



# AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA BALLARAT BRANCH

Newsletter June 2020



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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

## COVID-19 AND CONTINUING NEED FOR SOCIAL DISTANCING AND OTHER RESTRICTIONS

While current social distancing requirements and other Covid-19 related restrictions are still with us, we will continue to provide four opportunities each week for members to be able to gather at our Airport Hut 48 for some social activity. As stated in the May newsletter, opening times and activities would be reviewed based on our experiences during the June openings.

I am pleased to be able to say that members attending these openings have been adhering to the requirements of use of hand sanitiser on arrival and during their stay, observing appropriate social distancing, absolutely no physical contact between any persons other than between a member and his or her own partner. This has allowed members who wish to dance to the provided music being able to do so with their partner and with some occasions of members dancing or exercising to the music on their own. Also pleasing to see some members moving to the music area to sit and enjoy the music and watch others dancing.

The Tuesday afternoon has proved the most popular with members. With this in mind, commencing Tuesday 7th July, our Tuesday openings will become a **'social luncheon'** commencing at 11 am and going through to 2 pm with a lunch break in the middle. This change of time for Tuesdays will also assist in the removal of a **clash of facilities use** by two tenants of the building, with another tenant needing to use joint facilities from 3 pm on Tuesdays. Members can bring home made lunch for themselves which will be supplemented by the provision of some hot pastries. Purchased commercial savoury or sweet items to share will be welcomed should members like to bring something. **Tuesday openings will continue to feature a Fruit Box Raffle ~ 4 tickets for \$2.**

The most regular attendees are those members who wish to take advantage of the opportunity to get the exercise and enjoyment of dancing with their partners to the great dance music provided, in fact this opportunity has brought us two new members in John Whittle who has become a regular attendee along with his partner Kirsten and another new member in Alice Christie and we welcome those two members to our branch of the Air Force Association. However, I must point out that we are in no way 'holding a dance', we are providing the opportunity at our rooms openings for members and their partners to exercise or dance to music provided, **with strictly no physical contact other than between a member and his or her partner.**

**Where else for just \$5 can you get this sort of social enjoyment activity? Coffee, tea, biscuits, camaraderie, magazines and books people to chat with and beautiful music to dance or exercise to.**

Thursday 2nd July:	2 pm to 5 pm
Saturday 4th July:	2 pm to 5 pm
Tuesday 7th July:	11 am to 2 pm (Luncheon)
AND :	7.30 pm to 10.30 pm
Thursday 9th July:	2 pm to 5 pm
Saturday 11th July:	2 pm to 5 pm
Tuesday 14th June:	11 am to 2 pm (Luncheon)
AND :	7.30 pm to 9.30 pm
Thursday 16th July:	2 pm to 5 pm
Saturday 18th July:	2 pm to 5 pm
Tuesday 21st July:	11 am to 2 pm (Luncheon)
AND :	7.30 pm to 10.30 pm
Thursday 23rd July:	2 pm to 5 pm
Saturday 25th July:	2 pm to 5 pm
Tuesday 28th June:	11 am to 2 pm (luncheon)
AND :	7.30 pm to 10.30 pm
Thursday 30th July:	2 pm to 5 pm



**Left :** L to R : Members John Ooi, Annette Lloyd, Margaret Chapman, John Ooi's partner Liz (Front) and member Ernie Chapman reading at other table. All enjoying the opportunity for a social gathering with social distancing being observed

**Right :** New member John Whittle, (right) was delighted to find an old friend in member Bob McDonald and to be able to catch up for a chat. Pictured in the centre is our Senior Librarian Stephen Brown who has been combining attending our openings with doing further library development work.



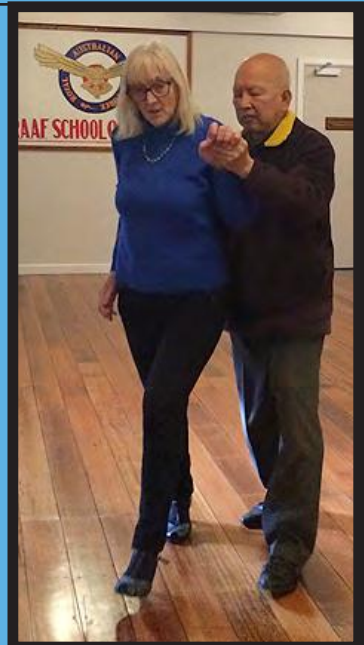
**Left :** With some great dance music playing, some members moved to the music area to dance.

