



Air Force Association NSW News and Views

President's Christmas Message

Ron Glew

I am fortunate to have councillors who are extremely supportive, but also heavily involved in progressing reforms from recent AGM's, as well as initiating and effecting change to improve RAAFA's image with other ESOs and ex-service members.

State Council. The transition to self administration of branches is almost complete and is proving to be very popular amongst branch executive committees. It requires far less administrative effort thanks to our excellent new website and the dedication of VP Dick Wills and webmaster Steve Smith.

I am pleased to report that two new branches have recently been formed; these are RAAFA Kirribilli, which is generally RAAF aircrew who transitioned to Qantas in civilian employment; and Wanderers Branch, being past and present members of No 1 Combat Communications Squadron (1CCS, formerly ATTU).

Financials. Council aims to have Division operating expenses cost neutral within the next 12 to 18 months through prudent, long-term investment strategies. The Investment and Finance Sub-Committee recommendations were adopted at the State Council Meeting on 27th October.

Website. By visiting the site regularly you will be updated on SC and National Agenda and Minutes. Use your member login to peruse all the updated information. The website is raafansw.org.au and I cannot recommend it more highly as the primary source of information about Division issues.

Central Branch. Unfortunately, Central Branch setup is still having a few issues that need to be addressed and it may be a little while before they are resolved.

Membership. It is anticipated that 9 SQN Association, to be known as the Helo Branch, will become a RAAFA NSW Branch by 1 July 2017.

Donations/Support. The following support was provided during the year:

- \$10,000.00 to HARS for Caribou parts;
- \$10,000.00 to the Catalina Memorial at Rathmines;
- \$6000.00 for drums and other equipment to 3 Wing AAFC.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to extend my sincere wishes for a Merry Christmas and a safe and healthy New Year to all our members and their families on behalf of your state councillors.

The Power of Beer



Well, you see Norm, it's like this.

A herd of buffalo can only move as fast as the slowest buffalo, and when the herd is hunted, it's the slowest and weakest ones that are killed. This natural selection is good for the herd as a whole, because the general speed and health of the whole group keeps improving by the regular killing of the weakest members. In much the same way, the human brain can only operate as fast as the slowest brain cells. Now as we know, excessive intake of alcohol kills brain cells. But naturally, it attacks the slowest and weakest brain cells first. In this way, regular consumption of beer eliminates the weaker brain cells, making the brain a faster and more efficient machine. And that Norm, is why you always feel smarter after a few beers.

First C-17 AME Mission

The day after being formally approved to conduct aeromedical evacuation (AME) tasks, a C-17 Globemaster heavy lift transport was used on 5 Sep 08 to bring home five wounded or injured Australian Defence Force personnel from Afghanistan. Accompanying the patients were two AME teams consisting of 18 permanent and reserve specialist and general duties doctors, nurses and medical assistants, who provided around-the-clock care during the flight from Tarin Kowt to Amberley, QLD.



Embarking patients at Tarin Kowt



In flight care

The C-17 proved to be a functional and comfortable aircraft to use on AME missions, reflecting that it had been designed with that role in mind. Capable of carrying up to 36 stretcher cases, or up to five critical care patients plus 18 low to medium dependency patients, the Globemaster proved a major addition to the RAAF's capabilities.

The Great Escape

Untouched for almost seven decades, the tunnel used in the Great Escape has finally been unearthed. The 111 yard passage nicknamed 'Harry' by allied prisoners was sealed by the Germans after the audacious break-out from POW camp Stalag Luft III in western Poland.

Despite huge interest in the subject, encouraged by the film starring Steve McQueen, the tunnel remained undisturbed over the decades because it was behind the Iron Curtain and the Soviet authorities had no interest in its significance.



But at last British archaeologists have excavated it, and discovered its remarkable secrets. Many of the bed boards which had been joined together to stop the tunnel collapsing were still in position. And the ventilation shaft, ingeniously crafted from used powdered milk containers known as Klim Tins, remained in working order. Scattered throughout the tunnel, 30ft below the surface, were bits of old metal buckets, hammers and crowbars which were used to hollow out the route.

A total of 600 prisoners worked on three tunnels at the same time. They were nicknamed Tom, Dick and Harry and were just 2 ft square for most of their length. It was on the night of March 24 and 25, 1944, that 76 Allied airmen escaped through Harry.

Barely a third of the 200 prisoners who hoped to escape, many in fake German uniforms and civilian outfits and carrying false identity papers, managed to leave before the alarm was raised when escapee number 77 was spotted. Only three made it back to Britain. Another 50 were executed by firing squad on the orders of



Adolf Hitler, who was furious after learning of the breach of security.



