



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



Vale Les Gordon

Les Gordon was a rare individual who was instrumental in RAAFA WA becoming the successful and prestigious organisation it is today. His was a life well lived.

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Gopher Guide

Jim Grey found there were a number of road rules and safety tips of which gopher users should be aware. A comprehensive guide is published on the back page.

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Celebrated nurse recognised in name for new aged care centre

RAAFA's state-of-the-art new aged care centre will recognise the important role of Australian servicewomen, with the centre to be named in honour of celebrated WWI nurse, Alice Ross-King.

The \$30 million new care centre, which is due to be completed early next year, will be known as the Alice Ross-King Care Centre.

CEO John Murray said the name had been chosen after careful consideration, to reflect the important role of women in Australia's military services and to celebrate nurses' contributions to military and civil society.

"We are delighted to announce the name of the new Alice Ross-King Care Centre, in recognition of the extraordinary Alice Ross-King, whose legacy truly embodies the role of nurses supporting the community in times of need," he said.

"Throughout Australia's history of military service, women have put their lives on the line alongside armed forces from the trenches of WWI to more recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"In naming the centre after Australia's most decorated nurse, we hope to reflect the same principles of care and support which have guided nurses through military and civil society, who push themselves beyond the call of duty in their mission to care for others."

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Honouring Alice Ross-King

ALICE Ross-King is Australia's most decorated ex-servicewoman, having served her country in both WWI and WWII, as well as nursing for civil society for most of her life.

She was born in 1887 in Ballarat, Victoria, and from a young age held a great passion to care for others through nursing. Before WWI she had established a strong career in nursing, having been a sister, night superintendent and acting matron in hospitals across Melbourne.

With the outbreak of WWI, Ross-King enlisted as a staff nurse in the Australian Army Nursing Service within the Australian Imperial Force on 5 November 1914. She served with the 1st Australian General Hospital in Egypt and in Rouen in France, where she remained throughout the Somme offensive.

In 1917, Ross-King was sent forward to the 2nd Australian Casualty Clearing Station close to the trenches at Trois Arbres near Armentières, where she survived a hospital bombing, after which she became one of only seven nurses of the AANS to be awarded a Military Medal

during WWI, presented by General Sir William Birdwood. The citation praised her "great coolness and devotion to duty" during that night. More decorations were to follow, and in 1918 she was awarded the Associate Royal Red Cross.

The 1st AGH transferred to England in January 1919 and that month Ross-King embarked for return to Australia. Her A.I.F. appointment ended on 17 September.

After returning home to Australia, Ross-King married Doctor Sydney Theodore Appleford, whom she met on the return voyage home, and they had four children.

During WWII, Appleford took on the task of training members of the Voluntary Aid Detachments, and in 1941 was appointed to the Headquarters, Southern Command. In 1942, she was commissioned as a Major of the Australian Army Medical Women's Service, of which she was a member until its disbandment in 1951.

In 1949 Appleford was awarded the Florence Nightingale medal by the International Red Cross.

Alice Appleford passed away on 17 August 1968 in Sydney. An annual award is presented to a serving member of the Royal Australian Army Nursing Corps by the Ex-A.A.W.M.S. Association in her memory.

RAAFA is proud to continue Alice Ross-King's legacy of care for others, through the Alice Ross-King Care Centre, and we wish to thank her family, including her granddaughter Maggie Johnson, for their support of the new care centre.



On the tarmac



State President, David Peet

By David Peet

RAAFA Annual General Meeting, results

THE two positions for election at this year's AGM were for State Secretary and

one Division Councillor. I am happy to announce that Ron Onions from Cambrai Village was elected to the position of State Secretary, a position he has held in an acting capacity since earlier this year. Clive Robertson of AFME was re-elected to the position of Division Councillor.

We received the surprise resignation of Bill Anderson, State Vice President on the eve of the AGM. Bill has served two years as a Division Councillor and one year as State Vice President. We thank Bill for his valued input over those three years.

This vacancy and the Division Councillor vacancy created by Ron Onions being elevated to State Secretary will now be handled under the Constitution by the Divisional Council.

The pressure exerted, by various factions and individuals who reside in our villages, on our elected Division Councillors and their

families should cease.

If you have an issue or you are unhappy with the system there is a process you can take:

1. For any complaint/maintenance see your village office staff/manager.
2. If it is social see your Residents Branch Committee.
3. If it is structural or village facilities see your Estate Group.
4. If no satisfaction from this process then send copies of all your requests to Head Office Bull Creek.

As an example, I was approached after the AGM and was advised that at least six people wanted to speak, ask questions or make a statement and they felt that it was pointless attending the AGM, why not just send the financial report to their village?

BUT, if the complaint is important, why wait for an AGM to attempt to voice your concern? Follow the process above and the matter will be addressed in a timely manner.

The agenda for the AGM was advertised in the September issue of Air Mail and clearly there was no provision for general business. There were no issues received by the State Secretary within the specified 84 day time frame as outlined in the Constitution.

Internal Painting

It has been resolved that the internal painting of units will be reinstated for the four villages of Merriwa, Cambrai, Meadow Springs, and Erskine only.

New leases have a clause 7.2d stating that internal painting will not be RAAFA's responsibility.

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Paper Pilots took off during school holidays

VOLUNTEERS from the Aviation Heritage Museum helped to bring the magic of planes, pilots and aviation to life in Perth as part of a special event run throughout the October school holidays.

As part of the Paper Pilots event in the Forrest Place Mall, the Museum teamed up with Spirit Events to give children a chance to test their skills at making and flying a range of different paper aeroplanes.

The Museum had taken a range of aviation artefacts 'on the road' from its Bull Creek base for the 13-day event, which gave

children the chance to get up-close to real aviation engines, props and have 'rides' on a stationary helicopter.

CEO John Murray said the Paper Pilots event was a fantastic event for children of all ages and their families during the school holidays.

"RAAFA's Aviation Heritage Museum was delighted to be part of Paper Pilots throughout the school holidays, and it was a great chance for children to get a little glimpse into the world of aviation," he said.



Paper Piolet volunteer Isobel Long with Brodie and Declan Thomas

"From the basic Dart to more the complex models like the Eagle or Glider, the simple fun of making paper planes is always a hit for kids and kids-at-heart."

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Members of Alice Ross-King's family including her granddaughter Maggie Johnson will be invited to travel to WA for the official opening of the care centre early next year.

Maggie said her family were honoured by the decision to name the care centre after her grandmother.

"My family thinks this is a very fitting honour and acknowledgement of our grandmother's work given her military and nursing background and RAAFA's history of supporting and respecting the role of ex-servicemen and women in their service to our country," she said.

"We are therefore delighted that she has been selected for this honour by RAAFA. While also feeling a little sad that none of my grandmother's children lived to experience some of the honours that have come her way in recent years, we are delighted that her memory, and an appreciation for the great service she gave to her country, will be passed on to her great grandchildren living today, and future generations of our family, through honours such as this."

The care centre will also recognise two other significant figures of the RAAFA community, Vic Murray OAM, a former RAAFA State President from 1983 to 1984, and Tom Dean, former RAAFA State President from 1987 to 1990.

Vic Murray's long-term contribution to RAAFA will be recognised through the Vic Murray Room, continuing the name of the Vic Murray Motel units within the Estate which were demolished to make way for Orion Terraces.

The Vic Murray Room will serve as a unique multi-purpose room within the care centre, which will be used for a variety of purposes including meetings and training and will be available for use by resident groups from the estate.

Vic's wife Margaret said her husband had an unwavering commitment to RAAFA and its community.

He served with No 10 Squadron during WWII in the UK, and joined RAAFA following his discharge from service in October 1945. He played a significant role in the formation of Air Force Memorial Estate in 1978.

Vic was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia recognising his service to veterans and the community through his work with RAAFA.

The new cultural hub of the Alice Ross-King Care Centre will be known as Café Dean, in honour of Tom Dean, continuing the name of Dean Lodge which was demolished to make way for the new care centre in 2014.

Tom Dean was a RAAF pilot during WWII, and met his wife, Teddi, in South Australia where she was also a member of the Air Force.

Teddi said she and her family are proud that her husband's long contribution to RAAFA will be honoured through Café Dean.

"We are thrilled to bits that Tom is being remembered and recognised through Café Dean, which will be a lovely meeting place for people from across the Estate to go for a bite to eat and to meet with family and friends. My family are already talking about having coffee at the cafe whenever they come to visit," she said.

The Alice Ross-King Care Centre will offer 102 beds, including 24 beds within a

dementia-specific care wing, and responds to the needs of the existing RAAFA members and the broader community.

The care centre will feature single rooms, all of which have private ensuites.

