

AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION VICTORIA



ATC/AAFC BRANCH

ABN 96 091 342 304

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

Issue No 74
February 2019

President's Message



Happy New Year to everyone. I hope you all enjoyed a safe Christmas break doing whatever you had planned or simply improvised as you went along.

VALE: On a sad note we advise of the passing of yet another Branch member, Audrey Steer on 3rd of December. Audrey was the wife of the late David Steer who was a photographer with the RAAF. Both were ex residents of Adelaide and we offer our

condolences to the family who still reside in South. Australia.

My thanks to PLTOFF (AAFC) Nicole Kelly and the cadets of 408 Squadron for having me as a guest at the Squadron's Dining In Night on Saturday the 10th of December. It was a most enjoyable evening and good fun all 'round.

I also thank the Squadron for their invitation to attend their 2018 End of Year Final Parade which, unfortunately, I was unable to attend on this occasion due to an unforeseen circumstance. My apologies once again for the inability to advise sooner.

This year already promises to be another busy one for the Branch and the Association with it being the year of the 2019 Bi-Annual Avalon Air Show. It doesn't seem all that long ago since we had the last one.....or so it seems.

The Branch's Christmas Luncheon was a resounding success again and the Committee thanks all of our members who so strongly supported the function again in 2018.

Just a reminder that our first monthly Luncheon for this year at Box Hill RSL will be on Friday the 1st of February and we look forward to catching up with as many who can attend.

Regards to all,

Laurie.

Office Holders

President	Laurie Bell
Vice President	Peter Wilson
Secretary	Hugh Tank
Treasurer	Tony Synhur
Delegate	John MacDonald

Newsletter Editor
Ian Cohn

Please send your contributions to
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or
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Deadline for next issue – 23Jan19

Welfare

Branch Welfare Officers
Hugh Tank on 03 9877 3424
and **Peter Wilson**

If you are aware of any member who is unwell please contact Hugh or Peter.



AAFC News

From the 4 Wing Facebook page

4WG Australian Air Force Cadets January 20 at 11:48 PM ·

// 1/19 PROMOTION COURSE DETACHMENT//



A number of 4WG cadets graduated from our promotion course detachment with Reviewing Officer, WGCdr(AAFC) B. J. Smith - who was recently appointed as Director of Training AAFC

We share some words from today's reviewing officer that were shared with the graduating cadets;

"Thank you for allowing me to share your special day as you celebrate the completion of your 2019 Promotion Training Course.

I'd like to congratulate you on a magnificent parade. I recently had the opportunity to work with the Recruit Unit at Wagga and while they are certainly good, your drill, your dress and your bearing outshines them every day of the week. So well done, your family and friends should be very proud.

Over the past 17 days, many of you would have been challenged with the question "why the heck am I doing this?"

Forty degree heat, heavy uniform and trying to sleep through hot nights.

You may have struggled with the fact that some of your friends were relaxing on holiday, enjoying the hot weather by a pool side or simply getting better at playing Fortnite.

While you, march in the sun, studied for exams and tried to stay awake in the afternoon heat.

Well, these last 17 days may have been disguised as hard work, there are many stories that will stay with you forever.

As someone who completed their Cadet Warrant officer course some 27 years ago, I still remember my course and the friendships forged during those days. At the time I thought it was the end of my leadership learning. I was a Cadet Warrant Officer, so surely I knew everything about the world!! Boy was I wrong.

One of the most important things I took away from my leadership journey, is that when people are thrown into a moment like this, it is where you learn to play your role. Among all the content you may have seen, all the activity conducted and all the classes delivered during these 17 days, one significant learning that you must take away from this experience is "Play Your Role"

Yes you will have a new rank, but what is your role? What part will you play back your squadron?

For those of you who are starting your leadership journey, your first rank, this will be a concept that will challenge you among your peers. You will still be Josh or Anna to your peers, but your role will have changed. Those who have experienced more senior ranks you will now have a change of role as well. You will be asked to serve in a different way, but still serve.

