488

Heath, George Henry

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



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

Rail employment information

Employer: Western Australian Government Railways

Branch: Traffic

Designation: Checker

Rail employment notes: Born 9/11/1909. Joined WAGR 1/12/1924 aged 15 as Junior Worker, Chidlows. Transferred to Fremantle Goods 3/4/1925, Bellevue 1/5/1925, Midland Junction 13/5/1925, Cottesloe Beach 7/9/1926, Claremont 26/1/1926, Collie 15/4/1926, Mukinbudin 6/8/1929 and Wyalkatchem 9/9/1929. Retrenched 7/11/1930 (Depression).

Re-employed as Repairer, CCE Branch, Daniell 13/5/1932 and transferred to Pioneer 10/4/1933 and 255 Mile Sandstone Rly 15/10/1934. ("Repairer" was a track maintenance worker in a gang responsible for upkeep of an allocated section of railway line. A typical gang might include between 3 and 6 Repairers with one Leading Hand Repairer and a Ganger in charge, often at very small settlements or tent camps.)

Transferred to Goods Porter, Traffic Branch, Fremantle Goods 5/6/1935, Kalgoorlie 5/10/1936 and Stower, Kalgoorle Goods 10/1/1938. Transferred to R&DG Porter, Mullewa 21/2/1939, Checker, Northam 27/9/1939, No. Taker, Perth Goods 28/4/1941 and Checker, Kalgoorlie 15/10/1941.

Enlisted in AIF 2/12/1941. Killed in action 9/9/1943.

Military service information:

Conflict: Second World War 1939-1945

Service: Australian Army

Military unit: 2/28th Australian Infantry Battalion

Service number: WX17874

Date of death: 9 September 1943

Place of death: New Guinea

Rank at time of loss: Private

Age: 33

Buried/commemorated: Lae Memorial, Lae, Morobe Province, Papua New Guinea

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Additional/personal information:

George Heath was born in Karalee, Western Australia, a small settlement on the railway to Kalgoorlie. Karalee existed primarily for railway staff, suggesting his father may have also been a railway employee.

He left a widow, Mrs Emily Rose Heath.

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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. Family information and collation by G.Higham.

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

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