



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



*Honour the Past – Support the Present – Act for the Future*

## **THE RADAR BRANCH BULLETIN**

**WINTER 2014**

Website: <http://www.raafradar.org.au>

Email: [contact@raafradar.org.au](mailto:contact@raafradar.org.au)

**Patrons  
President  
Senior RAAF Member  
Correspondence**

Air Commodore D. Bowden AM (Ret'd)  
Air Vice Marshal R.B. Treloar AO (Ret'd )  
Squadron Leader Ray O'Donoghue (Ret'd)  
Air Commodore C.J. Westwood  
Secretary, The Radar Branch  
57 Bay View Avenue EAST GOSFORD NSW 2250  
Email: [secretary@raafradar.org.au](mailto:secretary@raafradar.org.au)

### **RADAR BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2014**

The Office Bearers and Committee members were elected at the AGM are as follows:

*President: Ray O'Donoghue*  
*Vice-President: Terry Delahunty*  
*Treasurer: Tony Rogers*  
*Secretary/Pensions Officer: William (Bill) Forsbey*  
*Welfare Officers: Howard Campbell and Tony Rogers*  
*RAAF liaison: Warrant Officer Bobby McFerran (Serving Member)*  
*Committee: Jim Stewart, John King, Bruce Carpenter, Alex Culvenor (Victoria)*

The Branch is fortunate to retain Bob Treloar and Dave Bowden as Patrons and we look forward to their continued counsel and companionship.

Members are encouraged and welcome to apply for vacant committee positions. Please contact our Secretary or email to [contact@raafradar.org.au](mailto:contact@raafradar.org.au) if you are willing to contribute to running the Branch in any capacity.

### **NSW DIVISION STATE COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS**

Air Vice Marshal (Retd) Mark Skidmore AM has been appointed as President of the Air Force Association NSW Division following the retirement of John Staal earlier this year.

Air Vice-Marshal Skidmore last appointment was the Air Commander Australia as the specialist air advisor on raise, train and sustains issues to the joint environment. Air Vice-Marshal Skidmore is married to Caroline and they have two children, Nicole and Thomas..

### **THE 74th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN**

**15 September 2014**

The State President of the RAAF Association (NSW Division) in conjunction with the Royal Air Force Association Branch 1144 will commemorate the 74<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Britain on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2014 with a Commemorative Service 1100am, at the Cenotaph Martin Place Sydney.

**Please note that this year the service will not be followed by a harbour cruise luncheon**

For details of the events, please contact the RAAF Association, NSW Division Phone 02 9393 3485 or contact:

**Bruce Weekley RFD, State Vice President, RAAF Association (NSW Division)**

**PO Box A2147**

**SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1235**

[bweekely@optusnet.com.au](mailto:bweekely@optusnet.com.au)

### **RATHMINES ON PARADE 27 to 28 Sep 2014**

Rathmines (near Newcastle) will be the site for the celebration of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Rathmines RAAF Flying Boat Base. There will be a weekend of activities with exhibitions, model displays, food, entertainment and more.

Celebrations will take place on the weekend 27 to 28 September 2014 with entry by a donation. For enquiries contact 'Friends of Rathmines' 02 4975 1973

### **ANZAC DAY MARCH AND LUNCHEON SYDNEY 2014**



The Radar Branch contingent marched under the new banner which now includes the active service of all units post WWII and in particular the recent deployments of 41WG and 44WG in Iraq and Afghanistan. The banner was carried proudly by young veterans of these conflicts and is a reminder that the welfare of our veterans will continue to be an important role of the RAAF Association and the Branch in the future.

The Branch luncheon was again hosted by Eric and the gracious staff of the Emperor's Choice Restaurant and was also attended by a large number of members from Williamstown who enjoyed a great function.

The Radar Branch trophies to No 41 Wing, which have been awarded annually since 1997, were also announced. The Joe Ulett Memorial trophy and Pither Trophy accompanied by a

\$200 cheque are awarded annually to the airman or airwoman who has made the most positive contribution to operations and technical worthiness of No 41 Wing. The Pither Trophy was awarded to SGT Shane Robert Wilmot from 114 CRU and the Joe Ulett Memorial Trophy was awarded to FSGT Chad Harper from 3CRU

The recipient of the Grant Stuchbury award was FLTLT Victoria Sinclair from 44 WG. In her address and presentation of the citation, WGCDR Elsley spoke of FLTLT Sinclair's hard work, dedication to duty and the outcome of her work - a huge lift in the quality of the training program at 452SQN AMB FLT. In reply, FLTLT Sinclair acknowledged the support she received



from her peers and supervisors in achieving the goals that led to her award. Her comments were both humble and inclusive, traits I was forewarned to expect from her. From my brief acquaintance with FLTLT Sinclair, she struck me as an excellent role model and an outstanding recipient of the award. Once again, congratulations to FLTLT Sinclair from the Committee of the RAAF Radar Branch.