And I use this word (Serve) specifically because leadership is not about yelling at your team. It's not about pushing them to do what you want them to do. It is about being a servant to your team. It's about ensuring you create the environment for your team to thrive. It's about understanding that many a time, you will put the needs of your team before your own. It's about appreciating that there are variations in your teams and people are not all the same. The talents of each one of your team are there to be appreciated by the leader - that leader being you.

Applying the leadership skills you have learnt on this course is what really matters.

You may not have pulled the greatest numerical result. There is no place for 200 cadets to dux the course, but there is plenty of place for 200 cadets to apply their leadership.

You have worked very hard to be on this parade today, but the hard work is maintaining it. Today you have made a decision to serve others. You may take that into your careers later on, but you have decided to lead others and by leading is to serve.

I have no doubt that you all have the potential to be here in 30 years time leading the next generations of extraordinary young people, as I have had the chance today.

If you decide to continue your leadership development, you will most definitively read, Ken Blanchard book.

Ken writes;

"Servant-leadership is all about making the goals clear and then rolling your sleeves up and doing whatever it takes to help people win. In that situation, they don't work for you, you work for them."

Again, Congratulations on starting, or continuing your leadership journey.

Thank you."



4WG Australian Air Force Cadets January 21 at 9:23 PM ·

// 4WG PROMDET 1/2019 RESULTS - OVERALL DUX OF COURSE //

On Sunday 20th January, the candidates of 4WG's 2019 CUO, CWOFF, SNCO and JNCO courses graduated at Puckapunyal Military Area.

Congratulations to all candidates on what you have achieved this year.

Overall Dux of Courses

Dux of 51 CUO Course - CFSGT Eric Choi

Dux of 36 CWOFF Course - CSGT Reuban Iywan

Overall Dux of 1/2019 SNCO Courses - CCPL Aashutosh Sapkota

Overall Dux of 1/2019 JNCO Courses - LCDT Patrick Swingler



Photo credit: WOFF(AAFC) Bree Neve



401 Squadron - Australian Air Force Cadets
January 19 at 12:08 PM ·

4 WING CRG CHAIRPERSON AND DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON

Congratulations to our very own Cadet Sergeant Nikitha Kurian Anna and Cadet Sergeant Reuben Iywan who have been appointed as Chairperson and Deputy Person respectively for the 4 Wing Cadet Reference Group. Great work Cadet Sergeants!

The CRG is a representative group which communicates cadet ideas and feedback back to the wing executive. As Chair and Deputy Chair, CSGTs Kurian Anna and Iywan will be the link between squadron CRG representatives and staff at 4WG Headquarters. They will be responsible for organising and providing feedback on many wing activities.

In 2019 4WG is pleased to introduce a new award, the Dux of Excellence, in each course.

The Dux of Excellence is awarded to the candidate on each course who has displayed exceptional leadership qualities and values, along with exceptional followership and mateship.

This award has been introduced to complement the Overall Dux awards and further recognise the incredible talent we see each year in 4WG.

Congratulations to the first winners of this award.

