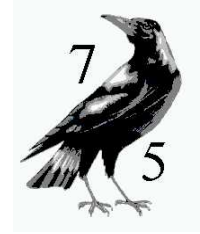




75 SQUADRON ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

Patron: Air Vice-Marshal Mel Hupfeld, DSC



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NEWSLETTER NO. 1/17 – JULY 2017

President's Report

Dear Fellow Magpies,

It has been my pleasure to have been the President of the 75 Squadron Association incorporated over the last year. It has been a period of social activity, commemoration and transition. The 75th year celebrations at Tindal were very successful. The squadron did a great job of hosting our members and the Dining-in involved the entire squadron and was the best I have been to. There were excellent speeches, good banter and a very professional and loud Hornet flypast. The intention for the Tindal Dining-in was to maximise the participation of the current squadron members and this was certainly achieved and we now have several hundred young Magpies with a firm understanding of the squadrons history. There was commemoration held at the Hornet Hill for WGCDR Ross Fox and myself and the CO along with our families trekked up Mount Harrison to check on JP Conlan memorial which still looks in great condition 25 years later. Well done to the CO and Admino for organising such fitting celebrations during this period.

CO 75, Warrant officer engineering and myself were also able to attend the 50th Anniversary of the Fast Caravan deployment to Malaysia in Newcastle. This has been a long running 75 squadron reunion and it was terrific to meet them as they celebrated 50 years since deploying over 20 Mirage to Butterworth from Williamtown. It was great to hear their stories of what was quite an epic feat and subsequent long term deployment at a tense time in our regions history.

With regards commemoration the squadrons formation was celebrated by several gatherings in Brisbane, Townsville, Williamtown and Canberra on the 21st of March. Thanks to all those who attended or organised functions. A contingent including Patricia Jackson and CO 75 also attended Port Moresby for the unveiling of memorial celebrating the squadrons early days. Please read Patricia's account below. Sadly we also farewelled several of our original members - Frank Robertson, Ed McCulloch and Ron Becker. Rest in Peace.

Many of you would have read the minutes from the AGM at Tindal that we plan to disband our formal status as an association incorporated and become embedded within RAAFA Fighter Squadrons Branch. This was after a unanimous decision of members present at the AGM and also congruent with the opinions of the vast majority of 'senior Magpie' that I took counsel from prior to the AGM. From an administrative perspective this will allow us to have a well managed membership base and further time to get on with the job of social activities and maintaining the squadrons proud history without the administrative burden. Membership dues paid will be converted into credit with RAAFA FSB and our remaining funds will be quarantined for the purpose of 75 Squadron History preservation projects. Our Facebook page and website will continue to remain active for discussion and planning of future events.

Congratulations to Patricia Jackson. She was awarded Life Membership of the 75 Squadron Association at the final AGM. She has been a stalwart of the association and has contributed in multiple capacities during the formal years of the association incorporated and in the many years prior. She will become a Life member of RAAFA over the coming months as our administration functions are taken over by RAAFA.

After a busy year of events so far I envisage the next major event will be the ANZAC Day March in 2018. However, for those able to get to Melbourne on 26 August 2017 the Association was formally invited by the 39th Battalion Association to attend the 75th Anniversary of the Kokoda Campaign. This will be a great event.

**Warm regards to all,
Daryl Pudney**

Commanding Officer's Report

see attached

Report on ANZAC Visit to PNG 23-26 April, 2017

My brother, Arthur, and I travelled to Port Moresby with Arthur's wife, Christine, Arthur's two daughters, Diane Fisk and Angela Groves, and Angela's husband, Adrian, to open the Commemorative Display in honour of our father, John F. Jackson, put together by the Port Moresby Sub-Branch of the RSL of Australia and the National Airports Corporation of Papua New Guinea.

GPCAPT Tim Alsop, CO81 Wing, and WGCADR Mick Grant, CO75 Squadron, and Chaplain (FLTLT) Tom Killingbeck represented the RAAF and played a role at the Opening. They also joined us on our journey about Port Moresby and looked after us with great kindness. We were very proud to have them and the other RAAF personnel there with us.

