's charge, while Warrnambool rejoined the convoy.
- The US minelayers "PREBLE" and "GAMBLE" en route Sydney to Noumea were diverted to the area of the attack to provide assistance and carry out an A/S search.
- The tug Reserve was dispatched from Brisbane in the evening of the 16th to assist.



USS Gamble (DD-123/DM-15) was a Wickes-class destroyer in the United States Navy during World War I, later converted to a minelayer in World War II.

16 June - Air

- A squadron of Spitfires (No. 79) which had just been formed in Australia and two squadrons of Kittyhawks (Nos. 76 and 77 Squadrons) were ordered to Goodenough Island to support the landings on Woodlark and Kiriwina.
- Hudsons, another Kittyhawk squadron (No. 75) and Beauforts of the R.A.A.F., operating from Milne Bay, were to provide anti-submarine patrols and protection from enemy aircraft for Allied shipping convoys carrying the assault forces.
- The following day (16 June) 76 and 79 arrived on Goodenough. Hewitt had established the headquarters of No. 9 Group at Milne Bay and No. 73 Wing headquarters, commanded by Group Captain McLachlan was set up at Goodenough to control the three R.A.A.F. fighter squadrons based at Vivigani airfield.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

OG0221

VIVIGANI, GOODENOUGH ISLAND, PAPUA. C. 1943-11. THE OFFICE AND DARKROOMS AND VEHICLE USED BY AN RAAF PUBLIC RELATIONS PARTY.

20 June – New Georgia

- Segi was the base and point of insertion for the reconnaissance parties operating around Munda, and to ensure its protection (since Japanese control there would have disrupted all plans) 400 Marines were landed there in the night 20th-21st June from the destroyer transports Dent and Waters, guided in by Kennedy's beach bonfires.



Coastwatcher Donald Kennedy (left) serves tea to U.S. Marine Captain Clay Boyd during one of Boyd's scouting missions to New Georgia before the Allied landing operation. (ISBN 1-59114-466-3).

23 June 1943 - Government

- Sir William Webb (photo), Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Queensland, was commissioned to report to the Commonwealth Attorney General as to “whether there have been any atrocities or breaches of the rules of warfare on the part of members of the Japanese Armed Forces in or in the neighbourhood of the territory of New Guinea or the territory of Papua.
- Australia had been an original member of the United Nations War Crimes Commission (UNWCC) when it was established on 8 December 1942.



April 29 1946 - IMTFE

- In 1946 Webb became the President of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, which tried the leaders of the Empire of Japan for their crimes against peace.
- Thousands of other "lesser" war criminals were tried by domestic tribunals convened across Asia and the Pacific by Allied nations, with most concluding by 1949.
- 984 of these were sentenced to death, 153 of them by Australia.



24 June 1943 - Sea

- By the middle of 1943, Lockwood (photo) had received enough reports from submarine officers to convince him the Mark 6 was significantly flawed.
- On 24 June 1943, he formally ordered all submarines operating out of Pearl Harbor to deactivate the magnetic influence feature.
- Inactivation of the magnetic influence feature stopped all the premature explosions.
- Early reports of torpedo action had included some dud hits, heard as a dull clang. The contact pistol appeared to be malfunctioning, though the conclusion was anything but clear until running depth and magnetic exploder problems were solved.



24 June 1943 - Sea

- Admiral Christie at Freemantle (photo), who had been involved in the development of the Mark 6 (magnetic influence) exploder ,was still committed to the exploder, and ordered Fremantle boats to continue using the influence feature.
- Submarines operating between the two commands were required to either enable or disable it, depending on which command area they were in. This difference of opinion strained relations between the two admirals.



28 June 1943 - Air

| | | | |
|--|----------------|-----------------|--|
|  | 19 August 1919 | 15 May 1942 | Center red circle now inscribed within a regular pentagon formed by inner vertices of star, making red smaller than first version. Colors were <i>Flag Red</i> and <i>Flag Blue</i> until late 20s when current colors of <i>Insignia Red</i> and <i>Insignia Blue</i> were specified |
|  | 15 May 1942 | 28 June 1943 | Insignia Red dot removed to avoid confusion with Japanese Hinomaru roundel. |
|  | 28 June 1943 | 14 August 1943 | Experiments showed that at a distance, shapes were more important than colors, so bars were added to the roundel with an Insignia Red outline. |
|  | 28 June 1943 | August 1943 | Several units in the Pacific refused to paint the red outline but added white bars pending new orders for a blue outline. |
|  | 14 August 1943 | 14 January 1947 | The Insignia Red outline was replaced with an Insignia Blue outline through the amendment of Army-Navy aeronautical specification AN-I-9 on 14 August 1943. This was followed by an amendment to Technical Order 07-1-1, issued on 24 September 1943, for units in the field. On some US Navy aircraft in the Pacific the blue outline was lighter than the insignia blue. |

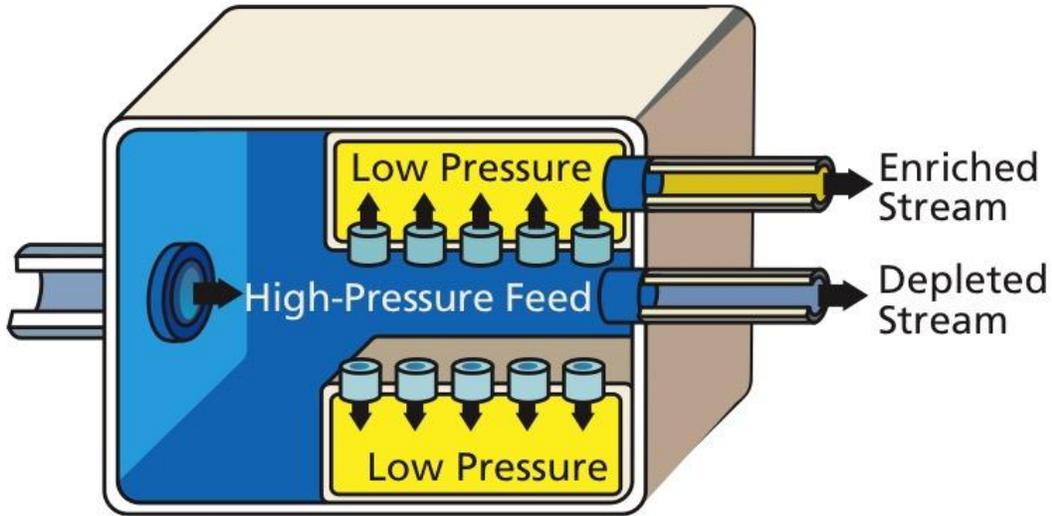
June 1943 - Manhattan Project

- June 2: Construction begins of K-25, the Oak Ridge Gaseous Diffusion plant.
- When it was completed in 1944, the four-story K-25 gaseous diffusion plant was the world's largest building, comprising over 5,264,000 square feet of floor space and a volume of 97,500,000 cubic feet.

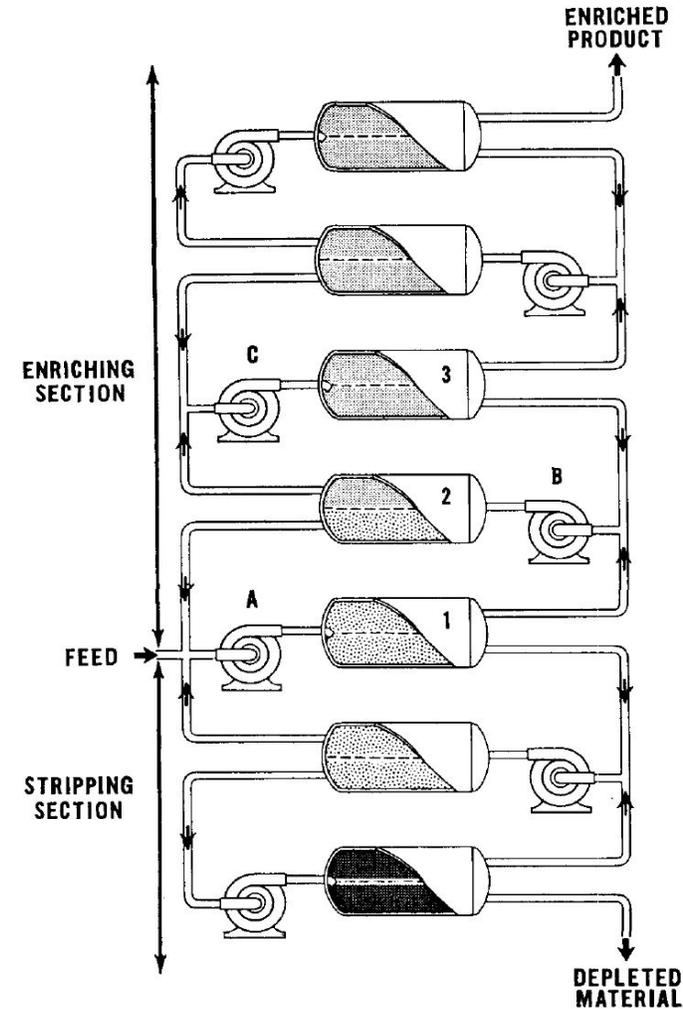


The mile-long K-25 building of the Oak Ridge Gaseous Diffusion Plant aerial view, looking southeast.

