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TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT MEDIA RELEASE

Guy Barnett, Minister for Veteran's Affairs
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Tributes flow for Tasmanian hero Lloyd Harding

I was very sad to recently hear that Mr Lloyd Harding, the last living soldier of Tasmania's 2/40th Battalion, passed away on 2 February 2021 aged 99. Our thoughts are with his family and friends.

The 2/40th Infantry Battalion was the only battalion in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) recruited almost entirely from Tasmania.

Mr Harding and members of the 2/40th Battalion served in the Pacific theatre of war. They were sent to defend the airfield on Timor but, due to being overwhelmed, were captured by the Japanese and taken as prisoners of war in 1942 with many being forced to work on the Thai-Burma railway.

Following the surrender of Japan, the remaining men of the 2/40th Battalion were liberated in early September 1945 and repatriated to Australia. Of the original 1000, the battalion had 271 men killed in action or died while prisoners of war, while a further 79 were wounded.

The Tasmanian Government recognises the valuable contribution of Tasmania's service men and women and we are committed to supporting the serving and ex-service community in Tasmania.