

Air Force Association

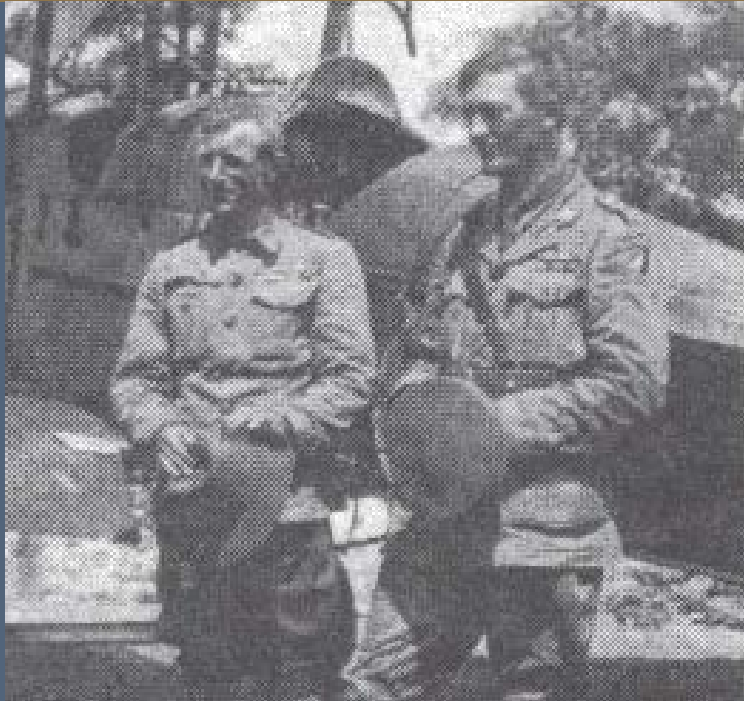
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CONTACT

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Spud Murphy with Capt. Henry Wrigley in 1919 in a BE2a on a survey of landing grounds



The Air Force Association – Victoria remembers

John (Jack) Bell

20th December 1917 –
26th November 2021

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THE FIRST RAAF AIRMAN

**AIRCDRE ARTHUR WILLIAM (SPUD) MURPHY DFC AFC
(1891-1963)**

In this centenary year of the Air Force, it is fitting to remember the first airman to enlist in the newly formed Australian Air Force on 31st March 1921. A.W. Murphy was the lucky man to be recipient of Service Number 1¹. AFA Victoria Technical Branch and Board member, John Clarkson shares the story of the first RAAF Airman.

Arthur Murphy was born on 17th November 1891 in Kew (Vic), the son of an engineer. He attended Melbourne Continuation School² and Footscray Technical School before completing an apprenticeship with Otis Engineering. Responding to a 1913 advertisement for young men to train as air mechanics, he joined the Aircraft Instruction Staff for duty at Central Flying School (CFS), Point Cook, and was assigned Service No7.

When war broke out, CFS remained at Point Cook to train aviators but many of the staff were keen to see action. In February 1916 Spud transferred to the 1st AIF and 1SQN AFC

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Staff and students of CFS in August 1914.
Back row: A.W. Murphy, W.H. Lord, L.G. Carter, N.M. Dyer, R. Mason
3rd row: G. Mackinolty, V. Ronald, G. Fontineau, A. Shorland, C. Heath, E. Pivot
2nd row seated: WO Hendy, G. Merz, H. Petre, E. Harrison, T. White, J.H. Chester
Front row: R. Williams, D.T. Manwell

for deployment to Egypt the next month. He was appointed the squadron technical warrant officer and in September that year was formally recognised for his technical work in the desert.

By 1917 the Royal Flying Corps was desperate to train more pilots, so Spud applied and was selected to undergo flying training in Egypt. On 24th October 1917 he was commissioned as a 2nd Lt pilot. He flew with the RFC before transferring to 1SQN AFC in Palestine. There he flew Bristol Fighters and was awarded both the DFC and the Hejaz Order of Nahda for his work with Lawrence of Arabia and the irregular Arabs in Hejaz.

When Spud returned to Australia for demobilisation, he was unable to retain his

AIF rank at CFS and reverted to SGT mechanic.

In late 1919, Spud accompanied Capt. Henry Wrigley³ in a BE2a on a survey of landing grounds between Melbourne and Darwin in support of the England Australia air race. It was the first continental crossing of Australia by air; no doubt his innovative technical and aviator skills, as well as his renowned tenacity were qualities essential to the success of the survey. For this work, they were both awarded the AFC

Now to the purpose of this story. On 31st March 1921 Spud enlisted in the newly constituted Australian Air Force as Technical Sergeant Major Class 1 ENGFITT – the Air Force's senior technical airman. He was 29 years old, was assigned Service No 1

and was posted to 1FTS.

In recognition of his valuable skills set, Spud was commissioned in 1922 as a technical specialist in the General Duties Branch (GD) with the rank of FLGOFF and posted to 101 Fleet Cooperation Flight. In those days, flying qualifications were essential for appointment to the GD Branch and the specialisation was a secondary consideration for assignments. His career blossomed.

In late 1926 Spud was posted to lead the rigging and engine section of Lawrence Wackett's newly formed Experimental Squadron⁴ at Randwick. Then, between April and September 1927, he accompanied WGCDR Dicky Williams on a pioneering survey flight

around Australia. Williams flew a DH50, Flt Lt Murphy a DH9 and SQNLDR Hepburn also a DH9. Hepburn was director of Works and Buildings AFHQ.

In 1933 Spud was promoted SQNLDR and posted as OC Technical Squadron of 1AD, a post he held until 1936. He was then selected to accompany Lawrence Wackett on an extended six-month trip to Europe, UK and North America to identify an aircraft that would be suitable for production in Australia. In a divergence from past practice, the team selected the North American NA33 aircraft (Harvard) which would become the Wirraway in Australia with a Wasp radial engine fitted. This aircraft would launch the aircraft industry in Australia, being produced by the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation led by Lawrence Wackett. Spud would also later become influential in the establishment of Government Aircraft Factories for production of Beaufort bombers in 1939.

