

WRAAF QUEENSLAND



From your Editor

((The President's Report is recorded in the Minutes of each meeting and distributed to members.))

What a busy three months! In July many of our Branch members shared 40th Birthday Celebrations with our Sisters in Toowoomba whilst others ventured north to Bundaberg to enjoy a long weekend of celebrations "Saluting Ex-Servicewomen" of that region.

Traditionally, the Council of Ex-Servicewomen's Associations Queensland (CESW) is the host of three events that commemorates and acknowledges the sacrifices and contribution made by all ex-servicewomen to our nation.

On the last Sunday in July we gathered at St Andrew's Uniting Church, Brisbane, along with 10 other ex-servicewomen's associations to witness the entrance of the Clergy and service banners being received at the Crossing by the Reverend Bruce Johnson. The First Reading was read by Ms Desley Lingard, WRAAC Assoc. Qld Inc. The Second Reading by Ms Eve Radford, Redcliffe Dist. Ex-Servicewomen's whilst, Mrs Rosemary Coleman, WRAAF Branch read "A Little Sprig of Wattle" written by A H Scott, 4th Battery, AFA.

The second function, the Tri Service Lunch, is a much lighter and less ceremonial occasion. The highlight of this gathering is the highly competitive "Singing Competition". Lots of raffles, lots of laughter, even more jousting between each of the services. We have shared memories with many of these ex-servicewomen over several years with each gathering being more fun than the last.

The third and final event, the most ceremonial and commemorative, acknowledges with the laying of wreaths at The Women of Australia Memorial, civilians and female members of the various Defence Forces for their dedication, courage and contribution during all wars and conflicts. Twenty-three names were added to the Perpetual Roll of Honour, Wednesday 13th September.

Submitted by Janet Noack

Newsletter
July - September 2017

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THE FORGOTTEN QUEENSLAND AVIATRIX – LORES BONNEY



'Lores' Bonney and her DH60 Gipsy Moth, VH-UPV, "My Little Ship"

National Library of Australia Image No. 07520
Photographer : Jessie Litchfield. Roderick Collection

I wish to thank Elma Casey for introducing me to “The Forgotten Aviatrix”, Brisbane pilot Lores Bonney who broke many records during the 1930’s, narrowly cheating death several times. Despite being lauded as the first woman to fly solo from Australia to England, little is known of her today.

Born Maude Rose Rubens on 20 November 1897 in Pretoria, South Africa, she adopted the name “Lores” in preference to her given names. Her well-to-do family moved to Melbourne some years later. While helping out with the WW1 War effort in 1917 she fell in love with Harry Bonney and once married, moved to Brisbane where Harry was a successful leather goods manufacturer.

Some ten years later at a soiree at their Brisbane home entertaining the intrepid Bert Hinkler, her husband’s cousin, her life changed. Bonney was impressed by Hinkler’s achievements and celebrity. Whilst sitting in his Avro Avian, an aircraft she said resembled “a great silver bird perched awaiting flight” she was struck by this defining moment – that “first taste of the air was the answer to my dreams”. Her passion ignited from that moment as she dreamt of being a solo, record-breaking pilot, as Hinkler had become. Within months Harry bought Bonney her own Gipsy Moth biplane, which she named *My Little Ship*.

Bonney had a secret. She wanted to be the first woman to fly solo from Australia to England. To prepare, she would first try to become the first woman to circumnavigate mainland Australia.

She set off from Brisbane 15 August 1932 and returned 27 September having encountered engine trouble; fatigue; poor visibility; a split starboard wing still holding by a thread and strong, squally winds blowing all the time. She had been airborne for 95 hours and 27 minutes and covered 13,000km. Bonney had chalked up her second record. (1931 Brisbane – Wangaratta, 1600km was her first record: “Longest one-day flight by an airwoman)



Next came England. During this tumultuous flight, there were many serious incidents but the worst was when she crashed into the sea near Calcutta whilst trying to miss hitting a buffalo on the beach where she intended to land. It was a terrifying moment, “What an inglorious finish – to be drowned in my cockpit upside down,” she noted in her diary. She did scramble to safety and some days later 60% of her damaged aircraft was rebuilt at a cost of 300 pounds.

