



## Commemoration for Bomber Command.

RAAF Amberley, 02 June 2019



On Sunday, the 2<sup>nd</sup> June, hundreds of people gathered at the Amberley RAAF Base to commemorate the service and sacrifice of the air and ground crews who served with pride and distinction in Bomber Command in the UK during World War Two, 1939 – 1945.



During the war, approximately 10,000 RAAF personnel served with Bomber Command and of those, 4,089 were killed or died later from injuries.

During that horrible conflict, Bomber Command flew a total of 364,514 operational sorties and lost 8,325 aircraft. From a total of 125,000 aircrew, 57,205 were killed, 8,403 were wounded and 9,838 became prisoners of war. Horrendous figures.

Bomber command comprised 126 squadrons, of which 32 were non-British units, 15 Canadian, 8 RAAF, 4 Polish, 2 French, 2 New Zealand and 1 Czechoslovakian. It flew Blenheims, Hampdens, Wellingtons, Whitneys, Manchesters, Stirlings, Halifaxes, Lancasters and Mosquito aircraft and most crews were aged between 19 and 25.

The Commemoration was attended by several WW2 Squadron Associations, such as



**The RAAF Beaufort Squadrons.**



**RAAF Lancaster Squadrons and the Pathfinder Force.**





## 462 and 466 Halifax Squadrons.



The Commemorative Ceremony was held in the Memorial Garden, on the Base, where the old Canberra A84-201 stands pride of place. As has been the case for many years, SqnLdr Paul Lineham (Ret'd) was the MC for the day and as usual, did a wonderful job.

A very good crowd of people attended the ceremony, among them were serving people as well as people from various ex-Service organisations and it was wonderful to see quite a number of senior high school students amongst the crowd. Apart from the Memorial in Canberra, Amberley is the only place in Australia that commemorates the sacrifice provided by all those wonderful people all that time ago, and long may it be so.



The whole event was extremely well organised, entry to the base was quick and trouble free, there were numerous RAAF personnel "volunteers" on hand to direct traffic and to answer any questions anyone might have, bottled water was in abundance, everyone received a small professionally done program of events, chairs and linked together marquees were provided for



people to sit out of the (early) sun, though at the end of the ceremony at about midday, it clouded up and old Huey sent it down scattering everyone far and wide.

At about 11.00 am, MC Paul Lineham introduced himself, welcomed everyone, then called for the mounting of the Catafalque Party which was comprised of Air Force Cadets from 208Sqn.



The Qld Governor, His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC, arrived in his shiny blue Rolls and was welcomed by Paul Lineham.



Music was provided by the RAAF Amberley Brass Band.



The Amberley Brass is a modern brass band, based in Ipswich and affiliated with the Queensland Band Association. They are based at the RAAF Base and are a mix of serving volunteer Air Force members, defence contractors, retired Air Force, Army and Navy personnel, spouses and dependents of serving members as well as civilian members from the local community.

They provide high quality music for Service, Civic and Community events and are currently looking to expand and seeking expressions of interest from intermediate to advanced standard brass players. They do not march or participate in competitions but aim for an enjoyable and satisfying musical experience for players and audience.

Should you want the band for your function or promotion, the easiest and most convenient way to engage them is to download the 'Engagement Request' form ([HERE](#)) which you can fill it out on line then email it to [band@amberleybrass.com](mailto:band@amberleybrass.com). You can also phone them on 0424162418.

**Words of wisdom:**

Do not walk behind me for I may not lead. Do not walk ahead of me for I many not follow.  
Do not walk beside me either – just nick off and leave me alone.

The Blackstone-Ipswich Cambrian Choir were on hand to lead everyone in the Anthem, the Air Force Hymn and National Anthem. The Choir was founded back in 1886 with the express purpose



of competing in what was to become the Queensland Eisteddfod. It is now reputed to be Queensland's longest continuously performing community choir.





GpCapt Ross Magno, from Combat Support Group, performed the official welcome.



after which WgCdr Jason Gamlin the Executive Office for 82 Wing, performed the Commemorative Address.





Chaplain Alan Williams, a Uniting Church Chaplain from Williamtown, led the assembly in prayer.



