



# AIR MAIL

## ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION

*"Fostering the Spirit of Friendship and Perpetuating the Honour and Ideals of Her Majesty's Air Forces"*

February / March 2017  
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> WHAT'S  
INSIDE



### A sense of patriotism

Florence Davies recounts some of her experiences as a WAAAF. She enlisted in 1942 and has been an active member of the WAAAF Branch since her discharge in 1945.

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### Postmaster and censor

Ray Passmore tells of his time censoring mail during his service in New Guinea. Ray is a past President of RAAFA (WA) and was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for his service to the community generally.

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## Amity gets Wifi



*June, Joyce, Denise and Bert could easily be mistaken for a bunch of 16 year olds!*

THANKS to the RAAFA IT team, Amity Village Albany is now right up with the 21st century - they now have WiFi in the Clubhouse.

Residents are enjoying bringing out their smartphones, iphones, ipads, tablets and laptops to embrace the availability of this new technology. For the young it may be anti-social, but for the residents it is providing a social and friendly opportunity

to share tips on how to use these new devices.

As well as WiFi, the Amity Village Library now boasts a u-beaut smart touch screen computer. No excuse to not know what to cook for dinner - nip down to the Clubhouse and google a scrumptious recipe!

A modern encyclopedia at everyone's fingertips!



*Chef, Jean-Paul Enjolras with the award*

## Scores on the Doors

THE AFA Club at Bull Creek was recently awarded a Five Star Certificate for exceeding Food Safety requirements.

The City of Melville operates and awards businesses that meet or exceed food safety requirements with a star rating system out of five.

Score on the Door is free and those who agree to participate receive a certificate they can display informing customers how good

their food hygiene is.

Businesses that meet the requirements of food safety legislation receive a certificate with three stars and are categorised as good.

Businesses that exceed legal requirements are awarded four or five star certificates and are categorised as very good or excellent.

Pretty good!

## Your Aviation Heritage Museum

*By Jo Naylor*

EVERY alternate month, in place of the usual meeting, the Museum Branch holds a film night which is open to all RAAFA members. At a recent film night I was made to realise just how important the artefacts we hold in our own museum are in relation to Western Australia's history.

One of two films shown was "Flight of Diamonds". We have the DC-3 used in the original TV documentary right here in our museum. Our aircraft was loaned to the film company who transformed it into the livery of a Dutch aeroplane for the duration of filming, using water-based paint that could be washed off later (the story of how the Aviation Museum acquired the DC-3 would, in itself, make a film worth viewing!)

Of equal importance, our museum is custodian of a seat, complete with bullet hole, from the actual DC-3 involved in

transporting a parcel of diamonds, the subject of the film. On a day in 1942, just before taking off from Broome, Captain Ivan Smirnoff was handed a parcel which he was told must be delivered to the Commonwealth Bank in Melbourne. He was not made aware of the contents of the package, which contained a fortune in diamonds.

The DC-3 never made it to its destination. We were in the middle of WWII and the aircraft was shot down by attacking Japanese planes. The crew and passengers managed to escape from the wreckage, though not all of them survived the perilous time in arid country before they were rescued. Since no-one knew the contents of the parcel, the diamonds remained in the wrecked aircraft.

Over the years some, but certainly not all, were apparently found and many intriguing stories surround them. Not least the ones

concerning a beachcomber who came to be known as Diamond Jack. The facts surrounding the missing diamonds remain an ongoing mystery. Author Merv Prime gives an account in his publication "WA's Pearl Harbour", recently reprinted and retitled "Broome's One Day War".

The second film "The Century of Flight: Trail Blazers-Epic Flights 1919-1939" told of the exploits of those daring men and women who first dreamed of flying to other parts of this state, to distant parts of this vast country and even to other parts of the world. Many lost their lives in the attempt. We owe much to those who succeeded. You can see and learn so much about those pioneers in the aircraft and artefacts on display in your own museum.

The Aviation Heritage Museum is owned by the RAAF Association of WA and therefore by you, its members. No other retirement village association or company can lay claim



to such a priceless asset. Acknowledged as the best aviation museum in the southern hemisphere, the countless tourists from all over Australia and the world who place visiting our museum at the top of their "to do" list are proof of its value.

Entrance to the museum is free to RAAFA Members so why not bring your visitors and friends along?

# From the cockpit



By **Graeme Bland**

WELCOME to 2017. I hope this year brings you good health, fortune and comfort of living.

Prior to Christmas, Judy and I had the privilege of attending Christmas events at Merriwa Estate, Meadow Springs Estate, AFME and Erskine Grove. It was great to catch up with many familiar faces and see each event well attended and enjoyed. We particularly enjoyed the different entertainment at each venue.

## Diminishing Branches

In the last issue of Air Mail I mentioned concerns about the closure of many long standing Branches over the past few years. Since then I have become aware of the likelihood of more Branch closures.

I have received only one response to my question in the last edition – “Do we try to resurrect the likes of the Permanent Air Force Branch or go with regional social branches?”

To progress this topic further the State Executive needs more membership involvement and input as only one opinion out of over 4,500 members can't cover many aspects. I ask more members to put pen to paper, or fingers to the keyboard. Complacency is not a solution.

## New State War Memorial Warden

WING Commander Christine Pittman was recently appointed as the new Warden of the State War Memorial.

Wing Commander Pittman is a member of the RAAF Specialist Reserve Legal (WA). She has been a Service member since 1979, as both a permanent and reserve officer. She took over the twelve month appointment as Warden at a handover ceremony at Kings Park on 11 November 2016. By tradition the rotation of the Wardens has been: Navy, Army, Air Force with a civilian appointed in the intervening years.

The role of the Warden relates to all matters around the customs, traditions and protocols at the Cenotaph, (comprising the Obelisk

## Darwin Day

Don't forget our annual 75th Anniversary of the Bombing of Darwin ceremony to be held on Sunday, 19 February at AFME, Memorial Wall from 9.00am followed by morning tea. All are welcome.

This year is also the 75th Anniversary of the bombing of Broome and a ceremony will be held on Friday, 3 March in Broome.

## Annual Dinner

Our Annual Dinner celebrating the 88th Anniversary of the RAAFA (WA Division) will be held in the AFA Club on Saturday, 8 April. Free bussing will be available from Estates at Merriwa, Cambrai Village, Meadow Springs and Erskine Grove. Book with the relevant Estate Office.

## ANZAC Day

The ANZAC Day march in Perth will take the same route as last year, hopefully drier! I encourage all Ex-service members, or a family representative, to join the RAAF Association Flight at the head of the Ex-RAAF Contingent.

## RAAF Pilot Course Centurions

RAAF Pearce are trying to locate Graduate Pilots from 200 Courses ago to invite them to relevant Pilot Graduations during 2017/18. Each Graduation event is held over two days starting with a Pre-Graduation dining-in night on Thursday. The Parade, Thanksgiving Service and Graduation Ball are on Friday.

Former Graduates of the following are being sought:

- Course 46 for Course 246 Graduation 30/31 March 2017
- Course 47 for Course 247 Graduation 8/9 June 2017
- Course 48 for Course 248 Graduation 31 August/1 September 2017
- Course 49 for Course 249 Graduation 23/24 November 2017

Expressions of interest are also sought from Ex Graduates of Courses 50, 51, 52 and 53 for Graduation events in 2018.

If you were one of, or know of, the double Centurions being sought please contact F. Sgt Randall Kronenburg on [randall.kronenburg@defence.gov.au](mailto:randall.kronenburg@defence.gov.au) for further details and bookings. What have you got to lose but to be feted as a Double Centurion.

## Korean War

The WA Minister for Veterans, the Honourable Joe Francis MLA, has advised that his office has produced a biography on each of the 34 Western Australians who died in the Korean War. These biographies were researched as part of the WA Government's tribute to the 65th Anniversary of the battles of Kapyong and Maryang San. The WA Minister for Veterans has written to all WA High Schools in the hope that students will use these biographies to undertake further research of these brave West Australians, in particular those Killed in Action (KIAs) who may have attended their particular school.

These biographies can be accessed from the Veterans portfolio link: [www.premier.wa.gov.au/Ministers/Joe-Francis/Documents/VAC/2016III-Western-Australai-Fatalities-From-Korean-War.pdf](http://www.premier.wa.gov.au/Ministers/Joe-Francis/Documents/VAC/2016III-Western-Australai-Fatalities-From-Korean-War.pdf)

## Advocacy

The Bull Creek Veteran Support Centre (BCVSC) has now been operating for 8 years with a mix of Advocates who are former ADF members. This Centre has processed over 300 current and former ADF members' claims, helping them to gain the entitlements they are due for their Defence service.

