



Australian Women's
Army Service 1941-1947



Women's Royal Australian
Army Corps 1951-1984

AWAS / WRAAC JOURNAL

April 2023



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Contents

- 03 From the WRAAC President
- 04 Significant Birthday
- 05 Calendar of Events 2023
- 05 Journal Article Submission Deadline
- 06 Association Contacts & Addresses
- 07 Application for Membership
- 08 Consent Form
- 09 WRAAC Membership
- 10 Lost Members
- 11 Anzac Day Commemoration March
- 12 Anzac Day 2023 Medical Identification Card
- 13 Protocol
- 14 Christmas
- 16 WRAAC Social Group
- 17 WRAAC Annual Luncheon
- 19 Vale
- 23 Lest We Forget Sick Parade
- 24 The Australian Ex-Prisoners of War Memorial
- 26 2 Australian Signals Training Battalion Fortress
Signals Area Camp, Signal Hill
23rd Radar Station, South Street, Lytton 4178

From the WRAAC

President

Greeting Members,

I was welcomed on to the Committee at the AGM of 2021, but it was an unexpected surprise to be asked to take up the role of President just twelve months later.

I know I have many of you to meet, and I look forward to serving the Ex-WRAAC of Victoria as your President. I would also like to thank the outgoing President, Meg Brown, for her leadership and service to the Association over many years.

We had a very good attendance at the Social Group luncheon held at the Seaford RSL on Saturday 18 February this year. We were made most welcome by President, Lorraine Mace (Ex-WRAAC) and her group on the day. The food was excellent, and it was a lovely setting.

Our next few events include ANZAC Day March (form up at 0915), AWAS/WRAAC Memorial Service at the Shrine, Sunday 7 May at 1000, and then we will be gearing up for the Annual Luncheon on Saturday 15 July to be held in the Bong Su Room at the Melbourne Zoo. This promises to be a wonderful day in a most exotic and special venue. There will be some surprises, for sure!

A priority which I have set is to update our website, so please keep an eye on it for more information and event details throughout the year.

We would also welcome your articles to include in our journals, as we know there are many stories out there to feature. Pens to paper, or fingers to keyboards please.

My best regards to all,

Dexter Purcell

President



Significant Birthday

On Sat 18 March 2023, Brenda "Rusty" Johnson celebrated her 98th birthday. Brenda served with the AWAS then later joined the WRAAC.

Vera Duane who served with Brenda, Lorraine Coleman, Lorraine McDougall, and Liz Maclaine travelled to Kilmore to help Brenda celebrate her birthday.

As normal, when ex WRAAC get together there is always plenty of talking and laughter.



Thank you, Liz Maclaine, for the story and photo. Ed.

Calendar of Events 2023

April 2023

Tuesday 25th

ANZAC Day

Check newspapers for details.

Form up Point: Collins Street West (Centre) –
that's between Elizabeth and Swanston Streets.

Form up Time: 0915

***Association Members & Ex-WRAAC guests are welcome
to attend, look for our banner at the Form Up Point***

May 2023

Sunday 7th

AWAS/WRAAC Shrine Service

10am Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne

July 2023

Sunday 2nd

Reserve Forces Day

9:30am Shrine of Remembrance

Saturday 15th

Annual Luncheon

11am Royal Melbourne Zoo.

See later in this Journal for further details.

**The deadline for all articles to be included in the
next Journal is Friday 5th May 2023.**

Articles can be posted or e-mailed.

To: Editor AWAS/WRAAC Journal

Postal Address: C/- 87 Westmelton Drive,
Melton West, VIC. 3337

E-mail: jager_id@bigpond.com

Association Contacts & Addresses

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Elizabeth Salmon

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Brenda (Ruby) Walters
Gai Cooke



WRAAC ASSOCIATION (VICTORIA) INC.

