

The "Clipped Wings"

Issue 22 - November 2011 The Journal of the Air Dispatch Association of Australia (Inc)

Patron ADAA - Major General D.B. Ferguson AM, CSC (Retired)



Par Oneri de Caelo

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT



As we go to press many activities are coming to fruition. After months of planning and preparation WO2 Anthony Eddie, AMTDU and his committee have been putting together the 176AD 45th birthday celebration to be held at Penrith on 26 November. All is now ready to go with a strong number of people reporting they will be attending.

The reunion will see the launch of the long awaited book on the history of Australian Air Dispatch which has been a labour of love for WO2 Jock McGreavie, Jock will be present in Penrith to autograph copies of his book purchased on the day. (Order form available online at www.adaa.net.au/jocksbook.pdf)

Details of the NZ Anzac Day Reunion from 23- 27 April at Wellington are available on the ADAA website and updated as information comes to hand. Additionally a number of couples are renting couple are renting camper-vans to tour both islands. For anyone interested in also doing this, please contact Barry Gannon ASAP. He and Pat sleet have already booked and you can be pointed in the right direction.

The ADAA committee has accepted tenders for 2 new banners, supervised by Chris Gill. They will be on display at Penrith on Nov 26. The old banners have run out of space for the latest deployments plus we require extra areas for future operations. A detailed report on the banners will be available in the next edition of "Clipped Wings".

The Committee will be looking forward to catching up to everyone at the upcoming Reunion - the Association has allocated \$2500 towards the cost of reunion expenses and as such this should help towards making this a successful reunion all round.

Gary Cole, President

THE AIR DESPATCH DAKOTA

RAF Lyneham (UK) closed down in July this year and made the move to RAF Brize Norton

The image shown is the DC3 Dakota which 47 COY now owns.

In June, about 200 Air Despatchers and families farewelled the Dakota at RAF Lyneham. The lady shown in the image is Mrs McCloud, the wife of Major McCloud who was the OC of 16 COY RASC Air Despatch at Eastleigh in Kenya in 1961/62.

The Air Despatch Dakota Project was originally established to procure a Douglas

DC3 Dakota aircraft, to stand as a Gate Guardian outside the headquarters of 47 Air Despatch Squadron RLC. The Dakota at Lyneham was primarily a tribute to all Air Despatchers but also commemorated the crew who flew FZ626 during Operation Market Garden.



Vale: John Gillespie - Date of Death November 14, 2011

John was a member of the Australia Regular Army from 1953 to 1978 and the Citizens Military Forces from 1979 to 1984. He served in Malaya, New Guinea, the UK and Vietnam in various companies and platoons. John received an Australian Defence Medal and a Vietnamese Campaign Medal and on discharge had achieved the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He served as OC of 176AD for a short period also. May he Rest in Peace.

WE DID IT!!!!

Background

On the night of 12 February 2009 in Oruzgan Province Afghanistan, a patrol from the 1st Commando Regiment attached to and under command of 4 RAR (Cdo) acting on intelligence reports from higher command, conducted a raid on a suspected Taliban occupied house in an Afghani village compound. After being fired at from the compound, they returned fire and threw grenades into the house where the fire originated. It was reported that five children and an adult were killed. The commandos were charged with manslaughter in September 2010; some 19 months after the event and then exonerated in May 2011; some 8 months after being formally charged.

The 4 RAR Association, Qld was a leader in supporting and defending the actions of all three members. We questioned the authenticity of evidence, the reasoning behind the accusations and the reasoning for the charging of all three of the accused members; a lieutenant colonel, a sergeant and a lance corporal. We also questioned the inordinate time taken to refer the charges and to bring the matter to finalisation. We wrote letters of protest to amongst others; the Governor-General as the Commander-in-Chief, the Chief of the Australian Defence Forces and the Chief of the Army.

Allan Jones of radio station 2GB publically supported us as did former and serving members of the Royal Australian Navy, The Australia Army, the Royal Australian Air Force and the general public of Australia as well of those in New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the USA. We cannot state that we forced the end result but we can take pride in that we contributed to the public indignation of the charges brought against these proud Australian warriors and that we stood up for them.

