

The RAM.

Vol 47

The Magazine by and for Serving and Ex-RAAF People,
and others.

The Caribou 50th Anniversary Bash.

Over the weekend of the 8th to the 10th August, 2014, Stew Bonett, (ex Caribou loady) with help from his lovely wife Valia, organized a wonderful and well attended get together at Coffs Harbour. The theme for the weekend was to commemorate the arrival of the first Caribous to land at 38 Squadron at RAAF Richmond on the 22nd April 1964, fifty years ago. It was also to commemorate the arrival of the first Caribous commencing operations in Vietnam as 'RAAF Transport Flight Vietnam' on the 8th August 1964. (In June 1966, 35 Squadron was reformed to take over from RTFV.)



This was the third "Bash" Stew and Valia have organised, the first was back in 2004 to commemorate the 40th anniversary and again in 2009 to commemorate the 45th. We're all looking forward to 2019 for the 55th. Got another one in you Stew???

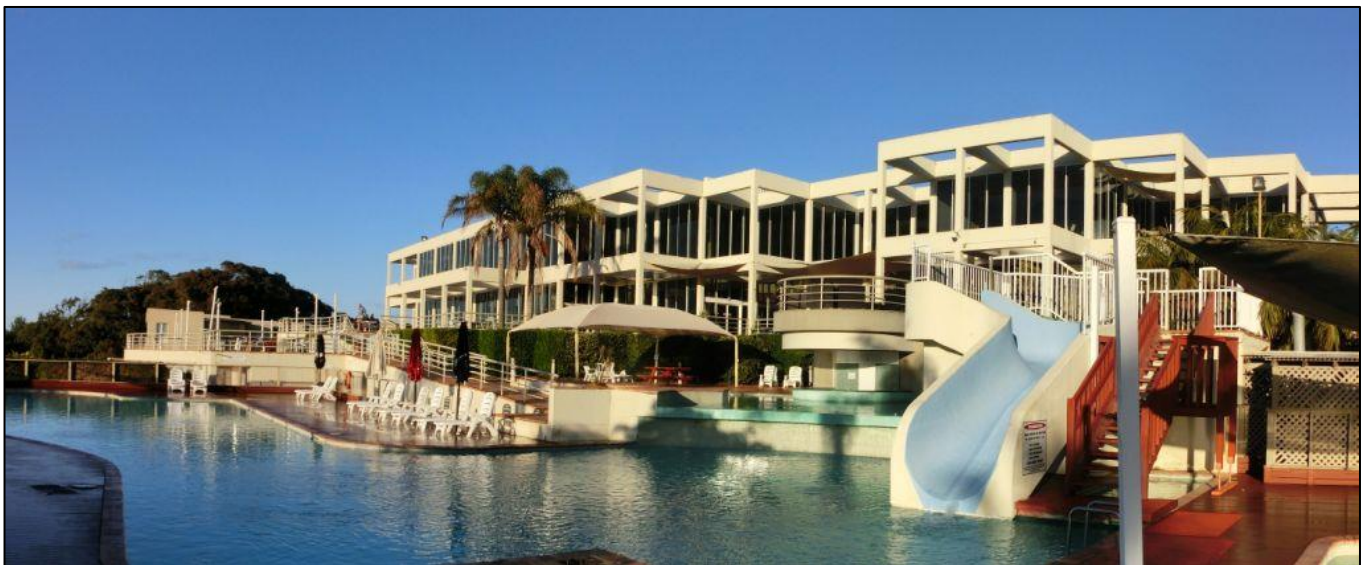


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The weekend started with a Meet and Greet on the Friday night when about 220 people got together in the Resort's ball-room to meet old mates, to enjoy a barbecue dinner, to have a drink, to take up a conversation that was put on hold some 5 years previously and to marvel at how old those other blokes have got since the last "do".

The "Bash" was held at the 135 room Opal Cove Resort which is about 5 kms north of Coffs, on the Highway.



The Resort is right on the beach and has all the facilities you could possibly need. Once settled in, there is no real reason to leave until that terrible check out time arrives. The food is great,

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there's 9 holes of golf if you're that way inclined, tennis courts, swimming pool and spa, a gym, a secluded beach to explore, a well-stocked bar and best of all, a wonderful and friendly staff that can't do enough for you.



On arrival and after checking in at Reception, everyone was met by both Valia and Stew and given their weekend "Pack". This consisted of a name tag with identified you to the Resort Staff in order to obtain drinks at discount prices, free drink vouchers, information on activities and amenities available at the Resort and seating arrangements for the Saturday night dinner.

All proceedings ran like clockwork and it was immediately evident that both Stew and Valia had spent an awful lot of time in preparation for the event – a bit like a military operation you could say.

We're all very grateful for your efforts Bonetts – and we're looking forward to the next one...

A doctor held a stethoscope up to a man's chest.
The man asks, "Doc, how do I stand? "
The doctor says, "That's what puzzles me!"

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After registration, the troops were invited to use the downstairs bar facilities prior to being mustered to the official Meet and Greet later that evening, though it's fair to say a lot didn't need a lot of coaxing.



A little girl asked her father, "How did the human race start?" The father answered, "God made Adam and Eve and they had children, and so all mankind was made." Two days later the girl asked her mother the same question. The mother answered, "Many years ago there were monkeys from which the human race evolved." The confused girl returned to her father and said, "Dad, how is it possible that you told me the human race was created by God, and Mom said they developed from monkeys?" The father answered, "Well, dear, it is very simple. I told you about my side of the family and your mother told you about hers."

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Jim Cameron, Jim Maguire, Wayne Oldfield.



John McDougall, Lorraine Slattery, Sheena Miller.

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Rob Meyer, Don Payne, Lyn Payne.



Neville King, Peter Bolton, Mark Royle.

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Serving members from both 35 Sqn and 38 Sqn were invited and they sent along a bunch of people to help celebrate the occasion and as 35 as yet doesn't have any aeroplanes of its own, they conned 37 Sqn into giving them a ride. Given the choice of either staying and working on base or spending the weekend at a resort on the mid coast of NSW, these people reluctantly agreed to volunteer their time and come along - and we're glad they did.