The centre is located on the banks of picturesque Lake Howard within AFME, and is designed to capitalise on natural light within bright open spaces, with easy access to the beautiful environment outside.

Designed by Perth-based architects Silver Thomas Hanley and constructed by BGC, the 18-month-long construction project is expected to be completed ahead of schedule by April 2016.

The Alice Ross-King Care Centre will create more than 80 jobs for the local community. RAAFA will begin recruiting for staff including nurses, carers, allied health professionals, administration and hospitality staff, early next year.

CEO's perspective



CEO, John Murray

By John Murray

IN AN Association that recognises the work and efforts of ex-servicemen and respectfully remembers those who gave their lives for their country, there is another group of unsung heroes that we potentially tend to forget about.

For those who live in the RAAFA estates, there are those who provide management and support during the daylight hours, maintenance and office workers and others. But there is another group who have the biggest challenges in their working days and that is those who care for our elderly within our aged care facilities.

Those who work in these facilities make up the bulk of our staff. They come to work every day with their values driven by their want to provide care for those who are not able to look after themselves.

They are the ones who are caring for those individuals who can no longer cook for themselves, much less in many cases, feed themselves. Those who have issues about their bodily functions including the realities of incontinence, who need to be supported each day to be able to have a shower, get changed and prepare themselves for the activities of the day.

In many cases the support of an individual with these physical needs can be challenging enough and is at times physically demanding. Unfortunately for many there is an additional overlay in their care that makes this process even more complex and that is the loss of cognitive function that enables the individual to make decisions, much less recognise who their carer is. In many cases they cannot even understand that the person that visited them was their son or daughter. The processes of Alzheimer's and dementia are a cruel infliction on those who are ageing.

Staff support not only the individuals they are caring for, but also the extended family distressed at trying to maintain relationships with family members who in many cases cannot recognise them.

Nurses, carers, allied health professionals, hotel services staff who provide cleaning, catering and laundry services, all have a role, along with our gardening and maintenance teams. In these relationships, each one of

them, in one way or another impacts on the lives of those that we are caring for and their families and friends.

These unsung heroes also work within the boundaries of a very complex aged care quality system. Everything that they are doing is based on assessment of the individual resident's needs. In order to track staff/resident relationships a daily plan is documented and actioned. Any breaches of these quality standards leads to potential sanctions being placed on the organisation for not being able to provide a safe environment for those we care for.

The responsibility to ensure that these quality systems are complied with primarily sits with Karen Borthwick as the General Manager of Aged Care and Community Services and her team, including the Operations Manager, Sheila Yardley, Quality Manager, Fiona Legg and the team of managers at each of the facilities. The responsibility that is born by these individuals to ensure that we provide a safe, caring, friendly and supportive environment for our residents, balanced with an external party who is very detailed in its assessment of our services is at times quite stressful. It brings a level of accountability that most individuals cannot fully comprehend.

Every three years each aged care facility has to go through a full re-accreditation program and assessment, usually conducted

over 2-3 days depending on the size of the facility. During this year we have had reaccreditation at Gordon Lodge, Tuart Lodge and Karri Lodge. In addition we receive random assessments by the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency with six of these assessments conducted in the past 10 months.

That team out there that spend their time focused on providing quality care and services, have along with their other responsibilities, ensured that RAAFA maintains its standards of quality delivery as assessed by our external quality assessors.

I ask you as Members to just think as you may be sitting down to enjoy a Christmas lunch, New Years Eve party or catching up with family on Boxing Day, that many of our people will still be working, still responding to those needs, still working to comply with the expectations of Government agencies. But more importantly, they will be providing care, companionship and support to those of our Members who are less well-off and cannot care for themselves.

On behalf of RAAFA and its executive and all its Members and staff who may read this, I thank you for your support in the past 12 months and hope that you all have a very safe Christmas and New Year period.



The Padre's Piece



By Padre David

ARE you all ready for Christmas or is it going to catch you by surprise – as it does for me nearly every year? I know some people can always plan ahead and be ready for their commitments well in advance, but I've already been caught out. Material for this Christmas edition of Air Mail should have been in to Julie at Bull Creek by last Friday!

But on the other hand, doesn't Christmas

have a predictability about it? Each year it comes round- with Christmas cards to send again, presents to buy and arrangements to make for the family's Christmas get together. And what about the annual visit to the Carol Service at Church and the singing of all those traditional carols? The way we celebrate is all so predictable. Even at Church we say that the birth of Jesus was all part of a preordained plan by God.

The Revd. John Shepherd, the former Dean of St George's Cathedral, in a sermon he published three years ago commented that approaching Christmas we get the unavoidable impression that preparing to celebrate the coming of Jesus is nothing if not a series of well-choreographed, well-rehearsed expectations. Jesus was born according to the deliberate and orderly progression of all that was prophesied from ages past. In other words there was nothing spontaneous about the coming of Christ into the world.

There is an 18th century hymn by Philip

Doddridge that is often sung in the weeks prior to Christmas. The first verse being "Hark the glad sound the Saviour comes, the Saviour promised long, let every heart prepare a throne and every voice a song".

John Shepherd suggests the predictable routine behind our Church celebration of Christmas is all due to George Frederick Handel!! It is impossible to imagine celebrating Christmas without a presentation of Handel's Messiah.

I was born in Huddersfield in Yorkshire and I grew up with the annual Christmas presentation of the Messiah by the Huddersfield Choral Society and the Halle Orchestra under the baton of Sir John Barbirolli. The librettist for Handel's "Messiah" was a man called Charles Jenner and he ferreted out every text and passage in the ancient scriptures that could have any bearing on the coming of the Messiah in the birth of Jesus. Rather cheekily, John Shepherd suggests that it's the popularity of the "Messiah" that has built this predictability of all that the birth of Jesus might mean.

It is worth remembering that modern scholars point out that Old Testament references to this ancient hope and expectation are quite few and those that do

exist are most likely to have no reference to a coming Messiah or to Jesus.

I would much rather have surprise in my celebration of Christmas. What can I do this year that is different? Can this Christmas hold a new experience for me, a new experience of God?

I don't know, but I do know that it is as a surprise the Christ comes to us still. We can't think ourselves into faith, but faith can catch us out. Like Jesus being born in Bethlehem the experience of God turns up unexpectedly, in the most unlikely places.

Way back in 1985 Gerard W Hughes wrote a little book he called "God of Surprises". He was then based in Birmingham and worked on the development of spirituality for people who were active in peace and justice work, people who were prepared to move out of their comfort zone, prepared to work for others and for a more humane world.

May your Christmas not only be blessed but also adventurous this year.

Shalom





State President's Report

By David Peet

RAAFA Members, Mr John Murray CEO and Division Councillors, it is my pleasure to present my report for the past year.

Division general

Restructure has continued within the Division, of which most members only see the final results.

I want to congratulate the Executive Leadership Team and staff for their devotion and loyalty during these changes and for the continuing care they provide to our Membership.

Division Council

At the beginning of the AGM period we had a new State President, State Vice President and one Divisional Councillor in place, as well as our sub committees of State Executive, Audit and Risk, Planning and Development, Museum, Air Mail, Compliance and Charitable Purpose.

Our State Secretary, Bob Bunney resigned in March. Councillor Ron Onions was co-opted to fill the vacancy rather than go to the vote for an infill. Ron has worked diligently and been quite a formidable State Secretary. A lot of changes have occurred in this area and Ron has risen to the challenge. We have had many robust discussions travelling from the northern suburbs to Bull Creek for meetings.

The Division Council also has the services of three appointed Councillors, selected for their many relevant professional qualifications and industry expertise who provide their services pro-bono to RAAFA.

However three of these councillors, having served five years and three years respectively, have indicated their intention to move on.

We thank Carole Bain for three years and Karen O'Neill and Tim Humphry for five years and for the many hours during this time they have given to RAAFA. We thank them for their expertise and for on some occasions rapping our knuckles through inexperience.

Commemorative activities

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

As the State President I have attended the RAAF Pearce Pilots Graduation Parades to present the RAAFA "Most Improved Trainee Pilot" award.

RAAFA also continued to be represented at ex-service organisation ceremonies throughout the year by members of the Divisional Council.

Events we attended in the past year included the Indigenous War Veterans, North American Veterans Day, the Returned and Services League of Australia, Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia, the Long Tan Day, Battle of the Coral Sea and Mindarie Senior College.

100 Year of ANZAC Ceremony

This special year was celebrated at Albany. I had the privilege of representing RAAFA at the celebrations, accompanied by the CEO John Murray.

RAAFA National

As the State President, WA Division, I have had the honour of attending the National Meeting in Canberra in June and the National AGM and 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain in Hobart in September.

