

Press Releases

THE SOLOMONS CAMPAIGNS, 1942-1943

Volume II in William L. McGee's "Amphibious Operations" series released in time for 60th Anniversary of Pearl Harbor

SANTA BARBARA, CA, October 1, 2001—*The Solomons Campaigns 1942-1943: From Guadalcanal to Bougainville, Pacific War Turning Point*, by William L. McGee (BMC Publications, 2002) is Volume II in McGee's series, *Amphibious Operations in the South Pacific in WWII*. The official publication date is early 2002. However, the book will be available by December 7, 2001, in time for the 60th anniversary of Pearl Harbor.

The author zeroes in on the Solomons campaigns for several reasons:

First, and foremost, it was **America's first offensive after Pearl Harbor**. Eight months to the day after Pearl Harbor, U.S. Marines landed on Guadalcanal to halt the advance of the Japanese and they not only stopped them - they began pushing them back.

Second, the author considers Japan's defeat at Guadalcanal the **key turning point** of the Pacific War. From late 1942, the tide turned and the Japanese never again advanced.

Third, the author wanted to chronicle all operations in the Solomons campaigns—from Guadalcanal to Bougainville—**under one cover**. Many books have been written on the epic battle for Guadalcanal, but this is the first to provide balanced coverage of the naval, ground, and air forces—for all Solomons campaigns.

Fourth, the author wanted to **continue his coverage** of the new shore-to-shore landing craft and their crews (profiled in his Volume 1) as they earned their battle stars in the Solomons.

The Solomons Campaigns is a 688-page book, with 42 maps and charts (to help the reader follow the action), 310 photographs (many never before published), plus appendices, notes, bibliography and index.

The book opens with a 20-page illustrated *Prelude To War* recounting the Japanese empire expansion and armed forces buildup, as well as the evolution of America's "what if" war plans, and the escalation of our armed forces. Finally, the devastating December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor is summarized, along with several early 1942 Pacific naval engagements prior to the Guadalcanal campaign.

Following *Prelude to War*, the book is then divided into three parts:

Part One covers the Southern Solomons and the bloody six-month struggle for Guadalcanal. The relationship between ground fighting, naval warfare, and air combat is described in considerable detail as first one side, and then the other, gains the advantage. Seven major naval engagements are recounted, including America's severe defeat at Savo Island, and decisive victory in the three-day Naval Battle of Guadalcanal—another notable

turning point. (Part One includes an abridged derivative of Volumes IV and V of *The History of United States Naval Operations in World War II* by distinguished historian Samuel Eliot Morison, used with the permission of the trustees of the Samuel E. Morison Trust.)

"For us who were there, or whose friends were there, Guadalcanal is not a name but an emotion, recalling desperate fights in the air, furious night naval battles, frantic work at supply or construction, savage fighting in the sodden jungle, nights broken by screaming bombs and deafening explosions of naval shells." —*Samuel Eliot Morison*

Part Two chronicles the Central Solomons amphibious operations in the New Georgia Islands group, including the five separate landings at Rendova, Segi Point, Viru Harbor, Wickham Anchorage, and Rice Anchorage, and the occupation of Vella Lavella, plus three more significant naval battles. (The invasions in New Georgia marked the beginning of a sustained American strategic offensive on the long and bloody road to Tokyo.)

Part Three recounts the seizure of the Treasuries, the Choiseul Diversion and the Bougainville campaign in the Northern Solomons, plus two more significant naval battles. Finally, the many valuable lessons learned during the Solomons campaigns are summarized—ranging from logistic support and force requirements, to offshore toeholds and leapfrogging. Most became doctrine in later Pacific campaigns.

The Solomons Campaigns is based on archival research and the vivid, personal recollections of more than 100 survivors of the campaigns. These eyewitness accounts lend an immediacy to the work that will appeal to the general reader as well as historians and serious WWII buffs.

The Amphibians Are Coming!, Emergence of the 'Gator Navy and its Revolutionary Landing Craft, Volume I, was published in 2000 and has garnered favorable reviews from magazines such as *Sea Classics* and *Leatherneck*, and enthusiastic endorsements from WWII veterans.

Bill McGee joined the U.S. Navy in 1942. In 1997, he authored his first military history, *Bluejacket Odyssey, 1942-1946: Guadalcanal to Bikini, Naval Armed Guard in the Pacific*, a vivid recounting of his four-year hitch in the U.S. Naval Armed Guard during World War II.

***The Solomons Campaigns, 1942-1943
From Guadalcanal to Bougainville, Pacific War Turning Point, Volume II
Amphibious Operations in the South Pacific in WWII series***

by William L. McGee

\$39.95, Softcover, 688 pages, 352 photos, illustrations, maps and charts, plus appendices, notes, bibliography and index, 6 x 9, ISBN 0-9701678-7-3.

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