

President's Report

2017 is going to be a busy and hopefully an interesting year for the Division. The Avalon Airshow 2017 was a great opportunity to promote the Association. This year we were accompanied by B24 Liberator Restoration who placed a Norden Bombsight on display. Together we attracted a good deal of interest. I'd like to thank Bob Brackin who negotiated the space with Avalon Airshow management and organised the display. Also, a big thank you to the many volunteers who staffed the stand over the Trade and Public Days.

In February, we welcomed two new branches, the 2SQN Branch and the RAF Branch. That's nearly 100 additional members, but it is not the number of members that we should crow about. The Association is about making current and new members feel their membership is worthwhile and are getting enjoyment from their membership. Several 2SQN Branch members reside in the NT and, although their attendance at functions may not occur, we'll be making sure they are 'kept in the loop' on social and veteran matters.

We will be vigorously pursuing the reactivation of the Gippsland and Geelong Branches during the next two months. B24 Liberator Restoration has agreed to come 'on-board' and I am also negotiating 'Branch membership' with another association.

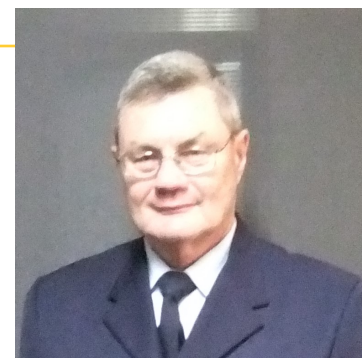
Late last year I was approached by a local historian from Tetbury, UK regarding a centenary commemoration of 1st Wing Australian Flying Corps that trained for aerial combat from two adjacent airfields. Twenty-three AFC airmen died in training accidents and are buried in the local church cemetery. The Air Force Association National Council agreed to fund a bronze plaque to pay tribute to the kindred relationship that existed between the AFC airmen and the Tetbury community that has honoured their memory for 100 years. I will present the plaque to the township on Remembrance Day this year.

I am very pleased to announce that William 'Bill' Belton, AM a former Division President and long standing Board Member, has been granted Life Membership of the Air Force Association. His Life Membership Certificate will be formally presented at the Division's Annual General Meeting to be held on May 11th, 2017. I very much am looking forward to the occasion.

The Division kindly promoted its Care Parcel Program to the National level making it an Air Force Association National Program. The last dispatch of parcels that reached our deployed Air Force personnel in time for Christmas brought many heart-warming accolades, testimony to the program's success in boosting morale. Victorian Division will continue to manage the program on behalf of the Association. This very generous gesture was acknowledged by the National President AVM Brent Espeland, AM (Retd).

ANZAC Day 2017 Melbourne CBD March will have a special feature.

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Autumn 2017

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Editor T.A Pili

Around the Branches

Bendigo Branch

Well here we are again, another year has gone by already.

Sadly we lost another WWII member in Noel Dean on 16th January, 2017. Noel celebrated his 90th birthday on 15th August with a great family party. I was very privileged to receive an invitation and meet with his six daughters. Noel had been in extreme pain for past 2-3 years. He attended our meetings regularly, wearing a lovely smile and never grumbled. We will miss him very much. It was Noel's wish for a RAAF funeral service which we were pleased to comply with, giving him a guard of honour as he left the funeral parlour and was carried to the grave.

Our Christmas luncheon was held on 1st December, 2016 at Windermere Hotel, Kangaroo Flat. Carl Schiller & his wife together with Tom Jobling & Keith Lanyon from Ballarat branch joined in the festivities with 34 of our members.

We had a choice of 1,2 or 3 courses from their seniors menu which we all really enjoyed. The entertainment consisted of a group of 6 ladies named "The Rustic Divas" who sang two brackets of songs and carols. They had all toes tapping. There was a unanimous decision that we should invite them back next Christmas.

On 2nd February we held our AGM with no changes to the executive, which I am pleased to report.

