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Balibo Victims: from left Brian Cunningham, Malcolm Rennie, Greg Shackleton, Tony Stewart and Brian Peters.

Truth without fear

Killed chasing for a story, the Balibo 5 journalists were murdered brutally by Indonesia – but they did not die in vain.

By Harry McLaurin

EVEN the bravest of East Timor's soldiers had retreated from Balibo on the morning of the 16th of October 1975. The small village was practically deserted as forces from Indonesia were quickly, but quietly, encroaching on their soil. Nothing was going to stand in the way of Indonesia's covert invasion of East

Timor – not even five foreign journalists or 180,000 people. Amid shell blasts and machine gun fire, the five journalists - Greg Shackleton, 27, Tony Stewart, 21, Gary Cunningham, 27, Brian Peters, 29 and Malcolm Rennie, 28 – were determined to capture the Indonesian invasion, to tell the world what was really happening. They had no idea that they could be putting themselves in harms way, no idea that they

would later die that day. In the end they did film the invasion, but the tapes that were used to do so were burned with their bullet ridden bodies. In 2007, a coronial inquest into the deaths found that their remains were mixed together then divided – making them impossible to identify individually. “Even in death it was impossible to separate them,” the report said. **>Continued P2**



Balibo movie may trigger justice

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For decades, the truth about what really happened at Balibo has been hazy.

Indonesia says the journalists we're killed in crossfire, but we now know that to be false.

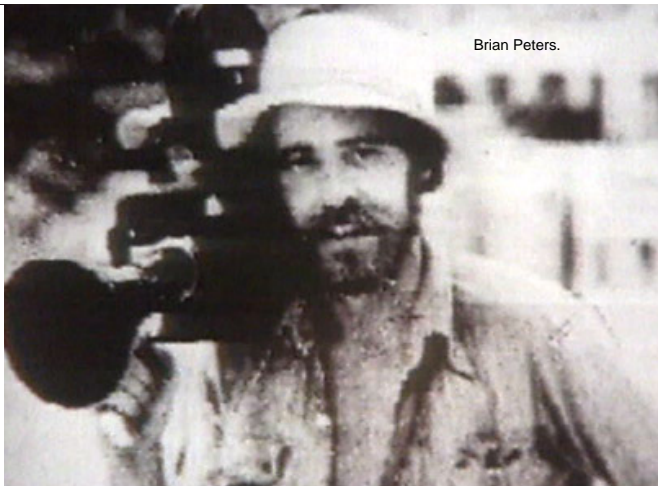
Public awareness of the atrocities committed back in 1975 has also been waning. However with the release of the new film *Balibo*, that is expected to change, maybe to even help bring to justice those responsible.

Bea Viegas, an actress in the film, believes it will be hard to bring justice to the people of East Timor.

"Justice: it's an interesting word. What kind of justice could you ever bring to the families of those who've been killed?" she told *The Times*.

Ian Siede, an Echuca resident, thinks that justice can never be served. His second cousin was Gary Cunningham, a channel 7 cameraman who was among the dead.

"We're dealing with politicians. It was a terrible shameful time in our past. Politicians were willing to protect trade agreements more than their people," he said.



Ian believes that the movie has brought awareness to what happened in East Timor, and was "as close to the truth as we're ever going to get."

Balibo had a huge impact on Ian, and said it hit close to home, especially with the graphic violence.

Bea, who played a survivor from the invasion giving her testimony in the present day, said that her role held immense responsibility.

"My role was a pretty heavy one, it was quite emotional. There was an enormous responsibility in getting it right. It's based on the stories and testimonies of the East Timor people and I was nervous to get it right," she said.

Rhonda Sutton, the secretary of the Campaspe East Timor Association in Friendship (CETAF), thought the film was heart-rending.

"It was sad because I have a lot of friends in East Timor who had family members killed," she said.

However Rhonda is pleased that the tale of East Timor has finally been told to a wide audience.

"I'm glad that the movie's come out now, but it's sad it's taken this time for the story to come out."

Bringing justice to the Indonesians is a complex issue, she says.

"I know the East Timor people need justice to be done. But I'm not sure >P3



Street

- THE 11th annual Sweet v Steam fun run has taken place today, with over 100 people competing in either a 5km or a 13km run. The PS Adelaide came across the line at just over 50 minutes, while the winner of the 13km race was well ahead, but did not beat the 40 minute record set last year. Bendigo's Meredith Cook was the first woman across the line.

Local

- THERE are three community surveys now taking place, asking local residents what their thoughts on the Mid-West Bridge option are. The Campaspe Shire council has commissioned a phone survey, with the Murray council doing much the same. National member for Rodney Paul Weller has also conducted a web poll, with the results show mass opposition.

