

# News and Reunions!



## Appy Reunion.

On Saturday 29 January, about 80 ex-Brats got together at the Werribee RSL for their annual get together. This event is held every year around the Australia Day weekend, and as one of the organisers, Phil “Dick” Tracy, who is the Secretary of the Melbourne Ex-Apprentice Committee said, it just keeps on getting bigger and better.



Don Ripper, Laurie Lindsay, Gordon Charlton.

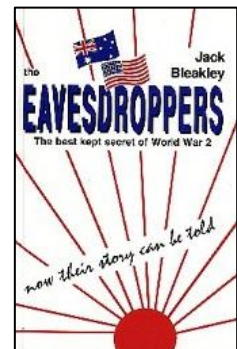
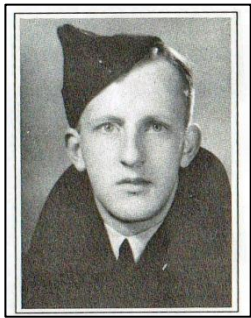
The reunion was started some years ago as an annual get together for the Wagga Brats, but was shortly “amended” to include the Queer Trade blokes from Laverton, who, as Laurie Lindsay insists, brought a bit of couth and culture to the event.

Dick Tracey said after the event that it was a magnificent success and the attendance numbers were definitely the best so far. He said they were already planning next year's event.

An Air Force Flight Sergeant and a Wing Commander were sitting in the barber-shop. They had just had a trim and a shave when the barbers reached for some after-shave lotion to slap on their faces. The Wingco shouted, "Hey, don't put that stuff on me! My wife will think I've been in a whorehouse! The FltSgt turned to his barber and said, "Go ahead and put it on, my wife doesn't know what the inside of a whorehouse smells like."

## The Eavesdropper.

A wonderful book was written by Jack Bleakley back in 1995. It tells the story of Australian men and women, wireless interceptors, whose skill in intercepting coded Japanese transmissions in WWII provided MacArthur's intelligence organisation with vital information about enemy operations in the South West Pacific Area. Jack was a member of one of those Wireless Units during WWII.



The RAAF's [No. 1 Wireless Unit](#) is featured in this book.

Their secret operations were located in a number of houses in French and Sycamore Streets in the suburb of Pimlico in Townsville, before moving to a new location at Stuart in a fortified concrete bunker disguised as an old farm house. It's a very good read and you can read a précis on the book [HERE](#).

Jack was born and educated in Melbourne and he joined the RAAF in 1942. He served with No 1 Wireless Unit in Townsville and later in Port Moresby (1943), Nadzab (1944) and Biak (1944). He was then posted to No 5 Wireless Unit in the Philippines in 1945.

After the war, he resumed a career in Banking, rising to senior management level before he retired in 1982.

If you want a copy of the book, it is hard to get but you can buy one from [HERE](#).

**Graham Brinsden** is organising a reunion for Course 67 that went through Radschool from April 1973 to September 1974. He says the reunion is a preliminary get together to plan something bigger at a later date. All class mates and partners of Course 67 are welcome to a BBQ at Graham's house in Melbourne at midday on Saturday 26th February, 2011. It will be a "bring your own drinks" barby, all meat and salads are provided.

If you can make it, please email Graham [HERE](#), include your phone number and he will get in touch and give you the address. Graham apologises for the late notice, if you can't make it, but would be interested in a reunion, get in touch anyway.

## 2 Squadron Association.

There have been a number of books written about 2 Squadron from its inception back in 1916, its WW II exploits, the involvement in the Malaysia Emergency in the 1950s and 60s, Vietnam 1967-71 and then as a PR Squadron until 1982 when the Canberra was withdrawn from service. Some books have provided a history over the entire period, others have been time specific. All have provided valuable history.

Ken Marks, (right) has put together, into a 470 page book, the memories of 17 people who served with 2 Squadron in Phan Rang from 1967 to 1971. Their remembrances of significant events are in chronological order along with nearly 200 photographs and illustrations. Each section contains annexes that include members who served during that year, bombing tables, aircrew sorties flown and more. The final Annexes contain Primary Source resources for academics and students alike. Anyone who served in the squadron, or indeed their relatives and friends, would find this an exclusive insight into their "Personal" war.



This book is very much time specific and deals only with 2 Squadron's involvement at Phan Rang airbase in South Vietnam from April 1967 to the beginning of June 1971 when the squadron was withdrawn and returned to RAAF Base Amberley in Australia.

It is a lasting legacy and tribute to each and every one who served with the Squadron in Vietnam that they created a unit of excellence that drew high praise and accolades from the USAF and South Vietnamese with the Squadron being awarded the USAF Outstanding Unit Citation and the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry.

