



# 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



### WAAAF memories

Jean Newton has been a member of the Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force (WAAAF) for more than 70 years. "Shortie from switch", as she was known, was based at Pearce Air Base through the war.

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### Vale Frank McCarthy

Frank McCarthy was a pioneer and enthusiastic participant at RAAFA Meadow Springs Estate where he held many official and unofficial positions over many years. He was also a former member of RAAFA Division Council.

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# WAAAF Branch's last President



Back row LtoR Kate Quan, Royla Sailing, Nancy Passmore, and Tracy Dean  
Front row LtoR Alison Atkins, June Perry, Florence Davies and Valma Page

IT TOOK June Perry a good two years to 'wear down' her father for permission to join the Women's Australian Auxiliary Air Force (WAAAF) in June 1943.

"I had just turned 20 – I would have joined when I was 18 but my dad wouldn't let me. Eventually I wore him down though, so that's when I enlisted," she said.

"I went to Karrinyup for my rookies and then we waited to be put to work. I was a pay clerk, and I was posted to Headquarters Western Area on St George's Terrace in Perth. I was there for about six months before I was posted to Geraldton at No. 4 Service Flying Training School, where the pilots got their wings."

June spent about a year in Geraldton, which she recalls as a lot of fun but a lot of hard work.

"I made friends I still have to this day. We slept on stretchers made of iron with a cyclone wire base and a hessian bag filled with hay for a mattress, and I think we brought our own sheets from home. Every morning we had to fold up the blankets and make the bed just so. But we were young and it didn't bother us too much," she said.

"One time on a Sunday morning we were having a church parade, there were about 800 people all outside when we heard an aircraft, and this big four-engine Liberator came down over our heads and blew our hats off," she said

"It turned out some Americans had gotten lost on their way to Sydney from Java and they ended up landing on an unserviceable air strip which caused a great commotion. They didn't have a very good reputation as navigators!"

June has many stories of the various shenanigans that went on during her time with the WAAAF.

"For a while when I first joined and was working at HQ about 20 WAAAF girls were quartered at the Cloisters. The RAAF had bought a double-storey house on the river, and I got to sleep in the bay window which you could see as you came up from Mill St," she recalls.

"When we first moved in, we'd have gentlemen arriving at all hours of the night knocking on the front door. We soon figured out that the boarding house must have been a high class brothel before it was bought for the WAAAF girls. I'm still not sure who got the bigger shock – the girls answering the door, or the men themselves!"

"Wherever we were there would occasionally be some bloke hanging around where he shouldn't. We used to sleep in big huts with no curtains and no floor coverings in Geraldton, and one night a girl was doing her hair and screamed and threw her comb out the window – she'd just seen a man peeping in.

"It certainly enlivened our days. It was all very

simple, all very innocent in those days."

When she returned to Perth, June was based at 5SDT, a service training school for RAAF cooks, where she was the sole staff member in the pay section. She then rounded out her WAAAF service at Headquarters in Perth, and was discharged in June 1946.

"It was quite interesting being based in Perth, you got to see lots of different people coming through to get paid. I met Hughie Edwards one day – word got around that he was coming and there he was," she said.

"I stayed on for another year after the end of the war. There were always wages to be processed."

Now 93, June has been involved with the WAAAF WA Branch for many years, and served as the branch President since 2012.

Sadly the time has come to close down the branch this year.

"It's sad to see it close and we don't want it to, but we are all getting on now, and it's time."

The Branch donated funds to the Aviation Heritage Museum for the installation of a park bench. The seat fittingly faces the Spitfire Memorial in acknowledgement of those who served in the WAAAF during WWII.

Proud Branch members gathered for the unveiling of the bench.

## 103 candles for Lesley

RESIDENTS and staff gathered for a very special occasion at Vivian Bullwinkel Lodge when resident Lesley O'Mara celebrated her 103rd birthday on 7 November.

Lesley blew out the candles on her cake while residents sang 'Happy Birthday', before everyone enjoyed a slice of the birthday cake.

Vivian Bullwinkel Lodge Occupational Therapist Alanna Bertoldo said Lesley is a much-loved part of the Lodge community, and residents were thrilled to come together in her honour.

"It's not every day that we celebrate a 103rd

birthday here, so this is a very special occasion," she said.

Lesley has lived through two World Wars, the landing of man on the moon and countless other world-changing events. Born on 7 November 1913, Lesley was one of three siblings, though her brothers Huntley and Frank have now passed away.

Her daughter, Kerry, lives in Queensland, and she also has two grandchildren, Leanne and Dean.

Lesley was a psychologist and served as a RAAF transport driver in 1942.

She has lived at Vivian Bullwinkel Lodge since 2008, and has been an active member of the Lodge community over the past eight years. She was also a member of the local Senior Citizens Association, and loved going to the horse racing on Saturdays well into her 90s.

She enjoyed gardening, swimming and was a talented pianist. Lesley is taking her retirement a little easier now that she's into



Alanna Bertoldo and Lesley O'Mara

her third centenary – she enjoys listening to music and having high tea and pamper sessions at the Lodge.

# From the cockpit



By **Graeme Bland**

## RAAFA AGM results

ANOTHER AGM has come and gone. I would like to take this opportunity to thank those people who have been minding the store be it as members of Division Council, management, staff or volunteers.

We welcome some new faces on Division Council in Denise Nicolay and Lindsay Lane. It was pleasing to see so many

nominees putting their hands up and to those who missed out on filling a vacancy, please try to maintain your fervour and put your hand up another year. Thanks also to those who showed faith by voting me in for another term as State President. The future of RAAFA in Western Australia depends on having a governing body of enthusiastic members.

The Division Council now consists of the following:

State President	Graeme Bland
State Vice President	Clive Robartson
State Secretary	Ron Onions
Division Councillors (elected)	David Peet Denise Nicolay Lindsay Lane
Division Councillors (appointed)	Geraldine Carlton Tony Brun Peter Bryant
CEO (ex-officio)	John Murray

I see over the past couple of years the WA Division management structure has been

defined and our governance risk assessment shows the safest level since the first housing was introduced into Bull Creek. Our financial status is sound and we now have adequate human resources (HR) back up for our employees, residents, volunteers and members. With over 500 employees HR issues are now downgraded from the high risk area. The future can now concentrate on tweaking other areas of our large organisation.

## Branches

One area of concern is our Branches and having lost the likes of the Australia Pacific, European Area and the City of Perth Branches and being aware of at least two more Branches on the edge of folding, I would appreciate the thoughts of the membership, in particular the non-residential members. Do we try to resurrect the likes of the Permanent Air Force Branch or go with regional social Branches?

I would appreciate any thoughts sent to [gbland@raafawa.org.au](mailto:gbland@raafawa.org.au) for further consideration.

## 75th Anniversary No 30 SQN RAAF

No 30 SQN RAAF will commemorate their 75th anniversary since their formation on 9 March 2017. To mark the occasion a Bloodhound missile static display and plaque will be unveiled at RAAF Base East Sale, followed by an evening function. Past members and associates of all iterations of 30 SQN are warmly invited to attend. To register your interest, contact 30 SQN at email: [eslabcp@defence.gov.au](mailto:eslabcp@defence.gov.au).

As I am putting this together within a week of being elected I am still in catch-up mode. Therefore I have little to add, except on behalf of the Division Council may we wish all a joyful Christmas, hopefully with family and friends, and may 2017 bring all you wish of it, except a long, cold winter like we've just had.

Remember also "to stay on your feet".

## Royal Australian Air Force Association

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**See page 11 for submission deadlines**

# Update - RAAFA's brand refresh

By **Julie Stearne**

AS AN update to the last brand refresh article in Air Mail, we are excited to present RAAFA's refreshed logo and new brand statement.

We have introduced a brand statement for the first time, it's what we want to be known for, the essence of our purpose, existence and endeavour.

RAAFA has protected, cared and supported Australians for almost 100 years and is committed and determined to continue supporting all Australians like no other, it's what we stand for. We believe our brand statement encapsulated this ethos in three simple words:

*'Above and Beyond'*

## RAAFA heritage

In keeping with our air force heritage and traditions the logo has been designed to represent the tail of an aircraft with the letters joined to depict a slipstream.

## The Crest

Note, there has been no change to the crest and it will continue to be used in various areas of the Association, especially ceremonial and membership areas.

## Introducing our Sub-Brands

As part of the refresh, sub-brand names have been created to represent the varying areas of our organisation. Some of you may

have already noticed 'RAAFA Connect', the new name for AFA Care. It is still the same supportive service, provided by the same compassionate staff, the only change is the name. During the coming months we will transition over to the new name, RAAFA Connect.

Why change the name? We have received a lot of feedback from members and the wider community saying that they didn't know what AFA Care was and didn't link it with RAAFA.

Our other new sub-brands are 'RAAFA Retirement Living' and 'RAAFA Residential Care'. These are being introduced to create a more standard, consistent and professional image across all areas of our organisation.

