



## **Royal Air Forces Association Melbourne Branch June 2018**

Our U.K contacts tell us that a range of activities are underway throughout the British Isles celebrating the formation of the RAF on 1 April 1918. We look forward to joining our AFA friends in celebrating their centenary in 2021.

At our Annual General Meeting on 1 March longstanding, tireless President/Chairman Ted Hayes OAM stood down from his role heading the branch. The new appointee is Val Boyd, a retired senior nurse with a family association with the RAF stretching back to 1936 when her father joined the service. He retired at 55, worked for the MOD, then became very involved with RAFA in England. He served many years as treasurer with the Bridlington Branch. Val will be working hard to consolidate the role of the Branch under the Air Force Association umbrella.

In April a very enjoyable lunch was hosted at Moorabbin Airport by a group of ex-RAF members who first wore uniform at the age of 15 years as Boy Entrants. Many had travelled long distances to be present at this special gathering.

At the Branch Meeting in April, three speakers tracked the history of the RAF from the Royal Flying Corp during World War 1 through to recent times – Michael Tucker, Ian Bartholomew and Michael Boyd.

The May Meeting provided a unique opportunity to hear Jean Smith recount in remarkable detail her life as a member of the WAAF. Jean joined up in 1940 and served with bomber squadrons where, of course, she got to meet many young Australian air crews.

Our Veterans who marched on ANZAC Day looked really smart but had to endure chaotic marshalling before setting off. This was compounded by the puzzling order to march a six-abreast over multiple tram lines. Upon conclusion of the march, a short dedication was held at the RAF plaque close to the shrine. Marchers and supporters caught up with each other for a light lunch at the nearby Botanical Hotel.

Plans are now underway for two of this year's major RAFA events. First, a reception at Government House will be held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> August to honour the Melbourne Branch members during the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year of the RAF. Second, the 'Battle of Britain' Luncheon on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> September at the Sofitel Hotel in Collins Street, Melbourne. At \$50 a head it represents excellent value as it is significantly subsidised. The luncheon is open to all AFA members.

A phone call to Val Boyd on 0428 174 070 now will ensure you receive a formal invitation in August. More details will follow closer to time.

**Val Boyd**  
**President, RAF - Melbourne Branch**