

Warrant Officer William Bowd REYNOLDS + RAAF 422704 - No. 80 Squadron

William Bowd Reynolds was born on 26 Jan 1923 at Cumnock. He was the eldest child of Aubrey and Marguerite Reynolds of "Geneffe," Cumnock.

Aubrey Reynolds had served in WW1 as a Captain in the Light Horse Regiments in Egypt (see WW1 section of the cumnocknswmemorials website) and married Marguerite Mills at Sydney on 1 Apr 1922. They had three children - William, Max and Marcia Reynolds. After WW1 Aubrey bought 1659 acres of the Burrawong property from Fred Young. He renamed the property "Geneffe" in memory of a place along the Suez Canal where he was stationed.

Aubrey was well known for the quality of his sheep and wool and did well in local and Sydney Show events. He participated in many Cumnock community organisations including being Secretary of the Farmers and Settlers Association and Captain of the Cumnock Bush Fire Brigade from 1940-1941. He was appointed as a Justice of the Peace in December 1937; was a member of the Cumnock branch of the Country Party; Patron of the Cumnock Pastoral and Agriculture Society; and in 1947, was a member of the local Repatriation Committee which assisted in helping ex-servicemen post WW2.

Marguerite Reynolds died at Cumnock on 28 June 1970 and Aubrey Reynolds died at Molong Hospital on 21 April 1978, aged 84 years



William attended The Kings School, Sydney, for his scholastic education between 1935 - 1941. His younger brother Max also attended the School between 1936 - 1941 and served in the RAAF as Flying Officer 433224 in England, Palestine and Italy.

William enlisted in the RAAF at Sydney, on 23 May 1942, aged 19 years and 3 months. He was 5 feet 10 inches tall, had brown eyes and brown hair, a dark complexion and of the Church of England religious denomination. His father, Aubrey Reynolds, was named as his next of kin. Aircraftman William Reynolds was assigned to 5 Elementary Flying Training School at Narromine, NSW. He was remustered as aircrew on 13 Jul 1942.

William was promoted to Leading Aircraftman (LAC) on 15 Aug 1942. On 20 Mar 1943, he was transferred to 7 Service Flying Training School (SFTS) at Deniliquin, NSW. The Station was responsible for intermediate and advanced instruction of pilots. He was promoted to Pilot on 11 Mar 1943, having being awarded his flying badge on 9 Mar 1943. then moved onto the Central Flying School at Tamworth from 29 Mar to 19 Apr 1943. He returned home to Geneffe on leave in March, June and December.

In May 1943 as a Fighter -Bomber Pilot, William was assessed over the last six months as as completing 131 hours 50 minutes as Captain in a Kittyhawk aeroplane, and further hours in a De Havilland 82 Tiger Moth, a Wirraway, an Avro Trainer and a Kittyhawk, giving him total flying of 868 hours. On 8 Aug 1943, he returned to 7 SFTS at Deniliquin, where he was a staff instructor. He was promoted to Flight Sergeant 11 Sep 1943.

F/Sgt Reynolds was transferred to No. 2 Operational Training Unit (OTU) at Mildura, Victoria, on 20 Mar 1944 and then onto the No 1 Reserve Personnel Pool (RPP) at Aikenvale, Townsville on 19 June 1944. He served in No 80 Squadron from 15 July and promoted to Warrant Officer on 11 Sep 1944.

"No. 80 Squadron continued to support Allied amphibious operations between May and July 1944. The squadron moved twice in July, arriving at Biak, an island near the northern coast of Papua, on 1 July and Noemfoor Island on 22 July. From its base at Noemfoor, No. 80 Squadron conducted ground attack operations over western New Guinea and the eastern islands of the Netherlands East Indies. These operations included attacks on Japanese watercraft and sawmills around Kokas Island and sweeps over the Maluku Islands in October." See insert from the Newcastle Sun - 8 Sep 1944, p1.

