

<b>Name:</b>	Noweni Deboyamina Story told by her son Rodney Galahodi	
<b>Date of interview:</b>	25 March 2017	
<b>Location of interview:</b>	Kilakilana, Milne Bay Province	
<b>Interviewer/s:</b>	Anne Dickson Waiko, Elizabeth Taulehebo and Keimelo Gima	
<b>Duration of interview:</b>	33:11	
<b>Main language of interview:</b>	English and Ealeba	
<b>Image:</b>	 <p>Noweni Deboyamina (centre, in blue dress)</p>	
<b>TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW</b>		
<b>TIME</b>	<b>TRANSCRIPT</b>	
00:00	[Interviewer] This is an interview with Noweni Deboyamina and her son Rodney Galahodi held at Kilakilana village on the 25 <sup>th</sup> of March 2017.	
	She was ten years old when the war came to Milne Bay. During the war they were here [Kilakilana] but as the war grew bigger they had to leave this place and go to Suau, to one of the villages called Modewa. She was with her big sister and her husband, Nitoweya and Siliki. Nitoweya is her sister. And the big sister's husband. His name is Siliki. When the war came here they have to leave this place because of the war. She saw the war with her own eyes.	
02:40	All the soldiers were based here even the food for the soldiers were but most of the fighting is across on the Tawala side.	
02:57	And some of the, she experienced during that war when we were asking her that time she was not very old and she was telling us. They were staying here,	

	<p>but one of the history that she told us, the Australian soldiers put two big machine guns down here and those machine guns were used when the Japanese soldiers war planes when they came in they used to use those machine guns. During the nights when any plane comes in from the point of East Cape or from Suau that's where those two machine guns they used to defend this area down here.</p>
03:54	<p>One of the histories that she told us, during the time you know the story about Milne Bay we live by our custom, what I mean by our custom is our ladies and even men they believe on culture, so one of the histories is that Japanese, they threw one of the bomb, but it came here but it didn't explode. It hang on one of the trees because of the power of our mothers just down here. So the bomb didn't explode. Yes, she did see the bomb hanging, just down here. The bomb didn't explode. As I've said because of our mothers, you are from Milne Bay I'm from Milne Bay we know what I'm talking about. The bomb was stopped from landing on the village. It was there until it was removed. The villagers from here had to be removed with their bare hands, that's what she told us. A few days after.</p>
06:38	<p>I was little at time so I couldn't remember much of the war. But I was scared of the war.</p>
07:05	<p>She used to tell us that the bomb was dropped and it got stuck on a leaf, it's like a palm tree leaf. There were two women who diverted the bomb and it stuck on the leaf and did not explode. It's down here at Mwadawa Oulana. When it landed there, it did not explode. After that maybe the soldiers came and removed the bomb. Maybe how many weeks ... it was on top of the pandanus (palm tree leaf-flat and wide). It was stuck on top of the pandanus and later they came and removed it, the soldiers. But it didn't explode. Maybe in 1942 or something. That was before they left the village, they were still here.</p>
09:25	<p>From here they have to walk all the way to Suau. Because of the war they have to leave this village and go to Suau. It's a bit far from here to Modewa across the mountains. They were in groups walking and the whole village. They got scared so they had to move out. They decided to leave this village because they got scared. Some of their relatives were there. Siliki is from Gala, Suau so when the war came, he's from there so they move across there. They were accepted well by the people there. They were not supplied food by the ANGAU or army. So they looked after themselves own their own. They had to make gardens and survive. And make their own houses and stay in the village. After the war that's when they returned back. We stayed there for about four years.</p>
14:17	<p>When the war came, I saw plenty planes flying over this place.</p> <p>She saw war planes and warships. She was scared. That was her first time to see plenty dimdins and she was scared because they were soldiers. They saw them carrying guns. No, Japanese didn't come around this way. Just Americans and Australians. She couldn't differentiate between the Australians and the</p>

	<p>Americans and the black Americans as well, she was too small to remember. She does not remember whether they were looked after by the army or not. They ran away when they saw the soldiers ... They just saw them as soldiers and war so they ran away ... they were confused. Because their very first time to see white people around here.</p> <p>I haven't seen any white man before the war. That was my first time to see dimdins but soldiers.</p>
18:12	<p>I see the war as something very bad because a lot of people were killed. And too much fighting. During the war the soldiers were really angry. They were angry with the Japanese.</p> <p>I didn't see any soldier killed or injured, only themselves.</p> <p>She didn't see any soldier being killed or injured because they all ran away. They villagers were not here. And they were not harmed.</p> <p>The soldiers, they built houses or made camps here too. There were lights put up. There were no trucks and I only saw them walking on foot. They used to go up to Gamadoudou but when they returned from Modewa, Suau all the Army things have been removed they army base.</p>
22:06	<p>Their villages were affected and properties destroyed.</p> <p>They had to start their lives all over again, rebuild their lives.</p>
22:21	<p>Our father is from Gamadoudou. I was very small like my daughter there and my daddy passed away.</p>
23:10	<p>There are no other stories about women helping or protecting them. She only told us the story about the bomb been stopped by the women. This happened down at our shores so we know about it.</p>
24:33	<p>During those times when she was strong and fit she used to tell us stories about the war but she is growing old and her memory has been fading so she can't to remember the stories. Her experience during the war was a pride for her because she was born already and a little girl when the war came and she witnessed it. She takes pride in telling and retelling stories about the war to her children. She was not in school when the war came. She didn't go to school after the war.</p>
25:40	<p>She ran away with her big sister and the family and she saw her sister as protecting her. The big sister had a son and she was the one carrying her big sister's son during that war when they were running away. One time she told me, she was carrying the big sister's son they were running because of the war and she dropped the big sister's son. And her big sister tried to belt her but her husband stopped her and told her, you don't have to belt her we are running away. Her big sister's son was maybe two or three years old. He's still alive, the boy he was carrying and they were running away during the war time.</p>

26:57	There are war relics down here at the beach, barge. Those barges the Americans and Australians used them as wharves. Like these Asians are doing. Pontoons or what they are still down there at the beach. There was plenty of them.
27:40	The bomb and the two machine guns, what she told us was during the night like they put up those two machine guns and as soon as the war planes came the Japanese war planes came the one on the left hand or on the right hand side, because they got big lights, like torch (spot light). So they will on the spot light and then that the other machine gun will show the war plane and then the other machine gun, they are the ones going to fire it. So that's their idea, the Australians. When she was telling us it's true, I myself went down to Kawahea they were there until because of the salt water and they rusted away.
28:52	Hearing the stories from my mother you know I felt that I should in that time during the war so I will see things with my own eyes. That's what I was thinking whether it's good or bad. So how life will be like. That's what I was thinking. Yes it was good for her to tell me her stories of the war. I like listening to the war stories from her and I feel proud of her because during that time she there and the war came and we still live on this planet earth so I feel proud of my mother. Even some of the war victims they are already gone they already passed away but she is still here so I'm proud of.
30:16	Her father Deboyamina and others helped the soldiers during the war as carriers and there were others as cooks.  There were women from here who helped to do laundry and also cook for the soldiers. There were no women from here who made friends with the soldiers or had boyfriends. The dimdim soldiers were busy fighting in the war.
32:50	[Interviewer]  Thank you very much.