On return from the study tour Spud was promoted WGCDR and posted back to 1AD as CO. He remained in that position from January 1938 to May 1940. At that time, on promotion to GPCAPT, he was appointed Inspector of Air Accidents.

Before long Spud found himself promoted to AIRCDRE and posted as OC 4th Maintenance Group in Melbourne in 1943. This group was responsible

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for all RAAF aircraft maintenance and spares in SE Australia. Then, in 1945, he served as Director General Technical Engineering in AFHQ before retiring in January 1946 aged 54.

Spud's contribution to aviation was subsequently recognised by his election as Fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society. But it was his 32year career of remarkable contribution to the evolving quality of RAAF technical standards which is his real legacy. Disappointingly, he is now almost forgotten.

Reputedly a kindly and somewhat shy man with a dry sense of humour, Spud's integrity was never questioned.

He died of heart disease at Essendon on 21st April 1963 aged 72 and was survived by two sons and a daughter.

References:

- A paper by (then) GPCAPT Mark Lax delivered to the 2001 RAAF History Conference,
 - One Thousand Airmen by LtCol N.C. Smith, published 1995, and
 - Australian Dictionary of Biography.
1. Officers at that time were not given service numbers.
 2. Melbourne Continuation School was the forerunner of Melbourne High School.
 3. Henry Wrigley had also attended Melbourne Continuation School at the same time as Spud.
 4. The Experimental Squadron was the forerunner of what we now know as ARDU.

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Change is a constant in modern life, but Covid-19 has really brought this statement home.

The easing of restrictions in November meant that we could proceed with a Christmas function and comply with the new restrictions so long as attendees are fully vaccinated. With numbers for our Christmas function at 83 it shows the need for social interaction and the Board members of AFA Victoria are all looking forward to a successful event.

Things were looking positive for Christmas and 2022 and then came the new variation - Omicron. At this stage it is too early to tell if Omicron will affect future events, but it appears that vaccinations and boosters will provide the protection that we all need. Covid-19 has struck our members so now is not the time to be complacent, stay safe by following the medical advice - as revised.

2021 has been a sad year with the passing of three significant members of AFA Victoria - AVM (ret) Alan Reed, Jack Bell and Gareth Davis.

Alan was a long-term supporter of AFA Victoria and specifically Vietnam veterans as the long-term patron of the Vietnam Veterans Museum at Phillip Island.

WW2 veteran and POW, Jack Bell's plane was shot down and he suffered serious wounds during the crash landing. Basic medical treatment was provided during his transfer to a POW camp where he spent many years. Jack was a well-known speaker, and his message of compassion, understanding and forgiveness was truly a positive one. At the Premier's ANZAC Day function in 2019, Jack delivered his presentation, and at the end all in

the room rose in a long standing ovation.

Gareth was a former President of the RAAF Vietnam Veterans branch with a long history of service to Vietnam veterans. All will be sadly missed and we send our condolences to their families and thank them all for their dedicated service to AFA Victoria and veterans generally.

We have two really positive events relating to the RAAF Centenary to look forward to in 2022. Planning is by necessity somewhat fluid, but at this stage the RAAF is planning to dedicate the new Air Force Memorial at RAAF Base Point Cook on Wednesday 30 March. The Air Force Band is also performing a Centenary concert at the Canberra Playhouse on Wednesday, 16 February. Both of these events are planned for public attendance and also will be livestreamed so that

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those who cannot attend in person will be able to see and hear these events. Pencil these dates into your calendar and more precise details will be provided when confirmed.

At the upcoming Presidents' meeting, I will be pleased to announce the developmental work that the Board of AFA

Victoria has been working on throughout 2021. We have certainly been busy with our vision of making AFA Victoria the ex-service organisation of choice. There is still much to do and there will definitely be a need for volunteers in the coming years for anyone who wants to be involved as we move forward with these projects.

Finally, I was honoured to attend the Remembrance Day commemoration service at the Shrine of Remembrance on 11 November and place a wreath on behalf of the Air Force Association. While attendance was small, it was certainly a positive step forward to welcoming back the public to our commemorative events next year.

On behalf of the Board of Management of AFA Victoria, I wish you all a safe and happy Christmas, with the hope that 2022 will return more normality to all our lives.

Max McGregor

President

DVA ANNOUNCEMENT: CLOSURE OF MYACCOUNT ON 10 DECEMBER 2021



The Department of Veterans Affairs has been working towards closing MyAccount for the last 12 months and has advised that MyAccount will be closed on 10 December 2021.

The following initiatives have been put in place to ensure all My-Account holders are aware of the change and of any actions they may need to take including:

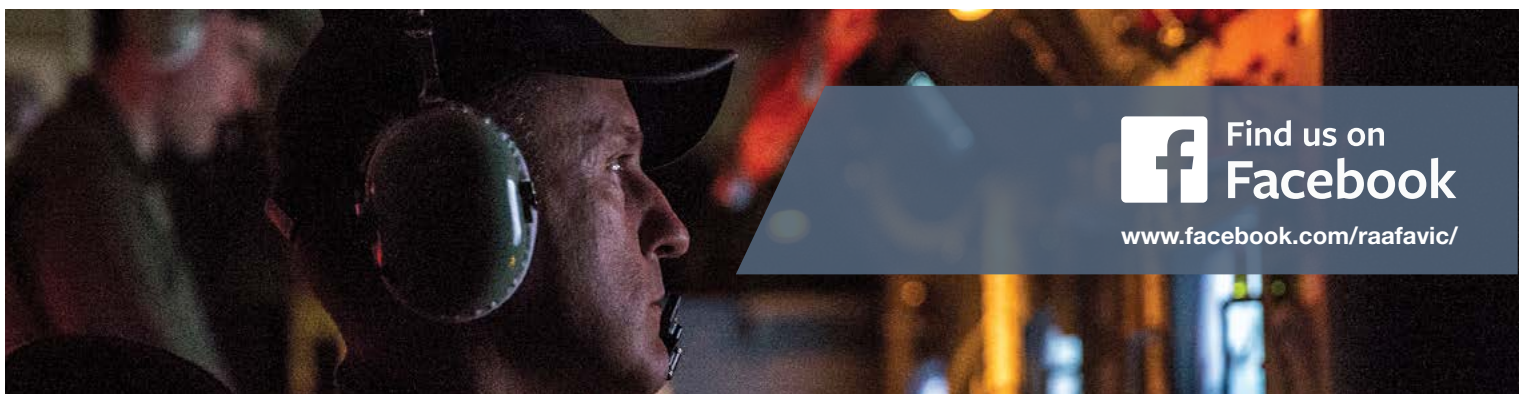
- An email to all clients who are MyAccount holders,

explaining the changes and including a factsheet about the changes and a guide on how to save MyAccount inbox contents.

