



# SITREP

Air Force Association NSW News and Views

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## NSW State President's Report

July 2017

The NSW Annual General Meeting was held at the Kirribilli Club on the 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> May and the results of the contested elections are as follows:

President	Ron Glew
Vice President	Dr Ian Getley
Vice President	Dick Wills
Secretary	Peter Ring
Treasurer	Phillip Speet
Councillor	Peter Gustafson
Councillor	Dave Leach
Councillor	Bob Redman
Councillor	Neil Smith
Councillor	Ian Woods

I extend my appreciation for the commitment and hard work of the outgoing Executive and Council members for their unwavering support and vision, and welcome our new committee. We are changing the way the NSW Association works and their guidance and expertise is ensuring that the Association will continue to not only survive but also become more relevant and provide benefits and support to our members, and to contemporary servicemen and women.

During the last six months we have been creating a higher profile within the veteran community and with other ESOs, the State Government and DVA, as well as a concerted effort by State Council resulting in self administering branches being implemented throughout the whole of the Division.

In addition, State Council appointed an Administrative Sub-committee, which has responsibility for administering previously inactive branches and Central unattached members, who still want to retain their historical identity, with retention of their individuality and Branch affiliation. This group will now be administered by the Kirribilli Branch Members Executive. As all NSW Branches are self-administering and may now set their own fee

structure, with the exception of National and Division capitation fees, NSW Division capitation will rise to \$3.00 for the coming year as adopted at the AGM, as well as \$10.00 for National, so the base capitation rate will be \$13.00 for the next few years.

### Website

The members installed Steve Smith, our website creator and Super administrator, as an Honorary Member at the AGM in recognition of his ongoing contribution and commitment. It is anticipated that **electronic voting** will be implemented prior to the 2018 AGM due to the versatility of our Orion MMS. The system has been tested and refined and is now ready, however some constitutional issues need to be addressed.

A Facebook page has been created thanks to Geoff Sheppard of the ARS Branch, and Peter Gustafson is the administrator. We have a public page and also a private page and anything that you consider appropriate may be posted. For access to the private page please contact Peter.

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## Awards to RAAFA NSW Members



**Life Membership Award being presented to Ron Rhodes by President Ron Glew at Richmond on 11th June.** (Mr Rhodes was heard to say something like "So I don't have to pay my \$10 each year from now?")



**Life Memberships** were awarded to Ron Rhodes (AIRTC & AAFC Branch), John Hailey (St George), Phillip Harrison (St George), Lindsay Smith (St George) and Tony Rogers (Radar Air Defence).

**National President's Commendations** to Peter Bennetts (Coffs Harbour), Bruce Connell (Fighter Squadrons), Howard Campbell (Radar Air Defence).

**Certificate of Appreciation** to John Cornish (Richmond).

**Long Service Awards:**

**70 Years:** Donald Burrows (Central), John Bice (Ballina), April Broadhurst (St George), Cornelia Koedam (Central).

**50 Years:** Ivor Elliott (Manning River), Gladys Webb, Neville Grady (Central).



Howie Campbell (R) being congratulated on his National President's Commendation by RADAR Branch president, Bruce Niblett.

**RADAR Branch Presentations**

Two long-serving and highly deserving members of RADAR Branch were recognised at the recent Division AGM. While Howard Campbell attended the AGM and received his National President's commendation, Tony Rogers was unable to attend to be presented with his Life Membership Award. Accordingly, at the Branch meeting on 26 May 17, Tony was presented his award and Howie was congratulated on his.



Tony Rogers (R) being presented his Life Membership Award by RADAR Branch president, Bruce Niblett.

**Update from 'The Fighting First' in the Middle East Region**

Greetings from the Fighting First in very sunny downtown Middle East Region! Operation OKRA Rotation 11 has hit the ground running, taking over from Classic Hornet operations and having a particularly busy month in support of Iraqi Security Forces and Coalition Special Forces in West Mosul. 1SQN dropped approximately 120 weapons in its first 30 days in theatre and thus surpassed the previous record of 110 in one month. The battle for West Mosul is still raging around an area approximately 2 x 3 kms, with multiple friendly Iraqi ground elements combining for the final encirclement and destruction of all remaining Da'esh within the city. The remaining conflict area involves incredibly dense, urban fighting and contains many CAT 1 buildings including the main general hospital complex and several significant mosques in the precinct called 'Old Town'. This causes a significant targeting challenge for both air and ground forces. Most strikes utilise low-collateral weapons to minimise the risk to civilians, infrastructure and friendly forces. Most days in the stack consist of several remotely piloted vehicles such as the Reaper and Predator, generally a larger bomber above and at least two formations of fighters. The Joint Terminal Attack Controllers (JTAC) '9 lines' reports come thick and fast over West Mosul with several instances of jets coming home having expended all ordnance. The 1SQN crews



are in good spirits and are now settling into a groove with summer operations. Daily temperatures rise above 50°C on the flight line and one of the biggest factors is to ensure both the crew and the jet don't overheat before getting airborne; 60°C in the cockpit leads to an interesting start-up procedure!

On the occasional days off, the crews generally spend their time relaxing (in air-conditioning) playing cards or watching movies. 1SQN has so far kept the callsign 'Kelpie' and is doing its utmost to maintain the credibility and reputation of Australian strike fighters in the Close Air Support (CAS) stack.

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### **Memories of the Ford Tri-Motor**

*Contributed by Terry Maher*

Ernest Gann, author of, among other books *The High and the Mighty*, wrote of the Ford Tri-motor aircraft, life with and aboard the Tri-Motor was far from ideal; Ford passenger cabins were always too hot or too cold and decibel levels assured them a top place among the world's noisiest aircraft. On boarding, passengers were offered chewing gum to allegedly ease the pressure changes on their eardrums during climb and descent, but it was just as much to encourage a cud-chewing state of nerves. They were also offered cotton which wise passengers stuffed in their ears so they would be able to hear ordinary conversation once they were on the ground. In the first Fords there were no seat belts, only hand grips were provided to stabilize passengers, and summertime flying could become a purgatory. While they bounced around in low altitude turbulence the passengers muttered about air pockets and a high percentage became airsick. Even with a few windows OPEN the cabin atmosphere developed a sourness which only time and scrubbing could remove. If the passengers retreated to the lavatory they found little comfort in any season. In winter the expedition became a trial-by-refrigeration, since the toilet consisted of an ordinary seat with cover. Once the cover was raised for whatever purpose, there was revealed a bomb aimers direct view of the passing landscape several thousand feet below!

### **Safeguarding veterans' pharmaceutical benefits**

On 1 July 2017 Minister for Veterans' Affairs Dan Tehan announced additional funding to ensure Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) clients would continue to have access to pharmaceuticals through the Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (RPBS). "From 1 July 2017, the Australian Government will provide \$663,000 in additional funding over five years for 35 pharmaceutical items," said Mr Tehan. "The funding will safeguard the availability of 34 items, one new listing and the addition of five generic brands." The generic brands treat insomnia, skin cancer, fungal mouth infections, diarrhoea and assist in preserving bone mineral density. Microdacyn, a sterile irrigation solution that assists in the treatment of wounds and is applied as a topical wound healing agent, will be added to the RPBS. These additions reflect new therapies becoming available, generic brands coming onto the market and pharmaceutical sponsors seeking to vary prices. "The Australian Government is continuously exploring ways to provide more pharmaceutical options at a lower cost to veterans," Mr Tehan said. "Australia will always be grateful to our veterans for the service they have provided to the nation. Ensuring access to affordable medications is one way the Government demonstrates our appreciation."

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### **The Bull Ring**

*From Ken Marsh*

The 'Bull Ring' was hallowed ground. Around the perimeter conspicuously placed notices declaring to the effect 'Crossing at an altitude under 6" forbidden unless authorised' said it all, and woe betide any apprentice or anyone else, who was caught breaking this rule. We were introduced to the parade ground very shortly after we arrived at Forrest Hill and over the next two and a half years would spend many hours on the impeccably maintained, tree lined gravelled square. Here we learned important things like left wheel, right incline, right dress, order arms and that, if we fainted on parade, we had to hit the ground before our rifle. Our drill instructors drilled us for hours on end, day after day, until we got it right. Round pause, up. Halt - right foot, left foot, in. To salute -



longest way up, shortest way down, not that American casual wave. And then there was that classic command, probably unseen on any military establishment other than a training camp anywhere in the world, 'Pick up [said quickly, followed by a pause] bags' - we were issued with a bag to carry our textbooks and other paraphernalia as we marched to and from work each day.

