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

THE RADAR BRANCH BULLETIN

FEBRUARY 2010

Website: http://www.raafradar.org.au   Email: contact@raafradar.org.au

Patrons	Air Commodore D. Bowden AM (Ret'd)
	Air Vice Marshal R.B. Treloar AO (Ret'd)
	W. Fielder-Gill (Life Member)
President	Air Commodore T.C. Delahunty AM
Correspondence	Secretary, The Radar Branch
	2 Preece Close, SPRINGFIELD NSW 2250 (Phone: 02 4322 1505)

Please Note: THE RADAR BRANCH 2010 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

(I)   Date: Monday 1st March 2010 – 1030am

(II)   Venue: RAAF Association Headquarters
Defence Plaza, Level 22, 270 Pitt Street, Sydney 2000 (Phone 02 9377 3485)

(III)   Travel: The Defence Plaza is in Pitt Street between Park and Bathurst Streets. It is a 5-minute walk from Town Hall Station. The nearest parking station is at 133 Castlereagh Street, one block north between Park and Market Streets.

The AGM will call for nominations for all office bearers and elect the Executive and Committee members. Existing office bearers are welcome to stand for re-election. All positions will be declared vacant and nominations can be made in writing to Secretary or at the meeting. Members are encouraged and welcome to participate in the election of your committee and executive. The first committee meeting of the Branch elected officers will follow the AGM.

Those wishing to attend and nominations for office are requested to be sent to The Secretary (details above) or e-mail to contact@raafradar.org,au. **Please Note: All Members and Friends are most welcome.**

ANNUAL RAAF BIRTHDAY FUNCTIONS 2010

This years Annual Birthday Luncheon to celebrate the 89th Anniversary of the formation of the Royal Australian Air Force will take place as follows:

(I)   Church Service: 1100am Sunday 28[h] March, RAAF Base Richmond Chapel

(II)   Commemorative Service   1100am Wednesday 31st March, Cenotaph Martin Place Sydney

(III)   Annual Luncheon   1200 for 1230 Wednesday 31st March, Parliament House

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

The luncheon is $65 per head and members of the Radar Branch have enjoyed the event over many years. The dress is Jacket and Tie (medals may be worn). If you haven't been before, please consider attending to experience a special function in a very special and friendly venue with other Radar Branch members. The RAAF Association extends the invitation to the function to all Radar Branch Members and partners and requests that the form attached to this bulletin be forwarded to the address on the form *no later than Monday 23 March 2009. Note: Payment of $65 per head can be made by cheque or credit card.*

Remember to annotate membership of The Radar Branch and make cheques payable to RAAF Association NSW Division Inc. For details contact:

Bruce Weekley RFD, State Vice President, RAAF Association (NSW Division)
PO Box A2147
SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1235
bweekely@optusnet.com.au

ANZAC DAY 2010

All RAAF and WAAAF Veterans and serving members are invited to assemble at the usual 1030am in Elizabeth Street, City (just south of Market Street).

RAAF will march as a complete service and current RAAF units are permitted to march with WW2 and Post WW2 units. Therefore, again this year, we will be accompanied by a contingent of serving members from Surveillance and Response Group (SRG), RAAF Williamtown. SRG includes Nos 41, 42 and 44 Wings which were also active in WWII as radar units. We are extremely grateful and delighted that serving RAAF members can once again join with us on this important day.

In addition to serving members, WWII and Post WWII veterans, one relative representing a deceased or disabled veteran may march with the Radar Branch. . In particular, one descendant will be allowed to march as a 'carer' for Veterans with a genuine need. Representatives of Radar Branch veterans may wear the veteran's medals on his or her right side and are invited to march in the contingent rear rows Instructions for others who wish to participate in the march will be published by the RAAF NSW Association. Descendants who are not representing a veteran member of a Branch or association will be able to join the march in the RAAF Descendants section at the rear of the Air Force contingent.

The Radar Branch contingent will again be lead by Cec Blumenthal who served as a commissioned officer in radar stations throughout Australia and New Guinea.