## Have-a-Go, Seniors Living Day

In early November we participated in the Have-a-Go, Seniors Living Day at Burswood Park. The day proved to be a great success,

showcasing RAAFA to over 2,000 attendees with many requesting to receive a follow up call or further information about the services we offer. This was the first time we showcased our new branding, and it was very positively received.



*LtOr Simon O'Neill, Julie Stearne, John Park, Debbie Beever, Barbara Wright and Stephanie O'Brien*



## Electric bikes hit Amity

CITY of Albany's Smart Travel Officer, Julie Passmore recently provided an information and practical session to Amity Village Residents on an alternative mode of transport - electric bikes. They come in both two and three wheel models, which is helpful depending on your balance and some even have large carry baskets for your shopping and gear.

Several residents already have ebikes, so they gleaned some tips on the best use of these modes of transport.

Residents also had the opportunity to have a test ride - taking the bike around the Village for a spin.

# CEO's perspective



CEO, John Murray

By John Murray

SOME years are just amazing in how fast they seem to flow.

2016 has been one of those years where we are now looking towards the Christmas break and the end of what has been a very busy, but fulfilling year.

You will see in the reports provided by the State President and myself, a snapshot

of some of the activities that have been undertaken as reported at the AGM.

In the coming year we will be more focussed on the needs of our members since much of the work relating to the internal structures and systems of RAAFA has been completed.

I would like to wish you all a very safe and happy Christmas and New Year. I look forward to welcoming the New Year with renewed enthusiasm to pursue the purpose of RAAFA and continue to improve its services and facilities for you as members.

I want to acknowledge the commitment of our employees to provide services to our members and those frail elderly we are entrusted to care for.

Thank you to everyone for your support throughout the year and I look forward to providing updates of our activities as we go forward.

## AAFC Honour Roll Board unveiled

By Charles Page

ON 14 August, at Glen Iris Club, the RAAFA Australian Air Force Cadets Branch unveiled an Honour Roll Board of 7 Wing (WA) Air Cadets who died in service.

The Honour Board is the result of intensive and sometimes forensic research, with the aim to complete the Board in time for the 75th Anniversary of the Air Training Corps (AAFC). 48 names were confirmed for the board, with 32 cadets from WWII, three from the Korean War, six from Vietnam, and seven from post-1945. But they are not just names. The Honour Board will be complemented by a booklet including biographies of each cadet who died in service.

One of the most tragic cases is that of Billy McGuigan, who belonged to 76 ATC Squadron Fremantle. In February 1945, his Beaufighter was shot down in the Celebes Islands. He was captured by the Japanese, but later executed by bayonet in a war

atrocities just before VP Day.

In Germany, pilot Richard Bennett was killed when his Lancaster was attacked by a night fighter and exploded in mid-air. Lancaster Air Gunner Edward Charman, was killed in 1944 – on Remembrance Day.

During the Korean War, 77 Squadron Meteor pilot J B Halley was shot down by ground fire while strafing. In a strange quirk of fate, it was his 77th sortie.

In Vietnam, Corporal Peter Clements from 12 Flight, Christian Brothers College, was our own hero at the iconic Battle of Long Tan.

We received a DVA Grant for two Honour Roll Boards. One board will be presented to 7 Wing HQ at RAAF Pearce, and the other to the Aviation Heritage Museum.

This Honour Roll Board will ensure that their names and their brave deeds will never be forgotten.

## Day on the green

THE residents at AFME had an opportunity to enjoy the outdoors in October for a Wellness and Environment Day.

It was such a lovely day to be by AFME's Lake Howard.

Residents from both the Estate and Lodges got together to join children from All Saints' Primary School. Stalls included the Herb Society, Laughter Group and the always popular animals from the petting farm.



Lynn Lewis and Elly Gaunt were active participants

## The Padre's Piece



By Padre David

I AM still on about hymns and music. Just over three years ago I wrote about a new hymn for ANZAC that I had found written by a New Zealander, Shirley Erena Murray. I found it a very confronting hymn because of the third verse that acknowledges those, who out of conscience, refused to fight and were shamed, imprisoned and branded as cowards. Nevertheless, the hymn has been used at ANZAC commemorations at Gallipoli and at Chunuk Bair.

Shirley Murray was born in Invercargill and she trained as a language teacher but she is also a pianist and church organist. She was a Methodist by upbringing but became a Presbyterian on her marriage to the Very Revd. John Murray, a Presbyterian minister. She has written 160 or so hymns and her hymns have been translated into at least eight languages.

I have now found one of her hymns for Christmas that I would like to share with you.

*Carol our Christmas, an upside down Christmas;  
snow is not falling and trees are not bare.  
Carol the summer, and welcome the Christ Child,*

warm in our sunshine and sweetness of air.

*Sing of the gold and the green and the sparkle,  
water and river and lure of the beach.  
Sing in the happiness of open spaces,  
sing a nativity summer can reach.*

*Shepherds and musterers move over the hillsides,  
finding, not angels, but sheep to be shorn;  
wise one's make journeys whatever the season  
searching for signs of the truth to be born.*

*Right side up Christmas belongs to the universe  
made in the moment a woman gives birth;  
hope is the Jesus gift, love is the offering,  
everywhere, anywhere here on the earth*

Shirley Murray has put her own music to her hymn but it has a metre II.IO.II.IO that fits many hymnbook tunes. As we sing carols this Christmas we will no doubt sing some of the Australian Christmas Carols by John Wheeler and William James that were first published in 1948. "The north wind is tossing the leaves" and "Out on the plains the brogias are dancing" are but two that have become firm favourites.

From both sides of the Tasman there's but one message - that Christmas is relevant wherever human beings live and share community. Annually we have the call to look again at the challenge of the life of Jesus of Nazareth whose birth we celebrate. We may all have different perspectives on this Jesus, but I find him challenging me to live and love fully and be all that God intends human life to be.

May your Christmas be a happy and holy one.

Shalom

## Christmas ideas

CHRISTMAS time and school holidays is fast approaching.

For those hard to buy for people in your life, why not consider:

- ★ **Lancaster Bomber tour - \$125**  
Experience a little of what a WWII RAAF airman went through with your own personal guided tour inside the Lancaster Bomber at our Aviation Heritage Museum. Contact the Museum 9311 4470 for details.



- ★ **RAAFA panama hats - \$35**

One size fits all white straw hats available from RAAFA Head Office. Call 9288 8400 for details.



Want something to do with the grandchildren over the school holidays:

- ★ **Why not visit the Aviation Heritage Museum in Bull Creek**  
Open 10.00am to 4.00pm every day except Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Years Day and Good Friday. 30 aircraft on display including the Spitfire, Catalina flying boat and Huey Helicopter, plus thousands of aviation artefacts. Definitely one of Perth's great attractions.



By **David Peet**

THE restructure of RAAFA has continued within the Division of which most members only see the final results.

At this stage I want to congratulate the executive management team and their respective staff for their devotion to their tasks during these changes, their loyalty and the care they have continued to provide to our membership.

## Division Council

At the commencement of this year we had the surprise resignation of our then State Vice President, Bill Anderson at the AGM. We were able to appoint one of our Division Councillors, Clive Robartson, to fill this vacancy rather than go to the vote for a replacement. Clive has worked diligently and been quite a formidable State Vice President, although in moving to this position it left Division Council a Councillor short until we were able to secure Allan Henshaw to fill the temporary vacancy.

As you would be aware, we have the services of three appointed councillors who because of their expertise in industry and with many professional qualifications to their credit, avail their services to RAAFA pro bono. We have secured three councillors to fill these vacancies and earlier in this term we were able to welcome the services of Tony Brun, Executive General Manager Integrated Planning and leader in the reconstruction of Perth International Airport, and Peter Bryant, Chief Financial Officer with Barmingo to join Geraldine Carlton, Executive Director Rockingham Peel Group, SMHS.

## Commemorative activities



### Remembrance Day

Our annual commemorative activities continued with ceremonies devoted to Remembrance Day, Bombing of Darwin, RAAF Anniversary, ANZAC Day, Bomber Command and the Mokine Memorial Service. All were well attended by members

# State President's Report

and the community in general. RAAFA State Executive members also continued to represent RAAFA at many ex-service organisation ceremonies throughout the year.

Some of these occasions included the United and Kindred, Indigenous War Veterans, North American Veterans Unit, the Returned and Services League of Australia, Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia, Long Tan, the Battle of the Coral Sea, Australian American Association and Mindarie Senior College ceremonies.

The anniversary of the RAAF ceremony is now celebrated in the Aviation Heritage Museum at Air Force Memorial Estate in conjunction with the permanent Air Force as an evening event by invitation only under the Lancaster. This event is proving to be very popular and creating liaison between the veteran community and those serving in the regular air force.

