



# CONTACT

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## RISE OF THE PHOENIX – THE STORY OF AN AUSTRALIAN B24 LIBERATOR RESTORATION (PART 2)



Peter Perryman and B24 Branch Secretary, Tony Muller, at work in B24 hangar.



The B24 Liberator – restoration well underway!

**In our last edition of Contact, we brought you Part 1 of the story of the restoration of Australia's only surviving B-24 Liberator, one of only eight still in existence in the world.**

Part 2 continues the story of the Restoration and the group of dedicated people who banded together in a common cause: to find and restore the glorious B24 Liberator, as told by Tony Muller from our B24 Branch.

2018 is significant as it is 30 years since that August meeting in Wagga where the B24 Restoration began, and the worldwide search began for a complete or parts of a plane.

One wonders at the reasons people collect and hoard things especially parts of a Liberator. Over time and as the word spread, information began to surface on the whereabouts of various items and the sometimes erroneous or fabled stories of complete planes stored in hidden locations all of which had to be studiously followed up.

One significant outcome was the provision of an unused hangar at RAAF Williams Base at Laverton, where items that did turn up could be safely stored. Later on and following the closing of the Laverton base to the general public, the provision of two former WW2 hangars on the Pt Cook Satellite aerodrome in Werribee was also gratefully accepted.

In late 1989, the Memorial Restoration Fund (as it had come to be known) was advised of a B24 fuselage lying in the backyard of the home of George Toye of Moe, Victoria. When this was confirmed, negotiations with him began and a signed and witnessed agreement that the unit would be sold to the fund for \$35,000 was completed. However, when the time came for the removal, a disagreement on the amount to be paid caused a huge problem and finally a further offer of \$5000 completed the deal. The fuselage was brought to Werribee through the efforts of the Korumburra Army Reserve unit in 1995.

Continued on page 2.

Our next big find came in 1991 with a Rotary project to build a school in Papua New Guinea and which involved the son of a former B24 pilot. A chance discussion with a local led to the discovery of an abandoned American Liberator that had been damaged by enemy fighters. It had lain there forgotten since 1944! A huge effort over three years involving volunteers, the Royal Navy, the RAAF and the Australian Army eventually resulted in it and other pieces arriving at Werribee in 1995.

Space prevents from detailing every incredible find, but a brief overview will give readers an idea of the enthusiasm of people and other organisations to help wherever possible.

Darwin Museum donated 3 rescued Sperry ball turrets on the understanding we rebuild one for them and one for ourselves.

Another donation was of a rear turret by the RAAF Historic Flight Amberley and with the help of an American Member a front turret was found in an Arizona bone yard.

A rescued upper gun turret being transported to a production facility on a truck which had caught fire and unceremoniously dumped into a roadside ravine which completed the set.

A brand-new complete landing leg still in its box was found under a house in Elsternwick Victoria, another found cut in half for a wool press on a farm was welded back to a working condition by a South Melbourne firm.

Brand new Fowler flaps found on a Queensland farm were in their original box. A hangar visitor noted "My father was a radar operator on a B24 and brought his unit home to the farm". It is now restored and operational as are the myriad of other components that have also been "donated".

Every donated, scavenged or bought item had to be evaluated, catalogued and repaired to a useable or operational condition. Over the last 30 years this has been

done by hundreds of volunteers working on site, and, sadly, many of them without ever seeing the final result.

## **WE'RE INCREASING OUR FUNDRAISING EFFORTS.**

B24 Liberator Fund Members and its many other supporters have raised the money that has made it all possible so far and now we need to further increase our fund-raising efforts. Currently the Restoration Committee is in negotiation with the many stakeholders involved with the task of finalising the ceding of the surrounding land to the Fund and demolition and the re-erection of the larger hangar Number 1 behind our current position. This will provide a permanent and proper home for the B24 Liberator A72-176 in accordance with our Mission Statement: 'To locate restore and display a B24 Liberator in an appropriate Museum for the people of Australia'. It also means we have to find the means to fund it

## **HOW CAN YOU HELP?**

We are asking people to become a Member of the B24 Liberator Fund, or a volunteer or bring family and friends to visit our B24 Restoration Project. We can also supply guest speakers that will travel to your meetings without charge.

Join us in the restoration of Australia's only surviving B24 Liberator! Find out more by visiting the [B24 Restoration Project website](#).

**Opening Hours:** Mon Tues & Thurs from 9-30am - 3-30pm,

**Location:** Farm Rd & Princess Highway, Werribee - 03 9731 1263

**Admission:** \$5.00.

**Membership\*:** \$55, Seniors: \$33 (\*includes visitation rights to other selected Aviation Museums and four B24 newsletters a year.



*Roger Williams (L) and Paul Rourke manufacturing underwing fuselage panels for the Liberator.*



*John Keevins (L), Nathan Shea and colleague working on oxygen lines for later installation.*

## FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Members

Initiated many years ago by the RAAF Vietnam Veterans Branch, the Care Parcel program has been a most successful venture for the Air Force Association (AFA) of Victoria. Initially only 150 parcels were dispatched, and over time this program grew to include every Air

Force member serving in an overseas conflict zone and became an AFA - National sponsored event.

Unfortunately, I must advise all of our members that the Australian Defence Force (ADF) has stated that due to the large numbers of care parcels being sent to ADF personnel that the postal service has had great difficulty in delivering these parcels. Many Ex-Service Organisations - and indeed many schools - have sent parcels to our servicemen and women serving overseas so it is easy to see how a very large number of parcels could clog the postal system. In addition, we were advised that there was no need for these care parcels as all serving overseas have ready access to all that they need!

