

AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION VICTORIA



ATC/AAFC BRANCH

ABN 96 091 342 304

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

Issue No 83 December 2021

President's Message



Greetings everyone.

Good health and Best Wishes to you and your families

Well, as you all know, again our hopes throughout this year for a possible return to social gatherings at some stage were short lived to put it mildly.

With the ever continuing restrictions on traveling and the closure of regular meeting venues everywhere, everything has been at a complete stand- still, but at last, with the

recent easing of the rules, there is now at least some hope for a return to normality in the coming year.

Unfortunately, our branch's Christmas Luncheon had to be cancelled again, 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.

Please note:- 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 the Box Hill RSL.**

Office	Holders
President	Laurie Bell
Vice President	Peter Wilson
Secretary	Hugh Tank
Treasurer	Tony Synhur
Delegate	John MacDonald
Returning Officer	Graeme Smith
Newsletter Editor	Ian Cohn

Please send your contributions to
scsiac@bigpond.com

or
Box 486, Mt Beauty, VIC, 3699

Deadline for next issue – 26JAN22

Welfare

Branch Welfare Officers
Hugh Tank on 03 9877 3424
and **Peter Wilson**

If you are aware of any member who is unwell please contact Hugh or Peter.

President's Message (Continued)

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

Before closing, a little "Happy Ending" story for Christmas.....

A couple of years ago there was found and subsequently passed on into my possession, a small wooden trophy which had been awarded to a cadet for AERO MODELLING but apparently had not been presented or claimed.

It bore a bronze Air Training Corps medallion which had been inlaid into the sloped section of its face and had an engraved plate below with the LCDT's name and the year 1994.

The hope was, of course, that the owner of the trophy could be found and the trophy given to its rightful owner.

An email was sent to the Cadet Alumni to see whether they had any records which might help identify the cadet but this attempt was unsuccessful, and so, the trophy sat, out of mind, in its little corner of the room until I rediscovered it again a couple of months ago and brought up the subject with our very own branch member SQNLDR (AAFC) Samantha O'Sullivan, Staff Officer Development & Community Engagement and Liaison Officer of the AAFC 80 Project who took the task on board and tracked down its owner in next to no time.

Well done and many thanks Samantha, you'd be a great detective. Contact has been made via another person, but as yet a meeting to hand the trophy over to its owner hasn't been finalised.

Stay well everyone.

Have a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Laurie.



AAFC News

AUSTRALIAN AIRFORCE CADETS – NO 4 WING UPDATE

From SQNLDR(AAFC) Samantha O'Sullivan
Staff Officer Development & Community Engagement
4 Wing Headquarters Point Cook

The Virtual Life

Cadets across the Wing have continued to engage in the AAFC program, despite the challenges of continual lockdowns over 2021. Both the Wing team and several squadrons have gone over and above to ensure that cadets are provided opportunities to continue with their learning, including running weekly Virtual Parades, offering lessons in Fieldcraft, Aviation and Electives.



Backyard Bivouacs

420 Squadron Wangaratta and The Duke of Edinburgh Award also catered for the lockdown by offering a Virtual Bivouacs and Adventurous Journey with cadets camping in their backyards, using their Fieldcraft learnings to cook and eat meals over hexi-stoves and campfires, and participate in exercise routines.

Inter-Squadron Parade Night – 402SQN and 321SQN



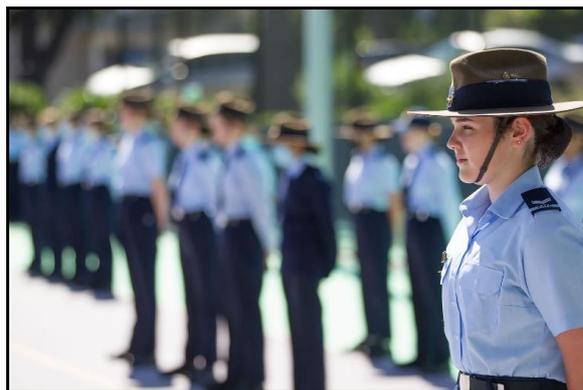
4WG ISO (ISOLATION) EXPO 2021



In our second year of Operational Pause, 4 Wing continued to engage cadets virtually around the traditional Annual Parade period by hosting the ISO EXPO 2021. A large list of external providers across aviation, STEM, Defence and education presented 1-2 hour sessions to cadets and staff online via Zoom and webinar on topics that are of interest to cadets for their future career paths.