Course Dux of Excellence

Dux of Excellence, 51 CUO Course - CFSGT Rhys Bubb

Dux of Excellence, 36 CWOFF Course - CFSGT Ben Koopmans

Dux of Excellence, 130 SNCO Course - CCPL Luca Chiefari

Dux of Excellence, 131 SNCO Course - CCPL Harrison Green

Dux of Excellence, 132 SNCO Course - CCPL Kyle Charles

Dux of Excellence, 231 JNCO Course - LCDT Presley Johannesen

Dux of Excellence, 232 JNCO Course - LCDT Benjamin Hildebrand-Neumann

Dux of Excellence, 233 JNCO Course - LCDT Adam Ford

Dux of Excellence, 234 JNCO Course - LCDT Christian Montagner



Photo credit: WOFF(AAFC) Bree Neve

Branch Events 2019

Friday, February 1 st	Branch Luncheon, Box Hill RSL.	Friday, September 6 th	Branch Luncheon, Box Hill RSL.
Friday, March 1 st	Branch Luncheon, Box Hill RSL.	Friday, October 4 th	Branch Luncheon, Box Hill RSL.
Friday, April 5 th	Branch Luncheon, Box Hill RSL.	Sunday, October 6th	4 Wing, AAFC Annual Parade, Point Cook,
Saturday, April 13th	Branch AGM, Box Hill RSL.	Friday, November 1 st	Branch Luncheon, Box Hill RSL.
Friday, May 3 rd	Branch Luncheon, Box Hill RSL.	Sunday, November 10th	AAFA's Annual Pilgrimage &
Friday, June 7 th	Branch Luncheon, Box Hill RSL.		RAAF Nashos' memorial Day, Point Cook,
Friday, July 5 th	Branch Luncheon, Box Hill RSL.	Friday, December 6 th	Branch Luncheon, Box Hill RSL.
Friday, August 2 nd	Branch Luncheon, Box Hill RSL.	Sunday, December 15th	Branch Christmas Luncheon, Box Hill RSL

Denotes dates subject to confirmation in due course.

Mystery Photograph

Our mystery photograph from the December 2018 edition has been identified by Peter Colliver and John Gracie who both appear in it.



Thanks is due to member Elizabeth Vida, the daughter of members Barbara and Bob Eastgate, for providing this picture. Elizabeth, who was a Cadet FltSgt with 16 Flight AirTC at Essendon from 1987 until 1994, recently attended a Branch meeting when she accompanied Bob Eastgate as a visitor. Elizabeth now resides in NSW and has joined the Branch as another of our interstate members.

City of Essendon

To the Commanding Officer, Officers,
Non-Commissioned Officers, and other Banks of the
No. 16 Flight Air Training Corps

Greetings

At the Ordinary Meeting of the Council of the City of Essendon held on the 18th December, 1989, it was resolved that, in recognition of the formation of the No. 16 Flight Air Training Corps, and the future close relationship envisaged between the Unit and this City, the Council confer upon the Unit, the distinguished privilege of Freedom of Entry to the City on ceremonious occasions with Swords Drawn, Bagonets Fixed, Drums Beating, Bands Playing and Colours Flying.

Now Therefore we the Mayor, Councillors and Citizens of the City of Essendon by these presents, do hereby confer on the No. 16 Flight Air Training Corps the said distinction and privilege accordingly.



Given under the Common Seal
of the Mayor, Councillors and
Citizens of the City of Essendon
this 17th day of March, 1990.

Mayor *Leo P. Cahill*
Councillor *John Gracie*
City Manager *[Signature]*

Peter Colliver writes:-

Ian, it is certainly John Gracie, as Parade Commander, me as CO VICAIRTC, and Cr Leo Cahill, Mayor of the City of Essendon, inspecting the troops, prior to the grant of the Freedom of the City to 16 FLT (now 416 Sqn) on 17 March 1990.

I have attached a PDF (see picture at left) of some items from my collection of memorabilia relating to the event.

Regards

And John Gracie also replied:-

Who:

FLGOFF John Gracie FLTCDR 16 Flight Essendon

Where:

Outside City Offices of Essendon City Council in Moonee Ponds

Why:

Inspection of Cadets by the Mayor, accompanied by WGCDR Peter Colliver CO VICAIRTC on presentation of Freedom of the City to the Flight

The Flight then exercised their right of entry by marching up Puckle Street on a busy Saturday morning to be challenged by Inspector Tim Pepperkamp who also later served as an AIRTC Instructor.

Cheers John Gracie

AAFC/AIRTC Historical Items

Please send in any of your old ATC/AAFC photographs with a small explanation of the circumstances. A picture is worth a thousand words.

Heard of the Air Training Corps/AAFC Memorabilia Collection? Located at Benalla Aviation Museum at Benalla Airport in Victoria, this display is highly recommended for a group visit.

See more at www.benallaaviationmuseum.org.au/

Another mystery picture

This one appeared in our December 2018 edition attached to the John Gibbs story. Who were these talented ATC members and what was the occasion?