RAAFA (WA Division) has sponsored this project at nil cost to clients, but age is catching up with some of our practitioners. With the new Advocate Training and Development Program (ATDP) coming

into the training regime, RAAFA will be responsible for obtaining trainee Advocates and providing Mentors for them through the various stages of Advocacy. A lot of training is available electronically so you can do courses at your convenience and pace. An entry level “Eligibility” course will be held in Perth on 15/16 February. For available courses and enrolment go to [www.tip.org.au](http://www.tip.org.au).

## DVA Policy updates

I have been advised of the following DVA policy updates by the Deputy Commissioner for Western Australia.

- Physical or sexual abuse.
 

In the absence of contradictory evidence the Commissions have agreed to the use of statutory declarations to establish the fact of abuse for claims where the abuse event occurred on or before 11 April 2011 and the survivor was aged under 18 years old at the time of the abuse.

For events to a survivor aged under 18 years old occurring after 11 April 2011 the claim must be supported by corroborative evidence. When the abuse event occurred to a survivor aged over 18 years old the claim must be supported by factual evidence.
- Non-Liability Health Care (NLHC).
 

Persons who are former members of the permanent forces of the ADF are now eligible for free treatment through the NLHC for certain conditions that can be linked to service, without having to lodge a compensation claim nor an application form. Applicants can request for NLHC health care per [NLHC@dva.gov.au](mailto:NLHC@dva.gov.au) or phone 133 254 or 1800 555 254. For mental health conditions a diagnosis is not required before NLHC approval but a diagnosis must be provided by a medical practitioner or mental health specialist within six months of approval.

Remember to “stay on your feet”.

the ceremonies.

The Warden is assisted by the Returned and Services League, a Deputy Warden and a number of Sub Wardens. They are present at all wreath laying ceremonies conducted at the Memorial by approved organisations, including RAAFA, wishing to honour those who have paid the supreme sacrifice, and those who have served the Nation or our country's allies.



Wing Commander Pittman

## Royal Australian Air Force Association

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**See page 11 for submission deadlines**

# CEO's perspective



CEO, John Murray

By John Murray

THE first days of the New Year generally come with lovely weather, clear skies and a lot of people undertaking physical activities

such as running or swimming at the beach. Many of them, like myself, think "it's a New Year, it's time to review my approach to my health and wellbeing", consequently establishing a plan to achieve these things over the next 12 months.

From the beginning of the year organisations such as RAAFA review the way they operate, what services they provide and what they are going to focus on to achieve their goals in the coming year.

So the first four weeks of this year has been spent collecting information about the current operations of RAAFA, looking at the external environment for what the community is seeking from us and looking at how we might be able to achieve some of the key goals that will be set.

The strategic planning process is scheduled to be held on the 30 January 2017 with all members of the Division Council and Senior Executive Team. We will have reviewed and defined the strategic plan for the coming year along with medium to longer term objectives.

The key areas of importance that we have already identified to be reviewed are:

1. how we respond to our younger veterans;
2. what do we need to proceed and further develop to be able to provide care and homes for our members; and
3. how do we ensure a "one RAAFA" approach to provide support to our members so as to maintain as much

independence as possible as they age?

The Division Council and the Senior Executive Team are excited about the potential direction that RAAFA can pursue. However, before we undertake the journey we need to define our objectives and how we mean to achieve them. Once this has been clarified, I will be able to inform you about our priorities and report on our progress towards achieving them, on an ongoing basis.

I wish you all a happy and safe New Year and I hope that you in turn have a positive outlook and plan for the coming year, along with the health and the opportunity to achieve the things you wish to do.

## Visiting RAAFA Head Office

RAAFA Head Office is conveniently located at 2 Sleaf Road in Applecross, which is close to the Canning Bridge Train Station, and an easy 10 minute walk or bus ride along Canning Highway.

Your first hour's parking is free along Sleaf Road, but don't forget to still collect your ticket from the parking machines.

For more details contact Karen at reception on 9288 8400.



Karen shows off the new branding at Head Office

## Not forgotten

THE AAFC Branch was delighted to recommend the posthumous recognition of John Clifford for his long and devoted service by the award of a Certificate of Service. State President, Graeme Bland made the presentation to John's widow, Julie at the AAFC Christmas lunch.

John Clifford joined the Australian Air Force Cadets Branch of the RAAF Association in 2004 and was elected to the Branch Committee at the inaugural AGM of the Branch that year. He served on the Committee continuously from then until 2015 when he died in office having been Branch President for the previous eight years.

Throughout his time as a member he vigorously pursued the Branch's continued development. As a much respected and recently retired 7 Wing Australian Air Force Cadets Squadron Commander, he successfully promoted close relations with the Wing and regularly attended passing out parades and other 7 Wing activities.

Under his leadership the Branch commenced awarding the FLT LT (AAFC) Peter Hummerston Shield to the Dux of the Junior NCO Course each year. He worked closely with successive Officers Commanding 7 Wing and with his encouragement a number of serving instructors have become members of



Julie Clifford and Graeme Bland

the Branch and the Committee. He also helped initiate the annual rifle shooting competition between Branch members and the instructors and Cadets of 7 Wing.

He represented the Branch at RAAFA memorial ceremonies and led the Branch contingent at the ANZAC Day Parade for a number of years. He continued his service with dedication and enthusiasm despite failing health, as he fought a long and determined battle with his illness.

John Clifford devoted a major part of his life to RAAF as a member of the RAAF Reserve, Air Training Corps and the Australian Air Force Cadets as well as the Australian Air Force Cadets Branch of the RAAF Association.

## 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BOMBING OF DARWIN

SUNDAY, 19 FEBRUARY 2017

You are invited to join us for the annual ceremony marking the 75th Anniversary of the Bombing of Darwin (19/02/1942).

The ceremony will be held at the  
MEMORIAL WALL, AIR FORCE MEMORIAL ESTATE, BULL CREEK  
SUNDAY, 19 FEBRUARY 2017  
COMMENCING AT 9.00AM.

The ceremony will be followed by morning tea in the Langley Hall with a display of historic photographs.

There will be free entry to the Aviation Heritage Museum for attendees following the ceremony.

MEDALS MAY BE WORN.

Please advise your attendance by Friday, 10 February on 9288 8400 or enquiries@raafawa.org.au.



## New home for RAAFA Connect

RAAFA Connect (formerly AFA Care) has moved to its new home at AFME, Bull Creek. It is now located in the Administration Building at the entrance to AFME, right across from the Museum.

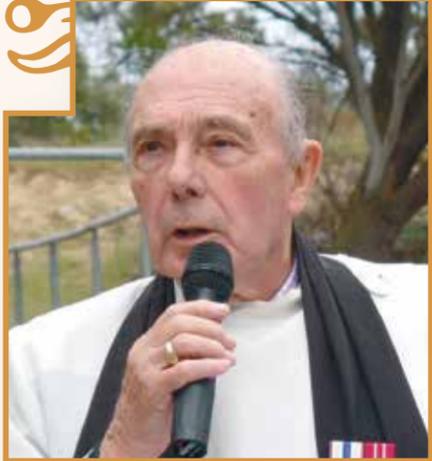
Connect is the in-home support division of RAAFA, one of WA's leading providers of tailored, customer-focused supported living services. Its aim is to provide you with

the support you need in the comfort and familiarity of your own home, optimising your independence and safety.

For more information, contact the team on (08) 9311 4498 or connect@raafawa.org.au.

Why not come in and visit soon?

## The Padre's Piece



By Padre David

JUST as I was writing here on 2 January there was a tremendous racket going on overhead above our Estate. We had a couple of helicopter water bombers taking up water from the lake at the Meadow Springs Golf Course and tackling a nearby bush fire in the Mandurah Terrace/Tindal Street area. Only just into 2017 and already there have been fires in Victoria and a lot of reflection in the "West Australian" about the Yarloop fires last year and also about the Department of Parks and Wildlife's prescribed controlled burning programme and its effects and appropriateness.

Some of the worst bush fires in Australia of recent years were the Ash Wednesday fires of 1980 in South Australia and 1983 in both

Victoria and South Australia where there were over 2000 square kilometres burnt and there were 75 fatalities.

In March 2015 Eileen and I attended the Rotary District 9450 Annual Conference in Albany and drove there via Pemberton, Northcliffe and Walpole through the National Park areas, which fires had devastated two-three months previously. Everything was black except for the occasional gum trees that were just beginning to sprout new green sprigs and the grass trees had flowers growing from their blackened hearts.

Life can hold for us many such dark burnt areas where we find it hard to believe there can ever be new life, new joys, or new relationships and friendships after a traumatic loss of someone we loved dearly. But it can and our burnt Australian bush is a wonderful metaphor.

A sense of loss at a death is very frequently felt in our RAAFA Care Centres where residents have found not only care but also new interests and new friends and where staff become attached to the residents in their care. At least twelve years ago Debra, the occupational therapist then employed at McNamara Lodge asked me if I would conduct a Memorial Service in memory of those residents who had recently died. At first the staff helped residents to attend our St Michael's Chapel but by 2006 it was felt

best if the Memorial Service could be held in the Lodge as it had become a regular feature of the McNamara programme.

