

## IN MEMORANDUM

Geoff Cash advises that SQNLDR **Gregory Cashmere** (aka “Crash”) died peacefully at home on the morning of the 26<sup>th</sup> November, 2010. His one wish, other than to be cured, was to be at home when the time came. Thankfully he arrived home with apparently the comment of " Home sweet home". At least that one wish was granted.

The Air Force News, in 2002, reported that Squadron Leader Greg Cashmere (on the left in the photo) and Wing Commander Terry Morgan were reappointed to the Air Force in 2002, after years away from the Services. They are pictured here with the RAAF’s Beech Super King Air at East Sale.



SQNLDR Cashmere had taken a 15-year break from the Air Force to fly for the Royal Flying Doctor Service. WGCNDR Morgan, meantime, a former Lieutenant Commander in the Navy, had returned to the RAAF after a five-year hiatus.

Greg will be sorely missed.

Ted Washbrook got in touch, he says “Sorry, I had forgotten to mention that, sadly another groundy went to the great transmitting station in the sky, **Joe “Graham” Mercer** passed away in either September or October. He got out of the RAAF when it was insisted that he go to Radschool from Darwin which he did, then snubbed his nose and went back to Darwin as a civvy. He was diagnosed with a brain tumour and died about one year after, a real gentleman who was not averse to a cold beer on a hot day. He and his wife Paula moved south to Toowoomba some years ago.

Maree Fitzgerald advises that **John Leonard Brereton** passed away on the 6th July, 2007. John was on 9RMT. John was buried at the Macquarie Park Cemetery and Crematorium, North Ryde, Sydney.

Vince Stanton advises that we have lost yet another member. **Alan (Manger) Richards** passed away on or about 5<sup>th</sup> December 2010, in Newcastle NSW, following an extended battle with cancer, at only 60 years of age. He leaves behind his lovely wife Cheryl. The funeral was held at Beresfield Memorial Park on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> Dec.

‘Manger’ was a long standing member of 3 CRU Williamtown, he joined in 1967 and after surviving 26 Appy, retired after 22 years then worked for the Air Force Reserve then DOD.

We will miss him greatly.

Rod McKinnon told us of the sad passing of one of the RAAF's legends, **WOD Bill "Dexter" Dutton** on the 2 January, 2011. As Rod says, "Anyone who went through Wagga in the sixties would remember Dexter, he was the bloke who struck fear in us all, but was fair when handing out punishment. I have fond memories of him tearing the Canberra guard gate apart when arriving there for a parade – *'Hells flippin bells laddie don't stand there like a startled prawn'*."



I'm sure there are enough stories about the man (pictured at right at his 94<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2010) that would fill this magazine".

Terry 'Mad-dog' Malligan probably sums Dexter up best, he says, "To me, this bloke was a definite legend and I never even met the bloke, there were just so many stories about him that you felt you knew him intimately. He was known throughout the RAAF worldwide. I would love to be remembered so fondly when my time comes."

Steve Hartigan advises that former RAAF Sir box-packer and member of the Williamtown "rat-pack" **Don "Butch" Foley**, passed away on Wednesday, 12 January 2011 at the Harbourside Haven Retirement/Nursing Village, Shoal Bay (Port Stephens NSW). He was 80 years old. His funeral was held on Tuesday, 18 January, 2011 at the Salamander Uniting Church and a wake to celebrate his life was held afterwards at the Nelson Bay Golf Club.

Dan O'Brien advises the sad news of the death of **Geoff Craig** who was on 29 Appy MT at Wagga and who graduated in October 1976. He was electrocuted at his farm at Miriam Vale QLD. Geoff was the WOFF Apprentice of his intake, one of only two MT Appys, along with Henry Higgins, to achieve that and I believe the recipient of the Governor General's Medal for the intake. He was apparently charging the battery of the ride on mower and didn't notice the 240V lead laying on the hot exhaust. It had melted the insulation and shorted to the mower frame, so when he went to disconnect and touched the mower, he was zapped. A sad way to go for a guy who was a brilliant technician and well liked by all who knew him.

John Nordheim gave a brief summary of Geoff's relatively short, yet incredibly influential 9 year Air Force career, he said: "Our loss is most certainly a gain for our maker and creator above, who obviously needed a provider of reef fish and crabs. Geoff impressed so many with his skills but led even more astray with his wicked sense of humour, though he always maintained the ability to fix anything that needed repair.

"If it was broken – Craigy could fix it".

A123828 **Geoffrey Douglas Craig** (known as Craigy to half of Australia's population) joined the Air Force as a 16 year old on the 7<sup>th</sup> January 1975 as one of approximately 150 engineering apprentices. Geoff chose to be a Motor Transport Fitter, similar to his father Alex and brother Bruce before him. This next part of his life was predominately a 2 year theory phase of a 5 year apprenticeship at the RAAF School of Technical Training at Wagga, a bitterly cold place in winter for a Queenslander. During this initial 2 years at Wagga he was, no doubt, a menace to most of his instructors, as he had far more knowledge than a student should possess. His outstanding marks, trade and people skills led to him being promoted to Warrant Officer Apprentice; an esteemed position. Only one apprentice each year is chosen. This resulted in Craigy proudly leading his 150 colleagues on for their graduation parade when their 2 years at Wagga was completed.

