

Alfred Charles Camp

"Darby" (QX 7684)



Born to Alfred Thomas and Kathleen Louisa Camp at Herberton on the 20th April 1916, Alfred Charles (Darby) was the eldest of fourteen children (seven still living).

Darby lived his entire life in Herberton, only leaving to join up for World War 2. He attended the local State School, and left to work at Armstrong, Ledlie and Stillman, serving behind the counter and doing deliveries. He also helped out at the family Cordial Factory and Carrying business with horse and cart. In his spare time he loved to play football and enjoyed dancing.

When war broke out, Darby along with some of his mates, joined up for service in 1940, and was posted to 2/15th Australian Infantry Battalion, 7th Division (later 9th Division), 2nd A.I.F. They left Australia from Sydney on the 'Queen Mary' arriving in Ceylon.

From there they went by much smaller ships to the Middle East, going directly to Palestine, then Egypt and on to Libya in 1941. They were sent west of Benghazi to relieve, and in early April Rommel made a push, forcing them into retreat, finally stopping at Tobruk. There, the Germans and Italians were stopped for eight months and this became known as the 'Siege of Tobruk'. Because they were 'holed' up for so long, they earned the legendary Army name 'Rats of Tobruk'.

They moved on again to Atkerine on the Turkish/Syria border, then Bab-El-Howa. Suddenly, a call back to Egypt, with weeks of battles to stop German advance reaching Alexandria, followed by extensive training which led to the Battle of El Alamein. This lasted 10 days and the outcome was the turning point of the war for them, with Germans and Italians retreating to Tripoli, then Europe.

They came back to Australia for intensive jungle training in North Queensland and in 1943 the 9th division assaulted Hae (PNG), then Finschhafen, Sattleburg and Sio. Whilst on leave in 1944, Darby went through more jungle and forest training in Ravenshoe.

Darby was off again, this time to Brunei Bay, Borneo and Lawas River. There was a sea-borne landing made at Muara to be used as a Motor Torpedo base for the American Navy. While at Borneo, peace was declared and the troops arrived back in Australia in October and Darby was discharged on the 5th November.

After the war, Darby went to work with his father, taking over the carrying business, buying his first truck - an International. In 1956 he brought his beloved 'old girl', a 1948 Morris Commercial LC3. A smiling Darby driving his 'old girl' was a familiar sight around the streets of Herberton. He carted goods, sand, soil, rocks, railway sleepers and sometimes passengers from the Rail Motor until the Rail Station closed, and continued general carrying until he suffered a stroke and gave his business up. One thing he did not give up at the time though, was his driving. Darby kept his license until the year 2000, when ill health forced him reluctantly, to give it up.

Darby met his wife-to-be, Phyllis Mazlin, whilst on leave during the War. They later married in Herberton in 1951, and had two daughters Daphne and Margaret. Life was always busy for Darby and his off-sider, Malcolm Taylor, not allowing him the pleasure of going fishing and camping quite as much as he would have liked! Darby also liked to partake in a few glasses of the amber liquid and was quite partial to Bundy Rum! The Royal Hotel was his watering hole ('his office' he used to say laughing!) and Malcolm was shouted his 'Shandy' there every Friday afternoon.

Phyllis passed away in 1983, but Darby kept himself occupied with his work, playing bowls (later becoming Patron of the club until his death), being an active member of the RSL (life membership) and also a member of the Masonic Fraternity.

He was awarded Herberton Shire 'Citizen of the Year' in January 1985 and several months after his passing, the Herberton Shire Council named 'The Darby Camp Children's Park' in his memory.

Darby was a kind and caring person, giving a helping hand whenever and however he could - the world's finest gentleman. He was a true asset to the town of Herberton and was loved by all who came to know him.

Darby's health gradually declined but he continued to play bowls and drive his truck until it became impossible for him to do so.

Sadly, Darby passed away at the Herberton Hospital on the 19 August 2001, aged 85. He is survived by his two daughters and sons' in-law, one grandson, three granddaughters, one great-grandson and two great-granddaughters.

A loving family man and a Herberton icon, he is sadly missed by all his family members and many friends and will never be forgotten.



BORN:

20 April 1916

Herberton, Queensland

AUSTRALIA

DIED:

19 August 2001

Herberton, Queensland


The Queensland Book of
MEMORIES