Who can ever forget our DIs barking out 'Get those arms up!', 'Don't you know your right foot from your left laddie?', 'Chest out, shoulders back' and their continual berating of those 'horrible little men' who were so slow to learn. And then there were the regular inspections, lined up in ranks of three as the inspecting NCO walked first along the front of each rank and then the rear, making sure we were up to standard and letting us know when we weren't. Standing directly in front of us, almost nose to nose and spitting out 'Did you shave this morning laddie?' or directly behind us with their mouth almost in our ears, with (if our overalls were too short) 'Get your boots to have a party and invite your overalls down!'. Or, 'Am I hurting you laddie?' 'No corporal/sergeant!'. 'Well, I should be, I'm standing on your hair. Now get it cut, you horrible little man!'.  
Here we paraded every morning and there were the weekly Tuesday morning parades, when we dressed in full uniform instead of our overalls. The Officer Commanding would hand out Long Service Medals to those who qualified and read from the official text, congratulating recipients on 'achieving this significant milestone' in their service careers to which he would always add his personal congratulations, reading, no doubt, from the speech authorised by the Air Board for such auspicious occasions. And before we marched off the parade ground, we would witness the march past of those adult trainees who had successfully completed their training at the RAAF School of Technical Training. It was here we prepared for our penultimate event at Forrest Hill. First, there was the graduation march through Wagga Wagga. We paraded in front of family and girlfriends, dressed in full dress uniform with full webbing, spit polished boots and carrying rifles with bayonets attached. This was an all apprentice affair. Over the time we were at Forrest Hill some of our numbers

were promoted to the rank of apprentice NCOs. Aply led by Warrant Officer Apprentice Ted Keetch, an Instrument Fitter from the Electrical Trades Squadron, we drilled with great precision, supported by 22 intake who themselves would graduate in 12 months time. We came to RAAF Base Forrest Hill as boys. We left as disciplined young men who understood teamwork, responsibility and accountability well beyond our years, well prepared to serve our country, first in the service and later in civilian life. It was more than our time on the bull ring that prepared us for our future careers, but this time played a major part in our development. We said goodbye to good mates, some of whom had become very close over that time and some we would never see again. But we remain forever bonded through our unique and privileged experience as air force apprentices.



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### Hardworking trainee Military Working Dogs





## MUFWIC in Vietnam

*from Ian Devereux*

When I was at Phan Rang, RVN as the supply officer to No 2 Squadron in 67/68, apart from the spares and general stores backup and ammo, my most valuable pieces of equipment were half a dozen spare slouch hats. These items were the object of desire of about 10,000 USAF staff on the base. I had to donate one to Bob Hope for his Christmas show, but the rest were under lock and key. One day a negro Captain sauntered into my office wearing his flying suit, and gave me a quick salute and said, "Excuse me sir, are you the MUFWIC here?" "Excuse me?" I said. He replied, "Are you the MUFWIC - the mother-f-----r whats in charge?" It floored me, and he won a hat. After 48 years, whenever I see someone in charge of ANYTHING, I refer (silently) to them as the MUFWIC.

many retired to a luncheon at the nearby Westin Hotel, where further interesting stories of the war years were told. It was an honour and privilege to be part of this moving 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary tribute to the 37,000 Australian airmen trained under the Empire Air Training Scheme. Over 10,000 young Australian men served with Bomber Command; with over 4,000 of whom who did not return.



## Bomber Command Commemorative Day

*Dr Ian Getley, VP RAAFA NSW*

I recently attended the Bomber Command Memorial Service held at Martin Place Cenotaph at 1100 hrs on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2017. It was an inspiring event, where at least five veterans, all in their nineties, could recall and reflect on their experiences with such lucid clarity it would put many their junior to shame. The ceremony was attended by His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley, AC DSC (Ret'd) Governor of NSW and Mrs Hurley, AIRCDRE Richard Lennon, Commander Air Mobility Group at RAAF Richmond and state dignitaries. Also present, Mr Jean-Louis Worobec, President of the Association of French Veterans, on behalf of the French Consul General, Mr Nicolas Croizer. This was a fitting tribute to those veterans present, many of whom wore the French Legion of Merit, awarded in recent years by the French Government. Dr Ron Houghton, President of Bomber Command Association in Australia Inc, gave an introduction, with WGCDR Cal Harrison, CO 460 SQN giving the main address. Mr Don Browning, veteran and representing No's 463/467 SQNs, gave a very moving reflection of his experiences in battle. After the ceremony,

## Reflection Address Bomber Command 11th June, 2017

*Don Browning President 463/467 RAAF Lancaster Association*

The sacrifice of the men and women who served in Bomber Command and those who died in their countries cause, certainly deserves recognition. It is pertinent to recall some of the experiences of those who survived and the sacrifice of those who did not. With the realisation that the RAF did not have the resources to maintain adequate strength to confront Germany, the Empire Air Training Scheme was signed on 17th December, 1939. Under this scheme Australia provided 37,000 aircrew. Training was conducted in Australia, Canada and Southern Rhodesia. RAAF operational aircrews were usually made up of very young men – some gunners were only 18 years old. The remaining crewmembers - pilots, navigators, bomb aimers, wireless operator/gunners all underwent considerable training before coming together as a crew at operational training units (OTU). At the conversion unit, the flight engineer joined the crew for further training on four-engine aircraft. We should also remember the small band of dedicated personnel who instructed these aircrew and the losses that occurred in accidents



and bad weather during training. Whilst my tribute focuses mainly on Australian aircrew we must not forget that Australians were part of a larger force comprising men and women from Britain, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, Rhodesia, some British Colonies, as well as Poland, Norway, France, Czechoslovakia, the Netherlands and the USA.

I'll give three examples of actual operational experiences which demonstrates that no target was a piece of cake. On 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1944, a relatively short duration daylight attack on a launch pad of a flying bomb sight at Bois de Casson was staged, with seven friends who had been on course with us at OTU had the misfortune of being hit by bombs from above, shearing off one wing and causing their aircraft to collide with another aircraft. Both aircraft crashed with the loss of fourteen aircrew. Of these two crews, FLGOFF Arthur Bradley and crew had three days service on 467 Squadron., and the other crew had only three weeks service. The second occasion which I remember in detail was a raid on Calais on 24th September, 1944. This was an Army cooperation request to remove a particular gun site that was holding out in defence of Calais. We had been held all day waiting for the weather to clear, eventually taking off at 1730 hours. At briefing we were told this was a 'Death of Glory Raid', as we were to bomb visually no lower than 1200ft. Our bomb load was 11x1000 lbs plus 4x500 lbs. As we approached Calais our bomb aimer insisted that we go round again to correct our heading. The gunners were most unimpressed as the light flak was coming up six red dollops at a time The bomb aimer dropped our bombs successfully from 1900 ft. Of 15 aircraft that went out, eight were shot down, seven Lancasters and one Halifax. One Lancaster was from 467 Squadron skippered by F/O Jones R.A, with three KIA and four POW. The navigator who was a friend of mine was held POW in German HQ until Calais was captured and he returned to Waddington. Then there were the heavily defended targets such as the Dortmund, Emms Canal at Merseberg Leuna where a 463 SQN crew were first hit by heavy flak putting the hydraulics and their rear and front turrets out of action. They carried on and on the bombing run they were hit again, setting the port inner engine on fire until it was

feathered. The aircraft was then attacked by a FW190 from 200yards, hitting the pilot's air speed indicator and the altimeter. The mid-upper gunner drove the German fighter off. After jettisoning the bombs and turning for base, they were attacked again, holing the starboard tank. They then set course for Jouvencourt in France, and after considerable difficulty lowering the flaps and undercarriage, they landed. On 3/4 March 1945 in a raid again on Dortmund Emms Canal (this time at Ladbergen) the crew was shot down with five KIA and two POW – on their 19th operation. This crew was skippered by FLGOFF Howells and the Wireless Operator, Oswald Elliott, was a particular school friend of mine.