Needless to say, we were extremely disappointed with this decision, for it ignores the impact on morale when those serving overseas are recognised by those at home in Australia. While an unstructured approach to sending care parcels could result in a large volume of parcels being sent, our program was structured to individual Air Force members serving overseas and therefore our number of parcels being sent was a known quantity. The additional disappointment is that after a lot of negotiations the Governor of Victoria had accepted our invitation to attend our next care parcel packing that had been scheduled for November, something that we reluctantly have had to cancel.

At this stage we are in discussion with Air Force to explore possible ways of continuing the program. There are a small number of Air Force personnel serving in remote locations without ready access to all that they need to whom we may be able to send care parcels. The other possibility is that we send a parcel of some description

to the families of those serving overseas. This obviously creates difficulty in establishing what would be of benefit to families, and it does not cover members without families. Further advice will be provided when we have a clearer understanding of just what is possible.

We have two big events occurring in November:

**Our Armistice Commemoration** on 4 November will be a spectacular event with the Air Force agreeing to open RAAF Base Point Cook to the public. The reception in the old Officers' Mess for our members and invited guests precedes the sunset fly past of vintage aircraft and the evening torchlit service. It should be a memorable event and we hope for good weather conditions, but it will go ahead irrespective of the weather. Our special thanks go to 21 SQN for their total support of this event.

**Our Christmas function** will be held at our Hawthorn headquarters on 29 November. For our mid-year Meet-A-Mate event we had arranged for AFA member and former-POW Jack Bell to be our guest speaker, but unfortunately Jack could not attend as he had a fall and was in hospital with a broken leg. I am happy to report that Jack has made a splendid recovery and has again agreed to be our guest speaker for our Christmas function.

For those who have not heard Jack tell his story, come along and be inspired, for his is a story not to be missed. This presentation will be recorded so that we retain his message for future generations.

In addition, at our Christmas function AFA member Ted Bushell will be donating several items to our Association. There are numerous bound volumes covering the history of the Air Force Engineering Branch which will be available to anyone interested in the subject and for research purposes. Ted is also donating several paintings and these will be unveiled on the day. One painting in particular is spectacular and when unveiled it will take your breath away.

Two special events that will be a great lead into Christmas, and I hope that you can attend.

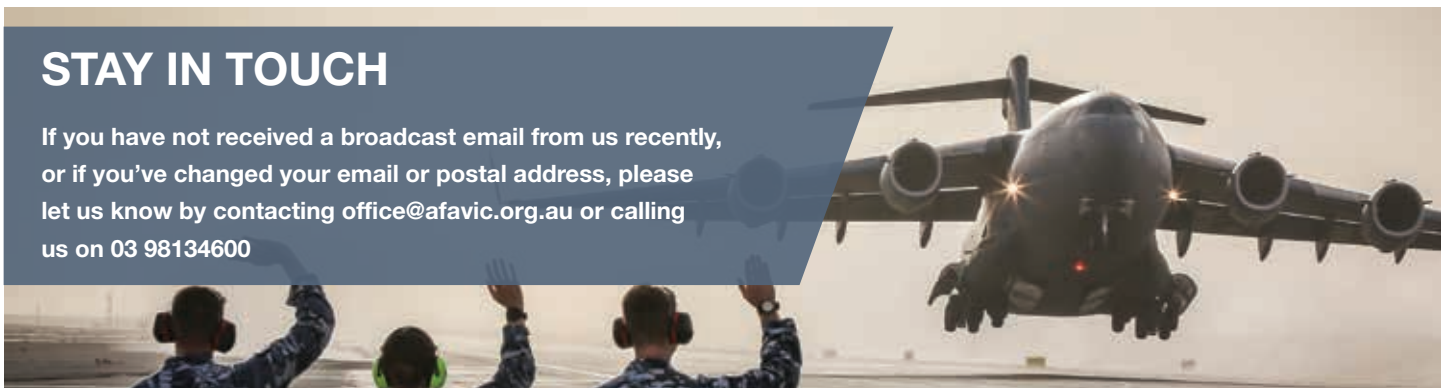
Best wishes

**Max McGregor**

President, Victoria Division

## 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](mailto:office@afavic.org.au) or calling us on 03 98134600





# LIFE MEMBERSHIP FOR AFA VIC TREASURER, PETER COLLIVER



AFA Victoria President, Max McGregor (R) presents Peter Colliver with his Association Life Membership

## AFA Victoria Treasurer and National Secretary Peter Colliver brings up a half century with the Association – and a well-deserved Life Membership.

While fifty years of membership of the Air Force Association is indeed a significant achievement in itself it does not qualify for life membership. However, it is only when you look at the service that Peter Colliver has delivered to the Air Force Association over this period that you appreciate the time and effort that he has devoted to making the Air Force Association what it is today.

Together with Bill Belton, then President of the Victorian Division, Peter was one of the key people involved in turning the fortunes of the Air Force Club -as it was then known - around and helping to establish the stable and viable entity it is today.

While Bill Belton was instrumental in steering the Air Forces Club towards disposing of its property in Cromwell Road, South Yarra and purchasing commercial premises with the potential of making the Victorian Division a financially viable

entity, Peter Colliver played a leading role in the successful sale and subsequent purchase of the Camberwell Road property in East Hawthorn, our current headquarters and a regular source of income for the Victorian Division. In addition, Peter was also influential in persuading concerned members that this path was the only way to keep the Association functioning successfully in Victoria. Those who remember these bleak days report on the tireless efforts of Peter Colliver in delivering this most successful outcome.