- MyAccount site has been updated to advise the closure date and includes links to the guide on [how to save MyAccount inbox contents](#).
- An article on Latest News for Veterans for DVA e-news subscribers and posted on the DVA website.
- A brief article on ForceNet.
- An update for Advocates to explain the changes.

Click on the following links to access the 'MyAccount Is Closing' factsheet here or on the [DVA website](#).

If you have any additional questions about this change, please contact digitalclientexperience@dva.gov.au.



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REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM CROSS OF GALLANTRY WITH PALM UNIT CITATION



The Department of Defence has announced that Australian Defence Force members who served during the Vietnam war have been recognised with the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Unit Citation (the Citation).

The Citation was awarded by the former Government of the Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam) to specific

military units that distinguished themselves in battle. The Governor-General has formally approved the awarding of the Citation to identified Australian military units in recognition of their service during the Vietnam war.

To be eligible for the Citation, Navy and Air Force members must have served in Vietnam under the operational control of United States Military Assistance Command Vietnam and posted to particular units across a range of dates.

Full details about the Citation and eligibility can be found on the Department of defence website. See link below.

[Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Unit Citation](#)

'FATHER OF THE RAAF' HONOURED IN BRONZE



The sculpture of Sir Richard Williams in Moonta, South Australia. (Photo courtesy, Department of Defence, LAC Stewart Gould)

To commemorate 100 years of Air Force, the Copper Coast Council in Moonta, South Australia, held a centenary celebration to honour the 'father of Air Force', Sir Richard Williams KBE CB DSO on 7 November.

A centre piece of the celebration was the unveiling of a life size bronze sculpture of Sir Richard Williams and a commemorative plaque in Queen Square, Moonta.

The statue was unveiled by Governor of South Australia Frances Adamson and the plaque was unveiled by the President Air Force Association (South Australia) Dr Robert Black.

Celebrations also comprised a Thanksgiving Service at the Moonta Mines Uniting Church, a street parade including RAAF Base Edinburgh members and Army and Air Force Cadets, a RAAF PC-21 flypast, and a vintage aircraft flypast comprising a DHC-1 Chipmunk, DH-82 Tiger Moths and DH-94 Moth Minor as well as a RAAF PC-21.

Born in Moonta Mines, South Australia in 1890, Sir Richard was instrumental in the formation of the Royal Australian Air Force in 1921 and its continued evolution between the wars. He also became president of the association that became the Air Force Association.

In unveiling the commemorative plaque, AFA South Australia President, Dr Robert Black spoke of the distinguished and remarkable life and times of Sir Richard Williams:

"Sir Richard was the first in three generations to seek a living above ground. He advanced in military life via part time Infantry and the Light Horse to Australian Flying Corps.

Among the first military aviators to qualify, flying flimsy primitive and awkward Box Kites, he was soon at war in the Middle East. He was the first to command an Australian Flying Corps Squadron in combat, later he commanded a Royal Flying

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Corps Wing, returning from the Great War the AFC's foremost military Commander, a decorated Lieutenant Colonel in his late twenties. By dint of great determination and against entrenched opposition from both Army and Navy, he succeeded in establishing an independent arm of the Defence Force. The Australian Air Force became Royal on 13 August 1921 just after his 31st birthday. He was the Air Force's first chief but was replaced by others in a controversial history during which he was again chief on two other occasions – and at two higher ranks!

When he retired from the Air Force in 1946, the

country's first Air Marshal and still in his 50s, he became Director of Civil Aviation. He was knighted in 1954. His death at 89 was commemorated at an Air Force funeral with a flypast of 17 aircraft. Sir Richard was a most significant figure in the history of the Air Force, rightly remembered as "The Father of the RAAF".

The Air Force Association is proud to have been a key sponsor and participant in this important centenary celebration to promote and preserve Air Force heritage for future generations.



The medals of Sir Richard Williams KBE, CB, DSO, on display during the Thanksgiving Service, held at Moonta Mines Uniting Church. (Photo courtesy, Department of Defence)



Group Captain (retired) Robert Black AM, unveils the rock and plaque, part of Sir Richard Williams KBE, CB, DSO sculpture in his home town of Moonta, South Australia. (Photo courtesy, Department of Defence)

YOUR LATEST EDITION OF WINGS IS OUT NOW!

[Click here to access the online version](#)

WINGS magazine will be distributed by post in the coming weeks.



Wings is the official publication of the Air Force Association

A WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING?

What does housing homeless veterans have to do with a fake German Hospital Ship? Simon Hudson, ex- FLTLT HQTC, RAAF Pearce and 2FTS explains further.

10 SQN's (82 WG) Flight Lieutenant Jack Mabbett (PLT) pilot from Melbourne and the crew of Sunderland JM721/W were on a reconnaissance mission at the end of WWII

The crew did something that day that would house needy people in Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane and Sydney outside the 'welfare system'.

The midships gunner spotted a German 'Hospital Ship' off the coast of Lorient, a French seaport. Flight Lieutenant Mabbett was suspicious. The message 'halten' was sent to the ship but ignored. The British Navy was summonsed and the so called 'Hospital Ship' was seized and escorted back to Britain. The win belonged to the Australians. She was identified as the M.V. Rostock, a convertible German Navy Minesweeper. A 'wolf in sheep's clothing'.

The crew of 10 SQN Sunderland JM721/W claimed her 'as a prize', in accordance with the British Naval Prize Act 1918. As a result, \$11,023,961 (2021 equivalent) was paid to the RAAF.