The motto of 463 Squadron was 'Press on Regardless'. The motto of Bomber Command was "Strike Hard, Strike Sure". Similar events such as these would have happened on many squadrons and it must be appreciated that 80% of RAAF airmen flew with mixed squadrons and only 20% on Australian squadrons. The RAAF Bomber Command crews incurred 20% of all losses although they represented only 2% of the Australian Forces. Bomber Command was awarded 19 Victoria Crosses for bravery, with seven awarded to Dominion Forces including two Australians; nine were awarded posthumously.

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### State-Of-The-Art Air Power

(from *The Australian* 28Jun17)

The Trump administration says the Turnbull government's decision to buy up to five spy planes for as much as \$US1.3 billion (AU\$1.7bn) will boost Australia's self defence capability and is vital to US interests in the region. The US government yesterday gave in-principle approval for Australia to purchase up to five Gulfstream G550 modified intelligence and surveillance aircraft. The deal, which was mooted in last year's Defence white paper, will sharply boost the RAAF's intelligence capabilities. The highly secretive G550 is expected to be able to fly more than 12 hours non-stop with a range of more than 12,000km. "The State Department has made a determination approving a possible foreign military sale to Australia for Gulfstream G550 aircraft with airborne intelligence, surveillance,



reconnaissance and electronic warfare mission systems,” the US State Department’s Defense Security Co-operation Agency said. “The estimated cost is \$US1.3bn. “This sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the US by helping to improve the security of a major contributor to political stability, security and economic development,” the State Department said. “It is vital to the US national interest to assist our ally in developing and maintaining a strong and ready self-defence capability.”

Defence will acquire up to five of the G550 aircraft from the early 2020s, in two tranches. They will complement the Australian fleet of six E-7A Wedgetail airborne early-warning-and-control aircraft and the planned purchase of eight Poseidon P-8A surveillance planes, giving Australia its most advanced aerial intelligence capabilities yet. The State Department said the \$US1.3bn price included aircraft modification, ground systems, crew training, US government engineering and logistics.

“The proposed sale supports and complements the ongoing efforts of Australia to modernise its electronic warfare capability and increases interoperability between the USAF and the RAAF”, the State Department said.

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### My Chitty Chitty Bang Bangs

*from Don Langley (I was in the Third Intake of RAAF National Servicemen, February to July 1953 stationed at Laverton, Victoria. I was mustered into an Aerodrome Defence Unit.)*

There are one or two things I must point out right from the start. These vehicles are not restorations; far from it. They are perhaps better termed re-constructions or replicas. Though they have the form and profile of the originals they are not precisely the same as the originals. Mostly because they are replicas of vehicles long since banished to museums as the only such vehicle in existence. But each has its own story and that is what has made this work so enjoyable.

I only became interested in this hobby in late 2012. I had a small workshop in which I made furniture, rocking horses, and for a rather unusual twist - harp making. Though I had been in the building business all my working life, I was not a trained woodworker, more of a Project Manager, but I loved working with wood when

the opportunity came. However about 5 years ago whilst my wife and I were visiting our son in Victoria, I picked up a magazine on motorbikes – he being a motorbike fan. It was there that I saw an article on, arguably, the first wooden motorbike made by Daimler Benz. An Australian man had made a replica. I figured that, being an old chippy, I could make one also. That was the start of my Chitty Chitty Bang Bangs. I have had no plans, and parts are simply not available. How I overcame these difficulties comes with the story of each vehicle.



**The finished bike**



**The first test run**

(I was petrified, not of falling off, but that it would fall apart in front of onlookers.)

Incidentally, I called it the DAIMLAN, a sort of play on words as my initials are D.A, my wife’s initials I.M, and the first three letters of Langley LAN. Bit corny but it seemed appropriate at the time as the original bike did not seem to have a name.



## On the Job Training

from Lyall Klaffer

While I was working in Air Force Office, I was directed to fly over to Pearce with Sir Richard Williams (former CAS) to attend and assist with the graduation of No. 100 Pilots Course. Whilst we were flying over in a small twin engine jet aircraft, we had a talk about the graduation. Sir Richard asked me how many flying hours I had by the time I graduated and received my wings. I told him that I had flown about 160 hours in three different aircraft. He said that I had gone to Japan for the Korean war. I agreed. He then asked me how many hours I had on Mustang aircraft before I flew my first mission. I told him about 50 hours. I then asked him if I could ask him the same questions. He smiled and said OK. I asked him how many hours he flew before he got his wings at Point Cook in the early 1900s. He said 7 hours and 30 minutes. I said that he went to North Africa with Army and flew some combat missions. He agreed. I then asked him “How many hours did you have when you flew your first mission”. He smiled and said “7 hours and 30 minutes”.



## ANZAC Day 2017 at Rathmines

A selection of photographs taken at Rathmines Memorial Park ANZAC Commemoration Service, Tuesday, 25th April, 2017.



## Budget provides more funding for mental health

In the 2017–18 Budget, the Government expanded the range of mental health conditions current and former Australian Defence Force (ADF) members can seek treatment for on a non-liability basis. The \$33.5 million expansion of the program to cover all mental health conditions announced in the Budget recognises that the earlier a veteran gets treatment, the better the health and other outcomes. A veteran does not have to prove their mental health condition is related to their service. The funding for mental health treatment is demand-driven and not capped – if an eligible person requires treatment, the Government will pay for it. To access this treatment, call 133 254 or 1800 555 254 if you are in a regional area; or email [nlhc@dva.gov.au](mailto:nlhc@dva.gov.au).



The Budget also provides \$8.5 million to expand eligibility for the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service to include partners, dependants and former partners of veterans, who are often affected by military service. For more information about how the 2017–18 Budget affects veterans, see the Budget 2017–18 page of the DVA website. Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS): A free and confidential counselling service for Australian veterans, peacekeepers and their families. For more information on VVCS services and eligibility, please visit the VVCS website or phone 1800 011 046.

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## Longest Serving Fighter in RAAF History?

*(from Bob Richardson)*

From the Museum website:

'Entering operational service during 1965, the Mirage served as the front-line fighter until 1988, making the aircraft the longest serving fighter in RAAF history.'

This is now out of date, because of the first GAF-assembled F/A-18 Hornet being accepted by 2OCU on 17 May 1985, coinciding with Brian Robinson leading two Hornets from Lemoore to Williamtown on that same day! That's 32 years in Service some weeks ago by my reckoning...



**RAAF Mirages in flight**

'Australia reduced its shortlist for the Mirage replacement to only two candidates in November 1979. To fill the Tactical Fighter Force (TFF) requirement, the RAAF selected between the General Dynamics F-16 and the

McDonnell-Douglas F/A-18 Hornet. On 20 October 1981, the Hornet was selected. The F/A-18 was a descendant of the Northrop YF-17, which had been the loser of the United States Air Force (USAF) light-weight fighter competition. On 2 May 1975, the US Navy announced the selection of McDonnell-Douglas-Northrop project, which became the F/A-18 Hornet, as a multi-mission aircraft with the 'F/A' designation signifying both fighter and attack roles. The Hornet resembled a YF-17, scaled up 12 per cent. The YF-18 prototype first flew on 18 November 1978.

The Australian Government contracted to buy 75 Hornets for the RAAF in November 1981. This order was for 57 single-seat F/A-18As (serialled A21-1 to A21-57) and 18 two-seat F/A-18Bs (A21-101 to A21-118). The Hornet gave the Tactical Fighter Group several firsts, including a pulse-doppler look-down radar with a shoot-down capability, an inertial navigation system and a head-up display. The Australian Hornet program was for the first two aircraft to be entirely assembled by McDonnell-Douglas (McAir) in the USA with the remaining 73 to be assembled by the Government Aircraft Factories (GAF) in Victoria. The first RAAF Hornet, A21-101, made its first public appearance at the McAir plant at St Louis on 29 October 1984. Two aircraft, A21-101 and A21-102, were then ferried in a non-stop record-breaking trans-Pacific 15-hour flight on 17 May 1985. The 6672nm (12,360km) flight from US Naval Air Station Lemoore, California, to RAAF Williamtown, made possible by inflight refuelling from US Air Force (USAF) KC-10 tankers, was led by No2 Operational Conversion Unit (2OCU) Commanding Officer, Wing Commander Brian Robinson.