RAAFA Branch Tasmania are to be congratulated for their organisation of this event which involved delegates from all Australian states, plus military representatives from Britain, France, USA and the Netherlands. There was a formal dinner for 240 delegates.

Talking to members of the other RAAFA

Division it becomes apparent that those who established our Division did a marvellous job. We who have followed have a much easier task and you as members have very enviable benefits compared to the other Divisions. They have no retirement villages, no aged care facilities and no licensed clubs.

Annual Dinner

The 2015 Annual Dinner had a good attendance and we continued with the relaxed dinner dance format and band. Costing for attendance was kept to a minimum, well within the means of members to attend. Members 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 a why should I.

Branches

As time marches on we have less and less Branches, with three advising their impending closure, however we are working to have an 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. On our villages at least four have licensed clubs which you are entitled to use and patronise.

Membership shows we have in the region of 2500 members in WA who do not live in a village, so why not make your local village your local. The Air Mail paper shows the programs and events available and as members of RAAFA you are entitled to partake in using these facilities

Ex-service community

RAAFA maintains good contact with the major ex-service organisations 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 Pension and Advocate Officers are located at Bull Creek and Meadow Springs and are able to provide advice and information.

Youth

Our contact with WA Youth continues with the upgrading of both the Swetman Fellowship and McIntosh Memorial Scholarship. These awards have been increased to \$3,000 each.

The 2015 McIntosh Memorial Scholarship was awarded to Cameron Becker. Cameron is entering his second year of a double degree in Arts and Commerce aiming to enter Law as a post-graduate.

The 2015 Swetman Aviation Education Fellowship was awarded to Tessa Zoliner who is currently studying for a Bachelor in Aviation Technology at Greenwood College.

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

Conclusion

This has not been an easy year since taking over from Graeme Bland. He is a hard act to follow, especially as he took the last packet of Quick-Eze with him.

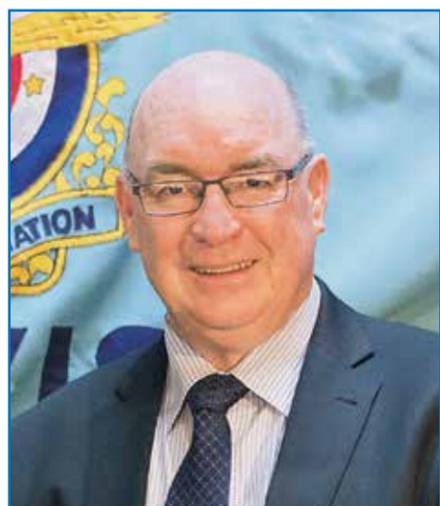
My thanks for this emotive year would have to be, the dedicated office staff at Head Office to a person they are a real bonus to RAAFA.

To the Executive Assistant Julie who is a real bonus to RAAFA and all us people trying to perform.

To the Divisional Councillors who are continually under the pump, because all our elected councillors live in RAAFA villages and therefore are subject to continual harassment.

To my dear wife Dianne for her devoted support when she is berated for decisions that are mine.

Thank you.



CEO's Report

By John Murray

GOOD morning ladies and gentlemen and welcome to the 2015 Annual General Meeting of the Royal Australian Air Force Association (Western Australia Division).

There are a number of things I want to discuss this morning, but before I do so, I wish to acknowledge a number of people. I believe that without the support they have provided, this organisation would not have been able to put in place the significant

changes that have taken place in the last 12 months.

Firstly, to David Peet, State President, the Division Councillors and State Executive of the Division Council for their support and guidance over the last 12 months, which at times is at the expense of their own capacity to enjoy retirement living.

In particular I want to acknowledge the support that has been provided by the appointed Division Councillors, Carole

Bain, who retired earlier this year, Tim Humphry and Karen O'Neill who both will have reached the end of their 5 year term of supporting this organisation in December 2015. They have been part of a significant period of change, which at times has been challenging, but they have always worked in the best interest of RAAFA, its members and ensuring the organisation was able to progress in a positive manner.

My staff, including the Executive Leadership *continued page 5*



CEO's Report Continued

Team, the office management team, the Managers at our sites and all those who provide care to our residents and support them with whatever needs they have. They have shown an enormous amount of commitment and willingness to work during a period of significant review and change across the organisation.

To my EA, Julie Stearne, her support and care in ensuring that I keep on track with the multiple layers of our Division Council Committees and the support to the Division Council is a significant factor in helping me through the multiple issues that have been presented to us over the last 12 months. On top of this Julie is also the producer of the Air Mail magazine which takes an enormous amount of effort from all those who are involved, to achieve production deadlines.

2014/15 Focus

So what has been the focus of 2014/15?

There was a Strategic Plan put in place in 2013 which had 8 Key Objectives which remained our primary focus.

System improvements

The most critical was the enhancement of RAAFA's capability to respond to its future, which required us to significantly review the corporate structure of the organisation. We have put in place a competent and experienced Executive Leadership Team that has taken on the responsibility to review and enhance their areas and portfolios over the past year and a half.

I am aware that some members have expressed concern about the growth in the size of the Executive Leadership Team. I wish to reassure you that in comparison to other like organisations within our sector, the cost of our Executive Leadership Team as a percentage of revenue is still less than comparable organisations such as Swancare, Amana Living, Brightwater and Juniper.

IT upgrade

The pursuit of the IT Strategic Objective led to a 3 year plan to upgrade a whole range of our support systems with a \$5.5M budget. This included the upgrading of all our computer hardware and software systems, in Head Office and across all our sites.

Our computer users have increased from 50 to 400+ in the last 12 months. The clinical management systems that have been put in place in our care facilities are now the most advanced in Western Australia. In fact our industry peers are now starting to visit us to look at these systems with a view of upgrading their own to meet our standards. The accreditation agencies have informed us that the clinical management systems and medication management systems in our sites have significantly improved our quality control systems. This is now also starting to show significant increases in our government subsidy revenue because of our increased understanding of the care needs of our residents.

Museum

The enhancement and promotion of the Museum was another objective. We have seen increased attendances lifting from just over 20,000 to 32,000 this year. The number of school visits has increased from 20 per year to in excess of 70 visits this year.

The ANZAC Anniversary provided an opportunity for us to access funding from the Federal Government in the order of \$90,000 to support the production of the documentary film "The Flying ANZACs". This will highlight the important role the Australian Flying Corps pilots of WWI played in developing aviation services in Australia. It is anticipated that this documentary will be ready in the next couple of months.

Aged and Community Care

The new Residential Aged Care Facility has been an increasing focus this year with the anticipated handover of the Facility in March 2016. This is a \$30M+ aged care development with 102 beds.

The General Manager, Aged and Community Care, Karen Borthwick was successful in achieving another 62 bed allocation from the Federal Government, which means that Gordon Lodge will now be maintained and continue to be operated.

It is anticipated that in May 2016 the new Residential Aged Care Facility will be open. This will be an additional 102 bed residence with 80+ staff and an additional \$9M per annum business to operate within RAAFA.

Strategic Plan 2015 – 2019

The Division Council and Senior Executive Leadership Team earlier this year sat and determined the Strategic Plan for the period 2015-19. There were four major themes, as follows, with 17 objectives within:

1. Drive operational effectiveness and service quality
2. Understand and respond to resident, customer and community needs
3. Evolve to address the emerging needs of the community
4. RAAFA people and culture

The Strategic Plan was based on a commonly used process called the "Agent Method" where we started by reviewing what the original purpose of RAAFA was. As you know RAAFA was formed by ex-servicemen for the support of ex-service personnel and hence the RAAFA Executive Leadership Team and Division Councillors have refocused back onto that original purpose.

Charitable purpose

The Division Council has just recently been reviewing the Terms of Reference for a "Charitable Purpose Committee" with the intent that we start exploring how RAAFA can start utilising its resources, funds and expertise to support ex-service personnel. This may include working with those organisations who are trying to link with the younger ex-service personnel that have returned from conflicts such as Timor, Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Future development needs

The other major significant issue affecting RAAFA's future is the ageing population. The results of the surveys completed by you our members early this year have provided clear feedback indicating that many of you wish to move into retirement living within the next 5 to 10 years. In fact 87% of those who don't currently live on our estates indicated their wish to become a resident.

We understand the future demands for retirement living in Western Australia has significantly increased. Our estimates, based on data from yourselves and the industry sector would indicate that RAAFA will need

to provide anywhere between 800 to 1,300 homes. This is required just to maintain the existing 10.3% of the total number of retirement living homes that we provide in this State based on the predicted demands ahead.

As a response to this demand there are master planning reviews being undertaken for our existing sites to see whether there are opportunities for us to expand our housing options within existing villages.

Bull Creek has had a master plan for many years. This is going to be reviewed in the context of the different demand and service model required to support people within their units. We will also need to look at whether there are opportunities within Merriwa and Meadow Springs estates to be able to enhance or provide additional housing on those particular sites.

