

A SOLDIER'S STORY



Service No.: SX28008
Name: Mervyn Glen GILES
Nickname: Colonel



Medals and Decorations

1939 - 45 Star

Pacific Star

Defence Medal

War Medal 1939 - 45

Australian Service Medal 1939 - 45

Australian Service Medal 1945 - 75

Rank: Private

Service: Army

Enlisted: 22 Jul 1942

Discharged: 12 Jun 1946

Mervyn was born at Tumby Bay on 18 Mar 1922 to George Henry Giles and Ethel Maude Giles (nee Brown) of Lipson. He was the second youngest of 10 children, in a family of 6 boys and 4 girls, of which only 3 are still living.

He attended school at Lipson, leaving at the end of grade 7 to work on Don Butler's farm at Lipson. He hated milking cows, so left this employ and moved to Whyalla to work in the steel mill. He remained in this work until he was "called up" at the age of 20.

He enlisted at Wayville camp on 22 Jul 42 and undertook basic training before being sent to Darwin in Oct 42. He remained there for 2 years during the bombing of Darwin before returning to Brisbane in Oct 44 for further training and allocation to 5th Australian Port Operating Company (Royal Australian Engineers).

At the completion of his training he was posted to Moratai. Prior to embarkation he was given a few days leave. Not wasting any time he returned to Murray Bridge and became engaged to Lena Wehrmann. He remained in Moratai until the end of the war in 1945. He returned to Australia and took his discharge from the Army at Wayville on 12 Jun 1946.

The long distance romance prevailed and Mervyn married his fiancée on 25 Oct 1947. He presented his wife with a most unusual wedding present, a copy of the document containing the Japanese cease fire: these papers are still held by his widow. It is not known how he came by these documents.

They had 2 daughters, the eldest of whom passed away in Oct 2006.

After discharge he took employ with Telecom at Woodville and remained with this

company until his retirement in 1982. Unfortunately he enjoyed only a short retirement before his death on 22 Oct 1989, at the relatively young age of 67 years.

Mervyn was one of three Giles brothers to enlist in the Army in WW2.

Like most young men of his time, Mervyn was a keen sportsman. He played football for Lipson and later for Murray Bridge. He was also a talented tennis player, representing Lipson on a number of occasions.

He joined the RSL at Murray Bridge, later transferring to Tumby Bay and then to Croyden in Adelaide.



Mervyn & Lena Giles (Wehrmann)
25 Oct 1947