RETURN TO PARADING – NOVEMBER 2021

After a long pause to in-person parading, Squadrons across the wing are now getting back into the rhythm of parade nights at their squadron locations. We were excited to see cadets back in person and getting back into the amazing activities. Whether marching on the parade ground or learning with the new PYGMY drones it is good to be back!



4 WING ANNUAL AWARDS – MINUS THE ANNUAL PARADE!

After the difficult call by OC 4WG Wing Commander (AAFC) Kylie Walker to cancel the 2021 4WG Annual Parade, we were able to host the Annual Awards program over Zoom in early November 2021.

Congratulations to the following recipients of the 4 Wing Annual Awards:

4 WING CADET OF THE YEAR AWARD	CUO Campbell Perkins 414SQN
WOFF (AAFC) R. BOLTON OAM INSTRUCTOR OF THE YEAR	SGT(AAFC) Stacy Slater 414SQN
AIR COMMODORE A. J. Pappin CVO AM 4WG AAFC PATRONS AWARD	FLTLT(AAFC) Shaun Kemp 415SQN
4 WING MOST EFFICIENT SQUADRON OF THE YEAR	409SQN EAST SALE
4 WING SAFETY INITIATIVE AWARD	426SQN TRARALGON
OFFICER COMMANDING COMMENDATIONS	CPL(AAFC) Sam Chu 416SQN CUO Angus Cha 417SQN

GENERAL PURPOSE UNIFORM ROLL OUT FOR 4 WING

After many months of waiting for the new uniforms to arrive into 4LOG stores, cadets and staff around the Wing were finally able to transition into their new working wear during December. A mammoth task for the 4LOG team to coordinate, pack and distribute to the 26 squadrons with support from various staff driving transport runs to make this happen. A new sense of pride and uniformity is already evident as squadrons use their new working wear on the parade ground and in the field. We look forward to more photos as this transition becomes business as usual.



Summer Bivouacs

416SQN Moonee Ponds wasted no time in returning to the field, conducting a 3 day bivouac at Rowallan Scout Camp. After weeks of fieldcraft theoretical training in the classroom, the bivouac served as an opportunity for cadets to apply their skills and knowledge in the field environment. For many cadets, this was also their first time outfield. However, all arose to the challenge and demonstrated key training competencies for their respective training stages.



401SQN farewelled their DPCUs by giving them a final workout at their Summer Biv at Dallas Brooks Scout Park. Cadets were able to obtain practical experience in fieldcraft after many months of online training throughout the year, an all training stages participated in a casualty evacuation (CASEVAC) scenario on Day 2, locating the casualty, and sections applying first aid before transporting the casualty to an awaiting helipad for an 'aeromedical evacuation'.



FORMER 4 WING ADF GRADUATES

On 05 September 2021, 4WG Staff member LAC(AAFC) Petrincic, graduated from Officer Training School at RAAF East Sale. He was a former CUO at 405 Squadron Sunshine prior to transitioning to 4WG HQ staff in 2019.

Acting as the Parade Warrant Officer in front of a non-public graduation parade that was live streamed for family and friends, he was also awarded the Highest Academic Achievement Award for Course 04/21.

Nash commenced Pilot's Course (1FTS) in October, where he will spend almost 6 months training to achieve his ultimate goal as a RAAF Pilot.

Congratulations also goes out to former CFSGT Kate Sherwood (419SQN Shepparton) who graduated from ADFA in December after completing a 3 year Bachelor of Arts degree, majoring in Indonesian Studies and Geography.

Kate has been featured in media stories and posts via UNSW and ADFA, and was a guest presenter in 2020 for the 4WG ISO EXPO speaking about ADFA opportunities and her career path in the Royal Australian Airforce.

Kate will now head to RAAF Base East Sale in 2022, where she will undertake the Mission Elementary Course for mission aircrew training.

Kate's last march out was at Puckapunyal in 2018 as part of the 4WG SNCO course with the AAFC.

Also in December 2021, former CWOFF Jack Rasmussen 403SQN Beaconsfield marched out as a new Private at the Australian Army Recruit Training Centre - Kapooka. He was also awarded the Baird VC MG Award as Most Outstanding Soldier for 22 Platoon's Charlie Company.

