

The Eltham Roll of Honour: Second World War

On 14 August 1945, Japan accepted the Allied demand for unconditional surrender. A cease fire was called for at 7.00 p.m. (9.00 p.m. AEST). VP (Victory in the Pacific) Day, also referred to as VJ (Victory over Japan) Day was gazetted, in 1945, a public holiday and is celebrated on August 15th. It meant for all Australians, the Second World War was finally over, joyful their sons and daughters could finally come home at last. But one local Eltham family was still grieving the recent loss of their son, Private Jack Herbert Butherway, VX37645, who had died as a Prisoner of War of the Japanese just 37 days earlier in Borneo on 8 July 1945.

On VP Day 2020, we remember the 75th Anniversary of Victory in the Pacific, the end of the Second World War and the 11 men from the Eltham district who laid down their lives for us and country.



BUTHERWAY, Jack Herbert, Pte, VX37645 (DOD 8 Jul 1945, Borneo)



Vic. Paybook photograph, taken on enlistment, of VX37645 Craftsman Jack Herbert Butherway (AWM)

Jack Herbert Butherway was born 20 November 1918 at Clifton Hill, the son of Thomas James and Florence Mary Butherway of Clifton Hill, younger brother to Harry (UK 1911) and Tom (1914). His father was a coach/car painter by trade however work must have been hard to find as the family moved shortly after Jack's birth to Kinglake West where his father sought work as a labourer, then on to Whittlesea as a sawmill hand. By 1924 Thomas was painting coaches again, in Collingwood. Around 1930 the family moved and settled in Falkiner Street, Eltham where Thomas initially sought work as a coach/car painter but by 1936 had set himself up as a printer.

Educated at Eltham High School, Jack played cricket with several local teams. In 1935, playing for Diamond Creek, Jack was the star performer. Only just left school, Jack took six wickets for nine runs. The *Advertiser* said, "This lad should develop into a fine cricketer." Coincidentally, he was a cricketing and football mate of Theo Feldbauer, though on opposing teams, and suffered the

same fate as Theo at Sandakan. He won the best bowling average in 1938 for Lower Plenty and was also caught and bowled by Theo Feldbauer for Research. His brother Tom Butherway was a star football player for Eltham.

Before enlisting, Jack worked at Jack O' Lantern knitting mills in Richmond. His service file is currently not freely available from the National Archives, but we know he enlisted at Royal Park on 16 July 1940. Jack was assigned to the Australian Corps of Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, A.I.F., 2/4 Field Workshop. At a function arranged by the Badminton Club held in the Church of England Hall on 23 January 1941, Jack was guest of honour and was presented with a money belt on behalf of the members. He was posted to 22 Independent Brigade Group Ordnance Workshop Australian Army Ordnance Corps, his rank Craftsman, when Singapore fell on 15 February 1942. Jack's father, Thomas, died early June 1942 not knowing his son's true fate. Jack was listed as missing in July 1942 and a Prisoner of War in April 1943.

The Australian War Memorial advises Jack was one of over 2,000 Allied Prisoners of War (POW) held in the Sandakan POW camp in north Borneo, having been transferred there from Singapore as a part of B Force. The 1,494 POW's that made up B Force, were transported from Changi on 7 July 1942, on board the tramp ship *Ubi Maru*, arriving in Sandakan Harbour on 18 July 1942. Jack ultimately died, only 26 years old, a prisoner of the Japanese on 8 July 1945, at Ranau Number 1 Jungle Camp (near Sinarut). It was recorded that he was buried at Ranau Number 2 Jungle Camp (First Cemetery, near Japanese hut, used from 11 June to about 9 July 1945). Although Jack died young, his elder brother Harry kept his memory alive till 101 and is buried in Eltham Cemetery.

Even before the end of the Second World War, the citizens of Eltham began to consider an appropriate form of memorial for those from the area who fought and died in the Second World War. In 1943 the Eltham Women's Auxiliary raised funds for the construction of buildings to be established on land to be purchased for the proposed War Memorial. On March 27th, 1945, the Eltham District Progress Association called a meeting of local people who in turn set up and registered the Eltham War Memorial Trust Inc. As a focus for the purpose of the memorial, the newspaper notice read: -

“Those who have had a member of their family in the fighting services will want to see that the form of a memorial we are concerned with is the one which will be a constant reminder to us of those who fought for us and the little ones for whom they fought and died.”

Jack's name is one of eleven listed on the Eltham Honour Roll (Second World War) located in the Eltham War Memorial Hall. Whist listed in order of rank; Jack was the last of the eleven from the Shire of Eltham who made that ultimate sacrifice for us, during the Second World War.

The following notices were published in the newspaper in memory of Jack.

The Age, Friday, 2 November 1945, p8

BUTHERWAY. – To honour the memory of our pal, Jack, VX37645, 2/10th Ordnance Workshop, died P.O.W. in Borneo on July 8. – Inserted by the Eltham Cricket Club.

The Age, Saturday, 3 November 1945, p11

BUTHERWAY. – VX37645, Jack, died P.O.W., in Borneo, July 8. A great pal, sadly missed. – Inserted by the Eltham Fire Brigade.

BUTHERWAY. – VX37645, Jack, 2/10th Ord. Workshops, died July 8, P.O.W., Borneo. Not just to-day but every day in silence we will remember you, Jack - From all who worked with him at Jack O'Lantern.

BUTHERWAY. – VX37645, Jack, 2/10 Ord. W'shop, died July 8, P.O.W., Borneo. – Inserted by his friend, Lillian.

The Argus, Saturday, 3 November 1945, p20

BUTHERWAY. – VX37645 Jack, 2/10th Ord. Workshops, died July 8, P.O.W., Borneo. – Not just today, but every day, in silence we will remember you Jack. (From all who worked with him at Jack O'Lantern.)

Jack is remembered on Panel 29 of the Labuan Memorial in the Labuan War Cemetery. The Labuan War cemetery is located on the small island of Labuan (part of Sabah, Malaysia) in Brunei Bay, off the north-west coast of Borneo.

*BUTHERWAY, Craftsman JACK HERBERT, VX.37645. A.I.F.
2/4 Fd. Wksp. Australian Corps of Elec. and Mech. Engineers
8th July 1945. Age 26.
Son of Thomas James and Florence Mary Butherway, of Eltham, Victoria.*

CASTLEDINE, George Ernest, Spr., VX10044 (KIA 18 Apr 1941, Greece)



Vic. Paybook photograph, taken on enlistment, of VX10044 Sapper George Ernest Castledine (NAA)

The first soldier from the Shire of Eltham to pay the ultimate price in the Second World War was Sapper George Ernest Castledine.

George was born 18 May 1914 in North Hampton, England, the son of Arthur Frederick and Annie Castledine of 'Abington' (now known as 'Araluen') on the Old Eltham Road, Lower Plenty. A blacksmith by trade, George was engaged to Miss Jean Simonson of Montmorency when he enlisted on 23 January 1940 at Lower Plenty. His next of kin was his mother Annie, his father having died in September 1933. He was assigned to the 2/2 Field Company, Royal Australian Engineers, 6th Division.

Following training, the 2/2 was deployed to North Africa in mid-1940. They first saw action in January 1941 in the Western Desert in support of the 16th Brigade's attack on Bardia and the capture of Tobruk. Further action was seen around Derna and Barce before the 6th Division was relieved and withdrawn to Mersa Matruh in Egypt.

The 6th Division arrived in Greece in late March and were joined by New Zealanders and British forces in early April. On April 6th, the Germans began their invasion of Greece sending in 27 Divisions. After arrival in Greece, the Australians were transported north towards the Yugoslav border taking up defensive positions around the Florina Valley. The 2/2 supported several of the 6th Division's brigades but the campaign was short lived, the Germans quickly overwhelming the Allies. George was killed in action on April 18th. Nine days later the Allies were driven off the mainland, George's unit heading to Crete without him.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA - POSTMASTER-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT.				T. 43.	
FUND MAY BE QUICKLY, SAFELY AND ECONOMICALLY TRANSFERRED BY MONEY ORDER TELEGRAM.				OFFICE DATE STAMP.	
(PLEASE TURN OVER)				Sent at	
Office of Origin.	Words.	Time Lodged.	No.		
Victoria Barracks, Melbourne	CO.	5210	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> RECEIVED TELEGRAM The first line of this telegram contains the following particulars in the order named. To Mrs Annie Castledine Old Eltham Road Lower Plenty </div>		
Remarks.	Sch. C. 2235-11/4/41.		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> POSTAL TELEGRAM It is with deep regret that I have to inform you that VX10044 Sapper G.E. Castledine has been killed in action April 18th & desire to convey to you the profound sympathy of the Australian Army and the Military Board. Minister for the Army 5-410 </div>		

Telegram, Victoria Barracks, Melbourne to Mrs Annie Castledine, Old Eltham Road, Lower Plenty, 3 May 1941. The telegram is oil stained as it was kept by George's brother Sid, in his toolbox. (Private collection)

On May 3rd, Annie became the first woman in the district since the Great War to experience their world shattered by telegram.