Financial performance

The financial performance of the organisation despite the increased overheads has provided before depreciation a net 7.5% increase in profit of \$649,000 over last year. This is one benefit of a quality professional executive team working hard to increase performance and efficiencies in all aspects of RAAFA's service delivery. This also provides opportunities to look at how we can expand our services to you as members and respond to the increasing needs of veterans and the broader community.

Conclusion

I would like to thank all the members for their support and patience through this challenging year. We are very aware that as an Executive Management Team we have been very focused on the internal operations and needs to keep this \$45M a year business operating efficiently and effectively whilst looking after our 450+ staff and the care of the 2,500 residents within our retirement living and aged care facilities. Now that the majority of this work has been put in place our focus is now on how we develop further services and respond to the needs of you as members.

Thank you very much for attending this morning and supporting the organisation towards what we see as a very bright future.



By Robert Parker

STATE President Mr David Peet; members of Division Council and members of the Division, good morning.

Chief Financial Officer's Report

It is my pleasure to present to you a report on the Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2015 and some matters arising therefrom. Our last 12 months in the finance department has continued with enhancements to processes and efficiencies. Despite higher activity in all areas of the business, we have maintained a lean department.

Audit

You will see in the accounts the signed audit report. The most important aspect of that report is that we continued to receive an unqualified opinion. In other words the auditors found no grounds upon which they felt the accounts were not a fair

presentation of the Associations financial position and performance. It is also important to note that it is the Division Council, and management, represented by John Murray and myself that are responsible for the preparation and presentation of the accounts.

There are several members of Division Councils Audit Committee present, and I'm sure they will agree with me that the auditors continued to experience enhanced levels of documentation, procedures and internal controls than prior years. This also led to their audit costs being maintained at last years amount.

Overall

Trading performance

The Association achieved a pleasing Surplus for the year of \$1.89 million (2014 - \$2.3M). Whilst this is a significant number in itself, it is important to make the following observations:

- a. Interest income earned from cash balances held was \$2.6 million (2014 - \$2.5M). Without such a healthy reserve of cash on deposit, the Association would have a net deficit for the year.
- b. Gross Assets (at book/written Down

continued page 6



CFO's Report continued

- Value) increased a further \$36 million to be \$338 million. A return of \$1.89 million represents a yield of 0.5%.
- c. Gross Turnover (ie all sources of revenue) increased by over \$4 million to \$46.3 million.
 - d. Depreciation & Amortisation increased by approx. \$1.1 million. Full year depreciation of Orion Terraces and software/IT amortization were the main reasons for the increase.
 - e. The operating surplus, before depreciation, increased by approx. \$649,000 being 7.5% over the prior year.

In many respects this could be seen as the result of our "not for profit" approach to business. Management must ensure that

such a return is not due to inefficiencies, poor decisions or other inadequate use of facilities.

Of course the Operating Surplus is only one measure of performance, and there are many others than have far greater influence on peoples lives, such as quality of care, school visitor numbers to the museum, and quality of life in retirement etc.

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

Balance sheet

As mentioned, our gross assets have increased to just over \$338 million. This is an increase of approx \$36 million, largely due to cash settlements upon occupation of Orion Terraces at Bull Creek and construction costs on the new Alice Ross-

King Residential Care Centre.

We have reduced Receivables considerably over the year as well as continuing our program of paying out member loans to the Association.

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

On a Cost Centre breakdown the results including corporate income were:

Independent Living Units (inc. Clubs)

Inclusive of deferred management fee, but excluding depreciation, ILU's had a 2015 surplus of \$344,339 compared with a loss of \$48,715 in 2014. This turnaround is largely due to increased DMF and operating revenue from Orion Terraces with costs maintained.

Aged Care Facilities

Inclusive of retention/daily accommodation payments the Aged Care Facilities had a collective surplus of \$2.4 million compared with \$1.9 million in 2013. This is a 26% increase.

As can be seen from the above and information from our CEO and State President reports the future of RAAFA is looking positive. All managers and staff continue their efforts to ensure that residents and members funds are used wisely.

In closing I wish to thank all staff, Division Council and Audit Committee members for their support and assistance over the year. Mr Chairman that concludes the report and I thank members for their attention.

Hard work rewarded

BETTY Titterton was recently recognised for her commitment to helping others at RAAFA's Merriwa Estate with the presentation of a Certificate of Service.

Betty joined RAAFA in 2004 and moved into Merriwa Estate in August 2005 with her husband Ray.

Betty has been the Secretary for the Merriwa Residents Branch since 2008, working tirelessly for the benefit of the residents and during this period, represented the Branch at the Branches Forum meetings in Bull Creek.

In her spare time, Betty arranges the Branch social functions and ceremonial events such as ANZAC Day, Australia Day and Remembrance Day, including two Branch Christmas dinners.

Together with her husband Ray, Betty has very successfully run the Football Tipping Competition at Merriwa for seven years. They also organised the Annual Fete in 2012, raising over \$22,500 for future Branch activities.

For her outstanding efforts to the Branch and the Division, the Merriwa Residents Branch had no hesitation in recommending Betty for a Certificate of Service.



Betty receives her award from State President David Peet

A caring heart

CHRISTINE Robinson was awarded a Certificate of Service for the wonderful contributions she has made to Village life over many years and in so many different areas.

Christine became a Member in 2002 and entered Erskine Village in 2003. She quickly immersed herself into Village activities, becoming one of the inaugural members of the Branch Committee.

One of her first initiatives was to ensure the Craft Room was established. Christine worked tirelessly to create this resource and once it was up and running, she worked as the Co-ordinator for many years. She still participates in Craft Room activities and actively encourages people to make use of the facilities.

Christine devotes much of her time to making beautiful patchwork quilts for charity, as well as items for sale at the Village Fete. Anyone who has witnessed a patchwork quilt come together will appreciate the time, attention to detail and creative flair that these works of art require.

Christine also supports the Village's "Caring Hearts" appeal which assists



foster children. Christine's sewing prowess comes to the fore again by making a large number of toiletry bags for the children. Not satisfied with merely making the bags, she generously fills them at her own expense with toiletry items.

Christine's involvement in Village life has not stopped there and she has contributed in many other ways. She has served on the Chapel Committee and was involved in the formation of the Carol Singing Group. She also instigated the purchase of hospital chairs for residents who are unwell and has participated in the collection and management of the Village's mobility aids.

Christine was also the main driving force behind the "poppy" display for Village's 100th ANZAC Anniversary commemoration.

Memorial service at Mokine

ON SUNDAY, 4 October about 80 people attended the annual Mokine Memorial Service held at the memorial site near Northam. This service is held in October each year on the closest Sunday to the 4th of the month. The service was hosted jointly by the City of Perth Branch of RAAFA and the Northam Sub Branch of the RSL. RAAFA members attended from the Air Force Memorial Estate, Cambria Village, Meadow Springs Estate and Merriwa Estate.

For those who may not be aware of the history, on 9 October 1942 an Avro Anson aircraft piloted by Sergeant Geoffrey Debenham and carrying Flying Officer Lynton Birt, and Sergeants Noel Nixon and Kenneth Hugo crashed at Mokine (near Clackline) WA. The airmen, all from 68

Reserve Squadron based in Geraldton, were on a training mission flying from Cunderdin to RAAF Base Pearce. Partway along what should have been a routine flight, the aircraft crashed and burned, leaving no survivors and destroying the aircraft.

A solemn memorial service was conducted by Reverend David Oxley who remembered the four RAAF Airmen killed in the crash and the dedication to duty of Wing Commander Leamonth. Past State President Peter Fardon recited the Ode and the RSL provided the bugler who played the Last Post and Reveille. Reverend Oxley concluded the presentation by seeking remembrance for all who have died during war service. The moving and meaningful service was appreciated by all who attended.

RAAFA has held an annual memorial service at the crash site since 1985. By mutual agreement, control of the site was passed from RAAFA to Northam RSL Sub Branch in 2013 and the site was in pristine condition thanks to the efforts of the Northam RSL volunteers. Due to the closure of the City of Perth Branch, this is the last occasion that the Branch members will organise RAAFA's attendance at this service.

After the service, participants moved to the Northam RSL premises to share



a lovely three course meal prepared by Club volunteers and organised by Donny Prytulak. A raffle was held to boost the Club coffers. The prize, an original painting depicting a bombing raid during WWII, was won by a delighted Milly Onions, wife of State Secretary Ron Onions. In all, members had a great day, finished off with a delicious stop at the Bakers Hill Pie Shop.

Vale Keith Edward Kessell



By Coralea Kessell

ON 28 September 2015 another airman passed away aged 92.

