

Air Force Association

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

VOLUME 75 ISSUE 1 // AUTUMN 2020



CONTACT

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CELEBRATING 100 YEARS – AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION CENTENARY DINNER



Air Marshal Mel Hupfeld, AO, DSC, Chief of Air Force addresses the dinner

The Air Force Association celebrated its 100th Anniversary on February 26th at a Centenary Dinner held at the Vibe Hotel in Canberra.

The Guest of Honour and Speaker was Air Marshal Mel Hupfeld, AO, DSC – Chief of Air Force who was accompanied by his wife Louise. Other VIPs included Air Chief Marshal (Retd) Sir Angus Houston, KT, AFC and his wife Liz, and Warrant Officer of the Air Force Fiona (Fee) Grasby, OAM. Seventy-four members including partners travelled from as far away as WA. The occasion was wonderfully supported by the Air Force Band's Sydney detachment led by Warrant Officer Ian Waddell.

National President, Carl Schiller welcomed the guests and briefly described the meeting in Melbourne among Australian Flying Corps WW1 veterans that took place 100 years ago that evening. The discussions led to the formation of the Australian Flying Corps Association, the forerunner of the Air Force Association we know today. Its objectives of supporting veterans, promoting an air defence capability, and honouring those who served and lost their lives in the service of Australia remain the Association's principal aims today. The Association has broadened these time-honoured objectives by extending support to veterans and families of any Service origin.

Continued on page 2

Carl stressed the need for the Association to look forward and adapt to the current environment. Its 100-year existence will not guarantee its continuity and that all members have a responsibility to ensure the legacy bestowed on us by our Australian Flying Corps veterans endures. He stated the Air Force Association has a desire to work closely with Air Force to ensure serving and ex-serving members receive the support they need for a happy life. Only veterans and their families appreciate the meaning of 'the unique nature of military service' and the impact on families.

Carl also advised the Association's State and Territory Presidents had made a milestone decision to form a Joint Boards Steering Group to investigate ways to transform the Association into a modern veteran and family support organisation. He praised the work of Brigadier (Retd) Jim Campbell, AM who is Chair/Facilitator of the Steering Group for his extensive experience in the not-for-profit sector and his pro bono work towards improving our Association. He graciously thanked Air Marshal Hupfeld for accepting the offer to be Patron of the Air Force

Association and his support for Warrant Officer Grasby to be a member of the Joint Boards Steering Group.

Air Marshal Hupfeld acknowledged the Air Force Association had an important role in supporting veterans – serving and former serving members, and he welcomed its support and closer association with Air Force. He praised the foresight of those Australian Flying Corps veterans who instigated the establishment of the Association and the century-long contribution towards veterans and families' wellbeing. The Air Marshal elaborated on the modernity of Air Force and the challenges it faces adapting to changing and advancing technology. He stressed the importance of a technically advanced service that must be supported by a professional workforce – service personnel, Defence APS, and civilian contractors.

Air Marshal Hupfeld endorsed the comments made by Carl Schiller that the Air Force Association must be influential in preserving veterans' rights and adapt to the modern environment. He looked forward to his tenure as Patron and welcomed regular input on the Association's wellbeing and its modernisation program.

The fellowship that took place at the Dinner was a clear indication of the occasion's success. Guests were most fortunate the gathering took place before the impact of COVID-19 that has subsequently interrupted our lives.



Centenary Dinner Order of Service



Official guests (L to R): Jennifer Kelloway, Peter Colliver, Liz Houston, WOFF Fiona Grasby, Christine Schiller, AIRMSHL Hupfeld, Carl Schiller, Louise Hupfeld, Sir Angus Houston, Helen Colliver, Richard Kelloway, Peter Meehan.

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Times are indeed difficult, but there is an opportunity to prove that we are in fact the organisation that we believe we are. It is difficult to keep up with all the changes, with the distinct possibility that conditions will become worse, so I have asked all Branch Presidents to discuss with their executive how best to keep in touch with their members, and to implement a regular contact program.

Social isolation is the best way known at present to avoid catching the CoronaVirus, but being isolated from normal interaction with family, friends and colleagues can be very challenging and may lead to other health issues.

One of the aims of this regular Contact say, "you are not alone". I believe this to be critically important and reinforces the understanding that if

anyone is in need, that there is someone to contact. For those of you online, please also visit our website and Facebook page as we will be keeping these updated regularly.

While I am reluctant to promise anything for it may be impossible for AFA Victoria to physically support a member in need, we do have a significant list of organisations that can provide help and assistance if needed.