This is a verse I sometimes use in that service from Helen Steiner Rice:-  
*After the clouds, the sunshine,  
 After the winter, the spring,  
 After the shower, the rainbow,  
 For life is a changeable thing.  
 After the night, the morning,  
 Bidding all darkness cease,  
 After life's cares and sorrows,  
 The comfort and sweetness of peace"*

The Church's season of Lent will commence with Ash Wednesday, which this year is 1 March and many churches will hold a special service that day using ashes as a symbol. The name Ash Wednesday, derives from the practice of blessing ashes made from palm branches blessed on the previous year's Palm Sunday and placing them on the forehead of participants with words that remind that Lent is a time for a turnabout of our lives and a renewal of our faith.

A verse to think about as we come to Lent and Ash Wednesday: Paul urges his readers in Romans: "Adapt yourselves no longer to the pattern of this present world but let your minds be remade and your whole nature thus transformed. Then you will be able to discern the will of God and to know what is good, acceptable and perfect" (Romans 12v 2) The New English Bible.

Shalom



## Aviation Heritage Museum

### New entry prices

Adults	\$15
Children (4 to 16)	\$7.50
Children (under 4)	Free
Family (2 adults & up to 4 children)	\$35
Students & Concession Card Holders	\$10
RAAFA (WA Division) Members	Free
Group Bookings (6 or more)	
Adults \$8, Pensioners & Children \$5	

Bookings must be made at least one week in advance.

### Opening Hours

10.00am to 4.00pm daily  
 Closed Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day and Good Friday  
 Bookings and enquiries on (08) 9311 4470

## First Christmas marks successful beginnings

STAFF and residents celebrated their first Christmas at the new Alice Ross-King Care Centre in December 2016, marking a successful beginning to the Centre.

Since opening in April 2016, staff have worked hard to ensure a smooth transition for residents moving into their new home, which is now almost at full capacity with 100 residents.

Alice Ross-King Care Centre Manager Helen Falkiner said the success of the care centre's inaugural months has been a credit to all staff involved.

"A huge thank you goes to all our staff at the care centre for their hard work accomplishing what we have achieved this year," Helen said.

"Christmas 2016 was an important milestone for us, because we can look back on the first six months of life at the Centre and be so proud of what has been a momentous year.

"Our residents are happy, comfortable and



feel very secure in their new home, which is something we can all be very proud of, by creating such a welcoming and inviting home atmosphere.

"Families are also an important part of our community at the Alice Ross-King Care Centre, so we have been pleased to receive positive feedback from many families over the past few months, recognising how our staff always go the extra mile to ensure little touches which reflect how much they care about the people they look after."

Resident directed care remains a key focus of the care centre, with Helen and her team looking to continue implementing this model in 2017.

## New Year's Eve 2016

By Joyce Johnson

OVER 100 residents from Merriwa Estate and Cambrai Village joined together to usher in the New Year at the Main Hall in Merriwa.

Armed with all manner of snacks and the convenience of the open bar, we were set for a great night. Serenaded by the dulcet sounds of "Easystream" the night passed pleasantly with conversation, dancing and frivolity.

For those energetic enough there was dancing dancing, and also spot prizes and quizzes to keep our grey matter active until the magic hour of midnight. Blowers, poppers and bubbles were distributed to help with the celebrations, keeping everyone amused.

It was a wonderful opportunity to mix, talk and reflect, sharing company with one another on a night, when we may otherwise have been alone in our units.





## 100 candles for Nina

SPECIAL celebrations were the order of the day at McNamara Lodge when resident Nina Nye celebrated her 100th birthday on Friday, 9 December 2016.

Residents joined Nina along with three of her four children, 11 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren and two great-great grandchildren to mark the milestone birthday celebration at the Lodge, with everyone enjoying cake and entertainment by a local singer.

City of Mandurah Mayor Marina Vergone also attended the centenary party to present Nina with a special framed certificate on behalf of the City of Mandurah.

Nina was born in 1916 in Alexandria Egypt and moved to Malta, then migrating to Australia in 1948 in search of a better life and where she met her husband Joseph Hiram Nye.

Nina's daughter Liz says her mum had been a very hard worker for many years as a domestic cleaner for Perth's rich and famous in the Nedlands and Dalkeith area – which

could be the secret to her longevity.

"Mum used to walk everywhere and has worked very hard all her life, so that could be her health secret. She has never smoked or drank alcohol either," Liz said.

"She has always taken her small cups of tea with lots of sugar eg: three soup spoonfuls of sugar in a small cup! She also loved Chicory coffee in which she had the same amount of sugar (who said sugar can make you fat or give you diabetes?) it's all about a lot of walking."

Amazingly Nina also has a knack for languages, being fluent in French, Maltese, Italian, Egyptian, Greek and English.

In her spare time throughout her life Nina loved to have a flutter on the races, singing and enjoyed sewing.

Liz says her mum moved into McNamara Lodge in 2008 at the age of 92, and "has enjoyed living at RAAFA very much and the staff have been absolutely wonderful to our mother, thank you".

## Time to retire

By Joan Dodd

THE members of the All Saints Chapel at Erskine Grove gathered recently to farewell Major Ted Ferguson and his wife Kath.

Ten years ago, they agreed to take the Salvation Army Service when there was a 5th Thursday in the month for one year. Now, 10 years later, they have decided it is time to retire - again.

After the service, more than 40 residents shared a meal and it was a very happy evening for everyone.

Majors Ted and Kath were presented with a beautiful white orchid as a thank you gift for everything they have done over the past 10 years.



## RAAFA Trophy awarded

ON FRIDAY, 9 December 2016, State President Graeme Bland attended No 245 RAAF Advanced Pilots' Course Graduation Ceremony at RAAF Base Pearce.

After enjoying music from No 7 Wing, AAFC Drum Band and watching a precision flying display, a "Diamond Nine" formation flown by the No 2 Flying Training School Instructors, Graeme presented an award to one of the graduating pilots.

The RAAFA trophy was presented to Pilot Officer Benjamin Tuynham as the

graduate who showed the most improvement throughout the course.

Pilot Officer Tuynham comes from Sydney where he attended Arndell Anglican College. Ben joined the RAAF in 2012 and graduated from the Australian Defence Force Academy with a Bachelor of Arts degree in International and Political Studies. He has been posted to 2 Squadron at RAAF Base Williamstown, where he will fly the Boeing 737 E-7A airborne early warning and control aircraft, known as the E-7A Wedgetail.



## Wheelchairs for Kids

ON 14 November 2016, members of the RAAFA Knitting and Crochet Group from AFME, visited the headquarters and workshops of "Wheelchairs for Kids", a project of the Rotary Club of Scarborough, assisted by the Christian Brothers.

This amazing project, which began with an idea in 1996 by a Queensland Rotary member and which was taken up in 1998 by the Rotary Club of Scarborough with the

project "Wheelchairs for Kids", constructs wheelchairs for impoverished, disabled children in under resourced countries. The wheelchairs are specifically designed and constructed to tolerate the rough terrain found in many countries and are fully adjustable for varying ages, sizes and disabilities.

The workshop comprises of two large workshops where various components

are prepared, drilled, joined, shaped and assembled, as well as an assembly room where headrests and side panels are covered, brakes assembled, quality testing undertaken, and finally major sections disassembled for packing and distribution.

Every wheelchair is sent with a soft toy, a knee rug for use with the wheelchair, a pen, and often with a further blanket for other use. This is one of the main interests of the RAAFA Knitting and Crochet group, as knee rugs constructed by the group are destined for the wheelchair project.

Since the project's inception, the group has constructed and delivered 35,839 wheelchairs to some 79 countries around the world. The group complete around 80 chairs a week, the current chair being the 9th model, with each model improving on the preceding one.

Wheelchairs for Kids, while a project of the Scarborough Rotary Club, is supported by many Rotary Clubs throughout Australia and internationally, as well as multiple businesses around the country.

Support may be financial or in-kind, such as transportation of components, bringing blankets and soft toys from country areas and sometimes overseas shipping. There

are also many, many groups of dedicated knitters, crocheters, quilters and sewers all over the country that contribute to this very worthwhile project.

All contributors, including administrators, workshop and other personnel are voluntary and every cent raised is used directly for wheelchairs. It is also interesting to note that there is a waiting list to volunteer for this worthy cause.

The RAAFA Knitting and Crochet Group meet in the Village Hall on Thursday afternoons from 1 to 3pm and new members are always welcome. It is not necessary to be able to knit or crochet as there are plenty of willing teachers.

As well as knee rugs for "Wheelchairs for Kids", rugs are also donated to KEMH Care Packages, and to the Fiona Stanley and Fremantle Hospital oncology units

Wheelchairs for Kids can be contacted via PO Box 1175, Wangara DC, WA, 6947 or on 0412 111 419, or email [wchairs@bigpond.net.au](mailto:wchairs@bigpond.net.au). They also have a website [www.wheelchairsforkids.org](http://www.wheelchairsforkids.org).