However, these were not the first RAAF Hornets to arrive in Australia. A21-103 and A21-104 had been flown inside a USAF C-5 Galaxy from St Louis, Missouri, arriving at Avalon, Victoria, on 6 June 1984. These were in a knocked-down state for Australian assembly and, on 16 November, A21-103 was rolled out by GAF at Avalon. Concurrently, at the main Tactical Fighter Group base at Williamtown, Mirage A3-3 (the first Australian-assembled Mirage) was flying a sortie to celebrate its 21st anniversary. It had first flown on 16 November 1963. A21-103 made its first flight at Avalon on



26 February 1985 in the hands of McAir test pilot, Rudi Haug. On this flight, A21-103 reached a speed of Mach 1.6 at an altitude of 40,000ft. This aircraft was accepted by the RAAF on 30 April 1985, formally handed over on 4 May, and then delivered to 2OCU at Williamtown on 17 May.



**RAAF F/A-18 Hornets in flight**

The first 14 aircraft (A21-1 to A21-7, A21-101 to A21-107) were all allocated to 2OCU to enable the commencement of Hornet instructor training. 2OCU's Hornets were marked with a yellow and black tail flash, to which the unit's tiger head insignia was later added. 2OCU began the first RAAF Hornet conversion course at Williamtown on 19 August 1985. The F/A-18 simulator was installed later that year, and on 25 November the first single-seater (A21-1) was accepted.'

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### **Extract from Milt Cottee's Memoirs**

The following occurred during 77 SQN's desperate efforts to help stop the North Korean advancing offensive in 1950. Pilots always needed some relief from the seriousness of the situation and sought to find any available source of humour.

The ground fire caused us to adopt supportive tactics when attacking ground targets. We avoided attacking a target singly, always using a minimum element of two aircraft, usually in loose line astern. With four aircraft we always tried for a tight pattern to share the ground fire. I was always conscious of being a prospective target, but the rapidity with which the scene was changing and the requirement for a continuous process of decision making resulted in there being no time to dwell on it.

The second time my Mustang aircraft was

damaged was somewhat dramatic. Another bridge, and more bombs which I dropped in a shallow dive at an unsafe height above the target. Soon after release I had rolled to the left to try to observe the accuracy of my release, when right before my eyes the top of the left wing opened up to form a jagged hole about the size of a large dinner plate. This hole was about 5 feet out from the fuselage just in front of where the undercarriage wheel folds into the wing. My immediate concern was that I had been targeted by ground fire so I called to say I had been hit but was OK for now. The aircraft continued to perform but I now had doubts about internal wing damage and damage to the undercarriage. Bay Adams ordered me to immediately head for Taegu whilst the rest of the flight completed the mission. I lowered the undercarriage as soon as I was close to Taegu and was relieved to feel it clunk into down lock and to see a green light in confirmation. But I could not see the wheel so called a landing emergency and on my first approach gently touched the wheels briefly on the runway. Those on the ground had a fairly close look and advised that I had a hole in the wing forward of the wheel well. The landing was uneventful. During the next hour I found a USAF airman with a well stocked tool kit. I borrowed a hammer, some aircraft fabric and dope. Looking through the entry and exit hole I was able to see that the only internal damage was to the air pressurisation lines only employed when carrying drop tanks. There was no other significant damage. I proceeded to use the hammer to flatten down the jagged edges of the hole on the top of the wing, patched some fabric over the holes and I had what I considered to be a useable aircraft again. I was then able to rejoin my flight in the turnaround queue where I was refuelled and rearmed for the next mission. My red doped patches stayed on until I arrived back at Iwakuni. A few days later and the aircraft had been expertly fitted with metal patches. Most bombs were delivered from a 60 degree dive from about 7000 ft above the target. Release would be immediately preceded by a quick pull though a small angle of about 2 degrees at about 2500 ft. This would be followed by a hard pullout at about 5g to avoid shrapnel from the bomb bursts. No one ever told me I should not release bombs singly and this



lack of knowledge came close to writing me off. My target was a camouflaged stationary T34 tank. There was negligible ground fire in the area. Using a text book training pattern I climbed to 7000 ft above the target, approached it by running it along the usual row of rivets in the left wing and rolled into what should have been a perfect 60 degree dive. But I had misjudged somehow and the dive turned out to be more vertical than 60 degrees.

This was not for me so I pulled out with the bombs still in place. This was a bit of a struggle for the Mustang but next time round found myself with the right dive angle. Thinking that I may as well have a second try at the target if I missed this time I selected the right bomb only for release. Everything was fine until I started the pullout. That poor aircraft tried to go everywhere but where I wanted. The harder I pulled the more it wanted to roll left and go sideways. The ground was coming uncomfortably close when the bomb I had released went off with a more than the usual thump under me. For a while I thought I wasn't going to make it and could not release my two hands from the stick to jettison the bomb causing all the trouble. Skimming the ground in the bucking aircraft I was able to coax it into a climb but soon found that as speed reduced I could not hold level with full left stick and trim. The residual stick force was very heavy and my minimum speed was about 190 kts. I wasn't offered another attack on the tank as the Mosquito controller reported the tank to be smoking and lying on its side in the bomb crater. It was quite a relief to shortly release that other bomb on another target.

On another occasion Bay Adams was leading four of us into Taegu when the tower called us to orbit for a while to provide time for a 'dead dog' to be removed from the runway. We all had visions of an aircraft having landed wheels up and wondered about this new bit of American language usage. After a while Bay called to say we were getting low on fuel and how long would we have to hold. The answer made us roar with laughter. The American voice said, "No problems Dropkick flight. We have a jeep picking up the dog now so we are all clear for you to join on initial. Call at one mile out. The poor dog had strayed on to the runway and been hit by a landing aircraft.

## Restaurant Guide

*from Kev Mcvey*

A group of chaps, all aged 40, discussed where they should meet for lunch. Finally it was agreed that they would meet at Wetherspoons in Uxbridge because the waitresses had big breasts and wore mini-skirts.

Ten years later, at age 50, the friends once again discussed where they should meet for lunch.

Finally it was agreed that they would meet at Wetherspoons in Uxbridge because the waitresses were attractive. The food and service was good and the beer selection was excellent.

Ten years later, at age 60, the friends again discussed where they should meet for lunch.

Finally it was agreed that they would meet at Wetherspoons in Uxbridge because there was plenty of parking, they could dine in peace and quiet with no loud music, and it was good value for money.

Ten years later, at age 70, the friends discussed where they should meet for lunch. Finally it was agreed that they would meet at Wetherspoons in Uxbridge because the restaurant was wheelchair accessible and had a toilet for the disabled.

Ten years later, at age 80, the friends discussed where they should meet for lunch. Finally it was agreed that they would meet at Wetherspoons in Uxbridge because they had never been there before!

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## No Bull

*Contributed by Dr Ralph Doughty*

Luis Freg was known as one of the worst matadors of all time. He was gored 57 times, which was more than anyone else in his trade. He received the Last Rites five times but kept on going back for one more. He quit the ring in one piece only to die two years later ... by drowning.