Continued on page 3

I have also closed our office in Hawthorn East with our Office Manager Barb Stallard working from home. The office phone line has been diverted to Barb along with email, ensuring this line of contact also remains open.

As you probably are aware, unfortunately all commemorative events have been cancelled. It was extremely disappointing to have to cancel our centenary celebrations.

However, we can still have this function sometime in the future, whenever it is safe to gather together again, and this will be something for all of us to look forward to.

AFA Victoria's AGM is scheduled for 28 May and this is one event that has to go ahead. The regulatory authorities have said that they will be "tolerant" but cannot authorise an extension of time to hold an AGM. AFA Victoria does

have the ability to use a video conferencing system, and also have multiple phone connections through a speakerphone. While none of these formats is ideal, they can be used safely and reasonably effectively. At this stage, I plan to hold the AGM as planned with members using either the video conferencing or telephone connection to participate in the AGM while staying home. More details of the video program and how to connect will be

provided when closer to the date.

Please, wherever possible, stay at home and only go out when necessary. Keep in contact with family and friends, and most importantly stay safe and well

Max McGregor
President
AFA Victoria

1WAGS WEBSITE LAUNCHED IN BALLARAT

The new 1WAGS website commemorating every Wireless Air Gunner and Navigator who trained at 1WAGS Ballarat for their WWII service was officially launched on 11 February 2020 by Ballarat Branch President Noel Hutchins.

As part of the establishment of the Ballarat Branch rooms in the restored Airport Hut 48 at the Ballarat Aerodrome last year, the Branch made an important commitment to the creation of a website to record names and information of all the Wireless Air Gunners who trained at No 1 Wireless Air Gunners School (1 WAGS) at Ballarat Airport during WWII.

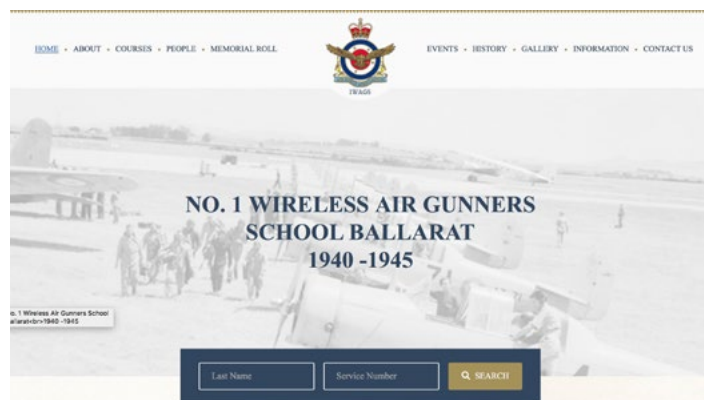
Over 5000 airmen completed their training at the school and over 1000 of these trainees were killed in action. The airmen who were killed are listed on a memorial page on the website.

A special guest representing every 1WAGS trainee was 95yo 1WAG and WWII veteran Tom

Runnalls, who was delighted to see his own profile page on the website.

"The years of research contributions led by Immediate Past President of the Ballarat Branch (Dr Tom Roberts OAM) Tom Roberts and Peter Schoutens have been exceptional and critical to the success of the website." said Noel Hutchins, Ballarat Branch President.

"Furthermore, the high standard that has been achieved with this website is very much due to our website co-ordinator, Mrs Janet Bates' hard work and commitment to ensuring that the 1WAGS website would be of the highest possible standard."



Front page of the new 1WAGS_website

The City of Ballarat's Community Impact Grants Program also provided significant funds support for the creation of the website.

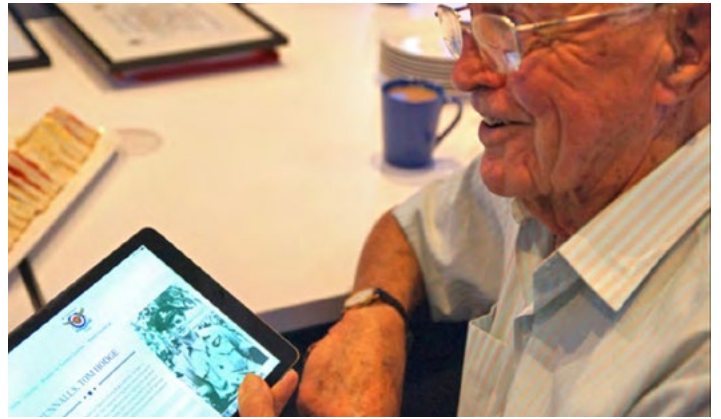
Mr Hutchins presented Certificates of Appreciation to Dr Tom Roberts OAM, Mr Peter Schoutens, Mrs Janet Bates, Mr Allen Penhall, Mr David Plunkett and UBC staff (who built the website) and to Councillor Samantha McIntosh representing the City of Ballarat in acknowledgement of their significant contributions to the establishment of the 1WAGS website.