As the State President I have attended the RAAF Pearce pilots' graduation parades to present the RAAFA "Most Improved Trainee Pilot" award.

## RAAFA National

As the State President of the WA Division I had the honour of attending National meetings in both Canberra and Melbourne.

## Annual dinner

The 2016 annual dinner had a good attendance and we continued with the relaxed dinner dance format and band. Costing for attendance was kept to a basic and well within the means of members to attend. I was disappointed with our attendance figures considering our membership is in the region of 4,700 members. However having said that, the members who made the effort and came along had a very enjoyable dinner and dance. This event will continue into the future.

## Volunteers

We really appreciate the volunteers who make the wheels of RAAFA turn each and every year. I do not intend to identify individual persons as you are well aware of your contributions, which in terms of revenue and service are priceless, thank you.

With our newer members moving onto villages, don't be shy, there are many groups on each village that need assistance that you may have the ability to provide. Try and develop a can-do attitude rather than why should I?

## Branches

As time marches on we have fewer existing branches and more branches are advising of their impending closure. However we are working to have expansion of general service branches to carry on the service tradition. If you do not live in one of our villages and did not serve in a dedicated squadron, there are still benefits for you to enjoy. Four of our estates have licensed clubs, which

as a member you are entitled to use and patronise.

Membership shows we have in the region of 2,500 members in WA who do not live on a RAAFA estate, why not make your closest estate your local. Air Mail provides information on the programs and events available and as members of RAAFA you are entitled to partake in using these facilities.

## Ex-service community

RAAFA has maintained our exposure to this community and together with the RSL and Naval Association we are in consultation with a range of groups with the intention of expanding our services to the wider veteran community. Our welfare officers, who are located at our retirement villages, are able to provide assistance depending on the nature of that service.

Our Charitable Purpose Committee is now operational and the first assistance package has been approved with a \$10,000 grant to the Meentheena Retreat for the upgrade of their solar power system. The retreat is located some 80km east of Marble Bar and caters for many veterans who have chosen to live away from the pressure of society.

## Youth

Our contact with the WA youth has continued with the awarding of the Swetman and McIntosh scholarships to the value of \$3,000 each. The 2016 McIntosh Memorial Scholarship was awarded to Asha Healy. Asha is currently studying journalism and public relations at Curtin University.

The 2016 Swetman Aviation Education Fellowship was awarded to Dakota Colborne. He is currently studying for a Bachelor in Aviation Technology at Morley Senior High School and awaiting his interviews for selection for pilot training in the RAAF. In addition to the cash amount our IT consultants Ricoh presented Dakota with the latest laptop to use for his studies.



**Dakota Colborne**

The Aviation Youth Group continues to flourish and the Aviation Heritage Museum is now housing the Australian Air Force Cadet Flight simulator.

## Progress

- The relocation of head office from AFME, Bull Creek to Applecross had some members being vocal. However it was essential to give our staff proper

working conditions with an area for expansion. AFME loses nothing in this move as they already have the entire village management system still in place.

- The construction and opening of the Alice Ross-King Care Centre provides the organisation with world class facilities for the aged members of our organisation plus the top class Cafe Dean for everyone's use.
- The refurbishment of Vivian Bullwinkel Lodge, Gordon Lodge and Karri Lodge has brought them up to first class facilities to accommodate our members.

## Vivian Bullwinkel Lodge dining room

- The upgrade of all landline facilities on our six estates with fibre optic cables to provide service on telephone, landline, television, NBN security and additional lighting has been approved and is being installed. The total cost is in the region of \$6M.
- The upgrade of our computer system by Ricoh on all villages and headquarters to cover the iCare nursing system and new payroll and accounting systems.
- RAAFA now has an efficient corporate management system.
- RAAFA now has a complete human resources department to look after our staff and their requirements, this includes safety.
- The RAAFA brand re-fresh is now in place and progressing to rollout for general use.
- Two new committees have been established the Charitable Purpose Committee and the Safety, Quality and Compliance Committee and both are now operational. We have also reintroduced standing orders to the Division By-Laws.
- RAAFA was involved in the negotiation and development of retirement living agreements and RAAFA now has Lifemark Accreditation for all its estates.
- Her Excellency the Honourable Kerry Sanderson AC, Governor of Western Australia has been appointed as the patron of RAAFA (WA Division).
- We are currently and continually working through the master planning for the organisation and this will entail the removal and replacement of old and unsuitable structures with new usable structures.
- To this end RAAFA has been awarded both State and National building awards for Mirage and Orion Terraces at AFME, Bull Creek.



By John Murray

## CEO's Report

The whole emphasis in seniors living is shifting away from organisations being funded to look after individuals. The future challenges come in the form of community based services or consumer directed care. Essentially the individual will be provided with the funds to make decisions about who they use to get their services provided in their homes. We have primarily been a provider for community services to veterans through AFA Care. We are in the position, come February 2017, where we will be able to provide community based services to individuals within our communities. This is an enormous opportunity for RAAFA going forward.

Tonia Zeeman, was recently appointed as Chief Operating Officer. Tonia comes to us with significant skills having been a senior executive at Brightwater for the past 15 years. The principal focus for Tonia is to develop the RAAFA model and skills to provide support to members who require services in their homes.

The imagery we are visualising is that you walk into the estate, and you don't see a bunch of buildings, but we think only about people. It won't matter whether you're an individual who is living in our care facility or in your unit, you should be able to get the same level of service. More and more buildings only define where you live, it doesn't define what your needs and care requirements are.

In the past, people who are fit, well and healthy resided in independent living units. The aged care hostels used to be the second stage where people could go into if they needed a few meals or a bit of laundry, catering or care. This model doesn't exist anymore, hence the requirement is back on us to be able to provide those care levels into your own homes. Now a lot of that is going to be provided on "user pays principles" balanced with government subsidies.

We have been very fortunate to engage Sandy Koman, former manager of community based services at Brightwater. Sandy increased community based services at Brightwater from \$2M to \$25M per annum, so we have a level of expertise coming on board that will enable us to take this forward.

It is great to be able to be here this morning and be part of a ceremony that represents what RAAFA has been since 1929, and that is its purpose as an ex-service organisation. I know many of you in this room may not be ex-service personnel, but the principle of service in what RAAFA represents is something that we truly value. Our marketing strategy has been developed and will reflect the care we provide and also mirrors the ethos of those who provided service to their country. As you know I'm not an ex-service person, but I have worked with many people who have come from that background.

The importance of us to stop and reflect, with the laying of the wreath, taking the moment to recite the ode is very powerful and brings us back to what we're here for. Being conscious of the capacity this organisation, which has a turnover of \$56M per annum

with insured assets of \$650M and 580 staff, we have the ability to do a lot more in relation to supporting ex-service personnel.

When we think about the number of veterans that have come out of the East Timor, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan conflicts, they are the people that we need to connect with. We have been very good at looking after people from WWII, and the Korea, Vietnam and Malaysia conflicts, with some of you in this room obviously having been part of that. There's a group out there that really does need our support and how we connect and engage with them is a real challenge.

The reference that David made to the Charitable Purpose Committee and Meentheena, a veterans retreat approximately 80km east of Marble Bar, is quite interesting. You could ask "why would you support something that's 80km east of Marble Bar?", "how can I get to that?" The reality is, when you look at the demographics of the younger veterans, many of them live between Geraldton and Darwin.

I was fortunate enough to take a couple of weeks leave and I went for a drive up to Meentheena looking at the site. It's located on the Nullagine River and they haven't had rain for two years. It was highlighted that there have been veterans who on their first visit would just sit at a table with other veterans and not say a thing for a week. The next time they turn up, it's with their wives because they feel it is a safe place, that is respectful and not imposing on who they are. Upon the third visit they may turn up with their grandchildren. It is at this point that they know that they're now starting to make a difference to their lives. It's not just about veterans, it is for ambulance officers, firefighters, nurses, all of those who end up on the frontline of what can sometimes be quite traumatic situations. Any one of you are very welcome to go and visit, you can camp along the river, and there are a lot more people starting to use it as a place to drop in and stay for a couple of days. I think this one small engagement is enabling RAAFA to start to advance our efforts to younger veterans.

The key thing for me has been the support of the Division Council. Our retirement living estates represent about 10.3% of the retirement village market in Western Australia. For us to maintain the service level to the community, both veterans and non-veterans, we are looking at between 800-1,400 homes required in the next 5-10 years based on the projections of the community needs for retirement living. That's not just building homes but also building the service model that supports these people. The average age in villages at the moment is 84 years and many are living alone. Our focus is on what are we doing to make sure that they're safe and they have access to services.

RAAFA now has a relationship with a technology organisation that's just been awarded a \$24M contract with Country Health WA. We are now using AFME as a pilot site to test the technology that will allow people to have passive surveillance and

support systems through IT systems in their home so that they can feel safer. For example, if water has not been flowing in the house, or the toilet hasn't been flushed during the day, it says that something is not right. The focus of Country Health WA is to ensure safety to remote seniors. AFME with its new technology and optic fibre enables us to be able to bring technology into this estate and ultimately across all the estates.

