440

Hall, John Patrick

A West Australian railway employee killed while on military service for his country



Memorial at Railway Workshops Midland (D.Graham/panoramio)

Rail employment information

Employer:	Western Australian Government Railways
Branch:	Traffic
Designation:	Station Relief Officer

Rail employment notes: Born 2/10/1917. Joined WAGR 30/5/1934 aged 16 as Junior Worker, Traffic Branch, Perth. Transferred to Junior Clerk Perth 8/11/1934, Mukinbudin 24/4/1935 and Southern Cross 2/7/1936.

Promoted to Clerk 2/7/1938 and transferred to Assistant Station Master, Meekatharra 27/11/1940 and Station Relief Officer, Mullewa 24/2/1941.

(When stations were busy enough to warrant more than one officer, the Station Master normally worked day shift 8am – 4pm and had overall responsibility, the Assistant Station Master worked 4pm-midnight and shared the paperwork, and the Night Station master worked midnight-8am.)

Enlisted in RAAF 2/7/1941. Killed in action in Sicily 13/8/1943.

Military service information

Conflict:	Second World War 1939-1945
Service:	Royal Australian Air Force
Military unit:	No.40 Squadron (RAF)
Service number:	415030
Date of death:	13 August 1943
Place of death:	Sicily, Italy
Rank at time of death:	Flight Sergeant
Age:	25

Buried/commemorated: Syracuse War Cemetery, Syracuse, Sicily, Italy

John Hall enlisted on 23 June 1941 in Perth, naming his mother Mary Hall as his next of kin. He was taken into the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) with the service number 415030.

While the war was raging in Europe, many RAAF crewmen were transferred to the UK and attached to Royal Air Force (RAF) squadrons. John Hall was transferred in this period and attached to RAF Squadron 40, which was then based in the Mediterranean and flew the Wellington, a twin engine medium bomber from the Vickers company. They were based first in Egypt, then at Malta, and by early 1943 they were based in Tunisia. The squadron flew operations against targets in Sicily during the Allied invasion of that island in July–August 1943.**

John Hall was presumably involved in these operations when he was killed in action over Sicily on 13 August 1943.

He was later buried in the Syracuse War Cemetery, Sicily.

© Rail Heritage WA

Additional/personal information:

John Hall was born in North Perth in 1917, a son of Oswald John Hall and Mary Josephine Hall (nee Bohan). His parents had married in Subiaco in 1909 and John was one of 6 children, although his sister Dorothy died young. His father died in 1924, however his mother lived until 1968 dying at the age of 83. (BDM 1491/1917 etc and *The West Australian* 3/12/1924)

Family notices suggest he was usually called 'Jack'.

His family arranged for a personal inscription on his Gravestone: "Loved son of Mrs. M.J. & the late O.J. Hall of Perth, W.A. may perpetual light shine upon him"



John Hall. Photo courtesy Mrs A Miller

*** Wikipedia article: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/No._40_Squadron_RAF*

Further information and/or photos may be added as available. Information may also be found on the Australian War Memorial website: *https://www.awm.gov.au/advanced-search/people*

Abbreviations: WAGR= Western Australian Government Railways (& Tramways at some periods); MRWA= Midland Railway of Western Australia; BDM=Western Australian Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages website; AWM=Australian War Memorial (Canberra and website); CWGC= Commonwealth War Graves Commission (including website). DVA=Department of Veterans' Affairs (including website)

Acknowledgements: Rail employment notes from WAGR Honour Roll and WAGR records held by State Records Office, Perth, transcribed by J.Austin 2019. Military information researched by Dr G.M.Galvin. Family information and collation by G.Higham.

----------Lest we forget----------