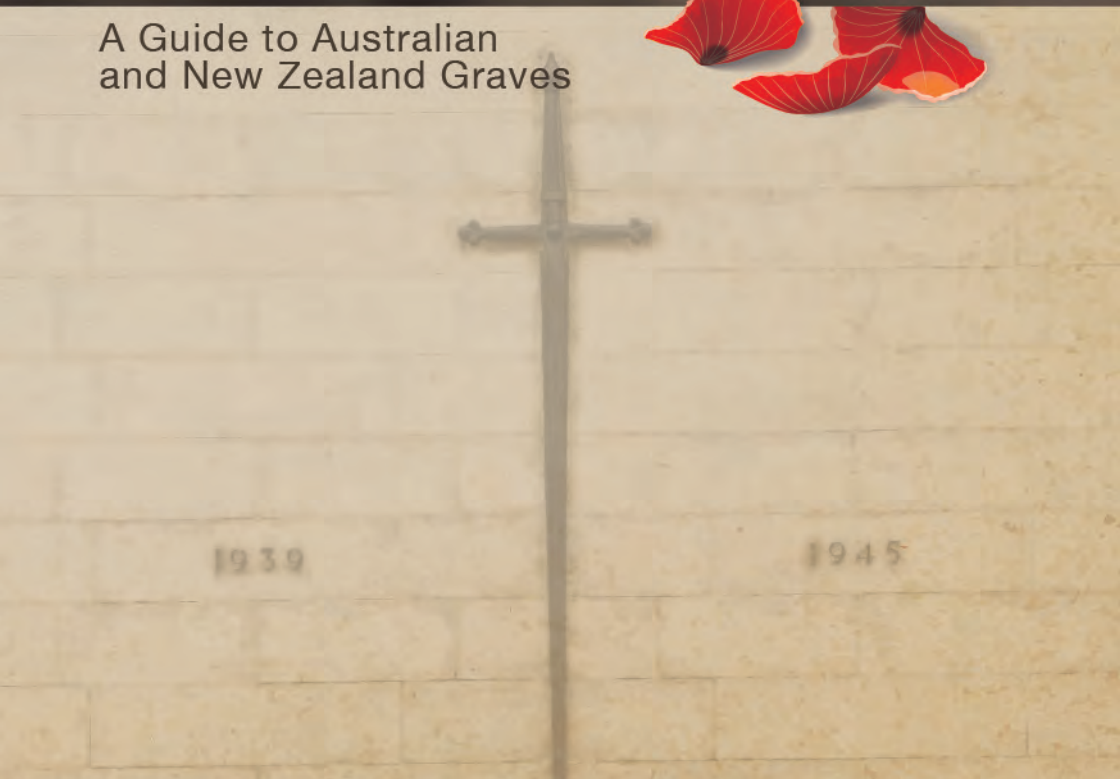




# Sai Wan War Cemetery

A Guide to Australian  
and New Zealand Graves



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## A Guide to Australian and New Zealand Graves



Hong Kong is home to three Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemeteries. Two in Sai Wan and one in Stanley. Of these, the largest is Sai Wan War Cemetery on Cape Collinson Road. Of nearly 1700 service personnel buried in Hong Kong, more than 1600 are at rest in Sai Wan War Cemetery. The majority are from the United Kingdom, Canada, and India who fought in Hong Kong. More than 400 are unidentified.

Australian and New Zealand defence forces did not serve in the defence of Hong Kong during World War II. However, among the dead buried at Sai Wan War Cemetery are 33 Australians and one New Zealander. Each was brought here for burial from other theatres in the Pacific, including Formosa (now Taiwan), Japan and the Philippines. Many were among a group of 450 senior Australian officers, engineers and technicians captured in Singapore and then transported to labour camps in Taiwan, Japan, Korea and China.

The cemetery is designed by the architect Colin St Clair Oakes, and is located about 11 kilometres from the Central business centre. The alter-like Stone of Remembrance, designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens and common to all larger Commonwealth war cemeteries, stands just inside the entrance. Carved into it are the words chosen by Rudyard Kipling from the Book of Ecclesiasticus: **THEIR NAME LIVETH FOR EVERMORE**. At the lower end is the Cross of Sacrifice, also a feature of most Commonwealth war cemeteries. It was designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield and is set on an octagonal base and bears a bronze sword on its shaft.

At the entrance to this cemetery stands the Sai Wan Memorial, also designed by Colin St Clair Oakes. It is one of several memorials across Hong Kong to those who remain missing during conflict. Among the names are 23 Australians and three New Zealanders.

This guide contains known details of those buried at Sai Wan War Cemetery, with information obtained from the Australian War Memorial, Auckland Museum, Commonwealth War Graves Commission and other open-source reference materials. The Australian and New Zealand Consulates-General in Hong Kong do not guarantee the accuracy, reliability, currency or completeness of any material contained in this guide, nor accept any liability for information contained within.





**ADAMS,**  
JAMES WILLIAM

**Service Number:**  
VX39777  
**Rank:** Private  
**Unit:** 2/21 Battalion, AIF  
**Age:** 26

**Parents:** William James Adams and Margaret Euphemia Adams from Albert Park, Victoria, Australia.

Private James "Jimmy" William Adams was a 21-year-old salesman before he enlisted on 18 February 1941 at Royal Park, in Victoria. Two months later, his unit, 2/21 Battalion, AIF was sent to Darwin to prepare for an attack by Japanese forces.

On 13 December 1941, the battalion headed to Ambon Island, Indonesia, then known as the Netherlands East Indies, to reinforce Dutch forces, bringing the island's allied armed forces to 3,700 soldiers.

The commanding officer at the time noted that ammunition, food, transport, air and artillery support were limited and it would not be able to defend itself from Japanese attack. He was right. On 30 January 1942, the Japanese landed and Dutch troops surrendered. Private Adams' battalion was forced to surrender on 3 February 1942, and he became a prisoner of war (POW).

