The strongest people make time to help others, even if they’re struggling with their own personal demons ★

On behalf of all members, we wish those members who have had birthdays in March, April, May and June a very Happy Birthday.

Future newsletters will go back to the practice of naming those who are celebrating birthdays in the month of publishing.

★ HAPPY BIRTHDAY! ★

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Next Branch Meeting
Sunday 11th July 2021
1000 Hours
Bolton Clarke Community Centre,
Rowes Bay

Next Branch Event
TBA
MEMBER PROFILE

Welcome to our new member Ken Bailey. Here are some facts about Ken

KEN BAILEY

Where were you born?
Waverly, NSW.

Where did you go to school?
Woolahra Public School, Waverly Public School, Maroubra Bay Public School, Peakhurst West Public School Narwee Boys High School St George Technical College (Plumbing, Gasfitting and Sanitary Engineering).

What are your interests/hobbies?
Caravanning around Australia (since 1989. Have contributed several stories and photography to Caravan and Motorhome magazine), Photography, Australian history, collecting gemstones and fossils.

Do you have a favourite book/movie/song?
Some Days are Diamonds sung by John Denver.

When did you join the military?
Joined the RAAF in 1968.

Where was your favourite posting?
36SQN

What is on top of your bucket list?
Win Lotto.

What do you like about Townsville?
Feels like home to me.

CRASH OF A LOCKHEED HUDSON IN HINCHINBROOK CHANNEL NEAR CARDWELL, QLD ON 5 MAY 1942

RAAF Hudson A16-162 of 32 Squadron RAAF, was one of four Hudsons sent out from Townsville at 0943 hrs on 5 May 1942 on a 2,500 mile low level patrol mission to search Area "H" during the Battle of the Coral Sea.

The crew were:-Alwyn Ruta "Sammy" Samuel (405113) – Pilot, James William "Jim" East (405301) - Co-Pilot, Sgt Geoffrey Eric Fletcher (416253) - Wireless Air Gunner, Sgt Graham Stanley "Jessie" James (416260) - Wireless Air Gunner.

The patrol continued initially without incident in arduous conditions until a tropical storm was encountered. They experienced heavy turbulence, radio compass failure, loss of radio contact with Townsville, a reliance on “dead reckoning” navigation, cloud rolling in and evening darkness and loss of visibility, a “near miss” with mountainous terrain resulting in rapid evasion, fuel issues and ultimately engine failure. The aircraft crashed into the waters of the Hinchinbrook Channel at 1915 hrs in darkness, shortly after low tide and remained buoyant for a short time with empty fuel tanks and the benefit of shallow water.

Graham Stanley "Jessie" James was killed on impact. Pilot Alwyn Samuel and Co-Pilot James East were unconscious and trapped in the wreckage. SGT Geoff Fletcher regained his senses, exited the aircraft via the rear hatch, and climbed along the outside of the aircraft to the cockpit finding the pilot and co-pilot immersed in water and in danger of drowning. He first pulled the unconscious Samuel from the wreckage and then swam towing him to nearby mangroves, returned to the aircraft and extricated the unconscious and mangled East and again swam and towed him to the mangroves to join Samuel. Fletcher returned again to the wreckage diving multiple times to extricate his close friend James and then swam, towing him to a small clearing in the mangroves. He then tried unsuccessfully to revive him. Turning his attention back to the survivors, Fletcher then tended to the injuries suffered by Samuel and East. He had to contend with bone fractures, open wounds, head injuries, shock and exposure suffered by these surviving crew members. He again swam to the wreck, located a parachute and set up a hammock. He then pulled the remaining crew out of the water and dank mud of the mosquito infested swamp.

When Hudson A16-162 was reported as missing, three Wirraways were sent out from Townsville to locate the aircraft. They found it half submerged at the end of the shipping channel on the north west side of Hinchinbrook Island near Cardwell. Fletcher directed the launch to the surviving crew Samuel and East, who were then transported to Cardwell and thereafter to Tully hospital. Fletcher returned to duty at 32 Squadron RAAF at Townsville.

