



# AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA BALLARAT BRANCH



## Newsletter February 2020

**President :** Noel Hutchins - 0439 929 322  
**Secretary :** Rob Petty - 0407 891 281  
**Treasurer :** Brian Drennan  
**Asst Secretary / Asst Treasurer:** Peter Dowling  
**Vice President :** Leigh Harvey OAM  
**Junior Vice President :** Peter Schoutens  
**Chaplain :** Rev. Keith Lanyon - 0411 512 160

**REGULAR  
COMMITTEE MEMBERS**  
 Janet Bates  
 Stephen Brown  
 Ken Marsh  
 Bob McDonald

**ELDER STATESMEN**  
 Dr Tom Roberts OAM  
 Gordon Jarvis  
 Tom Jobling  
 Keith Pitman  
 Stan White  
 Newsletter Editor  
 Noel Hutchins

### MONTHLY SOCIAL MEETINGS

Our **Social Luncheon Meetings** are held on the **FIRST TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH, (except January)**, with **Arrival time by 11.45 am for a 12 Noon commencement**. All meetings are held at our rooms at Airport Hut 48, Airport Drive, Mitchell Park (ie : Ballarat Aerodrome).

### MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETINGS

Our **Business Meetings, open to all members**, are held at 3 pm on the **second** Tuesday of each month. These meetings immediately follow a monthly Committee meeting enabling members to be promptly aware of decisions taken by the committee, enabling members to ratify, or otherwise, decisions taken.

**YOUR 2020 COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT** If you read through the committee members' names in the block headings above you will see that nine members of the 2019 Committee are retained on the committee for 2020 and that there are two new committee members, i.e : We welcome Brian Drennan as the new Treasurer and also Peter Dowling to fill a new position of Assistant Secretary/Assistant Treasurer. We thank Brian and Peter for accepting nominations for those positions and congratulate them on their election to the committee for 2020.

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**Memberships Fees Overdue :** On the list of "unfinancial members " received from Melbourne Head Office, there are a few members who have not yet paid their membership renewal fees for 2020. If you have not yet paid your renewal would you please do so as soon as practicable. If you have difficulty in processing payment to Melbourne, you are welcome to pay your renewal fee to the Treasurer at our March Social Luncheon Meeting on Tuesday 3rd March.

**Please Note :** Any member whose 2020 membership renewal remains unpaid as at 15th March 2020 will not receive further copies of the monthly newsletter and will not be eligible to partake of our social functions/activities.

Any member's Wife/Husband/Partner are welcome to attend/take part in any of our Air Force Association Ballarat Branch functions and activities and **do not need to be also a member**.

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**VISIT BY GEELONG BRANCH OF AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION :** The Geelong Branch of AFA Vic is up and running again and apparently, before my time, there was some interaction between the Ballarat and Geelong Branches. When Geelong members were asked what activity they would like to kick off their 2020, the choice was "a visit to the Ballarat Branch".

We will be hosting the Geelong Branch members at our rooms on Thursday 5th March from around 1 pm, (they will have already had lunch in Ballarat), and we will then serve an afternoon tea at around 2 or 2.30 pm. Would as many members as practicable please try to come and meet the Geelong members and enjoy an afternoon tea. To help with catering, would members please advise me asap of their intention to attend. (NH, Pres)



## NO. 1 WIRELESS AIR GUNNERS SCHOOL BALLARAT 1940 -1945

***The official Public Launch of our new website commemorating each and every Wireless Air Gunner and Navigator who trained at 1WAGS Ballarat for their World War Two service occurred on 11th February 2020. The launch was held at the Web Designer's Offices at UBC Digital, Ripon St Nth, Ballarat.***

After several years dedicated research work and deciphering of RAAF records, the information gathered then enabled us to move onto making these records available world-wide via this incredibly high standard website.

I am sure that among those people who will, over time, access these records, will be many descendants of these men who bravely served during World War Two.