POW conditions on Ambon were harsh as recorded by fellow battalion member Alan Murnane who kept a diary outlining the conditions and illnesses affecting the prisoners such as malaria, Beriberi (Thiamine deficiency), and starvation.

Ambon had the highest death rate of any Australian POWs. Private Adams survived his three years imprisonment. He was evacuated on 10 September 1945 but died on 1 October 1945 of an unknown illness, on board the Royal Navy Hospital Ship HMHS Gerusalemme, when it was docked in Victoria Harbour, Hong Kong. The ship was carrying 139 POWs including 56 Australians at that time.

**Date & Place of Death:**  
1 October 1945, At sea (ex-POW)

**Cause of Death:** Illness

**Gravestone Location:** VI. A. 10.



**ANDERSON,**  
ARTHUR DESMOND  
THORN

**Service Number:**  
VX42633  
**Rank:** Gunner  
**Unit:** 2/4 Anti Tank  
Regiment, 8th Division AIF  
**Age:** 20

**Parents:** Arthur Gordon Anderson and Ruby May Anderson, Balwyn, Victoria, Australia.

Arthur Anderson, or "Des" as his family affectionately called him, was a transport driver and mechanic before he enlisted on 28 June 1940 at Caulfield, Victoria. On his enlistment records, the 21-year-old named his mother, Ruby, as his next of kin. He was born in 1919 at Footscray, Victoria.

The young gunner's regiment, 2/4 Anti-Tank Regiment 2nd AIF, took part in the Malayan Campaign and the Battle of Singapore, before the city-state was captured by the Japanese.

He became a Japanese prisoner of war (POW) in Palembang, southern Sumatra and was sent to 3rd branch camp, Taiwan where he died as a result of colitis and malaria on 4 November 1942. More than 170 soldiers in his regiment also died as POWs.

Anderson's name is mentioned in connection with the SS Hong Tat that was used to transport Australian Army POWs from Palembang POW camp. He is also honoured at The Australian Ex-Prisoners of War Memorial, Ballarat, Victoria.

**Date & Place of Death:**  
4 November 1942, Taiwan

**Cause of Death:** Illness

**Gravestone Location:** VI. A. 7



**BRADBURY,  
ROWLAND CHARLES  
COVERDALE**

**Service number:** 4654  
**Rank:** Leading Seaman,  
RAN  
**Ship:** HMS Moreton Bay  
**Age:** 40

**Parents:** Miles Coverdale Bradbury and Catherine Bradbury, Mt. Hawthorn, Western Australia.

Leading Seaman Bradbury was born in 1900 in Perth, WA and enlisted in Fremantle. His service record details from the National Archives of Australia note that he was 162 cm tall, had dark hair, brown eyes and a sallow freckled complexion.

Bradbury first enlisted in the Royal Australian Fleet Reserve in 1915. His record includes a British War Medal and Victory Medal (1921) and both Long Service and Good Conduct Medals (1935).

He served under Acting Captain E M Haes on the HMS Moreton Bay, an armed merchant cruiser, which had been converted from its former use as a passenger ship. The vessel was in Hong Kong to help evacuate families in the face of a pending attack by Japanese forces which was expected in July 1940.

His service record attributes his death to appendicitis and notes that a pension was granted

**Date & Place of Death:**  
25 July 1940, Hong Kong

**Cause of Death:** Illness

**Gravestone Location:** VI. A. 11.



**BUTLER,  
REX NELSON**

**Service number:**  
SX2600  
**Rank:** Sergeant  
**Unit:** 8th Division  
AIF, Amn. Sub. Park,  
Australian Army Service  
Corps (AASC)  
**Age:** 30

**Parents:** Arthur William and Margaret Mary Butler.

Rex Butler was born in Mt Gambier, South Australia, and died in the Philippines on 18 August 1943, aged 30.

Butler left school when he was 14 to help out on the family farm "Wattle Grove" near Kongorong, in the south east of South Australia. At 18, he joined the 3rd Light Horse in Mt Gambier and became known as an expert marksman, a useful skill for a young man who later travelled across northern Australia, hunting buffaloes and crocodiles.

Butler enlisted as a private on 1 May 1940 at Wayville, an Adelaide suburb. Feeling that he was missing out on the war overseas, he asked to be transferred to 8th Division, and left Australia in November 1941 for Malacca. With the fall of Singapore, he became a Prisoner of War (POW) but fellow inmates recalled that he made nightly sorties outside their barbed wire enclosure.

In 1943 he was moved to Berhala Island, Malaysia, where he was one of eight POWs who escaped by rowing a dugout canoe 250 kilometres to Tawi Tawi, in the Philippines. Once there, he joined the US/Filipino guerrilla unit, the 125th Infantry Regiment. During an ambush by pro-Japanese Moro villagers, Butler was accidentally killed by a stray bullet.

In 1945, Major RE Steele remembered Butler as a "man who lived and died a hero".

**Date & Place of Death:**  
18 August 1943, Philippines

**Cause of Death:** Killed in action

**Gravestone Location:** II. B. 5.



**COOPER,**  
RONALD SIMMONS

**Service Number:**  
VX58497  
**Rank:** Gunner  
**Unit:** 2/4 Anti-Tank  
Regiment, AIF  
**Age:** 25



**DESMOND,**  
JAMES

**Rank:** Chief engineer  
**Unit:** Australian  
Merchant Navy

**Parents:** Andrew Dresser Cooper and Madge Eileen Cooper, Gardenvale, Victoria, Australia.

Born in 1919, in Hobart, Tasmania, Ronald Cooper enlisted at Royal Park, Victoria. His regiment saw action in the Malayan campaign and the Battle of Singapore. In February 1942, the garrison was overwhelmed by Japanese forces, and was forced to surrender.

