

1/4 Fettes Rise,  
Edinburgh EH4 1QH.  
26 June 2000.

Dear Dr. King,

Thanks for your letter of 19 June. I hope that by now that you have received a reply from Pat Garvey, who so far as I know is still alive.

I greatly admire the industry and zest that you and your colleagues continue to display, as you develop the Search Project, and I wish you well in all your efforts. Regretfully I am unlikely to be able to offer anything of a positive nature. The most that I can do is probably to comment on any leads that you might have regarding persons who might have been involved around 1940/41.

Because of their excellent memories and meticulous insistence on the recording in files of all actions being taken by public officers, you would undoubtedly have obtained useful information from Vaskess and Macdonald, but they are long since dead. Isaac/Verrier was meticulous as well, but whereas Vaskess and Macdonald were public servants, Isaac/Verrier was a law unto himself, highly intelligent, and a maverick at all times. Obeying orders was not for him.

In your letter of 19 June you mentioned the names of Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara and Captain Stan Brown. I am certain that the former would not have any first-hand information to pass on to you, though like many others he would have heard stories about the bones. Captain Brown on the other hand, served as you correctly state in your letter as Third Engineer on RCS (later HMFS ) VIII from 12 July 1940 onwards. He was born on 9 October 1914 and has written books on Fiji's past. Before his retirement he was in charge of Fiji's Navy. He suffered a severe stroke in the early 1980s and has been greatly incapacitated since then. His wife, Jean Brown, was Private Secretary at Government House.

John Eric Pery-Johnston was born in 1912 and held a Diploma in Pathology and Bacteriology in the New Zealand State Health Department. Surely that Department must know of him. If he is still alive, he is the one person who could supply you with useful information as he was the Technician in the Pathological Laboratory in Suva in 1940/41. He was married.

Dr. Macpherson died shortly after Gallagher's death. He was unmarried. Sir Harry Luke had left Fiji by then, and I was on active service with the Third Battalion of the Fiji Military Forces.

With best wishes

Yr.  
Ian Trauca.

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