Glenis Gordon
Secretary



The Bristol Boxkite replica with former Air Vice-Marshal Mark Skidmore at the controls at Point Cook, air base for a 2013 test flight. The replica was painstakingly built at the RAAF Museum.

ATC/AAFC Branch,

Hello to all members and Happy New Year.

Well, here we are again into the brand New Year 2017 and we hope that everyone had an enjoyable and safe time over Christmas either with their families and friends or wherever else they might happen to have been during the Festive Season.

First we extend a warm welcome to two new Branch members from the ranks of the AAFC, Kieran Rogan and John Weiss. We hope they enjoy being members of the Air Force Association and part of our Branch.

The Branch Christmas Luncheon was a huge success again this year and on behalf of the Committee I thank all of the members who attended and made the day such an enjoyable one. My special thanks to O.C. 4WG WGCDR (AAFC) Shaun Young our Branch AAFC Liaison Officer who assisted greatly by stepping into the breach and conducting the raffle, thus saving much of my ailing voice.

With this being the year of the Avalon Air Show, planning is well under way for the Air Force Association's display stall. If you're going to attend, please be sure to drop by the stall and say hello.

On Saturday the 21st January, I had the pleasure of attending the Graduation Parade of the 4WG AAFC Promotion Detachment 01/17 at Laverton and meeting up again with a number of our AAFC Branch members and others, plus quite a few friends of the days of yore. The cadets' standard of uniform and drill was highly commendable and thanks to our member, FLGOFF (AAFC) Sarah Gulam who officiated as M.C. for the parade and afterwards kindly supplied me with the details of the Awards presented on the day for publication in our Branch's recent newsletter.

Our first Friday of the month luncheon at Box Hill RSL on the 3rd of February was well attended by approximately 28 of our Branch and we remind our members that should they have any family, visitors or friends who would like to come along

with them and join us on these occasions, they will also be made most welcome.

VALE: Once again it is our sad duty to report the passing of Arnold Kopp MBE DFC, another of the ATC/AAFC Branch's long serving members. Our deepest condolences to Betty and the family and my personal thanks to both Betty and daughter Jennifer Futiere for making Arnold's war record notes from the funeral service available for inclusion in our newsletter.

Very best wishes to all.

Laurie Bell.

Engineers Branch

The branch met on February 6 at The Batman Hill Hotel on Collins Street, Melbourne.

It was resolved that we would hold two functions in 2017; one in June and one in November. These functions are held in collaboration with the RAAF Engineer Officers' Association (REOA). At the June meeting David Graham (who was a member of DSTO before he retired) will be our speaker at the mid-year luncheon. He was involved with the F18 aircraft (as one of our reps in the US) and was the Chief Scientist to CAF (and is well known to senior RAAF officers who served before he and they retired).

The June function will be held at the Batman's Hill on Collins Hotel at midday on Wednesday, 14 Jun 17.

Contact Peter Jupp at peterjupp@a2ei.com if you wish to attend.

Kingsley McRae
Representative

CATALINA BRANCH



Allan Arvidson and Jennifer Newton represented the RAAFA Catalina Branch at the Remembrance Day Service in the grounds of the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital (Austin Health) on Friday 11 November 2016. More than 600 were in attendance, including children from Ivanhoe Primary School and the Austin Hospital crèche. Also, there were nursing students and chaplains from hospitals around Victoria.