In 1949 Prime Minister Ben Chifley announced the establishment of a special fund which became known as the Royal Australian Air Force Veterans Residences Trust (RAAFVRT) Act which passed through Commonwealth Parliament in 1953 for the 'provision of a residence or residences in which the former male members of the RAAF who were in necessitous circumstance and, if

the trust approved, the wives of those members might be accommodated or supported' (note: legislation has since been passed by the Commonwealth to ensure all references to the term 'males' is taken as gender neutral).

The RAAFVRT is carefully managed to this day and it has extended its support to many people in need. RAAF founding father, Sir Richard Williams chaired 80 of the RAAFVRT meetings.

This story is testimony to several attributes which are typical of Air Force people. First, it is testimony to tenacity and efficiency of the crew of the Sunderland.

Second, it is testimony to those who have overseen and served with the RAAFVRT providing careful management. Finally, it is testimony to the loyalty and support that Ex- Service people provide to their comrades, without question.

The moral of this story could be that we should always keep a lookout for 'wolves in sheep's clothing'. From my own experience I suggest this story is also proof that Ex Service Organisations (ESOs) are the best equipped to look after their own.

The website of the RAAF Veterans Residences Trust and an application form for passing on to any ex-service person may be found via the link below. Please use it if Centrelink, or some other government agency fails to help you or your family - we never know what might happen.

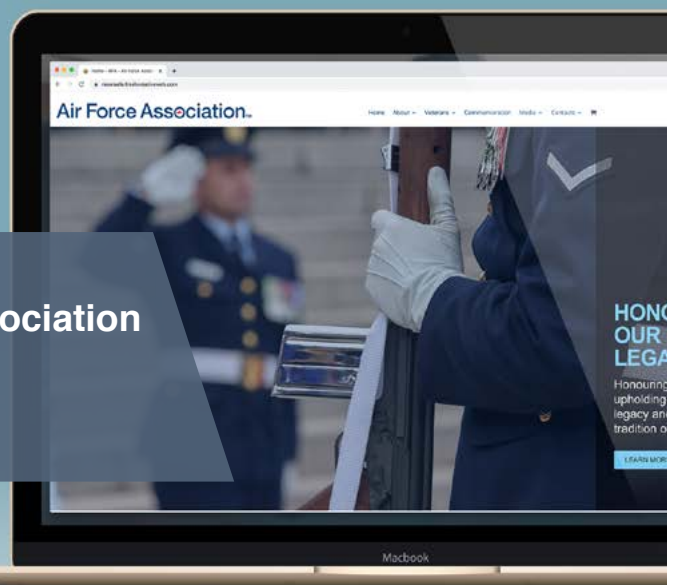
<https://www.airforce.gov.au/our-community/veterans-residences-trust>

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WWW

For all national Air Force Association news visit our website!

www.raafa.org.au





The German Hospital Ship – M V Rostock (Images courtesy: Australian War Memorial)



A Sunderland aircraft of No.10 Squadron RAAF sets out on patrol (Images courtesy: Australian War Memorial)

An important footnote to this story from the author...

As an occupant of one of the RAAFVRT residences, I write this piece with eternal gratitude to those who put me here. I was homeless, having returned penniless from China. My family was on the other side of the world I ran out of couches to 'surf on'. My faith in the foresight and generosity of my RAAF comrades continues to astonish me.

I wish to thank my first boss in the RAAF, SQNLDR Darrell Robinson (Retd.) who remained my friend after my service, for getting me in touch with the RAAFVRT and helping me to get where I am today. I also wish to thank GPCAPT

(Retd) Carl Schiller and the Air Force Association. I thank the RAAFVRT for their ongoing support.

Simon Hudson

B.A. Grad Dip Ed DSM (ex- FLTLT HQTC, RAAF Pearce and 2FTS)

(With thanks to Mr Wayne Bingham, Manager of the RAAF Veterans Residences Trust for providing an article extracted from 'Maritime is Number Ten: The Sunderland Era' Griffin Press 1983) by Flight Lieutenant K.C. Baff from which the relevant facts have been extracted)

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

SEEKING WESLEY COLLEGE VETERANS

Wesley College in Melbourne retains extensive records and history of past students who served in WW1 and WW2, with several books researched and written by Philip J Powell on the involvement of those students in WW1.

As a matter of interest, among the distinguished former students who served with RAAF are Air Marshall Lawrence Pearce, and Air Vice Marshalls Geoffrey Hartnell and Thomas Hurley.

Wesley College is now looking to expand that work by seeking information on former students who saw military service in the post-1945 era. This includes those who participated in full or part time service or National Service.

Any Collegians who have served or are still serving, or family members of those who are deceased, are invited to contact Leigh Treyvaud (NS Intake 4/1967) at treyvaud-lc@bigpond.com.

VETERANS' AFFAIRS AMENDMENT ON DISABILITY PAYMENTS PASSED BY PARLIAMENT.



On 5 December the Veteran's Affairs Legislation Amendment (Exempt Disability Payments from Income Testing and Other Measures) Bill 2021 was passed by both Houses of Parliament.

For full details please go to [Veterans' Affairs Legislation Amendment \(Exempting Disability Payments from Income Testing and Other Measures\) Bill 2021](#).

The implications of the passing of this Bill are:

DEFENCE FORCE INCOME SUPPORT ALLOWANCE (DFISA) AND RENT ASSISTANCE

- This Bill enacts the 2020-21 Budget measure to exempt disability payments from the income test under the Social Security Act 1991 from 1 January 2022.
- Centrelink payments such as the Age Pension will increase as a result of this, removing the need for DFISA (Defence Force Income Support Allowance). DFISA will no longer be paid from 1 January 2022.
- Veterans and their partners do not need to do anything, the payments will be made automatically.
- The Disability Income Rent Test will be removed so that disability income does not reduce Rent Assistance. This means from 1 January 2022, some veterans will receive more Rent Assistance, or receive Rent Assistance for the first time.

