



AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA BALLARAT BRANCH

Newsletter February 2021



President : Noel Hutchins - 0439 929 322
Secretary : Peter Dowling RFD - 0418 281 775
Treasurer : Brian Drennan
Vice President : Leigh Harvey OAM
Junior Vice President : Peter Schoutens
Chaplain : Rev. Keith Lanyon - 0411 512 160

**GENERAL
COMMITTEE MEMBERS**
Sue Alexander
Janet Bates
Stephen Brown
Ken Marsh
Bob McDonald

ELDER STATESMEN
Dr Tom Roberts OAM
Gordon Jarvis
Tom Jobling
Keith Pitman
Stan White

Newsletter
Editor : Noel Hutchins
Co-Editor : Sue Alexander

YOUR 2021 EXECUTIVE AND GENERAL COMMITTEE

At our 2021 Annual General Meeting Mr Peter Dowling RFD was elected as the new Branch Secretary to replace Rob Petty who was not able to make himself available to continue in the role. I thank Rob for his service as Secretary and also for his Runway's Dance initiative.

Ms Sue Alexander was elected as an additional General Committee Member and I thank Sue for accepting her nomination and election to committee. Sue has accepted my invitation to fill a position of responsibility as "Social Secretary" and has also agreed to become Co-Editor of the newsletter with the view of taking over as Editor of the newsletter as I ease out of the position prior to my stepping down as president prior to our Annual General Meeting in February next year. (NH, Pres)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS' POSITIONS AND AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR 2021 ARE :

Noel Hutchins : President, Newsletter Editor; **Peter Dowling RFD :** Secretary/Assistant Treasurer;
Brian Drennan : Treasurer/Assistant Secretary; **Leigh Harvey OAM :** Senior Vice President/Cashier/Assistant Librarian;
Peter Schoutens : Junior Vice-President/Audio-Visual Technician; **Rev. Keith Lanyon :** Chaplain;
Sue Alexander : Social Secretary/Co-Editor Newsletter; **Janet Bates:** 1wags.org.au Website Coordinator;
Stephen Brown : Senior Librarian; **Ken Marsh :** Photographer; **Bob McDonald :** Newsletter hand delivery Assist.

ANZAC DAY IN BALLARAT 2021

Alan Douglas, Ballarat RSL President, has advised me that **there will be Anzac Day commemorative Services held in Ballarat on Sunday 25th April 2021.** Services cannot be held at the Cenotaph in Sturt Street due to the difficulty to control numbers of attendees.

Services will be held at the **Ballarat-Midlands RSL Sports and Services Club** in Heinz Lane and will include : a **DAWN SERVICE** followed by a **GUNFIRE BREAKFAST** served inside and outside the club rooms complex. The later morning **ANZAC DAY SERVICE AND MARCH** will follow with this to be conducted in the large carpark area where no parking will be allowed on the day, so if you don't want a big walk on the day, then attend the Dawn Service. Outside Services will allow the attendance of up to 500 people. In the afternoon, Anzac Day activities **Two-Up and general camaraderie** will continue in the club rooms complex. I would like to see a good number of our members take part this year and show a strong Air Force Association commitment to these very important Commemorative Services and activities.

I am well aware that many of our ex-service members have mobility problems and unable to march or stand for long periods. **Motorised open buggies** can be arranged for you to take part in the 'March'. So that we can provide the RSL with numbers of AFA Ballarat members wishing to be included in the numbers allowed to attend and so that I know how many motorised buggies to request...PLEASE ADVISE ME, (Noel Hutchins, 0439 929 322.... OR....noelhutch@bigpond.com) ASAP of your intention and commitment to attend. (NH, Pres)

OPENING OF AFA HUT 48 ROOMS TO MEMBERS AND ACTIVITIES

In anticipation of some further easing of Covid-19 restrictions very soon, (optimism), consideration is being given to opening our rooms, both our Committee Room and our 'Meeting Room/Common Room', for members to be able to attend to gather and chat over a cuppa in the Committee Room as well as Dance Music being played in the 'Common Room' for members to dance or exercise to or to just watch others doing that. Our Senior Librarian Stephen Brown has advised that **the development of the library is now at a stage where members are able to sign out books on loan from the library**, so members will be able to take advantage of that.