Cooper was later sent as a prisoner of war (POW) to Japan. Ironically, although Coopers survived three years as a POW, after Japan surrendered, he and four fellow Aussie ex-POWs were being sent back to Australia when they were killed in a plane crash. Their transport plane, a converted Liberator bomber, flying them from Okinawa to Manila, was blown off course by a cyclone, and crashed into a mountain in Taiwan.

All five crew members, 11 US ex-POWs and four Dutch ex-POWs also died in the accident.

**Date & Place of Death:**  
10 September 1945, Taiwan

**Cause of Death:** Accidental

**Gravestone Location:** VI. A. 5.

Very little detail is outlined in Sai Wan War Cemetery records about James Desmond.

Born in 1926 in Sydney, Desmond joined the merchant navy's war effort in March 1941 in Waverton, Sydney and was posted to serve on the steel steamer SS Macumba as a Deck Boy. In August 1943, that ship was sunk when two Japanese aircraft scored a direct hit on its engine room. Three of its crew died in the attack with Desmond being among survivors who were taken on board an escort vessel.

In 2017 the wreckage of the ship was located in 40 metres of water in the Arafura Sea, off the Northern Territory coastline.

The men and ships of the merchant navy had a vital role in the war effort. They ferried troops, food, supplies and equipment to battlefields, often at great risk and without the protection of weaponry.

Around 3,500 merchant seamen are listed on an Australian Department of Veterans Affairs nominal roll as having served in WWII while the Australian War Memorial commemorates 845 of them who are known to have died during their war service.

This number doesn't include hundreds of merchant seamen who died while serving on British merchant ships and in the international Seaman's Pool.

**Date & Place of Death:**  
9 October 1945, Luzon, Philippines

**Cause of Death:** Died in Hospital

**Gravestone Location:** I. E. 10.



**GILDING,**  
JACK LIVINGSTONE

**Service number:**  
SX10013  
**Rank:** Corporal  
**Unit:** 8th Division  
AIF Amn. Sub. Park,  
Australian Army Service  
Corps  
**Age:** 26

**Parents:** George Jasper and Kathleen Gertrude Gilding of Woodville, South Australia.

After enlisting in Adelaide, Gilding saw action in the Battle of Singapore. When the garrison surrendered he became a prisoner of war (POW) and was sent to Japan.

At the end of the war, Gilding was among a group of five Australian ex-POWs being transported back home via Manila when their plane crashed into a mountainside in Taiwan.

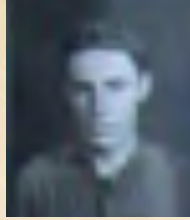
The Directorate of Army Records at Albert Park said the returning ex-POWs lost their lives 'when a United States Army Air Force Plane crashed at Kansan Mountain, Formosa.'

A fellow ex-POW, Johnny Gilmore had travelled with Gilding until they reached Okinawa, where Gilding ran into an old colleague. Gilding decided to travel back to Manila with his mate. Gilmore never saw Gilding again, but described him as a true friend. "He would do anything to help anyone, and took many risks," Gilmore said.

**Date & Place of Death:**  
10 September 1945, Taiwan

**Cause of Death:** Accidental (after recovery)

**Gravestone Location:** VI. A. 6.



**GOOD,**  
CHRISTOPHER  
MARSHALL

**Service number:**  
417476  
**Rank:** Warrant Officer  
**Unit:** RAAF  
**Age:** 21

**Parents:** William Duncan Good and Magdalen Good, Brighton, South Australia.

While transporting goods and passengers from Australia to the Philippines, Christopher Good was part of the crew of an ANA Courier VH-CDC that crashed on landing in bad weather at Tacloban airstrip and ended up in San Pedro Bay in the Philippines. Good and 15 others on the flight were killed. Amazingly, one person survived. The plane operated under charter from US Forces.

An investigating highlighted problems with the plane's radio and maintenance of rescue equipment.

Good was originally buried in the US Armed Forces Cemetery on Leyte Island, close to the crash site. His records include a letter from his father asking for details about that service. Among Good's personal effects which were sent to his family, is listed his golf clubs and a golf bag.

In February 1955, he was re-interred in Sai Wan and a letter describing the ceremony, wreath laying and dignitaries plus a photograph of his memorial cross, was sent to his father. Unfortunately, it appears that the original headstone had the wrong rank and initials.

**Date & Place of Death:**  
13 November 1945, Leyte, Philippines

**Cause of Death:** Accidental

**Gravestone Location:** I. D. 10.



**HALL,**  
G. J.

**Service:** Merchant Navy  
**Rank:** Able Seaman  
**Unit:** United States  
Army Transport Wichita



**JAMES,**  
ALBERT ARTHUR

**Service number:**  
NX60056  
**Rank:** Sergeant  
**Unit:** 2/19 Battalion,  
Australian Infantry, AIF  
**Age:** 33

**Parents:** Mr and Mrs. John Hall, Mackay, Queensland, Australia.

Able Seaman Hall served with the Merchant Navy and was attached to the US Army Transport Wichita in the Philippines.

Built in the 1930s in Philadelphia, the Wichita was a heavy cruiser that was commissioned into the US Navy in 1939.

In June 1944, she was engaged in the Battle of the Philippines Sea against Japanese forces. In the first week of July the ship covered troop transport and escort carriers off Saipan and between 8-12 July the ship was involved in bombarding Japanese positions on Guam.

Hall is honoured on the Australian War Memorial Commemorative Roll.

**Date & Place of Death:**  
8 July 1945, Leyte, Philippines

**Cause of Death:** Drowned

**Gravestone Location:** II. E. 14.

**Parents:** Albert and Elsie Margurite James; Married to: Minora May James, Kogarah, New South Wales, Australia, (Father of Clive James, Australian writer and broadcaster).

