



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



THE RADAR BRANCH BULLETIN

JULY 2011

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

Email: contact@raafradar.org.au

Patrons	Air Commodore D. Bowden AM (Ret'd)
President	Air Vice Marshal R.B. Treloar AO (Ret'd)
Senior RAAF Member	Air Commodore T.C. Delahunty AM
Correspondence	Air Commodore C.J. Westwood Secretary, The Radar Branch 7 Glenridding Grove, Lakelands NSW 2282

BEST WISHES AND THANKS TO RETIRING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Radar Branch extends its appreciation and best wishes to departing committee members Secretary Howard Campbell and long standing committee member and office holder Malcolm Le Bas. Mal is an ex WWII member and Howie is a Post WWII member whose service included active service with 114CRU in Malaysia during Confrontation in 1965. All Branch members extend their heartfelt thanks for your dedication and we look forward to your continued friendship as members of the Branch.

THE 71st ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN LUNCHEON

- (I) **Commemorative Service 1030am Thursday 15th September , Cenotaph Martin Place Sydney**
 (II) **Luncheon and Harbour Cruise: 1215 for 1230 Thursday 15th September, No 6 Wharf Circular Key**
For details of the events, please contact the RAAF Association, NSW Division Phone 02 9393 3485

The 71st Anniversary of the Battle of Britain function this year following the commemorative service at the Cenotaph will be a harbour cruise with Captain Cook Cruises on board the MV SYDNEY 2000. The dress is Jacket and Tie (medals may be worn). If you haven't been before, please consider attending to experience a special function with other Radar Branch members. The cruise will depart at 1230 and guests are requested to be at No 6 Wharf at Circular Key at 1215 to ensure an on-time departure. Access to embark is level and all facilities are on deck the Show Deck with panoramic windows. The cruise will accommodate 180 guests for a three course meal including Standard Open Bar serving a choice of beers, Tyrrell's wines, soft drinks and fruit juices.

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 included with this bulletin **no later than Friday 29th July 2011. Note: Payment of \$60 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
bweekley@optusnet.com.au

RADAR BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2011

The Annual General Meeting was held at the Defence Plaza, Pitt Street Sydney on Tuesday 8 March 2011. The Office Bearers and Committee members were elected as follows:

President:	Terry Delahunty
Vice-President:	Tony Rogers
Treasurer	Terry Meyrick
Secretary:	Ray O'Donoghue
Committee:	Mr Mal Le Bas, Mrs Bette O'Donnell, Mrs Shirley Brettle, SqnLdr Jim Stewart, Mr Stan Burge, Alex Culvenor (Victoria), Paul Ogden (Honorary Auditor)

The Branch is fortunate to retain Bob Treloar and Dave Bowden as Patrons. 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 if you are willing to contribute to running the Branch in any capacity.

MEET THE SENIOR SERVING MEMBER OF RADAR BRANCH



It is with great pleasure that the Radar Branch recognises Air Commodore Chris Westwood as the Senior Serving Member of the Radar Branch. Air Commodore Westwood has been a strong supporter of the Radar Branch and he represents the many serving RAAF members who constitute the future of the Branch. Air Commodore Chris Westwood joined the RAAF in 1982 as an Air Defence Controller and was posted to various operational and instructional posts throughout the RAAF's Air Defence Ground Environment, including Fighter Combat Controller and Air Battle Director, Executive Officer of the Jindalee HF Radar Facility. In January 2000, AIRCDRE Westwood was posted to Seattle, USA as Operations Manager of the Wedgetail Resident Project Team. In September 2001, AIRCDRE Westwood assumed command of 3CRU. During this Command tour 3CRU successfully brought the new Eastern Regions Operations Centre (EASTROC) on-line. In Feb 2007, 41WG deployed a TPS-77 Radar and a Mobile Control and Reporting Centre to Afghanistan in support of Operation Slipper, Operation Enduring Freedom and the International Security Assistance Force. AIRCDRE Westwood commenced his appointment as Director General Joint Capability Coordination in January 2010.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

The RAAF Association (NSW) Membership List on May 2011 indicates that a number of Radar Branch members have yet to renew their membership for 2011. If you have renewed your membership since May, thank you and no doubt you have received acknowledgement. If by chance you have yet to renew your membership, please take time to consider maintaining your membership and support to the Radar Branch and the RAAF Association which exist to support you as well as to keep you in contact with friends and colleagues with whom you share a special bond and experience. Ordinary membership is \$30 or \$42 with a Wings Magazine subscription.

