



# CONTACT

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## VETERANS COME TOGETHER FOR VIETNAM VETERANS DAY



*Mentone Grammar School Cadets formed a Guard of Honour for dignitaries and members of the public who placed wreaths around the Eternal Flame.*



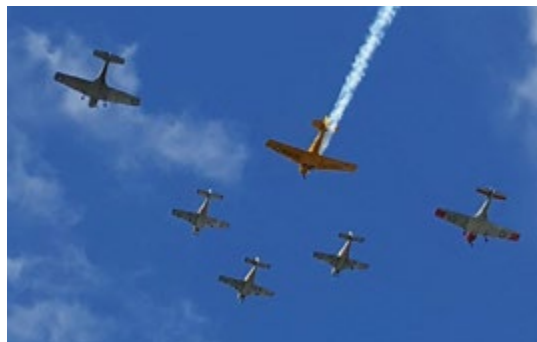
*Chris Hudnott, Lindsay Fankhauser, Neil Boulton and Ron Douglas.*

**Every year, on 18th August, Vietnam veterans come together to march and attend a commemorative service at the Shrine of Remembrance to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice during the Vietnam conflict.**

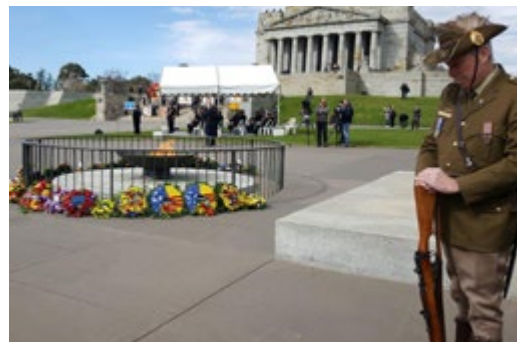
This year, 2019, we commemorated the 53rd anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan and the 50th anniversary of the Battles of Hat Dich and later Binh Ba - major Australian battles involving infantry and armour. You can read more about these battles here (<https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/history/conflicts/australia-and-vietnam-war/events/combat/battle-binh-ba>.)

In support of this year's Vietnam Veterans' Day commemoration, up to five aircraft from the RAAF Museum conducted flypasts over the Shrine of Remembrance at 1100hrs.

Prior to the main service, Vietnam Veterans Branch members joined other veterans in their customary brief commemoration service, to remember those RAAF veterans who lost their lives during the conflict and reflect on the service and sacrifice of these brave men and women.



*Flypast of aircraft from the RAAF Museum comprising three Airtrainers, two Winjeel and a Harvard aircraft.*



*Commemorative wreaths around the Eternal Flame.*



## **PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION REPORT**

There are numerous rumours circulating as to what the final outcome of the Productivity Commission Report will be. The true position is that we just do not know what the final outcome will be.

Unfortunately it is a matter of waiting until the Government announces just what recommendations it will implement, and how. It is expected that the Government will be making the announcement in the latter part of the year, and as soon as the details are known this will be circulated to AFA-Vic members.

## **MEET-A-MATE**

As covered in this edition of Contact, Sharon Bown gave a most informative and inspiring presentation. Unfortunately not all of the AFA-Vic members who advised they would be attending actually attended, nor, in the majority of cases, did they advise the office of their change of plans. Catering is expensive, and for this event we certainly experienced significant over-catering.

It is requested that having advised the office of your attendance, if your plans change for any reason that you let the office know so that we can revise the catering ordered.

## **AFA NATIONAL AMALGAMATION PROJECT**

Branch Presidents were briefed on the Amalgamation Project and

gave this initiative their full endorsement.

Not all Divisions have signed on to join this project at this time, but the fact that the Victoria Division Presidents have given their full support may help in having all Divisions engage fully in what is needed for AFA National to become an effective and efficient ESO.

## **GEELONG BRANCH RE-FORMED**

Congratulations to John Delia for his hard work in having the Geelong Branch re-formed after it had been closed for several years. John was elected as President, and if anyone in the Geelong area would like to join the Geelong Branch please contact the AFA-Vic office and we will pass on your contact details to John.

## **POSSIBLE MUSICIANS BRANCH**

It is early days, but fruitful negotiations have been taking place with the Air Force Band with the intention of forming a Musicians' Branch. Hopefully there will be a positive outcome before the end of this year.

## **BARB STALLARD – INJURY**

During a family holiday in Thailand, our Office manager Barb Stallard tripped over some uneven guttering and hurt her ankle. On returning home an x-ray confirmed a broken ankle.

Barb is now in a moon boot and is very restricted

in her movement. True to form, Barb continues to monitor emails from home as she helps keep the office running, but I have to admit that it is so much harder without Barb in attendance.

The initial medical assessment was for Barb to be out of action for 5 weeks, and if this eventuates then Barb should be back at work around the middle of October.

## **COMMUNICATION WITHIN BRANCHES**

Recently it was reported that the death of a branch member, and former President was not widely known which resulted in only five members attending the funeral service. While these five knew, nobody had passed this information through to the branch executive. All Branch Presidents were briefed of this lack of communication, and asked to ensure that all branches have a process in place whereby the first person to become aware passes on the details to the executive who can then ensure that all members are aware of the funeral details. If anyone has any questions regarding this aspect please discuss it with your Branch President.

