

VALE: JACK ERROL THOMPSON



Jack Thompson a member of this sub-Branch, a quiet and unassertive man passed away on 6th December 2013. For the past year, even though he had been enduring bad health, he was able to attend some general meetings and to share in the companionship of his service mates in the sub-Branch.

Jack like so many Australians of his age joined the Militia forces in his youth and later volunteering, in time of war, for service in AIF ready for deployment as directed by the Australian Defence Department.

Jack was born March 1922 at Bondi and while he was domiciled at West Ryde he enlisted in AIF in 1942 whilst at Springbank in South Australia. Following the ending of the war he was discharged on 26th Feb 1945 as a craftsman attached to 101 Australian composite AQA Regiment Workshop.

Following his entering civilian life again, he completed his tertiary education and obtained his BSc (Geology) Degree from Sydney University in 1946. At that time he joined Australian Petroleum Company, now Oil Search Ltd, where he undertook geological exploration in the *Sedimentary Basins* of PNG. For the next 4 years with Australian Petroleum Company his endeavours involved fieldwork mainly in the Papuan Gulf Hinterland.

In 1951 he joined the newly formed Geological Survey of PAPUA NEW GUINEA as Chief Geologist, operating firstly out of Wau then later from Port Moresby. In this capacity, for the next 12 years, he was involved in regional mapping, mineral exploration and vulcanology throughout PNG.

In 1962, due to family illness, he relocated to the Bureau of Mineral Resources in Canberra and conducted regional geological mapping projects in PNG and Northern Australia.

In 1967 at the age of 45, Jack joined a major American Mining Company (Amax) with a regional office in Sydney. He remained with this company until retirement in 1987. During this period he was involved in mineral exploration throughout Australia, South East Asia and southwest Pacific Region.

This work required much travel and with a liberal budget permitting extensive use of light aircraft and helicopters, he travelled to many remote areas. Inspection for likely prospecting areas was undertaken by aerial inspection along the mountain ranges. It was as a result of this extensive examination of the ground features, as a precursor for ground inspection, that Jack developed a method of recording such features using a hand held small camera to take high oblique pictures of the topography from the window of the plane. From these exposures he was able to examine in detail the topographical features using the stereographic model developed from these photos. From such examination potential mineral deposits might be detected and thus narrowing the search areas by ground survey parties.

Jack was a guest speaker at our sub Branch general meeting in 2005 at which he related some of his experiences in New Guinea.

John Curdie OAM. President, Epping RSL sub-Branch