



AIR MAIL

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION

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

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> WHAT'S
INSIDE



Women's AFL

Women's AFL football is nothing new. Erskine Grove resident, Joyce Cole, discovered her mother was playing the game in 1922 and that women have been playing competitively since 1915.

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Loving life

At the age of 95, Karri and Tuart Lodge resident, Len Snell, says it's better to be lucky than to be rich. As a survivor of the Bombing of Darwin, he should know.

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Active Georgie hits 100

AT 100 years of age and still living independently in her own home at RAAFA's Merriwa Estate, Georgie Higginbotham has a tip or two for the rest of us aiming to reach our first 'century not out'.

On 9 February, Georgie celebrated her milestone 100th birthday with a special party for family and friends at her home on the Estate.

Georgie embodies the active aging lifestyle message, crediting her daily cycles on her stationary bicycle at home to helping her keep fit and healthy as she enters her 101st year.

"Anytime I go anywhere people are always surprised about my age. They ask me 'what's the secret?' But I don't really think there's a secret. I've just been active all my life. I have a young mind, maybe that's it."

Born and raised in Ireland – her father worked as a riveter on the Titanic in Belfast as a teenager – Georgie moved to Australia in 1951, where she and her family originally settled in the Blue Mountains.

Georgie loved ballroom dancing, Irish dancing, table tennis and even women's football in her younger years – and has remained very active in the RAAFA community since moving to Merriwa 12 years ago, enjoying regular games of bowls with Merriwa's avid group of indoor bowlers.

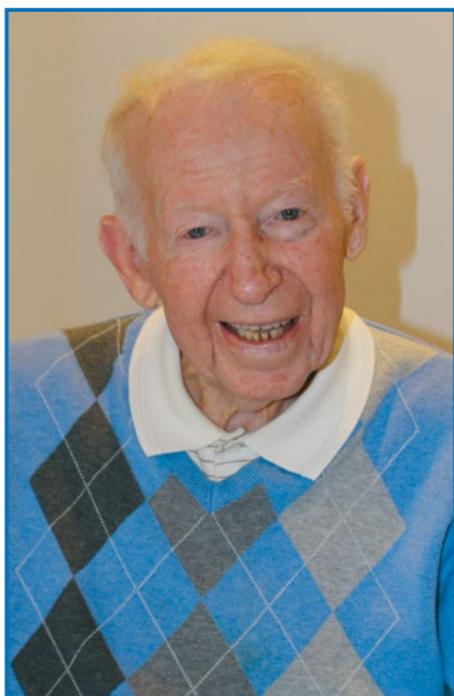
She has four daughters, one of whom also lives on the Estate, as well as eight grandchildren, six great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren.

Merriwa Estate Manager Karen Huyton congratulated Georgie on reaching her centenary birthday.

"Georgie is an absolute dynamo in our community at RAAFA" she said.



Georgie Higginbotham with her four daughters



Vale Raymond Passmore OAM OSJ

By Graeme Bland

RAY was born 28 April 1922 and grew up in South Perth. When he finished his schooling he obtained a carpentry apprenticeship with Bunnings Brothers Ltd.

With the European War raging, Ray joined the Royal Australian Air Force in 1941 as a Clerk General and subsequently Postmaster and Censor for the RAAF (see Air Mail 2017- Jan-Feb issue). Ray served at Pearce, Geraldton, Dunreath Airfield (now Perth Airport), Batchelor, Livingston, Townsville, Milne Bay, Goodenough Island, Yanchep and finally Cunderdin. Whilst in Yanchep he met beautiful young WAAAF, Nancy Jolliffe, who became his wife in 1945.

When Ray was discharged from the RAAF, he went back to complete his carpentry apprenticeship. He also joined the St John Ambulance Brigade in 1949 and was awarded the Order of St John in 1971.

Ray joined the RAAF Association in 1978 as a member of the City of Perth Branch. In the following years he served the WA Division on the Division Committee 1980-1985, 1986-1989, the Veterans' Homes Committee 1981-1990, State Junior Vice President 1990-1991, State Senior Vice President 1991-1992 and State President 1992-1994. Ray was awarded RAAFA Life Membership in 1994.

Ray remained a driving force in the City of Perth Branch, serving in many capacities

until, unfortunately, age caught up with its membership and the Branch closed in 2016. Ray was one of the stalwarts behind the recognition of the Mokine air crash disaster and the subsequent annual Remembrance Ceremony.

For service to the Veteran Community Ray was awarded the Order of Australia Medal in 1999.

Ray certainly had a full life, giving his time generously to RAAFA, the Community, as well as to his family. Of late, fragility became Ray's enemy and he quietly passed away on 1 March 2017 at the Alice Ross-King Care Centre.

Rest peacefully dear friend.

From the cockpit



By **Graeme Bland**

THIS year has started with a busy couple of months attending various meetings and discussions with RSLWA, DVA and other Ex-Service Organisations.

With the loss of several Veterans' Advocates we have also been extra busy at the Bull Creek Veteran Centre.

Membership

To date I have received only three replies to my plea for your thoughts in relation to our diminishing number of Branches and what else we can provide our Members, especially our non-resident members.

I would like to toss in another question. Is it really worthwhile continually subsidising the major deficits in all our licenced Clubs? The actual patronage of our Clubs isn't matching what our membership indicated in the Club Survey conducted a couple of years ago.

Any thoughts? I would really like to hear what you think about these questions, so please take a moment to drop me a line, either email gbland@raafawa.org.au or give me a call on 9288 8400.

Recognition of volunteer services and membership

Just a reminder that RAAFA has service

awards to recognise the service our many volunteers give to RAAFA, its Branches and Members.

A Certificate of Appreciation may be awarded to either a person or organisation for any outstanding service over a twelve month period.

A Certificate of Service may be awarded to a RAAFA Member who has given outstanding service over a five year period.

There are three higher awards issued by RAAFA National, Testimony of Appreciation, Certificate of Merit, and Life Membership.

Certificates for years of Membership may also be applied for being in multiples of five year increments from twenty-five years.

Further details of eligibility are available from the State Secretary on ronions@raafawa.org.au.

Bombing of Darwin Ceremony

Despite a very warm day this annual event was well attended and congratulations to the State Executive and Executive Assistant, Michelle for the planning and organisation, the volunteers for their first class handling of their duties and to those who attended.

RAAFA Advocate training

RAAFA in West Australia has three locations where serving and former members of the Australian Defence Force can gain assistance to obtain their entitlements through the Department of Veterans' Affairs. Our main support centre is the Bull Creek Veteran Support Centre and we also have Advocates operating at Merriwa and Meadow Springs.

However, we need more Advocates and training is available on 17 and 18 May when a face-to-face entry level course will be held in Perth. This training covers the three Acts, applicable claiming requirements and a sound background to the Veterans' entitlements. For further information contact the BCVSC on

bcvetcent@gmail.com who will contact you with further details. Both Veterans and non-Veterans can apply.

ANZAC Day Perth 2017

For those wishing to ride in a vehicle for the Perth ANZAC Day Parade please contact Cassandra Brennan 0402 845 459. Don't leave it too late or you may miss out.

The Perth Parade will follow the same format as last year with the ANZAC Day Service being held at Langley Park.

Sunset Services will be held during the week before ANZAC Day at the State War Memorial and will include guest speakers and wreath laying.

There will be a special service on Thursday, 20 April, at 5.00pm to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Formation of Bomber Command. Anyone wishing to lay a floral tribute may do so after the official laying.

For the Dawn Service, May Avenue will be closed from Saw Avenue and shuttle buses to Kings Park will leave from the Wellington Street Bus Station and not the Elizabeth Quay Bus Station.

The order of the March will appear in the Weekend West newspaper on Saturday, 15 April.

ANZAC Day Goodwill Mail

The ADF in conjunction with Australia Post is opening up Goodwill Mail for public submission from 6 March to 14 April, 2017. Our deployed troops are appreciative of the public's generosity.

Complimentary postage applies for packages weighing less than 2kg and should be addressed as follows:

An Australian Defence Member, AFP060, Australian Defence Force NSW 2890.

RSLWA

John Murray and I have had discussions with the RSLWA Executive and Veteran Services Department and are pleased to

advise that the RSLWA are returning to being more veteran welfare orientated. Defence Care who were partnering with RSLWA for their Advocacy and Welfare Services have withdrawn from Western Australia and we have spoken about sharing the load of Advocate Services and training.

The old ANZAC House will soon be demolished and a nine storey, open plan building will be constructed with Corporate tenants being pursued to help cover some of the RSL overheads.