Max McGregor  
*President*  
AFA-Vic

23 Sep 2019

# MEET YOUR BOARD

Our Board comprises people from a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences. One thing they do have in common is their passion for the Air Force, now and into the future, and their commitment to supporting and honouring those who have served and those who serve. In this edition we begin a series to introduce you to your AFA Victoria Board members - in no particular order - so you can get to know them just a little better.



## **CARL SCHILLER – IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT AFA VICTORIA, NATIONAL PRESIDENT, AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION**

Carl enlisted in the RAAF in 1964 and served with No2 Squadron in Vietnam in 1969. Upon receiving his commission in 1971 he held postings in unit administration, Instructor Officers' Training School and as a Recruiting Officer and in Training System development (Reserves). He also deployed as Northern Command/INTERFET Liaison during the East Timor Crisis.

Carl was involved in the development of integrated Permanent/Reserve workforce (Workforce Structures) and was an Air Force consultant to Ernst & Young on the ADF's integrated workforce model. Following a 10-year career break from 1986-1996, where he worked as a Secondary College Teacher of Accounting, Economics, Legal Studies and Information Technology, Carl then served until 2016.

Carl was recognised in 2003 and 2014 Australia Honours Lists with an OAM and CSM for the development of the Air Force workforce capability.

From 2016-18, Carl was a Board Member with the Weary Dunlop Medical Research Foundation and a Legatee with Bendigo Legacy Group from 2008-2018. He was also Vice-President Air Force, Defence Reserves Association (2009-2016) and Patron of the B24 Restoration Australia. He also served as 2SQN Branch President from 2017-2019.

After joining the AFA Victoria Board as a Director in 2014, Carl served as the Division's President from 2015 to 2017, vacating the position to take up the appointment of National President that he currently holds.



## **JOHN SEDUNARY – VICE PRESIDENT**

Commenced with the Air Training Corps in 1971 and graduated as a CUO in 1974. John says that they were some of his most formative years.

John joined the staff of the AirTC in 1977 as an airman before being promoted to Pilot Officer in the late 80's. John went on to be a Flight Commander of several Flights in Victoria, Personnel Officer in NSW Squadron, finally resigning due to work commitments when he was Staff Officer-Ground Training in 2000.

John has enjoyed a successful corporate career. His roles included Human Resources Director for The Age newspaper, Director of Eastville Partners Consulting and, General Manager Business Integration (uniting people, processes and technology). John is currently the CEO of a national charitable organisation that supports grieving families when a child dies (at any age or from any cause).

His special areas of interest are leadership development, strategic development, organisation development and change.

John is also a long-suffering Saints supporter.

Continued on page 4.



### **DARRYL TOPP – VICE PRESIDENT/SECRETARY**

Darryl enlisted with the RAAF in 1975 after which he had various postings as a Clerk from 1975 -2000 in Sydney, Adelaide, Melbourne, Woomera, Butterworth and Canberra. From 2000 he spent time in Canberra, Melbourne and Wagga as an Administration Officer.

Darryl had deployments in Sinai in 1983 and Iraq in 2008.

Following his retirement, Darryl transferred to the Reserves in 2015 and is still serving in the Reserves with No 21 (City of Melbourne) Squadron and represents Commanding Officer 21 Squadron on the Defence Reserves Support Council

In addition to his Reserves responsibilities, Darryl is also Vice President of Defence Force Welfare Association (2017) and Secretary of the Torquay RSL Sub-Branch (2016)

Darryl joined the Board of Air Force Association - Victoria in 2016, where he holds the joint positions of Vice President/Secretary.

Married to Gillian for 32 years, he has two adult children and five grandchildren (four boys, one girl). In his downtime, Darryl enjoys spending time with family, travelling and golf.



### **CHRIS HUDNOTT – COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR**

Joined Board as Director Communications in April 2018 and is also President of Vietnam Veterans Branch / VVAA RAAF Sub-Branch (since January 2017).

Born in UK and early education in London, Chris completed last two years of secondary school in Victoria and his BSc degree Melbourne University (through RAAF Academy).

After graduating from the RAAF Academy in 1965, he undertook Flying Training at RAAF Point Cook and Pearce in 1966 and then posted to 77/79 SQNs (RAAF Base Butterworth and Ubon) flying Sabre aircraft (1967-68).

Chris converted to Mirage aircraft and was posted to 76 SQN (1969-72) before being attached to USAF for operational service in Vietnam as a Forward Air Controller on O-2 aircraft (1970-71).

Qualified as a Flying Instructor, Chris was posted to 1 FTS (Point Cook) flying Winjeel and Airtrainer aircraft and had two years' service as Cadet Squadron Commander, RAAF Academy before being posted to 1 FTS as Chief Flying Instructor for one year.

Chris resigned from RAAF in 1978 to take up employment with the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) as an Examiner of Airman / Flying Operations Inspector for 31 years, initially in General Aviation, then Regular Public Transport (Airline) environment conducting Flight Crew evaluation and operational inspections on B737 / B727 /B767 and B747 aircraft.

Chris is actively involved with three choral groups (Barbershop and Classical) and three "Men's Shed" organisations (model boats / miniature model aircraft / model gliders).

You may also recognise Chris as the one of the official commentators on ABC television during the annual ANZAC Day Parade in Melbourne.