Contributors include:

John Downing - *Commanding Officer and Pilot (Oct 1970 – Mar 1971)*

Bill Wheeler - *Padre and CA Off*

Bob Bruce - *Navigator*

Wally Walters - *Pilot*

Nev Duus - *Navigator*

John Miller - *Navigator*

Kevin Hurman - *WOD*

Graham Giffin - *Motor Transport Fitter*

Dan Kinsella - *General carpenter*

Peter Finn - *Journalist*

Garry Cooper *Pilot - Australian FAC*

Howard Maniloff - *Journalist*

Stuart Ritchie - *Radio Technician (air)*



Ian Schafferius - *Instrument Fitter*  
Ken Marks - *Radio Technician (air)*  
Fred Neville - *Armament Fitter*  
John Bird - *Safety Equipment Worker*  
Lynton Clarke - *Telecommunications Operator*  
Peter Maher - *Radio Technician (air)*  
John Sainsbury - *General Hand*  
William Peterson - *US Forces*  
Jan Marks - *Wife of Vietnam Veteran Ken, and*  
Dr Andrew Marks - *Son of Vietnam Veteran Ken*

(I see there's nothing there from one Alfred William - tb).

If you would like to order a copy, click [HERE](#) for order details. All profits from the sale of the book will be shared equally between the Blue Mountains Division of Legacy and the Blue Mountains Vietnam Veterans and Associated Forces.

"Well," snarled the tough old WOD to the LAC who was about to take his discharge, "I suppose after you get discharged, you'll just be waiting for me to die so you can come and pee on my grave." "Not me, Sir!" the airman replied. "Once I get out of the RAAF, I'm never going to stand in line again!"

## 34 Squadron.

Formed as a transport squadron in February 1942, No 34 Squadron, although equipped with inferior aircraft, such as Dragons, Ansons and Tiger Moths, operated from remote Northern Territory airfields until its disbandment in December 1942. It was then reformed in South Australia in January 1943 and equipped with DC3's which allowed the squadron to carry out general freight and troop carrying operations throughout Australia and into much of South East Asia. At the end of the war, 34 Sqn evacuated Australian POWs from Singapore and commenced courier flights to Japan in support of the Allied occupation of that country. In February 1946, No 34 Squadron returned to Australia, disbanding at Richmond four months later.



2 years later, it was reformed again (in March 1948), this time its task was principally in support of the various activities undertaken at the Woomera rocket range in South Australia and in July 1959 it was decided to give it another task, this time of providing VIP transport for Australia's leading citizens and visiting dignitaries, a job it has held to this day as it continues to provide a high standard of special transport for the Australian government.



Since 1959, it has operated a range of different aircraft, including Vickers Viscounts, Convair Metropolitans, BAC 111, HS748, Mystere Falcon 20 and Falcon 900.

Equipped now with the modern Boeing BBJ and Challenger CL 604 aircraft, the Sqn has attained an outstanding record for safety and efficiency.

Ken Stone is planning to hold a reunion to mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Squadron's formation, which will be held at Parliament House in Canberra and all past members of 34 Sqn are invited to advise their interest in holding such an event.



If you would be interested in attending, (this is not a commitment, but is required to gauge interest only) please let Ken know your intentions by emailing him [HERE](#) or you can call him on 02 6255 9732.

## **Ballarat Reunion.**

**Philip Marsh** would like to remind all that went through Radschool Ballarat that the proposed reunion is for this year, 2011, not last year as mentioned in previous emails – so you haven't missed it after all. It will be held over the period 23-27 March. "If you are planning to be alive in 2011, and are interested in a FINAL reunion, please let us know so we can get an idea of how many are interested. By doing so you are NOT committing yourself to attending. We know from last time that disaster can strike at any time. We will canvas activities you may be interested in later. Just getting there may be activity enough.

Please advise changes of email, change of address or passing on of those ex Ballarat members you have been in contact with. 2 years is a long time in network affairs and I had a lot of bouncing emails last time. I haven't contacted any of the snail mail members as yet, so if you know anyone who might be interested please let them know.

If you would like to attend, please drop me an email to [Radschool.reunion@gmail.com](mailto:Radschool.reunion@gmail.com) and let me know, or you can call me on 0416 099 464".

Further details [HERE](#).

## **9 Sqn.**



Steve Hartigan would like to inform everyone that 9 Sqn is currently planning a welcome back celebration for A2-771, along with an Association get together, to be held in the first week of November 2011 at the RAAF Base Amberley. Discussions are currently being held with the hope of being able to organise a dinning in night in one of the hangers of the Aviation Heritage Centre. Further details of the event and meet and greet places and times will be announced once the planning takes a more specific shape. Accommodation availability details and costs will also be announced when planning has progressed. We are expecting that the restoration of A2-771 to 1971 configuration including a gunship fit-out will be complete and provide the complete backdrop to the weekend's festivities.

We ask that you keep the first week of November 2011 free and hope that you will be able to join us at RAAF Amberley.

## **32 RMC Proposed Reunion.**

3 July this year will mark 50 years since arriving at Radschool, RAAF Laverton, for the blokes on 32 Radio Mechanics Course which was the 1st RMC to start at Laverton.

Bevin Ford is trying to organise a reunion. If you were on 32 RMC and would be interested, please contact Bevan via email [HERE](#).

**The Djinnang Association** is holding its annual get together on the 28<sup>th</sup> May, commencing at 1400, once again at the Queensland Public Service Club. The club was high and dry during the recent flood and is looking forward to welcoming Djinnang members again. As Ernie Gimm says, "After a year of bushfires, floods and cyclones we could all do with a little respite and what better way than to visit Brisbane and reflect with old friends at our annual re-union." If you are able to attend, please email your intentions to Kerry Harington [HERE](#).



Names would be appreciated for catering purposes.