June 1943 - Manhattan Project



Gaseous diffusion uses semi-permeable membranes to separate Uranium Hexafluoride gas into Uranium 235 enriched and depleted streams. Stages are connected together to form a cascade. A, B and C are pumps.



June 1943 - Manhattan Project

- The greatest difficulty with the X10 reactor was with the uranium slugs produced by Mallinckrodt and Metal Hydrides to fuel the reactor.
- The slugs used pure metallic natural uranium, in air-tight aluminum cans 4.1 inches long and 1 inch in diameter.
- These had to be coated in aluminum to avoid corrosion and the escape of fission products into the cooling system.
- The Grasselli Chemical Company attempted to develop a hot dipping process without success.
- Alcoa tried canning, developing a new process for flux-less welding; 97% of the cans passed a standard vacuum test, but high temperature tests indicated a failure rate of more than 50%.
- Nonetheless, production began in June 1943.
- The Metallurgical Laboratory eventually developed an improved welding technique with the help of General Electric, which was incorporated into the production process in October 1943.
- Photo: Loading fuel slugs



June 1943 – New Guinea

- In March 1942, the Japanese landed at Lae and Salamaua and established major bases in the large town of Lae, and in Salamaua, a small port with an airfield.
- The small band of guerillas which was Kanga Force had been hanging close about the Japanese in the Wau-Salamaua-Lae area ever since they landed, supplied by carriers up the Bulldog track from the south coast and by air into Wau.
- The airfields at Wau and Salamaua are less than 50 kilometres apart but separated by some of the worst country in the world. So bad that to this day there are no roads between them.
- For 15 months the two armies had fought over this trackless waste with forces building up from Platoon to Company to Battalion to Brigade and had now built up to a Division at an enormous cost in air supply.
- The Australians had a significant success in late June defending Lababia Ridge.
- This force was now in a position to support the advance via the Bulolo Valley against Lae but had the greatest difficulty to get even a Platoon across the trackless waste to support the American beach head at Nassau Bay.



June 1943 – New Guinea

- The success in late June defending Lababia Ridge underlined a development in Australian defensive tactics.
- Previously the teaching had been to camouflage defensive positions and conceal the defenders.
- The Lababia defences, however, had been based—first by the 2/7th and then by the 2/6th on positions which to some extent sacrificed concealment to the clearing of fields of fire.
- Approached from the enemy side, however, there was little to be seen for the enemy had to come up hill and could see nothing until he was on a level with the diggings, and the fire lanes were cleared from the ground up, only leaves, twigs and small shrubs being removed to a height of about four feet.
- "This engagement is noteworthy," wrote Moten (photo), "and is a classic example of how well-dug-in determined troops can resist heavy attacks from a numerically superior enemy. Our troops in Lababia Base totalled 80 and when joined by C Coy 2/6 Aust Inf Bn totalled 150. It is conservatively estimated that 750 Japs attacked our perimeter. Our casualties were 11 killed and 12 wounded. Enemy casualties were estimated as 200."



30 June 1943 – Lend Lease

United States Lend-Lease Aid to Australia,
(\$US'000)

| Category | 1941 Mar-Dec | 1942 |
|--|-----------------|----------------|
| Munitions | 5,975 | 141,091 |
| Transport equipment | — | 17,988 |
| Industrial equipment and metals | 1,045 | 43,600 |
| Chemicals and medical supplies | 170 | 4,576 |
| Textiles | 933 | 9,046 |
| Timber, paper, pulp | 99 | 2,017 |
| Food and tobacco | 1,313 | 3,977 |
| Petroleum products | — | 21,545 |
| Other goods | 5 | 1,247 |
| Total goods, f.o.b. add unrecorded freight and other services | 9,440 | 245,087 |
| | 1,274 | 33,087 |
| Total Lend-Lease Australian-currency equivalent of total Lend-Lease | 10,714 | 278,174 |
| | £ 2,551 | 66,232 |

Australian Reciprocal Aid to the United States,
(£A'000)

| | 1941-42 | 1942-43 |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Military Stores | 2,023 | 18,356 |
| Food | 1,300 | 11,791 |
| Services | 992 | 8,996 |
| Construction | 2,185 | 19,814 |
| Total | 6,500 | 58,957 |
| U.S. dollar equivalent | \$US24,700 | 224,037 |

In general, Australian-United States mutual aid grew rapidly and effectively during 1942 with a remarkable absence of friction and a predominance of goodwill on both sides. In view of the complexity and scale of mutual aid, one would have expected much more misunderstanding, confusion and frustration than actually did occur. (Official History)

June – New Guinea

- Ever since the Buna campaign Kenney had been anxious for a good fighter field near Lae to use in covering the invasion.
- He hoped to fly troops into an existing emergency strip and seize it, as he had done during the Buna campaign.
- Kokoda and Wau had been surveyed but found unsuitable. Then in May an aviation engineer officer, with orders to find a field farther forward than Wau, trekked from the Bulolo Valey almost to Salamaua, found nothing suitable, and thereupon backtracked and went down the Watut River where he found and recommended an emergency landing strip at Marilinan.
- But Marilinan was not perfect; it was feared the September rains would render its clay too muddy to be usable.
- At this point General Wurtsmith of the V Fighter Command took a hand. Looking over the ground himself, he picked a site at Tsili Tsili four miles down the Watut River from Marilinan. Kenney and Whitehead agreed with his choice.