We encourage any Service Pension, Income Support or Veteran Payment recipients who also receive Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986 (VEA) Disability Pension, Military, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004 (MRCA) Permanent Impairment or Special Rate Disability Pension (SRDP) and who pay private rent above the following thresholds, to update their rental accommodation details if they have not already done so, in order to receive Rent

Assistance. An SMS was sent last month to those who may be eligible.

Details can also be updated via MyService or by phoning DVA on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372)

Per fortnight @ 20 September 2021 Rates	Threshold	Maximum Rent Assistance
Single	\$127.60	\$142.80
Couple combined	\$206.40	\$134.60
Illness separated (each)	\$127.60	\$142.80

If you are eligible, your Rent Assistance payments will be made automatically – apart from updating your rental information, you do not have to do anything.

REHABILITATION PILOT

- The Bill also contained amendments to establish a two-year pilot for non-liability rehabilitation. The pilot is a voluntary program designed to help veterans who have not made a claim for compensation, with access to psychosocial and vocational rehabilitation support. We will write separately to provide you with more information about the Pilot soon.

DISABILITY PENSION NAME CHANGE

- The Disability Pension is being renamed the Disability Compensation Payment to better reflect the nature of the payment. This is a change in name only, and will not change the way the payment is made or how it is treated by other organisations. The change will take time, so you may see both old and new names for a while.

Once the Bill receives Royal Assent, these measures will take effect on 1 January 2022.

CORRECTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT – CONTACT SPRING 2021 EDITION

In the Technical Branch article in the Spring 2021 edition of Contact, the acknowledgement of Bill Belton's momentous research into the relationship of RMIT and the Air Force in training Air Force personnel from the WW2 era up to the mid-1980's was inadvertently missed. Without Bill's research, this story - "The National Defence Effort of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University and the Royal Australian Air Force" - would not have been revealed in its far-reaching impact. Thank you, Bill, from all of us RMIT - Air Force alumni.

VALE WARRANT OFFICER JOHN [JACK] ROBERT BELL



On 26th November 2021, we lost an extraordinary Victorian WWII veteran whose experiences as a POW did not stop him from sharing his profound message of compassion, respect and honour.

Jack Bell, who passed away at the age of 103, enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force at age 22. He saw active service in North Africa during one of the great Allied offensives. His aircraft was shot down by the Germans and he was badly wounded.

But there is so much more to Jack Bell's story.

"We were flying to this place called Murzuq, in Libya, to pick up these brigade headquarters fellows, and any injured." Jack said in an interview with the New Daily in 2018.

"There was no way for us to get out, it was impossible. They just shot us out of the sky."

After enduring starvation and unspoken hardship for over three years in three POW camps Jack was liberated by the Russians. When Jack was demobilised in early 1946 he had just turned 28 - another seven decades of his life still lay ahead of him.

"When I came back to Australia every one of us that was a prisoner of war all went down and kissed the earth." Jack explained. "That's how precious and how much it meant to us. It was our country and I believed in it ever since."

Jack said he was still haunted by what he saw during those years.

"I still have nightmares. Even now," he told 3AW's Neil Mitchell in another interview in 2019.

Mr Bell said post-traumatic stress disorder prevented him from speaking of his war memories until his later years, but in 1987 his daughter urged him to write his experiences down. This helped him through some dark times

In his later years, Jack continued to share his story and his message of compassion, tolerance and respect, moving many to tears and many more to wonder how this man who has endured so much had so much respect and compassion for others.

"There are three little words I've adhered to all my life since the war: compassion, tolerance and respect. Now if everybody behaved like that, we wouldn't have any problems. Everyone would get on beautifully."

Jack was a staunch supporter of the Air Force Association and a long-time member of the Ballarat Branch. We send our deepest condolences to his wife Dolores and family. Vale Jack Bell, a truly remarkable man.

A special thanks goes to website coordinator Mrs Janet Bates, who prepared the following feature story about Jack Bell for Ballarat Branch's [1WAGS website](https://www.1wags.org.au/information/featured-stories/warrant-officer-john-jack-rob-ert-bell/).

<https://www.1wags.org.au/information/featured-stories/warrant-officer-john-jack-rob-ert-bell/>

Additional Sources:

<https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/national/2018/04/24/anzac-day-veterans/>

<https://www.3aw.com.au/video-jump-in-the-studio-to-watch-this-moving-interview-war-hero-john-bell-101/>



Warrant Officer John [Jack] Robert BELL

VALE WARRANT OFFICER JOHN [JACK] ROBERT BELL



Receiving a "Senior Achiever Award" at Government House on 10th October 2017, pictured with the Victorian Governor, The Hon Linda Dessau AC, his daughter Sandra, granddaughter Penny, and wife Dolores.



BEFORE AND AFTER: Corporal Jack Bell before the war (left) and as a prisoner-of-war. (Photo contributed. Picture: Contributed)



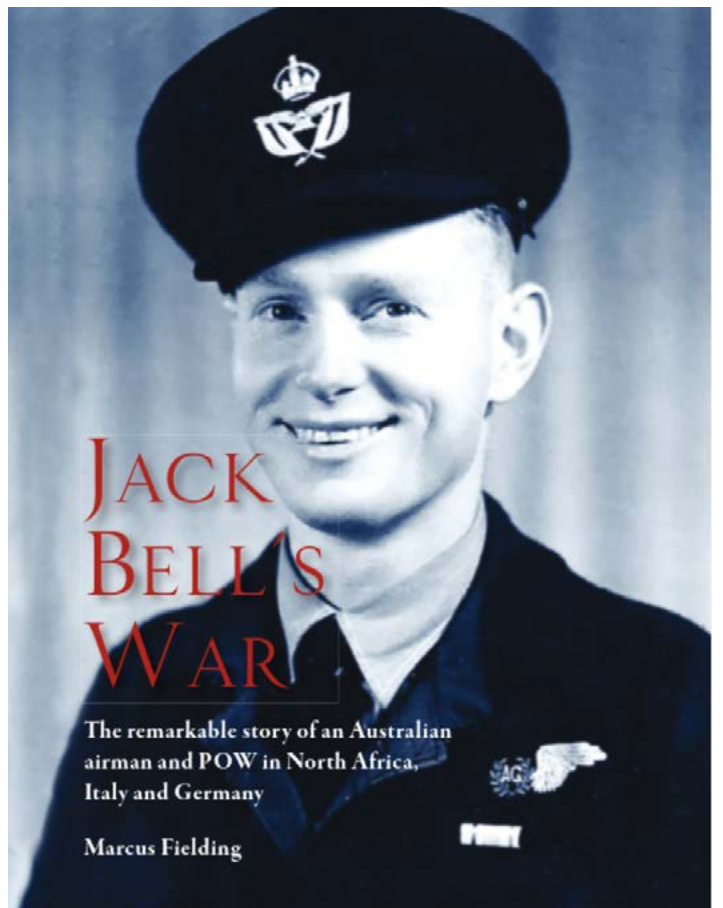
Jack with singer/songwriter Mike Brady at the launch of his new song for veterans 'Their Song' at the Shrine of Remembrance in 2018.