"I am sure that many descendants of these men who bravely served during WWII will access these records and remember them with honour." said Mr Hutchins.

Postscript: Since the launch of the 1WAGS website there has been interest shown in the site not only in Australia but world-wide with browsing visitors from countries including the US, France, Italy, Greece, UK, Netherlands, Turkey, New Zealand and Germany. There is also a Facebook Page – 1 WAGS Memorial - where the support base continues to grow.



1WAGS_Pres Noel Hutchins presents Cr. Samantha McIntosh with a Certificate of Appreciation.



95yo 1WAGS WWII veteran Tom Runnalls views his profile on the new 1WAGS website.



Tom Roberts, Janet Bates and Peter Schoutens were key drivers of the development of the 1WAGS website.

MEET THE BOARD

JOHN CLARKSON, DIRECTOR

John joined the Board of AFA(VIC) in October 2018 and has been a member of the Engineer Branch since it became affiliated with AFA(VIC) in 2016.

He joined the Air Force as an engineer cadet in 1968 and studied Aeronautical Engineering at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. After graduation he served in various technical postings until his appointment as Director of Personnel Airmen in 1995.

Subsequent senior appointments included: OC 401 (Maintenance) Wing at Williamstown, member of

the F-111 Deseal/Reseal Board of Inquiry, and DG Aerospace Combat Systems in the Defence Material Organisation. John transferred to the Air Force Reserve in 2005 and served principally as a technical member on the airworthiness review panel until retirement at the end of 2018.

John and Kathy have been married 48 years and have four adult children who left

home as soon as they could to avoid further moves. They are all married, and four grandchildren provide much enjoyment and entertainment.

John's principal interests now include family, maintaining a property in the Victorian high country, Melbourne Hash House Harriers, and many afternoons and evenings in the MCG members reserve.



2020 BURSARIES AWARDED TO STUDENTS FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

At a special joint ceremony in February, two young students were presented with bursaries in support of their continuing academic studies.

As is the custom, presentation of bursaries preceded the Vietnam Veterans AGM, generously supported by the RAAF Association Foundation.

In 2009, the RAAF Vietnam Veterans Association (Vic) and the Vietnam and Associated Veterans Sub-Branch, together with the Air Force Association Foundation, instituted an annual bursary to provide financial assistance in recognised educational or training courses to direct relatives of all veterans.

The two awardees this year were Richelle Borman, granddaughter of Flight Sergeant Barry Anderson who served as an Instrument Technician at various bases including Point Cook and Laverton during his 20-year Air Force career and Madison Biolobzeski, granddaughter of Group Captain Carl Schiller.

Richelle is about to start a degree in Engineering and Civil

Infrastructure at RMIT and Madison resumes her Bachelor of Teaching course at Swinburne University of Technology.

Madison is hoping to accelerate her course so she can begin work as a Primary School teacher as soon as possible.

A bursary winner from last year, Lucinda Sonneman-Mathieson, was also in attendance at the ceremony with her grandparents (grandfather Ross Mathieson was a 9SQN helicopter pilot in Vietnam) to offer a few words of appreciation, as she was unable to attend her own bursary presentation in 2019.

Two inaugural Encouragement Awards, sponsored by generous donations from members of the Vietnam Veterans Branch Committee, were also awarded to Chloe Reed, granddaughter of AVM Alan Reed and Renae Griffiths, granddaughter of Squadron Leader Laurence Fraser.

You can find out more about the bursaries by visiting the Vietnam Veterans Branch page of the AFA Victoria website.



The 'Snow' Coughlan Encouragement Award, presented by Gill Coughlan and accepted by AVM Alan Reed on behalf of his granddaughter Chloe Reed.



2019 Bursary awardee, Lucinda Sonneman-Maathieson, with RAAF Vietnam Veterans Association (Vic) President, Chris Hudnott.



Madison Bialobzeski receives her bursary from AFA Victoria President, Max McGregor.



Richelle Borman receives her bursary from AFA Victoria President, Max McGregor;

WWW

**Have you checked out the
AFA Victoria website?**

www.afavic.org.au

DA40 FLIGHTS FOR WARRNAMBOOL AIR FORCE CADETS

- BY FLYING OFFICER (AAFC) PAUL A ROSENZWEIG OAM JP

Air Force Cadets from Victoria's No 413 Squadron started the year with Pilot Experience (PEX) flights from Warrnambool airfield (YWBL).