About the same time, further recognition came when he was awarded the Governor General's Medal of Excellence, by the man himself, "Sir John Kerr". In over 40 years this award has only been won twice by Motor Transport Fitters; Geoff and his great mate and mentor Brian Higgins being the two recipients. For the next few years the Air Force had the skills of 3 Craigy lads, all following in the footsteps of their father, Alex. Geoff joined brothers Bruce and Ian serving this great country.

*Geoff at right, with one that did not get away.*



During his Air Force career 'Craigy' served Laverton, Butterworth, Pearce, Richmond and Amberley. The CO's at these bases no doubt breathed a sigh of relief when hurricane Craigy was posted to his next location.

Craigy could never be described as a quiet achiever, though an achiever he most certainly was.

His trade skills and "can do" attitude led to him being one of the youngest motor transport fitters chosen for overseas service. He was in the Sinai, Egypt from September 1982 to March 83.

Sadly for the Air Force, in Jan 84 he gave up his service career to be closer to family in his beloved QLD. I had the pleasure of working with Craigy for 2 years in Malaysia during 1979 and 1980. He made our work environment a "ton of fun", yet we achieved so much. I was supposed to be his boss, but somehow he always seemed to be the one in charge. From there, our great friendship was formed.

Craigy not only made a swag of friends at work, many of his vast circle of friends came from his afterhours activities. Most notably water sports, he was an outstanding water skier, social of course – not that interested in competition skiing, though I do recall his story of 13 barefoot whips on the river, out the front of the Tumble Gum Pub, in Northern NSW. When asked why

he did so many whip turns he replied, didn't you see those pretty girls on the pub veranda? Competition was obviously on his mind that day.

His ability to ski on almost anything that floated is legendary. The day he pulled a burning 4 by 2 fence post from the campfire and skied off up the river on it is another that comes to mind. It's probably a good thing the fun police with their breathaliser were not around.

In conclusion, though few of us can tell a story like Craigy could, I'm sure many of his treasured friends have other yarns to tell involving "Craigy". Click [HERE](#) to see a YouTube presentation of him.

You may be "Gorn" mate, but you'll never be forgotten. "

Harvie Ritchie advises: "It is with sadness that I am informing you of the death of **Dave "Crazy Horse" Hitchins**. Dave passed away peacefully, at home, relaxing in his favourite chair, doing a crossword, on Tuesday, 18th Jan, 2011. Dave was 88. His funeral was held on Thursday, 27th Jan, at Beresford, (near Newcastle, NSW) with an RAAF Padre from Williamstown officiating at the service. Afterwards a "wake" to celebrate his life was held at the Karuah RSL, near Williamstown.



People who worked on or flew the old A model Herc have lots of good memories of the time spent at 36 Squadron with Dave guiding the ship.

*Right, Karl Reichardt from 37 Squadron and retired former 36 Squadron Commanding Officer, Wing Commander David 'Crazy Horse' Hitchins cut the cake at the Hercules 50th Anniversary 'Hangar Bash' at RAAF Base Richmond. 6 November, 2008.*

Col Giles says "**Dave Hitchens** was CO Base Squadron at Amberley when I was in 3AD in 1970. I was given the secondary duty, as one was, of OIC Hobby Shop with a SGT assistant. (I think I may have taken over from Floyd.) I never quite got to the hobby shop and just left it to the SGT. One day, I am called to Dave's office and reply in the affirmative when he asks whether I am the OIC of the Shop. He said that he would like to look at it so I said that I would go and get the keys, his reply was "no worries, I have them here. Let's get in the car and go and have a look at the place." Out we go, get in the car and he drives onto the road and says "which way?" I indicate to go left as I realise that I don't know exactly where the hobby shop is - and he knows that I don't know. He lets me make a fool of myself for a few more seconds then pulls up in front of it. "Let's go in", says he. There is a sign beside the hobby shop door saying "NO MOTOR VEHICLE REPAIRS TO BE DONE IN THE HOBBY SHOP". In we go and there on the first bench is a partially stripped car engine, dirty and greasy components everywhere and pools of oil on the floor.





Needless to say, he set me up good and proper that day”.

Harry Gifford wishes to pass on the following sad news concerning **Greville “Monty” Montgomery**. He says: “Monty lived alone and as I didn’t receive the usual Christmas card in December from him, I checked and found his telephone was disconnected.and I then telephoned his local golf club and the lass in the office informed me of his passing.and He apparently took ill while dining there one November evening, so was transported to hospital, where he died a couple of days later.and His heart gave out I guess”.and

Unfortunately, no further details are at hand.