Albert James was born in 1912, and enlisted at the Sydney suburb of Paddington, listing his wife, Minora as his next of kin.

His battalion's battle honours include Malaya 1941-1942 and Singapore. Surviving these battles, he was taken prisoner by the Japanese after the fall of Singapore in 1942.

Just days after WWII ended, the former POW, who had been in a forced labour camp in Japan, was being flown home with four fellow Australians via Manila when their aircraft was blown off course by a typhoon, hitting a mountainside in Taiwan.

As a young child, his son Clive, remembered seeing his mother's grief as she was told about his father's death. Years later, Clive visited his father's gravesite in Sai Wan War Cemetery and wrote a poem about the event.

**Date & Place of Death:**  
10 September 1945, Japan

**Cause of Death:** Accidental (after recovery)

**Gravestone Location:** VI. A. 2.



**JENKINS,**  
THOMAS HAROLD

**Rank:** Able Seaman  
**Unit:** Merchant Navy,  
SS Morinda  
**Age:** 35



**JONES,**  
LLOYD GEORGE

**Service number:**  
425645  
**Rank:** Warrant Officer  
**Unit:** 4 Communication  
Unit, RAAF  
**Age:** 26

**Married to:** Mabel Heather Jenkins,  
Homebush, New South Wales, Australia.

**Parents:** Arnold William and Edith Emily  
Jones, Tully, Queensland, Australia.

The SS Morinda, a steam ship, was built in Scotland in 1913. In 1941 she was requisitioned by the Australian Navy to evacuate women and children from the Solomon Islands. The ship and its evacuees came under intense air attack but avoided serious damage.

Lloyd Jones was a member of 4 Communication Unit, Archerfield, RAAF. His death occurred after the war had ended and was the result of plane crash, near Leyte Island, in the Philippines.

In 1942 she was handed over to the US Navy as an ammunition ship together with her Australian crew to supply US destroyers in the Pacific.

The ANA C-49A (DC-3) he was in, crashed while landing in bad weather in Tacloban and ended up in San Pedro Bay.

Thomas Jenkins was one of that crew. The inscription on his gravesite simply says, "Sadly missed by his loving wife Heather and daughter Evelyn".

Jones together with Warrant Officer CM Good, Flying Officer AW Bennet and two Australian Merchant Seamen, together with 11 Americans all died in the accident. USAF Lieutenant McCabe was the sole survivor of the accident, after being rescued from the sea.

**Date & Place of Death:**  
13 November 1945

Records show the accident was investigated and questions were raised about the aircraft's radio communications and safety equipment.

**Gravestone Location:** I. D. 11.

**Date & Place of Death:**  
13 November 1945, Leyte, Philippines

**Cause of Death:** Accidental

**Gravestone Location:** I. D. 8.





**KING,**  
WALTER

**Rank:** Able Seaman  
**Unit:** Australian  
Merchant Navy, SS  
Elisha Whitney  
**Age:** 49



**LAW,**  
FREDERICK THOMAS

**Service number:**  
NX52301  
**Rank:** Private  
**Unit:** 2/19 Australian  
Infantry Battalion  
**Age:** 42

**Parents:** Walter and Fanny Louisa King.  
**Married to:** Dorothy Amelia King, Enfield,  
New South Wales, Australia.

Able Seaman Walter King was listed as serving on the SS Elisha Whitney. The ship was launched in October 1943 and went into service for the US Army Transportation Service. The steam turbine driven ship carried no armaments.

Records indicate King was on board an ANA Courier VH-CDC that crashed into San Pedro Bay. Records mention that his death, as a result of an airplane accident, and his subsequent internment in the US cemetery in Leyte was reported to the Department of Air in Melbourne by US authorities. The memo suggested the Department of Air should notify his next of kin because King was regarded as a civilian.

The inscription on his memorial at Sai Wan War Cemetery states: "Loved husband of Dot and father of Ron and Keith."

**Date & Place of Death:**  
14 November 1945, Leyte, Philippines

**Cause of Death:** Died in an air crash

**Gravestone Location:** I. D. 7.

**Married to:** Winifred Margaret Law, Balmain,  
New South Wales, Australia.

Private Law was born in Clifton Hill, Victoria on 23 December 1900, and at 42, he must have been considerably older than his fellow soldiers.

He enlisted at Paddington on 2 July 1940, Sydney and was with the 2/19 Australian Infantry Battalion. On Friday 4 December 1942 he was listed in the Brisbane Courier-Mail newspaper as being among 221 Australian soldiers taken as prisoners of war (POW) by the Japanese Forces.

The announcement was made by the Army Minister, Francis Forde, in Canberra, who asked relatives and friends not to contact their nearest district records officer, as they were having to deal with a large number of inquiries.

After the fall of Singapore, Law was sent to Taiwan by the Japanese forces, where he later died on 8 April 1943.

**Date & Place of Death:**  
8 April 1943, Taiwan

**Cause of Death:** Illness

**Gravestone Location:** VI. A. 9.



**LITTLE,**  
FRANCIS CYRIL

**Service number:**  
H2051

**Rank:** Able Seaman  
HMAS Yunnan

**Unit:** Austalian Navy  
Reserve AB20G1

**Age:** 21

**Parents:** Amos Henry and Daisy Theodora Little, Dromedary, Tasmania, Australia.

In 1942, Francis Little was not even 18 years old when he enlisted in the Royal Australian Navy Reserve. He spent the next three years in active service.

His ship, the HMAS Yunnan, was one of six vessels known as the "China Fleet" - which were requisitioned by the Royal Navy and which all retained their original names. During his time on board, the HMAS Yunnan was used as an ammunition stores issuing ship, to supply Australian units of the US Seventh fleet.

The HMAS Yunnan was in Subic Bay in the Philippines on 3 October 1945 when an explosion occurred on a motor barge, according to a report in The Mercury newspaper; as a result, the young Tasmanian accidentally drowned.

