

Name:	Grace Bauba
Date of interview:	Friday, 23 May 2014
Location of interview:	Kokoda Primary School, Kokoda, Northern Province
Chief interviewer:	Barnabas Orere
Time interview concluded:	2:26 PM
Duration of interview:	29:08:36 & 02:46:99
Main language of interview:	English
Image:	

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW

Time	Transcript
00:00	[INTERVIEWER]: Interview number 8, Kokoda, May 23, 2014. Can you begin by telling us who you are, your name, the village you are staying at and introduce your father, Bauba Avea. You may start now.
	My name is Grace Bauba, and my father is Bauba Avea. Before the war his village was Waie in the Mamba river. But now his village is Barara, still in the Mamba river, along the Mamba River. I am sixty years old, and the third born child in the family of eleven children: five boys and six girls, who are all alive except one boy who was killed in a car accident.
01:21	Before the War, my father Mr Bauba Avea was a plantation overseer at Awala. The owner of the plantation was Mr Searle, Clen Searle. So one afternoon, when my father was there at Awala, he heard the cannons firing at Gona. Gona was deep further down the coast, but they could hear the cannons, the noise of the cannons firing, and the labourers were wondering what that noise was but Mr Searle knew what it was. It was the Japanese landing at Gona, firing the cannons to the beach. So in the morning ... he called all the labourers together and told them that there was a war, that the Japanese are coming to fight. But he told the labourers that they were not going to fight with the natives, they were trying to fight, to make their way along the road to Kokoda and up the track to Port Moresby. From Port Moresby they going over to Australia to take over my village, that's what my father said, village, so 'all of you have to go home except Mr Bauba, you're not going', he choose my father and another man to stay back with him.
02:57	So they stayed, and my father was the trusted labourer of Mr Searle. So he trusted my father to stay with him with the other man. But the other man was very scared and he planned to run away. So he told my father, 'Mr Searle is telling lies. We have to run away. All our brothers ran away and two of us are here. So we have to run away too'. My father was also a store boy. So that night, while it was raining heavily, he told my father to go and open the store.
03:35	And that other man was standing outside. When my father got into the store, he started getting rations, like meat, biscuits, tobacco papers, bush knife, axe, and he was handing it out to the man standing outside that door. While they were doing that, I think Mr Searle, he had a feeling that something was going on. So he went out to the back door and creep behind the store. When he came to the front of the store, the other man was outside so he could see Mr Searle so he ran away with all he things that he got.
04:11	When my father heard footsteps of that man running away, he came outside but Mr Searle was already at that doorway and he grabbed my father. My father struggled to free himself and run away but he was held tight by Mr Searle. Mr Searle grabbed him, took him into the house and locked that door and told him: 'Mr Bauba you are not going to run away, you are not going to leave me here alone. You must stay with

	me. I told you that fight is not going to kill you people. They after the white people so you must stay with me.' So he comforted my father and advised him good and proper. 'If you obey my words, you will still be living. If you disobey me, you will die.'
05:01	So my father believe what Mr Searle said. So they slept together in the house. Next day, the white people started travelling, like the plantation owners, some government officials, business men, all the women were flown to Port Moresby but the men started walking up the road to Awala. And at Awala Mr Searle had a radio, so all came to Awala, native, Mr Searle, and he had to send the radio message to Moresby, tell them how many white people are travelling along the track, and who they were and what their names were.
05:40	So after sending the message to the radio, he left with this white man and told my father, 'you have to stay here with the white people. Any white man come they have to send the message. So you have to wait for them'... So he was waiting while everybody was coming using that same radio to send message to Moresby that they were coming. The last lot of people who my father told me were some miners from Bulolo and Wau. They walked towards Waria and the border of Morobe and Oro. They walked to Ioma till they arrived at Awala, and then this white man used the same radio, used the radio to send a message.
06:36	They spend the night there and they started walking up the road to come to Kokoda and then to Port Moresby. So he waited another day, no white man came, put the radio down, tied it with rope, it was very big radio, heavy one, he had to carry it on his shoulder. And Mr Searle told him you have to get some tobacco, tinned meat, biscuits. Mr Searle gave him a uniform, a rifle and axe. So he came. On his way up he was told to pull down and break up the signboards. Those signboards were telling how far the miles of the places like from Awala to Kumusi, Kumusi to Gorari, Gorari to Oivi, Oivi to Kokoda, these types of signboards, so he was given that axe to smash all the boards there.
07:39	And then he walked up to Kokoda. He said he slept on the way, and then he walked up to Kokoda. The previous person who was talking here is my cousin brother, so his grandfather Jinga was my father's uncle. Before he worked at Awala, he stayed with his uncle and worked in the gold mine at Yodda village while he was a young boy.
08:07	He came to check his uncle, the uncle was living up there behind the compound, that was his place, so when he came to check his uncle and the family they were not there, they had gone. So he had to sleep by himself there. The next day, he got up, he had to carry the radio with him, he started walking up. He went up, he slept on the way. He had only his uniform on and few packets of biscuit and a couple of tins of meat, which he's already finished. But he had some tobacco with him, so before he slept he smoked his tobacco. He tried to sleep but he was so cold so most of the night he stayed awake. When the day broke, he got up, and he started walking. He came to Ioribaiwa. From there, he rested. He sat down, he put the radio down, he rested, he drank water, he rolled his smoke, he smoked. While he was doing that, the Australian soldiers were already there.
09:19	They're already there on the sides of the track, the soldiers lying in the bushes. He didn't know that they were there, so he carried the radio, he bent his head and he was walking up. He was walking up, as he came closer to the top, the commander said 'halt'. He got shock. When he looked from left to right he saw the barrels of the gun all pointing at him and he started shivering. He dropped his gun, he didn't know what to do he was all in tears. So the commander had to come and hold his hand,

