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***Genealogical Society of the Northern Territory Inc.***

*The Family History Place*



# GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY INC

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**FRONT COVER:** Amiens Soldiers' Settlement on the Southern Downs, Qld after WW1.  
(from Greg Hallam, Qld Rail Historian) See story page 17

## **CATALINA POW REPATRIATION**

### **MERCY MISSION**

With the cessation of hostilities in the Asia Pacific on 15 Aug 1945, the return of Prisoners of War (P.O.W.) from camps in the region became a high priority.

On 24 Aug WGCdr Bolitho travelled from Rathmines to R.A.A.F. Headquarters in Melbourne to discuss evacuation operations using the Catalina aircraft for the repatriation of POW. As a result, Catalina aircraft were modified to carry passengers. This entailed the removal of no longer required weapons, etc. The work was conducted on fifteen (15) aircraft at Rathmines by No 3 Fighter Base Repair Depot (FBRD).

On 27 August nine Catalina aircraft departed on a "mercy mission" to Singapore via Darwin and Labuan (Borneo). The aircraft carried 10,000lb of urgently needed drugs and blood plasma. They also carried 5,000lb of Red Cross supplies and delicacies to feed sufferers from malnutrition. "The passengers included 26 medical personnel, three Red Cross representatives and several teams who will make first contact with prisoners and begin interrogation on the fate of thousands of missing Australians."

The aircraft arrived in Darwin on 29 August. Upon arrival in Darwin the aircraft were moored at East Arm.

On the evening of 29 Aug, at about 2045, **F/SGT Kain B.J. (442516)** was inspecting the anchor lights when he fell off the port main-plane of **A24-66**. A search of several hours failed to recover him and he was reported as missing, presumed drowned. (There is a memorial at Adelaide River)

Flight Sergeant BRIAN JOSEPH KAIN Service Number: 442516

Regiment & Unit/Ship Royal Australian Air Force

Date of Death Died 30 August 1945

Age 21 years old

Buried or commemorated at

Northern Territory Memorial Panel 9.

Adelaide River, Australia

Country of Service Australian

Additional Info Son of Coleman and Rosalia Kain; husband of Pauline Beatrice Clarissa Kain, of Dulwich, South Australia.

During take-off from Darwin, Catalina A24-1 (Pilot WGCDR Bolitho) struck a sandbank and sunk within seven minutes. All of the crew was successfully evacuated from the aircraft. The remainder of the aircraft flew to Labuan, Victor Harbour. The onward flight of the aircraft to Singapore was held over for six days, awaiting permission to enter Singapore.

The aircraft arrived in Singapore (10 Sep) where they were unloaded and readied for embarkation with POW. Only POW passengers capable of the long flights home were selected.

Departure from Singapore was delayed due to transport difficulties. On the morning of 12 Sep (Wednesday) nine Catalina departed Singapore with five officers and 130 men. The flight was six hours to Labuan. At 4.00pm on Thursday they departed Labuan for the overnight flight to Darwin, arriving at noon Friday. On Saturday seven aircraft departed at first light for Cairns. The eighth aircraft left later (5.30 p.m.) and was scheduled to fly direct to Brisbane. However, this aircraft flew direct to Rathmines. It was in the air for 18 hours and 25 minutes. It landed on Sunday morning at 9.00 a.m. and waited for the aircraft from Cairns.

On Sunday, 16 Sep, seven aircraft departed Cairns at 9 a.m. for Rose Bay in Sydney, where the eighth aircraft from Rathmines joined them. "The first Catalina landed at 3.22 pm and the eighth touched down at 5.25 pm."

### **THOUSANDS WELCOME PRISONERS**

"More than 50,000 people welcomed at Rose Bay flying base yesterday the first released prisoners of war to reach Australia since Japan surrendered. Eight Catalinas brought 132 men from Singapore, including three A.I.F. officers, 125 other ranks, two R.A.A.F. aircrew, and two R.A.N. survivors of H.M.A.S. Perth."

#### **Listing of Aircraft: (NAA ID 1360090, page 612) --- departed 27 Aug 45**

A24-1 Pilot WGCDR Bolitho  
A24-2 Pilot SQNLDR Gray  
A24-46 Pilot FLGOFF Houston  
A24-63 Pilot FLGOFF Day  
A24-66 Pilot FLGOFF Collins  
A24-302 Pilot FLTLT Scott  
A24-305 Pilot FLTLT Miller  
A24-351 Pilot FLGOFF Parker  
A24-352 Pilot FLTLT Marr

#### **Aircraft arriving at Rose Bay on Sunday 16 Sep 1945. (SMH, Page 8, 17 Sep 45)**

**NAA ID 1360090, page 616 --- pilot details**

**A24-46** Pilot FLGOFF Houston

**A24-200** Pilot SQNLDR Gray

**A24-305** Pilot FLTLT Miller

**A24-63** Pilot FLGOFF Day

**A24-45** Pilot unknown

**A24-351** Pilot FLGOFF Parker

**A24-352** Pilot FLTLT Marr

**A24-302** Pilot FLTLT Scott

**POW's who flew home in Catalinas**

Ref: **(SMH, Page 8, 17 Sep 45)**

Following are the names of the prisoners-of-war from Singapore who arrived in Sydney by Catalina flying-boats late yesterday.

**(PLANE No. A24/46 --- inserted from aircraft departed/arriving at Rathmines)**

NX76242, COLLIS, Capt. C. H. **(NX76342)**

NX41677, DELANEY, W02. R. M.

NX41852, McBEAN, Sgt. A. S. W.

NX30225, PARLE, Sgt. G. J.

NX58718, MOORE, Cpl. D. J.

NX41646, DIAL, Cpl. H.

NX41637, CONNELL, Cpl. T. J.

DX630, BLACKIE, Pte.

NX39918, BULLEY, Pte. G. J. **(NX39968)**

NX50526, CASEY, Pte. J. F.

NX41840, CONLEY, Pte. R.

NX17722, JOHNSON, Pte. V. F.

NX39966, LESLIE, Pte. F. L. **(NX39936)**

NX39366, NEILSON, Pte. R.

NX39713, LEONARD, Pte. H.

