

New Australian Author Book Release

# CHINT SINGH

The Man Who Should Have Died

NARINDER SINGH PARMAR

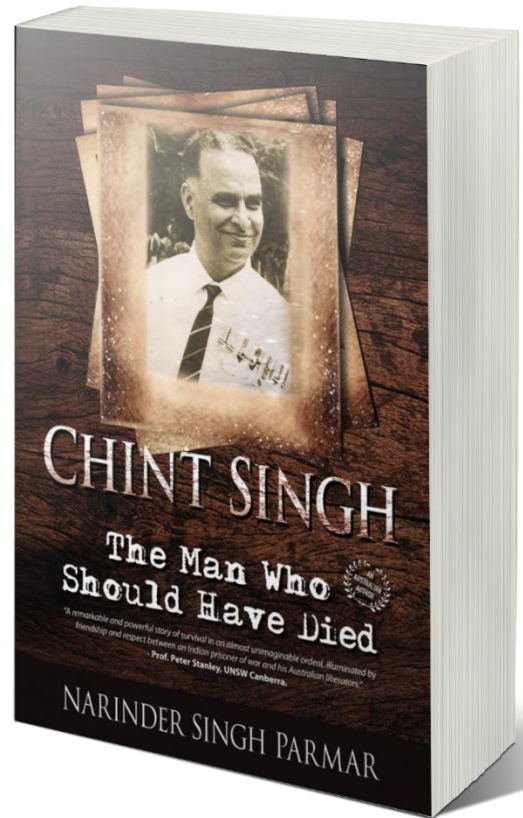
*“Chint Singh: The man who should have died” is the compelling true story of survival and courage during World War II...*

Chint Singh was a chief witness against the Japanese military at the war crimes trials. He was captured by the Japanese army, along with approximately 3000 other Indian POWs. They were then shipped to Papua New Guinea to work. Chint was one of the few Indian POWs to survive this burdened existence for years until rescued by the Australian forces.

*Out of the 600 in his work party, only 11 survived.*

Chint Singh was a primary witness in the war crimes trials that followed years later. While involved at these trials, his ten fellow POW survivors boarded a plane to take them home, but the plane tragically crashed killing everyone on board.

From an historical perspective, the story of Chint Singh highlights the role of Indian soldiers in the WW2 against Japan and their experiences following the fall of Singapore in 1942. This book reveals the atrocities committed by Japanese forces on Indian POWs but also reveals how some miraculously survived and shared their story with the world.



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# A Conversation with Narinder

## **Where do you get your information or ideas for your books?**

*The information for this book comes from my father's notes, diaries, and the information I collected from his Australian mates.*

## **Why did you write this book? What were your inspirations?**

*This book is about my father's survival story during WW2. When I found his diaries and a document "A brief Sketch of the fate of 3000 Indian POW in New Guinea, Wewak, NG 4/11/45", it became obvious that my father wanted to tell his story to the world. He passed away in 1983, without achieving this.*

*Therefore, it became apparent that I must complete his unfinished project. I was interviewed on Sunday ABC radio program in 2003, and that connected me to many Australians who knew my father. That gave me further energy to travel and meet them. From them I heard their connections with my father.*

*One was Mrs Cecil Bruce, wife of Capt. Dough Bruce, a tent mate of my father. When my father visited Sydney in 1947, he stayed with Capt. Bruce's family. Later Capt. Bruce moved to Perth. When I met Mrs Bruce in Perth, I stayed at her place, a retirement home. While having dinner, she got a bit emotional and said, "Narinder I cooked for your father a long time ago, and now I have cooked for you". We talked for a long time after the dinner, and she shared her memories.*

*While I was posted at Crookwell High School in my time after school, I further researched on my father's story. I found lot of information is held at AWM library/archives. This led me to connect with AWM senior historian Prof Peter Stanley. I met him in Canberra, and we were equally excited to meet each other. Since then, Prof Stanley has been my mentor and constant inspiration.*

## **What was the biggest challenge when writing the book?**

*Not finding time to work on the book consistently and to remain focused. This book should have been published at least 10 years ago. I have lost lots of time.*

## **Who inspires you?**

*My father's desire that his story should be told to the world inspired me to complete this project.*

## **Did you have any interesting experiences while writing/editing this book?**

*I have narrated my interaction with Mrs Bruce above. Similar interesting experiences I had with Capt. Smith's son and daughter. I was able to connect to Capt. Smith's family only just a few days after his death. Someone who listened to me on ABC radio contacted me and told me that Capt. Smith has just passed away, and his funeral is in a day or so. I managed to get the contact number of Capt. Smith's daughter, Marilyn, and called her and expressed my condolences. After a few months, I drove to Melbourne to meet her. She was just a baby when my father visited Capt. Smith in 1947.*

*I met another officer Mr Richard Youden, of Scottish Regiment, who lived in Sydney. When I visited him, he gave me his battalion pin, saying that once Chint Singh was attached to our battalion after being rescued and now you are attached to our battalion. He invited me to march with the battalion contingent during the ANZAC parade in Sydney. I was there, marching with those veterans, with my father's service medals on. It was an amazing experience that I will treasure all my life.*

## **What tips would you share with other new writers about your learnings?**

*Follow your heart and passion. Step outside of your comfort zone.*



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