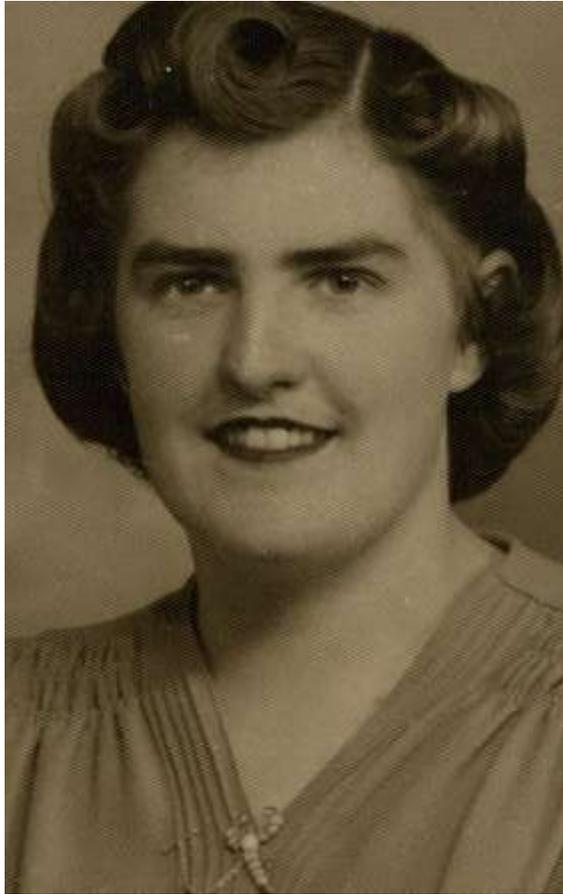




PA3130 Stoker William (Bill) Mervyn Schloithe

Bill was born at Loxton on 8 November 1924. He signed on (enlisted) in the Royal Australian Naval Reserve on 26 August 1942 and underwent his recruit and stoker training at Flinders Naval Depot. On 16 October 1942, Bill was drafted to the Navy's amphibious training school HMAS *Assault* at Port Stephens. His eight months there included six weeks at sea on HMAS *Westralia* before he joined the Landing Ship Infantry (LSI) HMAS *Manoora* on 13 June 1943. This converted passenger liner served at many of the Pacific amphibious landings - Morotai Island, Leyte & Lingayen Gulfs (Philippines), Tarakan Island, Brunei and Balikpapan. After these, it transported troops and repatriated personnel to Australia after the war. Bill went ashore (demobilised) on 23 April 1946. He retired to Victor Harbor in 1982 and is a member of this RSL.



Avona Dawn Schutz (*nee* Greenwood)

Avona was born at Box Hill (Vic) on 6 August 1923. In 1940 she commenced work in a civilian capacity as a typist/clerk with the Army's 2nd Echelon Casualty Department. This unit received all telegraphic messages from army units around the world, including casualty reports and movement details of soldiers. When the army found out her three brothers were serving in the armed forces (Kingsley & Grantley – army; Wynston – navy) she was transferred out of the section in case her brothers became casualties and she would see the reports. Avona then served with the army's Design Division (engineering & ordnance) in Melbourne. At war's end she left the Department and later married Ed Schutz (see separate profile). They moved to Victor Harbor in 1979.



SX37004 Sapper Edwin (Ed) Herbert Schutz

Ed was born in Keyneton (SA) on 26 April 1919. He was serving in the militia when he enlisted in the 2nd AIF on 19 October 1943. After basic training he learned seamanship and was later posted to the 16th Aust Small Ships Company. Ed sailed aboard the AV 1365 *Wayanna*. They carried stores and supplies to locations where smaller vessels were more practical. Ed sailed to New Guinea to support the Australia troops in the offensives against the Japanese. After peace was declared, the *Wayanna* continued to sail around New Guinea and the islands delivering supplies. Ed returned to Australia and was demobilised on 13 May 1946. In 1979, he and his wife Avona moved to Victor Harbor.



416619 Flight Lieutenant Alan Joseph Lyall Sedunary DFC

Alan was born at Victor Harbor on 23 December 1922 and enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force on 21 July 1941, age 18 years seven months. He was a qualified single engine pilot holding a private licence. He was mustered for aircrew and pilot training. Alan served with 75 (NZ) Squadron RAF in England. He was 20 years old and captaining a Stirling bomber when he was killed in a flying battle during the opening days of the aerial bombing offensive against Berlin on 24 August 1943. Alan had been awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross shortly before his last mission.