There is a lot of exciting things to look forward to. Rob Parker is going to give the financial report, and yes there has been a dip in the net profit of the Association over the last couple of years which reflects on what we've had to spend, to lift RAAFA up to contemporary standards. The projected cash holdings by the end of this year is in the order of \$93M, primarily as a result of the Alice Ross-King Care Centre opening - providing RAAFA with the capacity to pursue our strategic goals.

The organisation is looking for greenfields sites. We have already started negotiating on one that is still subject to planning and other requirements.

We received a number of awards this year which are worth mentioning. The Orion Terraces building was awarded both State and National awards for the "best vertical retirement living" construction in Australia by the Master Builders Association, and I think this is a reflection of what RAAFA has been doing.



Orion Terraces

I was awarded the Aged and Community Services WA (ACSWA) "Excellence in Aged Care Award" for individuals. I have been asked again to take up the role of Chair of ACSWA which is the peak body for all non-profit organisations across Western Australia. This requires me to be the WA representative on the national board of Aged and Community Services Australia (ACSA). The National body's function is to negotiate funding and other issues with the Federal Government and support the not for profit aged care providers across Australia.

You would have heard that the aged care funding has had a significant cut as a result of the last budget where the government projected it was around \$1.2B, we believe it in reality over \$2.5B. The peak bodies have been able to successfully negotiate with government and have started putting in strategies to reduce its impact. They do have to cut funds because the budget cannot handle it, but we have to ensure we reduce its impact on care.

THERE are many very exciting things happening within our organisation. A lot of these achievements the State President, David Peet has covered.

This was realised when I was asked to provide an oversight of the achievements for the 2015/16 year by the Division Council as part of my performance report. I thought it would take a few pages. It ended up being 44 pages of paragraphs about specific items.

These outcomes over three years are the result of solid work by a team of people around me that have just been extraordinary. The concerted efforts of executive staff, Rob Parker, Garry Holmes, Lisa Hawkins, Karen Borthwick, Craig Burkett, Paul Brown and Brendan O'Leary will have a long term positive impact on RAAFA.

There are still components of the system that we need to work better, however we have in place an underpinning of the corporate machinery to be able to take us forward.

We are now in a position to seriously think about what RAAFA's future needs are. We have six estates, five aged care facilities and with the opening of the Alice Ross-King Care Centre we have seen a shift in the quality and services provided.



Alice Ross-King Care Centre

RAAFA in the last year has grown from around 430 to 580 staff. Our revenue this coming year will be in the order of \$56M. Three years ago that was \$32M. Our peers in the aged care and retirement living sector are starting to recognise that RAAFA is increasingly an innovative organisation.

This innovation has been in such areas as our IT systems. Large organisations have been coming to look at our facilities, to understand how this unique village structure works. The work that has been done by previous Division Councils and CEO's to develop a place like Air Force Memorial Estate for example is somewhat unique in Australia.



By Robert Parker

THE last 12 months in the finance department has been very active due to various factors including:

- i. Legislative changes to aged care funding and dealing with the implications to our various residential care centre budgets.
- ii. Commissioning of the Alice Ross-King Care Centre and the financial transactions related to the admission of new and transferred residents.
- iii. Closure of 30 + beds at Karri Lodge to facilitate refurbishment.
- iv. Changeover of the payroll system to a modern package capable of handling over 550 full/part time staff.
- v. Ongoing enhancements to processes and efficiencies. With estimated annual turnover now exceeding \$55M we have increased our capacity to manage the finances with the recent appointment of a Financial Controller. We are confident we have the resources to appropriately manage the Association's finances and

# Chief Financial Officer's Report

to ensure safeguarding of the assets and entry/RAD loans from residents.

## Audit

You will see in the accounts the audit report signed by our auditors Shreeve and Carslake. As in previous years this is an unqualified opinion. The financial statements are prepared and presented by Division Council through the employed executives, represented by John Murray and myself. It is the auditor's role to ascertain whether there are sufficient grounds to support that the accounts are a true and fair view of the Association's financial position, and its ability to pay its debts. This was their view.

At a recent Audit Committee meeting the auditors gave positive feedback on our systems and controls and the quality of audit documentation.

## Overall

### Trading Performance

The Association suffered a downturn in its surplus for the year with a nominal reported surplus of \$68,325 (last year - \$1.89M). Whilst this is a significant reduction in itself, it is important to make the following observations:

- a. Interest income earned from cash balances held was down \$500k due to lower interest rates and reduced cash balances whilst Alice Ross-King Care Centre was in construction.
- b. Subsidy revenue was up 10% on prior

- c. Earnings before depreciation were \$8.2M (last year \$9.3M). This represents a yield of 2.9% on gross assets (at book written down value).
- d. Gross turnover (ie all sources of normal trading revenue) increased by \$2M to \$49.3M.
- e. Depreciation and amortization increased by approx. \$0.7M (last year \$1.1M). Full year software/IT amortization was the main contributor.
- f. Salaries and wages costs increased by 17% over last year.

It is fair to say that 2015/2016 was a transition year in that:

- i. The final structure of the corporate office was largely completed, and the cost base for future years substantially settled.
- ii. Alice Ross-King Care Centre was completed, but was a major demand on executive resources.
- iii. Many major IT and infrastructure projects were completed.
- iv. Aged care subsidy announcements required significant management resources to assess, plan and manage the flow-on effects.

It is now the role of executive management, with guidance from Division Council, to maximize the use of our assets ("your assets"), be that land, buildings or people, to return RAAFA to a sustainable level of operating surplus. All of this to be

done with due recognition of the rights of residents, the Association's charter and history, and care for staff.

An appropriate balance of all of the above, including financial, is the objective of the Division Council and management.

### Balance Sheet

As mentioned, our gross assets have increased to nearly \$353M. This is an increase of approximately \$15M, largely due to final year construction costs on the Alice Ross-King Care Centre.

During the year we virtually completed the program of paying out member loans to the Association. This has reduced an onerous and costly administrative burden on Corporate Office. I thank any members in the audience who had loans or represented bodies for whom loans were held.

The Association has no external borrowings, and this should remain so for the foreseeable future.

As can be seen from the above, and information from our CEO and State President reports, the future for RAAFA continues to present challenges. Fortunately the Association's accumulated financial strength and dedicated executive and staff will provide the resilience and drive to take RAAFA forward with confidence.

In closing I wish to thank all staff, Division Council and Audit Committee members for their support and assistance over the year.

# Robert's rare glimpse into history

NOT too many people could lay claim to having photographed the two aircraft responsible for dropping the atomic bombs on Japan – but Alice Ross-King Care Centre resident Robert Croft has just that.

99-year-old Robert was based with 452 Squadron on Tarakan Island in Borneo for two years during WWII, and it was in 1945 that he snapped a photo of the infamous planes.

"I happened to be around when the Enola Gay and Bockscar were staging at Tarakan Island at our strip in Borneo, while waiting for good weather on their way to Japan," Robert says.

While some servicemen's route to enlisting in the Air Force was fairly straightforward, Robert's journey to be in Borneo was somewhat more complicated.

"I was trying to sign up for the RAAF from 1939 but only succeeded in enlisting in 1943," Robert says.

"I was providing manpower on a mine in Leonora, and they wouldn't let me go for a time because I was considered to be providing 'essential services'.

"At the time I was also an ambulance officer in charge of the local ambulance services, so I had a job getting out of it. Finally, in 1943 I was able to join the Australian Army, then after six months I transferred into the Air Force for the final two years of the war."

Given his medical experience with the ambulance service and his mechanical experience in the mines, Robert took on a role with the ground crew as a mechanic (his official title was Fitter Driver Mode of Transport, or FDMT) with the RAAF 452 Squadron, and was based in Darwin then Morotai and Tarakan Islands in Borneo until the cessation of hostilities.

"There were 300 men in our Squadron and it was like a big family. Everyone knew everyone, but that also meant after the war it took a lot of settling. Australia is the best place in the world, but all the same that's why I took a job in Kalgoorlie on the ambulances again afterwards, to settle me down after being in the war," Robert says.

"There are many funny stories to tell because it was generally good fun and I had some good mates. One of the funniest ones was when the powers that be were trying to build

a new landing at Tarakan and they brought in this great big bulldozer to clear the jungle.

"Well they left it outside overnight and in the morning came out to find it had disappeared... they couldn't find it anywhere. It turned out that it had sunk into the mud overnight and there was no way it could be retrieved because the suction was so great! So it had to be abandoned and a new runway was built elsewhere by putting steel over limestone to stay on top of the surface."

"Another evening we were walking around the beach and this great thing came whizzing out of the sky in front of us. We looked up to see these cheeky monkeys throwing things out of the trees."