Keith was born at Maylands in 1923. He moved with his parents to Dalkeith where he attended the Rosalie Primary School and Claremont State School. With a full scholarship he chose to attend Perth Modern School where he excelled academically. But his heart was always toward sport and he won the coveted Ambrose Cummings Cup for all-round sportsperson. At this time he was a North Cottesloe Life Saver – something he thoroughly enjoyed.

In 1942, he joined the RAAF for Pilot training and was initially at Clontarf, Cunderdin and Geraldton where he attained his Wings.

Keith was posted to Narrandera, NSW 8EFTS as a Pilot Instructor and later to 34 Squadron in the Asia Pacific region. He retained his private Pilot's Licence through to the mid 80s. The last flight was in a Tiger Moth VH-BTP over Perth celebrating the 70th anniversary of the Tiger Moth aircraft.

Following demobilisation, he joined the Commonwealth Development Bank and spent time in the lower west region, after 16 years rising to Assistant State Manager of the Savings Bank.

His love of sport continued, he was a country WA football umpire until he returned to Perth and the WA Football Umpiring League.

He joined the Lombard/Lombank English Financing Company as State Manager and stayed there for many years serving on a number of company boards. He was a member of the Royal Perth Yacht Club, Perth Club and Cottesloe and Melville Glades Golf Clubs.

However the flying "bug" took hold and he became Managing Director/Director of the Transwest Air Charter group servicing the Pilbara, Kimberley, Kalgoorlie and Esperance regions. Following the takeover by Skywest he became a consultant to the Justin Seward Real Estate Co, leasing major CBD building space to mainly State Government departments.

On my retirement, we purchased a property at Gwambygine, south east of York where Keith set about building a house with the assistance of a manual training teacher. At this time he was asked to take-over the role of Honorary Secretary of the York Trotting Club. This went on for 13 years and as his health was starting to deteriorate, we moved back to Perth onto the AFME in Bull Creek in 1988, though his Association membership had begun in 1971. At AFME, Keith rekindled his friendship with Tom and Teddi Dean, having first known Tom at Perth Modern School.

Keith's welfare activities at Bull Creek included shutting the bottom gates at 7.00pm and re-opening them at 7.00am the next morning, long before the gates were automated. In addition, he helped with the collection of glass, bottles and newspapers for sale to benefit the welfare branch.

On his passing, we say goodbye to an honest, true, loving and gentle gentleman. The family wish to acknowledge the expressions of sympathy extended to them all.

Remembrance Day



RAAFA Amity Village Albany



AFME Bull Creek



Cambrai Village



Fremantle



RAAFA Estate Merriwa



RAAFA Estate Meadow Springs



Perth



Erskine Grove

Service Excellence

AT THE September meeting of the Erskine Grove Residents Branch, two members were awarded Certificates of Service for their outstanding and long-term assistance to the residents of the Village.

Jill Deacon joined the Association and moved into Erskine Grove in March 2004. Together with a group of willing helpers, Jill quickly took on the immense task of setting up the Village library.

The library initially started with generous donations from the residents and the first enormous task was to collect, collate and catalogue six years of back-issues of Readers Digest and almost every edition of National Geographic! As the donations kept arriving, the library kept growing and Jill oversaw the expansion of the library into the wonderful Village resource it is today. It is a credit to Jill and her helpers that the library is a vital part of Village life and continues to grow under her enduring stewardship.

If running the Library was not enough, Jill has also made a contribution to the Residents Branch by serving as Treasurer for two terms from 2009 to 2011. On a number of occasions, Jill has generously volunteered her time to act as cashier at the Annual Village Fete.

Colleen Stein joined the Association and moved into the Village in February 2005. Wanting to make a meaningful contribution, Colleen initially volunteered her time as the receptionist to the newly-appointed visiting Doctor. Over time, her obvious abilities and professionalism in this area led to her becoming the supervisor of the doctor's rooms.

Her duties cover a wide range of administrative tasks, including arranging the rosters for the receptionists. Colleen has been a stalwart in this position and it is one she holds to this day. In addition, she also organises the mobility equipment for those



LtoR Colleen Stein, Basil Wilton, Jill Deacon. You can read about Basil's contribution to Erskine Grove in the October/November edition of Air Mail.

residents who require assistance.

However, this is not the entire story when it comes to Colleen's generosity with her time. From 2007 to 2009, Colleen also served as the Secretary for the Branch Committee and in 2011 served on the Liaison Committee. Being Secretary once was not enough and Colleen served again from 2013 to 2015. This means, that out of the ten years Colleen has been a resident at Erskine Grove, she has served five years in various capacities

on the Branch Committee.

It is fair to say that Village life would certainly be poorer without the extensive and long-standing contributions of both Jill and Colleen. Their compassion, care and service to other residents of the Village is self-evident and RAAFA is truly grateful for their contribution.

Why not live at Erskine Grove?

WITH 197 independent living units and just over 300 residents, RAAFA's Erskine Grove has gone from strength to strength since it was founded 12 years ago.

Estate Manager Helen MacBeth said that with easy access to Mandurah's beautiful inlet and beaches, Erskine Grove offers residents the best of both worlds.

She said the tight-knit community is what really sets it apart from other retirement villages.

"Erskine Grove is a smaller estate than many of RAAFA's other estates, which makes

us quite unique and as a result we have a really strong sense of community spirit and everyone knows each other, which is fantastic," she said.

"While we don't have a staffed Clubhouse, our residents are really socially active – there's always something happening in the Clubhouse, from Wednesday night 'happy hour' to Valentine's Day, St Patrick's Day and Melbourne Cup Day celebrations. We have bar and kitchen facilities, so residents are always putting on social activities, it's almost like a holiday atmosphere here.

"Our residents are really passionate about

our community, and are continually keen to help better the Estate."

Helen said many of Erskine's residents make the most of the fact that the Estate backs on to the Halls Head Bowling Club, while the pool and spa facilities on-site are also popular. The Estate is also home to art and craft groups, table tennis, darts and pool clubs, as well as a thriving computer group and popular library facilities.

"We have an active community of volunteers who take part in various activities which is great, from driving our faithful golf buggy Grover, to assisting with Tuesday 'shopping

day,'" Helen said.

One of the upcoming events which is creating a buzz on the Estate is the annual Children's Christmas Party, where grandchildren and young relatives of Erskine Grove residents are invited to spend Christmas with 'Old McDonald's Farm' on the Estate on 7 December.

The Estate also caters for residents who love getting out and being active in the community, with space for caravan and boat parking.



The herb gardeners LtoR Joy Helliwell, Rita Gardin and Dieter Sohns

Community herb garden

THE Erskine Grove community herb garden started with a suggestion from resident Joy Helliwell for the garden beds that were not in use and about to be filled in.

As you can see, there has been a wonderful makeover with lots of herbs now growing for the villagers to use, including oregano, chives, mint, coriander, parsley and lots more.

Joy said she has to be careful with the coriander as it can lower your blood pressure and she likes to use it in all her cooking.

The wonderful group of green thumbs that look after the garden, including the watering, weeding and sweet talking, are Rita Gardin, Dieter Sohns, Joy Helliwell, Bob Smoothy, Jill Heraty, Wendy Lee, Mike Seeber and Helen Watson.

Melbourne Cup, Erskine Grove style

ABOUT 120 residents celebrated Melbourne Cup at Erskine Grove with a tasty cold meat and salad lunch in the Community Centre with a quiz, sweeps, races and door prizes.

The quiz was won by Table 5 after a long battle with Table 12, as neither of them could answer the tie breaker questions correctly and it came down to a toss of the coin.

Terry Patten won the first race and was very excited. Jan Oates won the best hat and visitor Pam won the most outrageous hat with both receiving prizes.

Then followed the excitement of the running of the Cup, which was made even more so when we realised it was won by a female jockey. There was a lot of friendly banter between the sexes to follow.

A big thank you went to Margaret Cunningham and her helpers for setting up for the event and the lunch, it was a great fun day.



Melbourne Cup hat winners

Woodcarvers skills on display

By Elsa Dabbs

HOW many skilled people can there be in one retirement village?

At Erskine Grove we had the privilege to see the talents of three residents, who since retiring, now have the time to nurture their hobbies. Terry Blenkinship, Ron Jones and Graham Wilson held an exhibition displaying their wood carvings and wood turning, under the skilled eye and coordination of Bette Schmidt, organiser of the Craft Room.

The woodcarvers are all members of the Western Australian Guild of Carvers and have won many awards and prizes at the Perth Wood Show and various other competitions.

For four days residents and guests were enthralled with a display of woodturning and wood carving that far surpassed everyone's expectations. It was a delight to see the artistic interpretations of pictures in relief and marvel at the patience it must take to carve figures by hand from a block of wood.