GPCAPT Steve Fielder, Vice-President of the Port Moresby Sub Branch of the RSL of Australia, organised our itinerary and took great care to make our visit an interesting one. He and his wife, Nicky, looked after us with diligence and good humour.

We stayed at the Airways Hotel where the owners made us very welcome. They provided free accommodation for all the Jackson Family. There is a Jackson Suite in which letters and photos pertaining to John Jackson, given by us during our first visit in 2011, are displayed. We gave them more photos this time.



Hanuabada Village

We were picked up at 2.30 pm and travelled with Steve Fielder and the rest of the party to Hanuabada Village where John Jackson was first buried in 1942. His remains were transferred to Bomana when it was opened after the war. Hanuabada is a village beside the Harbour where the houses are built on slender stilts so the tide washes in and out underneath and takes away the rubbish. The way around the

village is by a walkway built on stilts with slats over the top. The people who live in Hanuabada are warm and friendly and very curious about us, especially the children, who followed us everywhere, giggling when we spoke to or looked at them. They seemed carefree and happy. They gave us so much joy just laughing with them. Our guide was Kopi, a Senior Resident of the village.

On the 24 April, we journeyed to Bomana Cemetery where WGCDR Mick Grant, Arthur and I met the Governor-General at John Jackson's grave.



Presentation of Medals by the Governor-General

He made a short speech and then handed over a set of replicas of John's medals on a cushion to us. It was a very emotional time for us with a feeling of sadness mixed with pride that our father was being honoured in this way.

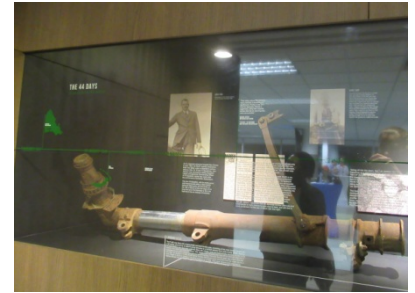


WGCDR Mick Grant & GPCAPT Tim Alsop at John Jackson's Grave

Next stop was to the Air Traffic Control Tower at Jackson's Airport. Our guide, Phil Irvine, pointed out the mounds that were left over from 1942, behind which our planes were hidden from the Japanese. He also showed us the new section of the Control Tower that is to be opened soon.

That evening, we went back to Jackson's International Airport lounge for the Opening of the 75th Anniversary Commemorative Display. GPCAPT Steve Fielder gave a Welcome Address. This was followed by a Prayer of Remembrance by Chaplain Tom Killingbeck. GPCAPT Tim Alsop gave an Address, followed by a poem, "High Flight", read by WGCDR Mick Grant.

I thanked everyone who had participated in putting the Display together and the guests for attending. I emphasised what an honour it was for our father to be recognised in this way and how proud we were of him. I presented the medals we had received from the Governor-General to the people of PNG to be put in the Display. Arthur then spoke about John Jackson before the War, during his time in the Middle East and his time at Port Moresby, so everyone could get to know this man better. Arthur left his speech on the lectern after the Opening. When he went back to get it, it was gone – but it appeared in full in a local newspaper the next day. I thought it was good publicity and Arthur said he was flattered someone wanted to copy it.



After the Ode was recited by Mr Glenn Maitland, RSL Port Moresby Sub-Branch President and the Blessing was made by the Chaplain, I tore down a black covering and behind it found the most moving and well-designed display. We all crowded in to take a look. So many people at the Opening came up to us to talk about the display and/or Dad and have their photos taken with us. The people of Port Moresby are so open-hearted and friendly. We had drinks and tasty food while we mingled with the guests until the end. We went back to our Hotel feeling very emotional and moved by the Commemorative Display and all the wonderful people we had met.

We left early (4.15 am) the next morning for Bomana Cemetery to attend the Anzac Day Dawn Service with 5,400 other people. We sat behind the Governor-General and his party in silence as the morning light slowly filtered into the sky and lit up the graves where all those men, and one woman, lie: so young, so much to give but silenced forever fighting for their families and the country they loved.



