

The Dirt I Still Exude:

On Kapyong and the Battle that held the line

Dr Hea-Jin Park

The Battle of Kapyong stands as one of the definitive moments in Australian military history. In April 1951, the 27th Commonwealth Brigade – led by the Australian, Canadian, and New Zealand forces – held the line against a massive Chinese breakthrough, ultimately saving Seoul from occupation. Marking the 75th anniversary of the battle, this seminar offers a rare perspective from the front lines: the testimony of the last remaining Kapyong veteran in Western Australia. By combining first-hand accounts with historical data, the presentation explores how a force of under 1,000 men repelled an onslaught twelve times their size, as well as the evolution of the Kapyong legacy in both Australia and Korea.



Dr Hea-Jin Park is a historian and team member of the Korea Research and Engagement Centre (KRC) at Curtin. She was born in Korea, raised in Paraguay, and has been calling Australia home for over 20 years. She completed her medical degree at the Universidad Nacional de Asunción and received the doctoral degree from the Australian National University for her thesis on the history of South Korean agricultural migration to South America. Her current research projects focus on the story of Australians who have had a significant impact on the relationship between Australia and Korea, including the Australian missionaries and their work in Korea since 1889, the Australian veterans of Korean War and two Australian Kelpies, just to name a few. Her work has been featured in Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade reports and materials.

Date: Thursday 30 April, 2026
Time: 12-1PM AWST
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