The new ANZAC House will be able to provide office space for smaller ESO's on a rotational basis. It is hoped to be able to provide a one stop shop for Veterans and families plus meeting rooms, a large entertainment area, gymnasium and crèche.

Upcoming events

- Thursday, 20 April, 5.00pm - Sunset Service for Bomber Command at the State War Memorial.
- Tuesday, 25 April - ANZAC Day.
- RAAFA Annual Dinner has been re-scheduled and we anticipate it to mid-June. Watch this space for further details.
- Sunday, 28 May, 10.00am - Bomber Command Commemoration Ceremony at AFME in Bull Creek.

Representations

Our Division membership have been represented by the State Executive at the following:

- Australian Air Force Cadet Under Officer and NCO Graduation Parade.
- RSL annual Young Australians Awards.
- WRAAC Anniversary lunch.
- RSL Strategies Forum.
- Partners of Veterans' PTSD Seminar.
- Associations Forum Chair and CEO Symposium.

Don't forget to "Stay On Your Feet".

Your Division Councillor - Denise Nicolay



Denise Nicolay

DENISE Nicolay was elected to Division Council in 2016.

Denise joined RAAFA in 2004 when she moved to Erskine Grove with her husband Peter. Originally from Melbourne, Denise and Peter

moved to Perth shortly after they were married. Denise and Peter have been blessed with two adult children, and five wonderful grandchildren.

Denise's working life has been predominantly in the management of professional service

firms and in particular accounting, business management and strategic planning. Denise spent a number of years working for Parker and Parker Solicitors, in administration and management roles and then spent 10 years as General Manager of Downing and Downing Solicitors. Denise was a member of the Facilities Management Association and completed management courses at the AICD and the Financial Management Research Centre based at the University of New England. Denise has a range of skills including accounting, human resources management, project planning and public speaking.

Denise was editor of the Erskine Grove Gazette, Secretary of the Erskine Grove Branch and has spent the past three years as

Chairperson of the Erskine Grove Resident Liaison Committee.

Denise has always been involved with community groups, including as a Volunteer Coordinator and member of the Board of Management for Camp Quality, treasurer of the local sailing club as well as a Guide Leader. Denise was the secretary of the Western Australian Retirement Village Association (WARVRA).

Denise is keen to be involved in advocacy for those unable, or unwilling, to negotiate the walls of bureaucracy and to ensure that both ex-service men and women and the aged are properly represented. She also has an interest in being involved in extending the charitable work of RAAFA.

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See page 11 for submission deadlines

Amity giant garage sale

THE giant Garage Sale at RAAFA Amity Village Albany has become an annual event.

The initial idea started so that residents could have an annual clean out of unwanted treasures and as they say, one man's junk is another man's treasure.

The retirement living units and village living does not lend itself to individual garage sales, so the village community coming together for one giant garage sale is a win-win situation in a multitude of ways.

Many residents had their own tables to convert their redundant treasures into cash for travelling or other more pleasurable plans, whilst other items are donated to the craft and social group tables, and the ladies provided tea and coffee with biscuits for a gold coin.

This was our third Giant Garage Sale, held on Saturday 4 February and it was the most

successful yet. We had slightly drizzly weather, but this is Albany after all and everything was undercover on the Clubhouse verandahs.

The giant sale was attended by over 500 people and was a wonderful social opportunity. Everyone was pleased with their sales, plus it was a brilliant opportunity to showcase our beautiful Village to outsiders.



The Padre's Piece



By Padre David

I'VE been jumping from one memory to another and it's all because of the recent renovation of the Meadow Springs Estate Club Restaurant. The restaurant has not only been repainted but it has been given a new "Movies" theme. This has meant a change in the pictures etc. that previously decorated the walls. There is still the picture of the Queen and the Beaufort model above the entrance to the Restaurant but out has gone something that Eileen and I presented to the Club way back in 2002. It has however found a new home.

In 2002 on a holiday back to England we visited the Yorkshire Air Museum at Elvington and discovered a small piece of lace that depicted the RAAF's Lancasters "Old Sugar" (PO-S) of 467 Sqn and "Old Nick" (JO-N) of 463 Sqn flying on 29 June 1944 to attack the flying bomb sites at Beauvoir, France. We brought it back, had it framed and it has hung in the restaurant for 15 years. Its new home is in the St Michael's Chapel alongside the Bomber Command Memorial window.

Placing the lace in the Chapel had my mind going back to the occasion on 14 May 2004 when the Mandurah Branch presented the Bomber Command

Memorial window to the Chapel for its dedication.

My mind, from there, jumped to the day in April 1988 when I concluded my RAAF Chaplaincy and my colleagues at RAAF Edinburgh along with Chaplain (I think Principal Chaplain) Roger Boerth and visiting Chaplain (Gp Capt) Jack Pilgrim, held a luncheon for my wife and myself in the Officers Mess and presented me with a collection of books including Dudley Seward's biography of "Bomber" Harris, C-I-C Bomber Command 1942- 1945.

That in turn took me further back to June 1952 when, with some of my RAF pals I had a week's leave at the Mohne See BAOR (British Army of the Rhine) Leave Centre. When the war was over the Mohne dam wall had been repaired after the daring raid when 617 Sqn (the "Dam Busters") had breached the dam and flooded the Ruhr on the night of 16/17 May 1943.

This year as usual I will share ANZAC Day with colleagues who have served in each of the three arms of the military - Army, Navy and Airforce but my thoughts this year will particularly be with all who have served in the Allied Air Forces.

There are some arresting statistics that come from the history of the RAAF. For instance, in Alan Stephen's History of the RAAF he writes "There were four RAAF squadrons in Bomber Command's worst night of the war, the notorious strike against Nuremburg on 30/31 March 1944 when 95 of 608 aircraft (almost 16%) were lost. The 545 Allied airmen who died in the space of about 8 hours exceeded the 507 killed during the entire Battle of Britain"

ANZAC DAY is our national day to remember, respect and reflect.

Lest we forget
Shalom

Acting CEO's perspective



Acting CEO, Tonia Zeeman

By Tonia Zeeman

I HAVE the pleasure of writing the Air Mail article for this edition of Air Mail as our CEO John Murray is overseas with his family on a well-earned holiday.

RAAFA has taken a giant leap into the New Year with lots of activity on many fronts. The Division Council and Executive team have been busy with strategic planning, to ensure we have the right road map in place to guide our decisions, investments and activities over the next 12 months and beyond.

Recent Government reforms to home care packages, where eligible people receive their funding direct and choose their own providers, have brought many changes.

Our in-house community care business RAAFA Connect is ideally placed to create new services to meet members' needs in these new challenging times.

We intend initially to focus our efforts, through our One-RAAFA strategies, towards the existing RAAFA Villages residents and RAAFA members living within reasonable proximity to our Estates.

Sandy Komen, General Manager Connected Living, commenced at RAAFA in mid-January and her focus has been on building relationships with key people within our RAAFA estates, meeting with resident groups, listening and learning about your needs and wants, and communicating what services RAAFA Connect can provide.

For further information, please contact the RAAFA Connect team on (08) 9311 4498, or visit our brand new office located at the Air Force Memorial Estate, Bull Creek Drive, Bull Creek.

On a slightly different note, you may have seen an article about a month back in the Weekend West reporting a serious breach of information systems security and privacy by a home care provider resulting in personal details being used for fraudulent purposes.

I want to reassure you that RAAFA is committed to preserving data confidentiality and integrity and is confident that adequate protections are in place to prevent misuse, unauthorised disclosure, damage or loss of electronic and non-electronic information. This is an area that we actively monitor and we are currently undertaking a security review.

As part of our RAAFA brand refresh we will be rolling out new signage across all of our estates. This will create a more consistent image across all of RAAFA as well as helping people locate our various services.

The roll out will commence with new entry statement signs to our estates and lodges and will be completed estate by estate over the coming months. Residents will be notified prior to the installation of new signage at your estate.

Rock and Roll night

A ROCK and Roll Night was held at the Bull Creek Club in February as part of the fundraising efforts for Solaris Care, Red Sky Ride. Resident Alan White once again participated in the Red Sky Bike Ride which covered 1000 kilometres of our South West region to raise much needed funds for Solaris Cancer Care.

It was great to see everyone letting loose and enjoying a second teen-time as they rocked around the clock and dusted off their blue suede shoes on the dance floor. The Rockettes were also a big hit.