Last Fuzzy Wuzzy Angel

Arthur and I, helped by Tim and Mick, laid a wreath each. The Governor-General made a very moving gesture by taking the last Fuzzy Wuzzy Angel by the hand and leading him to the Cenotaph. The breathtakingly sad parts of the service began: The Ode, Last Post, Lament and Reveille. We made our way back to the bus saddened but hopeful for the future that lessons had been learned and happy in the knowledge that our Defence Forces are as brave and as ready to defend us and our country as they were in 1942.

We attended a special Anzac Lunch at the splendid Royal Papua Yacht Club. We sat on the verandah and enjoyed the view of the luxury yachts, the company and the food. Bill Shorten came over to speak to us. He told me he had read "44 Days" by Michael Veitch, about those first furious weeks of fighting, on the advice of his father-in-law, Michael Bryce.

On our way back our van's left hand back wheel went over a grate which collapsed and we came to a standstill. We all jumped out and, in a flash, our heroic RAAF and RSL companions, plus Adrian, rushed at the van, heaved it out of the hole and back on the road. After giving a tip to the nearest local, we sped away, confident that we had been saved from a savage attack by the Rascals.

During the afternoon, we visited the National and Cultural Museum which was specially opened for us. It is well laid out and contains an extremely comprehensive display of PNG artifacts. We also stopped at the PNG Parliament Haus. The building is huge and quite awe inspiring. It is set in grounds that include a lake and gardens full of flowering shrubs and trees. We were able to go inside to the large lobby, then on into the Sitting Chamber.

We were sad to leave Port Moresby but happy that Dad is in Bomana where his grave is so well looked after. It is a calm and peaceful place for him to rest.

Patricia Jackson, 9 May 2017

Visit to Tindal RAAF Base by Association Members – 27/28 April, 2017

75 Squadron personnel, led by the CO, WGCDR Mick Grant, and organised by the Squadron's ADMINO (FLGOFF Adam Primmer), hosted a wonderful event at RAAF Tindal on Thursday 27 April 2017 and Friday 28 April 2017 to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the Squadron's formation in 1942. WGCDR Grant is the only pilot who went to Iraq in 2003, and Syria and Iraq in 2015-17, on all three occasions with 75 Squadron.

A diverse group of Association members attended with representatives from across Australia including Newcastle, Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne and Brisbane. Two WW2 veterans honoured us with their presence, Ed May and Joe McGrath. The Jackson family were strongly represented. Others included Richard Deane-Butcher, son of the "Fighter Squadron Doctor", and Ian Thomson from Canberra who was with the Squadron during the Mirage era. It was also great to have the Association's President and his family there. Dr Daryl Pudney, now a GP, was a Hornet pilot with the Squadron a few years ago and was a participant in the first deployment of the Squadron to the sand pit (the Middle East) in 2003. The special guest was Michael Veitch, an actor and now military historian whose book "44 Days" was recently published. It is a well researched account of the Squadron's baptism of fire in 1942.

Guests were accommodated in comfortable quarters made available for visitors next to the Base, and were given access to the Sergeant's mess for meals – great hospitality all round.

Our programme was most interesting and varied and all visitors mingled and engaged with many of the current serving personnel throughout the stay; hopefully bringing them close to the Squadron's wonderful history and legacy. Highlights included a briefing by the CO in the Pilots' inner sanctum (or operations main briefing room) firstly by FLTLT Roswell, one of the senior FA18 pilots, and then by the CO, Mick Grant. Later that day we visited the Base's Flight Simulator and various visitors were allowed to operate it. One member managed to fly under the Harbour Bridge, but unfortunately demolished the Sydney Opera House at the same time!

Later that day a visit was arranged to pay our respects at the Ross Fox Memorial Site that is several hours away from the Base, and very moving service was held in his memory. Richard Deane-Butcher played 'Il Silenzio' on his trumpet as a tribute to Ross, and then The Rouse. This was a memorable event, and highlighted the dangers that are always present when operating such powerful and extraordinary fighter aircraft.