## “THE LUCK OF THE DRAW” — A STORY FROM THE CATALINA ARCHIVES (PART 1)



*The Consolidated PBV-5 Catalina on the seaplane deck, aft on the U.S. Navy seaplane tender USS Tangier (AV-8) anchored at Noumea, New Caledonia on 14 April 1942. (Image: Wikipedia.org.)*

**“My father’s name is Allan George Cooke and he was a 1st Engineer on Catalinas in 20 Squadron. He passed away in February 2000 at the age of 82. I just wish he was alive today as I have so many questions to ask him!”**

Philip Cooke shares a story from one of the detailed logbooks his father kept during his WWII service as member of a Catalina flying boat crew. Originally titled ‘The Luck of the Draw’, this two-part story was more recently re-titled ‘I Will Remember Them’ – a personal account by Allan George Cooke (unedited with additional comments added by Philip Cooke).

19th April 1944, a date I shall never forget! It was our third night over this target. Along with other “Catalina” flying boat crews, we were mining the channel entrance to Woleai Harbor, laying 1000lb acoustic mines, (a devilish device which by it’s nature of construction did not necessarily activate at the first overpass by enemy shipping as a soluble washer had to completely dissolve to arm them). Woleai was a Japanese held atoll some 650 miles north of the Admiralty Island Group.

Additional to their shipping harbor, there were shore installations and a fighter airstrip; prior to this third night, there was no evidence of Japanese presence. We knew they would not disclose their position unless provoked or visually exposed.

Our aircraft “A24-63” carried additional to our usual crew complement an intelligence officer who was required to confirm the actual existence of the fighter airstrip. When instructed our Armourer released a parachute flare which owing to our slow speed and altitude (~ 1,300’?), lit up like day, and were an easy target, therefore at this point, “all hell broke loose”. We “copped one” amidships;

the Japanese “ack ack” had found its target. Our perspex blisters were blown out, and we were holed through the hull. Two crewmembers were killed and the intelligence officer severely wounded. As we were still flying, it remained to attempt a return to base - base being USN “Tangier”, a seaplane tender victory ship anchored in Seeadler Harbor, Admiralty Island Group.

When the projectile (estimated later to be a

75mm Bofors type) penetrated our aircraft, the first thing following the sound of the explosion was that the aircraft was filled with an acrid odor. The explosion was in the blister compartment where Ron Ely, Norm Phillips and Paul Lachal were performing their tasks. They were all hit and we helped them into the bunk compartment. As I was removing Ron’s flying boots he died! We lifted Paul on a bunk; he was severely wounded in a leg (later amputated) and lower body. We helped Norm onto the floor in the navigation compartment, some hours later he died, having said to me there’s a taste in my mouth like I’ve been drinking plonk (his sense of humor remained to the end).



*: RAAF electricians, engineers and riggers arriving by launch to service PBV-5 Catalina A24-63, Darwin N.T. 24 June 1944. Note the missing blister canopy. (Image: Australian War Memorial)*

Continued on page 6

What with the smell of cordite, blood, burnt flesh, medication and hydraulic oil, I unashamedly vomited!

Our skipper was able to follow the signal of the I.F.F. (indicate friend or foe) of a Catalina ahead of us; after 6½ hours tenseness owing to our dead and wounded, plus my duty to monitor engine performance and fuel usage, also the large hole in the hull which our 2nd engineer capably repaired, thus enabling us to land alongside our mothercraft.

(PC: Post was official advice disclosing that aerial mine laying by "Catalina" flying boats was highly successful.)

The Americans were quick and thorough, their shipboard mounted crane picked our aircraft out of the sea and within 24 hours was repaired and airworthy, however we (crew) were returned as passengers to Cairns, (Catalina operational base 11 & 20 squadrons), my sad duty then

being to sort the belongings of my two mates Ron and Norm.

Being young we recovered our composure and after a break resumed our flying duties which later on Air Sea Rescue with 113 ASRF turned out to be just as hair raising as our earlier exploits. They belong to further stories. Perhaps as compensation we were posted to "Ferry Detachment" (the purpose being to return new Catalinas USA to Australia!)

*All events stated in my true story can be verified by reference to my logbook. Signed A.G. COOKE.*

**Part 2 of Allan George Cooke's personal account of time as a member of a Catalina flying boat crew during WWII will continue in our next summer edition of Contact. You can also read the full story now on our website.**

## MEET A MATE EVENT – WGCDR (RETD) SHARON BOWN – ONE WOMAN'S WAR AND PEACE

**AFA Victoria's latest Meet A Mate event held on the 16th August at the Officers' Mess Point Cook, featured keynote speaker WGCDR (Retd) Sharon Bown, who spoke about her deployment experiences in Timor-Leste and Afghanistan.**

Speaking to a very receptive audience, Sharon shared her story as a Nursing Officer in the RAAF – travelling the highs and the lows of military deployment, from serious injury and PTSD to a return to service and deployment as a surgical team commander.

In 2004, when working as an aeromedical evacuation nurse Sharon was seriously injured and narrowly escaped death in Timor-Leste when the UN helicopter she was travelling in crashed in a violent storm. She survived a broken back, a shattered jaw, and aviation fuel burns and not surprising, was diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. A young woman of tremendous resilience, Sharon later served as a commander of a surgical team in Afghanistan in 2008.

The audience showed their appreciation through their comments and feedback:

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*"Definitely one of the best presentations I have ever attended. Thank you, Sharon and thank you AFA for hosting the event..."*

*"Brilliant presentation, thank you Sharon, for sharing your experiences..."*

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*WGCDR (Retd) Sharon Bown shares her story of deployment, challenges and recovery at AFA Victoria's Meet A Mate event.*

In 2016 Sharon was appointed to the Council of the Australian War Memorial for a three-year term, which was recently extended a further three years, and is also the Air Force Association's representative at the Female Veterans and Families' Forum. She is also the author of the book, 'One Woman's War and Peace...a nurse's journey through the Royal Australian Air Force'. An outstanding and memorable presentation.



