



In Memory of

Flying Officer

JOHN ROBERT SPALDING

404516, Royal Australian Air Force
who died age 26
on 26 April 1942

Son of John Spalding and Florence Spalding;
husband of Valda Lillian Spalding,
of Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia

Remembered with honour
KARACHI WAR CEMETERY, PAKISTAN





Flying Officer John Robert Spalding, the son of John Spalding and Florence Spalding (nee Smallhorn) was born at Toowoomba on 29th September 1915. He was educated at the Toowoomba Grammar School. After leaving school he was employed as a Sales Clerk (Engineering Salesman) for the Toowoomba Foundry in Townsville. He was enrolled into the Reserve of the Royal Australian Air Force at Townsville on 7th April 1940 after swearing the statutory oath of allegiance. At the age of 24 years and 11 months he was enlisted into the Citizen Air Force of the R.A.A.F. on 18th September 1940 at No. 3 Recruiting Centre in Brisbane after giving a commitment that he would serve for the duration of the war and an additional twelve months. His physical description at the time of his enlistment was that he was 5 feet 8 inches in height and weighed 135 pounds. He had a dark complexion, brown eyes and black hair. He stated that he was of the Church of England religion. He gave his next of kin as Mrs Valda Lillian Spalding, residing c/- E.T. Perkins, 3 Cecil Street in Toowoomba. They had married on 1st October 1938 and their daughter, Susan Gai Spalding, was born on 8th May 1941.

Flying Officer John Spalding joined No. 2 Initial Training School on Lindfield in New South Wales. He joined No. 2 Elementary Flying Training School at Archerfield in Queensland on 14th November 1940. He joined No. 3 Service Flying Training School at Amberley in Queensland on 13th January 1941. He was awarded the Flying Qualification Badge on 1st March 1941. He was appointed to the commissioned rank of Probationary Flying Officer on 6th May 1941. He joined No. 3 Embarkation Depot at Sandgate in Queensland on 6th May 1941 and No. 2 Embarkation Depot at Bradfield Park in Sydney on 2nd June 1941 to prepare for service overseas on attachment to the Royal Air Force. Embarked from Australia on 13th June 1941 and disembarked in the United Kingdom on 21st July 1941 and he disembarked from the ship on 31st July 1941 and joined No. 3 Personnel Despatch and Reception Unit at Bournemouth. He joined No. 13 Operational Training Unit at Royal Air Force Station Bichesser on 9th August 1941 where aircrew were trained on light bombers. He joined No. 1445 Flight at Royal Air Force Station Lyneham in Wiltshire on 31st January 1942. 1445 Flight was where pilots received training in ferrying aircraft and joined the Middle East Pool on 11th February 1942 for operational duty.

Flying Officer John Spalding was the pilot of a No. 60 Squadron Royal Air Force Tiger Moth Aircraft that was lost at The Mall, Lahore, India, on 26th April 1942. He died at the Mayo Hospital in Lahore and was buried in the Rewak (South) Cemetery at Lahore. At the time of his death John Spalding was 26 years of age. He was later reburied in the Karachi War Cemetery in Pakistan.

His headstone in the Karachi War Cemetery has the family inscription “His Duty Nobly Done”. His name is commemorated on Panel No. 130 at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra and locally on the Toowoomba Grammar School World War 2 Honour Board.

John Spalding’s photo and the following report appeared in the local newspaper:

Flying Officer J.R. Spalding. Advice has been received by Mrs Valda L. Spalding, Toowoomba, that her husband, Flying Officer John Robert Spalding, has been killed as a result of an aircraft accident at Lahore, India. Flying Officer J.R. Spalding was the elder son of Mr and Mrs John Spalding, of No. 6 Cecil Street, Toowoomba. He was educated at the Toowoomba Grammar School and prior to enlistment with the R.A.A.F. was a member of the staff of the Toowoomba Foundry Co. Ltd, Townsville, from which centre he enlisted. He graduated as a pilot at Amberley, Queensland, and received his wings and commission at that centre in May, 1941. He left for overseas in June, 1941, and had been on active service in England, Gibraltar and the Middle East. Only recently he was posted to India from the Middle East. His baby daughter Susan was born a few weeks prior to his embarkation.

Toowoomba Grammar School archive records show that he enrolled as a day student on 29th July 1929 and he left the School on 29th September 1933. His parent was shown as Mr John Spalding of Toowoomba. He passed the Junior examination and played football whilst at School.

External Links:

[CWGC](#)

[Australian War Memorial Honour Roll](#)

[RAAF Record](#)