The site of the tunnel

Under the noses of their captors, 90 boards from bunks, 62 tables, 34 chairs and 76 benches, as well as thousands of items including knives, spoons, forks, towels and blankets, were squirreled away by the Allied prisoners to aid the escape plan.

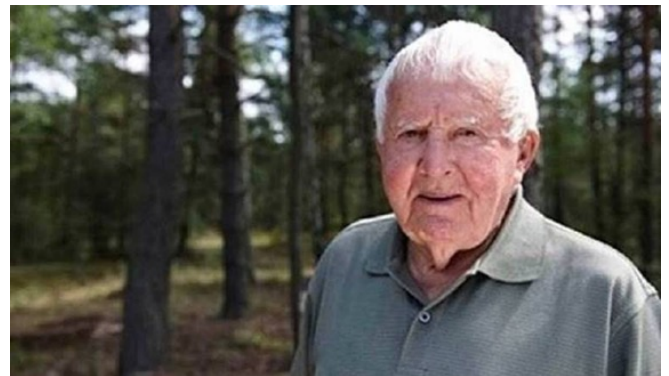


A tunnel reconstruction showing the trolley system

Although the Hollywood movie suggested otherwise, **no** Americans were involved in the operation. Most were British, and the others were from Canada, (all the tunnelers were Canadian personnel with backgrounds in mining) Poland, New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa.

The latest dig, over three weeks in August, located the entrance to Harry, which was

originally concealed under a stove in Hut 104. The team also found another tunnel, called George, whose exact position had not been charted. It was never used, as the 2,000 prisoners were forced to march to other camps as the Red Army approached in January 1945. Watching the excavation was Gordie King, 91, an ex-RAF radio operator, who was 140th in line to use Harry and therefore missed out. 'This brings back such bitter-sweet memories,' he said as he wiped away tears. 'I'm amazed by what they've found.'



Bitter-sweet memories for Gordie King

Why I'm A Grumpy Old Man *Ken Marsh*

The psychological condition known as Grumpy Old Man Syndrome (GOMS) has been known for many years. Until now however, its cause has been unknown. Thanks to a recent scientific breakthrough we now have the answer.

What scientists have found is that we are all born with an innate capacity for absorbing matter known as bull shit. While there is a large variation between individuals, females have a far larger absorption capacity; further research is being carried out to try and understand this gender variation. That which we take in is offset to some degree by a leakage factor, although in most cases we can fill up much faster than we can drain off.

What this means for each of us is that at some point we reach our individual Bull Shit Threshold Limit (BSTL). At this point we can't absorb anymore BS. This manifests in different ways, but common symptoms include cynicism, grumpiness and a general revulsion at the sight of the moving lips of politicians.



Researchers have also found that among those considered to be at significantly higher risk of developing GOMS are military veterans, with a direct correlation between severity of symptoms and length of service.

As any military veteran can attest, the military runs on BS, in fact it oozes the stuff. This is not normally a problem for recruits nor for some years later. Many who have given long service will tell you they have no regrets about their decision to join and stay. However, a common factor among these veterans and their decision to leave the service is the point came when they reached their BSTL.

Given that many of those who join the military do so at a young age and that there are very few who reach 20 years service, you can understand that if you know a military veteran you should not be surprised that they have demonstrated symptoms of GOMS from a comparatively young age.

1910 Biplane *Ken Marsh*



When this biplane was built in Victoria by John Dugan in 1910, it was the first in Australia. From this project Dugan developed a sound knowledge of aeronautical engineering and became a skilled aviator. During WW1 he used his knowledge and skills to train Australian Flying Corps pilots in England.

He entered active service in 1917 and on 9 May 1918 whilst on a photographic mission his plane came under attack and he crash landed. Saving both his observer and the valuable photos, he was awarded the Military Cross for his courage.

The aircraft pictured, on display in the Melbourne Museum, never flew over the European trenches, but remains an important contribution to the war effort.

Old School Photo

I found this old school picture. I'm not sure of the year exactly and I don't know who everyone is, but I'm about 99% sure that you're in the back row on the right.



Caribou Visits TVL

Douglas Haywood (HARS Caribou Ops Mgr)

R AAFA NSW has part-sponsored the Historical Aircraft Restoration Society (HARS) Caribous A4-210 and A4-234. It is only because of sponsorship such as this that the all volunteer HARS organisation can showcase our fabulous Defence heritage.



L-R: Leigh Peddell (FLTENG), Dick Elliott (co-PLT)
Kent Corney (A/C CAPT).



The Caribous were purchased in 2011 and 210 was flown to TVL for the T150 Airshow which celebrated 150 years of the city and the RAAF's involvement. HARS also flew up their Catalina and Neptune for the show. The aeroplanes got a fabulous reception, having previously been part of the Townsville community for many years. Pictured is the new sponsorship banner with A4-210 at RAAF Townsville on 16 Oct 2016.