He and his fellow crewmembers are buried in the Berlin 1939-1945 War Cemetery, Charlottenburg, Germany.



SX14031 Staff Sergeant Kenneth Herbert Sinkinson

Ken, as he was known, was born at Mount Torrens on 4 January 1908. At age 33, he was married with three children, and farming at Victor Harbor when he enlisted in the 2nd AIF on 11 August 1941. Ken was posted to the Corps of Australian Electrical & Mechanical Engineers (AEME) and attached to the 2nd Motor Transport Workshops. The volunteers for the 2nd AIF all wanted to serve overseas but many soldiers like Ken were posted to mainland Australia units. Ken served with the logistic units between Alice Springs and Darwin. There was no rail link and all war materiel and troops were transported by motor transport. Ken's unit was responsible for keep the convoys moving. His leadership qualities saw him promoted to staff sergeant. He was demobilised on 19 May 1944 and returned to farming.

Ken died on 12 February 1992 and is interred in the Victor Harbor Cemetery.



407256 Wing Commander Donald Hamilton Smith DFC, USSR Medal for Valour

Donald was born at Encounter Bay on 18 August 1915. He enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force on 17 August 1940 and was mustered for pilot training, later embarking for service in the UK. He flew Spitfires and was wounded in a dogfight over Malta, but managed to land his plane safely. Donald spent ten months in hospital recovering. He later commanded 453 Squadron RAAF (Spitfires) and took part in the intense aerial assaults before and after the Normandy landings in 1944. He also took part in the Arnhem aerial campaign. He was credited with five “kills” and was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and the USSR Medal for Valour. On repatriation to Australia, he was demobilised on 4 December 1945.



SX9743 Driver Donald (Don) Lindquist Smith

Don was born at Victor Harbor on 1 July 1920. He enlisted in the 2nd AIF on 26 July 1940. After basic training he was posted to the 2/8th Field Ambulance. The unit embarked for the Middle East on 29 December 1940. During the “Benghazi handicap” he narrowly avoided capture. He later served in the Battle of Tobruk until September 1941, and then in the First and Second Battles of El Alamein (July & October 1942). A shell splinter injury to his eye affected his eyesight for the rest of his life. He returned to Australia and then served in the New Guinea campaign from August 1943 to March 1944. He was evacuated several times with malaria. Don returned to Australia and was demobilised on 4 August 1945. Three of his brothers also served in the army.

Don was later President of our RSL Sub-branch. He died on 27 June 1998, age 77.



22263254 Trooper John Gerard Smith

John was born in Poona Military Hospital, India on 27 March 1928. He was conscripted for national service (1946-1948) in the UK and re-enlisted in December 1948. John was posted to “C” Squadron of the 7th Royal Tank Regiment. The Squadron formed part of the 29th Brigade and embarked for service in Korea, arriving there on 15 November 1950. In early 1951, overwhelming Chinese Communist forces caused a general retreat of the UN Forces (the *Pusan Handicap*). The Squadron fought hard to relieve the embattled 1st Royal Northumberland Fusiliers. The retreat slowed and order was restored to UN Forces. During the advance to the River Han, C Squadron encountered stiff enemy resistance, but they managed to eliminate it. The fighting was hard and bitter. At the end of the Squadron’s tour, John was repatriated to England.

After his discharge, he migrated to Australia and upon retirement, he moved to Victor Harbor. John is a member of this RSL.



107697 Corporal Margaret Joyce Smith (*nee* Watson)

Margaret was born at Cowell (SA) on 18 December 1924. She was living at Macclesfield when she enlisted in the Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force on 14 June 1943, age 18. Margaret undertook her basic training at No 4 Initial Training School (ITS), Mt Breckan, Victor Harbor. She was then posted to No 1 Elementary Flying Training School (EFTS) at Mallala as a clerk/typist and later posted to Melbourne Air Force Headquarters. Margaret was promoted to corporal. Her pay was two-thirds that of her male counterparts. She enjoyed the service life and believed she contributed to the war effort. Margaret was demobilised on 16 May 1946.

Margaret's brother John Watson was killed in the Battle of El Alamein.

On retirement, she and her husband Max Smith (see separate profile), moved to Victor Harbor. Margaret is a member of this RSL.