After the war, Robert moved to Leonora in 1948, then to Kalgoorlie for six years before



Robert Croft

returning to Perth where he and his wife had their family. Robert served with St John Ambulance for over 30 years, and received an award honouring his long term contribution to the service several years ago. When his wife sadly passed away 20 years ago, Robert moved to Esperance, where he lived until moving into the new Alice Ross-King Care Centre earlier this year to be closer to family in Perth.

Robert joined other RAAFA veterans to commemorate Remembrance Day on 11 November. Lest we forget.



Air Force Cadets provided a fitting commencement to the service

## Mokine Memorial

By Graeme Bland

RAAF's annual pilgrimage to the crash site of Avro Anson W2262 occurred on Sunday, 9 October 2016.

Three busloads, one each from Bull Creek, Meadow Springs and Merriwa attended the remembrance ceremony for the four airmen Flg/Off Birt, Sgt Debenham, Sgt Hugo and Sgt Nixon killed on 9 October 1942.

Since the closure of the City of Perth Branch the Northam RSL Sub-Branch have kindly

taken over looking after this ceremony at the crash site and the following luncheon in the Northam RSL Hall.

This year saw the presence of RAAF Officers from RAAF Base Pearce and the Air Force Cadet Drum Corps. A flyover was provided from the Northam Aero Club.

Next year will be the 75th Anniversary of this tragic crash and the ceremony will be held on Sunday, 8 October 2017. We would be pleased to have you join us.

## Remembrance Day holds special meaning for Rob Lyon

FOR Cambrai Village resident Rob Lyon, Remembrance Day is always a day of reflection given his long history and association with the Air Force, and his father's before him.

Rob, who went to Perth Modern School, joined the Air Training Corps in 1951, where he became a Cadet Pilot Officer and then gained a flying scholarship in 1953. Soon after, he was called up to undertake National Service in the Air Force, and travelled to Pearce Airbase in 1956, from where he applied for officers' training school in Portsea, Victoria the following year.

After he graduated, Rob spent 12 years in the RAAF, where he also met his wife who was a secretary at the base.

"Remembrance Day has great meaning for me as I lost my dad in the war when I was eight years old, and he in turn lost his father in WWI in France in 1918," says Rob. "So, in a way, our family had a double whammy and when we lay a wreath on Remembrance Day, we do so for both my father and grandfather."

Rob went to Malaya in 1959 and again in 1967 where he was based in Butterworth, and then in February of that year was posted to No. 2 Squadron and went to Vietnam, where he says he had lots of adventures, both good and bad.



Rob Lyon

In 1969, he felt it was time to make a change and resigned from the Air Force, returning to Perth to work for Len Buckeridge who was married to his sister, following which he became self-employed.

Rob retired in 1994, moving to Cambrai Village in 2000, where he says he has enjoyed living very much ever since.

"My focus now is on contributing so that the new generation have some understanding of what happened in both WWI and WWII, as well as Vietnam," he says.

"I'm blessed that my kids didn't join up, but I have two grandsons and I would like them to understand a little of their family's history and what my world was all about."

## Joining the Air Force was an adventure for Allan

ALLAN Hawkins couldn't wait to enlist in the RAAF as soon as he turned 18 years old.

The 91-year-old Amity Village resident had been a member of the Air Cadets in his hometown of Norseman for two years before he enlisted, and walked in to sign up on 19 February 1943, just nine days after he finally reached his 18th birthday.

"They called me up and I went in and did my initial training in Busselton for a month. Strange things happen in life though – of our 34-man intake there were two of us with the surname Hawkins, though we were no relation at all," Allan said.

Assigned to a general mechanics course, Allan was posted to a training centre back in Perth on Mounts Bay Road.

"We used to march over the Horseshoe Bridge and there was a Boys' School just over the railway line where we stayed. We did all our mechanics training, learning about batteries and how to make little things out of metal, files and things like that," Allan recalls.

"After three months of that they posted me to Melbourne and asked me what I wanted to do. There was no room in the radar course I was keen on, but I could be an armourer, flight mechanic or flight rigger. I thought I could be a mechanic after the war, so I decided on that one.

"I finished up being posted with Number 6 Squadron to Milne Bay in Papua New Guinea, then at Goodenough Island, and then to Dobadura"

As part of the service party, Allan would help overhaul engines after flights, and would support pilots in regular test flights after maintenance.

"When I first got there some of us were asked to volunteer to do the test flight – because the older blokes would never volunteer to go," Allan said.

"There was a young South Australian bloke and myself who used to do all the test flights, we'd sit and take all the readings in front of the pilot, looking at the fuel gauge and the amount of boost they had and so on. Some of the pilots would be very easy on you, but others would do their best to turn the plane inside out on purpose!

"Milne Bay was a bit of a mud hole, they averaged an inch of rain each day. I remember the first test flight I did, I was telling the blokes afterwards about it because my pilot had tried to turn the plane inside out, cut the engines and drop – because he realised I was still green you see – and they all said 'Oh did you go up with Crasher Christie?'"

Despite enduring difficult times, Allan says "there were also lots of good days" during his time in the Pacific.

"Goodenough was an ideal spot, only 17 miles by 5 miles and an 800 foot mountain down the middle and our camp was on the

side of a pool, we'd all go for swims every night," he says.

After 14 months overseas, Allan was posted home on VE Day.



Allan Hawkins

"They said 'well there's your flight ticket, you have three weeks to find your way to Subiaco for your leave'. So I flew to Lae first, and I wasn't doing much good there so I flew to Finch Haven, then to Brisbane, where I got a railway ticket and came home from there. By the time I arrived in Kalgoorlie I still had five days left, so I thought I'd pop down to Norseman to see mum and dad for a few nights," Allan said.

"And that's when I met the love of my life, Truda, when I got back to Perth. She was out somewhere one night and two girls bounced up in this group and I thought 'that girl has sparkling eyes', and I had half a dozen dances with her that night. She said she had to go to a party the following Saturday and asked if I'd like to go along.

"We got married 12 months later, and now we've been married more than 70 years. We had our four boys and the last one has just retired."

After the war, Allan was assigned to Pearce Air Base then posted back to Melbourne for a refresher course.

"When I got there they said to me 'what are you doing here, don't you know the war is over?' But they'd sent the work order through so I was sent down to Ascot Vale to do some work around Flemington racecourse tidying up the place.

"After that, malaria broke out on me. Once we returned from New Guinea we all had to take our tablets for three months straight to prevent malaria, which I did. Then at the five month mark I broke out with it! I didn't report it, I used to just sleep it off in the hay bales at the racecourse."

Allan was discharged from the RAAF in October 1945, after spending almost three years in service.

He completed his plumbing apprenticeship, and worked in Esperance for several years, where he was the president of the RSL by the time he was 26 years old, before moving to Albany in 1955.

Allan and Truda have lived at RAAFA Amity Village Albany for 12 years now, and take part in the village Remembrance Day and ANZAC Day commemorations each year.

# Sheryl's passion for positive aging

IF ANYONE is a positive role model for active lifestyles, Meadow Springs Estate Manager Sheryl Munday is it.

Sheryl has been the Estate Manager at Meadow Springs for the past 2 ½ years, during which time she has brought her enthusiasm for working with seniors, and positive attitude towards aging.

Sheryl joined RAAFA about three years ago, initially as the Manager at Gordon Lodge at AFME. She has a strong nursing background, having worked for many years as an Enrolled Nurse, before moving into community care and retirement living with other local aged care service providers.

"I enjoy my job here. I am passionate about our residents – this is their home and it's about doing our best to support them," she said. "The staff team are terrific, I love being able to have a laugh.

"One thing that I'm rapt about that I've achieved is opening the new gym earlier this year. It's had a very positive response so far from residents and is very well used. It's important to me to provide different options for residents."

Being part of RAAFA's future vision is another motivating factor for Sheryl to create an environment of celebrating positive

aging at Meadow Springs.

"RAAFA's vision of encompassing care is so great, this concept of bringing together all the services; like meal services and cleaning, because it supports people to stay in their homes longer. There is a tsunami of baby boomers coming into retirement and aged care over the next 10 to 30 years, so it's important that we have those structures in place now," she said.

"In the future I would love to see a little shop here if we had room. People are staying in their units longer these days and sometimes they don't have the mobility to access the shops regularly. A shop on-site would make it easier for some of our residents to do their shopping without venturing off the Estate."

Sheryl shares her office with a very cuddly addition, Peter the therapy rabbit, who she introduced to the village almost four months ago.

"We've all heard of therapy dogs, but Peter is our therapy rabbit. He is doing so well here – he even went to the Aged Care Games as RAAFA's mascot in a little RAAFA jacket a few weeks ago," Sheryl said.