The Cameron Baird VC MG Award, introduced in 2016, is named in honour of Corporal Cameron Baird, who was killed in Afghanistan's Uruzgan Province in June 2013.

Jack was a graduate of the 2020 4WG Cadet Warrant Officer Course, and has been a keen fieldcraft and firearms competition participant, who also held Cross Rifles. He cut short his final year as a Cadet Warrant Officer to take up the opportunity to join the Australian Army, which has been a long term dream of his.

We congratulate these former 4Wing AAFC cadets on their pathways into the ADF.



END OF YEAR SQUADRON PARADES

With a reprieve from the Operational Pause, squadrons took full advantage to get their cadets ready for their 2021 End of Year parades.

With most Reviewing Officers sourced from the Staff Officer team, Squadrons were able to be agile and put on a show for special guests and families as a way of encouraging and celebrating our young people's resilience through the COVID-19 global pandemic. Many squadrons were just able to kit their new recruits out the week and even days prior into the new AAFC Service Dress uniforms. All rose to the occasion to showcase their skills and disciplines learned. In another year of so many disadvantages, to see Cadets of all ages beam with pride on completing their parade and either accepting or watching hard working peers be recognised with Squadron awards makes the challenges all worthwhile. Congratulations to all Cadets and Staff who participated.



401SQN Surrey Hills



403SQN Beaconsfield



408SQN Ringwood (City of Maroondah)



409SQN East Sale



415SQN Melbourne High School



426SQN Traralgon

AFA Victoria CHRISTMAS PARTY

From Samantha O’Sullivan

A special mention of thanks to the AFA Victoria branch for welcoming 4WG Officers to your Christmas celebrations!

It is always lovely to see some familiar faces and chatting to Vic members about the progress of the AAFC, many of whom have been former AirTC and ATC members prior to joining Defence. We missed the presence of Mr Laurie Bell a long-term supporter of our AAFC functions and parades, who has been off with knee surgery.

Max McGregor, along with Peter Colliver were presented with a special Air Force 100 / AAFC 80th Anniversary Challenge coins by SQNLR(AAFC) Samantha O’Sullivan as well as an 80th Anniversary AAFC patch as goodwill tokens of appreciation for the ongoing support and partnership between the Air Force Association Victoria, ATC/AAFC Sub-branch and No 4 Wing Australian Air Force Cadets.



L-R: FLTLT(AAFC) Neil Fitzclarence, 4 Wing Safety Advisor – East and former CO 426SQN Traralgon, SQNDR(AAFC) Paul Gixti, Regional Executive Officer – Southern region, Mr Max McGregor President RAAFA Victoria, and SQNDR(AAFC) Samantha O’Sullivan, Staff Officer Development & Community Engagement 4 Wing.

From The Editor

The Editor was in Melbourne recently and took the opportunity to go to the AFA Victoria Christmas party, not expecting to see other Branch members. It was great to briefly say hello to hard working AFA Victoria Office Manager Barbara Stallard. The Editor was pleasantly surprised to come across members John MacDonald, Howard Brownscombe, Peter Colliver, Neil Fitzclarence, Samantha O’Sullivan and Paul Gixti.



John MacDonald, AFA National Secretary Peter Colliver and Howard Brownscombe

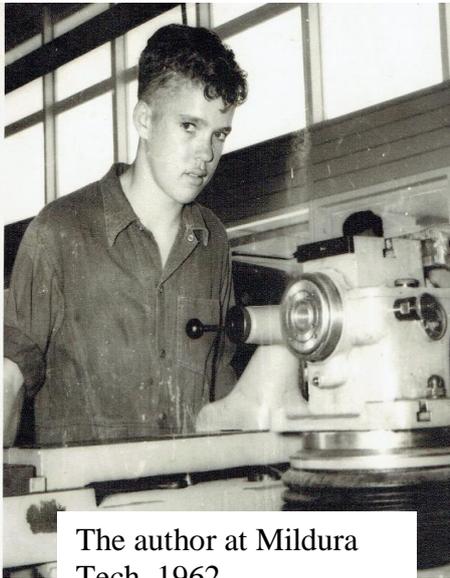
Member Story

From Rob Brown

When growing up with my brothers on a farm in the Mallee, I used to look at the fluffy cumulus clouds and imagine flying up to them. We had no idea of the practicalities of doing so.

