

The Late Frederick Sheppard Smith, DFC, BA





## Mr. F. S. SMITH, D.F.C.

On the 14th February this year our school was suddenly paralysed. "Fred" was gone. While indulging in one of his happiest pastimes, swimming, he had accidentally drowned.

Mr. Frederick S. Smith was a quiet and unassuming man, with high morals and very good taste. "Fred" was no saint, as we often found out in class.

He would sit up for hours at night marking our essays, so that we could have them back for the next lesson. He did not consider himself, and only that we might get a good pass in our exams did he spend so much time collecting all sorts of information for us on Shakespeare and other sections of our work.

It was obvious from his eyes and his energy that he loved his work. If a boy did not do as well as he could have done and was not promoted, just let anyone criticise him in "Fred's" hearing. "Fred" did not have a harsh word for anyone, except to prevent him from hurting someone else.

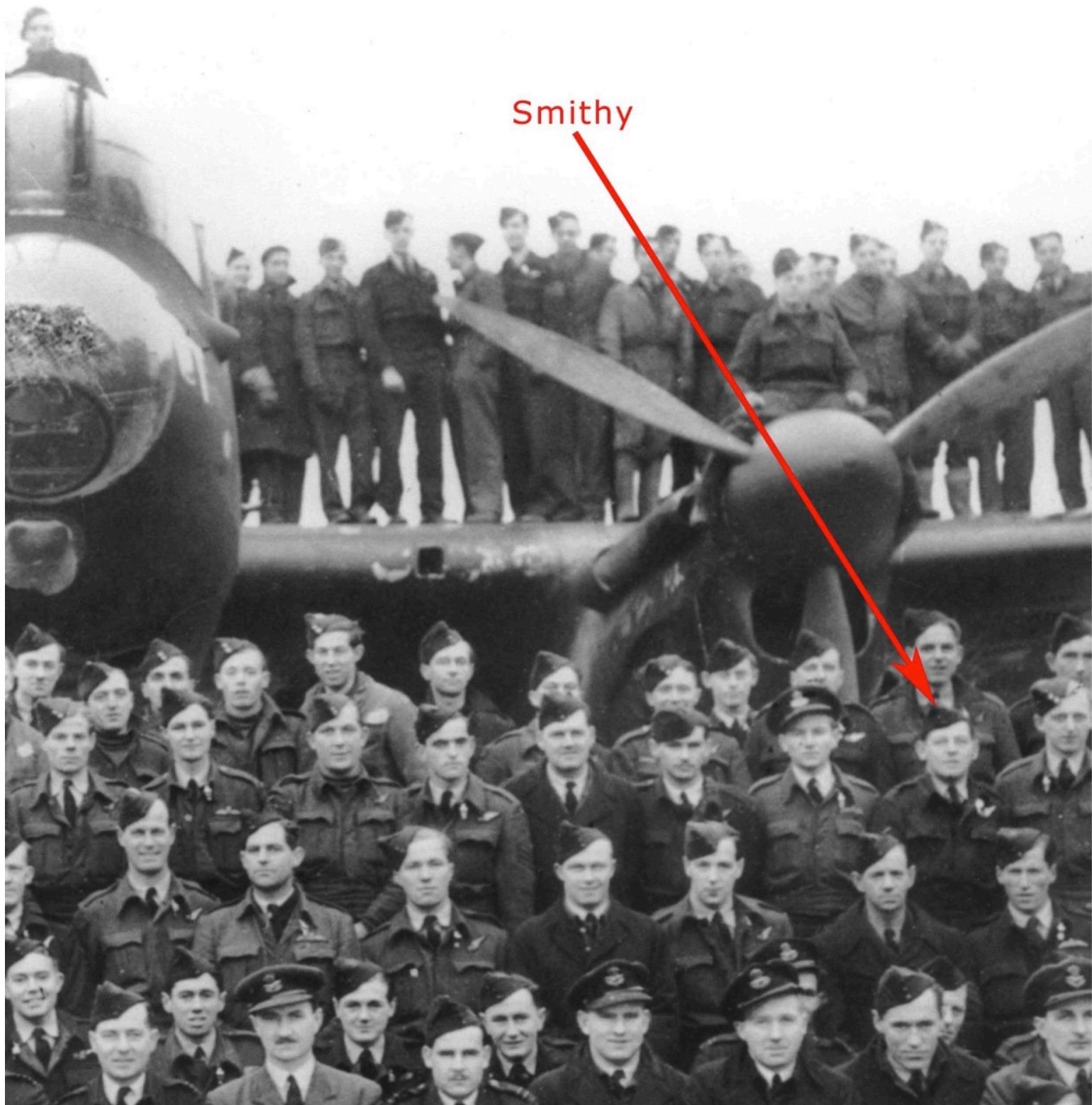
I have not met another humorist such as he. Mention the one word "Kelly" to anyone in "Fred's" class, and that person would rock with laughter.