RAN 23174, PRICE, Telegraphist. W. B.

RAN B2936, ELLIOTT, A.B. A

**PLANE No. A24/200**

SX10080, COXALL, Cpl. L. J.

SX9268, BROADBENT, Cpl. R. N.

SX7709, BAYLY, Dvr. R. L. W.

SXI0050, BERG, Dvr. A. H.

SXI0813, BORTHWICK, Pte. J. C,

SX9982, BURGESS, Dvr. M. M.

SX2218, CORNISH, L/Cpl. G. R.

SX8003, DABINETT, Dvr. W. I. E.

SX8387, GILES, Dvr. R. SX4097,

HAINES, Dvr. J. V. SX13723,

KIMBER, Dvr. R. C. SX9653,

MARKHAM, Dvr. R. J. WX10975,

WILSON, Dvr. D. H.

QX9960, DANIEL, Pte. L. C.

**PLANE NO. A21/305.** (should read A24-305)

WX11045, SOLOMON, Capt. B. H.

VX51281, COOK, Cpl. W.

VX51580, FROST, L./Cpl. E. O.

VX21260, WATERWORTH, L./Cpl R. E.

WX9784. BASSETT, Dvr. A. K.

WX39980, FRANCIS, Dvr. R.

VX60185, FRY, Dvr T. J.,

SX10424, GASS, Dvr. W. G.

SX11623, GREENWOOD, Dvr. J. S.

VX51047, JOHNSON, Dvr. E. H.

WX9608. KING, Dvr. L. P.

VX47877, LITTLE, Dvr. W. P.

VX39853, MANSFIELD, Dvr. W.

VX50995, STUART, Dvr. W. A.

SX11640, WAGNER, Dvr. A. E.

SX9893, MASKELL, Dvr. W.

SX10271, INGLIS, Dvr. R.

**PLANE NO. A24/63.**

NX43631, LAMBOURNE, Cpl. E. J.

VX62500, NOLAN, Cpl. M. L.

TX4277, BURN, Dvr. R. M.

VX48419, JAMESON, Dvr. J. H.

NX46337, KING, Dvr. E. A.

VX48443, LUCAS, Dvr. S.

NX45932, McRAE, Dvr. D. W.

VX35909, McQUEEN, Dvr. H. J.

NX66100, MILLER, Dvr. G. E.

VX23773, PRESWELL, Dvr. W. C.

NX60201, ROBERTSON, Dvr. R.

NX34243, SANGSTER, Pte. M. B.

VX51194, BALES, Pte. L. H.

SX11039, CRONSHAW, Dvr. J.

**PLANE NO. A24/45.**

NX29977, O'CONNOR, W.O.II

G. W. NX41782, LAWLER, Sgt. J. L.

NX41855, WILES, Sgt. L.

NX17653, NOAKES, L./Sgt. G. F.

NX41674, PINDER, Cpl. R. C.

NX41654, SEYMOUR, Cpl. D. J.

SX3311, WILSON, Cpl. E. C.

SX11077, WOODBERRY, L./Cpl. F. C.

SX8082, REED, Dvr. T. A.

SX9843, SLEE, Pte. L. J.

NX67122, STEWART, Pte. N. M.

SX9086, VENABLES, Dvr. M. R.

SX10247, WHITE, Pte. J. P.

SX6300, WILKIN, Dvr. A. D.

NX55980, SINCLAIR, Pte. J. C.

VX39437, WOODHAM, Pte. L. N.

VX51906, MORRISON, Major W.

VX62278, FOLEY, W.O.I F. A.

TX4226, BOWDEN, S./Sgt. J.

**PLANE NO. A24/351.**

VX39360, CHISHOLM, S./Sgt. J. H.

VX33361, McKENZIE, S./Sgt. W. N.

VX36294, GRENFELL, Sgt. A.

VX39283, LINDEMAN, Sgt. N. E.

VX39288, PETERSON, Sgt. R. L.

VX47321, MAY, L./Cpl. J. N.

VX35617, COUACAUD, Pte. F. L.

VX25723, HANSEN, Pte. C. C.

VX34120, HENDER, Pte. C. V.

VX39433, JACQUES, Pte. H. L.

SX4287, KEANE, Pte. M. S.

NX31672, LEECH, Dvr. J. H.

VX29504, McCAFFREY, Pte. T. B.

VX33614, MOORE, Pte. P. T.

VX43438, NEALE, Pte. A.

VX47060, STEPHENSON, Dvr. J. S,

NX56415, McMAHON, Pte. J. R.

**PLANE NO. A24/352.**

VX39287, POSTLETHWAITE, W.O.II

R. J. SXI0252, MILLER, S./Sgt. S. J.

TX4246, NORRIS, S./Sgt. A. H.

TX4241, BUNNING, Cpl. J.

TX4249, HUTTON, Cpl. K. A.

VX45294, WINSON, L./Cpl. M.

TX5142, BROOKS. Dvr. G. G.

TX5129, CLARK, Pte. R. W.

TX5153. EVANS. Dvr. W.

TX5132. HODGE. Dvr. G.

NX55903. McKAY. Dvr. T. M.

SX9135, McMAHON, Pte. J. M.

VX43148, SAMPSON, Dvr. A.

TX5135, WEEDON, Pte. J. G.

TX5136, WILLIAMS, Dvr. G. F.

R.A.A.F, 401039, KELLY, W.O. H. A.

R.A.A.F. 401012, MORITZ, W.O. A.

**PLANE NO. A24/302.**

NX56633, LEATHART, W.O.I J. J. D.

VX45598, BOYLE, Cpl. J.

VX60028, ADAMS, Dvr. A. J.

VX35470, ALLEN, Dvr. G. W.

VX36020, BAMBRICK, Dvr. A.

VX51348, BANKS, Dvr. N.

VX52754, BIRTHISEL, Dvr. A. H.

WX9568, BULLEN, Dvr. L. H.

VX39960, BURTON. Dvr. A. R.

VX48732, COLEMAN, Dvr. R. P.

VX51302, COOPER, Dvr. T. S.

VX45112, DEED, Dvr. E.

VX43579, DENNETT, Dvr. A.

VX32305, FLECSNOE, Dvr. A.