On the 4th of October, 1957, Sputnik, the world's first artificial satellite, was launched from the Soviet Union. This stunned the world and created great excitement. There was an explosion of articles in the media about spaceflight, rockets, space suits and the future. All great for young nascent teenagers.

Education progressed to Mildura Technical School and there, apart from learning a whole range of technical and other skills that have been a huge asset for the rest of my life, I learned about the Air Cadets.



The author at Mildura Tech, 1962

Number 23 Flight of the Air Training Corps, met in the evenings at the Drill Hall in Mildura. Spurred on by the exciting reports of others already in the Cadets, I joined up, perhaps in 1961. A new uniform, boots and funny cap, were issued. I learnt how to get a mirror polish on the boots and was trained in parade ground manoeuvres.

Marching was not my strongest suite and it was thought better if I was buried somewhere in the middle of the cohort.

We went in a Dakota to Laverton Air Base to take part in marching ceremonies. Not sure if it was a contest or not. Concealment was not particularly successful as if you were in the back line, when the troop did an about turn, you were suddenly front and centre.

At Laverton, I was close to taxiing Sabre jets and always remember the ear-piercing scream from the radial compressor at

the front of the jet engine.

Another excursion was to East Sale RAAF Base for about a week. There I fired a 303 rifle for the first and last time. Laying on a sloping mound on the rifle range, I remember the recoil causing me to slide backwards. The recoil of the 303 was about the same as a shotgun – in other words, pretty severe. I never found out if I hit the bull's eye.

Then we were treated to a flight in a Dakota fitted out with tables for trainee navigators. The Dak had an astro dome which allowed 360 degree vision. We flew out over Bass Strait a little.

Back at Mildura, films were often shown at the end of the evening's training. One that had a huge impact on me, was *The Living Desert*. This was a forerunner to the David Attenborough series. This epochal film was made by Disney in 1953 and won the Academy Award for Best Documentary that year. It was shot in Tucson, Arizona. It was a stunning, highly educational film.

We handled various guns and learned how to strip and reassemble them. I could strip and reassemble a Bren gun in less than 20 seconds (I think). Sergeant John Lever was the main driving force and organiser for 23 Flight. It is sad that he had a heart attack years later, but much too soon.

I look back with great affection on my time with the Air Cadets. Everything was beneficial in some way and I learned a lot. Eventually, I left the cadets to concentrate on my studies and I did quite well.

The following years were spent in Melbourne attending RMIT and Melbourne University Engineering Schools. Eventually I got a PhD in electronics.

Was a pretty keen scuba diver for many years. By far the most interesting diving was at Wilson's Promontory. Great underwater boulders, fissures in the bottom, kelp and crayfish, made it the best. But I would not dive there now. The nearby seals have big bite marks on some of them. One had a substantial piece of flesh missing from one quarter, including the foot.

Also cave dived near Mt Gambier. The clarity of the water at Picaninnie Ponds was extraordinary. We dived at many interesting locations such as the Rip at the bottom of Port Phillip Bay. There is a feature there called the Drop-Off, which is boomerang shaped 300 foot deep cleft orientated more or less North

and South bisecting the underwater escarpment. Just outside to the West, is the scuttled hulk of a WWI submarine, given to Australia by the British Government. It is a lot bigger than I expected.

As diving faded, one of the members phoned me and asked what I was doing next weekend. He wanted to go to Benalla to take a Tri-This package in gliders. I asked "Where is Benalla".

Thus began my 21 year involvement in gliding. My participation included instructing and taking joy flights at Lilydale Airport. We did gliding safaris going as far as Mildura, Hay, West Wyalong and many other places. It was necessary to have a retrieval driver for these safaris and my wife fulfilled that role admirably.

Eventually, I got over the top of Mt Kosciusko in my glider, a challenging feat over the rocky escarpment. This was after taking off from Khancoban.



Author's 20.5m, Jantar 2B glider

I have also flown at the International gliding "Mecca" at Minden, Colorado, USA. Glider pilots from all over the world go there because of the superb gliding conditions. It is a challenge to fly there as the airport is shared with jets and other big aircraft such as Hercules. The runways all cross in the middle and the airfield elevation is 4722 feet. Just to the West is the Sierra Nevada mountain range, which, in the evening, pours cool air into the valley at Minden, just the thing needed for good thermals the next day.

