

A short biography of Flying Officer William Mather DFM RAF.

Flying Officer William Mather 49sq RAF 157746

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Born: 23rd April 1920

Place: Weston (a small town near Cessnock) in the District of Kurri Kurri, New South Wales, Australia.

Father: John Fellowes Mather - (Father William Walton Mather)

Born: New Delaval England

Employment: Mine Deputy

Mother: Olive Mather Nee Dixon

Born: Adamstown, New South Wales, Australia

Employment: Owner/Proprietor of a drapery / dressmaking shop.

Address: Aberdare St Weston, New South Wales.

Brother: John Dixon Mather (still living - UK)

Born: 3rd April 1930

Place: Aberdare St Weston, New South Wales.

William Mather attended school at Weston then Cessnock High School.

His father J.F. Mather served in the Australian army during WW1 in France and Belgium. He arrived in Australia as a young man of 18 living at Weston with his grandparents and working at a coal mine in Weston where his Grandfather was under manager.

The family returned to England in June 1935 in order for Williams father (J. F. Mather) to work in his father's Newsagent & Tobacconist business in Blyth, Northumberland, England.

The family sailed to England aboard the S.S. Jervis Bay which later became famous as the Armed Merchant Cruiser HMS Jervis Bay which was sunk on 5th November 1940 by the German Pocket Battleship, Admiral Scheer. The Captain of the Jervis Bay, Captain Fegan, sacrificed his ship which was the only escort protecting the 37 merchant ships of Convoy HX-84 sailing from Halifax, Nova Scotia to Britain. For this action, Captain Fegan was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross.

Jervis Bay was subsequently immortalized in the 1943 World War Two movie "San Demetrio London" about one of the tankers in that convoy which was abandoned after being shelled and burning. The tanker was re-boarded by some of the crew the next day and sailed successfully to Britain.

William Mather (aged 15) continued his education at Blyth Grammar School. After completing his education he was employed at Northumberland County Council in the Poor Law department. He enlisted in the RAF in 1940 initially as a wireless operator air gunner.

William Mather's brother, John Dixon Mather, has his log book for operations with 97 Squadron, his DFM and Caterpillar badge awarded for bailing out to save his life. John Dixon Mather also holds his father's AIF medals from WW1 and his ANZAC Cap Badge for service in the Australian Army. (F/O Mather had flown with 97 Squadron, and his DFM award was Gazetted on 15 June 1943)



**In Memory of
Flying Officer**

William Mather

D F M

**157746, 49 Sqdn., Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
who died on 22 June 1944**

Remembered with Honour

Schoonselhof Cemetery, Belgium.