Payment can be made by Mastercard or Visa credit Card with your credit card number and expiry date to: raafansw@bigpond.com or **by mail to RAAF Association (NSW Division) Inc, PO Box A2147, SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1235**

Alternatively, you can transfer your renewal directly to the RAAF Association Westpac account: A/c Name: RAAF Assoc, BSB 032-014 A/c Number: 188514

PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR SURNAME IN YOUR BANK TRANSFER DETAILS

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT

Enclosed with this bulletin is a membership form to pass onto potential members. Remember, the future of the Association depends on new membership.

ANZAC DAY MARCH AND LUNCHEON SYDNEY



Radar Branch contingent Sydney 2011

The Radar Branch contingent was again generously supported by serving members from RAAF Williamtown including the Officer Commanding 41 Wing, Group Captain Dick Pizzuto, Officer Commanding 42 Wing, Group Captain Tracey Friend and Officer Commanding 44 Wing, Group Captain Foz Breckenridge. The participation of 41, 42 and 44 Wings represented the current domains of radar in the RAAF of Air Defence and Surveillance, Airborne Early Warning and Control, and Joint Battlefield Airspace Control. The presence of the RAAF serving members was particularly welcomed given that Anzac Day fell on Easter Monday and the members forewent the public holiday to join

the Branch members from WWII and post WWII on the day. Their dress and bearing was impressive as well as impeccable and a credit to the members and their units.

Our host Eric at Emperor's Choice' restaurant

The Branch luncheon was hosted by the generous and gracious staff of the Emperor's Choice Restaurant who also gave up their Easter holiday for Anzac Day. The luncheon was also attended by a large number of members from Williamtown who contributed greatly to what was a great function and we look forward to a repeat of the success next year. In recognition of the generosity and support to the Radar Branch and the RAAF, the President presented the staff of Emperor's Choice with a RAAF Association plaque as a small token of appreciation and gratitude for their friendship and support.

Once again, the awards were presented to the No 41 Wing winners of the Branch trophies which are sponsored by the Radar Branch and have been awarded annually since 1997. The Joe Ulett Memorial trophy and \$200 cheque is awarded annually to the airman or airwoman who has made the most positive contribution to operations of No 41 Wing. The Pither Trophy was awarded to CPL J.P. Wells and the Joe Ulett Memorial Trophy was awarded to CPL D.J. Knight. The awards and commemorative plaques were received by Group Captain Dick Pizzuto on behalf of the recipients.



The support from Surveillance and Response Group, RAAF Williamtown in the Sydney march is greatly appreciated and a highlight of ANZAC Day and the luncheon for all participating members. We look forward to their continued support and comradeship. A special thanks to Flying Officers Neville Moyle and Nicholas Kither for their assistance in organizing the March and luncheon.

NEW CHIEF OF AIR FORCE



Air Marshal Geoff Brown AM was appointed as the Chief of Air Force on 4 July 2011 to replace Air Marshal Mark Binskin AO who has been appointed Vice Chief of the Defence Force.

Air Marshal Brown joined the RAAF in February 1980 after completing an Engineering degree. He graduated from No 111 Pilot's Course in 1981 and was initially posted to 12SQN Amberley to fly Chinooks. After three years at 12SQN he was posted to 2FTS Pearce and spent 18 months as a Flying Instructor before being posted to Central Flying School (CFS) East Sale in 1986 and was a member of the Roulettes from 1987-89. In 1990, Air Marshal Brown was posted to Williamtown for a Hornet conversion and served in 77SQN and 75SQN Tindal as a Flight Commander. From 1997 to 2000, Air Marshal Brown commanded No 3 Squadron. He then completed F-111 conversion and assumed the position of Officer Commanding No 82 Wing in December 2000. In 2003 he commanded all F/A-18 and C-130 operations in Operation Iraqi Freedom and was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia and a Legion of Merit for his service in the operation. He was Officer Commanding Airborne Early Warning and Control

Systems Program Office from June 2003 until December 2004 and spent 2005 at the Centre for Defence and Strategic Studies. He then commanded Air Combat Group throughout 2006. From Jan 2007 until Jun 2008 he was Director General Capability Planning in Air Force Headquarters. Air Marshal Brown was the Deputy Chief of Air Force from 30 June 2008 to 3 Jul 2011.

DID YOU KNOW?

