

PRIVATE ROBERT THOMAS CHRISTIE – ANGASTON

Second World War

Robert Thomas Christie was born in Mount Gambier on 18 March 1916. Robert attended school at Sacred Heart College in Glenelg.

Robert was a member of the Angaston Football Club 1935 and 1936 (best player) and also the Angaston Cricket Club as a premiership player 1936/37, 1937/38 and 1939/40. He as held the position of Club Secretary 1936/37.

From the Cessnock Eagle and South Maitland Recorder March 28, 1939 - D. G. Bradman was deprived on Saturday of the honour of scoring the fastest century of the season. Playing in the last match of the season, Bob Christie, of Glenelg, scored 100 in 58 minutes, and 137 in 80 minutes. He beat Bradman's time for the century by 22 minutes. Robert enlisted in the Australian Military Forces on 6 July 1940 and was in the 2nd/48th Infantry Battalion.

Private Robert Thomas Christie was killed in action, dying from wounds in Libya on 7 May 1941, aged 25 years and is buried in Alexandria (Chatby) Military and War Memorial Cemetery, Egypt.

From "The Leader" May 15, 1941 - Mrs R. Friend, Angaston, has been advised of the death of her son, Private Robert Thomas Christie, as result of wounds received in North Africa. He was 24. His father, the late Pte Christie, was killed in France during the last war; Bob being his only son. He was born at Mt. Gambier on March 18. 1917 and was educated at Sacred Heart College, Glenelg.

To his many fine characteristics he added brilliant sportsmanship in football, cricket and baseball. For years he was one of Angaston's key men in cricket and football, being an excellent wicket keeper and quick-scoring batsman. He played district cricket with Adelaide and later with Glenelg, and was with the latter team in 1939 when he won the "Mail" Cup for quickest century of the season.

Don Bradman, with a century in 80 minutes, had a big lead for the cup; but in the season's last match, Bob in a dazzling display made a chanceless century in 58 minutes, going on to 138 in 80 minutes.

He was associated with Mr H. H. Young's Angaston Pharmacy when he enlisted with the A.I.F. and went overseas. This bright young man with sterling character and adventurous spirit, has passed on: but his sacrifice and heroism will live on in a wonderful, inspiring memory.

From The Mail July 12, 1941 - Fine Tribute To Former Cricketer - A fine tribute to Pte. R. T. Christie, former Glenelg district cricketer, and winner of the 1939 'Mail' Cup for the fastest century, who recently died as the result of wounds received at Tobruk, was contained in a letter received by his mother, Mrs. K. Friend, of Angaston, yesterday. The writer of the letter was Captain F. A. G. Tucker, Private Christie's company commander. 'During heavy artillery fire from the enemy while defending the western peninsular of Tobruk,' he writes. 'Bob was severely wounded.

It was on April 18 and after his evacuation to hospital he showed every promise of recovery for several weeks, when later he received a setback, which finally resulted in his death.'

Capt. Tucker said that after being wounded. Bob displayed the finest spirit of bravery and fortitude that he had yet seen and in every way, he typified the highest ideals of the A.I.F. 'He was very popular among his comrades in the company, and I am very proud to have had the command of such a brave soldier.' added Captain Tucker.

Angaston Football Club first awarded the Bob Christie Anzac Medal at the inaugural Centenary Cup Game on 25 April 2008 as a tribute to Robert Christie.

The club subsequently decided to make it a permanent award and to retrospectively award the medal back to WWII in honour of not only Robert, but to all the footballers who have served their country in time of conflict, to their best A grade player in a game on or near Anzac Day.

Lest We Forget.

