

A SOLDIER'S STORY



Service No.: SX11842
Name: Malcolm George HURRELL



Medals and Decorations

1939 - 45 Star
Africa Star
Pacific Star
Defence Medal
War Medal 1939 - 45
Australian Service Medal 1939 - 45

Rank: Private
Service: Army
Enlisted: 19 Mar 1941
Discharged: 30 Sep 1943

Malcolm was born at Elliston on 12 Jun 15 to William James Hurrell and Hannah Hurrell (nee Starkey). He was one of 11 children (8 boys and 3 girls), only 2 of whom are still living. His father was a shearer and farm labourer.

Malcolm went to school at Colley (near Poochera). He left after completing grade 7 and commenced work at W.H. Betts grocery store at Penong for the princely sum of 3/6 (35c) a week. After a few years his wage had increased to 15/- (\$1.50) a week, but because of the drought he had to find alternate employ: he began rabbit trapping and working on local farms.

He left Penong in 1933 and traveled by rail car to Warrambo where he continued farm work. In 1937 he moved to Coultas, again farm working, and then on to Lakes Entrance (Vic) before continuing on to Sydney to meet and work with his brother. This was a major journey in the '30s, all undertaken by rail and bus.

After a short stay in NSW, he and his brother returned to the West Coast where Malcolm joined the Army at Wudinna in 1941. He was sent to Wayville for initial training and then to Woodside for further training and allocation to 2/27th Battalion. On 12 Apr 41 (1 month after enlisting) he embarked on the troop ship "*Isle de France*" for the Middle East. Malcolm served in Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and New Guinea: it was in this latter location that he was shot in the head by a Japanese sniper. After being carried out of Soputa (NG) by "Fuzzy Wuzzy" angels he was eventually repatriated to Australia, and after convalescence was discharged from the Army as medically unfit in 1943.

Malcolm returned to the West Coast and was given board at the Lock Hotel for undertaking odd jobs. One evening he asked the hotel cook to the local dance, even though he could not dance. The cook was Shirley Rogers (whose uncle owned the hotel) who is now Malcolm's wife. They were married in Port Lincoln on 21 Aug 1944: they had 4 children (1 boy and 3 girls).

The couple returned to Lock and Malcolm went into the building trade with a Mr. Heron: he qualified as a carpenter in 1947, and then built the family home in Lock. After this he went share farming, but in 1957 decided to buy his own farm, "*Wahroonga*" at Lock. In 1968 he moved to Yallunda Flat and bought another farm, "*Gooda Wada*" (aboriginal for "my camp"): the family remained at this location for 14 years before Malcolm retired to Tumby Bay.

Malcolm was a good sportsman, playing both football and cricket for Warramboo. In later years his garden was his pride and joy, winning many a commendation from the Council. His workshop was also much used, where his earlier woodworking skills stood him in good stead.

Malcolm is also a stalwart of the RSL and Service Organisations.

- He was a founding member of the Tooligie-Lock sub branch since 29 Aug 1944
- He has been an active member of the Tumby Bay sub branch for over 40 years
- He is a life member of the 2/27th Battalion Ex-Serviceman's Association

In 2004 Malcolm and Shirley celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary (60 years) and received congratulations from the Governor General and his wife.

Unfortunately Malcolm is currently in hospital at Tumby. We wish him well in the future.



Right:
Penong, the
town of
Windmills

