

THE CLIPPED WINGS

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE AIR DISPATCH ASSOCIATION OF
AUSTRALIA



MARCH 2017



President's Report

Hello everyone,

March, autumn (fall for the Americans), and relief from the 48°C (118°F) days in western Sydney. No matter where you were in Australia, the heat got to you unless you were blessed with suitable air conditioning. Luckily Joyce and I had already planned to escape to beautiful New Caledonia for a few days and it just happened to coincide with the extremely hot period, so we were spared the heat.

Since our last edition of the Clipped Wings, our Queensland Rep, Kemm Baber put together a Christmas Party and get together at Beenleigh RSL on 3 December. A great afternoon was had by all.

Whilst talking about Queensland, Anthony Eddie, our Vice President has been posted to 9 FSB in Amberley, we wish Ed all the best with his new posting.

Next month is April and at this point we only have about twenty people confirmed for the Reunion in Melbourne. This disappointing response has required us to cancel the venue we had for the Reunion Dinner on the Sunday night and Geoff Cutts is currently looking for another venue in the same area. All the planned events are still going ahead. One of our American brothers (Bennie Manning) was so impressed with last years' ANZAC Day that he has decided to come back again this year and will be marching with us in Melbourne.

Realising we are all getting on in years, another issue where we had a disappointing response was the trek over the Kokoda Trail, planned for late July early August of this year to commemorate the 75th anniversary of initial airdrops in New Guinea. We were hoping that some of our younger members and current Air Dispatchers would have been interested in taking part in this venture but this was not to be. Two Reservists indicated they wanted to do the trek. This had been posted previously in the Clipped Wings and discussed at the AGM last year. Further, I had contacted a number of people and organisations, including Charlie Lynn's office, where I left messages on at least four occasions. Charlie did not even have the courtesy to get back to me. So much for communication! The Kokoda Track venture has been cancelled due to lack of interest.

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The Kokoda Trail leads to another subject – Jack Green, the last surviving “Biscuit Bomber” sadly passed away earlier this year. Dean Kenny and members of the Reserve Troop had been supporting the Biscuit Bombers Association for many years in the Sydney ANZAC Day parade. Due to late notice of Jack’s passing we were unable to have a representative attend the funeral. I have been in touch with his daughter and a sash has been forwarded on behalf of the association. Our condolences go to Jack’s family.

Last week, I was informed of the passing of a young soldier from the Squadron. Pte Arron Stephen from 39 ADE Platoon was killed in a car crash near Colo. His funeral is to be held on Thursday 2 March in Batemans Bay. The funeral party is to be supplied from the Squadron. Again, our condolences go to Pte Stephen’s family.

In April, during the reunion, we shall also be looking at holding the AGM. If you have anything that you believe needs to be addressed at this meeting, please contact the Secretary, Lou Heidenreich for inclusion in the programme. All committee positions are to become vacant and every member will have the opportunity to put their hand up for committee positions.

With the passing of Jim Piet, we had a vacancy for an editor, well we may have found a new one. Andy Cornish has put his hand up and will be putting out the June edition. Let’s hope he gets some support from you lot out there with articles and photos etc.

We have finally penned a letter to all widows of former air dispatchers and members. In line with the association being a registered charity, we are planning to supply a fully paid trip for at least one of these ladies to attend the International Reunion next year in the UK. This letter should be posted in the next few weeks.

In closing, if you haven’t paid your annual subscription please hurry up and do so. We may be conducting fund-raising activities but the admin side cannot run on fresh air. Hope to see you in Melbourne over the ANZAC period

Take care
Cheers
Nicko
Feb 17

Editor’s Note

In the last copy of “The Clipped Wings”, we were fortunate to receive an article about The Rising Sun badge. I apologise for not acknowledging the author of that article. Thanks to Rusty Towers for his contribution.

If you have any feedback you’d like to share with other members, I welcome your input. Please send to clippedwings@adaa.net.au, or post me a hard copy to PO Box 483, Helensburgh NSW 2508.