Peter has held numerous positions within the Association, clearly showing his dedication and commitment to making the Association the successful entity that it is today:

- State Treasurer - November 1993 to April 1996
- State Treasurer - August 2001 to June 2004
- State Vice President - 2003 to 2004
- State President - 2004 to 2012
- President of the RAAFA foundation - 2004 to 2006
- National Vice President - 2006 to 2012
- Appointed to the Victorian Veterans Council - 2006 to 2013
- Member of the Ryder Cheshire Foundation Board - 2007 to present day
- National Secretary - 2014 to present day
- Chairman Welfare Patriotic Fund - 2014 to present day
- State Treasurer - 2016 to present day

In recommending Peter for Life Membership, AFA Victoria President, Max McGregor said "Peter Colliver has made, and continues to make, a most significant contribution to the Air Force Association over many, many years. His cheerful contribution continues today with unwavering commitment and enthusiasm."

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*"The Board of Management of the Air Force Association (Victorian Division) is unanimous in recommending to the Air Force Association National Council, that Peter William Colliver be made a Life Member of the Air Force Association."*

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Congratulations, Peter.

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## SAVING BOXER 22 A STORY BY DON HOLLWAY – AN EXCERPT FROM VIETNAM MAGAZINE, OCT 2018

**In December 1969 the effort to recover two downed airmen snowballed into the biggest rescue mission of the Vietnam War. You can read the full story by visiting the AFA Victoria website, but here is a brief excerpt below...**

On September 18th, we celebrated the 71st birthday of the US Air Force. This is a great story to remember those served and made the ultimate sacrifice.

"The mission went wrong almost from the start. Two U.S. Air Force F-4C Phantoms of the 558th Tactical Fighter Squadron, call sign "Boxer," found their primary target weathered over. They diverted north to the village of Ban Phanop, Laos, near a chokepoint where the Ho Chi Minh Trail crossed the Nam Ngo River... In the trailing aircraft, Boxer 22, pilot Capt. Benjamin Danielson and weapons systems officer 1st Lt. Woodrow J. "Woodie" Bergeron Jr. were on their first sortie together. Just after dropping their ordnance, the Phantom suddenly pitched up, then down. Their flight leader called over the radio: "Boxer 22, you're hit! Eject! Eject! Eject!"

It was Friday morning, Dec. 5, 1969, and Boxer 22 was about to become the objective of the biggest rescue mission of the Vietnam War.

Ejecting, Danielson and Bergeron—Boxer 22 Alpha and Bravo—came down on opposite sides of a dogleg in the Nam Ngo, in a valley a mile across and a thousand feet deep, walled with karst, limestone cliffs. They were just

10 miles from the North Vietnam border, but only about 65 miles east of NKP—Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai Air Base, the main base for U.S. Air Force special operations squadrons specializing in search and rescue.

The rescue of Boxer 22 was the largest search and rescue mission of the Vietnam War. A total of 336 sorties were flown by aircraft that expended 1,463 smart bombs, high-explosive bombs, cluster bombs, smoke bombs, napalm bombs and rocket pods over the course of three days. Skyraiders alone flew 242 sorties; the HH-3 and HH-53 helicopters, over 40. Five Skyraiders were damaged, but the Jolly Greens got the worst of it. Five of the 10 involved never flew again.

After nearly 48 hours in enemy territory, and on his last legs, 1st Lt. Woodie Bergeron was finally rescued. Tragically, Capt. Benjamin Danielson was shot and killed before he could be rescued. Rescue chopper tail gunner Airman 1st Class David Davison was killed by enemy fire.

Read the full story by Don Hollway from the October edition of 'Vietnam' magazine on our website.



*The crew of Boxer 22. Weapons systems officer Woody Bergeron, at left, and pilot Benjamin Danielson (Photo courtesy Don Hollway)*





## COMMEMORATION & FELLOWSHIP

### SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE HOSTS NATIONAL MALAYA & BORNEO VETERANS' MEMORIAL SERVICE.

A moving Commemorative Service for Malaya and Borneo Veterans was held at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance on 31 August. AFA Victoria member and Confrontation veteran, Noel Hutchins was there...

On Friday, 31st August 2018, the National Malaya & Borneo Veterans Association of Australia held a very moving Commemorative Service at the beautiful Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne in recognition and honour of Australian military personnel who served in two historical campaigns — the Malayan Emergency (1948–1960), and the Indonesian Confrontation, or Konfrontasi (1962–1966).

While inclement weather prevented the service from being held outside as intended, to hold it inside in the beautiful Upper Chamber of this magnificent Shrine somehow, to me, seemed more appropriate.

Wreaths were laid by the NMBVAA President, the Consul General of Malaysia, the British Consul General, The Hon Consul Fiji (Vic), a representative for State Minister for Veterans Affairs, RSL Victoria President, the Shrine Life Governor, Melbourne Legacy Chairman, Vice Chairman of the Weary Dunlop Association and representatives from the Sabah, Sarawak and Borneo Natives Organisation, Austin Health Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital and Thomas Carr College.

Those present paused reflect on the service and sacrifice of those who served and pay tribute to those who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

A special thank you must also go to the Students and Staff from Thomas Carr College in Tarneit, for providing a beautiful choir, music, bugler and a piper on bagpipes for the Service."

by Noel Hutchins, Ballarat Branch.