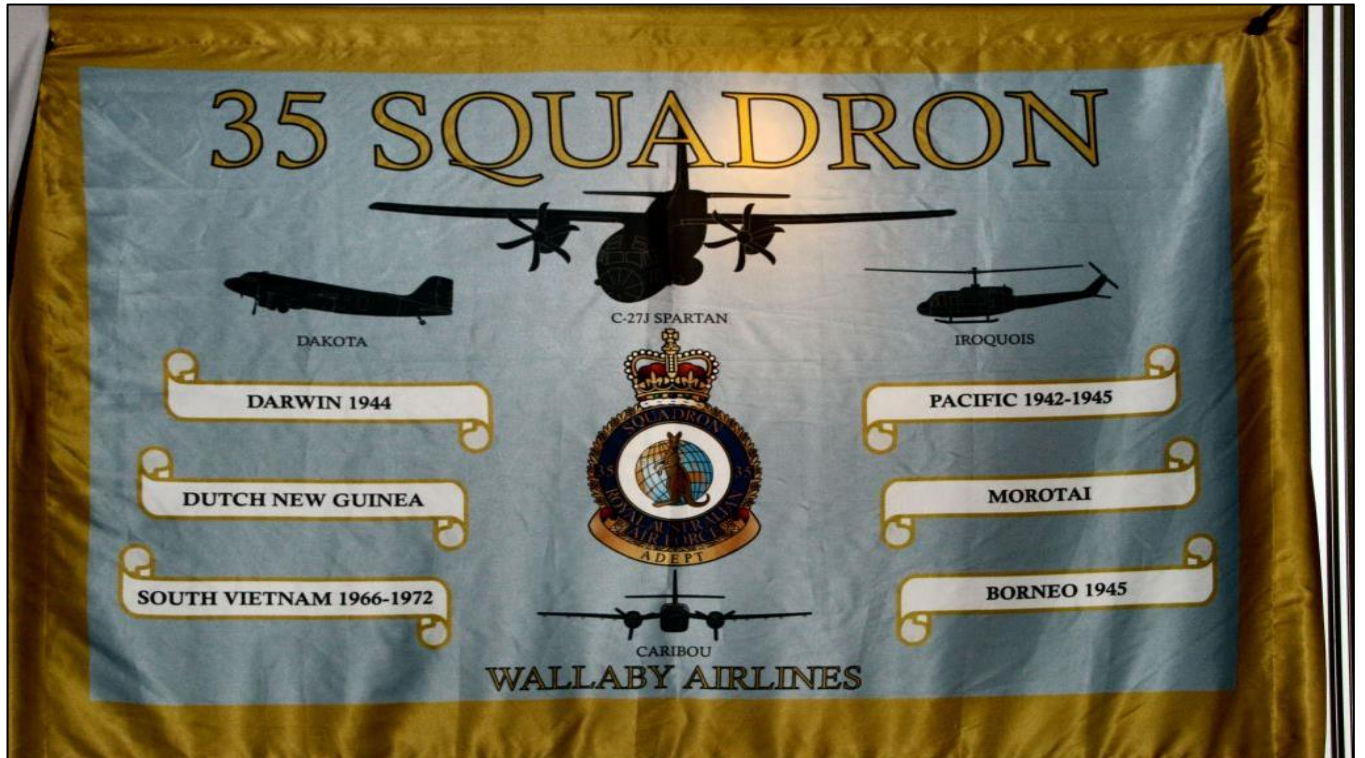


38 Sqn people from Townsville, L-R: W/O Craig Thomas, FOff Luke Duffey, Sgt Emma Kay, WngCdr Michael Burgess-Orton (CO) and out the front, FOff Chris Davis.

Last week, Ethel checked into a motel on her 68th birthday and she was a bit lonely. She thought, "I'll call one of those men you see advertised in phone books for escorts and sensual massages." She looked through the phone book, found a full page ad for a guy calling himself Tender Tony - a very handsome man with assorted physical skills flexing in the photo. He had all the right muscles in all the right places, thick wavy hair, long powerful legs, dazzling smile, six pack abs and she felt quite certain she could bounce a sixpence off his well oiled butt... She figured, what the heck, nobody will ever know. I'll give him a call... "Good evening, ma'am, how may I help you?!? Oh my, he sounded sooo sexy! Afraid she would lose her nerve if she hesitated, she rushed right in, "Hi, I hear you give a great massage. I'd like you to come to my motel room and give me one. No, wait, I should be straight with you. I'm in town all alone and what I really want is sex. I want it hot, and I want it now. Bring implements, toys, rubber, leather, whips, everything you've got in your bag of tricks. We'll go hot and heavy all night - tie me up, cover me in chocolate syrup and whipped cream, anything and everything, I'm ready!! Now, how does that sound?" He said, "That sounds absolutely fantastic, but you need to press 9 for an outside line."

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35 Sqn mightn't have any aeroplanes but they have their banner sorted and it was displayed for all to see.

Some of the people who barbecued and "metted and greeted" are: (all names left to right).



