



THE MASONIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

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**Bro. HAROLD FRANKLIN LUTON**  
**28-7-1924 – 9-12-2008**

**From Fighter Pilot and Top Cop to Renowned Artist**

**Paper by RWB Ken Newman PAGM**

Brother Harold Franklin LUTON was born in Cooma NSW on the 28-7-1924 and spent his early life and adolescent years on the family property at Adaminaby. Harry was 15 when World War II broke out. In 1942 'raised' his age from 17 to 19 years to enlist in the AIF. He spent a short time in the Army before joining the RAAF. Harry was selected for Pilot Training and learned to fly Tiger Moths, Wirraways and graduated to Kitty Hawk fighter aircraft. One of Harry's instructors stated that Harry had a 'natural ability to fly aircraft'.

Harry's extensive war service began in 1943 and continued until the conclusion of the Pacific War in 1945. He was involved in the hard battles against the Japanese in Papua and New Guinea, New Britain and Morotai. The War took him from Port Moresby to Cape Gloucester, Madang, Weewaak, Atape and Hollandia in Dutch New Guinea flying Kitty Hawks. Harry was an Air Advisor Liaison Officer to US Marines during beach landings on several enemy held islands in the South West Pacific campaigns. There Harry contracted a vicious form of malaria and suffered a bullet wound, he was repatriated to Australia for treatment. Harry remained in active service until he was demobilized in 1946 at the rank of Flying Officer. Harry was awarded the Australian Imperial, American and Dutch service decorations for his service.

Harry married Annie Joyce MASKILL in 1946 and he was employed for a brief time with the Department of External Affairs in Canberra. He joined the ACT Police in June 1946. His career in the Police Force is as outstanding as was his war service.

In the early days of the Canberra Police the township of Canberra was physically developing as Australia's capital city resulting in many worker's hostels being fully occupied at times with some rough and interesting characters. Friday and Saturday nights meant workers from the hostels would be fueled with alcohol and their behaviour was often violent and extreme.

In those days there were few vehicular patrols and foot beats were the standard patrol method. Those patrols were carried out in the main shopping areas of Manuka and the City and were often dangerous. The only form of contact a Beat Police Officer had with any other Police member or Supervisor was via a public telephone or by waiting for a Supervisor to turn up randomly in a Police vehicle. Hotel closing time was 6pm back in the early days of Canberra and there were plenty of rough altercations when patrons spilled out onto the streets

Harry rose rapidly through the ranks and was the founder of the Canberra Police and Citizens Boys Club, which is still operational to this day. He was the OIC of the Canberra CIB for many years rising to the rank of Detective Senior Inspector. Harry was being 'groomed' as the next ACT Police Commissioner until his health problems forced him into early retirement retiring in 1974. 28 years Police service.

In the mid 1960's Harry studied art with several known artists and developed into a respected, competent artist. Harry held many successful art exhibitions and sold vast amounts of paintings to both local and overseas buyers. Harry found that continually purchasing frames for his artwork was expensive and he began building his own frames. Other artists were so impressed with his ability to make professional frames they began purchasing his handiwork. His reputation expanded and Harry set up a successful framing business in Canberra. That business is still going strong today and is run by family members.

In 2001 Harry's wife Joyce died. He continued his artwork while helping his family frame workshop. In 2007 Harry remarried a fellow artist Audrey Bonwick despite his failing health. On the 9 December 2008 Harry died after a long illness at Canberra Hospital. He is survived by his children Sandra, Garry and Rodney, his grand children and great grand children.

To quote a former Police colleague, Harry may be summed up as 'A person of exceptional professional integrity for whom I have the highest regard. He was exemplar of consistency and had an outstanding ability to pursue a task to completion. Harry was thorough in anything he undertook. He has a calm and considered approach to any project, and had a reputation for flair and creativity, a man who could turn his hand to anything as evidenced by his paintings'

With the passing of Harry Luton an important page of history has closed. The lives of those he loved, liked and respected him or related to him at any level must surely be diminished.