NX53551, NICHOLAOU, Pte. C.

SX10422, DOWNER. Gnr. A. R.

Wreck inspections carried out by the Maritime Archaeology and History Section, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT) in 1995 were aimed at verifying a number of reported World War II (WW II) Catalina flying boat wreck sites in East Arm, Darwin Harbour. The origin of these reports called Wrecks in Darwin Waters mentions one Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Catalina known as A24-1.

Place	Date	Summary of Events																																																																																																																		
	29 AUG	7 CATALINA A/C under the command of W/CDR K. BOLITHO, D.F.C. of No. 3 O.T.U. arrived at EAST ARM, enroute for SINGAPORE, with food, and medical supplies for released prisoners of war in MALAYA, and certain Military personnel to assist in carrying out evacuation plans. M/T Chev.(Light Sliding Tilt) (11924) handed over on allotment to 7 R.S.U. for overhaul.																																																																																																																		
	30 AUG	M/T Dodge Weapon Carrier (211550) received on allotment from NWA HQ. Chev. Tip Trucks (203545) handed over on allotment to 12 A.R.D. Det. "A" for repairs. A/C. A24-1 (Pilot - W/CDR K. BOLITHO, D.F.C.) crashed on take off to resume flight to SINGAPORE, and sank in 6 minutes. Food and medical supplies, including penicillin and surgical instruments, were later salvaged. Aircraft was a total loss, and approval has been given for reduction to produce. 442516 F/SGT KAIN, B.J. Airman Pilot (2) of 3 O.T.U. RATHMINES, a member of F/O COLLINS crew in A/C. A24-66, was detailed to remain on the Aircraft, which was amongst those which had arrived at EAST ARM enroute to SINGAPORE. At approximately 2100 hours, whilst checking the anchor lights, <sup>KA</sup> fell off the port mainplane. After being sighted in the vicinity of the tail of the aircraft, F/SGT KAIN, disappeared, and a thorough search extending over several hours failed to reveal any trace of the missing airman. A tide rip of 2 1/2 knots was running, but it is not known whether or not F/SGT KAIN was able to swim. (Casualty Signal A.212, dated 31 AUG refers) A Court of Inquiry is proceeding.																																																																																																																		
	31 AUG	1 LAC D.M.T., 1 LAC F/11A, 1 CPL, 1 LAC M.B.C arrived on posting. 1 LAC M.B.C. departed on posting to 5 P.D. M/T. Chev. Light Sliding Tilt (12231) received on allotment from 9 S.D pool.																																																																																																																		
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		<p style="text-align: right;"><i>Finlon</i> (F.N. COX) F/LT. for SQUADRON LEADER, COMMANDING No. 20 SQUADRON.N.T.</p>																																																																																																																		

of (Unit or Formation).....NO. 25 OPERATIONAL BASE UNIT

No. of Sheet ONE <sup>70</sup>

Place	Date	Summary of Events	References to Appendices
SEPT	2	S/O M. BEIRNE arrived on the Unit to commence duties as O/I/C W.A.A.A.F.	
	12	S/LDR. A.D. CALLOW arrived to assume command.	
	12	At 1500 hours a fishing boat containing one fisherman was reported to be adrift about ten miles to sea off Double Island. After a search being made by Catalina Aircraft without results, this Unit's crash boat went out and found the missing boat and towed it back to Cairns. The water conditions were rough with strong easterly south-east breeze.	
	15	A/SGT. SUMMERS (A.O.C.) arrived on inspection duties	
	17	S/O. M.A. BARNES, O/I/C W.A.A.A.F. departed on posting S/LDR. AHEARN departed on posting. F/LT. P.L. AIREY (ZONE EDUCATION OFFICER) departed for conference of Education Officers in Townsville The ADJUTANT (F/O. F.A. LORD) returned from attachment to AIR DEFENCE HEADQUARTERS A DC-47 provided by 36 SQUADRON was made available at this Unit for the Governor of Qld. to travel to COOKTOWN and return. Transport Section moved from the Aerodrome site to Edge Hill camp.	
	15	Seven Catalinas arrived at CAIRNS carrying the first batch of 135 P.O.Ws. Weather conditions were perfect and arrangements for their reception went very smoothly. The P.O.Ws and crews were quickly ashore where they were met by Army and Red Cross representatives, given fresh fruit, tea, cakes and sandwiches and greeted by cheers from a very enthusiastic gathering of well-wishers. Army M.P.s kept strict control of the crowd. Later all POWs were conveyed to 116th A.G.H. The seven Catalinas took off for Sydney between 0700 and 0730 the next morning. The Marine Section were complimented on their efficient handling of the situation.	
	24	The Commanding Officer departed for conference in Townsville and returned next day.	
	28	F/O. L.E. WORT arrived for Messing Officer duties.	
	29	G/C GRAHAM (S.A.S.O) arrived on inspection duties.	
	30	F/O T. CHESSEL (Messing Officer) departed on posting. ADJUTANT (F/O. F.A. LORD) departed for conference in TOWNSVILLE.	
		<p style="text-align: right;"><i>A.D. Callow Sr</i> (A. D. CALLOW), Squadron Leader, COMMANDING, NO. 25 OPERATIONAL BASE UNIT.</p>	



## Mount Isa Underground Hospital and Museum

Can you imagine being a patient in an underground hospital? During World War II, this almost became reality in Mount Isa.

After Darwin was bombed in 1942, there were fears of a similar attack inland. Mount Isa was a possible target because of its rich mineral resources.

Mount Isa locals were worried about their hospital being destroyed, so a decision was made to build a new one underground.

Miners worked over two weeks to drill and blast into the side of a hill at the base of the existing hospital. They created a series of four timbered tunnels in an E shape.

A few weeks after this, the underground hospital had separate male, female and children's wards, an operating theatre, delivery room and dedicated maternity ward. They were all fully stocked with linen and medical equipment and had electricity and telephones.

Weekly air raid drills were practised for some time. Nurses and orderlies would transfer less serious patients from the existing hospital to the underground hospital.

Fortunately, the threat of invasion disappeared, so the new hospital never ended up being used as intended.