*(Top) A very moving NMBVAA Commemorative Service at the beautiful Shrine of Remembrance*

*(top) L to R: Two ex-RAAFies - Doug Pendergast and Noel Hutchins*

*(Right) L to R: Vernon Joseph (Army), Noel Hutchins (Air Force), Chris Hoare (Navy) - all Indonesia/Malaysia confrontation veterans.*



You can find out more about the National Malaya & Borneo Veterans Association by visiting the [NMBVAA website](#).

## BATTLE OF BRITAIN COMMEMORATIVE SERVICE 78TH ANNIVERSARY



WWII WREN Mrs Margaret Woods shares stories and a laugh with AFA Victoria President Max McGregor

**It was a cold cloudy day on Sunday 16th September when the 78th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain was commemorated at Ballarat.**

The day started with a church service at the Skipton Street Uniting church where the two ordained AFA Ballarat Branch members, Rev John Furness and Rev Keith Lanyon were significant contributors to what was a very well attended and lovely service.

The memorial service that followed at the Sebastopol Memorial was attended by Service and Parliamentary dignitaries including the Air Force Association of Victoria President, Max McGregor and his wife Rosemary.

Just a little bit of rain during the ceremony but not enough to dampen the spirit of the occasion or stop the fly overs by the vintage Auster aircraft which added to the occasion. Lovely to see the fine upstanding young people of 425 Squadron



The Battle of Britain memorial service at the Sebastopol Memorial in Ballarat

Australian Air Force Cadets who formed the Catafalque Party and to observe the fine bugler, Tony Vanderkley.

The Battle of Britain Luncheon this year was well attended and seemed to be enjoyed by all those in attendance. The guest speaker was Squadron Leader Geoffrey Roberts (Ret'd), Eldest son of AFA Ballarat President Tom Roberts and his wife Penny. Geoffrey gave a most interesting talk which included stories of two recently deceased Battle of Britain pilots, Tom Neil and Geoffrey Wellum.

AFA Victoria President Max McGregor attended the commemoration and Battle of Britain luncheon afterwards and noted that one of the highlights of the afternoon was meeting WWII WREN Mrs Margaret Woods, a well-known and loved member of the Ballarat Branch. Readers may recall [Margaret's wonderful story](#) of her wedding dress that belonged to former American First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt.

"It was wonderful to meet Margaret Woods, a really lovely lady. The day for me was made special in being able to discuss with Margaret what it was like during those dark days, and to hear her story of her wedding and that special wedding dress" said Max.

"As Margaret said, she finished work on Friday afternoon, had her hair done that night, was married on the Saturday, had a one night honeymoon and then she and her husband went back to work on Sunday. It is hard to imagine just how hard it was at that time.

"I am glad that we have captured the details of the wedding dress, for this story could easily have been lost."

A special thanks must also go to Ballarat Branch President, Tom Roberts, for organising a wonderful event for a memorable occasion.

You can read [Margaret's wedding dress story](#) on our [website](#) or in the Winter 2018 edition of *CONTACT*.





## RAAF VVA GATHER FOR VIETNAM VETERANS' DAY AT THE SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE



### Commemorating the 52nd anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan and the 50th anniversary of the Battles at Fire Support Bases Coral and Balmoral.

On Saturday 18 August, RAAF Vietnam Veterans gathered at the RAAF Plaque for a remembrance service conducted by President (and AFA Victoria Board Member) Chris Hudnott. The service included prayer readings by the Rev George Ashworth and a wreath laying by Nick LeRay-Meyer.

Following a gunfire breakfast, official Vietnam Veterans' Day proceedings commenced. In acknowledgement of the 50th Anniversary of the Battles for Fire Support

Bases Coral and Balmoral, this year's March was led by 26 Australian flag-bearing Army cadets from Mentone Grammar School. Sadly, each flag represented one of the 26 Diggers killed-in-action during the battles between 12 May and 6 June 1968.

*(Thank you to Geoff Rose, Chris Hudnott and the RAAFFVVA for this story and wonderful images).*



26 Australian flag-bearing Army cadets from Mentone Grammar School, representing the 26 Diggers killed-in-action during the Coral and Balmoral battles.



RAAF VVA President Chris Hudnott leads the RAAF Vietnam Veterans in the March.





## ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT

### HEALTH UPDATE: MAKING WELL-INFORMED CHOICES ABOUT PROSTATE CANCER TREATMENT

**AFA Victoria member Alan White's recently book on surviving prostate cancer, "We've Lost My Prostate, Mate...and Life Goes On!", shares his story of diagnosis, treatment and survival, and he encourages men to make well-informed choices about prostate cancer treatment.**

Alan is also actively involved with ongoing research through the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre to develop better ways of helping men make well-informed choices about their prostate cancer treatment. He has shared this information about a new study assessing an online tool designed to help men and their partners do just that.

Men recently diagnosed with low risk prostate cancer are needed to take part in a study assessing a new online tool designed to help navigate their treatment.

Low-risk prostate cancer often grows very slowly or not at all, yet men faced with this diagnosis report more difficulty making a treatment decision than any other cancer clinical group. This is largely due to the variety of management options including Active Surveillance (close monitoring) versus active treatment such as radiotherapy or surgery.

Consultant Urologist Declan Murphy said it can be somewhat challenging for men to consider which option is best for them when confronted with a cancer diagnosis. "We like patients to feel well informed about their options and ensure men are armed with the best knowledge," A/ Prof Murphy says. "Comparing management options and watching the Navigate videos from men who have been in the same position can be very reassuring and really aid the decision-making process."