Letter to the Editor.

Dear Editor,

Here is the inscription proof for our AFC Memorial (Opened by our then State President, Group Captain Carl Schiller on the 25th of March, 2017, and the Member for INDI, Cathy McGowan, AO, MP. This particular Memorial commemorates the connection between the Australian Light Horsemen “volunteers” and the foundation of the AFC. It is the only memorial outside of RAAF Base Williams in Australia.

On another front the ATC/Airtc/AAFC display at the Benalla Aviation Museum has remained static during 2018 and needs some Branch Membership input in forthcoming years to establish ownership and secure its future.

Meanwhile the Benalla Aviation Museum, home to No.11 EFTS, RAAF Station Benalla 1941 – 1945, has just acquired the only Fawcett 120, 4 seat, high wing monoplane in existence! That should get our buffs talking? This rare machine was designed in 1962 by Pellagrini -- all metal monocoque construction, powered by a D.H. Gypsy Major 1 ex Tiger Moth engine (Cowl and all). The Museum has also been donated an Aussie Mirage 30 aircraft which will arrive before the middle of 2019.

Doug & Jan Williams

Letters to the Editor – continued.

A Short History of the Australian Flying Corps (A.F.C.) and Our Benalla A.F.C. Memorial

The Beginning

In the first decade of this century, aviation in Australia was developed slowly by a handful of enthusiasts and inventors (known as the Aerial League of Australia), who experimented with primitive, often home made, 'flying machines'.

These men were given a chance to air their ideas in 1909, when the Commonwealth Government offered a prize of 5,000 Pounds Sterling (\$10,000) for the invention of a flying machine which could be used as a military weapon. However, no prize was ever awarded, because most of the entries were hopelessly impractical.

By now the British Military Board had noted the newspaper advertisements placed by the Aerial League, and they contacted the Australian High Commission in London. Events then were to follow (not without setbacks) for both the British and Australian governments, and despite opposition from the navies, progress was made with the formation of the Royal Flying Corps in Britain. At the same time, courses for flying training in Australia were oversubscribed despite stringent personal criteria.

This did not deter many volunteers from applying again, (as many were already volunteer Australian Light Horsemen), including those from the Victorian Mounted Rifles who had enlisted at Benalla's Drill Hall Recruit Centre from 1912.

Point Cook 1913
Refer to Plaque 1: A.F.C. Point Cook, Victoria 1913

Little was done by the government towards the encouragement of military flying until September 1912, when an Army Order was issued proposing the establishment of a squadron of four aircraft. This was to be known in the A.I.F. as the 'Aeroplane Corps', whose members would wear a distinctive triangular Corps 'Patch'.



A Flying School was eventually formed, which was transferred to Point Cook in 1913. Two of the great pioneers of Australian flying, Lieutenants Petre and Harrison, became its first officers and began courses in flying with primitive machines to select officers of the Army. At Point Cook in those early days, men were valued for the performance of deeds of spectacular skill and valour in the Great War of 1914 to 1918, the first conflict in history to demonstrate the vital tactical importance of air power.

The Great War 1914 - 18: Mesopotamia (Iraq)

Apart from an uneventful excursion to German New Guinea in November 1914, the first contingent of Australian airmen to leave for overseas was the famous 'Half Flight' of four officers and forty one men dispatched to Mesopotamia in April 1915. They were to join an Indian Government contingent of airmen, and together they went into action against the Turks.

Refer to Plaque 2: A.F.C. 1/2 Flight Mesopotamia (Iraq)

In the fierce fighting, Lieutenant Merz was killed. Captain T.W. White, later Australian High Commissioner in London, together with nine mechanics, were captured near Baghdad and taken as prisoners to Kut, in modern day Iraq. The rest of the force joined the A.F.C. in Egypt in 1916.

