



**A Patron: CO 3 Squadron - WG CDR Adrian "Kenny" Kiely.**



# **-Members Newsletter-**

## **FEBRUARY 2022**

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**Subs should be paid by ANZAC Day each year** and can be mailed in by that date or paid directly to the Bank of Qld (3 Sqn Assoc. BSB: 124001 – A/C No 10516100) Ensure you include our name when depositing direct. Your subs help cover being a member of 3 Sqn Assoc, the receipt of your regular newsletters, name tags

etc, including camaraderie and friendship of others. Subs are: **\$15.00 Initial Joining – then \$10.00pa.** Treasurer Ric Thompson - **Phone 0418499920; EMAIL – [rict@bigpond.net.au](mailto:rict@bigpond.net.au)**



# PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

## **Welcome to our first newsletter for the year**

**I hope all went well for you and your families over the Xmas/new year period and will continue to do so well into the future.**

**Our November luncheon was well attended considering the travel restrictions imposed on many. We are all looking forward to having greater numbers at future gatherings as the country works its way to a new normal.**

**No doubt Blue has been in touch with most of you regarding the photos that he has organized, please don't be backward in ordering a copy or two.**

**As you all know 3 Sqn has a new CO, Blue has established a close working relationship with him and we will continue have an input from Williamtown.**

**That's it from me, keep safe and smile for the speed cameras.**

**Mal**



# Secretary's Desk

Fellow Members.

**With most State Borders now opening I assume that Members' Social Calenders are starting to change. When making social arrangements please keep the following dates in mind:**

**25 April ANZAC DAY – After March Refreshments at Mythyr Bowls Club and Mid-Year Year Luncheon Banora Point 30 Jul**

**The next major event is probably the Federal Elections. What is going to happen? No one knows. Let us hope that there are no devastating occurrences arising from the results irrespective which ever party wins. We have had enough.**

**3 Sqn RAAF Assoc QLD is as strong as ever with members willingly participating in Luncheons etc as well as purchasing memorabilia whenever offered Also the numbers are holding up well with new x 3Sqn personnel joining on a regular basis. I doubt that there would be a more stronger X Defence Force Assoc in Australia.**

**As you can ascertain from “3 SQN TO-DAY” the Squadron is pretty well committed with various exercises throughout the year, However I will liaise closely with Kenny and Jason to ensure we maintain a very close relationship with TO-DAY’S 3 SQN and ensure (where possible) representation from them at various functions through the year. Perhaps a personal visit by either or both.**

**Once again my thanks to all members for their support to me and the Association throughout the last year and look forward for continuance.**

**May 2022 be a stark difference to 2021.**

Blue

**One last thing – THOSE WHO HAVE NOT PAID THEIR  
SUBS PLEASE ACT NOW**



# 3 Squadron Today

Dear Association Members,

Firstly, I'd like to take the opportunity to convey my excitement at the opportunity to return to 3 Squadron as the CO. I last posted to 3SQN in 2012 after returning from a UK Exchange with 3(F) Squadron (RAF). After 10 years between postings, it's great to be back – a once-in-a-generation transition from F/A-18 to F-35 has happened in the short years since. The squadron is in great shape. I'm looking forward to continuing a deep engagement with the association, to build on the foundation laid most recently by Harps and Clarey. I'm also excited to become the second CO 3SQN from Cowra, some 55years since the first – being a close family friend in Air Marshal Jake Newham. I'm confident that in the coming years, 3 Squadron will build on the rich legacy forged by our predecessors.

We were privileged to welcome some of our association members to a visit of 3 Squadron on 9 Dec, and again to the Command handover ceremony on 10 Dec. Harps and I were able to fly an enjoyable mission and shut down flying operations for 2021 with a low arrival over the base.