# Easy living the order of the day at Erksine

LIFE couldn't be any easier at RAAFA's Erskine Grove according to long term resident Lillian Bridewell.

Lillian and her husband Geoff have lived on the Estate since 2005 when Stage 5 was completed and couldn't be happier that they made the move from their family home.

"We used to live in the suburbs and we would be the only ones in the street who were at home during the day – all our neighbours would be working. We were bored – and then we shifted here and haven't stopped since," Lillian said.

"The major thing I love about being on the Estate is the companionship. We have good neighbours and great facilities."

Like many other Erskine residents, Lillian makes the most of the range of social and hobby activities available at the village. She

runs the village Photography Club, where she helps teach other residents how to use their digital cameras and how to do things like download images onto their devices. She is also part of the Computer Club which meets twice a month, and is involved with the recently-formed Family History Club. She is also editor of the Erskine Grove Gazette which comes out monthly.

"You can be involved as little or as much as you want here, which is the beauty of it. The other thing I like is that everyone is always willing to help if you need it," she said.

"The best part is being with people who are in the same age group. Our principles are the same and we grew up at the same time. We are all coming into the technological age at the same time, and we have 90 year olds living here who have just bought a computer and are keen to give it a try."

Lillian's neighbour Bob Schwartz agrees the community atmosphere is what sets Erskine apart.

"Before moving into the village I lived in

another place for 12 years and knew three people. When I arrived here I'd been here about 12 minutes and already knew six people. That's what makes the difference," he said.



Lillian Bridewell and Bob Schwartz



## Mavericks going from strength to strength

MAVERICK by name, Maverick by nature – or so say the residents who have become part of the inclusive social group at Erskine Grove.

Since Welfare Officer Angeline Carleton set up the innovative social group last year, about a dozen residents from both Meadow Springs Estate and Erskine Grove come together for a relaxed cuppa, chat and a laugh every week.

Angeline explains that The Mavericks is a way to help bring together residents who are living with memory loss or dementia, in a relaxed social environment.

"The Mavericks is just one of the many social groups we have on offer at Erskine Grove, and anyone is welcome to come along to our catch-ups – we have a lot of fun," she said.

The main aim of the Mavericks really is about providing a social outlet to those residents who may be socially isolated, it also gives carers a couple of hours respite.

The day always starts with a cuppa and a chat, we celebrate special occasions such as birthdays with a cake and on big milestone birthdays we can arrange to go somewhere

nice for lunch. Last year we celebrated a 70th birthday with fish and chips down at the Mandurah Marina.

The group also enjoy playing games outdoors – the favourite is bocce. Recently a Meadow Springs resident donated a Scandinavian game called Klopp, so we gave that a go and boy did we have some laughs.

"Soon we are about to become trial worm farmers. A resident on the estate has donated a worm farm to The Mavericks and we are hoping to start producing fertiliser for the gardens around the club house. We are working with the estate gardener to set it all up now, which should be very exciting."

The group used to have regular visits from Rafael the therapy rabbit, who is now on holidays and taking a break from his therapy duties.

Paul Wilkinson who attends the group said it was a pleasure to meet new friends across both villages.

"It's a brilliant group and we have some great conversations together," he said.

We are very lucky to have such great facilities at Erskine Grove and we make good use of them.

## Gazebos a gathering point

WHETHER it's for a morning cuppa, Christmas barbecues or sunset nibblys, two new gazebos at Erskine Grove are proving to be popular gathering points for residents.

The new gazebos join two existing gazebos spread across the Estate, which allows residents at all four corners of the village to have access to a nearby neighbourhood gazebo.

Resident Margaret Reynolds said she and her neighbours had embraced the gazebos as a place to come together as a mini-community within the village.

"If one person comes and sits out here with a cuppa then it won't be long until someone comes to join," she said.

"We decided to call our gazebo The Friendship Corner, and we've made a little sign for it. It really is a lovely corner for us to come and have a chat."

Glenis Winton, who has lived at Erskine for more than 11 years, said the gazebo was a

handy rest-stop for residents on their way to the shops.

"We've been using the gazebo since the minute it went up. People use it a lot to sit down and have a rest when they go to the shops too. We have a barbecue here and it will look even more beautiful when the garden creeps up around it some more," she said.

At the other end of the Estate, residents are considering naming their gazebo Dew Drop In.

Resident Valma McIvor said she would rather be at Erskine than anywhere else.

"Now that we have the gazebo it's a beautiful place to meet your neighbours, bring a plate of food and a cuppa and stop for chat," she said.

Rae Lothiam joked that the neighbours will buy a musical triangle to ring and muster the troops for morning tea at the gazebo each day.



## Sisters rewriting the record books at Erskine



LtoR, Denise, Joy and Dawn

WHILE RAAFA has been home to many families over the years, for the first time Erskine Grove is now home to not two but three sisters who have come to enjoy their retirement together.

Denise Nicolay was the first to move to Erskine Grove in 2004, and was then followed by her sisters Joy Helliwell and Dawn Spark.

Originally from Melbourne, Denise moved to Perth with her husband Peter shortly after they were married in 1970, leaving her family behind.

Denise remembers it being wrenching to leave her Mum, sisters and brother as well as her extended family.

“People didn’t fly like they do now and Perth seemed so far away. However being a strong

family we always kept in touch and all made numerous flights and car trips back and forth across Australia,” she said.

“Dawn moved to Perth with her husband Barry and their three boys in 1974 and spent 15 years in Perth before they moved to Adelaide for work. Joy continued to raise her three children in Melbourne – so we were spread right across the country.”

Denise says their childhood set them up for a close lifelong bond.

“Sharing a small bedroom, one chest of drawers and two small wardrobes really taught you to get along,” she said.

“There was no car so we walked, cycled or caught a bus or train everywhere. Being the youngest I always had to accompany Dawn and Joy on their adventures... but that’s another story.”

Denise and Peter had always planned to move into a retirement village when the time was right, and after Peter’s parents moved to Erskine Grove in 2002 it wasn’t long before the couple decided they wanted to be part of the RAAFA lifestyle.

“My sisters and brother came to visit us at Erskine many times and saw how enticing the lifestyle is. When Joy retired in 2013 and with her children all living overseas, she decided to sell up her large property in

Melbourne and join us at Erskine Grove,” Denise said.

“But Dawn wasn’t having any of that - none of us like to “miss out”! Her boys were all grown up and spread across the country, so soon after Dawn and Barry sold up and joined us all in WA at Erskine Grove. It’s been a hoot ever since.

“Now for the first time since I left Melbourne in 1970 we are in the same place and it’s like having your best friends next door.”

The sisters are an active part of the Erskine community, taking part in a range of activities and social functions put on by the Branch Committee.

Denise has recently been elected to Division Council, a role which will keep her busy for the next few years.

“Although we are all busy with our own lives it’s still nice to know my sisters are close by and available if we need. We spend many dinners laughing about our childhood antics and there always seems to be a song or two in there as well. We love being at Erskine Grove and being part of a great community that reminds us very much of the neighbourhood in which we grew up. Although we all miss our big brother and his wonderful wife,” Denise said.

## Beautiful community on offer at Erskine

RAAFA’s Erskine Grove estate in Mandurah is an ideal retirement option for over 55s looking to get away from the hustle and bustle of the city.

Close to the Peel Inlet and not far from the convenience of a range of shopping centres and amenities in Halls Head and the greater Mandurah region, the estate is home for over 300 residents, who form an active community.

Erskine Grove Estate Manager Helen MacBeth said the estate is home to an active community of residents who are busy making the most of their retirement.

“We are lucky to have such a fabulous vibrant community of residents at Erskine Grove who are passionate about living life to the fullest and who are proud to be part of the village – as a result we have a range of very popular social and hobby groups, and there are always different activities and events taking place,” she said.

The estate offers a range of spacious two and three bedroom units in seven different designs, allowing residents to individualise their own homes. In addition, the village offers a range of on-site facilities, including a club house, chapel, recreation areas, men’s shed and hobby workshops, as well as two large parking areas for caravans and boats, catering for the ‘grey nomad’ population of the village.



Helen MacBeth

“My belief is that whether you have that diagnosis or not, you are a person first and foremost, not a label, so how do we support people to stay in their own homes living a good quality of life independently.

“My overall aim is to help create a dementia-friendly community at Erskine where we all reduce the stigma around dementia and I support our residents to link into support and education if they want to access that.”

Welfare Officers Carena Slattery (AFME), and Vanessa Priestly (Cambrai Village) are also Dementia Champions, while Tracey Lockett (Meadow Springs) is currently completing her Certificate IV in Dementia Practice to become a Dementia Champion.