	shook hands with him, took him up to the other place. He told him 'did you meet any Japanese?' He said 'no. They are not here yet they were still at Gona firing the cannons so I heard that and I had to come carrying the radio'. Mr Searle already told them that a boy would be coming with the radio, so they were expecting him.
10:22	So when he went up, the radio man came and quickly took the radio out of my father's back. And then they gave a seat to my father. He sat down and he was watching. This radio man quickly went and set the radio up and he started sending message. The commander came and said to my father, 'our radio's not working well so we have to use the radio that you brought', so they started. 'And this radio message the radio man is sending is so that they will send more reinforcements, our rations and our ammunitions.' And when he told my father that, he sent him to the mess. The cook already prepared his food, so when he went to the mess the cook gave him his food. It was late so he said, 'you have to spend the night here with us'.
11:13	So he was given a bed to sleep in. Next morning they gave him his breakfast, gave him some rations, and then the commander wrote a note, he said 'get this note with you, you meet any white man coming or soldiers, you give it to them this note. They will read it and they'll let you pass.' So the commander gave him that note and he took the note up with him. On the way he met some soldiers who were coming down so he would give them the note. They would read it and let him pass. And he told us that when he saw the soldiers they were very, very young boys. Some of them didn't even shave their beards, and he was really worried and he was deeply thought, he was wondering whether these soldiers, these young boys were going to fight in the war.
12:08	And then he went to Sogeri. The planters there were Mr Searle and Mr Bill Gordon who were in charge of there. So they were at Sogeri to meet him. From Sogeri they took him down to Hanuabada. They stayed in Hanuabada with some white people who were waiting for the ship from Australia to arrive in Moresby. So they stayed with him. Their plan was to take my father to Australia. But they didn't let my father know that they would take him to Australia. They kept it secret. One brought the woman to come, one Hanuabada woman they brought her to him, and she took measurement, to sew his clothes.
12:53	Then he didn't know what was going on. The lady there got the measurements and sew all his clothes. The day before the ship sailed, my father had very thick hair, he had long beard, he had earrings made from turtle shells, he had necklace, he had armbands and leg bands. So they had to cut all those things out, take his earring out, cut his hair down, shave his beard.
13:29	Gave him soap to have his wash. After that they gave him clothes to wear and then they slept. The next day, Mr Searle said 'Mr Bauba you have to go inside the ship and look around there.' So he thought that they were just going inside to see the ship. They went inside, Mr Searle took him all over the ship, showing him the places in the ship. While they were doing that, the ship already left the harbour. It was in the middle of the ocean. So after looking around the last place they went to the mess, so they had lunch there. Mr Searle said 'we'll go out now'. So when they came up the deck, my father was really shocked to find that he was right in the middle of the ocean.
14:21	He had no words to speak. He was just dropping his things. Mr Searle put his arms around him and he said, 'Bauba, you remember my promise, my words to you, if you obey my word, you will be safe and you will be still alive. Now I'm taking you to my