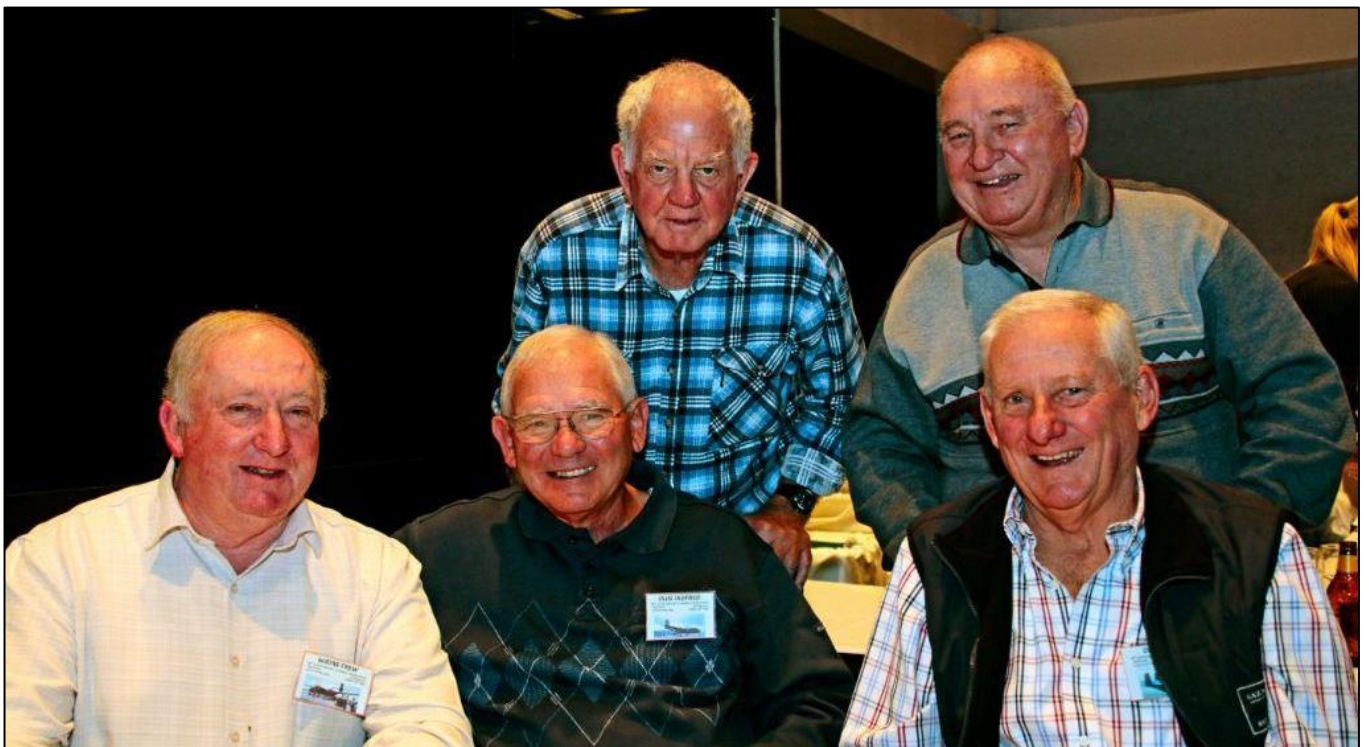
Alex Kelly, Dick Elliott, Sandi Zimmer.

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Alison Rose, Gersha Staal, Janelle Eynaud.



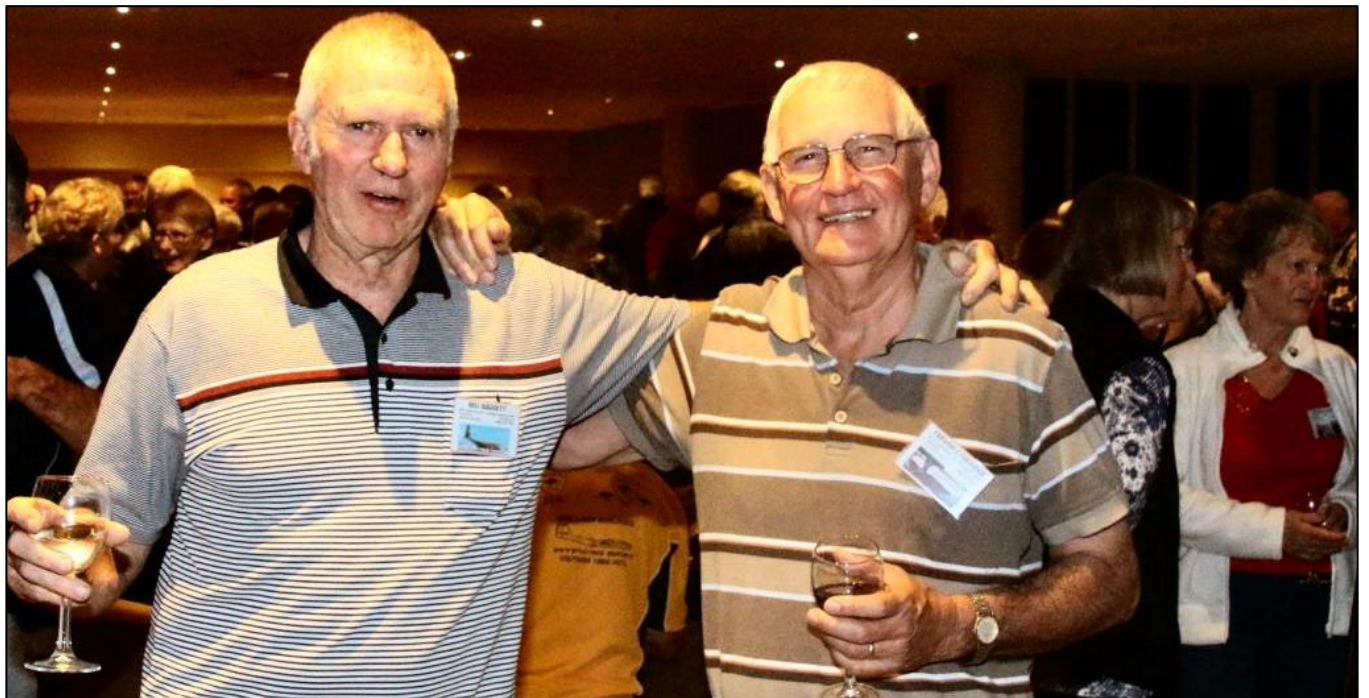
Back: Brian "Masta" Bates, Jim Cameron.
Front: Wayne Frew, Wayne Oldfield, Dick Salter.

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Bill and Sandra DeBoer.



Bill Baggett, Trevor Etheridge.

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Bill Moore, Gloria Gardner.



Chuck Connors, Kathy Kershaw.

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Chris and Gerry Reed.



Dave Coomber, Barb Coomber, Steve Gee, Robyn Gee.

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Bob and Cathy Williams.



Denise and Wayne Frew.

