

Mackay North State High School Lest We Forget Commemorative Project

Mackay North High's Lest We Forget Project is an ongoing project of commemoration undertaken by Senior History students at the school.

The aim of the project is to commemorate and further publicise the sacrifices made by Australians in war and to make practical and respectful tributes to those Australians who have died for our country.

The project revolves around overseas pilgrimages to the battlefields, cemeteries and memorials where Australians have fought and died.

These tours involve the search for individual graves and names and the honouring of these fallen soldiers on behalf of relatives in Australia. Photographs of the graves and names are taken and presented to relatives on each group's return.

The school has so far undertaken 6 commemorative tours - in 1999, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008 & 2010. In that time 148 students have travelled to Gallipoli, the Somme and Flanders, Thailand and Singapore and have honoured 576 men and 33 nurses buried or commemorated in these areas.

"My final thoughts as I watched the silent headstones was that we have to live the life these soldiers gave us we have to live our lives to the fullest, love our friends and family to the utmost. It's the least we can do - live the life that these men never got."



For more information on the Lest We Forget Project

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(or Google - 'Mackay North Lest We Forget')

The Lest We Forget Project



Securing our future by respecting our past

Mackay North State High School



Anzac 2010

Commemorative Tour

Street Memorial Project



Dear Patton St Resident

My name is Simon Patton and I am a member of the Mackay North SHS Anzac 2010 Commemorative Tour Group.

This year, our group undertook a 3 week overseas pilgrimage to the past Australian battlefields, cemeteries and memorials of Gallipoli, France, Belgium and Singapore.

One aspect of our research and commemoration centred around undertaking a local history study of Mackay streets which were named in honour of fallen Mackay soldiers.

Each student 'adopted' a street and the relevant soldier and, in the lead up to the tour, we researched the war service of "our" soldiers and learnt about the circumstances surrounding each man's death.

On the tour, we visited the graves or the memorials where each of these soldiers is buried or commemorated. At each site, we undertook a service which included the delivery of a eulogy, a recital of The Ode and the observance of a minute silence. We then photographed the grave or memorial name to bring this record back to Mackay.

I was honoured to have researched and commemorated the soldier after whom Patton St is named. So as to provide you with a little history of your street, please find over information related to the soldier. I hope you find it interesting.

Patton Street, South Mackay

Named in honour of:

Flt Sgt John Patton

Service No. 405646

3rd Bomber Group USAAF / RAAF

Killed in Action over New Guinea on 25 August, 1942

Age 27

John was born in Petone, New Zealand in October, 1914. He came to Australia as a child and attended Mackay Boys State School and All Souls School in Charters Towers.

At the time of his enlistment into the Air Force on 27 April, 1941 he was living in Peel St, Mackay and working as a carter and labourer. He was 26 when he enlisted and was trained as a wireless operator and air gunner.

John was attached to the US Air Force 3rd Bomber Group and was a crew member aboard a Mitchell B25 bomber of No. 13 Squadron when he was killed in action whilst on a bombing mission over Milne Bay in Eastern New Guinea on 25 August, 1942. There are no accounts of the plane's fate and John's records indicate that, after being posted as missing on the 25th, he was not formally declared as presumed dead by the Air Force until 3 December, 1946.

As a result, he is commemorated on the Port Moresby Memorial to the Missing in the grounds of Bomana War Cemetery at Port Moresby.

My interest in John is more than as a street name as he was the brother of my grandfather, who also served in WW2.



A B 25 Mitchell Bomber -
the type that John was killed
in

The Port Moresby Memorial is situated in Port Moresby (Bomana) War Cemetery, which is located approximately 19 km north of Port Moresby. The memorial commemorates over 700 officers and men of the Australian Army, the Australian Merchant Navy and the Royal Australian Air Force, who gave their lives during the operations in Papua and who have no known grave.



Whilst the Anzac was unable to visit New Guinea, I was honoured to commemorate John at a special group service that we held at the Singapore Memorial in the grounds of Kranji Cemetery. The fact that I am related to John made the commemoration even more special and emotional.