(RAAF History)

20 Jul 44- Last air battle fought over Australia



Wreckage of the Japanese Dinah near Truscott

In early July 1944, three LF.VIII Spitfires of No 54 Squadron, RAF, on attachment to the RAAF's North-Western Area, were sent from the Northern Territory to protect a new forward airfield at Truscott, Western Australia. Early on the morning of this day an enemy aircraft was detected over the Timor Sea by several RAAF radar stations and tracked as it crossed the coast and turned east toward Drysdale and

Truscott airfields. On receiving the alert, the British pilots became airborne at 0850 hours. Two of the Spitfires closed on the bogey, establishing that it was a Mitsubishi Ki 46 Type 100 'Dinah' reconnaissance aircraft. Both fighters poured fire into the enemy machine, causing the starboard wing to break away. The Dinah burst into flames before falling 9000 metres into the sea eight kilometres north of Drysdale Strip. This was the last air battle over Australia.

22 Mar 42 - Japanese bombers struck Katherine, NT



Bomb crater at Katherine

When nine Mitsubishi C5M 'Babs' bombers struck Katherine, 270 kilometres south-east of Darwin, on this day, this was remarkable as the furthest inland attack on Australia mounted by the Japanese. Although nearly 5400 kg of explosive were dropped in the attack, damage was remarkably slight and only one fatality resulted. The episode was actually more notable because No 31 Radio Direction Finding (RDF, later Radar) Station, located at Dripstone Caves north of Darwin, had just become functional and played a valuable role in both detecting the incoming bomber force and also correctly reporting when the formation split into two—

with part of the force heading for Darwin, while the main element continued on to Katherine. The station was still being installed at the time of the first Japanese raid, but its value was demonstrated by its immediate success once operational.

Wing Commander A G Pither, Director of Radar in the RAAF for much of the war, made the following comment in a Report he presented to RAAF H/Q in December 1946:

“the greatest credit is due to those who worked on radar stations and in aircraft in the face of the enemy. We have the first classic example at Darwin where the personnel of the unfinished radar station took no part in the general evacuation which followed the first Japanese attacks, but worked with renewed vigour on their station. Throughout the whole war, the ground radar story repeatedly shows examples of this type of tenacity. Stations erected and operated on lonely islands or at inaccessible places in the jungle with very poor communications with base areas had to rely on their own resources to compete with the menace of nature in climate and disease or of the enemy in bombing or marauding forces. . . It was only the incredible courage and ingenuity of all these people that made the organisation useful. Presented with comparatively untried and definitely unreliable equipment to be used in inaccessible areas where no facilities were available, they made it work and kept it operating, knowing that many others depended on them.” (see pp 91,92 of the Pither Report, www.radarreturns.com.au)

25 Feb 41 - Formation of WAAAF announced



The Minister for Air, John McEwen, issued a press statement on this day announcing the immediate enrolment of female wireless and teleprinter operators to fill RAAF ground staff vacancies. Proposals to raise a Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force (WAAAF) had been before the War Cabinet since July 1940, but not until 4 February 1941 was approval given; the Advisory War Council agreed with the decision the next day. McEwen's announcement made clear that the women were wanted only 'until they could be replaced by qualified men', and because legal doubts existed over whether women could be enlisted under the Air Force Act—they were at first enrolled only as

auxiliaries for renewable periods of 12 months. Nonetheless, the other Services quickly followed the RAAF in establishing women's Services for general war duty. The WAAAF grew to reach a strength of 18 664 in October 1944.

US HONOURS KOREAN WAR VETERANS

(RAAF News)



On 27 June 2011, the US Ambassador Jeffrey Bleich presented the United States Air Medal to 11 RAAF pilots who flew with 77SQN during the Korean War. One recipient was FLGOFF Ron Guthrie who is well known at Williamtown and pictured here with his grandson James at the ceremony. Ron distinguished himself as a Meteor pilot and, his award certificate read, 'exhibited extraordinary airmanship and courage by accomplishing 26 reconnaissance, strike and attack missions against enemy forces under extremely hazardous conditions'. Ron was captured on 29 August 1951 after ejecting from his Meteor at 38 000 feet when it was badly damaged by enemy MIG-15 fighters. He was held prisoner of war until freed in 1953 at the end of hostilities.

James Guthrie admires his grandfather's medal

The other recipients of the US award were: SQNLDR Ross Glassop, FLTLT Hartley Shearn, PLTOFF John Newham, SGT Ronald Bastin, SGT Billie Collings, SGT Peter Coy, SGT Robert Macintosh, SGT William Monaghan, SGT John Seaton, and SGT Spencer Seaver.

VALE

With deep regret we sadly announce the passing the following Radar Branch members:

Warren Mann, Publisher of 'Radar Returns' (see article next page)

SQNLDR (Ret) D.E. Eaves of Falls Creek

Professor John Bennett AO of Balgowlah

SQNLDR (ret) Paul Pearson, of Alice Springs

Mrs Beth Pooley of Strathfield

We offer condolences to families and loved ones and give thanks for their lives.