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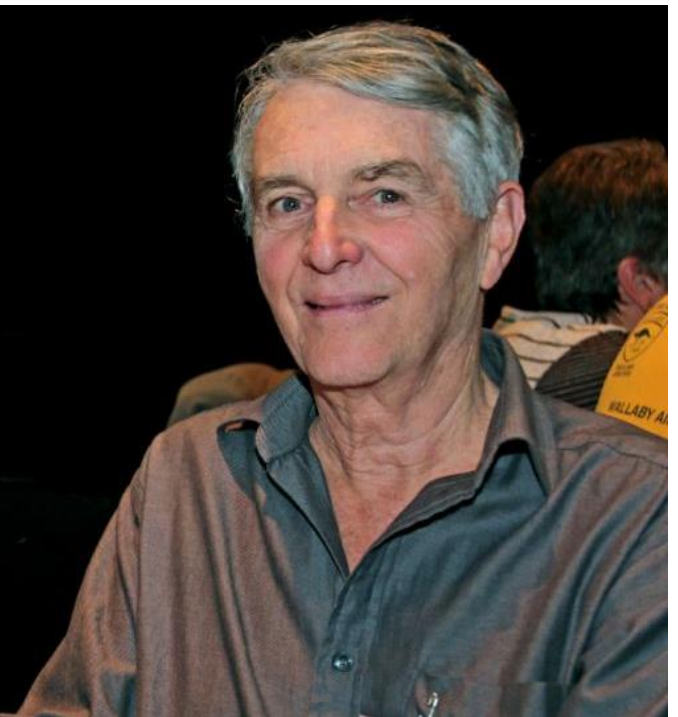
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Bing St John



Dick McGoogan



Elsie and Graham Johnson.

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Front: Doug Angus, Rick Richards, Sqn Ldr Ross Benson.
Back: Lucky RAAF bloke, Sandi Zimmer, Alex Kelly.



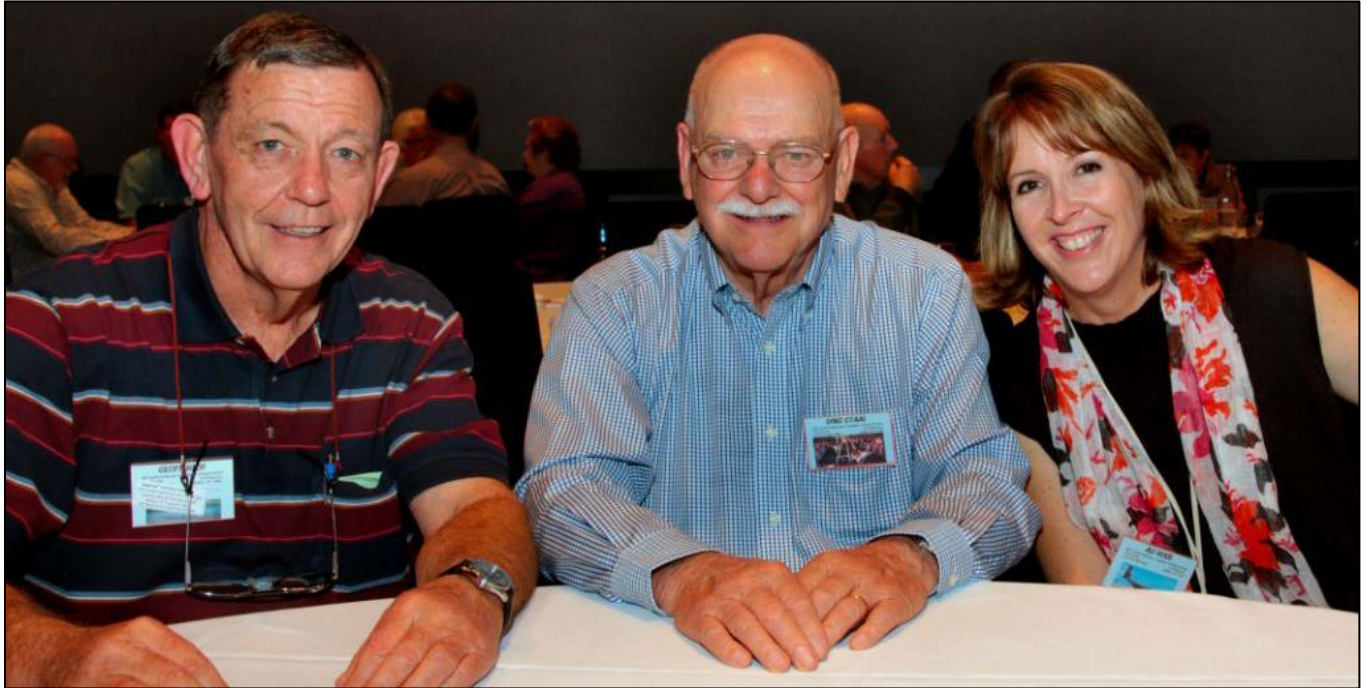
Peter "Dit" Eaton, John Broughton.



Geoff Brand.

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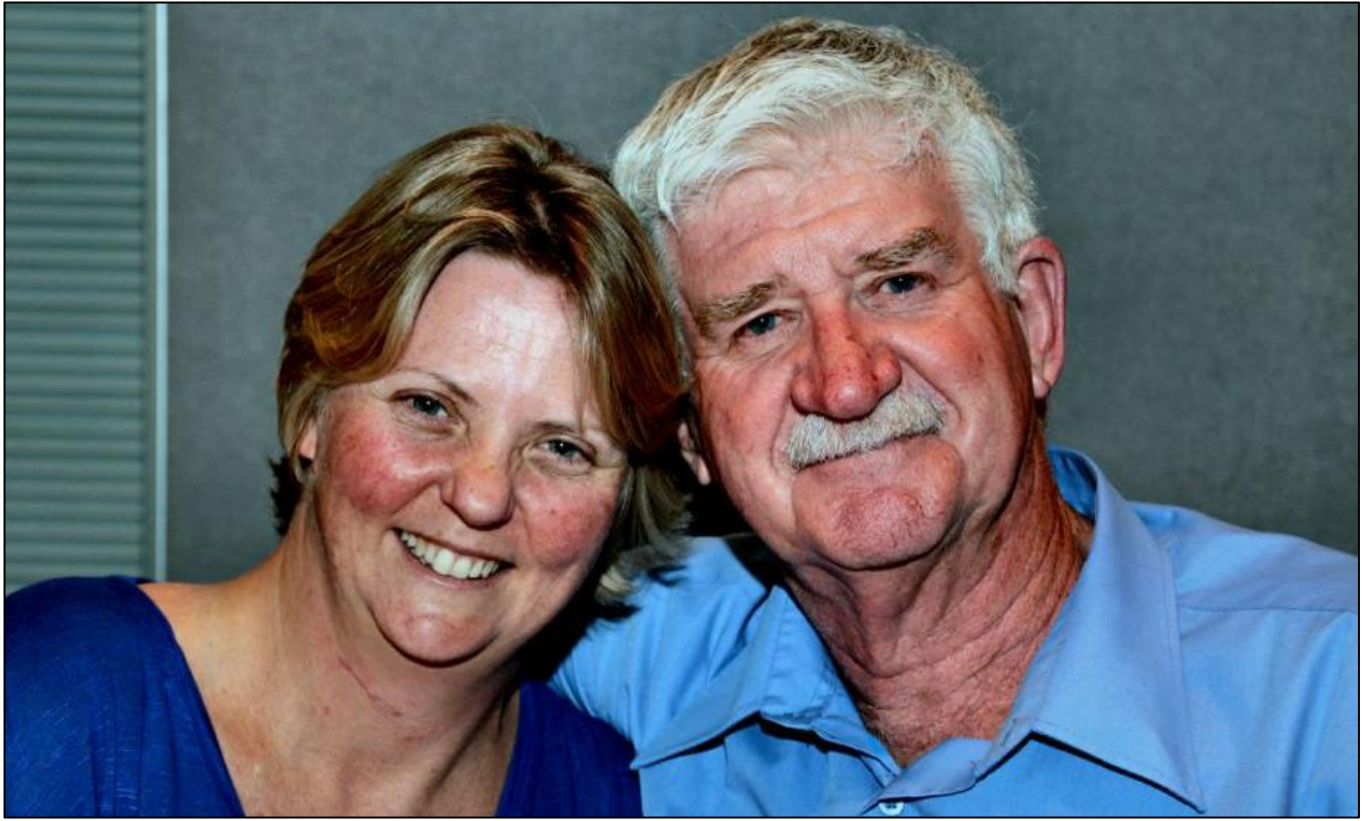
Geoff Rich, Jan "Ding" Staal, Alison Rose.



