
RAAF Association (ACT Division)

Patron: Air Marshal David Evans AC DSO AFC (Retd).

President: Peter McDermott AM CSC peter.mcdermott@bigpond.com / www.raafaact.org.au



NEWSLETTER



March 2016

AIMS: To foster friendships based on sharing Air Force and aviation experiences; to support commemorative activities, heritage and records of history; and to provide for the welfare of members through advice, liaison and representation

Activities Ahead for 2016

Monday 21 March 2016 – Annual General Meeting, 1230, lunch 1300, Commonwealth Club Yarralumla. Speaker: Ken Crowe, of Northrop Grumman, on Global Hawk and other UAV developments.

Thursday 31 March 2016 – RAAF 95th Anniversary ceremony at the Memorial Grove, details below.

Sunday 3 April 2016 – Canberra Airport Open Day

Refer to article herein.

Wednesday 13 April 2016 – 22nd Field of Remembrance Ceremony.

Hosted by the War Widows Guild of Australia (ACT) at RSL LifeCare, Sir Leslie Morshead Manor, Lyneham at 13.30am.

Monday 25 April 2016 – Anzac Day.

Lunch 1300-1330, Southern Cross Club. Details TBA.

Monday 20 June 2016 – General Meeting and Lunch, 1200-1230, Commonwealth Club, Yarralumla. Details TBA.

Saturday 6 August 2016 – HMAS Canberra memorial ceremony.

Thursday 18 August 2016 – Vietnam Veteran's memorial day.

Monday 22 August 2016 – GM/lunch at the Commonwealth Club, details TBA

Thursday 15 September 2016 – Battle of Britain Last Post Ceremony

Australian War Memorial, details TBA

Annual General Meeting and Lunch:

Monday, 21 March, 2016, Commonwealth Club, Yarralumla 1200 – 1230.

The AGM will once again highlight the need for more volunteers to help run the Division. Some key officer holders – especially President Peter McDermott - have been serving for years. Although volunteering again, Peter and other office holders are finding the work of running the Division is falling more and more to a few.

Indeed, but for Peter and VP Bob Weight, the Division would lack a voice at National, RAAF and local-community level and the wonderful progress at the Memorial Grove would not all have happened. So please give thought to doing more to help run the Division, and in particular serving on the committee, preferably as an executive member.

The AGM will be followed by lunch and a speaker – Ken Crowe, of Northrop Grumman, who will tell us about Global Hawk (being bought by the RAAF for maritime surveillance in concert with specialist aircraft) and emerging developments with tactical UAVs in the battlespace.

This is a new world to most of us, but it is becoming routine stuff to many in today's RAAF. Global Hawk is much more than just a bigger version of those pesky drones often seen on TV. It is as big as many full-sized aircraft and carries advanced sensors and communications gear. This is your chance to hear about this extraordinary new capability and enjoy a convivial lunch at the same time.

If joining us for lunch remember guests are always welcome and minimum dress standard is smart casual.

As usual, lunch will cost \$30 and alcoholic drinks will be on sale at individual expense.

Lunch Payment. Payment is either to Doug Hurst, by:

* posting the attached proforma along with a cheque or money order to Doug at: *43 Percy Crescent, Chapman, or*

* calling him on 6288 6195 to arrange payment on the day, or

* by making a direct debit.

Details for Direct Debit are:

A/C Number 0342 0295 BSB 805 022

*Name: AFC & RAAF Association ACT Division.
Place " 2016AGM Lunch"with your name in the reference section.*

With direct debits, please send advisory emails to dhurst5@bigpond.com and treasurer, Nadine Weight at nadine.weight@bigpond.com

This will confirm your booking and payment. Doug will acknowledge postal bookings by phone (so be sure to put your phone number on the proforma) and direct debits by email.

Note: All bookings must be in by 1700hrs Thursday 17 March 2016.

RAAF 95th Anniversary.

