



In Memory of
Warrant Officer
JACK MURRAY TEW
404725, Royal Australian Air Force
who died age 26
on 11 March 1944

Son of Alfred Murray Tew and Rose Marian Tew;
husband of Lesley Joy Tew,
of Neutral Bay, New South Wales, Australia

Remembered with honour
CAMBRIDGE CITY CEMETERY, ENGLAND



WARRANT OFFICER
JACK MURRAY TEW

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE
SERVICE NUMBER: 404725

Warrant Officer Jack Murray Tew, the son of Alfred Murray Tew and Rose Murray Tew (nee Gibbs), was born at Toowoomba in Queensland on 13th June 1917. He was educated at the Newtown State School in Toowoomba where he passed the State Scholarship Examination in 1931. He then attended the Toowoomba Grammar School where he passed the Queensland University Junior Public Examination in 1934. He also studied Mercantile Law in 1937. He applied for aircrew training in the Royal Australian Air Force on 17th May 1940. At the time of his application, he had been employed for 2 years and 9 months as a Proof Reader and Sub-Editor at the Harrison Printing Company and then for 2 years 6 months as a salesman at the Toowoomba Foundry in Ruthven Street, Toowoomba. He had previously served for two years with the 25th Infantry Battalion and for four months in the 11th Light Horse. He stated that he was of the Church of England religion.

Warrant Officer Jack Tew resided with his family at 19 Grange Street, Toowoomba. His father was a printer by occupation. He was enrolled in the Reserve of the R.A.A.F. on 4th June 1940. He was enlisted into the Citizen Air Force of the R.A.A.F. at No. 3 Recruiting Centre in Brisbane on 8th November 1940 after giving an undertaking that he would serve for the duration of the war and an additional twelve months. His physical description at the time of enlistment was that he was 5 feet 7 inches in height and weighed 166 pounds. He had a fair complexion, grey eyes and chestnut hair. He stated that he was of the Church of England religion. He gave his next of kin as his father, Mr Alfred Murray Tew, residing at 19 Grange Street in Toowoomba.

Warrant Officer Jack Tew was allotted the Service Number of 404702 and sent to No. 2 Initial Training School at Lindfield in New South Wales on 10th November 1940 where he was trained in the basics of service life. He joined No 6. Elementary Flying Training School at Tamworth in New South Wales on 9th January 1941. He then attended No. 3 Service Flying Training School at Amberley in Queensland on 10th March 1941 as a student on No. 8 Flying Training Course. After graduating as a pilot he was awarded Flying Qualification Badge on 26th June 1941 and on the following day was promoted to the rank of Temporary Sergeant. He joined No. 3 Embarkation Depot at Sandgate on 6th July 1941 and No. 2 Embarkation Depot at Bradfield Park in Sydney on 11th July 1941 to prepare for overseas service on attachment to the Royal Air Force. He embarked by sea transport from Sydney on 17th July 1941 and disembarked in England on 2nd September 1941 where he joined No. 3 Personnel Despatch and Reception Centre at Bournemouth later that day.

Warrant Officer Jack Tew joined No. 27 Operational Training Unit at Royal Air Force Station Lichfield on 23rd September 1941 where training for night bomber crews was conducted using Vickers Wellington aircraft. He was promoted to the rank of Temporary Flight Sergeant on 27th December 1941. He joined No. 103 Squadron at Royal Air Force Station Elsham Wolds, Wales, for

operational duties on 13th May 1942. No. 103 Squadron carried out operations on targets on mainland Europe. He was transferred to No. 23 Operational Training Unit at Royal Air Force Station Pershore on 10th June 1942. He joined No. 9 Squadron at Royal Air Force Station Honington on 23rd July 1942 and No. 115 Squadron at Royal Air Force Station Marham on 25th July 1942. He was transferred to No. 161 (Special Duties) Squadron at Royal Air Force Station Tempsford on 7th September 1942. He was transferred to No. 1483 Bombing & Gunnery Flight at Royal Air Force Station Marham on 8th December 1942. He was promoted to the rank of Temporary Warrant Officer on 27th December 1942. He joined No. 1688 Bomber Defence Training Flight at Royal Air Force Station Feltwell on 11th February 1944. His role in the squadron, particularly as he was flying a Hurricane fighter, appears to have been to familiarize bomber crews by simulating attacks by enemy aircraft on their aircraft.



A Hawker Hurricane fighter photographed by Adrian Pingstone.

Warrant Officer Jack Tew was a pilot of a No. 1688 Flight Royal Air Force Hurricane Fighter LF 426 and was killed in a flying accident at Weltmore Farm, 22 miles north east of Cambridge, Norfolk, United Kingdom, on 11th March 1944 whilst engaged in a non-operational flight. His father and his wife, both residing at 19 Grange Street, Toowoomba, were both notified that he had lost his life whilst carrying out a non-operational flight. His funeral with full service honours was held at 1400 hours at the Cambridge City Cemetery, in the United Kingdom on 16th March 1944. At the time of his death, Jack Tew was 26 years of age.

The Commanding Officer of No. 1483 Bombing & Gunnery Flight at Royal Air Force Sub-Station, Newmarket in Suffolk wrote the following letter to his wife:

Dear Mrs Tew. You will have had a cable advising you of your husband's death in a flying accident and I am writing to express my deep sympathy with you in your loss. Jack had been with me for over a year and was one of the most popular members of my staff and of his Mess and will be very much missed by everybody. I, myself had come to regard him as a friend and his death came as a great shock, particularly so, as I had been trying very hard to get him commissioned, for I had a high opinion of his capabilities and I think he would have gone far. There is little I can tell you about his death. The cause of the accident is still very obscure and is of course being very thoroughly investigated, but it may be some slight comfort for you to know that he was killed instantly and can have known no pain. Every possible care is being taken of his personal effects and these will be returned to you in due course by the Australian Authorities in London. In the meantime, if there is anything further you would like to know, or if I can be of any assistance whatever, please get in touch with me without delay. Yours Sincerely, Squadron Leader Kay.

For his service during World War 2, Jack Tew had entitlement for the Pilot Qualification Badge, the 1939/1945 Star, the Aircrew Europe Star, the Defence Medal, the War Medal and the Australian Service Medal 1939/1945. His name is commemorated on Panel No. 131 at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra and locally on the Toowoomba Soldiers' Memorial Hall World War 2 Honour Board, the Toowoomba Mothers' Memorial, the Newtown State School Honour Stone, St James' Church Memorial Tablet and the Toowoomba Grammar School World War 2 Roll of Honour.

Jack Tew's photograph and the following details of his death were published in the *Toowoomba Chronicle* on 19th May 1944:

Warrant Officer Jack Tew was killed in a flying accident in England in March. He gained his wings in Australia in June 1941, and during two and a half years' service overseas had taken part in several operational flights. He was educated at the Newtown State School and the Toowoomba Grammar School, and before the war represented Toowoomba in inter-city hockey matches. He was the eldest son of Mr and Mrs A Tew, Grange Street. Prior to going overseas he married Miss Lesley Hawkins of Adelaide.

Note:

Prior to going overseas, he married Lesley Joy Tew on 31st May 1941 at St James' Church of England, Russell Street, Toowoomba. She initially resided with his parents and later changed he address to "Tara", 45 Kurraba Road, Neutral Bay, New South Wales. In March 1946 Jack Tew's wife, having remarried, is shown as Mrs Donnolly, c/- 45 Kurraba Road, Neutral Bay, Sydney.

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