Kittyhawks Blew Up An "Island"

From HARRY POTTER, War
Correspondent.

RAAF Kittyhawk pilots recently blew up what at first appeared to be a small, uncharted island. The "Island" was a camouflaged Jap barge concentration.

The pilots found this camouflage canopy was a screen for three 45ft. barges, one of which was sunk by strafing and two others left smoking amidships.

The Kittyhawks had already scored four near-misses against another barge, which also was sunk. They had been on a mission to RAAF Bay on the south coast of Vogelkop Peninsula.

On the way home they strafed a fifth barge, the stern of which was protruding from a cave.

The attacking party included F/O L. Norton, of Sydney, F/Sgt. W. B. Reynolds of Cumnock (NSW) and F/Sgt. D. C. Hurst, of Toowoomba (Qld.).

"No. 10 Group, of which No. 80 Squadron was still part, was redesignated the First Tactical Air Force on 25 Oct 1944. On 15 Jan 1945, four of No. 80 Squadron's pilots were ferrying Kittyhawks from Noemfoor to Morotai when they missed their destination and had to land on the Japanese-held Talaud Islands, where they were captured and executed. The unit completed its move to Morotai on 21 January, where it continued to operate over the Maluku Islands.

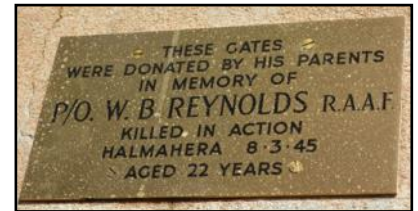
The shortage of worthwhile targets in this area caused morale to decline in No. 80 Squadron and other RAAF units in the area from the end of 1944."

[No. 80 Squadron RAAF - Wikipedia](#)



W/O William Reynolds, (far right) with ground crew and his Kittyhawk aeroplane, Morotai. 1945

W/O William Reynolds, aged 22 years, was shot down over Celebes (Sulawesi), Netherlands East Indies (now Indonesia) during a flying battle on 8 Mar 1945. He is remembered at the Ambon War Cemetery, Ambon, Maluku, Indonesia, and also honoured on the Roll of Honour, National War Museum, the WW2 Roll of Honour at The King's School War Memorial Chapel and on the Cumnock Memorial Gates. The gates were donated by Aubrey and Marguerite Reynolds in memory of William Reynolds.



Molong Express and Western District Advertiser
Fri 16 Mar 1945 / Page 4

© Dianne Strahan & Val McKenzie, August 2023,
www.cumnocknswmemorials.com



Sad News of W/O. W. B. Reynolds.

W/O. William Bowd Reynolds, who is presumed to have lost his life in air operations, was a most popular young resident of the Cumnock district.

The sad news of W/O. Reynolds' death was briefly reported in the mid-week edition of the "Times."

Son of Mr. and Mrs. A. Reynolds, of "Geneffe," Cumnock, W/O. Reynolds was only 22 years of age.

He was educated at Kings School, Parramatta, and he played in the school's first fifteen in 1941, which were the G.P.S. Premiers.

Leaving school in 1941, he joined the R.A.A.F. in May 1942, and W/O. Reynolds did his early courses at Narromine and obtained his wings at Uranquinty. After a short course at Tamworth, he was posted to Deniliquin as an instructor. He went north about the middle of last year. Just before Christmas W/O. Reynolds spent leave with his parents.

A keen sportsman, this young man was noted for his rifle and gun shooting. He was always ready to have a shot at the rabbits and foxes and knew his way round the hills at the back of Bywong. Shooting was his favourite past-time when on leave.

Deepest regret is felt by the district in the death of this fine young man, and sympathy is extended to his parents.



*No 80 Squadron RAAF pilots, grouped in front of a Curtiss P40 Kittyhawk. Noemfoor Island, 1944. Those marked with a cross were those known to have been killed. Names of pilots are provided at:
www.awm.gov.au/collection/P10029.019*