	<p>home, so don't be afraid. You will be safe with me'. So he took my father back down to the cabin, got his key out from the pocket, then opened the cabin. When they went inside the cabin, my father was very surprised to see his bag and clothes there. So they sat on the bed and he kept on advising my father, comforting him and encouraging him.</p>
15:08	<p>After some days they reached Sydney. Came to Sydney, from there they took him around, he visited many places. He visited Sydney, he even went across Sydney Harbour Bridge, he went to Cairns, Townsville, Brisbane, Melbourne, and some places there. During his stay there, he was first taken to the factory where guns were made, where bullets and cartridges were made, where bombs were made. They showed him everything there. They took him to the army bases where the training was given the soldiers.</p>
15:54	<p>They took him around in army jeep. They took him to the airport, and put him in the fighter plane. They took him around in the air, and they took him down back again. Then they took him to seaport where he was put in the submarine and they took him under the sea. They went around from there, they got him back. He visited many places, he said he visited places like factories, clothes factories, meat factories, where they make cars, where they make all sorts of things. They even took him to the [?], they even took him to the botanical gardens, and then the last part, they even took him to the hall, big halls where people were gathered. They were all gathered there. When they took him to the hall, where people were gathered, there was always a seat with his name. His name, Mr Bauba Avea, was always put on the seat, so whenever people go inside to sit, they usually see my father's name, and leave the seat and go and sit on the other seats. So Mr Searle and Bill Gordon were the ones who were taking him around and as soon as they take my father in to the hall, everybody would rise. They would rise in respect of him, and when he took his seat everyone would sit down. And then they usually on the radio, listening to the progress of the War here in the country.</p>
17:31	<p>They know he was from Northern Province and the war around here, in this area. They wanted to listen to what he would say. So they used to ask him questions and it used to be translated by Mr Bill or Searle in Police Motu. They ask him in Police Motu and then he would answer them and they would tell the people in English what my father was saying. Everybody were trying to touch him and talk to him and some people were pushing others to look at him. And then they took him into a studio, Mr Searle told him, 'you are going to tell a story, and that story is to be recorded', so they took him into a studio and they told him what to say. He talked in Police Motu on the one side, and then the other side he talked in Binandere language, that's our mother tongue.</p>
18:36	<p>In the record, they told him to talk about the war especially in the Northern Province, and he was from the Northern Province, so he had to tell the people of Northern Province about the war, about the Japanese, and the Japanese were our enemies, and the Australians are our friends. So whenever you see Japanese hiding or anywhere you have to come and tell the Australians where the Japanese are, so the Japanese, could go and kill them. Don't help the Japanese you must help the Australians.</p>
19:16	<p>Give them food whatever needs they need, you have to help them and look after them, and don't betray them to the Japanese. So that's what he was saying in Police Motu and Binandere language. On cover, on the record, his first introduction is in</p>

	my language, in our language, 'na Bauba Avea na Bindandere man'. So that record was sent, and it was distributed to the missionaries, to the plantation owners, government officers, businessmen, and some well known people, those were educated, they were given these records.
20:03	So they went into the bush; while my father was still in Australia, his record was here. So they went into the bush, gathered all the people who were hiding, and had to bring them together and have to play my father's record. Those who knew the Binandere language, they understood what my father said. Those who knew Motu, they knew what he said. So from there people started helping Australian soldiers, and whenever they saw the Japanese, they would come and tell the Australian soldiers where they were, so they would go and kill them, fight them.
20:42	And in that, during that time, there were some people who were very small boys and they heard about my father's story. So one of them I remember, ... he's the medical boy. While he was very small boy with his parents hiding in the bush, the record was played. He heard the word, the introduction that my father said. Na Bauba Avea Binandere man. So this little boy went to school, he grow up, in his mind he was planning to see who that Bauba Avea was.
21:21	So he became a medical, he went around to aid post and hospitals working. At last he was sent to Kokoda, that's while I was a small girl. He was sent to Kokoda hospital, the hospital down there where now it is a recreational centre. So he was working there, our mother usually take the babies or children to the hospital, and write our names he usually say the name Bauba. He said I think this is the name I heard talking, and I plan to find out... I find this man and then I'm going to settle down. So he asked around he is working up there at the station, we'll show you, he is a very popular man. So one day they showed him Mr Bauba. He grabbed hold of him, he asked, 'are you Mr Bauba?'. He said 'that's me', and he said, 'at last, I have found you'.
22:22	From Australia, my father went first and there were some men, a man from Manus, Tolai, Central, Daru, and Kerema. Other people went and they used to sleep in one house, one building. My father was sleeping on upper decker bed, while this Manus man was sleeping on the lower deck. This Manus man always get up and they had this uniform. He used to look at this uniform and there was a Queen's crown and spit on this uniform and say bad words, and he used to take the uniform out and throw it on the ground and stick it with his leg and spit. So my father was looking at this and was really angry.
23:16	So one day when that man did that, he jumped down from his bed and he smashed the man's face. Hit him very badly ... they sent him back to Port Moresby. He should stay in Australia but they Mr Searle said 'stay with me until the war is over then you go back'. But it was winter and he had rashes, rashes under armpits and private parts and his neck. So they admitted him in hospital. When he got out, when he got better they sent him back to Port Moresby. He had to have a court case about the fight they had.
23:55	My father had to explain, and then they said you had a reason to hit him, so they gave him the uniform and he didn't want. He said I am not going to be in this again. So then they sent him to Milne Bay Province. In Milne Bay they were pulling cables under the sea to plant sea mines. So it was very dangerous to work and very hard work pulling these wire cables. And my father was there with other people. Many, many men were there to work on that island, so they were pulling cables from the

