

**Private/L/Cpl Frederick George WYKES
NX122468 (N33219 CMF) - 54th Btn. AIF**



Biography:

Frederick George Wykes and his twin brother James Barton, were born on 29 Apr 1901 at Bournemouth but registered in Wellington, sons of James and Hannah Wykes.

Frederick's great grandparents were James (Snr) and Susan Wykes who emigrated to Australia from Luton, Lincolnshire, UK, in 1852. James (Snr) worked as a shepherd for Captain Finch on the *Brymadura* run, 150,000 acres in the Molong District. In 1862 they selected 40 acres of land at *The Shades*, Molong, which after time increased to 800 acres. In 1876, James (Snr), Susan and their family sold *The Shades* and selected 400 acres along the Chinaman's Creek at *Loombah*, later to be known as Bournemouth.

The eldest son of James (Snr) and Susan Wykes sons was John, who was married to Ellen Wing in 1864. John and his family also moved to *Loombah* in 1876, along with his parents and all of his siblings. John and Ellen Wykes had 12 children—the fourth child being James Wykes. James (Jim) married Hannah Pickford in 1896 and they had 10 children, six sons and four daughters. They took up 319 acres of land known as *Searock*, inherited from his father John, and 436 acres on the northern side of Chinaman's Creek.



Frederick attended Bournemouth School for his Primary School education.

Frederick, aged 22 years, married Marjorie Elizabeth Hyland, daughter of William Alford and Margaret Hyland, of Nandillyan North, at The Shades Baptist Church, Bournemouth, on 1 Aug 1923, and an account of which was published in *The Wellington Times* - 13 Aug 1923, p2.

Frederick and Marjorie had 8 confirmed children: William James B & D 1924; Hazel B 1926 M 1945 to Raymond LEARY & M 1970 to Reginald GRAY; Margaret B 1927 M 1950 to Kenneth BRUCE; Linda B 1928 M 1948 to Wallace MILLER; Beryl B 1930 M 1950 to Ronald BISHOP; Oliver B 1935; Marie B 1939 M 1959 to John JOHNSTONE; June B 1940 M 1958 to Herbert DAVIS. (Unconfirmed - unnamed female B & D 1925)

The Wellington Times - 31 Mar 1927, p4, "BOURNEWOOD - The many friends of Mr and Mrs Fred G Wykes assembled at the residence of Mr James Wykes (father) of 'Sea Rock,' on Saturday night, the occasion being to make a presentation to Mr & Mrs F Wykes on their leaving the district. Mr F Wykes, who purchased a farming property at Yullundry, had lived all his life in the district and both himself and Mrs Wykes have succeeded in making themselves very popular, as was testified to by the large concourse of folk from all parts of the district, who came together to say goodbye. They have identified themselves with all the activities of the district and have been members of the local cricket and tennis clubs. Mr Wykes was also an active member of the FSA (Farmers & Settlers Association)... Mr and Mrs F Wykes were presented with a gift of a silver cake stand..."

Fred Wykes worked on *Brigalow* for WR Glasson before acquiring *Hazeldene*, a 1,400 acre block, a cut off from *Yullundry*, in 1927. He participated in Field Wheat Competitions in 1927 and 1928 and grazed sheep. In February 1929 Fred and sister, Hannah, had a holiday in New Zealand, according to a local newspaper report.

On 20 Apr 1939, Fred enlisted in the Citizens Military Force at Molong. He stated his age was 37 years and 11 months and he was born on 29 Apr 1902, but he was actually born in 1901. He was 5 feet 9 inches tall, has brown hair, brown eyes, a medium complexion and had gall bladder and appendix scars. He was of the Baptist religious denomination. His occupation was a farmer and grazier at *Hazeldene*, and his wife Marjorie was his next of kin.

Pte Wykes served with the CMF in the 54th Btn until 10 Jan 1942 and then served with the Australian Army 54th Btn. He had leave without pay from 26 May - 15 June 1942 and leave again in July, before he embarked per *SS Perseus* on 11 Aug 1942 and disembarked on 25 Aug 1942 at Fremantle.

On 5 Sep 1942, L/Cpl Fred Wykes was accidentally shot in the Donnybrook Area of WA and admitted to the Bunbury District Hospital. *The Harvey Murray Times*, WA - 17 Sep 1942, p1, reported:

“YOUNG SERGEANT SHOT IN CAMP ACCIDENT - All is quiet at Donnybrook. It is about 8 pm and a military unit has just moved into camp; the boys are taking it easy after a hard day. 28-years-old Sergeant Laurence Patrick Smith bends over cleaning his dusty boots. Nearby stands his cobbles, Eric Cecil Evans (25) and L/Corporal Frederick George Wykes (42). Evans picks up his rifle and murmurs something about unloading it. He has been carrying it loaded all day, with the cut-off in action. Remembering having fired one shot on the way, he only ejects nine cartridges. Then he pulls the trigger to uncock the weapon. There is a crack, a flash, and simultaneous cries of pain from Smith and Wykes. Both roll on the ground. There were ten bullets in that rifle, and the tenth, fired accidentally by Evans, smashed through Smith’s body from thigh to thigh, wounding Wykes in the leg. Smith died as the ambulance rushed him to the Bunbury District Hospital, while Wykes suffered from a bullet wound in the leg. The Coroner, CH Wood, JP, found that death was caused by a gunshot wound inflicted accidentally. No blame, he said, was attachable to anyone.”

L/Cpl Wykes was discharged from Bunbury Hospital on 16 Sep 1942 and rejoined his unit. He returned to NSW by train on 24 Oct 1942 and was discharged from the Australian Army as medically unfit for service on 4 Dec 1942. He is honoured on the Cumnock War Memorial gates and the Yeoval WW2 Honour board.

Fred’s daughter, Hazel Wykes, also served in WW2. Aircraftwoman 176686, RAAF, 5 Service Flying Training School served from 9 Mar 1944 to 1 Oct 1945.



Left: Fred Wykes and his son-in-law, Ken Bruce (married to Margaret) of Myrangle, and both Merino breeders. Taken at the Sydney Sheep Sales. *The Land (Sydney)* -13 Jun 1952, p13.

Fred Wykes was a long time member of the Cumnock Pastoral and Agricultural Association and assisted in the sheep section at Cumnock Shows and won many prizes in various sheep sections. He was also a committee member of the Cumnock Bowling Club in 1953.

Fred Wykes sold Hazeldene to Wansey Pastoral Company in 1962. He and his wife Marjory retired to live in Wellington.

Frederick Wykes died, aged 71 years, on 28 July 1972 at Dubbo. Marjorie returned to live at Yeoval, and died, aged 94 years, on 8 April 1996, at Yeoval. They are both buried in the Dubbo Cemetery.

Sources:

The Book of Bournemouth- compiled for the centenary of the Bournemouth Baptist Church, 1884-1984.

The Crossroads - the History of Cumnock, by Joan Marriott, 1993.

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