Do you have a story to tell, a joke to make us smile, a poem, an event you want to tell us about or anything else you think our readership would be interested in? Then send it to tvsec@raafaqld.org with the subject line “NEWSLETTER ARTICLE” (continued on page 5)
A BOOK IN REVIEW

**Authors**
Kristen Alexander  
**ISBN**
9781473833791  
**Published**
19/07/2015  
**Released**
10/07/2020  
**Binding**
Hardcover  
**Pages**
424

**Price** $19.99

During the summer and autumn of 1940, the Germans launched their Luftwaffe campaign to gain superiority over the RAF, especially Fighter Command. They were not successful, and this defeat marked a turning point in the Allies’ favour.

This is the story of eight Australian fighter pilots engaged in the Battle of Britain, the first major battle of World War II (or any war) fought entirely in the air. Jack Kennedy, Stuart Walch, Dick Glyde, Ken Holland, Pat Hughes, Bill Millington, John Crossman and Des Sheen—only one of them came home.

Commendations generated upon release of the Australian edition; ‘A story we take for granted, here told afresh with insight and empathy’ - Professor Peter Stanley, UNSW Canberra

‘In telling the stories of some of Australians who flew in the Battle of Britain, Kristen Alexander has combined academic rigour with compelling personal detail. She has demonstrated that the “unknowns” of the battle are as fascinating as those who gained celebrity status. This is a book for those who know much about what happened in 1940 and those who don’t” - Geoff Simpson, Trustee, Battle of Britain Memorial Trust.

“The lives of eight Australia fighter pilots, from backyard to cockpit and beyond, lovingly and expertly told” – Andy Wright, Aircrew Book Review

**RAAF Centenary Celebrations**

On 9th & 10th April, the Branch was delighted to host 2 events as our contribution to RAAF Centenary celebrations.

On 9th April a Centenary Dinner was held at the Rydges Hotel event centre. 70 guests attended the function including our National President Carl Schiller OAM CSM, and WOFF-AF Fiona Grasby OAM who both addressed the dinner.

We were fortunate to have a jazz ensemble from the 1RAR band to entertain us throughout the evening.

On 10th April a non-denominational memorial church service was held at The Sacred Heart Cathedral. Among the congregation were a number of VIPs including the our Branch Patron, the National President, WOFF-AF, SADFO, BRIG Fegan and Mayor Jenny Hill. This solemn occasion was well received by those in attendance. The Service was live streamed and viewed by over 70 people. The support given by the Cathedral staff and RAAF Townsville helped to make this service a success.

Carl Schiller  
OWF-AF Fiona Grasby  
1RAR  
Jazz Ensemble

Branch Chaplain Wayne addressing the congregation

State President Ted recited “The Ode”
Two hunters got a pilot to fly them to Canada to hunt moose. They bagged six. As they started loading the plane for the return trip, the pilot said the plane could take only four moose. The two lads objected strongly.

“Last year we shot six and the pilot let us put them all on board. He had the same plane as yours”

Reluctantly, the pilot gave in and all six were loaded. However, even with full power, the little plane could not handle the load and went down a few moments after take-off.

Climbing out of the wreckage, Brian asked Tommy, “Any idea where we are?”

“I think we’re pretty close to where we crashed last year Brian”

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**Hudson Crash** — continued from page 3

SGT Graham Stanley James (416260) aged 24 years, was killed in this crash and was buried at the Tully Cemetery. SGT James was the son of Stanley Marden James and Elfreda Laura James, of Kersbrook, South Australia.

There is a plaque located in the Battle of The Coral Sea Park located in Cardwell, north Queensland that commemorates the event. The plaque was unveiled on 7 May 1997 on the 55th anniversary of the tragic crash. The ceremony was organised by 32 Squadron RAAF, and was attended by Alwyn Samuel and family, Muriel Fletcher (widow of Geoff) and family, and a contingent of RAAF personnel from Townsville and 32 SQN RAAF from East Sale in Victoria. The plaque was dedicated by Chaplain Robert Heathwood from RAAF Townsville and a flypast by a HS178 which was conveniently on an exercise in the area was organised.