The squadron is in a period of significant rebuild during the early part of 2022. Much like we did in 2020 and 2021 to stand-up 20CU and 77SQNs respectively, 3SQN has lost a wealth of experience (and our key brewer and brisket cooker) to provide an expertise base for 75SQN to transition to F-35. The squadron is currently heavily focused on training and mentoring to build the team that will carry us forward to 2023 and beyond.

2022 is shaping up as a busy but exciting and rewarding year. Between now and April, we are flying from Williamtown conducting core training, and supporting the first F-35 Fighter Combat Instructor Course. We are planning on deploying to Nellis AFB in Nevada in April-May to participate in an exercise aimed at greatly deepening our interoperability with our US partners. The Williamtown runway is scheduled to close for runway works during the mid-part of the year, and during that time we will conduct some periods of training in Amberley and Tindal. We'll spend the bulk of August in Darwin conducting Exercise Pitch Black – it will be great to again operate with our regional friends to improve our collective capability and interoperability. During the latter part of the year, we will deploy to Eglin AFB in Florida to conduct a missile shoot, before returning to Australia with a delivery of factory aircraft.

Around our busy schedule, we'll continue to seek opportunities to actively involve the associations in activities and engage with current 3 Squadron members, in order to deepen our history and legacy. The constraints of COVID have not made this easy in the recent times; I am hopeful we can operate with fewer constraints in the year ahead.

Kind regards,

Adrian 'Kenny' Kiely

CO 3 Squadron

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### 3 Sqn RAAF Assoc QLD

It's great to be here at 3SQN. Our personnel have returned from the Christmas break refreshed and eager to get into the groove. 2021 was another year of transitional change with a larger percentage of our trained workforce heading to 75SQN to complete the F35A workforce transition, though now it's time to concentrate on ourselves for ourselves. I must congratulate the outgoing CO and WOE for handing over the Squadron in such a fine shape, albeit somewhat smaller.

The year ahead is full of training opportunities both at home and abroad. As we concentrate on building our strength again, we also focus on the quality of our skillsets and the ability to collaborate with fellow sections and Squadrons. I am excited for the personnel of 3 Squadron and where I see us at the end of the year. We are also looking forward to having a few more jets fill the lines.

As always, the personnel were happy to see some of you here late last year and we are looking forward to catching up again soon. Even though the Squadron will be away for ANZAC Day, we will endeavour to have representation with you on this very important commemoration.

Kind Regards,

WOFF Jason West (WOE3)

**Photos Handover/Takeover Command 3 Sqn from "Harpes" Harper to "Kenny" Kiely witnessed by Tim Allsop**



**10 December 2021**



# **JAPS SURRENDER TO ‘NED KELLY’**

*Townsville was the Headquarters of RAAF North Eastern Area during World War II. RAAF 35 Transport Squadron was also based there. Lloyd Mortlock of Ocean Shores, NSW, who was Squadron Navigation Officer with 35 Squadron around the time of the official Japanese surrender, has provided us with some details of a most extraordinary happening - ‘The Galela Incident’ - which had some rather unexpected repercussions. Lloyd continues.*

**Though I was not a participant in the actual operation I was aware of an unauthorised Japanese surrender to some of our chaps on Galela Island that caused a major ‘flap’ at Townsville as evidenced by the large number of signals about it which I saw passing through the base. I knew that in August 1945, 35 Squadron had a detachment at Morotai, just a couple of degrees off the equator, and that crews there were well aware of tiny Galela Island about twelve miles to their north with an airstrip and a Japanese garrison but which, weeks after the Japanese surrender<sup>1</sup> had not yet been taken over by Allied Forces. Accordingly it was ‘off limits’ to our personnel.**

**However one of our planes did make an unauthorised visit there triggering not only the Townsville ‘flap’ but also giving rise to many vague and extraordinary stories, half-truths and exaggerations.**

**But what really did happen on Galela Island? The central figure in these events said nothing for over fifty years - until he finally agreed to tell the full story for the first time in this book. He is Mick Murphy, now of Maddington, WA, who at the time was a pilot on 35 Squadron flying C-47 Transports. This is Mick’s own amazing story.**

