

## A SOLDIER'S STORY



Service No.: SX38638 (S57008)  
Name: William Burnside BROWN  
Nickname: Bill



### *Medals and Decorations*

1939 - 45 Star

Pacific Star

Defence Medal

War Medal 1939 - 45

Australian Service Medal 1939 - 45

Australian Service Medal 1945 - 75

Rank: Lance Corporal

Service: Army

Enlisted: 5 Feb 1942

Discharged: 31 Jan 1946

Bill was born at Edinburgh, Scotland on 29 Oct 1921 to George Brown and Jean Brown (nee Burnside). Bill had two brothers, George and Jack. His father had served in France during WW1 with the Kings Own Scottish Borderers, before returning to Edinburgh and taking employ as a police officer.

The family decided to move to Australia, where Bill's uncle John had established a baker shop in Port Pirie. The family embarked on the "*Euripides*" and departed UK on 1 Jan 1927. Seven weeks later they arrived in Adelaide and travelled to Port Pirie. The three boys attended school at Port Pirie, whilst their father was employed in the uncle's baker shop.

On leaving school, Bill undertook a dry cleaning apprenticeship. On completion of the apprenticeship in 1938 he travelled to Tumby Bay and commenced work with Don Brock who operated a dry cleaning business at the rear of Brock's Store in Spencer Street (the current site of IGA).

On 5 Feb 1942 Bill enlisted in the Army (Militia) at Field (SA): in fact the 3 brothers and father all enlisted in the Army during WW2. On 20 Nov 1944 he was transferred to 55/53<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Battalion, AIF: after initial training he was posted to Woodside for further training before embarking for New Guinea. He saw service at Bougainville (PNG) and Rabaul (PNG).

Before embarkation Bill married Gladys Goode, one of Charlie Goode's daughters. They had 2 sons.

After discharge from the Army on 31 Jan 1946, Bill returned to Tumby Bay to operate

the dry cleaning business in his own right. The cleaning was still done behind Brock's store and the pressing was now undertaken at a shop across the road – this shop is owned by Jean Brock and still stands today. In 1950 Bill and Gladys had a house built in Spencer St and the dry cleaning business was moved to a shed at the rear of the house – the pressing continued to be done in Jean Brock's shop. Many of the more senior residents of Tumby will still remember Bill pushing a wheel barrow across the road loaded with stumps for the boiler; many will also remember him working at his steam press. He gained a reputation for fastidious work. The business was eventually consolidated into the house property, before being sold to Graham Smelt in 1979.

In 1979 Bill and Glad retired to Sydney Road, Tumby Bay. Unfortunately Glad did not enjoy the best of health due to cancer; she passed away in 1994. Bill stayed on in the house.

Bill's sporting prowess is almost legendary: He played Football for Tumby Bay, being a member of the teams that won 5 finals in a row. He won the 1948 best and fairest for Tumby and was named as full back in Tumby Bay Team of the Century.

He was a foundation member of the Tumby Bay Bowling Club and Club Champion in 1954,58,59,60,63 and 1990, as well as Champion of Champions (SEP Bowling Association) in 1958. He also won the Champion of Champions Pairs in 1989. He was awarded life membership of the Club in 1998 and 50 Year Continuous Service Award in 2005. His achievements in Lawn bowls has set a local record yet to be equalled!

He was also a keen golfer, being an active member of "Dad's Army" golfers.

Bill was a member and past Master of the Tumby Bay Masonic Lodge.

He was a founding member of the Tumby Bay Sub Branch of the RSL and was awarded Life Membership in 1975; recognition of 30 years as Treasurer (1967-97), and presented a 50 years continuous service award in 1999.

Bill Passed away on 2 Feb 2007 and is buried in the Tumby Bay Cemetery. He is survived by his two sons (Bill & Lou), two daughters-in-law (Lorraine & Vicki), 6 grand children and 4 great grand children.

It can be said that Bill was always a true gentleman.

