

Name:	Norah Bate
Date of interview:	6 April 2017
Location of interview:	KB Mission, Milne Bay Province
Interviewer/s:	Anne Dickson Waiko, Elizabeth Taulehebo and Keimelo Gima
Duration of interview:	20:45
Main language of interview:	English
Image:	 <p>Norah Bate (left)</p>

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW

TIME	TRANSCRIPT
00:00	[Interviewer] This is an interview with Norah Bate taped on the 6 of April 2017 and Norah is going to talk to us about her mother.
	My mother was already married when the war came. She had our first born brother, Omari was born and she went to her parents at Divinai. She was a nurse because she was trained as a nurse. She went there and she was living and because war was coming so they had to run away and go so she went up to Divinai. She was there and this war was coming so she was there staying with her parents. And these Australians were already down at Giligili, they were already here.
01:13	These two Japanese pilots, two young pilots they got on that plane, running away. I think war was finished and they were trying to run away, and they were flying over up this way towards the coast to go over those mountains. And then something went wrong with their plane and crashed into the sea. And then somebody from there contacted these Australians at Giligili, said a

	<p>Japanese plane falling down with two pilots on that plane and they were swimming and came up to the barracks, it was a barracks there for the army people to use and they went inside that barracks and they were resting there.</p> <p>And news reached the Australians and they got on their small boat and they came all the way up to Divinai and they stopped at Divinai. And then they send message to the village people to move away from the village so when people started moving those Japanese - they already knew that something is not right, think our enemies were on their way they said. They prepared themselves they got up and got all their bullets, belts, and tied them and they got their pistols and they went inside the house and were looking out from those holes. While they were looking out and not long these Australians already went and surrounded that area. Some of them went around there and some going ... So when they were coming down the Japanese had to fire first, shot and those Australians were moving down.</p> <p>They came and they started shooting and shooting at each other and then they ran out of the house and they ran down to the beach and they were swimming. On the beach they start to exchange fire but the Australians already came in they came, came, came and they swam down to the sea and they started firing at those two pilots. They were trying to swim away from there and then these Australians, you know, plenty of them, so they surrounded the place and they fired at them and them too were firing until they shot one first and only one. They were firing until they shot him. These two pilots were shot. They went down and they pulled them up and they loaded them on the dinghy and took them to Giligili.</p>
03:58	<p>And my mother was there and she said we saw the pilots, very young boys, guys. The pilots Japanese. They took them down to Giligili. From there they buried them at Kainako or where. That's what my mother was telling me. She saw what was happening there. They came to Divinai and they asked, "where is that plane crash?" They pointed to the sea and said at Bou Village. They had to go up, follow the place they surrounded where the barracks and the house was standing. And my mother was there.</p>
04:49	<p>When the plane crashed they walked to the village themselves. They were not taken care of by the villagers because they sent a message down to Giligili straight away. They told the village people to move out from that area. When they were moving out the Japanese already knew that something is going to happen maybe their enemies are on the way. She was telling stories and I was listening and I said oh.</p>
05:36	<p>She didn't do anything to them [Japanese pilots] because they told them not to because the enemies were coming there. Yeah she didn't take care of them. No, she wasn't working with Maiogaru. She was just staying. She remained in the village. And then they told them to run away, come and go across to Buhutu when my brother was a baby they put him in the basket, you know before they used to use our own baskets. They walked all the way up to Duabo and they went down to Buhutu where our relatives were.</p>

06:35	Later then the Americans came and they built hospitals and helped the Australians. And this is one of the hospitals during the war. That's the hospital aee. Before they built one where the present hospital is. And then another hospital over there at Gwavili. Until the war the Americans occupied the whole area here.
07:10	And we were all at Kwato and that's when everything was going back, boats were travelling there, the Red Cross. Samarai was occupied by the Americans and Kuiu by the Australians. And the nurses always go up to Kwato for retreat, American and Australian nurses. They got nurses too to help.
07:47	They said you know it's like something new to them, first time to see war.
08:04	The soldiers were really friendly to us. They made friends and talk to us. The Japanese were very rude people, rude to the local people. They go and steal in the gardens. They threaten them. But the Australians were very friendly to us, also the Americans. But the Japanese were very rude.
08:37	After the war they were running away, they went into villagers' houses. They got their grass skirts and wore them and put those black charcoal they paint their legs their hands and then they carry their baskets, coconut leaf baskets. They carry them and they were walking and running away but on the way if Australians meet them on patrols, they were patrolling, when they meet them they just shoot them. Japanese are very rude. There's two mango trees there are history for during the war but they chopped them down and we always complain for those mango trees. Because during the war those mangoes they shot Japanese and they hang them up on those mango trees with bayonet or what. And they cut tinned meat and put them on their mouth. And the Australians were doing this to the Japanese. I didn't see them but they told us. They told the story out. And there's a rain tree down near the wharf now sea is ... and the Japanese climbed those rain trees and hiding up on the rain trees and the Australian army they came passed because you know there was a battlefield down there and hand to hand, he came and the Japanese just went down on the Australians and they fought but the Australian men used to shoot the Japanese but he didn't die, he was just lying down and the Australian was walking away and he shot him. He managed to get up and shot him and the Australian died.
10:37	But then we heard a guy from Suau, he's a pastor like a mission pastor and he was telling me during the war they took him as chaplain, army chaplain. A Papua New Guinean from Suau. Australians got him as a pastor, as their chaplain. And the battlefield was here and when the soldiers are dying, he walks around and pray, praying over them. Yeah, he really risked his life. The war was going on, you know the soldiers were falling down but he was walking around and praying for the soldiers. And he was telling me here when I was staying here, Mrs house. And then he came down and was telling me stories, telling me about the battlefield here, really fierce one because this where the fierce battle was fought. His name is Weibo but I don't know his second name.

