



Volume 03. Number 04

April 2018

Air Vanuatu helps give us wings



We are delighted this month to have Air Vanuatu join the Museum's Navara Fund.

It takes resources to run our project office and mini-museum in Luganville, so we have created the fund to allow businesses to directly support that. In the language of Bislama, "Navara" means seed, so it is an appropriate name for those helping us flourish and grow.

The Project Office manager Alma Wensi said Air Vanuatu is a key link for growing tourism into Espiritu Santo.

"We believe this museum will be a significant drawcard and yet another reason for people to visit this wonderful island. We see Air Vanuatu's support as a vote of confidence in us, and we look forward to a partnership that benefits both organisations. Paul Pio, Procurement & Public Relations Officer for Air Vanuatu said, "Air Vanuatu is delighted to support the South Pacific World War II Museum. Given the significant role played by Vanuatu in supporting the allied war effort, the museum will be a fitting tribute to the tireless efforts and sacrifices made by Ni-Vanuatu people throughout the archipelago".

About half of the visitors to the office have been Ni-Vanuatu people. It is an important way to build local understanding and support for the project. Alma Wensi says Ni Vanuatu visitors are learning about a history that many of them, until now, were unaware of.

"The Navara Fund is a way that local businesses, in particular, can demonstrate their commitment to a museum that will also serve as an economic and educational boost to our people."

A High Commissioner comes calling



Image: Chairman Bradley Wood talks to High Commissioner Jenny Da Rin during her visit

In the ANZAC spirit, the High Commissioners of both Australia and New Zealand have now visited the project office this year.

The most recent visit was by Australia's High Commissioner to Vanuatu, Jenny Da Rin. She was very interested in what's proposed and invited us to keep her office in touch on progress.

Inspiring Everyday Heroes

Our museum motto is "Inspiring Everyday Heroes", which means how the stories of yesteryear and our project can inspire today's new generation.

Vanuatu recently celebrated bronze medals at the Commonwealth Games, for beach volleyballers Miller Pata and Linline Matauatu, and for Friana Kwevira (pictured). Friana's medal came in the javelin paralympian class. Her talent was identified just 12 months ago. Now that is inspiration!



This month in South Pacific War History

This month, April 1942, saw the audacious Raid on Tokyo by US B-25 bombers flown off the deck of the carrier Hornet. The Doolittle Raid stunned the Japanese, setting in train events that would arguably eventually lead the focus of the Pacific War to the South Pacific.

The reason for that linkage? Stung by the raid, the Japanese fleet chose to make its next strategic move against the central Pacific island of Midway. They suffered a disastrous defeat.

Some Japanese commanders had already argued before Midway that the next move should have been south, to isolate Australia and New Zealand from the US.

Now, with their carrier fleet licking its wounds, but still with a substantial overall edge over the US fleet, the Japanese would be drawn more and more into what at one time would have been the unlikeliest of theatres by both sides – the South Pacific.

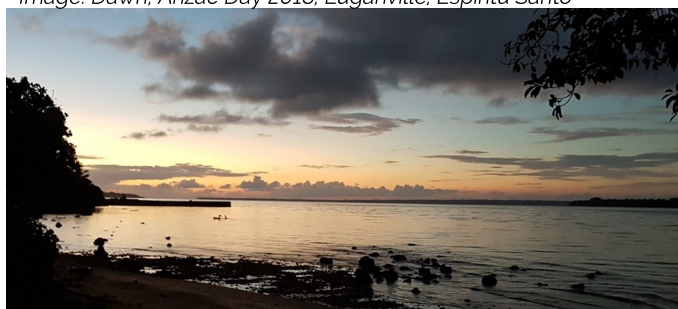
ANZAC Day on Espiritu Santo

There is no greater day of wartime remembrance for the people of Australia and New Zealand than April 25th, ANZAC Day.

The date marks the start of the disastrous Gallipoli campaign in World War I but now serves as a commemoration of the sacrifices made by both nations during the conflicts since.

Espiritu Santo is one of many ceremonies held worldwide. As with all of these, they occur at dawn. Some 35 people gathered at Rotary Park in Luganville this year, along with an honour guard from the VMF, and World War II Australian paratrooper veteran Aub Thode. *Lest We Forget.*

Image: Dawn, Anzac Day 2018, Luganville, Espiritu Santo



The USS Helena is found

The news keeps coming from Paul G Allen and his underwater discovery team.



This month they have found the wreck of the USS Helena, a ship with a proud history which was a frequent visitor to Espiritu Santo.

The veteran of a number of fierce naval battles off Guadalcanal, the light cruiser was sunk during the Battle of Kula Gulf on July 6, 1943, struck by three Japanese torpedoes. The St. Louis-class cruiser was found 860 meters below the surface, resting on the floor of the New Georgia Sound off the coast of the Solomon Islands.

Back to the Future

This month sees the first edition of the Santonian.

The Santonian was the services newsletter produced here in Espiritu Santo during the war years for US personnel.

We are bringing the name back as an extra bonus for our loyal signed-up members.




Each edition will be out every three months, and include more information about our project and about the history of the war in the South Pacific.

The first issue of The Santonian includes:

- The tireless work of one of our members to bring back a forgotten story of wartime heroism.
- A tale of two ships – the very different fates of the Juneau and the Helena.

You can sign up for the Santonian by becoming a Museum member. Your direct support brings us that much closer to realizing our goal of building the Museum. You can become a member [here](#).

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

“Inspiring everyday heroes”



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