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State Rep Report - NSW

2017 has seen us hitting the ground running. Fund-raising is in full swing again. We have had 4 successful sausage sizzles, netting a total of about \$2,500. Tony Horden joined us for the first time in Wollongong in February and successfully completed his apprenticeship. The staff at Bunnings decided to supply him with an 'L' plate to wear for the day.

That same plate was worn a few days later by a non-affiliated volunteer that joined us in Kirrawee.



Here are some of the events that we are talking about arranging this year:

The Riverboat Postman

This is a journey along the Hawkesbury River, accompanying the postie as she (and sometimes he) delivers the mail and other daily essentials (even the odd bottle of whisky) to isolated homes. The cruise takes a little over 3 hours, costs \$55 per person (\$45 for seniors) and includes morning tea and a delicious Ploughman's lunch.

A cruise – possibly around New Zealand

This is very much in early stages of discussion. We will have more available for you as we put together some possibilities.

Grant Foster

State Rep Report - Qld

It is proposed to hold a tour of the Army Flying Museum at Oakey QLD in the 1st week of October this year. It would be a 1 day bus trip from Brisbane to Oakey, a museum tour followed by lunch at the Oakey RSL and return to Brisbane.

We are looking at expressions of interest from those who would like to attend.

Here are links to check out:

<http://www.armyflyingmuseum.com.au/>
<http://www.oakeyrsl.com.au/>

Kemm Baber

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EVENTS

Queensland Christmas Drinks At Beenleigh RSL



In early December, we held a small Christmas function for members at the Beenleigh RSL. We were able to use the trophy room and the Association kindly provided some nibbles and a few drinks.

It was good to see members turn up from the Gold and Sunshine Coasts as well as those from local areas. Also present was our Immediate Past President Gary from the Darling Downs and making a long day of it, current President Nicko.

A big thank you to the ladies who kept us in line and provided great company, as usual. I would like to thank all of those who were able to attend and catch up with old friends.

I hope all members and their families had a great Christmas and have started off the New Year on a positive and healthy note.

We look forward to seeing you all at future functions.

Kemm Baber



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22 Platoon March Out Parade 3 December 2016



3 December 2016 started out as a windy mongrel day in Kapooka. Families and friends from around Australia converged on the Main Parade Ground awaiting the formal march out of 22 and 23 Platoons from 1 RTB.

Lou Heidenreich and I were asked to attend the march out and do a presentation to the most-improved recruit, so Lou drove from Adelaide and I drove from Wollongong to meet up in Wagga the night before the big day.

As with every operation, there is a requirement to have the place recce'd, so we went for a beer at the Farmers Home Hotel then off to the RSL Club for dinner. Not much has changed in Wagga, especially the roads on the east side of town.

Next morning, after a healthy breakfast at McDonalds, we made our way out to Kapooka to meet Lt Cameron Smith, Platoon Commander, 22 Pl. Well surprise, surprise. He had been promoted the day before so Capt Smith escorted Lou, me and his father to the public waiting area prior to the parade.

The parade went off well and it was a credit to the young diggers who became soldiers that day. That said, they would not have achieved this high standard without the dedication and determination of their Platoon Staff.

After the Parade, Lou and I were escorted to the Edmonson VC Club where 22 Platoon was assembled for the final presentation. The Soldier who was the most improved soldier was a Signaller, Sig Callum Wilkin. This young feller must have put in a decent effort because even his Platoon Commander stated "even the Platoon Staff wondered whether he would make it through". Well he did and that is the main thing.

You know, having been through a number of different courses within and outside the Army, we take a lot for granted and sometimes you just don't know how far you can go until you try.

Well done Pte Wilkin, a well-deserved presentation.



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River Cruising

For those who have never done it, this is an opportunity to take the holiday of a life time. What would that be you ask? Take a holiday on a houseboat on the Murray River.

I know that there are some of our illustrious Kiwi friends who have had this wonderful experience. What does it take? Surprisingly very little really. Find a suitable houseboat hirer and make a booking. Some of the more important considerations are who to go with, how long to go for, where to leave from and what time of year to go.