Generals Kenney and Whitehead

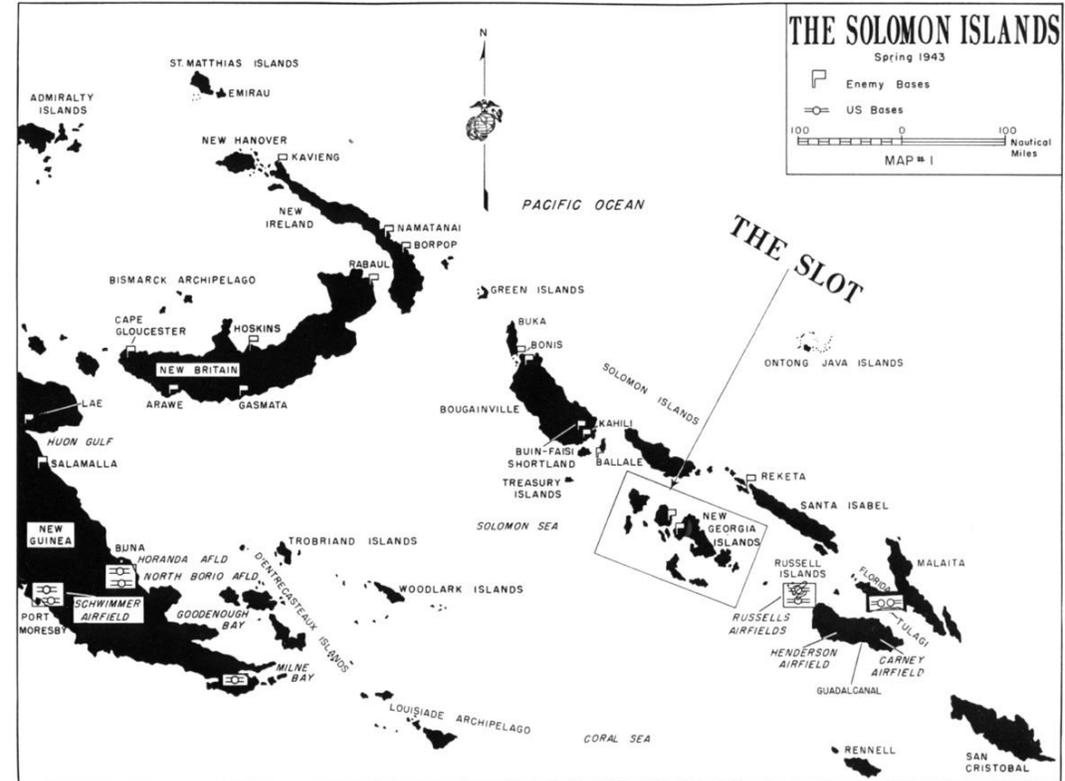
June – New Guinea

- Kenney and Herring arranged to build a second staging field, using a few Australian troops and native labor, at Bena Bena south of the Ramu Valley.
- This emergency strip had long served as a New Guinea Force patrol base, and the Japanese at this time were hoping to capture it eventually.
- The Allies decided to build a grass strip suitable for fighters at Bena Bena (C-47's carrying supplies to the Australian patrols had been using Bena Bena for some time), and to burn off the grass in a fashion so obvious as to distract the enemy's attention from Tsili Tsili.



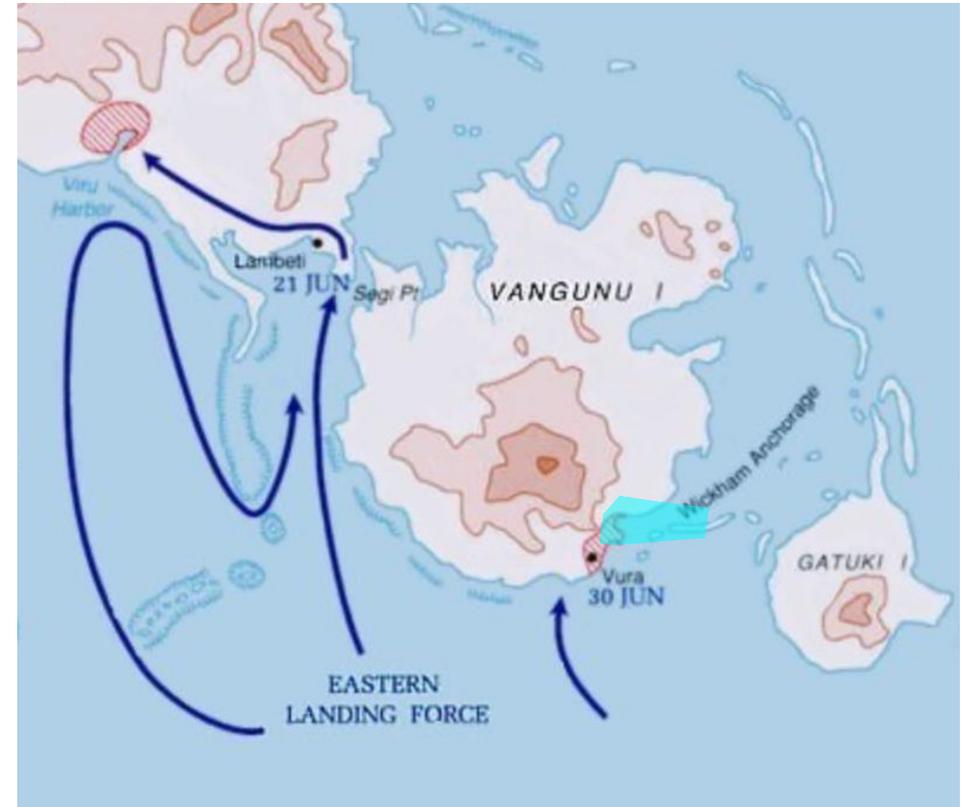
30 June 1943 – New Georgia

- The Allied base at Guadalcanal continued to suffer from Japanese bombing raids even after the island was declared secured on 9 February 1943.
- The Japanese airfield at Munda made these raids easier by giving Japanese planes a convenient place to refuel on the way to and from their main base at Rabaul.
- The Allies attempted to neutralize Munda with repeated bombing raids and naval shelling, but the Japanese were always able to repair the airfield in short order.
- The Allied command thus determined that Munda had to be captured by ground troops.
- the operation would be conducted by Admiral William F. Halsey's forces under the overall command of MacArthur's South West Pacific Area.
- Forces committed to capturing Munda totaled 32,000 Army personnel and 1,700 Marines. Forces allocated to capturing Vella Lavella totaled 9,588, of which 5,888 were US servicemen and 3,700 were New Zealanders.



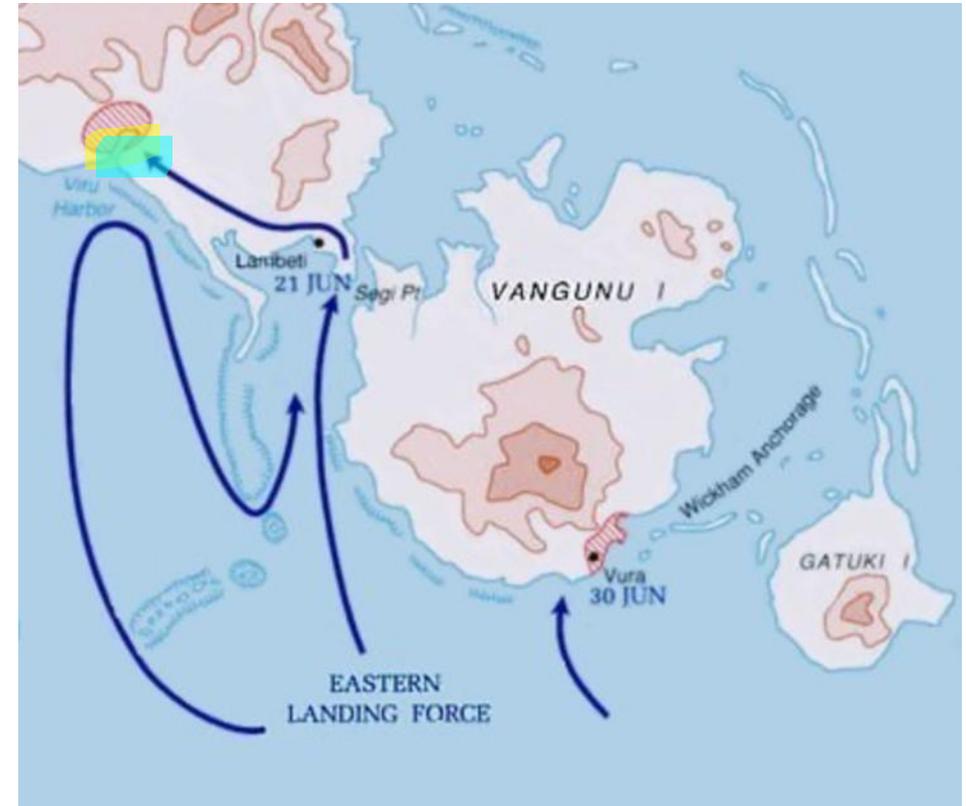
30 June 1943 – New Georgia

- A force consisting of portions of the 4th Marine Raider Battalion and the 103rd Infantry Regiment landed at Oloana Bay on the south coast of Vangunu Island on 30 June.
- From there they marched overland to Vura village which overlooked Wickham Anchorage, the first of the objectives of the original Allied plan.
- By 12 July, Vura was secured and garrisoned.



30 June 1943 – New Georgia

- The remainder of the 4th Marine Raider Battalion captured **Viru Harbor**, supported by dive bombers, on 30 June, after advancing overland from Lambeti Plantation.
- They had moved to the plantation by boat on 27 June from Segi Point, having been dispatched there on 21 June during a preliminary operation.
- Another company from the 103rd Infantry Regiment relieved the Marines in the harbor on 4 July, having landed at Segi Point on 30 June when the Marines' advance had been delayed.



