Today I would like to celebrate the life of and pay our respects to 48292 Warrant Officer Class Two Jack Lionel **Beehag.**

Jack was born on the 13th of Nov 1920 to George and Annie Beehag nee Costigan, of Kilbrine. He was the third son and a brother to James, Kenneth, Joan, Colin and Shirley.

His early schooling years were at Lyall Bay and Wellington Technical College before he left school to work with as a builder with Mr. William Burr, Melrose.

Jack joined the territorials in 1938, at the age of 18 and 3 years later went to Australia as a selected solider in an army training scheme to do special work. He spent 5 months in Australia. Records are unclear as the nature of the special work.

He spent 5 months in Australia before returning to New Zealand and residing at *24 Mahora Street, Kilbirnie, Wellington, New Zealand for embarkation.*

He embarked as a temp Cpl to Suva and New Caledonia. It appears during the course of his deployment and subsequent posting to 3rd NZ Division, he was promoted WO2 however, with 2nd NZEF, records show 3rd NZ Division were in this theatre and not 2 NZEF.

The Japanese had occupied Mono Island, the largest of the Treasury Islands, during their invasion of the Solomons.

The New Zealand Engineers 3rd NZ Division were involved in operations in the Treasury Islands from the 25thOct to 26th Nov 1943 under command of Brig Robert Low.

The initial landing, the first NZ opposed landing since those fateful days of Gallipoli 1915, assisted the American allies clear Mono Island of its Japanese defenders.

On 27th Oct 1943 the US 87th Navy Construction Battalion and the 8th Brigade of the 3rd NZ Division landed at two locations, Falamai (site of the Japanese HQ on the Island) in the south and at Purple Beach at Soanotalu in the North. the largest in the group, and after the landing the New Zealanders encountered only scattered opposition from the Japanese defenders, who withdrew to the northern coast of the island. The last organized Japanese units were defeated on the night of 2/3 November. New Zealand casualties were 40 killed and 145 wounded.

Unfortunately, WO2 Jack Lionel Beehag aged 22, one of those killed 27 Oct 1943.

Jack has been laid to rest Lionel in Bourail New Zealand War Cemetery, New Caledonia 2.12

RIP Jack

Thank you for your service

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Will never forget.