



Air Force veteran and New Zealand's oldest person passes away

It is with sadness that we learnt of the passing of Ron Hermanns earlier this week — a Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) veteran of the Second World War and New Zealand's oldest person.

Mr Hermanns passed away on Monday 30 August, just three weeks from his 110th birthday.

Born in Canada on 25 September 1911, he moved with his family to New Zealand in 1914. He joined the New Zealand Territorial Air Force in 1937 as an aircraft rigger, transferring to full-time RNZAF service when war broke out in 1939. Initially stationed in New Zealand, he had two overseas postings to the Pacific, first to Espiritu Santo in the New Hebrides (now Vanuatu) in 1943, where he spent 12 months servicing the RNZAF's Kittyhawk fighter aircraft. This was followed by a second tour to Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands in 1945 when he spent a further five months maintaining Lockheed Ventura bombers.

After the war, Mr Hermanns gave many years of service to NAC/Air New Zealand, as an aircraft engineer.

He never married and had no children, and despite being legally blind and deaf, still lived in his own home in the Christchurch suburb of Cashmere, supported by a dedicated team of neighbours and carers.



Mr Hermanns standing with a cut-out figure of his younger self at the Air Force Museum of New Zealand in 2019

Date

03 September 2021

Tags

Veterans' stories (<https://www.veteransaffairs.mil.nz/news-events/articles/?tag=45>)

Last Modified: 3 September 2021