Certificate of Incorporation No.: A0051572X

PRESIDENT: Dexter Purcell
SECRETARY: Carol King

16 RICHARD STREET
WILLIAMSTOWN. VIC. 3016
Telephone: 03 9397 1043

Website: www.wraacvic.com

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

I.....
(Mrs, Miss, Ms, Rank,) (Surname) (Given Names)
Maiden Name (If Applicable) Date of Birth.....
Address.....
..... Postcode.....
Telephone (Home)..... (Mobile)..... (Work).....
Email Address

Apply to become a Member of the Women's Royal Australian Army Corps Association (Victoria) Incorporated

In the event of my admission as a Member, I agree to be bound by the Rules of the Association for the time being in force.

Cost of Membership: Annual Membership (\$8.00 per year) Life Membership (\$80.00)
(Circle Type of Membership required)

Payment Enclosed: Cheque Cash Other.

If paying by EFT; For Bank Details, contact Liz Maclaine

(Please Circle) - Branch of Service. ARA CMF ARES AWAS OTHER

Regt No. WRAAC or Unit/s Served/Serving with Approx. Dates

.....
.....
.....

Nominated By

Name: Membership No.:

PLEASE RETURN FORM TO

**Mrs Liz Maclaine,
16 Richard Street,
Williamstown, Vic. 3016
Telephone: 03 9397 1043
Email Address: lizardmac@hotmail.com**

CONSENT FORM.

I consent to the following details relating to myself and my service history being published in the Association Newsletter/Journal and Association website www.wraacvic.com
I understand that this information is for the purpose of advising other members of my joining the Association and with a view to renewing old friendships.

DETAILS TO BE PUBLISHED.

Service Number.....

Given Names.....

Surname.....

Maiden Name (If Applicable)

Units Served with Approximate Years Served (Dates)

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Signed..... Date.....

ONLY THOSE DETAILS FILLED IN BY THE APPLICANT WILL BE PUBLISHED.

DO NOT COMPLETE THE ABOVE FORM if you do not wish to have your details published.

Your decision to publish or not will be respected without question.

FOR COMMITTEE USE ONLY: Application Accepted. Yes / No. (Please Circle)

Meeting Date..... Receipt No..... Dated.....

Annual Membership Card No..... Date.....

Life Membership Card Issued No.Date.....

WRAAC MEMBERSHIP

We would like **YOU** to contact any ladies whom you may know who were in the Army (ARA, CMF/ARes) regarding joining the Association.

Please contact our Membership Officer Liz Maclaine on 03 9397 1043 or email lizardmac@hotmail.com and she will post out the appropriate form.

Contact Details Update

Vice-President Liz Maclaine wishes to thank all for taking the time to return their contact details update forms.

If you have not yet been able to return the form, please do so at your earliest convenience.

If you do not have or have misplaced the green form, we have included the membership contact details here.

Could you please update the following?

Name: - _____

Address: - _____

Reg. Number: - _____

Phone Number: - _____

Mobile: - _____

Email: - _____

Return to: - Liz Maclaine

16 Richard Street Williamstown Victoria 3016

Or: email: lizardmac@hotmail.com

LOST MEMBERS

The Association has lost contact with some of our members.

If anybody can help with current contact details (phone number, email address or street address) of the members listed below, please contact the Membership secretary.

Liz Maclaine

16 Richard Street Williamstown Victoria 3016

Or: email: lizardmac@hotmail.com

MAJ JAN ALLEN Nee MILNE

CPL DOROTHY BERRY

MS SHIRLEY BROWN

MS MARILYN DELL

MISS JOANNE DOOLAN

MS PAMELA HUNT Nee WALSH

MS ANGELA JONES

MS CARLA DE KOUSEMAKER

MRS LOIS MORRISON Nee McLEAN

MRS JOYCE PAYNE

MRS WENDY RUNDELL

MS DEBBIE UMPLEBY

MS SALLYANN WELTON



ANZAC DAY

COMMEMORATION MARCH

25th APRIL 2023

**This year you will need to check
the local newspapers for our
step-off position and time.**

**We have enclosed the protocol as directed
by the ANZAC Commemorative Committee
regarding the march.**

**The medical identification card is to be carried
by all participating in the
ANZAC Day 2023 March.**

ANZAC Day 2023

MEDICAL IDENTIFICATION CARD

Name:

Address:

Date of Birth:

Brief Medical History:

.....