30 June 1943 – New Georgia

- The initial phase of the siege of Munda was the capture of Rendova, commanded by Admiral Turner.
- A total of 6,000 soldiers, sailors and marines of the US Army's 172nd Infantry Regiment, the 9th Marine Defense Battalion, and the Navy's 24th NCB landed at Rendova Harbor early on 30 June.
- Companies A and B of the 169th Infantry Regiment along with the New Zealand-trained and led commando unit of 130 South Pacific islanders took three strategic islets in the Blanche Channel opposite Munda.
- Rendova, Wickham Anchorage and Viru Harbor were developed into staging areas for the main event, the siege of Munda, while Segi Point was developed into an airfield.
- The small Japanese garrison on Rendova was quickly overwhelmed but the island was subjected to heavy attack by Japanese aircraft over the following days.
- The Marines on Rendova quickly built artillery emplacements from which they could shell Munda airfield and support the operations during July and August to capture Munda airfield.



Airfield at Segi Point

30 June 1943 – S.W. Pacific

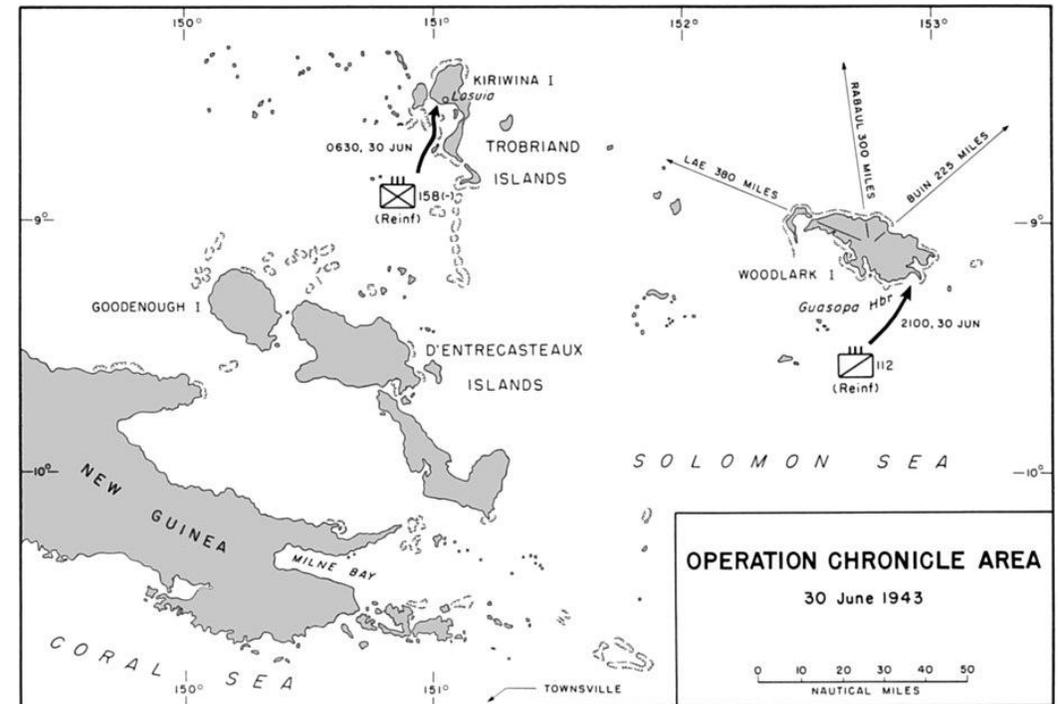
- Operation Chronicle was the Allied invasion of Woodlark and Kiriwina Islands, in the South West Pacific.
- Woodlark and Kiriwina were required as future airfield sites to support operations in both New Guinea, New Britain and the Solomon Islands as part of the wider Operation Cartwheel, during which the Allies planned to advance towards the main Japanese base around Rabaul.



The New Guinea and New Britain area, including Woodlark and Kiriwina.

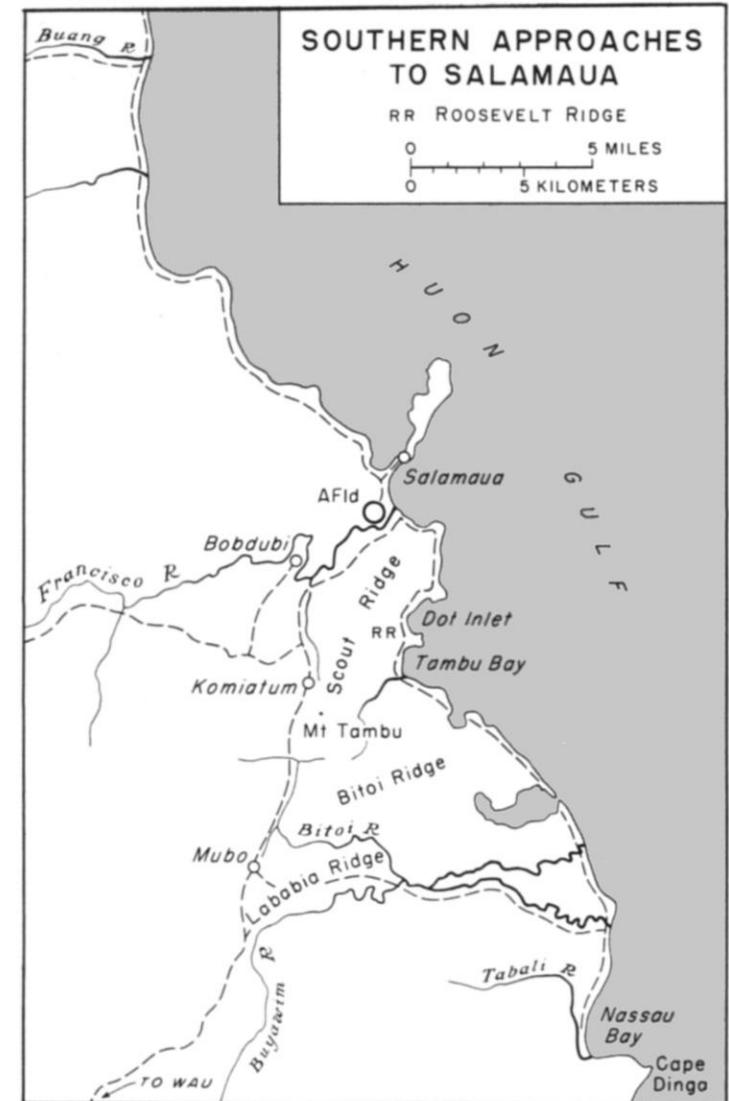
30 June 1943 – S.W. Pacific

- Preliminary actions commenced on 23–24 June 1943 when small reconnaissance parties were landed on both islands.
- The main operation was executed without opposition on 30 June 1943.
- Around 16,800 personnel took part, divided into two forces. The United States Army provided the majority of ground troops, which were supported by a United States Marine Corps defense battalion as well as U.S. and Australian aircraft and naval vessels.
- The 2,600 troops of Woodlark Force had departed Townsville, Australia, on 25th June aboard six LSTs, with one subchaser SC-749 and two destroyers, Bagley and Henley, as escort.
- On 30 June, 2,250 troops of Kiriwina Force departed Milne Bay aboard twelve LCIs. They were escorted by two destroyers and two small coastal transports.



30 June 1943 – New Guinea

- A landing at Nassau Bay was timed to take place in conjunction with similar operations on Woodlark and Kiriwina, in New Guinea, and on Rendova, in New Georgia.
- The amphibious landing force consisting of elements of the American 162d Regiment left Mort Bay at dusk on 29 June.
- PT boats PT-142, PT-143, and PT-120 of the US Seventh Fleet took aboard 210 men of 1st Battalion, 162nd with PT-68 providing escort.
- Twenty-nine LCVPs, two requisitioned Japanese barges of the 2nd Engineer Special Brigade, and two Landing Craft Mechanized of the 532nd Engineer Boat and Shore Regiment took the remainder of force – numbering 770 men – on board at Mageri Point.
- The landing force was organized into three waves.