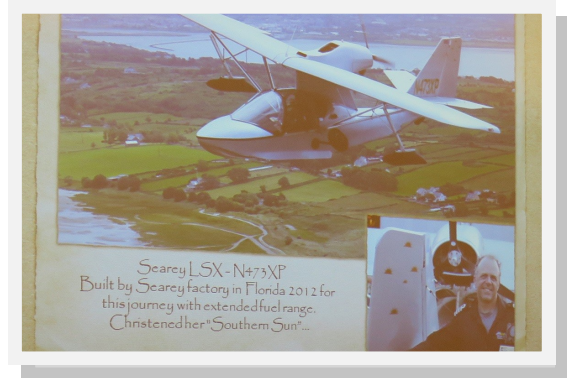
Approximately 50 wreaths were laid and a plaque was unveiled for the 2/2nd Field Regiment along with the 2/23rd Battalion Shield. A Fromelles Mosaic was also presented. Three planes made three passes at 11:15 am following their flyover at the Shrine of Remembrance. As always, it was a great day and the sense of community was most evident. A light luncheon was a chance to meet up with many folks from multiple theatres of war, including the current generation. Allan again laid our wreath with dignity and pride.

RAAFA Catalina Branch held our annual Christmas luncheon at ANZAC House, Collins Street Melbourne on Thursday 24 November 2016. President Mr Ken Scott



welcomed 19 members, family and friends, to an afternoon of comradery and conversation. Member Michael Smith was our guest speaker. He has worked in the cinema exhibition space for 25 years and is the owner of the popular Sun Theatre in Yarraville. Michael is also the founder of the Non-Government Organisation Lorosa'e Cinema in East Timor. His Grandfather, Flight Sergeant Russell Wordley Smith, was a Wireless Operator Air Gunner (WOA) on Catalinas in 42 Squadron at Melville Bay in Northern Territory during WW2 and inspired his interest in Flying Boats. Michael was named Adventurer of the year in 2016 by Australian Geographic after he was the first person to circumnavigate the world in a flying boat. His presentation style was

infectious and captivated his audience with a story of adventure, anxiety and trust, being alone in foreign lands.



Michael's aircraft, Christened the Southern Star, was a Searey LSX-N473XP built in Florida in 2012, with an extended fuel range specifically for this flight. The journey took 7 months, through 25 countries and 80 cities. Flying at an average speed of 80 knots, Michael travelled 57,500 kilometres taking 82 flying days over 480 flying hours.

Diary Dates for 2017:

Monday 25 April - ANZAC Day March. "Step Off" place and time TBA,

Thursday 25 May - Catalina Branch AGM at RAAFA Camberwell from 10:30 am, *followed by - Committee Meeting and Branch Get Together.*

Sunday 20 August - Shrine of Remembrance Wreath Laying and Pilgrimage Service at 2:00 pm.

October - Branch Get Together at RAAFA Camberwell from 10:30 am - TBA

Friday 11 November - Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital (Austin Health) Wreath Laying, time 11:00 am.

November - Catalina Branch Christmas Lunch - TBA. Please flag in your diaries the 75th Anniversary of No 1 Flying Boat Repair Depot from 17 to 19 March 2017.

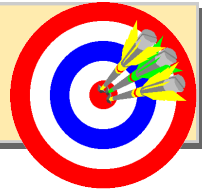
Ron Kirk Secretary

RAF Branch

"The Royal Air Force Branch of AFA, came on board officially on 1st January and joined in with the first activity, our Welcome party on 19th February. There was very enthusiastic attendance from our members (Barb, you may know the number) and we were impressed by the warm welcome and an excellent lunch. We were also pleased to receive our official certificate of association which we will ensure is seen by all of our membership. We look forward to many opportunities to meet and enjoy the company of our wider Air Force brothers and sisters."

Ted

Care Parcels Hit the Mark



Australian Defence Force
Headquarters Resolute Support

Dear Sir,

Being separated from loved ones and family during the festive season never seems to get any easier. During this deployment I complete 35 years' Service and there is no doubt in my mind that active support by associations, community and schools has never been better. In the distant past perhaps the attitude was 'that's your job'. Today the toll on members and families is better appreciated and the positive messages of support from fellow Australians is much appreciated by all who are deployed.