A.F.C. Squadrons

More substantial progress was achieved towards the formation of an Australian air force in March 1916, when No.1 Squadron, Australian Flying Corps, left for Egypt as the first complete flying unit to go overseas from any Dominion. It went into action at Suez and Karga, where it played a vital role in the air war. In the Sinai Desert in 1917, Lieutenant (later Air Vice-Marshal) F.H. McNameara of No.1 Squadron won the Victoria Cross after rescuing a comrade under enemy fire. He was the only Australian pilot to win this decoration in the 1914-18 war.

Refer to Plaque 3: A.F.C. France & Belgium 1916 - until the 'Armistice' on the 11th of November 1918

Numbers 2 and 3 Squadrons A.F.C. were formed in 1916, and went to England for training. They first saw action in September 1917 at Cambrai, France. Among the commanding officers were Major A. Murray-Jones, later Managing Director of de Havilland Aircraft, who made Mosquitoes during World War Two, and Major W.A. McCloghry who was killed in 1943 while Air Officer Commanding R.A.F. Egypt.

The third squadron of the A.F.C. was formed in Egypt from volunteers, and had the distinction of being the first Australian flying unit to arrive in France.

Number 4 Squadron embarked for Great Britain from Australia in January 1917. During this unit's operational tour of the Lille, Cambrai and Lys areas of France and Flanders, young Captain George Jones made his mark as an outstanding officer and fighter ace, when he won a Distinguished Flying Cross after shooting down seven German aircraft between February and November 1918. He would become Air Marshal Sir George Jones, former Chief of the Air Staff for nine years.

Captain (later Air Commodore) A.H. Cobby was another prominent member of 4 Squadron. He destroyed thirty-two German aircraft and several balloons, as well as taking part in bombing and strafing attacks on enemy territory, troops and installations.

Left side

Plaque 1



AFC POINT COOK - 1913/14

Plaque 2



1915 AFC HALF-FLIGHT, MESOPOTAMIA (IRAQ)

Plaque 3



AFC FRANCE - BELGIUM 1916-18

Legacy

These were the four operational squadrons of the Australian Flying Corps. An additional four A.F.C. training Squadrons were formed in England: Numbers 5, 6, 7 and 8, to formalize training. Many other young Australians served with the Royal Flying Corps, the Royal Naval Air Service and later the Royal Air Force in Britain, the Middle East and Europe. Until the Armistice on the 11th of November 1918, 2,275 Australians, both air and ground crews, served overseas: 158 of these were killed.



Lest We Forget

These pioneer pilots and the ground staff who so ably supported them and kept them in the air blazed the trail for the later achievements of the Royal Australian Air Force. Their efforts helped to change aviation from a pastime of visionaries and inventors into an important military force in both defensive and offensive warfare.

Between the Wars

The A.F.C. was disbanded in 1919, and military flying ceased in Australia until the following year when the Australian Air Corps was formed at Point Cook to man the Flying School. At its head was Lieutenant Colonel Richard Williams and like the A.F.C., it was part of the Army. However, plans were being made for the establishment of a permanent Australian Air Force. The Air Services Committee paved the way, and in early 1920 the Air Board held its first meeting. This Board was purely advisory, and was replaced by an administrative Board on the 22nd of December 1920, along with an Air Council.

The Formation of the R.A.A.F.

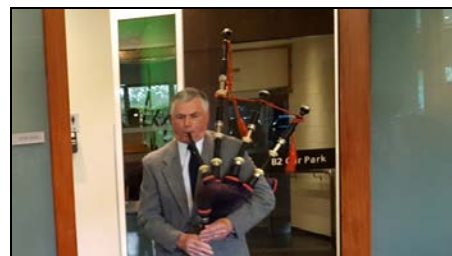
On the recommendation of Lieutenant Colonel Williams, the Australian Air Force came into being as a separate branch of the defence services on the 31st of March 1921. Three months later, the word 'Royal' was added to its title by the gracious permission of King George V, making up the four famous letters 'R.A.A.F.'. The R.A.A.F. with twenty-one officers and 130 airmen was distributed among Headquarters (Melbourne), No.1 Flying Training School and No. 1 Aircraft Depot at Point Cook. This force was equipped with twenty-six Avro Trainers, ten Sopwith fighters and six Fairey seaplanes, with 128 aircraft in storage.

