

Gunner of Renown



Royal Australian Artillery Historical Company

Major Bruce Atlee HUNT, MBE

(1899-1964)

Hunt enlisted in the AIF on 24 February 1917 and served on the Western Front in 1918 with the 8th Australian Field Artillery Brigade rising to the rank of Bombardier. In 1919, he matriculated and undertook his entrance examination for medicine at King's College, before entering the University of Melbourne to complete his studies (M.B., B.S. 1925; MD in 1928).

World War II interrupted Hunt's burgeoning career in medicine. Commissioned in October 1939 as honorary squadron leader, Royal Australian Air Force, he transferred to the AIF on 19 August 1941. Next month, he sailed for Singapore as a major with 2/13th Australian General Hospital. He was captured when the island fell in February 1942. Sent with 'F' Force to the Burma-Thailand Railway, he proved to be a devoted physician and worked with impossibly small resources. He was beaten several times by the Japanese for standing up for the rights of sick prisoners of war. Repatriated in 1945 he was awarded MBE in 1947 and testified before war crimes tribunals.

After the war Hunt became a powerful and sometimes controversial figure in the Perth medical establishment.

His last years were clouded by illness, but his personality remained undiminished. Survived by his wife, daughter and son, he died of hypertensive coronary vascular disease on 29 October 1964 at Applecross, and was cremated.

Source: G. C. Bolton and Alex Cohen, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol. 14, p.520.

For more information follow this link: <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/hunt-bruce-atlee-10573>