



In Memory of
Warrant Officer
FRANK ESBERT MULLER
405640, Royal Australian Air Force
who died age 22
on 18 March 1944

Son of Frank Joseph Nicolaus Muller and Isobel Mabel Muller,
of Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia

Remembered with honour
RUNNYMEDE MEMORIAL, ENGLAND



WARRANT OFFICER
FRANK ESBERT MULLER
ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE
SERVICE NUMBER: 405640



Photograph of Warrant Officer Frank Muller, courtesy of Ruth Stiller.

Warrant Officer Frank Esbert Muller, the son of Franz Joseph Nicolaus Muller and Isabella Mabel Muller (nee Carseldine) was born at Toowoomba in Queensland on 14th August 1921. He was educated at the Harristown State School from August 1933 until December 1935. He then attended the Toowoomba Grammar School during 1936 and 1937 where he passed the University of Queensland Junior Public Examination. After leaving school, he worked as a Junior Clerk and 12 months as a Machinist at the Toowoomba Foundry.

On 25th June 1940 at the age of 19 years and 10 months, he applied to join the Royal Australian Air Force for aircrew training. He gave his spare time interests as swimming, hockey and cricket. At the time of his application, he was single and residing with his family at 277 James Street in Toowoomba. He gave his next of kin as his father who was employed as a building contractor. After swearing an oath, he was enlisted in the Reserve of the Royal Australian Air Force on 21st February 1941 at No. 3A R.A.A.F. Mobile Unit in Toowoomba.

Warrant Officer Frank Muller was enlisted into the Citizen Air Force of the R.A.A.F. on 27th April 1941 at No. 3 Recruiting Centre in Brisbane for training as a Navigator (Air Observer). His physical description at the time of his enlistment was that he was 5 feet 10 inches in height and weighed 149 pounds. He had a dark complexion, brown eyes and black hair. He stated that he was of the Baptist religion. He was sent to No. 3 Initial Training School at Sandgate in Queensland on 27th April 1941 as a student on No. 16 Observer's Course. Upon completing his basic training, he was posted to No. 1 Air Observer's School at Cootamundra in New South Wales on 22nd August 1941. He then proceeded to No. 1 Bombing and Gunnery School at Evans Head in New South Wales on 17th November 1941. He was awarded the Air Observer qualification badge on 8th January 1942. On 19th January 1942, he joined No. 1 Air Navigation School at Parkes in New South Wales. He was promoted to the rank of Temporary Sergeant on 12th February 1942 and he then proceeded to No. 8 Service Flying Training School at Bundaberg in Queensland on 17th February 1942.

In preparation for service overseas, he joined No. 1 Embarkation Depot at Ascot Vale in Victoria and from there he went to No. 2 Embarkation Depot at Bradfield Park in New South Wales. He embarked from Brisbane by sea transport on 5th May 1943 and arrived in England on 7th July 1943 where he joined No. 11 Personnel Departure and Receiving Depot at Bournemouth. He joined No. 3 General Reconnaissance Squadron on 5th September 1943. Whilst serving with the squadron he was promoted to the rank of Temporary Flight Sergeant on 1st October 1943. He joined No. 3

Operational Training Unit on 19th October 1943 to prepare him for service in an operational squadron and he was promoted to Temporary Warrant Officer on 1st December 1943. He joined No. 612 (County of Aberdeen) Squadron of the Royal Air Force Coastal Command on 9th December 1943.

No. 612 (County of Aberdeen) Squadron main operational task in late 1943 and early 1944 was carrying out night patrols over the Bay of Biscay, hoping to attack German U-boats as they were crossing the bay. A significant number of attacks were recorded with one confirmed U-boat victory.



*Australian War Memorial photograph MEC1396
A Vickers Wellington aircraft of an RAF Squadron flies over Italy.*

Warrant Officer Frank Muller was a navigator and crewmember of a No. 612 Squadron Royal Air Force Wellington Bomber XIV HF170 that went missing during anti-submarine patrol over the Bay of Biscay on 18th March 1944. The aircraft left its base at Chivenor at 21.49 hours on 17th March 1944 for a sortie that was scheduled to last 10 hours. At the time of his death, he was 22 years of age. The Commanding Officer of No. 612 Squadron that was based at Royal Air Force Station, Chivenor, North Devon sent the following letter to his parents on 23rd March 1944:

Dear Mr Muller,

Before you receive this you will have had a cable advising you that your son is missing as a result of air operations.

I have delayed in writing this letter in the hope that I might have better news for you, but I regret that I am not in that happy position. Frank was the navigator of an aircraft which took off on an operational flight over the Bay of Biscay on the night of the 17th March, from which it unfortunately did not return. Although Frank had not been with us very long, his ability and enthusiasm for his job had marked him as likely to become one of our best navigators, and with the rest of his crew,

to develop into a first class team. In the Mess, he had gained popularity very quickly and his many friends miss him greatly.

His personal belongings have been gathered together and forwarded to the R.A.F. Central Depository, Colnbrook, Slough, who will be communicating with you in due course, regarding your wishes for disposal. In closing, may I express the great sympathy which all of us feel with you in your great anxiety, and I should like also to assure you how greatly we honour your son for the sacrifice he has made in the cause for which we are all fighting.

Yours sincerely, W.G. Thompson (Squadron Leader).

Despite enquiries made through the International Red Cross, no further news came to light regarding the loss of the aircraft and its crew, and their death at sea was presumed to have occurred for official purposes on 18th March 1944. Frank Muller has no known grave therefore his sacrifice is recorded on the Runnymede Memorial for the Missing in England. For his service during World War 2, Frank Muller was awarded the 1939/1945 Star, the Atlantic Star and the Defence Medal and the King's Scroll. His name is commemorated on Panel No. 127 at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra and locally on the Toowoomba Mothers' Memorial, the Toowoomba Memorial Hall Honour Board and the Toowoomba Grammar School Honour Board.

Toowoomba Grammar School archive records show that he enrolled as a student on 1st January 1936 and left the school on 31st December 1937.



*Graduation Photo taken at No. 1 Bombing & Gunnery School, Evans Head, New South Wales –
Warrant Officer Frank Muller third from the right in back row.
Photograph of Warrant Officer Frank Muller, courtesy of Ruth Stiller.*

External Links:

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[NAA Accident Report](#)