.....

.....

Allergies:

Medications (name, dosage, frequency):

.....

.....

- Next of Kin -

Name:

Relationship:

Home Telephone: Mobile:

Name:

Relationship:

Home Telephone:

Mobile:

**TO BE RETAINED BY MEMBER CARRY IN TOP LEFT HAND
POCKET**

Protocol

(To be followed)

- All marchers should form-up and march six (6) abreast.
- Veterans are to march directly behind their unit banner, accompanied by one carer if needed. That carer should be of an age where they can directly assist the Veteran. Veterans having difficulty completing the March, and all WW2 Veterans, are encouraged to use the transport provided, but must remain in the vehicle until the March is completed.
- If a Veteran must fall out of the March, he or she should be directed to a Marshall for assistance. Unit Associations are to continue moving so as not to disrupt the momentum of the March.
- Descendants are to march behind the Veterans and be old enough to march the full distance (approximately 1 km) without assistance.
- Representation of your Veteran forebears is to be restricted to one descendant per Veteran and the descendant is to wear the Veterans medals on the right breast (the left breast is reserved for the original recipient of the medals).
- Descendants are to dress in appropriate clothing, as your forebears would have done. Therefore, all marchers should wear neat and tidy clothing, out of respect for the fallen (torn denim, sporting attire dirty joggers are not considered appropriate).
- The carrying of framed photographs of relatives, and the pushing of prams and pushers, is not permitted.
- Veterans are requested not to join or leave the March other than at the Assembly and Dispersal points.

CHRISTMAS

As a first-time contributor I am pleased to say that The Cranberries (WRAAC and RAANC, and with a smaller than usual number of members) had a lovely afternoon tea, with lots of laughter and chitter chatter, at my husband Bill and my Christmas display home at Cranbourne North on December 3, 2022. Apologies were received by quite a number of ladies due to a variety of reasons.

Once again, our outdoor display was inundated with approximately 4,000 visitors ranging from the newborn up to the very elderly. Overall, the weather was generally quite kind to us. All being well, we'll do it all again in 2023.

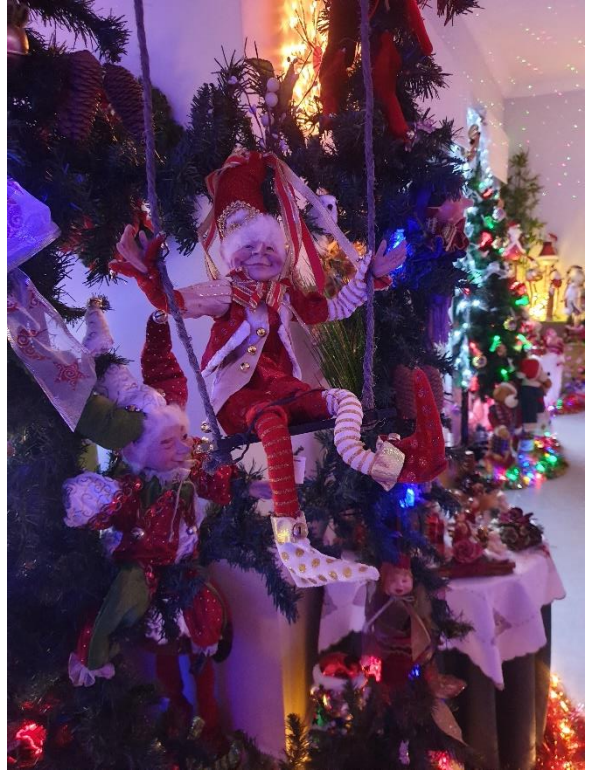
The happy faces belong to me, Lorraine McDougall, Meredith Bell, Sheila Vennells-Praed, Libby Moore, and, seated are Karen Martin and Vera Duane.