**Date & Place of Death:**

3 October 1945

**Cause of Death:** Drowning

**Gravestone Location:** I. E. 4.



**LUDVIGSEN,**  
LUDVIG

**Rank:** Second Officer

**Unit:** Australian  
Merchant Navy SS  
China

**Age:** 32

**Parents:** Jens Andreas and Elena Margrethe Ludvigsen.

**Married to:** Ethel Patricia Ludvigsen, Dulwich Hill, New South Wales, Australia.

Born in 1912, Ludvigsen was Norwegian by nationality. As the hostilities of WWII drew to an end, Ludvigsen was serving his country as second officer assigned to SS China.

During the war effort, the Merchant Navy played an essential role in keeping allied ship fuelled and supplied, and when the war ended, in bringing home thousands of POWs.

**Date & Place of Death:**

11 July 1945, Mindanao, Philippines

**Gravestone Location:** I. D. 13.



**MARSHALL,  
LEONARD**

**Rank:** Chief Refrigerator Engineer  
**Service:** Australian Merchant Navy, SS Katoomba  
**Age:** 35



**MARTIN,  
CECIL**

**Service number:** NX31696  
**Rank:** Acting Sergeant  
**Unit:** 2/20 Unit Battalion, Australian Infantry  
**Age:** 26

**Parents:** Henry and Mary AM Marshall, Laurieton, New South Wales, Australia.

Chief Refrigerator Engineer Marshall was born at Laurieton on the New South Wales mid-north coast. He was engaged with the Australian Merchant Navy from 3 April 1939 until January 1946 when he died from injuries.

SS Katoomba was originally a passenger liner but she was used to carry troops during both WW1 and WWII.

He is "Dearly loved and sadly missed by loving mother and sisters."

**Date & Place of Death:**  
19 January 1946

**Cause of Death:** Injuries

**Gravestone Location:** I. E. 11.

**Parents:** George Robert and Ada Elizabeth Martin, Lismore, New South Wales, Australia.

Cecil Martin was a member of Tulip Force otherwise known as Mission 204, a secret British operation carried out between 1940-42 in China to help the Chinese National Army, undertake guerrilla and resistance operations against the Japanese occupation of China, during the Second Sino-Japanese War.

Members of the mission were trained in demolition, ambush and engineering reconnaissance at the Bush Warfare School in Burma in 1941, before being sent to China. The first phase of this operation did not go well as they were not permitted to attack the Japanese by their Chinese commanding officer.

In camp, members of the unit suffered dysentery, malaria and typhus. The battalion, of which Martin had been a member, left the area in September 1942.

**Date & Place of Death:**  
15 July 1942  
Buried in Christian Burial Ground near Tungku, Kiangsi Province, China

**Cause of Death:** Illness

**Gravestone Location:** I. D. 5.



**NEILL,**  
AUBREY CHARLES

**Service number:**  
NX24931  
**Rank:** Gunner  
**Unit:** 2/15 Field  
Regiment, RAA  
**Age:** 33

**Parents:** Archibald and Miriam Neill, Gosford, New South Wales, Australia.

Aubrey Neill was born in November 1909, at Colo in New South Wales, and lived in Kulnara, near Gosford. Before he enlisted in June 1940, Neill was an orchardist.

He enlisted at Paddington and his unit, the 2/15 Field Regiment was raised at Rosebury Racecourse, Sydney in November 1940. Soldiers in the regiment trained at Ingleburn. They used First World War, 18-pound guns – noted in the regiments' history, as being even "older than the gunners" were themselves.

The new recruits disembarked in Singapore in August 1941, moving to Kluang, Malaysia in December. As the Japanese forces advanced, the regiment's gunners provided essential artillery support, firing thousands of rounds as the allies withdrew towards Singapore where on 15 February 1943, British forces surrendered and on 17 February 1943, Neill's regiment moved to Changi prisoner of war camp (POW).

The Australian Ex-Prisoners of War Memorial in Ballarat lists Aubrey's death as having occurred while he was a Japanese POW. The Australian War Memorial notes he died and was buried in Taiwan. His name is also mentioned on the Roll of Honour, in his hometown of Gosford, NSW.

**Date & Place of Death:**  
5 October 1943, Taiwan

**Cause of Death:** Illness

**Gravestone Location:** VI. A. 8.



**NOBLE,**  
RICHARD THOMAS

**Service Number:**  
NX35741  
**Rank:** Sergeant  
**Unit:** 2/30 Australian  
Infantry Battalion  
**Age:** 37

**Parents:** Richard Thomas Noble and Elizabeth Noble.

**Married to:** Evelyn May Noble, Temora, New South Wales, Australia.

Born in 1908, Richard Noble was already considerably older than his fellow enlistees when he joined up in Wagga Wagga on 26 June 1940.

On 29 July 1941 he set sail on the Johan Van Olden-Barneveldt at Woolloomooloo, headed for Singapore, arriving in August 1941. His battalion was involved in the Battle of Gemas and in the defence of Singapore.

After the allied surrender, he became a Japanese prisoner of war (POW), undertaking forced labour in Singapore before become part of 'J Force' - POWs who were sent to Japan. He survived to see the end of the war, but died when the plane taking him home, was blown off course and crashed into a mountain in Taiwan en route from Okinawa.

Of the 900 men in his battalion, 433 were killed in action or died as POWs. A further 136 were wounded.

There is a touching epitaph on his gravestone from his family: "Dearly loved & sadly missed by loving wife Evelyn and son Ron".