My answers to this were all pretty simple, if we were going to be away with anyone they should be fun people who have similar interests to us. That you may say could be dangerous, maybe I would really need stable, clear thinking people who are not risk takers. That would be boring so I decided it would be people who we have known for years, enjoy life, love a challenge and don't mind a beer or wine.

After a rigorous selection process and a couple of refusals the travelling party was selected.

The destination was a no brainer for a South Aussie, there is only one navigable river within the state so that had to be it; the Murray. As for the departure point that is really determined by the location of the houseboat rental company. This was solved with the help of my friend the internet.

After all of the considerations, like how big and how much we decided on a company at Murray Bridge, not far up the highway from Adelaide but a bloody long way from Sydney.

Why is Sydney in this conversation? Well some of the guests on the voyage are going to come from there.

With all of the information spinning in my head I came to the conclusion that a 12 berth boat would be sufficient, departing a few days before Christmas, and returning a few days after would do the trick.

There are numerous other considerations like how does everyone else like this idea. As it turned out Christmas probably didn't suit a lot of people but in the end we ended up with eight people who were happy to have their Christmas dinner on a houseboat on the Murray.

After all of the hard work was done I then left it to my better half and all of the other better halves going to organize the simple things like meals, decorations and the like.

After many interstate calls the girls came up with a workable plan and the men folk sorted the important issues like what brand of beer we should take and how much sun screen we might need and more to the point how much beer.

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With all of these logistical considerations in the bag we all assembled at the correct location for the launching of the journey on the 23 December.

Because of the fullness of the river and the rapid rate that it was coming down the question of where to go was a moot point. The only way to go was up stream, so we selected Mannum as our destination. After loading the boat and assembling the crew, loaded all and sundry on board and had to suffer the ignominy of being taught the rules of the river, how to drive a houseboat and then had to be tested by the marina foreman before we were allowed to take up our duties. After completing the river masters course with flying colours we headed off on our adventure.

For those who have never been there, Murray Bridge is a reasonable sized town about 100 kilometres from Adelaide, it was once the hub for the railway and river transport system in South Australia and quite a quaint place, it is also far more interesting with a view from the river.

We ambled our way up river and passed stunning scenery of cliffs and trees, green fields and beautiful homes dotted along the river. After travelling for four hours we finally found a spot that didn't have a sign saying, "Private Property" "No House Boats" and "Reserved for River Bogans" so we moored and settled for the night.



With a cold beer for us and a glass of wine for the girls we celebrated our coming of age as a crew and saluted our achievement of not hitting any trees, stumps, sand bars or boats. Our evening meal was fit for royalty, the ladies had really put on a spread. With much laughter and banter the meal was over the dishes done and everyone settled in to a night of reminiscing and sensible social discourse.

The journey was resumed the next morning after a breakfast of bacon and eggs, plenty of coffee and a couple of panadol. The day required a six hour cruise to our destination of Mannum. The male crewmembers rotated through all of the jobs on board, steering or not steering, while the female members adjourned to the spa on the top deck for giggle juice and canapés. Lunch was served on the move and I could feel my girth expanding as the day wore on.



After mooring for the night outside the Pretoria Hotel another gastronomic delight was unleashed followed by more of the same from the night before. Although the houseboat had TV and Radio no one had bothered to try to figure out how they worked. Instead everyone became involved in a game of Cards Against Humanity, a game that reduced all and sundry to fits of laughter.

Christmas Day!!! The boat was full of pirates, male and female. Eye patches, parrots, sabers and weird hats greeted pressie time on Christmas morning. The arrangement was for men to buy a woman's present and women to buy man's with the proviso that the maximum to be spent was \$10 and it had to be from a second hand shop. What delights there were, unfortunately this is a non- rated publication so I can't disclose some of these gifts.



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Christmas morning and the temperature was hovering around 38 degrees and that was before we got out of bed at 0600. (minor exaggeration there) it was 38 at 0930. The air conditioner was pumping out cool air like there was no tomorrow, the large esky on the front of the boat, next to the BBQ, had been stocked with liquid refreshment and ice, enough to last a week. After a breakfast that would have satisfied the whole of the waterside workers at Port Adelaide the preparations began for Christmas Lunch.