"Seeing as we can't have dogs on the Estate, we thought a therapy rabbit was a

good alternative. If you don't want to have anything to do with him then you don't have to, but a lot of our residents love to pop in and pat or cuddle him. He is a very social little fellow, and spends weekends at the Lodge."

Sheryl recently took part in the Masters World Athletic Games here in Perth, where she achieved personal best times in the 5km, 8km and 10km running events.

The Masters cater specifically for athletes who are 35 years and older. "The age of some of the competitors and how fit they are is so inspiring," she said.

"Our oldest Australian competitor was 97! People came from all around the world to compete – I spoke to people from Italy, Mexico and England. The next games are in two years time in Spain – so there is plenty of time for some RAAFA residents to start training and take part!"

Although she is kept busy with her role at Meadow Springs, Sheryl also finds the time to indulge her creative side – and has just finished writing her first novel.

"It's taken me five years, but I've finally gotten there and am editing it now. It's a spiritual fantasy for young adult readers and it's something I've wanted to do for a while



Sheryl Munday

now. The hardest thing was to sit myself down to do it – I get up at 4.30am so that's when I start writing, then go for my run with the dog and come to work," she said.

"I also like to paint. I like to do big things but then run out of room to hang them at home, so I have one painting here in reception."

And there's one more thing which will soon be taking up more of her time – Sheryl is about to become a grandmother for the first time next year.

"I can't wait to be a grandmother, it's going to be great," she said.

## WAAAF memories

FOR McNamara Lodge resident Jean Newton, the end of WWII didn't spell the end of her long-term connection with the Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force (WAAAF), having been a proud WAAAF member for over 70 years now.

Jean has lived at McNamara Lodge for two years, at the Meadow Springs Estate for over 15 years, and at AFME for 11 years before that.

Born in 1923, Jean grew up in Launceston before her family moved to Wiluna. Her father was the winder driver at the Moonlight Mine. At the age of 15 she began working on the switchboard for the P.M.G. in Wiluna – an experience which set her in good stead when she joined the RAAF in 1940.

"I was so keen to be part of the WAAAF that I applied to join six months before my 18th birthday but they wouldn't let me in – they said 'go away and wait until your birthday'. So, the minute I turned 18 I enlisted," Jean says.

"Recruits were supposed to be at least 5 feet tall – well I'm only 4'11 and ¾", and I wasn't going to let ¼ of an inch stop me – so I made up the extra quarter of an inch by raising my heels slightly. The lady said, 'What do you think you're doing!' and I said, 'I'm growing to five foot in a hurry.' They used to call me Shortie from Switch!"

Jean was based at Pearce Air Base throughout

the War – and it was there that she met her lifelong best friend Mavis Darcey on her first day, and her future husband Geoffrey shortly after.

"He was a wireless maintenance mechanic – and he used to collect his mail from the same basket that I did. He thought I was a bit of a dish, and I thought the same. Eventually he went up to Geraldton and then to the island of Milingimbi just off the coast of Arnhem Land. We didn't marry until after the War," Jean says.

"It was a very happy time in my life – we all went out together and went to dances and had a great time. The friendships I formed there have lasted a lifetime; it was such a strong sense of camaraderie. We trusted each other because our lives were in each other's hands."

There was always some form of mischief happening at the base which kept everyone busy.

"I always remember one night, one of the girls went to the officers' ball – and she and her fellow left the hall arm in arm for a walk together. We used to have slit trenches where we would hide if there was a bomb raid, and as they were walking the officer lost his grip on the girl and she fell down into the muddy trench. She had to spend the rest of the night sitting in the hall waiting for the bus to come pick her up," Jean recalls.

Of all her memories, VP Day is one day

which stands out in Jean's mind. "We heard the news towards evening and the next day we all piled into busses and headed for the city. Perth was electric on that wonderful, wonderful day.

There were people everywhere, all moving and some danced in the street. Later there was a concert, and I remember that everyone cried when a female singer sang. I'm a bit teary now, just thinking about it. I think it was the whole experience that I remember."

After the war ended Jean and Geoffrey married as soon as possible. Jean and Geoff joined the Association together on the same day, soon after their discharge.

Since those days Jean and Geoff were inseparable until Geoff's passing in 1989.

"When I was young enough I always took part in the ANZAC Day Parades. There aren't very many of us left now though."

Jean's daughter Rhonda says her parents lives were all about fun, and as she grew she came to understand what faithfulness was all about through her mother's example.

"When I was a teenager I remember young



Jean Newton with an old family photo

men returning from the Vietnam War and they were not always well treated. Around the same time ANZAC Day seemed to lose popularity within the Western Australian community and the numbers of WAAAF marching dropped down to a handful, but my mum never missed one," she said. "We used to watch it on television. We were proud of her, but sad as well."

Since moving to Mandurah, where her daughter and granddaughter live, the time came for Jean to accept help. Her dream room at McNamara Lodge became available and she jumped at the chance of a comfortable home to see her out. She has lived in the Lodge for the past two years.

"Being here suits Mum well, because she has always been a social butterfly," Rhonda says.

"She came in for one month's respite to see how she liked it, and after two days she announced she loved it, and has lived here ever since."

## Lifestyle a winner for Bruce and Elaine

HAVING a home which fit into their caravanning lifestyle was important for Bruce and Elaine Hardie when they made the decision to move into RAAFA's Meadow Springs Estate.

Bruce and Elaine have lived at Meadow Springs for almost two years now – and the lifestyle is a perfect fit for their 'grey nomad' travels.

"We are active in caravanning so we often go away for months at a time. We've just spent five months camping north of Coral Bay over winter. It suits us perfectly – we can lock the door and go away and come back and everything is as you left it," Bruce said.

"The caravan parking area on-site is a major appeal for us – we have a large caravan, a boat and a truck, so having room to park them all is fantastic.

"We moved from Australind – we met a couple on the road a few years ago who lived

here and they said 'come visit' so we did. We were impressed with it so decided to move here. Now we have friends who also have their name on the waiting list to move in."

At 61 and 62 years old respectively, Elaine and Bruce are spring chickens on the Estate, but believe making the big move has been their best decision.

"Location is important; it's terrific here. If you like fishing, crabbing, crayfishing and boating, which we do, it's perfect," Elaine said.

"Also having access to public transport is really important. Going into Perth on the bus and train means you're there in under an hour. As you get older and need to go to Perth more for medical appointments it's important to have access to things like that."

After an illness which led to a stay at Fiona Stanley Hospital last year, Elaine also appreciated having access to support

equipment through the Estate.

"When I was sick there was someone on the Estate available to support us with the equipment I needed, things like shower chairs and rails. Having it all coordinated on the Estate was so helpful, and it's fantastic that RAAFA have made that equipment available for residents," she said.

"There are so many good things to say. There is lots of open space and the gardens are well maintained. I use the hydrotherapy pool and the outdoor pool in summer. We love that we can have our grandchildren stay with us here in summertime and they can use the pool with us. We're still just about the youngest people living here, but for us it's good to be young and to make the most of the facilities on offer."

Bruce says the best improvement made since they moved in is the addition of the new gym space in a converted storage area.



Bruce and Elaine Hardie

"A lot of people use the gym, it's great to have it on-site. When you go away for long periods as we do the weight can crawl on, but by going to the gym each day I've lost 7kg since we came back in August," he said.

## The right fit for whole family



LtoR Chris, Cyril and Eunice make it a family affair

WHEN Chris Warren decided to downsize in her retirement and move into a villa at RAAFA Estate Meadow Springs, she never expected her parents would also end up taking advantage of the lifestyle and care facilities on offer at the Estate.

Chris, 62, moved into the Estate three years ago in January 2014, drawn to facilities on offer at the village.

"I had a back injury and wanted an easier lifestyle, and the hydrotherapy pool here was a big drawcard," she said.

"Being single, I like the security of living in a community and the fact I don't have to do much maintenance is really good.

"The thing with living here is that you are never lonely – if you ever want to do an activity or see people you can – but you aren't living in each other's' pockets.

"When my dad, Cyril, had a stroke the following year, it was a complete nightmare. He and mum were living in Mandurah, and it all got too much for them at home. I said to mum, 'Why don't you move in here?'"

When a villa became available, Chris' mum and dad, Eunice, 82, and Cyril, 86, leapt at the chance to join their daughter at the Meadow Springs Estate.

Initially Eunice was able to care for Cyril at home, but as his care needs became higher, the family began to consider their options.

At that time there were no places available in McNamara Lodge, so for a short time Cyril

moved into another nearby aged care home, until a room in the Lodge became available.

"It has worked out so well. We can visit Dad whenever we want to, and take him out to the Club for lunch," Chris said.

"Unfortunately it's just a fact of life that circumstances do change, but dad is in a place now where he can be cared for properly at all times, and we have easy access to visit. He enjoys being at the Lodge."

Eunice said knowing her husband is only two minutes' walk from home gives her peace of mind.