Since this essay is primarily for those of you who did not know "Fred", I should like to tell of a few of my own experiences. Once I dared to praise him at the end of a composition, and he wrote underneath: "No marks for flattery." On another occasion I looked out of our class-room door and called out, "Here comes Freddie." As he came in the door, he said, quietly and simply: "Your voice carries, Master Matthews." Everyday statements such as these meant a lot to all who knew him.

All those who saw his productions, "Arms and the Man," and "School for Scandal," remember how perfectly they were produced, and how, as at concerts and on other occasions, he was too modest to come on stage or come down to be congratulated.

Personally, I have never felt a greater blow than when I found out our A.T.C. Officer in Command, "Freddie" Smith, had left us. And I was only one of hundreds who felt that way. "Freddie" was the "tops". I am very proud to have known him.

## Fred Smith, English Teacher: His RAAF Years



Smithy

This is the much loved English teacher Fred Smith, when he served in the RAAF, with 460 Heavy Bomber Squadron during the Second World War. He taught at the school from 1950 to 1955, and was unfortunately found drowned in Newcastle baths in 1956, aged only 34.



*This detailed research information was supplied by Old Boy Jim Hawkins (Year of '54), in an email to John McKenzie and John Harborne.*

**Flight Lieutenant Frederick Sheppard Smith DFC BA 1922-1956**

Dear John & John

Please find the results from my research on Fred Smith. I would like to record my appreciation to Adjunct Associate Professor Norton Duckmanton, OAM, MDS who was a Beaufighter navigator in the Pacific Theatre and my secretary, Ros Palmer, who sorted all the information for me so it could be transmitted by email.

Fred would have completed his Arts I year at the time of enlisting in October 42. During World War II, the University compressed its courses with minimal time allocated for vacations. Consequently, he would have sat the Arts I exams and received his results by that date. As you are probably aware, service records do not provide any personal details and apart from Fred's mother's name and his father being deceased, there is no other information present. The details of his flying career would have been recorded in his personal log book which would still presumably be in the family's possession. More details regarding the operation flights would be held in the 460 Squadron's archives. For each operation, the details would be recorded in the Squadron's operations record book. This information would include the date of the operation, the aircraft type and its number, a list of the crew, the duty (operations and target), time up and time down and details of the sortie including bomb load and report of the action. Also on record there would be a report on 460 Squadron's base for each day, including operations, weather details and cross references. It would be difficult to gain access to these records without assistance from staff at the Australian War Memorial.

If there are any World War II tragics in the group, I would suggest the following further reading:

*Firkins, P.*: Strike & Return, the Unit History of 460 RAAF Heavy Bomber Squadron; Australian Military History Publications, Loftus, 2000.

*Nelmes, MV & Jenkins, IG.* : G,A A Memorial to RAAF Bomber Crews. Banner Books, Maryborough, 2000.

Both should be available from the Australian War Memorial Shop.

Other than my summary of his service, there are two attachments containing Smith's biographical details (below).

His operational record summaries are noted on one of the attachments. "Strike & Return" gives a list of the operations he flew during this time. Smithy had a relatively safe introduction to operations as 460 Squadron lost no aircraft between 3 September 44 and 5 October 44. Many of these operations had over 20 aircraft from the Squadron. Losses started to return from 19 October 44 to late December, but there was still only a maximum of one crew lost per operation, which is probably a reflection of the state of Germany and the occupied countries at that time.

Smithy's crew would have been lucky to escape the ME410 over Cologne on 30 October 44 as this was a particularly lethal aircraft. More details of this plane can be obtained on the internet.

Most of you will be aware of the Flight Hall at the Australian War Memorial, but for those of you who are visiting overseas, the RAF Museum at Hendon is worth a visit. It is easy to get to; catch the tube to Colindale (Northern line) and then the 33 bus.

Jim

### **Timeline for Flight Lieutenant Frederick Sheppard Smith, DFC, War Time Career.**

Previously he was in the Sydney University Regiment/Royal Australian Artillery having completed ARTS I with the rank on discharge as Private.