JENNY HAYES nee
Timmins (RAANC
1968-1970)

Note: The
Cranberries were
formed in 2018
meeting firstly at the
Cranbourne RSL

*Thankyou Jenny and
the Cranberries. Ed.*





WRAAC Social Group

The WRAAC Social Group luncheon was finally able to start again.

On Sat 18 Feb 2023, we booked in at the Seaford RSL, as a lot of the ladies who attend live in that area.

Next luncheon will be closer to the city.



PICTURED ABOVE (L TO R) MELISSA BELL, LIZ MACLAINE, BRONWYN ROWLESON, RUTH OGDEN.

We had 32 ladies present, with 10 apologies and 3 ladies who attended their first function, all these ladies joined the WRAAC Assoc Vic. on the day.

The talking and laughter coming from the tables was wonderful to hear. All who attended said they had a great time, talking and meeting other EX WRAAC.

We heard that two EX WRAAC were President of the local RSL. Lorraine Mace at Seaford RSL, Pam Phillips at Berwick as well others being secretary of their local RSL.



Members & friends attending included; Margaret Jager, Gai Cooke, Melissa Bell, Toni Cornelius, Jenny Hayes, Judy Bennett, Lenore Warden, Sheila Vennells-Praed, Ruth Odgen, Brony Rawlinson, Deb Pearce, Gayleen Duncan, Margaret Dark, Glenys Williamson, Denise Warren, Tessa Griffiths, Lorraine McDougall, Vera Duane, Lyn Board, Elizabeth Moore, Aileen Shaw, Bronwyn Flack, Gay Markey, Pam Phillips, Nola Williams, Kirsten Larsen, Jan De Witte, Dexter Purcell, Karin Martin, Iris Petrass, Angela Stafford & Lorraine Mace (President Seaford RSL)

WRAAC Annual Luncheon

15th July 2023

Will be held at The Royal Melbourne Zoo

In the Bong Su Function Centre.

COME MEET KATI !

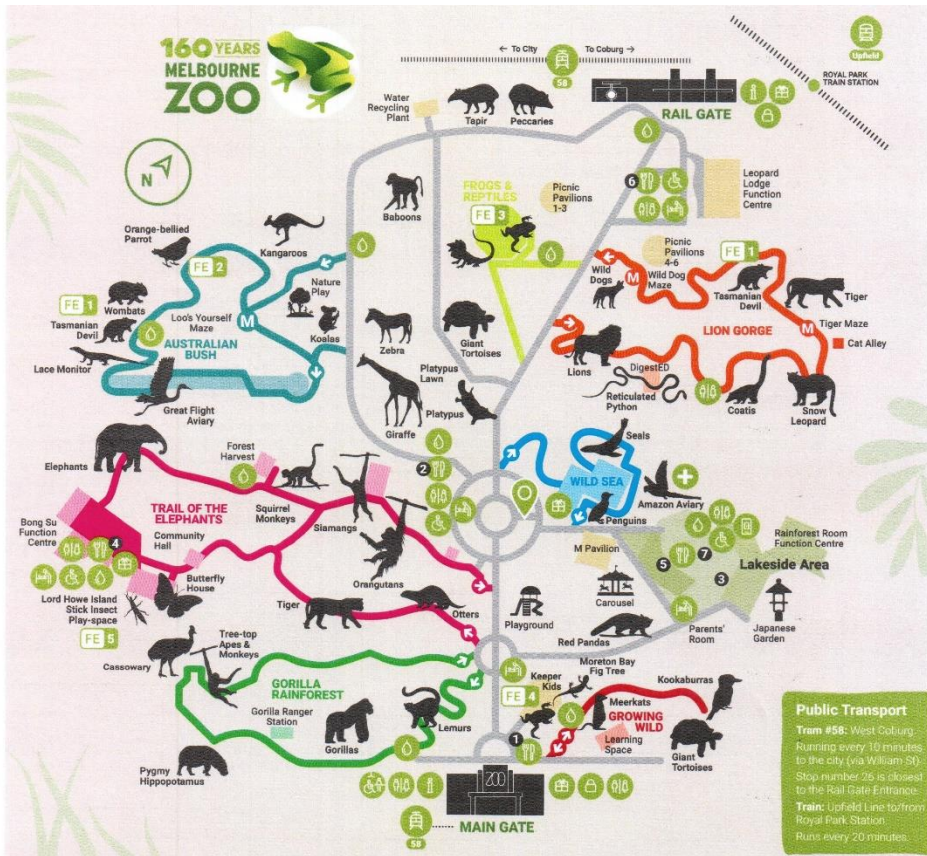
This is **Kati** (pronounced car-tee), which means coconut milk, an ingredient used in Thai cooking. She is the latest Asian elephant calf born just before midnight on 1 Jan 2023 at Melbourne Zoo.

