



# **THE RADAR AIR DEFENCE BRANCH**

## **RAAF ASSOCIATION (N.S.W. DIVISION) INC**

**Patrons:** Air Commodore D. Bowden AM (Ret'd)  
Air Vice Marshal R.B. Treloar AO (Ret'd)

**President:** W. Fielder-Gill

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### **BULLETIN JULY 2006**

#### **FUTURE EVENTS**

#### **LUNCH: SEPTEMBER – NSW PARLIAMENT HOUSE** **“BATTLE OF BRITAIN”**

As mentioned this time last year, the Committee feel that we should offer an opportunity to meet for Lunch sometime between our two regular events viz: Anzac day and Xmas lunch. Again this year we believe the best opportunity for something different is a NSW Division Sponsored Lunch which has been held each year for some years past, attendance at which is by invitation to the Branches from Division HQ. Details as follows:

- (I) Time – Day – Date: 12 Noon Friday 15 September 06
- (II) Venue – NSW Parliament House – Strangers Dining Room Macquarie St. Sydney
- (III) Cost - \$60 per Person includes Pre Dinner Drinks, 3 Course Meal & Table Wine.
- (IV) Payment Cheques made in favour – RAAFA NSW Division. Please reply by Friday 01/09/06 to:  
The State Secretary (for attention Annette Williams)  
RAAF Association (NSW Division) Inc.  
PO Box A2147 Sydney South 1235

**Indicating that it is payment for the “Battle of Britain: Lunch. Please pay by 1<sup>st</sup> September 06 at the latest, the sooner the better, and indicate Radar Table (see below return slip)**

.....Please cut off and return with your cheque.....

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Ms Annette Williams – RAAFA (NSW Division) Inc.  
PO Box A1247 Sydney South NSW 1235

I/We would like to attend the Battle of Britain Lunch, Enclosed is a cheque for \$.....covering No.....  
People. NAME.....Address.....PC.....Tel No.....

I/We would like to be seated at the Radar Tables

## PAST EVENTS

### BRANCH AGM – CLUB WILLOUGHBY – 14 MARCH 2006

There were 16 Members and Multiple Members in attendance. President reviewed the past 12 months activities noting that: 6 Committee Meetings had been held, all well attended; 3 Branch Bulletins were distributed to members and selected RAAF people at Williamtown; 2 lunch gatherings were ably organised by SVP Jo Dunbar viz; for Anzac Day and Xmas 2005, the former strongly supported by the RAAF from SRG Williamtown.

Thanks were extended by President Walter Fielder-Gill to Jo Dunbar, Ted Dellit, Cec Blumenthal, Mal Le Bas, Tom and Norma Bond, Terry Delahunty, Ed Simmonds, Paul Ogden (Auditor), Bette O'Donnell and Stan Burge for their continuing support to the Branch in many and varied ways.

Following the election of Office Bearers and Committee Members, we were delighted to accept nominations for three additional people, namely Terry Delahunty, Shirley Brettle and Howard Campbell with the following overall result:

President:	Walter Fielder-Gill	(Publicity and PR)
Vice Presidents:	Jo Dunbar	(Social Convenor)
	Tom Bond	(Constitutional advice)
Treasurer:	Malcolm Le Bas	
Secretary:	Howard Campbell	(Membership)
Committee:	Norma Bond	(Social assistance)
	Terry Delahunty	(RAAF Liaison, Data Base)
	Ed Simmonds	(Historian)
	Ted Dellit	(Gold Card, RAF Museum)
	Bette O'Donnell	(Social assistance)
	Alex Culvenor	(Victorian Radar Assoc Liaison)
	Cec Blumenthal, Stan Burge, Ray O'Donohue and Shirley Brettle	
	Paul Ogden	(Auditor)

We are fortunate that both Dave Bowden and Bob Treloar enjoy their roles as Patrons of The Branch and are pleased to continue in same. Both have been most supportive to The President in particular and The Branch in general.

Finally, The President noted that many senior positions in the National Body and NSW Division of the RAAF Association are now currently occupied by Post World War II Veterans and he was most pleased to note that our Branch Committee included three people in this category, viz: Howard Campbell, Roy O'Donohue and Terry Delahunty.

He added that it will not be long now before the WWII people on the Committee and/or carrying Office would favour the Branch being run by younger people. We continue to promote post WWII RAAF and Serving RAAF to join the Branch asap, noting that RAAF Williamtown is strongly in support of this action.

### PLAQUE CEREMONY-RAAF MEMORIAL GROVE-CANBERRA 22 MARCH 2006

Attended by some 100 WWII and Post WWII Veterans, Spouses, Family Members and Serving RAAF from the Surveillance and Response Group Williamtown NSW. A selection of copies of photographs taken by our ever willing Branch photographer Allan Dennison tells the story of that most successful, pleasant and enjoyable day which again is one "*we shall never forget*".