THE FORGOTTEN QUEENNLAND AVIATRIX – LORES BONNEY

CONTINUED

She returned to Brisbane on October 18th 1933. The press described her as the first female to fly solo from Australia to England. The same year Hinkler died in a crash in Italy.

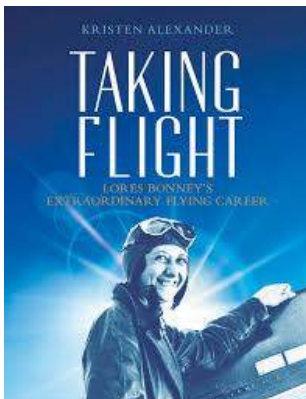
For her Australia to England flight, she was awarded the Member of the Order of the British Empire by King George V. Four years later, in her new aircraft, the more robust Klemm monoplane, *My Little Ship 11*, Lores became the first person to fly solo from Brisbane to Cape Town, a perilous journey of 29,000km via Cairo.

She considered other destination – Japan among them – but, with Earhart's disappearance, Harry opposed them all. Any plans for other extended tours were also scotched when her aircraft, the Klemm and five other aircraft at Archerfield aerodrome were destroyed by fire in June 1939.

In recognition of her achievements, in 1936 Old Sandgate Road was renamed Bonney Avenue and in 2017, Qld Redistribution Commission proposed a new electorate of Bonney in her honour on the Gold Coast. Lores spent her final years at Miami on the Gold Coast. She died on February 24, 1994, aged 96.



Lores confessed in the 1970s that “all I wanted to do was to hear that engine “tick over” and take off “in just one last flight”. (Image: National Library of Australia)



Reference:

“The Forgotten Aviatix” by ALEXANDER Kristen and SARGENT Josephine, Australian Geographic, Jan-Feb 2017 issue (AG#136)

Read the full story of *Lores Bonney's* adventures in *Taking Flight: Lores Bonney's Extraordinary Career* by ALEXANDER Kristen, National Library of Australia-Publishing, \$40.

TOOWOOMBA 40TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION

On Saturday, 15 July, I was invited along to the WRAAF Toowoomba 40th Anniversary Reunion by my friend Truus Perry. A member of her group (Mary), who had planned to go, could not attend so I was roped in to fill the bus. We travelled to Toowoomba on the bus for the north Brisbane members and along with Truus and I were Carol, the Queensland President, and a bus full of lively ex WRAAFs. I had a great day and thank all those concerned with the organising and especially our busload for their friendship during the day. A great lunch was enjoyed by all and I would also like to express my thanks for the special commemorative gift of the day. I will certainly put mine to good use.

I was never in the WRAAF, however my mother did serve in the WAAAF. Truus asked me for a brief outline of my mother's service history so here goes.



Jean Myrtle Clarke, Service No. 104793 enlisted at Lang Lang, in Victoria on the 28th October 1942. As she was only twenty at the time, she needed one of her parents to sign her papers. Her mother was not at all happy about her joining up so Dad got the job! As she was quite a good cook she signed up for the Catering Corps. Jean achieved her Diploma of Cookery and launched out into the big wide world of WAAAF kitchens. This did not mean that she had to peel tons of potatoes and chop endless vegetables as she had someone to do this. It was her responsibility to cook and present the meals.



Her recipe book, which we still have in the family, is worth reading! Roast beef and Yorkshire pudding for 450 or steak and kidney pudding for 250. I remember her telling me that one Good Friday she spent over 4 hours cooking hundreds of pieces of battered fish in a huge vat of boiling fat and by the end of her shift on a stinking hot day she was feeling fairly battered herself. However, I know she enjoyed her service days and spoke of the companionship and fun she had with her fellow WAAAFs and kept in touch with several all her life.



Mums training stood her in good stead all her life as she went on to become a soldier settlers wife and a mother of five children. Sometimes we would be flooded in for a couple of weeks when we lived outside Dalby, but Mum could produce a meal from almost nothing. (She had lived through the depression in the 1930s.) In later years, she was a member of the CWA and Treasurer for about 29 years and it was always to Mum they came, whether it was catering for a bull sale, a wedding, a church fete or whatever, when discussing how much meat to order or how many loaves of bread for sandwiches for a cattle sale. She had a reputation in the district for being a good cook. When she passed away, although a widow, she left a freezer full of apple pies, stewed fruits, casseroles etc so she still cooked in bulk and was always ready for family and visitors!