Merriwa Welfare Officer Suzanne Free also has a wealth of experience having worked with Alzheimer’s Australia WA for seven years in various dementia specific roles.

## Angeline’s dementia work celebrated



Angeline receives her award from Alzheimer’s WA CEO Rhonda Parker

RAAFA Welfare Officer Angeline Carleton’s exceptional work promoting positive community spaces for people living with dementia has been recognised by Alzheimer’s WA, which named Angeline the Dementia Champion of the Year at a recent ceremony.

Angeline, who is the Welfare Officer at Erskine Grove, has been an Alzheimer’s WA Dementia Champion for nearly 3 years, having undertaken specialist training and implemented a range of initiatives to help support people living with dementia at RAAFA.

Angeline said she was humbled by the award because she sees it as “just doing her job”.

Angeline’s journey working in aged care began several years ago when she had a chance encounter with a lady in her neighbourhood who was living with memory loss. It was this

experience that changed her perspective on how she could best help support people to continue living independently in their own homes.

“I grew up with no grandparents around me, so I was never exposed to older people when I was young... I didn’t have an understanding of caring for older people so I always just assumed that you would get to a certain point in life and then be placed in a nursing home,” she said.

“About eight years ago I was out the front of my house and saw an elderly lady walking down the street and she caught my eye. As she got closer I realised she was lost and needed some support to get home. I ended up spending about two hours with her, keeping her calm and worked with her to get her back home.

“We ended up getting her home and I thought the family should know so they could look at putting her into care so I found out the contact details of her daughter and called her.

“That phone call changed my whole way of thinking. The lady’s daughter told me her mum goes for walks every day and most of the time found her way home, but if she did get lost there were always kind people who helped point her back home.

“She told me she would love to keep her mum at home for as long as possible rather than going into aged care prematurely, but obviously they knew that day would come eventually.

“For me that was life changing, because I thought ‘people can actually stay at home so how can I contribute to support people to stay in their own home as long as possible?’”

Since then, Angeline has been on a personal journey to support people living with dementia and memory loss as best as possible. She holds a Certificate IV in Dementia Practice and has worked the past two years with RAAFA at Meadow Springs and Erskine Grove and is now based at Erskine Grove.

Last year she established the Maverick Group, which helps create social connections and links between people with dementia in an open and relaxed environment.

“Sometimes when a person is diagnosed with dementia, communication might break down – friends or family might be coming from a place of concern but not know how to deal with the diagnosis or the best path forward... the person themselves might begin to withdraw from activities they’ve always loved. My role is to link the person and their family/friends to support services such as Alzheimer’s Australia WA.

From my experience the earlier a person living with dementia and their family/carer are linked in to good support services and education, such as the Living with Memory Loss Program run by Alzheimer’s Australia WA, the better the outcome is for all who are affected, not just the person with the diagnosis. There are also programs for carer support and information and they run a family and friends two day course as well.

# Patriotism was Florence's call to WAAAF service

A STRONG sense of patriotism runs through Florence Davies' family, who served with the WAAAF during WWII, following in the footsteps of her father, who served for Australia in WWI.

"I was born in England. My mother married my Dad, who was an Australian soldier, after WWI and because she was pregnant with me, we couldn't come out on the boat to Australia until I was about 12 months old," Florence said.

"Dad was a drover on stations up north, so when Mum came out here she realised he had no roof to put over our heads! He took us to an out camp at a station he was working at, which was near what is now known as Newman. My mother didn't know one end of a horse from the other, and she couldn't cook. It must have been very difficult for her to get used to.

"Our nearest neighbours were about 44 miles away, and that was a telegraph station. I grew up there until I was sent to boarding school."

Having previously studied Morse code, Florence decided to enlist in the WAAAF in early 1942, when she was 22 years old.

"I suppose it was patriotism that led me to enlist, and a desire to help," she said.

"I did my rookies' training in Melbourne.

We had to catch the troop train across the Nullarbor, which took about seven or eight days. Every time another train came in the opposite direction, we had to go off the tracks and wait for it to pass.

"At meal times the train would stop and we'd all go sit outside in the desert. We were each given a tin plate, mug, knife and fork and we were usually served tinned 'M and V' (meat and veg).

"A lot of the girls on the train were city girls and they hated the food, some would throw it on the ground to avoid eating it.

"When we got over there, the powers that be had taken over a number of Toorak mansions, so we lived in those during our training. We'd all have cyclone beds and a palliasse, which was a hessian sack we had to fill with straw, to use as a mattress. We each had three grey blankets, no sheets and I suppose we had a pillow. I remember it being so cold," Florence says

After completing her training, Florence was stationed at Pearce Base back in Perth, as a wireless operator working in signals.

"The signals girls all had constant static in our ears, our job was to listen to machines and aircraft for coded signals, and in turn we could send off coded signals all over, all in Morse code. We didn't know what the messages were ever saying, we just typed out

the codes," she said.

Although the WAAAF girls worked hard, Florence's favourite memories are of her friends and the antics they got up to off shift.

"I think the thing I enjoyed most was the camaraderie and the friendships I made. We were on shift work, working six days on and two days off, and were housed in a big brick building with our stretchers and palliasses.

We had to polish the floors and fold up our palliasses and blankets every day, and it would be inspected. But because we were on shift work we would put a sign saying 'sleeping' on the door, on the CO's inspection day so they wouldn't come in and inspect our rooms," Florence recalls.

"Another time I remember so clearly being confined to the barracks, because I was caught walking across the parade ground without wearing my beret."

While parts of WA were far removed from the theatres of WWII, there were times when the war came alarmingly close to home.

"We had a red alert once, meaning there were enemy aircraft near Moore River. We found out later that it was a Japanese aircraft that had flown off a mother ship out at sea," Florence says.

"The next shift I was due to go into



Florence Davies

signals, so our shift went off, but everyone else had to go into the trenches. Apparently they jumped into water about six inches deep."

Florence and her WAAAF friends enjoyed playing tennis and hockey in their spare time, sometimes travelling to Perth to play.

Florence's many fond memories of her time in the WAAAF have continued since she was discharged from service in 1945 when she was 26, as she has been an active member of the WAAAF WA Branch since.

Having lived at AFME for more than 24 years, Florence recently moved into the new Alice Ross-King Care Centre, which she says "is excellent."

**Amity Village Albany  
Garage Sale  
and Home  
Open**

**Saturday, 4 February 2017  
8.30am to 1.00pm**

Treasures and bargains galore  
Tea and Coffee for gold coin donation  
Sales kits available for interested family & friends  
Come and see our beautiful Estate and gardens with opportunities to view one of our well appointed units

## Christmas spirit strong

WHILE the rest of Perth was excitedly opening presents and tucking into hearty roasted lunches on 25 December, staff members were bringing the true Christmas spirit to life when they headed in to work for the day.

Angela Fawcett, who is a chef at RAAFA's Alice Ross-King Care Centre, spent her Christmas Day in the kitchen preparing a special feast to ensure it was a happy and festive day for every one of the aged care centre's residents who spent the day in their homes at the centre.

Meanwhile Samantha Halley, who is a carer at the care centre, also gave up the usual roast lunch at home with family to instead spend the day ensuring all residents were cared for throughout the festivities on Christmas Day.

While some older people can find Christmas a lonely experience, for both Angela and Samantha, working on Christmas Day is a way to make sure no one is lonely during the festive season.

RAAFA CEO John Murray said not all residents have the opportunity to spend the festive season with family or friends.

"It doesn't matter what day of the year it is – at RAAFA our role is to make sure all our residents feel cared for and appreciated all of the time, especially at Christmas, which can sometimes be a lonely time for people in the community," he said.

"It's a credit to our staff, including Angela and Samantha, who put their hands up to take the time to make someone else's day so special at Christmas."



LtoR Angela Fawcett and Samantha Halley

## Summer Fair

By Anniqe Keisler

THE barbecues were fired up, urns boiled and trestle tables assembled ready for a bonanza day at McNamara Lodge's Summer Fair in December 2016.

Meadow Springs Estate and McNamara Lodge residents came together with their families and RAAFA staff for some fun in the sun at the fair, held on Saturday, 10 December 2016.

With a jumping castle for children and the young at heart, stalls ranging from massages, cakes and jumble sales to raffles and spin the wheel, there was something for everyone at the fair.

McNamara Lodge Manager Kerry Rennison said it was fabulous to see residents, staff, families and friends come together to share the festival atmosphere.

# Monitoring the mail important work

AS A Clerk General and then Post Master working in postal censorship during WWII, it was Ray Passmore's job to ensure important information didn't fall into the wrong hands.

Ray, who is a former RAAFA State President, served in the RAAF with 77 Squadron in Darwin and New Guinea during the war.

"I did rookies in Geraldton, and went in as a Clerk General in Darwin. In those days the weather was communicated through letters. They would send it in to Perth and I'd have a look in front of me to understand the code," he said.