Women Veterans Network Australia

Connecting past and present Women of Defence with resources, support and information.

WVNA is a network helping women veterans connect with each other to share information and access services. WVNA aims to provide a cohesive and engaging environment for Australian women veterans to network effectively on social media and in local groups. WVNA groups are inclusive of all ranks who are currently serving, or have served, in the Navy, Army or Air Force, either in a full time or reserve capacity, regardless of whether they have deployed or not.

WVNA supports all organisations who help veterans, and intends to work together to establish peer support networks focused on the specific health and wellbeing needs of women veterans to ease transition, isolation and assist with readjustment problems. Women have unique transition challenges because of their role in the military and society. They experience deployment and reintegration differently than men. The cost of military and combat service is unique to each woman. They are strong and resilient, but because of the magnitude of the challenges faced, they may well need support during post-military readjustment periods. The number of women in the ADF today and their evolving roles in our national defence continues to rise – which means a greater number of women experiencing transition in the future.

The absence of a network of support for women veterans brings a heightened risk of social isolation and exclusion, which is unacceptable at a time when the world commemorates the centenary of WWI. All women veterans are welcome to join WVNA groups to connect with others, in both local and national forums, for

networking and support in a respectful, encouraging and considerate environment.

Women veterans can connect with other women veterans via closed Facebook groups. Join a regional WVNA group to:

- share information about local activities and services,
- ask questions and discuss issues,
- meet up and enjoy a social connection with other women who have served.

Join the WVNA Forum to get involved in the national discussion, share information and ideas, ask questions and tackle issues important to women veterans. With your help we hope to advance the conversation about women veterans in Australia for all women who have served, are currently serving or will serve in the future. Help create the future of women veterans today. Contact us.



RAAFA NSW Publications Publishes Two Quality Magazines

(AVM Neil Smith (ret'd), Managing Director, RAAFA(NSW) Publications Pty Ltd)

Most members will be aware of RAAFA (NSW) Publications Pty Ltd, a small not-for-profit company that is wholly owned by NSW Division. The company was formed two years ago for the specific purpose of publishing, at the request of the Air Base Executive Officer at Williamtown, a base newspaper. We took on the challenge, and we called it the *Advocate*.

The *Advocate* had three purposes. Primarily, it was an internal news service for the base, updating the 30 plus disparate units on Williamtown with significant events in neighbouring units, thereby helping to create a sense of community on the base. Secondly, it



was a public relations medium; with over 9000 copies distributed off-base, it provided a 'window' for the local community to see inside the gates of the base which are, for security reasons, normally closed to them. Last, but certainly not least from a RAAFA perspective, the *Advocate* gave the Association a presence on the base, increasing base awareness of our great organisation, and improving our prospects of recruiting serving members.

Readers will notice the use of the past tense in the preceding paragraphs. Unfortunately, while the *Advocate* was popular with serving members as well as the local community, it could not be sustained financially, and we ceased production in April this year. The good news is that, in addition to the *Advocate*, RAAFA(NSW) Publications was publishing two annual magazines, and we are continuing with them. Titled *Welcome to Williamstown* and *Welcome to Richmond*, these high quality, glossy magazines provide introductory information to new arrivals and visitors to their respective bases, noting that *Welcome to Richmond* includes the neighbouring base of Glenbrook.



While the primary objective of the magazines is to help serving members and their families by removing some of the stress associated with relocation, we also use it to advertise the Association and the work we do.

The 2017 editions of both magazines were released last month, earlier this year to be of more use to families planning their relocation. In addition to the hard copies that have been printed, the magazines are available on line on our website, by clicking on the appropriate magazine cover at <http://www.raafapublications.org.au/>. While visiting the website, readers may care to scroll

down to watch our popular Hornet video. Archived copies of past issues of the *Advocate* can also be viewed from the link in the 'About Us' page.

✂ Snippets ✂

RAAFA Richmond Branch

Richmond Branch holds bi-monthly luncheons at the Richmond Golf club, 34 Bourke Street, Richmond. Branch luncheons are generally held on the first Sunday in February, April, June, August, October and December. Members are requested to assemble at 12:00 noon for lunch at 12:30 pm. The cost per person is \$20 for members of the Richmond Branch and their partner, and for non-members \$33. Visitors are most welcome to our luncheons, so bring along your family and friends. They can be assured of having an enjoyable meal in most convivial company.

One of our members, Rex Austin, received the Legion of Honour for his service in Bomber Command in WWII. Rex is a long-serving member of the RAAF Association.

