



THE JAVA- BROOME EVACUATION ROUTE

FEBRUARY AND MARCH 1942

**Nonja Peters Adjunct
Professor
Curtin & Edith Cowan
University**

**Civic Reception
80+1 years anniversary of
the attack on Broome
Broome Golf Club
2 March 2023**

The greatest number of the Dutch present in Australia during World War II, were the bureaucrats and military personnel who were evacuated from the Netherlands East Indies (NEI (Indonesia), in front of the Japanese occupation.

Numbers are contentious. Figure banded about range from 5000 to 8000.

They were transported by a collection of aircraft from different nations, RAAF, USN, RAF, KLM, USAAF and the MLD using Catalina, Dornier and 'C' Class Empire flying boats, plus B17, B24, DC3 bombers and transports. Specifically chosen for their skills-sets, their brief was to continue the war effort from Australia.

Around 2000 are purported to have entered Australia via Broome in the two weeks prior to the capitulation of the NEI on 8 March 1942.

Hence our shared heritage!

Who were they?

They were civilian government employees, members of the army, navy and air force, clerical workers and some civilian refugees.

The personnel comprised ethnic Dutch, mixed race Dutch and ethnic Indonesian.

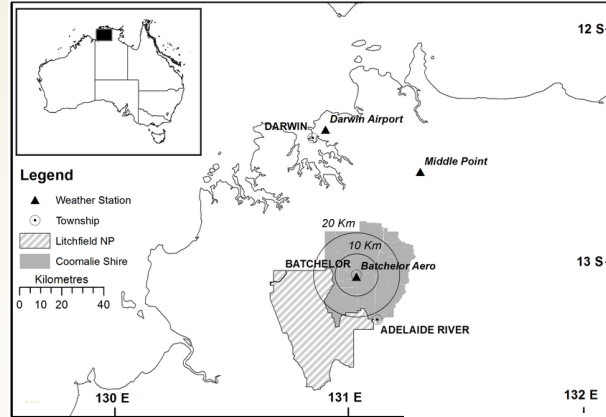
They joined the 3000-5000 Javanese, Mendonese and Ambonese merchant seamen on the KPM (Royal Packet Company) ships that were stranded in Australian ports when Japan occupied the NEI.

Elink Schuurman, Netherlands Consul-General to Australia since 1935, swung into action to find the refugees accommodation; take care of health needs and schooling for the children with the help of existing Dutch communities, members of the NEI Administration and mainstream agencies.

Where they were housed depended on what was available.

Now some snapshots of where the evacuees were located and why!

No.191 Squadron ground crew prepare a Mitchell for a bombing raid. Batchelor, NT Australia, 1943



No.18 Squadron was a joint Dutch and Australian bomber squadron formed in Canberra in April 1942. The squadron was staffed by a mixture of Dutch and Australian personnel and placed under Royal Australian Air Force operational command.

Squadron 18 at Batchelor & MacDonald airstrip,
Northern territory 1942-1945.



Initially it undertook anti-submarine patrols on the east coast of Australia, before moving to the Northern Territory and taking part in operations against the Japanese in the NEI from Batchelor base and McDonald airstrip.

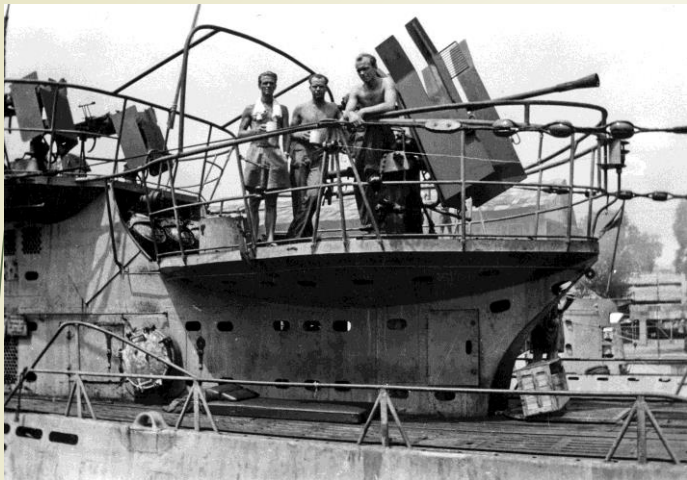


A group of young Dutch airmen evacuated into Australia from the Netherlands East Indies to keep up the war effort in 1942. Stationed at Batchelor NT, 1942

Inside B Mitchell Bomber.

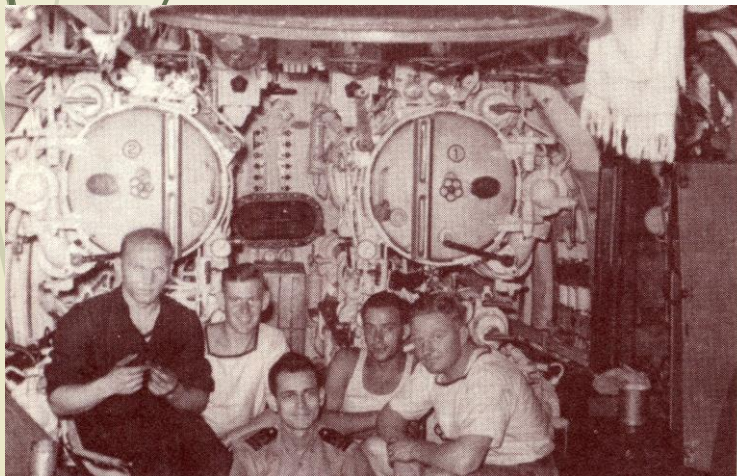


Dutch Submarines, Fremantle



Dutch submariners on board a captured but unidentified Nazi German submarine at Batavia (Jakarta) - Ary Jongejan.