Miniatures were another feature of the exhibition, done with such detail that you had to wonder how. How can someone carve such a delicate item? How can such detail be accomplished and how long does it take?

Great interest was also taken in the woodturning of bowls and again this raised many questions such as, "was the inside really finished by hand?"

The carvers were very pleased with the appreciation shown. Entrance was free with a voluntary donation to the Royal Flying Doctors Service and the RFDS were extremely grateful for the \$200 received.



Woodcarving by Terry Blenkinship

Morning tease

By Lillian Bridewell

MORNING Tease is held at Erskine Grove on the 3rd Wednesday of the month to provide an opportunity for residents to get together, have a chat and enjoy a cup of coffee.

But it is much more than an opportunity for a chat and a coffee. Morning Tease includes a musical quiz and sing-a-long with Pam Parish playing the piano followed by a talk from one of our residents about their life. The talks have always been very interesting as we are provided with an insight into how someone else has lived and what they have achieved. We have discovered that we have a very interesting mix of people living on our estate who have had some amazing experiences.

The idea was initiated by Bill Bevan when he was President of the Erskine Grove Residents Branch and has proven to be very popular.





All Saints Chapel 10th anniversary

By Kaye Seeber

ON THURSDAY, 22 October over 60 people gathered for the anniversary service and high tea at the Erskine Grove All Saints Chapel. It was a wonderful and blessed occasion that was a tribute to all who have journeyed with All Saints Chapel over the past 10 years.

The service was led by RAAFA Chaplain, Reverend David Oxley with special guests including Estate Manager Helen MacBeth and Keith and Mary Evans. The Chapel's regular ministers, Majors Ted and Kath Ferguson of the Salvation Army, Commanding Officer Michael Cossington, Major Erica Cossington, Karen Cave of the Anglican Church and Fr Richard Doyle of the Catholic Church.

The All Saints Chapel was dedicated on 24 November 2005. The work and inspiration of former residents Mike and Penny Wood

and Ray Polglase inspired and created the prayer space.

Many of the foundation members of the Chapel Committee still reside at Erskine Grove, they are Laurel James, Graham Wilson, Margaret Wilcox and John Wolfenden. Rev David Oxley originally assisted with the development of an ecumenical programme of weekly services and we are deeply indebted to his contribution and to all who offered and donated altar accoutrements and sanctuary items, especially the congregation of St Michael's Chapel at Meadow Springs.

At the close of the service Kaye Seeber, on behalf of the congregation, presented a special gift to Mrs Bep van de Ven who provides the organ music for the weekly services.

God bless

Health check

By Irene Smith

On 17 September, thirty RAAFA Amity Village Albany residents enjoyed an informative talk by Joe Foster, intern pharmacist from Brookes Garden Chemmart about strokes and health checks.

Joe, one of our favourite guest speakers, succinctly explained why strokes occurred, the FAST system of identifying strokes, how to reduce stroke risk and what to do in case of a stroke.

Did you know that using the FAST system involves four simple questions.

FACE – check their face, has their mouth drooped?

ARMS – can they lift both arms?

SPEECH – is their speech slurred, do they understand you?

TIME – is critical. If you see any of these signs call 000 straight away.

A stroke is not a heart attack. A stroke happens when the supply of blood to the brain is suddenly interrupted. The longer a stroke remains untreated, the greater the chance of stroke related brain damage. Emergency medical treatment soon after symptoms begin improves the chance of survival and successful rehabilitation.

The faster you act, the more of the person you save.

The talk in the Village aligned with National Stroke Week - Take the Challenge: Be Aware, Live Healthy & Get Checked.

After the talk, interested residents and the Village Manager, queued to have their blood pressure taken by Joe.



RAAFA Welfare Team

NORTH

Vanessa Priestley **9304 5280**
/ **9400 3778**

Cambrai Village and RAAFA Merriwa Estate

CENTRAL

Carena Slattery **9311 4562**
AFME Bull Creek

SOUTH

Angeline Carleton **9582 5369**
Erskine Grove and RAAFA Estate Meadow Springs

SOUTH WEST

Irene Smith **9841 8311**
RAAFA Amity Village Albany

The Welfare Service aims to:

- Assist ALL MEMBERS 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 Bull Creek

All events, \$2.00 donation unless otherwise stated, morning tea included.

Please contact Carena for further information and to RSVP.

Weekly – Orion Function Room

Monday, 9.30am, Tai Chi, professional teachers, costs apply.

Monday, 1.00pm, Falls Prevention Clinic, professional physiotherapist (private home visits available) costs apply.

Wednesday, 10.00am, Gym classes, professional exercise physiologist, costs apply.

Thursday afternoon, Whichcraft. Will have you caught up on the magic of assorted crafts and lively banter.

Friday, 10.00am, Seated Yoga, professional personal trainer, costs apply.

Village Hall

Every second Tuesday, "Two Black Dogs" help keep the blues at bay. Join us for a morning tea and some animal therapy.

Last Tuesday, GEMS Ladies Group coffee, cake, friendship and more! Guest speakers to be advised. All ladies very welcome!

Tuesday and Thursday Presentations will recommence in the New Year. Dates TBC.

Erskine Grove/Meadow Springs

Tuesday, 10.00am, Social Club for Members Living with Memory Loss, Erskine Grove club house

The club is run by Alzheimer's Australia WA, residents/members not living on the Estate can be transported by bus to and from Erskine. For those residents/members who already access services/supports through Alzheimer's Australia WA, details can be obtained from their Mandurah office on 9535 8772 to check eligibility.

Please contact Angeline for more information 9582 5369

Merriwa Estate

Thursday, 10.00am Group Functional Fitness. Meeting Room. Fitness Instructor/Personal Trainer to the senior age group, Craig Blake provides low impact fitness sessions on living a healthier happy lifestyle.

Craig also provides nutritional advice. All welcome regardless of fitness level.

Monday and Wednesday mornings, Merriwa Walking group.

Meet in the Arcade at 7.30am for a brisk 30 min walk around the Estate boundaries. All fitness levels invited to attend, please bring along a hat, water bottle and wear comfortable clothing/shoes.

Tuesday, from 9.00am, Australian Hearing.

Please phone 9204 9200 for an appointment. A qualified Audiologist will perform full hearing tests, fitting of hearing aids, new batteries etc.

Cambrai Village

Every second Thursday from 9.00am, Australian Hearing.

Please phone 9204 9200 for an appointment. A qualified Audiologist will perform full hearing tests, fitting of hearing aids, new batteries etc.

Tuesday, 10.00am Group Functional Fitness.

Cambrai Gym and Poolside. Fitness Instructor/Personal Trainer to the senior age group, Craig Blake provides low impact fitness sessions on living a healthier happy lifestyle. Craig can show you the correct way to use the gym equipment and will monitor your fitness levels each week. Craig also provides good nutritional advice. All welcome regardless of fitness level.

RAAFA Amity Village Albany

Thursday, 3 December, 9.30am.

Iris Thomas from Consumer Protection will be providing insightful information on SCAMS: what to look out for and who to contact.



Notes From Branches and Groups

Airfield Construction Squadrons Branch

Ron Lopaten

9535 7830 lopaten30@iprimus.com.au

We welcome new members who served in the ACS.

Upcoming events

Thursday, 17 December, Christmas Lunch, Beaufort Restaurant Meadow Springs, 12noon for 12.30pm. Please book with Bev Gilmour by 10 December 9582 5135 or bevy@msvillage.com.au . Sunday, 21 February, Annual ACS Picnic Lunch North Dandalup Dam.

Aviation Museum Branch

John Harris

The Aviation Museum Branch would like to thank all who gave donations to the Branch in memory of Les Gordon.

To those who left an address we have posted a receipt, to those who did not leave an address we send our thanks by using Air Mail.

Mandurah Branch

Diann Gibbs

Well done members – this year's profit is \$1,431 and we have 231 financial members! A donation for \$400 was sent to McNamara Lodge Wheelchair Bus Fund.

The Casino trip, buffet dinner and entertainment was enjoyed by all.

Thank you members for your support this year. The Committee wishes you and your loved ones, friends and families a safe, happy and blessed festive season.

Upcoming events

Thursday, 10 December, Christmas lunch. Book for the two course lunch, plus entertainment by Peter Williams. \$25 subsidised by your support of the raffles.

Thursday, 17 December, General Meeting.

MER Branch

Judy Bland

9311 4401

Our 2016 calendar of events is being drawn up and we welcome all members to any social function that we hold. The details will be advertised in the Chatter, Air Mail and on the notice board in the AFA Club Bull Creek.

Upcoming events

Wednesday, 9 December, Residents' Lunch. Open to all residents of AFME. Forms have gone out in the Chatter.

