



AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA BALLARAT BRANCH



Newsletter September 2019

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REGULAR
COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Janet Bates
Stephen Brown
Michael Lake
Ken Marsh
Bob McDonald

ELDER STATESMEN
Dr Tom Roberts OAM
Gordon Jarvis
Tom Jobling
Keith Pitman
Stan White
Newsletter Editor
Noel Hutchins

MONTHLY SOCIAL MEETINGS

Our **Social Luncheon Meetings** are held on the **FIRST TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH, (except January)**, with **Arrival time by 11.45 am for a 12 Noon commencement**. All meetings are held at our rooms at Airport Hut 48, Airport Drive, Mitchell Park (ie : Ballarat Aerodrome).

MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETINGS

Our **Business Meetings, open to all members**, are held at 3 pm on the **second** Tuesday of each month. These meetings immediately follow a monthly Committee meeting enabling members to be promptly aware of decisions taken by the committee, enabling members to ratify, or otherwise, decisions taken.

79TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN

The 79th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain was commemorated at the Sebastopol Cenotaph on Sunday 15th September 2019.



World War Two Vintage Ryan aircraft piloted by AFA Ballarat member Steve Carter overflies Sebastopol Cenotaph.
(Photo : Edwina Williams, Times News Group)



Guest of Honour, AFA Vic President Squadron Leader (Retired) Max McGregor speaks at the Commemorative Service.
(Photo : AFA Member Ken Marsh)

The 79th Anniversary of The Battle of Britain commemorations on 15th September got underway with a church Service at the Skipton Street Uniting Church. This was followed by a morning tea provided by the church ladies.

Our **Commemorative Service at the Sebastopol Cenotaph** commenced at Noon with 425 Squadron Australian Air Force Cadets providing a Catafalque Party. After the mounting of the Catafalque Party, Master of Ceremony Mr Reg Mowat signalled a flyover of a WWII vintage Ryan aircraft flown by AFA Ballarat member Steve Carter. The weather on the day allowed a clear view of the aircraft as it flew over, (Photo Page 1).

The City of Ballarat was represented by Councillor Grant Tillett which was much appreciated, and Grant gave a speech from the Lectern.

The assistance of the Ballarat City Council, particularly that of Community Events Officer Mark Bruty and his staff, with the arrangements and "setting up", for this Commemorative Service, was acknowledged by myself.

Guest of Honour for this service was Squadron Leader (Ret'd) Max McGregor, State President, AFA Vic. Max also gave a speech from the lectern. (Photo Page 1). The Bugler for the service was Tamara Barrett, pictured with Max in Page 1 photo.

Our **Battle of Britain Luncheon** was held at the Barkly Restaurant where Guest Speaker Max McGregor gave a very informative talk surrounding the political 'goings on' between British politicians and military leaders at the time of the Battle of Britain.

The attendance as an invited guest at the luncheon of Times News Group journalist Edwina Williams, gave us the opportunity to express our thanks to the Times News Group Editor Alistair Finlay, through Edwina, and to Edwina herself, for the great support that we have received from them in the form of excellent newspaper exposure of our Branch of the Air Force Association as an ex-service organisation. (NH, Pres)

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**VALE : Mrs Pat Foley**

*Sadly, the month of September 2019 saw the passing of former Air Force Association Ballarat Branch President Mrs Pat Foley.*

*During the WWII period, Pat served as a member of the Womens' Auxiliary Australian Air Force.*

*Pat served as our Branch President in the years 1995 and 1996.*

**MAY SHE REST IN PEACE**

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Our Ballarat RSL Poppy Club friends have needed to change our Poppy Club monthly get together at the Midlands-Ballararat RSL Sports and Services Club to the **4th Friday of each month** ~ so our next get-together is upon us ~

FRIDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER 2019

Arrive from 5.30 pm but try to be there before the 6 pm Ode.

Come and enjoy a friendly get-together, have a meal and then stay on for the live band entertainment if you wish

BATTLE FOR AUSTRALIA 1941 ~ 1945

Remembrance and Afternoon Tea

A Battle for Australia Remembrance and Afternoon Tea was held at our Airport Hut 48 Rooms on Sunday 8th September. This was not a full commemorative service in respect of Australia's defensive war against the Japanese from 1941 to 1945 (which was the 'Battle for Australia'). This was a more simple and casual gathering to remember those who gave their lives and to honour all those who took part in that defence of our country.

