
William Hocking

My full name is William E. Hocking – so just call me Bill and I will be ok. My date of birth was the 20th March 1923 and I was born at K.E.M.H. Subiaco, W.A. and my life before W.W.II was dreadful. My Mother had passed away in 1929 and at 6 years old life was both hard and cruel – I was living on a wheat and sheep farm 9 miles north of Nungarin or 35 miles north of Merredin. I'm lightly built and farming is hard work handling wheat and super, picking roots on newly ploughed paddocks, handling refractory sheep and endless hours on a tractor or worse still on a harvester.

As a child I lived half a mile from the school and eventually I could reach it in 3 minutes flat. I spent 10 years at school and later in 1942 I was conscripted and joined the R.A.A.F. and posted to Melbourne for training as an airframe mechanic and then posted to Geraldton W.A. for about 8 months to be posted back to Melbourne for further training. I was then sent to Adelaide to be transferred by rail to Darwin, actually to Coomally Creek in the N.T. about 40 miles south of Darwin working on Beaufighters in their never ending fight against the Japanese. I remained with the 31st Beaufighter Squadron at Morotai, S.W.P.A. until about 1946 when I was posted south with the war over and discharged back to civilian life.

Several years after W.W.II we sold the farm at Nungarin or north of Nungarin at Mangowine to be precise and relocated to a 40 acre property out of Mundaring, actually Glen Forrest which was also sold and we came to Mandurah to retire and amongst all this I had married Sylvia who became the mother of my four children, Robert, Chris, Jim and Margaret. Margaret now lives in Texas, U.S.A. and is like the above also married with children.

Once again trouble befell me when my wife Sylvia passed away in August 1986 and I was devastated, however a year or two later I met Win, my present wife who has been a great help to me in many ways and we now live in Mandurah with our dog (poodle) "Monty", a garden – such is it and so life goes on! We are both 81 but healthwise I feel we are pretty good, all things being equal.

So ends a short look at my life but one cannot squeeze 81 years into a couple of pages of a writing pad as it is a bit of a "mission impossible" as my memory has a vast hole in it and so much has gone straight through!!!.