Point Cook Centenary

Ian Woods

The Centennial Parade for Point Cook, organised by RAAFA Victorian Division, was held on Sunday 13 Nov 16. Past and present Air Force personnel were well represented, with Brendan Nelson giving a great speech about the character of the aerial defenders of 100 years ago. The weather was typical for Melbourne, but it didn't rain on the parade!





Brendan Nelson's Australian Flying Corps Centenary Speech

Air Commodore Geoffrey Harland CSC, Commander Air Force Training Group and Senior Air Force Officer Victoria representing Chief of Air Force; Air Vice-Marshal Brent Espeland AM (Retd), National President of the Air Force Association; Group Captain Carl Schiller OAM, CSM (Retd), President Victorian Division of the Air Force Association; Mr John McLeod, Senior Vice-President National Servicemen's Association of Australia; distinguished guests, those who wear and have worn the uniform of the Royal Australian Air Force, the families who love and support you.

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Elders past and present of the Kulin nation.

In *Revelation*, the German physicist and philosopher Bernhard Philberth wrote:

'Progress leads to chaos if not anchored in tradition. Tradition becomes rigid, if it does not prepare the way for progress. But a perverted traditionalism; And a misguided progressivism, lead each other to a deadly excess, hardly leaving any ground between them.'

As we pause here, on the occasion of a centenary of the formation of the four squadrons of the Australian Flying Corps, a new generation of airmen and women is conducting operations in the Middle East and distant parts of the world. More than 18,000 RAAF regular and reserve personnel support and operate 260 aircraft across fifteen different types. From transport to fast jets and airborne early warning command and control aircraft, in the end all that advanced technology is transcended by character, values and traditions whose origins are here.

Standing silent sentinels the Unknown Australian Soldier interred in the Hall of Memory at the Australian War Memorial are fifteen stained glass windows. Each is a depiction of a serviceman and nurse of the First World War. Beneath each is a single word. First World War official historian, Charles Bean – witness to it all from Gallipoli to Mont St Quentin, asked of himself, veteran and first Director of the Australian War Memorial, John Treloar, a vital question. What were the qualities they had seen in these men and women they regarded as essential not only for victory in battle, but for character.

Character derives from the Greek word meaning the 'impression left in wax by a stone seal ring'.

Transcending all else in life – rank, power, money, influence and intellect, is character. Beneath the image of the airman of the Australian Flying Corps is – Chivalry. Bean and all who had observed these men, saw in them the chivalric code of medieval knights. Those qualities seen in them were courage, honour, integrity, courtesy, justice and readiness to help those in need.

When Lt. Frank Hubert McNamara landed behind enemy lines in March 1917 to rescue a wounded comrade under heavy fire, wounded and effecting

the rescue despite his own significant blood loss, he did more than earn the Victoria Cross. He and those pioneers gave the emergent, modern Royal Australian Airforce the noble traditions upon which it would be built. Their legacy is that whatever technological progress it would make, the strength and success of this nation's air force would be built on the character of those who would lead it and wear its uniform.

With the establishment of the Australian Flying Corps in 1912, Australia's political and military leaders had shown great foresight in recognising the potential importance of air power, less than a decade since the Wright brothers had made their historic first manned flight. Flying was still in its infancy. By the time the First World War broke out the newly established Central Flying School here at Point Cook – Australia's first and, at that time, only military aviation base – had just two instructors and five flimsy aircraft. Australia's first military aircraft flight occurred on this very spot on 1 March 1914 when Lieutenant Eric Harrison took off in his Bristol Box kite. Despite these lean beginnings, Harrison and many of the others who qualified for their wings here at Point Cook were the pioneers of Australian aviation. Their service in the AFC throughout the First World War forged the basis for the innovation and traditions that live on today in the Royal Australian Air Force.

This year marks the centenary of the formation of the four operational Australian Flying Corps squadrons. No. 1 Squadron left Australia in 1916 for reconnaissance and combat operations in the Middle East. It was followed overseas by squadron Nos 2, 3, and 4, bound for the Western Front. An Australian training wing, comprising four training squadrons, was also established in England to provide pilots for the operational squadrons.

Before this, however, in 1915 the AFC sent what became known as the Mesopotamian Half Flight at the request of the Indian government. This was the first Australian aerial unit to enter a war zone. The professionalism and excellence of the Australian air and ground crews throughout the First World War was outstanding. No. 1 Squadron consistently outperformed all other RFC units in the Middle East. Such performance began with the ground crew. RAAF historian Alan Stephens noted:

'An aircraft which is not properly maintained and a pilot who is not properly prepared are unlikely to win. Australia's ground crew established a tradition in the Middle East which was to prove no less enduring than that of their pilots and observers. Rigging airframes, tuning engines, loading weapons, and operating base camps constituted arduous and sometimes hazardous duty.'