You can see her whilst attending the WRAAC Association (Vic) Inc. Annual Luncheon which will be held at the Bong Su Function Centre (located near the elephant display) on Saturday 15 July 2023.

Lunch commences at 1200 noon, but those attending can enter the Zoo from 1100 a.m. (Zoo entrance fee is included in the luncheon ticket).

The cost will be \$60.00 per head.





Plenty of parking is available at the Zoo for \$2.50 for 5 hrs.

Members can enter the Zoo 1 hour prior to the start of the function if you wish and you can stay in the Zoo after the function until the Zoo closes for the day if you wish to look around.

VALE

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 1926 - 2022

For the information of members, on the recent passing of HRH Queen Elizabeth II, the WRAAC Association (Vic) Inc. sent a card (details below) to Buckingham Palace, and we received the response shown on the next page.



Heartfelt Sympathy

To His Majesty, King Charles

*With heartfelt sympathy
On the passing of
Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth,
May she rest in peace.*

*From,
President, Committee and Members
WRAAC Association (Vic) Inc.*



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

The King has asked me to send you his warm thanks for your kind message of sympathy following the death of Queen Elizabeth II.

His Majesty is greatly touched that you should have thought of him at this time.

The King knows he can rely on your support as he takes forward his new duties and has asked me to send you his warmest wishes.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E N S Millar', written in a cursive style.

Major General E N S Millar MBE
Defence Services Secretary

Dorothy Stevens

Dorothy Stevens was an amazing woman and mother. She passed away peacefully in October 2022 at the age of 98 years and 10 months.

She joined the army at age 20 in 1944 and met her future husband (Ken) at a dance at Bonegilla. They married when she was just 21. They had two children, Wendy, (now 76) and Garth, (now 74). She was an excellent ballroom dancer and won a few trophies. She was a perfectionist and made many of her own clothes as well as many embroidered art-works and quilts. She also painted, made many pottery items and was into bonsai.

She suffered a facial lesion in 1971, the removal of which left one side of her face paralyzed. This never seemed to daunt her, and she carried on as normal (but kept that side of her face away from the camera). She assisted her husband, Ken in his work as a loss assessor and in his involvement in Rotary (including a presidency of Camberwell Rotary), which led to many overseas trips. Ken passed away in 2005 at



the age of 87 and Dorothy moved from their house in Camberwell into her final accommodation in a unit at the Fountain Court Retirement Village in Burwood. She lived there for 17 years with carer assistance in later years.

VF388059

Joan Caroline Hope (Lemin)

AWAS

Joan served with 2 Australian Signals Training Battalion from 22 June 1942 until she was posted to Victorian Lines of Communication Records on 20 December 1943 before being discharged as a Lance Corporal on 4 May 1944.