**Acknowledments**

“Battle of the Coral Sea”, Australia @War By Peter Dunn
“Diary of WWII - North Queensland” Complied by Peter Nielsen
“Air Force in the RAAF 1921-71” By Geoffrey Pentland & Peter Malone
“Hinchinbrook Channel, A16-162 and the Royal Australian Air Force” By Paul D. Padley
“For Freedom and Honour - Biography of Peter Wilkinson Cavanagh” By Paul D. Padley
“Moresby’s Few - The Story of No 32 Squadron RAAF in New Guinea” by Leslie Jillett. Publisher : North West Courier, Narrabri, NSW 1945
**Padre’s Piece**

As I said in my last “Padre’s Piece”, the bible’s Book of Proverbs was written by King Solomon as a guide to daily living and it still has value today. In the opening chapter he sets out the purpose of his book - *To know wisdom and instruction, to understand words of insight, to receive instruction in wise dealing, in righteousness, justice, and equity.* It is important to remember the difference between wisdom and knowledge. Knowledge is the collection of facts; wisdom is the right application of what we know, and requires good judgement, insight, common sense and experience.

One can read books about aircraft navigation or air traffic control and acquire a lot of knowledge about them, but very obviously, you need to have wisdom to navigate an aircraft safely or manage a crowded air space! Solomon goes on to tell us how to gain wisdom and we will deal with that in a later newsletter. Please remember that exercise Talisman-Sabre is being held over the next two months. It is going to be exciting to see lots of air activity, but please remember to pray for all who are taking part, especially the air crews: “Safely away, safe sortie, safely home.”

*Padre Wayne Melrose,
Townsville Branch Chaplain*

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**UPCOMING BRANCH EVENTS**

**Barefoot Bowls**

The Barefoot Bowls planned for 27JUN have been postponed UFN. Unfortunately there has been insufficient time to organise this activity as well as conflict with other events but a date in July will be pursued.

**Legacy Appeal Week 2021**

From Monday 30AUG21 to Friday 03SEP21 the branch will be supporting Townsville Legacy by manning a stall at The Avenues shopping centre from 0800 – 1600 daily. This is an annual event that we have supported for many years. If you are able to assist please contact the Branch Secretary with your availability.

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**44th ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF DELEGATES**

The Branch was honoured this year to host the 44th Annual Assembly of Delegates (AAD) in Townsville. The event saw Delegates from all Queensland Branches gather in one location to carry out the business of the Division and the Association as well as enjoying fellowship at two social gatherings.

On 14th May, Delegates met at a Civic Reception sponsored by the Townsville City Council. The council forecourt in Walker St was the venue where drinks and nibbles were served accompanied by entertainment from the 1RAR Jazz Ensemble. The Deputy Mayor welcomed the Delegates with a response from State President Ted.
Saturday, 15th May commenced with morning tea followed by the Delegates participating in the State Council meeting, lunch and the Division AGM and concluded with afternoon tea. The venue for these meetings was Rydges Southbank Event Centre in Palmer St. Guest Speaker at the State Council meeting was Ms Michelle Higgins from the Townsville DVA office.

Saturday night saw Delegates, partners and invited guests attend the annual AAD Dinner at Rydges “Raffles” room. Our Branch Patron, Tony Jones addressed the dinner as our guest speaker.

A memorial service was conducted at the ANZAC Memorial on the Strand on Sunday morning signifying the conclusion of this year’s AAD. The service was conducted by the Division Chaplain Peter Moore. Attendees included SADFO RAAF Townsville and Mayor Jenny Hill. Again the Council strongly supported this service by providing all necessary facilities including a marquee, chairs and a sound system free of charge.

From all reports, an enjoyable time was had by all those who attended