One of those mechanics serving in the ground crew of No. 1 Squadron was my great-grandfather, First Air Mechanic William Robert Beecroft. He had earlier survived the Gallipoli landing and campaign as a member of the 12th battalion.

Early on in the First World War, when in combat with enemy aircraft, opposing pilots and observers would



shoot at each other with pistols, then rifles; it was only later that machine-guns began to be added as a modification by pilots and crew. One member of No. 1 Squadron described a dogfight as:

'Every man for himself. We go hell-for-leather at those snub-nosed, black crossed busses of the Hun, and they at us. Hectic work. Half-rolling, diving, zooming, stalling, "split-slipping", by inches you miss collision with friend or foe. Cool precise marksmanship is out of the question.'

The innovative and technologically savvy Lieutenant Lawrence Wackett mounted a Lewis gun on his plane prior to a bombing raid on Beersheba, and during the raid fended off two attacking German fighters. Wackett went on to serve on the Western Front with No. 3 Squadron, where he mastered the method of accurately dropping ammunition to ground forces by parachute. This proved to be a crucial piece of the operational jigsaw in Lieutenant General John Monash's plans for the battle of Hamel. With casualties mounting among the pilots, preparation provided to airmen was not always of a desirable level.

Australia's leading air ace in the war, Captain Harry Cobby, commenced operations on the Western Front with just 13 flying hours. Others were known to have as few as three hours experience. Cobby spoke of his fear of being posted to the front: *'the nervousness that assailed me during the months of training in England, when I gave thought to the fact that as soon as I was qualified to fly an aeroplane, or perhaps sooner, I would be sent off to the war to do battle with the enemy in the sky and on the ground. I quite freely admit that if anything could have been done by me to delay that hour, I would have left nothing undone to bring it about.'*

The most spectacular encounter for the AFC on the Western Front occurred on 29 October when 15 Snipe aircraft of No. 4 Squadron encountered 60 German Fokkers. The ensuing battle was one of the largest air battles of the war. Ten Fokkers were shot down in the dogfight for the loss of one Snipe. Several badly damaged Snipes managed to scrape through safely. Cobby wrote of operations on the Western Front in 1918:

'The job consisted of getting to the "line" ... as fast and often as one could, and letting the enemy on the ground have it as hot and heavy as possible ... All this flying was done under 500 feet and our targets were point-blank ones ... The air was full of aircraft and, continuously while shooting-up the troops on the ground, we would be attacked by enemy scouts ... The smoke of the battle below mixed with the clouds and mist above rendered flying particularly dangerous ... On top of this there were scores of machine-guns devoting their time to making things as unpleasant for us as they could.'

In the final year of the Great War, these deadly battles were fought in the sky over France and Belgium; this was the new battle ground. The flimsy flying-machines of a few years earlier had evolved into hardy, mass-produced combat and reconnaissance aircraft. In the mornings hundreds

would take off from grassy fields along the Western Front. The Germans, even when finally outnumbered and facing defeat, still introduced new and deadly fighters. Australian pilots and gunners fought them to the last days of the war. The AFC's four operational squadrons claimed to have destroyed or driven down 527 enemy aircraft. In total the corps produced 57 flying aces. But the price was high. By the armistice, some 880 officers and 2,840 other ranks had served overseas in the AFC. At least 600 more Australians had served in the RFC or RNAS (including men such as Charles Kingsford Smith and Bert Hinkler). Casualty rates for aircrews on the Western Front were shockingly high. The life expectancy of a new pilot on the Western Front was just three weeks. 207 members of the AFC are listed on the Australian War Memorial's Roll of Honour, either killed in action or dying as a direct result of their war service.

The founding members of the Royal Australian Air Force brought with them the proud traditions established during their time in the AFC. They shaped the organisation and its culture and laid the foundations for its role in the defence of Australia. Their experiences in aviation with the AFC during the First World War were invaluable when, in 1939, the world was once again at war.

To the audience before him in the Mystic Park Hall in Kerang, rural Victoria late in 1945, former Flight Lt John Grey Gorton – one of yours, spoke on behalf of those with whom he had served who did not survive a second, even more deadly war and all those who had come before:

We bought your freedom with our lives. So take this freedom. Guard it as we have guarded it; use it as we can no longer use it, and with it as a foundation, build a world in which meanness and poverty, tyranny and hate have no existence. If you see and hear these men behind me – do not fail them. We gather here today to honour all of them – those who served and who now serve across a century in the Australian Flying Corps, and in the Royal Australian Air Force. They served, fought, suffered and died for us, our freedoms and in the hope of a better world.

We do so in renewed commitment to one another, our nation, the ideals of mankind and the hope of a better world. In this, the traditions of the Australian Flying Corps are the foundation for progress of the Royal Australian Air force. Today we recommit ourselves to not failing them.