F3/22

WRAAC

Margaret Ivy Brookes (Todman)

9 March 1932 – 7 February 2023

Margaret enlisted in WRAAC on 28 May 1951, she was one of the first WRAAC in Victoria, served as a Signals Operator and was posted to Headquarters Southern Command and then Headquarters Signals Regiment. She discharged on 27 May 1955 with the rank of Lance Corporal and was awarded the Australian Defence Medal.





LEST WE FORGET

**When someone you love becomes a memory,
Our memory becomes a Treasure.**

SICK PARADE

*To all our members who are not feeling well, our thoughts and prayers are with you.
If you wish to have a chat, please do not
hesitate to contact a committee member:*



The Australian Ex-Prisoners of War Memorial.

I received an invitation for myself as President (Berwick RSL Sub-Branch) and 10 members to attend the 19th Anniversary Service of the Ex-Prisoners of War Memorial in Ballarat.

I had never been and went prepared to listen and learn about their stories.

The Memorial was first added to the Memorials list in 2004 and next year is the 20th Anniversary.

The names of over 36,000 Australian Men and Women are listed here as captives of the enemy from the Boer War, World War 1, World War 2 and the Korean War. There were no prisoners of war during the Vietnam conflict.

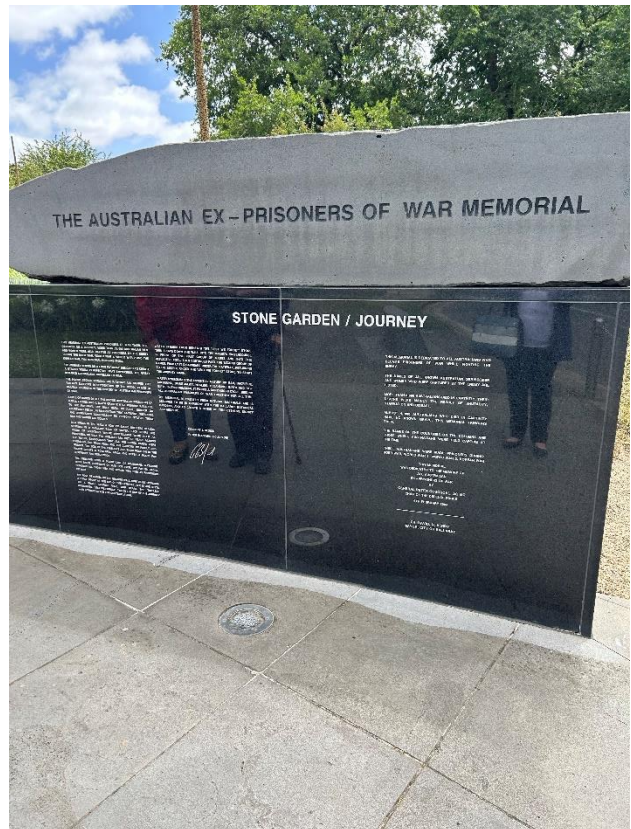
The service had the usual dignitaries, and the guest speaker was Megan Spencer who spoke of the research that she has done on a family member.

There were RSL representatives from Gippsland, NSW, and the local region. Two of our members that went with us had relatives whose names were on that wonderful row of granite.

I laid a wreath on behalf of our RSL and members which was a great privilege.

We had lunch at the Midlands RSL and golf club before heading home.

If anyone is passing through Ballarat and has time to spare, drop in and have a look.



We went off the freeway at the Wendouree turnoff and it's near the Botanic Gardens (cnr. Carlton street and Wendouree Parade).

Pam Phillips (nee Rolph)
President
Berwick RSL Sub-Branch



Thanks Pam for your report. Ed.