The cadets flew in the new Diamond DA40 NG training aircraft, which are operated by the Elementary Flying Training School at RAAF Point Cook.

In this activity, the cadets flew circuits over the picturesque Warrnambool coastline. The Commanding Officer of No 413 Squadron, Pilot Officer (AAFC) Jane McDonald said, *"413 Squadron had a fantastic weekend of beautiful weather, just perfect for the PEX activity, so both the cadets and pilots had stunning views of South West Victoria and the cadets had an awesome learning experience"*.

Their instructors were Wing Commander Dave Chaplin and Pilot Officer (AAFC) Chris Hulley, with Squadron Leader (AAFC) Scott Wiggins and Corporal (AAFC) Craig Johnstone as the Operations Officers for the activity. Pilot Officer (AAFC) McDonald noted, *"All the cadets commented on how great the pilots were at answering all of their questions and explaining everything – and yes there were a lot of questions!"*.

The Elementary Flying Training School at RAAF Point Cook is a subordinate unit of Aviation Operations Wing, AAFC, which has the aim of delivering flying pathways through gliding and powered flying experiences and training. These Pilot Experience flights, under the supervision of a qualified flying instructor and at no cost to the cadet, are designed to help lay the foundations for aviation career pathways.



Three AAFC Diamonds on the tarmac at Warrnambool airport with Pilot Officer (AAFC) Chris Hulley. Image by CAPT(AUX) Matt Doyle.



Cadet Corporal Sasha Smith (413 Squadron) in a Diamond DA40 NG at Warrnambool airfield with Wing Commander Dave Chaplin. Image by PLTOFF(AAFC) Jane McDonald.

The Diamond DA40 NG, leased for exclusive use by Australian Air Force Cadets, features modern avionics and a turbocharged jet-fuel piston engine, with contemporary navigation and flight control systems. The acquisition of this aerodynamically advanced aircraft will support safer, more advanced training for Air Force Cadets.

Leading Cadet Dominic McCosh had this to say of his PEX flight: *"My flight was absolutely amazing. I enjoyed every single second of it. The best part was getting full control over the plane, mainly having to point up, point down and turn, that was absolutely amazing"*.

No 413 Squadron is based at Tel el Eisa Barracks in Pertobe Road, Warrnambool. PLTOFF (AAFC) McDonald said, *"We cannot wait to host the wonderful AOW / EFTS team in Warrnambool again!"*.

**** This article was written and submitted by Flying Officer (AAFC) Paul A Rosenzweig OAM JP, Public Affairs & Communication Officer, Aviation Operations Wing, Australian Air Force Cadets.**



: Cadet Aaron Cahill (413 Squadron) in a Diamond DA40 NG at Warrnambool airfield with Wing Commander Dave Chaplin. Image by PLTOFF(AAFC) Jane McDonald.



Leading Cadet Aisha Lowe (413 Squadron) in a Diamond DA40 NG at Warrnambool airfield with Pilot Officer (AAFC) Chris Hulley. Image by PLTOFF(AAFC) Jane McDonald.

DO YOU KNOW?

A Snoopy Memory Test for all 2 SQN Vietnam Veterans

This photo was taken at Phan Rang by John Lovegrove in 1971.

John is seeking information on the origin of this replica of Snoopy on his kennel – who made it and why. John is sure there is a good story behind the model and we'd love to hear it!

If you know the answer, please let Vietnam Veterans Branch President, Chris Hudnott (ruth.chris@bigpond.com), know and he will pass the info onto John. The prize for the most convincing story will be a special mention in the next edition of Contact.



NOT JUST ANY PIGEON: A STORY FROM THE SUNDERLAND BRANCH ARCHIVES - BY RICK HATTAM

When fossicking through some memorabilia at home, I came across a small container that contained the message carried by the pigeons when they were released by a crew.

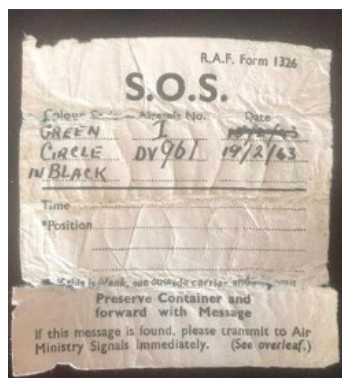


Carrier pigeon capsule

The form is 70 mm (2 5/8 inch) square on quite flimsy paper. The details on the partly filled out (in ink) form indicate that it was prepared for a trip on 19 February 1943 by Sunderland DV961, "I" India of 461 Squadron.