## 'This is wizard!'

Contributed by Geoffrey Moore  
(By Sarah Oliver for *The Mail on Sunday*  
published 5 February 2017)

Mary Ellis (pictured during her time as an Air Transport Auxiliary pilot in WW2) has celebrated her 100th birthday. Tearing through the skies above the South Coast, two Spitfires evoke powerful memories of Britain's wartime



resilience. But this stirring image holds a further poignancy – for in the cockpit of the lead aircraft sits Mary Ellis, celebrating her 100th birthday by recreating her time as one of the 'Ata-girls', the select gang of female pilots who flew Britain's fighters during the war. And over her shoulder is one of the actual Spitfires she flew during her 1,000 flights as a First Officer with the Air Transport Auxiliary. 'Wizard, this is wizard!' yelled the delighted centenarian through her intercom. Mary was handed the controls of the 275mph twin-seater as it swooped over West Sussex. After about 15 minutes, she turned for home, and told her co-pilot Matt Jones: 'Goodwood on the nose, you have control...'. Then she settled back to enjoy the ride back to base. Earlier, Mary watched in delight as Spitfire MV154 took its place beside her in an extraordinary airborne tribute. It was a plane she had delivered to RAF Brize Norton from Southampton on September 15, 1944 and it hides a sentimental secret. For at the end of the 25-minute wartime flight, she signed the cockpit, scrawling her maiden name Wilkins and the initials ATA.



Mary Ellis (circled) was handed the controls of the 275mph twin-seater as it swooped over West Sussex

She hoped her tag might be spotted by a handsome pilot and lead to a wartime romance – although the impulsive act, a career one-off, didn't bag her a boyfriend. Mary, originally from Oxfordshire, had her first flying lesson in 1938, and flew for pleasure until 1941 when she heard a BBC radio appeal for women pilots to join the auxiliary service and so release male pilots for combat duty. Speaking at a surprise birthday party on Thursday, Mary said: 'The war was a challenge and one had to do something about it. I went on and on until I flew everything. I love the Spitfire – it's my favourite aircraft, it's everyone's favourite, it's the symbol of freedom.'

For four years she ferried warplanes from factories to frontline squadrons. The 166 women of the ATA – about one in eight of the total – have been dubbed 'The Female Few', echoing Winston Churchill's description of the RAF airmen who fought in the Battle of Britain.



Mrs Ellis toasted a glass of champagne with co-pilot Matt Jones, managing director of Boulton Flight Academy



## Ride-On Lawn Mower For Sale

It's still hard to believe the way it turned out. My wife said she wanted a ride-on lawn mower. She works all day and was always tired when she came home from work and I thought that a ride-on lawn mower would help her get the yard work done quicker so she would have more time for the chores inside. So, being the handy sort of guy that I am, I made her a ride-on lawn mower. I thought she would squeal with delight or something and give me a big hug. I even put a light on it so she could work at night after she finishes putting away the dinner dishes. To this day I still can't understand why some women are so hard to please! I can see out of my left eye pretty well now and should be able to leave the hospital sometime next week!



## The RADAR Branch Awards

*from Ray O'Donoghue, VP RADAR Branch*

Initially formed to maintain the bonds forged between the men and women who served in RADAR units during WWII, the RADAR Branch has increasingly strived to maintain links with currently serving members in RADAR units. For many years, one of the ways in which the Branch has reached out to the RAAF has been through the presentation of awards for outstanding service.

Currently, the Branch sponsors three annual awards. Two of the three, the Joe Ulett Memorial Trophy and the Pither Award, are presented by the Branch as 41 Wing Proficiency Awards. The third award, the G.E.S. Stuchbury Memorial Award, was initiated and sponsored by the Branch in more recent times and is presented to a 44 Wing recipient. In this short series of articles, I hope to raise awareness of these awards by presenting a little of the history and ethos behind each one.

## Joe Ulett Memorial Trophy

Joe's career began during WWII, enlisting as a radio operator in May 1941. Joe rose rapidly through the ranks to be a T/FSGT by April 1944 testament to his ability and standing as an operator. During the war, he served with several RADAR Stations and then with the RAAF Occupation Force in Japan as a member of 114MFCU (Mobile Fighter Control Unit). Post-war, Joe remained in the PAF, re-engaging in September 1948, then remustering to Aircraft Plotter in 1952. Once again, Joe's abilities were quickly recognised and he very soon reached the rank of WOFF. From 1956, Joe was posted to No1 CARU (Control and Reporting Unit) Brookvale, NSW and was responsible for the training of the operational surveillance team. He demanded the highest standards from his trainees and operators; his mantra was 'I want better than 100% on scope. Miss one aircraft and we could all be dead.' His no-nonsense approach invoked a level of trepidation in most airmen, but it also garnered considerable admiration and unwavering support.

In later years at Butterworth, the quality of Joe's training and the dedication of his teams saw 114MCRU (Mobile Control and Reporting Unit) regularly win top awards as the 'gun' unit in the Far East, when the RAF Inspection Teams conducted annual reviews. After a stint on exchange duties to London, WOFF Ulett was posted back to 3CRU, RAAF Williamtown. It was while there that Joe succumbed to a sudden illness and passed away on 21 February 1968. As a measure of how much WOFF Ulett was admired and missed, in both the RAF and RAAF, within a matter of months the Commanding Officer of RAF Western Hill, Penang, Malaysia, had presented the CO of 1CARU with the Joe Ulett Memorial Trophy, to be presented for excellence achieved by the most outstanding AC/ACW Aircraft Plotter. The trophy is still awarded annually with the essence of excellent achievement demanded by WOFF Ulett remaining central to the award. Now the criterion is to recognise the 'airwomen or airman who has provided the most positive contribution to the operational performance of 41WG'. In the 1990s, the RADAR Branch elected to support the award as a way of enhancing ties between past and present RADAR operators. Many of the members of RADAR Branch had



worked with or for WOFF Ulett and felt it was a very fitting way to honour him. Since then, the Branch has contributed a cash award (replaced in recent years with books from the Chief of Air Force's reading list), and a personal trophy for the recipient to keep. With the cooperation of 41WG, the Joe Ulett Memorial Award is presented each year as part of the RADAR Branch activities associated with ANZAC Day. The Branch is very honoured to be able to contribute in this small way to the ongoing excellence of those serving members in the RAAF RADAR community. A highly prized award, each 41WG unit submits nominations, with a selection board chaired by Officer Commanding 41WG ultimately deciding the winner.

This year's recipient of the Joe Ulett Award is one of our contemporary veterans of the war in Afghanistan, SGT Cassandra Grace of HQ 41WG. In part, Cass's award citation reads: *During your time in the Air Battle Management Coordination Centre, you have identified a number of opportunities to improve 41 Wing policies, processes and associated documentation including the new Site Survey Process and Database. Further to this, your work in redeveloping 41 Wing planning tools and the creation of the Exercise Summary template has created a robust method of retaining critical information that is easily accessible for all stakeholders while allowing for a smooth transfer of planning responsibilities. You have demonstrated a level of professionalism and dedication that reflects the finest traditions of Headquarters Number 41 Wing and the Royal Australian Air Force.*

Next issue – The Pither Trophy.

*(Disclaimer: I never had the honour of knowing WOFF Ulett and I am therefore deeply indebted to two principal sources for the material in this article – Howie Campbell, a former SGT Air Defence Supervisor and proudly 'Joe Ulett Trained'; and FSGT Gary-Jon Darrigo, currently the 41WG SO3 Standardisation Officer.)*

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## Some Things Never Change

The following safety tips from Daedalian Foundation are excerpts from a Royal Flying Corps monthly safety report. The report was signed C. St.John-Culbertson, Royal Flying Corps, Colonel, and was dated 21 December 1917. If you read through them you will discover where the term 'NO STEP' that we see on certain parts of the wings etc., may have come from.

**INTRODUCTION** Another good month. In all, a total of 35 accidents were reported, only six of which were avoidable. These represented a marked improvement over the month of November during which 84 accidents occurred, of which 23 were avoidable. This improvement, no doubt, is the result of experienced pilots with over 100 hours in the air forming the backbone of all the units.