Left front : is new member John Whittle dancing with his partner Kirsten, at rear centre is member John Ooi with partner Liz, and on right is member Annette Lloyd dancing on her own with her partner Noel tied up with other things.



**Left :** Noel Hutchins pictured dancing with his partner, member Annette Lloyd

**Right:** Member John Ooi dancing with his partner Liz



**Left :** Senior Vice President and Assistant Librarian Leigh Harvey OAM chats with Senior Librarian Stephen Brown. Two very good conversationists. Talking books I guess.

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My apologies go to other attendees who didn't make the photo page. I will get more photos at future opening.  
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**Come on, give me a call and let me know when you are coming ~ 0439 929 322**



## COVID-19 AND COMMEMORATIVE EVENTS -3-

I will, in the coming ten days or so, be discussing with City of Ballarat Council the likelihood of still commemorating two important 2020 military anniversaries falling in 2020. Just a matter of days ago it was appearing very likely that we would be able to proceed with arrangements for commemorating the **75th Anniversary of the end of War in the Pacific** with a planned Commemorative Service at the Australian Ex Prisoners of War Memorial here in Ballarat on Sunday 30th August, the Sunday before Battle for Australia Day, Wednesday 5th September. It had been planned to also hold a Battle for Australia Afternoon Tea Dance in the afternoon of that day.

However, how things have changed with a spike of Covid-19 cases in Victoria. While it may still be *possible* to hold this commemorative event, it is now *less probable* than it was, and the likelihood of being able to hold a dance is *very doubtful*, in fact, *Unlikely*. The possibility of holding the Battle for Australia Commemorative service is enhanced due to the large open area around the Australian Ex-Prisoners of War Memorial which would allow the City of Ballarat Officers plenty of room in their 'set-up' to allow for whatever social distancing requirements exist at the time.

The other important military anniversary this year is the **80th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain**. This may be a bit more difficult if social distancing requirements are still in place due to the very small area available at the Sebastopol Cenotaph. The Skipton Street Uniting Church Battle of Britain Church Service is a very important part of this commemorative event so what restriction are still in place for internal gatherings will also have some effect the holding of this particular commemorative event.

I will be guided by the advice of the appropriate City of Ballarat Officers and Health Department, and of course by what restrictions the State Government still have in place. However, a decision will need to be made in the short term so that arrangements can be commenced if commemorative services are to go ahead. (NH, Pres)

# 75 YEARS ON ~ WAR IN THE PACIFIC THE BATTLE FOR AUSTRALIA

We are approaching the 75th anniversary of '**VP Day**', (**Victory in the Pacific**), which will fall on 15th August this year, 75 years on from 15th August 1945 which must surely have been a wonderful day for peoples of the Pacific region. War in the Pacific ended with Japan's acceptance of the Allied demand for unconditional surrender on 14 August 1945 and the Australian Government gazetted the following day, 15th August 1945, as a **VP Day** public holiday. The Governments of Britain, the United States and New Zealand preferred 'VJ Day', (Victory over Japan) but Australia went with **VP Day**.

The picture at right shows a Miss Lois Martin celebrating the end of the war on a Melbourne street, captured by a roving photographer. She stood out among the crowd with her handmade jumper and painted face. Lois at the time worked at the Kodak factory in Abbotsford, as did the girls either side of her in the photo, Betty Williams (left), and Carmel O'Connor, (right). Lois's knitted jumper is now on display at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, having been donated to the AWM by her widower husband Bill Drew on the 50th anniversary of VP Day in 1995. Lois had knitted her jumper especially for the expected 'coming day', and she never wore it again.

**Victory in the Pacific** was effectively the end of World War Two, with **Victory in Europe** having been achieved earlier with **formal acceptance by the Allies of Nazi Germany's unconditional surrender of its armed forces on Tuesday, 8 May 1945**.