Some details were obviously completed prior to the trip in order to expedite a quick completion of the message and dispatch of the pigeon when required.

I apologise for the condition of the document as I haven't been able to restore it properly. Still, it is not in bad condition for being rolled up in the container for some 77 years.



The message slip that was inside the container – Form 1326 – S.O.S.



Plymouth, England. 1945-01-18. Aussie - No. 4112, a blue checker cock pigeon which returned to RAF Station Mount Batten with an SOS message from a ditched Sunderland aircraft of No. 10 Squadron RAAF on 16 September 1944. (Source: AWM)



Most animals employed during the war did not survive their service. The purple poppy represents the memorial to the animals who sadly lost their lives during the war efforts.

OPERATION BUSHFIRE ASSIST 19-20

Operation Bushfire Assist saw around 6500 Australian Defence Force (ADF) personal and Reserves provide critical support to emergency services in NSW, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania during the recent national bushfire emergency. The ADF provided air/ground transport, route clearance, logistics, engineering and aviation support to the firefighting and recovery effort. International partners also contributed with personnel from PNG, Fiji, New Zealand, Singapore and Japan operating alongside their Australian counterparts.

(images courtesy Royal Australian Air Force, airforce.gov.au)



RAAF C-27J Spartan pilots from No. 35 Squadron, work in arduous conditions as they assist evacuees during the bushfires in Mallacoota, Victoria.



South Australia Country Fire Service personnel board a Royal Australian Air Force C-27J Spartan transport aircraft to return home to Mount Gambier from Kangaroo Island.



No. 23 Squadron air movements personnel load an 6th Engineer Support Regiment water purification system onto a C-17A Globemaster at RAAF Base Amberley.



Members from the ADF, Melbourne Zoo and Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning load 11 injured koalas onto an RAAF C-27J Spartan aircraft for transportation to RAAF Base East Sale for further care.



5th Engineering Regiment soldiers board an Air Force C-130J Hercules assist with clean-up operations in Bega during Operation Bushfire Assist 19-20.



No. 11 Squadron pilots carry out pre-flight checks prior to a mission on a P-8A Poseidon during Operation Bushfire Assist 19-20.

GENERAL INFORMATION

COVID-19 INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

Do you have COVID-19 symptoms?
First contact your doctor or Medical Centre by phone.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

General

Department of Health: www.health.gov.au

COVID-19 Specific.

www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert

This will provide: Daily updates, answering your questions about the latest news, current facts and figures, travel advice, key contact and phone numbers.

OR call: 1800 020 080 (24/7 assistance)

Counselling

Beyond Blue: 1300 224 436 (24/7 assistance)
beyondblue.org.au

Lifeline: 13 11 14 (24/7 assistance)
www.lifeline.org.au

VETERANS SUPPORT

Department of Veterans Affairs: 1800 555 254 (office hours)
www.dva.gov.au

Open Arms (Counselling): 1800 011 046 (24/7 assistance)
www.openarms.gov.au

CARE PACKAGE SUPPORT

Australian Red Cross: 1800 733 276 (office hours)
www.redcross.org.au

Salvation Army: 13 72 58 (office hours)
www.salvationarmy.org.au/contact-us

CONTACT: EDITORIAL DATES

WINTER 2020

Contributions by 22 May 2020
Publication: 12 June 2020

SPRING 2020

Contributions by 24 July 2020
Publication: 11 September 2020

SUMMER 2020

Contributions by 27 November 2020
Publication: 15 December 2020

AUTUMN 2021

Contributions by 26 February 2021
Publication: 12 March 2021

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	Darrell Robinson	0409 942 856
Gippsland	(contact AFA Vic)	03 98134600
Melbourne WAAAF	(contact AFA Vic)	03 98134600
North Metropolitan	Rod Garmaise	03 93093543
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

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Facebook

www.facebook.com/raafavic/



AROUND THE BRANCHES

In addition to the Presidents' 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.

BALLARAT

SUSPENSION OF BALLARAT BRANCH ACTIVITIES

Considering the age group of members of our branch of the Air Force Association, along with advice from Federal and State governments and health authorities in respect of the threat of the further spread of Coronavirus, all meeting and activities of our Branch are suspended until further notice.

I will continue to put out our monthly newsletter and keep members informed as to when our activities will be able to start up again. General administrative running of our branch will continue to be attended to by the Executive Management Committee of President, Secretary, Treasurer and Assistant Secretary/Treasurer.

SOCIAL LUNCHEON GUEST SPEAKER, WWII BOMBER COMMAND VETERAN, BILL COOK

Bill Cook was a most interesting guest speaker at our March Social Luncheon Meeting.