The RAAF would continue the distinguished tradition of the Australian Flying Corps through a subsequent World War and onwards.

Designed and Created by Benalla Signs & Designs
Information provided by Doug Williams Benalla H.S.I.

Right side.

Christmas Meeting



Member Story – From Geoff Le Couteur



Geoff Le Couteur (right) at a recent Branch meeting with John MacDonald

24 Flight Ballarat

I joined 24 Flight Ballarat in 1957, a school flight associated with the Ballarat Technical School. We used to parade one evening after school and our Commanding Officer was one of the Lecturers. At the end of secondary school, I had reached the rank of Cadet Flight Sergeant.

The Technical School shared a wall with the Ballarat Gaol so parades were sometimes interesting. The Parade Ground was the school yard and on the other side of the wall were prisoners. In the late 1950's some prisoners were former military personnel so it was interesting to conduct the parade and to hear the parade ground orders being echoed or countermanded on the other side of the wall. All quite funny in retrospect.

As many will recall to join the ATC, the minimum age was 14 – or more precisely turn 14 in that particular school year. My birthday was the second last day of the school year so I effectively spent another year as a 13 year old. This meant getting involved in all the activities such as camps at Pt Cook, Laverton or East Sale although most seemed to be at Point Cook – and doing the relevant courses as they became available. It was a great time. Who would forget the rifle shooting competitions at Williamstown Rifle Range?

It also meant a 13 year old was taking home a .303 rifle (minus the bolt) on the school bus. Imagine the police response if that occurred today.

With every visit to Point Cook this meant a flight in a Dakota DC 3 and this spawned my interest in Aviation. This was a great start for me. Back in Ballarat I knew that 25 Flight Ballarat was located at the Ballarat Aerodrome and though we had some common activities with 25 Flight I found the Ballarat Aero Club. Although it was a 40 minute bike ride it became a Sunday ritual for me to ride to the airport and sit near the airside door asking all and sundry if there was a spare seat. Given most were undertaking training the answer was in the negative however the Chief Flying Instructor would always take pity and take me up for aerobatics at the end of the day. Apart from myself it was common for people to drive to the airport to simply watch flying activities from their motorcars - so it was entertainment too for the crowd. I can't remember missing out on a flight. I later came to spend a lot of time at this Club.

Back to the Cadets. Being a School Flight this meant membership terminated at the end of Intermediate Certificate which was age 16 so it was either join 25 Flight or leave completely. Given I was about to move onto the School of Mines studying Applied Chemistry I chose to leave and put any flying ambitions on hold temporarily.

After a year at the School Of Mines the Police Department offered an intake of Police Cadets full time study at RMIT or Melbourne University. It was an Indenture Scheme and I applied and was accepted. Sadly there was only one squad of cadets selected to do this and it only lasted for two years before being rescinded. Only two of us passed while other young 17 year olds excelled in table tennis and billiards.

Apart from Police Cadets at RMIT there were Air Force personnel in uniform undertaking Engineering courses.

Upon the Indenture Scheme being rescinded I joined the Police Recruits at the Police Training Depot then posted to North Melbourne Police Station. I found that by doing permanent nightshift I could complete Applied Chemistry at RMIT during the day. Sleeping was optional but generally 4pm to 10pm was sufficient. By volunteering for nightshift duty I found there were no problems in being swap shifts with other Constables. I did this for one academic year.

At the start of the next year I was posted to the Forensic Science Laboratory and the last year of the course I did part time, mainly at night school. Five nights per week, but who cared?