Gladys and Brian Dyer.

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Janelle Eynaud and Trev Benneworth.



Ali Rose, Gersha Staal.

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Jock Young, Kevin Johnson.



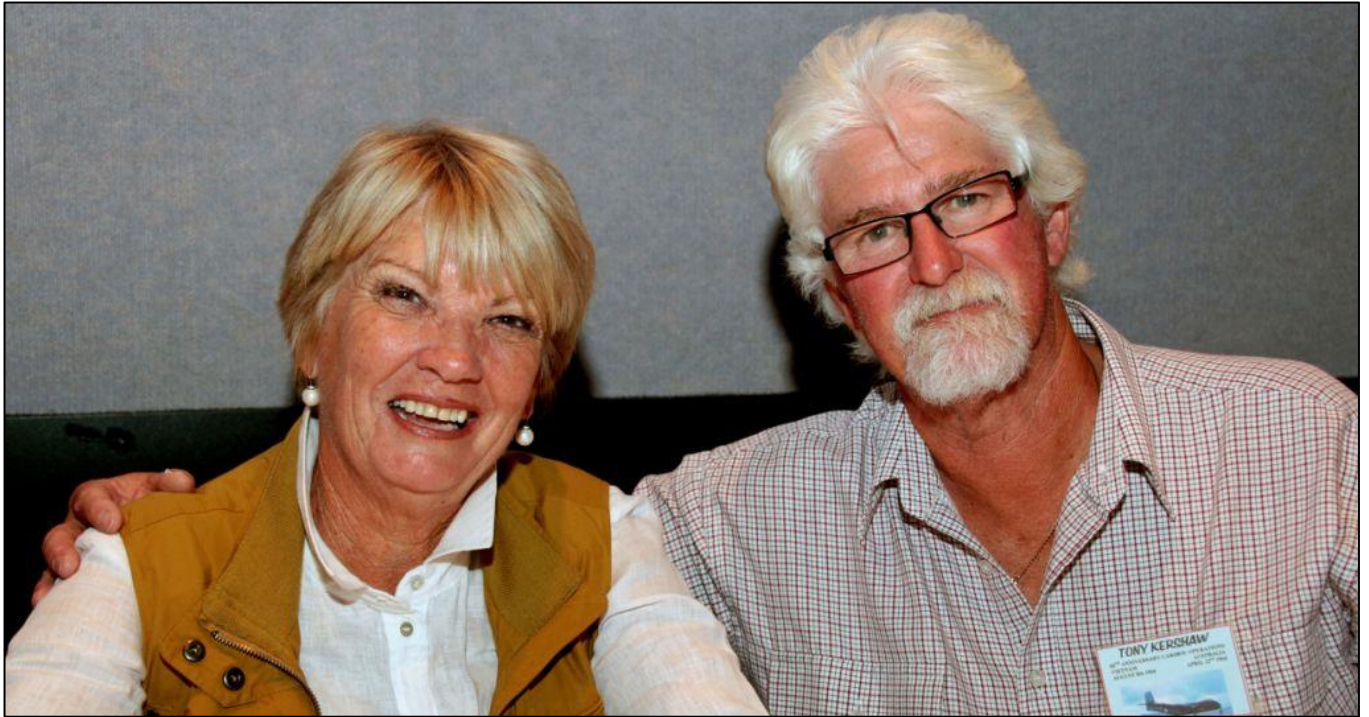
John "Sambo" Sambrooks.



John Webster.

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Kathy and John Kershaw.



Keirman French, Ted Crawley.

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Kim and Wally Little.



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At the meet and greet, on the Friday.....



Keirman French, Kathy Kershaw.



Lyn Payne, Sandi Downes.
The two girls were on WRAAF Rookies [Course 130](#).

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Alex Kelly, Sandi Zimmer.



Mike Lewino, Judy Lewino, Sue Lovett.