ANZAC Day Banquet Lunch - $40 Per Head

ANZAC DAY 2010 VENUE: The Emperor's Choice Restaurant, Corner King and Castlereagh Streets, Sydney

The EMPEROR'S CHOICE RESTAURANT, on the corner of King and Castlereagh Streets, Sydney has graciously agreed to host our annual lunch following the Anzac Day March. Lunch will commence 1230pm to 3.00pm. An usher will be on the corner to direct members to the restaurant.

The restaurant would not normally open on Anzac Day but they have again willingly accepted our booking in the spirit of ANZAC Day for which we are most grateful. The banquet is open to all members and guest, particularly those who are unable to march but wish to meet up with old friends and make new acquaintances.

Please fill out the slip included in this bulletin and return to the Secretary **by Friday 9th April 2010**. Payment can be made by cheque accompanying the slip or at the restaurant on the day.

The Joe Ulett Memorial and Pither trophies will be awarded at the luncheon to the recipients from Surveillance and Response Group. Both of these trophies are sponsored by the Radar Branch and are awarded annually to the airman or airwoman who has made exemplary contributions in their field.

PAST EVENTS

Annual Christmas Luncheon 2009

The Radar Branch held its annual Christmas Luncheon at the The City Tattersalls Club. on 4 December 2009. The event was attended by only 30 members including the company of serving RAAF members. As mentioned last year, the annual luncheon will become increasingly difficult without branch member support and attendance. Whilst City Tattersalls is an ideal function locality because of its central locality and access to transport and parking an alternative venue and luncheon arrangement may have to be considered for this year. Members input would be greatly appreciated in this regard.

The toast to RAAF was made by Patron AVM Bob Treloar, AO and responded to by Officer Commanding 41 Wing, Daryl Hunter who has recently completed a tour of duty with No 41 Wing Radar Detachment in Kandahar, Afghanistan. Again, our thanks go to Surveillance and Response Group from RAAF Williamtown for their continued support.

The Christmas lunch is a traditional function for the Branch and we intend to keep it going into the future in a location and format that will attract member participation and provide the means to bring members together for as special occasion. The committee is well aware that cost is an important aspect of making the function and will ensure that affordability is a key factor to encourage participation.

A NEW ERA FOR RADAR IN THE RAAF

In December 2009, the first two Wedgetail Airborne Early Warning and Control (AEW&C) aircraft were delivered to No 2 Squadron at RAAF Williamtown. In all, six Wedgetails will be delivered to 2 Squadron and will herald a new era for radar in the RAAF with the introduction of cutting-edge airborne radar technology and other advanced capabilities in electronic support measures and integrated communication systems. Whilst the $4 Billion project delivery is behind due to technical development of the advanced systems, test and evaluation has commenced to achieve full operational capability.   A prominent feature of the Wedgetail is the large and powerful external 'electronically scanned array radar' on top of the fuselage which can be seen in the picture below.

When operational, No 2 Squadron and the Wedgetail AEW&C will provide an enhanced air defence, fleet support and force coordination capabilities that will play a key role in the networked- enabled Australian Defence Force. We wish No 2 Squadron all the best as they enter the last phase of their technical and flying training to bring the Wedgetail into service.

END OF AN ERA FOR AN OLD WAR HORSE

On 27 November 2009, Caribou A4-140 flew into Canberra from RAAF Base Richmond on the last flight before this aircraft type ceased operations with the Royal Australian Air Force. In a small ceremony which followed, A4-140 was handed over to the Australian War Memorial. The transfer marked the end of the DHC-4 Caribou's remarkable 45-year career with the RAAF, encompassing service during the Vietnam War, several peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations, and multiple disaster relief and humanitarian missions across Australia and around the world. A total of only 29 airframes served with the RAAF, in No 35 and No 38 Squadrons, and this aircraft type holds the unique distinction of the longest record of constant operational service in the RAAF having been in service from 1964 to 2009.

The aircraft's robust construction and exceptional Short Take-Off and Landing (STOL) capability enabled it to operate from the most rudimentary of airstrips. The aircraft gave the RAAF considerable flexibility in the conduct of air mobility operations, enabling the tactical airlift of personnel and cargo across a wide variety of environments and conditions. The ability of the Caribou to sustain a high operational tempo in arduous conditions was quickly demonstrated at the very outset of the aircraft's service life.

