



THE TERRITORY REMEMBERS 75 YEARS

*Commemorating the Bombing of Darwin
and defence of Northern Australia*



Darwin Post Office

Probably one of the most poignant moments of the first air raid on Darwin was the bombing of the Darwin Post Office, killing the postmaster, his family and six young telegraphists sheltering in a slit trench.

While many lives were lost on the morning of 19 February 1942, the deaths of these public servants were a reminder that war is not just about soldiers and men.

Postmaster Hurtle Bald, his wife Alice and daughter Iris, Archibald Halls, Arthur Wellington, Jean and Eileen Mullen, Jennie Stasinowsky and Emily Young were going about their work serving the people of Darwin when they were tragically killed.

They were buried in makeshift graves at Kahlin Beach and later reinterred at the Berrimah War Cemetery. Their final resting place is at the Adelaide River War Cemetery.

The site of the old Post Office became the site of the old Legislative Assembly building and subsequently the modern Northern Territory Parliament House. A plaque and a remnant of the original building's wall in the foyer of the entrance to the Northern Territory Library is dedicated to their memory.

www.territoryremembers.nt.gov.au



AWM P01791.004 Darwin, NT, 1942-02. The graves of five of the twenty-five civilians killed on 1942-02-19 when the Darwin Post Office was hit by a bomb dropped by a Japanese aircraft, during the first Japanese air raid on mainland Australian territory. The graves are, left to right, those of: Mr H. C. Bald; Mrs H. C. Bald; Miss Iris Bald; Miss J. C. Mullen; Miss E. C. Mullen.

Hurtle Bald received a Civil Service Medal 1939-1945 posthumously on 9 January 1998. This medal is for civilians who served in arduous circumstances in support of the war effort as part of organisations with military-like arrangements and conditions of service.

Hurtle, Alice and Iris Bald each have a street named after them in the Darwin suburb of Alawa. Nearby there is also a Bald Park and Bald Circuit named in their honour.



Photo on front: Darwin Post Office after the first air raid, 19 February 1942, PH0420-0012, GW Ireland Collection, Northern Territory Library