In May 2011, the Chief Judge Advocate threw out the manslaughter charges against the sergeant and the lance corporal even before the trial began. This means that the prosecutor had no grounds to charge these men but did so anyway. This in itself should be cause for an investigation.

NOW READ ON

A MEDIA RELEASE FROM THE DEFENCE MEDIA CENTRE DATED 29 AUGUST 2011

General Courts Martial relating to charges against Australian defence force members relating to the 12 February 2009 CIVILIAN CASUALTY Incident

A directions hearing convened by the Registrar of Military Justice in relation to the charges against the third Australian Defence Force member relating to an incident in Afghanistan on 12 February, 2009 was conducted, by telephone, on 29 August 2011.

The Director of Military Prosecutions applied formally to withdraw the charges before the Judge Advocate. The Judge Advocate ordered that the charge sheet be withdrawn.

The legal processes as a result of the charges brought by the Director of Military Prosecutions in relation to the 12 February 2009 civilian casualty incident, involving the three ADF members, have now concluded.

“Defence was committed to ensuring a proper legal process was observed throughout this matter so that the individuals charged received a fair trial and that the integrity of the military legal process was preserved,” said the Chief of the Defence Force, General David Hurley.

“The legal processes that were adhered to in relation to this matter were independent of the chain of command.

“The Australian Defence Force has a reputation for being a highly disciplined and professional force. In order to maintain this reputation, it is important that all incidents leading to a civilian casualty are investigated thoroughly, comprehensively and transparently.”

Note: We must assume that General Hurley had a hand in this decision being brought down. I knew the then Lt Hurley in B Company, 1 RAR and even then it was noticeable that even as a brand new lieutenant, that he was destined for greater things. The 4 RAR Association, Qld cannot assume that this success was due solely to our efforts but we stood by our soldiers and attempted to make a difference. We did it!!!!!! Thank you to all who supported us in this mission and to all those who supported the three Diggers; you all helped to bring down a fair and just decision and you should feel proud!!!!.

Remember the Breaker.

Alan Price 4RAR Association
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Mick's work for veterans is part of life

While Vietnam veteran Mick Scrase has been through some dark times, he has fought hard to help others going through the same rollercoaster of emotions brought on by the war, **DAVID CAMPBELL** reports.

ANYONE who knows Mick Scrase knows there's two sides to the 63-year-old – the side that continues to deal with the trauma of serving in the Vietnam War and the side that delights in caring for historic properties around the Macarthur region.

The Harrington Park resident was based at Vung Tau and Saigon between 1961 and 1969 with the Signal Corp in the Special Dispatch Service and Air Dispatch Service.

Mr Scrase's role was to deliver mail and military documents to different units and bases across Vietnam and, like many veterans,

who returned to Australia and public scorn. Mr Scrase suffered a rollercoaster ride of emotions which led him to the brink on a number of occasions.

"Vietnam was a TV war and people saw it, and all the propaganda on the news every night," Mr Scrase said.

"I was called a baby killer when I came back, I went through suicide attempts like many others and tried to hide the fact I'd even served in Vietnam."

Forming the National Vietnam Veterans' Association with 14 other veterans in 1979 and taking an interest in local historic

properties were what got Mr Scrase through some of the darkest moments in his life.

"I saved a mate's life over there when he got shot through the neck and I had to get him to the hospital with my fingers jammed into his neck to stop the blood," Mr Scrase said.

"Forming the association and helping other veterans out was something that helped me keep things together when I returned to Australia.

"I'm very proud with what we've achieved in the Vietnam Veterans' Association including having post-traumatic stress

disorder recognised as an issue for military people, something which has also flowed on to police, ambulance officers and firemen."

While the Vietnam War and continued work with the association will always be a part of Mr Scrase's life, he now enjoys more time with his family and a role as caretaker of the Lady Fairfax estate at Harrington Park.

"We'd agisted cattle we were looking after on the Lady Fairfax property at Harrington Park when we first came out here 13 years ago," Mr Scrase said.

"It's been an incredible change in these old estates with the

housing going in but I think it's something that had to happen because people need somewhere to live and the population is exploding.

"The property we caretake now is just the 50-acre property that's here in the middle of the estate with the main homestead."

