



## THE MASONIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

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### **GARING William Henry CBE, DFC**

Bill Garing was born on July 6 1910 at Corryong in Victoria, the son of George Garing a retired grazier and Amy Evelyn Garing. He was educated at Thougla State School, Corryong Higher Elementary School and Melbourne Technical College.

Garing began his career as an Electrical and Mechanical Engineer in 1928 with the citizen air force before entering the Royal Military College at Duntroon in 1929. In 1930 he transferred from the army to the air force as a specially selected RAAF Cadet and commenced flying training at Point Cook in December 1930, graduating in 1931. He also graduated from the School of Air Pilotage and Specialist Navigational School in the UK in 1934-35 and was a Seaplane Flying Instructor and Chief Navigation Instructor at Point Cook in 1936. In 1938 he became the first person in Australia to qualify for a first class Air Navigator's Licence (Australian).

Bill Garing was posted to England in 1939 and served with the No.10 Australian Squadron RAAF as Flight Commander in Coastal Command RAF in 1939, taking delivery of new Short Sunderland marine patrol aircraft for the RAAF. On the outbreak of war in 1939 instead of returning to Australia as planned, Bill Garing stayed on to participate in the war and flew the unit's first operational mission on 10 October 1939. In June 1940 whilst flying a Sunderland flying boat he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for engaging five German bombers that were attacking an armed merchant cruiser. At this time he was flying operations in the North Atlantic, France and the Mediterranean, and also helped rescue 45 survivors from the refugee liner City of Benares six days after the ship had been torpedoed in the North Atlantic.

Garing flew Lord Lloyd to France for meetings with the Petain Government before the collapse of the French Government. He was also pilot to the Duke of Kent and Mr Anthony Eden, being Mentioned in Despatches during that time.

He returned Australia in 1941 and was appointed Senior Air Staff Officer Headquarters, Northern Area which ranged through Netherland Indies, New Guinea, British Solomon Islands and New Caledonia. It was at this time that he was able to use his operational experience and planning ability to set up reconnaissance and attack plans for air force units stationed in New Guinea. These plans had previously not existed in the RAAF and were in preparation for the possible entry of Japan into the war.

Garing then commanded the No. 9 (Operational) group RAAF, New Guinea 1942, Milne Bay Campaign 1942, Buna Campaign 1942-43 (awarded American DSC), 1943 awarded CBE, Commanded No 1 Operational Training unit Victoria 1943-44 (awarded 1939-43 Star),