Later, we were shown over one of the FA18s that was undergoing some maintenance, and visitors were allowed to sit in the cockpit and discuss the aircraft with several of the pilots. It was great to have the SENGO, SQNLDR Aleisha Broadbank there with her staff to answer our questions. On Friday evening a splendid dinner was held in one of the aircraft hangars, with several FA18s decorated especially for the occasion, one with John F. Jackson's details on the side. This was a really special event, with the pilots all in their brown camouflaged overalls, wearing silver spurs. All other personnel wore their blue camouflage overalls. Just before the Dinner one of the pilots (FLTLT Ross Bowman), a true "top gun", performed a flying display over the assembled crowd that was described as the best ever by some of us, as he made about 10 passes overhead at low levels and varied speeds, followed by some aerobatics that were outstanding. Fortunately we were issued with ear plugs.

A feature at the dinner was the cuisine. There were three types of meat available that had been slow cooked by several of the pilots on a BBQ since 1.30pm that day. This was very tasty as were the salads and a splendid cake made especially for the event. The dinner was conducted with Mr Vice (SGT Mark Kenyon) keeping order. He proposed The Loyal Toast and the Chaplain, FLTLT Tom Killingbeck said Grace. Visitors were scattered throughout the crowd so that everyone could mix and share experiences.

At the Dinner, the CO addressed the crowd at some length, walking around the hangar as he spoke, with great effect. Then Michael Veitch addressed the Dinner as the key note speaker, and this was a wonderful privilege for everyone present. Later, Richard Deane-Butcher made a rousing speech that was received well by the troops. He also thanked Michael Veitch for attending the Anniversary and for addressing the Squadron and Association members. After the dinner, Richard entertained some of the crowd by playing a selection of songs for them on his trumpet, including some classical music and some jazz, finishing with "We'll Meet Again". The whole event was outstanding and enjoyable in every way and it was a great pleasure to be a participant. Long may the Squadron flourish, and continue to represent Australia internationally with such distinction, and to protect its citizens.

Richard Deane-Butcher

**Address delivered by Michael Veitch at the Dining-In Night
Celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the foundation of 75 Squadron, at RAAF Tindal**

It is for us today all but impossible to appreciate the terror, the chaos, indeed the despair out of which this organisation was born, 75 years ago. 75 Squadron, Royal Australian Air Force, emerged from a catastrophe, the magnitude of which had not been faced by our country and has not since; a catastrophe which, though thrust upon us, was also one of our own making. 1942 – the year of 75's birth - saw us at our very best, but also our very worst.

At the terrible dawn of the Pacific war at the end of 1941, a conflict which had, to the bulk of the Australian populace, seemed distant, removed, even theoretical, was suddenly and violently thrust into our orbit, shattering forever the dangerous notion that our geography would cocoon us forever.

It was the moment when, despite the years of warning, despite a heritage in aviation which, for a time, was the envy of the world; when for the first and only moment in our history, we came under direct and imminent threat from the forces of a foreign power, we looked to our own defences to find that the warnings had been ignored, the heritage squandered and the cupboard bare.

Twenty years earlier at the close of the Great War, Australia had one of the finest aviation traditions in the world. Our airman had performed outstandingly in Europe and in the desert, our young RAAF was up and running years before comparable air forces of the day (including that of the United States). It was resourced, confident and well led. In the inter-war years, Australians blazed international reputations across the world's skies: names like Kingsford-Smith, Ulm, Hinkler and a dozen other lesser-known Australians becoming forever entwined with aviation folklore.

Japan too had ambitions, and for those few who choose to look, these were found to be hiding in plain sight. But as her forces expanded, ours contracted. Inter-Service jealousies and politics by the mid-thirties had torn the heart out of the RAAF's purpose, and its leader, Williams who had fought so hard to establish its strength and independence was replaced by an English Wing Commander reluctantly dragged out of retirement, who knew little of Australia and cared about it even less.

At a time when Japan had no less than 37 different types of modern aircraft under development, all designed and built by themselves, Australia had not a single one.

When their long-hatched explosion burst suddenly across the Pacific with a speed, scale and violence which dwarfed even that of Hitler's Blitzkrieg, we as a nation stood, numb, bewildered and defenceless, as if watching the approach of a monster through an open door. This enemy was ruthless, savage, and perhaps even more terrifying, utterly unknown. The image of our new Prime Minister, John Curtin, ashen at his desk in Canberra muttering over and over 'this is the end', can be well believed.