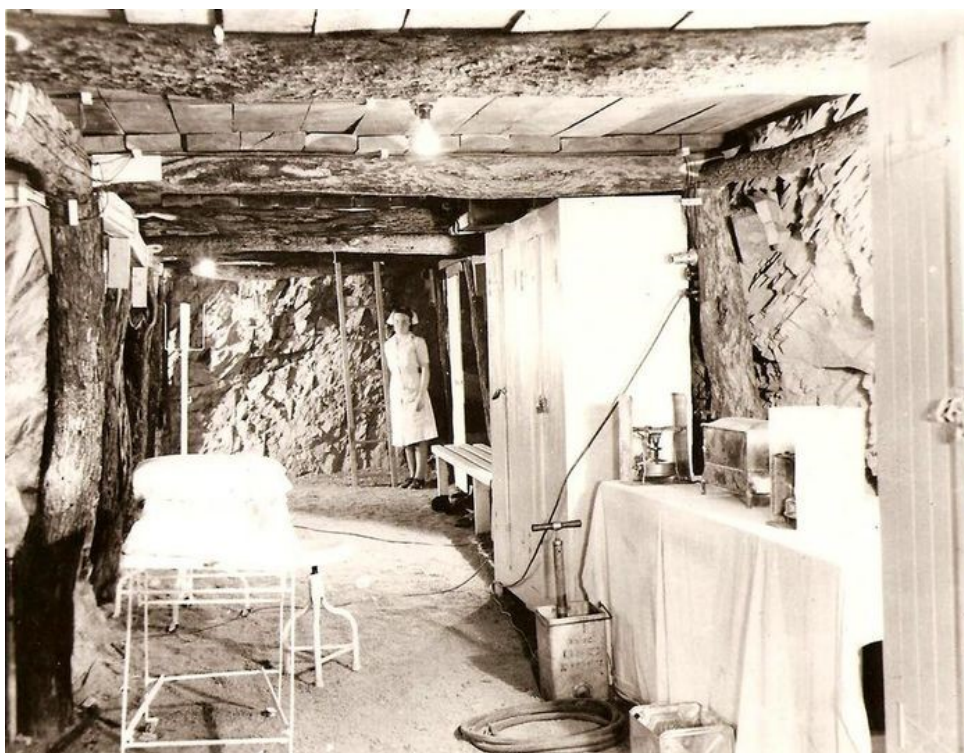
Following the war, the hospital was used as dormitory accommodation for nurses. It eventually became a storage space for medical equipment and files before being deemed unsafe. It closed in the 1960s after most of the structure began collapsing.

The underground hospital has since been restored and is now a museum.

Sources:

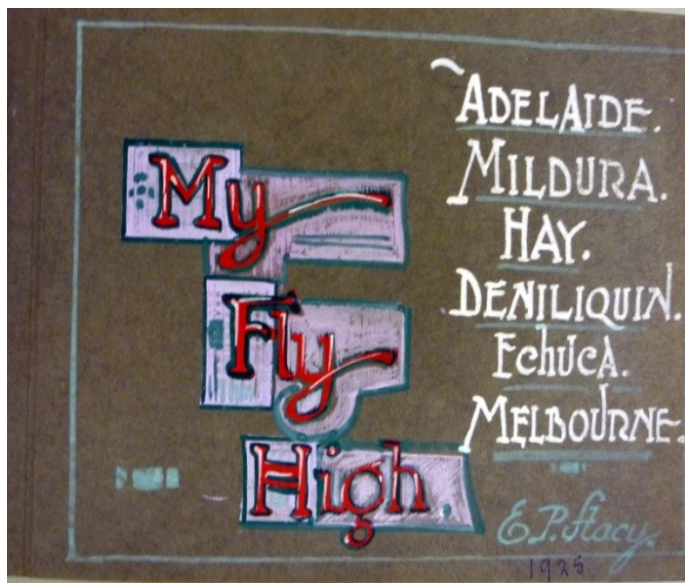
*Mount Isa Underground Hospital and Museum. Visit the underground hospital*

*Queensland Government. Former Underground Hospital, Mount Isa*



## EARLY COMMERCIAL AVIATION IN AUSTRALIA

Leafing through my great grandmother's Family Bible I came across a news cutting about the flight her sister, Emma Penelope Stacy, had taken in 1925 to visit her at Hay NSW. On a different occasion, I visited the Mortlock Library in Adelaide to view the Stacy Papers housed there. Included in the papers was an album entitled My Fly High, which had photos taken at the time of Mrs Stacy's flight. My father, Fred Lloyd Harrison, features as a 4 year-old along with other family members. The man cut off on Mrs Stacy's left is George Henry Harrison senior, husband of Florence (nee Smith) who is standing beside her sister Mrs Stacy. I am unsure of the identity of the other two women, although the one with her hand on my father's head could be his mother, Winnie Harrison (nee Lloyd).



**A newspaper reported on the flight thus:**

### **YOUTHFUL OLD AGE**

*Flight at Seventy Years ADELAIDE TO MELBOURNE Looking as though a long journey by air was an everyday occurrence for a woman more than 70 years of age, Mrs. E. P. Stacy, of Glenelg stepped nonchalantly from the Lyrebird at North Essendon, Victoria, after a flight from Adelaide. "When aeroplanes are perfected, I'll visit you at Hay," Mrs. Stacy jestingly told her married sister a long time ago. She has now fulfilled that promise. She enjoyed the trip from Adelaide to Hay so much that she continued the journey to Melbourne.*

The photo and one of the articles mentioned the name of the aircraft she flew in – the Lyre Bird. This set me on another journey to find out more about the company that flew this plane and the story behind its founder. Many Trove and internet articles later I could piece together the story of Herbert James Larkin, referred to as Captain Larkin. Chas Schaedel of the South Australian Aviation Museum gives a thorough outline of his life.

Herbert James (Jimmy) Larkin was born in Brisbane on 8 October 1894. He enlisted in 1914, went to Egypt and served at Gallipoli until wounded and invalided to England in September 1915. In 1916, he transferred to the Royal Flying Corps. He did valuable photographic and reconnaissance work. He became a flight commander and downed 11 aircraft earning himself a DFC.