MAP 6

30 June 1943 – New Guinea

- A platoon of 'D' Company, 2/6th Infantry Battalion from Mubo set landing markers to guide the landing craft into the beachhead.
- As the first wave with PT-142 arrived at Nassau Bay, PT-143 arrived with the second wave landing craft. In the confusion, the landing craft of the various waves bunched up and "landed on the same stretch of beach" in 10–12-foot pounding surf.
- The landing craft were pushed far up on the beach, with seventeen unable to get off the beach which became flooded.
- The Landing Craft Mechanized, after unloading a bulldozer was able to proceed back out to sea and retrieved the troops off PT 142 and then returned to the beach, where it too began taking on water and became flooded.
- The landing had been unopposed with 770 men landed at Nassau Bay. However the landing craft breached were wrecked and most of the radios were damaged by salt water.
- PT-143 and PT-120 returned to the advanced PT boat base at Morobe, while PT-142 and PT-68 provided seaward protection.
- The Japanese defending the landing area – a small six-man observation post – offered a brief defence before fleeing into the jungle.
- The third wave of landing craft with PT-120 arrived hours after the first two waves and decided not to land until the surf abated. They took shelter in a cove down the coast, until the storm had subsided and returned to Nassau Bay but failed to find the beachhead and returned to Mageri Point.



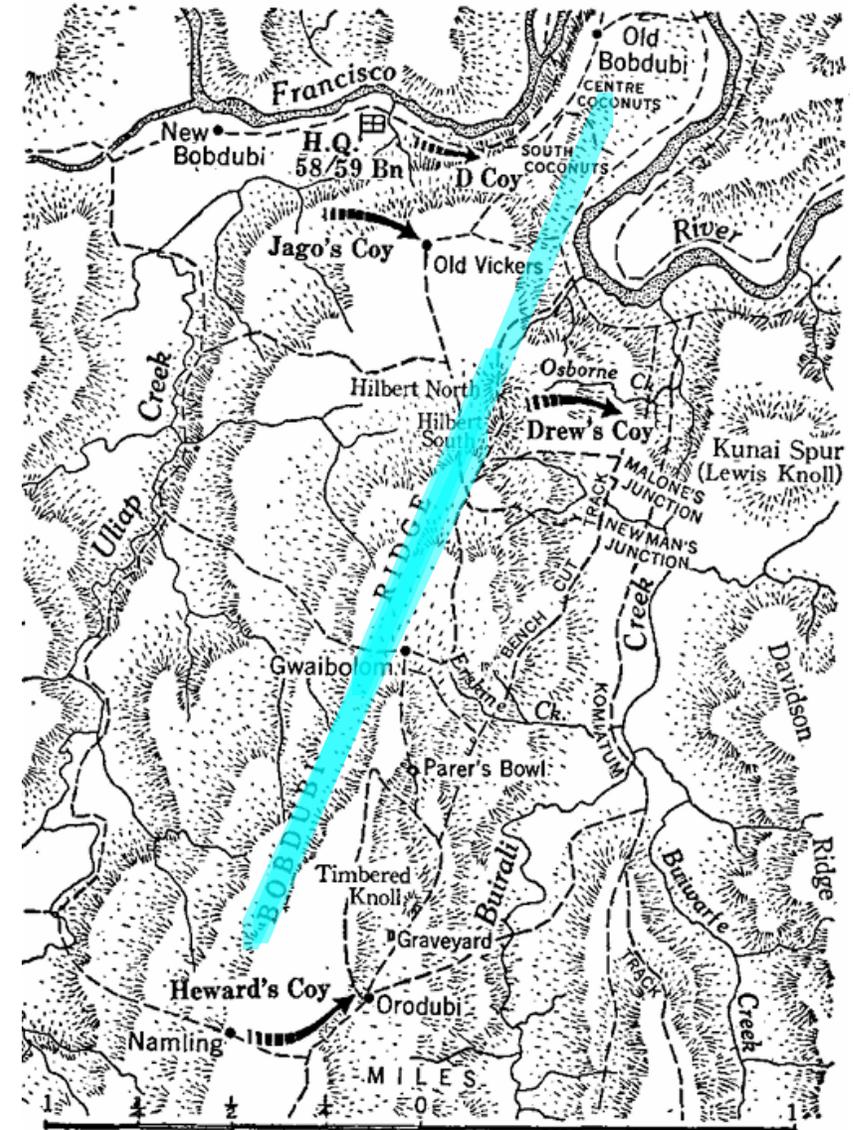
AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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Wrecked landing craft at Nassau Bay

30 June – New Guinea

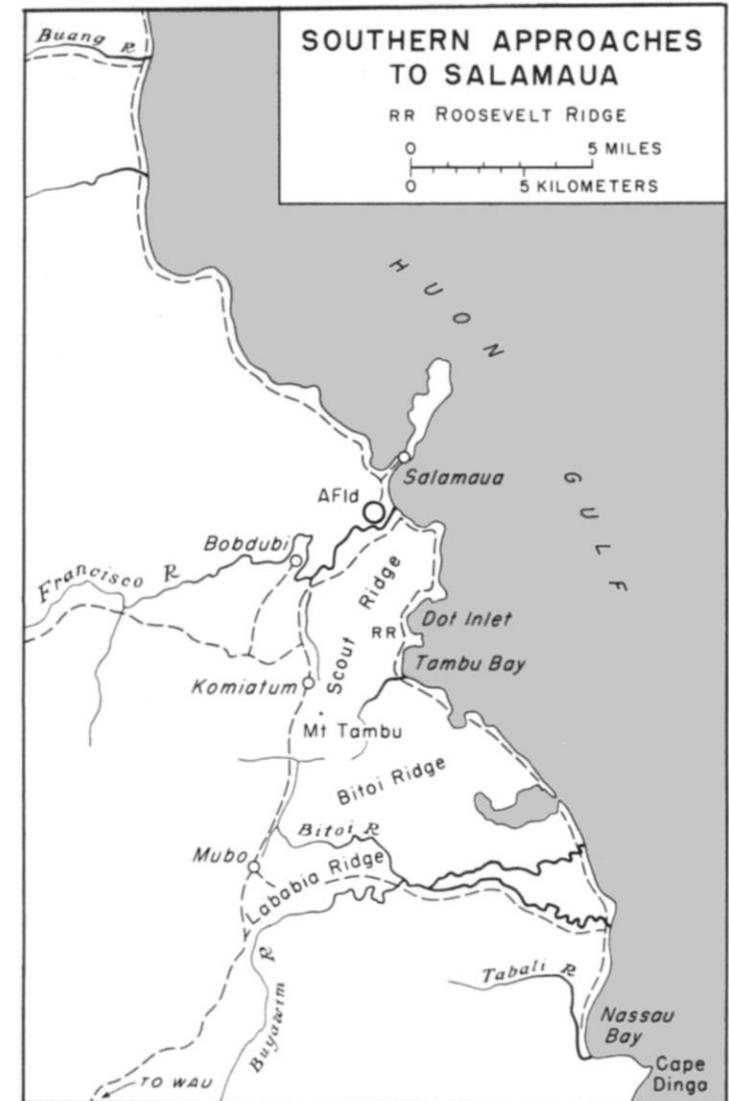
- Between 30 June and 19 August, the Australian 15th Infantry Brigade cleared **Bobdubi Ridge**.
- The operation was opened with an assault by the inexperienced 58th/59th Infantry Battalion that came to hand-to-hand combat.



58th/59th Battalion attack, 30th June

30 June / 1 July – New Guinea

- The Japanese attacked the beach head's defensive line in a series of attacks that lasted throughout the night, with machine gun, mortar, and rifle fire cracking around the American defensive positions in conjunction with grenade attacks.
- Small parties of Japanese soldiers attempted to infiltrate the positions but were pushed back.
- The Japanese withdrew before sunrise on 1 July, having lost around 50 killed during the night.
- Allied casualties amounted to 18 killed, and 27 wounded, several of which were the result of friendly fire incidents.