It was my pleasure to provide Certificates of Appreciation to Dr Tom Roberts OAM, Mr Peter Schoutens, Mrs Janet Bates, Mr Allen Penhall, Mr David Plunkett and UBC Staff and to Councillor Samantha McIntosh who accepted it on behalf of the City of Ballarat in acknowledgement of the grant of funds which covered the bulk of our monetary costs for the building of this website.

The years of research contributions by Tom Roberts and Peter Schoutens have been very deservedly widely acknowledged by me in recent times, but with this launch of the website now effected I wish to acknowledge the tremendous effort put in by our 1WAGS Website Co-ordinator Mrs Janet Bates. The high standard that has been achieved with this website is very much due to Janet's hard work, her ability to work with the web developer and his staff and her very strong desire and commitment to ensuring that this website would be of the highest possible standard. Thank you Janet.

A special guest representing each and every 1WAG trainee was 95 yo 1WAG and WWII veteran Tom Runnalls who was delighted to see his own profile page on the website. Photographs taken at the launch continue on page 3. (NH, Pres)



Tom Roberts, Janet Bates and Peter Schoutens





95 yo 1WAG, WWII veteran Tom Runnalls views his own profile on [www.1wags.org.au](http://www.1wags.org.au)



Tom Roberts, (seated 3rd from left) invited to speak



Certificate of Appreciation ~ Tom Roberts



Peter Schoutens



Janet Bates



Allan Penhall



Cr. Samantha McIntosh



UBC's David Plunkett

**CHANGE IN PROVISION OF RAFFLE PRIZES :** Members attending our December and February Social Luncheon meetings would have seen the upgrade of raffle prizes. This new arrangement will continue with the branch providing five substantial prizes, (really worth winning), each week. These five prizes may at times be supported by donations from Committee Members. There is no longer need for general members to provide raffle prizes. Our branch relies on funds from member's \$5 payment each meeting and member's purchasing raffle tickets. All members should contribute to the raffle income and, why not, with very worthwhile prizes on offer. (NH, Pres)



### **BUS TRIP ~ B24 LIBERATOR HANGAR WERRIBEE AND THE WERRIBEE MANSION AND GARDENS**

A bus trip is to be arranged for **Tuesday 19th May** where members will get to visit the B24 Liberator Restoration Hangar at Werribee where, as well as a tour and a talk, we will be provided with morning tea.



After leaving the B24 Hangar we will then head to the beautiful Werribee Mansion and Gardens. Members can bring a packed lunch and enjoy a picnic in the beautiful gardens.



Members will get to experience the grandeur of the Werribee Mansion. Explore the formal gardens and marvel at the expansive manicured landscape, intricately designed grotto and ornamental lake. This is also the location of the Victorian State Rose Garden.

Once the working heart of the Werribee Park estate, the remaining bluestone outbuildings of the farmyard provide a stark contrast to the elaborate craftsmanship of the Chirnside Mansion. Wander down to the heritage orchard and see the work the community and Parks Victoria have put in to preserve and restore the fruit orchard originally planted by the Chirnside family in the late 1800s.

**Now this heavily subsidised trip will only cost members a measly \$15 per head, yes, even including that morning tea at the B24 hangar. SO GET IN QUICK, Bookings will be open from the March Social Luncheon Meeting on Tuesday 3rd March.....once the bus is booked out, if you haven't booked, then you miss out.**



### **CHANGE OF GUEST SPEAKER ~ MARCH 2020 MEETING**

Our scheduled guest speaker for March has kindly agreed to a re-schedule of his talk to our May Social luncheon meeting so as to allow 92 yo WWII Bomber Command veteran Mr Bill Cook to be able to speak to us at our March meeting this coming Tuesday 3rd March.

After Bill's introduction by the President at our March meeting, Club Secretary Rob Petty will then join Bill in an interview type presentation which I am sure will provide members with some very interesting stories from Bill's WWII experience as Air Force ground crew member and the aircrew and the aircraft that he was associated with in his very important WWII role



**TAXI TRANSPORT TO MARCH MEETING** Don't forget to request taxi transport to and from our March meeting if you are in need of this assistance. Advise Noel before 3 pm on Monday 2nd March.  
By phone : 0439 929 322 or by email : noelhutch@bigpond.com