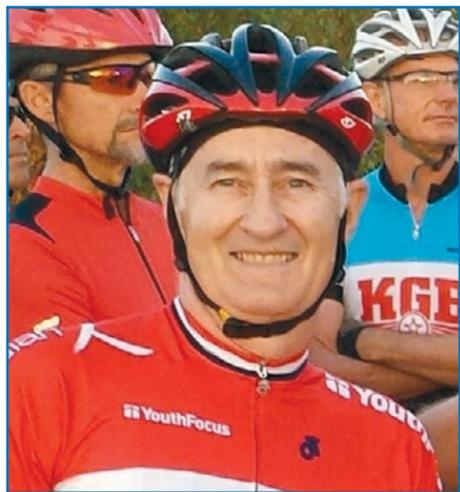
Rock and Rollers "dolled" up for a good cause

Charity rides

FEBRUARY and March were busy months for Rob Parker, RAAFA's Chief Financial Officer and Alan White, Operations Manager – Estates who both participated in Charity Bike Rides to raise much needed funds for two very deserving causes.

Hawaiian Ride for Youth

In the third week of March Rob participated again in the annual charity bike ride known as the Hawaiian Ride for Youth. This was Rob's third time, having ridden in 2014 and 2016. The ride has been going for over 14 years, with major property developer/owner



Rob Parker

Hawaiian Investments as naming sponsor for most of that time.

The ride is in support of Youth Focus, a WA based charity which provides support and counselling to youth in the areas of depression and suicide.

In 2016 the ride raised \$2,240,000 and over its life, the has raised in excess of \$13,000,000.

This year's ride in March involved 185 riders and over 40 support personnel. It was a five day journey from Albany to Perth with three separate pelotons setting out from Albany on different routes to Perth. For the first time this year, a peloton left from Geraldton and took an inland route back to Perth. The pelotons stopped at over 20 high schools along the route and riders and staff met with students to help raise awareness about depression and youth suicide.

Rob says that all riders must undertake a rigorous six month training regime, involving three rides a week, starting at 5.30am in

Shenton Park. Most Saturdays involved a lengthy 130km (over five hours) ride up in the hills east of Perth. "It's a great way to keep fit, whilst fulfilling an important social responsibility at the same time" says Rob. "A good, strong long macchiato at our favourite coffee shop after training makes some of the colder mornings worthwhile also", he added.

Each rider is responsible for the \$1,500 required to cover food and accommodation on the journey and must raise a minimum of \$5,000 for Youth Focus. "The ride doesn't cost Youth Focus any outlay – we cover our costs, then raise the minimum donation on top", said Robert.

Riders and teams use a variety of events to raise funds, ranging from quiz nights, corporate lunches, jazz nights and raffles. Rob rides for Team KPMG, which held a quiz night in late February.

Rob also arranged a "gold coin" afternoon tea with residents at RAAFA Amity Village Albany on Monday 20 March prior to the ride. The KPMG team rode in their team lycra to explain the ride to residents and then took questions and donations.

"We were very keen to engage with our Albany residents. Many are from rural/regional areas – and these areas suffer greatly from youth suicide and depression. The Youth Focus counsellor based in Albany was also on hand to help promote the important work of Youth Focus in the region."

Alan White also took part in a gruelling 1000km charity bike ride at the end of February as part of the Red Sky Ride.

Red Sky Ride

The Red Sky Ride, was so named, as the title conveys a vision of peace and tranquillity. Alan rides for Solaris Care, with the ride being the primary source of funding for them. The ride has raised \$3.5 million over nine years, this year being the 10th year. There are around 20 participants on each ride, riding 1000kms around the south west in eight days. There are seven actual riding days. Riders spend five months training and preparing, riding 5000kms before departing. A very large commitment in time and effort. The course takes in Bunbury, Dunsborough, Augusta, Bridgetown, Wagin, York and back

instrumental in arranging regular Christian worship services. She was involved in the dedication and liaison with Management when the establishment of the Chapel building was being considered and her research, consultation and contribution to services especially for the day of St Michaels Chapel consecration in 2002 were greatly appreciated.

Apart from playing the organ for church services and restaurant, Mary also undertook roles as producer, director, wardrobe



Alan White

to Perth, with the longest day being around 190kms.

Alan's initial charity ride was for Nulsen, raising \$300,000 in funds for people with severe disabilities. However, following the Nulsen ride, Alan and his team moved to supporting Solaris Care, a cancer support charity, dedicated to trying to allow people who have been diagnosed with cancer, an opportunity to step away for a period of time and literally get away from the daily stress of trying to cope with the disease and treatments.

Solaris Care provides free treatment for 9000 cancer sufferers and their carers each year. Professionals provided their services free of charge. Services include Reflexology, Massage, Counselling, Bowen Therapy, Reiki or simply sitting down and enjoying a coffee or tea. There are many other services provided and further details and location of the Centres can be found on the website.

"The enjoyment I receive in seeing the Solaris Care services continue for people less fortunate than myself and also seeing ordinary people achieving extraordinary things, seeing the smile on their face on having completed the ride, is simply priceless," says Alan.

If you would like to support Rob and Alan, here's how:

To support Rob in his ride for Youth Focus, please visit their website at www.rideforyouth.com.au and use the Donate Now button (NB Ensure to select Rob as rider to help him achieve his fundraising target!).

To support Alan, donations to Solaris Care and all the services provided can be found at www.solariscare.org.au or donations to the Red Sky Ride, can be directed to www.redskyride.org.au. Donations are tax deductible and all monies go directly to Solaris Care, there are no administrative fees deducted.

mistress, musical director and others for six Christmas/Variety shows, all of which were highly appreciated by residents who participated and attended the performances.

Mary joined the Meadow Springs Residents Branch Committee in 2013 and took on the position of Treasurer from May 2014 to July 2015.

A Certificate of Service was presented to Mary in January, in recognition of her commitment and service to her fellow residents and RAAFA.

Mum's moonlighting

ERSKINE Grove resident Joyce Cole never suspected her mother moonlighted as a champion footballer until a chance discovery last year.

"My mother never told me a word about it and it wasn't until I went through old photos last year and found this program and sepia photograph that I realised there was something she hadn't told me," Joyce said.

"There was a photograph of women in short skirts and bloomers in 1922 at West Leederville Oval and a four page program about the competition, between Boan's and Foy and Gibson department stores.

"In the program they included little headshots with a comment about each footballer – next to my mum's name it said she was a 'dab hand with scones and jam at the department store'."

Excited by her discovery, Joyce contacted the State Library and the WAFL, which put her in touch with historian Brunette Lenkic, who has recently published a book shining a light on the history of women's football in WA.

It may come as a surprise to many, but women's AFL began as a competitive sport in Perth back in 1915, when two teams from department store Foy and Gibson played each other at Loton Park. The game has been played continuously ever since – culminating in the new professional league debuting this year.

Early in January, Brunette visited residents at Erskine Grove, where she shared the little-known history of the women's sport over the past hundred years.

For Joyce, the timing of her discovery was pure serendipity.

"People have asked me 'was your mum sporty' but up until now I had no idea, she was just my mum. But she had this secret life moonlighting as a footballer," she said.

"She would have been about 24 at the time of the photograph. She started off in Boan's as a milliner then switched to waitressing.

"Even though mum never spoke about this, I think it must have really meant something to her though, if she kept the program and photograph with her all those years."



Joyce Cole with a photo of her AFL-playing mum

Certificate of Service

MARY Stevens and her husband Colin moved into the developing Meadow Springs Estate at the end of 1998 to become one of the original 20 occupants - Pioneers. She quickly became involved in helping the fledgling Estate become a reality for like-minded people to enjoy the good life. Her active support to all residents has always been readily given.

In October 1999 Mary, together with Father Ray Collyer and Ray Long formed the inaugural Chapel Committee and was

Family tradition of service behind Royla's WAAAF days

WITH her father and older brother already serving in the army and RAAF respectively during WWII, it was natural for Royla Sailing to enlist to do her part for the war effort.

Royla, who now lives at RAAFA's Orion Terraces in Bull Creek, decided to enlist in the Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force (WAAAF) as soon as she turned 18 in 1944 – joining her brother, who was already a RAAF pilot, and her father, who was an army officer, to serve Australia during the war.

Her first day at rookies in Karrinyup was one she will never forget.

"That first day we were given wire cutters to cut the hay for our own palliasses to sleep on, and we were each given two grey blankets but no sheets. I sneezed a lot from all the straw but enjoyed the marching drills we had to do," she said.

After completing her rookies, Royla was transferred to IES (equipment training school) in Melbourne. She and her fellow WAAAF trainees were transported across the Nullarbor on a troop train.