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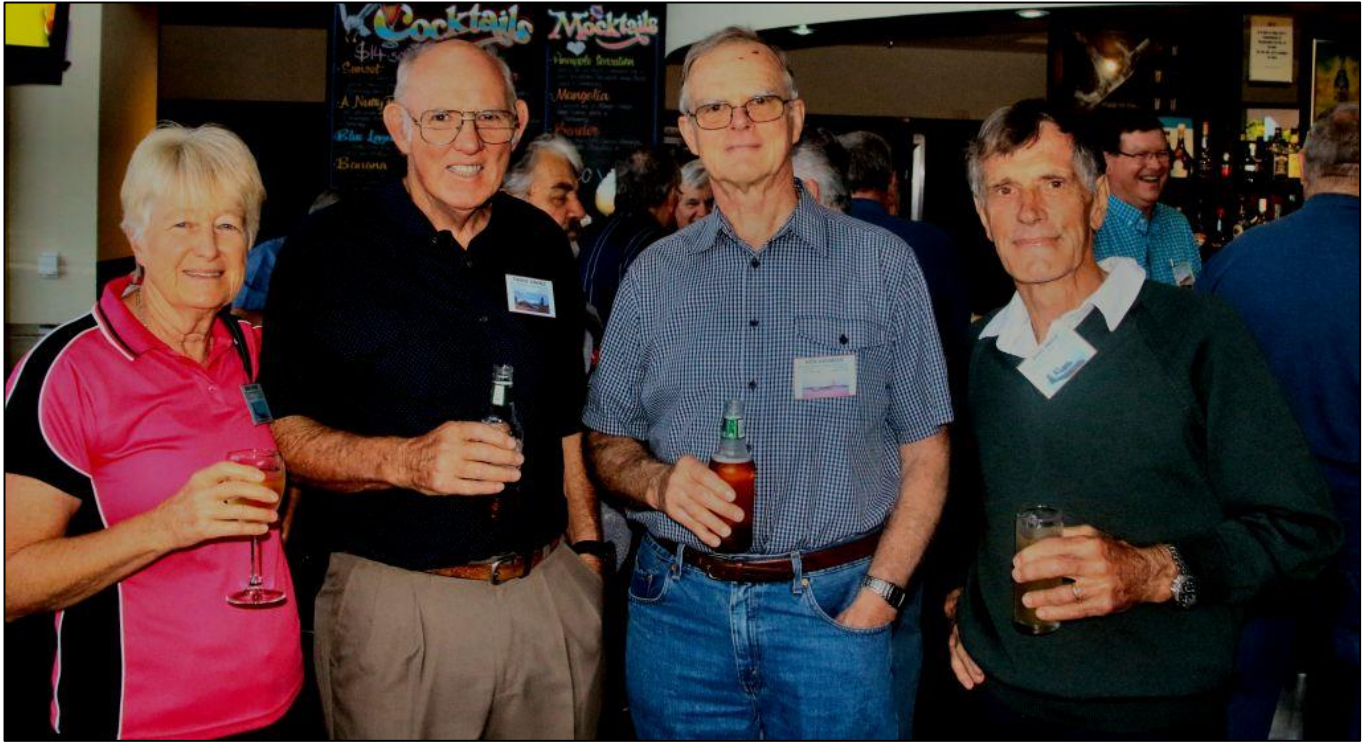
Richard and Helen Forward.



Robin Pedrina, Jeff Pedrina, May Winkel.

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Sandie Downes, Charlie Downes, Ric Richards, Doug Angus.



Sandra and Geoff Hall.

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Sue Lovett, John Lindner, Janice Jordan, Don Jordan.



Suzanne and Dick McGoogan.

The Doctor gave a man six months to live.
The man couldn't pay his bill, so the doctor gave him another six months.

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Ted and Mary Maxwell.



Ted McEvoy, Peter Gustafson.

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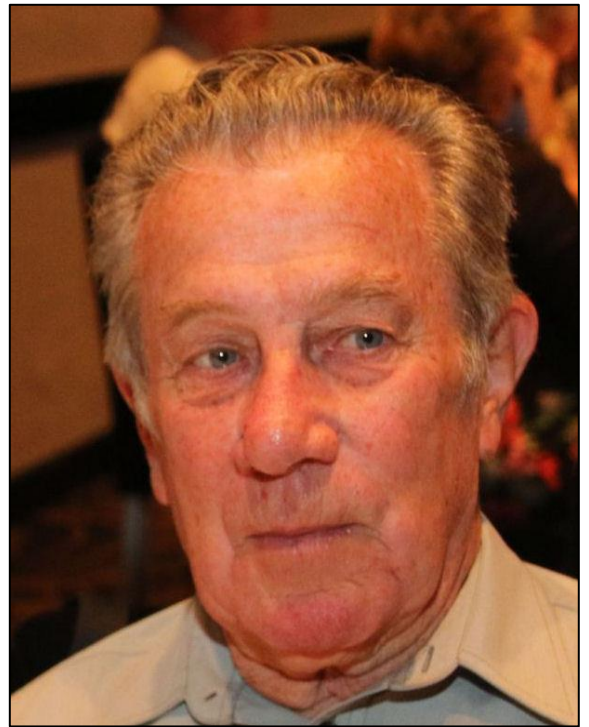
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Terry "Bunny" Collier, Wng Cdr Michael Burgess-Orton, Hugh McCormick.



Terry Manning



Trev "Scruffy" Hill

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Alex Kelly, Trev Benneworth, Sandi Zimmer.
I just love this job, you get to travel a lot and meet heaps of pretty girls.
Sorry, no vacancies!



Margaret Trim, Lorraine Collier, Helen McCormick.

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The table layout.

The panorama below was taken towards the middle of the night, before the band started playing our music and a lot of people got stuck into the dancing.



On the Saturday morning, Ron Glew and Del Hueke briefed the troops on the current Advocacy, Entitlements and Support that is available from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Del then explained the options and protocols that should be followed when considering an enduring Guardianship with Advanced Health Care.

Then it was David Bedingfield's turn to update the troops on the latest Retirement Village legislation, options and protocols. You can see more on this in our [Health and Welfare pages](#).

About 2.00pm on Saturday, the troops from 35 Sqn at Richmond arrived in their hired Herc which they had borrowed from 37 Sqn (marvellous what you can still get for a 6 pack). Stew had told everyone that he'd heard the Herc was going to execute a low level barrel roll followed by a touch and go on the sand so everyone hit the beach with their instamatics in anticipation.

But alas, ATC at Coffs had other ideas and kept the big bird seawards of the coast. The display was watered down to 2 straight and level fly pasts, one of which was very wild with the back door open. Now if Coffs was still an AFIZ as it was in the 70's.....



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After the fly past, the troops retired to the bar and the beach was once again left to the sea-gulls.



Did you hear about the bum who walked up to a Jewish mother on the street and said, "Lady I haven't eaten in three days." "Force yourself," she replied.

Then after all the excitement on the beach, (an A model would have done a proper job), the afternoon was free with those of the faith offered a few rounds of golf while the sensible ones sat with mates and reminisced or took to the room for a nana nap.