**Why does a pilot decide to do silly things? What makes him take unnecessary risks? After fifty odd years I can’t answer those questions. Most pilots in the area knew the history of the Japanese. Stationed at Galela Island, only about twelve miles off Morotai and virtually in our circuit area, they had tried to bring us in on their beacon when we were returning from missions. I was aware of this beacon on my return from the invasion of Tarakan in Borneo.**

**Since the Japanese Government had surrendered and there was no sign of any official surrender party I thought it would be worthwhile to fly over and pay them a visit and see what war spoils we could collect. I think one thing that motivated me was that I had missed out on all the interesting booty which invariably turned up on these occasions. I was always at the wrong place at the wrong time.**

**The Galela visit was just a spur-of-the-moment decision. I felt I could bluff my way through, and tell the Japs, 'I have been sent over to collect your arms; there will be another visit in the near future', and so on. Bluff, bluff, bluff!**

**I shared my plans with twelve colleagues including my crew and we set about acquiring machine guns and ammunition and other arms in case the visit backfired. As additional precautions some of the chaps also altered their uniforms and badges to confuse the Japs. One wore an old army jacket that still had its badges on it and 1 After the atom bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki on 6 and 9 August, Emperor Hirohito accepted an unconditional surrender with the cease-fire coming into effect on 14 August 1945.**

**The Japanese surrender was signed in a formal ceremony aboard the USS *Missoure* in Tokyo Bay on 2 September 1945.**

***Some were not taken over until as late as 29 October. [Ed]***

**Another chap added some unofficial decorative badges plus extra pips and stripes tacked on. They fixed these up to make it difficult for anyone to give accurate descriptions of who they were if there was an investigation later. I wore some jungle greens and my normal officer's cap but we certainly looked a motley crew.**

**We arranged for an air test on a C-47 that had been recently serviced and took this opportunity to put the plan into operation. After completing the normal tests the chaps changed into their specially altered 'uniforms'. Then the tension and anxiety started to increase.**

**On arrival over the Galela strip I did several low-level runs to survey the situation, with all twelve of us looking out to spot gun positions and any sign at all of hostility. To our amazement quite a few Japanese ran out to the side of the strip waving. They seemed excited to see us in our RAAF Dakota. The strip looked long enough to get down and off again. So I called out to the crew and others, who included some other officers, 'Will we give it a go? The strip looks OK.' We had a quick discussion and one by one they nodded, so now for the test, friend or foe? The big question was whether they had been told the war was over and had been instructed to be nice to us. At this stage I was anything but relaxed.**



**Amazingly we landed without incident - no obstructions, no gunfire. We taxied back to put the aircraft in the best possible position for a quick takeoff. Once on the ground our plan was for us all to disembark. I would make initial contact with a small party, then signal if everything was OK and for the others to come over except for a guard party which was to remain with the aircraft and have their machine guns at the ready. It seemed a very long walk across that strip to make first contact and we went most apprehensively but I was astounded to see a small party of Japanese coming towards us carrying a makeshift white flag on a stick led by the Japanese Commanding Officer and the Doctor, (who acted as interpreter), together with two or three of their officers. Much to our surprise they were waiting for us, obviously expecting that any daysomebody would be along.**

**The party stopped in front of us, bowed and saluted. I cannot remember the initial discussions but the Japs were very humble, respectful and more than willing to help us, making it easier for me to carry out the biggest bluff I ever pulled off in my life! Our fellows quickly caught on to the situation, kept straight faces and we went through the charade of accepting the 'surrender'. I introduced myself as 'Flight Lieutenant Ned Kelly' and presented 'Flying Officer Don Bradman' and 'Major Billy Hughes' and so on, according to the dummy names they had agreed to use. We were then escorted to the Japanese Officers' Mess. They showed us every courtesy, even serving us a meal and went to the trouble of preparing special bamboo cutlery for us. Now confident and cocky as 'Flight Lieutenant Ned Kelly', I requested the Japanese to hand over all ceremonial swords, also numerous other interesting items such as cameras, money, knives, binoculars and twelve revolvers. They also insisted that we take back souvenirs of sake jugs and bowls, cigarettes, and chickens - which were a real treat after our bully beef, baked beans and goldfish (herrings).**