"We all slept on the floor and in the corridors, and the men were in the cattle trucks. One night I rolled off my sleeping spot under the seat and another girl shuffled over on top and blocked off my air supply, I thought I was about to suffocate," Royla recalls.

"We stopped for meals across the desert and shared our tinned sausages and peaches with all the locals who came to meet the train."

Once she arrived in Melbourne, Royla and her friends were billeted at Ascot Vale showgrounds, where she slept in the Hall of Manufacturers with hundreds of other young WAAAF recruits.

"One day after using the toilet I pulled the chain and it came down with a big heavy bang that smashed the bowl," she said.

"Someone said I needed to write a report to the CO explaining everything, so I did that and ended up saying it was accidental – and I never heard anything back."

After her training was completed, Royla moved on to IOSD (stores depot) in Merredin.

"There wasn't enough room for us all to sleep in the huts so I had to sleep in one of the tents outside with raised wooden floors so that we wouldn't get wet when it rained. Mind you, we were young so we didn't really mind too much," she said.

"I was part of a small group called the 'ape gang' because we had to climb high in the fixtures of the hangars to count the stock.

"We used to travel from Merredin to Perth on our leave and the trains would be so packed because the Army troops would also board the train in Nungarin for their leave, so I would often sleep in the luggage racks."

After seven months in Merredin, Royla was on the move again, this time to 4CRD (Central Recovery Depot) in Maylands.

"I lived with the girls in a beautiful big home on a hill in Maylands called The Gables, and we could see Ascot racecourse from the

veranda. Each day I was taken from here to a so-called office at 4CRD accounting for equipment going to and fro. Really it was a desk on a dirt floor and the place looked like an old cow shed. When it rained I used to put my feet up on a box so they wouldn't get wet and muddy," Royla says.

It was from here that Royla then served as a switchboard operator for five weeks at Pelican Point in Crawley which made for a nice change of pace. During this time Royla lived at the bottom of William Street, where she remembers the cook would make cheese and tomato sandwiches every day for her to take to work at Crawley.

Then after a month at Wembley, she was posted to her final posting at Pearce in September 1946, by which time the war had finished.

"By this time there were only very few WAAAF but there were hundreds of men – but we had better living quarters than ever before. I remember we used to polish our jarrah floors in the sleeping quarters with boot polish very Monday ready for inspection," she says.

"Seven weeks before I was discharged in February 1947 and joined the AFA, now RAAFA, I met my future husband, Fred Sailing. He was a wireless maintenance mechanic and served on Morotai in the Pacific during the war. He stayed with the RAAF after the war and was posted to Pearce to start up 3TU (telecom unit) at Muchea."

After Royla and Fred were discharged from the WAAAF and RAAF, they married in



Royla Sailing

January 1948 and settled in Adelaide for 10 years before returning home to WA in 1958. They bought a home in Mt Pleasant and raised their family together.

"Sadly Fred died in 1975 and didn't live to see any of his 11 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren," Royla said.

Royla has remained involved with RAAFA, and was a proud member of the AFA Band from 1978 to 1986 – where she was the drum major who led the band on ANZAC Days.

It wasn't until 2014 that Royla decided the time was right to move on from her family home, and has settled in at Orion Terraces, AFME in Bull Creek.

"I joined the lovely WAAAF Branch which folded at the end of 2016 as we are all getting very old now," Royla said.

"But we still have our monthly lunches and I enjoy catching up with the ladies."

Now a fit 91-year-old, Royla remembers her WAAAF days with much fondness.

"My life in the service was a terrific experience and I will always treasure our great mateship. I feel I did a very good job."

Can you help the sound of music continue?

SPENDING time with Cambrai Village resident Ivor Thomas is, according to many of the residents at the adjoining Vivian Bullwinkel Lodge, like taking a trip down memory lane.

Until recently, Ivor volunteered his time to play the accordion each week for the residents living with dementia at the Lodge, something which Welfare Officer and dementia Champion, Vanessa Priestley, admits gave everyone involved the opportunity to reminisce and sing along.

But recently, he opened his accordion case to find the instrument broken, with all of the keys out of place, which is why residents at Cambrai Village have decided to put a call out to see if anyone has an unwanted accordion they no longer use, that they might like to donate.

"Despite having a few health problems himself, Ivor tirelessly volunteers each week at Cambrai Village and sings dozens of all-time favourites to residents, which never fails to provide meaningful opportunities for them to reminisce about their younger years," says Vanessa.

"As a result, everyone is really disappointed

that he can no longer play, and we would love to hear from anyone who might like to donate an unwanted accordion, or help us to fix Ivor's."

As well as entertaining residents each week, Ivor volunteers his time by working in the village's community garden which supplies fresh produce to residents, and gives the residents the opportunity to participate in gardening activities, which can have a profound effect on their health, well-being and quality of life.

"He really is a hero of our community," Vanessa added.

Anyone who can donate an accordion can contact Vanessa Priestley on 9304 5280.



Ivor Thomas

Elissa gets set for a hairy challenge

RAAFA's Occupational Therapist, Elissa Munro, has accepted the somewhat hair-raising challenge of shaving her head to help people with blood cancer.

The much-loved team member at RAAFA's McNamara Lodge in Mandurah took the snip on Thursday, 16 March to support the Leukaemia Foundation's World's Greatest Shave fundraiser.

"Although I don't know anyone personally with leukaemia, there have been several members of my family who have been touched by cancer, including my beautiful aunt who passed away a couple of years ago, so this is my way of trying to make a difference," she says.

Before the snip, Elissa said, "As well as wanting to support a great cause, it's also a personal challenge for me, it's was pretty scary to lose all of my hair and have my physical appearance altered so much, but that is really nothing in comparison to what people living with leukaemia and cancer undergo."

Colleagues as well as residents at McNamara Lodge have committed to support Elissa all

the way, and watched as she underwent the shave at work on the morning of Thursday, 16 March.

"We just think it's a wonderful thing for Elissa to commit to, and it's a great cause," said RAAFA Management.

"Many of our residents and staff are supporting her by making a donation, we think she's very brave and we're very proud of her for choosing such a hair-raising challenge."



Elissa gets ready for her big haircut by Physiotherapist Annie Kessler

Focusing on Merriwa Estate

ACCORDING to residents at RAAFA's Merriwa Estate, the retirement living and residential care community is the place to enjoy the second half of life.

Consisting of 234 two bedroom and six three bedroom retirement living units, a 78 bed residential aged care centre (Karri and Tuart Lodge), with an additional 32 beds coming online in September, Merriwa Estate sits 36 kilometres north of Perth, just off the major arterial road Marmion Avenue.

Significantly, 'Merriwa' is an Aboriginal word meaning 'a good place', which many a resident would say is completely appropriate given the many lifestyle benefits of living in the community. From tennis facilities to a bowling green, movie nights to an indoor heated pool, and a 'men's shed' to regular Bridge and Mahjong games, whatever your interests, the chances are that you'll be able to continue your hobbies at the estate, as well as find new ones.

What's more, there are five short stay units located on the estate which are available for short-term bookings - so if you have friends or family visiting, they conveniently have somewhere close to stay. Over the years, we've found this to be a great arrangement for everyone.

Other services at Merriwa

- **Personal Advocacy**
RAAF Association Advocates are available to assist residents who have

DVA entitlements.

- **Beautician and Massage Therapy**
A Beautician visits the Estate each Wednesday and Thursday from 9.00am to 12noon.
- **Doctor**
Dr Therese Fisher operates a surgery located in the Arcade.
- **Hairdresser**
- **Hearing (Test, Fitting, Repairs)**
Australian Hearing visits the Estate every second Tuesday.
- **Pharmacy**
Quinns Centre Pharmacy provides a pickup and delivery service for pharmaceutical requirements.
- **Podiatrist**
A Podiatrist attends the Estate on Friday mornings between 8.00am to 1.00pm.
- **Chiropractor**
A Chiropractor attends the Estate on Monday mornings between 8.00am to 1.00pm.
- **Library**
The Estate Library is stocked with a good collection of large print and regular print books, audiotapes and videos.
- **Welfare Officer**
The Welfare Officer in Merriwa is Suzanne Free and her office is located in the Arcade, next to Administration. The main aim of welfare is to maintain or



improve the quality of life for members and residents, whilst also encouraging independence and choice by providing information, referral, and support as needed. She provides a wide range of services to residents including:

- » Information and links to accessing in-home support including i.e. domestic assistance, shopping assistance, transport assistance, meals on wheels, etc.
- » Provides information and presentations on relevant topics which include health and wellbeing
- » Information regarding future planning - aged care, EPA's, EPG's,

Advance Health Directives, and options for legal services

- » Advocates and liaises with government departments, including Department of Veterans' Affairs and other service providers as appropriate
- » Provides information and support regarding dementia and memory loss
- » Available for support regarding any concerns and worries that you may have, including health related issues and bereavement



Alix Wilyman with two dinner guests

Dinner dates are set to be special

INTIMATE dinner dates for small groups of residents at Karri and Tuart Lodge are set to be the order of the day throughout 2017.