Before moving to Harrington Park, Mr Scrase lived in the historic Blair Athol House for four years while the new Blair Athol suburb was beginning to develop.

Mr Scrase says he tries to focus more on the positives these days: wife Linda, two children, three step-children and one grandchild.



Mick Scrase is a Vietnam war veteran involved with the Vietnam Veterans' Association.

Picture: IAN SVEGOVIC / AP-6/03

CAN YOU ASSIST?

We have had an enquiry for help in relation to information relating to a serious mishap with a C130 at Cerbrus Naval base in March 1973, when a mass load broke up in the aircraft. The appropriate channels have been gone through with the CO at AMTDU but it seems that information is in one of the hangers at RAAF Base Richmond and due to an asbestos problem could be up to 6 months before it may be accessed.

What our 'searcher' (he was with 37 AD PL at the time), is trying to find, are any documents or letters that other members may have about this incident that could shed more light on it.

If you are able to assist, please forward your information direct to Phill Spry at phillspry@gmail.com.



Weight and Balance is Always Important!!

WHAT'S PHIL AVALON UP TO NOW?

AKA Stompa Holbrow (Formerly 36 AD)

'SUMMER CITY and SUMMER CITY 2 'Breaking Loose', in a re release 3 disc package that will be in stores nationally, thirty five years to the day 'Summer City' was first released at the Century Cinema, George Street Sydney.

The film broke the box office record in the cinema and introduced two young NIDA students, MEL GIBSON & STEVE BISLEY with JOHN JARRATT and PHIL AVALON taking on the other key roles in the production.



ADAA MERCHANDISE FOR SALE

Our merchandise officer, Chris Gill has been doing a wonderful job of late despatching merchandise to all corners of the globe!

Listed below are some of our more popular items for sale - we have included a latest order form for those on our postal mailing list as well with your copy of Clipped Wings.

Those able to visit the website can view the merchandise online at <http://www.adaa.net.au/web/catalog/9>. This shows you the full range of items for sale.



OUR STORY

Paul and I married on 7 May 2011 at Mudgee when we rode our motor bikes to Mudgee with some of our local Ulysses Group. Paul rides his beloved Harley each day. He is still fit and healthy and runs about ten kilometers a day through the sandhills at Birubi Beach along the beach and then via road back home. He's the guy who always runs barefooted. Paul also trains Karate on Thursday evenings. He is a third dan black belt.



The Ulysses Club is for the over 50 motorcycle enthusiasts. Their motto is Grow Old Disgracefully. And, most members try to keep the motto in motion.

It is not only an Australia wide Club but has ventured into Vietnam, America and European countries. The funds raised within the club are donated to the Arthritis Foundation. Each Club also support other charities. The Port Stephens branch meet once per month for a meeting and social get together. There is also a number of rides arranged during the month on Thursdays and Sundays to some great destinations, usually a day ride, lunch and return trip. Many long weekend rides are well planned by club members and much fun is had by all.

The Ulysses Club also engage in many community activities such as taking the disabled, and no so disabled, on motor bike rides on Disability Day. Each year a group of men and women of the Port Stephens Branch spend many hours working with the disabled to ensure they have fun riding or sitting on bikes and trikes.

There is a great mateship with the Ulysses, doesn't matter where you go, if you see the Old Man Logo on bikes and jackets and shirts, you know they belong. The Club has an Annual General Meeting each year and this is a great opportunity for people to travel from all around Australia to the meeting destination for the week's events. This year, 2011 the meeting was held in Newcastle. Next year is in Mildura. So Paul and I will be riding our bikes to Mildura.

Paul and I first met at a Port Stephens Ulysses Meeting. Paul has travelled around Australia on his Harley Davidson and has also done a few other trips within Australia.

Paul and I decided to marry at the 2011 Mudgee "Meet and Greet". There were a few hundred Ulysses members who met at Mudgee for the three day event.

Printed with permission - Anne Mulvay



Thank you David Jaehne for these photos.

FRANK VAN DEN BERGH - 47 AIR DESPATCH SQN

Family and friends of Frank Van Den Bergh, ladies and gentlemen. It is my great honour to be here today to represent 47 Air Despatch Squadron, the Air Despatch Association and Air Despatchers throughout the world. I am eternally grateful to the family of Frank and to Frans Amerlaan for your outstanding efforts in ensuring the message of Frank's death reached us all in the UK. Indeed, I am humbled to be able to join you today in order to pay our respects and say farewell to one of our own.