The RAAF will celebrate its 95th anniversary at the Memorial Grove on Thursday 31 March 2016. Proceedings will begin at 1000, but attendees are requested to travel to the grove by RAAF-provided bus. Buses leave from:

- Fairbairn at 0900, stopping en-route at Brindabella Park at 0920
- Blamey Square at 0920
- Majura Park at 0920 (car park of Brand Depot in the western part of the airport)

Buses return to same locations when the ceremony concludes at 1130. Those wishing to attend need to email President Peteron peter.mcdermott@bigpond.com before the cut-off date on Friday 18 March, telling him which bus they wish to travel on.

Korean War Commemorative Mission – October 2016-03-04

DVA is sponsoring a commemorative mission of eight veterans of the Korean War to the Republic of Korea in October 2016, timed to coincide with United Nations Day on 24 October. Nominations are now open and will close on 13 May 2016 – so if you wish to be considered, get your application in before then.

Details of how to apply can be obtained by email to: korea2016@dva.gov.au; by phone to Mathew Hardy, Commemorations Branch on 02 6289 6509; or from the AWM website: www.dva.gov.au/commemorations-memorials-and-war-graves/commemorative-missions

Bob Weight also has paper copies of the application form and the details of the mission for those who do not have access to a computer or the internet. Please contact Bob if you wish to receive a copy (see contact details).

WAAAF 75th Anniversary, Battle of Britain and the AWM Last Post Ceremony

The Last Post Ceremony marking the end of each work day at the Australian War Memorial has become a popular fixture on the commemorative calendar. Beginning at about 1700 hours each day it features historically significant ADF individuals, anniversaries etc. and is distributed via TVs in RSL clubs Australia-wide to a very large audience.

25 February 2016 was the 75th Anniversary of the formation of the WAAAF during WWII and The Last Post ceremony that day was organised around that event. Serving RAAF members and veterans were invited. Two WAAAFs, Ruth Hills and Violet Gunning, killed in an aircraft crash during the war were featured, along with a general history of the WAAAF.

The RAAF sent a strong contingent, predominately but not only female, and two divisional veterans – Gwen Kirk and Jean McAlister attended despite temperatures in the mid-30s. Both ladies were impressed by the short but moving ceremony and those attending all seemed to endorse the Last Post concept.

Special thanks is owed to serving RAAF Warrant Officer Geoff Banning who advised us of the event and greatly assisted our two WAAAF veterans throughout their visit.

Memorial Grove Report

The Memorial Grove remains an important focus of activity highlighted by a couple of recent significant events.

Peter McDermott and Bob Weight met with the President (Air Commodore Ian Scott ret'd) and members of the Remembrance Driveway Committee to discuss the Hughie Edwards VC rest area and the linkages to the Memorial Grove. Senior members from TAMS also attended.

The Committee and TAMS representative all spoke highly of the Memorial Grove and looked forward to its continued development.

Action will be taken to replace the location signs at the front of the Hughie Edwards VC area which have faded and are now unreadable.

TAMS will also look to adding funds into its budget to install a new path from the Hughie Edwards area to the Memorial Grove to provide better linkage between the two areas.

Two new plaques, for 3 SQN and No 5 (Mangoes) apprentice course have been installed. The 3 SQN plaque was dedicated on 11 February with a large group of current and previous 3 SQN members, including the current and a number of previous commanding officers, in attendance.



The fly past of three F/A-18s from 3 SQN was a highlight and very well received by all but especially the few remaining WW2 3 SQN veterans.



Future activities planned for the Memorial Grove for 2016 include:

- RAAF 95th anniversary (see separate details)
- No 4/5 SQN Association plaque;
- No 15 Apprentice course;
- Indigenous RAAF service recognition;
- Private plaques, including past presidents who have died.

When it gets a bit cooler we will have a general clean up again but mostly to have a BBQ and a few drinks together in this very special place.

1, 2 & 3 Squadron's Centennial Year

2016 marks the 100th year of the formation of Nos 1, 2 & 3 Squadrons – then of course part of the AFC. The RAAF is planning on a combined function later in 2016 and we will keep all informed as details become available.

