

Able Seaman W.Brown – Royal Navy

William Brown was born on 26th May 1923 and was the son of George and Caroline Brown of 52 St John's Road, Westcott. He attended Westcott Village School from 1928 to 1937.

In the autumn of 1944 William was serving as an Able Seaman in HMS *Nabbington*, a Mobile Naval Operating Base known as a MONAB. *Nabbington* was the first of a series of these shore bases and was known initially as MONAB 1, which began to be assembled at the Royal Naval Air Station at Ludham, Norfolk on 4th September 1944. It was destined for Australia where its role was to maintain aircraft flying from the British carrier force operating with the United States Navy in the Pacific.

MONAB 1 was commissioned as HMS *Nabbington* on 28th October 1944. In early November the Unit sailed for Australia. The stores, equipment and vehicles were sent on the freighter ss *Suffolk* which left Birkenhead for Sydney on 20th November; the Unit's personnel sailed on the converted liner *Empress of Scotland*. The main party arrived in Nowra, where they were to be based, 100 miles south of Sydney, on New Year's Day 1945.

William Brown died on 13th January 1945, just twelve days after arriving in Australia. We do not know the circumstances of his death. He is buried in Nowra War Cemetery which contains the graves of 35 service personnel who died during the Second World War.

HMS *Nabbington* remained at Nowra for the rest of the war, supporting the aircraft carriers *Illustrious*, *Victorious*, *Indefatigable* and *Indomitable* in their operations against Japanese forces. These continued until Japan surrendered on 15th August. HMS *Nabbington* paid off at Nowra three months later, on 15th November 1945.