Crew of HNMS O21. Willem Broetjes in the forward torpedo room.



On 3 March 1942 when the Allied Navies' Southeast Asian submarine fleets began arriving, Fremantle was totally unprepared for its role as the Allies' largest submarine base outside of Pearl Harbour. By 10 March, there were twelve submarines being repaired and serviced there.



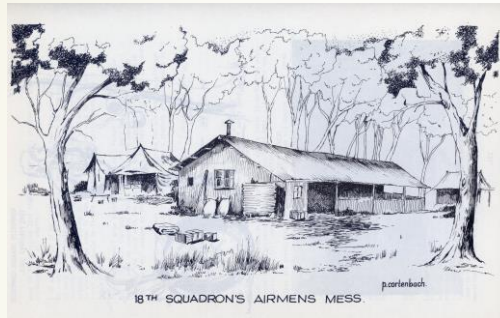
HMAS Stirling, Garden Island, WA. Dutch submarine Naval Base, Crawley Bay, Nedlands, WA on 5 March 1947.
Coca Cola Club

The naval personnel evacuated to Fremantle to continue the war effort in early March 1942 were all boarded with local families.

Netherlands East Indies Administration in exile in Australia Camp Columbia, Wacol, QLD 1944-1946



Joan van Embden
nee Butler &
colleague at Wacol
1944.



Camp Columbia, west of Brisbane in Queensland, the temporary seat of the Netherlands East Indies Government during World War II.

Kamp Columbia, tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog de tijdelijke zetel van de Nederlands-Indische regering, bij Brisbane, Queensland.

Women's Corps, Camp Columbia, Wacol,
Dutch girls were recruited from across
Australia & USA.



Camp
Columbia
dining room
Wacol.



NEI Troops
marching
Swanston St
Melbourne
on United
Nations Flag
Day, 14 June
1942.

Watched by a small boy waving an Australian flag, troops of the Netherlands East Indies Army march along Swanston Street, Melbourne on United Nations Flag Day, 14 June 1943.

Een jongetje zwaait met een Australische vlag naar troepen van het Koninklijke Nederlands-Indische Leger die op 14 juni 1943 marcheren door Swanston Street, Melbourne tijdens de UN Flag Day March.

Defensively Armed Merchant Ships or DEMS, had Australian gun crews on board.



Artwork AWM.

After the Japanese Occupied the NEI, the surviving 30 freighters, most of which belonged to the country's major shipping line, *Royal Packet Company* (KPM), were placed under the control of the US army, via the Allied Consultative Shipping Council. In Australia they were converted to "Defensively Armed Merchant Ships", or DEMS.

Transport vessels were at a premium, and the Dutch vessels became an essential part of offensive operations from Australia. During 1942–43 the vast majority of all supplies reaching Allied troops in New Guinea were carried by these Dutch ships.

In May 1942, the Australian 14th Infantry Brigade was taken to Port Moresby by a convoy of the KPM ships Bantam, Bontekoe, VanHeemskirk, and VanHeutz.

Reinforcements for Milne Bay were carried by Bontekoe, Karsik, Swartenhondt, Tasman, Japara, VanHeemskirk, VanHeutz and s'Jacob.

MS ORANJE hospital ship



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Major-General Hein ter Poorten (far left) standing next to Australia's prime minister, Robert Gordon Menzies on board TSS ORANJE II. Behind ter Poorten is his secretary Captain A Zimmerman (personal secretary) and to the right, Consul General for the Netherlands to Australia, Mr T. Elink-Schuurman.



The MS Oranje hospital ship carried more than 32,000 sick and wounded Allied patients on over 40 voyages.

On 28 June 1941, after a refitting at Cockatoo dock, Prime Minister Menzies hoisted a Red Cross flag on the Dutch liner ORANJE. The ceremony marked the handing over of the vessel from the Dutch NEI Administration to the Australian and New Zealand Governments to be used as a hospital ship.

When she joined the Allied shipping pool, she sailed under the Dutch flag with a Dutch crew and Dutch, New Zealand, Australian and British hospital staff.



Nora Heysen's
Portrait of
Adine Elink-Schuurman
Archibald Prize 1938



**Charles and Joan Beltz
NL c1949.**



**Wedding photo of Joy and Ary Jongejan
in Perth, Western Australia. WA
Museum, MHA4531/27.**



**Margaret Stokes and Klaas Kruimink -
22 December 1943.**

The story of Dutch-Australian shared heritage doesn't end here.

Many of the Dutch military personnel came back to Australia after being demobilised to marry their wartime Australian sweetheart.

Some Australian women went to the Netherlands with their Dutch husbands.

The Australian women who married Indonesians, however, had to leave the country with them, due to the White Australia Policy.