

The Military History Society of New South Wales
Incorporated presents

Dr Kevin Smith OAM

Member and Councillor of the Society

SANDAKAN – An Unanticipated Captivity



AWM Stolen Years Collection

After their large scale success in the early months of the Second World War the Japanese found themselves with large numbers of Allied prisoners of war without knowing what to do with them. In July 1942 they began to transfer some 3000 Australian and British prisoners (mostly Australians) to Sandakan on the Island of Borneo to build an airfield. Some 2,030 of these were Australians, mostly from the 8th Division, AIF. Only 218 Australians survived their incarceration.

Dr Smith will describe the experiences of these Australians as they endured their three and a half years of horrific captivity from the Fall of Singapore in February 1942 until the final Japanese surrender in 1945. He will describe events and conditions in the Camp and at work on the airfield, including the ninety odd attempts to escape along with the civilian resistance movement and its links with a similar group among the prisoners and the horrors of the Death Marches that characterised the approaching Japanese defeat.

Saturday, 9 April 2016, at 2 PM

ANZAC Room, 99 York St Conference Centre, Sydney

This is a FREE event but RSVP is essential by Wednesday 6 April 2016 as numbers are restricted (02) 9660 7225/0418 400 825 or rsvp@militaryhistorynsw.com.au