## DID YOU KNOW

### 31 August 1944 Peak wartime strength reached



On this day, the RAAF first attained its highest strength during World War II of almost 182 000 personnel (162 846 males and 19 031 females). The Service stayed at this level for the next six months, and on 28 February 1945 still stood at 181 976 (163 336 males and 18 640 females). Among the males, 20 304 were officers and 143 032 were other ranks; 11 277 aircrew and 129 777 ground staff were serving in the South-West Pacific Area, including Australia, while 14 938 aircrew and 3499 ground staff were serving in other theatres, and the rest were missing or prisoners. Of the females, 495 were nursing sisters in the RAAF Nursing Service and 18 145 were members of the Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force (including 629 officers). The Air Force declined in size from this point and, by the Japanese surrender in August 1945, was down to 173 622.

### 14 November 1944 - First Aboriginal fighter pilot



After joining the RAAF in August 1942 and serving as an aircraft mechanic, Len Waters applied for pilot training. Among the top five in his course at No 5 Service Flying Training School at Uranquinty, New South Wales, he graduated as a sergeant pilot. He completed an operational conversion course on the P-40 Kittyhawk with No 2 Operational Training Unit at Mildura, Victoria, at the end of which he was posted to No 78 Squadron on this day. Waters thus became Australia's first (and only) Aboriginal fighter pilot. While serving with 78 Squadron at Noemfoor (West New Guinea), Morotai (Netherlands East Indies) and Tarakan (Borneo), he flew 95 sorties; as the Japanese had few aircraft in these areas by this stage, his missions did not entail air combat. Promoted to Flight Sergeant in January 1945, he became a Warrant Officer 17 days before discharge in January 1946.

## AIR CADETS ALUMNI



2016 marks the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Australian Air Force Cadets (AAFC) which was formed as the Air Training Corps in June 1941 with the main aim of establishing a source of air minded RAAF recruits for both aircrews and ground staffs. An association called the "**Air Cadets Alumni**" has recently been formed of ex cadets and staff to facilitate contact among former cadets and staff and to help raise funds to assist extra AAFC activities.

To join the alumni, you need to be an ex cadet or staff, current staff member or an ex member of a similar cadet organisation. Or if you are simply interested or even wish to contribute photographs or stories about your experiences you can go to the website at [www.aircadetsalumni.org.au](http://www.aircadetsalumni.org.au) or **Facebook** or contact the AAFC Historian on 0400 419135

## **ROLL OUT OF FIRST TWO RAAF F-35A LIGHTNING STRIKEFIGHTERS**



The first two Australian F-35A aircraft, known as AU-1 and AU-2, rolled out of the Lockheed-Martin F-35 facility in Fort Worth, USA on 24 July 2014.

Senator Mathias Cormann, representing the Minister for Defence, Senator David Johnston, and the Chief of Air Force Air Marshal Geoff Brown, AO attended the event in Fort Worth to mark the milestone. At the ceremony, also attended by senior US Government and Defence representatives, Senator Cormann said that the F-35A will provide 'leading edge' air combat capabilities for the Australian Defence Force for decades to come.

Senator Cormann said that being a Partner in the F-35 program is not just about the leading edge capability it

represents, but also about the access it provides to advanced aerospace technology, and also for the way it has transformed parts of the Australian aerospace industrial base.

"The US-Australian Alliance and engagement on collaborative defence programs is crucial to Australia maintaining the capability edge it needs," he said.

Senator Cormann said there were several significant opportunities for Australian industry, including making 722 sets of vertical tails for the F-35, producing composite panels for the fuselage of the F-35, manufacturing the weapons carriers, decoy flares, and other components.

"With the commitment and support of Lockheed Martin and Pratt and Whitney, a steady F-35 production ramp up, and a continuing favourable Australian dollar, I expect Australian industry to do very well on the F-35 program over many years. Some 30 Australian companies have been directly involved in the F-35 program to date, and more than \$412 million in production orders have been won with only about 3 per cent of aircraft production completed to date," he said.

Recently Melbourne-based manufacturing and engineering company Marand accepted the 'best supplier relationship' award from BAE Systems for its F-35 work. The award was presented at the Farnborough Air Show in the UK and recognises the valuable contribution made by international partner company Marand, responsible for building 722 vertical tail sets for BAE Systems and the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program.

Initial RAAF pilot training will begin in the United States in early 2015, and from 2018 the Australian Defence Force will commence ferry flights of JSF aircraft to Australia

The F-35 represents an exponential leap in capability that will position the RAAF on the cutting edge of technology in aerospace power. Chief of Air Force, Air Marshal Brown, believes that the F-35 would be a catalyst for evolution and even revolution is technology for both the RAAF and the ADF and presents the greatest opportunity for the development of the RAAF in a generation.

### **Public Invited to Comment**

Having released the Environmental Impact Study for F-35 flying operations, Defence is inviting the public to comment. Comments can be made on the website at [www.f35evolution.com.au](http://www.f35evolution.com.au) and must be received by 5pm on 19 September 2014.