We were most pleased to welcome interstate Veterans, namely Frank Sharp and Jack Fidler from Victoria, Ron Holmes from South Australia with their spouses and Dave Bowden, one of our Patrons and his wife Pattie.

Our many thanks are extended to Terry Delahunty for his willing and outstanding assistance to the Committee in attending to local matters in Canberra in the detail that contributed significantly to the

outstanding success we enjoyed. We very much appreciated the action by the RAAF Personnel at Williamtown in funding the plaque, The Minister for Veterans' Affairs, The Hon. Bruce Billson MP, and the Department of Veterans' Affairs for their contribution to this function. The net result was that our Branch was required to contribute only \$20 from our funds to meet the total expenses, after allowing for the generous donations given by attendees.

### **MEMORIAL TROPHIES – RAAF PERSONNEL**

Our Branch has supported two Memorial Trophies, which are presented to RAAF personnel belonging to the 41 Wing RAAF Williamtown, noting that many of our members served in Radar Units under control of this Wing, located at Pt Moresby, during WWII. We contribute \$200 to each RAAF appointed winner in support of:

**The Pither Trophy**, which recognises the Dedication and Professional Contributions to the Operational effectiveness of the Wing (Technical), and

**The Joe Ulet Trophy**, which recognises the Dedication and Professional Contributions to the Operational effectiveness of the Wing (Operator).

**LAC Ronald Duke** was awarded the latter trophy and presented with a cheque for \$200 at our ANZAC Day lunch by one of our Patrons, Air Vice Marshal Bob Treloar AO (Ret'd). The winner of the Pither Trophy, **Corporal Mathew Haynes** could not attend the lunch being located in Edinburgh S.A., however arrangements were made to forward his cheque to RAAF Williamtown HQ 41 Wing.

### **ANZAC DAY MARCH AND LUNCH**

The ANZAC Day march and lunch was yet again most successful. We were fortunate to have a drum band from the Australian Air League during the march attended by some 30 Veterans and 80 Serving RAAF from Surveillance and Response Group (SRG). Approximately 80 people attended lunch including Veterans and Serving RAAF.

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## **BRANCH MEMBERSHIP**

### **COMMITTEE POST WWII NEW MEMBERS**

In addition to Howard Campbell two other post WWII Veterans and/or Serving RAAF who joined our Branch in 2005 (now Committee Members) and not mentioned in earlier Bulletins are Squadron Leader Ray O'Donohue and Group Captain Terry Delahunty AM, (Ret'd).

Ray was CO of the training unit of SRG and is now located at ADFA in Canberra while Terry was OC of 44Wing of SRG at RAAF Williamtown. A number of our members would have served under this Wing, located in the North west of Australia during WWII.

We welcome them both and the contributions they have made or will be making to our Branch of RAAFA.

### **NEW MEMBERS**

Branch membership stood at some 130 in April 2006 including multiple members from Branches of the RAAFA. Since that date, we have had some deaths, (see Vale), but also new members. We are pleased to welcome the following into our Branch: Ray Standing, Don Baehnisch, Beth Pooley, Krista Thompson, Norma Simes, Kelvin Campbell and Terry Cosgrove.

Krista, with the rank of Wing Commander, is the current CO of No 3 Control and Reporting Unit (CRU), which is an important Unit belonging to the No 41 Wing at RAAF Williamtown, commanded by GPCAPT Chris Westwood a long standing friend of our Branch.

Beth and Norma both served in WWII WAAAF, the former at Bombi (near Gosford NSW) and the latter at Kiama NSW, as Radar Operators. They were friends from childhood and since joining our Branch have attended our functions, Norma accompanied by her husband Harry.

Don Baehnisch rose to the rank of Wing Commander. He was a fighter pilot for some 10 years and in 1972 took command of No 1 CRU at Allambi heights NSW. As an Air defence Officer he served in Malaya, No 2CRU Darwin and Williamtown NSW.

Raymond Standing, Terry Cosgrove and Kel Campbell all served Post WWII in No 1,2 and 3 CRUs during careers with RAAF, Ray also serving in No 1 JCU and Kel in No 114 MCRU

We sincerely welcome these younger people into our Branch with a full understanding that its future is in their hands. We appreciate the efforts of our Secretary Howard Campbell in interesting his Post WWII colleagues to come and join us.

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### VALE

It is with great regret we advise of the death of Beryl Blumenthal, wife of our recent Secretary, Cecil. Beryl gave good support to Cec in his many years of association with our Branch activities. She was a WAAAF in photography during WWII and we join Cec in thanks for her life.

It is also with great regret that we note the death of Bazil Smith, born on 5<sup>th</sup> March 1918. Bazil spent his early childhood on a dairy and cattle producing property at Allynbrook in the Hunter Valley NSW experiencing the many hardships that only remote living could give. He joined the wartime RAAF in 1942 and became a Radar Mechanic, being posted to 304 Radar Station located in Port Moresby and Milne Bay in the critical years of 1943 – 1944, also No 19 Radar Bombi NSW. Post War he joined the Engineering Division of the PMG Department and became the Supervising Technician Chatswood. He is survived by his wife Beryl and family including seven grandchildren and two great grand daughters. Once again we give thanks for his life.

