



South Australian Division

President's Report to SA Division Council 15th of June 2020.

Meetings and Functions. Since the last meeting of Council most meetings have been face to face, but a few were facilitated by electronic means. VHAC at TPG 18th of May; AFA Board meeting and National AGM by videoconference 20th ; Bomber Command 30th, (after rehearsal 22nd); RGH naming committee JLC 27th; Mitcham Committee (Zoom) 29th; ABC interview by telephone with Peter Goers and Bill Denny 1st of June; AF 2021 Committee teleconference postponed from 3rd to 17th; visit, on the 10th, to Robert Bungey's headstone, with Bill Denny, Richard and Alison, at St Jude's Brighton, on the 77th anniversary of his death; Virtual War Memorial meeting with Greg Weller, Steve Larkins et al 11th; Mitcham AGM, Zoom/gathering hybrid 12th.

VHAC met for the first time since February at the TPG RSL memorial meeting room after our last Council meeting. The most important agenda item was a Ministerial request to consider naming either the proposed Repat Wellbeing Centre and/or buildings, wards etc. I joined a sub-committee that subsequently met at the JLC on the 27th. Many names had been suggested, contemporary or historical veterans with or without relevance to SA or the Repat. A few battle names/sites also were offered. Subsequently VHAC members were asked to report on a document from the Minister's Health Performance Council that related to Mental Health, but with no data on veterans, by June the 19th!

The AFA National AGM was a disappointment as vacancies were announced without a satisfactory means of nominating candidates to fill those positions. Richard Kelloway's resignation leaves a big hole. Retired Wing Commander, former Nursing Officer and wounded veteran, Sharon Bown was elected as Vice President. She had given an Anzac Day address in Canberra and is from the ACT, which may be an asset. At **the Board meeting**: WOFF-AF Fiona Grasby agreed to join the JBSG, whose members would be invited to join Board meetings; discussion continued on eg a NT Division, AF 2021 preparations; Greg Weller's contribution to JBSG was acknowledged; the unsatisfactory position with respect to firefighters' compensation claims was reiterated; sharing "Wings", and closer ties, with Air Force were discussed; and in relation to the Productivity Commission report, not as yet acted upon, concerns were aired about the possibility of DVA Advocacy, concerns that I do not share.

AF2021 preparations in SA are under way. Committee members in the large group of interested parties are keen; local events in Moonta, Mallala etc. are



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being actively pursued. A closer and important link with the VWM seems probable not just for AF 2021, but for the future. Greg Weller will report on our meeting with Steve on the 11th and on continuing AF 2021 progress.

A small gathering Commemorated **Bomber Command** at the Air Force Memorial Plaques on Saturday the 30th of May. We were limited to ten. Wreaths were laid by the Governor, SADFO Air Commodore Rogers CSC CSM, The Hon Terry Stephens MLC, Senator Andrew McLachlan CSC, Hon Tony Piccolo MLC, representing the Premier, Federal Government, and State Opposition Leader, Cheryl Cates, RSL President and myself. Chaplain Thoday led us, SQN LDR Pirlo CSC, EXO 462 SQN recited Brodie's poignant "Airman's Prayer", WOFF Brown looked after the flag, photographs and sound system. Greg Weller, who had orchestrated it all so well, was a shadow in the wings. A chance onlooker happened to be the son of a WW2 decorated aircrew member of 460 SQN.

The Mitcham AGM on the 12th is expected to return me to the Presidency, Jeff Mustard VP, Kevin Gogler Secretary, Don Hawking Treasurer and Don Roach Membership Officer. Members have received reports by email, where possible, have been invited to join by Zoom, or to fill places, up to 20, at the club rooms. All vacant committee positions will be filled.

Awards. I shall call our executive together to consider Division and National RAAFA awards in a week or two. By then, I would hope that branches will have sought nominations for recognition. Mitcham has done so.

Constitution. The working group has received helpful input from the Council as a result of last month's meeting, but it has not prepared a final "draft". Since that meeting Arthur Jeeves has written and suggested that the group should delete reference to an auditor in the constitution. This is the third time that he has made this suggestion, not because he would wish to forgo the process of auditing the Division's annual financial report, but for the admirable reason that he wishes to reduce Division expenses. I and others hope that expenses might be reduced by means other than deleting reference to a proper audit, a service that we wish, and intend, to have performed. It should be noted that this question is relevant not just to Division, but also to Mitcham branch and perhaps to others. The contentions about this matter are not straightforward. I have attempted to explain how I see this problem in a separate report. It will



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depend upon the extent to which we rely on a document sent to us by Arthur, and its assessment by the ACNC.

Robert Black. President SA Division 10th of June 2020.