"Then my first overseas posting was to Milne Bay in New Guinea. My job was to watch the mail going out of New Guinea and censoring things if we needed to. We found out the Japanese were getting information from letters, so we'd have to open everything and take a glance to make sure people weren't writing down sensitive information.

"Some of the things people did write were shocking, 'Dear Mum, I'm at this location with this squadron and this is what we are doing at the moment' – some people gave all the details away! If that fell into the wrong

hands the enemy would have loved it."

Ray was then promoted to Post Master, looking after all mail going in and out of New Guinea.

"Sometimes we would get 100 bags of cake and sheets and pillows that families sent to keep their boys comfortable. Bearing in mind they were only young blokes over there," Ray said.

"The boats would come in once a month and sometimes they'd bring bags and bags full of knitted jumpers.

"The food was the hardest. We had a baker and if it wasn't for him we would have starved. He would swap things for flour and eggs with the Yanks. The Yanks lived like royalty over there. Once a month a B-52 Bomber would come over and drop them supplies full of ice-cream and sweets, you name it.

"Meanwhile we had our bully beef, tinned meat and camp pie."

Ray spent about 18 months in New Guinea. Although he said it was "pretty rough", he made some good mates.

After his time in New Guinea, Ray was posted back to Yanchep where he met his

wife, Nancy, who was working with the Women's Australian Auxiliary Air Force. They married in 1944 at St Mary's Anglican Church in Busselton.

Together, Ray and Nancy have been actively involved in their community for many years. The pair were heavily involved with the St John Ambulance for many years, and Ray was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia in 1999 for his service to the community.

Ray is a past State President of RAAFA (WA Division) from 1992 until 1994, having served on Division Council for many years. Ray and Nancy lived on Air Force Memorial Estate for 30 years before recently moving into the Alice Ross-King Care Centre.

Ray and Nancy are passionate supporters of RAAFA's work with seniors. "To look and see the buildings here now is incredible,



Ray Passmore

when it was all bushland when we first moved in," Ray said.

## Patter of paws

RESIDENTS at Bull Creek's Air Force Memorial Estate received some visitors of a different kind in September 2016, when a number of four-legged friends came to visit from the WA Dingo Association.

Members of the group spent over an hour with residents to explain many of the character traits of the dingo, and how they differ from domestic dogs and also wolves.

Sitting patiently listening were five of the organisation's dingoes who, it was fair to say, were a little restless during the talk, but ingratiated themselves to the audience with licks and, at the conclusion of the presentation, a collective howl.

Feedback from the presentation has been very positive, with many members of the audience purchasing merchandise at the end of the talk, to support the not-for-profit organisation.

Interesting facts about dingoes:

The dingo is entrenched in aboriginal folklore and is an icon of Australian heritage.

The wild dingo, far from being an aggressive animal towards man is, on the contrary, naturally shy and reserved.

In captive conditions the extremely intelligent dingo is fully capable of being trained to be a companion.

Dingoes will not attack humans unprovoked.

The dingo is our only natural selective suppressant of foxes, feral cats, rabbits, wild pigs and goats. Non-selective toxins can never hope to emulate natural modulation by predator species. All healthy ecosystems exhibit healthy prey species such as eagles, small raptors and goannas. Where they are absent - so is biodiversity. That is the key to the aboriginal regard for the dingo.



## Salamaua days



Charles Page at Bill Newton's grave

By Charles Page

IN APRIL 2016 I joined an expedition to Papua New Guinea to search underwater for WWII planes and ships.

I flew to Lae, where I boarded our 35 foot dive boat Barbarian, although before we sailed we visited the Lae War Cemetery and honoured the graves of No.22 Squadron crews killed in New Guinea.

We carried with us a bronze plaque designed and donated by Ron Ebb from 22 Squadron Association. Ron had asked us to lower it into the waters off Salamaua, where Bill Newton VC, and crew were shot down on 18 March 1943.

The plaque commemorated Bill Newton and his air gunners John Lyon and Basil

Eastwood. While flying in Boston A28-3 they were hit by anti-aircraft fire over the target. With flames streaming from the aircraft, Newton ditched the Boston offshore. Basil Eastwood went down with the aircraft, but Newton and Lyon swam ashore, only to be executed by the Japanese.

On 25 April we attended the ANZAC Day Dawn Service at Lae War Cemetery, where we met the No.22 Squadron contingent from Sydney, and showed them the graves. It was a most moving service and afterwards we gathered for a gunfire breakfast.

Early the next day, we sailed for Salamaua, some 30 miles south-east. Our skipper was legendary wreck hunter Rod Pearce, and we had a number of technical toys to help us with our search. We searched for two weeks, finding ships, boats and possible aircraft wreckage. The seas were mainly calm, with cavorting dolphins and flying fish to keep us company. My main task was monitoring the laptop display for any targets detected by the sonar.

We also had several runs ashore exploring the idyllic Salamaua isthmus, which was heavily bombed in WWII. We saw the Japanese guns, old cemetery and visited the grave of pilot Kevin Parer, who was killed in the 1942 Japanese invasion.

On another trip, we ran the dinghy ashore at Kila and found the site where Bill Newton was killed and the remains of a RAAF Kittyhawk, which was a favourite for local children.

For our final mission, we anchored off Salamaua to ceremoniously submerge the No.22 Squadron plaque near the site of Newton's ditched Boston.

# Notes From Branches and Groups

## Aviation Museum Branch

Jo Naylor

### Upcoming events

Thursday, 9 February, General Meeting, Meg Olive Room, 7.00pm.

Thursday, 9 March, Film Night, Meg Olive Room, 7.00pm.

Thursday, 13 April, General Meeting, Meg Olive Room, 7.00pm.

Thursday, 11 May, Film Night, Meg Olive Room, 7.00pm.

## Mandurah Branch

Shirley Farmer

### Men's Health Workshop

Whilst at a Veterans' Affairs function in December we were asked if our Members would be interested in having a Men's Health Workshop on the Estate. If this is something you would like to attend, there is an Expressions of Interest List on the Branch noticeboard that will be displayed until Wednesday, 1 March. If we get sufficient numbers, we will arrange a suitable date and time.

### Upcoming events

Thursday, 16 February, Meeting, Middleton

Hall, 4.00pm followed by a meal of burger, chips and salad. Names in the folder by the bar as usual please, and anyone with dietary restrictions see Lorraine for an alternative selection.

Thursday, 9 March, Sausage Sizzle under the sails, 4.00pm till 7.00pm. Happy Hour 4.30pm to 5.30pm as usual. Further details on the noticeboard, please put your name down no later than Friday, 3 March for catering purposes.

## Meadow Springs Residents' Branch

Eileen Oxley

2016 ended on a high for Meadow Springs Estate with a delicious Residents' Branch luncheon. State President, Graeme Bland and his wife Judy attended and we were beautifully entertained by children from the North Mandurah Primary School.

The following Sunday we were treated to an afternoon of carols and Christmas songs by the Heart & Soul entertainers.

On Christmas Day, over 100 residents and guests were well sated with a magnificent Christmas dinner and a visit from Santa.

Our 2017 calendar of events started on 17 January, with a presentation from the Office of the Public Advocate regarding completing

information for Advanced Health Directives.

### Upcoming events

Tuesday, 7 February, First Aid for Seniors, by St John's Ambulance.

Sunday, 26 February, Movie afternoon.

## Merriwa Branch

Joyce Johnson

Joycejohansson54@gmail.com

### Upcoming events

Sunday, 12 February, Sunday Roast.

Monday, 13 February, Residents Bi-Monthly Meeting.

Tuesday, 14 February, Movie Night.

Sunday, 19 February, RAAFA Anniversary of the Bombing of Darwin ceremony, AFME, 9.00am.

Tuesday, 21 February, Theme night in Blue Gum Restaurant.

Sunday, 12 March, Sunday Roast.

Monday, 13 March, Fashion Show, Main Hall.

Tuesday, 14 March, Movie Night.

Tuesday, 21 March, Theme night in Blue Gum Restaurant.

Saturday, 8 April, RAAFA Annual Dinner.

Monday, 10 April, Residents Bi-Monthly Meeting.

Tuesday, 11 April, Movie Night.

Sunday, 16 April, Sunday Roast.

Tuesday, 18 April, Theme night in Blue Gum Restaurant.

Tuesday, 25 April, ANZAC day ceremony and breakfast.

## WRAAF Branch

Judy Bland

gjb41@bigpond.com

### Upcoming events

Tuesday, 4 February, General Meeting, Meg Olive Room, 7.30pm.

Tuesday, 7 March, BBQ at Unit 201 Ventura House, 6.30pm. Further details in WRAAF Newsletter or ring Judy on 9311 4401.

Tuesday, 4 April, General Meeting, Meg Olive Room, 7.30pm. Bring an Easter Egg and wear your Easter Bonnet.

Tuesday, 25 April, Breakfast at the Mercure Hotel, from 7.30am. Bookings essential ring or email Judy.

