

## history & heritage notes

## Squadron Leader J.N. PARKER AFC, OAM, DFM

[1928 - 2020]



Squadron Leader Parker was the Secretary of the Club from 1978 to 1980.

John Norris Parker was born in Cairns on 3 November 1928. He was the son of Percy Donald Parker [1903-1972], a Clerk of Petty Sessions who was posted throughout Queensland during his career, and Ethne Vivian Pearl (née Norris) [1902-1991].

He was schooled at Sarina and at the Church of England Grammar School, Brisbane in 1943-44 where he completed the Junior Certificate. He then became an accounts clerk at the Plane Creek Central Mill and M.H. Parker & Co (Accountants, Cairns) before enlisting in permanent Air Force.

He married Betty Patricia (née Stefansen) [1930-2019] in 1953. They had two children, Carolyn Ann [b. 1954] and David John [b. 1962].

John's military service is described below:

After service in the School Cadets (2 years) and the Air Training Corps (1 year) he:

- 1950 enlisted in the permanent RAAF and undertook pilot training at Point Cook.
- 1951 promoted Sergeant
- 1952 Jan July 77 Sqn RAAF Korea. Flying Gloster Meteors in over 170 operational flying missions.

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.

Please do not reproduce them or distribute them outside of the Club membership.

File: HIG/Biographies/PARKER

- 1952 promoted Pilot Officer
- 1953 promoted Flying Officer
- 1956 promoted Flight Lieutenant
- 1956-7 'A' Flight Commander of No. 23 (F) City of Brisbane (Citizens Air Force) Squadron,
- 1960 No. 1 Air Trials Unit, Woomera, SA. This unit operated the pilotless V12 Jindivik, Meteor U15 and Canberra U10 aircraft as targets for radar tracking and live firing, using surface-to-air (SAM) and air-to-air (AAM) weapons.
- 1962-5 Indonesian Confrontation Chief Controller and Operations Officer with No. 114 Mobile Control and Reporting Unit at Butterworth, Malaysia, and also served in Thailand.
- 1963 promoted Squadron Leader
- Commanding Officer No. 1 (B) Operational Conversion Unit (OCU) at Amberley 1966
- 1968 He developed an aircrew conversion course into the Canberra bomber for operational service with No. 2 (B) Squadron based at Phan Rang, South Vietnam.

Squadron Leader Parker was decorated for his service in the RAAF by the award of:

Air Force Cross 1 January 1969 Squadron Leader Parker - as a pilot and flying Instructor.

Distinguished Flying Medal 30 December 1952 Sergeant Parker – for service as a pilot in 77 Squadron RAAF. (Korean War)

United States Distinguished Flying Medal (Korean War) United States Air Medal February 1952 (Korean War)

USAF Outstanding Unit Award with Valour Device (Vietnam War)



Sergeant Parker, Korea, 1952

Parker retired from the RAAF as a Squadron Leader in 1969 (with over 3,600 flying hours logged) and immediately joined the (then) Department of Civil Aviation, Melbourne, as an Examiner of Airmen. He continued to serve in the Citizen Air Force (Victoria University Squadron) until 1972. The family moved to Brisbane in 1973 and lived at Fig Tree Pocket before retiring to the Gold Coast in 1988.

John Parker was active in a number and variety of community organisations, including:

Returned & Services League of Australia

Treasurer, South East Queensland District 1982-88 1986-88 District Nursing Home, Board Member

Dri	cho	nna	100	acy
ווט	SUC	שווג	LEG	ıac v

Brisbane Legacy		
	1981-82	President
	1974-89	Member
		Member – Welfare Committee
	4000 0004	Youth Activity Convenor
	1989-2001	Member Coolangatta/Tweed Heads Legacy Club
	2002-2020	Reserve Legatee
United Services Institute		
	1982-84	Treasurer (Queensland)
United Service Club		, ,
	1976-78	Committee
	1978-82	Secretary / Manager
Australian War Memorial		
	1975-81	Member, Board of Trustees
Australian Airaraw Associat	ion	Chair Cold Coast Branch

Australian Aircrew Association Chair, Gold Coast Branch

Queensland Veterans Affairs Review Board Member Toowong Bowls Club President

He was awarded a Medal in the Order of Australia (General Division) in the 2012 Queen's Birthday Honours List for his "service to veterans and their families through a range of organisations".

John Parker joined the Club in 1958 and remained a member until his passing. He served on the Committee 1976-78. He was appointed Secretary in June 1978 following the resignation of Flight Lieutenant J.I. Coleman.



Sergeant J.N. Parker DFM, Korea (1952) [Ivor Hele]

Squadron Leader Parker died on 6 October 2020 at Tweed Heads.

## During his tenure as Secretary, Squadron Leader Parker served Presidents Captain O.M. May OBE, VRD, RANR and Major General The Hon. J.L. Kelly CBE, RFD, QC

## 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
- AWM and NAA archives
- Trove
- Contribution from Squadron Leader Parker's son, David Parker.