## RAAF FORWARD AIR CONTROLLERS IN VIETNAM (PART 2)

The Forward Air Controller's (FAC) job was one of the most dangerous flying occupations in Vietnam. 36 RAAF fighter pilots flew as FACs with the USAF between 1966 and 1971. In the second part of his 2-part story, retired WGCDR Peter Condon continues his story...

I was assigned to the US 9th Infantry Division in the Mekong Delta area south of Saigon. After a few rides in the back seat of the O-1 watching experienced FACs controlling some airstrikes I was placed in the front seat with an experienced FAC supervising me from the back seat as I controlled my first air strikes in anger. It was difficult getting used to operating three radios, all at the same time, especially when working with troops in contact.

We controlled the fighters on UHF, we spoke with Brigade HQ on VHF and we spoke with the ground forces on FM. I was sent solo after seven days and ended up controlling 34 airstrikes and flying 75 hours in my first month as a FAC. The next month I controlled 35 airstrikes and logged 78 hours flying time. The pace was high compared to my 22 hours per month back in 76 Squadron.

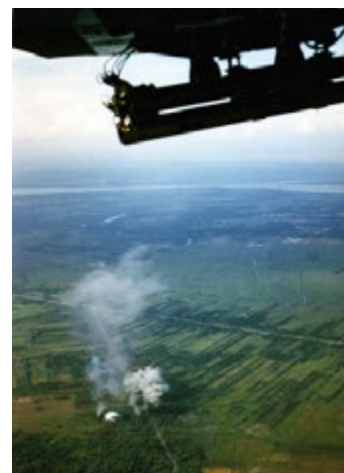


Cessna O-2.  
(Photo: Dick Roberds Collection).



Ron Slater and me with OV-10 No.639 at Di An in September 1969. This aircraft is currently being restored by staff at the Australian War memorial for display.

There was a general rule that FACs should not fly below 1,500 feet to remain safe from enemy ground fire. In the early days many FACs were shot down trying to win the war at low level all by themselves; hence the height rule. However, if low flying was necessary to complete the mission, especially when friendly ground forces were in serious trouble, then a FAC would do what was necessary to get the job done.



A bright white WP smoke is just blooming alongside a burnt-out smoke rocket. The larger smoke blooms are the result of bombs hitting the target nearer to the canal. (Photo: Peter Condon).



O-2 fires rockets. (Photo: Bill Carruthers Collection)



O-2s in formation.  
(Photo: Bill Carruthers Collection).



An OV-10 'Bronco' with a centerline fuel tank.  
(Photo: USAF Captain Brad Wright).

# SAVE THE DATE! OUR ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE TO POINT COOK



## **The 2019 Annual Pilgrimage to RAAF Base Point Cook will be slightly different from our traditional commemoration service.**

Traditionally we have held our commemoration on the Sunday closest to the official 11th November Remembrance Day date, utilising the old Officers' Mess for our reception before moving to the parade ground for our Commemoration Service.

However, in order to prepare for the Air Force celebrations in 2021, the old Officers' Mess at Point Cook will be renovated with work commencing shortly. This means that this year we will be unable to use the Mess as a venue for our reception. With no other suitable venues available at Point Cook, things were not looking all that positive.

The Air Force is conducting a Commemorative Service at Point Cook on Remembrance Day itself, Monday 11th November, and has very generously invited AFA Victoria to join them for a "combined" Commemoration Service, which we have accepted on behalf of our members

Not only does this provide us with the opportunity to commemorate Remembrance Day, this kind offer gives our members the opportunity to meet with current serving Air Force members and also to share with them the aims of our Association.

We will provide further details as soon as they become available, but in the meantime, please mark your diaries for the 11th November at RAAF Base Point Cook for this combined Air Force – AFA Victoria commemoration.

## **CONTACT: EDITORIAL DATES**

### **AUTUMN 2019**

Contributions by 25 February 2019

Publication: 5 April 2019

### **WINTER 2019**

Contributions by 1 June 2019

Publication: 28 June 2019

### **SPRING 2019**

Contributions by 2 September 2019

Publication: 25 September 2019

### **SUMMER 2019**

Contributions by 29 November 2019

Publication: 19 December 2019

## **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
Engineer	David Graham	0407 248 874
Fighter SQN	(contact AFA Vic)	03 98134600
Geelong	(contact AFA Vic)	03 98134600
Gippsland	(contact AFA Vic)	03 98134600
Melbourne WAAAF	Jessie Reed	03 98029073
North Metropolitan	Rod Garmaise	03 93093543
Vietnam Veterans	Gill Coughlan gilly4346@gmail.com	
RAF	Val Boyd	0417512177
Sunderland SQNs	Ricky Hattam	03 52413431
Williams	(contact AFA Vic)	03 98134600



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## AROUND THE BRANCHES

In addition to the President's Reports below, you can also find Newsletters and other information about our Branches on our AFA Victoria website (<http://raafavic.org.au>). Simply go to the Branches dropdown menu on the front page.

### ATC/AAFC

Hello everybody

I hope you're all starting to thaw out a little after all of those freezing, windy days which we've all suffered during recent weeks.