Jack Bell with AFA Victoria's Ballarat Branch President Noel Hutchins at the official opening of newly restored Airport Hut 48 at the Ballarat Aerodrome in 2018.



Jack Bell spoke with Neil Mitchell before the 75th Anniversary of the end of WWII in 2020 of his experiences as a PoW and shared his profound message of compassion, respect and honour.



The cover of his book 'Jack Bell's War'

EDUCATIONAL BURSARIES – HELPING STUDENTS REACH THEIR GOALS

BURSARY AND ENCOURAGEMENT AWARDS 2022

Originally sponsored by the RAAFA Foundation between 2009 and 2021, Air Force Association – Victoria, in conjunction with the RAAF Vietnam Veterans Association, are proud to support an annual Educational Bursary for eligible dependants.

Closing date for applications – Friday, 21 January 2022

Administered by the RAAFVVA, the Educational Bursary (and Encouragement Awards) represent another facet of the assistance both Associations are delivering to former and serving RAAF members and their families.

'The John 'Snow' Coughlan CGM Encouragement Award' and 'The Lee and Ellen Scully Encouragement Award'.

These two awards, sponsored by the RAAFVVA and named in honour of highly esteemed past members, will provide an amount of **\$500** to applicants deemed most worthy of such assistance.

Since 2010, educational bursaries have assisted 35 young students of RAAF Vietnam veterans with their education or training endeavors. Applications are now open for our 2022 Bursaries.

The concept of educational bursaries was introduced in 2009 as an initiative of the RAAF Vietnam Veterans Association as a way of providing assistance to eligible dependents of Vietnam veterans in recognised educational or training. Originally funded by the RAAF Association Foundation, the bursaries are now funded by the Air Force Association Victoria.

The first bursaries were awarded in February 2010 and presented at a ceremony prior to the RAAFVVA AGM to three young women who were undertaking tertiary studies.

This tradition has been continued every year since the first presentation and only interrupted in 2021 when State Government COVID lockdown restrictions winners were announced via video conferencing.

Over 35 young students have been awarded bursaries since they were introduced and the program, initially designed to assist tertiary students, has been expanded to include students studying at primary and secondary schools. Included in the total of over 35 are students who have been awarded a bursary on more than one occasion.

A separate Incentive Award, funded by the RAAFVVA, in addition to the bursaries, has also been presented annually. In 2014 the Incentive Award, with the new title of Encouragement Award and funded by individual

members of the RAAFVVA Committee, was formalized in memory of John "Snow" Coughlan CGM and presented each year by his widow, Gill.

In 2017, the President of the RAAFVVA, Lee Scully, introduced another Encouragement Award in memory of his wife Ellen who had passed away in 2016. A year later, following the tragic death of Lee in a motor-cycle accident in the USA, financial support for the Award was assumed by individual members of the committee as the Lee and Ellen Scully Encouragement Award.

Eligibility has been expanded to children/ grandchildren of any Victorian RAAF veterans...

President of the RAAF Vietnam Veterans Branch, Chris Hudnott explained, "Originally the Bursaries were conceived as support for children and grandchildren for students undertaking tertiary studies.

"However, eligibility for the Bursaries has been expanded over the years and they are now available for children or grandchildren (resident in Victoria) of RAAF veterans with either operational service or who have three or more years' service with the RAAF."

Educational study has also been expanded to include any recognised educational or training courses. Eligibility for Encouragement Awards is currently limited to children and grandchildren of RAAF Vietnam Veterans.

Applications for the 2022 Bursary and Encouragement Awards close on Friday 21 January 2022.

[Download the application form here.](#)

For further information regarding the Bursaries and Encouragement Awards please visit the AFA – Victoria website. You access via this [link](#) or <https://afavic.org.au/content/1128/bursaries>

ACES & INNOVATORS: CAPTAIN ARTHUR HENRY 'HARRY' COBBY (1894 – 1955)



Captain Arthur Henry (Harry) Cobby GM, CBE, DSO, DFC and two Bars, MID, US Medal of Freedom

Captain (later Air Commodore) Harry Cobby GM, CBE, DSO, DFC and two Bars, MID, US Medal of Freedom, was President of the Victorian Division of the Air Force Association from 1944 to 1946. He served in the Australian Flying Corps in WWI and in the RAAF during WWII.

In this excerpt in our series of RAAF 'Aces & Innovators', Communications Director, Chris Hudnott writes of the life and service of Harry Cobby.

Arthur Henry (Harry) Cobby was born on 26 August 1894 in Prahran and started work at 15. By the time WWI commenced he was a young executive at the newly formed Commonwealth Bank.

Although he was commissioned into the 46th Infantry, a militia unit (early

equivalent to the current Australian Army Reserve), his employment was considered an essential occupation and he was prevented from enlisting in the Australian Imperial Force.

Despite a self-confessed lack of interest in flying, young Cobby enlisted in the Australian Flying Corps in 1916 as he felt that this would give him a better chance of being released from his "exemption" and was sent to Point Cook for flying instruction.

Cobby was one of the original members of No 4 SQN and with less than 30 minutes flying instruction left Australia to continue his flying training in England arriving there in March 1917. After some initial training with the RFC, he continued flying with an Australian squadron to "wings standard" and undertook conversion training on Sopwith Camels before rejoining No 4 SQN just as it departed for France in December 1917.