Thanks again for including me in your celebrations.....Gwen O'Connell

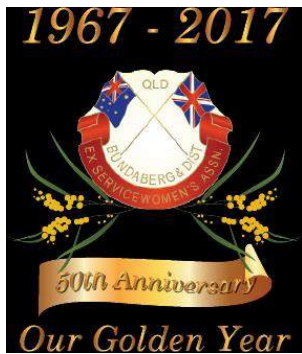


BUNDY WEEKEND 14 – 16 JULY 2017

On arrival at our motel, Vi, Jill and myself received a bag of goodies left at reception for us by the Bundaberg & District Ex-Servicewomen's Assoc. Contained inside was a "Welcome to Bundaberg" note extending "a warm welcome to our city and to our 50th reunion celebration." It also had information on the weekend events and the Bundy Book tourist guide. The local goodies were thoroughly enjoyable whilst the Pacific Gold honey macadamias were VERY Moorish.

Friday's Meet & Greet (approx. 70 attended) provided a wonderful opportunity to mingle and meet with friends old and new. Ethel Bourke was the MC for the evening. After a warm welcome from Glenda Everton-Brocklesby, Grace was said by Raelene Fryer, a break from traditional verse which was well received by the audience. The buffet was extremely delicious, plentiful and varied.

Saturday's "Golden Luncheon" was held at The Waves Sporting Ground and the room looked amazing. Each place setting had a commemorative coaster, placemat, key ring, gold pen and a little emergency bag (containing 9 items). Preceding lunch we had the opportunity to view the Portrait Exhibition presented by Elements Art, proud sponsor to this special event. Whilst we wandered, Debbie Robertson entertained us with those golden oldies. Once attendees were seated, the day's ceremony began with the parade of banners carried by local cadets with Branch representatives following. It was a moving and inclusive start to an interesting and entertaining program of events.



Several local dignities toasted to The Queen, Servicewomen, The Association and Leanne Donaldson MP, State Member for Bundaberg concluded with the Birthday Toast. Entrée and Mains followed. Guest speaker, Mrs Judith Munday OAM was informative, entertaining and captivating in her delivery.

Throughout the proceedings, MC Janet Rasmussen kept the laughs flowing. Sunday's "Salute to Servicewomen – Commemoration Service" at the Lion's Remembrance Park commenced with the threat of rain, but fortunately cleared before the program got underway with the entering of the parade of ex-servicewomen marching proudly behind their Banner Carriers. The Laying of Wreaths was followed by the Lament, Tribute to the Fallen and the National Anthem. Capt. Melissa Millard gave the Benediction with Ms Jennifer Waldron (President) thanking the attendees and

inviting all to enjoy an enjoyable morning tea provided by the Association and the ladies of Bundaberg RSL Women's Auxiliary.

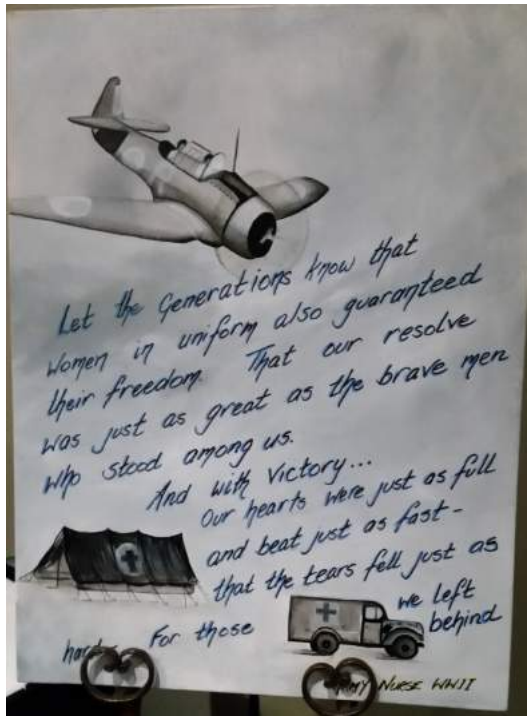


Congratulations to Jennifer for her vision and tenacity and to your team of valuable dedicated workers who have proudly honoured the memory of all servicewomen.

