



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



THE RADAR BRANCH BULLETIN

NOVEMBER 2010

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)
Correspondence	Air Commodore T.C. Delahunty AM Secretary, The Radar Branch 2 Preece Close, SPRINGFIELD NSW 2250 (Phone: 02 4322 1505)

XMAS LUNCH: –CITY TATTERSALLS CLUB SYDNEY

THE CHRISTMAS FUNCTION WILL BE HELD AT TATTERSALLS CLUB WHICH IS CENTRALLY LOCATED IN THE HEART OF SYDNEY WITH EXCELLENT ACCESS BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT

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|-------|----------------------------|--|
| (I) | Day - Date - Time : | Thursday 9 TH - December 10 – 1100am for 12 noon lunch |
| (II) | Venue: | Meet: "The Lower Bar", Ground Floor
Lunch: "Café 2 Bistro", 2 nd Floor
City Tattersalls Club, 194 – 204 Pitt Street, Sydney |
| (III) | Dress: - | Smart Casual |
| (IV) | Cost: | Individual Payment |

A Slight Change for the Xmas 2010 Function

The Branch has not been able to guarantee the minimum number of attendees to hold a privately catered function for the 2010 Xmas function. However, we invite members to celebrate together at the fine facilities of the Tattersalls City Club in Sydney. Order and payment of drinks and lunch will be an individual choice.

We will meet on Thursday 9th December 2010 at 1100am in the 'Lower Bar' on the ground floor, one of Sydney's Art Deco treasures, and move upstairs to the 2nd floor Café 2 Bistro for lunch. The bistro serves fresh snacks and light meals at reasonable prices.

Family members and friends are most welcome!!

The committee will also investigate function alternatives for next year including a harbour cruise and a change of venue. We will keep you informed.

(Whilst we do not require members to return an acceptance slip this year, we would appreciate if members would inform the Branch if they are attending to give Tattersalls an indication of our numbers.

Please contact our Secretary (details above) or email contact@raafradar.org.au

- (V) **Travel** – City Tattersalls Club is conveniently located in Sydney Central CBD. It is a short walk from Town Hall Rail Station and is close to the corner of Pitt and Market Streets, on the eastern side of Pitt Street. It is also adjacent to the Monorail Station and is easily accessed by bus from Circular Quay.
- (VI) **Car Parking** – The most convenient car parking is almost opposite at the Hilton or Piccadilly in Pitt Street.

RAAF Association Headquarters 'Christmas on Harris 2010'

Free XMAS Lunch

RAAF Association Headquarters Christmas Function will be held at the Ultimo Community Centre, William Henry Street Ultimo, at 1200 for 1245pm on Sunday 28th November 10. Cost is ZERO and is open to all NSW Division members. Transport from Town Hall Station and return will also be provided.

If you wish to attend please notify Brian Morelli, The Secretary, RAAF Association (NSW Division), PO Box A2147 Sydney South NSW 1235 or ring directly **02 9393 3485** before **23rd November** for catering and transport purposes. Raffle prize donations would be greatly appreciated.

F-111 RETIREMENT – “END OF AN ERA FOR THE RAAF”



The 3rd December 2010 will see the final flight of the F-111 at RAAF Base Amberley in Ipswich Queensland. No aircraft's introduction into RAAF service has been as controversial as that of the F-111. Conceived in the early 1960s as the TFX (Tactical Fighter Experimental), the F-111 was to provide a strike capability to the US Air Force and the RAAF with an innovative design utilising variable geometry (sweeping wings), and terrain-following radar, which allowed automatic blind low-level flight and precision bombing. For the Canberra replacement in 1963, the Australian Government took the unusual step of ordering 24 F-111 while they were still in the design phase. Development problems and escalating costs plagued the F-111 production program and the aircraft was consistently in the media spotlight. As it turned out, the F-111 was truly an example of 'all good things come to those who wait'.

The first prototype F-111A flew on 21 December 1964 and was followed by 16 pre-production development aircraft. The 24 RAAF aircraft, designated as F-111Cs designated A8-125 to A8-148, were similar to the US F-111A version, but with the longer wings and heavier undercarriage. The Royal Air Force also ordered 50 similar models, designated the F-111K, but this order was subsequently cancelled and the US Air Force and the RAAF became the only operators of the F-111. In all a total of over 560 F-111s were finally built with variants including the EF-111 Raven electronic warfare aircraft.

The first F-111C was handed over to the RAAF on 4 September 1968, but problems with the wing carry-through box (the advanced wing sweep mechanism) delayed delivery to Australia until final acceptance in 1973. For part of this period, 24 F-4E Phantoms were leased to Australia to provide an interim attack capability, until aircrew and maintenance personnel finally deployed to the US to convert to type and ferry the F-111s back to Australia. The first of four delivery flights, led by Group Captain J.W. Newham (later Chief of Air Staff) and Wing Commander (later Air Commodore) T.C. Owen in A8-125, finally arrived at Amberley on 1 June 1973. The last of the delivery flights arrived on 4 December.

