



**The Federal Redistribution 2009
QUEENSLAND**



**Comment Number 7
on Public Suggestions**

Robert Buchan

4 pages

From: Desley Buchan [desrobb@bigpond.com]
Sent: Wednesday, 6 May 2009 8:59 PM
To: QLD Redistribution
Subject: letter from Robert Buchan
Attachments: waters.doc

I am attaching a letter regarding a suggestion for naming the new Queensland Federal Electorate. Please see attachment. Also below is the information to which I refer in the attached letter.
Thank you...Robert Buchan

TRIBUTE TO HEROES FROM THE ST GEORGE DISTRICT



**SQUADRON LEADER
JOHN FRANCIS JACKSON DFC**
23 Feb 1908 – 28 April 1942



**WARRANT OFFICER
LEONARD VICTOR WATERS**
20 June 1924 – 24 August 1993

Squadron Leader John F Jackson, a Queensland grazier and businessman, joined the RAAF as a pilot when war broke out in 1939. He was appointed Commanding Officer of the newly formed No 75 Squadron on 19th March 1942. On the same date the 17 Kittyhawks of the No 75 Squadron left for Port Moresby.

John Jackson provided this new squadron with combat knowledge and leadership from his experience fighting with No 3 Squadron in the Middle East. However, with only limited time to provide vital experience for the young pilots, the squadron flew north.

As the first 4 Kittyhawks approached Seven Mile airstrip, Port Moresby (later named Jackson's Strip) they were mistaken for Japanese aircraft by Australian machine-gunners on the ground. Three of the aircraft were damaged. One of them was later written off. An hour after the main body of the Squadron had arrived at Seven Mile airstrip two of the Kittyhawks scrambled to intercept a Japanese reconnaissance flight. They intercepted the Japanese aircraft at 3,000 metres and pursued it down to 150 metres where it exploded and crashed into the sea near the harbour entrance. This was the first combat kill for No 75 Squadron.

The next day, Jackson led his Squadron of Kittyhawks on an attack against Lae, sweeping in low the squadron left 12 enemy aircraft in flames and another five damaged.

During the ensuing weeks the squadron endured numerous attacks by the Japanese and were engaged in defensive action, protecting Port Moresby.

On April 10, Jackson was shot down after an encounter with Japanese Zeros, near Lae. It took him eight days of debilitating jungle trekking and the assistance of the local people to reach Port Moresby.

John Jackson was killed in action on 28 April, 1942, and is interred in Port Moresby (Bomana) War Cemetery. The role of No 75 Squadron was pivotal in preventing the Japanese advance to Port Moresby. The cost of high: in 44 days, 12 pilots and 22 aircraft were lost.

Len Waters is remembered as the only known Aboriginal fighter pilot to serve in World War II. An 18 year old shearer from Nindigully, Queensland, he joined the RAAF on 24 August 1942 as a flight mechanic.

He applied and was accepted for pilot training, at Narrandera, then Uranquinty, NSW from where he graduated as a Pilot. His training continued at Mildura, attaining the rank of Sergeant on 1 July, 1944, before being posted to No 78 Squadron in November, 1944.

As a member of No 78 Squadron, based at Noemfoor in the Netherlands New Guinea, Morotai and Tarakan, he conducted 95 ground attacks and fighter sweeps over Japanese held positions in New Guinea and the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia) during late 1944 and 1945.

On 20 January 1945, Len Waters was assigned the Kittyhawk fighter ironically named 'Black Magic' by its previous pilot, John Blackmore. Len was promoted to Flight Sergeant on 1 January 1945, and continued to undertake missions until 6 August 1945, the day Hiroshima was bombed. Before discharge from the RAAF on 18 January 1946, he was promoted to Warrant Officer, the highest rank for non-commissioned officers.

On his return to Australia, Len married Gladys Saunders and together they raised their family and lived life to the fullest. Later in life, Len was drawn back to the land. Never idle, he also maintained strong links to his cultural heritage.

Len Waters was an inspiration to others. He believed that if you wanted to achieve your goals, you had to go out and make it happen. Then, in his words, 'the sky truly is the limit'.



Authorised by Bruce Scott MBE 59 Condamine Street, Dalby Q 4405

ank you RObert Buchan

18 Cutler Ct
StGeorge
Qld 4487

6th May 2009.

The Commissioner,
Queensland Redistribution Commission
AEC
GPO Box2590
Brisbane 4001

Dear Commissioner,

On Friday, 1st May I heard a broadcasted discussion on ABC radio concerning the new Federal Electorate to be established in Queensland. The discussion was concerning possible names for this electorate and I telephoned in with a suggestion on this programme.

I would therefore like to formally submit for your consideration the following name:

“WATERS”

My suggestion is to name the electorate “Waters” after Warrant Officer Leonard Victor Waters who, I believe is the only aboriginal fighter pilot ever in the Royal Australian Air Force. Len Waters as a young man joined the RAAF during World War 2 and while working as a mechanic, answered a call for people to train as flight crew. Len was accepted for flying training and graduated fourth out of a class of 48. He flew with 78 Squadron and successfully completed 95 missions in his Kittyhawk fighter.

In January 1945, he was promoted to Flight Sergeant and continued to undertake missions until 6th August 1945, the day Hiroshima was bombed. He was promoted to Warrant Officer before discharge from the RAAF at the tender age of 21 years.

As an aboriginal person he just got on and did the job and was able to overcome any hurdles before him. It is my humble and honest belief that this man should be used as a role model for other aboriginal people as someone who was able to achieve, 65 years ago. Recognising him in the naming of this electorate would be contributing to Reconciliation between all Australians. Whilst not born in StGeorge, Len Waters family were brought up near the town of StGeorge in Nindigully before the War. He returned to StGeorge after discharge from the RAAF and was married here in 1946. A number of his relations, including his brother, Kevin Waters still reside in the town of StGeorge.

In 2003, nothing had been done in the town of StGeorge to recognise this man or another famous Australian also from StGeorge, John F Jackson so together with the Rotary Club of StGeorge, I built a memorial to these two World War 2 aviators. I am enclosing some

information which is on the memorial which was opened on the 8th March 2003 and which treats these two fine Australians as equals.

I personally never knew Len Waters but have become friends with his family in recent years and I think it would be a fitting tribute to this man and the aboriginal race if this could be considered.

Thank you for considering .

Yours sincerely ,

Robert Buchan