



# AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA BALLARAT BRANCH

Newsletter June/July 2021



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COMMITTEE MEMBERS  
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**Newsletter**  
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**Social Luncheon Meetings** are held on the first Tuesday of each month commencing at 11.45 am (December meeting held closer to Christmas) **Committee Meetings** are held on the third Thursday of each month at 1 pm followed by a **General Business Meeting** at approx 2 pm to which all financial members are welcome to attend to ratify or otherwise the actions of the committee on that day and raise other matters.

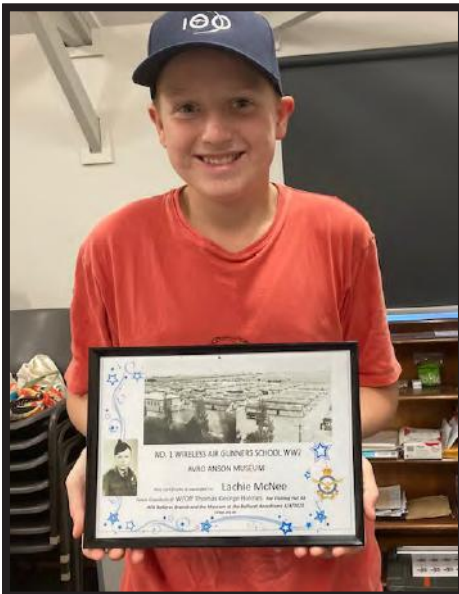
**FROM THE PRESIDENT** : Well I am back from my few weeks away up at Coffs Harbour NSW. My trip away was to have a bit of a break and to escape a few weeks of the cold. As it turned out, I not only escaped the cold but also avoided the last Victoria lockdown which worked out good for me, but I was most disappointed to hear of the lockdown and that it necessitated Secretary Peter Dowling to have to cancel our June Social Luncheon meeting.

**BUT THE GOOD NEWS IS** : Our July meeting this coming Tuesday 6th July is all okay to go ahead. **Please arrive by no later than 11.45 am, Remember your mask, a savoury item for your lunch, your own mug or cup for your tea or coffee, \$5 for entry and some additional cash for raffle tickets.** Our guest speaker will be Victoria Police Senior Sergeant Barry Jenks who will have interesting things to tell us about his involvement with the Kokoda Track. I would like to see a good turn up. Those requiring taxi transport need to advise me, (0439 929 322), by 6 pm on the Monday evening. (NH, Pres)

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**OUR 1wags.org.au WEBSITE AT WORK** : It has been great to see the interest that our 1wags.org.au website has received both in Australia and with hits from all around the World, but how good is it to see that it has provided a young man with the story about his Great Grandfather's training at 1WAGS here during World War Two and which also provided him with information about Great Grandad's service during the War.

Lachie McNee was so interested in his Great Grandfather's training at 1WAGS Ballarat that he made a visit from Melbourne to see first hand where Great Granddad, Warrant Officer Thomas George HOLMES did that training. Not only did Lachie get to see our Air Force Association rooms and view what we have done to honour and remember all those who trained at 1WAGS during World War Two, but he also got to tour the 'Friends of the Anson' museum to be able to view and touch the Avro



**Lachie McNee**



**Thomas George  
HOLMES as a  
WAG Sergeant**

Anson aircraft in which his Great Grandfather trained. Warrant Officer HOLMES completed 1WAGS Course No 43 after which he was posted to the United Kingdom for World War Two service with RAF Bomber Command. His further training would have included the lighter two engined bomber aircraft then moving up to four engined Lancaster bomber and then becoming the Wireless Air Gunner in a Lancaster crew. His World War Two service included operations over Cologne, Germany. Lachie received a Certificate marking his visit. Thanks to Janet Bates

for preparing the Certificate and meeting with Lachie and his family during my absence.

The latest figures for our 1wags.org.au website since its launch in February last year are 31,367 individual browsers from different countries all around the World and 152,635 'spider' visitors.

Again, with thanks to a lot of work by our website coordinator Janet Bates, *the June/July feature story* on the website honours **Wing Commander James Eric REYNOLDS** (father of member Margaret Bennett). Wing Commander Reynolds was post-war Commanding Officer at RAAF Base Ballarat with the establishment of the Air and Ground Radio School, later to become the RAAF School of Radio.

Following his World War Two top secret duties relating to the establishment of RAAF Radar Units around our shores, and prior to his post-war Commanding Officer post at Ballarat, Wing Commander Reynolds filled Command posts at both No 2 and No 3 Wireless Air Gunners Schools.