By the time that we all sat down for lunch the supply in the esky had dwindled somewhat and the used white wine bottles were forming a glass wall between the river and the Hotel. Again I can only say that the caterers (insert our wives) had done wonders, it was probably the biggest feast in the whole of Mannum. Considering that the pub was closed for the day it wasn't a big competition.

Before the glowing orb kissed the river everyone was sitting on the top deck watching the magnificent sunset trying not to move lest they invoke some natural reaction to eating so much food.

Boxing Day and we were on our way heading back towards Murray Bridge. This time we had the river at our tail and the flow of the river, with just a tiny bit of power, had us heading homeward at a rapid rate of knots. We had decided to stay at our first night's location, but unbeknown to us it had been invaded by river bogans. River bogans are a rare species of the homo erectus clan who own speed boats and think they own the river banks.

Whilst I was trying to steer the boat into the shore against the wind and tide, and towards the sign that said "Houseboat Friendly Area" the bogans started their rant. Led by a ten year old, his black toothed mother, his budgie smuggler wearing father and an older lad who looked like a deformed grasshopper, we copped every expletive known to man because we dared to pull up near the spot where they were water skiing. The tide of the conversation changed when two of the crew leapt from the bow (that is the front of the boat) and engaged them in cordial conversation as they were tying up the boat. I guess the pirate get up from the previous day had something to do with calming the bogans down. We made conversation with the houseboat next door and were dutifully informed that they had suffered the same tirade an hour before.

Not to be deterred from having another magnificent day on the river, everyone adjourned to the front of the boat and to the top deck to toast our newly found species Boganus River Rattus. Eventually it started to rain, this seemed to take the wind out of their sails, as they appeared to have an aversion to getting wet (very strange that) so eventually they headed back to their holes in the ground.

The second last day dawned with strong winds and huge dark clouds. We made our way, with the aid of the river flow back towards Murray Bridge. In the late afternoon we pulled into a lovely mooring and secured the houseboat with every available rope. The weather forecast was for thunderstorms, high winds, and hail. We settled down to an early night and wait to see what mother-nature could throw at us. The night was definitely interesting, the ropes securing us to the bank made some weird sounds, the houseboat rolled with the waves and was eventually pushed up onto the bank, whilst we were sitting at an unusual angle there was no damage and it only took a little bit of manoeuvring to get us under way.

The houseboat trip was over, and after we handed it back to the marina I felt sad that our adventure was over, it could have gone for much longer and I for one would have been happy. The whole crew were fabulous, all duties were shared equally amongst all, there was never a harsh word and we are still all speaking to each other today.

If you have never considered this type of trip then I would say don't just think about it, give it a go.

Cheers Capt William Bligh
Cruise Director

The Last Biscuit Bomber

Lance Sergeant John “Jack” Heslop Green

NX153388

The 20th of January 2017 was a sad day for the Air Dispatch fraternity. This day saw the passing of one of our military forebears. The last of the “Biscuit Bombers” Jack Green.

- 17th December 1922 – 20th January 2017
- Aged 94 years
- Date of Enlistment: 23rd June 1943
- Place of Enlistment: In the field, Papua
- Date of Discharge: 2nd May 1946
- Posting at Discharge: 2 Australian Air Maintenance Company ASC
- Additional Service Numbers: N228716
- Also enlisted in the CMF from 19th January 1942 to 22nd June 1943



Total service: One thousand five hundred and sixty-five days. Active service: In Australia 912 days; outside Australia 565 days

Jack was born John Heslop Lackenby on 17th December 1922, the youngest of three children. His father Robert died in a building accident when Jack was 8 months old and his mother Kate died when he was 15 months old. He was fostered by Charles and Louise Green. In his teens he did get to know his two siblings – Hazel and Robert.

Enlisting during World War II in the Citizens Military Forces (CMF) he was later transferred to the AIF and posted to 2 Air Maintenance Company and was promoted to Lance Sergeant. Although he said “he drove a truck”, he never spoke about his wartime service (like so many of his contemporaries).

Whilst on active service, a young lady named, Joyce, started writing to him. There must have been something in those letters because they married on 21st September 1946 and were married for nearly 63 years. He was a father of six, grandfather of five and great grandfather of four.