SX31843 Sergeant Arnold Maxwell (Max) Smith

Max was born at Macclesfield (SA) on 31 May 1920. He was serving in the militia when he enlisted in the 2nd AIF on 27 August 1943. After basic training he was posted to the 2/43rd Battalion. The Battalion trained in the Atherton Tablelands (Qld) and readied itself for jungle warfare. In April 1945, the Battalion sailed for Morotai and landed on Brown Beach, Labuan Island. They met determined Japanese resistance and it took the 2/43rd and the 2/28th Battalions eleven days to clear the Island. There were heavy casualties during the hard fighting. Later, at the official surrender ceremony, Max was the NCO in charge of the guard. Max was repatriated to Australia and demobilised on 10 April 1946.

After his retirement, he and his wife Margaret moved to Victor Harbor. Remembered by his wife Margaret Smith (*nee* Watson), who served in the WAAAF (1943-1946).



SX13977 Lieutenant Rollo Francis Stephens

Rollo was born in Adelaide on 26 November 1917 and was farming near Victor Harbor when he enlisted in the 2nd AIF on 7 August 1941. After basic training he was selected for an officer-training course and was later commissioned as a lieutenant and posted to the 2/1st Anti-Aircraft Composite Regiment. We do not have access to his service file from the National Archives at this time, but we do know the Regiment embarked for Morotai in about March 1945. As part of the 7th Aust Division, it took part in the Battle of Balikpapan, the final stage of the Borneo campaign.

On his return to Australia, Rollo was demobilised on 27 November 1945 and returned to farming in the Inman Valley area. Rollo died on 1 September 1975, age 57.

Remembered by his daughter-in-law, Sarah Stephens (*nee* Johnson) of Victor Harbor.



SX1832 Private William (Bill) Charles Stevens

Bill was born in Adelaide on 31 July 1919. He enlisted in the 2nd AIF on 1 March 1940 and after basic training was posted to the 2/10th Infantry Battalion. They embarked overseas on 5 May 1940 and the convoy berthed in Scotland. They sailed for North Africa and fought at Tobruk from April to August 1941. They were subjected to constant infantry attacks, artillery and aerial bombardments and suffered many casualties. After Tobruk, they regrouped in Palestine and sailed for home in February 1942. The men then trained for jungle warfare and landed in New Guinea. The Battalion suffered heavy casualties in ill-conceived attacks against bunker systems near Buna. Bill returned to Australia and had several admissions to hospital with malaria. He was medically reclassified and discharged on 2 September 1945.

Remembered by his son Robin, a member of the Victor Harbor RSL.



SX9821 Private Donald (Don) Frederick Sweetman

Don was born at Victor Harbor on 21 November 1917. He enlisted in the 2nd AIF on 29 July 1940 and was posted to the 2/43rd Infantry Battalion. The unit sailed for the Middle East and arrived in Egypt in January 1941 where the Battalion completed its training in Palestine. By March 1941, the unit and the 2/28th and 2/32nd Battalions, part of the 9th Division, were near Tobruk. In April 1941, the Germans under Rommel launched an offensive, which pushed Allied forces back to Tobruk and laid siege to the fortress. The 2/43rd was engaged in the defence of Tobruk until it was withdrawn by sea on 17 October. By July 1942, the Germans had advanced to El Alamein and the 9th Division was rushed to the area. On 15 July, the Battalion and the 2/28th attacked along the ridge line from Trig 22 to Ruin Ridge. Don was wounded during this action and was evacuated to the rear. He died on 19 July and was buried in the Hadra British War Cemetery, Egypt.

Remembered by his nephew, John Sweetman of Middleton.



122671 LAC Maxwell (Max) Arthur Swincer

Max was born at Minlaton on 14 Feb 1913 and was farming at Waitpinga when he enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force on 16 Mar 1943. He had previously served in the Citizen's Military Forces and held the rank of lance corporal in the 4th Battalion Volunteer defence Corps. We do not have access to his service file from the National Archives at this time. The WW2 roll indicates his unit was the 11th Repair Servicing Unit (RSU). The unit repaired and service RAAF aircraft for operational service. This unit had moved from Qld to Nadzab (New Guinea) in late Jan 1944, then to Noemfoor Island (Oct 1944). Max returned to Aust, some time in Nov 1944 and was discharged on 18 Dec 1944. His discharge was most likely on the grounds of resuming his farming occupation (farming was a reserved occupation during the war years).