On 21 March 1918, No 4 SQN undertook a notable engagement with elements of Baron von Richthofen's (aka The Red Baron) "Flying Circus" squadron, during which five enemy planes were downed in an attack led by Cobby. Cobby himself shot down two Albatros D.V aircraft which were confirmed as his first victories, proving himself as a talented and aggressive pilot.

By the end of his active service, Cobby was leading

Allied formations numbering up to 80 aircraft and No 4 SQN was recognised as the most successful fighter squadron in France accounting for 220 victories. Cobby was credited with 29 of these making him the highest scoring member of the AFC. His proudest boast was that as a flight commander, he never lost a pilot over enemy territory. He was awarded both Distinguished Flying Cross and the Distinguished Service Order.

Cobby led the AFC fly-past over London on ANZAC Day 1919 and became a foundation member of the newly formed RAAF in 1921 and later President of the Victorian Division of the Air Force Association.

Read the full story of Australia's leading air ace in the war, Captain Harry Cobby on the Commemoration page of afavic.org.au or click on this link:

<https://tinyurl.com/5cky43ty>



Harry Cobby sitting in the cockpit of his Sopwith Camel.

2022 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING/STATE CONFERENCE

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS & MOTIONS

Members are advised that the 2022 AGM followed by the State Conference will be held on 26th May 2022 at AFA office, Suite 3, 24036 Camberwell Road, Hawthorn East.

NOMINATIONS FOR STATE PRESIDENT, TREASURER AND BOARD MEMBERS

- Nominations for the office of State President, State Treasurer and Board members are to be sent in writing to the RAAFA Office no later than 1st February 2022 and must be signed by the candidate and proposer.
- The President's and Treasurer's tenures will expire at the Annual General Meeting. Nominations for these positions are invited. Current incumbents are:
 - State President – Mr Maxwell McGregor.
 - State Treasurer – Mr Peter Colliver OAM
- Board Nominations are invited. All current Board members' tenures, except one, Mr James Allen, will expire at the Annual General Meeting.

Nomination forms may be obtained from the Office Manager, RAAFA Divisional office.

MOTIONS FOR 2022 AGM AND STATE CONFERENCE:

- All proposed motions must be forwarded by Branch Secretaries to the State Secretary 28 days prior to Conference.
- Copies of all motions must be forwarded to all Branch Secretaries, 14 days prior to Conference.
- Financial Reports must be sent to all members 21 days prior to Conference.

CLAUSE 31: PURPOSE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The business of the Annual General Meeting shall be to:

- Receive the Report of the Board;
- Receive the Statement of Accounts;
- Elect the President, Treasurer and members of the Board;
- Transact any other business of which 28 days' notice in writing specifying the motion to be moved has been received at the registered office of the Division.

All business transacted at the Annual General Meeting pursuant to this paragraph shall be deemed special.

GENERAL INFORMATION

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

CONTACT: EDITORIAL DATES

SUMMER 2022

Contributions by 19 November 2022
Publication: 10 December 2022

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



AROUND THE BRANCHES

ATC/AAFC

Greetings everyone

Well, as all Branches would well know from their own experience, our previous hopes for a possible return to some social gatherings were short lived to put it mildly. With the continuing restrictions on travelling and the closure of our regular meeting venue, everything has been at a complete stand- still, but at last, with the gradual easing of the rules, there is now at least some hope for a return to some form of normality in this regard.

Unfortunately, our branch's Christmas Luncheon has had to be cancelled again this year but I'm sure that many of our members who have asked as to what's happening socially, will be pleased to hear that we have at least been able to plan for and set our chosen dates for the year 2022's 'First Friday of the Month' luncheons along with the intended dates for our AGM and Christmas Luncheon.

These requested dates have been submitted to the Box Hill RSL for

the Function Manager's approval and once we receive confirmation of these (or any necessary amendments) we will set and distribute our branch calendar.

In closing and just as a 'heads-up' at this stage, it is anticipated that as usual, our first Friday lunch will be on the 4th of February at 1130hrs in the bistro at Box Hill RSL.

Should there be any necessary amendment to this date members will be advised at the earliest.

Take care, stay well and hope to see you soon.

Best wishes to all,

Laurie Bell

President

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE ATC/AAFC BRANCH?

VISIT OUR BRANCH PAGE ON THE AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION VICTORIA WEBSITE



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

Greetings

Since my last Contact Report, we have managed to go out to the Toolleen pub. Luckily the weather was warm as some of us had to sit outside to comply with COVID restrictions. We all enjoyed a sumptuous meal. Most saying that there wouldn't be any tea tonight. Thanks to Roy for driving the bus.

We held our first meeting for 6 months on 4th November, 2021 at the Kangaroo Flat Sports Club.

It was so good to be able to catch up with our members after so long. Didn't think we would recognise them... except they just looked a bit older!

Our Christmas function was held on 2nd December also at Kangaroo Flat Sports Club at 12 noon with The Saucy Sisters Choir entertaining us as they have done previously.

Our heartfelt thanks to everyone at Headquarters who got AFA Victoria through the longest

lockdown in history. You excelled yourselves. THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU. You have all earned some time off, not a lot though, don't want you to get too carried away.

To all members of the Branches our sincere wishes go out to you for Seasons Greetings and a very, very safe & healthy 2022. Here's hoping it is a great deal better than 2021.

Glenis Gordon
Secretary

Want to know more about the Bendigo Branch?

Visit our branch page on the air force association Victoria website

At this year's Remembrance Day saw GPCAPT John Price, who is a member of the Geelong Branch and I were honoured to attend the wreath laying ceremony at the Geelong RSL Sub-Branch.

John Price was the keynote speaker, invited by the RSL, to reflect on Remembrance Day as well as reflecting on the 100th Anniversary of the RAAF in his speech.

Both GPCAPT Price and I laid wreaths on behalf of the RAAF and as President of the Geelong Branch, Air Force Association Victoria.

John Delia
President



GPCAPT John Price delivers the Remembrance Day address at Geelong RSL Sub-Branch on 11 November 2021. Image courtesy: Alison Wynd/Geelong Advertiser.



