

Nambour Museum will remember Jim Hocking's heroic feat

Nambour... the new West End

Seventy years on, on 19 July, Nambour & District Historical Museum is remembering one of Nambour's sons, who gave his life during World War II in an incredible feat of heroism.

President Clive Plater said on 28 July 1944, Jim Wallace Hocking, an RAAF pilot, was completing training with the RAF in England in World War II. He was killed on his final training flight in a Stirling bomber. The plane he was piloting crashed after its engines caught fire. Jim ordered his crew to parachute to safety and he stayed at the controls. He prevented his plane from hurtling as a fireball into the village of March, in the Fenland district, thus saving many hundreds of lives, including those of his crew, while sacrificing his own.

"The Remembrance Service will be held at the museum at 18 Mitchell Street, starting at 1pm with special guests,

including members of Jim's family, including his brother and sister. Also visiting from England, representing the mayor of Fenland District Council, is Cr Mike Cornwell and Mrs Judith Cornwell. Jim's plane crashed in the Fenland District and there is a memorial to Jim in the town of March," Mr Plater said.

"Jim has not been forgotten in Nambour. Details of his gallantry are on display in the museum's Remembrance

Room. Also his story is recounted in the book, March Hero by Dorothy Whittington, and a special award is given each year at the Nambour High School. Jim was a foundation student at the school."

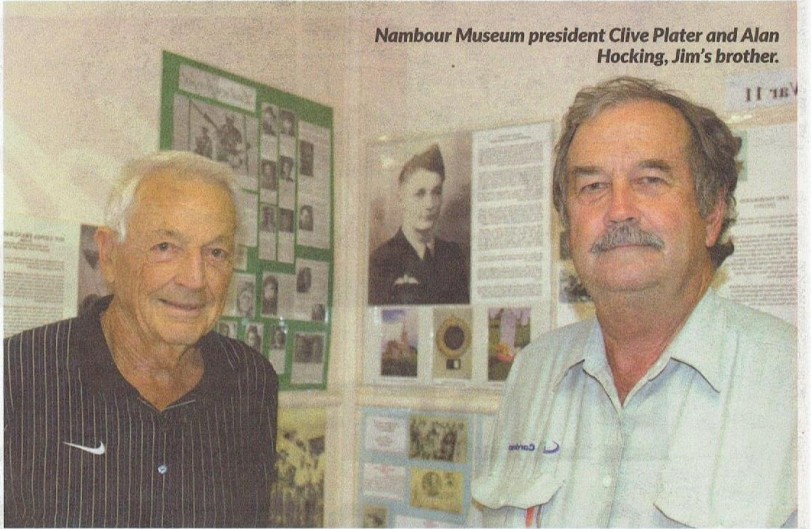
Mr Plater said cadets from AAFC 207 Squadron

Nambour will begin the service when they parade into the museum grounds. Members of the Nambour branch of the RSL, and the RAAFA will also take part.

Mr Plater said during the service, prizes will be presented to Sunshine Coast high school students who

took part in the museum's writing competition, entitled a Friend's Letter. Students were asked to put themselves in the place of friends of fictional Australian airmen, who crashed and died during World War II and write letters to their parents offering sympathies.

The service is from 1-2pm in the carpark of the museum at 18 Mitchell Street. Those attending the service are cordially invited to afternoon tea and to inspect the museum which closes at 4pm. No entry fee applies. Donations gratefully received. RSVP 5441 2083.



Nambour Museum president Clive Plater and Alan Hocking, Jim's brother.



Jim Hocking



Museum member Dawn Percival and Sister Cities member Lorraine See.