**RESUME OF ACCIDENTS** Avoidable accidents.

1. Avoidable accidents this last month.
  - a. The pilot of a Shorthorn, with over 7 hours of experience, seriously damaged the undercarriage on landing. He had failed to land at as fast a speed as possible as recommended in the Aviation Pocket Handbook.
  - b. A BE 2 stalled and crashed during an artillery exercise. The pilot had been struck on the head by the semaphore of his observer who was signalling to the gunners.
  - c. Another pilot in a BE 2 failed to get airborne. By an error of judgement, he was attempting to fly at mid-day instead of at the recommended best lift periods, which are just after dawn and just before sunset.
  - d. A Longhorn pilot lost control and crashed in a bog near Chipping-Sedbury. An error of skill on the part of the pilot in not being able to control a machine with a wide speed band of 10 MPH between top speed and stalling speed.
  - e. While low flying in a Shorthorn the pilot crashed into the top deck of a horse drawn bus near Stonehenge.
  - f. A BE 2 pilot was seen to be attempting a banked turn at a constant height before he crashed. A grave error by an experienced pilot.
2. There were 29 unavoidable accidents from which the following are selected:
  - a. The top wing of a Camel fell off due to fatigue failure of the flying wires. A successful emergency landing was carried out.



b. 16 BE 2s and 9 Shorthorns had complete engine failures. A marked improvement over Novembers fatigue.

c. Pigeons destroyed a Camel and 2 Longhorns after mid-air strikes.

**COST OF ACCIDENTS:** Accidents during the last three months of 1917 cost 317 pounds, 10 shillings sixpence, money down the drain and sufficient to buy new gaiters and spurs for each and every pilot observer in the Service.

#### ACCIDENT BRIEFS

No. 1 Brief: No. 912 Squadron 3 December 1917 Aircraft type BE 2C, 678, Total solo 4.20 Pilot Lt. J. Smyth-Worthington, Solo in type 1.10 The pilot of this flying machine attempted to maintain his altitude in a turn at 2,500 feet.

This resulted in the aeroplane entering an unprecedented manoeuvre, entailing a considerable loss of height. Even with full power applied and the control column fully back, the pilot was unable to regain control. However, upon climbing from the cockpit onto the lower mainplane, the pilot managed to correct the machines altitude, and by skilful manipulation of the flying wires successfully side-slipped into a nearby meadow.

Remarks: Although through inexperience, this pilot allowed his aeroplane to enter an unusual attitude, his resourcefulness in eventually landing without damage has earned him a unit citation.

R.F.C. Lundsford-Magnus is investigating the strange behaviour of this aircraft.

No. 2 Brief: No. 847 Squadron 19 December 1917 Aircraft type Spotter Balloon J17983, Total solo 107.00 Pilot Capt. \* \* \*, solo in type 32.10.

Captain \* \* \* of the Hussars, a balloon observer, unfortunately allowed the spike of his full-dress helmet to impinge against the envelope of his balloon. There was a violent explosion and the balloon carried out a series of fantastic and uncontrollable manoeuvres, while rapidly emptying itself of gas. The pilot was thrown clear and escaped injury as he was lucky enough to land on his head.

Remarks: This pilot was flying in full-dress uniform because he was the Officer of the Day. In consequence it has been recommended that pilots will not fly during periods of duty as Officer of the Day.

Captain \* \* \* has requested an exchange posting to the Patroville Alps, a well known mule unit of the Basques.

No. 3 Brief: Summary of No. 43 Brief dated October 1917 Major W. de Kitkag-Watney's Nieuport Scout was extensively damaged when it failed to become airborne.

The original Court of Inquiry found that the primary cause of the accident was carelessness and poor airmanship on the part of a very experienced pilot. After extensive inquiries and lengthy discussions with the Meteorological Officer and Astronomer Royal, the Court came to the conclusion that the pilot unfortunately was authorized to fly his aircraft on a day when there was absolutely no lift in the air and could not be held responsible for the accident.

The Court wishes to take this opportunity to extend its congratulations to Major de Kitkag-Watney on his reprieve and also on his engagement to the Commandant General's daughter, which was announced shortly before the accident.

**FLYING SAFETY TIPS.** Horizontal turns. To take a turn the pilot should always remember to sit upright, otherwise he will increase the banking of the aeroplane. He should NEVER lean over.

Crash precautions. Every pilot should understand the serious consequences of trying to turn with the power off. It is much safer to crash into a house when going forward rather than to sideslip or stall a machine with engine troubles.

Passengers should always use safety belts, as the pilot may start stunting without warning. Never release the belt while in the air, or when nosed down to land.

Engine noises. Upon the detection of a knock, grind, rattle or squeak, the engine should be at once stopped. Knocking or grinding accompanied by a squeak indicates binding and a lack of lubricant.

**WATCH THAT FIRST STEP.** The First Marine Air Wing had this write up in their Safety publication Wing Tips.

It was conceded by all that the pilot had accomplished a brilliant piece of work in landing his disabled machine without damage under the circumstances. It is not with intent to reflect less credit upon his airmanship, but it must be noted that he is a well experienced



aviator with over 40 total hours in the air, embracing a wide variety of machines, and this was his seventh forced landing due to complete failure of the engine. It was doubly unfortunate that upon alighting from his machine he missed the catwalk on the lower airfoil and plunged both legs through the fabric, straddling a rib, from which he received a grievous personal injury. Some thought should be devoted to a means of identifying wing-traversing catwalks to assist aviators in disembarking from their various machines.

### Anzac Day 2017 at Evans Head Memorial Aerodrome

*(Formerly RAAF No.1 Bombing and Gunnery School and No.1 Air Observers School)*

The Annual ANZAC Day Evans Head Memorial Aerodrome Service was held at the Aerodrome with a full contingent of RAAF from the Evans Head Weapons Range and members of the local community, many with connections to the aerodrome and its WWII history. The service was led by Dr Richard Gates, Vice-President, Ballina Branch of RAAFA. He gave the occasional address which focused on the message that the burden of the effects of war should not only be borne by Servicemen and women, their families and government, but directly by wider society. The service was preceded by a fly-over of local aircraft arranged by Gai Taylor, daughter of Sir Gordon ‘P.G. Taylor’, WWI pilot who flew with Smithy in the Southern Cross. Gai organizes the annual Great Eastern Fly-In at Evans Head in recognition of the men and women who served there during the war.

The assembled group then attended the Service at the Evans Head War Cemetery where a wreath was laid on behalf of WWII veterans by Mrs Joy Sivertsen, a WAAAF who served at Evans Head during WWII and attended the crew of Q for Queenie, the Lancaster which crashed at Evans Head during a War Bonds and Recruitment tour. Joy had the first flight on the repaired aircraft, a thank you gift from the crew for looking after them while the Lancaster was being repaired in the field by the boys from Amberley. Joy is also patron of The Evans Head Living Museum which has as its major theme the WWII history of No.1 Bombing and

Gunnery School and No. 1 Air Observers School, Evans Head. More than 1,000 of those who trained at Evans Head lost their lives in service to their country.



**Dr. Richard Gates and Mrs. Joy Siversten**



**Evans Head personnel**



**The banners displayed on Anzac Day are part of an Evans Head Schools and Community WW2 project spanning a four year period**



## New RAAFA Branch at HARS

Recently a new branch has been promulgated, to be based at the HARS Museum at Illawarra Regional Airport, Albion Park, near Wollongong. The RAAFA has been supporting the operation of our two ex-RAAF Caribou aircraft and so it seemed natural to establish a permanent branch of the Association at the museum. HARS has the largest collection of airworthy ex-RAAF aircraft in the country, including the two Caribous, two C-47 Dakotas, a Catalina, two SP-2H Neptunes, a Convair Metropolitan and a Winjeel. Waiting in the wings (so to speak) are a pair of Vampires, one of which will be a flyer, the other for taxi operations.

These aircraft are complemented by a growing collection of static ex-military and civil aircraft, too numerous to list here. HARS is a group of enthusiasts who have been building the collection since the late '70s. It has now grown to over 40 aircraft, crowned with the donation of Qantas's first Boeing 747-400 VH-OJA. We also have a branch of HARS at Parkes Airport, along with a warehouse nearby which stores a considerable number of artefacts.

One of the benefits of this branch will be a physical presence for RAAFA that is in the public domain. We intend to set up a niche at HARS where we can showcase some memorabilia and point out the work and advocacy that RAAFA supports. Recently, HARS was chosen as the permanent site for the Australian Aviation Hall of Fame (AAHOF) and we have now achieved a critical mass whereby we will be the centrepiece of Australian aviation history in NSW.