"I feel safe and secure in the villa, and Cyril is so well cared for in the Lodge. I can pop in to visit any time I want to. Living on the Estate also frees you up to do the other things you enjoy doing, so I still play bowls which I really enjoy," she said.

As an Air Force family, the Warrens were drawn to the companionship of the RAAFA community. Cyril served in the Royal Air Force in the UK as a Chief Technician working in radar and missiles. The family were based in Germany, Cyprus and England.

Chris emigrated to Australia more than 30 years ago, and her parents and sister soon followed. She served in the Australian Army for a period and is now retired.

Cyril and Eunice have three grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren in Perth.

## Happy at Meadow Springs

RAAFA Estate Meadow Springs resident Des Thornton never expected to retire to Perth, but he faced a significant life transformation two years ago after divorcing and moving from Esperance to find a new home.

Wanting to be closer to his son and daughter who both live in the Perth region, Des was drawn to the Norfolk Mews serviced units at Meadow Springs because he liked the facilities on offer at the Estate.

"I'll be honest, I was pretty miserable when I first arrived here, but I forced myself to start playing croquet, and that was the beginning of a new start for me," he said.

"Then I joined the carpet bowls group and that put the icing on it. They're a happy and irreverent mob, and they all enjoy slinging off at me, but it's a great group to be part of."

Des says the beauty of the village is that there are a range of activities on offer to suit all tastes.

"You can pick and choose what's of interest



Des Thornton

and do whatever you want to do. Not every activity appeals to me – I'm not into bingo or things like that – but that's the beauty of it," he said.

Des remains fully independent in his unit, and does all his own shopping and cooking – but says it is handy to have the option of cooked meals at the Clubhouse every now and then.

## Oktoberfest

By Eileen Oxley

THE October theme night was a big success at Meadow Springs Club with everyone getting into the swing of Oktoberfest.

The menu included traditional German fare of sauerbraten sausage with red cabbage and pretzel dumplings, jagerschnitzel, for the uninitiated this is pork schnitzel with mushroom and beer sauce and black forest gateaux.

Residents and friends were kept entertained during the night by keyboard maestro Bob Frazer and there was even a birthday celebration.



Janis Purvinskis celebrated his birthday during Oktoberfest

Friday dinners are held every second Friday, so why not join in the fun and come along to the next one.

# Notes From Branches and Groups

## Aviation Museum Branch

*Jo Naylor*

Some time ago the decision was made to hold our business meetings one month, with the alternate month being more of a social event known as film night. The film night is open to anyone who would like to attend.

Like all of the long-standing branches, our membership has fallen of late. I would encourage all Association members to consider joining the Museum Branch. You do not need to know anything about aviation but I can promise you that this Branch is like no other.

Our main aim is to support the Association's Aviation Heritage Museum. The film nights are our only social events.

### Upcoming events

Thursday, 8 December, General Meeting, Meg Olive Room, 7.00pm.

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

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

## Mandurah Branch

*Shirley Farmer*

The Committee would like to wish all our members a happy, healthy and prosperous 2017.

It has been decided there will be no social event organised for January, as it is anticipated that many will be away for an extended Christmas break resulting in insufficient numbers to make a trip or event cost effective.

Please feel free to approach any member of the committee if there is an event or trip you would like to do. This is your Branch, and we would welcome any ideas. Have you been somewhere you thoroughly enjoyed and would want to go back or something you would like us to consider doing? We are quite happy to get costings for a trip or outing. Suggestions can also be placed into Box 287 at anytime.

### Upcoming events

Thursday, 15 December, General Meeting followed by the Branch Christmas Lunch with entertainment by Greg Clarke.

Thursday, 16 February, General Meeting, Middleton Hall, 4.00pm. Followed by burgers, chips and salad. Names of attendees in the folder by the bar as usual. Anyone with dietary restrictions, see Lorraine for alternatives.

## Meadow Springs Residents Branch

*Fran Hewitt*

We had an interesting talk by Tim Clements about Enduring Power of Attorney and

Power of Guardianship on Tuesday 20 September.

On Tuesday 18 October we had an enjoyable time with morning tea and a fashion parade with clothing from Kings Park Fashion.

### Upcoming Events

Sunday, 11 December, Heart & Soul, 2.30pm.

Monday, 5 December, Branch Christmas Lunch.

Tuesday, 17 January, Advanced Health Directive session from Public Advocate.

## MER Branch

*Judy Bland*

[gjb4I@bigpond.com](mailto:gjb4I@bigpond.com)

### Upcoming events

Wednesday, 7 December, Residents' Christmas Lunch, Langley Hall. Booking forms available in Village Chatter.

2017 activities to be advised.

## WAAAF Branch

*June Perry*

### Branch closure

The final meeting before the Branch disbands will be held on 12 December followed by

lunch in the AFA Club. Bookings essential by 5 December.

Members will continue to meet socially for lunch at the AFA Club on the second Monday of each month.

### Upcoming events

Monday, 12 December, Final Meeting, Meg Olive Room, 11.00am. Followed by lunch in the AFA Club. Bookings essential for lunch by Monday 5 December.

## WRAAF Branch

*Judy Bland*

[gjb4I@bigpond.com](mailto:gjb4I@bigpond.com)

### Upcoming events

Tuesday, 6 December, Christmas Party, Orion Terraces Meeting Rooms, 6.30pm. Open to all ex-WRAAF, friends and partners. Bring a plate of food to share and \$10 Santa gift. Plates, cutlery, drinks and glasses provided.

Tuesday, 7 February, General Meeting, Meg Olive Room, 7.30pm.

Tuesday, 7 March, BBQ at Unit 201 Ventura House, AFME, 6.30pm. BYO meat, drinks and salad or sweet to share. Plates etc. supplied.

# Vale Frank McCarthy

*By Mary Stevens & Eileen Oxley*

LAST month we mourned the loss of Frank McCarthy. Frank had served RAAFA and the Meadow Springs Estate for many years in a variety of roles, including being a member of Division Council, President of the Meadow Springs Residents' Branch, Chair of the Estate Committee and recently Vice President of the Mandurah Branch.

Frank and Judy were among the 'Pioneers' on the Meadow Springs Estate - the name given to the first 20 units occupied. As a JP, he assisted many over the next 17 years. Always willing to give a hand, he joined other residents in the early days to assist the gardener in laying reticulation and grass, as dust was a huge problem. Frank would often be seen walking around the Estate in the early evening just 'checking' that everything was in order. The ritual continued for many years. Frank contributed towards the ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day services held on the Estate, and also supported the Frederick Irwin School and the Meadow Springs Primary School at their services, where he was often the guest speaker.

On a brighter note, Frank and Judy were heavily involved in the Estate shows. Besides

acting, he enjoyed singing, but will be best remembered as Marlow in A Christmas Carol and the policeman in the Pioneer Show, escorting two convicts on board ship to Australia.

Caravanning played a big part in his retirement and he and Judy travelled widely for many months.

Sleep peacefully dear friend, and thank you for all you did for the Residents of the Meadow Springs Estate and RAAFA. You will be sadly missed by all.



## Seasons choir

*By Angeline Carlton*

ON A beautiful October Spring day we welcomed the Seasons choir to Erskine Grove. The weather was perfect so we made use of the main courtyard and bbq's.

The choir was fantastic, and all who attended had a great morning singing along to some classics.

I stood at the back and I'm sure I had a smile on my face from the beginning to the end of the performance. It was great to see everyone join in the singing and there was even a bit of toe tapping. Residents who had come to check their mail stopped and listened to a song or two, before carrying on with their day.

While the choir and residents were busy singing, the smell of sausages and onions

cooking on the bbq was wafting through the air.

Ray, who organises the choir, kindly supplied and cooked the sausage sizzle, which went down a treat and provided an opportunity for the choir and residents to mingle.

I think just about every one of our senses were satisfied that day and I could see lots of smiling faces.

The feedback from the event was very positive. We are now looking forward to having Cassie, the choir's conductor and solo singer join us on 7 December for our staff and resident Christmas get together.

The choir are booked out for the rest of this year but we have been assured they will be back to visit in 2017.

## Bull Creek AFA Club

Phone: 9311 4460

### Trading Hours



#### Bar

Monday to Thursday, 9.30am to 6.00pm  
Friday, 9.30am to 10.00pm  
Saturday, 3.00pm to 6.00pm

#### Specials

Monday and Wednesday, Happy Hour drinks, 4.00pm to 5.00pm  
Monday to Friday, morning coffee and afternoon tea with muffins and cakes, 9.30am to 5.30pm  
Monday lunch, roast of the day, \$10.00  
Monday, Chase the Ace, 4.00pm to 5.30pm  
Tuesday lunch, fish and chips \$10.00  
Every 4th Wednesday, 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

Please contact the club for bookings.  
Sunday, 25 December, Christmas lunch, \$65 per person  
Entrée - Smoked salmon and seafood plate  
Mains - Roast turkey with baked ham mustard glaze served with roast vegetables, cauliflower broccoli mornay, pumpkin & diced potatoes  
Dessert - Plum pudding with brandy custard and cream  
Coffee and tea with mince tarts and a fruit platter  
Residents requiring transport out of volunteer buggy hours, please contact the bar and we will organise pickup.