We would like to contact the family of LAC Max Swincer.



SX9744 Corporal Jack Raymond Theisinger

Jack was born at Murray Bridge on 27 March 1916. He was married and living in Victor Harbor at the time he enlisted in the 2nd AIF on 26 February 1940. Trained as a machine gunner, Jack embarked for the Middle East on 10 April 1941 and on arrival joined the 2/3rd Machine Gun Battalion. In June 1941, the Battalion joined in the attack against the Vichy French forces in the Syrian campaign. The fighting was hard and many casualties were suffered. In February 1942, Jack's company returned to Australia, whilst some companies were diverted to Java in what would be an ill-fated campaign. Jack was injured in an accident and hospitalised for six weeks. He was then medically reclassified and served in army employment companies. He was discharged on 17 Jan 1945.

Jack's brother Allan was killed in action on 25 October 1942 during the Second Battle of El Alamein.



SX13535 Private Allan Lawrence Thessinger

Allan was born at Victor Harbor on 2 July 1912. He enlisted in the 2nd AIF on 2 July 1941, age 29. After his basic training he was posted to the 2/48th Battalion. He embarked with the unit in November 1941 for the Middle East. Allan fought in the First and Second Battles of El Alamein (July & October 1942). He was killed on the night of 25 October 1942 during the initial assault. Allan is buried in the El Alamein War Cemetery, Egypt.

The above photograph was taken by Patricia Fletcher (*nee* Milnes), who was on a tour of the Cemetery in October 2008.



107470 Aircraftwoman Ida Elizabeth Thomas

Ida was born in Adelaide on 8 March 1922. She enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force on 30 November 1942, age 20. She underwent her basic training at No 4 Initial Training School (ITS) at Mt Breckan, Victor Harbor. Ida was then posted to a driver training school and on completion, was posted to the RAAF Station at Port Pirie. Her pay was two-thirds that of her male counterparts. Ida thought service life was rigorous and disciplined, but she was fit and enjoyed her time in the service. She believed she contributed to the war effort. Ida was demobilised on 10 January 1946. She moved to Inman Valley in 1980.



416794 Flight Sergeant Raoul Ellery Thorpe

Raoul was born in Adelaide on 18 April 1922. He was educated at Victor Harbor and was a bank officer at Mt Barker when he enlisted in the RAAF on 11 September 1941 and mustered for aircrew. He trained at No 5 Initial Training School (ITS) at Pearce (WA), then 9 Elementary Flying Training School (EFTS) at Cunderin (WA) and 4 Service Flying Training School (SFTS) at Geraldton (WA) and qualified as a pilot. Raoul sailed from Sydney on 24 August 1942 for the UK where he trained further. He was posted to 466 Squadron RAAF on 5 July 1943. Flt Sgt Thorpe captained a Wellington (HX580 call sign HD-C) when it took off from RAF Leconfield at 2246 hours on the night of 25-26 Jul 1943. Their target was to bomb Essen (Germany); they were loaded with 2 x 500lb, 3 SBC 90 x 4 and 4 SBC 8 x 30 bombs. After the war it was determined that the aircraft crashed into the North Sea and all the crew were killed. It is believed they were shot down by a flak-ship.

Flt Sgt Thorpe's and Flt Sgt W. Harper's bodies were not recovered. They are commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial, England.

We are trying to locate the family and a photograph of Flt Sgt Thorpe.



SX39081 Trooper Eric Ernest Tregenza

Eric was born in Adelaide on 30 May 1922. He was living at Victor Harbor at the time he enlisted in the militia. Eric transferred to the 2nd AIF on 23 September 1941. After his basic training, Eric was posted to the Transport Platoon of the 2/9th Armoured Regiment. The unit trained in the Atherton Tablelands and embarked for Morotai in March 1945. The Regiment took part in the *OBOE* operations to re-occupy areas of Borneo and the Netherlands East Indies. They would support the 9th Division at Tarakan, and then Labuan and Brunei Bay in British North Borneo. The fighting was intense as the Japanese withdrew inland and put up determined resistance. Snipers and booby traps were a constant hazard for the troopers. At war's end, Eric was repatriated to Australia and demobilised on 26 March 1946. His brother, SX23554 Trooper Ron Tregenza, also served in the same unit.