Flying two-up there on one flight, we climbed straight to 18,000 ft. and went south over the

snow and mountains toward Mammoth, California.

At Minden, I took movie film of two big four-engine fire bomber aircraft working on a fire at Reno. The Hercules was straining mightily on every take-off after filling up with a full load of water. The powerful turboprop engines were screaming and wing tip vortices were visible.

Sadly the Hercules later suffered catastrophic structural failure over a wild fire and all on board were killed.

Around 2010, I obtained my Recreational Aircraft licence and four years later, my Private Pilot Licence. I fly a Flight Design CTLS and have been on several long trips in it, one time taking in Burketown and Karumba on the coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Member Story

Recollections from Hugh Tank - Part 2

NATIONAL SERVICE and AFTERWARDS

Some time before the first 'National Service' Scheme began I had become a Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) because of the influence of a distant family member; and therefore a conscientious objector (not to carry weapons). Never the less I really looked forward to my number being called up in the Ballot. Each male of 18 years old had a number, and a marble with everyone's number was put into a barrel; if your number came up, you were inducted into the Armed Services.

My number did come up and I hoped that I would enter into the Air Force as I had been an ATC cadet. However, two things prevented that from happening.

1. In 1957, the Government cancelled further 'National Service' for the Navy and Air Force as a cost cutting measure. That only left the Army until approximately 1958 when the entire scheme was cancelled. The 'Second National Service Scheme', although much smaller, was re-introduced in 1960 because of the war in Vietnam. (This second scheme only involved the Army).
2. Being a conscientious objector, only the Army could accommodate the same.

Some one I knew (whose marble came up) wanted to join the Navy; so he went down to the Navy Depot in South Melbourne and enquired. They said, "Sorry, the Navy intake is finished. Anyway what is your name son". The young man said, "Nelson". They said "You're in".



So in June 1957 I was inducted into the Army. (After having been to Court in Melbourne city to prove my objection). In many ways this was a worse experience than anything the Army threw at me. We met at the old Children's Hospital site, (Camp Pell) and were trucked to Spencer Street Rail Station by the Department of Labour where we were handed over to the Army and there by steam train to Puckapunyal.

Because of my conscientious objection, I was put into the Medical Corps. In our two huts for No 10 Platoon there was room for additional personnel so members of the N.S. Band were billeted with us. (Band members became stretcher bearers in War-time), also several members of the Armed Corps. But more of that later.

I soon learned that the Army hated 'conscientious objectors'; and worse, being an S.D.A. whose Sabbath is from Sunset Friday to Sunset Saturday, they simply didn't know what to do with us. I think there were 3 of us in the 20th National Service intake, one in my hut who I had never met before and one in another hut who I cannot remember.

The S.D.A.s were marched to the Colonel's office at H.Q. and told to 'disappear' at sunset Friday, they didn't want to know us; but God help us if we didn't appear at the Colonel's door precisely at two minutes to sunset on Saturday night. Naturally when most of the Battalion had Sunday off (after Church Parade), we had to work, latrine duties, cleaning pig bins etc., but that was fair enough as we had Saturday off. We were not allowed to go on leave on Saturday night like the remainder of the Battalion.

I was helping one guy in my hut to put together and clean his newly issued .303 rifle as he didn't have a clue. A regular Sergeant came in and tore strips off me, and told me in no uncertain manner, 'Never' to touch a rifle again. I realised then that the Army hated conscientious objectors.

After that we were given every unsavoury job that they could find. Never-the-less I really enjoyed military life. I remember one officer saying to me, "You are keen, I'll give you that."

In 1957 'The White Australia Policy' existed, whereby no one could emigrate to Australia unless from a European country. Also until 1976, Aborigines were not considered citizens of Australia. In 1976 the Whitlam Government held a plebiscite and the population of Australia was asked to vote on the question 'Should Aborigines become Citizens?' The population voted overwhelmingly that they should.

So in my hut there was a young, dark skinned man who everyone called 'Darkie'. So who was he? He was not Aboriginal because in 1957 they could not be called up for service because they were not classified as 'Citizens'. And because of the White Australia Policy, he, or his parents were not immigrants. 'Darkie' was actually a descendant of the Afghan camel drivers who created the Ghan Camel Train, (later to become the Ghan Rail Train.)