**Date & Place of Death:**  
10 September 1945, Taiwan

**Cause of Death:** Accidental

**Gravestone Location:** VI. A. 3.



**PIGDON,**  
DOUGLAS CLELLAND

**Service number:**  
VX39275  
**Rank:** Colonel  
**Unit:** 13 Australian  
General Hospital  
Service  
**Age:** 53



**PRYOR,**  
ROBERT GEORGE

**Service number:**  
437058  
**Rank:** Flight Sergeant  
**Unit:** RAAF  
**Age:** 21

**Parents:** Thomas Miers Pigdon and Elizabeth Kate Pigdon.

**Married to:** Beatrice Pigdon, Narre Warren, Victoria, Australia.

Douglas Pigdon MD BS ED FRCS, had already seen action in WW1 (1914-18) as a medical officer with the rank of Major, when he enlisted in the 2nd AIF in January 1941, arriving in Singapore in April 1941.

On 1 September 1941 he was appointed Colonel and commander of 2/13 Australian General Hospital.

The hospital was relocated to Malaya in November 1941, and became a large-scale casualty clearing station as the Japanese advanced. In January 1942, the hospital was withdrawn to Singapore. At the time of Singapore's surrender, the hospital was treating 1,273 patients.

Douglas was reported missing in action on 16 February 1942. Records note he was a prisoner of war (POW) with H Force in August 1942. As a POW he was moved from Changi, to Taiwan, Japan and finally to Hoten Camp, Mukden, Manchuria (China). Army records indicate he was officially listed as missing until January 1943, and confirmed he was known to be a POW in Hoten Camp in April 1943. POWs were forced to work in nearby factories making parts for aircraft, tools, dyes and carpentry. Pigdon's service record indicates he died from disease at Mukden in July 1945.

A US army parachute team landed near the camp in August 1945 and a few days, later Russian troops took over the camp.

**Date & Place of Death:**  
6 July 1945, Mukden, China

**Cause of Death:** Illness

**Gravestone Location:** IV. B. 1.

**Parents:** Harold Rupert Torr Pryor and Florence Maud Pryor, Broken Hill, New South Wales, Australia.

The young RAAF crewman was born in the mining town of Broken Hill on 10 January 1924, and enlisted aged 18, in Adelaide, South Australia, on 15 October 1942.

Pryor's unit, No. 358 squadron (RAF) was based in Jessore, India when on 25 February 1945, Pryor was the second pilot in the crew of Liberator EW188, which took off on a special operation to drop supplies behind Japanese lines.

The plane left the squadron's airstrip at 1044Z hrs and last reported its location to base at 23.11.North, 089.11 East. With contact lost, it was reported missing in Indo-China.

Later, a search team under the command of the US Army HQ China found the crash site, 40km west of the Vietnamese village of Phu-Loc, south of Hue. There were no survivors.

The young officer's service is acknowledged on Honour Rolls in Broken Hill, at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, and at the National War Memorial, Adelaide. In 1955 a photo and a description of the dedication ceremony at the Sai Wan cemetery was sent to his father, who wrote back to the Department of Air saying how grateful the Pryor family was to receive both of the items.

**Date & Place of Death:**  
25 February 1945, Indo-China (Vietnam)

**Cause of Death:** Aircraft crashed during a special operations mission

**Gravestone Location:** VII. D. 7.



**RAWSON,  
HAYDN SELBY**

**Service number:**  
300549  
**Rank:** Warrant Officer  
**Unit:** RAAF Reserve  
(Civil aircrew)  
**Age:** 26



**ROGERSON,  
HARRY**

**Service number:**  
VX35009  
**Rank:** Warrant Officer  
(Class 2)  
**Unit:** 2/29 Battalion AIF  
**Age:** 44

**Parents:** Ernest Henry and Violet Elaine Rawson.

**Married to:** Constance Viva Rawson, Cardwell, Queensland, Australia.

Born in Nottingham in 1919, Haydn Rawson's parents migrated to Australia in 1923, settling in Perth, Western Australia when he was a four-years-old.

Rawson enlisted in Perth in May 1941. In January 1943, 2 Navigation School posted Pilot Officer HS Rawson to 1 Embarkation Depot for termination of appointment, where he was discharged. In April 1943 he enlisted in the RAAF Reserve as a Warrant Officer.

While piloting an Australian National Airlines transport aircraft, a Dakota C-49A VH-CDC, the aircraft struck trouble, due to bad weather, about 1.6km after take off from Tacloban, in the Leyte Gulf, in the eastern Visayan region of the Philippines.

Rawson and 15 others were killed in the crash although one person survived the accident.

**Date & Place of Death:**  
13 November 1945, Leyte, Philippines

**Cause of Death:** Accidental

**Gravestone Location:** I. D. 9.

**Parents:** James Brown Rogerson and Margaret America Rogerson.

**Married to:** Hilda Mary Rogerson, Oldham, Lancashire.

Rogerson was born in 1901 in Manchester, UK. He enlisted at Royal Park, Victoria and gave his wife Hilda as his next of kin. His battalion was formed in 1940 and sustained heavy battle losses in Malaya before drawing back to defend Singapore where the battalion surrendered in February 1942.

Harry Rogerson survived his time as a Japanese prisoner of war (POW) and was returning home to Australia when he died.

He was being flown from Okinawa to Manila together with US and Dutch ex-POWs when the B-24 Liberator aircraft in which he was a passenger, was blown off course and crashed into a mountainside in Taiwan.

Rogerson's regiment gained battle honours for campaigns in Johore, Malaya, Singapore and The Muar.

His memorial at Sai Wan War Cemetery simply states: "RIP"

**Date & Place of Death:**  
10 September 1945, Japan

**Cause of Death:**  
Accidental (after recovery)

**Gravestone Location:** VI. A. 4.



**SANDERY,  
NEIL**

**Rank:** Chief Officer  
**Unit:** Australian  
Merchant Navy SS City  
of Houston  
**Age:** 28



**SAVAGE,  
STUART WILLIAM**

**Service Number:**  
B2083  
**Rank:** DEMS Gunner  
**Unit:** Royal Australian  
Naval Reserves MV  
Bishopdale.  
**Age:** 25

**Parents:** William Joseph and Effie Sandery.  
**Married to:** Isabel Mary Sandery (nee King Patrick), daughter Julie, Double Bay, New South Wales, Australia.

