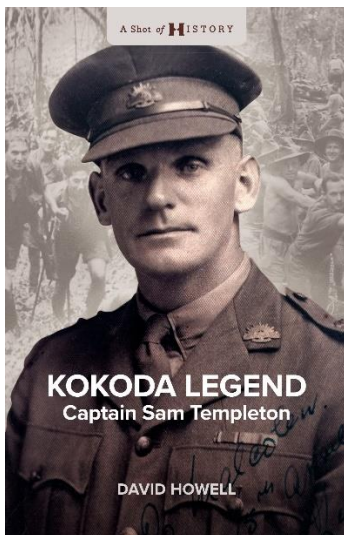


*If you have trekked Kokoda, then the campsite of Templeton's Crossing will be familiar. This presentation will help you discover the story of the man behind the name.*

Captain Sam Templeton of 39th Infantry Battalion was the first Australian officer to be captured by the Japanese in the 1942 Kokoda Campaign of World War II. After being interrogated by his captors he was executed on the battlefield. Prior to facing his enemy, Templeton had predicted his fate, telling one of his platoon commanders, that if 'he went into action, he wouldn't come back'. Having resigned himself to his destiny, Templeton misled his captors on the numerical strength of the Australian forces waiting in Kokoda and Port Moresby.

Did the misinformation given by a militia officer slow the initial push by the Yokoyama Advance Force into the Owen Stanley Range, allowing the Australian Imperial Force to join the fight earlier? Did Templeton create doubt in the mind of the commander of the South Seas Force, influencing an operational change for the attack on Port Moresby? A quiet and often aloof character originally from Belfast, Captain Sam Templeton is mentioned in just about every book written about Kokoda. Prior to fighting in New Guinea, Templeton is reputed to have helped quash the Irish rebellion, served in submarines with the Royal Navy during the First World War and to have fought with the International Brigade during the Spanish Civil War.

**LECTURE TIME AND VENUE: 10:30AM Saturday 2 August 2025 at The Auditorium, Anzac Memorial Hyde Park, Hyde Park South, corner Elizabeth and Liverpool Streets, Sydney CBD. Admission is free of charge but a donation would be appreciated. For information call 0419 698 783 or email: [president@militaryhistorynsw.com.au](mailto:president@militaryhistorynsw.com.au)**



## David Howell – Biography

David Howell is a Melbourne-based writer, tour guide, historian specialising in the South West Pacific Area of Operations during the Second World War and author of the recent *Kokoda Legend: Captain Sam Templeton* (Big Sky Publishing, 2024). With extensive experience as a guide at the Friends of Kokoda at the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway in Concord and the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne, educating visitors about the significance of the Kokoda Campaign. David created and was the editor of the Shrine's history magazine- *Remembrance* at the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne, and also created and ran the Friends of the Shrine program. In 2015 he returned full-time to Kokoda Historical. David also served for fifteen years as an infantry soldier in the Australian Army Reserve. In 2008 he deployed on peacekeeping operations in the Solomon Islands. David is well

published on Australian military history and a regular guest on many radio and television history programs including the award winning SBS series *Who Do You Think You Are*. David is a life member of the 39th Battalion Association and is married with two children and resides on the Mornington Peninsula, Victoria.

**The venue for The Military History Society of NSW lecture program is the Auditorium on the lower level of Anzac Memorial Hyde Park, corner of Elizabeth and Liverpool Streets, Sydney CBD. Numerous bus services stop at the location and Museum railway station is only 160 metres away. The venue opens its doors at around 10:00AM.**