Vale Warren Mann, Publisher of 'Radar Returns'

It is with deep regret that we announce the death of Warren Mann on Sunday 24 June 2011. A service to celebrate Warren's life was to be held at Wilson Chapel Springvale Botanical cemetery Commencing 10.15 am Friday 29 July 2011. The Radar Branch extends its condolences and deepest sympathy to his family.

Warren Mann was best known to the radar community throughout Australia as a renowned authority on radar and the editor of the publication, *Radar Returns* and of the associated website. Warren was dedicated to *Radar Returns* and was engaged for decades in collecting and publishing relevant material aimed at clarifying and recording the history of the use of radar by the RAAF. Warren was also forthright in fighting for the welfare of radar veterans. In memory of Warren Mann the following excerpt from his submission on the recommendations of the Clarke Review of Veterans' Entitlements is presented as a tribute to his dedication and passion.

A CASE STUDY IN EQUITY by Warren Mann

November 2008

I have become aware of a number of cases of apparent inequity arising from Repatriation Commission interpretation of the Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986 (VEA), as well as others caused by the wording of the Act itself. For these reasons, my submission addresses Recommendations Numbers 1, 2 and 67.

As a radar technical officer with the RAAF in WWII, I commanded radar stations both in Australia and overseas. It occurs to me that the RAAF ground-based radar organisation which grew up in the post-Pearl Harbor phase of World War II may provide a useful case study by which to throw light on the relative needs and rights of those who served outside of Australia's border and those who were required to perform their functions in the widely varied circumstances that applied within this country.

In many cases those posted to units within Australia suffered conditions that were similar, if not sometimes more dangerous and onerous, to those encountered by their contemporaries who by pure chance were sent beyond that border. Servicemen and indeed women on RAAF radar ground stations were mostly volunteers, serving where they were sent irrespective of whether it was within or outside the national border. Women, of course, were never considered for overseas postings and were confined to mainland units that were considered safer and less demanding. Despite this policy, WAAAF radar operators were used, for example, on units such as 131RS and 208RS that were set up as part of the defence of sensitive facilities like the Newcastle steelworks, which may well have been the target when Newcastle was shelled by Japanese submarines on 8 June 1942.

Although radar (before April 1943, it was known in Britain and Australia as RDF or radiolocation) had its antecedents in Britain and Germany prior to WWII, its development as a significant factor in warfare did not really begin until WWII brought a serious threat to Britain through the German 'blitz'. In Australia, there was little serious interest in radar until Pearl Harbor, late in 1941. A concise account of its early history appears as introductory material in, for example, *More Radar Yarns*, edited by Ed Simmonds, which is available for reference in the Archive section of the website, www.radarreturns.net.au.

On November 7 1941, the RAAF was called upon by the Defence Committee of the War Cabinet to assume responsibility for the establishment and management of a radar warning system for Australia. The Air Force was, of course, already aware of its responsibility to provide bomber aircraft with ASV (Aircraft to Surface Vessel) equipment and, though some overseas equipment was available, its introduction into operational service was slow for various technical and training-related reasons. However, from early in 1942, some radar officers and mechanics were allocated to the installation and maintenance of airborne radar equipment. These people were normally posted to squadrons and for the most part have been treated by DVA in much the same way as have the normal aircrews. Some of them will have served in squadrons operating in forward locations in northern Australia, and will have been denied qualifying service as a consequence, though most will have satisfied the requirements as a result of having taken part in forays over enemy-held territory.

The remainder of the radar technical officers and mechanics, together with all of the radar operators, were trained to form the basis for an ambitious ground-based warning system to provide early warning of approaching enemy aircraft, as well as ground-controlled interception facilities, air-traffic control services and information on shipping movements including, in some circumstances, submarines. This required the equipment and manning of a substantial number of ground stations and of strategically placed filter and operation rooms to provide the link between information on aircraft (and occasionally shipping) movements from radar stations and strike-force aircraft and other relevant armaments. During WWII, around 114 early warning (AW) stations and 22 ground-controlled interception (GCI) stations were formed and, with a few exceptions late in the war, were deployed operationally. Of these, 44 AW and 7 GCI units served outside of

Australia's national border. A network of eight fighter sectors was set up, later to be classified as fighter control units and to be supplemented by six mobile fighter control units.

