

75 SQUADRON NZ ASSOCIATION

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75 SQUADRON PERSONAL PUBLIC NOTICES DETAIL

Hello to all 75 Squadron RAF and RNZAF personnel and your families.

During the past four years as Secretary of the 75 Squadron NZ Association, I have become aware that the public notices which are published in our many newspapers - that advise of the passing of our family members, squadron colleagues and friends, have been incorrect and incomplete. The responsibility for writing and publishing these notices seems largely to be with the Funeral Home companies that provide the funeral service. However they do not use the correct and proper terminology for us Air Force people, and often use descriptions and terms that are more of an affront to us than a memorial or honouring ones specific military service and history.

Therefore, I wish to offer you some information that will help yourself or family members prepare a more correct public notice for when it is necessary.

- a. For those that served during World War II, the flights across enemy territory were called **Operations** or **Ops**, on the raids or sorties to designated targets. Many people say or write the word *missions*, but mission or missions is totally incorrect and should not be used.
- b. The Squadron description should be written or spoken as **No. 75(NZ) SQN RAF**, or just **75(NZ) Sqn RAF**. It should NOT be written or spoken/pronounced as *75th*!
- c. During WW2, the New Zealanders, Australians and Canadians flew for their respective countries, in the RAF on RAF Squadrons. 75(NZ) was an RAF Squadron; it was not an RNZAF squadron. 75(NZ)RAF Sqn flew **Vickers Wellington, Short Stirling** and **Avro Lancaster** bombers ... but note the spelling for the Stirling aircraft is with an 'i'..... It is not "*sterling*" (as is the English currency)!
- d. For any public notices, ensure the term Regiment No. is NOT used. Regiment is an Army term. For Air Force and Navy, our military number is called a "Service Number", and should be shown with the prefix "NZ" for those that joined the RNZAF from the late 1930's to the late 1940's. (ie. NZ425631). Just having the service number like this is adequate.
- e. An acceptable or correct header for newspaper public notices for World War II veterans can be the following....

RODD, DUNCAN RUSSELL, NZ431149, FLTLT, DFC*, mid, csva, PILOT, RNZAF, 75(NZ)SQN RAF, 1945.

f. Campaigns are not normally shown by description, but can be added later in the text...

ie. European theatre, or Pacific theatre.

g. For awards, or decorations of valour and recognition of bravery such as the VC, DFC, DFM, or CGM, they should be used by their initials but must be in upper case lettering. For the likes of the **mid** and **cvsa**, they must be written in the lower case. This is standard medallic protocol; therefore please ensure the newspaper people know this, because many change it to upper case!!

h. Awards and decorations for valour are **awarded**.... They are not won ! Many use the term “some soldier or airman ‘won’ the VC”, or “he went on to ‘win’ a VC for his country”. This is incorrect terminology. It is/was not a race to win a medal. The awards and decorations for valour and bravery were awarded only after many recommendations - starting from the Squadron CO, then the Base Commander to the Prime Minister and finally authorised by the King. So to win or won is not correct! The airman were awarded and/or bestowed these decorations.

i. Each RAF Squadron had/has an identifying badge, a practice first begun during WWI, but made more formal with restrictions in the mid 1930's. Our 75 Squadron had four different lives from 1916 to 2001. But the RAF Squadron number did not have a badge until 1942, when one was designed by three squadron members at RAF Newmarket when the squadron was flying Short Stirling's. It was authorised by the King in 1943, and in 1947 was given to the RNZAF as a gesture of thank you to the NZ airman for their work and sacrifice during WW2. Many call a squadron Badge - a Crest. This is totally incorrect. The commonwealth Air Force's have a Crest, but each Squadron has a Badge as are on this letter-head, on a plaque or on your ties I have made. The 75 Squadron badges - the three designs – are now available electronically and you are most welcome to ask for a copy of this for any paperwork or funeral service card.

I have been most disappointed when reading public notices for our airman and how the format has been quite wrong. We owe it to all our special airman that gave so much so long ago, to have the public notice of their passing in memoriam to be proper, correct and a fitting tribute.

Please forgive me if you find my information above upsetting or out-of-line, but I have wanted to make these finer points of our history and for people's tributes correct for so long now. Therefore I feel a personal letter is my last resort to ensure this important information is promulgated to all members and their families to help you all.

I would be very grateful for your or your families contact should things not be well, and especially if anyone requires further help or assistance with writing notices, etiquette or information on Air Force protocol.

Ake Ake kia kaha

For ever and ever be strong

My kindest regards

Your humble servant

Glen Turner

Secretary 75 SQN ASSN NZ