**The New Guinea Campaign** : The New Guinea campaign of the Pacific War lasted from January 1942 until the end of the war in August 1945. During the initial phase in early 1942, the Empire of Japan invaded the Australian-administered Mandated Territory of New Guinea (23 January) and the Australian Territory of Papua (21 July 42) and overran western New Guinea (beginning 29/30 March), which was a part of the Netherlands East Indies. During the second phase, lasting from late 1942 until the Japanese surrender, the Allies, consisting primarily of Australian and US forces, cleared the Japanese first from Papua, then the Mandate and finally from the Dutch colony.



Australian War Memorial PO 2018.226

Papua New Guinea was **part of Australia's overseas territories** until 1975, so the large Japanese invasion in 1942 was a significant invasion of territory under Australian control.

On 97 occasions during 1942 and 1943 during the War in the Pacific, Japanese aircraft bombed towns and airfields in Northern Australia. The first air raid on Australia occurred on 19 February 1942 when Darwin was attacked by 242 Japanese aircraft. At least 235 people were killed in the raid. Attacks on northern Australian towns and airfields included 64 raids on Darwin, 9 raids on Horn Island, 4 raids on Broome, 3 raids on Exmouth Gulf and 3 raids on Townsville.

Japanese submarines periodically attacked shipping in Australian waters from 1940 to early 1945. It was the night/morning 31 May/1 June 1942 that Sydney Harbour came under attack by Japanese submarines with 21 Australian sailors and 1 British sailor losing their life. In the early hours of the 8th June 1942 Japanese submarines bombarded Newcastle with obvious target being BHP Steelworks. This attack on Newcastle followed the attack on Sydney Harbour on 31 May/1 June and followed shortly after the shelling of the eastern suburbs of Sydney. The attack on Newcastle consisted of the firing of 34 shells, including eight illumination rounds, but caused little damage.

But the biggest loss of life to Japanese submarines in Australian waters occurred in the early hours of 4th May 1943 when the Japanese torpedoed and sank the Australian hospital ship 'Centaur' off Point Lookout, Queensland, with the loss of 268 lives.

In our war against the Japanese the total of Australian servicemen killed in action was 8,274 but when adding those who died from their wounds or died as prisoners of war, the total climbs to 17,501. But of course there were also casualties among the civilian population including the aforementioned lives lost with the bombing of Darwin. Thirty Merchant ships were lost to enemy attack in Australian waters with a resulting 654 deaths.

Of the airmen that trained at No 1 Wireless Air Gunners School at RAAF Ballarat during the Second World War, in addition to the many that lost their lives in Europe and Africa, 281 of them lost their lives in operations relating to our war closer to home against the Japanese, and that is just the Ballarat trained airmen.

Of this total of 281 Killed-in-Action Ballarat trained airmen, a handful of those lost their lives on Australian soil with the rest losing their lives beyond our shores with most buried in foreign lands.

Here is just one name of a locally born young man that trained here in Ballarat and subsequently lost his life in the defence of our nation in our Battle for Australia.

Patrick Fraser **STANLEY**, Born Ballarat..... 3 Nov 1921 ~ Enlisted in RAAF ..... 1 April 1943  
Commenced No 1 Wireless Air Gunners Course No 46 at No 1WAGS RAAF Ballarat commencing.....9 Dec 1943  
**Killed in Action as Flight Sergeant STANLEY P. F. on 5th July 1945 in a flying Battle over Borneo**

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**VALE : Mr Barry Ernest LEACH ~ 27 Oct 1931 - 5 June 2020**  
Tom Roberts has advised me of the passing of this former member of our Branch of the Air Force Association.  
Tom and Penny were invited to attend the restricted numbers funeral service.  
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**Come on, go back to the first page and check on those 'rooms opening times' and give me a call and let me know when you are able to attend so that 'numbers' are known prior to each opening. (Noel : 0439 929 322 or email noelhutch@bigpond.com)**

**Thank you to the members who have been attending and paying their \$5 each time. You are providing the financing of our future as a branch of the Air Force Association.**

**You should not attend if you are uncomfortable about attending or if you are feeling unwell or if you do not take social distancing seriously.**