



AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA BALLARAT BRANCH

Newsletter December-January
2021 / 2022



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Social Luncheon Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month commencing at 11.45 am (December meeting held closer to Christmas) **Committee Meetings** are held on the third Thursday of each month at 1 pm followed by a **General Business Meeting** at approx 2.15 pm to which all financial members are welcome to attend to ratify or otherwise the actions of the committee on that day and raise other matters.



MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR



Well the time is nearing for us to put yet another difficult year behind us.

2021 has seen a continuation of our program of activities seriously affected by Covid-19 related restrictions and lock-downs. However, I am optimistic that the coming 2022 year will see us get to the other side of Covid-19 and I look forward to a time when we get back to a fully open economy where there are no more restrictions on anyone and we are ALL able to gather together and get back to the gatherings and activities that our Branch of the Air Force Association is all about.

Most affected were our two bus trips that had already been postponed from 2020 and also our efforts to get to hold our Battle for Australia/Air Force Centenary weekend comprising our Battle for Australia/Air Force 100 Centenary formal black-tie Ball on the Saturday night and a full Battle for Australia Commemorative Service at the Australian Ex-Prisoners of War Memorial on the Sunday morning and Airport Hut 48 rooms and surroundings activities on the Sunday afternoon.

But what a great finish to the year. While our planned Battle for Australia/Air Force 100 Centenary Ball was postponed too far away from the formal Battle for Australia Day date, we were finally able to proceed with the Ball as simply Air Force Centenary Ball on Saturday 4th December and what a great night it was. To top off a good ending to a difficult year our December Christmas meeting on 14th December saw 40 of us, including some guests, have a great time together in the large formal dining hall of the restored WWII RAAF Officers' Mess building at our rooms at what is now called Airport Hut 48 at Ballarat aerodrome.



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

Noel Hutchins,
President



Swinging Air Force Ball *takes flight*

BY EDWINA WILLIAMS

THE Air Force Centenary Ball had Brown Hill Hall swinging on Saturday night.

Hosted by the Air Force Association Ballarat Branch, 80 attendees marked the 100th anniversary celebration of the formation of the Royal Australian Air Force in style, dancing the night away to live music from the 1940s era.

AFA Ballarat president Noel Hutchins said it was important to acknowledge the centenary locally.

"The RAAF Base in Ballarat played a massive role during World

War Two, both in Europe and Africa, as well as in our Battle for Australia in the Pacific and right here at home in our defensive war against the invading Japanese forces," he said.

"It was at the No 1 Wireless Air Gunners School Ballarat where Wireless Air Gunners were trained for war service with Britain's RAF Bomber Command or RAAF Squadrons defending Australia.

"Many of those men lost their lives in action against the Germans, and others in action against the Japanese, with many buried in foreign soil."

Recently retired RAAF Wing Commander Daryll Topp, the vice-president of Air Force Association

Victoria, and his wife Gillian travelled up from Melbourne to attend, while local AFA members and the swing-dancing community also enjoyed the night.

Mr Hutchins said singing trio The Pacific Belles were "an absolute delight" performing two half-hour sets, which were a highlight of the event for all.

"I was overjoyed to see so many dancers being able to once again get together on the dance floor after long periods of not having to be able to do so," he said.

"I have never before seen so many very happy dancers, and the night went off without a single hitch."

Originally scheduled as our *Battle for Australia/Air Force 100 Centenary Ball* to be held in August 2021, Covid-19 related postponements well beyond 2021 Battle for Australia Day date caused the Ball to finally proceed as our *Air Force 100 Centenary Ball*.

That we were finally able to proceed with this event in this 100th year anniversary of the formation of the Royal Australian Air Force was in no small way due to the perseverance and tenacity of our Ball organiser Ann Petty.

The night felt special, looked special and was special due to the work that Anne put into the organising of the event.

Thank you Ann and also husband Rob and the group of their special friends who contributed to the success of the night.

Right : Anne and Rob Petty pictured with Melbourne based singing trio The Pacific Belles who provided great entertainment during the evening ~ thank you ladies





Appropriately decorated tables and stage.