	mainland across to the island, they have to put mines so the ships could not come and go. From there they send him to Sepik. From Sepik they were cutting along the border with some whites. They were cutting, making a survey or something like that, they were cutting the place from head of the river, they were building. Then while they were going down, they were coming closer to the sea. Then one fine day they heard a small plane, they heard a small plane coming over there, where they were, everybody looked up and saw they plane they saw hundreds and hundreds of white papers flying down from the plane.
25:26	So everybody ran and grabbed those papers and brought those papers. So he opened the papers and saw that in the paper it was written the war is ended. So when he called out 'the war is ended', everybody just started jumping and shouting for joy. From there, they had to walk back to where they started, where they came to the Sepik River. From there the Catalina came. The seaplanes came and started loading people who were from other provinces to take them back to Port Moresby. So there were some people got into other Catalina and this seaplane flew up and made a mistake and went and hit on the sago palm and it had to crash into the river. The people who got into the plane got killed. So my father was taken back to Port Moresby. From there he walked down the trail, he came in to the village, he got married to my mother after the war.
26:39	While in the village, there was some high tide, ... there was a tsunami or something of that kind, in the Mamba river had to swell up, it had to cover the village, and everyone was floating on the canoe. My mother and father were newly married. So they had a small canoe, which that they were just floating on top of the river. My father's medals and his souvenirs that he brought from Australia were all dropped into the Mamba river. From there they came to Awala he still continued on with his work as the overseer at the plantation. Then he went to Duropa plantation, the coconut plantation down at the coast. And they told him to take charge of a ship that was loading the copra. It was another man who sank, who didn't steer the boat well and it sank, and the plantation manager there blamed my father for that, so he had to come to Kokoda. They had to come to Kokoda, my father settled at Kokoda, eleven children were all born at Kokoda station. He was well known here, my father worked at the station, he was the first pioneer who cleaned up this area. When my father was at Kokoda station, the place was a paradise. Thank you.
28:14	My father was a very, very strong and hard working and very faithful servant, he was a public servant until he retired in 1996, 95. And he had a block at Eora, at the bank of Eora River. He stayed there until 7 February 2003. He passed away. And I as his daughter am always wanting, to tell his history out, so I have this opportunity to come and share with you the history of my father.
28:14	Thank you [applause].

Interview continues

00:00	I was a teacher before, so Mrs Hiari is my colleague now. So while I was at the college, at Balob Teachers College, I went with my father's record, the address of that record. So while I was there I wrote to the factory where that record was made.
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	<p>And then my letter was replied, saying that this record is an old record that was made in World War Two. So if you want to find out about your father's record, you have to write to the War Museum in Canberra. But then I had no address, I didn't know what to do, so I stayed till now. That's the first. The second is, when my father told me the history, he always told me with my brothers and sisters when we used to sit around he used to tell us.</p>
00:51	<p>But one particular day I came and I asked him to tell me from the beginning to the end. So when he told me what I have just said, the last thing he told me was this. My daughter, without me carrying that radio out there, the Australian wouldn't win the war. Absolutely correct. That was the truth. I usually treasure those words in my heart, until now. The third thing is, when I gave birth to my first son, my father called out when he heard the baby crying. My mother ran in to see me, and then my father said, 'is it a girl or boy', and my mother said 'it's a boy', and he said 'his name is Sydney, because I went across Sydney Harbour Bridge.'</p>
01:40	<p>So that boy is driving ... car. He was named after Sydney. My elder brother had a boy, he was named after the plantation owner, Bill Gordon... Because Mr Bill Gordon took him around in Australia.</p>
01:59	<p>My other brother, Apollos, his son, when he had a son, he named him after my father, he called him Melbourne. So he was in Melbourne. He called him short 'Mel'. If other children named... their children after my father, all the towns and cities in Sydney or Queensland, he would name after them, but only three of us gave names after my father, so the first is Sydney, the second is Bill Gordon, the man who took him around. The third is Mel, because he was in Melbourne most of the time.</p>