Submitted by Janet Noack



Photo Gallery



Anne and Jill catching up with Gloria Garbutt

Janet & Ellen
Having a good laugh



Marj Dixon (Melbourne) sharing the event with life long Wraaf friend Anne

**SALUTE TO SERVICEWOMEN
BUNDABERG
14 - 16 JULY 2017**



**Hazel, Vonnie and Mavis
Celebrating Vonnie's 90th Birthday**



**Rosie Forster—Memorial Church Service
St Andrews Uniting Church, Brisbane
30th July 2017**



**Enjoying the Tri Service
Luncheon and Prize Winning
Cup**



**Thank you to Fay Ison for providing
some of her wonderful collectables for
the Tri Service Luncheon Display**





**Congratulations Lyn Wilkes receiving recognition
From the ESW RSL Sub Branch for turning 75.**



**Council of Ex Servicewomen's
Associations Queensland
Memorial & Wreath Laying Service
for the Women of Australia
13 September 2017**



VALE

SMITH, June nee RANDELL
WTC 136 Pt Cook 6/11 – 6/11/1962. Telephonist.
Dear friend to member Ester Harte.

June joined our Branch on 21/01/1996. Her Service No. W17624,
Service years 1962-1966.

After serving for four years she married Robert Joseph Smith.
June was also on the committee in 1996.





EVENTS

OCTOBER

20th—22nd **Hervey Bay ESW Social Club 33rd Birthday**
RSVP 6th October to Jill Walker (Secretary) Ph 4124 6003

DECEMBER

2nd, Saturday— **Savvy Socialite—High Tea** Trusts Office Meeting Room
At 143 Ann Street, Brisbane. 10.30am to 12.30pm. Cost \$25pp
Payment to Treasurer by 11 November 2017.



JANUARY 2018

20th—Saturday—**WRAAF ANNIVERSARY BUFFET LUNCHEON—(Follows AGM)**
SOFITEL Brisbane Central, 240 Turbot Street, City.
12.00noon to 2.30pm. Cost \$40.00 Includes international cuisine,
sparkling wine/soft drink/juice, tea & coffee.

RSVP :-

Cash payment to Treasurer by **11th November**

Direct deposit payment by **8th January 2018.**



YOUR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

President: Carol McCool
Dep. President: Pam Condie
Secretary: Janet Noack
Minute Secretary: Pam Condie
Treasurer: Truus Perry
Assist. Sec/Treas: Jill Buckland



General Committee Members:
Gillian Shepherd, Vi Speis, Eunice Smith

Delegates & Proxies

Council of Ex Servicewomen

Lyn Wylkes, Margaret Stevenson,
Janet Noack, Truus Perry (Proxy)

RAAFA

Carol McCool, Jill Buckland, Janet Noack

Health & Well-Being Officer

Maureen Stewart keeps in contact and sends out cards to those who are not well, those supporting a loved one who is infirmed or recovering themselves, and to those who have lost a loved one. If you know anyone in these situations let Maureen know on Ph. 3389 5762 or 0424 741 527, or Email morsy@optusnet.com.au

Update Your Details

If you change your email or postal address or phone number **PLEASE** advise the Secretary **ASAP** on secretary@wraaf.org.au or phone 3800 3031 or mail to 30 Scrubby Creek Road, Browns Plains Q 4118

WRAAF ACCOUNT

Payments of membership, functions, fees clothing etc. can be made to the Treasurer at meetings or deposited electronically or manually into our Heritage Bank Account.

- ♦ **Account Name:** WRAAF Branch Queensland
- ♦ **Bank:** Heritage Bank Limited
- ♦ **BSB:** 638-070
- ♦ **Account No:** 13917374
- ♦ **Direct Deposit:** Reference your name and reason eg. Fees, M/Tea

- ♦ **Cheques must be made out to WRAAF Branch Queensland**

NEWS

No updates on 2018 National Reunion

RAAF NEWS ONLINE

Access online by going to: http://digital.realviewtechnologies.com/default.aspx?xml=defencenews_airforce.xml

RAAF RADSCHOOL MAGAZINE

Access online by going to: www.radschool.org.au