Firstly, on behalf of the Committee and members it is my pleasure to extend a warm and friendly welcome to two new members into our midst:

**James Ostroburski** who, whilst not actually being a past member of the ATC or AirTC, has decided to join our Branch in memory of his Grandfather who was a member of the RAAF from around 1950 until 1974/75; and **Thomas (Tom) Calvert** who was a member of the ATC in Nos. 24 & 25 Flights, Ballarat during 1957 – 59

and wasted no time in getting to meet up with a number of us by attending our Friday Luncheon at Box Hill RSL on the 5th July.

We hope both James and Thomas enjoy their membership with the Branch and we look forward to seeing more of them on a personal level in the future, as their time allows.

The "Meet a Mate" Event held at Point Cook on the 16th August was well attended and the address presented by WGCDR (ret'd) Sharon Bown on her experiences in Timor-Leste and Afghanistan was both informative and memorable.

A light lunch provided by the AFA rounded out yet another of these well

received and enjoyable occasions.

As some would by now be aware, the date for the AAFC Annual Parade and Careers Expo at Point Cook has been confirmed for Sunday, 13th October. The Expo opens from 0900hrs and will be followed by the Annual Parade at 1430hrs.

This, as always is a big event, as it presents a Spectacular Review involving a seldom seen gathering of so many Cadets from 4 Wing's Victorian Squadrons in the one place, at the same time. Information provided to date suggests it is expected that no less than 800 cadets will be on parade this year.

So, if you've never been



to one of these and you're looking for somewhere to take the family for an outing, please join us!

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

### BALLARAT

Our commemoration of the 79th Anniversary of the **Battle of Britain on Sunday 15th September** commenced with an Anniversary Church Service at the Skipton Street Uniting

Church and this was followed by a morning tea provided by the Church Ladies. This was followed by a Commemorative Service at the Sebastopol Cenotaph which included a fly over

by our Branch member Steve Carter in his WWII vintage Ryan aircraft with the weather allowing a clear view of the aircraft. Steve's voice was amplified through speakers as he approached

and flew over the Cenotaph. Guest of Honour at the Commemorative Service was AFA Vic President Max McGregor, who gave a very informative talk relating to the Battle of Britain.

The Ballarat Branch held its inaugural Battle for Australia commemoration in the form of a **Battle for Australia Remembrance Gathering and Afternoon Tea** on Sunday 8th September. The Guest Speaker at the service gathering which was held in our meeting room at the restored former RAAF Ballarat Officers' Mess building, was LTCOL David Arden RFD, the Deputy Chair of the Victorian Division of the Battle for Australia Foundation. The afternoon tea was served in the large former dining hall in the building.

It was also nice to see a number of our members brave the snow and freezing conditions to attend the **Vietnam Veterans Association's 2019**

**Commemorative Service** on 18th August. My car still had snow packed on it after a very slow 35min drive from home!

Vietnam Veteran and Branch Senior Vice President Leigh Harvey OAM laid our wreath. Air Force Association member, Rev. John Furness was the Chaplain and Junior Vice President Peter Schoutens laid a wreath on behalf of No 2 Squadron RAAF with whom he served in Vietnam.

#### **Stan White, Secretary from 1988 to 2016 – 28 Years Straight!**

At our July Social Luncheon meeting we acknowledged the long service to our Branch of one of Mr Stan White. Stan joined the Air Force Association in March 1946 and maintained his

membership of our Branch while pursuing a career in accountancy. Stan's qualifications would serve the Air Force Association well in later years when he took on the Secretary job.

During the years from 1946 the membership slowly declined and by 1988, in Stan's words, the Branch "fell away". It was then that Stan and five others decided to "reactivate" the Branch. The members of that group became the committee.

By 2016 Stan White had seen 12 changes of Branch President involving 11 different people, while he continued on as Secretary for that 28-year period. One of those Presidents during Stan's incredibly long period as Secretary was Gordon Jarvis who

presented a written tribute to Stan, read out by our Secretary Rob Petty. A letter of thanks from AFA Victoria President, Mr Max McGregor in recognition of his long AFA membership and tenure as Branch Secretary was also read and then presented to Stan.

Past President Tom Roberts presented Stan with a plaque that had been specially prepared as a permanent tribute. This plaque and a photo now hang in our Committee Room beside the Honour Board listing all Branch Presidents from 1945. All those Presidents share an Honour Board, Stan has one to himself. Stan, you deserve nothing less than what we have been able to put together for you.

Noel Hutchins  
*President*



*In recognition of Mr Stan White, Ballarat Branch Secretary from 1988-2016*



*AFA Victoria President Max McGregor gives the keynote address at the Ballarat Branch Battle of Britain lunch*

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT  
THE BALLARAT BRANCH?

VISIT OUR BRANCH PAGE ON  
THE AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION  
VICTORIA WEBSITE

## **BENDIGO**

I regret to have to report the passing of long-time members of the Bendigo branch.

**Victor Cahill** (13.4.2019)  
**Alex Culvenor** (10.6.2019),  
Life Member  
**Norman Quin** (29.8.2019)

Members of Bendigo together with RAAF Radar & Castlemaine RSL attended Alex Culvenor's funeral and formed a Guard of Honour respecting his service to their committees over many many years.

It hasn't been a great

year for members of Bendigo with President, Ray Gray, having been hospitalised several times with melanoma of finger and foot, but pleased to say it appears he's on the mend now. Member, Noel Boschert, had a hernia operation earlier this year,

since then it was found that he needed a gall bladder operation. We wish him every good wish for a speedy recovery.