Michael Bryce AM AE, addressing the gathering. Michael is an Australian architect and graphic and industrial designer, who, while at University, joined the Air Force Reserve as a member of





the Queensland University Squadron. He later joined No. 23 (City of Brisbane) Squadron. While with the RAAF Reserve he was appointed as honorary Aide-de-Camp to the Governor of Queensland. He is the patron of the Air Force Association in Queensland and was a trustee of the Queensland Art Gallery and a member of the boards of the Queensland Symphony Orchestra and Queensland Orchestra. He served as a ministerial adviser on the Child Accident Prevention Foundation and as the founding president of Melanoma Patients Australia.

Some people at the ceremony were:



*AVM Julie Hammer, AVM Dave Dunlop, WgCdr Gordon French, Peter Rackley, Michael Bryce AM AE, Ted Vowels OAM, AE, AVM Peter Growther.*

AVM Dave Dunlop graduated from [No 20 Academy Course](#) in 1970 after which he joined [No 79 Pilots Course](#). On graduation, he was posted to Williamstown for Mirage conversion. This was followed by a posting to Butterworth and on return to Australia in 1975, he converted onto the F-111 at RAAF Amberley where he stayed until 2002. In 1976, while at Amberley, he was selected for pilot exchange with the US Air Force, flying F-111s at Mountain Home AFB which is in the middle of nowhere in the desert of southern Idaho. Over the 27 years of flying the 'Pig', he was involved in the various upgrades to the aircraft and its support systems and was also the Program Manager to acquire additional aircraft – the F-111G project. He was also fortunate to command at the Squadron, Wing and Group levels.

Like most people who stay in the RAAF for a 'career', he had a number of ground jobs usually following the associated training. After a course at the Royal Military College of Science, Shrivenham (the British Army's university) he did a stint back in Canberra as an analyst in the



Defence Science and Technology Organisation. Of course, there were the compulsory 'staff' jobs which flowed from doing staff college, in his case the French Staff College at the Ecole Militaire and what would a career be without a few years in the training world? He had two very enjoyable tours at the Joint Services Staff College both as an instructor and as the Director of Studies. He thinks perhaps his most challenging staff position was in the area responsible for developing the future aviation and space capabilities for Defence.

In 2002, he transferred to the RAAF Active Reserve and worked part time until finally retiring in 2014. He and wife Julie have retired to Caloundra on the Sunshine Coast where he fills in his time with the local branch of the Air Crew Association, the Queensland Air Museum and the Air Force Cadets Alumni.



*John "Sambo" Sambrooks, Wal Bellamy, Ray Murrell –representing the Kedron Wavell RSL Sub-Branch.*

**Right,** John Sambrooks, Will Pembroke (Padua College), Maggie-May Hornigold (Wavell State High).





**Scripture Readings.**



*WgCdr Lindsay Bennett (Ret'd) the State President of the Australian Flying Corps and RAAFA read the First Reading.*



*A very confident Zalia Cuthbert, a student from the Ipswich Girls' Grammar School, read the second Scripture and did a wonderful job. Our country is in good hands.*



## Reflections.



*Former Royal New Zealand Air Force Lancaster pilot, Ken Walker, recounts his wartime experiences.*

Ken joined the RNZAF when he was 18 years old. He was born in 1924 which makes him 95 years old today and for a person of his age, he had an amazing memory and spoke for some time without referring to any notes. He described his tough childhood, having little clothing to cope with the harsh Dunedin winters and losing his father when he was just 11 "as a direct result of the Depression". He recalled with emotion his older brother waiting four years to marry in order to let him (Ken) finish his secondary education.

But the family couldn't afford university and Ken started a career in bookkeeping in 1941, joining the Air Training Corp, before enlisting in the air force at 18. As a Lancaster pilot in Bomber Command, operating out of Spilsby in northern England, he and his crew survived 30 operations over Germany, primarily at night. They were hit at least once, returning to England on just three engines and Ken's voice broke as he recalled seeing his best mate Buzz's plane blown up before his eyes and other "friends going down in flames".

It was in the Panama Canal, while on board a ship bound for Wellington to join the Pacific war effort that Ken learnt of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki which ended the war.

The darkest hours come just before the dawn.  
So, if you're going to steal your neighbour's milk and newspaper, that's the best time to do it.



*Ken Walker.*

**Wreath Laying.**

Paul Lineham then asked those that wished, to lay a wreath at the Memorial Wall.