Lest we forget.

Ballina Branch 2016

The branch organised six fund raisers during the year and was a partner service in the Ballina Combined Services Charity Bowls Day. Below a photo showing 326 (City of Lismore) SQN AAFC Cadets after receiving their 2016



Ballina Branch Scholarship Awards and cheques.



CO 326 Squadron AAFC FLTLT Roy Nuttycombe and Branch Patron GPCAPT Dr David Scott with the 2016 Branch Scholarship recipients. L to R CCPL Kiah Oosterbeek, CDT Torsten Mundt, CDT Salika Nolan (receiving for CDT Chiara Wenban) and CDT Zanthie Bailey.



Ballina branch members Jan McRae and Colleen Wills selling raffle tickets and memorabilia at Ballina Central shopping centre, November 2016

Branch donations during 2016 were made to Ballina Branch 326 SQN Cadet Scholarship Scheme, 326 (City of Lismore) SQN AAFC, Ballina Legacy, Evans Head Memorial Aerodrome Historical Aviation Association, Westpac Rescue Helicopter service, Salvation Army, Residents of Florence Price Gardens RSL Life Care Ballina and the Combined Services Charity Bowls Day with proceeds to the Ballina and Lismore Surf Life Saving Club.

Ballina Branch is the organising service for the 2017 Combined Services Charity Bowls Day on

25th March. Should you be visiting the far north coast, roll up for charity, it will be a fun day. Cost is \$20.00 for breakfast, bowls and lunch; everyone wins a prize, plus whatever we can extract from your wallet or purse on the day. The local SES will be the recipient of proceeds from this event.

Battle for Australia and Battle of Britain Commemoration at Ballina, 11th September 2016



In June 2008 the Governor-General, MAJGEN Michael Jeffery AC CVO MC (Ret'd) signed the Battle for Australia Day proclamation. That same year on 13th September Ballina Branch organised the first combined Battle for Australia and Battle of Britain commemoration service for the far north coast region of NSW.

As attendance at and interest in the local Battle of Britain service had been waning over the years, the branch decided change was needed and introduced a combined commemoration service, bringing awareness of the Battle for Australia Day to the local community.



**Speakers for the 2016 Commemoration Service
L-R: SQNLDR Haidee Harrison, GPCAPT Milton Cottee AFC, Branch Patron GPCAPT Dr David Scott**

Ballina has no nearby Air Force establishment for personnel participation, hence a Sunday



between the two designated days was chosen, allowing for cadet participation during school term. Honouring the past with this commemoration has become a successful annual event on the Ballina calendar.

Cadets from TS *Lismore* Australian Navy Cadets and 326 SQN AAFC provided the catafalque party and flag bearers for the service.



Balloon Ride for Milton's 90th Birthday

GPCAPT Milton Cottee was born in Murwillumbah, later moving to Sydney. He joined the Air Training Corp during high school then the RAAF in 1944 as an aircrew trainee. When WWII ended, he was demobilised. Following matriculation, he studied engineering at Sydney University. He again joined the Air Force in 1947 completing pilot training on No 1 Pilots Course, and was later posted to 77 SQN then based at Iwakuni, Japan and GPCAPT Cottee flew on the first operational mission into Korea. On completion of his Korean war posting he was awarded the American Air Medal and Mentioned in Dispatches.



GPCAPT Cottee served as a flying instructor with No 22 City of Sydney CAF Squadron where he won an inter squadron Top Gun competition, and later at Central Flying School prior to a posting for experimental test pilot training.

In 1955 he joined the Empire Test Pilots School at Farnborough, England. As a test pilot he flew many developmental aircraft and was appointed project test pilot for the Royal Air Force Vulcan aircraft. On completion of this tour he was awarded the Air Force Cross in recognition of his test flight achievements. Returning to Australia, GPCAPT Cottee served with the RAAF Aircraft Research and Development Unit, and later as CO of No 36 SQN. In 1969 GPCAPT Cottee was assigned Project Manager for the RAAF's F-111C acquisition programme, involving aeronautical engineering, flight testing and weapons system development, leading to the delivery of 24 F-111C aircraft into RAAF service in 1973. GPCAPT Cottee was also involved with the replacement of the A model Hercules, and the acquisition of the CT4 Trainer.

Resigning after 28 years of service, GPCAPT Cottee had flown more than 100 different aircraft types. The balloon flight for his 90th birthday brought back memories of his test pilot days. Milt commented how he could not help but continue to be a test pilot during his flight. He was able to fly the balloon enough to appreciate the limitations of controllability compared with a winged aircraft, and the balloons very slow reaction to only vertical control. He remarked that he could make a few recommendations for improvement.



