

BEM AWARD

CITATION

W6257 Leading Aircraftwoman Kathleen Winifred Pearson

On 14 June 1954, an airwoman was standing before an open fire in the Women's Royal Australian Air Force Recreation Room at No 1 Stores Depot, Tottenham, Victoria, when her clothing caught fire. As she ran towards the door, Leading Aircraftwoman Pearson, the only other occupant of the room at that time, caught her and attempted to smother the flames. The victim, panic-stricken, broke free, but LACW Pearson caught her and, after a brief struggle, forced her to the floor and rolled her in a carpet. Having smothered the flames, she then ran for assistance. During her courageous efforts to extinguish the flames, LACW Pearson herself suffered second degree burns and ran great risk of igniting her own clothing. There is no doubt that the presence of mind and prompt and gallant action of the Leading Aircraftwoman were responsible for saving the life of her companion who is now slowly recovering from serious and extensive burns.