SX23554 Trooper Ronald (Ron) Arthur Tregenza

Ron was born at Cut Hill (Victor Harbor) on 1 February 1921. He was serving in the militia when he enlisted in the 2nd AIF on 6 July 1942. After basic training, Ron was transferred to the 2/9th Armoured Regiment, the same unit as his brother, Eric. The unit trained hard in the Atherton Tablelands and readied itself for jungle warfare. The Regiment sailed for Morotai in March 1945. They landed with the invasion forces in Borneo and supported the infantry battalions in the advances against the Japanese. Ron was attached to Headquarters Unit as a driver. The Regiment engaged enemy fortifications and provided mobile support against the determined Japanese resistance. Ron was repatriated to Australia and demobilised on 25 March 1946.



SX9757 Private Ernest (Ern) Tugwell

Ern was born at Victor Harbor on 13 January 1912 and was farming in the Waitpinga area at the time of his enlistment in the 2nd AIF on 26 July 1940. He was posted to the newly formed 2/3rd Machine Gun Battalion. The men trained hard for overseas service and sailed for the Middle East in April 1941. They fought in the Syrian campaign against the Vichy French, a determined foe. After garrison duties the 2/3rd sailed for home but elements were diverted to Java to counter the Japanese threat. Later forced to surrender, the men became POW's. Ern was forced to work on the notorious Thai-Burma Death Railway. The POW's suffered great hardships and ill-treatment at the hands of their captors and many died. Ern survived and at war's end was repatriated home and demobilised on 18 July 1946.

Ern died on 17 June 1970, age 58.



416728 Flight Lieutenant Leonard (Len) Ormond Tugwell

Len was born at Broken Hill on 24 June 1918. He was living at Victor Harbor prior to his training as a policeman. Len enlisted in the RAAF on 16 August 1941 and was mustered for pilot training. He was later posted to 101 Squadron RAF in England. Equipped with Lancasters, the Squadron was a "Special Operations" unit – each crew included an airman who spoke fluent German; they jammed enemy fighter controllers broadcasts and frequently transmitted false information to German night-fighters. As such, these special ops aircraft were heavily targeted by the Luftwaffe. On the night of 12-13 August 1944, Flt Lt Tugwell's aircraft was on a mission to Bruanschweig, Germany when at 0010 hours, it was shot down by a night-fighter. Len Tugwell and his fellow crewmen are buried in Hanover War Cemetery, Germany.



52500 Flight Lieutenant George Henry Ward DFC, DFM

George was born in England on 3 June 1921 and enlisted in the Royal Air Force on 10 October 1938. He was mustered as aircrew and trained as wireless operator & air gunner, then later as a navigator on bombers. George served in North Africa with 89 Squadron and undertook many missions against the enemy. He was awarded a Distinguished Flying Medal.

Later commissioned, George served with 138 Squadron (Special Duties). They undertook special missions dropping agents and equipment for the SOE inside enemy territory. On 18 October 1943, his aircraft was shot down on the Belgian-German border. All seven crew survived, and six men, including George, evaded capture and returned to England. Later awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross, George remained in the RAF after war's end.

George and his wife Marjorie moved to Australia in the early 1960's. They moved to Victor Harbor recently and George is a member of our RSL.



Captain Vincent Kenneth Timothy Warwick

Tim, as he was known, was born in Cardiff, Wales on 9 November 1922. He was studying at Oxford when recruited by the British Office in India. Tim arrived in India in 1941 and underwent officer training. He graduated as the prize cadet of his course, was commissioned as a lieutenant, and soon promoted to captain. Appointed as an instructor at a jungle-training centre in northern India, he learned to speak Hindi and Urdu. Posted to Arakan, Burma, he contracted malaria and other tropical illnesses and was evacuated back to England. After recovery he returned to India and was posted as a staff officer near Bombay. Near war's end he returned to England and resumed studies. Tim and his wife Rosemary then moved to Australia.

When the Korean War broke out, Tim was recruited into the Australian Intelligence Corps. He was discharged in 1953 and took up farming at Inman Valley, and later at Back Valley.

Tim was a longstanding member of our RSL. He died on 26 Apr 2011.