We extend our deepest sympathy to Committee member Shirley Brettle on the recent death of her beloved husband, Horace Joseph Brettle age 86. Horace served in the AIF Engineers in New Guinea and Borneo during WWII and his post war academic career culminated in his appointment as Professor of Civil Engineering NSW University, a wonderful man who contributed significantly during his lifetime.

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### SICK BAY

Most unfortunately, our *“one and only”* Jo Dunbar, Senior Vice President of our Branch and very well known to our members is now ‘wrestling with her problem’ in Lady Davidson Private Hospital. She is in good spirit despite her adversity and wishes to extend her thanks to all those members who have sent cards and/or have contacted her by phone. We sincerely hope and pray for her recovery soon.

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### PROFILES

The Bulletin profiles the following two very long term Branch members:

**Victor Crawford Thomas (ex Medical Sergeant).** Born in December 1907 and currently our oldest WWII Veteran at age 98. Victor spent many months in the New Guinea – Admiralty Islands theatres of War with 345 Radar Station which was located in the Admiralty Islands from March 1944 to early October 1945 (one CO only for 20 months – guess who?)

**Allan Dennison (ex Radar Mechanic Corporal).** Born 27 April 1924. Allan joined the RAAF in May 1942. He was posted to No 131 Radar Station at Ash Island and early in 1944 he was moved to No 154 Radar Station being formed at Richmond. This unit was installed on the Anjo Peninsular in the Kimberley WA, then to No 150 Radar Station (early 1945) Darwin NT and No 59 Radar Station (mid 1945) Lee point Darwin. He is well known to Branch members through his skill as our photographer and generosity in the distribution of appropriate photos to members over many years past.

## **AIR POWER TODAY**

(From the RAAF Air Power Development Centre Bulletin, 'Pathfinder' Issue 32 Sep 2005)

Although the youngest of military capabilities, air power has carved a distinct niche for itself not only as a purely military capability but also as an asset that can be brought to bear in disparate situations in support of national policy. This rise to prominence, in a short span of a century, has been made possible because of two complimentary factors. First, the continuous push by the commercial scientific community to enlarge the envelope of technology that provide air power with its operational capabilities and second, the willingness of the practitioners of air power to experiment with emerging technology in order to refine such capabilities.

The combination of these two factors has created a cascading enhancement of air power capabilities, especially in the past few decades. There is also a downside to this success story. As technology has continued to enhance air power capabilities and provide planners with increased options for its application, the cost factor has also surged, at times in a disproportionate way. This has resulted in a balanced force of high-end air power capabilities moving beyond the reach of even comparatively rich nations. Capabilities ranging from the benign use of airlift in humanitarian assistance to the forceful application of precision strike have become far too expensive to procure and maintain. The outcome has been the selective maintenance of particular capabilities by most of the air forces around the world. Maintaining the complete suite of capabilities in adequate measure is now prohibitively expensive and governments around the world are questioning the need for such expenditure.

While the core function of air power remains force projection in a military sense, in this scenario, capabilities that have been traditionally viewed as supporting the core function assume critical importance. These support capabilities are known variously as 'force multipliers' and 'enablers'. Irrespective of the designation, what they achieve is a tangible improvement in capabilities while ensuring that the number of assets remains within the resource availability thereby achieving a great deal of cost-effectiveness. These enablers are more technology reliant than most air power applications. The major enablers include space-based assets, radar and early warning devices, electronic warfare assets and air-to-air refuelling capabilities.

Space-based assets cover a large swath of capabilities. Currently the majority of surveillance and reconnaissance functions are done from space and this leads to targeting functions. Another area where space assets are almost omnipresent in their usage is communications. From being sparingly used even a decade ago, space communications have become the centrepiece of all military communication systems. It can be said without any doubt that military operations of any magnitude are now heavily reliant on space-based communications for their success. From an air power perspective, these communications in conjunction with navigational systems like the Global Positioning System (GPS) are vital to the success of any mission.

The improvements in Airborne Early Warning and Control (AEW&C) capabilities now provide a measure of assurance to ground radar and air defence capabilities and greatly enhance offensive applications. Some form of AEW&C is now considered a baseline requisite for effective air control, even when such control is delineated in time and space.

The quantum of enablers needed and the types that an air force should aspire to acquire will be a direct function of the role that air force is expected to play in the pursuit of national security. The only hard fact is that without adequate enablers, no air force can be expected to deliver air power in a cost-effective manner for any given time. The imminent arrival of AEW&C in the RAAF inventory and the recent acquisition of new air traffic control and air defence radars, and surveillance and control systems in SRG at RAAF Williamstown will ensure that the RAAF is well 'enabled' for the future.