Smooth landing for GPCAPT Cottee

Milton is a member of the Ballina Branch and also a member of 77 SQN Association.

In the great days of the British Empire, a new commanding officer was sent to a jungle outpost to relieve the retiring colonel.

After welcoming his replacement and showing the usual courtesies (gin and tonic, cucumber sandwiches etc) that protocol dictates, the retiring colonel said, "You must meet my adjutant Captain Smithers; he's my right-hand man and the strength of this office with simply boundless talent."

Smithers was summoned and introduced to the new CO, who was surprised to meet a humpbacked, one eyed, toothless, hairless, scabbed and pockmarked specimen of humanity; a particularly unattractive man less than three feet tall.

"Smithers old man, tell your new CO about yourself."

"Well sir, I graduated with honours from Sandhurst, joined the regiment and won the Military Cross and Bar after three expeditions behind enemy lines. I've represented Great Britain in equestrian events and won a silver medal for boxing in the middleweight division of the Olympics. I have researched the history of..."

Here the colonel interrupted, "Yes, yes, never mind that Smithers, he can find all that in your file. Tell him about the day you told the witch doctor to bugger off."

New Travel Pass For Eligible NSW Ex-Members Of The Defence Forces

NSW ex-members of the Defence forces with service-related disabilities are receiving a new travel pass from Transport for NSW. The Transport Concession Entitlement Card is replacing the Ex-Member of Defence Forces Pass (paper ticket) that expires on **31 October 2016**. The Transport Concession Entitlement Card is a valid travel pass (or ticket) for NSW ex- members of the Defence forces with service-related disabilities. Similar to the previous ticket, the Transport Concession Entitlement Card will be used as a proof of entitlement to free travel. Cardholders will need to show it to staff at train stations or wharves

who will manually open wide access gates. Cardholders will also need to show it to bus drivers, light rail and private ferry staff, revenue protection officers or NSW police officers. Travel entitlements and eligibility rules have not changed. For full details please go to transportnsw.info/ex-defence.

New applicants have been receiving the cards since early September 2016. From mid-October 2016, Transport Concession Entitlement Cards will be mailed out to around 15,000 existing Ex-Member of Defence Forces Pass holders. The free travel Opal card is optional for NSW ex-members of the Defence forces with service-related disabilities. Tapping on and off is also optional. Customers who use the free travel Opal card can open gates at train stations and wharves themselves. It's not too late to order a free travel Opal card. New applicants can download the application form at: transportnsw.info/ex-defence.



The old travel pass



New concession card



The Opal Card



RAAFA NSW Membership Feedback

Geoffrey R Usher, Membership Officer

Over the last four years we have had a fairly steady decline in membership numbers, caused largely by the deaths of World War II veterans and a comparatively small number of new members. Some branches have been unable to get enough people to form a committee and have either closed or ceased to function as a formally constituted branch. Some of those members have transferred to other branches, but some maintain identification with their historic branch for sentimental reasons.

Against the decline, this year has seen the establishment of two new branches - Kirribilli and Wanderers - and a resurgence in a couple of other branches, notably National Service. Negotiations are in progress about other areas of growth, which would see existing squadron or service-based associations becoming part of the RAAF Association either as new branches or by merger with existing branches.

Most of our larger, active branches have changed from having their membership matters administered by the Division Office to self-administration, under the general oversight of Vice-President Dick Wills. This change means that they can set their own levels of subscription fees, above what is required for state and national capitation costs. Other branches continue to have their membership administered by the Division office, either by choice or by default.

One aspect of the change to Branch administration is the variety of application forms, which makes it difficult to maintain a standard level of information on members' records in the Division office, such as details of next of kin. All applications for membership have to be formally approved by State Council before a membership number and a lapel badge are issued. Unfortunately some branches have submitted application forms for prospective members, but have failed to send the necessary payment to the Division office, so that those applications cannot be processed.

The Difference Between Officers and NCOs

A young Army officer was severely wounded in the head by a grenade, but the only visible, permanent sign of his injury was that both of his ears had been amputated. Since his hearing was acceptable, he remained in the Army.

Many years later he had risen to the rank of Major General. He was, however, very sensitive about his appearance. One day the General was interviewing three servicemen who were candidates for his headquarters staff.

The first was a Captain, a tactical helicopter pilot, and it was a great interview. At the end of the interview the General asked him, 'Do you notice anything different about me?'

The young officer answered, 'Why, yes Sir, I couldn't help but notice that you have no ears.'

The General was displeased with his lack of tact and threw him out.

The second interview was with a Navy Lieutenant, and he was even better. The General then asked him the same question, 'Do you notice anything different about me?' He replied sheepishly, 'Well, sir, you have no ears.' The General threw him out too.