To increase numbers of interested people, members can invite non-members to attend, (with them), members to pay just \$2 to attend any session opening and non-members to pay \$5 to attend any session opening, with monies going toward our costs such as for tea/coffee, biscuits and milk.

When the time is right, it is intended to start these openings with a Thursday afternoon opening each week from 1400 hours to 1700 hours, (2 pm to 5 pm). **SO WATCH THIS SPACE.....** and then we can consider other opening times if response is good.

What we would like to hear from members is what 'activities' they would like to see introduced at the rooms and WHICH THEY WOULD SUPPORT, so that we can gauge interest of other members. It is not appropriate to conduct "classes" of any sort because U3A are providing classes for 'just about anything'.

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**HAPPY BIRTHDAYS :** Yes, there were/are a few member birthdays during February, so Happy Birthday to you ..... **But a special Happy 94th Birthday to Stan White.** Stan did receive a Special Happy Birthday email sent to him on behalf of the Committee and all members of our Ballarat Branch.

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TALKING ABOUT BIRTHDAYS, HAPPY FIRST BIRTHDAY to our 1wags.org.au website.

Yes, it was on 11th February last year that I had the pleasure of officiating at the launching for the 1wags.org.au website to go live and the presenting of certificates of appreciation to each of those people who had contributed to the research and other work/activities that made the development of the website possible.

Since the website went live just one year ago there have been 20,841 individual browsers to the website from all around the World, with Germany and the USA featuring heavily in the



locations of browsers. There has also been 107,989 'spider' visitors to the site.

Once the website went live our website coordinator Janet Bates didn't consider her job 'done'. Janet continues to work with the website developer and his staff working on various aspects of the site and she continues to research and publish new "Feature Stories" on the site. Yes, there were several people who contributed to the development of the site and who were rightly recognised in the presentations last year, but the continuing work and the quality of that work that Janet continues to do is a real credit to her. Janet is a very valuable committee member of our Branch of the Air Force Association. Thank you Janet. I also recognise the continuing work and cooperation of the staff at UBC Digital, our chosen Website Developer. (NH, Pres.)



Website coordinator Janet Bates receives her Certificate of Appreciation 11/2/2020

OUR 1WAGS WEBSITE AT WORK

RAAF airman Thomas George HOLMES, Service Number 430763, trained at 1WAGS Ballarat, completing Course No 43, after which he was posted to the UK. Thomas was attached to No. 8 [Observers] Advanced Flying Unit [AFU] RAF, based at Mona, Isle of Anglesey, Wales. The Advanced Flying Units for pilots and 'observers', (Wireless Operators and Navigators), were set up to enable aircrew who had trained abroad to experience UK weather and flying conditions prior to their posting to an Operational Unit. Thomas was then posted to No. 14 Air Crew Holding Unit [ACHU]. He flew on operations over Cologne, Germany. Thomas ultimately achieved the rank of Warrant Officer during his WWII RAAF service.

The fact that our 1WAGS website lists Warrant Officer HOLMES as a 1WAGS trainee led to his daughter, Carol Gould, together with her husband Glen, travelling from Mitcham in Melbourne to Ballarat where she met with our Website Coordinator Janet Bates to provide to us a photo of her father, (above, right), and to discuss information about her father's RAAF training and service. Carol and Glen were able to view what we have done at Hut 48 in recognising the training and service of her father and every other 1WAGS trainee.



Photo of her father provided to us by his daughter Carol Gould



Carol and Glen GOULD



Carol Gould & Janet Bates

This is our 1wags.org.au website, (and Janet Bates), at work.