The selection of Wing Commander Reynolds' story as the *June/July Feature Story* was to coincide with the **No 13 RADAR STATION CAPE OTWAY, RAAF RADAR INTERPRETATIVE EXHIBITION~DEDICATION CEREMONY** for which we had planned our bus trip; however, Covid-19 has caused the postponement of that Ceremony until Saturday 23rd October 2021 **for which we will rearrange the bus trip.**



There is a lot more to this story and it has been very well put together by Janet. It is all there for you to access by going to our 1wags.org.au website. Lots of information and also more photographs. The time that Janet has spent on research and the preparedness of Margaret Bennett to provide information and documents and talk with Janet about her father's RAAF Service is very much appreciated. Go to the website, have a look. 1wags.org.au (NH, Pres)

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**UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER**

**Tuesday 6th July:** 11.45 am *Monthly Social Luncheon Meeting*. Guest Speaker will be Victoria Police Senior Sergeant Barry JENKS who will tell us some very interesting things about the Kokoda Track. If we are all quiet and listen to his talk, he might be happy to answer some questions about his policing duties when it comes time for questions. To assist with Covid Safe 'recommendations', please **bring your own Tea/coffee mug and take it home again.**

**Thursday 8th, Thursday 15th, Thursday 22nd, Thursday 29th July :** *Our rooms will open* for tea/coffee/biscuits/chat/library books etc in the committee room; dance music for dance practice in the Meeting/Common Room. **2.30 pm to 5 pm. Minimum \$2 donation.**

**Tuesday 3rd August:** 11.45 am *Monthly Social Luncheon Meeting*. Our speaker at this meeting will be our own Secretary Peter Dowling who will deliver a special 1WAGS presentation which has been put together with Janet Bates, Peter Dowling and Sue Alexander working together. To assist with Covid Safe 'recommendations', please **bring your own Tea/coffee mug and take it home again.**

**Thursday 8th, Thursday 5th, Thursday 12th, Thursday 19th and Thursday 26th August :** *Our rooms will open* for tea/coffee/biscuits/chat etc in committee room; dance music for dance practice in the Meeting/Common Room. **2.30 pm to 5 pm. Minimum \$2 donation.**

**Saturday 28th August:** *Battle for Australia/Air Force 100 Formal Ball*. Further info in this newsletter.

**Sunday 29th August:** *Battle for Australia/Air Force 100 Commemorative Service*. Further info in this newsletter.

**Tuesday 7th September:** 11.45 am *Monthly Social Luncheon Meeting*. Guest speaker to be advised at a later date. To assist with Covid Safe 'recommendations', please **bring your own Tea/coffee mug and then take it home.**

**PLEASE NOTE THE REFERENCES TO 'BRING YOUR OWN TEA/COFFEE MUG'**

**TO ASSIST WITH OBSERVING SOME OF THE COVID SAFE 'RECOMMENDATIONS' (NOT LAWS), IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO DRINK OUT OF SINGLE USE CARDBOARD CUPS THEN PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN TEA/COFFEE MUG TO MEETINGS AND TAKE IT BACK HOME WITH YOU.**



# BATTLE FOR AUSTRALIA DAY AND BATTLE OF BRITAIN DAY ~~~~~



**Battle for Australia Day** falls on the first Wednesday in September each year.

**Battle of Britain Day** falls on 15th September each year.

Our branch of the Air Force Association will commemorate **Battle for Australia Day** while combining it with celebrating and commemorating the Centenary of the formation of the RAAF, **Air Force 100** as detailed on page 4. **Battle of Britain Day** will be acknowledged by Air Force Association Victoria State President, Squadron Leader (Ret) Max McGregor when he addresses the **Air Force 100** part of the Commemorative service at the Australian Ex-Prisoners' of War Memorial on Sunday 29th August 2021.

There is a very strong Ballarat connection with the **Air Force Centenary** with the WWII No 1 Wireless Air Gunners School established at Ballarat and the post-war Air and Ground Radio School/RAAF School of Radio. There was a RAAF presence in Ballarat until 1961 when the RAAF School of Radio was relocated to RAAF Base Laverton. There is also a very strong Ballarat connection to the **Battle for Australia** with many 1WAGS trained airmen losing their life in our war in the Pacific with some buried in foreign lands.

