
John Arthur Paine

I have much pleasure in telling my story. Born 28/05/1923 in Auburn, NSW. Lived most of my life at 44 Majors Bay Road, Concord, NSW. I attended Concord Primary School, Croydon Park Super Primary School, Ashfield Technical School and Central Technical School Ultimo. I achieved to School Certificate Level.

28th May 1941, on my eighteenth birthday, I enlisted in the Australian Army. I was posted to 1st A A Brigade for recruit training then transferred to 1 A/A Battery Gun Sites at Georges Heights and later to North Head. I was there when the Japanese attacked Darwin. A new Battery of three Gun Sites and a Head Quarters was formed in a hurry and despatched to Darwin in a hurry. By that time I had been promoted firstly to Lance Bombardier and then Bombardier. First we opened fire on the mother ship when the Japanese submarines entered Sydney Harbour. We could not fire on them because our Gun Site was on the coastal side of the North Head. We were sent to the Long Bay Gun Site. While the Japanese float plane few in over Mascot we identified it but were not permitted to fire upon it.

We entrained at Liverpool to Albany, changed gauge to Terowie in South Australia, changed again trains to Alice Springs. Then went by truck to a town outside Darwin. Then in train again to inside the town area. Then entrucked to the various Gun Sites we were allocated, the oval in town, near the Head Quarters, near the Hospital. McMallas and ours at Fanny Bay on the way to East Point of the Harbour entrance. We stayed there for 63 heavy enemy raids. Lots of reconnaissance flights and later, early 1944 American bombers going out in 1000 bombing formations.

We left there in late 1944 travelling in the same manner in reverse to Sydney, going on leave for two weeks, then to Singleton. From there we did the victory march through Cessnock, West Maitland and Newcastle then back to Singleton. We were then transferred to Greta for retraining. I was learning to use tank attack rockets, I was still there when the war ended.

Discharged in November 1945. I joined the NSW State Branch early 1946, transferring to East Concord Sub Branch when it was formed. I was President for two five-year terms being granted life membership for Returned Services League of Australia for my efforts. I was also a delegate to the Western Metropolitan Districts Council.

When we moved to WA in 1990 I became a member of the Wanneroo Sub-branch which later became the Wanneroo-Joondalup Sub-branch. I attended State Congress as a delegate. I remained and became President until poor health caused me to give it up. In fact I attended a Sub-branch meeting this afternoon where I picked up the pamphlet about this. While I was President I led the delegation who combined with the Federal and State governments and

Joondalup Council for the money to build a modern memorial close to the Joondalup City Administration building.

In 1938 I had joined William Cooper and Nephews, a manufacturer of sheep and cattle dips and various disinfectants. I stayed there until I enlisted in May 1941. I returned there after discharge. After 18 months I left there and went to work at British Australia Lead Manufacturers which became in turn BALM Paints and later Dulux Australia Ltd.

I worked in the paint filling room, then Edge Runner grinding red lead slurry, later on Edge Runner and Metal Rollers making white undercoat. I was later promoted to Change Hand in charge of a battery of ball mills. I did a three year Supervisor's course in one year at Ultimo Central Technical College. I was promoted to Statistics Officer of which later I became manager. When computerised I was put in Export Sales, later Sales Office, Order Office, Automotive Sales, Industrial and Government Sales and finally Stock Auditor in charge of a team of checkers of all the material in the Store. I was still doing that when I was retired at 62 in 1985.

While still in the Army I married Joan Dorothy Hinde, we had three children, Robert, 16th December 1945, Peter, 22nd May 1948, Lynette, 29th September 1949. I divorced Joan Dorothy and later married Joan Florence Galbraith nee Muller 30/01/1970. Joan had four sons, Keith, Danny, Ray and Brian. Keith and Ray live not far from us in Beldon, the other two in Sydney.

When my son Bob was in the Senior Scouts, I became involved too. My son Peter was a Cub, Scout and Senior Scout. When Joan's eldest son came up to 1st Concord Senior Scout Troop from 1st Cabarita Mortlake Scout Troop I met Joan and we were attracted at once. Ray and Brian came up to be by this time Venturers. To assist gaining access to National and State parks I became a state Flora and Fauna Warden, a Fire Warden and various other duties. I later became District Venturer Leader. I had been Group Scout Master at 1st Concord and later Group Scout Leader at 1st Cabarita Mortlake Group. I was also a Justice of the Peace.

My father was in WWI, Bob in Vietnam and we were all wounded.