Unfortunately, we only had 4 representatives at the Meet-A-Mate. Those present told how very interesting Wing

Commander Sharon Bown's (Ret'd) talk was.

Our branch was well represented at Commemorative Services for End of Korean War, Victory in Pacific, Vietnam Veterans (Long Tan), Malay/Borneo. A number of our members also attended Battle for Australia Service

at Melbourne Shrine and also Battle of Britain at Ballarat.

In June this year 20 of our members travelled to the Toolleen Hotel where we enjoyed a delicious lunch with great friendships being made.

We look forward to a visit to Puckapunyal to see their military museum.

Member Harold Chatfield celebrated his 99th birthday on 1st June while on 6th July Keith Silverwood turned 100. How wonderful is that?

That's all for now

Glenis Gordon,  
*Secretary*

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT  
THE BENDIGO BRANCH?

VISIT OUR BRANCH PAGE ON  
THE AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION  
VICTORIA WEBSITE

## ENGINEER

### MID-YEAR LUNCHEON

Our mid-year luncheon of 12th June was a great success and the special company of several partners added to the value of the occasion. Unfortunately, our Guest Speaker, Dennis Kelly, in his 97th year, became quite ill and so the opportunity to hear some "living history" was denied us. Dennis was a RAAF WW2 Wireless

Air Gunner (WAG) who survived being shot down in his Lancaster and escaping from the Germans twice.

At the time of writing (30/9) Dennis had been transferred from his aged-care facility to hospital. Despite sorely missing Dennis, everyone enjoyed considerable "natter-time" and departures home were reluctantly carried out.



### END-OF YEAR LUNCHEON

The EOY Luncheon has been proposed for Thursday 7th November (Oaks Day), with the venue and cost will be advised later via email (but the event is definitely "on"). As indicated in the Winter Contact, the Committee is planning that a Senior Scientist Guest Speaker from the CSIRO will talk about "The

Square Kilometre Array" (the SKA). The SKA is a hugely significant radio-astronomy project proposed for Western Australia. For further reading, just Google "The Square Kilometre Array".

### RMIT ALUMNI MORNING TEA AT STOREY HALL

This event on 20th June was a real "cracker",

and for the few REOA members and partners who attended, we were treated to something quite out of the box.

The keynote address was given by RMIT researchers Dr James Chapman and Dr Aaron Elbourne sharing their world-first research on fighting superbugs and changing the future of healthcare for joint surgery patients.

Their application of specialised nano-particles to coat the surfaces of superbugs thus suppressing the bug's cellular division and multiplication will prevent the spread of infections, particularly into joint prosthesis replacements such as knees, hips, shoulders and elbows. If such infections occur, a removal of the artificial joint and replacement by a new prosthesis is often required (as your scribe can attest).

This revolutionary technology is essentially a mechanical, not biochemical, process which physically isolates the superbug, previously

resistant to anti-biotics, and has the potential to become a normal part of a joint replacement operation.

A subsequent tour of the laboratory brought back many memories for the visitors, albeit far newer techniques than experienced in their "old lab days".

Following the lab tour, we visited the Capitol Theatre, which RMIT has extensively restored, and includes the interactive Electronic Commemoration Wall. The "Wall" features the history of RMIT and the involvement of other organisations such as the RAAF.

In particular the RAAF involvement with RMIT describes the days of Frognall and the Diploma Cadet and Engineer Cadet Squadrons, the Radio Apprentice School, as well as the Cadets involved with Business Studies and Logistics courses. Bill Belton has been our principal researcher on our history with RMIT and its predecessors the RMTC and the MTC, going way back to 1939.



The next RMIT Alumni will meet at the William Angliss Restaurant, at 12 noon, Monday 2nd December, 550 Little Lonsdale St. Branch members will

be advised closer to the time, and all are reminded one does not need to be an RMIT Alumnus to come along. Partners are especially welcome.



*Caption: At the "Wall" with the Engineer Cadet Squadron Crest displayed: Marc Morel (in dark coat, and clearly youngest) is the RMIT Venues Manager showing (L to R) Carl Dillon, Glen Gould and Brian Fuller that part of the Air Force - RMIT History which includes the Radio Apprentice School Crest and which will soon, (many thanks to AVM (ret'd) Mac Weller) display a high-quality Diploma Cadet Squadron Crest.*

## THE CHARLIE WALFORD MEMORIAL WIRRAWAY AWARD

Via Bob Brackin and the 9 Squadron Association, the following story about Charlie Walford, ex-RAAF Helicopters Engineer and Vietnam Veteran, will be of interest to many...

After leaving the RAAF, Charlie worked for Boeing in Canberra and was the VP

of Strategic Customer and Government Relationships, where he was highly respected by the company and Defence. He made substantial contributions to a number of successful new business campaigns including the Wedgetail Airborne Early Warning &

Control project, a variety of weapons programs, F/A-18 Super Hornet, C-17 and the Wideband Global Satellite.

Sadly, Charlie passed away in 2010 on Easter Saturday after battling bone cancer. Charlie was so highly regarded that Boeing has honoured him by creating the Charlie Walford Memorial Award. The Award has evolved to being a team-based award presented to the Wirraway team that is making an exceptional, positive change to Boeing.

The Wirraway Awards are an internal initiative of Boeing Defence Australia (BDA) to acknowledge and celebrate the many BDA teams who, every day, deliver above and beyond to Boeing, its partners and customers. Teams from BDA and its subsidiaries are required to address criteria that align with strategic and behavioural objectives for award, with winners selected by a judging panel of their peers, with ten teams honoured with a Wirraway Award.