Pictured at Right is two-man Band "Mantel"

Photos: Noel Hutchins



Melbourne-based singing trio the Pacific Belles during their first half-hour performance which they did in uniform. For their second half-hour the girls changed into 1940's style floral outfits (Photo Top Left: Alistair Finlay Ballarat Times) (Photos Below: P.Belles) (Photo Top Right: Noel Hutchins)





Photo: Alistair Finlay
Ballarat Times



Photo: Alistair Finlay
Ballarat Times

Air Force Association Victoria Division Vice President, Wing Commander (Retired) Daryll Topp pictured Above Left : with Ballarat Branch President Noel Hutchins and..... Above Right : with wife Gillian



Photo: Alistair Finlay
Ballarat Times



Photo: Alistair Finlay
Ballarat Times



Photo: Alistair Finlay
Ballarat Times



Photo: Alistair Finlay
Ballarat Times

WE THANK THE UNDER LISTED FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THIS SPECIAL EVENT

Hon Catherine King ~ Federal Member for Ballarat

Regent Cinemas, Ballarat

Mars Confectionary, Ballarat

Avalon Nursery, Haddon

Bunch of Grapes Hotel, Ballarat

Ferguson Plarre Bakehouse, Ballarat

Smokey Town Cafe, Creswick

Times News Group/Ballarat Times

CHRISTMAS SOCIAL LUNCHEON ~ TUESDAY 14 DECEMBER 2021



A GREAT WAY TO FINISH OFF 2021 WITH 40 OF US ENJOYING OUR FINAL GET-TOGETHER OF THE YEAR. HOW GOOD TO SEE SOME OF OUR SENIOR STATESMEN THERE IN, (LEFT SIDE FROM FRONT) : KEITH PITMAN, TOM ROBERTS AND STAN WHITE AND, PARTIALLY OBSCURED OPPOSITE STAN, OUR CHAPLAIN KEITH LANYON. SPECIAL THANKS TO SUE PITMAN FOR OFFERING TO LOOK AFTER PENNY ROBERTS ON THE DAY SO THAT TOM COULD JOIN US.

PHOTO : KEN MARSH



PHOTO : NOEL HUTCHINS



PHOTO : KEN MARSH

WE WERE ALL TREATED TO SOME LOVELY MUSIC TOGETHER WITH THE BEAUTIFUL VOICE OF MUSICIAN/SINGER/SONGWRITER AMIE BRÛLÉE ~ WOW! AMIE, THAT WAS BEAUTIFUL. AMIE WAS THEN COOPTED TO HELP ME DRAW THE MANY GENERAL RAFFLES (DUE TO LOTS OF DONATED PRIZES), BEFORE OUR GUEST DARYLL TOPP DREW THE BIG ONE.....AND.....

AMIE WINS



WE HAD AN ABUNDANCE OF PRIZES FOR OUR GENERAL RAFFLE THANKS TO THE GENEROSITY OF SOME OF OUR MEMBERS AND THANK YOU TO EACH MEMBER THAT CONTRIBUTED. OUR MAJOR RAFFLE FOR THE DAY CONSISTED OF A CHRISTMAS HAMPER DONATED TO US BY HON CATHERINE KING, FEDERAL MEMBER FOR BALLARAT AND A LOVELY TEA SET DONATED BY PETER DOWLING AND SUE ALEXANDER THANK YOU CATHERINE, PETER AND SUE. WELL DONE AMIE.

VALE John Robert (Jack) BELL

Sadly 2021 saw the passing of Ballarat Branch member Jack BELL. Passing away on 26th November 2021 Jack was less than a month away from what would have been his 104th birthday on 20th December. Let us remember Jack's words : **Respect and Compassion. Rest in Peace Jack**



MOVING ON INTO 2022

JANUARY PICNIC GET-TOGETHER : As we usually do, we will commence our new year with a picnic get-together at the Rotunda at Lake Wendouree. (The Rotunda near the larger Childrens' Play Equipment Area) diagonally opposite the Australian Ex-Prisoners' of War Memorial area. Members bring their own lunch. It is okay to bring item of food to share if you wish. We will provide some cold drinks, (water plus other options), and some form of ice cream on stick for each member.

Just like we needed to move our December meeting from the first to the second Tuesday of the month to get a little closer to Christmas, we will move our January start to the year to the second Tuesday considering that the first Tuesday is the 4th January, a little bit soon following on everybody's busy Christmas/New Year period...SO OUR :

JANUARY PICNIC GET-TOGETHER IS ON TUESDAY 11TH JANUARY...(FROM 11AM)

FEBRUARY SOCIAL LUNCHEON MEETING/AGM : As is the case annually, our February Social Luncheon Meeting also doubles as our Annual General Meeting. The first Tuesday in February is the 1st. Once again, this meeting will need to be changed to the second Tuesday, (8th), due to inability of some committee members being unavailable on 1st February, SO OUR :

FEBRUARY SOCIAL LUNCHEON MEETING/ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING WILL BE ON TUESDAY 8TH FEBRUARY....ARRIVE BY 11.45 AM

So that is a bit of messing about with occasions arising with need to change from the first Tuesday in the month to the second Tuesday for some months during the year; so let's sort that out :

At our Annual General Meeting on 8th February there will be a motion on the books to have **ALL** of our Monthly Social Luncheon Meetings on the **Second Tuesday of the month**. So if any member has strong reasons to oppose that change, please be ready to voice those reasons when the motion for change is put forward at our Annual General Meeting.