*John Griffiths, representing the Logan City branch of the RAAFA.*



*John Griffiths*



*Leanne Cameron, the Deputy Commissioner, DVA, Tony Ferris, State President of the RSL in Qld.*



*John Sambrooks, on behalf of RTFV-35 Sqn.*



*Will Pembroke and Maggie-May Hornigold, representing the Kedron Wavell RSL Sub-Branch.*



*Womens Auxiliary Air Force, Section Officer, Paulina Nielsen, on behalf of the Path Finder Force Association. Paulina was assisted by FSgt Susan Mallet and Chris Nielsen.*



*During the Wreath Laying ceremonies, Piper Rod Jamieson, from the Amberley Pipes and Drums, provided the accompanying lament.*





After the wreath laying ceremony, the Assembly commenced two minutes silence in memory of those fallen.



*FILt Steve Finch, OAM, played the Last Post and the Rouse.*

The National Anthem was then sung, the Catafalque Party was dismantled, after which everyone was invited to the Officers' Mess for refreshments.



*At the Mess.*



*WngCdr John Griffiths, AVM Julie Hammer.*

Julie joined the RAAF in 1977 as an Education Officer, serving in the engineer cadet squadron at Frognall after which she was moved over to Laverton to instruct at the School of Radio.

In 1981, the RAAF's Engineer Branch was opened to women and she transferred to the Electronics Category and was posted to 3AD at Amberley. From 3AD, she was posted to



Headquarters Support Command and in June 1985 she was promoted to Squadron Leader as head of the Aircraft Equipment Engineering Division (AEENG3) at SupCom Vic Barracks, Melbourne.

She then spent 16 months studying at No. 5 Advanced Systems Engineering Course at RAF Cranwell and became a liaison officer in the Directorate of Scientific and Technical Intelligence at the Ministry of Defence in London. After the completion of her Master of Science thesis in Aerosystems Engineering in 1987, she became a technical intelligence analyst with the Joint Intelligence Organisation in Canberra. This was followed by work on the P-3 Orion ESM Project, first as project engineer and then, following promotion to Wing Commander, as project manager.

In 1992, she assumed command of the Electronic Warfare Squadron at Edinburgh, becoming the first woman to command an operational unit of the RAAF for which she was awarded the Conspicuous Service Cross in the Australia Day list in 1997. She was also the recipient of the 1996 Association of Old Crows (Australian Chapter) Award for Distinguished Service to Electronic Warfare.



Returning to Canberra in 1996, she took the role of Project Director of Joint Project 2030, the Australian Defence Force's Joint Command Support Environment, in the Command and Support Systems Branch of the Defence Acquisition Organisation. She completed a Graduate Diploma in Strategic Studies at the Joint Services Staff College and became the first woman in the RAAF to become a member of the General List when she was promoted to group captain in 1996. She was seconded for four months to serve on the Science and Technology Team of the Defence Efficiency Review.

During 1999, she was the lone Australian student at the Royal College of Defence Studies, completing a 12-month course in strategic and international studies. Returning to Australia in December 1999, she was promoted to Air Commodore, becoming the first woman to achieve that rank and the first to be promoted to one-star rank in the ADF. When she was subsequently promoted to air vice marshal in 2003, she became the first woman to attain two-star rank in the ADF.

She assumed duties as Director General Information Services, responsible for the operations and support of Defence's fixed communications networks and computer systems throughout Australia. In December 2001, she became the first woman Commandant of the Australian Defence Force Academy. That year she was awarded the Sir Charles Kingsford Smith Memorial Medal by the Royal Aeronautical Society to recognise her contribution to Australian aerospace, and she delivered the Kingsford Smith Memorial Lecture.

She was appointed by the Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Status of Women to be one of Australia's Honouring Women Ambassadors in 2002. She became the University of Queensland's 12th Alumnus of the Year in 2003, and a Member of the Order of Australia in 2004.

Retiring from the RAAF in 2005, Julie became the National Vice President of Engineers Australia, and its president in 2008. In 2008 she was elected as a Fellow of the Australian Academy of



Technological Sciences and Engineering,[10] and was appointed an Honorary Fellow of Engineers Australia in 2011.

She has been married to fellow RAAF officer, Air Vice Marshal David Dunlop, since September 2000.

I believe in climate change! In December it was hot, now it's cold. Voila.



*Students from various High Schools, looking after the old blokes from Kedron Wavell RSL Sub-Branch.*

They won't be hungry after that lot!!

FSgt Susan Mallett, who usually looks after events such as this, had the day off and was able to enjoy the day and mix and meet with everyone.





People enjoying the hospitality of the Offices Mess.

Don't aspire to become irreplaceable. If you can't be replaced, you can't be promoted.



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