I am sure I speak for everyone here when I say how shocked and saddened we were by the news of Frank's untimely death. We had drawn great comfort from his presence at the Air Despatch Memorial Service only 4 weeks ago. Despite his recent illness, we fondly remember him as he proudly overlooked the Air Despatch Memorial, looking resplendent in his Air Despatch and Airborne regalia.

Frank van Den Bergh holds a very special place in the hearts of Air Despatchers throughout the world. As you all will know, it is for his tremendous work in commemorating the Air Despatchers at Arnhem. But you must look deep into the soul of an Air Despatcher to understand the importance of Arnhem to everything we do today. The unique esprit de corps, fighting spirit and professionalism of the modern Air Despatcher was forged in the hell of Operation Market Garden and has survived ever since. There can be no greater tribute to the Air Despatchers of Arnhem than to commemorate them at the memorial in Oosterbeek. We are all hugely grateful to Frank for the instrumental role he had in commissioning the memorial.

I will share with you the story of a young Air Despatcher who recently made his first visit to Arnhem, only 4 weeks ago. This young man was only 20 years old and had barely heard of Arnhem, never mind understanding what had happened there. After the memorial service, he reflected on what he had just seen and said to me that suddenly 'it all just made sense'. He had been struck by the magnitude of the effort which Frank and all of our friends in Arnhem go to in order to ensure we always remember the Air Despatchers at Arnhem. Today, we remember Frank and the special part he has played in that. We owe you a debt gratitude for ensuring their story lives on.

Indeed, Frank has carried the torch for so long and continually championed the memory of the Arnhem Air Despatchers. His passion and energy in flying the flag is an excellent example for us all to follow. We all know the greatest tribute to Frank's memory will be to pick up the flag and continue the legacy of his work in Arnhem.

In recognising Frank's unique and immense contribution to the Air Despatch community, it is easy to forget there was so much more to Frank. Few will disagree when Frank is described as an absolute expert when it comes to the history of Operation Market Garden and the Second World War.

Frank Van Den Bergh, it only leaves me to bid you farewell.

'Action Stations!' 'Red On!' 'Green On!'

Safe journey my friend. The name 'Frank Van Den Bergh' will always be remembered by Air Despatchers throughout the world.

Major Colin Munce RLC - Officer Commanding 47 Air Despatch Squadron RLC

<http://frankvandenbergh.blogspot.com/>

TREASURER'S REPORT TO OCTOBER 30, 2011

The following report is for the period July 1, 2011 - October 31, 2011.



Profit & Loss [Cash]

1/07/2011 through 31/10/11

Income

Subscriptions	\$940.00
Merchandise Sales	\$852.50
Donations	\$23.10
Postage Pd for Merchandise	\$27.50

Total Income **\$1,843.10**

Cost of Chambray Shirts **\$792.00**

Gross Profit **\$1,051.10**

Expenses

Bank Fees & Charges	\$41.30
Newsletter Costs	\$119.50
Postage	\$37.80
Postage - Merchandise	\$22.00
Stationery Supplies	\$198.00
Reunion Donation (Nov)	\$2,500.00

Total Expenses **\$2,918.60**

Nett Profit (Loss) **(\$1,867.50)**

Balance Sheet

As of October 31, 2011

Assets

Bank of QLD	\$10,190.99
Paypal Holding	\$762.55
Undeposited Funds	\$64.80
Stock on Hand	\$6,960.50
Merchandise Cash on Hand	\$4.40
Debtors	\$25.00
Total Assets	\$18,108.24

Liabilities **\$0.00**

Net Assets **\$18,108.24**

Accumulated Funds

Retained Earnings	\$2,906.44
Current Earnings	-\$1,892.50
Historical Balancing Account	\$17,094.30
Total Accumulated Funds	\$18,108.24

ADAPTED FROM THE BOOK "FRONT LINE DISPATCHES" AUSTRALIANS AT WAR 1845-1972.

