

Engineer Branch Report - Spring 2019

Committee News

Mid-Year Luncheon:

Our mid-year luncheon of 12th June was a great success and the special company of several partners added to the value of the occasion. Unfortunately our Guest Speaker, Dennis Kelly, in his 97th year, became quite ill and so the opportunity to hear some "living history" was denied us. Dennis was a RAAF WW2 Wireless Air Gunner (WAG) who survived being shot down in his Lancaster and escaping from the Germans twice.

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



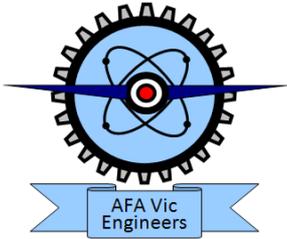
End-of Year Luncheon:

The EOY Luncheon was proposed for Thursday 7th November (Oaks Day), but noting the lowered numbers for the Mid-Year Luncheon, a change of venue may be required so as to cater for fewer attendees (which did correspond with the winter exodus from Melbourne). The venue and cost will be advised later, but the event is definitely "on". Members will be advised via e-mail once details are firm.

As indicated in the Winter Contact, the Committee is planning that a Senior Scientist Guest Speaker from the CSIRO will talk about "The Square Kilometre Array" (the SKA). The SKA is a hugely significant radio-astronomy project proposed for Western Australia. For further reading, just Google "The Square Kilometre Array".

Beware of the Mobile Phone Porting Scam!!

The REOA and the AFA (Vic) Engineer Branch main activities involve, inter-alia, 6 monthly Fellowship functions, and up until quite recently, our financial position was quite good, particularly when committing a deposit to the function venue months in advance, to secure the booking. However, our account was cleaned out by internet criminals employing an unauthorised mobile phone porting process; a number of the Telcos (all private enterprises) have not yet invoked a positive verification process that you did indeed request this porting to another provider, and this is a scandalous situation. Police investigations are continuing, and while we will have the funds returned by our banking institution, this could take



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several months to happen. If necessary, the committee members will be able to loan the REOA and the AFA (Vic) Engineer Branch sufficient for the deposit.

In this particular case, the initiating message to port a mobile phone number was received by SMS indicating that the mobile phone would be ported from Telco A to Telco B unless the owner of the mobile phone called the number shown in the SMS to advise this is not to happen. Of course, the number could not be called if the mobile phone had been turned off for some minutes after the SMS was received because by that time the phone number was ported and the owner left with a mobile that only allowed "Emergency Calls". The hapless victim has just a few minutes to advise their actual Telco (by awkward means other than via their defunct mobile) that this default porting action was not requested. Do nothing, and the porting will occur.

Readers probably have heard of this scam via media reports, and many Australians have become victims.

RMIT Alumni Morning Tea at Storey Hall:

This event on 20th June was a real "cracker", and for the few REOA members and partners who attended, we were treated to something quite out of the box.

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

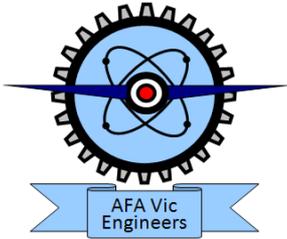
Their application of specialised nano-particles to coat the surfaces of superbugs thus suppressing the bug's cellular division and multiplication will prevent the spread of infections, particularly into joint prosthesis replacements such as knees, hips, shoulders and elbows. If such infections occur,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

This revolutionary technology is essentially a mechanical, not bio-chemical, process which physically isolates the superbug, previously resistant to anti-biotics, and has the potential to become a normal part of a joint replacement operation.

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

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

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



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At the "Wall" with the Engineer Cadet Squadron Crest displayed.

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

Next RMIT Alumni Meeting:

Once again, the RMIT Alumni will meet for a fine lunch, prepared and served by the Hospitality Students at the William Angliss Restuarant, at 12 noon, Monday 2nd December, 550 Little Lonsdale St. Branch members will be advised closer to the time, and all are reminded one does not need to be an RMIT Alumnus to come along. Partners are especially welcome.

The Charlie Walford Memorial Wirraway Award

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

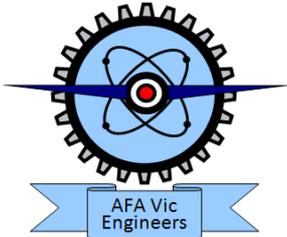
After leaving the RAAF, Charlie worked for Boeing in Canberra and was the VP of Strategic Customer and Government Relationships, in which position he was highly respected by the company and Defence. He made substantial contributions to a number of successful new business campaigns including the Wedgetail Airborne Early Warning & Control project, a variety of weapons programs, F/A-18 Super Hornet, C-17 and the Wideband Global Satellite.

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

The Wirraway Awards are an internal initiative of Boeing Defence Australia (BDA) to acknowledge and celebrate the many BDA teams who, every day, deliver above and beyond to Boeing, its partners and customers.

Teams from BDA and its subsidiaries are required to address criteria that align with strategic and behavioural objectives for award.

Winners are selected by a judging panel of their peers, with ten teams honoured with a Wirraway Award. The Wirraway team that has made the most exceptional, positive change, and which exemplifies the spirit embodied by Charlie Walford, is honoured with an award in his name, being the Charlie Walford Memorial Award.



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Next Meeting:

The Committee's next meeting will be Monday 7th October at the Mail Exchange Hotel (Bourke St near Spencer St) at 12 noon, and visitors are most welcome. If wanting to come along, just advise Noel Hadfield on 9511 7775, for catering purposes. Our committee meetings are very light-hearted affairs, with much reminiscing (and occasional lamentations), and importantly, the lunch menu and quality are excellent.

We wish you all Ongoing Good Health and Happiness

Carl Dillon

On behalf of David Graham and the Committee

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