National

- THE Bushfire season has begun in Victoria, with blazes flaring up in the Gippsland area, burning 700 hectares so far. There is also a small blaze south of Orbost. It comes as flooding in northern NSW has left many residents stranded, with floodwaters peaking at 5m.

World

- A GUNMAN has killed 13 people and wounded 30 in a crazed massacre at Fort Hood army base in the United States. A Muslim psychologist who was being forced to deploy to Afghanistan has been charged with the murders.

Invasion a 'travesty'

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the East Timor Government can do that, they've got a balancing act in terms of holding people to account," she said.

"I would like to see justice being done, but I'm not sure that it will happen. The best thing we can do is give help however we can now."

However the issues of East Timor affect Australia more closely than most people would believe. Geographically, East Timor is only a few hundred kilometres away.

"When you're in the eastern part of the island, you can see the glow of the lights in Darwin at night," Rhonda said.

But during the invasion, Australia was implicated deeper than once thought.

After many inquiries and reports during the past decades, it was finally revealed that the Australian Government knew what happened to the five journalists – however covered it up. This aspect of the invasion, which was supported by the former Whitlam Government,

angered Ian greatly.

"All we were doing in 1975 was trying to find out what happened (to the journalists). We were on a vendetta to find the truth, even though the politicians knew what happened..." he said.

Roger East, another Australian journalist, was also on a quest to find the truth about what happened to the journalists.

However he was slaughtered in the invasion, along with 180,000 other people.

"It was a massive tragedy, the invasion was enough, but not only five but 6 journalists were killed, it's a tragic story," Bea said.

No one has ever been held to account for what happened to the journalists, and it's doubtful that someone ever will be, but without their deaths, awareness for the atrocities in East Timor would never be so great and perhaps one day that could pave the way for justice.

Bea Viegas has been nominated for an AFI award for her performance in *Balibo*.

Visit the CETAF website for more information:

Sweat prevails

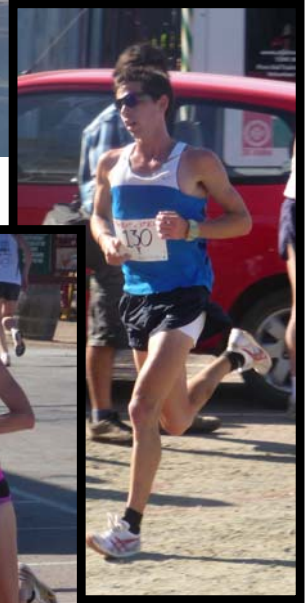


And they're off... Sweat v Steam runners start the race.

WHEN people who are quadruple your age are passing you, you know it's probably time to speed up. Running, what would seem an easy race compared to the 13km marathon; I took part in the 2009 Sweat v Steam "fun run" 5km event. It was indeed fun, at the beginning, but then as the old men started to pass me, I realised that I should fasten my pace. It's a great day for the whole community to come together on a Sunday morning to go for a jog. Some take it seriously, and others just walk it, but we were all supporting good causes in the process.

In the end the winner of the 13km was Brady Trelfall, while the first female across the line was Bendigo's Meredith Cook. Last years winner Mark Thompson came across the line second, however his 40 minute record was not beaten this year.

Meredith Cook was the first female across the line.



St. Mary's primary school teacher Brady Trelfall was the first person across the line in the 13km event.

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SPORT



Shocking beats Crime Scene to the finish line.

SHOCKING WIN

THE headline writers were having a field day after Shocking, ridden by Corey Brown, won the Melbourne Cup, closely followed by Crime Scene, ridden by Kerrin McEvoy. It was an unexpected victory, with Shocking coming out of the pack in the last 300m, pipping Bart Cummings hopes of securing his 13th Cup. Trainer Mark Kavanagh was in disbelief after his horse won the race, however entered it quietly

confidant, despite some mishaps with scratched horses in the past. Not many had placed their bets on Shocking to win, with a \$3.60 place on the Victorian TAB. Favourite Alcopop came in 6th, with Viewed close behind. Coming in third place was Chechen dictator Ramzan Kadyrov's horse, Mourilyan – however the Greens have called on the Government to seize his Cup Day money as it may fund his dictatorship.

Echuca cup great, despite horse death

MELBOURNE Cup Day in Echuca was a fabulous day, with a record crowd from across the state and fashions of the field a huge attraction. However the day was marred with tragedy, with Famous Laddie falling over and breaking its two front legs, being euthanized soon afterwards. Out of Towner Carleton was the winner of race six.

EDITORIAL

To pay or not to pay?

With 12 free TV channels, and counting, who needs pay TV?

THERE was once a time, a long time ago, where families would sit down after a hard day's work and watch television. Black and white was history, and the future of colour TV was here – with 3 channels to watch it on!

Channel Seven, Nine and the ABC were the original posse of TV networks who brought us what we wanted every night. But since then we now have more than we could have ever imagined, or even wanted.