Ground-based radar stations were small (typically 25 – 40 personnel) and normally self-sufficient. They were expected to maintain a 24-hour watch, seven days a week, so shift work was obligatory. On most of these units, the radar technical staff included 1 officer, 4-5 radar mechanics and 10-12 radar operators, and the support staff usually included: 1-2 wireless operator/mechanics and 2-3 wireless telegraphists to maintain technical and administrative communications, a fitter/DMT or two to operate and maintain motor transport and electrical generation equipment, a cook and a couple of assistants, a clerk general, a medical orderly and 5-10 guards and general hands. Normally, NCOs from among these were given responsibility for arranging shifts in appropriate cases, as well as for general training and discipline.

In most cases, the Commanding Officer was a technical man, though sometimes a non-technical CO would be backed up by a technical officer. Many of the technical officers were very young, and it was not uncommon to have a man aged 19, 20 or 21 in command of a unit in which most of the other staff were older than he was.

Some technical officers and mechanics were 'direct entries', with previous civilian experience in radio, but most had to be trained ab initio, with basic courses for officers provided by Sydney University and for mechanics by Melbourne Technical College. In addition, officers were given administrative training and all technical staff including operators took courses in radar at No 1 Radio School at Richmond NSW and later at Maryborough, Qld. A number of radar mechanics from earlier courses were subsequently commissioned.

Within Australia, radar units were deployed in defensive positions around the coast with, of course, targets likely to attract enemy attention in mind. Most of the units operating in Australia were fixed in the sense that the equipment was not designed to be moved easily from place to place. On the other hand, almost all of the equipment deployed outside Australia, in PNG, Dutch East Indies, the Admiralty Islands, New Britain, the Solomon Islands and Borneo, was light-weight, designed to be moved quickly and easily and to be operational within a few hours of reaching a new site. Later in the war, some of this lightweight equipment was also used in northern and north-western Australia to cope with changing circumstances.

The technology and the nature of their task made it necessary to locate ground radar stations on sites that were characteristically remote and isolated, and many of them offered living conditions that were difficult and unpleasant. AW units were best on elevated sites and were often placed on islands and promontories so that warning of impending attack could be given as early as possible. GCI units, in which accuracy of height estimation was of prime importance and ranges were rather less than achieved by AW equipment, were normally sited on flat or saucer-shaped country – swamps were not unknown.

In some cases, especially in the northern and north-western areas of Australia but also at several remote island sites in the south, the units were protected by trained guards, defensive armament normally used only by army, and even occasionally by army detachments. Considerable attention was also given to camouflage of the units. Clearly there was real concern among service chiefs that radar stations in some of the remoter locations around the coast of Australia were vulnerable to attack from the air and in some cases from submarines.

All staff, especially those directly involved in radar operations, were subject to the strictest possible secrecy provisions, which were not fully relaxed until the actual conflict was well over. A consequence of this has been a widespread lack of awareness, among other service people and the general public alike, of the work done by the RAAF ground-based radar organisation.

There are many cases among people who served on these units of substantial inequities in the treatment of those who have qualified through service outside Australia under the existing VEA Section 6A (1) (a) and those who rendered service at least as dangerous, demanding and valuable to the war effort who failed to satisfy the existing Section 6A (1) (b) covering service within Australia. For example, a person who was sent on a brief overnight mission to Port Moresby in July 1945 would presumably be deemed to have qualifying service whilst his fellow course member who spent six months in 1944 with 344RS on West Montalivet Island off the north-west coast of Western Australia would not.

Thank you Warren, *Requiescat in pace*

71st ANNIVERSARY BATTLE OF BRITAIN LUNCHEON RSVP & PAYMENT ADVICE

Please return by Friday 29 July 2011 to

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

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

BRANCH.....Radar Branch NSW Division.....

Will be attending the RAAF Battle of Britain Luncheon on board MV Sydney 2000 on **Thursday 15 September 2011**

I will be accompanied by.....

And if possible would like to be seated with.....Radar Branch NSW Division.....

Every effort will be made to meet your seating requirements. However, the accommodation and seating arrangements on the MV Sydney 200 are a slightly different format to that of our other functions with guests.

METHOD OF PAYMENT FOR LUNCH

Cheque

I enclose a cheque (made payable to RAAF Association NSW Division)
for \$..... for..... persons at **\$60 per head** (GST Included)

Credit Card

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

VISA / MASTER CARD (Please circle)

\$..... being payment forpersons at \$60 per head (GST Included)

NAME ON CREDIT CARD: (please print)

CREDIT CARD NO:.....

SIGNATURE:.....

EXPIRY DATE:MONTH.YEAR

PLEASE RETURN BY FRIDAY 29 JULY 2011