The care packages kindly gifted by the Victorian Division were perfectly suitable, including your generous letter of appreciation. The following is offered only from my own observations. Most deployed locations are supported by US dining facilities, with an emphasis on high sugar sweets and deep frying. The Australian taste is more savoury with the exception of ever popular Tim Tams, which are also a useful bartering tool or to show appreciation to coalition colleagues. Items such as; all varieties of nuts, jerky, Anzac and savoury biscuits are unlikely to go to waste. Small packages are best to prevent spoiling; a small ziplock bag would assist retaining freshness of any open product.

As a personal aside, it's a small world, you were reviewing Officer for my OTS graduation almost 20 years ago and I recall chatting about gliding and a common friend – John Buchanan, 'Butch' within the gliding community. You might be interested to know he's still as passionate as ever and recently humbled pilots half his age at the Australian Nationals to once again become Australian National Champion.

On behalf of all Air Force members currently serving in Afghanistan, we wish all Air Force Association members and family a happy, healthy and rewarding new year.

Regards
Peter J 'Stan' O'Donnell
WGCDR
ISR Chief
CJ6
HQRS
Kabul

2 Jan 2017

Presidents Message Cont. from page 1

Air Commodore

Jenny Lumsden, CSC will be the Leader of the March – most likely the first female officer to do so. Jenny is a veteran of multiple deployments and I was very pleased on behalf of the Board, to nominate her for the role. Air Commodore Rowan Story, AM RFD will lead the RAAF Group.

Finally, I ask you look for the notice regarding April's 'Meet a Mate' event. It will be the first of this type of excursion that will include members and non-members to gather for a social outing. First up is the B24 Liberator Restoration Australia hangar at Werribee and lunch.

God Bless

Carl Schiller, OAM CSM

President



RAAF ASSOCIATION VICTORIAN DIVISION

PATRON

Wing Commander **P. S. Isaacson** AM DFC AFC DFM

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

GPCAPT. C. F. (Carl) Schiller OAM CSM Ret. : State President

Darrell Robinson: Executive Board Secretary

R.J (Bob) Brackin : Immediate Past President

D (Darryl) Topp and M (Max) McGregor Vice-Presidents

P.W. (Peter) Colliver Chairman Welfare Patriotic Fund & National Secretary

J. (John) McCrystal : Chairman RAAFA Foundation

Directors: D. (Di) Hooper ; T. A. (Tony) Pilli;

P. (Peter) Finkelstein: Honorary Solicitor

BRANCH SECRETARIES

Catalina Ronald Kirk (98193527); **ATC/AAFC** Hugh Tank (98773424);
Ballarat Tom Jobling (53331653); **Bendigo** Glenis Gordon (54369293);
Fighter Squadrons Bill Taylor (98486778); **Engineers** Kingsley Porter
 0411 803500, **21 Squadron** Mike Dance 5776 2106;
RAF Ted Hayes 9841 8553; **Melbourne WAAAF** Jessie Reed (98029073);
North Metropolitan Elayne Whatman (93021048); **Vietnam Veterans**
 Gill Coughlan gilly4346@gmail.com ; **Sunderland Squadrons** Ricky Hattam
 (52413431); **2 Squadron** Walter Sherman 5282 8315.

2017 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING/STATE CONFERENCE

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS & MOTIONS

Members are advised that the 2016 AGM followed by the State Conference will be held on **19th of May 2017**, venue to be RAAFA, .26 Camberwell Rd East Hawthorn

Nominations for State President, Treasurer and Board Members

.has now closed.

◆ The President's and Treasurer's tenures will expire at the Annual General Meeting.

◆ Current incumbents are:

State President - GPCAPT Carl Schiller
OAM, CSM Retd.

State Treasurer - Vacant

Motions for 2017 AGM and State Conference:

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

Clause 34: Purpose of Annual General Meeting

The business of an ordinary meeting shall be for the purpose of receiving the report of the Board, receiving the state of accounts and transacting any other business which under these presents ought to be transacted at any ordinary meeting. All other business transacted at an ordinary meeting and all business transacted at an extraordinary meeting shall be deemed special.