Bob Delahunty OAM, has kindly offered to be our inaugural President. Working with him are Doug Haywood (Secretary) and Dick Elliot (Treasurer). We are still in the process of setting up, but in the near future we will be establishing a RAAFA area within HARS. To that end, if anyone has any unwanted memorabilia (ie stuff that the grandkids will throw out!), please contact us and we can find a good home for it. Any other RAAFA members are most welcome to see the activities at HARS. You will be astonished at what has been achieved here, all with volunteer labour and no direct government support. Doug Haywood is there most Thursdays and we can give you a little more

than the standard tour. We look forward to gaining members and a physical presence at the museum.



RAAFA HARS Branch: L to R Rod Holzward, Leigh Peddell, Tony Dach, Kent Corney, Doug Haywood and Dave Dredge.

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## More than 1,000 jobs for veterans flagged

17 June 2017

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Dan Tehan today said more than 1,000 jobs flagged as suitable for veterans had been advertised on the Government's *jobactive* website as part of the Prime Minister's Veterans' Employment Program. The Industry Advisory Committee on Veterans' Employment, which comprises business leaders from the private sector, met in Canberra this week to review progress on a number of initiatives that will improve the employment pathways of former Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel within the private sector.

Mr Tehan said in this year's Budget the Government provided \$2.7 million to support the Advisory Committee's work, establish the Ex-service Organisation Industry Partnership Register and manage the Prime Minister's Annual Awards. Mr Tehan praised the positive response since the Government had added a 'Defence Force Experience Desirable' category to its *jobactive website* (<https://jobactive.gov.au/>).

"More than 1,000 jobs have already been advertised on the *jobactive* website as suitable for a former member of the ADF," Mr Tehan said. "The Prime Minister's Veterans'



Employment Program is already delivering improvements to the employment prospects of our former ADF personnel. “It is also raising awareness about the unique skills and talents our veterans learn in the military and can bring to a career in the private sector. “This program is about improving the transition from the ADF into post-service employment and highlighting the opportunities for business when they employ a veteran. “The Industry Advisory Committee is developing policies and practices that could be implemented by businesses keen to attract these valuable employees. It is also developing strategies to support veterans as they adjust to a working life outside of the military. “More than 60 businesses from across Australia have already expressed an interest in working with the Advisory Committee. I encourage people to consider how the unique skills and talents of our veterans could help their business and to register their interest in the Prime Minister’s Veterans’ Employment Program.” Industry Advisory Committee on Veterans’ Employment chair George Frazis said the committee was working to ensure veterans got the support they deserve when looking for a job. “Improving the opportunities available to today’s veterans to secure appropriate employment is just part of the great debt we all owe to our servicemen and women,” Mr Frazis said. “More and more employers are recognising the valuable skills veterans can bring to their businesses, and the Committee is working to ensure that all businesses are aware of the wide range of skills and capabilities that veterans gain during their service.” Businesses can register their interest in the Prime Minister’s Veterans’ Employment Program by emailing: [veteransemployment@dva.gov.au](mailto:veteransemployment@dva.gov.au).

### Helping Hands

During his service career a RAAF fighter pilot had a problem in his Meteor jet fighter and prudently decided to land at the nearest airfield; one not used to such elite machinery. He landed and came to a stop at the end of the runway and for safety reasons elected to shut down the engines and get a tractor to tow the aircraft to a hangar. He felt relaxed at having handled an awkward situation with coolness and that nothing untoward had happened to him or the

aircraft. As the engines wound down he spoke to the control tower about his tractor requirement. As light rain was falling he wisely kept the canopy closed.

However, the next 20 seconds were not so calm and collected. A fire engine, with red flashing lights and siren wailing, pulled up alongside. Before the pilot could stop them, two men in astronaut like anti fire suits and helmets began spraying foam over the aeroplane, while another similarly garbed giant placed a ladder against the fuselage and then swung an axe through the canopy in front and behind the pilot. After removing the shattered perspex, the fire fighter produced a knife, and bending over the fiercely gesticulating pilot, cut through the shoulder and parachute harnesses. As this was happening another energetic fellow with a similar knife appeared on the other side and slashed through the thigh straps and before the unfortunate pilot could further remonstrate, four arms lifted him bodily out of the cockpit!



An intact Meteor

### 18 Apr 32: RAAF motto settled



On this day, the order was published which made per ardua ad astra the official motto of the RAAF. Australia’s Chief of the Air Staff, Air Commodore Richard Williams, had first raised the idea of finding a suitable motto in late 1928,

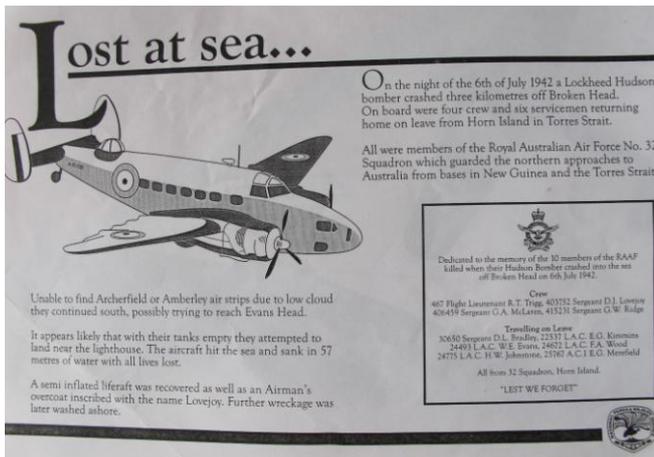


expressing his preference for something different to the RAF. After unsuccessfully seeking suggestions from Latin scholars at the universities of Sydney and Melbourne, the Air Board decided in October 1929 to conform with other dominion air forces which had adopted the British motto, and the process of securing royal assent was put in train. In February 1932 the Australian Prime Minister was notified that approval had been granted, and the order promulgating the change followed two months later. Various meanings were ascribed to per ardua ad astra over the years, but in 2002 the Chief of Air Force formally accepted 'Through Struggle to the Stars' as the RAAF's translation. **Note:** The motto was approved for the Royal Flying Corps in March 1913.

### Engine Recovered near Byron Bay recalls 1942 Hudson crash

*from Dr Richard Gates, VP, Ballina Branch*

On the night of the 6<sup>th</sup> of July 1942 RAAF Lockheed Hudson A16-198 from 32 SQN with 10 personnel on board, disappeared off Broken Head near Byron Bay in Northern NSW. The aircraft was en-route to Amberley from Horn Island, with reports of a large explosion being heard at the time. A Remembrance Plaque at Broken Head gives some details of the crash.



**Plaque at Broken Head**

No personnel were ever recovered, but various items from the aircraft were found on the beach the next day, including the jacket of one of the airmen containing a packet of precious letters which are held by the family. In January 2014, 72 years after the Hudson crash, two fishermen from Ballina picked up a large object in their trawler nets which they managed to bring on

board. To their surprise it turned out to be a large radial engine with a three blade prop. The Evans Head Living Museum, which has as one of its themes World War II RAAF history with a focus on the Empire Air Training Scheme, was called by the RSL at Ballina. The engine was soon on its way to Evans Head where it is now being carefully restored, a long, but interesting process. While it is not possible to say with certainty that this particular engine belonged to the lost Hudson, all the facts point to it being from that particular aircraft.

The recovery of the engine created quite a media interest which then prompted calls from a number of family members of those lost, who have since visited Evans Head. For some seeing and touching the engine has, in their words, 'brought finality' to the loss of a long-remembered family member. Generously, they've revealed their private thoughts and feelings for the record, and shared memorabilia: quite an experience and privilege for those of us recording their visits and reviewing the pieces they had saved.