2016 Battle of Britain Ceremony

In response to an offer from the Director of the Australian War Memorial, Dr Brendon Nelson, following last year's ceremony, the Committee has decided that this year's Battle of Britain ceremony will be incorporated into the Australian War Memorial's Last Post Ceremony on Thursday 15 September 2016.

The Ceremony will follow the standard AWM Last Post Ceremony format but will align with the Battle of Britain "theme". Where possible, an aligned story will be selected by the AWM to represent the Battle of Britain veterans.

Integrating the ceremony into the Memorial's Last Post ceremony will give us a much wider public exposure whilst maintaining the traditional and solemn values of our annual wreath laying ceremony.

Full details of the ceremony will be provided as they firm up and we get closer to the date.

ANZAC Day March – 2016

Details for this year's ceremony just received and all is similar to previous years. RAAFA (ACT) is contingent #53 and we will assemble at around 10:15 am at same location – near Nurses' Memorial on ANZAC Parade. Full details will be provided in the next newsletter.

We have also received an invitation for people to sit in the main stand but we need to rsvp by 16th March. If anyone wishes to take up this offer and sit in the main stand please email/contact Peter McDermott before the 16th.

Doug's Talk at the February GM

As advised in the previous newsletter, Doug Hurst spoke at the last GM about his memories of Transport Support Flight in Butterworth, 1968-69 including their work in Malaysia, visits to neighbouring countries like Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, a python strangling barman, the impact of the Cold War on the region (especially the operation of six large USAF bases in Thailand), the drug scene in Laos, and much more.

The talk was based on a recent article in Wings and if anyone would like a copy of the article please contact Doug (see contact details) and he will send to you.

ACT Heritage Week

Unfortunately the planning for our involvement in the ACT Heritage week has had to be deferred until next year. Wayne Johnston has been working with the RAAF Cadets the the ACT in regard to a research project leading to a heritage walk around the old RAAF Fairbairn. More details will be provided on this as the year progresses and especially if anyone has information that might assist in this effort.

Canberra Airport Open Day

The Open Day at Canberra Airport is on again this year and will be held on Sunday 3 April 2016 from 10.00am to 2.00pm. Full details will be advised asap but will also be advertised by the Airport.

Canberra Airport Group is providing us with a marquee for the open day to promote the Association and just provide general information on the RAAF and the Association.

If you would like to help on the day please contact Bob Weight or just drop into the marquee.

Membership Renewals

You have all been sent the membership renewals for 2016. We ask those who have not renewed their membership to please do so as early as possible – if for no other reason to make the membership officer's job a bit easier.

If anyone has not seen the renewal form or has any questions please give Bob Weight a call or email (see contact list below).

CONTACT US
President – Peter McDermott 0411 055 458 peter.mcdermott@bigpond.com
Secretary – James Elsbury 0428 622105 secactraafa@grapevine.com.au
Vice President – Doug Hurst 6288 6195 Publicity & Newsletter dhurst5@bigpond.com
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Postal Address: PO Box 770 Dickson ACT 2602

RESERVATIONS PROFORMA

GM/Lunch, 21 March 2016

1200-1230, Commonwealth Club, Yarralumla.

Name:.....

Ph:..... (for postal bookings only)

Number attending

Cost: \$30 per member and guest

TOTAL AMT \$

Cheque or money order - (made out to **RAAF Association ACT Division**); or

*Direct Debit** - (Account No: **0342 0295** BSB: **805 022**)

Add '2016 AGM Lunch' and your name in the reference section.

Send email advice to **dhurst5@bigpond.com** and **nadine.weight@bigpond.com**

When paying by cheque or money order, post this proformato arrive by 1700 hrs Thursday 17 March 2016 to:

Doug Hurst, 43 Percy Crescent, Chapman ACT 2611

Note: There is no capacity for last minute arrivals and lunch can only be provided for those who have pre-booked