



The Federal Redistribution 2009
QUEENSLAND



**Comment Number 4
on Public Suggestions**

Gladys Waters

2 pages



To
Queensland Redistribution Committee
P.O. Box 2590
Brisbane Q.L.D. 4001

5-5-9

Q.L.D.

Dear Sir

I would like to make a request to have my late Husband's name added to the list for the New Electoral Seat to be named "Waters."

My Husband was Australia's only Kittyhawk Fighter pilot during the second world war. His full name Warrant Officer Leonard Victor Waters No 78144 78 Kittyhawk Squadron. He was given the Kittyhawk called "Black Magic." please accept my thanks for your attention

Gladys Waters

Australia's First and Only Aboriginal Fighter Pilot Warrant Officer Leonard Victor Waters

Len Waters was born on 20 June 1924 at Euraba Aboriginal Mission, Boomi NSW to Aboriginal parents Donald and Grace Waters. At the age of six, Len's parents moved the Family to Nindigully QLD, where he spent his school years. Len left school before completing his scholarship year.

In 1937, the Waters Family moved to St George where Len's parents became well respected members of the community. Len commenced his employment career in the St George district, working as a shearer, cook and fencing contractor with his father, Don.

His boyhood dreams compelled Len to realise his ambition to fly. Len and his brother Jimmy went to Brisbane Exhibition Grounds to join the Armed Forces.

On the 24 August 1942, Jimmy joined the Army while Len created Aboriginal and Australian history by becoming the first Aboriginal person to join the RAAF and become a Pilot.

Len joined the service as a member of the aircrew, completing a mechanics course before being selected for the Pilot Training Program. He completed his training at Mildura before serving overseas at Borneo and Dutch New Guinea. Len achieved the ranks of Flight Sergeant and Warrant Officer before leaving the RAAF on the 18 January 1946.

He returned to St George where he married Gladys May Saunders on the 16 February 1946, thus beginning another chapter in his life. Len lived and worked in the St George district before moving his Family to Brisbane. Len moved to the Cunnamulla region in his later years to live out his retirement.

On 24 August 1993, (ironically the 51st anniversary of the day he joined the RAAF, Len died at Louisa Street, Cunnamulla. Obituaries acknowledged his achievements throughout Australia, marking the passing of a truly unique Australian. On the 28 August 1993, Len was laid to rest at the St George Cemetery, while a squadron of F18 saluted a comrade. Members of the 78 squadron paid their respects to Australia's first and only Aboriginal Fighter Pilot.