He was ostracised as I was but for entirely different reasons. He and I became friends. He was tough; his father used to ride a bike fast through a large regional Victorian town with a rope tied around his son's neck and 'Darkie' had to keep up.

'Darkie' was a member of the Armoured Corps. He could not read English very well; I think at home they spoke a mixture of Punjabi, Urdu, or English. So over time I taught him to read the street signs around the camp. 'Monash Drive', 'Passchendaele Drive', 'Tobruk Road' etc.

At the completion of our Corps (Medical) training, we finished 2 weeks early, so our instructors (all Korean Veterans) said "We are not going to let you sit around doing nothing for two weeks so we are going to teach you women's anatomy and childbirth". (A great cheer went up). Just as well they did, for some years later I had to deliver a baby. I spent an amount of time as a Nursing Orderly in Puckapunyal Military Hospital.

After the three months obligatory training at Puckapunyal, I was enlisted into the 3rd Division, 4th Field Ambulance for a further two years obligatory part time service in the 'Citizens Military Forces (CMF)'. Today – 'Army Reserve'. After the completion of my service I left the Army.

I had drifted away from the S.D.A. Church and after several years I began to miss Army life so I re-enlisted in my maternal grandfather's (an old Permanent soldier and Gallipoli Veteran) old Regiment, the 'Victorian Scottish Regiment'. At that time the Federal Government was closing all Community based Regiments such as 'Essendon Rifles', 'Melbourne Rifles', 'Vic. Scottish Regiment' etc in all States. So I re-enlisted in the '1st Royal Victorian Regiment' (1RVR) of which only the 'Support Coy' retained the Scottish Heritage, as it does today. I was given a new number 3171551.

A Regiment or Battalion consists of approximately 1000 soldiers at full strength, and is divided into 4 Companies, 3 Rifle Companies and 1 Support Company. The Support Company is divided into 4 Platoons.

A Coy. 'Machine Guns' **B Coy.** 'Mortars' **C Coy.** 'Assault Pioneers' **D Coy.** 'Anti-Tank'.

Guess which one they put me in?



Anti tank Gun



Rocket Launcher



Anti tank Gun Instruction

I still go to the Company Reunion and as such support the 'Pipes and Drums Association'. It is there that I met up with another ATC Branch member, Capt. Don Bergman OAM RFD ED (Ret'd) who was also in the Anti-Tank Platoon. He left to join the Paratroopers (Green Berets) and then subsequently to Vietnam. At this point we were issued with Vietnam era weapons, including the all black American M60 machine gun, SLR Rifles and Rocket Launchers instead of Anti-Tank guns.

Now for the most important part. I served as 'Almoner' to a group of National Servicemen for some 16 years, Navy, Army, Air Force; and then as 'Almoner' to the Air Force Association's ATC Branch where for legal reasons the name was changed to 'Welfare Officer'. I served for another four years or more. During all of those years I visited the sick and dying (men and women ex military) in approximately 76 Hospices/Mental and Drug Hospitals and General Hospitals etc.

One day I was talking to a neighbour's mother when she asked me "What did I do now that I was retired?"

I commenced to tell her of the welfare work when I burst into tears; she said "You need help". I didn't realise that she was a trained psychologist and had been a Vietnam veterans and family counsellor. A week later at an ATC Branch committee meeting I burst into tears again. Several high ranking Air Force Officers from the Air Force Association also advised me to get help. So I did.

Through the Welfare Officer of my R.S.L., (he was also a Vietnam veteran) we contacted the Department of Veteran Affairs (D.V.A.). After a protracted procedure, D.V.A. accepted my case and I

was referred to a Psychologist/Counsellor from 'Open Arms', a much expanded organisation to the original Vietnam Veterans and Families Counselling Service.

On my first visit the Counsellor said, "Did you see the man who just left, he was a helicopter pilot in Afghanistan. How many Australian Service personnel have been killed in Afghanistan?" I replied, "43 I think". The Counsellor said "correct, now how many have committed suicide since they have come back?" I replied "A high number, 43 I think". He replied "Wrong, 243". On my second visit the person who left the Counsellor's office before me was a policeman in full uniform. I am sure they must witness some terrible things in their line of duty.