Weekly, staff are encouraging people - particularly those living with dementia - to join in friendly banter and conversation over candlelit meals which have been specially organised in the Lodge's lounge room.

With music in the background and a special atmosphere created, the aim is to allow residents who sometimes struggle to hear in the dining room an opportunity to increase their interaction and quality time with their friends.

Alix Wilyman, Occupational Therapist, said the benefits of seniors receiving increased levels of socialisation, and spending more

time with their peers rather than in their rooms was beneficial on many levels.

"Friendship and companionship is hugely important for every persons' welfare, and we're really focused on finding ways that we can increase their opportunities to interact and spend time with each other," she says.

"Over the summer, we will also be organising meals outside in the evening, which will be particularly pleasant and enjoyable for everyone who gets involved."

One lady, who attended the first dinner date with three fellow residents said she enjoyed the evening very much.

"It was a wonderful atmosphere, the staff made it very special and we all enjoyed it immensely," she said.

Scenic drives and coffee dates

PEOPLE from Karri and Tuart Lodge are set to start zipping around the northern suburbs this year, as a result of the regular bus outings organised by the lifestyle team.

Not only will there be outings to take people out and about to different places, there will also be additional outings once a month particularly aimed at those seniors who don't get out quite as often, giving them the opportunity to visit local cafes for a morning coffee.

Alix Wilyman, Occupational Therapist, said residents were pleased to be given additional opportunities to get out and about a lot more.

"It's obviously very important for people living at our care centres to spend time outdoors with the friends they've made while living with us, and also to be able to socialise in different settings," she says.

"We will also be hiring the Wanneroo bus each month which is wheelchair friendly, so we'll be able to take residents out in wheelchairs which we're all really pleased about.

"We'd encourage everyone to jump on board with these outings, it's a great opportunity for them to enjoy chatting over a cup of coffee as well."



Claudia Dohr with Lodge residents enjoying coffee and cake

The joy of locking up and leaving

LIFE is a holiday when you live at RAAFA's Merriwa Estate, according to resident Brian Luckhurst.

"I love it here," says the 67-year-old. "I was fed up mowing lawns, cleaning a relatively big house and worrying about leaving it when I went away, and I've had none of those concerns since moving here, it's like a homecoming to me."

Brian explains that he has been visiting the Merriwa estate for over 20 years, having had many friends who have called it home over the years.

"It's a great place and I knew that, because I visited so often and had always felt very comfortable here, in fact I've had my name down for 15 years, so moving in wasn't a quick decision, it was very well thought out. I just wanted to be on the list for when the

time was right, and that time was about 18 months ago and I've never looked back."

Brian now has a two-bedroom villa at the estate which he calls home when he's living in Perth. He also has a motorhome which is currently in Sydney, and it's where he'll return in a few weeks' time when he resumes his travelling up the east coast of Australia.

"I try to get back about every two months for the residents' meetings. I figure I can't volunteer because I'm not here enough, but when I am here I like to contribute. What do they say? If you don't contribute, you can't complain if you're not happy, and that's really how I feel.

"But I love everything about this place, my neighbours are a bit older than me but everyone is so friendly, it seems to me that pretty much everyone is friends here."

And as someone who has recently relocated to a retirement village, Brian has some advice for anyone currently considering a similar move.

"You need to come in earlier rather than later," he says. "I think if you leave it, the decision becomes very stressful as learning new things as you get older, and perhaps as your memory fades, isn't always a good thing.

If you come in earlier you've got time to make friends, get to know your new doctor and dentist and things like that, and I believe the younger you do it the easier it is."

Sounds like very sound advice to us Brian.



Brian Luckhurst

Anyone wanting further information on the homes available at RAAFA's Merriwa Estate can contact Estate Manager, Karen Huyton on 9400 3772.

Betty celebrates 102



Betty Bell with her family

BETTY Bell celebrated her 102nd birthday on 31 January 2017 with a special family lunch. Her son Keith, daughter in law Bev and two granddaughters Jacquie and Kellie got together to mark the special occasion with a lunch at RAAFA.

Betty was born on 31 January 1915 in Karachi and grew up in Poona in India, part of the British Raj. It was there that she met her husband, Bob, who was a jockey then a racehorse trainer and had her only son Keith.

Keith migrated to Australia with his grandparents in 1947 during the partition

of India and his parents followed, arriving in Sydney in 1950.

"They lived through part of the Raj regime and it was quite a colourful existence," Keith said. "Things were looking a little hairy in the mid-1940s so they thought it was a good idea to get me out of the place.

Betty is the oldest resident at Karri and Tuart Lodge and she received many cards and good wishes from family and friends from interstate and overseas who remember her with fondness.

Keith said that Betty remembers her 100th birthday celebrations well, particularly her letter from the Queen and letters from many dignitaries. She also received a cuddly toy Corgi from Windsor Castle which she loves.

Betty said it is time to slow down now. She is doing very well and Keith would like to thank all the staff at RAAFA for the special care and attention they give his mother.

Seniors set to make a big splash

AFTER many months of organisation and planning, Merriwa Estate has a new activity on its weekly schedule - aqua aerobics.

The brainchild of Lois Woodcock, with help from husband Mike, three aqua aerobics sessions a week are taking place in the hydrotherapy pool.

According to Lois, although the sessions only began for the first time on 9 January, they're already proving popular.

"The Monday classes are already attracting

between eight and 10 people, which is fantastic to see," says Lois, who also helped to organise the new coach for the classes, fitness instructor Craig Blake.

"Aqua aerobics is so beneficial, particularly to seniors, as it exercises all of your muscles in one go and is a really healthy weight-bearing activity."

Anyone interested in finding out more information is encouraged to chat to Lois, or head along to the hydrotherapy pool at Merriwa just prior to a class starting.



Lois and Mike Woodcock

Redevelopment at Karri and Tuart Lodge

THE number of Australians living with dementia is growing — and growing fast. Indeed, it has been estimated that the number of people living with cognitive issues such as dementia will increase rapidly within the next ten years.

As a result, RAAFA has identified a greater need for accommodation specially designed for people living with dementia, which is why we are currently carrying out construction work at Karri and Tuart Lodge.

As part of this work, we recently closed 31 beds within the Lodge, in order for construction to take place. It's great to be able to report that the new building and services will include a number of small

community activity rooms, relaxation rooms and a beautiful sensory garden, as well as a fabulous alfresco area. The design will enable people living at Karri and Tuart Lodge to freely move throughout the building, as well as the garden areas.

This building environment is important, but just one part of the service. RAAFA's ground-breaking approach to care will encompass this new environment, supporting its focus on placing the person at the centre of their own care. Considering each person's unique values, attitudes, beliefs and preferences will help enable us to ensure people are treated with dignity, compassion and respect in a fun, caring and loving environment.

We will create a sense of community, not only for the people living there, but also for staff, families, friends and visitors. Indeed, we're all extremely excited about the difference this service will make to people living with dementia.

We anticipate the building works will be complete around September this year and we hope to be welcoming our first guests in October.



Significant works are underway at Karri and Tuart Lodge

The day war came to Australia

By Clive Robartson

ON SUNDAY, 19 February 2017 RAAFA remembered the day Australia was attacked and bombed, 75 years ago.

The solemn memorial service was held at Air Force Memorial Estate, in Bull Creek beneath the Spitfire at the Wall of Remembrance to commemorate what became a very sobering experience for the Australian nation.

Over 100 people gathered on this warm but beautiful Sunday morning as Denise Nicolay, Division Councillor, paid tribute to the 236 service personnel who died that day and the many who were wounded.

A very smartly turned out parade of Australian Air Force Cadets set the scene for the wreath and cross laying ceremony.

Ninety-five year-old Charles Cugley who 75 years ago was a young Sergeant of the 12th Squadron stationed in Darwin, placed a beautiful floral wreath at the foot of the Spitfire memorial, assisted by State President, Graeme Bland.

Crosses were also placed on the Wall of Remembrance by invited Guests, Division Councillors and Executive, Branch representatives and members.