Official wartime records show that Chief officer Neil Sandery's rank and first name were corrected after his death.

A notice from the Sydney Morning Herald on 25 January 1946 notes he died at Chung-king (Chongqing), in China and reads as follows: SANDERY - January 12, 1946, at Chung-king, China, Neil Lyndon, beloved husband of Isabel Mary (nee King Patrick) and father of Julie (suddenly), aged 28 years.

The inscription on his memorial at Sai Wan War Cemetary states:  
"Dearly loved & sadly missed by loving wife Isabel and children."

**Date & Place of Death:**  
12 January 1946, China

**Gravestone Location:** I. C. 2.

**Parents:** Walter William and Margaret Savage, Woolloongabba, Queensland, Australia.

Defensively Equipped Merchant Ship (DEMS) Gunner Stuart Savage was killed in the subsequent explosion when a Japanese VAL dive bomber hit the starboard upper bridge and the No. 3 wing tank of the fuel tanker Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) ship Bishopdale.

Savage was buried at the US Military Cemetery at Leyte the same day, before being relocated to the Sai Wan War Cemetery in Hong Kong.

Called a VAL dive-bomber by allied forces, the aircraft was an Aichi D3A Type 99 Carrier bomber of the Imperial Japanese Navy. These were used extensively by this force, and were responsible for sinking many allied warships.

**Date & Place of Death:**  
14 December 1944

**Gravestone Location:** II. E. 12.



**SHEIK,  
CONER A**

**Service Number:**  
20109  
**Rank:** DEMS Pumpman

**Unit:** Australian  
Merchant Navy  
Royal Fleet Auxiliary  
Bishopdale



**SLY,  
NEIL MERSON**

**Service number:**  
413269  
**Rank:** Flight Lieutenant  
**Unit:** 243 Squadron  
RAAF  
**Age:** 23

On 14 December 1944 a Japanese Navy dive-bomber pilot deliberately flew his aircraft into the RFA Bishopdale, killing one crewmember. Sheik later died from injuries as a result of that attack.

DEMS Pumpman Sheik's vessel was in San Pedro Bay (located between Leyte and Samar Islands, in the Philippines) to refuel US warships supporting an operation targeting the Japanese Forces and had arrived there in October 1944 to service vessels in the Leyte Gulf Service Force of the US 7th Fleet during the invasion of Leyte Gulf operation.

The RFA Bishopdale's role was to supply fuel, lubricating oil, aviation spirit, water and stores to the allied ships.

**Date & Place of Death:**  
16 December 1944  
San Pedro Bay, Philippines

**Gravestone Location:** II. E. 13.

**Parents:** Herbert Henry and Jessie Ogston Sly.

**Married to:** Patricia Madge Sly, Parkes, New South Wales, Australia.

Flight Lieutenant Neil Sly was one of five crew members aboard a Dakota IV KN 530 piloted by Warrant Officer John Scholes and Flight Lieutenant John Steel that crashed on 24 July 1945, while on flying duties with the Royal Navy near Tacloban in the Philippines.

Born in Wagga Wagga in March 1922, Sly originally enlisted in Royal Australia Air Force Reserve in November 1940. His service records noted that when he signed up, his qualifications included being a tractor and truck driver and farmer. In August 1941, he enlisted in the RAAF, naming his wife, who he had married in November 1940, as his next of kin.

After he completed his flying training he was granted a commission with the rank of Pilot Officer. He reached the rank of Flight Lieutenant just two months before his fatal flight.

As a result of his service he qualified for the following awards: the 1939-1945 Star, Pacific Star, War Medal 1939-1945 and the Australian Service Medal 1939-1945.

His RAAF record is damaged on the page reporting the accident.

**Date & Place of Death:**  
24 July 1945, Tacloban, Leyte, Philippines

**Cause of Death:**  
Killed in Action

**Gravestone Location:** I. D. 6.





**SMITH,  
NORMAN**  
was also known as  
PEDDINGTON William  
F  
**Rank:** Radio Operator  
WF  
**Service:** Australian  
Merchant Navy. SS  
China  
**Age:** 31



**VAGG,  
MERVYN REX**  
**Service number:**  
430230  
**Rank:** Flight Sergeant  
**Unit:** No. 358 Squadron  
RAAF  
**Age:** 20

**Parents:** Thomas Alexander and Jean  
Veronica Smith, Chelsea, Victoria, Australia.

**Parents:** Cecil Mervyn and Mabel Blanche  
Vagg, Elwood, Victoria, Australia.

The inscription on his memorial at Sai Wan  
War Cemetery simply reads:  
"Deeply mourned by father and family."

**Date & Place of Death:**  
11 July, 1945 Mindanao, Philippines

Gravestone Location: I. D. 12.

Wireless Air Gunner Mervyn Rex Vagg, 20,  
was a member of No. 358 Squadron, which  
carried out operations involving long distance  
flights from bases in India. In February 1945,  
the squadron had moved to Jessore, in order  
to drop leaflets and supplies to resistance  
fighters behind Japanese lines.

The squadron was trained for special duty  
operations during moonlight and in January  
that year had dropped 32,000lbs (14,500  
kg) of bombs in daylight sorties while  
based in Digri. It's January efforts earned  
congratulations from AOC Strategic Air  
Force, for successfully completing long and  
difficult sorties "reflecting the greatest credit  
to all".



**STEWART,  
CYRIL**  
**Service number:**  
TC13316  
**Rank:** Oiler  
**Service:** Australian  
Merchant Navy.  
**Unit:** US TC/13316  
**Age:** 47

**Parents:** James and Annie Stewart,  
Matraville, New South Wales, Australia

Stewart is also honoured on the Australian  
War Memorial Commemorative Roll and at  
Sai Wan War Cemetery, Hong Kong.

