



AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA BALLARAT BRANCH

Newsletter December/January
2020~2021



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Treasurer : Brian Drennan
Asst Secretary / Asst Treasurer: Peter Dowling
Vice President : Leigh Harvey OAM
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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



MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR



Well the time is nearing for us to put a most difficult 2020 year behind us. I don't need to list here the problems that we have faced during the year, we all faced difficulties associated with the Covid-19 situation throughout 2020. But locally, we have fared very well in comparison to other communities around our own country and the much more serious situations that developed around the World and that are still wreaking havoc with peoples lives.

Yes, Anzac Day was very different this year as was Remembrance Day, and we were not able to proceed with our planned Battle for Australia Commemorative Service. But I don't need to elaborate on those things here, as all of our activities and events and our non-activities and non-events were recorded in our monthly newsletters.

Let us be grateful for our situation. Many lives have been lost during this year, but every single 2020 Ballarat Branch member is still with us as we prepare to see in a new year which will hopefully see us all get back to at least something like the old 'normal'. And how fortunate we were to be able to gather again for our Christmas Social Luncheon Meeting on 15th December, much more fortunate than many others.

I take this opportunity to thank all committee members for their commitment during this much 'less active' year, but I do need to single out *three committee members who have been far from 'less active' during 2020.*

Thank you to Janet Bates our 1wags.org.au website coordinator who continues her great work on the website ensuring that our monthly newsletters are included on the site and continually researching in order to regularly have new "Feature Stories" included on the site plus general coordination with the web-developer and dealing with queries from visitors to the site. Janet can be justly proud of the high standard of our 1wags.org.au website. Thank you Janet.

Thank you to Stephen Brown our Head Librarian. What a mountain of work Stephen has got through in sorting and cataloguing so many books into our Tom Roberts Library and establishing such a well organised and professional library set-up. That our library set-up has reached the stage that it has is thanks to Stephen's hard work. Thank you Stephen.

Thank you to Bob McDonald for assisting me every month in hand delivering our newsletter to local addresses of members who are unable to receive their newsletters by email. Bob not only hand delivers half of the newsletters that we need hand delivered but also gives his time in staying for a chat with members who are at home when he calls. Thank you Bob.

To each and every member I wish you a Very Merry Christmas
and a Safe and Wonderful New Year



Noel Hutchins, President



Santa dropped in to our Christmas Meeting

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS A DECEMBER/JANUARY NEWSLETTER. THE NEXT NEWSLETTER WILL BE THE FEBRUARY 2021 ISSUE.....SO PLEASE TAKE NOTICE OF THE FOLLOWING TWO NOTICES RE JANUARY AND FEBRUARY AND NOTE DOWN THE TIME AND DATES.

JANUARY GET-TOGETHER : Tuesday 5th January 2021 : As has been the practice, our January get-together will be in the form of a BYO picnic lunch in the Rotunda adjacent to the larger children’s playground at Lake Wendouree **commencing at 11.30 am**. As usual, some of us will need to get down there early to secure the rotunda before others get in there. **Don’t forget to bring your lunch**. In anticipation of some continuing restrictions, any food brought to share should be commercially prepared and not home cooked. The Association will provide some cold soft drinks and ice creams on the day. There is a Bar-B-Que facility there for those wishing to bring BBQ items to self-cook for themselves.

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FEBRUARY SOCIAL LUNCHEON MEETING Tuesday 2nd February 2020 will also act as our Annual General Meeting. **Arrive by 11.45 am for a 12 Noon Start**.
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Please see the separate Annual General Meeting notice accompanying this newsletter re nominations for committee positions for 2021. Basically, all 2020 executive and general committee members have indicated that they are happy to continue on in their positions and areas of responsibility for year 2021 with the exception of Secretary Rob Petty. Rob has advised that he will not be able to continue as Secretary or accept any other committee position in 2021 owing to other commitments. I thank Rob for his past commitment to the Secretary position and also for his Runways Dance initiative.

I will be nominating Assistant Secretary Peter Dowling to fill the position of Secretary in 2021 and Peter has confirmed to me that he will accept that nomination.

It is my intention that in 2021 the elected Secretary will fill positions of Secretary/Assistant Treasurer and the Treasurer will fill the positions of Treasurer/Assistant Secretary. *(NH, Pres)*

Please note that any 2021 financial member is entitled to nominate for and challenge for any of the committee positions.

Would you like to get involved? There is no limit on the number of General Committee Members on the committee so if you would like to be actively involved then please organise a nomination for such position.....you will get a job to do.
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TWO-STEP SUCCESSION PLAN FOR BRANCH PRESIDENT POSITION : It is my intention in the coming year to take a step back by way of progressively handing over the handling of administrative and some other matters to the incoming Secretary in preparation for my taking the second step at the end of 2021 by stepping down from my position as President. I expect at the end of 2021 to be in a position to nominate and recommend to members the person that I believe is best suited to take the position of Branch President in my place.

It will of course be up to members who they elect at the 2022 Annual General Meeting. *(NH, Pres)*

THE CAMBRIAN HILL AVENUE OF HONOUR

Cambrian Hill is a small settlement just south of Sebastopol on the Sebastopol-Colac Road and just into the Golden Plains Shire district. It was in 1917 that an Avenue of Honour was established at Cambrian Hill. Forty trees were planted to commemorate local men who had enlisted to fight in World War 1. The Avenue was formally opened on 24th November 1917. In January 1919 an additional twenty trees were added making a total of sixty.

With this avenue being established on the Sebastopol-Colac road, destined to later become a major road, unfortunately, over the years, the trees suffered badly from road widening and the installation of major power lines on one side of the road.

In 1985 a new bridge was constructed at the Northern entrance to Cambrian Hill and the Shire Engineer at the time suggested that the Avenue of Honour should be relocated to another area.

It was in 1986 that ground was ploughed in a new location on Glassons Road Cambrian Hill and sixty blue-gum trees were planted for the re-establishment of the Avenue of Honour. A cairn was placed at the end of the avenue to honour all those who gave service from Cambrian Hill and District in all wars.

Unfortunately the blue-gums didn't do too well and in 2013, with assistance from the Buninyong RSL and a Commonwealth Government grant, the old trees were replaced by the planting of English Oak Trees.

In early 2020 with the avenue still not really completed, a group was formed with the task of seeking funding, researching and checking details of men and women from the district who had served in both WWI and WWII, and the placing of bronze plaques containing details about each enlisted person on plinths adjacent to the memorial trees.

There are five plaques to RAAF members, four men and one woman :

- The four men are :
- 149881 Atkinson, Kevin Robert,**
 - 58003 Bandy, Norman Henry,**
 - 143076 Pullen, Harold Leslie, and**
 - 54385 Williams, John Lloyd.**

The woman is named as :

Wills, Norma ~
Royal Australian Air Force for whom they have no other details. But clearly, **Norma would have been a member of the Womens Auxiliary Australian Air Force, (WAAAF), not the RAAF.** Research will be undertaken to see if we can find more information re Norma.



With works considered now complete, a re-dedication service was held at the Avenue on the morning of 15th December this year to which I was invited by the Buninyong RSL President Ron Fleming to attend and lay a wreath on behalf of the Ballarat Branch of the Air Force Association. (Photos courtesy of Ron Fleming, Pres. Buninyong RSL)