

In Memory of

Warrant Officer

THOMAS OSWALD MULLER

**404046**, Royal Australian Air Force

who died age 28

on 1 January 1947

Son of Johann Friedrich and Lizzie Muller; husband of Linda Roberta Muller,

of Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia.

Remembered with honour

 DRAYTON/TOOWOOMBA GENERAL CEMETERY, AUSTRALIA



Warrant Officer

**THOMAS OSWALD MULLER** ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE SERVICE NUMBER: 404O46

**Warrant Officer Thomas Oswald Muller, the son of Johann Friedrich Carl Muller and Lissie Muller (nee Eastgate), was born at Toowoomba in Queensland on 14th January 1919. He had previously served for five months in the militia as a Corporal with the 25th Infantry Battalion, 6th Division. (SNo. QX1371). At the time of his enrolment, he was single and employed as a Clerk with the Toowoomba Foundry for 3 years. He gave his next of kin as his father, Mr F C Muller, residing at 80 Mary Street, Toowoomba. He married in Bulawayo Southern Rhodesia on 20 February 1943 and added his wife, Mrs Grace Edwards (Divorcee) Muller, of Chilmam Court, Main Street, Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia as a next of kin.**

**Warrant Officer Muller was enlisted into the Citizen Air Force of the R.A.A.F. at No. 3 Recruiting Centre in Brisbane on 26th April 1940 after giving an undertaking that he would serve for the duration of the war and an additional twelve months. His physical description at the time of his enlistment was that he was 5 feet 9 ¾ inches in height and weighed 148 pounds. He had a medium complexion, brown eyes, and brown hair. He stated that he was of the Church of England religion. He was allotted the service number of 404046. He did his training in Australia and on 6 May 1941 was transferred to 223 Sqn (RAF) in Egypt. 223 Sqn was an OTU (Operational Training Unit), converting aircrews onto the Bristol Blenheim, Douglas Boston, Martin Maryland and later Martin Baltimore twin-engine bombers. Shortly afterwards he was transferred to Sqn 22 of the South African Air Force. Whilst a member with the Squadron he was a member of a crew that failed to return to base on 29 May 1941 after an operational flight over Crete. He was reported safe on 13 June1941 together with Sergeant DD McWilliams S.A.A.F.**

*According to an article in Trove, 2 January 1947, he was among those who were left behind in ‘Greece’. With others he commandeered a small craft and set sail across the Mediterranean. They were intercepted by an Italian submarine, who took off the officers and left the others to their own devices. After many adventures they eventually landed in Egypt within the British lines.*

**After further service Warrant Officer Muller was transferred to be an instructor with the Rhodesian Air Training Group in Bulawayo from 20 September 1941. He met and married his wife in Rhodesia and had to leave her behind when he was transferred to England. He rejoined Sqn 22 S.A.A.F. again on 2 March 1942. He left Sqn 22 for 33 FIS on 17 September 1942 and again moved to 27 E.F.T.S. on 1 November 1942 for further pilot training, finally being transferred to the 74 OTU in the Middle East on the 24 July 1943. No 74 OTU was based at Aqir in Palestine and trained army co-operation pilots in tactical reconnaissance duties under desert conditions. He then joined 680 Sqn on 22 December 1943 receiving his full pilot wings on 31 December 1943. No 680 Sq RAF was a Photographic Reconnaissance Unit (PRU), equipped with a variety of aircraft including Supermarine Spitfires, Hawker Hurricanes, Bristol Beaufighters and Lockhead Electras. It operated in North Africa and the Mediterranean.**

**On the 30 June 1944 he was sent from the Middle East to UK and then transferred back to Australia on 4 August 1944. He was medically discharged, deemed unfit for further service, from the RAAF on 20 September 1945. He went back to Rhodesia to bring his wife back to Australia.**

**Warrant Officer Muller died on 1 January 1947 from a gunshot wound in Toowoomba. This was reported in The Daily Mercury – Mackay on January 1947.**

*Thomas Oswald Muller (26) of Toowoomba, whose wife, a war bride, recently came from Rhodesia, died this morning with a revolver wound in his head. He was found lying on a settee at his home at 1 a.m. – with an automatic pistol near his right leg. He died later in hospital. Muller had a long service at home and abroad as a Sergeant in the RAAF.*

***Although it would appear that the Deputy Commissioner of the Repatriation Commission in Brisbane did not certify his death as being attributable to his war service, it is felt that his death should be recognized by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission as a World War 2 casualty. There is an unopened file in the NAA that may provide further information.***

**At the time of his death his wife was living in Toowoomba and it is known his father Johann Friedrich Carl Muller (1878 – 1957) was alive, but unclear if his mother had deceased. He is buried in the Drayton & Toowoomba General Cemetery, Sect. CE 9 Block 5 Allotment 28.**

**For his service during World War 2 he had entitlement to the 1939/1945 Star, the North Africa Star ribbon, the Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, the Defence Medal and the Australian Service Medal 1939/1945. His name is commemorated locally on the Toowoomba Grammar World War 2 Honour Board.**

**Military Records show that he went to East State School, Toowoomba from 1931-32. He was at Toowoomba Grammar from 1933 and left the school on 31st December 1935. Whilst at Toowoomba Grammar School he participated in the Cadet Corp for 2 ½ years. An article in the Toowoomba Grammar School Magazine in 1941 states the following:**

***Sergeant Gunner T Muller***

*Official word was received in Toowoomba on May 27th that Sergeant Gunner T.O. (tom) Muller, of the R.A.A.F., was missing from air activities abroad on May 25th. This information was received by his parents, Mr, and Mrs. J.F. Muller, Mary Street, Toowoomba. Tom Muller, an employee of the Toowoomba Foundry, was one of Toowoomba’s best-known swimmers before he enlisted in the A.I.F., from which he later transferred to the R.A.A.F., where he won his stripes rapidly. He is an Old Boy of the school and won his swimming colours. He is perhaps best remembered at the school for his performances, while still a junior, holding both the senior and the junior School swimming cups at the same time. After leaving School he swam with the Past Grammar Club (of which he was one of the keenest members), and as a junior won his Queensland Amateur Swimming Association blazer, taking a freestyle title.*

External Links:

[NAA Service Record - AIF](https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=4251673)

[NAA Service Record - RAAF](https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=5522815)

[NAA Service Record - RAAF Casualty Repatriation](https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=1059134)

[Trove - The Courier Mail Thu 2 Jan 1947 p 3](https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/49361515)