

HMAS SYDNEY II – Family Memories

Able Seaman David Wallace FERGUSON

Joan Ferguson's Story

I was married into the Ferguson Family on 18 December 1948.

The memorial service in Sydney on 24 April 2008 finally brought to a close years of torment and silence that the Ferguson Family had endured. My son and daughter attended with me.

My Mother-in-Law was a widow in circumstance only, having put her husband into Rydalmere Institution because he had advanced Multiple Sclerosis. She reared her four boys alone; trying to make sure they did not become State Wards, taking in sewing.

There was **Gordon Ferguson** (Born 1916) who enlisted, only to be taken out because he worked in a necessary wartime industry. He never recovered the shame and was sent a white feather for not being in uniform.

Then there was **Robert Ferguson** (Born 07/10/1918). He was in the 8th Division which was captured in Singapore and spent the war in Changi. He eventually went to Japan with the occupying forces as a interpreter and stayed in the Army for years. He also wanted to bring home a Japanese wife, but Fergi would not accept this so he returned home alone and remained unmarried.

My Husband, **James Peter Ferguson** (Born 16/5/1920) was in the 6th Division, 2/3 Battalion. He was in the Middle East and New Guinea.

David Wallace Ferguson (Born 29/01/1922) was the youngest. His brothers had wanted to get in the Navy, but David was the one that was accepted. They took him into town to enlist. Without a Father, the older boys had helped rear David. He was 19 years old when he died.

Both Robert and Jim were overseas when news of the disappearance was announced.

Fergi continued throughout the war to contribute to the war effort with her sewing and knitting.

She never spoke of the pain that she endured and went to her death after a lifetime of loneliness and hardship (a wonderful woman). My Husband hardly ever spoke of the tragedy, as was the order of the day. He only wanted to rear a family and be at peace – a gentle man.

Joan Ferguson