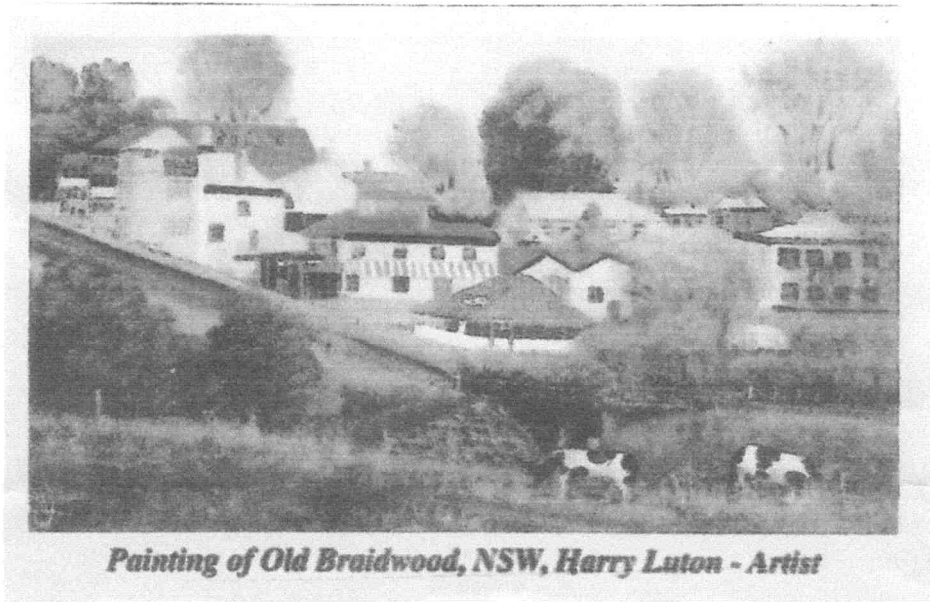
#### AWARDS / MEDALS

1939-45 Star, Pacific Star, General Service Medal, Australian War Medal  
Queens Police Medal, Italian Order of Merit, Queen Wilhelmina (Holland)  
Active Service in Dutch New Guinea, 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary WWII,  
A.C.T. Police Longs Service Medal, 30yrs as a Justice of the Peace.  
United States Presidential Unit Citation ( 23.4.1945)

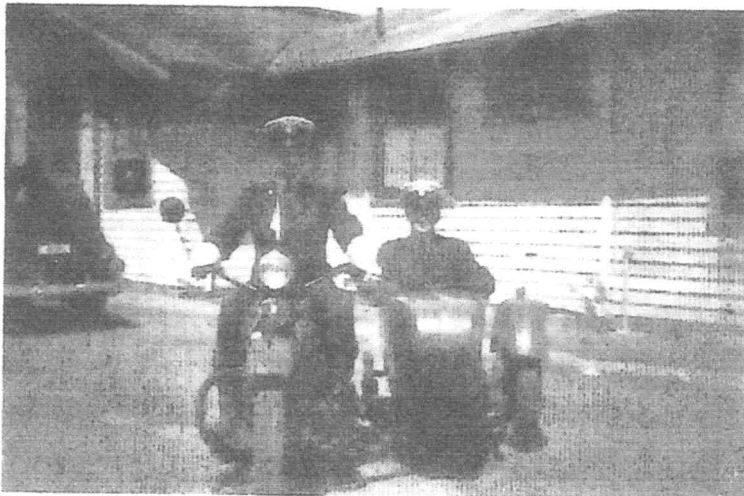
**MASONIC HISTORY**

**17/7/1950 Initiated in Lodge Capital 612 Passed 20/11/1950 Raised 16//4/1951  
Called off 18/11/65**

**Recognition and thanks of research by Bro. Phillip KLEINE ACT Police (ret)  
article in the International Police Association Magazine.**



*Below: Harry Luton and Archie Underwood  
(sidecar) ACT Police 1947*



*Below: Senior Inspector Harry Luton, 1973*

