

Victoria. This contains far more details on his service with Bomber Command than his personal file. By October 1941 he was at 20 Operational Training Unit in Lossiemouth, Scotland with nearly 80 hours of flying completed. This also included a stint at a nearby field with the unforgettable name of 'The Bogs of Mayne'!

In January 1942 he was with Number 460 Australian Operational Squadron at the quaintly named Breighton, Satellite of Holme-on-Spalding-Moor Aerodrome in Yorkshire, England. His first bombing mission over Germany was in the evening of 12 March 1942 where he was the front turret gunner and dropped six 500 pound high explosive bombs. By 30 May 1942 he had completed 13 bombing missions, but his luck ran out two days later.

On 1 June Wellington Bomber number Z1344, under the command of Flight Lieutenant Holland with Buff in the front turret, took off from Yorkshire. The log book has the handwritten words in red pen 'for OPS – Essen FAILED TO RETURN'. He nearly had 300 hours of flying time.

After bombing Essen their plane was shot down, by German anti-aircraft artillery, over the Dutch coast near Bergen-Op-Zoom and ditched into the sea with the crew of six. On 6 June the Air Board in Melbourne was notified that the plane and crew were missing. Following normal procedures, the RAAF opened a Casualty Evacuation File for each crew member. Buff's file has survived, and records the final days of his life as a POW in a hospital.

One of the first notifications was to his father, his next of kin, by Telegram. Being the postmaster at Naracoopa, he had to first lodge the document and then sign and return it to the Air Board.

A few days later there was a notification that Buff was wounded, that his right leg had been amputated below the knee, but he was progressing satisfactorily and is being well treated.

This gave the family some hope, but all was dashed when the Air Board sent another telegram on 24 August stating that Buff had died almost a month ago on Monday 20 July 1942. This was one week after his 21st birthday, just over 77 years ago.

## King Island Courier

*A Beacon for the Community*

### Letter to the EDITOR

#### Letter to the Editor

Chronic pain – pain that doesn't go away after the injury or illness has resolved and lasts at least three months – is arguably Australia and the world's fastest growing medical condition and is a significant issue affecting Australians.

Living with ongoing pain can lead to feelings of hopelessness and can all too often lead to isolation, mental health issues and a declining ability to effectively manage pain - an extremely vicious and heart-breaking cycle. Pain is often invisible and people face the additional burden of not being believed.

National Pain Week (22 – 28 July 2019) is an annual initiative of Chronic Pain Australia, the voice of Australians living in chronic pain. It aims to destigmatise the experiences of people living with chronic pain and provide an outlet to share their stories and experiences with the wider community. This year's theme is 'Equal Partners in my healthcare' to highlight the need for people with chronic pain to be included in the decisions and policies that affect their lives.

During National Pain Week, people living with chronic pain are encouraged to share their experiences and ideas on the (<https://chronicpainaustralia.org.au/forum>) or on social media using the hashtags #NPW2019, #nationalpainweek, #equalpartnersinhealthcare.

Jarrod McMaugh, president, Chronic Pain Australia



*King Island's VDC Guard on parade in their makeshift uniforms at the Naracoopa Cable Station in the early years of WWII. The names are not yet known, but Buff does not appear in the photograph. Courtesy of the King Island Historical Society.*

Father Jimmy never gave up hope and there follows a series of his letters including advice that Buff had managed to send a letter to his uncle in England and might be still alive. However, the Red Cross did investigate but sadly for the family the initial notification was confirmed. The toll on the Cheese family in the small village of Naracoopa can only be imagined.

Undoubtedly, not displaying his overwhelming sadness and grief, Jimmy wrote a letter to the Air Board on 28 August 1942 where he expressed the family's appreciation to them, as well as a touching tribute to his son in the second paragraph:

There is one satisfaction, although a small one, and that is that we know he did his best

and gave all for us who are left behind.

William Desmond Cheese is buried at Bergen-Op-Zoom War Cemetery in Noord-Brabant, Netherlands, in 3.D.5; one of 1190 casualties. Recently, a photograph of his headstone was placed on the Island's Facebook Page. Buff is one of many King Islanders who served their nation and paid the ultimate sacrifice in conflicts far away from our shores. We shall never forget them.

When I visit Naracoopa, whether on the Jetty or along the Esplanade, I observe the young teens of the village fully enjoying life, with a freedom of spirit and adventure that other places would be envious of. I see a little bit of Buff in them all and find solace in the thought that this is how he grew up when the

world was at peace.

Less than 20 years after Buff's death, the Australian Army Training Team deployed to South Vietnam. This was the start of an involvement that would last until 1973 with a number of King Islanders serving in that war. Sunday 18 August is Vietnam Veterans Day and the King Island RSL Sub branch is holding a service commencing at 11am in the War Memorial Park. A list of Islanders is being prepared and if you know of someone who served in SVN please contact the KICourier editor. You are most welcome to attend the service and remember those who served.

—GARY BARKER ©



**The King Island Historical Society's Annual General Meeting**

SATURDAY 31ST AUGUST 2019

11.30am at the KI Club's Hooper Room

All positions are declared vacant.

All members must be financial to vote.

There will be a short meeting after the AGM and everyone is welcome to join us in the restaurant for lunch afterwards.

We look forward to a good turnout



## KING ISLAND - IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN

**Romi Bitar from Financial Solutions Victoria &**

**Jason Clemm from Accounting Solutions Victoria**

will be visiting the island from

**Monday 12th August until Thursday 15th August**

If you would like to book an appointment for

Financial Planning or Accounting Services,

please contact Kelsey at our office on **5152 6222**

Look forward to seeing you!

**Committed to providing a professional financial service to the**

**King Island Community**