Steve Hartigan advises the passing of **Mike Crimston** on the 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2011 at the Wesley Hospital in Auchenflower (Brisbane). He fought a remarkable battle for 15 years and passed on peacefully in the arms of his wife Marie, who supported him so magnificently for all of those years. Mike was surrounded by family and his close friends JJ and Graeme, he was 63. Mike was a well-known and well liked equipo and a lot will recall his 36 Sqn days in the early 1970s and would appreciate knowing of his passing. His funeral was held at the All Saints Catholic Church, 4 Fahey's Rd. Albany Creek QLD on Friday 28JAN11. A wake was be held at Kedron Wavell Services Club, Chermside.

John Kettle advises us that **Sqn Ldr Christopher John Sugden “Suggie”** passed away at Nambucca Heads (NSW) in 2009. Suggie was the CO of RAAF Transport Flight Vietnam (which later became 35 Sqn) from July 1964 to April 1965.



Steve Hartigan advises that Sqn Ldr (Ret'd) Kay Ellis passed away on the 5th January, 2011. Kay, who lost her husband FLTLT Tim Ellis in October 1991 in the Boeing 707 crash, was diagnosed in 2007 with inflammatory breast cancer which has a poor prognosis. She considered herself fortunate that her treatment options gave her another three years - these she regarded as a bonus. She recently became unwell and was hospitalised in early December. She was diagnosed with end stage kidney failure caused by secondary breast cancer in her bone marrow. She accepted this and was relieved that it would probably not be too drawn out. She was discharged for Christmas and spent the last week at her sister's home being nursed by a few good friends and relations. Some of her friends were able to spend a brief time with her in those final few weeks. Unfortunately she weakened rapidly and was not able to see a large number of others who she had hoped to see. She died on Wednesday 5th January, 2011, a week before her 57th birthday.



She is being honoured in several ways. At her request, she had a private cremation service for family only. Unfortunately the catastrophic floods in Brisbane necessitated its postponement. It

was finally held on Thursday 20 Jan. Her death notice appeared on Friday 14th January in the Courier Mail.

Kay also wished for all her friends to gather at Woorim, Bribie Island in board shorts and thongs to scatter her ashes out to sea together with frangipani from her garden, and to conjure up their happiest memory of her. This was done on Saturday 5th February, followed by the obligatory BBQ.

The Air Force will also be holding a Memorial Service for Kay at Amberley on Wed 9th March. The CDF and CAF will be speaking. Anyone who wishes to attend can email Patricia Mcdonell at [patricia.mcdonell@defence.gov.au](mailto:patricia.mcdonell@defence.gov.au).

Frank Pederick advises that **Vivian Hague Norrish** is no longer with us. He died in a hospice in Canberra on Sunday 16 Jan 11. Viv joined the service in Feb 1948 on No 1 Radio Apprentice's Course at Frognall. He graduated on No 2 course in June 1951 at Air and Ground Radio School, Ballarat. After 18 months as an WMM(A), then RadTech(Air) he joined No 1 Fellowship Diploma Course, again at Frognall. He graduated and was commissioned in Dec 1954. Frank doesn't know all of Viv's postings but they included: Woomera, 3TelU and Borneo during Confrontation. His sharp analytical mind was sought for the RAAF's first interface with computer technology in Canberra. He was attracted to this work and although he left the RAAF for family reasons he remained in government service in the computer field.

Viv had a long battle with diabetes and eventually no longer responded to dialysis.

Kevin Knowles advises that "**Jim**" (**Alfred Walter James**) **Rogers** (Warrant/Officer. Sig) who was with Base Support Flight, Vietnam, from November 1966 to November 1967, passed away peacefully after a long illness on the 8th November in Wantirna Victoria, he was 84 years old...."Jim" was buried in the Springvale (Vic.) cemetery after a private funeral. Audrey, Jim's wife, herself suffered a mild stroke last August, but fortunately has only left her with a slight weakness down her right side.

Neil Hunter advises the passing of **David (Dave) Mangan** (4TYTC 65/66) - David was involved in a road accident some time ago and never really recovered, passing away quietly in November 2010.

Robin Hayes got in touch, he says, Hi, Just been reading some back issues and saw a photo from in [issue 25](#). One of the guys in the photo was **Ian Tyrer** who died of cancer in 2003. Ian a larger than life RadtechA with 76 Sqn, pulled the pin shortly after that photo was taken. Just recently while trip to Albany while passing through Mt Barker I stopped off to visit the Galafrey vineyard he established with his wife Lynda. He was one of the pioneers of



wine making in the Great Southern District and now his wines are considered amongst the best in WA. The name Galafrey was stolen from the Dr Who series on TV and now the wine has become the official drink for the series. If any of Ian's old friends, and there were many, are passing through I would recommend a stopover and visit with Lynda and his daughter Kim and sample some truly awesome wines.

The website for the winery is <http://galafreywines.com.au>