Rhegan Harvey of the Australian Air Force Cadets presented a wonderful tribute to the servicemen and women caught up in the attack on Darwin.

These are just a few excerpts from her address:

“Australia entered WWII shortly after the invasion of Poland, declaring war

on Germany on 3 September 1939. From our country the war seemed so far away, yet it affected everyone and is remembered still today, 75 years on from what was the largest and most serious attacks on Australia during war time. The Darwin Bombing was the first time since European settlement that mainland Australia had been attacked by a foreign enemy.

“We stand here today to commemorate this attack, acknowledging the bravery of the people of Darwin, and all Australians who bore witness and acted to aid after the raids, we stand here to remember the courage of the Australian Defence Force which protected our coastline and we remember fondly the lives lost on that unforgettable summer morning.”

“In the first attack, which began just before 10.00am, the heavy rumbling of the Kate bombers covered the sky and hit shipping, infrastructure and the town. The Japanese attacked with over 180 planes that had been launched from Japanese land bases and aircraft carriers in the Timor Sea. The Japanese fighters strafed land targets and shipping. Dive bombers attacked the ships in the harbour, the military and civilian aerodromes and the hospital. The dive bombers were escorted by fighter planes to protect them from Australian and allied planes. Eight ships were sunk and most of the others were damaged by bombs or machine gunfire.”



LtoR Graeme Bland and Charles Cugley

“Darwin is arguably Australia’s most inclusive battle. Those who died that day included members of all three services, in rank ranging from a Wing Commander down to two cooks. They also included merchant seamen, postal workers and civilians who were just doing their jobs. They included men and women, black and white Australians, a teenage girl and a grandfather. It is important to recognize that the very first attack on Australia as a nation cost the lives of representatives of that nation.”

“The bravery and mateship shown that day has influenced not only the culture of Australia but has also increased the capabilities of our defence systems. The dreadful day brought a new awareness for national security that still has an influence today.”

Following the remembrance ceremony, morning tea was served in Langley Hall. Guests enjoyed the opportunity of fellowship and to view an extensive display of photographs and memorabilia of the Darwin raid set up by Charles Cugley.

Len still loving life

AT 95 years of age, Karri and Tuart Lodge resident Len Snell is still driving his car, actively playing bowls and reckons he couldn't wish to be in a better place.

“The Lodge is absolutely fantastic,” he says. “I lived in the RAAFA Merriwa Estate for 18 years and then when I had the opportunity to move into the Lodge I thought, well, I can sit and talk to these four walls, or move into a much more comfortable place.

“So move I did, and I love it, the meals are fantastic, the nurses are wonderful and the carers are great, it's such a friendly place and offers a fantastic lifestyle.”

At the time of writing Len was making plans to visit Darwin for the 75th Anniversary of the Bombing of the town, which occurred on 19 February 1942.

“I'm really looking forward to it, it's going to be a big event because of it being an anniversary year, and I received a wonderful invitation yesterday to have lunch with the Governor of the Territory.

“We'll also get taken to lots of different places in and around the city of Darwin, like the aviation museum, we get looked after very well.”

Len, who has lived at RAAFA's Merriwa estate since 1996, was based at Darwin's Noonamah Barracks from 1941-1943 where he was a postal dispatch rider in the 43rd Battalion.

The 20-year-old has significant memories of the day - now known as The Bombing of Darwin - because a serendipitous stop off to 'spend a penny' saved his life.

“I was running late that day because I had to answer a call of nature and those few minutes saved my life.

“I heard droning in the distance, at the time we had no idea it was Japanese bombers but we ran to the cliffs in panic and disbelief. When I then made it back to the post office it had been bombed to the ground killing the post master, his wife and daughter and several others.

“The time was 9:51am on 19 February 1942 and I'll never forget that day, I still clearly remember the horrific scenes of death and destruction and the enormous feeling of helplessness when we saw the town being destroyed, later discovering that more than 240 Australians had been killed and over 400 injured.”

Len, whose father was a WWI survivor, went on to see extensive action in Borneo and New Guinea, but admits his memories in both countries could not match the horror of the bombing of Darwin.

“Only one other post officer survived the attack and everyone else I worked with was killed, in fact many of my mates thought I had died too and when I eventually got back to the barracks that day there was a huge cheer when they all saw me,” he said.

Len was given a box camera by his mother before joining the army, which he used to take many photos on that fateful day and in the days after, all of which are now in a special scrapbook that he treasures.

Museum drone

IN EARLY February the Rotary Club of Melville held their meeting and dinner in the Aviation Heritage Museum under the Lancaster. During the meeting Club President, Marilyn Barton and Rob Willis, Youth Committee member presented a cheque for \$3,099 to a very enthusiastic Museum Manager, John Park for the purchase of an unmanned aerial vehicle drone (UAV), a DJI Phantom 4 Pro.

This drone is one of the most sophisticated UAV's on the market featuring advanced stability, 4k HD camera with gimbal, obstacle avoidance and automatic return to home mode. The unit can fly for 30 minutes on one charge and return to home if the battery becomes low. It is able to take still pictures, burst pictures or video using the very stable, gimbal controlled, high quality camera.

The drone will be used to train budding pilots in the Museum Youth Club and the Australian Air Force Cadets, take aerial pictures of the Museum and Estates for advertising, including the Museum's YouTube video channel.

When the unit is not being used it will be included in the UAV display in the Museum. The UAV will be a great addition to the Museum as a training aid, advertising tool and display item.



John Park with the drone



Len Snell

He was eventually discharged from the army in February 1945 and moved to Adelaide, where he worked as a roof tiler for many years, before starting his own business. He later retired to Perth in 1982 to be with his two daughters.

“I've had an eventful life, but I've been very lucky,” he laughs. “Some people have got to be lucky I guess, and I've always said it's better to be lucky instead of being rich, and I guess that's me.”

The fall of Singapore remembered

By Graeme Bland

A REMEMBRANCE Service was held at the City of Stirling Memorial by the Malayan Volunteers Group (WA Branch), followed by a get together and Malay cuisine.

Those gathered remembered how during February 1942 the Japanese Army swept south through the Malay Peninsula.

Although a naval attack from the south was expected, a land attack from the north occurred and within seven days Singapore was captured.

Thousands of prisoners from the Singaporean Militia, other armed forces and civilians were taken captive and went on to endure the remainder of WWII under the harshest of conditions in Changi Gaol, on the Thai-Burma railway and even working in Japanese coal mines.

Vyner Brooke massacre

ON 12 February 1942, with the fall of Singapore to the Japanese imminent, 65 Australian Army nurses, over 200 civilians and English military personnel were evacuated on the small coastal steamer SS Vyner Brooke.

Japanese aircraft bombed the overloaded ship and it sank quickly with some survivors reaching Bangka Island off the coast of Sumatra. When the number of survivors reached about 100 it was decided they should surrender to the Japanese.



There was a large turn-out at Point Walter for the Remembrance Ceremony

The survivors separated into three groups with the men going in search of the Japanese, closely followed by the civilian women and their children. The 22 Australian nurses stayed to look after the injured.

The first two groups were killed and the nurses were ordered to walk into the sea and when the water had reached the nurses' waists, the Japanese opened fire. Sister Vivian Bullwinkel was hit in the back by a bullet and knocked off her feet, but pretended to be dead. She was the only nurse to survive the massacre.

She hid with wounded British Army Private Cecil George Kingsley of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps for 12 days before being

captured. They were taken into captivity, but Private Kingsley died soon after from his wounds. Bullwinkel was reunited with survivors of the Vyner Brooke and spent three and a half years in captivity.

This massacre was later described in the book "White Coolies" written by fellow survivor Betty Jeffrey.

A Remembrance Ceremony was held on Sunday, 12 February 2017 at the Army Nurses Memorial, Point Walter Reserve in Bicton.

Relatives of those lost and the survivors paraded and were each given an Australian Flag to place in memory before the Ceremony commenced.

Bomber Command Memorial Centre

By Cyril Ayris

THE achievements and horrendous sacrifices made by Bomber Command in WWII are to be immortalised in a world-class memorial centre, now being constructed in England's eastern county of Lincolnshire, from where most bombing operations were launched.

The multi-million dollar, International Bomber Command Centre will be dominated by a 31.09m spire, representing the Avo Lancaster bomber wingspan, and will be the tallest war memorial spire in the UK.

The Centre, on one of Lincoln's two hills, looks across to the city's famous 13th Century cathedral spires which were landmarks for bomber pilots returning from raids and the last image of home for the tens of thousands of airmen who failed to return.