The service of the Caribou to Australia has not just been confined to international missions. For almost half a century the Caribou's capability has been on hand to serve Australia in both military and non-military applications. The aircraft has been one of the RAAF's leading assets in response to natural disasters, search and rescue, aeromedical evacuations, and even security patrols over Bass Strait oil rigs. It has transported state police, fire fighters and visiting royalty. Throughout its entire service life, the Caribou has provided extensive support to the entire ADF, particularly airborne and tactical transport support to Army and Special Air Service training exercises.

To replace the Caribou, No 38 Squadron at RAAF Townsville will operate King Air 350 aircraft as an interim light transport in support of the ADF until a new tactical transport aircraft is identified and delivered to fill the role of the 'old warhorse'.

VETERANS AFFAIRS ISSUES

The Department of Veterans' Affairs with NSW Health have introduced an initiative to provide ex military personnel with guidance on 'Advance Care Planning". The plan is intended to assist with addressing long term health management including issues such as appointing guardians and power of attorney to manage financial decisions. Further information can be obtained from :

www.hnehealth.nsw.gov.au//advance_care_planning or contact the Branch Secretary for literature and assistance.

A FREE DAY OUT! The Department of Veterans' Affairs are supporting the **Sydney Veterans' and Defence Expo** to be held at **Penrith Paceway** on **Saturday 6th March 2010 9am – 4pm.** Admission is free and will include entertainment, Health Community and ex Service organization stalls as well as displays.

NEED A HOLIDAY?

St George's Holiday House at 192 Marine Parade, Rainbow Bay Coolangatta, QLD is available for Service and Ex Service personnel and war/Defence widows for holiday accommodation. For details on eligibility and bookings call **07 55361261** or email **stgholidayservpers@bigpond.com** or visit website at **www.spahs.com.au**

VALE

Vale Bill Drury. Sadly, Bill (Cougar) Drury passed away on 30 December 2009 in Sydney after a long illness. Bill was on No 1 Aircraft Plotters Course and was an active member of Radar Branch. The funeral took place in Sydney on 4th January 2010 and was attended by Secretary Howie Campbell along with Post WWII mates. Our condolences go to Thelma and family members.

Please cut off and return

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ANZAC DAY LUNCH 2010 – 'EMPERORS'S CHOICE RESTAURANT' 12.30 TO 3.00PM

Please return with your cheque by Friday 9th April 2010 (or annotate that you will pay on the day)

We would welcome your response to

Secretary, The Radar Branch

2 Preece Close, SPRINGFIELD NSW 2250

Phone: 02 4322 1505

1. YOUR NAME: ……………………………………………………………………………………

2. I will/will not be able to attend the ANZAC Day lunch and will be accompanied by my spouse/partner/family members/friends (please include given and surname)

    NAME/S: ……………………………………………………………………………………………

    ……………………………………………………………………………………………….

3. I enclose my cheque made in favour **"Radar Air Defence Branch'** for the sum off $…………………..
    Being payment of $40 for each person attending.   Number attending: …………………...

4. I will pay the sum off $………………….
    Being payment of $40 for each person attending.   Number attending: …………………...

5. Please advise whether there are any special dietary needs: …………………………………………

6. Please advise if you require assistance on the day with your contact details below

Your phone number or email: ……………………………………………………………

'RON HUNT RECALLS'

Once again, the Bulletin includes a recollection from Ron Hunt. Ron Hunt was an Air Defence controller between 1968 and 1972. Ron joined the RAAF in September 1968 with a four year Short Service commission as an Air Defence Officer.

"Military Specifications"

We are all familiar with the term "military specifications". When the military wants something – it has to be robust and reliable. As far as possible it must continue to function, even if damaged. After some time at 3CRU I was transferred from operations to the computer programming section – to become one of the initial team of RAAF people to take-over the maintenance of the operational software from Plessey and SCSL.. These days we are familiar with computers having Operating Systems – and running individual programs. But the HUBCAP system was different. There was the computer (a Marconi Myriad) – and there was "the system" – a huge program that fulfilled all functions. There were nominally many hundreds of program modules, and each would be assembled into a "relocatable object". About every three months a new system would be "built" – called a "Link Edit". It was a big job, taking the best part of a full day – and was usually done on a Sunday. It was my turn to do the Link Edit. On the Friday evening I'd got everything ready – all the object tapes and plenty of spools of paper tape and a few rolls of paper for the printer.