#### Christmas trading hours

The Club will be closed from Monday, 26 December, reopening Tuesday, 3 January.

## Cambrai Club

Phone: 9304 5401

### Trading Hours



#### Bar

Tuesday and Wednesday, 4.00pm to 8.00pm  
Friday, 12noon to 2.00pm  
Friday night opening times may vary, contact Club for details  
2nd and 4th Friday, 5.00pm to 8.00pm

#### Specials

Tuesday and Wednesday, Happy Hour, 4.00pm  
Wednesday, Morning Tea, 10.00am to 11.00am  
Tuesday and Wednesday, Dinner, 6.00pm to 8.00pm, Picardy Restaurant  
Friday, Happy Hour, 5.00pm when function on

#### Events

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

#### Christmas trading hours

The Club will be closed from Friday, 23 December, reopening Tuesday, 10 January.

## Meadow Springs Club

Phone: 9582 5375

### Trading Hours



#### Bar

Monday, 10.30am to 2.30pm  
Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 10.30am to 6.00pm  
Wednesday, 10.30am to 8.00pm  
Saturday and Sunday, contact bar staff.

#### Specials

Monday, roast lunch, \$12.00  
Tuesday, best fish and chips lunch in town, \$10.00  
Wednesday, Chase the Ace, bingo, horse racing and evening meal. Small and regular size meals available  
Thursday, Happy Hour, 4.30pm, Sports Bar

#### Counter lunches

Monday to Friday, 11.45am to 1.30pm

#### Events

Please contact the club for bookings. Our friendly staff are looking forward to having you join us.  
Sunday, 25 December, Christmas Day lunch, \$65 per person  
Scrumptious three course menu, tea and coffee with mince pies. Invite family and friends to join us for this happy day.

Saturday, 31 December, New Years Eve party, 7.00pm to late. \$10.00 per person. Entertainment by Highway 21 throughout the evening. BYO nibbles.

Thursday, 26 January, Australia Day breakfast, 9.00am to 12noon. \$18 buffet breakfast from the servery.

#### Christmas trading hours

The Club will be closed Monday, 26 December, Tuesday, 27 December and Monday, 2 January.

#### 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  
4th Wednesday of the Month, Offal Lunch  
Sunday, 25 December, Christmas Day lunch, bookings now being taken at the Bar 9400 3640  
Saturday, 31 December, New Years Eve party.

#### Christmas trading hours

The Club will be closed from Friday, 23 December, reopening Tuesday 3 January.

## SUBMISSIONS FOR AIR MAIL

6 January for February / March  
3 March for April / May  
5 May for June / July

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

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

## Rose farm visit

By Sue Dunne

THE spring bus outing of the GEMS Ladies Group on 25 October saw 19 ladies head for the hills, with Ted McEvoy in

the driver's seat. The destination was Patsy Durack's Rose Garden on the slopes of Gooseberry Hill.

The entry was by way of a cute little shop, filled with all things roses. Following some perusing and shopping, the group moved to the verandah of the Bishop's Holiday Home,

(Patsy's residence) where they were served a delectable Devonshire Tea.

Patsy then chatted about the journey she and her late husband, Ian (who passed away in 2012) had been on from the establishment of the original rose garden in 1988. What an amazing achievement to bring the garden

to its current patch of paradise state.

Patsy also shared some of the history of the Bishop's Holiday Home, which has been beautifully restored.

The ladies explored the different areas of the garden, with Patsy on hand to answer any questions and share her extensive knowledge of that magical flower - the rose.

There was no chance for a nap on the way home to AFME as the trip included fun games and prizes.

A gift was presented to Ted, our driver and group photographer in appreciation. If we didn't have such great volunteers these outings couldn't occur.



The GEMS Ladies

# RAAFA Red Devils

By *Alanna Bertoldo*

THE LiveLighter Aged Care Games are set up to provide an opportunity for people in 'care' situations to experience team participation and light competition, as well as social interaction, through adapted games in a community recreational facility.

It all began in 2003, Seniors Recreation Council of WA established Games for Seniors in Care as part of the Fremantle Masters Games and included in the games seated hockey, seated pass ball, bean bag toss and skittles. The champion team with the overall highest score across these events wins a trophy.

This was presented for the first time at the Fremantle Masters Aged Care Games 2007 and has been presented each year since.

With a perpetual trophy, plus Gold, Silver and Bronze medals, all participants receive a participation medal. There is also a small trophy for the 'Best Presented Team' which is why many teams dress up in uniforms and costumes.

Residents at Vivian Bullwinkel Lodge start

training sessions in preparation for the Games at least three months prior to the event and take it very seriously.

Through this program the residents have a sense of purpose and an opportunity to compete and maintain the physical dexterity required to promote a healthy life style.

There were 12 residents from Vivian Bullwinkel Lodge participating in this year's Aged Care Games on 15 September and McNamara Lodge had a team participating in the Mandurah Regional Games.

The RAAFA Red Devils participated across the four events of leaderball, hockey, skittles and bean bag toss and after three months of dedicated practice, came first with an overall score of 291 points.

The RAAFA Red Devils leader ball team set an overall record for the Aged Care Games with a score of 31 passes.

The RAAFA Red Devils have placed first, five out the eight years they have participated in the Aged Care Games and continue to strive to bringing that cup home!



*The winning leader ball team*

## "Which?" Craft Group

A VERY happy group of ladies meet in the AFME Village Hall on Tuesday afternoons to work their magic with fabric and threads, beads and sequins, paint and glue. Leading the Group are Beverley Hewett, Maxine Chambers and Vivienne Rowney.

The ladies learn new crafts or bring along items they have been working on at home, sharing a cuppa and working on joint projects. Last year's big project was the completion of a Memory Quilt which hangs in the new Alice Ross-King Care Centre.

In 2016, the major project has been panels incorporating Dresden plate designs for two single bed quilts. One of these has been completed and was the major raffle prize at the Group's Bazaar held on Saturday, 22 October. The second quilt is anticipated to be completed in 2017.

The original idea to hold a sale of the works grew into a fund-raising Bazaar, which was coordinated by Sue Dunne. In addition to the sale of many beautiful crafts, jewellery and the raffle of the quilt, a hamper of



*LtoR Sue Dunne, Gary Rowney, Vivienne Rowney*

food and a Christmas hanging, there were lucky dips, displays and demonstrations of embroidery and craft.

The Knitting and Crochet Group also mounted a display of their beautiful work and the Aviation Heritage Museum had a table to sell items.

The weather was very kind and residents, friends and families came in their droves and after viewing the displays and purchasing goods, enjoyed a delicious Devonshire tea.

Camp Kulin which does wonderful work with children at risk was chosen as the charity for the funds raised at the Bazaar.

## Coffee stops

THE City of Albany has been proactive in creating safe and fun opportunities for seniors in Albany to remain active.

Every Tuesday morning, either the Community Development Officer or the Smart-Travel Officer from the City of

Albany accompanies keen Amity Village residents on a walk to nearby coffee stops.

Before returning home, all participants have enjoyed a social catchup with friends over a coffee, courtesy of the City and a chance to get out for a walk and remain active.

This initiative has been thoroughly enjoyed by active Amity Village residents.

## RAAFA Welfare Team

### CAMBRAI VILLAGE

Vanessa Priestley 9304 5280

### RAAFA ESTATE MERRIWA

Suzanne Free 9400 3778

### AFME

Carena Slattery 9311 4562

### ERSKINE GROVE

Angeline Carleton 9586 4309

### RAAFA ESTATE MEADOW SPRINGS

Tracey Lockett 9582 5369

### RAAFA AMITY VILLAGE

### ALBANY

Irene Smith 9841 8311

### The Welfare Service aims to:

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

### Events

#### AFME

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

#### Weekly

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

**Mondays, 11.15am - Falls Prevention Clinic with a Professional Physio, Orion Function Room**

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

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

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

**Friday, 13 January, 10.30am - Brain Training, Orion Function Room 1**  
Caitlin will return in January to test and tease your brain like never before.

**Saturday, 10 & 17 December, am - Nordic Walking.**

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

Heather is a trained Nordic walking

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

If you have no poles, no problem. If you would like to buy some, that can be arranged.

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

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

### Meadow Springs

**Every 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

**Every 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.

### Merriwa Estate

**Every 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.

### Cambrai Village

**Every Tuesday, 10.00am to 11.00am - Mindful Fitness, Cambrai Gym and poolside.**

Special offer for new clients: 1st session free, after the 3rd session receive a ½ hour coaching session and personalised program for the gym.

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

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

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

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