

POLITICAL COMMENT

A fair share of government support for Braidwood's strong community

Fiona Kotvojs

Braidwood has been near and dear to my heart since I was a child, and I have had the pleasure of watching as it burgeoned from a small rural service into a thriving regional town. My family and I would stop for a picnic at Braidwood's Ryrie Park on trips from our farm near Narooma to Queanbeyan. I remember when the local bakery expanded, coffee and cake became the treat — now look how far Braidwood has come. It has transformed into a regional arts and tourism hub, built on the area's rich history and is fast gaining a reputation for quality jewellery. The transformation Braidwood has achieved is one many other communities would want to emulate. There have been hard times but people have worked together, got through and main-

tained a proud and strong sense of community. Members of the Braidwood community work together for the benefit of the people in the community. It has been this way as long as I can remember. This passion for building a strong community is reflected by the groups I have met: the Men's shed making decorations for festivities in the Park, the RSL organising an ANZAC day celebration that introduced a new generation into the respectful remembrance of those who served our nation, Business Connect working to forge and support connections between businesses, and the Anglican Church helping those in need with food parcels and practical support. The vibrancy of the community is reflected in the near continual stream of special events occurring in Braidwood and the area: the rodeo, show, festivals,

quilt and art exhibitions, music recitals, book fairs and markets. The challenge into the future is to retain the quality of life and heart of Braidwood as it expands. Achieving this requires a coordinated approach from all levels of government — Local, State and Federal. This is where I see the role of the community's Federal representative as key. I will fight to ensure Braidwood receives its fair share of government support, whether it's a local doctor on call 24/7, upgrades to rural roads, support for drought-stricken farmers or more activities to keep local teenagers engaged. My first projects in office would include helping deliver our Government's \$30 million commitment to upgrade the Kings Highway, which many residents in Braidwood rely on, as well as rolling out further mobile towers to address the remaining black spots in the region and working with the State Government to ensure Braidwood Central School remains a vibrant school after the Bungendore high school opens. As the Liberal candidate for Eden-Monaro, I look for your support on May 18 so that I may have the honour of serving you and the wider Braidwood community. ■



FIONA KOTVOJS AND SCOTT MORRISON WILL DELIVER FOR EDEN-MONARO

- Supporting over 19,200 small and medium businesses with tax relief
- Increasing funding for all 65 local public schools including here in Braidwood
- Protecting our 6,900 older Australians from Labor's Retiree Tax

I need your support on May 18

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Flight of the navigator

John Cockram, who died in 2017 aged 93 was a flying Anzac. When his son Paul asked him about his time in the RAAF, this is what he said ...

When people ask me why I joined the Air Force I usually say because it sounded like fun. Everybody wanted to be a flier. That's what kids wanted. We felt it was an imposition on the part of the government that you had to be age 17½ before they would accept your nomination. Even then, you couldn't actually go in until you turned 18, but you could start training. Kids that were waiting to go into air crew would go to the local post office about twice a week at night, and were taught morse code up to about 10 words a minute. It was part of the mys-

tique of the air force and the war that people had to do things like that. I wanted to join the RAAF for probably two reasons. One is that it was a great idea to fly an aeroplane, and everybody I knew, boys my age, would want to do that. And the second one was that I was working in a bank, and I found that my general attitude to life was not appropriate for a bank. I did tend to appear a little bit facetious at times. The bank was very decent about it. When a kid from the bank was accepted into the air force as air crew, there was usually something like a six to nine month delay before the air force

[ABOVE] JOHN COCKRAM'S NAVIGATING MAP FROM A NIGHT RAID ON OCTOBER 30 1944 FROM DRIFFIELD IN THE UK TO COLOGNE IN GERMANY. JOHN'S ORIGINAL PENCIL ROUTE CALCULATION IS HIGHLIGHTED IN WHITE. [INSET] A PHOTO RECORD TAKEN FROM HIS HALIFAX ON THE NIGHT OF SEPTEMBER 12 1944 OVER GELSENKIRCHEN IN THE RUHR.

could take them because the timing had to work in training schedules. I received a telegram that said, "You can come in on the April, or May, June intake," which was quite a bit earlier, "if the bank will release you." And they did, so I went. So in 1942 when I was 18 I was sent off to an elementary flying school and flew for a very short time before they decided that I would never be able to fly an aeroplane. Quite rightly, I think, actually, because I did try it later on, many years later on, in much larger aeroplanes, and I still couldn't steer the thing. So I was sent home and eventu-