SGT JAMES MALLETT BENNETT – AUSTRALIAN FLYING CORPS

James Mallett Bennett (1894-1922), airman and mechanic, was born on 14 January 1894 at St Kilda, Victoria, son of James Thomas Bennett, tick-maker, and his wife Henrietta Augusta, née McKendrick. After schooling he trained as a motor mechanic. In 1912 he joined the militia and served for three years with the 49th Battalion.



Bennett enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force on 14 July 1915 and, on the formation of the Australian Flying Corps early next year, was posted to 'C' Flight, No. 1 Squadron, as a mechanic. On arrival in Egypt in mid-April, the squadron's mechanics were split up into several parties and assigned to British units for training. Bennett joined No. 14 Squadron, Royal Flying Corps, and trained as a fitter and turner. After returning to his own unit he was promoted corporal on 24 August; later that year he began duty with No. 67 Squadron, R.F.C., an all-Australian squadron serving with the British Expeditionary Force in Egypt.

Except for a brief period spent at its base at Abbassia, he remained with No. 67 Squadron throughout the Sinai and Palestine campaigns. Promoted sergeant in March 1918, he was mentioned in dispatches soon afterwards and was later awarded the Meritorious Service Medal for his distinguished service as an air mechanic. After the Armistice Bennett and Sergeant W. H. Shiers were invited to act as air mechanics for Captain Ross Smith, then attempting the first Cairo-Calcutta flight in a Handley-Page aircraft. Both mechanics received the Air Force Medal for outstanding work under hazardous conditions during the flight. The same crew then carried out a survey by ship of the proposed Calcutta-Koepang (Timor) air route. On 7 July 1919 Bennett was attached to a Royal Air Force unit on the north-west frontier in India; here he superintended the rigging of Bristol fighters for use in reconnaissance and offensive missions during the short but fierce Afghan campaign.

In 1919 the Australian government offered a prize of £10,000 to the first aviator to fly from England to Australia within thirty days. Ross Smith and his brother Keith entered the race with Bennett and Shiers as their mechanics and were the first to reach Darwin. Their success aroused world-wide interest and acclaim.

On 22 December the Smith brothers were knighted; Bennett and Shiers received Bars to their Air Force Medals. Popular opinion favoured greater recognition for the mechanics, especially after Ross Smith stated publicly that the success of the flight was mainly due to

their skill and zeal. On 19 March 1920 the minister for defence announced that Bennett had been promoted senior warrant officer, class 1; six months later he was granted the honorary rank of lieutenant in the A.I.F. reserve of officers.

Early in 1922 the Smith brothers decided to attempt a round-the-world flight; Bennett and Shiers were again chosen as mechanics. The crew planned to take off from England on 25 April, but on 13 April Ross Smith and Bennett were killed during a test flight at Weybridge, when their Vickers Viking Amphibian crashed. The pioneer aviators were mourned as national

heroes and their bodies were brought back to Australia. Bennett was buried in St Kilda cemetery on 19 June 1922 after a lying-in-state at Queen's Hall, Parliament House. An obelisk in his honour was unveiled at St Kilda on 26 April 1927.

*The above article is attributed to **Rex Clark**
This article was first published in **Australian Dictionary of Biography**, Volume 7, (MUP), 1979*



REVIEW:

75 YEARS ALOFT – Royal Australian Air Force Air Training Corps, Australian Air Force Cadets



In this comprehensive, thoroughly researched book Matthew Glozier describes the remarkable 75 year history of the Air Training Corps (ATC) and Australian Air Force Cadets (AAFC) and pays tribute to the over 150,000 cadets and staff whose lives the organisation has positively influenced. Formed in 1941, the purpose of the ATC was to attract air-minded youth into the rapidly expanding RAAF and by the end of WWII over 13,000 had done so. The ATC continued post-war when the emphasis

changed to training in citizenship, discipline and fostering comradeship, loyalty and leadership.