GOOD ONYA' JACK

Our Melbourne based Ballarat member, 103 yo Jack Bell has added his very respected voice to objections to any thought of not proceeding with an Anzac Day Commemorative Service and March for Sunday 25th April 2021.

(Melbourne Herald Sun 24 Feb 2021)



Visit by REOA and AFA Engineering Branch

The President of the REOA and Air Force Association Engineers Branch, David Graham, has advised of their planned excursion to Ballarat on Friday 19th March. The REOA in their title stands for "RAAF Engineer Officers' Association of Australia. Their visit to Ballarat will include a visit to the Ballarat Aviation Museum, a visit to our rooms at Hut 48 where we will host them to lunch after which they will visit the "Friends of the Anson Museum before returning to Melbourne. Members are invited to advise me of their wish to attend the luncheon. Members will not be required to bring any food items. A finger food lunch will be provided and attendees will, as normal, pay \$5 each, (toward our costs), to attend, as will each of our guests. I would appreciate a good attendance of members. (NH, Pres.)

2021 MEMBERSHIPS

We have had an excellent take up of membership renewals for 2021. Thank you to all those that have done so.

If you are among the few that have not yet gotten around to renewing, please renew at, or before, our meeting on 2nd March

I have a full list of financial members as of 24 Feb provided to me by AFA Vic Office.

If you renew through AFA Vic Melbourne Office after that date, please advise me that you have done so

If no renewal by 2nd March 2021, No Newsletter

(Noel Hutchins, President)

MARCH SOCIAL LUNCHEON MEETING

Yes, we are back to a full Social luncheon meeting this coming Tuesday 2nd March including a GUEST SPEAKER

One year ago we were preparing for our March 2020 Social Luncheon Meeting with a special guest speaker arranged, retired Victorian Police Sergeant John Moloney. One year on we have our 2021 March meeting this coming Tuesday 2nd March, **and the good news is**, John has accepted our invitation to be our guest speaker for this meeting.

As usual, I ask that members please arrive **no later than 11.45 am** to enable us to start proceedings at 12 Noon. Also, as usual, members are asked to bring a lunch item for themselves which will be supplemented by the provision of some hot pastries and other finger food items.

Don't forget your \$5 cash towards our costs and **REMEMBER SOME EXTRA CASH** to purchase some **raffle tickets**. There will once again be a nice veggie basket and other prizes for winners to choose from.

Our guest speaker, John Moloney, served 38 years as a Victorian police officer, but since retiring as a Police Sergeant 11 years ago he has continued working for Vic Police, so he is now in his 49th year of service to Victoria Police. He currently works from the Ballarat Police Station.

John is the co-founder of a wonderful initiative, **Cops N' Kids**, which organises camps and activities for children with cancer or other life-threatening illnesses.

It was in November 2019 that I was privileged to witness **Cops N' Kids** in action at the Ballarat Airport Terminal Hangar and surrounds at the invitation of our own Stan White's daughter, Detective Senior Constable Mary White.

What a delight to see. I had tears of joy happening while trying to take some photographs with my iPhone of what was witnessing. It is not just the kids that are benefitting from these camps and activities, but it also provides some respite for the parents and carers while the kids are away 'having heaps of fun'.

I have ascertained that camps and activities are funded solely by Cops N' Kids, with no outlay from parents. Funds come in the form of donations of goods and service by businesses providing things such as accommodation, food, entertainment etc., as well as monetary donations from across Ballarat.

So if you would like to consider a donation to support this wonderful program, provision will be made to enable you to do just that during our meeting on Tuesday 2nd March.....give it some thought please. (NH, Pres)



Detective Senior Constable Mary White with one of the children

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**IF YOU REQUIRE TAXI TRANSPORT FOR THE MEETING ON TUESDAY PLEASE LET NOEL KNOW ON 0439 929 322 OR by email at noelhutch@bigpond.com**