I was asked to relate some of the things I had witnessed in my line of work, there were 4 special cases; I will relate one here. I had heard of a serviceman who was dying and only had a short time to live. I raced to the establishment but was too late. He was unconscious, never to wake up again and expected to die within a few hours. His wife and two daughters were weeping at his bedside. All I could do was to kneel down and whisper in his ear, "This is Hugh, I've just come to say goodbye". Then the most remarkable thing happened. He opened his eyes, sat bolt upright in bed and said "Hugh"; and then dropped down dead in front of us all. There were about four instances of something like this happening. The Counsellor asked me what sort of emotional support did I have during those years. I said "None". He was staggered that I had lasted some 20 years without any emotional support. Finally I was diagnosed with 'Compassion Fatigue'.

The United Nations send in 'Peacemakers' to stop certain wars; they wear 'Blue Helmets'; after them come the 'Peacekeepers' who wear 'Blue Berets'. I have met some of these who went to Rwanda and Cambodia and cannot tell you here what they experienced, it was so terrible. In Rwanda millions were killed over three days, mostly by machete. After what he saw, one such soldier will be in and out of Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital for the remainder of his life.

I have worked with 3 wonderful people during those years. Air Commodore Rev. Steve Box and Colonel Rev. Barrie Sutton, also Rev. Bill Casey (ex Vic Scottish Reg.), a very eccentric character who was on a commercial trading vessel off Korea, got caught up in the War and ended up with the Americans. He used to sell A.N.Z.A.C. badges at the Flinders Street Station, wearing a ragged old Army Great Coat. The money went to the Seamen's Mission in Melbourne. He used to run a wayside chapel in Balaclava. I attended a number of funerals with Bill in country Victoria.

For anyone suffering from mental health issues, there is help. My problem was that I thought I could do it on my own and left it too late.

Well, there it is, as Rev. Steve Box would say, "my tale is told, let's get on with it or the soup will be cold".

Holden's Lightning flight

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia



XM135 at Imperial War Museum Duxford
Picture by Alan Wilson from Stilton,
Peterborough, Cambs, UK

On 22 July 1966, Wing Commander Walter "Taffy" Holden, an Engineer in command of [No. 33 Maintenance Unit RAF](#) with limited experience flying small single-engine trainer aircraft, inadvertently engaged the afterburner of a Mach 2-capable [English Electric Lightning](#) XM135 during ground testing.

Unable to disengage the afterburner, Holden ran down the runway in the Lightning, narrowly missing a crossing fuel bowser and a de Havilland Comet taking off, before lifting off himself. Flying without a helmet or canopy, the ejection seat disabled, and the landing gear locked down, Holden aborted his first two landing attempts.

He landed on his third approach, striking the runway with the aircraft's tail as he adopted in his flare the attitude of a tail dragger aircraft. The aircraft returned to service, and was subsequently acquired by the [Imperial War Museum Duxford](#).

Read the full story at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holden%27s_Lightning_flight

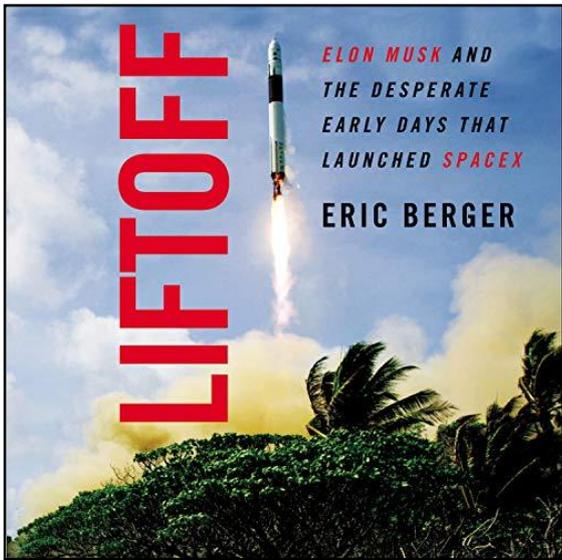
Historical Item



In about 1990 a Myer photo shoot for an advertising brochure was done at RAAF Laverton while The VICAirTC Gliding School Annual Camp was underway. The photo team recruited a couple of Gliding School Cadets to act as extras for the photo shoot. This picture from the brochure shows CdtCpl Nick Cohn in the cockpit and CdtCpl Richard McLean under the 21 Squadron Vampire.

