



In Memory of

Corporal

JOHN WILLIAM SEELEY

QX22054, 2nd/29th Infantry Battalion, A.I.F.

who died age 25

on 05 June 1945

Son of James Seeley and Janet Seeley,
of New Farm, Queensland, Australia

Remembered with honour
LABUAN MEMORIAL, MALAYSIA



CORPORAL
JOHN WILLIAM SEELEY
2ND/29TH INFANTRY BATTALION
REGIMENTAL NUMBER: QX22054



Australian War Memorial photograph PO2468.162 of John William Seeley. Corporal Joh William Seeley, the son of James Seeley and Janet Seeley (nee Caskie), was born at Brisbane in Queensland on 13th April 1917. He was educated at the Toowoomba Grammar School. He was mobilized in the Australian Military Forces at Brisbane on 11th December 1939 and was allotted the regimental number of Q199761. He had previously served in the Citizen Military Force with the 11th Light Horse Signal Troop. He was allocated to the 15th Infantry Battalion area staff. He was appointed to the rank of Sergeant on 26th January 1940. He was discharged from the Australian Military Forces on 3rd December 1940. He was mobilized into the Australian Military Forces at Kelvin Grove in Brisbane on 21st January 1941. He was allotted the regimental number

of Q84967 and allotted to the Australian Army Medical Corps, 10th Fortress Company with the rank of Corporal. He was promoted to the rank of Lance Sergeant on 20th February 1941. He embarked for service with the Thursday Island Detachment on 14th March 1941 and he disembarked on 20th March 1941. He embarked from Thursday Island for return to Brisbane on 9th June 1941. He was convicted by a Civil Court and discharged from the Australian Military Forces on 19th June 1941.

At the age of 21 years and 2 months he voluntarily enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force at the City Hall Recruiting Depot in Brisbane on 7th July 1941 after swearing the statutory oath of enlistment. At the time of his enlistment he was unmarried, employed as a Costing Clerk and residing at Roseberry Terrace, Chelmer, Brisbane. His physical description was that he had fair hair and grey eyes. He stated that he was of the Methodist religion. He gave his next of kin as his father, James Seeley, residing at Roseberry Terrace, Chelmer, Brisbane. His father's address was later changed to 52 Mark Street, New Farm, Brisbane on 7th March 1942.

Corporal John Seeley was allotted the regimental number of QX22054. He joined the recruit camp at the Brisbane Exhibition Grounds on 7th July 1941. He was granted pre-embarkation leave during the period 16th July until 21st July 1941 to farewell his family and finalize his personal affairs in preparation for overseas service in the Australian Imperial Force. He joined the 11th Training Battalion at Redbank Camp on 22nd July 1941. He attended a course of instruction at the Army Special School at Frankston in Victoria during the period 11th October until 12th November 1941.

He was promoted to the rank of Acting Corporal on 26th November 1941. He was sent for coastal defence duties on 14th December 1941.

Corporal John Seeley was allocated to the 4th Reinforcements of the 26th Infantry Battalion and he left Redbank by rail transport and proceeded to Eastern Command in New South Wales on 8th January 1942. He embarked for overseas service in South East Asia from Sydney in New South Wales on 10th January 1942 and travelled via Batavia to Singapore where he disembarked on 26th January 1942. He was transferred to the 2nd/29th Infantry Battalion on 26th January 1942. He was promoted to the rank of Acting Corporal on 1st February 1943. He was wounded in action on 15th February 1942 suffering a slight shell wound to the back of his right leg and thigh.

Corporal Seeley became a prisoner of war of the Japanese when the Allied Forces at Singapore surrendered on 15th February 1942. Whilst in captivity he was admitted to the Australian General Hospital at Changi suffering from dysentery on 15th May 1942 and he rejoined his battalion on 16th September 1942. He was a member of "B" Force that comprised 1494 Allied prisoners of war who boarded the Japanese ship "Yubi Maru" in Singapore and embarked for Sandakan in Borneo where they were to build an aerodrome for the Japanese. He died of acute enteritis/malaria during somewhere on the track between Sandakan and Ranau during the second march. According to a survivor he dropped out of the march. It was not possible to establish whether he subsequently died or was killed by the Japanese. At the time of his death John Seeley was 25 years of age. A personal possession of his was found at Ranau after the war.



Australian War Memorial photograph 133913

Captain Susimi Hoshijima the Commandant of the prisoner of war camp at Sandakan. He orchestrated the Death Marches and was tried and hanged for his war crimes.

Toowoomba Grammar School archive records show that he enrolled as a day student on 30th January 1934 and left the School on 1st June 1935. His parent was shown as Mr James Seeley of Toowoomba.

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