Sunday, 13 December, Carols by Candlelight, on the grassed area near the pool. This event is open to residents and friends. Includes a sausage sizzle.

December Light Tour. A bus will be going to view local Christmas Lights. Further details TBC.

Merriwa Branch

Joyce Johnson

joycepjohnsson54@gmail.com

We welcome new members from the Merriwa area. For further details contact Joyce.

Our Branch has been very active with too many successful social events to report on individually in great detail.

They have included a Fathers Day roast which proved to be eventful when most of the staff came down with a virus. But all hands pitched in to create a very enjoyable day.

Melbourne Cup lunch was a run-away success with 170 enjoying the opportunity to watch the race in style with a chance to back the winner.

Upcoming events

Friday, 4 December, Residents' Christmas Dinner.

Tuesday, 8 December, Movie Night.

Wednesday, 9 December, Club Christmas Lunch.

Monday, 14 December, Residents' bi-monthly meeting.

Tuesday, 15 December, performance by Butler School Choir.

Thursday, 31 December, Club New Years' Eve function.

Monday, 8 February, Residents' bi-monthly meeting with special guests John Quigley and Michelle Roberts.

WAAAF BRANCH

June Perry

june.r.perry@gmail.com

November has been a busy month for the Branch members with Branches Forum, Combined Ex-Servicewomen's Meeting, the usual monthly meeting, and the Remembrance Day Commemoration Service.

Best wishes to all for happy, healthy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

Upcoming events

Monday, 14 December, WAAAF Branch's Christmas Lunch, in Wings. Cost is \$27. Bookings essential.

Monday, 14 March, 75th Annual Re-Union Luncheon, Langley Hall. Carers, partners, husbands, welcome. Bookings essential. Information will be published the December issue of ESPRIT newsletter.

WRAAF Branch

Judy Bland

9311 4401

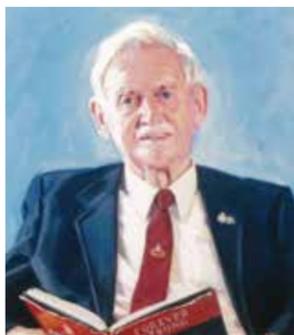
Many of the WA WRAAF enjoyed a wonderful National Reunion in Coolangatta in October. There were 280 ladies with every state and territory represented and a great time was had by all.

At this time we would like to extend a message of goodwill to all for the upcoming Festive Season.

Upcoming events

Tuesday, 1 December, Christmas Party, 6.00pm, Orion meeting room. Partners and friends are welcome. Please bring a plate to share and a gift for you and whoever is coming with you for Santa's helpers to distribute. Drinks, plates, cutlery and glasses supplied. Come and join us for a great evening.

Tuesday, 2 February, General Meeting, 7.00pm.



Vale Les Gordon

By Jo Naylor

LES and Molly Gordon with their young family emigrated

from England to Australia after WWII. Les had flown with Bomber Command and Molly, too, had served with that Command.

They, along with other ex-Commonwealth air and ground crews, became enthusiastic members of the Royal Australian Air Force Association.

Through the years we have learned just how much Les Gordon contributed to the success of RAAFA's first retirement estate, the Aviation Heritage Museum and the Association as a whole. A prophetic line in Per Ardua – the first history of the Association – reads: "The new Division Council contained for the first time the name of Mr Les Gordon, who was to make his mark in later years." (Per Ardua p.103) Thus

began the third era of RAAFA from 1972 to the present day.

Les was to serve as State President of the WA Division from 1979-1983. At that time, the Association had only one paid staff member being the State Secretary. The rest were all very willing volunteers and all expenses came out of their own pockets.

During his tenure Les Gordon proved to be an astute businessman. With fellow European Branch member Hedley David, who was the State Treasurer, they conceived a plan to increase the selling price of the dwellings being built in Stage 2 at Bull Creek. In doing so, they would be able to pay off the Association's debts. The result was that not only were all debts cleared, but they were able to build the Administration Block, the North Wing of the Aviation Museum and two more bowling greens. Les continued as a Division Councillor for several years. Later, the Aged Care Hostel that bears his name was opened and a record number of homes were

built at Air Force Memorial Estate (AFME), Bull Creek.

Les was the esteemed President of the European Area Branch until shortly before his death. It was fitting that he attended the final meeting on 7 October when the decision was made, with his consent, to close the Branch that had existed for more than fifty years. He learned at that meeting that delegates from an International Conference of Aged Care Providers had visited the AFME at Bull Creek and the Aviation Heritage Museum. They were blown away by what had been achieved.

He lived to see our Aviation Heritage Museum become world-renowned and acknowledged as the best in the southern hemisphere, drawing visitors from all over the world. He could take pride in the fact that he had played a major role in its success. He was instrumental in acquiring some of the most important aircraft on display. A founding member of the Museum Branch, he was always at the forefront of any fund-raising efforts.

Fiercely loyal to the RAAF Association, Les was

in the vanguard of those members across the Branches who fought, with support from office holders in the Eastern States, to prevent our Association's assets from being handed over to what he considered to be a nameless body.

Les Gordon was also an organiser par excellence. Who could forget the Bomber Command dinners? He arranged those annual events entirely on his own – even down to ensuring corsages, or a long stemmed rose, awaited the ladies. No one ever refused his invitation to be guest speaker – the State Governor, the State Premier, a high ranking Air Force official. All were happy to address the Bomber Command veterans and guests. When Bomber Command was at last recognised with a memorial in London, Les was invited to attend the unveiling.

Les Gordon had honesty, integrity and courage. Always courteous, he was the epitome of a true gentleman. Molly and their three daughters were always supportive of everything he did for the RAAF Association.

Vale Les Gordon. Yours was a life well lived.

Bull Creek AFA Club

Phone: 9311 4460

Trading Hours



Bar

Monday to Thursday, 11.00am to 6.00pm
Friday, 11.00am to 10.00pm
Saturday, 3.00pm to 6.00pm

Specials

Monday and Wednesday, Happy Hour drinks specials from 4.00pm to 5.00pm
Monday to Friday, morning coffee and afternoon tea with selection of muffins and cakes available from 9.30am to 5.30pm
Monday, Roast Lunch \$10.00
Monday, Chase the Ace 4.00pm to 5.30pm
Tuesday, fish and chips lunch \$10.00

Counter lunches

Monday to Friday, from 11.30am to 1.30pm

Dinner dance

Friday, 5.30pm to 10.00pm

Events

Sunday, 6 December, Kids' Christmas Party. Sausage sizzle, face painting, kids' farm, balloon man and a visit from Santa Claus. For more information contact 9311 4401 or the club.

Friday, 25 December, Christmas Day Lunch. Three course meal \$65.00 per person.

Friday 29 January, Friday Night Aussie themed BBQ plus entertainment.

Booking required for all events on 9311 4460.

Christmas trading

Club closed Saturday, 26 December until Monday, 4 January.

Residents requiring transport out of volunteer buggy hours, please contact Simon or Sue at the bar to organise pickup.



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 to 5.00pm
Wednesday, morning tea 10.00am to 11.00am
Tuesday and Wednesday, dinner 6.00pm to 8.00pm Picardy Restaurant
Friday, Happy Hour 5.00pm to 6.00pm when function on

Events

Wednesday, 25 November, Craft and Art group morning tea and sale. Devonshire tea available

Friday, 27 November, Sundowner. Happy Hour 5.00pm to 6.00pm. Snack menu and light entertainment on offer

Thursday, 31 December 2015, New Year's Eve function with entertainment, 7.00pm

Christmas trading

Club Closed Thursday, 24 December 2015, until Tuesday, 5 January 2016 except for New Year's Eve Function 31 December 2015.

January 2016 alternate fortnights on a Friday, either a three course buffet or Sundowner. Be sure to book early as both events will be popular. Don't forget to invite family and friends. The friendly staff are looking forward to seeing you there.

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 to Friday, morning tea from 10.30am. A variety of scrumptious cakes available at low prices!
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. Some nights Buffet.
Thursday, Happy Hour 4.30pm to 5.30pm, Sports Bar.

Counter lunches

Monday to Friday, 12noon to 1.30pm

Events

Monday, 7 December, Residents' Christmas Luncheon

Friday, 18 December, Friday Night Dining in the Beaufort Restaurant

Friday, 25 December, Christmas Day Luncheon

Thursday, 31 December, New Year's Eve Party

Friday, 8 January, Dining in the Beaufort Restaurant

Sunday, 17 January, Family Roast

Tuesday, 26 January, Australia Day Breakfast

Christmas trading

Club closed Saturday, 26 December 2015 until Saturday, 2 January 2016

Please contact the Club for bookings. Our friendly staff are looking forward to having you join us at Meadow Springs Club.