MAP 6

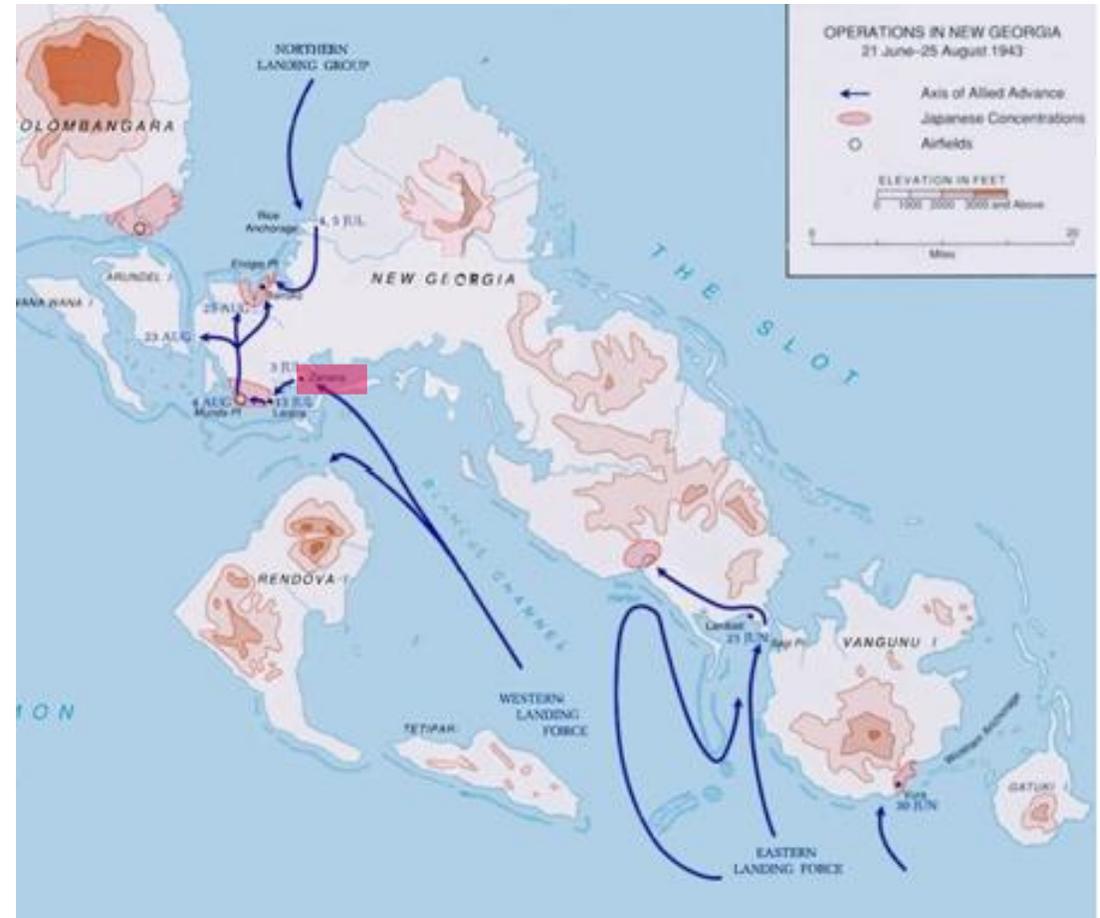
1 July – New Guinea

- MacArthur's Southwest Pacific forces were executing Operation II of the ELKTON plan--the seizure of the Markham Valley and the Huon Peninsula of New Guinea--aimed at increasing the Southwest Pacific Area's degree of control over **Vitiaz** and **Dampier Straits**.
- This operation had actually started in January 1943 with the Australian defense of Wau in the Bulolo Valley and was furthered by the Australian advance from the Bulolo Valley toward Salamaua and the 30 June landing of the MacKechnie Force at Nassau Bay.



2 July 1943 – New Georgia

- On 2 July, the Americans were ready to make a landing in the Munda area on the New Georgia mainland.
- Laiana beach was closest, being only 2 miles from Munda, but as it was heavily defended, it was rejected in favor of **Zanana** beach, more than 3 miles farther east.
- The crossing was undertaken in daylight by elements from two regiments in the afternoon of 2 July; a small perimeter was established around Zanana and defenses built up before the advance westwards towards Munda Point began.



2 July – New Guinea

- On 2 July, reinforcements – drawn from the failed third wave – arrived aboard 11 landing craft, escorted by PT-149 and PT-145.
- Further landing craft hauled by trawlers also arrived at Nassau Bay.
- The easternmost company of Australian 2/6th Infantry Battalion made contact with the northern perimeter of American troops at the south arm of the Bitoi River, and patrols by the Australians found that the Japanese defenders at Cape Dinga had been evacuated.
- Four 75mm Pack Howitzer M1 artillery guns from the 218th Field Artillery Battalion were unloaded on the night of 2/3 July, together with reinforcements.
- MacKechnie Force patrols were then sent out towards Napier, guided by the Australian company from the 2/6th Infantry Battalion.



PT 617

4 – 6 July – New Guinea

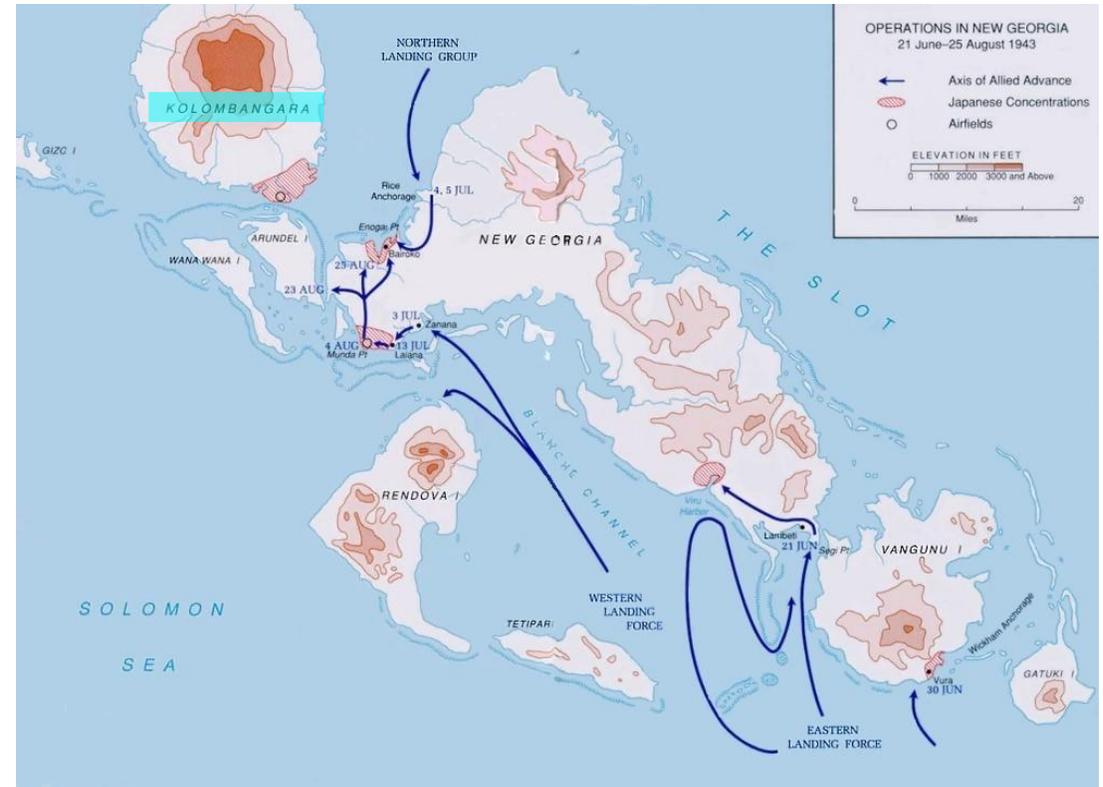
- By 4 July, more than 1,400 troops were ashore. PT-120 and PT-152 carried 140 troops to Nassau Bay, which were transferred to shore by landing craft.
- On 6 July, PT-120 and PT-149 transferred another 135 troops and escorted 11 landing craft to Nassau Bay.