Tuesday, 25 April, ANZAC Day March, commencing 9.00am.

# The Bibbulmun Track

RECENTLY Bibbulmun Track Foundation head guide, Steve Sertis was invited to AFME to introduce the Track to RAAFA Members.

The Bibbulmun Track has the allure of a wilderness experience but can be walked in relative safety. It is well marked, maintained to a high standard, is rarely far from towns and has many vehicle access points, making it more accessible than many other long-distance walking Tracks around the world – and it's FREE.

The Track stretches just over 1000km from Kalamunda to Albany, winding its way through some of the most beautiful natural areas in the State's South West. It links nine towns and passes through 22 national parks and other reserves. It was designed for people with varying fitness levels and interests and can be walked as part of a relaxing day in the bush, an overnight or weekend camping adventure or as an eight-to-10-week end-to-end hike.

An excellent source of practical information for 'getting on track' is the Bibbulmun Track Foundation. The Foundation is a not-for-profit community based organisation established to support the Department of Parks and Wildlife in the maintenance and

marketing of the Track. They provide a free information service, a range of merchandise including maps and guide books, a calendar of guided walks and events, equipment hire and free trip planning for its members.

Self-guided walking and camping with a backpack is also a satisfying and inexpensive way to experience the Track. Car access points make the Track easily accessible and it is extremely well marked, although walkers are advised to use one of the eight maps and two guide books which cover the length of the Track.

The Foundation also coordinates a Volunteer Maintenance Program where more than 300 volunteers 'own' a section of Track and carry out important maintenance work. The Foundation is eager to ensure that the Track remains in a world-class condition and emphasise that the Bibbulmun Track is a 'walk only' Trail and is not suitable for bikes, horses or wheeled vehicles. Also, to prevent the spread of dieback disease it is vital that access to the Track is made only via the red or green car access points marked on the maps.

Walk Safely... key tips to a safe walking experience:

- Always carry a map or guidebook.



- Choose a walk to suit your abilities.
- Take adequate food and water (minimum 2 litres).
- Wear appropriate clothing (non-slip foot-wear, hat, waterproof etc) and sunscreen.
- To prevent overcrowding, groups of eight or more need to register (overnight walks only).
- Check the latest Track conditions.
- Tell someone where you're going and when you expect to return.
- Leave rocks, plants and other animals as you find them.
- Only camp at official campsites.
- Don't use detergent or soap.
- Bury human waste 20cm deep and at least 100m away from Track and any water source.
- Observe fire bans.
- Be considerate of others.

For more information contact The Bibbulmun Track Foundation; 08 9481 0551, email: friends@bibbulmuntrack.org.au www.bibbulmuntrack.org.au.

Tread Softly... leave no trace principles:

- Stay on the Track.
- Pack out all rubbish.

## Bull Creek AFA Club

Phone: 9311 4460

### Trading Hours



#### Bar

Monday to Thursday, 9.30am to 6.00pm

Friday, 9.30am to 10.00pm

Saturday, 3.00pm to 6.00pm

#### Specials

Monday and Wednesday, Happy Hour drinks, 4.00pm to 5.00pm

Monday to Friday, morning coffee and afternoon tea with muffins and cakes, 9.30am to 5.30pm

Monday lunch, roast of the day, \$11.00

Monday, Chase the Ace, 4.00pm to 5.30pm

Tuesday lunch, fish and chips day \$11.00

(New date) Now every 2nd Wednesday of the month, A la Carte dining night (bookings at bar)

Every 2nd Thursday lunch, lambs fry and bacon \$13.00

#### Counter lunches

Monday to Friday, 11.30am to 1.30pm

#### Dinner dance

Friday, 5.30pm to 10.00pm

#### Events

Friday, 31 March, Asian Theme Buffet Night (5th Friday) details TBA. Please contact the club for bookings.

Saturday, 8 April, RAAFA Annual Dinner

Residents requiring transport out of volunteer buggy hours, please contact the bar and we will organise pickup.

## Merriwa Club

Phone: Club 9400 3640

Kitchen 9400 3642

### Trading Hours



#### Bar

Tuesday, 11.00am to 2.00pm

Wednesday and Saturday, 11.00am to 6.00pm

Thursday, 10.00am to 6.00pm

Friday, 11.00am to 9.00pm

Closed Sundays and Mondays

#### Lunches

Tuesday to Saturday, 12noon to 1.30pm

#### Specials

Wednesday, Happy Hour, 4.00pm to 5.00pm

Thursday, morning tea, 10.00am to 11.00am

Thursday, Games Night, Chase the Ace, 4.00pm to 6.00pm

Friday, Happy Hour, 4.00pm to 5.00pm

Friday, Dinner, Main Hall, 5.00pm to 9.00pm

Saturday, coffee and cake, 2.00pm to 3.00pm

Saturday, Fish Lunch \$9.00, 12noon to 1.30pm

#### Events

3rd Tuesday of the month, Themed Dinner

## Meadow Springs Club

Phone: 9582 5375

### Trading Hours



#### Bar

Monday, 10.30am to 2.30pm

Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 10.30am to 6.00pm

Wednesday, 10.30am to 8.00pm

Saturday and Sunday, contact bar staff.

#### Specials

Monday, roast lunch, \$12.00

Tuesday, best fish and chips lunch in town, \$10.00

Wednesday, Chase the Ace, bingo, horse racing and evening meal. Small and regular size meals available

Thursday, Happy Hour, 4.30pm, Sports Bar

#### Counter lunches

Monday to Friday, 11.45am to 1.30pm

#### Events

Friday, 10 February, A la Carte Dining in the Beaufort Restaurant with raffles and dinner, music by Bob Frazer.

Friday, 24 February, an evening under the sails with a sausage sizzle, raffles and entertainment.

Friday, 10 March, A la Carte dining in the Beaufort Restaurant with raffles and dinner, music by Bob Frazer.

Friday, 17 March, St Patrick's Day Lunch with buffet and entertainment by "Nearly Famous".

#### Motels

Time for a getaway? You can book a stay in one of our motel units for just \$75.00 per night (including continental breakfast). Bookings on 9582 5375.

## Cambrai Club

Phone: 9304 5401

### Trading Hours



#### Bar

Tuesday and Wednesday, 4.00pm to 8.00pm

Friday, 12noon to 2.00pm

Friday night opening times may vary, contact Club for details

2nd and 4th Friday, 5.00pm to 8.00pm

#### Specials

Tuesday and Wednesday, Happy Hour, 4.00pm

Wednesday, morning tea, 10.00am to 11.00am

Tuesday and Wednesday, Dinner, 6.00pm to 8.00pm, Picardy Restaurant

Friday, Happy Hour, 5.00pm when function on

#### Events

Alternate fortnights on Friday, either a three course buffet or sundowner. Book early as both events are popular. Don't forget to invite family and friends. We look forward to seeing you there.

## SUBMISSIONS FOR AIR MAIL

**3 March for April / May**  
**5 May for June / July**  
**7 July for August / September**

All Scribes, please note that articles of interest are always gladly received and accompanying photos need to be of a high resolution. You are most welcome to submit prior to the deadline.

Please send articles electronically to [airmail@raafawa.org.au](mailto:airmail@raafawa.org.au) in the first instance or via snail mail to Julie Stearne, 2 Sleat Road, APPECROSS WA 6153.

## Sleeping easy

GOOD sleep habits are often referred to as good sleep hygiene and there are many things that can be done to improve the quality of our nightly slumbers.

Many of these top tips for a better night's sleep were shared by Brad Denton from Revitalife during a workshop he held at the AFME on Thursday, 18 August 2016.

Brad also outlined a number of therapeutic sleep products which his business specialises in, including bed systems which offer whole body vibration therapy and therapeutic recliner lift chairs, which he said had helped thousands of Australians suffer less from their aches, pains and ailments.

Here are some tips for a better night's sleep:

- It is not good to frequently change the times you go to bed and get up.
- The hour before going to bed should be used to wind down and do more relaxing things.
- Meals should be timed to avoid going to bed on a full stomach, but not hungry either.
- If you are not asleep after 20 minutes in bed, go to another room until you feel tired again and then go back to bed.
- Many poor sleepers spend too long in bed.
- Don't have things in the bedroom that distract you from sleep.
- Getting sunlight during the day will help you to sleep better at night.
- Most adults need 7-9 hours of sleep a day. This stays the same even in older age.
- Naps in the evening can make it hard to sleep at night.



Bonnie Johnson relaxed on the body vibration bed during the talk



## Your State President Graeme Bland

GRAEME Bland joined the RAAF as an aircraft apprentice in 1957 and separated as a Warrant Officer Engineer in 1980. He was involved in the agricultural industry after leaving the RAAF, working a territory from Carnarvon to Esperance. He eventually joined RAAFA in 1991.