2 Australian Signals Training Battalion Fortress Signals Area Camp, Signal Hill 23rd Radar Station South Street, Lytton 4178

Signal Hill was a wartime signal station and engineers training camp associated with nearby Fort Lytton. Having been the site of a telegraph station since 1873, Signal Hill was developed into an outer redoubt to screen the fort during the 1880s. It was fully manned during World War II, and it continued to be used as a defence site until the 1960s.



SITE LOOKING TOWARDS BRISBANE RIVER

History

In the 1880s, to protect Fort Lytton from an overland flanking attack from an enemy party landing at Moreton Bay, a forward defensive redoubt was proposed for a strategic site on the nearby high ground of Lytton Hill. The site held an electric telegraph station and residence built in 1873 and so Lytton Hill was sometimes referred to as Signal Hill.

In 1881, buildings belonging to a boys' reformatory school were constructed on the hill that became known locally as Reformatory Hill.

By 1885, a redoubt had been dug around the reformatory buildings. In 1900, these buildings were removed but the planned redoubt was only partially developed, comprising a trace, the temporary mounting of a 12-pounder gun and barbed wire entanglements.

The site was further developed during 1901-03, when it was used as a training camp for mounted troops embarking for the Second Boer War. A 20-stall timber stables building, and a brick store were added to Signal Hill. Thereafter the site was little

used except for annual military encampments.

During World War I, the site again became a military training camp with an army dermatological hospital added in 1917.

During 1919-31, the flat ground near the hill was used as Brisbane's first airfield.

At the outbreak of World War II in 1939, the redoubt was again fully garrisoned. It comprised a wooden stockade with arrow-headed demi-bastions placed on each flank with both structures protected by a deep ditch dug at the front. In the war's early years Brisbane Area's Fortress Signal camp, where signals training was conducted, utilised the old 1873 telegraph station building. This building was extended with a covered walkway leading to a new building with a concrete floor.

The Fortress Signal camp had a telephone line connected to the Headquarters (HQ) of Brisbane Fortress Command located at the requisitioned St Laurence's Boys College, 82 Stephens Road in South Brisbane.



RECEIVER BUILDING AT SIGNAL HILL

The 23rd Radar Station was formed at Signal Hill on 12 June 1942 led by Pilot Officer A.J. Allen. It was a Fixed Radar Station, being one of the first 18 radar installations established in Australia. It was equipped with either a British Mk V COL set or an Australian-made AW set. The Margaret Marr Memorial Home for Boys located near the corner of Tingal Road and Petersen Street at Wynnum was

requisitioned as the billet for the members of No.23 Radar Station.

The unit underwent several changes in commanding officer: Pilot Officer W.E. Foster on 24 July 1942; Pilot Officer R.W. Mitchell on 24 August 1942; Pilot Officer I.B. Asman (date unknown); Pilot Officer G.C. Scott on 10 December 1942; Pilot Officer H.W. Flynn on 21 January 1943; Pilot Officer W.F. Gill on 17 May 1943; Pilot Officer A. Harris on 9 December 1943 and Flight Lieutenant L.F. Sawford 6 June 1944.

By early 1943, Signal Hill comprised 29 buildings constructed within the redoubt and a small building just outside the redoubt. To the left of the redoubt there were another 18 buildings, mainly timber accommodation huts, an electrical generator shed plus a central parade ground. This was the camp occupied by the Australian Army

engineers and signallers. The engineers are thought to have dug some underground bunkers and/or tunnels around Signal Hill as part of their training.

By the end of the war, the site was known as the Lytton Signal Station. A few of the World War II structures remain at Signal Hill which is located within the Caltex Refinery site.

Source/comments

Queensland WWII Historic Places (<https://www.ww2places.qld.gov.au>)

BCC Heritage Unit

[Australia @War](http://www.ozatwar.com/) (<http://www.ozatwar.com/>)

D.W. Spethman & R.G. Miller, Fortress Brisbane - a guide to historic fixed defence sites of Brisbane and the Moreton Bay Islands, (Brisbane: Spethman & Miller, 1998).

Units of the Royal Australian Air Force Vol.5