"It is with deep regret that I have to inform you that VX10044 Sapper G. E. Castledine has been killed in action April 18th & desire to convey to you the profound sympathy of the Minister for the Army and the Military Board. – Minister for the Army"

An obituary was published in the *Eltham and Whittlesea Shires Advertiser*, Friday, 9 May 1941, p 2

"SAPPER G. E. CASTLEDINE

Advice has been received of the death in action of Sapper George Ernest Castledine, son of Mrs. A. Castledine of Lower Plenty.

Deceased was very well known in the Eltham district, and was engaged to Miss Jean Simonson of Montmorency.

This was the first fatal casualty to be reported among those who enlisted from the Eltham Shire."

The following notices were published in *The Age* newspaper in memory of George: -

The Age, Tuesday, 6 May 1941, p1

CASTLEDINE. —Killed in action, April 18, Spr. George, the loved finance of Jean. Loved, remembered, longed for always.

The Age, Wednesday, 7 May 1941, p1

CASTLEDINE. — On April 18. killed in action. Spr. George Ernest, loved son of Mrs. A. Castledine. Lower Plenty; loved brother of Annie, Lil, Gladys, Joyce, Lila, Syd, Les and John, aged 26 years. Always remembered.

George is buried in the Phaleron War Cemetery, Athens, Greece, Grave 2. E. 4.

CASTLEDINE, Spr. GEORGE ERNEST, VX.10044. A.I.F.

2/2 Field Coy., Royal Australian Engineers.

18th April 1941. Age 26.

His life was one of sacrifice

"Life is eternal

Love will remain"

Son of Arthur Frederick and Annie Castledine, of Lower Plenty, Victoria, Australia.

GAHAN, Studley Manston, Capt., VX48379 (KIA 17 May 1941, Tobruk, Libya)



VX48379 Capt. S.M. Gahan (NAA)

Studley Manston Gahan was born in Ivanhoe, 8 December 1913, the son of Walter Ernest and Alice Miriam (Rourke) Gahan. By 1924, the family had moved to "Derril," Eltham, on the western side of Main Road near the present-day site of Shillinglaw Cottage where they remained till about 1960 when Walter died. The house was demolished in 1968 during the widening of Main Road.

Educated at Eltham High School and Melbourne Grammar, in April 1937 Studley was engaged to Kathleen Elsie (Kitty), daughter of Lieut. Colonel and Mrs C.A. Mitchell of Cowra Avenue, Mildura. Studley was employed by the Bank of New South Wales, stationed previously at Preston, Mildura and Melbourne offices. He was living at Caulfield when he enlisted 16 December 1936 and allocated to the 57/60 Battalion. He received a commission as Lieutenant on 15 September 1937. On 21 April 1938 he and Kitty married at Melbourne Grammar School Chapel. He was promoted to Captain, 28 March 1940.



Gahan home, 'Derril,' (left) c. 1905 and (right) March 1968 immediately prior to demolition

On 1 August 1940 Studley was posted to the 2/23 Battalion, A.I.F., embarking 16 November 1940 per *Strathmore* for the Middle East. The Battalion arrived in Egypt mid-December where it was reassigned from the 7th Division to the 9th Division in early 1941. Shortly after they were sent to Cyrenaica in Libya. A German-Italian offensive led by the 'Desert Fox', Field Marshall Erwin Rommel of the German Wehrmacht drove the forces to the port of Tobruk where the 2/23 formed part of the garrison during the Siege of Tobruk, which lasted 241 days from April 10. These men were nicknamed by Rommel as the 'Desert Rats of Tobruk', something that was to become a source of pride amongst the Australians in their defiance of the German military might. A policy of 'making the besiegers the besieged' involved undertaking numerous and aggressive raids into German lines by small groups of men. On May 17, Studley led 12 men on such a raid on a German defensive outpost (Scates 2013). War Diary records note Gahan was last seen at 07.30 hours. Six of his men were wounded but he continued to push on to the next position. He was never seen again. On May 28, 1941, Studley was reported 'Missing' as of May 17th. On 9 June, his status was revised to 'Missing Believed Prisoner' and on May 3rd, to 'Killed in Action'. His body was never recovered.

Studley's younger brother Neil followed him into banking and the Army. Lt. Gahan departed Australia with 2/29 Australian Infantry Battalion for the Malayan campaign. Having initially been reported missing, he rejoined his unit just two days before Singapore fell. He became a prisoner of war of the Japanese, alongside many other members of the 2/29 and was interned at Changi and

sent to work on the Burma-Thai Railway as part of "F Force". Neil survived the war and returned to Australia, his final rank, Captain, like brother Studley.

Scates (2013) writes of Kitty Gahan's efforts to be heard as a war widow. She was one of a select few to be invited to travel after persistent requests on behalf of the War Widows Guild to be part of the official Australian party to attend the dedication of the War Graves Commission cemetery at El Alamein, Egypt, in 1954. He also observes that while standing beside a grave to secure that finality of loss had no equal, from the 1940s, memorial funds were generally put towards useful and enduring purposes and less towards sponsoring pilgrimages, a more common demand after the Great War.

The State Library of Victoria holds the *Papers of Kathleen Gahan, 1929-1982*, which includes a scrapbook of correspondence, photographs, postcards, press cuttings and other ephemera relating to Kitty Gahan's visit. Scates describes Kitty's pilgrimage and this scrapbook of poignant material, not just as a souvenir, but as Kitty's own personal memorial to her husband. The final image in the scrapbook being Studley's name, etched in cool white stone in the desert, on a panel to the missing.

The following notices were published in the newspaper in memory of Studley.

The Age, Saturday, 9 May 1942, p2

GAHAN. – Captain Studley Manston Gahan, killed in action May 17, 1941, dearly loved husband of Kitty.

GAHAN. – Captain Studley Manston Gahan, VX48379, killed in action May 17, 1941, beloved eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Gahan, of Derril, Eltham, and brother of Neil (2nd A.I.F.), Lorrainer, Peter, and Kevin, aged 27 years.

The Argus, Wednesday, 17 May 1944, p2

GAHAN. – In proud and loving remembrance of Captain Studley Manston Gahan, 2/23rd Batt., who made the supreme sacrifice at Tobruk on May 17, 1941.

The Argus, Wednesday, 17 May 1946, p2

GAHAN. – In fond and loving memory of Captain Studley Manston Gahan, 2/23rd Batt., who gave his life at Tobruk on May 17, 1941. – At the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember.

The Argus, Wednesday, 17 May 1950, p11

GAHAN. – In loving memory of Captain Studley Manston Gahan, and comrades of B Coy., 2/23rd Battalion., who made the supreme sacrifice, May 17, 1941, Tobruk.

Studley is commemorated on Column 91, Alamein Memorial, Egypt.

GAHAN, Capt. STUDLEY MANSTON, VX.48379. A.I.F.

2/23 Bn, Australian Infantry.

17th May 1941. Age 27.

Son of Walter Ernest and Alice Miriam Gahan; husband of Kathleen Elsie Gahan, of St. Kilda, Victoria, Australia.

RUTTER, David, Flying Off., 833 (400833) (KIA 9 Dec 1941, Bir El Gubbi, Libya)



*Flying Off. David Rutter, 1942
(Page 2002, p162)*

David Rutter was born 2 August 1915 in Armadale, second son of Hubert and Beulah Alice (Simpson) Rutter after Hubert Jnr. (Joe), followed by June in 1917 and Donald in 1922. Their father was a notable figure in Eltham and beyond, with a career as a mining manager in Australia and Malaya. He served in the AIF in the First World War. While growing up at 'Yarra Braes', Eltham, their father was an Eltham Shire Councillor in the 1920s, shire president in 1928 and a leading figure in establishing the Shire of Eltham War Memorial League, which was responsible for building the Shire of Eltham War Memorial tower at Kangaroo Ground, near where the Shire Offices were located until the 1930s. The Rutter name was commemorated after the war at Eltham High School with one of the schoolhouses named 'Rutter House' and at Geelong Grammar School until the 1960s where a 'Rutter Badge' was awarded to junior boys for leadership.

The childhood home, 'Yarra Braes' was destroyed in the devastating [Black Friday bushfire](#), 13 January 1939 and Beulah relocated to Toorak, Hubert working in Western Australia. Tragedy struck the family again December 19, 1940 when daughter June was killed after falling from the Heidelberg train on to an adjacent track into the path of a Reservoir train at Victoria Park station.

A mining engineer by profession, having graduated from the University of Melbourne at a ceremony held at Wilson Hall on December 21, 1937, David was working with the Zinc Corporation, part of the Broken Hill Pty Ltd in Broken Hill when he resigned to join the R.A.A.F.. At the time, David was Secretary and a popular member of the Broken Hill Aero Club. He had previously been a member of the Officer Training Corps at Geelong Grammar for three years whilst at school. He also had an Advanced "A" license with 45 hours solo flying experience in de Havilland DH-60 and DH-82 aircraft.

David was officially enlisted as an Air Cadet in the R.A.A.F., March 4, 1940, at Parafield, South Australia and assigned to No. 1 Elementary Flying Training School at Parafield following which, he was posted to No. 1 Flying Training School 29 July 1940 at Point Cook, Victoria and No. 1 Air Observer's School 18 November 1940 in Cootamundra, New South Wales. His training involved flying Avro Anson and CAC Wirraway aircraft, he being most proficient in the latter.

