

## Christmas Caper – 2019

### Day 11 - Aiome to Saidor via Madang



In April 1884 an expedition led by Otto Finsch and Eduard Dallmann arrived and named the landing point "Friedrich Wilhelmshafen"; however, they felt that the area was unsuitable for a settlement. A subsequent survey in 1888 mentioned good soil conditions that would make a coffee plantation possible. In the summer of 1891 a station was built and by September 1892 was the seat of the provincial administration; however, the Imperial Government Commissioner remained at Stephansort, some 23 kilometers away due to concerns about malaria. The name of "Madang" was used by Papuan natives who had accompanied the German administrators after their home island and only became the official name of the settlement towards the end of the German administration. Although the settlement was expanded from 1893-1894 with warehouses, a sawmill, hospital and other facilities, (including an ox-drawn railway to Stephansort) various ventures, such as the coffee plantations and atap palm processing proved economically ruinous, due to malaria and inclement climate. From 1895 and 1896 several German warships were stationed here for a survey of surrounding waters, during which time a total of 295 men came down with malaria. In 1899 the capital of the New Guinea Company was transferred to Herbertshöhe on the island of New Pomerania.

Following World War I, the area was turned over to Australia as part of the League of Nations mandated Territory of New Guinea

The Imperial Japanese Army captured Madang without a fight during World War II in 1942. In September 1943, Australian forces launched a sustained campaign to retake the Finisterre Range and Madang. The town was captured on April 24, 1944, but during the fighting and occupation it was virtually destroyed and had to be rebuilt afterwards.

#### The Route

Leg 1	Aiome to Madang	63 nms
Leg 2	Madang to Saidor	48 nms

This days flying is 111 nms and can be comfortably undertaken in a Cessna 172. Flying over low-lying terrain, an altitude of 2 500 ft should suffice.