**Engine tied down for trip to Evans Head for restoration.**

In the course of researching the history of the aircraft's loss, we examined the personnel files and related records of those aboard the aircraft on that fateful night. RAAF Personnel "presumed to have lost their lives as a result of an aircraft accident on the 6<sup>th</sup> July, 1942":

- Flight Lieutenant Robert Thomas TRIGG, 467
- Sergeant Douglas John LOVEJOY, 403752
- Sergeant Gavin Athole Laurie McLAREN, 406859
- Sergeant Gordon William George RIDGE, 416231



Sergeant David Leslie BRADLEY,  
30650  
Leading Aircraftsman Edward George  
KIMMINS, 22537  
Leading Aircraftsman William Edward  
EVANS, 24493  
Leading Aircraftsman Frederick Albert  
Charles WOOD, 24672  
Leading Aircraftsman Harold Wilmot  
JOHNSTONE, 24775  
Aircraftman Class 1 Edward George  
MEREFIELD, 25767.

### REST IN PEACE

Further enquiries: Dr Richard Gates, The Evans  
Head Living Museum, or Vice-President,  
Ballina Branch RAAFA. Tel 02 6682 6410 or  
0409 558 500, or email:  
[ehlmuseum.ctc@westnet.com.au](mailto:ehlmuseum.ctc@westnet.com.au)

### Email and 'Snail' Mail

*from Dick Wills, Division VP*



How are you sending or receiving you mail and messages? If you don't own or have access to a smart phone, ipad or tablet, or a computer, I guess post and telephone is the answer. This article is included here for association members without a smart phone or a computer, and to advise other members of the importance of keeping your member details up to date. Print media and mail by post is declining but it will still be around long into our future, so those of you who don't have or don't want a smart phone or a computer need not worry, you are not forgotten with the Association recently moving towards using the new Membership Management System for sending information by both email and post mail. Many members already have a friend or relative receiving and sending their mail electronically.

Maybe you have a relative or a friend who would be willing to have their email address listed on your records and to act as your mail person; then you too could be receiving and possibly sending mail electronically. This is a Mates Helping Mates scenario, so the reality depends on willingness and view towards handling your mail, the only personal mail sent by email is membership subscription invoices and reminder notices for unpaid subscriptions. An alternative is to use the computers available at most libraries: you could set up and monitor an email account at the library, without the need or expense of having your own computer and library computer use is usually free. Electronic mail is easier, faster, more environmentally friendly, and also cheaper than post, allowing us to better use members money.

Some have an email address and have not had it recorded on their member details, or have changed their address and have not notified the change. If you have email and have not been receiving notices from the Association, then contact us to have your correct email address recorded.

Members with access to the internet are encouraged to visit the Association website at [www.raafansw.org.au](http://www.raafansw.org.au). There members are able to access the members-only portal allowing them to update their own details, communicate with other members and send items of news or stories and photographs to the website for all to see and read.

Facebook has become a recent addition to the Association's communication media. The site address is <https://www.facebook.com/raafansw/>, or search on Facebook for Air Force Association – New South Wales. Facebook users will find lots of interesting photographs, posts and reviews, and can leave their own items for others to see. This site is administrator controlled, keeping it suitable for all viewers. Your membership updates and feedback (both brickbats and bouquets) are welcome. Use the "Contact Us" tab on the website; or send an email to Dick Wills at: [vicepresident.wills@raafansw.org.au](mailto:vicepresident.wills@raafansw.org.au), telephone 0414 618 793; or post mail to Air Force Association (NSW Division) Inc. PO Box A2638 SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1235, telephone 02 9393 3485, fax 02 9283 3144.



### Pat Hughes Book Offer

Readers of *Arm Australia* will be familiar with Dennis Newton's work through his excellent Skywarriors regular features, dealing with (usually) pilots who have made their mark in wartime. Pat Hughes joined the RAAF in 1936 and trained at Point Cook. He was part of the scheme under which some Australians would serve with the RAF after their initial training at home under a short service commission, and then return. The idea was to provide the RAF with a reserve of trained aircrew for use in an emergency. Pat Hughes went to Britain in 1937 and of course the 'emergency' - the outbreak of war with Germany in September 1939 meant he stayed there. A natural leader and gifted fighter pilot, he was the top-scoring Australian in the Battle of Britain with 14 confirmed victories, all of them claimed in a frenetic three-week period in August and early September 1940 at the height of the battle.

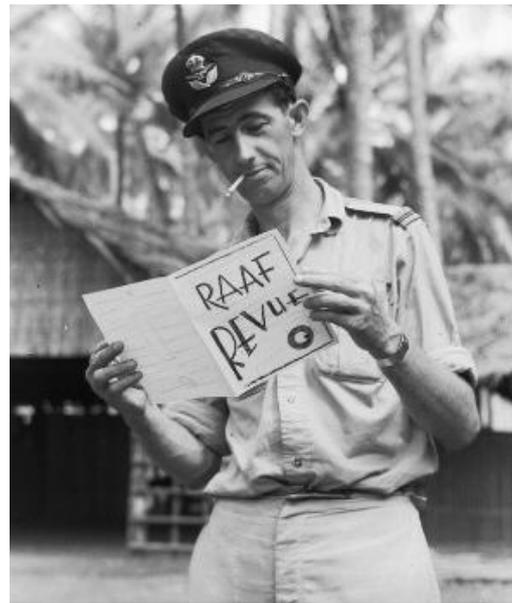
He was killed in action on 7 September 1940. Written with the full support of Pat Hughes' family, the book is written to the very high standard expected of Dennis Newton with flawless research telling the story in great detail, like any good biography. It is easy to read and there is plenty of political, operational, historical and personal context provided to paint a complete picture of Pat Hughes' remarkable and all-too brief career.

The early part of the book covers Pat Hughes' time at Point Cook. It paints a very interesting picture of what life for a trainee was like at the time. Featuring more than 60 illustrations, appendices and an index, this is the story of a remarkable man told extremely well.

304 pages casebound; RRP \$44.95, Amberley Publishing (UK) [www.amberleybooks.com](http://www.amberleybooks.com)  
Available through the publisher Booktopia, or the Australian War Memorial bookshop.

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### 24 Apr 43: 'Chips Rafferty' commissioned in RAAF



Actor John Goffage, better known by his screen name of 'Chips Rafferty', was appointed as a Pilot Officer in the Administrative and Special Duties Branch of the RAAF on this day. He had enlisted on 29 May and was a Corporal at the RAAF School of Administration at the time he was commissioned. Fulfilling welfare and entertainment duties in Australia, New Guinea (including Milne Bay) and the Netherlands East Indies (including Morotai), he was promoted to Flying Officer in October 1943 before being demobilised in February 1945. While still serving, he was released to perform in propaganda films for the Department of Information. In 1944 he had a leading role in Charles Chauvel's war classic, *The Rats of Tobruk*. After WWII he had roles in feature films made overseas as well as in Australia, and during the 1950s even had his own local production company.

A biography of Chips Rafferty is here:  
<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/goffage-john-william-pilbean-10317>

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## The Rathmines Catalina Festival is on again this year Sunday 29th October.

Once again, there will be a diverse range of quality exhibitors to make this year's Festival an even bigger and better event.

After having quite an extensive and lengthy overhaul, 'Felix', the **HARS** PBY Catalina has been confirmed for a fly over during the Festival. The **RAAF Roulettes** will also participate as well. Other details re the air display content will be released as it is confirmed.

A Raffle will be held in conjunction with the Festival, with tickets now available from Sticky Ticket via this [link](https://www.stickytickets.com.au/54529) - or copy & paste in your browser - <https://www.stickytickets.com.au/54529>

**1st PRIZE** - Return Helicopter for four (4) to Hunter Vineyards donated by **Heliservices Newcastle**, PLUS two course lunch with wine for four (4) donated by **Wandin Valley Estate** - value \$1720.00

**2nd PRIZE** - VIP Movie Experience, thanks to **Event Cinemas** - includes movies for two (2) for 12 months plus gift box of goodies - value \$600.00

**3rd PRIZE** - Tandem Skydive donated by **Skydive Newcastle** - value \$319.00

**4th PRIZE** - One night's accommodation with \$50 lunch voucher donated by **Best Western Plus Apollo International**, Charlestown - value \$300.00

**Tickets \$5 each or 3 for \$10**

Prizes will be drawn at 2.30pm on 29th October, with winners advised by phone, and published in our next Newsletter.