When completed next year, the Centre will be a world-class facility for researchers and those who want to spend time just remembering and reflecting on the years when Europe trembled under the Bomber Command onslaught.

This is where you may be able to help: The

Centre is organising audio interviews with former Bomber Command personnel, which will be kept in its archives. It is envisaged that visitors will be able to listen to the recordings, as in Canberra's Australian War Memorial or Albany's National ANZAC Centre.

Interviewers have been appointed worldwide, including in Western Australia, but the Centre is having difficulty locating people who flew with, or were connected to, Bomber Command.

If you would like to be interviewed and included in the archives, you are invited to contact Western Australia's appointed International Bomber Command Centre interviewer, Cyril Ayris on 9245 3563 or cyrilayris@bigpond.com.

The Lincoln Centre already includes Memorial Walls on which are inscribed the names of 26,296 aircrew who were killed in action while serving with I and 5 Groups in WWII. More walls will be built incorporating the names of other Bomber Command groups who were killed, bringing the total number of names to 55,573.

Hear hear for Australian Hearing

DOZENS of Cambrai Village residents undertook a hearing test late last year, thanks to Australian Hearing's mobile bus, which visited the estate.

It was a case of 'all aboard' as resident after resident entered the bus to find out what hearing services were available to them, and how they could protect their hearing into the future.

Vanessa Priestley, RAAFA Welfare Officer at Cambrai Village, said the mobile service had been organised to provide easy access to hearing services for local seniors living on the estate.

"We are very keen to be proactive about the health of our residents, and organising Australian Hearing to visit the estate is one way we can ensure seniors have access to important health outreach programs," she said.

"Our hearing is very important; without it people can get socially isolated, so we think it's important that people make the time to have their hearing checked regularly, and for those who were unable to visit the mobile bus this time around, we book it regularly.

Bomber Command Commemoration Day



Sunday, 28 May 2017

You are invited to join us for the annual ceremony marking Bomber Command Commemoration Day.

THE CEREMONY WILL BE HELD AT THE MEMORIAL WALL, AIR FORCE MEMORIAL ESTATE, BULL CREEK COMMENCING AT 10.00AM

We shall honour the memory of 125,000 Australian and allied aircrew who served in Bomber Command. Of those, 55,500 were killed in action and over 10,500 were taken prisoner.

The ceremony will include the laying of crosses by invited guests and a short address. This will be followed by morning tea in Langley Hall. You are then welcome to tour the Aviation Heritage Museum with its WWII displays, including a Lancaster Bomber.

Medals may be worn.

Please advise your attendance by Friday, 19 May to Michelle McCullough on 9288 8400 or enquiries@raafawa.org.au

Notes From Branches and Groups

Mandurah Branch

Shirley Farmer

The General Branch meeting held on 16 February was well attended, with members enjoying the cash prize quiz organised prior to the Happy Hour.

All members are to receive a flier through their mailbox, asking for suggestions regarding trips and club entertainment. This will be anonymous and once completed, should be posted into Box 287 please.

Do you fancy joining a games afternoon, with a few rounds of bingo, or perhaps you would prefer a Saturday night dance? We are looking at the possibility of utilising the club on a more regular basis, this would obviously need to be discussed and work round existing bookings. We look forward to reading your ideas, we may not be able to accommodate everything, but will certainly look at, and cost each suggestion.

Is there anywhere you have been that was so good, you would love to go back? We have pencilled in several more activities for the rest of the year, but would more than welcome further input.

Upcoming events

Thursday, 20 April, Branch Meeting, 4.00pm, followed by a meal of Chicken Maryland with pepper sauce or gravy. Names in the folder by the bar as usual please and anyone with dietary restrictions should speak with Lorraine to organise a suitable alternative.

Friday, 27 May, Mystery Tour, leaving 9.00am, returning approx 4.00pm. Cost \$45 per head, includes morning tea, entry to various venues, lunch with tea/coffee, and transport. List for those wishing to come will be on the Branch noticeboard.

Thursday, 13 July, Evening Casino trip, leaving Estate 3.30pm, returning 9.00pm. Cost \$15 per head including dinner. A poster will be displayed nearer the time.

Meadow Springs Residents' Branch

Fran Hewitt

On Tuesday, 7 February we had an interesting morning brushing up on our First Aid. Some things change over time so it is a good idea to do a refresher course. We covered CPR, snake bite action, bleeding, stroke and the recovery position.

We have a list of things coming up in the next few months which you may be interested in, so keep an eye on the notice board, and put your name down for any that you may wish to attend.

Upcoming events

Tuesday, 4 April, Mrs Jones' Fashion Parade - tickets from Fran unit 134 or Judy unit 78.

Tuesday, 18 April, Tea and Talk, Anne Peacock.

Tuesday, 25 April, ANZAC Day at the Memorial Wall. Please be seated by 8.15am.

Friday, 12 May, Friday night dining.

Friday, 19 May, Branch Annual General Meeting, 3.30pm followed by a meal.

Sunday, 28 May, Movie, 2.00pm.

Wednesday, 3 May, High Tea, Orion Terraces Rooms, 4.00pm. Tickets \$15pp from Judy Bland 9311 4401, includes a glass of bubbly.

Friday, 30 June, A visit down memory lane with the songs of Tom Jones and Frank Sinatra, Langley Hall, AFA Club. Further details Rhonda Mays 9311 4403.

Sunday, 23 July, Best of British Show, Tivoli Theatre, \$20pp, bookings Fay O'Brien 9311 4380.

WRAAF Branch

Judy Bland

Upcoming events

Tuesday, 11 April, Friendship Lunch at Merriwa, friends and partners most welcome, bookings essential, Laeraine on 9306 2681.

Tuesday, 25 April, ANZAC Day Breakfast at Mercure Hotel, from 7.30am. Bookings Judy 9311 4401. Followed by the ANZAC Day March. We wish to invite all ex WRAAF or RAAF ladies to join us on this day.

Tuesday, 6 June, Fish and Chip lunch, AFA Club, Bull Creek. Bookings Laeraine on 9306 2681 or Judy on 9311 4401. No meeting on this day.

MER Branch

Rhonda Mays

Upcoming events

Tuesday, 4 April, Fashion Parade, Village Hall, 9.30am for 10.00am. Tickets \$10 from Fay O'Brien 9311 4380 - includes a Devonshire Tea.



Occupational Therapist Aimee Zhang sizzled sausages at Bunnings

Gordon Lodge fund raising sausage sizzle

GORDON Lodge staff held a fund raising sausage sizzle at Bunnings in O'Connor on Saturday, 11 February 2017. Seven staff from the Lodge with some family volunteered their time for a very successful day.

During the day, both staff and relatives from Gordon Lodge showed their support by coming down and purchasing sausage rolls, which was fantastic. The locals however had their own special way of showing that they care about what we do. Knowing that the fundraiser was for RAAFA aged care, some of the locals kindly gave us their small change after their purchases and one customer showed his generosity by donating a further \$30 which was both unexpected

and greatly appreciated.

With hard working staff doing four hour shifts, we successfully raised around \$900 which will be utilized to develop the new Occupational Therapy Program for Gordon Lodge. With their neurocognitive decline, a new sensory program is needed to maintain or even possibly slow the decline.

Thanks to everyone for their support, especially the staff who took time out of their weekend to assist with this worthy cause. Without you this would not have been possible.

We look forward to the next fundraiser which will be announced in due course.

Maintaining the connection

IF YOU need a helping hand getting the weekly shopping, going off to a doctor's appointment, vacuuming the house or even having a shower, RAAFA Connect is here to assist.

RAAFA Connect (formerly known as AFA Care) is the in-home support division of RAAFA which provides the support you need, in the comfort and familiarity of your own home to stay living independently for longer.

Barbara Wright, Manager RAAFA Connect, explains that RAAFA residents can access a whole range of support services, many specifically tailored to an individual's requirements.

"We pride ourselves on consistent, flexible services and our team of support workers are fully trained and great at what they do," she says.

"We're also developing new services all the time and our focus is on listening to what people require, rather than telling them what we have to offer - we're always trying to get the best possible outcome for our clients."

RAAFA Connect services are expanding, now offering services at a 10% discount to our residents on site at Air Force Memorial Estate in Bull Creek, Merriwa Estate, Cambrai Village, Meadow Springs Estate and Erskine Grove, with talks starting in Albany.

"We're really focused on providing people with consistent, well-qualified staff with the right skills to deliver what they really need, whether that's assistance with cooking or taking their medication," adds Sandy Komen, General Manager of Connected Living.

"We can deliver services privately or offer advice on the government funded services available; we're basically here to help support RAAFA residents in the best way possible."