Jack was an active member of the community volunteering his time to the Scouts and a number of sporting groups and didn’t mind a punt on the horses (50 cents each way – no need to go overboard). He had a keen sense of humour that he retained till his death. One such example was penned by his daughter in his eulogy.

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One time I was driving him home from Manly Hospital when he opened the letter for the consulting surgeon and started reading.

"John Green presented SOB", he paused. "John Green presented Son of a Bitch??" he shouted.

"Relax Dad, I think you'll find that's Shortness of Breath."

Another example was shortly after he entered the nursing home in Terrey Hills and his daughter visited him, she wrote:

As I sat there going through his bills the nurse asked me "How often do you come to see John?"

Bit weird, I thought, but I said "every week".

"And how long have you worked for him?"

"All my life; I'm his daughter", I replied.

He had told them that his social secretary would be turning up that day!

Not long ago Jack was told that he was to remain in bed and couldn't use the bathroom. "We'll see about that", he replied. Shortly afterwards the police turned up at the nursing home – they had received a call saying that a person was acting strangely and forbidding residents to use the bathrooms. By this stage, tired from righteous indignation, Jack had fallen asleep.

From a personal point, I think the last paragraph of the excerpt from the eulogy was probably the most touching.

When Dad got sick in November we were called to say goodbye. He had been very ill but managed to recover. When we spoke, he said that he had been in a cold dark room but no one had come to collect him so he had come back. When I last saw him he asked me

"Are they coming to collect me today?"

They came the next morning.



RIP John "Jack" Green

This article was reproduced from the eulogy written by Jack's daughter Kathie. I would like to thank Kathie for the use of her words. Jack Green was a very special man.

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Blue Worland

In January, Blue went through a traumatic time after undergoing major surgery in Westmead Hospital. He is doing fine now and has been discharged from hospital.

Fund Raising

Listed below are the fund-raising activities planned for the remainder of the year. If you can, please come along and pick up a pair of tongs to help out or sell a few snags, you won't be disappointed.

Nick and Joyce have organised for the first Tuesday of every month at Bunnings Wollongong and the first Friday at Kirrawee. However, not all of them will go ahead:

- 4 April Bunnings Wollongong – this is not going ahead due to Bunnings double-booking us
- 7 April Bunnings Kirrawee
- 2 May Bunnings Wollongong
- 5 May Bunnings Kirrawee
- 2 June Bunnings Kirrawee
- 6 June Bunnings Wollongong

We are endeavouring to source more Bunnings stores as they are extremely successful days. Fozzie is working on both Penrith establishments as well as Valley Heights, Matt Conwell has approached Narellan and John Barnes has been in contact with Windsor.

If you wish to organise an event in your area, please let us know and we will assist where possible.

Kokoda Track Trek 2017

Unfortunately, this event has been cancelled due to lack of interest.

ANZAC Reunion 2017

ANZAC Day 2017 is to be held in Melbourne. As part of the reunion, the committee has planned the following.

- 21 Apr Bus trip to Puckapunyal to see the new Army vehicles go through their paces
- 22 Apr Bus trip to National Vietnam Veterans Museum, Phillip Island
- 23 Apr Bus trip to RAAF Museum, Point Cook
- 24 Apr Stand-down day
- 25 Apr ANZAC Day
- 26 Apr Return to home base

Registration forms are now coming in from the website where you can view full details of all events.

For more information, contact Geoff Cutts on 0418 384807 or email events@adaa.net.au

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Annual Raffle

We are holding a raffle, with the draw being held in August, at the formal dinner in Penrith. Tickets are \$5.00 each or 5 for \$20.00.



First prize: a beautiful hand-made quilt, made and donated by Sue Heidenreich
I wish the photo could do it justice

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Second prize: engraved decanter and 6 scotch glasses



Third prize: set of 6 engraved liqueur glasses

Fourth prize: set of 6 engraved shot glasses



Check the website for details on how to purchase your tickets.

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VALE

Jack Green

Pte Arron Stephen, 39 ADE Platoon