	He died just recently. I said oh a lot of Milne Bay people took part during the war like helping but it's never mentioned, yeah, never never mentioned.
12:13	But the Battle of Milne Bay, the magazine, I say go across to Education Milne Bay and find out. You'll see Maiogaru there and few of those men who fought in the war. But only a few have had their stories recorded and documented but what about the others, those who risked their lives like Enoka, my father and others. Aunty Daido's brother Enoka. But Weibo was telling me that you know soldiers were falling down and he was walking among the dead people and blessing them. This man from Suau, his name is Weibo, a chaplain. He was doing that to any soldier, any soul that is falling down he goes and bless them. Like for us Papua New Guineans here like Milne Bay we don't treat soldiers like enemies and allies. Like my father did to these two soldiers, he treated them the same. That Japanese soldier's name is Kakimoto. The one who was rescued by my father. But the Australian guy, he didn't tell me his name.
14:05	No, no the pastor Weibo survived. He came here and we were together and he was telling me this story, we sat down up there and he was telling me this story, this area here. Yeah, this is just recently 2000 something.
14:37	Yeah, General Sikana, he carried the flag and he ran, Japanese order him to carry a Japanese flag. They gave him from over that side, north coast some where there, Tufi or where and he ran. He was aiming for this Taela bridge, this Cardigan bridge there, now they put up a long new bridge there. Those two Australians are already ready, two brothers. One climbed up the tree and he told his brother to stay underneath the bridge to watch. Some rumours said already he put the flag over the boundary because that's the boundary where if the Japs went over that boundary then they win the war. Those two brothers, Australians, they were there and they shot him. While one was struggling with him on top and the brother shot down and he shot both of them. His brother and that General. He shot them because he said I can't ... I don't know their names. But if in the book then, in their war book you'll see. The story was told to us by our people, our father and other men too. They were telling stories about him. This is like a big story. How and why and Japanese came and aimed for that Giligili. They said Sikana is from Tufi, Popondetta area Northern Province. His from Popondetta, very big, huge man and black skin. He aimed for Giligili. Like they did to uncle Eli.
16:54	There's another thing about the Kwato Mission, took part during the war. They used their boat <i>Osiri</i> , Kwato boat to transfer soldiers from here to the other side of the bay and our boys were involved, you know uncle Sila and the others. They really risked their lives and that Cecil Abel was with them and only Cecil Abel got the honours and not the others. The captain and not the crews. And they were telling us that The boat had to take all the soldiers you know, blood everywhere, to take the soldiers across to the other side of the bay up to the hospital there at Gwavili. Every time our boat is traveling across bomb will be coming down but they never hit our boat the sides. And they said Cecil Abel was in that boat and what he does in the cabin is praying

	while the boys are doing the work. So Kwato Mission you know they helped during the war. Our boys.
18:43	And they have to go up to the islands to recruit some boys to come down and help in the war down at Giligili with uncle Malu and all those ones. So they were there you know like helping with the soldiers and the plane when they come their job is to hang the bullets or something to shoot the other planes down. So they recruit some boys from the islands to come down and help in the war.
19:18	But Kwato Mission did a lot and helped our soldiers. So our boat and also Anglican boat too, I forgot the name of their boat. Anglican mission and Kwato mission they were helping our soldiers. <i>MacLaren King</i> [Anglican mission boat] and <i>Osiri</i> [Kwato mission boat]. That's just few things that we remember. I had a magazine on the Battle of Milne Bay but my grannies came and took it away reading it and I don't know where they put it. How many times I went and ask for the magazine but inside is everything. But there's a library down in Toowoomba, army library but they have a Milne Bay section. That's all I can recall.