

Finding Uncle Ted

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I always knew I had an Uncle Ted on my father's side, although I can't remember ever meeting him. His full name was Edward James TAYLOR and he was born in Hobart, Tasmania in 1914 to parents Alfred James and Margaret Ann (QUIGLEY) TAYLOR.

Edward was a wireless operator/gunner in WWII attached with No 2 Squadron. He enlisted in the RAAF in November 1938 aged 24 and began his training service at Laverton, Victoria. By December 1940 he was on active service in the UK as one of the crew members of a Sunderland Flying Boat, W3339/Y, operating in Coastal Command from 1940 to 1945. In 1942 this crew was sent out to rescue some survivors from a Wellington Bomber that had been shot down in the English Channel. They were unfortunately hit themselves and the plane was lost at sea with all crew listed as missing.

It was a chance conversation between my husband and a former UK RAF member that started my search to find out more about Uncle Ted. This man suggested putting a few enquiries in some relevant magazines; he even drafted the queries for me and I was delighted with the responses. Not all who answered knew of my uncle, but were former members of the squadron and were full of information that was handy to me. For instance, that I could obtain more information from the Sunderland Association, that a history of



RAAF Sunderland Squadrons banner

No 10 Squadron had been written (*Maritime is No 10* by Flight Lieutenant Kevin C BAFF) and that my uncle's name was entered on a memorial in Runnymede Park, Egham, Surrey. This is a very large WWII memorial holding 20,000 names of AIF personnel killed in action who have no known grave. The nationalities are UK, Australian Canadian and many more.

I finally received two welcome letters in April 1998 from two men who served in the same Squadron, although not the same crew, and knew my uncle well. One man noted that my uncle had the nickname of 'Toobie'. The other man said that he had borrowed a case from my uncle because he was going on leave to London but could not return it because by the time he returned to base

W3339Y had been lost at sea. He told me that he had only recently thrown the case away.

In August 1998 my husband and I went on a trip to England and we stayed a few weeks with relatives who very kindly offered to take us to Runnymede. Let me tell you this wasn't easy, as Runnymede is not a town but only a park. We finally reached there and looked in the index books for Edward James TAYLOR. When we found his name, my husband's nephew said he heard him say, "About time somebody came to visit me."

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Runnymede Memorial, Egham, Surrey