**These trophies were all laid out on a table near one of their huts adjoining the strip. The doctor suggested to me that I should take the Commanding Officer's personal sword, rather than offend by selecting another. This I did and it was presented to me with an elaborate gesture which made him happy. We duly signed and exchanged 'documents of surrender' and after all the bowing, farewells, thanks, etc, departed as soon as we decently could.**

**Back in the air our relief was enormous. That feeling I will never forget. It was agreed that I would take control of all the booty until the dust had settled, then I would distribute it amongst all who had participated in the venture.**

**Arriving back at Morotai we knew we were overdue and there was some concern as fuel is limited on an air test. Someone might have worked out that we could not have been flying all that time. But we thought we covered up pretty well by saying we had given the plane a very extensive air test. So far so good!**

**The days ticked by; can't remember how long, but we got to the stage when we thought it was safe to distribute the spoils. I thought no one knew about it**

**However a couple of weeks later when an official party led by high ranking officers did land on Galela Island to formally take the surrender they were told by the Japanese Commanding Officer, to their utter amazement, embarrassment and disbelief, that he and his forces had already surrendered to 'Flight Lieutenant Ned Kelly' and his officers. The sheer insolence of this deed immediately started a witch-hunt for the culprits, but not having any correct names or descriptions, they had no immediate success.**

**Then a little later back at Morotai, out of the blue came the request: 'Send Murphy up to see Area Officer Commanding Transport, Wing Commander Harry Purvis'. It seemed I was really on the mat. He began, 'Why would you do such a mad thing? We were just ready to mount a search for you'. Somehow the word had leaked out. He more or less knew some of the story but wanted to know where we had been and what we had done. He did seem rather intrigued by the escapade. I pleaded that I had all along missed out on picking up any booty on such occasions because of my junior rank, that senior officers had taken all the good trips; I had missed out right back since 1942. This seemed to strike a slightly sympathetic ear. However he did hand out a nominal penalty for 'exceeding the time on an air test'. He also promised to put in a good word for me without guaranteeing anything.**

**'Thank you Sir', and it was all over. I really thought that that we could at last relax.**

**But then it happened! Days later a signal arrived from Townsville saying: SEND MURPHY BACK TO BASE AS A PASSENGER STOP REPEAT AS A PASSENGER.**

**Why would they write a signal like that: 'AS A PASSENGER' Perhaps I was being called for discharge? I had over five years service up. You can believe anything when you really want to.**

**On arrival in Townsville 'as a passenger' I was marched into the Commanding Officer's office. He was furious and proceeded to tear strips off me, right, left and centre. 'Why, why would you do such a foolish thing? You've disgraced the squadron. Embarrassed some high ranking officers. Broken the Geneva Convention. Endangered one of His Majesty's aeroplanes and one of His Majesty's crews. You're grounded.**

**You'll never fly another aeroplane while you are in my squadron.' And much more. 'Be prepared for a court martial within the next three weeks. Dismissed.'**

**The Commanding Officer, Squadron Leader Roy Brown, was a well-built swarthy-skinned fellow with dark brown eyes. This particular day I swear they turned black! I was demoted to Duty Pilot and for the rest of my time on 35 Squadron at Townsville, was relegated to the Operations Room, wielding a stick of chalk and a blackboard.**

**Some weeks later, with no news of my court martial and when things appeared to be gradually getting back to normal, Headquarters phoned me to prepare an aircraft for Perth, my home town. Rather cheekily I listed myself as second pilot and was amazed when this was allowed to stand. Not only that, once on the aircraft I was moved over to the left seat as No 1 pilot!**