On 11 June 1919 in London, he and his brother R. S. Larkin with others formed the Larkin-Sopwith Aviation Co of Australasia Ltd, and engaged as pilots A. W. Vigers, T. T. Shipman, E. R. King, G. C. Wilson and G. C. Matthews.

On 15 October 1919, Larkin received his first aircraft from England, and ten days later, he made the first night flight in Australia in the illuminated Sopwith Dove K-168 G-EAHP at the Melbourne Henley Regatta. As well as importing a small number of Dove and Gnu aircraft, he also began the manufacture of petrol storage systems at Glenhuntly in Victoria, and on 26 December organised an air pageant at Epsom Racecourse, Mordialloc, with parachute descents, aerobatics and a 37-mile air race.

In September 1920, Larkin temporarily operated as the Larkin-Sopwith Aircraft Supply Co Pty Ltd after the Sopwith Aviation Co in England went into liquidation, and on 27 December, he organised the Victorian Aerial Derby at Epsom Racecourse over an 80-mile course. He later registered his company as Larkin Aircraft Supply Co Ltd (Lasco) on 1 July 1921.

During 1921-22, Larkin, as managing director of Australian Aerial Mail Services, which operated as Australian Aerial Services Ltd, won contracts for a Sydney-Adelaide and a Sydney-Brisbane service. In 1923, Larkin noted in response to some aircraft accidents that *flights should not be allowed until wireless reports regarding the weather, workshops with skilled mechanics and especially prepared-landing places are all available*. In 1927 Larkin established a factory at Coode Island in Victoria and also established aerodromes at Adelaide and in the Riverina in SA

In 1928, Larkin employed designer W. S. Shackleton as Chief Engineer and in 1929 Lasco produced the single-engined Lascoter VH-UKT to Shackleton's design, followed in 1931 by his Lark glider and in 1933 by the three-engined Lasconder VH-UMY. This made its first mail flight Daly Waters-Camooweal in June 1933 to become the first Australian-designed three-engined aircraft used on regular service. According to Wixted, the big stations along the route were serviced and landings took place at Alexandria Station, Brunette Downs, Anthony's Lagoon and Newcastle Waters. Mailbags were landed at Daly Waters, then transported by wheelbarrow to the Post Office. Mail then was transported by road to Birdum.

In 1932, Larkin formed the Australian Air Convention to formulate aviation policy. Unfortunately, the Depression cut most of his activities. Then on 26 February 1934, the Australian Air Convention was sued by Western Mining Corporation over allegations regarding Government subsidies, and a judgement of £50 + costs was awarded against the AAC defendants. After Larkin lost the case he went into liquidation in 1935, his assets went to New England Airways (later Airlines of Australia) and later he became traffic manager for AOA.

In 1937, Larkin left Australia for Europe and had a succession of jobs before rejoining the RAF at the beginning of the Second World War, and between 1939 and 1943, he advanced from Flight to Squadron Leader. On 10 April 1943, he relinquished his RAF commission. He served with the American forces as a purchasing officer, after the war engaging in the disposal of surplus US Ar-

my and Air Force equipment. In 1945, he settled in France, and early in 1947 was back in Australia on a business trip as representative for the Peugeot car firm before returning to Paris in February.

Larkin retired to the Channel Islands and in 1968 published a book *Bonsai Culture for Beginners*. On 20 June 1972, he died at St Martin's, Guernsey.

Back to naming the Larkin aircraft. Along with the Lyre Bird, there was the Bell Bird, the Diamond Bird, the Love Bird, the Wattle Bird and the Sun Bird. In 1928, both the Love Bird and Lyre Bird were used in the Central Australia Survey Expedition. Larkin's intent was to survey potential aerodrome sites between Broken Hill, Oodnadatta and Alice Springs. In 1930, Larkin took Donald MacKay to make a survey map of Central Australia.

#### FURTHER READING

The North-west aerial frontier, 1919-1934 : some men, women and flying machines seen in north-west Australia in the pioneering period : international flights, round-Australia flights, and the completion of the Darwin air link to the eastern states / by Edward P. Wixted ; foreword by Lady Joy Taylor.

## Meet Phoebe Farrar (1868-1960).

### Exhibition Details

Date        Until July 2025

Location   Northern Territory Library, Parliament House, Darwin

Many words could be used to describe Phoebe; a bush woman, stock woman, drover. But she is mostly remembered by her family as a woman that couldn't be kept down.

At the tender age of 13, Phoebe left NSW and sailed to Normanton on the Gulf of Carpentaria with Jack and Mary Ann Farrar and their son Bob who were employees of the pastoralist John Costello. Initially at Valley of the Springs Station, Phoebe learnt the skills of a jackaroo; breaking in horses, throw cattle, branding and castrating them. She would use these skills later on when establishing a further two stations in the NT. At her last station, Ban Ban Springs, she personally drove the cattle down to Brocks Creek to set up a new homestead, and would run the station herself when her husband got sick in the later years. This station would stay in the family for the next three generations.

In 1935 at the age of 67, Phoebe was gored by a bull while branding cattle. It took two days for a doctor to reach her. She was taken to Darwin and underwent surgery for her broken hip. Doctors told her she would never walk again but a year later she was walking and branding cattle.

Phoebe passed away on the 19th of August 1960 in Darwin Hospital. 78 years of her life were spent out bush; making camps, droving, and mustering livestock. And despite her impact on the operation of these stations, her death certificate lists her occupation as 'housewife'.

Phoebe is only one of the many significant Territorians explored throughout A Territory Story exhibition at the Northern Territory Library, Darwin.



## IMPACT OF WAR ON SUBSEQUENT LIVES

In researching my husband's family, I was struck by the impact of wartime service on the subsequent lives of returned soldiers. Here are two examples, father and son from Western Australia whose service determined work choices and affected health.

**Stephen Sheridan** (1886 – 1941), son of James (1850-1920) and Sarah (nee Woods) Sheridan, was a carpenter living at Wannamal, WA when he married Ella Wells (1885-1961) at Wannamal School in 1908.