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At 6.30pm the flag was run up and everyone assembled in the gigantic foyer for some freebies, the Resort provided nibbles and drinks which were gratefully appreciated by all.



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Rob and Joshua Meyer.

Back in the “good old days” Rob was a clock winder on the Caribous and did a tour of Vietnam with 35 Sqn (June 1969 to March 1970). On discharge he stayed in the electronics game and had a successful career with Comalco at Bell Bay in Tassie. His son, Josh, joined the RAAF in Jun 2003 and after Rookies went off to Wagga to do an Avionics Course – no doubt following a recommendation from his dad.

In Jan 2004, with that certificate tucked under his belt he was posted to Richmond, once again following dad’s footsteps who no doubt told him where the Fitz and Richmond RSL are situated. Josh, however, went to 36Sqn, not 38 like his dad, and worked on the C-130H’s. In 2007 he followed 36 Sqn to Amberley which by then had the C-17’s and he stayed there until 2012. In 2012, he thought if you want to get around a bit, aircrew is the way to go, so he applied for and was accepted on a Loadmaster’s course, this time with 37 Sqn on the C-130J. That course took a year from Jan – Dec 2012, after which he stayed with 37 Sqn until June 2014. In June he was posted to 35 Sqn and is now waiting for the nod to pack his bags and head to Arlington in the US for the C-27 Loady’s course. He thinks this will happen early next year.

Some highlights of his career so far include:

2007-2012 - OP SLIPPER Middle East Area of Operations, UAE

- Numerous short deployments as ground crew, (Avionics).

2011 – OP PAKISTAN ASSIST.

- Diego Garcia, Air bridge staging ground crew, (Avionics).

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2012 – OP RESOLUTE.

- Port Moresby and Manus Island. (Loadmaster).

Jan 2013 – Search and Rescue Mission, Southern Ocean.

- Airdropped survival equipment to French sailor Alain Delorde (Loadmaster).

Jun 2013 – Sep 2013 – OP SLIPPER, MEAO, UAE and Afghanistan.

- Flying operations in and around Afghanistan, (Loadmaster).



Nov 2013 – OP PHILIPPINES ASSIST

- Humanitarian missions to various devastated areas affected by Hurricane Hayan, (Loadmaster).

Then it was into the Resort's Ballroom once again, this time for the formal dinner. MC for the evening was Gp Capt "Ding" Staal who firstly paid tribute to all our departed mates then thanked one and all for making the effort and coming to the event.

Ding then passed the baton to Air Cdre Warren "Macca" McDonald. "Macca" assumed command of the RAAF's Air Lift Group (now called the Air Mobility Group) on the 6th December 2013 when the previous chief, Air Cdre Gary Martin, headed off to Washington.

Prior to this position, Macca (below) served as the Director General Capability Planning in Air Force Headquarters in Canberra. Air Mobility Group operates six aircraft types from three separate RAAF Bases and from Fairbairn in Canberra.



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It was formed in February 1987 and is responsible for providing the ADF 's combat air mobility capability, which comprises the following roles:

air logistics support
airborne operations
special operations
VIP transport

air-to-air refuelling
search and survivor assistance
aeromedical evacuation
training

It has its HQ at Richmond and controls the following aircraft:

- KC-30A tanker aircraft with 33Sqn and C-17A transport aircraft with 36Sqn, both at Amberley.
- Boeing 737 Business Jet and Bombardier Challenger 604 aircraft with 34Sqn at Fairbairn.
- C-130J aircraft with 37Sqn and 285Sqn (training) and the soon to get C-27J aircraft with 35Sqn at Richmond, and,
- Beech 350 with 38Sqn at Townsville.

'Macca' outlined the important role the big slow old birds of the RAAF play in the defence of Australia and told us all how great the old Caribou had been, which of course was exactly what we wanted to hear. Click [HERE](#) to read the latest Air Mobility newsletter.

Des Lovett was then handed the baton and called all the serving 35Sqn and 38Sqn people onto the stage to be introduced to the masses.



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Unfortunately we didn't get all the names but we can ID a few, on the microphone is Des Lovett, the civvy intruder is Ken Howard, then WgCdr Brad Clark, CO 35 Sqn and WgCdr Michael Burgess-Orton, CO 38 Sqn.

Ding Staal resumed command of the stage and with Ken Howard called a surprised Stew Bonett to the front, where on behalf of all present, he was presented with a plaque as a well overdue token of our appreciation for the work he and Valia had undertaken over the years in organising these events.



Ken Howard, Stew Bonett, Ding Staal.

Then with the formalities out of the way, it was time to crack open the wine and enjoy the sumptuous dinner which was served on platters placed on each table. The meal included:

- Roast pork with apple sauce and crackling
- Roasted mustard crusted sirloin of beef
- Chicken cordon bleu.

With

- Roasted potatoes, caramelized onions, condiments and Diane sauce.
- A bowl of steamed seasonal vegetables
- A bowl of crisp garden salad.

This was followed by:

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- Pavlova with Chantilly cream and fruit
- Assorted cheese cakes
- Seasonal fresh fruit platters

And if you couldn't find something nice to eat amongst that lot you weren't trying.

Enjoying the evening were:



Mary and Ted Maxwell.



Ross Wilcox, Pete Dagleish.

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Sandra and Bill DeBoer.



Sandy and Gordon Nicholls.

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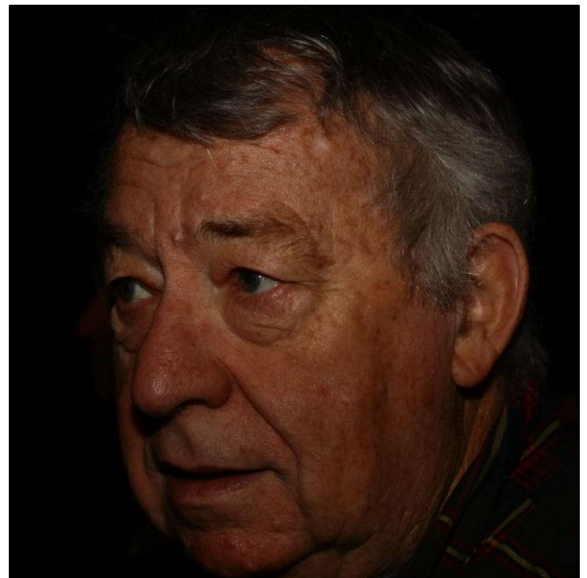
Alex Kelly



Helen McCormick



Ken White



Ted McEvoy

Stew then informed everyone that Ted McEvoy had volunteered to take part in the Scootarbor Challenge which is being organised by Jake Jacobsen, an ex-Caribou pilot. Participants will ride 50cc motor scooters across the Nullarbor from Pt Augusta to Perth and on the way raise funds for Beyond Blue.