The establishment of Channel 10 and SBS was a big enough step, however no one back then could have envisaged a boom of TV channels, which we are having.

In the past year, the amount of channels on Australian TV has doubled. Those original networks were so jam packed with content, they needed another channel to broadcast it all.

The ABC started it all, with the introduction of ABC2, which even competes with the other stations. There are even talks of an ABC3!



Then SBS followed, along with Channel 10, who brought us a 24 hour sports channel.

GO!, Channel 9's secondary station, made for entertainment, started just a few months ago and just this week Seven launched "Seven Two."

All these stations give us a great variety of things to watch. Sport, entertainment, news – anything you want is now free to air.

This makes us wonder about pay television. Paying \$2 a day for TV you could

probably get for free seems like a stupid thing to invest in. Although Austar may feverishly market their new deals and promotions, it is little wonder their profits are wobbling with so many free-to-air networks already on air.

There was a time when people flicked off their TV sets because "nothing's on." Those days have passed, as there's *always* something to watch.

Perhaps addiction to TV could become a problem, but at least we don't pay for it.

ODD BOX A luckless Indian is suing Lynx after failing to land a girlfriend in seven years of using its products. Vaibhav Bedi, 26, is seeking \$A47,000 from parent company Unilever for “psychological damage” caused by the lack of any “Lynx effect”. Lynx ads show women throwing themselves at men.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

Electricity is really just organized lightning.
George Carlin

JOKE BY JAKE

What does a redhead miss the most at a party?
The Invitation!

HOROSCOPE



I REALLY hope I don't get a gambling addiction. At the Melbourne Cup, for some mysterious reason, I chose Shocking to win! And the other horse I tipped got third. Just my luck you might think. But perhaps it's only the start of it. Maybe I'll spend all \$108.50 on other horse races, hoping I'll pick another winner, even though I secretly know that I won't. Then I'll get into all of this debt and have to live off my parents for the next 60 years or so. It might happen, you never know... Or I could spend this \$108.50 on something worthwhile, like lollies or something. I could even buy myself a really cheap bike, but I'm still undecided.

“Did you run in the Sweat v Steam fun run?”



Comic book guy

“No. I doubt it would have been a ‘fun’ run either...”



Usain Bolt

“Yes I did, obviously no body saw me though ha ha...”



Joe Hockey

“I uh... umm, I would have... but I had some, ah, important other business to attend to.”

Critic's choice

City Homicide

Channel 7, 8.30 Wednesday

ALTHOUGH not the ratings smash it used to be, *City Homicide* is still pumping out some good episodes. Although a little dark (I like it dark though), the show is still satisfying. This week there is a bomb blast at an ATM machine, which kills 3 people. Now the "team" has to figure out who, what and why, while Simon Joyner (Dan McPherson) starts to unravel.

Glee

Channel 10, 7.30pm Thursday

OMG! LOL! ROFL! Overreactions galore at *Glee* this week where we find out Rachel has feelings for Finn. Gasp! What kind of name is Finn anyway? There's another guy called Quinn as well. *Glee* is specifically made for teenage girls who are bored of Facebook and want something they can "relate" to on TV. I think it's stupid.

Celebrity MasterChef

Channel 10, 7.30 Wednesday

BECAUSE I wasn't so excited by the last series, this seasons *Celebrity MasterChef* isn't raising my eyelids much at all. However, it promises, the excitement will all begin this week with the semi finals. Plus they have a mystery box! There's going to be an invention test as well. The bookies are saying (there aren't actually bookies taking bets) that young Eamon Sullivan has a good chance of winning.

"Dragging it out"

WHEN news is hot, it's smoking. Some people can't get enough of it – whatever it may be – a disaster, a wedding or even a death.

And TV stations like to broadcast every bit of it, no matter how boring it may be. During the 2007 G20 meeting in Sydney, Sky News aired 4 live minutes of an aeroplanes door as it waited for the president to disembark. Riveting! At 2.30am, *Sunrise* and *Today* started their live coverage of Michael Jackson's funeral, which started with a hearse driving down a highway for half an hour. Lucky there was no one up to watch it, (except me, but I'm weird).

At some point in watching his funeral, you suddenly don't care anymore as what your watching is hideously boring.

Kind of like the Melbourne Cup this week. The TV networks had a story on everything. Not a lot was about the races, mostly about the dresses, did I mention NOBODY CARES! But for 7 and a half long hours, we watched fluff at Flemington... Although such things as the Black Saturday bushfires can be interesting. I couldn't drag myself away from the TV that week as there was so much information coming in on TV and it was only a few hundred kilometres away. You don't want to leave, just in case you miss something important. It was the same on September 11 and the London and Bali Bombings, with the news having news bulletins that lasted all day long.

However, some less important things are often dragged out for many, many hours to the point where we no longer care. Hopefully there won't be a celebrity death anytime soon...