The family lived in Gingin where Sheridan built several houses including his own. He also built the Wannamal Hall. By the time of his enlistment on 2 July 1917, the family had grown by 5 children. Before leaving Australia, he had a period of long leave until October. He served as a private in the 12/2 Pioneers in France and was sent *sick to hospital* 15 June 1918. He had leave for England in February 1919. He left for Australia from England by the *City of Exeter* 12 July 1919.

The family moved to Beaconsfield where Steve joined them following his return from war. Then they moved to Palmyra. As a returned soldier, Sheridan was attracted to the government offer of joining the Group Settlement Scheme in the south-west of the state. From 1922 he and the family lived at Group 10 Glenoran, near Manjimup on a mixed farm. The family featured in a pictorial edition of the *Western Mail* in 1929.

Ella's album shows photos of the family digging potatoes, Steve planting onions and various farm animals which paint a picture of their life on the land. Newspaper articles record prizes at the Manjimup Show for their Jersey bull and dairy heifer in 1927 and sales of porkers, 1930 – 32.

The Electoral Roll (State and Commonwealth) shows Stephen Sheridan 1925, 1931 and 1934 at Group No. 10, No 1 State Mill, Manjimup, carpenter.

By 1935 they were forced to leave the land as Depression prices for agricultural products fell so low that they could not afford to stay. *The Manjimup and Warren Times* dated 14 March 1935 has S. Sheridan, Group 10 Glenoran offering the following items for sale: *1 1/2 h.p. Massey-Harris Engine; Sunshine Chaffcutter, 2-knife, and 24 feet belting; Purser Seed Drill, 7 disc; Deering Mower, 3ft. 6in. cut; Cattle Syringe; 2 Horse Collars; 4 Sets Plow Chains; 100 Gallon Tank; Garden Tools and several sundries; 2 Milk Cows, Guernseys, .first and second calves; 1 Dry Cow; Heifer Calf, Guernsey.*

The *Sunday Times* of 23 June 1935 records the property being put up for sale: Kelson Location 9064, being the whole of the land standing in the name of STEPHEN SHERIDAN, containing 105 acres 1 rood 21 perches, situated in Group 10, 11 miles west of Manjimup, described as all 1st class red and brown loam, redgum, karri and jarrah; 12 acres cleared, 5 acres part cleared tillable, 68 acres of other part clearing, 18 acres rung; permanent stream; 16 chains 6 wires and netting, 72 chains 4 wires fence, boundary, 70 chains 5 wires and netting. 144 chains 4 and 3 wires, 11 chains 9 barb wires (internal) fence. House, 6 rooms of weatherboard, 2 tanks and stove; dairy, cow shed, hay shed and implement shed. Stock and plant that may be in our possession and belonging to the place at time of purchase. At last inspection there were 16 cows, 1 heifer, 1 calf and 1 bull on the property.

The family is unsure where Sheridan went after this, but one story suggests that he moved to Bunbury where he sold Singer sewing machines door-to-door.

The 1937 Electoral Roll has Stephen, Ella and Methwyn (aka Methwin aka Mick) at 1 Bulwer Ave, storekeeper and 403 Newcastle St, carpenter. It is believed that the Bulwer Ave premises was a mixed business in Highgate. Ella was running a boarding house in Newcastle St at the time of son Mick's marriage in December 1937. Wherever he was working, Steve had earned enough by 1938 to buy a new Ford V8 car. By 1939 he and Ella were living at Centre St, Queen's Park. Steve spent some time in Darwin in the early part of the war with a relative, Edda Chadbourne on a carpentry job.

Sheridan tried to enlist again for service in WWII but failed the medical. It was discovered that he had cancer and he died at South Perth 18 June 1941.

One is left wondering if this carpenter would have continued in that trade had he not enlisted and been tempted by the government's offer of land.

Son **Methwin Stephen Sheridan** (1912 – 1989) grew up at Glenoran. After leaving school he worked for the Muir's at Deeside Farm, on the goldfields near Ora Banda with an uncle and on a sheep station nearby. He married Helen Isabella Mitchell (1916 – 2003) in 1937 and worked as a truck driver for Inverarity's in Fremantle. The family was living at Beaconsfield.

He served as a private in the 2/28 Battalion in North Africa where he was captured at Ruin Ridge on 27 July 1942. He spent the rest of the war as a POW in Italy at Campo 57, Gruppignano and Stalag XVIII-A Wolfsburg, Austria. He spent time in hospital at Undine in January 1943 suffering from pneumonia (right lung). In September of the same year when Italy capitulated to the allies, the POWs awoke to find the Italian guards had been incarcerated with them and the guards were now Germans.

The Germans needed workers with experience in farming and timber so Mick, fearing the increasing allied bombing, put up his hand for work in the mountains. He helped on a farm and worked in a sawmill. At this time, he is believed to have contracted sarcoidosis (an incurable disease) which affected his lungs.

On his return from the war, Sheridan worked as a labourer at Mundaring which did not pay well. His fellow Kiwi POWs had talked about life in New Zealand. After meeting a crew member from a ship bound for NZ and docked in Fremantle he decided to stow away. So, he walked on board, so the story goes, without anyone stopping him, made his way to the galley and worked in the kitchen. Once in NZ he made his way to Greymouth on South Island and became a coal miner at the Dobson coal mine. He sent for the family who joined him for several years, but the weather took its toll and his wife returned to WA with the children in 1948. He stayed on until 1949.

Back in Perth, Sheridan borrowed his father's car to seek coal mining work in Collie but was unsuccessful. Then he heard of a mining job at Wittenoom. On his way there, he went share farming in Carnarvon.

Sheridan acquired land there on the north side of the Gascoyne River when the government sold blocks with preference given to ex-army men. They grew beans and bananas. Cyclones and floods were endured.

Later Sheridan moved to Manjimup with the view to producing beef cattle. This was not a success, and he spent some time working at the Deanmill sawmill. He returned to Carnarvon, living on a property (two adjoining blocks) where his sons were now growing bananas.

At a later stage when his sight was failing, he and Helen moved to Illingworth St in the town, but this did not last long. Then it was back to the plantation before his sons went into partnership with others to buy the Tortilla property (Wandinya Farm) that had belonged to Jim Sullivan. Mick, Hel-

en, and son Frank had to wait for the sale of the Carnarvon property to be finalised before they could move to the Territory.

