

# Your say!



## George Hatchman

George got in touch to tell us he'll be away for a while as he's off to the ex WW2 RAAF 3CR 'Kowguran' underground munitions bunkers which are at a place called Miles – about 4½ hours drive west of Brisbane. A friend of his, David Hinds, purchased this disposal facility some years ago, renamed it Possum Park and converted the bunkers into 'motel' units. Quite unique. He has also bought a Vickers Viscount aircraft (from Toowoomba) and located it on the property and it will be refurbished to a 'motel' unit to give the place a bit of RAAF ambience (it will be done up in 34SQN colours).



During the war, this depot held up to two and a half thousand tons of high explosive bombs and ammunition, all hidden in twenty well protected underground bunkers. Those bomb bunkers have been developed into truly unique motel style units and the troop trains that brought 'the boys' and the bombs to 'Kowguran' have been re-fitted as modern self-contained motel style units.

George suggests we should put together a 'group' and spend a few days there – we'll work on that.

We spoke with David and he says there is a lot to do and see out there such as the [Miles Historical Village](#) and [Dogwood Crossing Centre](#).

Costs per night at Possum Park are:

Fully self-contained Cabins	\$90
Powered Van sites	\$25

If you would be interested in joining a group to spend two nights out there some time in the future (we suggest driving your own car) please let us know. You can use the Contact Us link which you'll find [HERE](#)

In the meantime, we'll go out and check it out and report in the next issue.

**Alan Young** wrote, he says: I am looking for any information on the RAAF School of Radio Band. I have a picture of the band (undated)- possibly around 1959 on its first birthday which states that the Bandmaster was F/O A H Morrison. Andrew Morrison is my father-in-law and I am doing research on the family, any information you can supply, or if you can direct me to where I can obtain information on the band would be appreciated.



The band of the RAAF School of Radio yesterday celebrated the first anniversary of its formation.

Formed by the present Commanding Officer, Wing Commander W. T. Taylor, the band, under his encouragement, has grown to a strength of 23 members.

Bandmaster is Flying Officer A. H. Morrison.

Commended by the citizens of Ballarat on its past appearances on various civic occasions, the band will next be heard in public when it heads a march of 100 ATC Cadets through the city on May 22.

● The men photographed yesterday with Wing Commander Taylor, are:

Front row: Sgt. J. Humphreys, A/C J. G. Quinlan, LAC D. M. McComish, LAC A. G. Cocks, Wing Commander Taylor, F/O Morrison, W/O F. J. Richardson, W/O H. B. Harrison, Cpl. R. S. Milligan and Cpl. H. B. Tickner.

Back row: LAC A. Keegan, Pt. Sgt. V. H. Ohem, A/C W. R. Beville, Cpl. E. M. Palmer,

App. B. R. Livingston, Cpl. M. A. Sermen, Cpl. R. C. Billibrand, Cpl. J. N. Clifton, Cpl. G. E. Carter, LAC P. J. Tomlin and LAC B. S. Smooker.

I have attached 2 newspaper articles re the RAAF School of Radio Band, (one above, the other [HERE](#)) and the 2nd, undated one is the one that specifically refers to my father-in-law F/O A H Morrison as Bandmaster. If anyone can help with information on the band from around 1959 it would help me immensely.

If you can help, let us know and we'll pass it on.



Alan was at Edinburgh in 1978/79 posted to 11 Sqn. He says “Not a lot of people know where the name Edinburgh came from. Edinburgh was named in 1954 and was originally to have an aboriginal name which I cannot remember, but for argument let us call it ‘RAAF Base XXXX’. As the date for the official unveiling approached, someone in the know pointed out that XXXX actually meant ‘Swamp’. “Goodness - We can’t have RAAF Base Swamp . What else can we call it?”

Someone suggested that as the Duke was to open it, why not call it RAAF Base Edinburgh?” A new plaque was hastily arranged and the ceremony apparently went off without a hitch.

And what happened to the original plaque? Alan says that when he left Edinburgh, it adorned the wall in the flight-suit bar just off the main bar in the Officers Mess.

It was appropriately referred to as..... “The Swamp Bar”.

Two mysterious people live in my house – Somebody and Nobody.  
Somebody did it and Nobody knows who.

### **Darwin.**

Chrissy Hart was at Darwin in the early 1990's and asks: Does anyone remember the incident during one of the International exercises (I'm thinking K92) where a RAAFie pulled the emergency canopy lever on the tarmac near TAAMS? I was on ambulance duty that day and was called to collect said RAAFie to take him back to the BMF for drug testing. According to Crackers (who saw the whole thing), the USAF pilot had just taxied his jet to a halt and the RAAFie asked if he could drop the cockpit ladder down. By accidental miscommunication he pulled the yellow and black striped handle instead.



Apparently there was an almighty crack that was heard all over the Base as the canopy shot up a good few hundred meters into the air. Heard also there were some senior ranking officers nearby who sprinted for their lives as said canopy began making a rapid descent. Rumour was the USAF had to fly in a specialist maintenance crew and replacement canopy from Guam, costing a few tens of thousands of dollars. Also heard the poor RAAFie was posted down south not long after!



But there's another story which says, The aircraft was a Northrop Grumman EA-6B Prowler and this story says it was the other way around, the pilot asked the RAAFie to do the ladder honours for him as he got back early from a sortie and there were no USMC groundies on the job. Drug testing was not prevalent in the early 90s so perhaps that didn't happen either but it is believed that the SP's did an alcohol breath and blood test.

If anyone knows the truth, we'd love to hear from him/her.

"Dick" Tracey sent us an interesting story written by a Major Geoff Jones (Australian Army) who joined the Army in 1964 as a 17-year-old. He was trained as a Medical Assistant and two years later, aged barely 19, he was company medic of C Company 6 RAR in the Vietnam War.

You can read it [HERE](#).



### **Ballarat**

We heard from Laurie Edward – he says: Hullo. I am (ex LAC) Laurie Edward. I have recently very happily had my name added to the membership listing here. Does this site include 'items' from the A & G R S, Ballarat, '50's .era? I was on No. 7 Radar Mech (Air.) course circa 1953 (and later 'Radio Conversion' course) and am trying to contact any 'remaining' course mates. They formed a Guard of Honour' at my Melbourne wedding then. I have a pic of that and a few of the Ballarat course times.

Am I out of place here?

Thank you, and also for this great site.

Regards.

Laurie.

*Laurie, you're not out of place mate, we're glad to have you and if you've got any pics from your time at Ballarat we'd love to see them – tb.*

I'm super lazy today!!  
Which is like normal lazy, but  
I'm also wearing a cape...