World War 1 and the ANZAC tradition. It was during General Allenby's advance on Damascus in 1917 that a hard pressed detachment of Light Horse was holding a vital forward position and was forced to exist on iron rations. Providing the Cavalry with special amenities was really no part of the Air Corps job.

However, former Australian Light Horsemen flying with them persuaded their CO that their old comrades should not be allowed to go hungry.

A desperate SOS to the Australian Comforts Fund bought qualities of tea, sugar, soap and cigarettes. The Squadron was then faced with the problem of getting the supplies to the beleaguered Light Horsemen.

After spending a day practicing drops with dummy supply boxes, the pilots decided they were ready for the real thing. Individual packets of cigarettes and matches were dropped under tiny handkerchief sized parachutes. The other commodities were packed in short lengths of motor-car inner tubes.

This contained and cushioned the landing shock so effectively that the Light Horse received all the supplies intact.

Further interesting reading is contained in a thesis presented by Major Peter J. Lambert. Pages 61 and 62 of his thesis refers to air drops to the besieged forces at Kut during WW1.

You can see this thesis online by Googling "the forgotten airwar." Then click on to the "forgotten airwar: airpower in the Mesopotamian campaign." An excerpt is shown here.

.....One factor impeding the RFC's ability to deliver more food aid came with German attempts to attack aerial food deliveries. Subsequently, air escorts were provided, further reducing the number of machines available for food resupply. German General Von Hoepfner viewed Turkish and German air support as critical to the success of Turkish forces at Kut. "This subsequent activity [movement of machines to Mesopotamia] did a great deal towards encouraging Turkish troops to persevere until the English force decided to surrender."

Despite the RFC's Herculean efforts to keep Kut supplied with food, the inability of the Tigris Corps to relieve Kut forced Townshend's hand. He surrendered the 6th Division on 29 April, and commented, "I trust history will say that we did our duty as Englishmen and soldiers up to the extreme limit of human nature."

The Turks captured 12,000 prisoners, only 4,000 of which would survive captivity. Of the RFC personnel also captured, insufficient records exist regarding their fate, although the Australian Official History believed six survived. Townshend did not mince words regarding the aerial relief effort. "to put food into Kut by means of the aeroplane, the first time in the war, I take it, that it had been attempted so to supply a beleaguered garrison with food . . . and I may say at once that it was a complete failure."

A somewhat unfair critique for the RFC, base on the already critically desperate situation of the garrison at the beginning of aerial resupply.

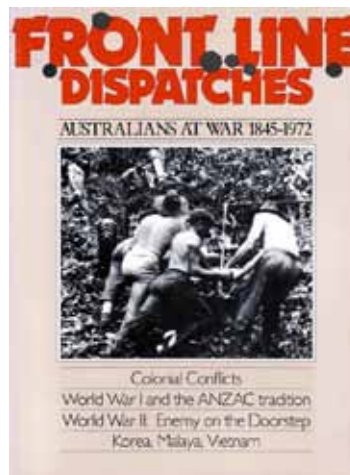
Thus marked the end of the first major phase of the Mesopotamian Campaign and the beginning of a new direction, both militarily and politically for IEFD. With the end of this particular phase of the Campaign, did the air effort affect the conduct of operations or influence its direction?

Major Massy prefaced his review of this phase of the operation with these remarks:

The Squadron was never at any period up to its full strength. . . Suffice to say that never before in my experience have pilots been called upon to fly machines in a less air-worthy condition, a condition exposed day and night to prolonged spells of rain, mud and wind with a minimum of spare parts for their upkeep.

From the beginning of the air operation in 1915, the number of machines and trained pilots was minimal. Coupled with the extreme temperatures and weather, it is remarkable that these fragile machines were effective at all. However, as noted by the commanders in the field--Gorringe, Townshend, Nixon, and Aylmer, the aerial reconnaissance from the beginning was essential in determining the course of action during a number of important engagements, from Nasiriyah to the first battle of Kut alAmara. As the Campaign progressed, leading to the battle of Ctesiphon and the subsequent retreat to Kut, the number, quality, and capabilities of the machines increased.

This provided additional flexibility to the ground commanders, allowing for reconnaissance, artillery spotting, and eventually air escort, aerial bombardment, and aerial resupply.



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- please forward to Secretary.

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HONORARY AUDITOR

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