It was only luck which intervened in the form of a shipload of American P-40 Kittyhawk fighters, unassembled and still in their crates, bound for Borneo, a place which had fallen almost before it was realised it was under threat. Diverted to Sydney, these were pounced upon as a sign of providence, and assembled hurriedly in the hangars of Bankstown airport. And so, at the stroke of a pen on the fourth day of March, 1942, three squadrons, 75, 76 and 77 were born, with 75 being ordered to form up immediately and be sent to the crucible of Port Moresby.

A schoolteacher from Queensland, a Melbourne carpet layer, an aspiring radio announcer from Sydney, a quiet accountant from Launceston. These were some of the original batch of 75's first pilots. They were not versed in military folklore. They had no traditions. They were ordinary young men with a handful of flying hours, barely out of their Service Flying Training Schools hardly given the chance to fly their big heavy P40 mounts in circuits around the airstrip, let alone grasp the fineries of aerial combat. History has often said, 'come the moment, come the man' and in 75's first and most desperate hour, they were however, very well led. John Francis Jackson, already in his mid-thirties, exhausted from a long campaign flying in the north African desert, his eyesight sun-damaged, quietly and calmly put himself into the breach as 75's first CO, and taught his young green men how to get a handle on the vastly more experienced Japanese pilots and their formidable mount, the nimble and highly manoeuvrable Zero.

The six week struggle that ensued over the skies of Port Moresby between the late March and early May of 1942 should really, be part of our folklore. It was truly a David and Goliath affair. Port Moresby had been just another name for Japan to strike off on their hitherto uninterrupted plan for the conquest of the territories to our north. It was here, for the first time, above that wretched, unspeakable, potholed ribbon of dirt called 'Seven Mile Strip' that their plans were interrupted.

Badly resourced, poorly fed, without the aid of radar or proper early warning systems, forced to live in tents – there were not even buildings - the men of 75 climbed up into the cloying tropical skies day after day to meet the cream of Japan's pilots – many of whom had been fighting for years. They flew when they were sick, they flew exhausted, stretching their nerves and their aircraft to beyond breaking point.

The 44 Days was in fact a long range duel, performed monotonously day after day in the cloying tropical skies above the jungle. There was no relief, not from the flies, not from the heat, not from the unspeakable food and especially not from the enemy. When they could, the Kittyhawks got above the Zeroes and the Bettys and tore down into them. It was all they could do. 'Try and dogfight a Zero', Jackson had told them, and you're dead.

They fought, often without the benefit of radio, without proper gunsights, their windscreens fogging up to invisibility as they tore blindly towards a Japanese formation from above. At dawn, they would take the initiative, led always by Jackson personally; they bolted over the hump of the mountains to audaciously surprise the Japanese who had arrogantly lined their aircraft up in neat lines, appearing out of the overcast to strafe and blast at treetop level. Parachutes were divested. At this height over this jungle, fighting this enemy, they asked, what was the point?

They fought at close range and from afar, from underneath and from head on. They broke formation easily but in a heartbeat lined up behind a mate who was himself under attack.

Their groundcrews performed miracles. The P40s had arrived even without the proper service manuals; engine changes were done under arc lights in the dead of night, sawed off tea tree stumps being used as hoists and winches over a dirt floor. The squadron's gallant and brilliant doctor, and a true humanitarian, Deane-Butcher gave his all, bolstering morale and confidence way beyond the parameters of his duty, taking on a commander's role, if not on paper, then certainly in spirit.

Gradually, 75's pilots and aircraft dwindled. Bombs tore more and more holes in their over-worked runways, illness and bad nutrition took their tolls. But the damage had been done. Although 75 Squadron's first and most important engagement was not a victory – that it could never be - it was at the very least a fight to a standstill, the first, the very first indication in a long and terrible war that our feared enemy was not in fact invincible.

At the end, Jackson's star was extinguished, tragically - some have said criminally - by senior commanders who did not appreciate his tactics and insisted he fight the Japanese aircraft more directly. In the style of a true hero, he complied, the first casualty of this monstrously stupid order being himself. This very day, 75 years ago, he climbed into a gloomy morning sky and tried to take the bastards on in a way he knew to be impossible. A few minutes later, his aircraft, drew a line like, some have said, like a pale cross, vertically down from the skies.