On 25 November 1940 David was posted to general duties at 22 Squadron at Richmond, New South Wales. His next of kin was listed as his mother, Mrs Hubert Rutter of Toorak. Following training, David was promoted to Pilot Officer on 24 September 1940 and to Flying Officer on 24 September 1941.

David embarked for overseas service on 1 November 1941, assigned to 3 Squadron at Aboukir in the Middle East. At the time of his embarkation, David wrote a letter of thanks for the generous embarkation kits provided by the Australian Comforts Fund, which was countersigned by T. Threlkeld, H. Graham, H.H. Schlaeffer, Donald King and I. Furniss. He wrote: -

"We felt we must write to thank you personally for the parcel of comforts provided for each of us on departure overseas. Actually our scale of issue in the Air Force is very generous, but the collection of articles so carefully selected fills in the gaps which would otherwise remain. More than this is the sense of the close bond your work represents — the personal effort and

sacrifice of the folk at home for those of us privileged to fight for our country and the things we love. This is just to assure you that your efforts are greatly appreciated."

By December 4 David was on flying duties in a Curtiss P40 Tomahawk in the Second Libyan Campaign. That same day, the squadron was the first in the Desert Air Force to commence being equipped with the new Curtiss P40E Kittyhawk 1A; whilst not much faster than the Tomahawk, it packed a greater punch. Five days later, according to 3 Squadron Association website, December 9, at 10:35, nine 3 Squadron Tomahawks, with ten from 112 Squadron RAF, whilst sweeping the Tobruk-El Gobi area, were bounced out of the sun approximately 14 miles north of Bir El Gubi, in the general vicinity of south El Adem by six Messerschmitt Bf-109s of I/JG27. Dave Rutter in Curtiss Tomahawk IIB AK378, Rex Wilson (AN457), and Tiny Cameron (AK499) were shot down by Oberleutnant Gerhard Homuth, Unteroffizier Grimm and Oberleutnant Hugo Schneider respectively. Both David and Wilson were killed. An account of the incident as told by Royal Artillery Officer, Captain D.A. Temple to David's father is recorded in *Geelong Grammarians at World War Two* (Affleck 2002): -

"My battery was moving forward as part of a brigade group to outflank the enemy near Bir el Gubbi, well south in the desert, and to force him to retire from Tobruk. He was very sensitive to this action and reacted violently in the air. We had casualties and lost vehicles as a result. About midday we were attacked by eighteen Messerschmitts who were having things very much their own way until a smaller number of our planes (about ten arrived – Kittyhawks, I think. They immediately dived in to attack and a tremendous aerial battle ensued only about 200 feet immediately above us. Thanks to this, we suffered no further casualties. Directly above, I saw one of our planes on the tail of a German one and fired hard into it, causing it to crash in flames about four miles away, but we saw also another German plane open fire on ours. The plane – your son's – was hit, and became out of control. It was so low, we could see the pilot trying to gain control and make some sort of landing. You must remember that in those early days planes were few and valuable and anything that could be landed could be reconditioned. In a few seconds it was obvious that the plane must crash and that it was too low for a parachute jump with safety. However the pilot did jump, but from only about 100 feet, and the parachute did not open."

The Royal Artillery members buried David where he fell, about 14 miles north of Bir el Gubbi. Captain Temple read the burial service from the Field Service Pocket Book. A driver fabricated a cross from some wooden boxes in the vehicles. The coordinates of his grave recorded as accurately as possible for retrieval later.

David was the German Ace Homuth's 30th victim. Though initially reported missing in air operations, his record was later revised to killed in action and his body recovered. According to the Wikinorthia article "The Rutter Family of Eltham", David is buried in the El Alamein War Cemetery, Marsa Matruh, Egypt but there is no evidence from CWGC to corroborate this.

David is commemorated on Column 245, Alamein Memorial, Egypt.

RUTTER, F/O. DAVID, 400833. R.A.A.F.

9th December 1941. Age 26.

Son of Hubert and Beulah Rutter, of Armadale, Victoria, Australia.

B.M.Eng. (Melbourne)

CLERKE, Alfred Charles, Cpl., VX23112 (KIA 2 Feb 1942, Laha, Ambon Island)



VX23112 Corporal Alfred Charles Clerke (NAA)

Alfred Charles Clerke was born 22 July 1906 in London, the son of William Charles and Rose Matilda Clerke. A printer by profession, he was 33 years old and married to Inga Caroline (Nicholls) when he enlisted at Heidelberg on 25 May 1940. His address was listed as Bridgelands, Eltham. The Bridgeland Park Estate was established in the mid-1920s and consisted of Antionette Boulevard, Rodda Parade and Leonard Crescent. Harold and Inga were married in 1934 and from Electoral Roll records, it appears they settled in Bridgelands, Eltham, soon after their marriage.

Initially assigned to Infantry Training Depot, he was then posted to 2/21 Battalion from 15th Training Battalion on 16 July 1940. In August 1940 he was admitted to Camp Dressing Station Seymour with Pharyngitis and in January 1941 admitted to 106 General Hospital and then transferred to Albury District Hospital suffering from

Septicaemia. In April 1941, 2/21 Battalion joined the 7th Military District at Darwin and on 22 May, Alfred was appointed Acting Lance Corporal, quickly followed on 1 June to Acting Corporal. Following the Japanese invasion of Malaya on 8 December, on 13 December, the battalion departed Darwin bound for Ambon, an island in the Dutch East Indies, now present-day Indonesia, disembarking four days later.

During the evening of January 30/31, 1942, the Japanese landed three battalions from the 228th Infantry Regiment and a battalion of marines from the 1st Kure Special Naval Landing Force at several locations on the north and south coasts of the island. By the afternoon of 31 January Dutch forces around Paso had surrendered. Outnumbered and lacking air or naval support, 2/21 Battalion, which was guarding Ambon itself, was unable to prevent the advance despite determined resistance, and were pushed to the far west of the peninsula. Within 24 hours of the landing, Dutch forces on the island had capitulated. Meanwhile, B and C Companies of 2/21 Battalion at Laha Airfield were attacked on 31 January. Around 150 Australian soldiers and some Indonesians and Dutch were subsequently captured, and many were later massacred following a major Japanese offensive on 2 February. Alfred was reported 'Missing'. His service file was updated following cessation of hostilities on 24 October 1945 as 'Killed in Action' on or before 2 February 1942 at Laha, Ambdina in the Battle of Ambon. The Dutch having already surrendered, the Australians followed suit on 3 February. Whilst Allied casualties were relatively light during the battle, more than 300 Australian and Dutch Prisoners of War were randomly selected and summarily executed by the Japanese near Laha Airfield. In 1946 this incident became one of the largest ever war crimes trials. As a result of the capture of Ambon, Australian fears of air attacks were realised when Japanese planes based at Ambon took part in major air raids over Darwin, Australia, on February 19th.

Alfred's wife Inga died in 1945 at age 41 never really knowing what happened to her husband. Alfred's service file is notated: wife deceased, daughter (Nora Ann) living with wife's mother, Mrs (Inga Mary) Nicholls, Allandale, Strath Creek.

Alfred's memory is commemorated on Column 2 at the Ambon Memorial, Ambon War Cemetery, Indonesia.

CLERKE, Cpl. ALFRED CHARLES, VX.23112. A.I.F.

2nd February 1942. Age 35.

Son of William Charles and Rose Matilda Clerke; Husband of Inga Clerke; nephew of Mr. G.E. Berry of Hawthorn, Victoria, Australia.

DUNLOP, Cuthbert Douglas, Sgt., VX15252 (KIA 22 Nov 1942, Gona, New Guinea)



Vic. Paybook photograph, taken on enlistment, of VX15252 Sergeant Cuthbert Douglas Dunlop (NAA)

Cuthbert Douglas Dunlop was born 14 September 1920 at Heatherton, the son of Reuben Cuthbert and Janet Dunlop. A farmer by occupation, he initially enlisted in the Militia Forces on 23 February 1939 and assigned Army No. 323730 with 46 Battalion. On 16 May 1940 he was discharged to the AIF and re-enlisted at Seymour. He declared his occupation as a labourer, his year of birth as 1918 and his father, Mr R.C. Dunlop of Yuilles Road, Mornington as next of kin. Cuth's service file was updated on 6 January 1942, his father advising his address to Henry Street, Eltham.

Cuth was posted to the 2/14 Battalion at Puckapunyal, 21st Brigade, 7th Division. On 19 October 1940, the battalion embarked per *Aquilania* from Sydney, disembarking 25 November in Egypt where they were then transported to Palestine for further training, whereupon they located at Dimra, near Gaza, in January 1941. On 19 January 1941 Cuth was evacuated to No. 1 Australian General Hospital with an incised wound to his right hand, returning to his

unit ten days later. In April, the battalion was sent to Mersa Matruh in Egypt to defend against a possible German attack during the Siege of Tobruk. At the end of May, the 21st Brigade was sent back to Palestine to prepare for operations in Syria and Lebanon against the Vichy French, commencing the night of 7 June. The fighting was ongoing for the rest of the month and Cuth was ultimately evacuated to 7 Australian General Hospital suffering from malaise from whence he was evacuated July 8, to 1 Australian Convalescent Depot. On 11 August he was discharged to 21 Infantry Training Battalion and then returned to the 2/14 four days later at Beirut, where the battalion was being used as garrison troops overseeing the repatriation of captured Vichy French to France. In early January, the 7th Division returned to Palestine, the 2/14 situated at a camp near Jerusalem.