The Wirraway team that has made the most exceptional, positive change, and

which exemplifies the spirit embodied by Charlie Walford, is honoured with an award in his name - the Charlie Walford Memorial Award.

## NEXT MEETING:

Monday 7th October at the Mail Exchange Hotel (Bourke St near Spencer St) at 12 noon.

Visitors are most welcome. Please advise Noel Hadfield on 9511 7775, for catering purposes. Our committee meetings are very light-hearted affairs, with much reminiscing (and occasional lamentations), and importantly, the lunch menu and quality are excellent.

We wish you all ongoing good health and happiness

Carl Dillon  
(On behalf of David Graham and the Committee)

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE ENGINEERS BRANCH?

VISIT OUR BRANCH PAGE ON THE AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION VICTORIA WEBSITE

## VIETNAM VETERANS' DAY

On 18 August each year, Vietnam veterans from our Branch join other veterans for a short march and service at the Shrine of Remembrance to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice during the

Vietnam conflict. As is our custom, we held a short commemoration near the RAAF plaque before the main event to remember those RAAF veterans who lost their lives during the conflict and the veterans and spouses who have subsequently passed away. Our lunch was well

## VIETNAM VETERANS



*Members of the AFA VV Branch commencing the short march towards the Shrine.*

attended and my thanks to all committee members who assisted in making the day a success.

### **NEW IN CINEMAS "DANGER CLOSE: THE BATTLE OF LONG TAN**

A new Australian movie entitled "Danger Close: The Battle of Long Tan" is screening around Australia at the moment. A few of members of our Branch have seen the movie and reported that they were impressed with the general depiction of the battle although a few scenes appear over-dramatic as the Director attempts to make the reality of the battle more appealing for a non-military audience.

The re-supply of ammunition to the men of Delta company 6 RAR by two helicopters from 9 Squadron in poor weather and at a critical stage of the battle and the tension between the pilots and the senior RAAF officer at

Nui Dat as a result of the existing Air Force Policy on the employment of RAAF aircraft is appropriately highlighted. The film will be of interest to all current and former Air Force members and I recommend a quick review of an on-line account of the battle before seeing the movie so that you are familiar with the important factual aspects of the battle.

### **GARETH DAVIS TO RETIRE**

Our Branch Association Treasurer, Gareth Davis is having to retire from the committee for health reasons. Gareth has been a committee member for many years and has held numerous appointments before taking over from Maree Jongkryg as Treasurer earlier this year. I would like to acknowledge the work and contribution that Gareth has made to our association particularly his recent work as treasurer and to welcome a new member, John Vansetton,

who will be joining the committee and taking over the Treasurer's role.

### **UPDATE OF AIR OPERATIONS GALLERY AT THE NATIONAL VIETNAM VETERANS MUSEUM**

The Branch Committee continues to liaise with the NVVM regarding updating the Air Force display and has recently presented a squadron plaque for each of the squadrons (2 SQN, 9 SQN, 35 SQN and No 1 Operational Support Unit) who directly participated in the conflict to enhance the display. The Museum is located at Philip Island and is well worth a visit.

WANT TO KNOW MORE  
ABOUT THE VIETNAM  
VETERANS' BRANCH?

VISIT OUR BRANCH PAGE ON  
THE AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION  
VICTORIA WEBSITE

Find out more at <http://www.vietnamvetmuseum.org>

Chris Hudnott  
President



*Graeme Dodd, a Past President and Life Member of RAAFVVA / AFA VVA Branch, laid the wreath beside the Branch's plaque on the western side of the Shrine of Remembrance.*



*RAAF Vietnam Veterans Memorial Plaque.*

## **CATALINA**

### **AGM**

The Annual General Meeting of the Catalina Branch was convened on Thursday 16 May 2019 at the Hawthorn Head Office. The following members were elected for the 2019-20 financial year:

- President Ken Scott
- Secretary Ron Kirk
- Treasurer Jennifer Newton OAM
- Committee members: Bev Keegan and John Ford.

It is with sadness and condolences we remember the valued contributions and service of Jim Goldsworthy and Don Black who have recently passed. The Branch also presented an orchid to AFA Victoria Office Manager, Barbara Stallard in recognition of her valued support throughout the past year.

### **ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE TO THE SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE**

The Catalina Branch held their annual pilgrimage to the Shrine on Sunday 25 August 2019, with our Patron, Group Captain Annette Holian and President Ken Scott officiating at the service.

Guests included family and descendants of men who had served on Catalinas. We welcomed 7 students from Wesley College St Kilda Road Campus, accompanied by their co-ordinator Amanda Stefancic. Wreaths were laid by student Anna Duan and Mac Ford.

Qantas Pilot Bill Crowther was represented by grand-daughters Jenny & Fiona McIntosh. Bill flew Catalinas during World War 2 on the double-sunrise route from Perth to Ceylon.



In 1943 a few brave men reconnected an Empire by flying Catalinas non-stop for up to 32 hours across enemy territory, breaking the Japanese air blockade of Australia. They achieved the impossible, but despite

all of this, the crews of the Double Sunrise Flights were never recognised for their service. The Qantas Museum in Longreach, with the help of dedicated engineers and pilots, have restored and flown

a Catalina from Spain to Longreach in order to preserve and recognise the memory of the Double Sunrise Flights.

