


Name:	Recks Ea'ah
Date of interview:	Monday, 7 July 2014
Location of interview:	Depo-Karakadabu, Central Province
Chief interviewer:	Didymus Gerald
Time interview concluded:	2:35 PM
Duration of interview:	13:02:19
Main language of interview:	English
Image:	

#### TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW

Time	Transcript
00:00	This is interview number 10, we are talking to Recks Kakira, Recks is going to be talking about the experiences of his dad Eric Kokina who was a wartime carrier. Recks it's good to be here with you here this afternoon. Please tell us the story of the experiences of your dad Era Kokira during the Second World War.
00:31	Thank you I will be telling a brief history of my late Ea'ah Kakira. My dad was the fuzzy wuzzy angels who made Australian history.  My father's history. My daddy was born in 1927, the place of birth was Midorofono [?] at Sogeri. My father's name is Kakira Waita. My mother's name was Waigi Mumu. So come to the other details my father attended a German Catholic school at Badigi when he was years 12 old in 1939. When the world war came he was 15 years, and he did not complete fourth year of schooling due to the war.
01:37	Due to the war, he was sent back to the village. After a few weeks a month the Australian army arrived at Donadabu, and this is where the Australian army

	established its base camp. Because our father had received some basic education, our father was identified by the Australian army, where he was recruited translator. His role was basically to assist with translations between Australian armies and the native people. In addition he was also served as a rifleman and as a carrier.
02:27	His involvement with Australian army made him an important person, helping the Australian soldiers along the famous Kokoda track campaign against the Japanese armies. Carrying supplies and wounded Australian soldiers were the task he had painfully undertaken alongside other fuzzy wuzzy angels. His main job however was designated to looking after the base camp at Donadabu, but occasionally called to assist with the campaign along the Kokoda track. He stayed dedicated to the Australian army throughout the entire war years from 1942 to 1945.
03:16	By the end of the war in 1945 the Australian army then left base camp in Donadabu in which Australian army war relics are still found to this days. After the war my father got married. He got married in 1948 or 1949. The children, the first born to Tomana Ea'ah, Saru Ea'ah, Oru Ea'ah, Kavana Ea'ah, late Kavana Ea'ah, Kevil Ea'ah, Te Ea'ah and Kite Ea'ah. In 1969 he was awarded a medal for his participation in war. The medal is lost.
04:07	In 1998, our father the fuzzy wuzzy angel, the fuzzy wuzzy hero died gracefully in Beriadabu [?] village, where his body peacefully lay today. Ea'ah Kakira: translator, carrier, doctor, fighter. What does he deserve when he fought in the war for foreigners. Australians. Would the children and the grandchildren of the great fuzzy wuzzy angel hero humbly request for the reconciliation for our father and the grandfather by rewarding him back backdating 1942 to 1948. I, Recks Ea'ah one of the sons representing the family of Ea'ah Kakira.
05:18	[INTERVIEWER]  Just to, thank you, just to get the record straight, we are in Australian territory so we're part of Australia, so that's one. Two, you mention about your late dad being a translator. What was he translating, from English to Motu or what?
	He was translating to – when the believed they were talking in English he translated to the native language, that this thing is going to happen, this thing is going to happen. For example, when they do this, when they trying to put a 25 pound gun, the big one on Donadabu, Sirinumu dam, they test the guns... he translate the Australians said you talk to your village people to remove the village to come to Meriani, so he came up to Sirinumu dam, to talk to the villagers, they going to test the 25 pound gun here so all the village people move, so he help to move the village, all the villagers and they came to Meriani just there, and they test the 25 pound gun. So they tried, and all the village people from the dam areas, they all came to Meriani, just there. So he was the translator.
06:47	[INTERVIEWER]  Was your father alone in translating, or there were other people also involved in translating?
	No just my father alone. And he was also looking after Australian base camp at Donadabu. So he went to Kokoda, as far as Buna, and when victory was won by the Australian armies he came back, and some of the Australians went down to Port Moresby to put the flag on, but they came to Donadabu, to Donadabu, to ... the

	order Australian armies to go back to their place they took all the bridges and ... everything. Only the bridge they left was the other one. The link to Meriani, don't [cook?] this bridge because the people are still there, they did not [cook?] that bridge.
	[INTERVIEWER] You talked about your father also being a storeman. Can you tell us a little bit about what he looked after?
07:54	He was the look after by ... was a translator, a rifleman, then he go after the villagers, the village people they come to the camp areas and they talk to them, the village people try to come and talk to them, talk to them about their something, like they passing through there, through the footpaths of the Australian workers so they don't go through there, the Australian army the guard ... he talking this fellow, so my father would go and talk to them. So he was also looking after the priest for the army, the Australian army camp at Donadabu, ... the only person looking after the ... looking after base camp at Donadabu. He went as far as Buna, came at Ioribaiwa. This is his track. It is his track.
09:02	[INTERVIEWER] This Kokoda trail that is used now, was the track still the same that is used today, or during the war did they use another track?
	No it's different altogether.
	[INTERVIEWER] It's the same that is currently used now?
	Yes but some are not the same route.
	[INTERVIEWER] You mean there's another route?
	Yes there's another route. Yes because, I'm one of the trackers there, I worked with Adventure Kokoda.
	[INTERVIEWER] What do you think our Department of Environment and Conservation is aware of the old wartime route?
	I'm not sure.
09:57	[INTERVIEWER] Are you proud of your father's involvement in the war?
	Yeah I'm proud... Because from 1999, the Australian government that's a form for medallions, I write application for medallions, that time, I filled out application, I went down to the Australian government, High Commissioner to present the application form for the medallion for my father. But when I sent my letter, the letter went down straight to Canberra, and Canberra, they sent my letter, when I read the letter they say only surviving widow will receive the medal. But I write the letter, I sent it myself. My mother is dead, so I'm the only son who's going to get the medal. But they said no. So I didn't get the medal. I didn't receive any medal. My father's medal. So the documents and letters from Canberra they're in that file

	there. The letters and signature from Australian High commission, I'm holding the evidence there with me. The letter is with me.
11:15	[INTERVIEWER] Are you happy about the response? When you inquired about the medal?
	No I'm not happy. Even ... my brothers and sisters and my uncles are not happy about it. Because my father did everything about the Australians. Australian people. He said they are – you know, one thing I came across is he was a translator, carrier, doctor, fighter, what does he deserve when he fought war for the foreigner, the Australians ... I'm proud about my father. But I didn't receive anything from my father's medal, anything. Because the Australian base camp, my father was there, the only looking after the base, where the Australians stayed, they went to Kokoda, that's the only base at Donadabu, there's no other base there. Even in Moresby, the only Australian army base is at Donadabu, in my place. The base is important.
12:26	[INTERVIEWER] Thank you. Thank you for your story. Thank you.
	So on behalf of my family's keeping my ears forward to the Australian government, what will they do for my father? Because my father had done victim for the Australian armies.
	[INTERVIEWER] Thank you.