The Navigate website has been developed by a team of experts and men with first-hand experience of prostate cancer. Men and their partners can access the decision-

making exercise to help them arrive at a treatment decision. Included are over 40 videos of men, partners, oncologists, urologists and specialist prostate nurses to provide a range of perspectives and personal experiences.

The Navigate team, led by Professor Penelope Schofield, is now recruiting participants from around Australia for a randomised study to collect data on the potential benefits of the website.

Like the flip of a coin, some participants will be given access to the Navigate tool while others will receive the best conventional support currently available.

*"Participants needed to help assess online tool for prostate cancer"*

This Swinburne University funded project is recruiting both online and from Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, Cabrini Health, Austin

Health, Alfred Health and Western Health.

Men and their partners can register their interest to participate at [www.navigateprostate.com.au](http://www.navigateprostate.com.au). For more information, please contact Project Manager Natalie Richards on 03 8559 7453 or email [navigate@petermac.org](mailto:navigate@petermac.org)

**WE'VE LOST MY PROSTATE**  
**MATE... AND LIFE GOES ON**

One man's story and practical survival guide for Prostate Cancer

Being diagnosed with prostate cancer once in a lifetime is enough. In 2011, Alan White was facing a second round with this life threatening disease.

Alan's years of experience as a natural health practitioner and counsellor helped him and his wife, Fiona, to make the choice that no man really wants to make - surgical removal of the prostate gland - and to recover, physically and emotionally.

Talking about the things not usually discussed - sex after surgery, giant incontinence pads and how to wrangle your overnight urine bag - Alan shares his story and his discoveries. Fiona adds her tips for partners of men facing prostate cancer.

Alan has been the facilitator of the local Prostate Cancer Support Group in Bayside Melbourne for several years. He is also involved in ongoing research through the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre to develop better ways of helping men make well-informed choices about their prostate cancer treatment. He continues to work as a counsellor and natural health practitioner, with a special focus on men's health and wellbeing.

We've lost my prostate, mate! is Alan's story about the diagnosis, the decision making, the surgery and the road to recovery. He shares the good, the bad and the ugly along the way, providing helpful tips for fellow prostate cancer sufferers. Armed with his irrepressible laughter and a very determined wife, Alan shows that there is life after losing your prostate, mate.

## THE DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION HAS WELCOMED THE SENATE'S SUPPORT FOR AN AUSTRALIAN MILITARY COVENANT.

The Defence Force Welfare Association (DFWA), together with not only its partners in the Alliance of Defence Service Organisations (ADSO) but also with the support of the Returned and Services League of Australia, have long advocated the need to formally recognise the unique nature of military service through a legislated Australian Military Covenant.

A motion for adopting such a Covenant was moved in the Senate and passed on 12 September 2018.

In welcoming the motion, DFWA President, Kel Ryan said,

“the Covenant would promote greater awareness and understanding of the demands placed on ADF members and dovetail in perfectly with the Prime Minister’s employment initiative because ADF members are a national resource that can bring enormous value to the Australian workforce and, if properly harnessed, will significantly enhance the skill sets in Australian commercial enterprises for the benefit of the nation and its economic competitiveness”.

You can find the full media statement on the DFWA website: [www.dfw.org.au](http://www.dfw.org.au).



In addition to the President’s Reports below, you can also find Newsletters and other information about our Branches on our [AFA Victoria website](#). Simply go to the Branches dropdown menu on the front page.

### ATC/AAFC

#### Greetings

We are pleased to be able to open this somewhat short report with 3 new members.

Peter Johnson who, in his younger days was a former ATC cadet in Queensland and later joined and served in the RAAF and his wife Robyn whose father was also a serving member of the RAAF during the period 1938 to 1975.

Also joining the Branch is Susan Cohn, wife of our Newsletter Editor Ian and last but not least, Elizabeth Vida (nee Eastgate) who is

the daughter of our member Bob Eastgate.

We had the pleasure of meeting Elizabeth, who was a Cadet FLTSGT with 16 Flight AirTC in Essendon from 1987 ‘til 1994, at our most recent Branch Luncheon when she accompanied her father as a visitor. Elizabeth resides in Cammeray, NSW so joins the Branch as an interstate member.

We extend a warm welcome to them all and hope they enjoy being members of the Air Force Association.

The outcome of our recent survey of the

membership with regards to the proposal that the one remaining General Meeting of the Branch be discarded and that we only have the Annual General Meeting was exactly as the Committee expected and has resulted in the meeting in question being discontinued.

The No.4 Wing AAFC Annual Parade will be conducted at Point Cook on Sunday 7 October commencing at 1400hrs. The parade will be preceded by an Expo which opens at 0900hrs.

Planning is well under way for the Branch’s Christmas Luncheon to be held again this year at the Box Hill RSL on Sunday the 16th of December.

Best wishes to all as we look forward to the weather warming up a little at last.

Laurie Bell  
President

WANT TO KNOW MORE  
ABOUT THE ATC/AAFC  
BRANCH?

VISIT OUR BRANCH PAGE ON  
THE AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION  
VICTORIA WEBSITE



## BALLARAT

Whether illness, either personal or close relatives, or the winter climate has taken its toll, numbers have been down over the last quarter. However, it has also a boon to see a few faces whom we have not seen for some time.

The quality of our guest speakers has been excellent. In June, the recently retired Director of the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery, Gordon Morrison, expounded upon the coming exhibition featuring paintings from a French Regional Gallery. This has proved to be as impressive as he had indicated – and if you hurry you may be able to view it prior to its impending closure.

In July we welcomed Urologist Don Moss, who is also the President of the Sir Albert Coates Foundation.