It was a gathering to hear from Guest Speaker Lieutenant Colonel David Arden RFD, the Deputy Chair of the Battle for Australia Foundation Victoria and to hear directly from him about the Foundation and their view on what is The Battle for Australia.

After I became involved with the Air Force Association and also joined the Ballarat RSL, which was just in April last year, I began to ask the question as to why, in this city of Ballarat, do we commemorate a whole range of military battles of the past, (which is wonderful), but not commemorate our war in the Pacific and right here at home against the might of the Japanese invading forces.

The Federal Government proclaims Australia's commemoration days. Among those for war is the Battle for Australia Day, (the first Wednesday in September), in third place of significance only after Anzac Day and Remembrance Day.

When, in June 2008, the Federal Government announced that the first Wednesday of September each year would be the day that would be "Battle for Australia Day, it was said, inter alia, "There will be a series of activities and commemorations **around the date** that will be the first Wednesday in September each year to acknowledge the sacrifice and courage that was something we can all be proud of".

In our war against the Japanese the total of Australian servicemen killed in action was 8,274 but when adding those who died from their wounds or died as prisoners of war, the total climbs to 17,501. But of course there were also casualties among the civilian population including the lives lost with the bombing of Darwin. Thirty Merchant ships were lost to enemy attack in Australian waters with a resulting 654 deaths.

Of the airmen that trained at No 1 Wireless Air Gunners School



Prior to commencement of Gathering Meeting
Guest Speaker Lieutenant Colonel David Arden RFD (Front, left) seated beside Captain Luke Quinn, Adjutant 8th/7th Battalion RVR (Photo : Ann Petty)



David takes some questions following his most informative talk (Photo : Ann Petty)

at RAAF Ballarat during the Second World War, in addition to the many that lost their lives in Europe and Africa, 281 of them lost their lives in operations relating to our war closer to home against the Japanese, and that is just the Ballarat trained airmen.

Of this total of 281 KIA Ballarat trained airmen, a handful of those lost their lives on Australian soil with the rest losing their lives beyond our shores with most buried in foreign lands.

Here is just one name of a locally born young man that trained here in Ballarat and subsequently lost his life in the defence of our nation in our Battle for Australia.

<p>Patrick Fraser STANLEY, Born Ballarat..... 3 Nov 1921</p> <p>Enlisted in RAAF1 April 1943</p> <p>Commenced No 1 Wireless Air Gunners Course No 46 at 1WAGS RAAF Ballarat commencing.....9 Dec 1943</p> <p>Killed in Action as Flight Sergeant STANLEY P. F. on 5th July 1945 in a flying Battle over Borneo</p> <p>Buried in foreign soil at Labuan War Cemetery, Malaysia Lest we Forget</p>

With continuing good work by our current Senior Researcher, Peter Schoutens and our Website Coordinator Janet Bates, Patrick's name will appear on the Killed in Action Memorial Pages of our 1WAGS Memorial Website along with the other 280 KIA in our Battle for Australia and those that lost their lives in other actions during WWII

What we have been able to organise in Ballarat this year to commemorate the Battle for Australia was a precursor for next year when there will be a full **Battle for Australia Commemorative Service** at the Australian Ex-Prisoners of War Memorial commencing at 11 am on Sunday 30th August 2020, (3 days prior to the first Wednesday in September). From 2 pm on the same day there will be the **Battle for Australia Afternoon Tea Dance** to be held in the Function Room, (the former RAAF Ballarat Officers' Mess Dining Hall), at Airport Hut 48. (NH, Pres)

PLEASE PUT IT IN YOUR DIARY NOW



A situation occurred this month where five members were aware that a former President of our branch of the Air Force Association had passed away, yet not one of them thought to advise the President or Chaplain of her passing, or at least enquire as to whether this was known to them. In future, would any member who becomes aware that a member or former member has passed away, please advise myself or our Chaplain Keith Lanyon without delay.

As has been the case, an email to members advising of a passing and funeral arrangements would then be sent out.

My contact details and those for Keith are included at the top of every newsletter. (NH Pres.)



Don't forget our Monthly Social Meeting on Tuesday 1st October and please advise by Monday 30th Sep if you require taxi transport to and from the meeting.

Our October General Business Meeting, open to all members, will be held on Tuesday 8th October, (second Tuesday of the month), at 3 pm. This meeting immediately follows the monthly 2 pm committee meeting, so come on, show some interest and come along to the meeting.