

Royal Dutch East Indies Army

Koninklijk Nederlands Indisch Leger (KNIL)

1st Infantry Battalion (KNIL) stationed at Camp Victory consisted of the following sub-units from 1944-46 :-

- The **1st Infantry Company (I Inf. I)** of the Battalion consisted of 500 soldiers from Dutch Guiana (now Suriname) and the Dutch Antilles in the Caribbean (Now Aruba, Bonaire, Curacao and Sint Maarten). They originally enlisted to fight with the Free Dutch Forces stationed in the UK, but due to racial prejudice and not wanting to antagonise the Dutch from South Africa, they were sent to serve in the Pacific Campaign with the KNIL. The prejudice continued upon their arrival in Casino, being restricted to barracks and paid in near worthless occupation money.
- The **2nd Infantry Company (II Inf. I)** was formed of Indonesian soldiers, mostly from Java and Sumatra with some soldiers from other region of what is now Indonesia. Most of these soldiers had been evacuated as the Japanese had invaded their homeland.
- **Papuan Battalion** was formed of West Papuan and Moluccan soldiers, from the spice islands such as Ambon. They were trained for garrison duties across regions of Dutch New Guinea, as they became liberated by Allied forces.
- **Netherlands East Indies Forces Intelligence Service (NEIFIS)** conducted field training across the Casino as part of their school based at Camp Columbia, Wacol in Brisbane.
- **KNIL Technical Battalion** was made up of oil workers and other tradesmen from Borneo. They trained to enable the quick reopening of the oil fields in Tarakan and Balikpapan, to support the war effort. They also performed mechanical and radio repairs in support of other KNIL units.
- **KNIL Labour Battalion** was made up of mostly low risk political prisoners evacuated from the Tanah Merah Prison Camp as the Japanese invaded. This brought the men under military control and instruction. They performed manual labour tasks around Camp Victory and at Camp Columbia in Brisbane.
- **KNIL Military Detention Camp** was constructed on Camp Victory to house fervent Indonesian Nationalist political prisoners, plus soldiers and merchant seaman that refused orders or to sail. As the war ended, many of the soldiers from Indonesian Islands from many units refused to serve and went on strike from all over Australia, they were court-martialled and held within the camp prison until they could be repatriated in 1946.
- **Militaire Luchtvaart van heet Koninklijk Nederlands Indisch Leger (ML-KNIL)**. 2 Squadrons of the Royal Dutch East Indies Army Air Force were stationed at Casino. They were used for training Airmen, many from newly liberated regions of the Netherlands in 1944. The original few hundred aircrew departed Europe, part of an intended 5,000 airmen to be recruited, with another 25,000 ground troops.

In late 1944, there was Allied approval for 5,000 airmen and 30,000 soldiers to be recruited from newly liberated regions of the Netherlands for service in the Pacific Theatre of Operations. They were to be supplied and trained in conjunction with the Australian government. Only a few hundred airmen, who had made it to England, were sent to Casino from May 1945. However the war ended before they could finish their air training and most were used as guards at the Military Detention Camp. The recruitment program was stopped.

Also in 1944, saw the creation of Royal Netherlands East Indies Women's Corps, **Vrouwenkorps – Koninklijk Nederlands Indisch Leger (VK-KNIL)**. Formed from Dutch women residing in Australia and across the world, they worked in medical and other auxiliary roles. However while some passed through Camp Victory, no units of this formation were ever posted to there.