The F-111 has always been operated by RAAF Nos 1 and 6 Squadrons of No 82 Wing at RAAF Amberley. Four were modified to become RF-111C reconnaissance aircraft. Subsequent to the initial purchase, four US Air Force F-111A were purchased in 1981 for attrition replacements. On delivery in 1982, these aircraft became A8-109 to A8-114. They were subsequently modified to full F-111C standard. In October 1992 the Minister for Defence announced the proposed acquisition of up to 18 surplus US Air Force F-111s to extend the type's service life. Ultimately 15 F-111G models were selected as the most suitable for introduction to RAAF service.

To add to its attack capability and modernise the aircraft's avionics, the RAAF modified the F-111C to carry the Pave Tack forward-looking infra-red radar and laser target designation pod and also underwent the Avionics Update Program (AUP) with advanced systems to keep the F-111 in the front line through to 2010.

The F-111 has been a remarkable aircraft for Australia and the RAAF and the last flight on the 3rd of December 2010 after some 40 years of RAAF service will be a truly remarkable feat and indeed the end of an era for the RAAF and those who flew and maintained the aircraft; including our Branch President, Terry Delahunty who is pictured below on his last flight with No 1 Squadron in 1991.



RECEIVE YOUR BULLETIN BY EMAIL AND HELP US SAVE COSTS

This is the first time that the Bulletin will be sent to email recipients. The Bulletin will still be available on the website at www.raafradar.org.au.

Please note: If you don't have a computer and/or an email address you will continue to receive the Bulletin in the mail. Also, if members with email prefer the Bulletin by mail, please notify contact@raafradar.org.au or phone message to 02 62598351 or 0437 459128.

VALE

It is with great regret that we note the passing of Mr W.P. DRURY, Mrs D.P. MILLER, Mr G. SIBLEY, Mr D.S. COHEN and Mr Morrie FENTON

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

NEW MEMBERS

It is with great pleasure that we welcome the following new members to the Radar Branch.

Bruce John Niblett of Stockton, Newcastle NSW
Peter Gordon Hocking of Lane Cove, Sydney NSW
Mrs B Palmer of ROSANNA VIC
Mr Ray Sanderson of RANGEVILLE QLD
Mr Peter Atkins of EAGLE FARM QLD

RAAF News Update

(Article by Ray O'Donoghue)

The Year 2010 marks a new chapter for the Royal Australian Air Force's Surveillance and Response Group (SRG) with world-first capabilities making long-awaited arrivals. The Group's Number 41, 42 and 44 Wings have undergone significant changes which will affect the way its people do business.

With the Headquarters located in the EASTROC Building at RAAF Base Williamtown, the role of SRG is to conduct surveillance, reconnaissance, air and battlespace management control and maritime response operations both at home and on deployment.

The introduction of both Project Air 5333 (Vigilare) and the Airborne Early Warning and Control (AEW&C) Wedgetail aircraft changes the face of Air Battle Management (ABM) for SRG. Vigilare will support national surveillance and air battle management of Australia from the two Regional Operations Centres (ROCs), located at RAAF Williamtown (EASTROC) ,and RAAF Tindal (NORTHROC). Vigilare will enable Air Combat Officers in the ABM stream to exchange information from the Jindalee Operational Radar Network (JORN), Wedgetail, civil and military microwave radars, fighter and maritime patrol aircraft, Royal Australian Navy air warfare-capable ships and various intelligence sources.

Until now these Air Combat Officers have only ever worked from static locations on the ground. Wedgetail will produce a further reach and enable them to talk to external assets using the comprehensive communications system whilst airborne. Formerly known as Air Defence Officers, since the early nineties they've been purposely exposed to and given AEW&C experience through liaison roles and exchanges with the USAF, USN and RAF.

"This has helped us gain insight into large-scale AEW&C operations and has allowed us to understand their training framework and employment procedures," said former 2 Squadron Commanding Officer and now Headquarters SRG Chief-of-Staff GPCAPT Tracey Friend.

Another expanding role in Battlespace Management prompted a name change for Number 44 Wing which also comes under the SRG umbrella. Military Air Traffic Controllers are now know as Joint Battlefield Airspace Controllers (JBACs) which represents the fact that the role extends well beyond the traditional provision of core air traffic control competencies. In addition to the renaming of the category an additional component of the transition was the awarding of the JBAC qualification Badge to all members of the category.

With brand new categories, systems and aircraft, SRG is breaking new ground and will no doubt be at the forefront of Australia's air combat capability into the future.

Hope to see you at the Xmas lunch at Tattersalls on 9 December 2010!!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

