
Stained Glass Window at Aberfeldie Methodist Church

Location

Waverley Street, Aberfeldie, MOONEE VALLEY CITY

Municipality

MOONEE VALLEY CITY

Level of significance

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Heritage Listing

Vic. War Heritage Inventory

Heritage Study/Consultant	Vic War Heritage Inventory - Stained Glass Memorial Windows Study, Bronwyn Hughes, 2013;
Architect/Designer	Kerr-Morgan, William, Brooks, Robinson & Co,
Hermes Number	196658
Property Number	

Memorial Window References & Acknowledgements

AWM Roll of Honour; NAA: B883,VX26521; NAA: B883, VX26518; NAA: B883, VX27001; *Argus*, 8 October 1940, p.6; 23 January 1946, p.6; 1 July 1947, p.13; 23 January 1950, p.10; unidentified newspaper cutting 28 July 1948; Robert JR Ditterich, *Two lives, no known grave: Rabaul 1942*, Place of Mind, Newtown, 2006; Brooks, Robinson Co. job books (1923-c1966)

With thanks to Norma Adams, cousin of Ormond Copas.

Memorial Window Subject

Valiant for Truth

Memorial Window Text

Valiant for Truth

Memorial Window Description & History

The memorial window dedicated to three former members of the Aberfeldie Methodist Church was unveiled on Sunday 23 July, 1948 in the presence of a large gathering. All three men enlisted in 2/22 Battalion and at the unveiling one of their comrades, Sergeant Herbert Smith, spoke of the part they played in the defence of Australia. The address was given by the Reverend Charles W Turner BA, before the leader of the Boys' Bible Class, Mr. FG Batten, unveiled the window on behalf of the donors, Mr. and Mrs. WL Russell. Mr. Russell ordered the window, measuring 105 x 28 inches, from Brooks, Robinson & Co. in May 1948 and it was made up from a cartoon previously used at Cootamundra NSW.

John Skelton 'Jack' Russell was born in 1918 and his brother Robert William 'Bob' Russell in 1920. Bob enlisted in May 1940, a few days after his good friend Ormond 'Orm' Frederick Clarke Copas, and his brother followed two months later. All three joined 2/22 Battalion AIF and after initial training embarked for war, arriving in Rabaul, New Britain in April 1941. By January, the 2/22 Battalion was opposing a mightier Japanese invasion that they were unable to repel; they attempted to withdraw without proper preparation for such an eventuality. Jack Russell and Orm Copas were killed in the Battle of Rabaul on 22 and 23 January respectively. Bob was taken prisoner and in June embarked on the ill-fated *Montevideo Maru*, bound for Japan. On 1 July 1942, in the South China Sea, an American submarine torpedoed the *Montevideo Maru* with the loss of life all 1,050 Australians on board. For many years afterwards, on the anniversary of the deaths of each man, the Russell and Copas families placed memorial notices in the daily press that recognised and perpetuated the strong bonds between them and between the three young men.

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