On 29 January, the 2/14 embarked from Egypt to return to Australia, arriving Adelaide on 24 March 1942. Following a period of leave the battalion was sent to Yandina, Queensland for defensive duties and training. On 6 July 1942 Cuth was promoted to Lance Corporal.

A month later the 2/14 embarked from Brisbane bound for Port Moresby, arriving August 12, and soon found themselves fighting the Japanese on the Kokoda Track. Cuth was promoted to Acting Corporal on August 30, at which time they were fighting a rear-guard action with a series of delaying actions and fighting withdrawals. By the time they reached Imita Ridge their casualties were so great, the 2/14 and 2/16 were amalgamated to form a composite battalion of approximately 300 men. As the 21st Brigade readied to make a final stand, battalions from the 25th Brigade arrived to relieve them, and the composite battalion was withdrawn September 16th for Uberi. The 2/14 started the Kokoda campaign with 546 men. By the time they were placed in reserve, only 88 men remained, of which only three were officers.

By November, the 2/14 had been reformed at Koitaki near Port Moresby with 341 men. The 21st Brigade was sent in to help capture the Japanese beachhead around Gona on the northeast coast of New Guinea. Cuth was promoted again, to Acting Sergeant, 13 November 1942 but was killed in action just nine days later.

Gona was eventually captured December 9, and the battalion remained there until early January at which time only 21 fit men remained before being sent back to Australia. Cuth's service file notes he was buried in the Gona area, Grave A13. On August 23, 1943 he was reburied in the temporary Gona War Cemetery, Plot D, Row A, Grave 9.

The following notices were published in the newspaper in memory of Cuth.

The Age, Monday, 22 November 1943, p5

DUNLOP. Sgt., VX15252 – In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Cuth, 2/14 Batt., K.I.A. New Guinea, November 22, 1942. Loved in life, treasured in death, a beautiful memory is all we have left. – Inserted by his mother, father, and brother, Harry and Mat.

DUNLOP. VX15252 – In loving memory of our dear brother, Sgt. Cuth, 2/14 Batt., K.I.A. New Guinea, November 22, 1942. Too dearly love to forget. – Inserted by his loving brothers, Jack and Len (5th Batt., V.S.R.).

DUNLOP. VX15252 – In loving memory of our beloved brother, Sgt. Cuth, 2/14 Batt., K.I.A. New Guinea, November 22, 1942. Sunshine passes, shadows fall, but loving memories outlast all. – Inserted by his loving sister and brother, Jean and Sid.

DUNLOP. – In loving memory of our dear brother, Sgt. Cuth, VX15252, 2/14 Batt., killed in action, New Guinea, November 22, 1942. To have you here in the same old way is our dearest wish to-day. – Jim and Con, and nephews Ron and Douglas.

DUNLOP. – In fond remembrance of VX15252, Sgt. Cuth Dunlop (A.I.F. returned), killed in action, New Guinea, on November 22, 1942. Remembered always. – Inserted by Ruby and Clarrie Smith (A.I.F. New Guinea).

The Age, Monday, 22 November 1943, p4

DUNLOP. – In loving memory of Sgt. C. D. Dunlop, VX15252, 2/14 Btn., killed in action in New Guinea, Nov. 22nd, 1942. Sadly missed by Maureen Massoud, Tewantin.

DUNLOP. – In proud & loving memory of our dear Friend, Sgt. Cuth Dunlop, VX15252, 2/14th Btn., who proudly gave his life for his country in New Guinea, Nov. 22, 1942. Always remembered by Pearl & George Massoud, Tewantin.

The Argus, Tuesday, 23 November 1943, p2

DUNLOP. – In loving memory of Sgt. C. D. Dunlop, VX15252, 2/14 Btn., killed in action in New Guinea, November 22, 1942. – I have a beautiful memory to treasure my whole life through. (Sadly missed by Maureen Massoud, Tewantin, Qld.)

DUNLOP. – In proud & loving memory of our dear friend, Sgt. Cuth Dunlop, VX15252, 2/14 Btn., who proudly gave his life in New Guinea, November 22, 1942. (Always remembered by Pearl & George Massoud, Tewantin, Queensland.)

Cuth was further remembered on the anniversary of his death with eight notices published in *The Age*, Wednesday, 22 November 1944, p6 by: -

“Gone is the lace we loved so dear.” - Mother, father, sister and brother

“In loving memory of Cuth, who lives forever in our thoughts.” – Bess and Len

“Memories of happier days.” – Jim (A.I.F.), Con and nephews

“To have you here in the same old way would be our dearest wish to-day.” – Loving brother and sister, Jack and Norma

“Sunshine passes, shadows fall, but loving memories outlast all.” – Jean and Sid Robertson, brother and brother-in-law

“To-day I am thinking of someone; darling Cuth., that someone is you.” – Sadly missed by Maureen Massoud, Tewantin, Qld. (Also, in the Courier Mail, p8)

“To know him was to love him.” – Always remembered by Pearl and George Massoud, Tewantin

“Loved pal of Clarrie and George, 2/14th Batt. Life moves on, but memories stay.” Ruby Smith, Panton Hill

Nine notices were placed in *The Age*, Thursday, 22 November 1945, p8; six notices in *The Age*, Friday, 22 November 1946, p8; five in 1947; three in 1948; four in 1949; three in 1950; two in 1951; his parents and brothers in 1953 and two in 1954 at which year, digital records are no longer accessible publicly through the National Library of Australia Trove website. Clearly Cuth was well loved and remembered by his family and friends.

Cuth is now buried in the Port Moresby (Bomana) War cemetery, Papua New Guinea, Grave C6. B. 23.

DUNLOP, Sgt. CUTHBERT DOUGLAS, VX.15252. A.I.F.

2/14 Bn. Australian Infantry

22nd November 1942. Age 22.

Son of Reuben Cuthbert and Janet Dunlop of Regent, Victoria, Australia.

Hearts That Loved You “Cuth” Will Never Forget

INGRAM, Lester Neil, Flt. Sgt., 410236 (DOD 22 Apr 1943, Longworth, England)



410236 Flight Sergeant Lester Neil Ingram (NAA)

Lester Neil Ingram was born at Kew, 8 November 1911, the son of John and Ada (Key) Ingram of Research. According to Electoral Roll records, in 1903, John Ingram was a farmer at Lancefield, his wife Ada, a milliner. By 1906, John Ingram was a baker at Research and from about 1912, an orchardist. The family moved to Anglesea River sometime between 1937 and 1942.

A sheet metal worker by trade, Lester had run the bakery business for 14 years, his father retired, and was working as a baker at Anglesea when he enlisted in the R.A.A.F. on 5 December 1941 at Melbourne. Previously he had worked as a baker at Research (1937). He undertook training as Aircrew at No. 4 Initial Training School at Victor Harbour, South Australia, followed by No. 1 Wireless Air Gunners School at Ballarat, Victoria, and No. 3 Bombing and Gunnery School, West Sale, Victoria. On October 15, 1942 Lester qualified as an Air Gunner, promoted to Sergeant, and was posted to 1 Embarkation Depot at Ascot Vale, Victoria, and attached to R.A.F. UK.

Lester embarked from Australia December 2, 1942 and arrived at 11 Personnel Despatch and Reception Depot on January 13, 1943. On March 9 he was transferred to 10 Operational Training Unit, Group No. 91, Bomber Command, R.A.F.

Lester's service file reveals that on the evening of 22 April 1943, Lester was a member of the aircrew of Whitley V bomber, N.1374. The airframe had run 1,127 hours. A full moon was just rising. The flight was non-operational, its purpose a dual conversion on type mission flown by a student pilot with almost two hours completed at night on similar flights. They had just changed aircraft as their previous aircraft had become unserviceable. The pilot had accepted the aircraft, which was technically unserviceable as the NCO in charge of flight had not completed the inspection paperwork correctly. The aircraft had undergone a major engine repair the day before. The aircraft took off at 2348 hours from R.A.F. Abington. It was reported that the aircraft take-off was quite normal and after climbing to 800 feet it passed out of view of the ground observers. A few seconds later the aircraft crashed, and it was reported that the sound of the engines seemed to become desynchronised. The crash occurred one and a half miles northwest of Longworth, Berkshire and the aircraft destroyed by fire. It carried a crew of five.

Lester was remembered with the following notices published in *The Argus* newspaper, Saturday 22 April 1944, p2:

INGRAM. —In treasured memories you are with me still. Sgt. Lester Neil Ingram, killed, aircraft accident, England, April 22, 1943. (Mother and father.)

INGRAM. —In proud and ever loving memory of Lester, 410236, Sgt. L. N. Ingram, R.A.A.F., air crash England, April 22, 1943. —Per ardua ad astra. (Ellen Peake and family.)