In a vividly illustrated presentation, he explained the difficulties of providing medical care in the South Pacific region due to lack of facilities, equipment and trained staff. He, together with other specialists in the field of anaesthesia and surgery, are attempting to overcome this, both with personal care and training of the indigenous population.

Following the success of an earlier trivia quiz, in August, the President compiled an aviation-based quiz, which he explained was meant to be as informative as it was a challenge. Maybe it was too difficult, but this time there were no requests for a repeat performance!

In September we were scheduled to be addressed by Police Superintendent Jenny Wilson, but she was struck down by the

prevalent 'lurgi'. The replacements, Leading Senior Constable Tony Creanor and Senior Constable Michael Gorr provided a superb audio-visual presentation on current revisions and update of rules and regulations, interpretation and the personal mental and physical toll of their position. Surrounded after the formal conclusion of the meeting, they only left when we were forced to empty the meeting place in order to lock up!

Progress continues in the renovation of the Old Officers Mess from the School of Radio, conducted by the Ballarat City Council under the Heritage Scheme and which should provide us with a permanent Base.

In conjunction with this, research continues on the names and fate of

Graduates of the No 1 Wireless Air Gunners School with the intention of creating a Memorial to those who lost their lives in service.

Our Battle of Britain Commemoration event with a Memorial Church Service, a Wreath Laying Ceremony followed by a luncheon was held on September 16 (Ed. note: see earlier story). This is what we understand to be one of only two mainland services which continue to be conducted and which we regard as the highlight of our year.

Best wishes,  
Tom Roberts  
President

WANT TO KNOW MORE  
ABOUT THE BALLARAT  
BRANCH?

VISIT OUR BRANCH PAGE ON  
THE AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION  
VICTORIA WEBSITE

## RAF

Her Excellency the Honourable Linda Dessau QC hosted a reception at Government House for the RAF Branch of the Air Force Association and guests on 7th August.

The occasion was to celebrate the Centenary of the formation of the RAF. VIPs invited included Chris Holtby, the British Consul General, AFA National President Carl Schiller and AFA Victoria President Max McGregor.

The Governor gave an excellent speech, as did the British Consul General.

While everyone enjoyed a very pleasant morning tea, the Governor mingled with the 80 people there and made a point of talking to the six WW2 veterans present. It was a most memorable occasion enjoyed by everyone.

Members of the RAF Branch look forward to sharing the 100th Anniversary of the

Australian Air Force in three years' time.



WANT TO KNOW MORE  
ABOUT THE RAF BRANCH?

VISIT OUR BRANCH PAGE ON  
THE AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION  
VICTORIA WEBSITE

*(L to R) Celebrating the centenary of the AF with the Governor of Victoria, Her Excellency the Honourable Linda Dessau QC (centre): Judith and Ted Hayes, OAM, Valerie Boyd, Chris Holtby (British Consul-General), Carl Schiller, OAM CSM, Rosemary McGregor, Max McGregor, President AFA Victoria.*

## BENDIGO

Well, Bendigo branch is still meeting at Windermere Hotel, but hopefully we will be back at Bendigo District RSL for October, not that we didn't enjoy the hospitality afforded to us at Windermere.

I took a bus load of members to the Toolleen Hotel for lunch on 15th June. We all enjoyed the delicious lunch after which the boys were given a tour of the 'Shed'. We can really recommend stopping in when travelling north from Heathcote to Elmore/Echuca.

Our July and August meetings were taken up with discussions of the name change. The Bendigo Branch members are adamant that we should

retain RAAF Association. It seems that the opinion of the Life Blood of the country, Ballarat & Bendigo, just don't count.

The name Air Force Association is missing an extremely important word 'AUSTRALIAN', so it obviously doesn't matter what country we represent. We have had National President, Carl Schiller and State President, Max McGregor, explaining to us on a number of occasions that this has to be done to attract the younger generation. Enough of this because what we say doesn't count anymore.

We have been busy attending Memorial

Services for Vietnam Veterans, Victory in Pacific, Malay/Borneo, Lark Force, Korean 65th Armistice and the Battle for Australia which was held at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance.

We are looking forward to this coming Sunday, when we travel to Ballarat to join them for their Battle of Britain commemorations.

Our Welfare Officer, Ray Gray, has been very busy over the last 3-4 months, assisting our Immediate Past President & Life Member, Jack Fay, transitioning into aged care at Freemasons Homes.

In addition to visits to

widows assisting them with DVA matters and assisting a member in aged care to receive a wheel chair from RSL Welfare & Charities Committee, Ray also carried out a combined RSL & RAAF funeral service for Keith Friswell at the family's request. He also visited Alex Culvenor in hospital after suffering a mild stroke. Alex is now in aged care at Daylesford.

Glenis Gordon  
Secretary

WANT TO KNOW MORE  
ABOUT THE BENDIGO  
BRANCH?

VISIT OUR BRANCH PAGE ON  
THE AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION  
VICTORIA WEBSITE

## ENGINEER

### End-of-Year Luncheon:

Following the successful mid-year luncheon, the Committee is organising the End-of-Year Luncheon set down for Thursday 8 November. The venue is again the Batman's Hill on Collins Hotel (cnr Collins and Spencer) which has ready access for trains, trams and buses, and parking facilities in Flinders Lane.