It was decided to hold a raffle and donate all the funds to Ted to pass onto Jake to pass onto Beyond Blue. John "Sambo" Sambrooks, the Secretary of the RTFV/35Sqn association immediately tossed in, on behalf of the Association, a dozen (in some cases priceless) prizes to be won by participants. Prizes included 1 bottle of RTFV/35Sqn port (1st prize), 3 RAAF Vietnam Veteran caps (2nd to 4th prize), and 8 white A4 envelopes containing, among other things, a CD of a Caribou in flight and two pics of Caribous. Wonderful prizes indeed.



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The generosity of people at the function was extraordinary, in a very short time all raffle books had been sold and \$975 was raised for the Charity. Then one white Knight gave Ted a donation of \$25 which brought the total funds raised on the night to an even \$1,000. A huge thank you to everyone!!!

The funds were handed over to Jake on Friday the 15 August.



Sheena Millar, Ellen Sharpe – with the Association's mascot.

History, is indeed, little more than the register of the crimes, follies and misfortunes of mankind.

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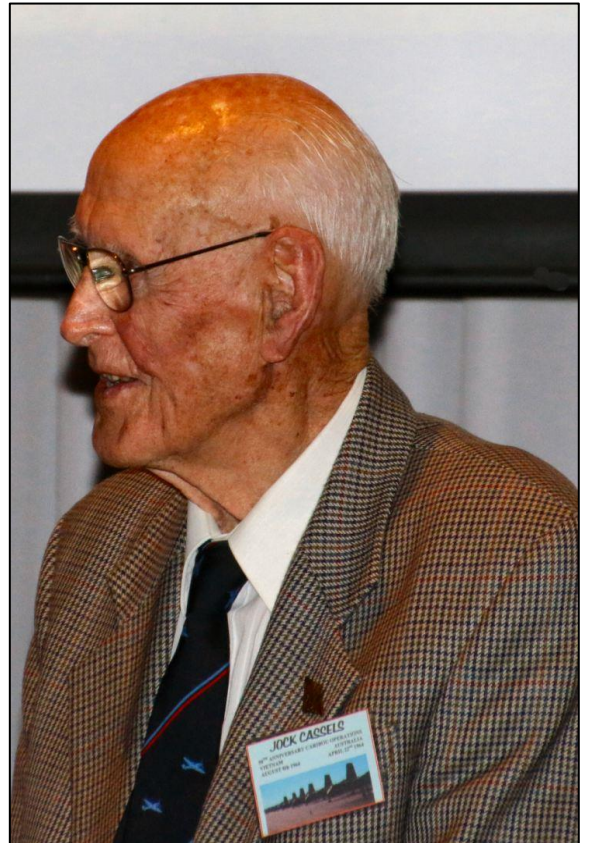
No show without punch??



John "Sambo" Sambrooks, Trev Benneworth.



Kathy Kershaw



Jock Cassels

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Jock is one of the well-loved patriarchs of the RAAF Caribou fraternity. He was born in Scotland back in August 1923 and when WW2 broke out in 1939 he couldn't wait to turn 18 so he could join the RAF and "get amongst it". He joined in September 1941 and was taught to fly the Spitfire and on the 30th May, 1944, while over enemy territory he zigged when he should have zagged and was shot out of the air. Although his spit was a write off, he wasn't but unfortunately he was captured and help prisoner for 11 months until the Russians came along in April 1945 and set him free.

He returned to flying with the RAF after peace broke out and spent some time as a flying instructor and then with Coastal Command flying the Sunderland.

In 1966 he was sick of England's rotten weather so he joined the RAAF and came to Australia along with other such notables as Tommy Thompson, Marty Newman and Maurice Wells.

He joined 38 Sqn at Richmond, converted to the Caribou then was posted to 35 Sqn in Vietnam from October 1968 to August 1969 where he earned an MID. Eventually he was given a desk to fly and in 1979, at age 56 he took a discharge and left the RAAF.

He's a lovely bloke with a lot of the rascal in him – we would love to get him a quiet corner for a few hours so we could bring you some of his adventures. We reckon it would be exciting reading.



Josh Meyer and Dan Amiet.
Dan is an [Aircraft Technician](#) with 35 Sqn.

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Some of the tables:



There are two theories on how to argue with a woman. Neither works.

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Then, unfortunately, Sunday morning came around far too quickly, as it does, and it was time to pack the gear and head for breakfast for the last time, say your farewells and promise to be there for the next one.



Joy and Rocky Rockliff with John Webster.

Rocky, another Patriarch of the Caribou fraternity, was born in Midland Junction, a suburb of Perth in WA in October 1922. He joined the RAAF in 1942, during WW2, and in 1946, after the end of the war was discharged. He rejoined again in 1949, as a sumpie, and rose to the rank of Flight Sergeant and in 1961 applied for and was commissioned. In April 1965, as a Flight Lieutenant, he was posted to Vung Tau as the Engineering Officer with RTFV after which, in December 1965, he was posted back to Australia as the Engo with 38 Sqn at Richmond.

In 1968 he was promoted to Squadron Leader and posted to Wagga where he stayed until 1971. As a going away present, the Wagga troops carted a Meteor onto the parade ground for his inspection early one morning.

After Wagga, he was posted to [482 Squadron](#) at Amberley and reached the rank of Wing Commander before taking a discharge on the 4th July 1977.

He and wife Joy now live on the north coast of NSW. We've arranged to meet up with Rocky in the near future and get his story which we'll bring to you in Vol 48.

Reality, is the leading cause of stress among those in touch with it."

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At the final breakfast.



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After which it was time load the car, pass on our thanks to Stew and Valia for the opportunity of getting together again and head for home with some wonderful memories.

If the rich could hire other people to die for them,
the poor could make a wonderful living.