I arrived at the unit on the Sunday morning. The guard came over with a key and unlocked the door to the annex to the computer cabin. He opened the door and suddenly a cloud of thick white smoke poured out the door. I had no idea what, exactly, was going wrong – but it seemed obvious that it was "a bit serious". I reached-in and threw the main power switch – and the guard and I stood back while the cloud of smoke continued pouring out of the doorway. After a couple of minutes it seemed like it might be safe enough to look inside. I checked to make quite sure there was no fire – and then rang the Engineering Officer. The engineering people arrived and I decided to leave them to it. There was no way that a Link Edit was going to happen on this Sunday! It took the engineers a long time to piece-together all the evidence and work-out exactly what had happened. The story went like this:

♦   There was a lot of electronic equipment in the computer cabin, and all of it generated heat. To keep the cabin cool there were several large "military specification" Westinghouse air conditioning units fastened to the walls. Each unit sat on a drip pan to collect water – and there was a small spout on the outside of the cabin for water to drain. The units were designed such that they would detect if they iced-up – and would go into a reverse-cycle to melt the ice – before returning to a cooling cycle.

♦   The night before one of the air conditioners did ice-up – and that caused the unit to switch to a reverse cycle to melt the ice. HOWEVER – a "friendly" bush spider had found the overflow water spout to be an ideal home – and had spun a web inside it. The water rose in the drip pan – until the water found an exit path. There was a small cable hanging down from above which touched the side of the drip pan – and then descended into a cable tray. When the water touched the cable surface tension caused the water to adhere to the cable and run down the cable into the cable tray.

♦   The water spread-out along the cable tray – until it found another "exit" – a hole underneath where some more cables came through. The water ran down one of these cables to the lowest point – and then dripped-down – right onto the tape run-out toggle switch on the console paper tape punch. The water caused the switch to short-circuit in the "run-out all holes punched" position – which caused an entire spool of paper tape to be punched-out.

♦   The punch operated at 150 characters/second and after a while the cutters became red-hot from the huge friction generated by this run-away operation. Eventually the cutters seized-up and that made the motor burn-out – which is what caused all the thick white smoke.

♦   Meanwhile, the water continued to drip. It formed a big pool of water on the top of the Myriad computer – and finally found its way right down into the guts of the computer. When everything was dried-out and cleaned – and then tested – it was found that so many printed circuit boards and other components had been damaged that the RAAF didn't have enough spare parts to repair the damage. Extra parts had to be shipped out from the UK.

♦   The paper tape punch was damaged beyond repair – but there was one in stores.

The upshot was that the Myriad computer was off-the-air for a couple of months! So much for "military specifications". A tiny spider had put a whole Air Defence radar system out of action for two months!

Please cut off and return to address below:

RAAF BIRTHDAY LUNCHEON RSVP & PAYMENT ADVICE

Please return by Friday 19 March 2010 to

Bruce L Weekley RFD
Vice President
RAAF Association (NSW Division)
PO Box A2147
SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1235

MEMBER'S NAME ....(PLEASE PRINT)

BRANCH ....

Will be attending the RAAF Birthday Luncheon at Parliament House, Sydney on Wednesday 31 March 2010

I will be accompanied by ....

And if possible would like to be seated with ....

Disabled parking

Regretfully, due to recent changes in Parliament House policy, parking is no longer available to function participants. Nearby parking is available at Secure Parking, Metro and Domain Parking Stations.

METHOD OF PAYMENT FOR LUNCH
Cheque
I enclose a cheque (made payable to RAAF Association NSW Division)
for $........... for........... persons at $65 per head (GST Included)

Credit Card
I approve the RAAF Association (NSW Division) to charge my

VISA / MASTER CARD (Please circle)

$.............. being payment for...........persons at $65 per head (GST included)

NAME ON CREDIT CARD: ....(please print)

CREDIT CARD NO: ....

SIGNATURE: ....

EXPIRY DATE: ....MONTH............YEAR

Note – Proforma and payment for lunch must reach this office by close of business on Friday, 19 March 2010. No further bookings will be accepted or refunds for cancellations given after this date. Again, this is a further result of change in Parliament House policy.