Whilst still working fulltime Graeme spent most weekends volunteering in the Aviation Heritage Museum as a handyman and forming the initial Display Team. He was

also a founding member of the Aviation Museum Branch, spending many years as Secretary/Treasurer. With his wife Judy and other volunteers he spent many weekends travelling to community events around Western Australia promoting and fundraising for the Museum. He also supervised the Museum Library between 2008 to 2010.

Graeme has spent the past ten years as a Veterans' Pension Officer and was instrumental in the setting up of the Bull Creek Veteran Support Centre at AFME, which helps serving and former ADF members gain the entitlements they are due.

He first joined the Division Council in 2002, becoming State Vice President in 2003 and served as State President 2004 to 2006 and 2010 to 2014.

For services to RAAFA he was awarded Life Membership in 2006 followed by the prestigious Geoff Michael National Award in 2013.

Graeme Bland was again elected State President at the 2016 AGM.

## RAAFA Welfare Team

### Cambrai Village

Vanessa Priestley 9304 5280

### RAAFA Estate Merriwa

Suzanne Free 9400 3778

### AFME

Carena Slattery 9311 4562

### Erskine Grove

Angeline Carleton 9586 4309

### RAAFA Estate Meadow Springs

Tracey Lockett 9582 5369

### RAAFA Amity Village

### Albany

Irene Smith 9841 8311

### The Welfare Service aims to:

- Assist ALL MEMBERS, no matter your location, to maintain and improve quality of life
- Encourage and maintain independence
- Provide information and referrals
- Link you to services to assist with individual needs

### Events

#### AFME

All events, \$2.00 donation unless otherwise stated, morning/afternoon tea included. Family and friends welcome.

#### Weekly

**Mondays, 10.30am - Laughter Group, Alice Ross-King Care Centre**

**Mondays, 11.15am - Falls Prevention Clinic, Orion Function Room**

Fees apply, rebates available. Professional Physio David is working wonders. Home visits available.

**Mondays, 2.00pm - Meditation Group, Village Hall**

**Wednesdays, 10.00am - Fitness with Emma continues, Orion Function Room**  
Personal gym instruction available.

**Friday, 10 Feb, 10 March, 21 April (more dates coming soon), 10.30am - Brain Training, Orion Function Room.**  
Caitlin has returned to test and tease your brain like never before.

**Saturdays, am - Nordic Walking or pole walking**

This is a super way to get your feet walking and your brain working all at once.

Heather is a trained Nordic walking instructor from Alzheimer's WA and she will be commencing her Saturday walking group here. There will be stretching and a friendly coffee after class.

Small donation to Alzheimer's WA requested. Contact Carena for details. This group will be running throughout 2017.

**All Saints Intergenerational Project is continuing to delight all involved.** If you are interested in joining in, call Carena for details.

### February

**Monday, 6 February, 10.00am - Activate, Motivate, Move & Groove, Orion Function Room**

Let David take you by the hand and lead you into 2017. Learn how physiotherapy can help to keep you fit, healthy and in tip top shape.

**Thursday, 9 February, 10.00am - Rediplan by Redcross, Orion Function Room**

Don't get caught out without having a plan in place. Come to this interactive presentation and get your Rediplan prepared. Claire from Redcross will show you how.

**Tuesday, 14 February, 9.30am - New AFME Playgroup Valentines Morning Tea, Alice Ross-King Care Centre**

Would you like to get involved in this fun project? All you need is a keen sense of fun and a desire to sit amongst some vibrant company. You will not provide personal care for the children, simply watch, enjoy and chat to the young Mums and others in the group. Please RSVP for this event.

**Tuesday, 21 February, 10.00am - Celebration & Information Morning Tea for the Ethiopian Scarves Appeal, Orion Function Room**

Come along and find out where all of those scarves go. Margaret Murray will be hosting this wonderful event where we can all get together as women and celebrate a worthy cause. Let's keep our closets clean ladies! If you have donated in the past or want to know how you can help, please join in the fun.

**Tuesday, 28 February, 10.00am - Melville Digital Hub, Orion Function Room**

There's no need to travel out to access the super services of Melville Digital because they are coming to us. We will be commencing our calendar with a presentation on WHY GET ONLINE. If there is something you would like to learn throughout the year, please let me know.

### March

**Thursday, 2 March, 10.00am - Anton Puzey Speaks Wills, Enduring Power of Attorney & Guardianship, Alice Ross-King Care Centre**

New Year, new plan? Whatever questions

you have, this is certainly a great opportunity to ask them. Family and friends are encouraged to attend.

**Thursday, 16 March, 10.00am - Motivational Senior Speakers, Authors and Consultants (www.passionateretirees.com), Alice Ross-King Care Centre**

If you want to feel genuinely inspired don't miss meeting Dr Ely Lazar and Dr Adele Thomas. This may be just the prescription you need to encourage you to live a fulfilling and adventurous life.

**Wednesday, 22 March, 10.00am - SK Dental, Alice Ross-King Care Centre**

Talk on oral health and denture care with an opportunity to ask any questions. SK Dental is a mobile service offering discounted pensioner rates, DVA Gold Card rates and private health rebates.

**Thursday, 23 March, 10.00am - Emma Koontz Fitness Morning, Orion Function Room**

Have you been wondering how to use the equipment in the gym or perhaps you want to get involved with the regular Wednesday Fitness Class. Join in the fun of Emma's "Getting to Know You" morning tea where you can chat to Emma about what steps you would like to take in getting fit this year.

**Wednesday, 29 March, 10.00am - Pranic Therapy Explained, Alice Ross-King Care Centre**

Have you ever heard of complimentary therapy? Once upon a time complimentary therapy was known as alternative therapy, these days it is recognised as a healthy adjunct to modern medicine. Jan is a trained nurse and Pranic Practitioner with years of experience in caring for people.

### Meadow Springs

#### Weekly

**Tuesdays, 10.00am - Mavericks Social Club for Members Living with Memory Loss, Erskine Grove Clubhouse.** Bus transportation available for Members not living on the Estate. Contact Angeline or Tracey for more information.

### Erskine Grove

#### Weekly

**Tuesdays, 10.00am - Mavericks Social Club for Members Living with Memory Loss, Erskine Grove Clubhouse.** Bus transportation available for Members not living on the Estate. Contact Angeline for more information.

#### February

**Wednesday, 8 February 11.30am - Season's Solo singer**

Jaye will be coming along to provide some entertainment in the Erskine Grove community centre, followed by a sausage sizzle lunch. All welcome.

### March

**Wednesday, 1 March, 10.30am - Seasons Funerals, Community Centre.**

Presentation by Ray Ferguson from Seasons Funerals. All welcome, morning tea included.

**Wednesday, 29 March, 11.00am - Wills and Estate Planning, Community Centre.**

Find out more by attending this informative presentation by Anton Puzey. All welcome, Morning tea included.

### Merriwa Estate

#### Weekly

**Thursday, 10.00am - Group Functional Fitness,**

Fitness Instructor/Personal Trainer to the senior age group, Craig provides low impact fitness sessions on living a healthier, happy lifestyle and nutritional advice.

**NEW! Aqua health classes starting twice weekly. Contact office or welfare for details.**

#### February

**Monday, 13 February - Citizens Advice Bureau in-house appointments for various services for residents with mobility issues.**

### March

**Monday, 13 March 10.00am - 12.00pm - Bladder and Bowel Health**

Presentation on diet, nutrition and wellness. Morning tea available with gold coin donation.

### Cambrai Village

#### Weekly

**Wednesday and Sunday, Physiotherapist Julie Pham.**

Available for appointments. Appointment book located in the Cambrai Foyer.

**First Thursday of the month, Australian Hearing - Cambrai Treatment Room.**

Available for advanced hearing checks, hearing aid repairs, equipment cleaning and new batteries. Some equipment available for free for DVA recipients. Call 9204 9200 for an appointment.

### March

**Tuesday, 28 March, 10.00am - Bladder & Bowel Health of Australia**

Information and activity session focusing on "Fuel Your Body" campaign run by Injury Control Council of WA. What foods and drinks should we be consuming for a healthy diet, which contributes to a healthy bladder and bowel. Includes a short exercise program (approx 10mins), run by a physiotherapist with experience in falls prevention to encourage seniors to strengthen their legs and reduce the risk of falls. All welcome to attend.

## WA Seniors Week

By Vanessa Priestley

WA SENIORS Week Morning Tea was held at Cambrai Village during WA Seniors Week in November 2016.

The morning tea was organised as a small recognition and acknowledgment of the amazing contributions that our seniors make to our community. The event was kindly

sponsored by the Cambrai Village Residents' Branch, which was greatly appreciated.

Plenty of fun was had by all with door prizes, raffles and amazing entertainment from the Cambrai Village Singers and a mystery singer, Mike Peden, who serenaded all, with his Dean Martin and Fred Astaire tributes.



The Cambrai Singers with their choir mistress Lenore Greive