PT-109 entering Tulagi carrying 94 survivors from the sunken heavy cruiser USS Northampton

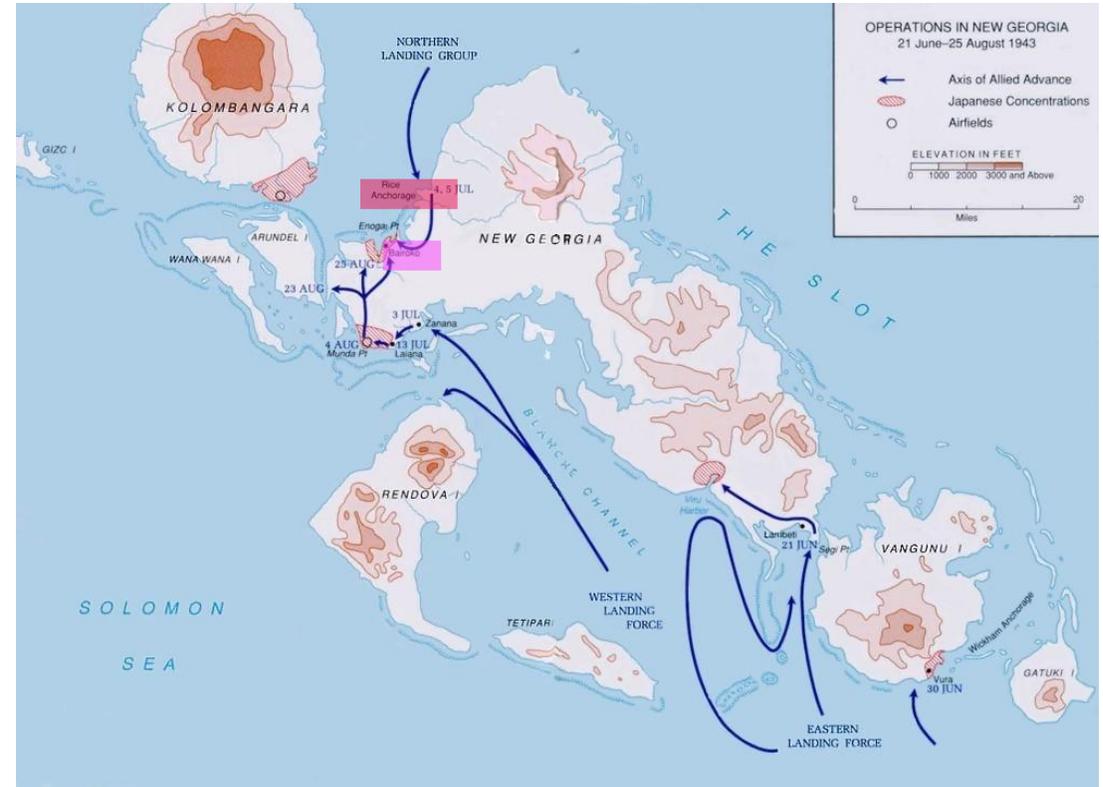
4/5 July 1943 – New Georgia

- The Japanese reacted by loading 4,000 troops on destroyers and brought them down "The Slot" on the night of 4–5 July and landed them at Vila on the southeast coast of Kolombangara.
- From there, the men would be ferried across Kula Gulf on barges to Bairoko on the northwest coast of New Georgia, before moving along an eight-mile jungle trail to Munda.



4/5 July 1943 – New Georgia

- The Allies also carried out an amphibious operation in Kula Gulf that night.
- Halsey had dispatched transports carrying 4,600 troops consisting of Marine Raiders and two US Army battalions under Colonel Liversedge to **Rice Anchorage** on the northwest coast of New Georgia.
- A force of three light cruisers and four destroyers commanded by Rear Admiral Walden L. Ainsworth covered the troopships.
- One of Ainsworth's destroyers was torpedoed and sunk. The US ships never saw their attacker and suspected a submarine. 241 survivors were rescued 46 U.S. sailors were lost.
- Liversedge's men were tasked with moving down the coast and capturing **Bairoko**, thereby interdicting the trailhead used by the Japanese to reinforce Munda. They were successfully landed at dawn but found the terrain difficult and advanced slowly inland



5/6 July 1943 – New Georgia

- Admiral Halsey was informed of another "Tokyo Express" mission down "the Slot" in the Solomon Islands, from Buin, on Bougainville. Ordered to intercept the Japanese, Ainsworth, with his task group, the light cruisers USS Honolulu, St. Louis and Helena, plus four destroyers, Nicholas, O'Bannon, Radford and Jenkins, changed course and proceeded northwest past New Georgia Island.
- A Japanese force of ten destroyers, landing reinforcements at Vila, was intercepted by Ainsworth off the east coast of Kolombangara, about half a mile from Visu Visu Point.
- The U.S. ships, having tracked their opponents with radar, opened fire at 01:57 hours, firing 612 shells in 21 minutes and six seconds, quickly sinking the destroyer Niizuki.



5/6 July 1943 – New Georgia

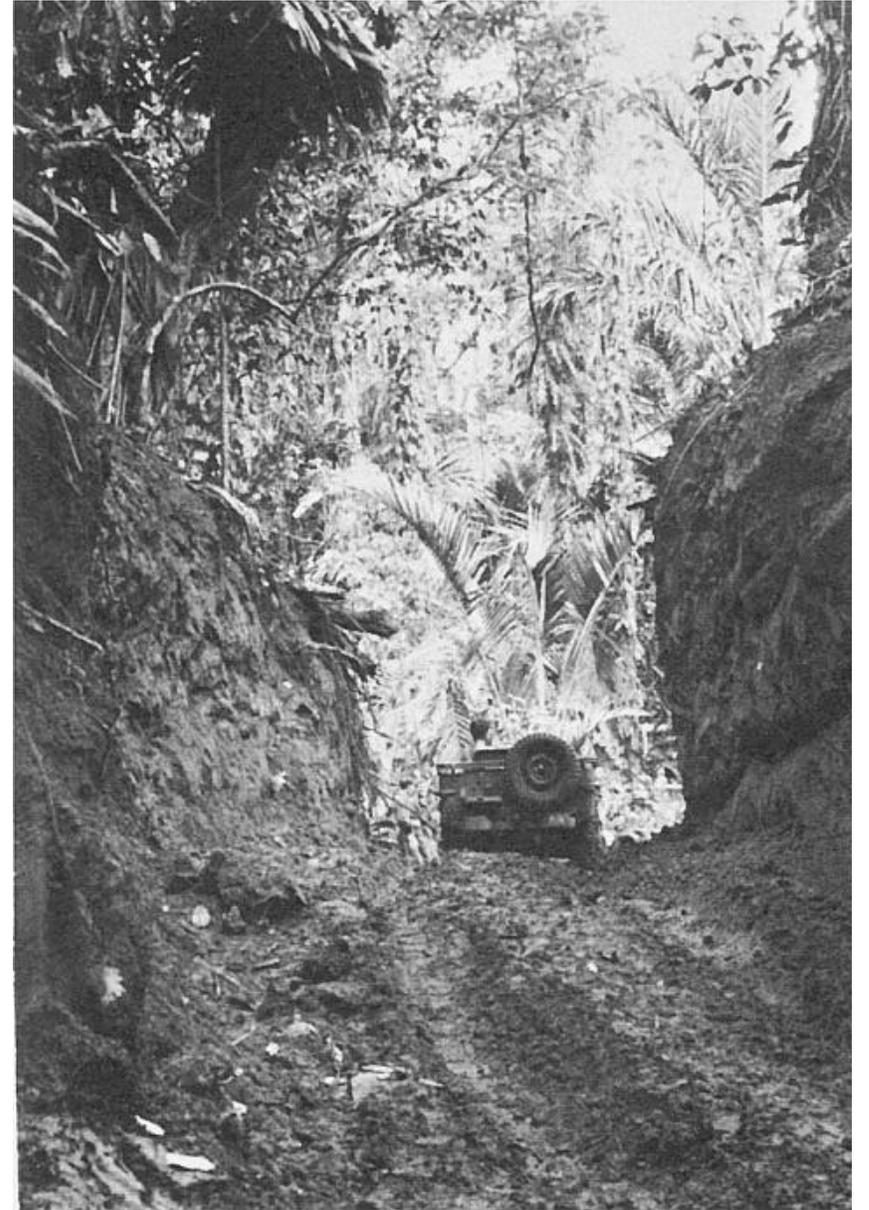
- Helena had expended all of her flashless powder the previous night, and she was forced to use smokeless powder, thus illuminating herself to the Japanese ships with every salvo.
- Two of the Japanese destroyers launched their Long Lance torpedoes and hit Helena sinking her.
- After heading away from Vila following first contact, the main Japanese force broke away behind a smokescreen.
- In the process, Nagatsuki was hit by a single 6-inch shell, and ran aground on Kolombangara, 5 miles north of Vila, while Hatsuyuki was damaged slightly by two shells, which failed to explode.
- US losses during the battle amounted to one light cruiser sunk and 168 killed, all from Helena.
- The Japanese withdrew after the engagement, having landed 1,600 troops.