["Per ardua ad astra" is a Latin phrase meaning "through adversity to the stars" or "through struggle to the stars" which was the motto of the Royal Air Force and other Commonwealth air forces such as the Royal Australian Air Force.]

And from his fiancé Ellen, in *The Argus*, Wednesday, 5 May 1943, p2:

INGRAM. —On April 22 (result of aircraft accident near Lodgeworth Village, Berks, England), Sgt. Lester Neil Ingram, R.A.A.F., fiancé of Ellen. -Treasured memories till we meet again.

Lester is buried at Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, United Kingdom, Grave 4. 1. 11.

INGRAM, Flt. Sgt. LESTER NEIL, 410236. R.A.A.F.

22nd April 1943. Age 31.

Son of John and Ada Ingram, of Anglesea, Victoria, Australia.

He gave his life

For freedom's cause

McLEAN, Stanley, Flt. Sgt., 419844 (KIA 7 Oct 1944, Emmerich, Germany)



419844 Flight Sergeant Stanley McLean (NAA)

Stanley McLean was born 21 April 1924 at Carlton, the son of Gordon Stanley and Lucy Mclean. Gordon was a miner and the family lived at Black Snake Creek, Dargo. The family moved to Mount Pleasant Road, Eltham sometime around 1941. Lucy is listed in the 1943 Electoral Roll, but Gordon is not. It appears he was based at the Garrison Battalion, Tatura, at the time.

Stanley was educated at No. 3606 Crooked River State School via Dargo from 1936 to 1938 and then at the Secondary Correspondence School, Napier Street, Fitzroy from 1938 to 1940. Stanley passed his Intermediate Certificate at the Higher Standard in eight subjects: Geometry and Trigonometry, Algebra, Arithmetic, English, History, Geography, Drawing and French. He then sat for his Leaving Certificate in December 1941 at the University of

Melbourne, achieving a Pass in English, History, Geography and Drawing. He also studied Maths. Stanley enjoyed swimming, football, cricket, cycling and tennis, the latter in which he held certificates at junior and senior levels.

On 17 July 1942 Stanley applied for Air Crew with the R.A.A.F., which was signed by his mother, Lucy. He enlisted at Melbourne in the R.A.A.F. on 29 September 1942, his occupation being recorded as a Junior Staff assistant in the Industrial and Employment Office with the Department of Aircraft Production, Beaufort Division. His place of residence was listed with his parents, at Mount Pleasant Road, Eltham.

Stanley was posted as Aircrew to No. 3 Bombing and Gunnery School at West Sale, Victoria, on 22 October then No. 1 Initial Training School at Somers, Victoria on 7 December. From there he was posted to No. 2 Wireless Air Gunners School at Parkes, New South Wales on 4 February 1943 from where he enjoyed two days leave in Sydney on June 9. From there he was posted to No. 2 Bombing and Gunnery School at Port Pirie, South Australia on 24 July 1943. On 19 August he was mustered as a Wireless Air Gunner and promoted to Sergeant and was posted to No. 1 Embarkation Depot at Ascot Vale, Victoria on 20 August, moving to No. 2 Embarkation Depot at Bradfield Park (now Lindfield), New South Wales on September 8 and attached to Overseas HQ UK.

Stanley embarked Brisbane 10 September and disembarked in the UK, 19 October 1943, assigned to 11 Personnel Despatch and Reception Depot, R.A.F. on 20 October 1943. He was then posted to No. 2 (O) Advanced Flying Unit at Millom, Cumbria on 18 January 1944 where he was mustered as Wireless Operator (Air) and promoted to Flight Sergeant on 19 February. From there to No. 12 Operational Training Unit at Chipping Warden on April 4 from where he was assigned to No 31 Base on July 14 and 514 Bomber Squadron on 30 September 1944.

On the 7th October 1944, Lancaster LM735 of 514 Squadron R.A.F. (Radio Call Sign JI-G2) took off from R.A.F. Waterbeach at 1225 hours detailed to bomb Emmerich, Germany. Nothing was heard from the aircraft after take-off and it failed to return to base.

No crash site is given but the bodies of six of the crew were recovered and lie in Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, suggesting that the aircraft came down in the vicinity of the target. Three other

Lancasters were also lost in the target area, at least one to flak and another to incendiaries from another aircraft. It is considered most likely that LM735 was hit either by flak or by 'friendly' bombs. There is no record of hostile fighter activity on this daylight operation.

Stanley was reported missing believed killed during air operations over target Emmerich, Germany. He was listed as "Presumed Dead" by Overseas Headquarters with effect from 7 October 1944.

Crew:

R.A.F. Flt Sgt T Gilchrist, Captain (Pilot)
 R.A.F. Sgt H R Knight, (Flight Engineer)
 R.A.F. WO G J Manlow, (Navigator)
 R.A.F. Sgt T Fenwick, (Air Bomber)
 R.A.A.F. 419844 Flt Sgt S McLean, (Wireless Operator / Air Gunner)
 R.A.F. Sgt B L Roberts, (Mid Upper Gunner)
 R.A.F. Sgt P J Sheehy, (Rear Gunner)

All the crew were killed. Six of the crew are buried in the Rheichswald Forest War Cemetery, Germany. The cemetery is 5kms south west of Kleve near the Dutch border. Kleve is just across the Rhine River from Emmerich, the target of their operations the night they were shot down.

Sgt Sheehy has no known grave, and his name commemorated on the Memorial to the Missing, Runnymede, UK

Stanley's file notes that his parents moved to "Banksia" Maldon in 1949.

Stanley was remembered with the following notices published in *The Argus* newspaper, Tuesday 25 September 1945, p2:

McLean. —On October 7, 1944, presumed to have lost his life over Emmerich, Germany, 419844, F.-Sgt. Stanley, devoted son of Mr. and Mrs. G. S. McLean, Eltham, and loved brother of Olive, Margaret, John and Anne

McLean. —On October 7, 1944, presumed to have lost his life over Germany, 419844, F.-Sgt. Stanley, loved grandson of Peter and the late Martha Nelson, and loved nephew of Belle, Elizabeth, Marion and Lewis.

The Argus, Monday, 7 October 1946, p15

McLean. —In loving memory of F./Sgt. Stanley McLean, presumed to have lost his life over Germany, October 7, 1944, loved son of Mr. and Mrs. G. S. McLean, and loved brother of Olive, Margaret, John and Anne. — Always remembered.

McLean. —In loving memory of F./Sgt. Stanley McLean, presumed to have lost his life over Germany, October 7, 1944, loved grandson of Peter and the late Martha Nelson, and loved nephew of Belle, Elizabeth, Marion and Lewis. — Always remembered

McLean. —Treasured memories of 419844, F./Sgt. Stanley, killed over Emmerich, Germany, October 7, 1944, grandson of Peter Nelson, nephew of Belle, Elizabeth, Lewis and Marion.

Memorial notices were annually published at least till 1953.

The Age, Saturday, 10 October 1953, p19

McLean. —In loving memory of 419844, F./Sgt. Stanley McLean, missing air operations over Emmerich, Germany, October 7, 1944, loved son of Lucy and the late Gordon and loved brother of Olive, Margaret, John and Anne

Stanley is buried in Reichswald Forest War Cemetery, Kleve, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany, Grave 2. B. 13.

McLEAN, Flt. Sgt. STANLEY, 419844 R.A.A.F.

7th October 1944. Age 20.

Son of Gordon Stanley McLean and Lucy McLean, of Maldon, Victoria, Australia.

Always Remembered

FELDBAUER, Theodore, Sgt., VX51733 (DOD 27 Mar 1945, Borneo)



Vic. Paybook photograph, taken on enlistment, of VX51733 Sergeant Theodore Feldbauer (AWM)

Theodore Albert 'Curly' Feldbauer was born 15 October 1909 at Melbourne, the son of Theodore Henry (a naturalised German) and Jessie Margarette Feldbauer. The family moved several times during his childhood but before he was 20 he was living and working in the Eltham district. He became a well-known local sportsman. He played cricket for the Montmorency Imperials in 1929 and 1930 in the Eltham Cricket Association and excelled as a footballer and football coach. There are press references at the time to minor misdemeanours and accidents: evidently he was up for a brawl or two, but he was also able to do a recitation at a social night to launch the Eltham Girls Club in 1932. He married a local girl, Violet Amelda Teagle, in 1933, the 12th of 13 Teagle offspring who lived in Frank Street. Curly and Violet's first child, June, was born the following year. By 1935 Curly was honorary secretary of the Research Cricket Club. He continued playing cricket regularly, mainly for Research, through till the 1940 season, after the war had begun. The girls started at Research State School in 1939 and 1940, respectively. They lived near Violet's parents in Frank Street. Curly's daughter, Valerie Waller recalls:

"We lived near my Teagle grandparents, who had a cow. Dad took over the milking. He would rest his head against the cow and sing to her. When he left to join the army, it took weeks before she would settle down to allow anyone else to milk her."

Violet's sister Margaret coincidentally married Ken Ingram in 1936, brother of Lester Ingram of Research who is also on the Eltham Honour Roll.

You can see from the photo that Curly was a well-built young man, 32 years of age when he joined up on 14 June 1940. Despite the army short-back-and-sides, the unruly hair on top took him to a height of just under 6 feet.