The ATC struggled to survive in the 1970s when the government of the day saw the cadet movement as warlike and a drain on the federal government budget but the dedication of staff with active support from the RAAF enabled it to emerge stronger than ever after a change of government. It was during this period that quite a few former members joined the RAAF and some reached CAS rank. In 1982 females were able to enrol. The emphasis on aviation was restored and new activities were initiated. On the 80th anniversary of the RAAF the cadets underwent a name change to Australian Air Force Cadets. Cadets are now prominent in supporting many national and local commemorative events, providing a disciplined and smart uniformed presence but the primary role is to motivate air-minded young people to seek a career in the RAAF.

AAFC officer and historian Flying Officer Glozier has written a scholarly, eminently readable and profusely illustrated history which will bring back many memories to former members as well as informing a wider audience of their achievements. It is available from the author at matthew.glozier@airforcecadets.gov.au, costing \$25.75, soft cover.

Les Sullivan (RAAFA, Vic Branch)

VALES

The following members have passed away since the last publication.

May they rest in peace.

Lest we forget

Mr Ronald Becker	Fighter Squadron	24.2.17
Mr Eric Dean	Bendigo Branch	March 17
Mrs Winifred Fry	Ballarat Branch	17/03/17



CONTACT EDITORIAL AND DISTRIBUTION DATES

Autumn 2017

Contributions close 28 February 2017

Publication March 11 2017

Winter 2017

Contributions close 30 May 2017

Publication June 17 2017

SPRING 2017

Contributions close 29 August 2017

Publication September 16 2017

SUMMER 2017

Contributions close 7 November 2017

Publication 25 November 2017

RAF Assn. Melb. Branch

Branch Meetings

1st Thursday at 11am

Stella Maris Seafarers Centre

600 Lt Collins St Melb.

VIETNAM VETERANS BRANCH

Our Annual General Meeting was held in the Air Force Association Headquarters on Sunday 12 February 2017 and was preceded by a light lunch and presentation of the AFA Foundation Bursary Awards by AFA Victorian President Carl Schiller and the Encouragement Awards made possible by two RAAF VVA Committee members.

There have been some changes to the Executive this year with Chris Hudnott assuming the role of President and Max McGregor as Vice President. Most members will know that after 12 years as Secretary, Rick Holmes has decided to take a back seat on the Committee and Gill Coughlan has taken on the role of Secretary.

Our monthly lunches at the Mail Exchange Hotel will continue this year on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. This venue is conveniently located just across Spencer Street from Southern Cross Station and is a great opportunity for members and partners to enjoy the company of colleagues and reminisce about the good old days in the RAAF.

Anzac Day will again provide us with the opportunity to reflect and commemorate the service and sacrifice of so many during the Dawn Service and March. After the March, we are again planning to get together for lunch at the Orient East Restaurant. This would have to be the closest restaurant to the Shrine (only a short 5-minute walk away) so do plan to attend this function if you can.

So that we can cater/accommodate appropriately, could you please let the secretary know of your intention to join us for lunch by the end of March by either a phone message on 03 8774-0646 or email gilly4346@gmail.com.



**RAAFA TIES AND SCARFS ARE
AVAILABLE FROM THE OFFICE.**

**THEY WOULD MAKE BRILLIANT
GIFTS**

**THE TIES ARE AVAILABLE AT
\$28.00 + POSTAGE; STATE
PREFERENCE WIDE OR NARROW
SCARFS AT \$28.00 + POSTAGE**

SPECIAL NOTICE!

For members who wish to watch the Anzac Day march on the big screen, RAAFA will be open on ANZAC day from 11am with light refreshments being provided. If you are going to be attending RAAFA in Hawthorn, on ANZAC day, please advise Barbara on 98134600 for catering purposes.