- 6 October 42: Enlisted RAAF No. 424679, rank AC2.
- 6 October 42: Appointed to air crew, Mustering: Guard.
- 6 December 42: Posted to Bradfield Park
- 27 February 43: Promoted to LAC
- 25 May 43: Embarked Sydney on attachment RCAF for further training
- 14 November 43: Completed course as navigator. Rank: Sgt, Navigator's Badge
- 14 December 43: Flight training school. Edmonton, Canada. Course 229 Nav.
- 19 December 43: Embarked Halifax for GB
- 25 December 43: Arrived GB
- 14 March 44: Posted to 27 Operational Training Unit, Church Broughton, Derbyshire (Bomber Command)
- 12 May 44: Promoted to (T) F/Sgt
- 8 June 44: Posted to 11 Base RAF
- 6 September 44: Posted to 460 Squadron RAAF, mustering: general duties. Commenced operations. Aircraft type: Lancaster.
- 21 November 44: Promoted to P/O
- 27 December 44: Completed last operation with 460 Squadron
- 24 February 45: Posted to 21 Operational Training Unit, RAF as instructor. Upwood, Suffolk. This base was home to 156 Squadron RAF (Lancasters).
- 14 April 45: Awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross (non immediate)  
Citation: "Pilot Officer Smith has completed numerous operations against the enemy in the course of which he has invariably displayed the utmost courage and devotion to duty."
- 14 May 45: Promoted to Flying Officer (Navigator)
- 25 June 45: Completed posting at 21 OTU RAF. At the end of this appointment he had flown 481 hours, including 21 hours in the last six months.



- 21 Jul 45: Posted to HQ No.5 group, RAF. On this date, advice was received that 460 Squadron had been included in Tiger Force and was to transfer from No.1 Bomber Group to No.5 Bomber Group. The aim of Tiger Force was to fly to Okinawa and assist the Americans in the destruction of Japan. The crews took off from Binbrook to East Kirby on 27 July, thus leaving their home station. Presumably, because of his history with 360 Squadron, Smithy was posted to HQ of No.5 Group. Tiger Force remained in England as Japan capitulated on 14 August.
- 11 September 45: Posted to 9 Air Crew Holding Unit (ACHU), Ganniston. Duties unclear. With the war over, operational flying ceased. 460 Squadron flew its last flight when the CO, WCDR PH Swan, an Australian Pathfinder flew his aircraft over France to salute the Australian War Memorial at Amiens.
- 30 November 45: Embarked from UK.
- 6 January 46: Arrived Australia.
- 3 February 46: Posted to 1 Personal Depot, RAAF. Duties unclear. Probably navigating a desk.
- 12 February 46: Posted to 2 Personal Depot, Bradfield Park. Probably navigating a desk.
- 18 May 46: Discharged from RAAF, transferred to RAAF Reserve.
- 1 March 56: Vale advice from Training Command RAAF to Air Training Corps, NSW: "Advised to strike FO (A/Fltlt) FS Smith (deceased) from register effective 14 February 56."

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE.

Overseas Headquarters,  
Kodak House,  
KINGSWAY, LONDON W.C.2.

PRO FORMA  
P/R 5.

SECRET & CONFIDENTIAL.

The following biographical details are required for R.A.A.F. Historical Records, Overseas Headquarters. These forms are to be filled in and returned to the Officer Commanding Repatriation Disposal Section, No. 11 (R.A.A.F.) P.D.R.C.

NAME (in full) SMITH, FREDERICK SHEPPARD NUMBER A/424679.....  
 RANK AND MUSTERING F/O NAVIGATOR DECORATIONS D.F.C......  
 NUMBER I.T.S. COURSE 25 O.T.U., A.F.U. etc. 2(a) AFU MILLOM.....  
27 O.T.U. CHURCH BROUGHTON.  
 DATE LEFT AUSTRALIA 22.5.43.....  
 CANADA 19.12.43 DATE OF ARRIVAL U.K. 25.12.43.....  
 S.AFRICA .....

SQUADRONS 460.....

AIRCRAFT FLOWN ANSON WELLINGTON HALIFAX LANCASTER.....  
 COMMAND AND TYPE OF ACTIVITY.....

OPERATIONS OR TRAINING WITH AMERICAN PERSONNEL, SQUADRONS, OR AIRCRAFT.....

