

## AUSTRALIAN GUNNER OBITUARY RESOURCE

**Ian Wilbert (Bill) Boyd**

**9 April 1915 – 27 May 2017**

**By Peter Bruce, OAM**

Perhaps the highlight of the Army career of Bill Boyd, most familiar to a younger generation, was his time as Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM) of the School of Artillery at North Head. Bill was RSM of the School from 5 February 1963 until his discharge from the Army on 15 March 1968.

Born in Drummoyne on 9 April 1915, Bill started his military career in the Royal Australian Navy when he enlisted on the 9<sup>th</sup> of April 1933 for a period of 12 years. Bill's Naval postings included HMAS Cerberus, Penguin and Australia. Not much information is available on Bill's Navy service and records show he discharged in February 1939.

Bill's connection with the RAA started on the 28<sup>th</sup> of May 1940 when he enlisted at Paddington into the Australian Imperial Force (AIF). His first posting was to 2/1<sup>st</sup> Medium Regiment and then with the 2/13<sup>th</sup> Army Field Regiment in October of that year. His records indicate he was in the Darwin area from the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April 1941 until the 23<sup>rd</sup> of July 1941. The 2/13<sup>th</sup> was formed from the 2/1<sup>st</sup> Medium Regiment and Bill deployed with the Regiment to the Middle East in September 1941. When his regiment arrived in the Middle East, it was reorganised again to form the 2/1<sup>st</sup> Medium Regiment equipped with 155-mm howitzers which were a US manufactured piece of French Deviation. Bill returned to Australia with the 2/1<sup>st</sup> in March 1942 as part of the reorganised First Army and was based near Toowoomba in Queensland. During the latter half of 1943, Bill was posted to the 2/13<sup>th</sup> Composite Anti-Aircraft Regiment.

Bill's experience and expertise did not go unnoticed and on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1944, he was posted to the School of Artillery. In March 1945 Bill was posted to the Headquarters, Australia Training Centre (Jungle Warfare) at Canungra before returning to 2/1<sup>st</sup> Medium Regiment in May 1945. Later that year, Bill was posted to the New South Wales Lines of Communications Area Details Depot. Very little is known of his duties here but he did remain with them until January 1948. A posting to Eastern Command followed and Bill was employed with the Regular Army Cadre Staff. By now, Bill had transferred from the AIF to the Australian Regular Army and in March 1948 he was again posted to the School of Artillery at North Head.

In April 1951, Bill was selected as a Long-Term Student to attend training in the United Kingdom. During 1951/52, Bill attended training at the Royal School of Artillery Larkhill, the UK School of Military Engineering and the UK Joint School of Chemical Warfare. Bill returned to Australia in July 1953 and resumed his posting as an instructor at the School of Artillery. Possibly for family reasons, Bill stayed at the School of Artillery until December 1960 when he was posted to 111<sup>th</sup> Light Anti-Aircraft Battery at Holsworthy. The battery was later to deploy to Malaysia but Bill returned to the School of Artillery as the RSM where he stayed until his discharge on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March 1968.

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Bills Honours and Awards include the 1939-45 Star, Africa Star, Defence Medal, War Medal 1939-45, Australian Service Medal 1939\*45, Australian Defence Medal, Long Service and Good Conduct Medal, and Returned from Active Service Badge.

Bill died peacefully at home in Manly Vale on the 27<sup>th</sup> of May 2017 at the age of 102. Bill was husband to Elva (deceased); Father to Glenys; Opa to Malcolm; Grandfather to Elissa, Nicholas and Simon; Great Grandfather to Mattias, Yoakim, Kyle, Darcy, Archie, Lulu, Andrew and Emma. Bill's life was celebrated at St Peter's Anglican Church in Manly Vale on Friday the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June 2017.

### **Acknowledgements**

- The Gunners, A History of Australian Artillery by David Horner.