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### Museum Project Development Office Opens

The South Pacific World War II Museum is one step closer to construction with the official opening of the Museum Project Development Office in Luganville on Thursday 26th October 2017. The opening coincided with the 75th anniversary of the sinking of the SS President Coolidge and the loss of the life of Captain Elwood J. Euart.

The new office is located on the north east corner of approximately 7300 square metres of land leased by the Vanuatu Government, upon which the museum will be built in Unity Park at the west end of Luganville.

It was constructed by [Santo Hardware](#) staff in a disused office that was renovated and fitted out over a period of months. The office space was made available to the museum project through the Acting Director General of the Ministry of Justice and Community Services, Mr Pacco Sir.

The Museum Association is very grateful to Mr Siri, his ministry and department staffs for their support.

*Image: New South Pacific WWII Museum Project Development Office, Unity Park, Luganville*



### 75 years after [Capt Euart's](#) passing



It was from the Euart memorial site east of Luganville that the day's events commenced.

A memorial service to Captain Euart and the only other person to lose his life following the sinking of the Coolidge, Fireman Robert Reid was held, followed by a wreath laying by Deputy Chief of Mission of the United States Embassy in Port Moresby, Mary Drake, The Vanuatu Minister of Lands, Ralph Regenvanu, President of Sanma Provincial Government Council (SPGC), John Olo Aru and South Pacific World War II Museum Founding Chairman, Bradley Wood. A visit to the Coolidge site followed, to let flowers drift off in remembrance of what happened 75 years ago.

*Image: (L-R) DCM Mary Drake, Bradley Wood, Minister Regenvanu, SPGC President John Olo Aru at Captain Elwood J Euart's memorial. (Photo: [Patrick Dancel](#))*



## Second Mini Popup Museum opens

That day also included the opening of a second mini popup museum at Espiritu Santo Peko International Airport, after the first at the Espiritu Hotel in November 2016. It features WWII aircraft parts recovered from the surrounding jungle, designed to pique the interest of inbound tourists and business people alike and raise awareness of the museum project.

The Museum Association thanks the board and management of Airports Vanuatu Limited (AVL) for supporting the Museum project and giving space at the airport for this special exhibit.



*Image: Minister Regenvanu makes first donation*

*Image below: Chairman Brad tells of the fascinating history tied with the displayed items, one of which is the Marston Mat, known as the M8 aircraft landing mat. A huge amount of these mats was left behind by the US forces, where many are re-used to this present day as pig fencing and stock yards. Large quantities of matting were produced and used extensively in the Pacific Theater of Operations in WW2. Approximately 2 million tons of mats costing more than US\$200 million (in the 1940s) which is well over 3 Billion dollars.*



*Image above: US Embassy DCM Drake and Minister Regenvanu unveiling Peko Mini Popup Museum.*

*Image below: Unveiled (All Photos: Patrick Dancel)*



*Image: Marston Mats being laid by Seabees and Ni-Vanuatu workers on Bomber 02 (Peko Airport) 1943*

Photo source: NARA

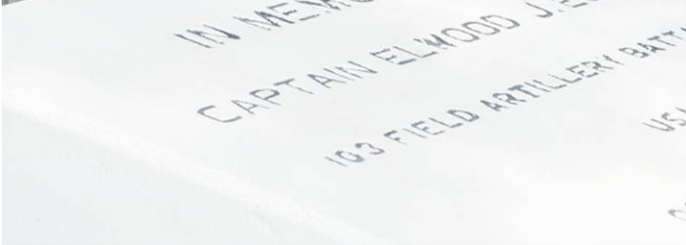


**More pictures of [Captain Elwood J Euart's Memorial Service](#)**

*Images (left): Capt Euart's monument and US Embassy DCM Drake addressing dignitaries*

*Images (below): Dignitaries at the Memorial Service. Other images at the Coolidge site, where flowers were drifted off in remembrance of what happened 75 years ago. Coolidge remains a popular wreck dive today.*

*Allan Power & team, LIS Students, and divers returning from morning dive. (Photos by [Patrick Dancel](#))*



### More pictures - Opening of the Museum Project Development Office



*Image above: L-R Minister Regenvanu, US Embassy DCM Drake, 'Big Wok' Co-Author James Gwero, Brad Wood and SPGC President John Olo Aru officially opening the SPWWIM Project Development Office.*

*Image below: Museum Board & Management*

*Image bottom right: Former Deputy Prime Minister of Vanuatu Sethy Regenvanu accompanied by other dignitaries to visit a foundation stone he laid over a decade ago at the site, with his vision for a museum. The SPWWIM Project fulfills this vision.*



*Image: Inside the SPWWIM Project Dev Office*

*Image below: Display items inside the project office*




Please visit our [website gallery](#) for more photos of the opening. Thanks to [Patrick Dancel](#).

### Project Development Office Hours

8am to 5pm Monday through to Friday. The Office is located at the [Museum site](#).

### New Membership Special Offer is still on

Signup today to have your name on a commemorative plaque in the Museum once construction is complete. This is only for the first 500 members. *Find out more [here](#)*

 **PayPal** Help us build the South Pacific WWII Museum  
Online donations to [Elwood J Euart Association](#) Paypal account

*"We aim to inspire all to understand the sacrifice and achievement of others in defending freedom for all"*

For more information, donation and pledges of support

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