Bill was among the first group of RAAF ground crew members to head to England for WWII duties. Arriving in England in 1941 he first served with 456 (RAAF) Squadron, a night fighter squadron stationed at Valley, North Wales. After a time there he was posted to 460 (RAAF) Squadron stationed at Binbrook, Lincolnshire. Serving at 460 Squadron as an Electrical Fitter he serviced Lancaster Bombers including the famed 'G for George' which is now a very much viewed exhibit at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

Bill told some very interesting stories covering his pre-war period, his enlistment, time with both 456 and 460 squadrons, "G" for George, his marriage in England and his post-war period back in Australia.



Branch Secretary Rob Petty looks on as WWII RAAF Veteran Bill Cook addresses the meeting.

AFA Geelong Branch members were hosted by our Branch at an afternoon tea in our rooms at Airport Hut 48 on 5th March. Our visitors were given a tour of our facilities and also given a rundown on the research of and 1WAGS records and the development of our 1WAGS website.

Please take extra care of yourselves and loved ones during this viral outbreak.

Noel Hutchins
President



Geelong AFA Branch President John Delia and Ballarat Branch President Noel Hutchins with branch members behind him.

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT
THE BALLARAT BRANCH?

VISIT OUR BRANCH PAGE ON
THE AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION
VICTORIA WEBSITE

2019 has been and gone, finishing off with our Christmas function, which was held at Windermere Hotel on 5th December. We enjoyed a great Christmas meal & entertainment by "Sassy Sisters" previously known as Rustic Divas. It was a fabulous function enjoyed by all.

2020 started off with our AGM. No changes to the Executive - Ray Gray, President - Trevor Taylor, Senior Vice President - Peter Simmons, Vice President - Glenis Gordon, Secretary./Treasurer, Ray is once again our hard working Welfare Officer.

19th February saw a number of our members attending 75th Anniversary of Darwin Defenders commemorative service at the BDRSL. The service commenced with the sound of an air raid siren, very spine tingling.

Glenis Gordon
Secretary

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE BENDIGO BRANCH?

VISIT OUR BRANCH PAGE ON THE AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION VICTORIA WEBSITE

NO 2 SQUADRON



CANCELLATION OF AGM AND FELLOWSHIP LUNCHEON – SUNDAY 19TH APRIL 2020

In light of the current health crisis with the Coronavirus, the decision has been made to cancel the No 2 Squadron Branch 2020 Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Fellowship Luncheon on Sunday, 19

April 2020. Based on the Government's 'State of Emergency', media and medical reports it appears that it will be some time before this crisis is over, making it impossible to consider an alternative date. On behalf of the Committee, I wish everybody good health.

MEMBERSHIP VOTING ON PROPOSAL TO WIND UP NO 2 SQUADRON (RAAF) ASSOCIATION

Notwithstanding the cancellation of the AGM, I would ask all members to consider the proposal to Wind Up No 2 Squadron (RAAF) Association Inc (A0043384X) (ABN 67 079 095 805), as outlined in

the February Newsletter and to register your vote by completing the 'AGM Special Resolution Motion – Voting Proforma'.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership of No 2 Squadron Branch (Air Force Association Victorian Division) is open to all serving and former members of No 2 Squadron, all serving and former Air Force members, their dependants and all adults who have an aviation interest and support the aims and objects of the Air Force Association.

Application forms can be downloaded directly from the Air Force Association Victoria website:

If you are yet to pay your 2020 Membership Renewal Subscription (due on 1st January 2020), please make your payment directly to the Air Force Association Victoria. If you did not receive or have misplaced your Renewal Advice please email Barbara Stallard on office@raafavic.org.au or phone (03) 9813 4600.