And as wheels of the 75's Kittyhawks left the dusty tarmac barely an hour after their arrival at Moresby in March 1942 in response to an enemy approach, they had no idea they were making history as their country's first effort made in the direct defence of their country. They were – it is almost hard to believe – undecorated, unacknowledged, unrecognized and spent the most of the rest of their lives relating what they had went through to no one. But although they may have been let down by history, by their own government, by politics they never let down one another.

Legacies, I'm sure are awful things. They are stubborn, they are immutable, they cannot be reasoned with, and they are often flawed. The men of 75, those first few who fought your first battle which even today, does not really have a name, had no preparation for such a momentous event. They were required to simply find and draw upon themselves what was needed to meet the terrible situation at hand. And, it has to be said, maybe one day it will be said, by all, what a magnificent job they did.

Speech given by Richard Deane-Butcher at the Celebration Dinner at Tindal for 75th Anniversary of the founding of 75 Squadron on 28 April

I am Richard Deane-Butcher, the son of your Squadron's first doctor, Bill Deane-Butcher, known as the "The Fighter Squadron Doctor", the title of the book that tells his story of the Squadron's formation and deployments to PNG in 1942, both to Port Moresby and Milne Bay.

There are some things in life that money cannot buy, and that are not for sale. Participation in a function such as this is one of them. What a privilege to be here with the "Murdering Marauding Magpies" on this historic occasion. I think I can speak for all those who have travelled here to the RAAF Base at Tindal to represent the Squadron's Association when I say how welcome we feel and how important it is for us all to embrace the great and unique legacy that this Squadron owns. This is part of the Squadron's identity and the remote community that we have been made part of for these few days is outstanding in every way.

With this privilege goes a responsibility to maintain the Squadron's traditions and standards, and to understand its legacy and what that means for the Squadron's present personnel. This legacy must be alive and relevant to the present, and to the future, and not only an historical exercise. 75 Squadron has served with distinction in many theatres post WW2, including Butterworth in Malaysia, and with three deployments in "the sand pit" in recent times. The general public is not fully aware of how fortunate they are to have you on guard at all times across Australia's northern borders.

The future will be equally demanding we know, and the professionalism we have seen in the last few days bears testament to the superb leadership that is in place, and to the high quality and dedication of the Squadron's personnel to keep safe in activities that are, intrinsically, highly dangerous. We want you to know that we support you absolutely in these activities and we thank you for your sacrifices and devotion to excellence and duty. I believe that all 24 million Australians would join me in this if they knew, and would thank each and every one of you for keeping us safe and protecting our freedom and way of life.

As we know it all started in the dark days of 1942, and with "44 Days" that have been so eloquently recorded recently by our special guest this evening, Michael Veitch in his book with that title. Michael has spoken to us tonight in what I would describe as a Churchillian address. Michael's book should be compulsory reading for everyone here, as it puts on the record the reasons that there is so much attention being given to the origins of 75 Squadron. Thank you, Michael, for being with us tonight and for your wonderful contribution to the research and publication of the Squadron's early history.

Some of the lessons from the past are articulated in other places as well, including in my father's book. The last chapter is titled "Looking Back". If I had my way, I would re-title that chapter as "Looking Forward", as this chapter contains numerous conclusions or gems of wisdom that are worth taking on board. Here are two that I will share with you now. I quote: "I came to appreciate the real worth of so many ordinary people. When pressure was applied many seemed to grow in stature. If ever I harboured any thoughts of belonging to a special group of people from a privileged mould then these thoughts were quickly dispelled. I learned that strength and quality are to be found in all areas of endeavour, and that one must look not only to those in high places but also to those around us to find the salt of the earth" and, "People shared a united purpose during the war, but a real sense of community seems to be too fragile to survive the peace. We all pray there will be no more war, but if there is, will the same outstanding qualities be found and the same fine young men and women come forward? The answer is a resounding yes. They're all around us. They are, after all, our own children and grandchildren."

So, we will return to our homes tomorrow. We are a disparate group, but with one thing in common and that is that we support the Magpies absolutely, and are true believers in the work you are doing.

We in the 75 Squadron Association, salute you.