While at North Melbourne Police Station the detectives were upstairs and there was a very young detective who was interested in aviation. By this stage I had re-established myself at the Ballarat Aero Club and was about to complete my Unrestricted Private Pilot Licence. This detective had a superior officer who flown Wellington bombers during the WW2. They had been discussing how aircraft could be used in aerial support of police operations and it was at this stage a respected UK policeman, Colonel Eric St Johnson was brought in to reorganise the Victoria Police. It was indeed fortuitous that the Staff Officer to St Johnson was this former WW2 pilot and it was not surprising there were recommendations that the Victoria Police embrace aviation. It was also fortunate for police aviation that this decorated WW2 pilot, Ronald Salisbury, became a Deputy Commissioner of the Victoria Police.

Given the cost of the total Force reorganisation the aviation component recommendations were not immediately implemented. However they were not forgotten.

I am aware that some members of this Association know members and past member of the Police Air Wing and will recognise the identity of the young North Melbourne detective as Daryl Knight. Daryl at this stage had gained his Unrestricted Private Pilot Licence and was instrumental in forming the Victoria Police Aero Club. I made it to the second meeting of the fledgling Club. The Police Department endorsed this club and it was not long before the club bought a Victa Airtourer 100 (1971) and this was operated out of Peninsula Air Services at Moorabbin. With the hire rate at \$9 per hour (solo) it attracted many interested member of the Victoria Police and other Emergency Services personnel.

Given the Club was not for profit this aircraft was flying many hours per month so another Victa 115 was purchased in 1973, then a Cessna 172 and later a Cessna 182. Membership grew and grew – so much so that quotas had to be put in place to ensure the Associate Members did not exceed the membership of serving police members. The police department became concerned that if this was not in place decisions could have been made that were inconsistent with police values while under the Victoria Police banner.

At the same time as the Aero Club was expanding a new Assistant Commissioner, S.I. (Mick) Miller for Operations decided the time was ripe to try out aircraft in support of police operations. Given I had my Private Licence the longest I was asked to take Mick Miller on a flight at Cape Schank (1974). We did this and he reported to the Chief Commissioner he wanted to take this experiment a step further. Mick Miller, by the way, later became Chief Commissioner of the Victoria Police.

Mick Miller devised an operation called Operation Salamander in 1974-5. He brought together Detectives, Uniform Members, Highway Patrol, Police Mounted Branch, Police Boating Squad to saturate the Mornington and Bellarine Peninsula's over the December – January period. These resources were deployed at hot spots and during this time Aero Club aircraft were doing bay patrols, detecting speeding offender with the use of a stop watch over prescribed distances, searching for stolen and dumped vehicles. To do this it was argued that the pilots were paid as police officers, not pilots, and for 2 years dispensation was granted for this to occur under strict conditions. For aircraft hire, Mick Miller sought and obtained \$5000 on both years. Such CASA dispensation would never be granted in this day and age.

Operation Salamander featured in annual police reports then the Police Air Wing was formalised in 1975 with an Air Operator's Certificate and private pilots replaced with Commercial Pilots. The Government had made the commitment to fund an Air Wing and the transition from initial scoping to funding was complete.

The detective referred to above, Daryl Knight, who had been instrumental in forming the Police Air Wing and our ATC/AAFC member John MacDonald were integral members of the Air Wing over a long period of time. Daryl later resigned to take up a position of Flying Instructor. He certainly had enthusiasm and determination and was not shy in mounting a case to government on what they should be doing – and why they should be providing more funding.

The Police Air Wing introduced fixed wing twin engine aircraft in 1975 then the helicopters in 1979, again by Mick Miller.

By this stage I was continuing in my career in Forensic Science and became an end user of the services available. This meant the on-call forensic crew could assemble at Essendon Airport and be flown to any part of the state, any hour of the day or night. Previously we would drive 8 hours to a murder scene at Mildura, now we had the flexibility of getting to the crime scene before it became (more) contaminated. On other regular flights it wasn't uncommon to be flown to a distant Court and in the aircraft was also the defendant under police escort.

Aerial photographs became the norm and the Helicopter would be dispatched to the Forensic Science Laboratory to pick up a police photographer. The Air Wing was also developing more and more technology and the Air Wing helicopters today are very sophisticated machines indeed.