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 essential on 9582 5375.

Merriwa Club

Phone: Club 9400 3640

Kitchen 9400 3642

Trading Hours

Bar

Tuesday and Friday, 12noon to 2.00pm
Wednesday and Saturday, 12noon to 6.00pm
Thursday, 10.00am to 6.00pm

Specials

Wednesday, Happy Hour 4.00pm to 5.00pm
3rd Wednesday, Offal Club 12noon to 2.00pm
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
No Sunday lunch in December - returning in January.

Counter lunches

Monday to Saturday, 12noon to 2.00pm

Christmas trading

Closed Thursday, 24 December after lunch until Tuesday, 5 January 2016 except for the following restricted hours:

Friday, 25 December Christmas Lunch

Tuesday, 29 December and Wednesday, 30 December 11.00am to 3.00pm

Thursday, 31 December New Years Eve Party 7.00pm to 12.30am



Vale John Cyril James Clifford

By Peter White

JOHN was well known for his tenacity, consideration for others and length of public service. He always gave his best, despite failing health and sadly passed away on 13 September 2015.

His life was marked by two great loves - his family; and his time as a cadet, instructor and office bearer within the RAAF.

He was married to Julie for 50 years and has one daughter, Melinda. He was grandfather to Georgia and Sienna. The family sanctuary was situated at Greenhead where many fish were caught and enjoyed on the BBQ during

school holidays. He was appointed Principal at Muntadgin Primary School for two years. A transfer to South Thornlie Primary School followed until retirement from the Education Department.

John enlisted as a cadet in the ATC during 1956 and first paraded with 4 Flight at Wright Street, East Perth on Wednesday evenings. He completed all stages of the Training Camps at Pearce and was promoted eventually to Cadet Warrant Officer.

On turning 18, John was mustered as a Drill Instructor with 8 Flight South Perth. His service as an Instructor was to continue for a further 42 years.

Prior to his retirement in May 2004, John's career included Flight Commander 14 Flight Leederville; 15 Flight Cannington; 1 Flight Cannington and 3 Flight Fremantle. He was appointed National Catering Officer at Wagga Wagga, NSW in 1996 (National Training Corp). In addition, he held Staff Officer Training (1989) and Supply (1993). He rose steadily through the ranks to that of Squadron Leader from February 1993 onwards.

While we might assume that retirement from active RAAF duties would have satisfied John, this was not the case. From 2004 through to his death in 2015, he was active in all things to do with his beloved RAAF and this

included an active involvement with RAAFA. He was President of the RAAFA Cadets Branch from 2006-2015 and was re-elected President for a further term at the time of his sudden passing.

For his long and meritorious service he was awarded the Reserve Forces Medal (1989), Australian Cadet Forces Service Medal and 1st Clasp (2000), Australian Cadet Forces Service Medal 2nd Clasp (2002), Centenary Medal (2003) and the Australian Defence Medal (2006).

RAAFA's go-to gopher guide

MANY RAAFA residents enjoy the use of motorised mobility devices (including motorised wheelchairs more often known as gophers and scooters) to get around both within the Estates and the wider community.

But did you know that there are some unique road rules which apply to using a gopher? Being a responsible gopher driver helps to ensure both your own personal safety, and the safety of those around you. Here are some key road rules which all residents who drive gophers should be aware of.

According to Main Roads WA guidelines, gophers and motorised wheelchairs can be used to ride at no more than 10km/hr on footpaths, shared paths, the pedestrian section of a separated footpath, in shopping centres and public places, and to cross roads.

When you're using footpaths, shared paths or the pedestrian section of a separated footpath, remember that you shouldn't be driving above 10km/hr. You should:

- Keep to the left of the footpath, unless overtaking
- Watch out for cars reversing out of driveways
- Always show consideration to other pedestrians
- Travel no faster than surrounding pedestrians, because they might not be able to move out of the way easily

But what should you do if there are no suitable footpaths or shared paths to drive on? In WA you can also use your gopher to ride

on roads, provided you follow these rules:

- You can ride on the road if there is no footpath or nature strip adjacent to the road that is suitable to use
- You must drive facing oncoming traffic on the far right-hand side of the road
- You immediately move off the road when a vehicle approaches, and remain off the road until the vehicle passes
- You cannot ride on freeways
- And if your gopher is capable of exceeding 10km/hr it must be registreed as a vehicle with the Department for Planning and Infrastructure

Safety tips

If you're riding on the road, you need to bear in mind your own personal safety, as well as the safety of other road users.

- Always travel facing forward into oncoming traffic
- Show consideration for other pedestrians using the road
- Be aware of traffic movements, signals and signs
- Watch out for drains, pot holes and parked cars
- Watch out for doors being opened by parked cars, or cars moving off without indicating
- Consider fitting a reflective flag onto your gopher to make yourself more visible



Jim Grey using his gopher

- Wear brightly coloured clothing during the day, or reflective clothing if travelling at night, to maximise your visibility to other road users
- Where possible ensure you're driving on level surfaces
- Ensure your gopher battery is charged to full before venturing out
- Roadside assistance is available through RAC
- Avoid getting your gopher wet and drive according to conditions
- Always use a seat belt, if you have one fitted to your gopher

95-year-old Meadow Springs resident Jim Grey has been using a gopher to get around since relinquishing his Driver's Licence about four months ago.

"I thought the time was right to get off the roads, so I didn't renew my licence and got a gopher straight away," Jim said.

"My main travel is around the Estate, between my home and the Clubhouse. I check the mail daily, visit the hairdresser and go to meetings and events and things of that nature. Without my gopher I wouldn't be able to do all this, and it's good

because it gives you a sense of freedom and independence."

Jim hasn't ventured out to drive his gopher outside of the Estate yet, but he has spoken with Main Roads to double check the rules to ensure he is a safe and responsible gopher driver. He is keen for other RAAFA gopher users to be aware of the fact gophers can be driven on roads where footpaths aren't available.

"Driving a gopher isn't like a car, you get used to the safety of a car and you do feel a little vulnerable at first," he said.

"It's important to be a confident driver though, to ensure you can handle obstacles and drive at a safe speed. You have a responsibility for yourself and for those around you."

"Around the Estate we don't have many footpaths so I usually drive on the right hand side of the road, facing any oncoming traffic. I try to wear light clothing so I'm better seen by other drivers."

For more information, contact Main Roads WA.

Meadow Springs residents remember ex-servicewomen

A SMALL group of ladies gathered to commemorate the closure of the Meadow Springs Ex-Servicewomen's Branch on Remembrance Day.

The Branch was formed in 2000 with a small group of women led by Meadow Springs resident, Jean Newton.

Branch member Hilary Rose said that unfortunately, with numbers declining, it was decided to close the branch this year.

In honour of the Branch and of all ex-servicewomen, the ladies joined Reverend David Oxley to unveil a commemorative plaque to mark their contribution to the Estate on 11 November.

Hilary said the original aim of the Branch was to create an avenue for ex-servicewomen in the area to enjoy fellowship while undertaking fundraising activities, through the form of lolly stalls held throughout the



year, to help support various charities in the local community.

"The Branch also designed and funded the window in the Estate Chapel and we helped to purchase benches which were placed around Meadow Springs. We were also members of the Australian National Flag Association," Hilary said.

"The plaque reads 'remembering all servicewomen', and we'll continue to remember all ladies who have served for Australia."

Bowled away

By Kevin Thomson

THE opening of the 43rd year of the Bull Creek AFA Bowling Club was held on Saturday, 5 September 2015. Members and guests sat down to lunch in the Air Force Association Club rooms.

Guests included RAAFA Vice President Bill Anderson, his wife Grace and Life Members Kath Hancock, Bill Corry and Gus Watson.

Lady President Barbara Pruden welcomed the members and guests and invited Bill Anderson to open the 2015/16 bowling season, Bill congratulated the Club in providing a healthy sporting activity for residents and outside enthusiasts.

After lunch, the traditional "spider" was conducted and Bill was invited to deliver the first bowl of the season.

A "reduced ends" game of bowls was played for the President's "Opening Day Cup".



Bill Anderson delivers the first bowl for 2015/16

The President's Cup was won by Jim Derries, John Peters, Geoff Dutton and Barbara Pruden.

The Bull Creek AFA Bowling Club conducts bowls on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays with evening bowls on Wednesdays when the weather gets warmer. Ladies and men bowlers compete in Bowls WA pennant events and friendly competition is held with RAAFA estates in Merriwa and Meadow Springs.

New and experienced bowlers are most welcome to visit and join the Club by calling 9311 4465. Qualified coaches are available for new bowlers.

Bowling Club facilities at the Bull Creek RAAFA Estate are the best in Western Australia.