Mick lived at Tortilla, blind by now and in poor health. In late 1989 his leg was amputated, and he died on 12 December 1989 at Royal Darwin Hospital. He is buried at Thorak Cemetery and has a plaque commemorating his war service. His name also appears at the memorial to Prisoners of War at Ballarat.

One wonders what this labourer would have done with his life without the war intervening, affecting his health, influencing the decision to move to NZ and giving him preference for land leading to a farming life.

## **Sources**

Electoral Rolls – Australia and New Zealand

Manjimup and Warren Times

National Archives of Australia

Oral History, Michael Sheridan, 2003, 2022

The Australian ex-Prisoners of War Memorial [www.powmemorialballarat.com.au/](http://www.powmemorialballarat.com.au/)

The Western Mail

By Ruth Sheridan

## **OLD OCCUPATIONS**

### **Violin String Maker**

My interest was piqued when checking online Census records for my Lloyd family ancestors. The occupation given for Betsey (14), Mary Slaughter (16) and Fanny (19) in 1881 was that of violin string maker. They lived in District 47, Islington West, London. Their father Alfred Slaughter was a butcher, which could have provided the girls with access to the sheep intestines they used to make the violin strings. According to the Worst Jobs in History site, 'Violin strings are made out of sheep intestines. The string maker slices open a dead sheep's stomach, reaches inside and pulls out the slimy intestines. These are then squeezed cleaned of fat, poo, blood vessels and slime. The thicker bits are cut off and sold to make sausage skins. The thinner bits are kept and twisted together to make violin strings. The whole job is messy, smelly and tedious.'

What an awful way to earn a living!

## **RESEARCH INFORMATION**

Genealogy in Schleswig-Holstein <https://rootdigger.de/>

If your ancestors left this country during the 19th century, you may find their names and more information on a long list of emigrants.

**Title A Morton Farrier, Forensic Genealogist Story "THE DESERTER'S TALE"  
A Genealogical Crime Mystery**

**Copyright Nathan Dylan Goodwin 2023**

**Author Nathan Dylan Goodwin**

' As always this is a gripping book by the very clever Nathan Dylan Goodwin. Ten books in and he certainly deserves more than tin! I was so excited to read this book and tried so hard to really take my time, inhaling all the details. In reality however I read it in one sitting, even pushing my very demanding but cute puppy off my lap. Sorry Dash!

It is easy to see yourself as a researcher in this fast moving tale. Who hasn't been distracted by a totally "new" person to research even when you have deadlines and other unfinished jobs? I just love the term "GENEALOGICALLY EVAPORATED" I'm making it my own. Such a great way to describe that ancestor who has totally disappeared from the records.....Oh my Timothy O'Flynn where are you ?????

Many fabulous research techniques are seamlessly included in this story where our very popular Morton Farrier researches his wife's great grandfather who went missing after WW1. He uses family stories and letters, photographs, medal records, the new 1921 census, death indexes, immigration records, DNA matches, family links through Shared DNA, newspapers, family search, Ancestry, Find My Past, Roots Tech and Find a Grave.

Morton encounters that dreaded "Missing Years" in his research.....haven't we all....and shows just how important it is not to overlook anything in that "negative space" It is interesting how he deals with name changes, and how to investigate handwriting, grave sites and headstones and glory be BOOKS. No book by Nathan would be complete without at least one interaction with Miss Deidre Latimer, the 'Demon archivist.'

The word SODDI, Some Other Dude Did It, delighted me. Almost an NT Number Plate or at least a reflection on American Politics. I also learnt about the bombing of the War Office in 1940 that destroyed so many WW1 records. So sad.

The Deserter's Tale is so much more than a missing soldier. It shows how deeply soldiers were affected by the horrors of war so much so that Charles Hughes left his family and his country to reinvent himself elsewhere, until rediscovered with such clever research, uncovering a serial bigamist yes, I'm looking at you my Daniel Smith.

So we leave Morton with his own cliffhanger at the end of this book, making the wait for the next book never ending. As if being on a live podcast with your ex girlfriend isn't bad enough. I like to picture Morton listening to his young son banging on his drum kit. Been there done that with a dreadful musical train engine that met its death when accidentally kicked by a mean mum over the balcony. Get to it Nathan. I'm getting older by the minute."

Mim Regan



## **The railway line and settlement of Amiens on the Darling Downs**

**by Greg Hallam, Queensland Rail Historian.**

This 20 kilometre long branch was built to serve post World War I soldier settlement in the granite belt. Most of the traffic was fruit and there were six intermediate stations. In the fruit season, trains were allowed as much as four hours for the journey, making it the slowest train in Queensland. In later years it operated regularly on Sundays to bring fruit to the Monday market in Brisbane, an unusual feature for a branch line. The line was not authorised in the usual way, the government using a technicality to build it as a mining tramway thus sidestepping the Legislative Council. The line opened on 7 June 1920 and closed on 28 February 1974.

The Pikedale Soldier's Settlement was one of the soldier resettlement schemes after World War I. It resulted in the opening up of a farming area on the Granite Belt in the Amiens district.

In 1919 surveys were carried out for a rail line connecting the Southern line and the Amiens Settlement. Four proposals were investigated and surveyed, all places on the Southern line including Dalveen, Cottonvale, Stanthorpe and Passmore. Cottonvale was the most direct route and construction of the line commenced from there.

Work began in June 1919 by day labour, a little over a year from the signing of the first petition. The resident engineer on the line was Mr. B.W. (Barney) Cook who had previously been in charge of the Blackall- Windorah extension of the Great Western Railway, a project that was terminated at Yaraka in far western Queensland (far short of its intended goal).

By July 47 men were at work. The main camp was established at Cottonvale. The Secretary's office advised the Chief Engineer in August 1919 "that this is not a railway but merely a mineral tramway. It does not require parliamentary plans or books of reference." For this same reason, the land was not resumed under the Railways Act, but by the Lands Department. (In any case, this was not a controversial matter as many settlers had promised their land free for the construction of the railway on their property to encourage the Government to build the line).