While professional air operations were now standard practice, the Victoria Police Aero Club was going from strength to strength. There were flying competitions, flyaways, all level of flying training, a club house at Moorabbin Airport and all this continued until the price of fuel then insurance caused a steady downturn.

For flyaways at Police Aero Club hire rates, members were virtually flying all over Australia on holidays and sometimes three aircraft would go to the remote sheep stations and visit far flung Police Stations in all States of Australia. It meant cross hiring aircraft as well so until the mid-1980's flying was a regular sporting activity enjoyed by many. When visiting outback Police these remote police enjoyed our company and we enjoyed their offer for ground transport – often in the back of paddy wagons or local School buses. The word would get out we were coming and people from surrounding stations were even known to fly in and join us. It was our responsibility to bring current newspapers and magazines.

In reality, I personally owe so much to the ATC for the experience and exposures to all manner of fascinating things, to be a Cadet Flight Sergeant holding parades and most of all, developing an interest in aviation.

I had worked with ATC/AAFC member John MacDonald when he was a detective in the Homicide Squad, but it was not until 2018 either knew the other had been a member of ATC. I never knew about the Association until John mentioned it. The sad part is we are about to relocate to the Mornington Peninsula - and hence I won't be able to attend all monthly meetings.

Today the Victoria Police Aero Club has been wound up and private flying has virtually ceased except for once a year the former members go to an Aero Club and each will do one hour under Trial Instructional Flight arrangements. The Instructor just sits there and enjoys the view unless we overlook something. Even after all these years it is still fun.

Thanks again, ATC!

Internet Links of Interest

RAAFA ATC/AAFC Branch page
raafavic.org.au/content/758/branch-atc-aafc

National Servicemen's Association -
www.nashos.org.au/

Air Force News www.defence.gov.au/Publications/NewsPapers/RAAF/Default.asp

Astronomical Information - www.heavens-above.com/

For instance – International Space Station passes for Melbourne (only for early birds for the next few days!)

Date	Brightness (mag)	Start			Highest point			End			Pass type
		Time	Alt.	Az.	Time	Alt.	Az.	Time	Alt.	Az.	
31 Jan	-2.0	04:11:09	26°	E	04:11:09	26°	E	04:13:14	10°	ESE	visible
31 Jan	-2.3	05:43:52	10°	W	05:46:46	27°	SSW	05:49:43	10°	SSE	visible
01 Feb	-3.2	04:54:33	38°	WSW	04:55:18	47°	SW	04:58:34	10°	SE	visible
02 Feb	-2.2	04:05:10	35°	SE	04:05:10	35°	SE	04:07:16	10°	SE	visible
02 Feb	-1.3	05:38:42	10°	WSW	05:40:51	16°	SSW	05:43:00	10°	SSE	visible
03 Feb	-0.4	03:15:44	10°	ESE	03:15:44	10°	ESE	03:15:47	10°	ESE	visible
03 Feb	-1.9	04:48:27	21°	SW	04:49:14	23°	SSW	04:51:59	10°	SSE	visible
04 Feb	-1.6	03:58:58	26°	SSE	03:58:58	26°	SSE	04:00:51	10°	SE	visible
04 Feb	-0.9	05:34:19	10°	SSW	05:35:01	10°	SSW	05:35:44	10°	S	visible
05 Feb	-0.2	03:09:28	11°	SE	03:09:28	11°	SE	03:09:35	10°	SE	visible
05 Feb	-1.2	04:42:10	12°	SW	04:43:17	14°	SSW	04:45:06	10°	SSE	visible
06 Feb	-1.0	03:52:37	17°	S	03:52:37	17°	S	03:54:07	10°	SSE	visible

AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION VICTORIA



ATC/AAFC BRANCH

ATTENTION - ALL ADULT MEMBERS of the AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE CADETS

The AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION (Victorian Division) would welcome you as a member of our Branch. As part of this proud Association with its long standing record of Service, the ATC/AAFC Branch membership consists of former ATC, AirTC and former and currently serving members of the AAFC. Associate memberships are available for partners.

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