



**THE FEDERAL
REDISTRIBUTION
WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

Objection 38

Darren West MLC

1 page

Darren West

MEMBER FOR AGRICULTURAL REGION

185 Fitzgerald Street
Northam WA 6401

☎ 9621 1999

✉ darren.west.mp@mp.wa.gov.au

🇺🇦 Darren West MLC

Dear Federal Redistribution Committee

RE - SUGGESTED NEW DIVISION NAME - Beard

I write regarding the name of the proposed new Western Australian Federal Electoral Division.

The Committee has proposed to call the new division 'Bullwinkel' after Lieutenant Colonel Vivian Bullwinkel. While this is a fitting name for a Federal Electorate given Bullwinkel's story of courage and service and I feel that the extended family of Vivian Bullwinkel would prefer her name to be associated with a division for her home state of South Australia or Victoria.

As such I draw the Committee's attention to a local alternative, 'Beard'.

In my capacity as Member for the Agricultural Region in Western Australia's Legislative Council, I've received contact from several local people from WA's wheatbelt region who have asked that I propose this alternative.

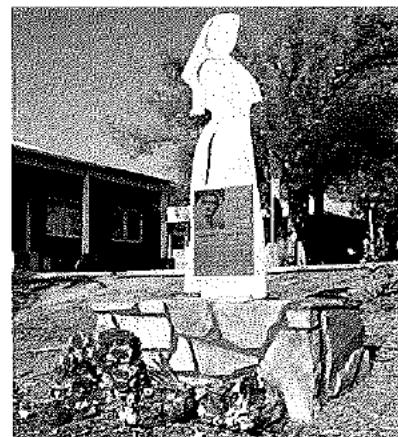
During the Bangka Island massacre which Lieutenant Colonel Vivian Bullwinkel survived, 22 Australian nurses were killed. Alma May Beard, a nurse local to the proposed Bullwinkel Division, was among them.

Beard was born in Toodyay in 1913, attended the local Toodyay State School and completed her nurses training at Royal Perth Hospital. She enlisted in the Australian Army Nursing Service in 1941 and was sent to Malaya. She was just 29 years old when she was shot by Japanese soldiers on Radji Beach.

Following Alma's death, her mother received a letter from Vivian Bullwinkel, which told how Alma's *"brave conduct in her hour of crisis has added lustre to the service which she so nobly carried on"*.

Beard's story is well known in Toodyay and throughout the wheatbelt region. The local medical centre which opened in 1992 for example, is named the 'Alma Beard Medical Centre', and contains a small display about her life.

Some years ago, the Toodyay RSL decided to commemorate Beard with a memorial on the town's main street. Unveiled in February 2022, the memorial depicts a World War II nurse and a plaque detailing Beard's story of determination and bravery. A representative from the Toodyay RSL said of her, *"Alma is still very much seen as one of ours."*



Pictured: The Alma Beard Memorial in Toodyay, Western Australia

Along with other members of the wheatbelt community, I ask that the Committee consider naming the division 'Beard', in recognition of the sacrifice of this important local hero.

Yours sincerely,


DARREN WEST MLC
MEMBER FOR AGRICULTURAL REGION

Your strong voice on the McGowan Team