To find out more about RAAFA Connect, call 9311 4498.



LtoR Barbara Wright and Sandy Komen

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, 3.30pm to 6.30pm

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

Thursday, 13 April, Easter Thursday Dinner Dance, Langley Hall
Tuesday, 25 April, ANZAC Day Buffet Lunch, \$25.00, entertainment by Peter Williams
Sunday, 14 May, Mother's Day Carvery, please book at the bar.
Sunday, 28 May, Bomber Command Commemoration Ceremony.
CLOSED Easter Friday, 14 April to Monday, 17 April.

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

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

Tuesday, best fish and chips lunch in town, \$11.00
Wednesday, Chase the Ace, bingo, horse racing and evening meal. Small and regular size meals available
Thursday, Happy Hour, 4.30pm, Sports Bar
Friday, Weekly Special (Offal Day, Parm and Beer \$15.00 and Sliders and Chips) See Specials Board

Counter lunches

Monday to Friday, 11.45am to 1.30pm

Events

Friday, 7 April, A la Carte menu, Beaufort Restaurant, raffle and music by Bob Frazer
Tuesday, 25 April, ANZAC Day ceremony and morning tea followed by delicious buffet \$28.00.
Friday, 12 May, A la Carte menu, Beaufort Restaurant, raffle and music by Bob Frazer. Take Mum out for an early Mothers' Day celebration.
Monday, 22 May, Biggest morning tea, All welcome for morning tea and raffle \$8.00. All proceeds to Cancer Foundation.
CLOSED Easter Friday, 14 April to Monday, 17 April.

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.

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.
CLOSED, Easter Friday, 14 April.

Growing our community

WORKING together is the only way to grow. Just ask the residents and staff at RAAFA's Air Force Memorial Estate in Bull Creek who are taking the One RAAFA philosophy and running with it.

Thanks to some community networking between friends, Gordon Lodge was recently given two wheelchair accessible planter boxes.

"This will make such a huge difference to people who don't get about as much these days, but remain avid gardeners," said Facility Manager, Simon O'Neill.

Equally pleased were the staff at Fleetwood who built and delivered the planter boxes using recycled materials from their Perth yard. Senior Project Manager, Chris Blair said, "Fleetwood has been supporting community projects for years, not unlike RAAFA, so it was a genuine pleasure to deliver the promise on this request." (www.fleetwood.com.au – innovative modular solutions).

Cambrai Club

Phone: 9304 5401

Trading Hours



Bar

Tuesday and Wednesday, 4.00pm to 8.00pm
Friday, 12noon to 2.00pm and 4.00pm to 6.00pm
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

Events

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

CLOSED Easter Friday, 14 April.

SUBMISSIONS FOR AIR MAIL

5 May for June / July
7 July for August / September
1 September for October / November

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 in the first instance or via snail mail to

Julie Stearne,
2 Sleaf Road, APPLECROSS WA 6153.

Village gardens

RAAFA Amity Village Albany has two corner spaces which have become innovative "garden commons" for our green-thumbed residents who are keen on vegetable gardening.

Interested people have an allocation of

garden space to grow, tend, and harvest their own produce.

Both corner gardens are incredibly lush with rhubarb, strawberries, capsicums, tomatoes, carrots, corn...and the list goes on according to the seasons.



Joan Webster in one of the veggie gardens



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, morning class – Falls Prevention Clinic with a Professional Physio, Orion Function Room

Fees apply, rebates available. Contact Carena for times.

Mondays – 10.30am - Tai Chi Chen Style, Orion Function Room

With professional instructor, \$5.00 per

class. Simple to learn with only eight moves enables you to concentrate on each step.

Mondays, 2.00pm – Meditation Group, Village Hall

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

Friday, 21 April, 19 May, 16 June, 10.30am - Brain Training, Orion Function Room
Caitlin has returned to test and tease your brain like never before.

Saturdays, am – Nordic Pole Walking
A super way to get both your feet walking and your brain working. Heather is a trained Nordic walking instructor from Alzheimer's WA. There will be stretching and a friendly coffee after class.

Small Donation to Alzheimer's WA requested. Contact Carena for details. Running throughout 2017.

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

Exergaming has come to AFME.
Fun ways to get fit indoors. Contact Carena.

April

Thursday, 6 April, 10.00am – Browns Dairy, Alice Ross-King Care Centre
Don't miss out on this lively presentation from well-loved dairy producers.

Wednesday, 12 April, 10.00am – COTA, Alice Ross-King Care Centre
Jane Newsome heading up the presentation, "Your Wellbeing, Your Plan" Bring your family and friends along for a morning of motivation.

Thursday, 13 April, 10.00am – Bunnings Small Garden Demonstration, Estate Village Green
If small garden beds or pots are your thing we have it covered. A qualified horticulturalist will talk good dirt, hardy plants and tasty home grown produce.

Friday, 21 April, 10:30am – Brain Training with Caitlin, Orion Function Room
Continue to flex those mental muscles! This class is loads of fun so come along!

Thursday, 27 April, 10.00am - Historical Series with Keith Eddington - The Endeavour. Alice Ross-King Care Centre
Keith will bring fresh insights to those who have followed his earlier presentations. Don't miss out.

May

Thursday, 18 May, 10.00am – Eric McCrum OAM, Alice Ross-King Care Centre
Environmentalism, Naturalist, Photographer, Wildlife Warrior, Presenter, Story Teller and Friend of the Estate is returning to capture our imagination once again. Topic TBC.

Friday, 19 May, 10.30am – Brain Training with Caitlin, Orion Function Room
Change your mind about dementia prevention and pay this class a visit.

Thursday, 25 May, 10.00am – Historical Series with Keith Eddington – Rottnest Women, Alice Ross-King Care Centre
They were strong and courageous and pulled their weight throughout the years of war. Come along and celebrate the essence of these Australian pioneers.

Wednesday, 31 May, 10.00am – Curtin University Outreach Program, Alice Ross-King Care Centre
Kicking off their series of science based presentations with Lucy. The topic will amaze you! "Fireballs".

Meadow Springs

Weekly

Tuesday, 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

Tuesday, 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.

Thursday, 13 April, 11.30am – Season's Solo Singer, Community Centre
John will provide entertainment, followed by a sausage sizzle lunch. All Welcome.

Merriwa Estate

Weekly

Monday and Wednesday, 9.00am – 9.45am - Water Aerobics, Therapy Pool
With fitness instructor Craig Blake.

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.

May

TBA – VisAbility presentation.

Cambrai Village

Weekly

Wednesday and Sunday, Physiotherapist Julie Pham
Available for appointments from 8.00am. Appointment book located in Cambrai Foyer.

Tuesday, 8.00am -12noon, Podiatrist Fredrick is available for appointments, see book in Cambrai Foyer.

First & third 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.

Tuesday, 9 May, 10.00am – 12noon, Citizens Advice Bureau, Club Rooms
Come and find out more about Enduring Power of Attorney, Enduring Power of Guardianship, Advanced Health Directive, Wills and much more. Registration to Vanessa.

New advocacy training and development program to support ADF members past and present

A NEW advocacy training and development program being introduced by the Department of Veteran Affairs will help RAAFA to better support the needs of serving and former Australian Defence Force members.

Through the new Advocate Training and Development Program, RAAFA will continue providing advocacy and welfare assistance for past and current ADF members, a service which has been provided through the existing Training and Information Program for many years.

However the new program will enable future

advocate trainees to gain formal certification.

Pension and Advocate Officer Graeme Bland explains the changes mean there will now be four levels of pension accreditation: Advocate level I (entry level); Advocate L2 (case officer); Advocate L3 (VRB assistance) and Advocate L4 (VRB and AAT assistance).

"Training will be by electronic tutoring courses as well as some face-to-face follow-up training, which makes it easy for people to access," Graeme said.

"There is a real need for more people willing

to help serving and former ADF members to gain the best outcome for injuries or diseases attributed to their Defence service.

"We also have a need for experienced advocates to act as mentors to these trainees."

"Ex Service Organisations will now be responsible for nominating trainees for the various levels and for providing their own mentors to further train and supervise the trainees."

"Some training courses will have pre-requisite training before a trainee can progress to higher levels – for example, a

trainee will need to have passed an entry level course such as the Eligibility Course, which will be run in Perth on 17 and 18 May 2017."

To apply for this course please refer to the TIP WA website www.tip.org.au or the ATDP site www.atdp.org.au

For more information please contact Graeme Bland on 9311 4235 or email www.bcvetcent@gmail.com