The occasion was a charity flight to Longreach in a

Qantas Boeing 737-800 (Retro Roo) to raise funds for the Queensland drought appeal. Charles and James are standing in front of the Catalina from Spain now permanently based at the Longreach Museum.



*Catalina Branch Patron Group Captain Annette Holian and Mac Ford (LAC 143309) in the Shrine Sanctuary.*

## BRANCH GET TOGETHER

A pleasant morning of conversation and light refreshment was had by members and friends during our Branch get together at AFA Victoria HQ on Thursday 11th July 2019.

Guest speaker, Clive Carmichael gave a very interesting talk about his experiences as a young lad at Rathmines in the 1950s, together with his recent adventure in a Grumman Mallard. You can read Clive's story on our website. Needless to say, to it is an interesting and informative read!



*From left: Clive Carmichael, Bev Keegan, Jennifer Newton OAM, John Ford, Peter Marsh, Alison Macfarlane, Mac Ford, Ron Kirk (not pictured Ken Scott) at the Catalina Branch Get Together. (Image: Barbara Stallard)*



*The Catalina Flag at the Shrine for the wreath-laying ceremony*



*Bill Crowther*



*Charles Crowther (grandson) left and James Tapp, whose grandfathers flew the Double Sunrise flights during World War 2. (Image – abc.net.au 2015)*

## DIARY DATES FOR 2019:

Monday 11 November,  
11.00 am – Remembrance Day, at Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital.

Thursday 28 November,  
12noon – Christmas Lunch at Mail Exchange Hotel, Melbourne.

Ron Kirk  
*Catalina Branch Secretary.*

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT  
THE CATALINA BRANCH?

VISIT OUR BRANCH PAGE ON  
THE AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION  
VICTORIA WEBSITE



## SUNDERLAND

### SUNDERLANDERS AND FRIENDS.

There are a number of exciting things happening soon in the Sunderland's world. See below for details of the Coastal Command exhibition at the Shrine of Remembrance and the New South Wales' Branch 50th Sunderland Branch Dinner in October.

### RAF COASTAL COMMAND EXHIBITION

A number of Sunderlanders attended the official launch of the exhibition, Cinderella Service – Australians in Coastal command 1939-45 Exhibition, at the Shrine of Remembrance on 16th August by WGCDR Colin Smith Commanding Officer, No.10 Squadron, RAAF.

The wonderful exhibition pertains to the activities of RAAF crews in RAF Coastal Command during the Second World War. This great exhibition that will continue for 12 months. Find out more here: <https://www.shrine.org.au/Exhibitions/>

### 50TH SUNDERLAND NSW BRANCH AWARDS DINNER

The 50th Sunderland Awards dinner will be held on Saturday 19th October, 2019, commencing 6:30 for 7:00pm at the Naval Military and Air Force Club, 111 Hutt St, Adelaide.

Dress: Lounge suit or jacket, miniatures to be worn

Cost: \$75 per person (beer, wine and soft drink are provided at no charge)

For further information or to register please contact Rick Hattam on 0405 503 650 or [rickyh461@gmail.com](mailto:rickyh461@gmail.com)

### MONTHLY LUNCHEONS

Monthly Luncheons are held on the first Tuesday of each month at the East Malvern RSL, Stanley Grose Drive, East Malvern, off Winton Road. See Melways Map 60 A12. There is no luncheon in January and the November luncheon is held on the second Tuesday due to the Melbourne Cup clash on the first Tuesday.

Rick Hattam  
*President*



WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE SUNDERLAND BRANCH?

VISIT OUR BRANCH PAGE ON THE AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION VICTORIA WEBSITE



### OFFICE BEARERS

#### AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION – VICTORIA

#### BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Max McGregor – President

Carl Schiller OAM CSM – Immediate Past President

John Sedunary – Vice President

Daryll Topp – Vice President, Administration

Peter Colliver, OAM – Treasurer; Chairman, Welfare Patriotic Fund

Chris Hudnott – Director Communications

John Clarkson – Director

Peter Finkelstein – Honorary Solicitor



### DFRDB REVIEW LET US KNOW

The Government has recently announced a review into DFRDB.

AFA Victoria will be making a submission on behalf of our members.

You are invited to submit details of your DFRDB issues - particularly the commutation aspect - to our Head Office (c/ Barb Stallard at [office@afavic.org.au](mailto:office@afavic.org.au)).

## VALE

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

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

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Mr Victor Cahill Bendigo Branch .....	13/04/2019
Mr Alex Culvenor (Life Member) Bendigo Branch .....	10/06/2019
Mr Peter Clemence Fighter Squadrons Branch .....	18/06/2019
Mr Charles Tuplin Catalina Branch .....	19/06/2019
Mr James Goldsworthy Catalina Branch.....	01/07/2019
Mrs Golda Holmes Vietnam Veterans Branch.....	04/07/2019
Mrs Beryl Foster WAAAF Branch .....	13/07/2019
Mr Malcolm Walker Vietnam Veterans Branch .....	20/07/2019
Mrs Edna Trewin WAAAF Branch.....	23/07/2019
Mr Ray Kennedy North Metropolitan Branch .....	25/07/2019
Mr Ed Crabtree (Life Member) Headquarters .....	27/07/2019
Mrs Pat Foley (Past President) Ballarat Branch .....	08/09/2019
Mr Joe Shuttleworth Fighter Squadrons Branch .....	14/08/2019
Mr Norman Quin Bendigo Branch .....	29/08/2019



*Lest We Forget*

## STAY IN TOUCH

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us on 03 98134600