Curly's service record is not yet accessible from the National Archives of Australia. Valerie Waller gives us some insight into that period between Curly joining and ultimately embarking for Singapore:

"Before he sailed to Singapore, Mum would travel by train, to Seymour, to spend a few hours with him. He sent her postcards and called her his "dear love". His idea was that the sooner everyone eligible joined up, the sooner the war would be over. He had a great love for Australia."

The Australian War Memorial records provide some bare facts about his military service.

Curly was assigned to the 2/10th Ordnance Workshops, Australian Corps of Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, attaining the rank of Sergeant. Only months after his enlistment, Sgt Feldbauer was among the thousands of Allied troops captured by the Japanese in the fall of Singapore, February 14, 1942. His loved ones knew nothing of his fate until July that year, when his name appeared in the long list of those 'officially missing'. A glimmer of optimism revived when he was officially reported as a Prisoner of War in mid-1943. It proved to be a false hope. Valerie adds:

"While he was a prisoner, Mum received a few postcards from him, not in his neat handwriting, but in block letter printing, to tell her he had received no mail or parcels from

her. He must have felt we'd forgotten him, because, of course, Mum had sent lots of parcels and letters, and the Japanese hadn't handed them on."

Along with Craftsman Jack Herbert Butherway, Theo was one of over 2,000 Allied prisoners of war held in the Sandakan POW camp in north Borneo, having been transferred there from Singapore as part of B Force. The 1,494 POWs that made up B Force were transported from Changi [Singapore] on 7 July 1942 on board the tramp ship *Ubi Maru*, arriving in Sandakan Harbour on 18 July 1942. Sergeant Feldbauer, aged 35, died as a prisoner of the Japanese on 27 March 1945 at Sandakan Number 1 Camp. The Japanese recorded his death from Malaria. He has no known grave, but it is believed to be at Sandakan Number 2 Camp.

His death was not reported in Australia until some months later. Valerie noted:

"I will never forget the sound my mother made when she received the telegram saying Dad had died months earlier, ostensibly from Malaria, but he died during the march. The sound still haunts me."

The family placed a notice in the *Age* (17 November 1945) 'MRS. T. A. Feldbauer and Family wish to express their sincere THANKS for sympathy in the loss of their loved one. Sgt. T. A. Feldbauer, 2/10th Batt., P.O.W., Borneo.'

We don't have details of his death but if Curly died of 'illness', as recorded at the AWM, it was because he was one of the thousands of Australian victims of the infamous forced Death Marches from Sandakan, January - May 1945, of which there were only six survivors.

Tuesday, 27 March 1945, when the Eltham Progress Association's public meeting put in motion its plans to create the Eltham War Memorial Baby Health Centre, Pre-School and Children's Library, was the exact date of Curly Feldbauer's death at Sandakan.

Theo was remembered with the following notices published in *The Age* newspaper, Friday 2 November 1945, p8:

FELDBAUER. — Serg. Theo, VX51733, 2/10 Ordnance Workshops, died while P.O.W. Borneo—Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Teagle, Research

FELDBAUER. — Serg. Theo, VX51733, 2/10 Ordnance Workshops, died while P.O.W. Borneo—Mrs. R. Ingram, Research

FELDBAUER. — Serg. Theo, VX51733, 2/10 Ordnance Workshops, died while P.O.W. Borneo—His loving nieces and nephews, Dawn, Pat, Joy, Ted, Bill Teagle, Alphington.

FELDBAUER. — Serg. Theo, VX51733, 2/10 Ordnance Workshops, died while P.O.W., March 27, 1945, loving husband of Violet, father of June, Val, Theo, Albert. — Inserted by loving wife and family, Research.

The Age, Saturday, 3 November 1945, p11

FELDBAUER.— Sgt. Theo. A. Feldbauer, VX51733, 2/10th Ord W. Shop, killed March 2, 1945, brother of Henry (deceased), Mrs. V. Foster, Eric (deceased), loving husband of Violet, children Junie, Valrie, Theo, Albert, dad and mum. Always in our mind, in which we'll never forget.

The Age, Tuesday, 6 November 1945, p8

FELDBAUER. — Sgt. Theo, VX51733, 2/10th Ord. W'shop, died while P.O.W. in Borneo, loved brother-in-law of Rita and Wally, uncle of Shirley and Brian. A hero at rest.

The Age, Wednesday, 27 March 1946, p10

FELDBAUER. — VX51733, Sgt. Theo, 2/10 Ordnance, who died whilst P.O.W., Borneo, on March 27, 1945. In proud and loving memory of our dear husband and daddy. A silent thought brings many a tear, For the one we lost and loved so dear — Inserted by his loving wife and children.

FELDBAUER. — VX51733, Sgt. Theo, 2/10 Ordnance, who died whilst a P.O.W., Borneo, on March 27, 1945. Not just to-day, but every day, In silence we remember. — Inserted by Edna, Charlie and family, Research.

FELDBAUER. — In memory of Sgt. Theo, VX51733, 2/10th Ord. Workshop, died whilst prisoner of war in Borneo, loved brother-in-law of Rita and Wally, uncle Shirley and Brain. Always remembered.

FELDBAUER. — VX51733, Sgt. Theo, 2/10 Ordnance, who died whilst a P.O.W., Borneo, March 27, 1945. He died that we might live. — Inserted by Mr. and Mrs. Teagle, Research.

FELDBAUER. — VX51733, Sgt. Theo, VX51733, died while P.O.W., Borneo, March 27, 1945. — Always remembered by his loving niece, Pearl.

FELDBAUER. — In loving memory of Theo, who died while P.O.W., Borneo on March 27, 1945. — Vin and Ivy.



Major Frank D. Stevens, RSL President and schoolboy Albert Feldbauer at the ceremony of turning the first sod for the Eltham War Memorial Infant Welfare Centre Building, 18 July 1950. Albert still retains the silver ceremonial shovel today. (Photo: Peter Bassett-Smith, EDHS collection)

Theo is commemorated on Panel 28 of the Labuan War Memorial Cemetery in Malaysia and Panel 91, Supplementary Panel 10 in the Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial. Like all the men who sacrificed their lives during the Second World War, his name was added to the original obelisk honouring the dead from the First World War and the Eltham Honour Roll. But the most meaningful commemoration is the actual fact of the Eltham War Memorial in Main Road, Eltham, where his son Albert, being the youngest child of the children of the soldier fathers attending a school in the district, officially turned the first sod and started the building process on that winter day in 1950 - the 'constant reminder to us of those who fought for us and the little ones for whom they fought and died'.

*FELDBAUER, Sgt. THEODORE ALBERT, VX.51733. A.I.F.
2/10 Ordnance Wksps. Australian Corps of Elec. And Mech. Engineers.
27th March 1945. Age 35.
Son of Theodore Henry and Jessie Margarette Feldbauer; husband of Violet Amelda Feldbauer, of
Research, Victoria.*

RUTTER, Donald Hemphill, Flt. Lt., 410262 (KIA 5 Apr 1945, Varrelbusch, Germany)

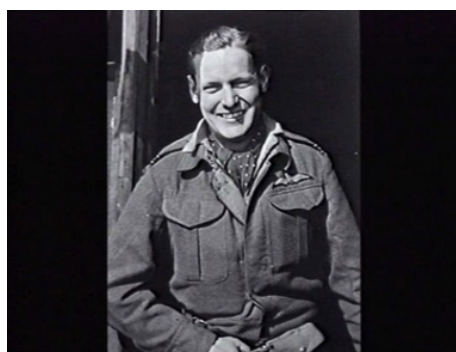


Flt. Lt. Donald Rutter, 1943 (Page 2002, p163)

Donald Hemphill Rutter was born 5 January 1922 in Melbourne, the youngest child of Hubert and Beulah Alice (Simpson) Rutter, after Hubert Jnr. (Joe), David in 1915 and June in 1917. Their father was a notable figure in Eltham and beyond, with a career as a mining manager in Australia and Malaya. He served in the AIF in the First World War. While growing up at 'Yarra Braes', Eltham, their father was an Eltham Shire Councillor in the 1920s, shire president in 1928 and a leading figure in establishing the Shire of Eltham War Memorial League, which was responsible for building the Shire of Eltham War Memorial tower at Kangaroo Ground, near where the Shire Offices were located until the 1930s. The Rutter name was commemorated after the war at Eltham High School with one of the schoolhouses named 'Rutter House' and at Geelong Grammar School until the 1960s where a 'Rutter Badge' was awarded to junior boys for leadership.

When their childhood home, 'Yarra Braes' was destroyed in the devastating [Black Friday bushfire](#), 13 January 1939, Hubert and Beulah relocated to Toorak. Tragedy struck the family again December 19, 1940 when daughter June was killed after falling from the Heidelberg train on to an adjacent track into the path of a Reservoir train at Victoria Park station.

Like his older brother David, Don was educated at Geelong Grammar School. Upon leaving school he entered Trinity College at the University of Melbourne to study Agricultural Science. While still at student, he enlisted at Melbourne as an Air Craftsman in the R.A.A.F., 5 December 1941, his father Hubert of Toorak listed as next of kin; just four days before his older brother David was killed. Three days later Pearl Harbour was attacked by the Japanese. With the loss of his sister a year earlier, the circumstances must have felt dire for the Rutter family.



