

<b>Name:</b>	Tom Dasi
<b>Date of interview:</b>	27 March 2017
<b>Location of interview:</b>	Maiwara, Milne Bay Province
<b>Interviewer/s:</b>	Anne Dickson Waiko, Keimelo Gima and Elizabeth Taulehebo
<b>Duration of interview:</b>	27:00
<b>Main language of interview:</b>	English
<b>Image:</b>	

**TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW**

<b>TIME</b>	<b>TRANSCRIPT</b>
00:00	[Interviewer]  This is an interview with Tom Dasi dated on the 27 <sup>th</sup> of March 2017 taped at Maiwara village. And he's going to talk about his father Dasi Besei.
	I think between 20 and 30, maybe 27 years old when he joined the war. He was a young man. He was recruited by Mr Smith. You know the war was getting bigger and Australian got short of army so they came and recruit Papuans. They came to the village and they recruit Papuans. They came to Gwavili ... From Gwavili and all around here, they recruited. They went to Waema, Ahioma and .... They went and joined Australians to fight against Japanese.
02:22	They went there, to Moresby and were trained. From Moresby then they went to Bougainville. He fought in Bougainville.  Because he didn't stay here for long time. He got married and I was born and he left. He went to Wagawaga. So I can't give you full story about him.
03:18	After training in Port Moresby, they got on the barge and they went to Bougainville. I think the year was 1942 .... Somewhere around 1943 or '44. They went and you know when they joined the Australians, they gave them

	guns and everything, packs and uniforms, everything. Hand grenade and you know different types of firearms and they went. They helped Australia. I don't know how many men were recruited during that year with him because as I said my father didn't stay with me and my mother when I was born ... and he left and went to Wagawaga. Then he got married at Gwavili and he got three children there .... I was still a small boy when he left ...
04:54	Yeah, he did tell me his war stories. You know when, because he went and ... just short story. He went and he was already surrender one Japanese, one Japanese soldier he was on top the rock and him on the ground. There was no way to run away because when he fell down, he fell down and slept on .... When he fell down, he already opened the gun and he was listening to Japanese army on top. Because you know they got special, I mean guns uh so I they pull it down uh first noise, second noise then my father turned around and then Japanese shot the ground and at the same time when he turned around he fire too. Then he shot that Japanese. That's a short story from him. He said I died already. But anyway lucky. Like we say God's blessing or caring.
06:45	The only ... what he told us and if Japanese man, I mean the soldiers when they surrender. They say one battalion surrender, they just go take their shoes out and everything, guns, uniforms. They go and ... there was a ship there which they open the cargo hole and throw them inside. They just throw them right down to the ... because you know those ships are sealed. They just go and hurt themselves. And that same thing the Australians ring to ask Japanese how to, ... did you do to our armies. They would do like this. They would do the same thing to the Japanese. So we gave them half biscuit and okay them to they give them half biscuit. Without water then say punishment you know. So that's what he told me. He said you join but your company must not surrender. If you surrender that means you are a prisoner. They will take you to Japanese what uh prisoners' camp. And also their army they took will take them to their camp too. Whatever and you know how they treat them ... they don't give them kaikai for one whole day is same.
08:58	No, my father was not captured. He came back alive.
09:07	Yeah because when they went to Moresby and from there they went to back, uh I think for one year or what. Yeah one year. Because that's during the war, already war started and Mr Smith asked for Papuan people to join. Yeah he went with some other Papuans, plenty of them. At Maiwara, that's Asalio and Gilipaiyani, down at end of Laviam, Wanadeu, and Auhewa from Kaloi. They went from here. But others like at Ahioma, I don't know. Sorry my uncle, my mummy's brother ...
10:21	No, he didn't tell about killing other Japanese soldiers apart from the one he told me. Because they said when they gave them bullets, there's uh loaded you don't misuse the bullet. Every bullet must be ... killed somebody or ... My father didn't tell me if he misused the bullets.
11:06	My father thought that the Japanese were very very strong ... they were all just moving in. They want to win this Papuan side and they go to Australia. That's