Book Review - Liftoff

From Nick Cohn



HarperCollins GB
Hardcover ISBN: 9780008445621
Paperback ISBN: 9780008445638

Liftoff tells the story of how the United States company SpaceX was founded by Elon Musk, and, after three rocket failures, finally made it to orbit. This allowed SpaceX to secure a contract to re-supply the International Space Station, laying the foundation of Musk's ambition to one day found a human outpost on Mars.

Eric Burger takes us along on Musk's trip from trying to buy old missiles from the Russians to send a greenhouse to Mars, to the realisation that none of the established aerospace companies would give up their lucrative one time use hardware paid for by cost plus government

contracts to create the reusable rockets and spaceships required to drive down the cost of access to space to the point where it is feasible to colonise Mars.

Eric spent years talking to the people who were there, working 100 plus hour weeks to get the Falcon 1 rocket into orbit. From US Air Force bureaucratic apathy to hardship and trials on a tropical island, the pressure to reach orbit on their fourth attempt, or face bankruptcy, was overwhelming. Reading the book you gain insight into what it took to create what is today arguably the leading aerospace organisation on earth.

If you'd rather listen, as I do, the audio book is expertly narrated by Rob Shapiro. If you're interested in space or just a ripping good yarn, I highly recommend the book and/or audiobook to you. As Elon Musk said of the book, "Just read it!"

Nick Cohn is a former VICAirTC CdtWOff now living in the Netherlands.

Internet Links

Benefits Finder



Find out benefits rebates and concessions you may be eligible for at Commonwealth Bank Benefits Finder

<https://www.commbank.com.au/digital-banking/benefits-finder> .

\$250 One-off Power Saving Bonus



You may be eligible for the Victorian Government \$250 One-off Power Saving Bonus.

Check at <https://compare.energy.vic.gov.au>

Heavens Above



The planets Venus, Saturn and Jupiter are currently lined up and are easily visible with the naked eye in the west just after sunset.

Also see International Space Station transit predictions at:-

www.heavens-above.com

The Editor's Epistle

Along with other Victorians, and indeed the rest of humanity, The ATC/AAFC Branch has had a difficult 2021 year, with meetings cancelled and other disappointments. Let's hope that things will improve quite a lot in 2022.

I took the opportunity to attend the AFA Victoria end of year meeting and was pleasantly surprised to meet a number of our branch members there. I also was particularly pleasantly surprised to meet up with an old colleague from my TAA/Australian Airlines days, Reinhard Goshiniak, who is a member of the AFA Bendigo Branch. Reinhard featured in my story about an Australian Airlines world record distance flight that appeared in our August 2018 Newsletter.

I thank all our 2021 contributors. Without your stories and current news material I would have nothing to edit and we would not have a newsletter.

Best wishes for Christmas and have a happy new year.

Your Editor
Impiorum requies.

Humour



Santa needs collision avoidance equipment!!!!

FAMOUS TOPICS IN ART HISTORY:



**HERCULES ATTEMPTING TO
GIVE HIS CAT A PILL**

Member News



Members Jan and Doug Williams have been spending the dreary days of virus lockdowns at their unit in Benalla. Your Editor recently caught up with them while returning to Mt Beauty from Melbourne.

Internet Links of Interest

AFA ATC/AAFC Branch page

raafavic.org.au/content/758/branch-atc-aafc

National Servicemen's Association -

www.nashos.org.au/

Air Force News

www.defence.gov.au/Publications/NewsPapers/RAAF/Default.asp

UK Air Transport Auxilliary History

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Txys1kBRkOw>

AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION VICTORIA



ATC/AAFC BRANCH

**ATTENTION - ALL ADULT MEMBERS
of the
AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE CADETS**

The AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION (Victorian Division) would welcome you as a member of our Branch. As part of this proud Association with its long standing record of Service, the ATC/AAFC Branch membership consists of former ATC, AirTC and former and currently serving members of the AAFC. Associate memberships are available for partners.

For membership enquiries, please contact:

Laurie Bell – Branch President

Hugh Tank – Branch Secretary

General Enquiries

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3130, Victoria.

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