

AN AIRMAN'S STORY



Service No.: 140350
Name: John Ferrier DARLING
Nickname: Potsy



Medals and Decorations

1939 - 45 Star

Pacific Star

Defence Medal

War Medal 1939 - 45

Australian Service Medal 1939 - 45

Rank: Leading
Aircraftman LAC
Service: RAAF
Enlisted: 18 May 1943
Discharged: 19 Feb 1946

John was born at Tumby Bay on 5 Nov 1924 to Kathleen Darling (nee Brazil) and Ellis Darling. The family lived on the farm at Warratta Vale (which had been in the Darling family since 1873), and John attended the Warratta Vale school until grade 7: it was here that he earned his nickname, Potsy, as a result of a part in the school play. He then attended Urrbrae College in Adelaide until grade 9, before returning to work on the farm because of the depression.

Potsy was, and still is, a very keen sportsman. He played both football and cricket for Lipson and in later years has been a lawn bowler for Port Neill and Tumby Bay.

In May 1943 Potsy joined the RAAF and was posted to 1 RSU (Repair and Salvage Unit). He saw service in Northern Australia and the South West Pacific. He has the distinction that both he and his father (Corporal Ellis Gordon Darling) were serving concurrently during WW2. His father had served previously in WW1.

After discharge from the RAAF at the conclusion of WW2, he married Nancy Packer on 25 Jan 1947. They have 3 surviving children (Beverly, Stephen and Geoffrey). After a marriage lasting 47 years, Nancy passed away in 1994.

Potsy remained on the family farms at Warratta Vale and Lipson until 1964, when he moved to Adelaide to work as a fencing contractor; after 2 years he purchased another farm at Myponga, but the damp climate got to him, so he returned to Tumby Bay and worked locally as a fencing contractor until 1970. In that year he purchased the Port Neill Hotel, which he and the family operated until 1988.

In 1998 Potsy remarried to Brenda Stancliffe, and they now reside in Tumby Bay where he is currently a stalwart of the Tumby Bay Bowling Club and President of the

Tumby Bay Sub Branch of the RSL.

Potsy has been a very active member of the RSL, having held the following positions within the Tumby Bay Sub Branch:

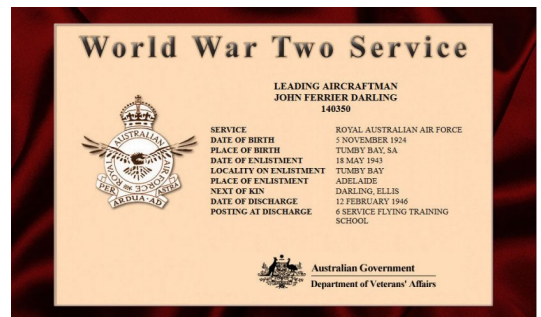
Secretary: 1957 – 59

President: 1963 – 64 and 2007 – 08

He was also the State Councillor for the Region 1982 – 86

He was made a life member of the RSL in 1991.

It is of interest to note that Potsy's father was the president of the Lipson RSL, prior to its merger with the Tumby Bay Sub Branch.



A rare father & son photograph,
Potsy is on the left.