Page 4 of this newsletter has details of our Battle for Australia/Air Force 100 weekend of 28th and 29th August 2021. AFA Vic State President Squadron Leader (Ret) Max McGregor and wife Rosemary and also AFA Vic Vice-President Wing Commander (Ret) Daryll Topp and his wife Gillian will be attending our Formal/Black Tie Ball on the Saturday night. **Public tickets to the Ball are sold out ; however, we might squeeze a couple onto the Air Force Association tables if confirmed, with payment, no later than this coming Tuesday 7th July Social Luncheon Meeting. After that, you will have missed out.**

Members are reminded that miniatures of service medals may be worn with formal attire for the Ball on the Saturday night and full size Service Medals should be worn at the Commemorative Service on the Sunday morning.

**DO YOU NEED YOU MEDALS CLEANED? DO YOU NEED MEDALS MOUNTED? DO YOU NEED MINIATURES OF YOUR SERVICE MEDALS MADE UP?** Dave at **Dave Wright Militaria and collectibles** does a perfect job. Dave is located at **6A Shepperd St, Ballarat**, tucked in behind Dan Murphys. Dave can be contacted on mobile 0414 067 051. .

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The Air Force Association Tasmania Division will be holding combined **Battle of Britain** and **Air Force 100** events and activities in Hobart over three days 10-12 September 2021.

For further details, please contact the State Secretary, Air Force Association, Tasmania Division on 03 6200 9221 (Wed 10 am - 3 pm or leave message), or email [secretary@raafatas.org.au](mailto:secretary@raafatas.org.au)

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STAY COVID SAFE, REMEMBER YOU MUST STILL CARRY A SUITABLE FACE MASK AT ALL TIMES REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR MASK WITH YOU TO OUR SOCIAL LUNCHEON MEETING AND ALL OTHER TIMES. PRACTICE GOOD HYGIENE, DON'T BECOME COMPLACENT



**SATURDAY 28TH AUGUST 2021**



# Formal Black Tie Ball

**7.30 PM - Midnight**  
**BROWN HILL HALL**  
**375 HUMFFRAY ST NORTH, BROWN HILL**

## DANCING FOR ALL

SEQUENCE, BALLROOM,  
ROCK N' ROLL, JIVE AND  
LINE DANCES

DANCE MUSIC BY MANTEL

LIMITED NUMBERS  
BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL

CONTACT ANN  
0414 441 149



ENTERTAINMENT BY

## The Pacific Belles

## DRESS : Formal/Black Tie

Ex-service attendees are invited to wear the miniatures of their  
Defence Service medals.

## COST : \$25 PER HEAD

INCLUDES TABLE SERVICE SUPPER

(OWN CUP RECOMMENDED)

DOOR PRIZES

GREAT EVENING OF ENTERTAINMENT AND DANCING

**SUNDAY 29TH AUGUST 2021**

Presented by the City of Ballarat Mayor and Councillors  
and the Ballarat Branch of the Air Force Association Victoria, a

## BATTLE FOR AUSTRALIA/AIR FORCE 100

COMMEMORATIVE SERVICE

WILL BE HELD AT THE

**AUSTRALIAN EX-PRISONERS OF WAR MEMORIAL**  
**Cnr Wendouree Parade and Carlton Street**  
**Lake Wendouree, (Ballarat)**

Attendees to arrive at the location by 10.30 am

Serving Defence Force members and  
Defence Service Veterans are

invited to wear their Defence Service Medals

Air Force Association Victoria State President  
Squadron Leader Max McGregor will speak to the  
Air Force Centenary

All three arms of the Australian Defence Force will be represented  
at the Service with individual speakers to address the roles  
of the RAN, Australian Army and RAAF in the Battle for Australia  
from 1941 to 1945

(All enquiries relating to this Service should be directed to Ballarat Branch Air Force Association  
President, Noel Hutchins by email to [noelhutch.afa@gmail.com](mailto:noelhutch.afa@gmail.com))

## SUNDAY AFTERNOON 29TH AUGUST 2021

In the afternoon, the now fully restored former World War Two RAAF Ballarat  
Officers' Mess building will be open to the public from 2.30 pm to 4.30 pm

This building has been restored by the City of Ballarat and Heritage Victoria  
and now houses three separate Community Groups including  
the Ballarat Branch of the Air Force Association. The building is situated at  
**Airport Hut 48, Airport Road Mitchell Park. (Stay on Airport Road, DO NOT TURN)**

**At 3 pm the Sing Australia Choir will present a concert of  
World War Two era songs. The Choir will also be seen,  
(and heard), at the Commemorative Service.**

Tea/Coffee biscuits will be available for a small fee