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**ELECTION OF COMMITTEE FOR 2022**

Since our Treasurer Brian DRENNAN advised that he was unable to continue to serve in the position, our Secretary Peter Dowling has been serving as Secretary/Treasurer which has proved satisfactory. Consequently I do not see a need to bring in another committee member to replace Brian for 2022.

In regards to my own position as President, where I had previously advised that I would not be re-standing for election for 2022, I have been encouraged by the additional efforts and work by committee members, particularly Peter Dowling, Sue Alexander and Janet Bates, to take some of the pressure and responsibilities off me, together with the fact that Covid-19 has once again prevented me from being able to establish and deliver a formal Battle for Australia Commemorative Service, (which I have committed myself to doing), I will be staying on as President for 2022 and then "see where my life is leading me" this time next year as to what I do beyond 2022.

With each of the current Committee Members making themselves available to continue on, there will be no positions to fill for 2022 and therefore no need for Ballot Papers or voting at our Annual General Meeting. *Noel Hutchins, President*

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BATTLE FOR AUSTRALIA WEEKEND 2022 In respect to the aforementioned Battle for Australia Commemorative Service, the City of Ballarat is budgeting to provide facilities for this to be an annual **City of Ballarat/Air Force Association BATTLE FOR AUSTRALIA Commemorative Service** at the Australian Ex-Prisoners of War Memorial providing seventy chairs under marquee cover for invited guests. Marquee over podium. Marquee and chairs for Choir. Public address system suitable for crowd of 200 people. Risk management/First Aid facilities. We **had** been looking at trying to hold this Service on the weekend closest to the formal Battle for Australia Day (1st Wednesday in September), but avoiding Fathers' Day weekend, but it has been determined to establish this service on the same weekend each year by making it **the last weekend in August**.

So for 2022 our Battle for Australia Weekend will comprise :

Saturday 27th August 2022 : Battle for Australia Formal Black-Tie Ball at Brown Hill Hall.

Sunday Morning 28th August 2022 ~ Battle for Australia Commemorative Service.

Sunday afternoon 28th August ~ Activities and display at Airport Hut 48.

Please put it in your diaries NOW

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**TRIP TO CAPE OTWAY** for Radar Branch Dedication Ceremony of the newly established RAAF Radar Interpretive Exhibition which is located within the historic Cape Otway Lightstation precinct. The Lightstation precinct houses a collection of historic buildings, from the 1850's Keepers Quarters and 1859 Telegraph Station to the WWII RAAF 13 Radar Station Doover building established in 1942. There will be refreshments provided on the day. Let us support the Radar Branch by joining them to celebrate the story of WWII RAAF Radar and to pay tribute to all those RAAF Personnel that served in Radar during WWII.

**But do we have enough interested members to warrant us hiring a bus?** or do interested members share private car transport? The date set down for this is Saturday 19th February. It takes time to organise a bus etc so...**are you interested?** please advise noel, 0439 929 322 as soon as possible if you are interested in attending. **Don't delay, let me know asap.** (NH, Pres)

**BUS TRIP TO B24 HANGAR AND WERRIBEE MANSION AND GARDENS.** Yes, we are holding payment from some twenty members toward this twice postponed bus trip and the Committee will look at organising for this trip to proceed sooner, rather than later. Be prepared for this trip to proceed in March or April providing no more restrictions get in the way.

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THE PHOTO CHALLENGE Members were recently given the opportunity to win a selection of chocolates by submitting in writing what was special about the photo shown below. Just as well we didn't buy the chocolates for the prize, because nobody really came up with anything close. Yes, several members noted the gentleman having his shoes shined, but not much else.



The location of this photograph is the Boulevard du Temple, Paris, better known at the time as "Crime Boulevard" because of the murders played every night in the dozens of theatres of the boulevard. Normally a place full of Parisians, **where are all the people?** The photograph was made in 1838 by Louis Daguerre, the brilliant guy that invented the daguerreotype process of photography. After collaborating with Joseph Nicéphore Niépce, a French engineer considered as the inventor of photography, Louis Daguerre continued his researches and tried to improve the process, especially the shortening of the exposure time from what was hours down to 15 minutes or less. The exposure time for this photograph was more than ten minutes resulting in anything moving not being recorded on the image. As luck would have it for Louis, the gentleman having his shoes shined and the shoe shiner spent sufficient time in much the same position to become the **first human beings to appear in a photograph**. For Daguerre to be able to produce images of this quality as he strove to further develop the new invention of photography must have been very exciting for him and he has gone down in history as **the first to ever produce a photograph which showed the human form**.

I LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ALL IN 2022 ~ TAKE CARE

(NH, Pres)