**We had a great trip to Perth and on arrival back in Townsville I was told I would resume normal flying duties. The court martial had been dropped, we all kept our spoils and nothing further was heard on the incident.**

**For a further four months I flew, evacuating many who had been POWs for years, including nurses, and even flew a courier trip to Japan. In April 1946 I was discharged after six and a half years service.**

## **Bobby Gibbes Rescues Rex Bayly**

*The following passage is just one of many marvellous stories of 3 Squadron's people and their adventures from "YOU LIVE BUT ONCE", the classic autobiography of Wing Commander R. H. (Bobby) Gibbes, DSO, DFC and Bar.*

*This incident happened on 21 December 1942, while Bobby Gibbes was leading six Kittyhawks to attack the Italian desert aerodrome at Hun, in Central Libya, 150 miles south of Sirte (modern-day "Surt").*



*"Desert Hawks" Painting [detail] by [Robert Taylor](#).*

(Bobby's Kittyhawk was marked CV-V.)



**[Bobby Writes:] ...Sergeant "Stuka" Bee's aircraft was set on fire by the aerodrome defence gunfire. As Sergeant Bee had a lot of speed from his dive and was flaming badly, I advised him to climb up and bail out instead of trying to belly-land his aircraft at high speed. He mightn't have heard me, or perhaps was badly wounded or even dead, as his speed had not decreased when he hit the ground. His aircraft rolled up into a ball, an inferno of flames. He didn't have a chance.**

**I circled and watched the Italians, showing great courage, send out an ambulance in an attempt to save him, but the outcome was obvious. It was later confirmed that he had been killed.**

**At the same time, Pilot Officer Rex Bayly called up to say that his motor had been hit and that he was carrying out a forced landing. Rex crash-landed his aircraft nearly a mile from the aerodrome, and on coming to a stop, called up on his radio to say that he was O.K. His aircraft did not burn. I asked him what the area was like for a landing to pick him up, and ordered the other three aircraft to keep me covered and to stop any ground forces coming out after him. He told me that the area was impossible, and asked me to leave him, but I flew down to look for myself. I found a suitable area about 3 miles further out and advised Bayly that I was landing, and to get weaving out to me.**

**I was nervous about this landing, in case shrapnel might have damaged my tyres, as on my first run through the aerodrome, my initial burst set an aircraft on fire. I had then flown across the aerodrome and fired from low level and at close range at a Savoia 79. It must have been loaded with ammunition, as it blew up, hurling debris 500 feet into the air. I was too close to it to do anything about avoiding the blast and flew straight through the centre of the explosion at nought feet. On passing through, my aircraft dropped its nose, despite pulling my stick back, and for a terrifying moment, I thought that my tail plane had been blown off. On clearing the concussion area, I regained control, missing the ground by a matter of only a few feet. Quite a number of small holes had been punched right through my wings from below, but my aircraft appeared to be quite serviceable.**

**I touched down rather carefully in order to check that my tyres had not been punctured, and then taxied by a devious route for about a mile or more until I was stopped from getting closer to Bayly by a deep wadi. Realizing that I would have a long wait, and being in a state of sheer funk, I proceeded to take off my belly tank to lighten the aircraft. The weight of the partially full tank created great difficulty, and I needed all my strength in pulling it from below the aircraft and dragging it clear. I was not sure that I would be able to find my way back to the area where I had landed, so I stepped out the maximum run into wind from my present position. In all, I had just 300 yards before the ground dipped away into a wadi. I tied my handkerchief onto a small camel's thorn bush to mark the point of aim, and the limit of my available take off-run, and then returned to my aircraft, CV-V, and waited.**

**My Squadron's aircraft continued to circle overhead, carrying out an occasional dive towards the town in order to discourage an Italian attempt to pick us up. After what seemed like an age, sitting within gun range of Hun, Bayly at last appeared, puffing, and sweating profusely. He still managed a smile and a greeting.**



