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NZ High Commissioner visits

The Museum Project Office has been honoured to have a visit from the New Zealand High Commissioner to Vanuatu, Jonathan Schwass this month.

The High Commissioner was visiting Espiritu Santo for the first time in his new role and was keen to hear about the museum plans and progress.

Association chairman Bradley Wood in turn was able to thank him for New Zealand's support to date for the museum, which has seen the provision of volunteers through the Volunteer Service Abroad (VSA) programme.

The High Commissioner has previously led New Zealand's diplomatic presence in Timor Leste and Solomon Islands. He is interested in the military history of the region, having seen first hand the battlefields on Guadalcanal during his time in Honiara.

"We certainly value the commitment of the New Zealand government to our project," says Bradley Wood.

"New Zealand has a proud history of service helping protect Vanuatu during the war years, and we look forward to working with them again in the years ahead as we realize our goals."

Association Chairman Bradley Wood with New Zealand's High Commissioner Jonathan Schwass in the museum project office.



A 70 year old message from a kiwi wartime past

A piece of wood from a now-dismantled building on Espiritu Santo has unearthed a piece of history with an intriguing New Zealand connection.

The wood clearly bears an inscription containing the name of James Walcott. It lists his address in Dunedin, an identifying number, and his dates of service.

The piece of wood and its inscription was spotted by Association Chairman Bradley Wood when the building was being dismantled to make way for a new hardware store in Luganville, now known as Santo Hardware.

We do not know if the wood was original to the building. After the war, it was common to reuse pieces of wood here for a second life.

Now we hope this piece can have a third life. It is already getting attention and interest from visitors to the museum project office where the wood is now on display. The project office in Luganville is already open to visitors, who can learn about the plans and see a selection of historic wartime items.

We hope to make contact with descendants of Mr Walcott to put them in touch with this piece of family history and be able to learn more about his war time here on Espiritu Santo. *(Continues next page)*

The house, now dismantled, where the piece of wood was recovered



Museum chairman Bradley Wood holds the piece of wood inscribed by Dunedin man James Walcott.



Some background details about James Walcott

Many Royal New Zealand Air Force personnel in particular served on Espiritu Santo but the inscription does not indicate in which arm of military services Mr Walcott served in.

Here is what we've found from the public domain:

Name: James Foord Walcott

Listed in the New Zealand, World War II Ballot Lists, 1940—1945 published 27 July 1943 as a storeman from 9 Epsilon St, Roslyn. His military number was 637206. He was listed in the 1946 Electoral Roll as living with his parents at 9 Epsilon Street, and working as a storeman.

Son of Ruby Doris Foord (1895-1949) and Vernon Rupert Walcott (1892-1959), and was baptized in Alexandra Parish in 1925.

By 1949 he married Coral St. Elmo and was living at 739 Cuberland Street, and was working as a grocer.

James Walcott died at 61 years old on 18th January 1986. His ashes were buried on the 21 January 1986 at Marsden Valley Cemetery in Nelson.



New Implementation Advisor joins Museum team

Kevin McCarthy, our new VSA Volunteer and Advisor has arrived with partner Leesa for a two-year posting, and has started with the museum team since mid-February 2018.



He will be helping the association implement its fundraising, marketing and communications plan developed by fundraising strategist Heather Ware during a recent six-week VSA posting.

Kevin has settled in well in beautiful Espiritu Santo and is looking forward to help the association achieve its fundraising goals.

The Museum project has now entered into its fundraising stage, with the aim of raising the needed funding to starting building in 2020 and open in 2023.

The Museum's board is pleased with Kevin joining the project and wishes to convey its appreciation and thanks to VSA team in Vanuatu and Wellington, including the New Zealand Government for their significant support towards the museum project.


Kevin has 30 years of experience as a journalist and broadcaster. He has worked for the national network Radio New Zealand, and for the past six years as a media communications specialist for the New Zealand Ministry of Health.

Welcome New Members

We are pleased to welcome Connie Christopher, Tony Lewis and Darrell Child to the Elwood J Euart Association this month.

New Membership Special Offer is still on

If you're one of the first 500 members to join the museum, we'd like to offer you a very special opportunity. In return for your generosity, we'll include your name on a commemorative plaque that will hang in the museum once construction is complete. Sign up today. [Find out more here](#)

 **PayPal** Help us build the South Pacific WWII Museum
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