In the early years of the 20th century, the practice was adopted of submitting all names for new railway stations to the Queensland Governor-in-Council for approval. Where there was no well recognised local name, one of aboriginal origin was preferred. Mr. George D. Grant (the surveyor) writing from Thulimbah on 18th August, 1919, suggested that the practice be varied in this instance in order to adopt the names of notable battlefields in Gallipoli, France and Palestine. For the highest station on the line - the highest in Southern Queensland in fact – he suggested Mons St. Quentin "where it may be truly said the Australians reached the highest point in their brilliant career." His idea was not opposed, but there was already a "Mons" on the Buderim Tramway, and given the 'propensity' of railwaymen to shorten names, confusion would have been inevitable. But the principle was adopted and preferred to the local M.L.A. Mr. Gunn's suggestion to name the settlement at the terminus Diggerthorpe since there were already Stanthorpe (Stannum = tin) and Applethorpe in the vicinity.

The officer-in-charge of the settlement, Mr. A. Clark, was consulted and he suggested naming the sidings after the six Queensland Victoria Cross winners and the terminus after (the then) General Birdwood. However, the idea had to be dropped as several of the proposed names were the same or similar to existing names in the rest of Australia. The names proposed - from the list of battles in which Queensland was well represented – were Fleurbaix, Pozieres, Bullecourt, Passchendaele, Bapaume, Messines and for the terminus Romani. As usual, all were submitted to the Lands Department and the Postmaster-General's Department (PMG) in case there were objections. All were approved except that the PMG considered Romani likely to be confused with Ro-

ma. As a replacement, Cambrai was suggested but there was already a township of this name in South Australia and so, as third choice, Amiens was suggested and approved.

In 1920, the Prince of Wales visited Queensland, and the Amiens settlement. A description of the day noted that the premier engine for working the Sydney Mail train to the border the steam locomotive C18 693 "Sir Wm. McGregor" (Sir William MacGregor) headed the train. The engine and tender were decorated in 'festoons' of red, white and blue, and a large image of the Princes Coat of Arms was adorned on the front of the smokebox. The Union Jack, and the Australian flag flew proudly from the buffers, whilst ornamental feathers were attached to the buffer lamp brackets. Ten carriages made up the train, including the vice-regal car, which the Prince travelled in.

Three of the carriages in the train were allocated for clerical staff, and the members of the press. The Prince began his journey from Wallangarra at 10.00am on 26 July. After passing through Stanthorpe, the Prince took a journey on the recently opened Amiens branch to "officially" open the line. At Cottonvale he changed to a special train consisting of two carriages and a locomotive which took him on the branch. a diminutive train, carriages 60 and 61 hauled by a B13-class locomotive. The driver, Mr. Lister, was one of the senior Warwick men. The pilot engine, another B13, ran tender first so as to be able to haul the Royal train back to Cotton Vale, since there were no turning facilities. The railway station at Amiens was decorated with wattle and two hundred diggers formed a guard of honour when His Royal Highness alighted to inspect the new township. An hour long return trip ended the 'Pikedale Tramway's' moment of glory.

The Prince returned to the mainline and the Royal train, after a short stay at Amiens by the same small train. Warwick was reached at 3.00pm, and over 1500 people thronged the platform at Warwick to see the Prince of Wales pass through.



*1920 - Prince of Wales Royal train C18 No 693*

## **Members Interests - 2025**

### **J Boland**

Hogan Berisrichne (?), Tipperary, Ireland abt 1900

Lynch Summerhill, Meath, Ireland abt 1900

### **M Bratchell**

Bratchell Wiltshire, England 1800 +

Cock Cornwall, England 1800 +

### **F Lawrence**

Ryan Clonmel, Tipperary, Ireland 1810 -1870

Fitzgerald Clonmel, Tipperary & Limerick, Ireland 1800 -1880

Dowle Lydd, Kent, England

### **J Simon**

Jones Merthr Tydfil, Glamorgan, Wales 1750 - 1880

Davies Merthr Tydfil, Glamorgan, Wales 1750 - 1880

Morgan Merthr Tydfil, Glamorgan, Wales 1750 - 1880

Evans Merthr Tydfil, Glamorgan, Wales 1820 - 1900

Adwey Merthr Tydfil, Glamorgan, Wales 1820 - 1880

Smith Merthr Tydfil, Glamorgan, Wales 1840 - 1870

Morgan Ystradfellte, Brecon, Wales 1760-1820

### **S Bone**

Bone Ayrshire, Scotland pre 1900

Bone NSW, Australia

Duckworth NSW, Australia

Elkington

Vitnell NSW & QLD, Australia

Vitnell Canterbury, England pre 1900

### **M Alyward-Smith**

Alyward Mullinavat, Kilkenny, Ireland pre 1900

Smith Mullinavat, Kilkenny, Ireland pre 1900

### **S Wright**

Rohrer Darwin, NT, Australia 1913-1925

McLennan Katherine, NT, Australia pre 1910

Mabone Katherine, NT, Australia pre 1910

## **J Reilly**

MacLeod / McLeod Raasay, Inverness, Scotland 1847 +

Lowes Newburn, Northumberland, England pre 1833

Moreshead Ballarat, Victoria, Australia pre 1862

## **B Leeson**

Fletcher Drumadravey & Irvinestown, Fermanagh , Nth Ireland 1880 – 1900

Scott South Shields, Durham, Nth England 1886

Scott Adelaide River, Northern Territory, Australia 1943 -1944

## **T Skegg**

Rawlins Northern Territory, Australia ca 1935

Coppock Northern Territory, Australia ca 1930s

Mercer Northern Territory, Australia ca 1930s

Dank Northern Territory, Australia ca 1940s

Edge Northern Territory, Australia 1830s

Schmelzkopf Northern Territory, Australia 1890s

Lane Northern Territory, Australia 1900s

Lean Northern Territory, Australia 1900s

Skegg Northern Territory, Australia 1900s

Clayson Northern Territory, Australia 1900s

## **S Gannon**

Sharma Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh, India pre 1910

## **S Oldroyd**

Joseph Lampter & Dyfed, Wales pre 1970s, post 1970s

George Lampter & Dyfed, Wales pre 1970s, post 1970s

## **A Kwiatkowski**

Murray Cork, Cork, Ireland 1800+