The third interview was with an old Sergeant Major, an Infantryman and staff-trained NCO. He was smart, articulate, fit, looked sharp, and seemed to know more than the two officers combined. The General liked him, and asked the same question, 'Do you notice anything different about me?' To his surprise the Sergeant Major said, 'Yes, sir, you wear contact lenses.'

The General was very impressed and thought, 'What an incredibly observant NCO, and he didn't mention my ears.'

He then asked, 'Sergeant Major, how do you know I wear contacts?'

'Well sir,' the soldier replied, 'it's pretty hard to wear glasses with no f..... ears!'

**ANZAC Day 2017 Order of March: Sydney****RAAF WW2 Contingent**

RSL SALUTING THEIR SERVICE banner

RAAFA banner & AFC banner

Unit banners following RAAFA Squadron banners

| SERVICE WOMEN | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| WAAAF | | RAAF NURSING SERVICES | |
| RAAFA FIGHTER SQUADRONS BANNER | | | |
| 3 SQN | 30 SQN | 31 SQN | 54 SQN |
| 76 SQN | 77 SQN | 78 SQN | 79 SQN |
| 85 SQN | 93 SQN | 452 SQN | 453 SQN |
| 457 SQN | 548 SQN | 549 SQN | |
| RAAFA BOMBER SQUADRONS BANNER | | | |
| 2 SQN | 22 SQN | 24 SQN | 454 SQN |
| 456 SQN | 458 SQN | 459 SQN | 460 SQN |
| 462 SQN | 463 SQN | 464 SQN | 466 SQN |
| | 467 SQN | 18 (NEI) SQN | |
| RAAFA MARITIME SQUADRONS BANNER | | | |
| 10 SQN | 11 SQN | 20 SQN | 33 SQN |
| | 42 SQN | 43 SQN | |
| RAAFA TRANSPORT SQUADRONS BANNER | | | |
| 34 SQN | 35 SQN | 36 SQN | 37 SQN |
| RAAFA SUPPORT SQUADRONS BANNER | | | |
| MWS & ACS SQUADRONS | RADAR SQUADRONS | SIGNALS SQUADRONS | REPAIR & SALVAGE UNITS |

RAAF post-WW2 Contingent

(form up facing north in Castlereagh St, corner of Hunter Street no later than 1000 hours)

| UNIT | CARD NUMBER |
|--|--------------------|
| Band | 1 |
| RAAF Contingent Commander | 2 |
| 1 Security Force Serving Members | 3 |
| RAAF ESCORT 22 SQN Serving Members | 4 |
| WW1 AFC banner | 5 |
| RAAFA banner, RAAF ensign & national flag | 6 |
| NSW State President RAAFA | 7 |
| RAAFA State Executive | 8 |
| RAAFA Service Women's banner | |
| WRAAF, RAAF Nursing Services, current Service Women | 9 |
| RAAFA Bomber Squadrons banner | |
| Bomber Squadrons Association | 10 |
| 22 SQN Association | 11 |
| RAAFA Transport Squadrons banner | |
| RAAF Vietnam | 12 |
| 36 SQN Association | 13 |
| 37 SQN Association | 14 |
| 35 SQN Serving Members | 15 |
| 37 SQN Serving Members | 16 |
| AMTDU Serving Members | 17 |
| 285 SQN Serving Members | 18 |
| RAAFA Fighter Squadrons banner | |

| | |
|--|----|
| 3 SQN | 19 |
| 75 SQN | 20 |
| 76 SQN | 21 |
| 77 SQN | 22 |
| 78 SQN | 23 |
| 79 SQN | 24 |
| 81 WING | 25 |
| RAAF UBON | 26 |
| RAAFA Maritime Squadrons banner | |
| 10 & 461 SQNS | 27 |
| 11 SQN | 28 |
| RAAFA Support Units banner | |
| Airfield Construction SQNS | 29 |
| RAAF National Service | 30 |
| Control & Reporting Units | 31 |
| RAF Association (Sydney) 1144 | 32 |
| RAAF RADAR and Air Defence Units | 33 |
| 41 WING Serving Members | 34 |
| 453 SQN Serving Members | 35 |
| 1CCS Serving Members | 36 |
| No 3 Expeditionary Health SQN | 37 |

Notes:

1. Squadrons shown in **bold** will be, or include serving members marching behind veterans.
2. There may be some minor changes to the order of march. Keep up to date by visiting the RAAFA NSW website.



As a little girl climbed onto Santa's lap, Santa asked the usual, "And what would you like for Christmas?" The child stared at him open-mouthed in horror and then gasped, "Didn't you get my E-mail?"

**Wishing everyone a Happy and safe Christmas and a delightful, healthy New Year,
from RAAFA NSW Division!**