Radford arriving at Tulagi with survivors from Helena

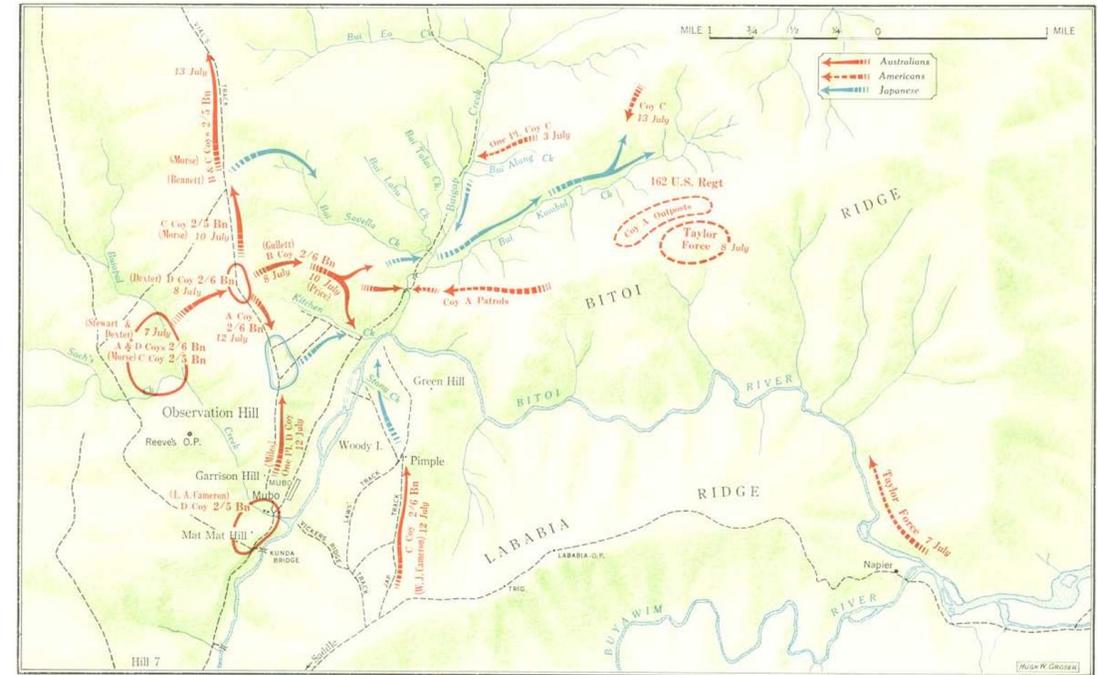
5/6 July 1943 – New Georgia

- The US advance from Zanana to Munda was completely stymied, hampered by difficult terrain, supply problems and low morale.
- General Hester tried to break the stalemate by sending the 172nd Infantry Regiment around to the north to take the Japanese position in the rear, while the 169th Infantry Regiment continued the frontal assault, but this effort was checked by the Japanese.
- As a result, the US advance on New Georgia stalled in both the north and the south.
- Photo: Jeep trail from Zanana.



7 July – New Guinea

- A week after the Bobdubi (7 July) attack and Nassau Bay landing, the Australian 17th Brigade launched another assault on Japanese positions at Mubo.
- With the Allies making ground closer to Salamaua, the Japanese withdrew to avoid encirclement and concentrated in the Komiatum area, which was an area of high ground to the south of Salamaua.



The 17th Brigade attack on Mubo, 7th-13th July

July – New Guinea

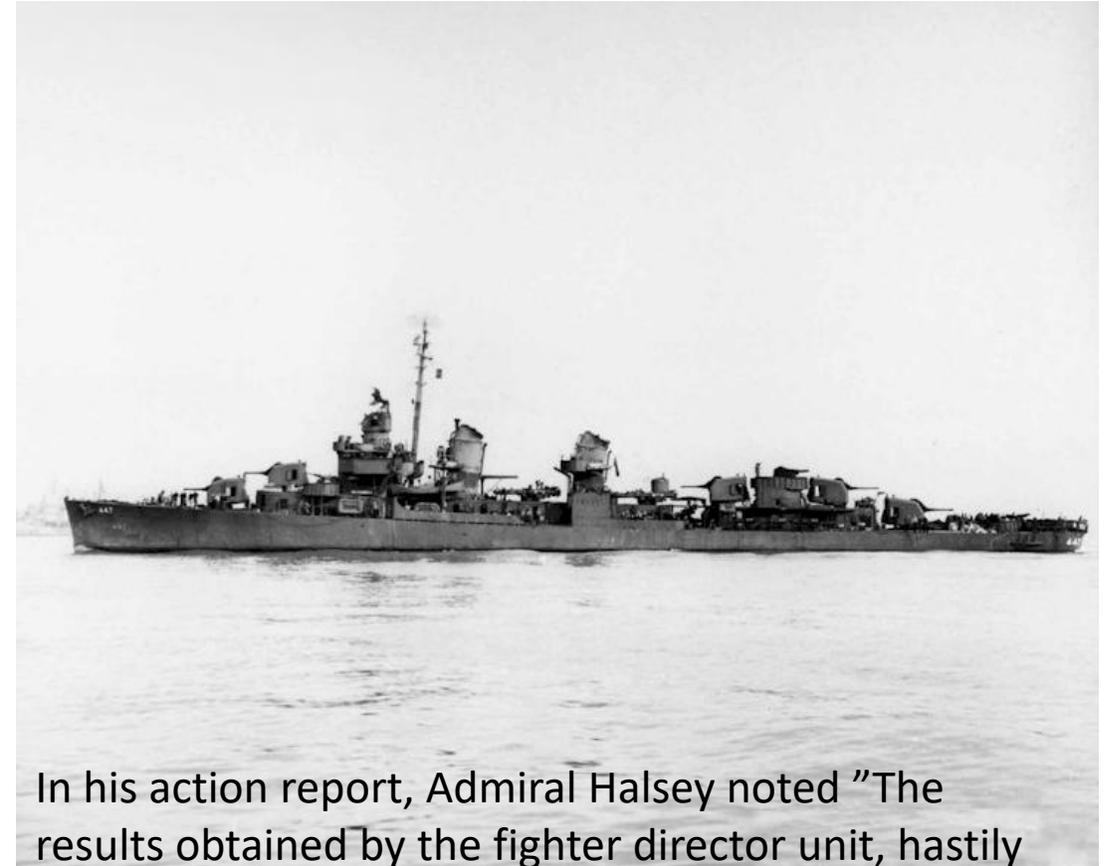
- In June and July, C-47's flew Australian troops and the U.S. 871st Airborne Engineer Battalion to Marilinan.
- The troops moved down the river to Tsili Tsili, cleared the strips, and C-47's flew in specially designed bulldozers and other earth-moving equipment.
- Some gear, including trucks sawed in half so they could be loaded into C-47's, was also flown to Tsili Tsili, where the trucks were welded together.



A Vultee Vengeance from No. 24 Squadron Royal Australian Air Force at Tsili Tsili Airfield in November 1943.

7 July 1943 – Air Defence

- Cruisers with their big guns were in demand for other work such as shore bombardment and surface engagement.
- The fleet was now getting new destroyers with SC-2 radar and well equipped CICs that could function as well or better than the improvised CICs on the older cruisers.
- The new Fletcher Class destroyer Jenkins (photo) embarked a team of four FDOs and two enlisted operators at Guadalcanal to provide fighter direction to cover the invasion of Rendova Island.
- Land based fighters were to provide the CAP.
- After the landing, Jenkins' skipper noted in his action report that the team had performed extremely well.
- He reported that they had intercepted all enemy air raiders before they reached attack position, and in the final attack a few torpedo planes did get through, but the ships guns easily dealt with them. He wrote:
- It is believed that if the combat air patrol is adequate, interception can be made in sufficient time to neutralize an attack: the problem appears to be that of providing sufficient fighters rather than improving radars.



In his action report, Admiral Halsey noted "The results obtained by the fighter director unit, hastily assembled on board the USS Jenkins and working in an area partly enclosed by land, are very encouraging. Rapid developments along these lines will be highly remunerative."



Thanks for your attention.