



Squadron Leader G.R.F. BURLINSON

[1899 – 1975]

Research has not uncovered an image of Lieutenant Burlinson

The then Lieutenant Burlinson was the Part-time Secretary of the Club from 1932 to 1934.

George Rupert Francis (Frank) Burlinson was born in Dunedin, New Zealand on 12 October 1899. He was the youngest of four brothers and a sister – children of George Melville Burlinson [1854-1920] born in Kent, England, and manager of the Industrial School in Dunedin, and Alicia Griffith (née Jackson) [1865-1902].

It appears that he qualified as an engineer and moved to Sydney by 1924. In that year he married Edna Marshall (née Liggins) [1903-1986] – she was born in Glebe and died in Sydney. They had a daughter - Pamela Grace (born c.1929), a nurse - and possibly a son. It appears that Frank and Edna separated as in 1929 he was living in Brisbane.

In 1934 Frank was an engineer living in Roma Street, Brisbane with June Athol Burlinson. She was Jessica Athol “June” (née McKay) [1901-1983] - born in Trawool, Victoria and died in Sandford, Victoria. She had assumed the surname Burlinson. Frank and Edna divorced in 1947 on the grounds of desertion, and later in 1947 - at Waverley, Sydney - Frank married June. They may have had a daughter and a son.

In February 1929, Frank began his military service and was appointed a Lieutenant in the Militia's 26th Battalion, The Logan and Albert Regiment. In October 1934 he transferred to 15/26th Battalion on its amalgamation and was promoted Captain. In July 1936 he transferred to the Reserve of Officers before he and June returned to live in Bondi, Sydney working as a business manager.

In January 1938 he re-activated with 17th Battalion, The New South Wales Scottish, before again transferring to the Reserve of Officers as a Captain in June of that year. He then returned to Brisbane and lived at Dutton Park. In June 1940 he was mobilised and served for several months at Miowera Army Camp, Bowen.

We thank the History Interest Group and other volunteers who have researched and prepared these Notes. The series will be progressively expanded and developed. They are intended as casual reading for the benefit of Members, who are encouraged to advise of any inaccuracies in the material.

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In April 1941 he resigned his Australian Militia commission to join the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve (RAFVR). He was commissioned as a Pilot Officer and with his engineering qualifications was posted to aerodrome defence tasks. He was one of several Australians who served in this capacity with the RAF in the Far East.

After enlistment he was posted to Singapore in June 1941 and was appointed Group Defence Officer and was involved in the planning for the defence of Kota Bahru. The Official History suggests that he held strong views on his work which often proved correct – but did not overcome his view of the “complacency and inefficiency” of the RAF.

His RAF career included:

- Administration Staff Duties at RAF Station Kallang, and at
- Air HQ Far East Air Force (RAF).
- Promotion to Flying Officer in April 1942.
- Aerodrome Defence Duties ACSEA 1942-43.
- RAF Regimental Duties 1943-45.
- Promoted Squadron Leader in February 1944.
- Resigned in September 1946.

He was awarded the 1939-45 Star, the Burma Star, the Defence Medal, and the War Medal 1939-45.

In the 1950s and 1960s, Frank, with June, lived in Cairns, working as an engineer. By 1968 they had retired to Noosa.

Squadron Leader Burlinson died on 9 October 1975 and was buried at Tewantin.

During his tenure, Lieutenant Burlinson served Presidents Platt and Hill

Sources included:

- Various web pages
- *United Service Club, Queensland: The First Century, 1892-1992* by Flight Lieutenant Murray Adams and Lieutenant Colonel Peter Charlton
- Club Meeting Minutes, Annual Reports, and sundry documents
- Australia in the War of 1939-45 Series 3, Volume 1, Ch 7