**Date & Place of Death:**  
7 February 1946, Manila, Philippines

**Gravestone Location:** I. E. 12.

At 1700 hrs on 25 February Liberator VI 'H'  
EW 188 took off from Jessore with Flight  
Sergeant Vagg as one of its two wireless  
operators.

Early next morning a weak signal from the  
plane was picked up but the aircraft failed  
to return and all eight crew on board the  
Liberator died in the crash.

A US Searcher Detachment later located the  
wreckage at Phu Log, in French Indo-China.  
Three of the Liberator's crew are buried at  
Sai Wan War Cemetery.

After the war ended, the squadron ferried  
supplies into POW camps in Malaya,  
Sumatra and Java.

**Date & Place of Death:**  
25 February 1945, Indo-China

**Cause of Death:** Crashed during mission

**Gravestone Location:** VII. D. 9.



**WAGNER,**  
CHARLES ARTHUR

**Service number:**  
NX29683  
**Rank:** First Lieutenant  
**Unit:** 2/18 Australian  
Infantry Battalion  
**Age:** 27

**Parents:** Edward and Annie Eliza Wagner  
**Married to:** Audrey Thurza Wagner,  
Woollahra, New South Wales, Australia.

Wagner was born in Sydney in 1916 and enlisted in Paddington in the 8th Division in June 1940. At the time, he was working in the boot trade. His battalion left Australia for Singapore on 1 February 1941, with Wagner serving as an Intelligence Sergeant and Intelligence Officer until the fall of Singapore. On 15 February 1942 he became a Japanese Prisoner of War (POW).

As a POW he was taken to Borneo with 500 other Australians in March 1943, where he escaped from an Imperial Japanese Army concentration camp in Berhala Island, with seven other Australian in June 1943.

Successfully evading recapture, he joined up with the US 125 Infantry Regiment by July 1943, where he was recommended for distinguished service by the CO 125 Infantry Regiment for successfully leading an ambush on 2 August 1943. He went from Tawi Tawi to Mindanao in October 1943.

A US forces in the Philippines file says he was shot by a Japanese sniper on 21 December 1943 at 8am during a Japanese attack which started on 19 December. His death certificate was signed by US Forces in the Philippines – 108 Division.

He was awarded a Distinguished Conduct Medal for bravery in the field in Malaya and was also mentioned in dispatches.

**Date & Place of Death:**  
21 December 1943  
Liangan, Mindanao, Philippines (ex Malaya)

**Cause of Death:** Killed in action

**Gravestone Location:** I. B. 6.



**WARMER,**  
ERIC FRANCIS

**Service number:**  
419146  
**Rank:** Flight Sergeant  
**Unit:** RAAF  
**Age:** 20

**Parents:** Harry Francis and Mabel Warmer,  
South Yarra, Victoria, Australia.

Flight Sergeant Warmer was a member of 358 Squadron Royal Air Force, which was based at Jessore in February 1945. Its role was to drop supplies behind Japanese lines in Burma (Myanmar), French Indo-China and Malaya using long-range Consolidated Liberator aircraft that had also been used as heavy bombers.

That month, the squadron's operations were hampered by poor weather conditions, mainly thick low cloud over drop zones. On 21 February 1945 Warmer was on board Aircraft 'H' EW188 captained by a French Canadian pilot Flight Officer Cloutier, on a mission into central French Indo China. Somewhere over northern Myanmar, the squadron received a signal that the crew were returning home but the plane then disappeared.

Eric Warmer was officially listed as missing on 25 February 1945 and his death was deemed 'accidental'.

In that month, 358 Squadron RAF lost three aircraft and 18 men including Warmer. Of its 67 sorties, only 28 were successful.

**Date & Place of Death:**  
25 February 1945, French Indo-China

**Cause of Death:** Accidental

**Gravestone Location:** V. D. 8.



**MCALLEESE,  
DANIEL**

**Rank:** Sub -Lieutenant  
**Unit:** Royal New Zealand Naval Volunteer Reserve. HMS Victorious  
**Age:** 25

**Parents:** John and Catherine McAleese (nee Connolly).

Daniel McAleese hailed from Burnside, an industrial suburb of Dunedin in New Zealand's south island.

A Royal New Zealand Naval Reservist, he served with the Royal Navy, joining the Fleet Air Arm (F.A.A.) 849 Squadron, serving on both HMS Victorious and HMS Indefatigable. As part of the British Pacific Fleet, he flew Grumman Avengers – a carrier-borne torpedo bomber. Victorious took part in operations in support of the American invasion of Okinawa from March to May 1945, flying strikes against airfields used by Japanese Kamikaze aircraft on the Sakishima Islands (southern Japan) and on Formosa, the historical name for Taiwan.

He was shot down on 12 April 1945 during an attack on Keelung Harbour. The plane crashed on a nearby island. His crew mate was killed and, badly injured, McAleese died the next day in a Japanese hospital at Keelung. He was 25.

**Date & Place of Death:**  
13 April 1945, Taiwan

**Grave Location:** VI. L. 8.

**Statistical Summary:**

**Place of death:**

Philippines	13
Taiwan	7
Japan	2
Indo-China	3
Mainland China	3
Hong Kong	1
At sea	1
Unknown	4

**Classified by Service:**

Navy	4
Army	13
Air Force	7
Merchant Navy	10

**Sources:**

Sai Wan Bay Cemetery, Hong Kong and Sai Wan Bay Memorial (Hong Kong: Lane Publishers, 1995) Roll of Honour  
Database, Australian War Memorial  
Auckland Museum



**Australian Consulate-General**

**Hong Kong**

23/F Harbour Centre  
25 Harbour Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong