

Air Force Association

The official newsletter of the Air Force Association – Victoria ABN: 96 091 342 304

VOLUME 76 ISSUE 2 // SPRING 2021

CONTACT

- 1 VALE AIR VICE MARSHAL ALAN REED, AO
- 3 FROM THE PRESIDENT
- 3 THE BATTLE OF LONG TAN AND THE CONTRIBUTION BY 9 SQN.
- 5 VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC DAY COMMEMORATION SPEECH BY WGCDR DARYLL TOPP (RET'D)
- 6 THE NATIONAL DEFENCE EFFORT OF RMIT AND THE RAAF.
- 8 DID YOU KNOW
- 8 MEET YOUR BOARD – JAMES ALLEN
- 9 GENERAL INFORMATION
- 9 AROUND THE BRANCHES
- 15 VALE



Air Vice Marshal (Retd) Alan Reed
AO DFC (US) with Oak Leaf Cluster
1933 – 2021

A Life Well Lived!



"If you don't have an F111, a Tiger Moth is the next best thing" – AVM Alan Reed

The Air Force Association honours the life and career of AVM Alan Reed who passed away in July this year. His love of and dedication to the RAAF will be well known. Here we share some of Alan Reed's story.

Born in 1933, family circumstances dictated that Alan Reed leave school before his 16th birthday. He was employed in a Chartered Accountants office until "called up" for National Service training in the RAAF. Becoming airborne in a Dakota DC3 changed his life forever and he applied for and was accepted by the RAAF as a trainee pilot. In 1953, Alan was selected for No13 Pilots Course training in Queensland on Tiger Moths and awarded his wings and graduating as Sergeant in 1954. Alan progress through the ranks completing his career as an Air Vice Marshal leading RAAF Support Command.

In 1958, jets called and he began a long and very satisfying period flying the beautiful "lady of the sky" - the Canberra bomber - firstly in No1 Squadron at Amberley. Highlights included becoming, with his navigator, the first A category crew in the Wing and participating in several overseas deployments including flying one of three Canberras around the world to participate in the Nigerian Independence celebrations in October 1960.

In 1966, he was promoted to Squadron Leader and selected for the first pick-up of the F111. In 1967 he was selected as an Exchange Officer with the US Air Force (USAF) to fly the then top fighter aircraft in the world, the Phantom RF4C.

Realising that his job was to train US pilots and navigators to fight in Vietnam, he decided that he needed to get some combat experience himself to give him experience. He approached the

Continued on page 2

senior USAF officer at Shaw as well as the Australian Embassy in Washington, seeking approval from both governments to do an assignment flying Phantoms in Vietnam.

With approval finally granted, he was assigned to the 12th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron at Tan Son Nhut base (Saigon) as the only Australian pilot in the entire wing of five squadrons. As the USAF could not order him as a foreign national to Vietnam, they issued "Invitational Orders". He thus claims to be one of the few people to be "invited to attend a war!"

Subsequent postings included command of a RAAF Phantom Squadron; faculty member of the Joint Services Staff College, senior officer flying the F111C while responsible for all air operations RAAF Base Amberley; Commandant of the RAAF Academy at Point Cook; Air Attaché in Washington; and finally, after promotion to Air Vice Marshal to Air Officer Commanding Support Command in Melbourne.

In his distinguished career, Alan was recognised by the Queen with the award of a Commendation for Valuable

Service in the Air; awarded the USAF DFC with Oak Leaf Cluster and appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia in 1989 in recognition of his service to the RAAF.

He retired from the RAAF in 1990, establishing a successful consulting business and continued to live life well. He was married to Aileen for 60 years, with two sons and five granddaughters.

Alan Reed passed away on 24th July and his funeral service was held at the Holy Trinity Chapel at RAAF Base Point Cook on 19 August 2021.

He was a tireless supporter of the Air Force Association, the RAAF Vietnam Veterans organisation and also a prolific writer of poetry. He will be sorely missed.

Vale AVM Alan Reed. A life well lived indeed.

A full tribute to Alan Reed can be found on the AFA Victoria website by [CLICKING HERE](#) or go to: <https://tinyurl.com/hbub6ry8>



AVM Alan Reed's funeral service was held at Holy Trinity Chapel at RAAF Base Point Cook.

The Chaplain, SQNLDR Joe Ward concluded Alan's service with the following letter written by Alan to his friends:

'I have had a very fortunate life... doing so many things that I enjoyed doing.

How wonderful is that?

What an experience life has been... on this amazing planet.

Only the lucky get born... and the much luckier reach old age.

I have been privileged in so many ways with my family, my granddaughters, my friendships...

And professional relationships with colleagues,

And most fortunate to have been a citizen of a country,

Which despite its many problems - recognises the freedoms and opportunities I have enjoyed.

I will leave no sorrow, only minor regrets... and no bad wishes, or thoughts,

To anyone, or anything.

Best wishes to all,'

Al.

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Writing this report while undergoing lockdown 6 (now 200 days of lockdown for Melbourne), one statement reflecting typical Australian humour is more than apt: "The worst feature of a snap 7-day circuit breaker lockdown is the first 3 weeks."

While it has been difficult for all of us, it is not all doom and gloom as there have been some significant positives regarding AFA Victoria that have occurred since my last report.

We have finally managed, in a very difficult period, to sign a lease for the last vacant office suite at Hawthorn East. Moving from one suite to two has meant some modifications were required - the removal of some walls and the installation of another kitchen. This work is continuing as it is allowed in a commercial property that is unoccupied. The lease commences from 1 September, which will certainly improve our finances.

The second positive is that following my last call for volunteers, we have had some 18 members who have come forward to undergo the training in order to conduct the AFA Eulogy at a memorial service. Having this number to call on means that this initiative can now proceed. Once the training has been completed members will be advised when this service is available to all members of AFA Victoria and the wider veteran community.

On a sad note, was the announcement of the passing of AVM Alan Reed AO, DFC(US). Alan had been a willing and consistent supporter of AFA Victoria activities, and a strong advocate for Vietnam veterans. He will be sadly missed. You can read a memorial feature dedicated to Alan in this edition of CONTACT.

Numerous commemorate events have had to be postponed over the last two years. The Avalon Airshow is another victim of COVID-19, and I believe that the

dedication of the new Point Cook Memorial will also be postponed until March 2022. Updates will be provided when confirmed.

Our Annual Pilgrimage to Point Cook in November is at this stage uncertain, but we are working with the CO of 21SQN to ascertain what can be accomplished. Again, more details will be announced when confirmed.

Please look after yourselves and your loved ones. If you need any support please don't hesitate to contact me, Barb at the office, or any member of the Board of Management for assistance or advice, in strict confidence of course.

Take care everyone during this difficult time.

Max McGregor

President

THE BATTLE OF LONG TAN AND THE CONTRIBUTION BY 9 SQN.

Regretfully, and for the second consecutive year, this year's annual Vietnam Veterans' Day Commemoration could not be held due COVID restrictions. However, Chris Hudnott takes the opportunity to share a little of the RAAF's involvement in the Battle of Long Tan, which became a focus for Australia's involvement in the Vietnam conflict.

On 18 August 1966, two 9 SQN Iroquois helicopters captained by FLTLTs Frank Riley and Cliff Dohle flew a hazardous mission to resupply ammunition to Delta Company of 6RAR. The Australian soldiers were engaged in a battle against vastly superior Viet Cong forces in what was to become known as the Battle of Long Tan.

The soldiers had taken significant casualties, were critically short of ammunition and were in danger of being



Iroquois helicopters

overrun by the enemy. Torrential rain meant that the aircraft had to fly just above the jungle canopy.

The crews located the friendly position and ignoring the

Continued on page 4

heavy ground fire, descended to a few metres above the ground and the gunners on board the helicopters kicked the boxes of ammunition out of the aircraft to the waiting troops below.

After the Iroquois left, the battle continued and only the support of artillery from the nearby Task Force HQ at Nui Dat and the arrival on scene of reinforcements in Armoured Personnel Carriers led to the defeat of the enemy.

The successful re-supply of ammunition was one of several factors that contributed to the survival of Australian and New Zealand troops in this action.

It was a costly battle. 17 Australians were killed, one died of wounds and 24 wounded - approximately one third of the initial force and many of them young National Servicemen.

The Battle of Long Tan has become a focus for Australia's involvement in the Vietnam conflict and each year on the 18th of August, Vietnam Veterans' Day commemorates the 60,000 Australians who served in Vietnam, the 521 who were killed and the 3,000 who were wounded.

The loss of commemorations this year would be keenly felt by veterans as a special service had been planned to mark the 50th anniversary of the cessation of combat

operations in Vietnam in 1971, as noted by the President of the Victorian Branch of the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia, Bob Elworthy in his 15th August press release.

In view of the cancellation of the main commemorative event, the Vietnam Veterans' Branch of AFA Victoria is looking ahead to later in the year (possibly 19th November - to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the cessation of combat missions by 9 SQN). With increased vaccinations and a reduction in State Government lockdowns, there may be an opportunity to hold a short Commemorative Service followed by a gathering of Branch members for our annual lunch.



The RAAF Vietnam Veterans' plaque adjacent to the Shrine of Remembrance



STAY IN TOUCH

If you have not received a broadcast email from us recently, or if you've changed your email or postal address, please let us know by contacting office@afavic.org.au or calling us on 03 98134600

VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC DAY COMMEMORATION SPEECH BY WGCDR DARYLL TOPP (RETD)



This year, at the invitation of RSL Victoria, AFA Victoria Vice President WGCDR Daryll Topp (Retd) was to present the VP Day Commemoration Speech on Sunday 15 August 2021 at the Shrine of Remembrance.

However, once again due to COVID restrictions, commemorations of important dates in our military history have either been postponed or undertaken in an online form.

Below is an excerpt from that speech. A VP Day Commemoration Presentation video, together with a full copy of the speech are available on our website [here](#).

“VP Day represented the end of hostilities and a conflagration that had taken 70 million lives; 3% of the world’s population at that time died during the Second World War. One half of those casualties were suffered in the Pacific. Australia lost 17,701 war dead in the Pacific alone.



CAC Boomerang in 1944 (image courtesy AWM)

Nearly 40,000 Australian serving personnel died, including 17,000 in the war against Japan. The war against Japan began on 7 December 1941, when Japan attacked Pearl Harbour and the Malayan Peninsula and it eventually reached our shores shortly after the fall of Singapore in February, 1942. More than 80 raids were launched against northern Australia from Broome to Townsville, including 60 against Darwin alone. Some 240 Australians died in that first Darwin attack of 19 February.

More than 215,000 men and women served in the RAAF during the Second World War and some 10,000 lost their lives, more than half in the war against Germany. Many of the survivors looked back on their years in the RAAF pleased that they had played their part in the war. In the words of a RAAF nursing sister, ‘We who have had the privilege of serving with the RAAF feel a great deal of pride’

So today is a very important day – it is a day for us to Remember the jubilation, the despair and the anger that was felt 76 years ago. Today is a day for us to Remember the sacrifice of those who served and those who fell and those who returned home bearing the scars of their time in service. Today is a time to Reflect on what we can do to build a lasting peace.”

Wing Commander Daryll Topp (Retd)

Vice President, Air Force Association - Victoria



Victory in the Pacific – Melbourne celebrates in 1945 (image courtesy AWM).

THE NATIONAL DEFENCE EFFORT OF RMIT AND THE RAAF.

For over 60 years the Engineering and Business Graduates from RMIT provided the backbone of the RAAF's expertise in these areas for many years, right up to the present day.

The active collaboration between RMIT and the RAAF effectively ceased after 1985 with establishment of ADFA, which offered undergraduate courses in a variety of fields, via the University of New South Wales. That said, the careers and mentoring influence of the pre-1985 RMIT Graduates continued well into the second decade of the 21st Century.

1939 - 1945: WORLD WAR 2

The Melbourne Technical College (MTC) made a significant contribution to Australia's war efforts by training some 20,000 service men and women (approximately 1/6th of all trained in Australia) - mainly RAAF personnel in Radio Communications, and also Aircraft Fitters and Electricians.⁽¹⁾

These personnel were housed at several locations turned over to the war effort, including the Royal Exhibition Building in Carlton and the Showgrounds at Ascot Vale. After graduation, personnel were assigned to RAAF bases in Australia and overseas or they participated in further training, such as the then revolutionary radar technology. The MTC Radio School was the leading National educator in these fields.

1948 - 1975: RAAF RADIO APPRENTICES ('THE APPYS')

In 1948 the RAAF established an Apprenticeship Scheme, with apprentices at the RAAF Ground Training School at Wagga Wagga and at the RAAF Radio Apprentice School at "Frognall" in the leafy Mont Albert Road, Camberwell, Victoria. The RAAF occupied the Frognall Mansion from 1941, with the establishment of the Wireless/Telegraphy

Shadow Station (aka "The Spooks"), then becoming the RAAF Telecommunications Unit after 1945.

The RAAF Radio Apprentices attended MTC for their academic tuition towards Associate Diplomas, followed by practical training at RAAF units in Ballarat and later at Laverton, Victoria. Through MTC, which became the Royal Melbourne Technical College in 1954 and then the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) in 1960, some 655 RAAF Radio Apprentices graduated mainly from the Radio School.

This was a significant contribution to the overall RAAF technical support capability with many graduates going on to complete higher level Engineering education at RMIT. Education for RAAF Radio Apprentices finished at RMIT in 1975 with all training afterwards conducted at the RAAF School of Radio at Laverton.

1948 - 1961: RADIO, COMMUNICATIONS, MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

Many RAAF personnel, having mainly graduated from the RAAF Radio Apprentice scheme, were appointed as Cadets into the Diploma Cadet Squadron (DCS) and studied Radio and Communication Engineering at RMIT. Those completing Engineering Diplomas were commissioned in the RAAF Engineer Branch as Radio and Communications specialist Engineers.

RMIT's School of Radio and Communications Engineering was the lead national faculty in this enterprise.⁽²⁾

Another 40 RAAF personnel based at Laverton and mainly graduates of the RAAF Technical Apprentice Scheme were commissioned into the DCS and undertook studies in the faculties of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, which significantly added to RAAF Engineering capability. Those completing RMIT's Associate Diplomas were commissioned in the RAAF Engineer Branch as Radio, Aeronautical, Electrical and Instrument specialist engineers, and achieved qualifying entry for Member of the Institution of Engineers Australia (MIE Aust).

1961 - 1985: EXPANSION OF EDUCATION FOR ENGINEERING AND BUSINESS STUDIES PERSONNEL

This period saw a significant expansion of the collaboration of RMIT in the academic education of some 700 RAAF personnel in the disciplines of Aeronautical, Communication, and Mechanical Engineering and in Business Studies. They were home based at the RAAF's Diploma Cadet Squadron (DCS), later becoming the Engineer Cadet Squadron (ECS) at Frognall, Camberwell. Some of these personnel included graduates from the



The Crests of the Best - Apprentice School, Diploma Cadets and Engineer Cadets

RAAF Technical and Radio Apprentice schemes, with the majority being direct entry to the DCS and later the ECS.

Those completing the RMIT Associate Diplomas and, from 1973, the Degree Courses in Chemical, Communications, Mechanical, Electrical and Aeronautical Engineering and Business Studies were commissioned into the RAAF Engineer Branch as Aeronautical, Electrical, Radio and Instrument Specialist Engineers and in the RAAF Equipment Supply Branch.

The RMIT Engineering Schools of Aeronautical, Chemical, Radio and Communications, Electronics and Electrical, and Mechanical, and the RMIT Business Studies were the key RMIT academic centres of excellence. The RMIT involvement was highly significant to the development and enhancement of Engineering and Management capabilities in the RAAF. RMIT lecturers also conducted subject matter tutorials at Frognall for the RAAF Cadets.

1985 TO ADFA - AND VALE FROGNALL

The scheme which provided the RAAF with Graduate Engineers and General Officers for 25 years, closed on 12 December 1985, with the closure of Frognall. From its beginnings in February 1961 as 'Detachment A' of the Radio Apprentice School, then the Diploma Cadet Squadron (DCS) from 1962, and the Engineer Cadet Squadron (ECS) from 1976, the Frognall unit administered Officer Cadets who were studying for Engineering Diplomas and Degrees at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.

Future intakes of RAAF engineer students attended the new Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) in Canberra. Those RAAF personnel still studying at RMIT when the ECS squadron disbanded with the establishment of ADFA in Canberra in 1985 were then attached to the RAAF Base Point Cook.

Overall, the RAAF could not have raised, sustained or projected its capabilities through the late 20th & early 21st centuries without the contribution of this outstandingly successful graduate education scheme, primarily supported and delivered by the RMIT.

Engineering and Business Graduates have provided the skills necessary for the acquisition, specification & maintenance of aircraft and associated equipment of highly developed & advanced designs such as the Dassault Mirage Interceptor/Surface Attack 1110; the F111 Aardvark (aka "the Pig"); medium range interdictor and tactical strike aircraft and the AP-3C Orion aircraft.

Pre-1985 RMIT graduates have guided the introduction of the current Air Force fleet, including the F/A-18 Hornet, the C17A Globemaster, the P8-A Poseidon, the EA-18G Growler Electronic Attack, and the Fifth-Generation Lockheed Lightning II F35-A stealth fighter.

In addition to serving with operational squadrons in Australia and overseas (including Vietnam and the Middle East), beyond the RAAF our engineers have contributed significantly to the private & public sectors.

Article written by Carl Dillon, Technical Branch

References:

1. Murray-Smith, Stephen; Dare, Anthony J. (1987), *The Tech: A Centenary History of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology* (1st ed.), South Yarra (Melbourne): Hyland House, ISBN0-947062-06-8
2. *From The Ground Up. The Training of RAAF Technical Ground Staff 1948 – 1993.* Coulthard-Clark, C.D: Air Power Studies Centre, Canberra, ISBN 0 642 26509 7



The history of the collaboration between Air Force and RMIT is described on "The Interactive Wall" at the RMIT-restored Capitol Theatre in Collins Street, Melbourne, seen here with (L) Kingsley and Lynn Macrae and (R) Glen and Carol Gould

DID YOU KNOW?

LOCKHEED HUDSON – GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

The Lockheed Hudson general reconnaissance bomber first flew on 10 December 1938 and was the military version of the Lockheed 14 Super Electra which, in turn, was derived from the Lockheed 10 Electra.

Later in 1938, the Hudson was ordered for the RAAF and the first aircraft, A16-1, was received at No 2 Aircraft Depot on 9 February 1940, and the last, A16-247, on this day in May 1942. By August 1940, Hudsons of Nos 1 and 8 Squadrons had deployed to Malaya and these aircraft made the first RAAF retaliative missions against the Japanese on 8 December 1941.



Hudsons continued to strike back during the following months of adversity and wreaked tremendous damage on enemy ships and landing forces. In the Pacific area, Hudsons served with Nos 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 23, 24, 25, 32 and 38 Squadrons, while RAF-serialised Hudsons operated with No 459 Squadron in the Middle East.

With the introduction of Beauforts, the Hudsons were gradually relegated to communication and training duties.

Hudsons were phased out of the RAAF by 1949 but as late as 1963 various Hudsons had been operated by a variety of civilian companies for airline and survey work.

Thank you to Walter Sherman – 2SQN Branch for this article.



MEET YOUR BOARD – JAMES ALLEN



In this edition we introduce you to your newest AFA Victoria Board member – James Allen.

James Allen joined the AFA Victoria Board of Directors in June 2021.

James' first taste of Air Force life was gained when he joined the Air Training Corps in 1977 with No.10 Flight in Tamworth, NSW. He holds fond memories of the JNCO

course at RAAF Williamtown.

But this did not immediately transpose into a RAAF career.

James had six years with the Australian Customs Service and then the Australian Federal Police during which time he joined the Active Reserve (RAAFPOL) before commissioning in 1997. He then spent 3 months in 1999 as an International Liaison Officer for HQNORCOM before transferring to the PAF in 2000.

His postings have included Instructional and HR roles, before transitioning back to the Active Reserve in 2012. A short time in the APS, saw James continue reserve service before a period of CFTS as SO1PERS at HQAFTG. In 2019, he assumed command of No.30 SQN at RAAF Base East Sale, just in time for bushfires and 1 January 2021, he transitioned for his 3rd stint in the reserve.

James holds a Master of HR Management and is currently completing Australian Command and Staff (Reserve). An avid traveller, he enjoys motorcycling, football and learning.

Married to Andrea, they recently welcomed their first grandchild to the family

GENERAL INFORMATION

CONTACT: EDITORIAL DATES

SUMMER 2021

Contributions by 19 November 2021
Publication: 10 December 2021

AUTUMN 2022

Contributions by 25 February 2022
Publication: 11 March 2022

WINTER 2022

Contributions by 20 May 2022
Publication: 3 June 2022

SPRING 2022

Contributions by 9 August 2022
Publication: 27 August 2022

AFA VICTORIA BRANCH CONTACTS

2 SQN	Walter Sherman	0407152479
21SQN	Mike Dance	0438764629
ATC/AAFC	Hugh Tank	03 98773424
B24 Liberator	Tony Muller	03 97414635
Ballarat	Noel Hutchins	0439 929 322
Bendigo	Glenis Gordon	03 54369293
Catalina	Ronald Kirk	03 98193527
Technical	David Graham	0407 248 874
Fighter SQN	(contact AFA Vic)	03 98134600
Geelong	John Delia	0408 054 122
Gippsland	(contact AFA Vic)	03 98134600
Melbourne WAAAF	(contact AFA Vic)	03 98134600
RAAF Radar	Chris Harnath	0425 770 011
RAF	Val Boyd	0428 174 070
Sunderland SQNs	Ricky Hattam	03 52413431
Vietnam Veterans	Gill Coughlan gilly4346@gmail.com	
WAAF	(contact AFA Vic)	03 98134600
Williams	(contact AFA Vic)	03 98134600



AROUND THE BRANCHES

ATC/AAFC

We pause and reflect on the sad loss of four of our Branch's long standing and well-respected members: Bob Eastgate, Susan Cohn, John Gracie and John Tribe. We extend our deepest

sympathy to their families and retain many happy memories of past gatherings.

On a happier note, we welcome the following new members into our Branch: John Stanley, a

past member of the ATC during 1957–1959; SQNLDR (AAFC) Samantha O'Sullivan, Staff Officer Development & Community Engagement and Liaison Officer of the AAFC 80 Project; SQNLDR (AAFC) Paul Grixti and

Howard Branscombe, former Staff member of the Vic AirTC Flying Training Flight.

We hope you all enjoy being members of the Air Force Association and the ATC/AAFC Branch.

On Saturday the 10th July I had the pleasure of attending the 4 Wing AAFC Promotion Course Ceremonial Review Parade at Point Cook. It was good to be able to catch up with quite a number of the AAFC members whom, due to restrictions, I hadn't seen for some time. The standard of drill and procedure was excellent and congratulations to all

concerned. Well done.

As would also be the case with other branches, our social luncheons and similar events have been rather disjointed over the past 12 months due to COVID restrictions and sudden lockdowns. The few of these gatherings which we have been able to enjoy have been reasonably well attended and we hope that the opportunities to have

more social interactions will be on the increase in the near future.

COVID permitting, our next Friday lunch is scheduled for the 3rd of September, so here's hoping.

Our Branch AGM was held at the Box Hill RSL on Friday the 7th of May and following this, those in attendance retired to the bistro for our usual

monthly lunch. The number of attendees was well down and the committee thanks those members who did support the meeting.

There were no changes in any of the positions which remain as per the table:

Best wishes

Laurie Bell

President

<p>ELECTED POSITIONS President: L.Bell Vice President: P.Wilson Secretary: H.Tank Treasurer: T. Synhur Delegate: J. MacDonald</p>	<p>APPOINTED POSITIONS ATC/AAFC Liaison Officer: (no appointment made) Returning Officer: G.Smith Welfare: H.Tank Newsletter Editor: I.Cohn (Regularity of newsletters subject to availability of provided subject material.)</p>
--	--

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE ATC/AAFC BRANCH?
 VISIT OUR BRANCH PAGE ON THE AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION VICTORIA WEBSITE

B-24 LIBERATOR BRANCH

Owing to the on again off again COVID situation that all are well aware of, very little has been able to occur socially.

We have continued, where possible, with restoration tasks on the Aircraft over these last months.

Contact with members has been kept up through the various means to check on their wellbeing during the various lock downs. The relocation of Hangar 1, the larger hangar on the old Werribee Field has



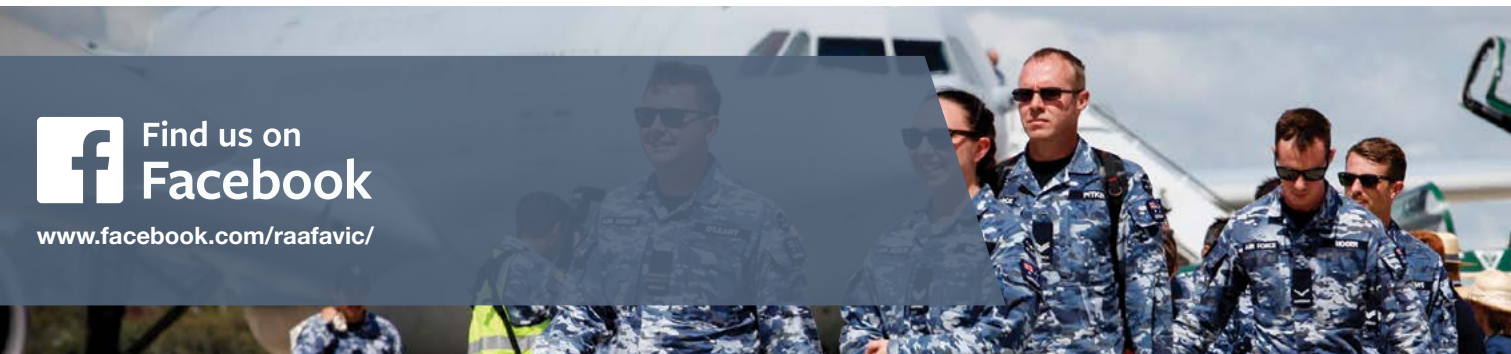
continued to proceed under Melbourne Water planning with all necessary permits and EPA testing in progress at this time.

And finally, we say farewell and vale to Dan O'Connell, a long-time volunteer who filled the role of Spare Parts Manager/Gopher. Dan's knowledge and humour around the hangar will be missed by many. Our sincere condolences go to his wife Trish and family

Paul Rourke

President

Want to know more about the B-24 Branch?
 Visit our branch page on the air force association Victoria website



 Find us on **Facebook**
www.facebook.com/raafavic/

While some Covid-19 restrictions caused the cancellation of our Social Luncheon Meeting for June, we were fortunate to be able to gather for our July meeting, at which we had an excellent guest speaker in Victoria Police Senior Sergeant Barry JENKS who presented a great talk on how he conducts tours along the Kokoda Track.

Barry showed us some excellent photographs taken along the track and gave us some very enlightening information. The members' interest was clearly shown with some really great questions seeking even more information about the various WWII battles along the Track. I don't think that any of us will be doing the walk though!

The first Tuesday in August was also lock-down free, so

we were again fortunate to be able to have our monthly Social Luncheon. This meeting saw an excellent presentation relating to WWII No 1 Wireless Air Gunners School Ballarat history.

Using well put together information prepared by our 1wags.org.au website coordinator Janet Bates, the trio of Janet, Secretary Peter Dowling and Committee Member Sue Alexander developed a most interesting Powerpoint presentation which was well presented by Secretary Peter Dowling RFD.

There are so many individual stories within the information recorded on our 1wags.org.au website and a couple of those stories were included in the presentation which stirred some emotions and a few tears flowed.

BATTLE FOR AUSTRALIA/AIR FORCE 100 WEEKEND UPDATE

Due to the Melbourne and regional lockdown, the full weekend activities have been rescheduled to 24-25 September 2021.

The Saturday night Ball is completely sold out and our Sunday morning Commemorative Service being supported by the attendance of currently serving Senior Australian Defence Force Officers representing Navy, Army and Air Force. All other details stay the same.

However, with the opening of the restored WWII Officers' Mess building in the afternoon of Sunday

25th September, we will now also have a privately owned Tiger Moth and a Mustang do a Tribute to the RAAF Centenary flyover of the area. Something not to be missed!

Noel Hutchins
President

Want to know more about the Ballarat Branch?

Visit our branch page on the air force association Victoria website

What a year 2021 is turning out to be, just when we thought things were improving, someone puts a hurdle in the way.

It seems like a high jumper at the Olympic Games, who hits the bar and goes on to try again. Apparently that's what we have to do, just like me putting together articles for Contact, because there doesn't seem to be much to report on. Quite frustrating!

We have a number of our members who are over 90 years of age. Time doesn't stop for ageing. Jack Fay is 98, Herb Jackson & Bill Hosking are both 97 and Frank Holland is 95. Jack & Herb are now residing in care.

As reported, Ray Gray resigned as President & Welfare Officer earlier in the year, owing to a number of health issues, passing the baton on to Roy Gaffee. We wish Ray all our very best. He will be sorely missed by all, especially all those who he assisted with welfare issues.

Sadly, our Branch has missed out on a number of meetings & social outings which has saddened our members, Memorial services for ANZAC Day, Sandakan, Darwin Defenders, Korea and Vietnam Veteran's have been cancelled with the postponement of expectations Battle for Australia, Battle of Britain and uncertainty around Remembrance Day also joining the list.

That's all for my whinging! Please stay warm & keep safe, which seems to be getting harder to do.

Glenis Gordon
Secretary

Want to know more about the Bendigo Branch?

Visit our branch page on the air force association Victoria website

Unfortunately, due to the fact that I was recovering from recent surgery, Ivy and I were unable to attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Fellowship Luncheon on 24 April 2021. In my absence, the meeting was chaired by the Vice President, Graham Henry. Everybody that I spoke to after the event, commented on how well Graham conducted both the AGM and the Fellowship Luncheon, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all. I would also like to pass on my personal thanks to Graham for an excellent job.

I would also like to thank the whole Committee for their combined efforts in ensuring that the day was an outstanding success:

- John Elliott for his work in co-coordinating the attendance list, financial management and putting together a photographic display of attending members treasured family photos. I would also like to thank him for his continuing efforts in copying and cataloguing all photographs loaned to him.

- Carl Schiller for ensuring our timely funding from the Air Force Association Victoria.
- Molly Agius for helping raise a substantial amount with the raffle and auctions. The money raised will go directly into our coffers and enable us to continue supporting our membership.

As you would be aware, at the AGM all Committee positions were declared vacant and the following members were re-elected, with the additional inclusion of Greg Donaldson as a third committee member:

- President: Walter Sherman
- Vice-President: Graham Henry
- Secretary/Treasurer: John Elliott

Three Committee Members: Carl Schiller (Immediate Past President), Molly Aquis, Greg Donaldson

It was a special pleasure to welcome SQNLDR Lee-Anne Stanway, as the Guest Speaker. Lee-Anne, served with No 2 Squadron in the Middle East on OP OKRA

as an Air Battle Manager in the Wedgetail aircraft. Lee-Anne who is currently posted to the Melbourne area is a member of our Branch and also on the Board of Directors for the Air Force Association, Victoria Division. Congratulations Lee-Anne, enjoy your current posting and best wishes for a return to flying duties with 2 Squadron in the future.

Everyone present was delighted to welcome WW2 Veteran, Alex Greig and wife Diedre who travelled from Sorrento whilst many others came from local and distant metropolitan suburbs.

NEW MEMBERS

Greg Donaldson and Margot and Wally Goodwin are very welcome new members and Greg, from Trentham, arranged to bring Joyce Daymon from Woodend. This was most welcome arrangement as Joyce was one of the early and most active members, particularly when the Ladies held their own annual Reunions of the Association and sadly, we had lost contact with her for several

years. Thanks Greg.

Thank you for your ongoing support of this 2 Squadron Branch, Air Force Association and the Committee looks forward to holding more fellowship functions.

Walter Sherman

President

Want to know more about the No2 SQN Branch?

Visit our branch page on the air force association Victoria website

Dedication Ceremony – 13RS Cape Otway RAAF Radar Interpretive Exhibition Postponement

Our RAAF Radar Branch Report in the Autumn

2021 Contact covered the opening of the WWII RAAF Radar Interpretive Exhibition at 13RS (Radar Station) Cape Otway and the planning for the June 2021 Dedication Ceremony at Cape Otway.

However, COVID 19 and the lockdown restrictions to combat it resulted in the Ceremony's postponement. This was in fact the second postponement of the Ceremony due to COVID after it was postponed in June 2020.

At this stage the new date for the Dedication Ceremony is Saturday, 23 October 2021, and the arrangements for the ceremony will be similar to those outlined in the RAAF Radar Branch report in the Autumn 2021 Contact. Given the nature

of the COVID pandemic, that October date remains tentative.

It is the RAAF Radar Branch's intention that the Dedication Ceremony for the RAAF Radar Interpretive Exhibition will be held, dependent on future

COVID considerations. AFA members interested in joining our Branch Members at the Cape Otway Dedication Ceremony should keep in contact with RAAF Radar Branch President Chris Harnath regarding further developments that

may occur due to COVID as registration to attend this event is likely to be a requirement during these COVID pandemic times. Chris can be contacted via: harnathc@bigpond.com

Chris Harnath
President

Want to know more about the RAAF Radar branch Branch?

Visit the air force association Victoria website

RAF BRANCH

Over the last year, I'm sure like most other organisations, our Branch has struggled with the isolation brought about by COVID. However, our Committee has tried to keep in touch by phone or email with most of our members. Sheila Rankcom, who took over from Vic Leigh as Branch Secretary, and I have worked closely to coordinate this.

Sadly, we have also lost

two valued members of our Branch – Jean Smith passed away in December and Jean Kaye in January this year.

When the lockdown restrictions were eased, we had two very successful social functions at the Waverley RSL in Glen Waverley. A pre-Christmas lunch in December and another lunch in February. At the February lunch we celebrated the lives of our

two lovely Jeans. It was very special.

We have started to meet up on the first Monday of the month at the RSL for an informal coffee/lunch (when possible) and it's really great to catch up with lots of members and their families.

We are also planning a Battle of Britain Lunch also on the 15th September, and a service at the Shrine on

Sunday 19th September. Hopefully more get togethers will happen during the year.

Valerie Boyd
President

Want to know more about the RAF Branch?

Visit our branch page on the air force association Victoria website

TECHNICAL VETERANS



The Branch membership is very saddened over the passing of one of our founders – Noel Hadfield.

Noel was pivotal in organising our bi-annual luncheons and had the semi-official title of "Keeper of the List", a vital role in holding the Branch together.

He warmly greeted everyone attending our luncheons and handed us our name-tags (in large font, befitting the ocular challenges facing many members).

Noel passed away peacefully at home on 3rd May, and is survived by his wife Judith, seven children and four grandchildren.

BRANCH EXCURSION TO THE BALLARAT AFA BRANCH

Committeeman Glen Gould was instrumental in

organising this trip on 19th March (and beating Covid).

Glen has a family connection to that era of the RAAF Base Ballarat 1WAGS – his father-in-law

Thomas George Holmes completed 1WAGS Course No 43 after which he was posted to the United Kingdom for service with RAF Bomber Command. He

moved up to the four engine Lancaster bomber as the Wireless Air Gunner – a position always a target for the German night fighters ("nachtskampfflugzeug der Luftwaffe"). Luckily, he survived the War. Glen's grandson Lachie was presented with a framed certificate detailing his great-grandfather's service.

Another piece of history, with close connection to Air Force Communications Engineering Cadets at RMIT has also emerged via the Ballarat Branch website co-ordinator Janet Bates, detailing the life and career of the

Continued on page 14

well-remembered RMIT lecturer Air Force Wing Commander (Ret) James Eric Reynolds. He tried to train wannabe engineers in the science and art of precision soldering – a practical and essential part of communications and electronics engineering. The writer came to know the Wing Commander in 1961 as a PMG Cadet Engineer, along with a few Air Force Cadets. On observing our initial attempts at precision soldering he remarked that we were in the wrong institution – the Department of Butchery at the William Angliss Food Trades School would be more appropriate! He prayed none of us (especially the Air Force Cadets) would be held responsible for the future downing of a Mirage.

The Wing Commander's story is quite fascinating and is on the 1wags.org.au website. It would make an excellent documentary, with references including wireless communications with Charles Kingsford Smith and top-secret wartime coastal Australia radar installations. Also, note the Dedication Ceremony of the Number 13 Radar Station Cape Otway for 23rd October – one of WGCDR Reynold's projects during WW2.

ZOOMING-IN ON COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Due to that pesky virus, in recent times, we have been unable to enjoy meeting at the Royal Mail Exchange Hotel. Like many other groups we have employed

Zoom to conduct recent meetings, invoking the SOP of "hand up if you want to talk" while Chair David decided who got to yabber next.

The main topic was our mid-year luncheon function at Batman on Collins (BoC). Encouragingly, AFA Victoria has confirmed a subsidy for the event, provided that actually happens. Once more, quite a good deal with BoC was secured but unfortunately, due to lower numbers the event has been postponed to a date tbc.

Finally, RMIT is never far from the minds of those Air Force Cadets attending through until the establishment of the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) in 1985.

In this edition of CONTACT, you can read about the history of the collaboration between Air Force and RMIT, which still resonates in today's Air Force – 'The National Defence Effort of RMIT and the RAAF'.

We wish you all ongoing good health and happiness.

Carl Dillon

On behalf of President David Graham and the Committee

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE TECHNICAL BRANCH?

VISIT OUR BRANCH PAGE ON THE AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION VICTORIA WEBSITE

VIETNAM VETERANS

Anzac Day commemorative activities were somewhat special with this year being the 100th anniversary of the formation of the RAAF. AFA President, Max McGregor together with long serving committee member Andy Lapin joined four currently serving Air Force members in leading the abbreviated March to the Shrine concourse. COVID 19 safety rules impacted on the March arrangements but with some careful last-minute adjustments, our Branch members rallied around our banner and were fortunate enough to be able to march together as a group. Our regular post-March lunch was held at a

city restaurant and was well attended.

COVID 19 of course, was not to be outsmarted and as I drafted this report, we were advised that after much planning by the Victorian Branch of the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia, commemorative activities scheduled for Vietnam Veterans Day (18 August) were cancelled. This was to have been the last major gathering of Victorian branches at the Shrine of Remembrance with future commemorative activities being planned on a local basis around the State. The cancellation will disappoint all members of

our Branch as it provided an opportunity to reflect on the service and sacrifice of all Vietnam veterans in the conflict. We continue to look forward to being able to gather again for lunch at a city restaurant, but this will be determined by State Government restrictions applying at the time.

Finally, and on a very sad note, we learned of the passing of our long-time member, AVM Alan Reed AO, on 24 July. Alan was a great supporter of our Branch activities and always made a point of joining us on Anzac Day and Vietnam Veterans Day commemorations. He will be sorely missed.

(Note: AVM Alan Reed's funeral service was held on 19 August at Point Cook Chapel and a memorial feature is included in this edition of CONTACT.)

Chris Hudnott

President

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE VIETNAM VETERANS' BRANCH?

VISIT OUR BRANCH PAGE ON THE AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION VICTORIA WEBSITE

LEST WE FORGET – ALAN REED AO DFC (US)

Lucky

The time has come someone has said, that I must toe the line
It's time he said that I should know, - "I can't say all is fine."

But fine it is for me you see, coz - lucky I have been
My life it really has been - something like a dream.

I'm eighty plus on earth my god, how can this really be?
I'll tell you now without a doubt, I'm lucky, lucky me.

I'm lucky to be here at all and lucky right enough
I've been lucky even when, some things were going tough.

I'm lucky in most things I did, like being born at all
And then how lucky was I - in deepest love to fall
With Aileen who is mother to my sons - my gorgeous boys
Who both of them, with lives they've led, have given me such joys.

And am I not so lucky, with their partners too?
My gorgeous new family, I'm among the lucky few.

They're lucky too with gorgeous girls, which we could not produce,
But aren't we lucky grands we are, coz we can cut them loose
We give them chocolate, candy bars whatever's really bad
And then we send them home - all charged, to drive their parents mad.
These gorgeous girls I love them so, how lucky have I been
To have my lovely grandkids has made my life supreme.

I used to be a flyer once and loved it, yes I did
I loved the thrill, the clouds, the sky I loved to lift the lid
And still I do it lovingly, with wind upon my face
I guess the day will one day come, when I'll have to say my grace

But lucky have I been and lucky still I am
To live the life I have done, is way beyond my dream
So lucky - that's the theme of this, my life refrain
And lucky is the hope - that things the same remain

But lucky me, I drift on - to things I know not what
So lucky me, whatever- it matters not a tot.

Alan Reed



Alan Reed (right) in Vietnam

VALE

*It is with the
greatest respect
and fond
memories, we
remember our
colleagues who
have passed on
before us.*

The following members have passed away since our last publication.
May they rest in peace.

Mrs Lorraine Dixon WAAAF Branch	13/04/2021
Mrs Elva Friswell Bendigo Branch.....	05/05/2021
Mr Peter Dodd Bendigo Branch.....	11/03/2021
Mr Ian Johnston Headquarters Branch	17/05/2021
Mr Francis Kingwell Headquarters Branch	14/12/2020
Mrs Susie Cohn ATC/AAFC Branch	02/2021
Mr Noel Hadfield Technical Branch	02/06/2021
Mr Noel Dunn Sunderland Branch	23/06/2021
Mr Daniel O'Connell B24 Liberators	14/07/2021
Mr Kevin O'Neil Vietnam Veterans	16/07/2021
Mr Alan Reed AO DFC(US) Retd Vietnam Veterans	24/07/2021

Lest We Forget

Air Force Association

OFFICE BEARERS

AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION – VICTORIA

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Max McGregor – President

Carl Schiller OAM CSM – Immediate Past President

John Clarkson CSC – Vice President, JBSG Representative.

Daryll Topp – Vice President, Administration

Peter Colliver OAM – Treasurer; Chairman, Welfare Patriotic Fund

Chris Hudnott – Director, Communications

Dianne Hoopert – Director, Welfare

Lee Stanway – Director, Member Services

James Allen – Board Member

Peter Finkelstein – Honorary Solicitor

VOLUME 76 ISSUE 2 // SPRING 2021

The official newsletter of the Air Force Association – Victoria