

Coastwatchers light is shining

MADANG, Monday: Australia's "cloak-and-dagger" men who operated behind Japanese lines during the war, were honoured here on Saturday—the fourteenth anniversary of the end of the war in the Pacific.

The Minister for the Navy, Senator Gorton, officially unveiled and lit the spectacular, bomb-shaped Coast Watchers Memorial Light on Kalibobo Point, at the end of Coast Watchers' Avenue.

At sunset—6.27 p.m.—the 90ft. beacon sent its one million candlepower beam into the Bismarck Sea for the first time, honouring the Coastwatchers, living and dead, European and native, who took part in the war's most hazardous spy operation.

The public subscribed half the memorial's cost of £21,500 and the Australian Government provided the rest.

Among the subscribers were the Vice-President of the United States, Mr. Richard Nixon, and the late American Admiral William F. ("Bull") Halsey who said during the war: "The coastwatchers saved Guadalcanal and Guadalcanal saved the Pacific."

The United States was represented at the ceremony by the U.S. Naval Attaché in Australia, Capt. C. M. White, who said on Saturday that he had great admiration for the coastwatchers.

Capt. White, who was commander of the squadron of fighter planes on Guadalcanal in 1943, said: "The coastwatchers have never received the praise they deserved for their work. They were the bravest men I have ever known."

NATIVES THERE

The Territory was represented by the Administrator, Mr. D. M. Cleland, and representatives of the Armed Forces of Australia and New Zealand were also present.

But the most important people at the ceremony were the surviving coast-

watchers — about 40 Europeans and 26 natives.

Some hadn't seen each other since the end of the war.

They milled around each other, slapping backs, shaking hands, listening to each other's tales before the ceremony, then sat solemnly while speakers — Mr. Cleland, Senator Gorton, the Chairman of the coastwatchers memorial committee, Capt. I. H. McDonald, and the honorary secretary, Mr. W. Brooksbank, gave them the credit for some of the most outstanding work of the war.

About 6,000 people — practically every European living near Madang and many of the natives — attended the ceremony, which lasted for an hour and a half and was climaxed by the lighting of the beacon by Senator Gorton as the sun set.

BIG DAY



Coastwatchers rushed to greet this man when he arrived at Kalibobo Point, Madang, on Saturday for the unveiling of the Coastwatchers Memorial Light.

He is 60-year-old Bougainville native Yuawika, who was one of 26 natives taken to Madang for the ceremony.

He was twice decorated while helping coastwatchers on Bougainville — first with the Loyal Service Medal and later with the Distinguished Conduct Medal.

He was the leader of the native force on Bougainville for 18 months, and worked with the famous Jack Read and Paul Mason.

● OUTSTANDING

On Saturday, Read said that Yuawika was an outstanding leader of men. The work he had done was magnificent.

Yuawika is probably the only native in New Guinea and surrounding islands who has a blue eye.

He lost the sight of both eyes and had his left arm blown off when a smoke bomb he picked up exploded in his hand.

● EYE GRAFT

He was taken to Greenslopes Hospital, Queensland, where cornea grafts were made to his eyes. Only one graft was successful.

Yuawika, who speaks no English, watched intently as the memorial ceremony was performed.