SX9538 Gunner David Hugh John Watson

John as he was known, was born at Cowell on 21 September 1919. He enlisted in the 2nd AIF on 23 July 1940 and after his basic training was posted to the 2/7th Field Regiment, an artillery unit. John sailed with the Regiment on 17 November 1940 for the Middle East. In April 1941, the Regiment did a splendid job in the defence of Mersa Matruh. By September 1941, it was near Tobruk and fought in the defence of the fortress. After the evacuation of Australian forces in October 1941, the Regiment was based in Egypt, and then in Syria. John and his fellow gunners then fought in the First Battle of El Alamein in July 1942. The fighting was hard and during the five days during which the Germans counter-attacked, the Regiment fired 20,129 rounds. The Second Battle of El Alamein commenced in late October 1942. On 31 October 1942, John was killed by an enemy artillery strike. He is buried in the El Alamein War Cemetery.

Remembered by his sister, Margaret Smith (*nee* Watson), a member of the Victor Harbor RSL.



SX9796 Pte Ronald (Ron) Peter West

Ron was born at Cowell on 13 June 1917. He enlisted in the 2nd AIF on 27 July 1940. After basic training he was posted to the newly formed 8th Division Salvage Unit. The unit sailed for Singapore on 30 July 1941 and joined other units of the 8th Division. After the Japanese invaded Malaya, the Commonwealth Forces retreated down the Peninsula to Singapore. Ron was captured and was sent as forced labour with "F Force" to slave on the notorious Thai-Burma Death Railway. The POW's suffered from maltreatment and disease at the hands of their captors. Ron died from beri-beri on 25 January 1944. He was buried in Tanbaya POW Cemetery, but after the war was reinterred in Thanbyuzayat War Cemetery, Burma (Myanmar).

Remembered by his son, Peter West of Victor Harbor, a member of our RSL.



SX5201 Chaplain Charles Roland Whereat MBE

Charles was born in Bath, England on 25 January 1896. He served in the British Honourable Artillery Regiment during World War One. He migrated to Australia and was the parish priest of St Augustine's Victor Harbor when he enlisted in the 2nd AIF on 12 June 1940. Charles embarked for the Middle East with the 2/27th Battalion as its chaplain and served in the campaigns against the Vichy French. For conspicuous service he was awarded an MBE.

He later served in the New Guinea campaign. Chaplain Whereat was demobilised on 25 June 1945.



SX313 Private Harold Reginald Wilson

Harold was born in Adelaide on 10 September 1910. He was farming at Waitpinga prior to his enlistment in the 2nd AIF on 20 October 1939. He was regarded as one of the “thirty-niners”. Harold was posted to the 2/10th Infantry Battalion and embarked for the Middle East in May 1940. En-route, the 6th Division was diverted to the UK to help in the defence of the motherland. The Battalion arrived in Egypt on 31 December 1940 and later joined the 7th Division. The 7th moved to Tobruk in early April 1941 where it came under siege by the Axis forces. Harold was killed in action on 25 May 1941. He was the first Victor Harbor casualty of World War Two. He is buried in Knightsbridge War Cemetery, Acroma (Libya).

There is a memorial to Pte Wilson at the top of Wilson’s Hill, on the Range Road, at Waitpinga.

We are trying to locate the family and a photograph of Pte Harold Wilson.



SX20106 Trooper Robert Edwin (Bob) Winter

Bob was born in Adelaide on 29 January 1923. He was serving in the militia when he enlisted in the 2nd AIF on 24 July 1942, age 19. After his basic training he was posted to the 2/7th Independent Company (later the 2/7th Aust Commando Squadron). In January 1943, the unit was in New Guinea and carried out fighting and reconnaissance patrols against the Japanese. The fighting was bitter and intense and the Company suffered many casualties throughout the campaigns. The Squadron was attached to various Brigades throughout their time in New Guinea and was always in the forefront of other advancing units. On many occasions, it was pushing well into enemy territory. At war's end, Bob was repatriated to Australia and demobilised on 23 May 1946.

Bob moved to Victor Harbor in 2005. He died on 22 August 2010. Remembered by his niece, Joy Miller.



SX14177 Trooper Ernest Jack Woodard

Jack was born at Victor Harbor on 24 October 1918. He enlisted in the 2nd AIF on 15 August 1941 and after basic training was posted to B Squadron of the newly formed 2/9th Armoured Regiment. The Regiment trained in north Queensland and readied itself for jungle warfare. They embarked for overseas service on 13 April 1945. Jack's B Squadron landed on Labuan Island on 10 June and backed the advancing infantry. The fighting was hard with concealed booby traps and enemy snipers causing casualties. Jack remained in Borneo until late December 1945 when he was repatriated to Australia. Jack was demobilised on 24 January 1946.