Geelong Branch President John Delia with GPCAPT John Price at Remembrance Day commemoration at the Geelong RSL Sub-Branch.



GPCAPT John Price lays a wreath at the Geelong RSL Sub-Branch on Remembrance Day, 11 November 2021. Image courtesy: Alison Wynd/Geelong Advertiser.

Want to know more about the Geelong Branch?

Visit our branch page on the air force association Victoria website

Dedication Ceremony – 13RS Cape Otway RAAF Radar Interpretive Exhibition - Update

As mentioned in several recent RAAF Radar Branch Contact reports, the ongoing challenges of the COVID pandemic have continued to impede the RAAF Radar Branch's endeavours to hold a Dedication Ceremony for the RAAF Radar Interpretive Exhibition at the WWII 13RS (Radar Station) Cape Otway Doover building.

Following the third postponement of the Dedication Ceremony due to COVID in October 2021, the Branch committee decided to introduce a two-stage process for the Dedication Ceremony in order to address the continuing delays of nearly 18 months.

The first stage of the Dedication Ceremony process was an online Pre-Dedication Ceremony via Zoom on 21 November 2021. All participants attended the ceremony as a virtual audience, including our WWII RAAF Radar

Veterans and their families, other RAAF Radar Branch Members, AFA Members, plus guests.

The pre-Dedication Ceremony included: an introduction to the Cape Otway Lightstation precinct, which has included the 13RS Doover building for 80 years, and now the Interpretive Exhibition; a brief summary of what had been the 'secret story' of WWII RAAF Radar, particularly focusing on 13RS Cape Otway; tributes from three WWII RAAF Radar Veterans; a Pre-Dedication address by AFA National President, Carl Schiller; and concluded with a video of the song of the 'RDF Boys' which was composed during Radar Operator Training in May 1943 and sung by two WWII Radar operators.

The second stage of the Dedication Ceremony process is an onsite/in-person Ceremony at 13RS Cape Otway scheduled for Saturday, 19 February 2022.

While the date remains tentative due to COVID



Radar Station Cape Otway

considerations, all AFA members are welcome to join the Dedication Ceremony. At this stage arrangement details for the February ceremony are expected to be similar to those previously advised for the cancelled October 2021 event. However, final details are expected to be confirmed to RAAF Radar Branch Members in January 2022.

AFA members interested in joining our Branch Members at the 13 RS 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 may be required 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

Air Force Association

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year
from the Air Force Association to all our members and their families, with special mention to our service men and women who are overseas at this time.

Our AFA Victoria office will be closed from 24th December 2021 to 17th January 2022

Gallipoli Scholarships

2022

APPLICATIONS
NOW OPEN

The Gallipoli Scholarship Fund promotes the enduring traditions of perseverance, courage, self-sacrifice and mateship that were established so indelibly in the cause of world peace at Gallipoli.

The Scholarships provide financial assistance to the most deserving and meritorious Australian applicants, commencing their first year of tertiary study at a University or TAFE at Degree, Diploma or Advanced Diploma level.

Find out more: <https://gallipolischolarship.com.au>

RAF BRANCH

Greetings all

How good is it to be out of lockdown!

Our Association is restarting casual monthly get togethers usually at the Waverley RSL. And we're also planning a Christmas Lunch. Stay tuned for more information.

Looking forward to next year.

Valerie Boyd

President

Want to know more about the RAF Branch?

Visit our branch page on the air force association Victoria website

VIETNAM VETERANS

As 2021 and all its COVID restrictions draw to a close, Vietnam Veterans Branch members are particularly mindful that half a century ago, the RAAF operational squadrons involvement in the Vietnam conflict was also finishing.

The eight Canberra aircraft of No 2 SQN left Phan Rang on 4 June 1971 after 4 years of service and the loss of two aircraft. RAAF Transport Flight Vietnam Caribou (later re-designated No 35 SQN) had been the first operational unit to arrive in Vietnam in July 1964 and was the last Squadron to leave on 13 February 1972.

No 9 Squadron operated Iroquois helicopter aircraft in support of ground forces and flew its last operational missions on 19 November 1971 and left Vung Tau airfield to land on HMAS Sydney for transport back to Australia on 8 December 1971. All aircrew and maintenance personnel with these units established a reputation for operating at a high level and earned the respect and admiration of the US forces with whom they worked.

On 19 November this year, a small number of Branch members, accompanied by Air Force Chaplain Peter Taylor, gathered around the RAAF Vietnam Veterans plaque adjacent to the Shrine of Remembrance to reflect



The full complement of No 2 Squadron RAAF at USAF Base Phan Rang, just before returning to Australia on 1971-06-04. (Image courtesy: Australian War Memorial)

on the cessation of 9 SQN operations 50 years ago and to remember the seven members of the squadron who had lost their lives in the Vietnam war and, indeed, all RAAF personnel who died as a result of active service in Vietnam. Branch committee member Andy Lapins, a former crewman with 9 SQN, laid a wreath on behalf of all members of the Vietnam Veterans Branch.

Chris Hudnott

Branch President



Iroquois helicopters on HMAS Sydney



Branch member Andy Lapins lays a wreath on the RAAF Vietnam Veterans plaque at the Shrine of Remembrance.

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE VIETNAM VETERANS' BRANCH?

VISIT OUR BRANCH PAGE ON THE AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION VICTORIA WEBSITE

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.

Mr James Everston Catalina Branch	13/08/2021
Mr Cliff Elliott Catalina Branch	13/08/2021
Mr Brian Patten Vietnam Veterans	04/09/2021
Mr Francis Morris 2 Squadron Branch	12/09/2021
Mr Bill Babb RAAF Radar Branch	06/2021
Mr Colin Cairns Geelong Branch	27/10/2021
Mr Gerald McPherson Headquarters	07/2021
Mr Terence Walsh RAF Branch	03/07/2021
Mr John Champion RAF Branch	01/11/2021
Mr Jack Bell Ballarat Branch	26/11/2021
Mr Gareth Davis Vietnam Veterans Branch,	1/12/2021

Let Us Not 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

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