The Guest Speaker will be Laurie Burgess from British Aerospace Engineering (BAE). Laurie has been a key High-Frequency (HF) specialist in the company for many years. He will discuss

the evolution of the Jindalee Over-the-horizon Radar Network (JORN) and the HF research and development work culminating in JORN Phase 6

BAE has won the Defence Department Contract for the upgrading of the JORN. The upgrade is Project JP 2025 Phase 6, valued at \$1.2 billion, and with a timescale of 10 years represents a huge investment. Reportedly, the existing JORN can detect an aircraft as small as a Cessna 172 taking off and landing as far away as East Timor; the upgrade

will improve this level of sensitivity by a factor of 10.

The development of JORN to Phase 5 in 2014 took about 44 years from the initial feasibility studies by DSTO (Phase1) for a total cost of about \$1.8 billion.

The talk by BAE will have added interest as many of the Engineers, including Laurie, involved in the JORN Upgrade are well-known retired Air Force Engineers, including Steve Drury of BAE and Ben Norris of Daronmont Technologies, one of the teaming companies.

A very interesting on-line article on JORN can be found in the June edition of the Australian Defence magazine – [www.australiandefence.com.au](http://www.australiandefence.com.au) (requires subscription).

**Branch Logo:** The Committee has produced an AFA Vic Engineer Branch logo (right) which has been placed on the AFA Vic Engineer Branch webpage. The Branch web-page can be found via the AFA Victorian Division at <http://raafavic.org.au/> and follow the link under "Branches".



### **RMIT Alumni Luncheon:**

The Committee's next meeting after the 1st of October will again be a "working lunch" at the RMIT Senior and Retired Alumni Luncheon on the 3rd of December in the William Angliss Institute's Restaurant commencing at 12 noon. The Air Force easily fills twenty places and we have to get in early with bookings, as this event is always a "sell-out". Closer to the time, there will be advice circulated. The Engineer Branch has a very close affinity with

RMIT as most of us are RMIT Graduates, and the reminiscing with the Alumni is a quite nice experience.

### **Commemoration Plaque:**

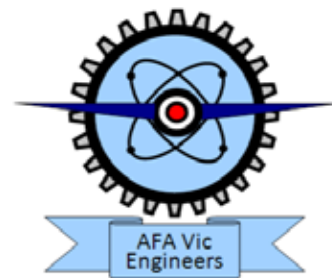
Many will be aware of the Branch initiative to have an Air Force Engineer's Commemoration Plaque placed on the Donors' Wall in the RMIT-restored Capitol Theatre in Swanston Street. We have raised some \$725 towards the Plaque and anticipate a ceremonial unveiling next year.

The Committee's next meeting will be Monday

1st of October at the Mail Exchange Hotel (Bourke St near Spencer St) at 12 noon. The Committee will welcome any visitors, as we always have an enjoyable "working lunch", while plotting and planning the Branch's activities.

We wish you all ongoing good health and well-being.

Carl Dillon  
(on behalf of Kingsley McRae and the Committee)



WANT TO KNOW MORE  
ABOUT THE ENGINEERS  
BRANCH?

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## **VIETNAM VETERANS**

### **VIETNAM VETERANS' DAY**

Vietnam Veterans' Day this year was a special commemoration remembering the battles of Fire Support Bases at Coral and Balmoral and the Vietnam Veterans Association of Victoria went to some length to ensure that the event was memorable. Particularly striking were the 26 Australian flags carried by Army cadets from Mentone Grammar School recognizing each of the Australians (many of whom were aged between 19 and 21) who died during the battles. These flags formed an avenue of honour for wreaths that were carried to the eternal flame at the end of the ceremony. Fortunately, the rain and hail forecast for the day held off until the completion

of the proceedings. The cost of staging this event was significant and it is likely that future VV Day commemorations will be much smaller.

Our own little group of RAAF veterans held a short commemoration at the RAAF VVA plaque adjacent to the Shrine just before the major event which was particularly special as this was the 10th anniversary of the installation of the plaque.

We held our customary lunch at the end of the ceremony for 23 members of our Branch.

### **COMMITTEE**

After many years acting as Branch Treasurer, Maree Jongkryg has announced that she is planning to step down from the position at

the next AGM to enable her to spend more time with her family. Committee member and former President, Gareth Davis, has volunteered to take over this important role.

### **ADVOCACY AND WELFARE**

Changes are taking place in how veterans and their families are assisted in accessing entitlements and services. In the past, advocates were trained under the Training and Information Program (TIP). This system is currently being replaced by the Advocate Training and Development Program (ATDP) and our current AFA advocate and Branch member, Alan White, will be transitioning from TIP to ATDP towards the end of this year.

### **NATIONAL VIETNAM VETERANS' MUSEUM (NVVM)**

The NVVM at Philip Island has a section displaying memorabilia donated by Air Force personnel. To enhance the display, the Branch has been liaising with the 2, 9 and 35 Squadron Associations to provide an operational summary of the contribution made by each Squadron during the conflict. The Museum will convert the text to a verbal summary accessed via an "Info wand" available to each visitor to help them understand and appreciate the role of the Squadrons. You can visit the website: [www.vietnamvetmuseum.org](http://www.vietnamvetmuseum.org)

Chris Hudnott  
President



WANT TO KNOW MORE  
ABOUT THE VIETNAM  
VETERANS' BRANCH?

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## DID YOU KNOW?

### REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE: RAAF NEPTUNE SAR MISSION - NOV 1965

**Mr John Peel is seeking members' assistance in tracing information around the two RAAF Neptune aircraft that assisted a sinking ship in 1965.**

**Maybe you can help?**

I writing a book called 'TARRA - The story of a small ship that made a significant impact on the Australian Army'. The ship was sold and renamed "Milos Del Mar" and was lost at sea on the 28 November 1965

According to the Melbourne Age, two RAAF Neptune aircraft (11 Squadron) were called out to assist in the rescue of the crew of the sinking ship. Fairfax is unable to provide the photos on the front page in a resolution suitable for inclusion in my book. The photos in the newspaper were of sufficient quality and a position above

the rescue for me to conclude that they were taken from the two Neptunes.