Warm Regards

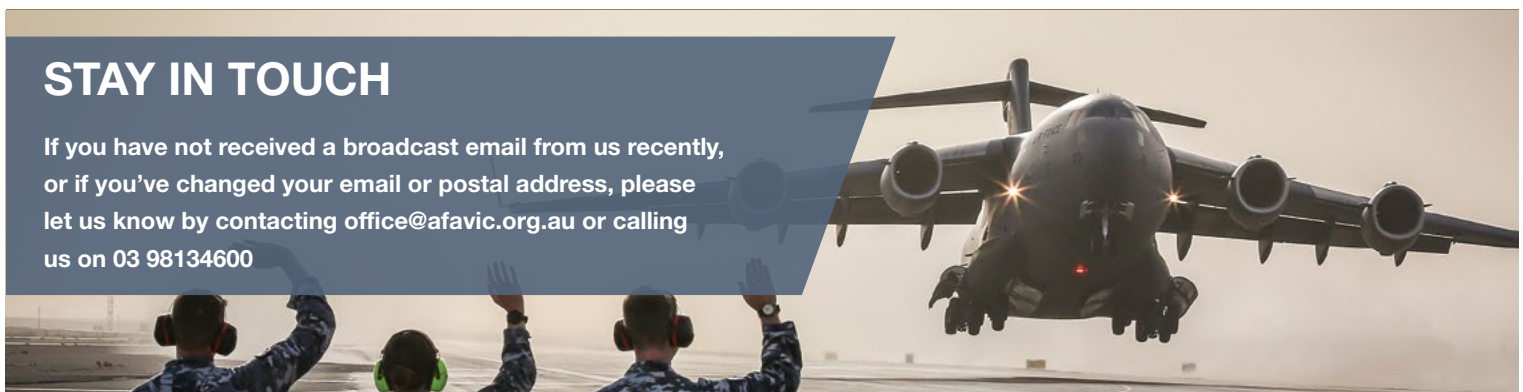
Walter Sherman

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE NO2 SQUADRON 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





Happy 2020 to all the Sunderlanders and friends. Unfortunately, the year commenced with the continuing bushfires

and various unusual and catastrophic natural events. The response was a testament to the Australian volunteer spirit that our Sunderland ancestors showed 70 or so years ago.

SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE – RAF COASTAL COMMAND EXHIBITION – AUGUST 2019 TO JULY 2020

This great exhibition is due to continue until July 2020. However, as the Shrine of Remembrance

is temporarily closed until at least 30 April 2020, people should check the Shrine website or Facebook page before visiting this exhibition. "The Cinderella Service" receives minimal publicity for the important role they played in keeping the sea lanes clear for the transportation of the vital supplies required for the war effort.

In light of recent Coronavirus developments, please stay tuned for updated details regarding future monthly luncheons.

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE SUNDERLAND BRANCH?

VISIT OUR BRANCH PAGE ON THE AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION VICTORIA WEBSITE

VIETNAM VETERANS

Our AGM was held on Sunday 16th February 2020 and attended by 39 people including AVM Alan Reed, National President Group Captain Carl Schiller and Division President Max McGregor. Little did we know at the time that meetings such as our AGM would shortly become impossible with the rapid spread of COVID 19.

As is our custom, the

AGM was preceded by presentation of educational bursaries generously supported by the RAAF Association Foundation. (see Bursary article in this edition of Contact)

Our new committee for 2020 includes many long serving members of our Branch. Bob Brackin and Gareth Davis have decided to retire and Ken Ewin who served on the committee

many years ago has generously volunteered to re-join. Our new Treasurer (taking over from Gareth) is John Vansetten.

The year ahead will be challenging with the impact of COVID 19 affecting so much of our personal lives. Many annual events such as Anzac Day, which punctuate our Branch activities during the year, have been cancelled

and an air of uncertainty is affecting the whole community.

Our Branch is looking ahead over the next few months with a positive attitude and sees a real responsibility in maintaining and fostering communication with our members and providing support where we can.

Chris Hudnott
President



*Vietnam Veterans Branch 2020 Committee: Front row Gill Coughlan
Second row L-R Chris Hudnott, Peter Raymant, Neil Boulton, Neil Morgan
Back Row L-R Geoff Rose, Graeme Dodd, John Vansetten, Max McGregor, Pieter Jongkryg.*

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE VIETNAM VETERANS' BRANCH?

VISIT OUR BRANCH PAGE ON THE AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION VICTORIA WEBSITE

TEMPORARY CLOSURE – SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE, MELBOURNE



In response to the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus, the Chief Executive Officer of Victoria's Shrine of Remembrance, Mr Dean Lee, has announced that the Shrine has closed its doors to public access - effective immediately and until further notice.

"Heightened anxiety and perceptions of risk amongst our patrons and personnel, reinforced by decisions by Museums Victoria, the State Library and NGV, have caused us to conclude that closure is in the best interests of the Shrine, our staff, volunteers and patrons." said Mr Lee.

The 2020 Anzac Day Dawn Service will proceed in some form however it is likely Victorians will be asked to commemorate on this important day by watching the Service on television, or via the Shrine's Facebook or Youtube channel.

Further information will be provided in the coming weeks. Updates will also be posted to the Shrine's Facebook page. or please visit the Shrine website:
<https://www.shrine.org.au/Home>.

