

Edgerley, Mark William (based on RAAF Squadrons History website)

Graduated from Australian Forestry School 1949. Worked for Woods & Forests Dept S.A. at Penola in 1950s, ACT Forests 1970s-90s.

From "UK War Bride - 467 463 RAAF Squadrons History" website.

The London Blitz began in September 1940, and my parents were killed in a direct hit on an air-raid shelter. during April 1943 and I was in my final term at school. She wanted to give us a treat one afternoon, and sent us to the Bournemouth Pavilion to a "tea dance" A group of Aussie airmen came in - we had never seen Aussies in their dark blue uniforms, and the next thing we knew was that two of them came to our table and asked us to dance. I was whirled around by a tall and handsome young man whose name was Mark Edgerley. He was 19 years old, two months short of his 20th birthday, and I was 17.

Mark joined 467 Squadron, one of the Australian Lancaster Squadrons, based at Waddington and was involved in the invasion of Europe offensive as a navigator in Lancasters. On their 28th trip, in 1944, they were shot down over France and Mark was reported missing. When the plane was hit, the rear gunner and pilot were killed, Mark and 3 others were rescued and sheltered by the French Resistance. He and the engineer were taken to a farmers house and locked up in a back bedroom all day for 4 weeks. Then they were handed over to a British commando unit and then to an American Army unit from where they were repatriated back to the UK. We married after the war ended in October 1945, and Mark was sent back to Australia seven weeks later. I followed 7 months later, in May 1946.

Mark took a degree in forestry. Our first baby, a boy, was born a year after my arrival and a second son in Canberra, when Mark had completed his degree. Then we returned to South Australia for his first appointment at Penola Forest. Joyce Edgerley, Canberra, January 2000.