**I tossed away my parachute and Bayly climbed into the cockpit. I climbed in after him and using him as my seat, I proceeded to start my motor. It was with great relief that we heard the engine fire, and opening my throttle beyond all normal limits, I stood on the brakes until I had obtained full power, and then released them, and, as we surged forward, I extended a little flap. My handkerchief rushed up at an alarming rate, and we had not reached flying speed as we passed over it and down the slope of the wadi. Hauling the stick back a small fraction, I managed to ease the aircraft into the air, but we hit the other side of the wadi with a terrific thud. We were flung back into the air, still not really flying, and to my horror, I saw my port wheel rolling back below the trailing edge of the wing, in the dust stream. The next ridge loomed up and it looked as if it was to be curtains for us, as I could never clear it. I deliberately dropped my starboard wing to take the bounce on my remaining wheel, and eased the stick back just enough to avoid flicking. To my great relief we cleared the ridge and were flying.**

**Retracting my undercart and the small amount of take-off flap, we climbed up. I was shaking like a leaf and tried to talk to Bayly but noise would not permit. The remaining three aircraft formed up alongside me and we hared off for home, praying all the while that we would not be intercepted by enemy fighters, who should by now have been alerted. Luck remained with us, and we didn't see any enemy aircraft.**

**On nearing Marble Arch, I asked Squadron Leader Watt to fly beneath my aircraft to confirm that I had really lost a wheel and had not imagined it. He confirmed that my wheel had gone, but that the starboard wheel and undercart appeared to be intact. I then had to make up my mind as to whether to carry out a belly landing, thus damaging my aircraft further, or to try to attempt a one-wheel landing, which I thought I could do. We were at the time very short of aircraft and every machine counted.**

**The latter, of course, could be dangerous, so before making a final decision, I wrote a message on my map asking Bayly if he minded if I carried out a one-wheel landing. He read my message and nodded his agreement. Calling up our ground control, I asked them to have an ambulance standing by, and told them that I intended coming in cross-wind with my port wing up-wind. Control queried my decision but accepted it.**

**I made a landing on my starboard wheel, keeping my wing up with aileron and, as I lost speed, I turned the aircraft slowly to the left, throwing the weight out. When I neared a complete wing stall, I kicked on hard port rudder and the aircraft turned further to port. Luck was with me and the aircraft remained balanced until it lost almost all speed. The port oleo leg suddenly touched the ground, and the machine completed a ground loop. The port flap was slightly damaged as was the wingtip. The propeller and the rest of the aircraft sustained no further damage. The port undercart was changed, the flap repaired, the holes patched up and the aircraft was flying again on the 27th of the month, only six days after Hun.**

**Every enemy aircraft on Hun was either destroyed or damaged. Six aircraft and one glider were burnt, and five other aircraft were badly damaged. The bag included two JU52s, two Savoia 79s, one JU88, one Messerschmitt 110, one CR42, one HS126 and two gliders. I was later to be awarded the DSO and this operation was mentioned as having a bearing on the award**

VELKOM TO OUR AIRFIELD MR GIBBES...  
WOULD YOU CARE TO WAIT IN OUR V.I.P  
LOUNGE FOR YOUR FRIEND!....



# ORDERLY ROOM

## LUNCHEONS – GET TOGETHERS

ANZAC DAY- 25 April

Refreshments - Myrthyr Bowls Club

MID YEAR -LUNCHEON 30 JUL

Venue – Banora Point

CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON – 26 NOVEMBER

Venue – TBN

Flyers will be sent out as a reminder

## NEWSLETTERS

Newsletters are published quarterly and will come out in the first week of the following months.

- February
- May
- August
- November

The next issue of our Newsletter is due May 22

Remember to check the 3 Squadron RAAF Association QLD web page around 1<sup>st</sup> each month – you never know what you may see or learn.