VALES



FADED ECHO – VALE PETER ALBERT YEOMANS

24/2/1924 – 31/12/2019

Service No. 52355,
Corporal, Radar Mechanic,
Course M21G

Born in Brighton, Victoria
on 24 February 1924,
Peter Albert Yeomans
was educated at Caulfield

Grammar School 1935-40.

He enlisted in the RAAF on
21 May 1942, just after his
18th birthday. After recruit
training he was enrolled
in the Radar Mechanic's
course No M21G at
Richmond NSW on 28
September 1942, passing
this successfully on 22
November 1943.

His first posting was to
13RS, Cape Otway in
November 1942.

In his reminiscences, which
he contributed to Morrie
Fenton's book *Defending
the Eye of the Needle* he
recalls climbing up the
radar antenna during gales
to tie it down and prevent
damage to the driving
gear. His confidence in
the Australian defence
force organisation was
severely shaken when
he became aware that
RAAF Headquarters staff

appeared to stand down at
5 pm on Friday evenings
and did not resume the war
until 7.30am on Mondays,
as reports sent during that
time were routinely ignored.

On a lighter note he often
visited the Ballarat Hotel
at Apollo Bay, in particular
he remembered the day of
his 19th birthday when the
hotel ran out of beer and he
was introduced to a rather
more potent substitute. A
few days later he was back
at Apollo Bay on the way to
a new posting, this time to a
new radar station 315RS at
Cape Ward Hunt, in the Oro
Province on the northern
Papua New Guinea coast
about 190 Kilometres south
west of Lae. Several other
postings followed, mostly
to RAAF Radar Stations
on the Australian mainland
including 20RS Tomaree
NSW, and 14RS Wilson's
Promontory Vic. He was
finally discharged as a

Corporal on 15 January
1946.

In the post-war period he
lived in Hampton, Victoria
and became involved with
the family owned chain of
cinemas, these included
the Chelsea Plaza and
several others. He was
married to Laurel Harris in
1947.

Peter and Laurel attended
the 50th anniversary
reunion of the RAAF
Radar Veterans at
Bendigo in March 1992
and until recently was an
enthusiastic participant at
the reunion luncheons of
the Victorian RAAF Radar
Association. Peter was also
present at the dedication of
the Victorian RAAF Radar
Association Memorial
Plaque on the site of No
13RS at Cape Otway in
August 2006.

Vale Peter Yeomans.



VALE VIC LEIGH, ROYAL AIR FORCES ASSOCIATION, MELBOURNE BRANCH

13/2/1926 – 20/12/2019

Mr Ted Hayes OAM, RAFA
Branch President writes:

It is with great sadness

that we have to report the passing of our great friend and loyal member, Vic Leigh.

Vic was a man of few words but a man of many parts.

Many of you will know him through his dedicated service to the RAFA and AFA as our secretary.

He was the keeper of information about our members and the detail of workings of the organisation. Vic always could be relied on to alert us to the requirements of membership subs, annual general meetings, election of officers and where to find these. His knowledge of the Association was second to none and he will be sorely missed.

We will also remember his

outstanding generosity in supplying copies, without charge, of the many photographs taken on the many occasions of our formal and informal activities. If you were in the picture you would receive an envelope with your name on it containing the appropriate print.

Vic was a humble man. He never made any attempt at self-importance although he was key to many of our activities and he rarely spoke of his background. We only relatively recently discovered some detail of his service in WWII and his arrival in Australia accompanying a shipment of Mosquito bombers from 618 Squadron which were to be used against the Japanese in the Pacific.

We do know that he was a long serving and highly respected member of the Freemasons.

Vic was not a man to complain. His health had been causing a great deal of discomfort for some time, but he bore this with stoicism and dignity - right to the end. However, he did complain bitterly that he was missing out on all the festive season activities! But, he was well pleased to get the cards from the AFA Xmas lunch members, and the RAFA lunch members.

What can you say about a man who was greatly valued, will be much missed but made little of himself. You can afford him one of life's highest accolades. He was not only a good man; he was a very good man.

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 Vic Leigh RAF/Nth Metropolitan Branch	20/12/2019
Mr Wallace Fawcner 2 Squadron Branch.....	31/12/2019
Mr Norman Quin Bendigo Branch.....	29/08/2019
Mr Peter Yeoman RAAF Radar Branch	31/12/2019
Mr Ron Clinch Vietnam Veterans Branch	27/01/2020
Mr David Grover Vietnam Veterans Branch	07/02/2020
Mr Alan Baskett Bendigo Branch.....	27/02/2020
Mr Raymond Magilton Ballarat Branch	20/03/2020

Let Us Not Forget

Air Force Association

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