	<p>their plan. The Americans came and helped the Australians and New Zealanders too. They treated them the same. They really, you know looked after them properly because they are you know fighting for the nation, I mean our country. Because they went and helped New Zealand and Australia. They were working together and also eating together. They were eating together in the same mess with the Australians. There's no difference. That was in Bougainville.</p>
12:37	<p>And in Rabaul too. He went to Rabaul as well. He said in Rabaul they dug the holes, big holes, only small one for entrance. Big tunnel. But inside, there's with the women they got the children inside. Because their plan is to win and then they'll get the what, I mean the women will come out and they get the place and stay here. The Japanese women. There were Japanese women in Rabaul. So my father said here we don't have holes, in Rabaul Japanese got holes and they hide their wives with the children. That's what he told me. So when you see, you know only entrance is very small but they plant the grasses so people won't know that there was a tunnel underneath. But once they know, they open it and they open the hand grenade and throw it inside. He said when you see the hole don't go inside, you just throw the hand grenade in because otherwise some soldiers are inside. After when they threw the hand grenade inside they stay little bit and then they go down and check. They won't leave it because otherwise some soldiers are there so they usually go and check that hole. They leave and go and find another hole and they do the same thing.</p>
15:03	<p>You when they join, they already know that they are going to war, they do the wrong thing because they kill and the blood of Jesus, oh you know ... killing people. So you won't say sorry.</p>
15:33	<p>And also their ... behind they got another boss there, you don't step back. If you step back, even your boss but he will shoot you. Because if you step back your friends will see you and them too, they'll step back. When they say forward, everybody will go forward. They just sleep on the ground and some of them stand. So they said land fighting is different from landing, landing from the barge. When they are landing from the barge, they just throw them on the sea and just almost come up to the shore. And they start to run off up the beach.</p>
16:38	<p>But they got uh, if like Japanese they dug the hole here and there, you know one after another and then. Inside are soldier, one Japanese there another one there, they are lying.</p>
16:51	<p>But these Australians and New Zealanders, when they were landing they used to come, some are firing and some you know coming up, coming up. So when you see close to hole just open hand grenade and throw it to the hole and then you kill that Japanese and you run and jump inside the hole. You get the man and throw it and you jump inside. So that's where you can, you know safety for you. Survive. That's what he told me. So when you fighting for your hole you don't look over there or over here. You just go ahead and get the hole. Then</p>

	<p>you help your friend open another hand grenade and throw it to Japanese. Then you kill it and your friend will go up there. Then your friend will help another one. That's what they did. My father was also handling the hand grenade. He didn't tell me how many he threw. But that's the only story he shared. During the fighting or landing they have to help each other for the safety of our army. We don't want to lose our army or our number would go down.</p>
18:22	<p>But uh once they went I think in Milne Bay army they did not kill anybody. All of them they came back. Not only Milne Bay but all the way to Central. I mean Papuan side. Yeah, our traditions helped our soldiers. No he did not talk about how he was helped by our traditions but we Papuan people or some of our women, they used to help our armies.</p>
19:10	<p>Like one women at Yaleuwa, Ambai. Ambai got a history. She got her own plane. The plane has no number. Everybody knows and also soldiers know Ambai. They are fighting on the air, Ambai too is fighting. So she helped the Australians and New Zealanders and Americans. But they don't recognize that plane. But anyway just leave it.</p>
19:54	<p>They were staying and one day, when the Americans were coming, I mean the Japanese, they said when you look up you can't see sun there. Planes are always when they come in planes are like this ... I think two lines, one underneath and one on top. They came on top of that airport there and one Australian army, that's what he told me.</p>
20:22	<p>One Australian army, he just ran down and got his plane and when he took off, just like this, he went and went and went inside the Japanese. He went on top and when he turned around, because all the planes I mean the wings and the sides there were bombs everywhere. So when he went up there and he went through the, what uh Japanese planes and from there and he started bombing those Japanese planes. By himself, one Australian army. Say hard for them to take off from the airport. Only one young Australian soldier just made it.</p>
21:26	<p>From there and then the air was bit open and then everybody took off. They got on their planes and they took off. They went up and they helped their friend. Ambai was also there helping. There were other women helping the men fighting on the land. Only Ambai herself helped in the air. Because at Kwato, Logeia and everywhere in East Cape, Ambai did the history, she's the only women who helped in the Army. She's famous; her story is famous around the bay.</p>
22:50	<p>I was also with Uncle Joe and Kama Lebasi. You know Kama Lebasi they asked me, this old woman is still there? I said oh, I don't know about her but I know that she's from Yaleuwa. They said during the Second World War, she did her part to help our people. Like help our army like Australian, New Zealand. Helped them to fight against the Japanese in the air. No she did not help in the sea, only in the air, part of the Air Force. She does not have descendants that</p>

	you can talk to. Yaleuwa is deserted if now you go there. She did not have any children. Today if you go to Yaleuwa, nobody there in that place.
24:27	When you know, after the war he came back and then you know he said war is not a game. When you go, you go to kill. You gonna die. So you help yourself. And when you get the as I say ... because they're working together one battalion helping each other then they got another battalion. Battalion or platoon, platoon yeah very big.
25:24	Not very proud but you know, no because he fight for our nation. No, I don't have any other stories to share about my father, that's the only what he told me when he was with me. No, he did not tell me the exact names of the places in Rabaul or Bougainville.
26:41	[Interviewer] Okay, thank you very much.