DETAILS OF OPERATIONS:- with dates; to be given as fully as possible under the following applicable headings:-

- (a) Number of operational hours.
- (b) Number Operational Sorties, Day/Night
- (c) Targets attacked.
- (d) Attacks on enemy surface vessels - type, size, etc..
- (e) Attacks on enemy submarines.
- (g) Outstanding sorties or incidents.
- (f) Combats with enemy aircraft.
- (i) Personnel in Photographic Reconnaissance Unit, Transport Column, etc., should give a brief report of their work.
- (h) Other Australians in crew.

(a) 163 hrs.....  
 (b) 17 DAY 15 NIGHT.....  
 (c) LE HAVRE 6.9.44, 9.9.44, 10/9/44, 25.9.44, 28.9.44, 29.9.44, 30.9.44, 5.10.44, 7.10.44  
STUTTGART 11.10.44, 23.10.44, 25.10.44, 24.10.44, 30.10.44, 2.11.44, 6.11.44  
ESSEN 11.10.44, 11/10/44, 24/10/44, 16.11.44, 21.11.44, 3/12/44, 4/12/44  
WANNEN EISEL, DORTMUND, DUREN, AACHENBURG, URFT, BHM, KARLSRUHE  
6/12/44, 15/12/44, 15/12/44, 21/12/44, 26/12/44, 27/12/44  
MERSEBURG, LEUNA, LUDWIGSHAVEN, ULM, BONN, ST. VIT, RHEYDT.  
 (d) NIL (e) NIL (f) ATTACHED BY REGALIO ON SOLOANE 30/10/44.  
 (g) NIL (h) F/O BASKERVILLE (BRISBANE) F/O J.W. TRIST (BRISBANE)  
F/O ELLIS (SYDNEY) F/O J.D. GOULDING (MURWILLUMBAN) F/O J. McQUEEN (BRIS)

DATE 12. ix. 45. SIGNATURE F. S. Smith



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE

The following biographical details are required for use at R.A.A.F. Overseas Headquarters, London.

SURNAME..... *SMITH*..... NUMBER..... *AUS 424679*.....  
CHRISTIAN NAMES..... *Frederick Sheppard*.....  
AIR FORCE RANK AND MUSTERING..... *SET. P/O NAVIGATOR*.....  
DEGREES ETC..... *D F C*.....  
DATE OF BIRTH..... *28/6/22*..... PLACE..... *SYDNEY N.S.W.*.....  
EDUCATED..... *Sydney High School Sydney University*.....  
DATE OF ENTERING SERVICE..... *6-10-42*.....  
PREVIOUS SERVICE EXPERIENCE..... *Sydney Uni. Regt. and R.A.A. 12 months*  
*Aircrew ground 3 months*  
PLACES OF TRAINING..... *Ingleburn, WARWICK FARM, CADVER, BALGOWLAN, FOREST HILL, BRADFORD*  
*PARK, N.S.W., EDMONTON ALBERTA*.....  
CIVILIAN CAREER AND ACTIVITIES..... *STUDENT ARTS*.....  
SPORT (TEAMS REPRESENTED) CLUBS ETC..... *Swimming tennis football*.....  
FATHER..... *deceased (mother) M. J. SMITH*.....  
WIFE.....  
HOME ADDRESS..... *121 PADDINGTON STREET PADDINGTON*.....  
SIGNATURE..... *L. S. Smith*.....  
DATE..... *22/12/43*.....  
DATE OF PREPARATION..... *14/12/43*.....

~~RESERVATION USE ONLY - DO NOT FILL IN~~

AWARDS..... *D F C*.....  
CATEGORY..... INTERVIEWS.....  
RADIO..... OTHER REFERENCES.....



## NBHS Fred Smith DFC



*This photo was kindly provided by Suzanne Trist, 29 October 2016, who wrote: "As I mentioned, Frederick Sheppard Smith (not Shepherd as printed under the 1956 Novocastrian photo) was the navigator in my father's crew in 460 Squadron during WWII (the pilot's name was Baskerville). I have also attached a photo of the crew. Fred (the navigator) is on the far right; my father (John Trist, the bomb-aimer) is next to him; Jack McQueen (rear-gunner and the last survivor) is third from the right; Jack Goulding (mid-upper gunner) is fourth from the right; Harry Ellis (the wireless operator) is next to him; followed by Alan Henry Baskerville (the pilot) and Hall (the engineer) on the far left. I would love to find out any information I can about Fred's life after the war, either from school archives or from former students who may still remember him. Your help with filling in any more of the missing parts of the tapestry would be greatly appreciated." All relevant information from the OBA web page was passed on to Suzanne 9 September 2018.*