Flt. Lt. Donald Hemphill Rutter, 410262 (AWM)

Don was initially posted to No. 4 Initial Training School at Mount Breckan, Victor Harbor in South Australia then on 25 April 1942 to No. 1 Elementary Flying Training School at Parafield, South Australia. From there, on 10 August 1942, Don was posted to No. 7 Service Flying Training School at Deniliquin, New South Wales where he undertook Intermediate and Advanced training. He was discharged from the R.A.A.F. at 7 SFTS on 16 December 1942 upon being awarded his Flying Badge and granted a commission as Pilot Officer effective 17 December 1942. His training involved flying CAC Wirraway, de Havilland DH-82 and Hawker Typhoon aircraft, he being most proficient in the latter.

Don was then posted to No. 1 Embarkation Depot on 22 December for embarkation to the United Kingdom. He embarked from Melbourne on 15 January 1943 on attachment to the R.A.F. Upon disembarkation he was posted to 11 Personnel Despatch and Reception Depot (14 March 1943), 7 (P) Advanced Flying Unit (25 May 1943) where he undertook advanced flying training and on 17 June 1943, promoted to Flying Officer. His next posting was 55 Operational Training Unit (6 July 1943) where he was given operational training and then R.A.F. Station Lealing (5 October 1943) from where he was assigned to 247 'China-British' Squadron (18 November 1943).

On 27 May 1944 Don was posted (sick), admitted to Military Hospital at 16 Personnel Transit Centre N/E with head injuries, his status recorded as being dangerously injured in a motor transport

accident at RAF Hurn, Hampshire. According to Affleck (2002), he was severely injured when his head hit the branch of a tree whilst riding in a truck at night, at the tree fringed aerodrome. The base of his skull was fractured. He was admitted to 53 Mile Field hospital. On 31 May he was recovering consciousness and was transferred to St Hugh's Military Hospital (Head Injuries), Oxford. His prognosis was expected to fully recover with no localised damage and back to flying duties in several months. On 17 June 1944 he was posted to 1 Personnel Holding Unit at Morecambe, the Midland Hotel, which had been requisitioned as an R.A.F. Hospital, until returning to 247 Squadron at R.A.F. Castletown, Caithness, Gloucester on 10 October 1944. On 17 December 1944 he was promoted to Flight Lieutenant shortly before the squadron moved to Heldon, Holland, in January 1945.

On 31 March Don was listed "missing air operations from United Kingdom" for a short period but later reported as "safe" when he returned to his unit the next day. At about 18.00 hours, whilst flying Typhoon IB JP443 in a formation of aircraft on an armed reconnaissance of the Enschede area, the formation sighted a large amount of transport on the road between Holten and Lochem, and proceeded to attack it. The 'flak' was most intense and Don was last seen when he went down firing cannon into a target, his No. 2, W/O Brown going down on some of the 'flak' positions. Brown stated the 'flak' was so thick that he stayed at deck level to avoid it, and probably due to his limited visibility, saw no sign of Don's aircraft leaving the target area or crashing into the ground. Nothing was heard over the radio transmission. Visibility was poor with cloud base at about 3,000 feet in patches. The aircraft had been badly hit by 'flak' causing engine failure, but he was able to land safely behind the Allied lines at Bocholt, Germany about 50km away.

On April 5, 1945, Don was again reported missing in air operations, target Stoppenburg, Essen, Germany. Though his Squadron Leader hoped he may have the same luck and turn up safe again, the situation looked grim, his status upgraded by Overseas Headquarters to 'Presumed dead'. Don, flying Typhoon IB SW526 and five others had been strafing transports on the Alhorn Road between Oldenburg and Cloppenburg. The six aircraft in the attack left seventeen vehicles destroyed and twelve damaged, for the loss of Rutter's plane (Affleck 2002).

Don's Squadron Leader wrote to his father, Hubert, on April 7 describing the incident: -

"Your son was detailed to fly in a formation of Rocket Firing Typhoon proceeding on an Armed Reconnaissance of the Cloppenburg area. Arriving over the target, a large amount of enemy motor transport was seen, and on the formation leaders instructions, all aircraft dived to attack. I myself had been down to attack, and had warned all pilots over the wireless, about the danger of high tension wires which stretched across the road. Pulling up from the attack, Yellow Leader reported to me that Don was missing, and that he was going down to look for him. This he did but could see no sign, and so I ordered all the squadron to circle the area, in the hopes of seeing him on the ground – but there was no sign of his aircraft. In view of the foregoing, I think there is quite a good chance of his having made a safe landing, for we saw no fire on the ground, which would have probably been the case if he had flown into the high tension cables. His aircraft may have been hit by 'flak', and forced him down."

His Squadron Leader further wrote: -

"Although your son had only been with us for five weeks since recovering from his accident at Hurn, I knew him in the old days of 247, and was all too pleased to have one of the old hands back with us, as his experience and reliability were a definite asset to the Squadron."

Later that year after the war had ended, Hubert Rutter received several reports that his son had been seen alive, one being an Air Letter dated November 4, 1945 from 486013, L.A.C.W. Ross, C., his son's fiancée, in which a friend of hers had met an Australian fighter pilot in London who had seen

Don Rutter in Osnabruck, Germany (about 90km from Varrelbusch), around the beginning of October. This was later confirmed by the officer in question to be incorrect. Another letter in December from a girl in England who had read in the paper that Don Rutter, Vic. had flown one of the aircraft in Display over London on VE Day. The Air Force and Hubert both realised that these reports must be mistaken or misidentifications as there was simply no explanation as to why Don would not have contacted his family by that time if he were still alive. Such was the anguish of grieving parents, their son's plane not found to confirm the fact for certain. Hubert wrote to the Air Force in frustration, failing to understand how the plane could disappear when it crashed in a relatively populated area.

In June 1947, the location of Don's aircraft was confirmed, the site visited by Investigating Officer, F/Off. C.J. Drysdale accompanied by Herr Segers, farmer of Bether Moor, Varrelbusch. Herr Segers stated that on the 4/5 April 1945 about 0900 hours, a small single engine British aircraft crashed about 350 metres from his house. It caught fire just before it crashed and exploded on impact. He thought it had been brought down by flak from Varrelbusch airfield and that three other aircraft of the same type were in the vicinity. His son saw part of a body in a hole in the aircraft but by the time he visited the scene later, the swamp had enveloped it leaving a hole full of water. At the time F/Off. Drysdale inspected the scene, two years later, what remained was a large hole about 50 feet in diameter full of filthy swamp water with parts of an aircraft littered all around. He believed the pilot was still in the hole. Analysis of various aircraft parts confirmed it was Don's Typhoon.

Recovery operations commenced on 28 February 1949 but due to bad weather and constant flooding, was called off the next day. Operations recommenced April 3 but abandoned again due to heavy rain and flooding. They were further recommenced on 11 April at which time the fuselage of the aircraft was located at a depth of ten feet, at least two feet of liquid mud still covering it. It was not until 19 April that the first remains were recovered. Operations continued a further two days at which point the fuselage lay exposed, embedded in sand, in an upright position but due to continual collapsing of the pit, the operation was ceased.

A letter in Don's service file initially sent to his father at Armadale, Victoria, dated July 13, 1949 states: -

"The Missing, Research and Enquiry Service has located your son's aircraft and recovered his body. The aircraft was found submerged in swampy country at Bether Moor, near Varrelbusch. Varrelbusch is about five miles north of Cloppenburg."

"A farmer who saw the aircraft crash stated that it exploded on impact and there could be no doubt your son was killed instantaneously."

"Examination of the wreckage after it had been extricated from the swamp corroborates the statement."

"Your son has been laid to rest in Plot 10, Row B, Grave No. 3 in the Hanover-Limmer British Military Cemetery. The grave will be cared for in perpetuity by the Imperial War Graves Commission."

The letter crossed paths with one from Hubert advising of his new address at Mount James, Meekathara in Western Australia, Don's mother Beulah having died in 1946, and was resent August 16. Hubert was apparently concerned to know whether his son had died instantly or after the crash. A further letter on file dated 20 September 1949 reassured Hubert that there was no doubt his son was killed instantaneously from the explosion when his aircraft crashed. It elaborates that his aircraft was shot down in flames and exploded on impact indicating that F/Lt. Rutter was killed

instantly. From the location of the crash, it was probable the aircraft had been hit by anti-aircraft fire from the Varrelbusch airfield.

An online forum discussing the loss of Typhoon JP443 on March 31st has confused this incident and Don's fatal crash five days later, however it is mentioned that the aircraft was found submerged in a swamp near the former Varrelbusch air base. A comment as recent as July 2020 confirms the impact crater from the crash is still visible today.

Donald is buried in Hanover War Cemetery, Germany, Grave 10. B. 3.

RUTTER, Flt. Lt. DONALD HEMPHILL, 410262 R.A.A.F.

5th April 1945. Age 23.

Son of Hubert and Beulah Alice Rutter, of Riverton, Western Australia.

