

## HERITAGE SERVICES INFORMATION SHEET NUMBER 15

# VINCENT (BUSHY) PARKER

**Vincent “Bushy” Parker is known as a local war hero. He was a local lad who became a spitfire pilot during the Battle of Britain; was later captured by the Germans and attained renown for his role in British escape attempts from Colditz Prison. Thuringowa City Council has recognised his significance by naming a park at Rollingstone after him.**



By 1919 the North Coast Line extended north from Townsville to Ingham. Purono rail siding was situated just south of the Rollingstone. Vincent Parker's adoptive parents had migrated to Australia in 1928 when Vincent was 10 years old. In 1929, his mother, Edith, gained the position of station mistress at Purono siding.



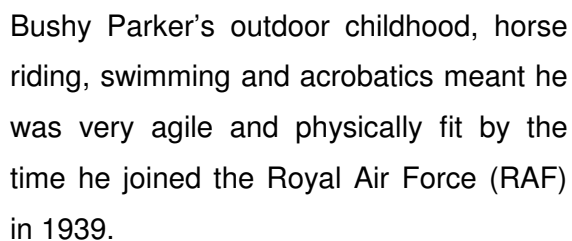
Her husband, who was already working on the north coast railway as a fettler, transferred south to be with his family. Vincent attended Bohlevale State School.

After leaving school Vincent Parker went to work for Kodak in the Flinders Street.



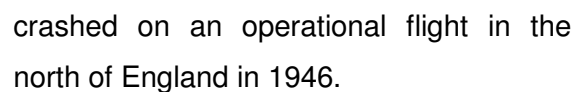
At eighteen he travelled to New Zealand where he spent time learning to be a professional magician.

When he returned to Australia he and a friend decided to travel to England and join the RAF but Parker had to work his passage to England as a steward.



Parker remained imprisoned in Colditz until the end of the war.

After the war end Parker continued in the RAF but was killed when his plane



- Bianka Vidonja Balanzategui, *Thirty-three miles to Rollingstone, A short history of Rollingstone and Balgal*, Thuringowa City Council, Thuringowa, 2003.
- Jack Champ & Colin Burgess, *The Diggers of Colditz*, Taylor-Type Publications (Australia) Pty Ltd., 1985.
- Colin Burgess manuscript - 'Bush' Parker, January 2000.
- Thuringowa Heritage Services Photographic Collection.
- RSL