The incident is not recorded in the National Data Base of Shipwrecks and is a mystery to the Australian Maritime Museum. Yet another example of our service to the community slipping away.

I recently read an article on Neptune aircraft in ADF Serials by Gordon Birkett and wonder if any members of the Air Force Association recall the mission in particular if any photos exist or if anyone wishes to offer a reflection? I would like to get the photos, correct the database and include the RAAF connection in my book.

Can you help? If so, please contact John Peel, [jackpeel@gmail.com](mailto:jackpeel@gmail.com).

### CALLING ALL YOUNG AVIATION ENTHUSIASTS

**Did you know that many Australian Air League cadets go on the earn their private pilot's licences?**

"Indeed, we have two of our current cadets doing so now, having learnt the basics from our in-house FlySim computer program." explains Lilydale Squadron 2nd Officer, Bob Gannaway.

"Our FlySim program is not your standard 'shoot-'em-up' graphics, but teaches how to actually fly an aircraft."

The Australian Air League was formed in 1934 and remains the primary youth group for those aviation enthusiasts, boys and girls aged between 8 and 17.

The AAL's primary activity is the awareness and education of all 'things aviation', but activities also include physical activities, drill, community involvement and instilling a sense of responsibility in our cadets.

If you know of any young people with an interest in aviation, then check out the Australian Air League.



## Join Us Today!

The Air League is for boys and girls aged 8 to 18 with a passion for aviation, fun and adventure. If that sounds like you - we'd love to hear from you!



Are you a dedicated adult with a passion for aviation who cares about the future of our children?

Air League Officers are volunteers from the community, often former cadets themselves or parents of cadets, keenly interested in developing the potential of young Australians and willing to volunteer their time to develop today's young people.

#### Your Nearest Squadron:

LILYDALE SQUADRON (Servicing the Yarra Ranges)  
Coldstream Community Centre  
12 Kelso St. Coldstream  
Times - Monday nights 6:30 - 8:30pm  
(during school terms)  
Contact: Jeremy Furness - 0403 310 032



## VALE

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

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

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Mr Keith Friswell: Bendigo Branch.....	21/06/2018
Mr David Madden: Sunderland Squadrons Branch.....	06/07/2018
Mr John White: Bendigo Branch .....	30/07/2018
Mr Thomas Gartlan: Headquarters.....	24/08/2018
Mr Wilfred Brook: 21 Squadron Branch .....	26/08/2018
Mr Robert (Bugs) Rose: B24 Liberator Branch .....	31/08/2018
Humphrey Campbell: Bendigo.....	06/09/2018
Mr Keith Watts, Life Member (104 yrs) Nth Metropolitan Branch.....	21/09/2018



*Lest We Forget*

### VALE MARY ELLIS – FEMALE PIONEER WWII PILOT, DIES AT 101

**Mary Ellis, a pioneering aviator and one of Britain's last surviving World War II female pilots died on 24 July at her home on the Isle of Wight. She was 101.**

Known as 'Spitfire Girl', she was one of 168 female pilots, and one of the last two living members of the Air Transport Auxiliary, or ATA, which has since disbanded. She alone ferried 400 Spitfires and 76 other kinds of aircraft to airfields during the war.

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A remarkable woman and a remarkable life.

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## ASSOCIATION NEWS

### Centenary of Armistice COMMEMORATION

1918-2018

*Honouring their memory*

#### REMINDER!

Don't forget to submit your expression of interest to attend the

Centenary of Armistice Commemoration  
on Sunday 4th November 2018 at RAAF Base Point Cook.

Please RSVP with name and postal address to Barbara Stallard at [office@afavic.org.au](mailto:office@afavic.org.au) or on 9813 4600 by 5 October, 2018

#### CONTACT: EDITORIAL DATES

SUMMER 2018

Contributions by 16 November 2018

Publication: 7 December

AUTUMN 2019

Contributions by 25 February 2019

Publication: 11 March 2019

WINTER 2019

Contributions by 24 May 2019

Publication: 6 June 2019

SPRING 2019

Contributions by 23 August 2019

Publication: 6 September 2019



#### OFFICE BEARERS

##### AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION – VICTORIA

##### BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Max McGregor – President

Carl Schiller OAM CSM – Immediate Past President

John Sedunary – Vice President

Daryll Topp – Vice President, Administration

Peter Colliver – Treasurer; Chairman,  
Welfare Patriotic Fund

Darrell Robinson – Executive Secretary,  
Director Communications

John McCrystal – Chairman, RAAFA Foundation,  
Ceremonial

Di Hoopert – Director, Welfare Services

Chris Hudnott – Director

Tony Pill – Director (on leave)

Peter Finkelstein – Honorary Solicitor

#### AFA VICTORIA BRANCH CONTACTS

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Bendigo	Glenis Gordon	03 54369293
Catalina	Ronald Kirk	03 98193527
Engineer	Kingsley McRae	0419518303
Fighter SQN	(contact AFA Vic)	03 98134600
Geelong	(contact AFA Vic)	03 98134600
Gippsland	(contact AFA Vic)	03 98134600
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Sunderland SQNs	Ricky Hattam	03 52413431
Williams	(contact AFA Vic)	03 98134600