FIELD, Kevin Francis, Pte., VX144763 (KIA 28 Jun 1945, Bougainville, PNG)



*Pte. K. F. Field ("Roll of Honor",
The Age, Friday, 31 August
1945, p4)*

Kevin Francis Field was born 5 September 1917 at Kew, the second son of William and Mary Field of Mayona Road, Montmorency. He was educated at Christian Brothers' College, Victoria Parade, East Melbourne. Before joining up, Kevin played football for Montmorency and won the 1940 cup for Best and Fairest player.

Kevin enlisted at Heidelberg on 27 August 1940. Kevin was a Private in the 57/60 Australian Infantry Battalion: a grunt, the work-horse of the Army. His service record is currently not publicly accessible, but it appears that he was brought before a Court Martial on 23 September 1942, the circumstances of which we currently do not know.

The 57/60 Battalion was assigned to 15th Brigade, 3rd Division out of Victoria. The battalion was initially used for garrison duties in Australia prior to being deployed to New Guinea in March 1943. In early July, while the remainder of 15th Brigade moved north to take part in the Salamaua–Lae campaign, the 57/60 performed defensive garrison and engineering roles at Tsili Tsili Airfield being secretly constructed by the Americans airborne engineers in the Watut Valley. Following the completion of the Salamaua–Lae campaign and construction of the Tsili Tsili airfield, the 15th Brigade including the 57/60 was moved back to Port Moresby in September 1943. Command was transferred to the 7th Division and the 15th Brigade including the 57/60 then fought in the Markham and Ramu Valley and the Finisterre Range campaigns. Kevin's battalion remained in New Guinea until July 1944 before being brought back to Australia for home leave, further training, and reorganisation.

The battalion was called together again for training in the Atherton Tablelands, Queensland. In November 1944, 3rd Division was on Bougainville as part of the Australian II Corps, Australian forces having assumed responsibility for the island from the Americans. The 57/60 received orders to re-join the 3rd Division. The battalion embarked from Townsville on New Year's Day, 1945 aboard the *Fairisle*, disembarking at Torokina, Bougainville, on January 5, 1945.

Following fighting around Slater's Knoll the 15th Brigade moved forward and relieved the 7th Brigade in the southern sector of the island and shortly afterwards resumed the advance along the axis of the Buin Road, crossing the Hongorai River, and then the Hari and Mobiai Rivers before being relieved on 1 July by the 29th Brigade. During this time, the 57/60 took part in the Battle of the Hongorai River, as well as the advance to the Mivo River, undertaking a diversionary drive along the Commando Road on the left flank of the brigade's main effort. Long (1963) describes the events of the advance towards the Mivo River:

"The 57th/60th Battalion, having completed its wide outflanking move on 16th June, was on the Buin Road and advancing towards the Mobiai. On the 17th a company of this battalion tried to outflank the enemy position between it and the Mobiai but was blocked by a Japanese position well north of the road. Next day it made a wider outflanking move and reached the road behind the enemy. There it was attacked but pressed on, and on the 19th the Japanese withdrew, having destroyed the field gun whose presence had prevented the tanks from advancing. In the following days the battalion thrust steadily forward, gaining a few hundred yards at a time, and on the 23rd was close to the Mobiai. There on the 24th a strong and determined enemy force was encountered with a 37-mm gun which scored three hits on the leading tank but failed to damage it. A heavy bombardment failed to dislodge the Japanese that day, but on the 25th they had gone leaving behind their gun, which had been buckled by fire from a tank.

Brigadier Hammer wished to advance to the Mivo before the enemy had recovered and reorganised. His plan was to relieve the 57th/60th Battalion on the Mobiai with the 58th/59th, move the 24th and 57th/60th to Musaraka whence they would advance with tanks round the enemy's northern flank, the 24th to the Buin Road between the Koopani and Ivana Rivers and the 57th/60th to Shishigatero. The 58th/59th would create a diversion across the Mobiai and south of the Buin Road. By the 27th both leading battalions were in the concentration area and a track for tanks had been made on this flank from the Mobiai to a track—Killen's—which ran just west of the Mivo to Shishigatero on the Buin Road.

That day when the 24th Battalion reached the assembly area from which the march to the Buin Road was to begin, the leading company found a party of Japanese in occupation, attacked them, killing nine, and dug in some 200 yards away while the artillery bombarded the enemy. Next day when the 57th/60th reached its area, farther forward, its leading company was attacked by about 100 Japanese as it was digging in. There was a fierce fight lasting half an hour in which 2 Australians were killed and 10 wounded and 11 Japanese dead left on the field. Nevertheless by dusk the battalion was packed and rationed ready to move off early next morning—29th June. All that night it rained, and in the morning there being no sign of the Japanese who had attacked the previous day, two companies, each with a troop of tanks, set off over boggy ground behind an artillery barrage which lifted 200 yards every eight minutes. By 4 p.m. the leading companies were on the Buin Road—their objective.”

Kevin was killed in action on June 28. The 57/60 was relieved by 15 Battalion on 2 July 1945. The battalion did not see combat again prior to war's end. For Kevin and his family, the end of the fighting was so near, a few days at most – yet proved too far.

Kevin was remembered with the following notices published in *The Age*, Saturday, 7 July 1945, p10:

FIELD. — Killed in action, Bougainville, June 28, VX144763, Private Kevin Francis, dearly loved son of William and Mary, Montmorency, loving brother of Gerard and Majella, age 27 years. May his dear soul rest in peace.

FIELD. — In memory of Pte. Kevin, killed in action Bougainville June 28. His cheerful smile and kindly ways always remembered. —Inserted by Orme family, Diamond Creek.

The Age, Saturday, 14 July 1945, p10:

FIELD. — Killed in action, on June 28, Bougainville, VX144763, 57/60th Btn. Private Kevin Francis, dearly loved son of William and Mary, Montmorency, loving brother of Gerard and Majella, age 27 years. May his dear soul rest in peace.

FIELD. — On June 28, killed in action Bougainville, VX144763, Pte. Kevin Francis, loved friend of Mr. and Mrs. Cowan and family, Montmorency. One of the best. We will always remember him.

FIELD. — On June 28, killed in action Bougainville, VX144763, Pte. Kevin Francis. Always a pal. — Barbara and Ron Cowan.

The Age newspaper, Saturday 29 June 1946, p10:

FIELD. — In loving memory of our dear son and brother, Kevin Francis, 57/60th Batt., D Coy., killed in action Bougainville, June 28, 1945. Requiescat in pace. — Inserted by his loving parents, brother Gerard, sister, Majella.

FIELD. — VX144763, Pte. Kevin Francis Field, killed in action, Bougainville, June 28, 1945, loving friend of Joe Hefferman, Templestowe, R.I.P.

The Age newspaper, Wednesday 28 June 195046, p2:

FIELD. — Killed in action, Bougainville, June 28, 1945, Kevin Francis, 57/60 Batt., loving son of William and Mary, Montmorency; loving brother Gerard and Magella (deceased). R.I.P.

FIELD. — In loving memory of Kevin, killed in action at Bougainville on June 28, 1945, second son of Mr. and Mrs. W. Field, Montmorency. — Inserted by his loving grandfather, John W. Field.

FIELD. — In loving memory of Pte. Kevin Francis, VX144763, killed in action, June 28, 1945, at Bougainville. R.I.P. — Inserted by loving uncle and aunt, Eric and Kit Field, Kew.

FIELD. — In loving memory of Kevin, killed in action, June 28, 1945. Res in peace. In God's care. Loved by all who knew him. — Inserted by Mrs. Neal, Nellie and boys.

Kevin is buried in Port Moresby (Bomana) War Cemetery, Papua New Guinea, Grave C1. F. 27.

*FIELD, Pte. KEVIN FRANCIS, VX.144763 A.I.F 57/60 Bn. Australian Infantry
28th June 1945. Age 27.
Son of William and Mary Field, of Montmorency, Victoria.
His duty fearlessly
And nobly done
Ever remembered. R.I.P.*

LEST WE FORGET

*"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them."*



ROLL OF HONOUR	
1914-1918	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sgt. George Williams • Sgt. Reginald E. Sims • L/Cpl. George Moore • L/Cpl. Henry G. Philips • L/Cpl. John C. Bell • Pte. Geoffrey Grant • Pte. George Sommerville • Pte. George Brown • Pte. John Brown • Pte. William Bond • Pte. Thomas Cameron • Pte. Alfred Cassells • Pte. Robert Meadows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pte. Walter Mosley • Pte. James Pryor • Pte. William Prior • Pte. Edward Barrett • Pte. William Crellin • Pte. Henry Norman • Pte. Edward Bird • Pte. Arthur Brown • Pte. Roslyn Stevens • Pte. Herbert Creed • Pte. Charles Bromfield • Pte. Kenneth Sharp • Pte. Henry McAlary
1939-1945	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capt. S.M. Gahan • Plt. Off. D. Rutter • Flt. Off. D.H. Rutter • Flt. Sgt. S.M. Mclean • Flt. Sgt. L. Ingram • Sgt. C.D. Dunlop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cpl. T. Feldbauer • Cpl. A.C. Clerke • Spr. G.E. Castledine • Pte. J. Butherway • Pte. K.F. Field

Soldiers of the Shire of Eltham remembered on the Eltham Roll of Honour for their supreme sacrifice; located in the Eltham War Memorial Hall

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