



South Australian Division

President's Report to Council 19th of October 2020

Meetings and Functions. 23rd funeral for Alwyn Tilley; 24th visit to RAAF Edinburgh with NZ centenarian; 28th funeral for Rena Pascoe; 29th AFA Board vidcon re Foundation; 30th telecon with Greg Weller and Bronwyn Jolly, GH, re Governor and AF 2021; 2nd of October spurious email to Councillors etc. from "Michele Howard" concerning an alleged AGM at Salisbury on the 24th; 5th of October JBSG vidcon; 8th meeting with Dean Nelson and Greg re Cathedral service; Shadow Minister 1300; Repat naming committee 1130; 10th Korea and SEA veterans; funeral streaming of Charlie Miller; lunch with Shadow Minister Boyer; 13th joint vidcon AFA Board and JBSG; 14th conference re constitution with Carl Schiller, Jim Campbell and Kevin Gogler; 15th meeting with Greg Weller and RAAF Veteran John Downing.

Three funerals of members have been conducted; each was restricted with respect to numbers permitted but each was important in recognising significant WW2 service. Alwyn Tilley, of Mitcham, was a lively character whose RAAF service in Northern Australia, bombing up aircraft etc. preceded multiple careers and a successful punting interest that led to early retirement. Rena was a well-loved Walkerville character with a regular coffee place "consultation" habit, whose enlistment in the WAAAF was at its outset. The RSL sub-branch was her ESO after our WAAF branch ceased. Charlie Miller OAM of Mt Gambier was a local character and Spitfire pilot, stalwart of the RAAFA, RSL and Legacy. His post funeral commemoration was to have been streamed from the Sir Robert Helpmann theatre. They all died in their nineties having led good lives serving their nation and community.

The AFA Board will develop a Foundation so that our association might achieve our objectives, particularly to assist those in need. Raising the necessary capital will be a huge hurdle. NSW has a Foundation that is more concerned with crisis management. Open Arms or RSL Care homes for homeless veterans may do that in SA, and Ward 17 RGH probably dealt with such things in the past. One hopes that it will be supported across the Divisions. The Board has engaged professional help to improve greatly its web site. The use of the NSW MMS database, which we saw demonstrated some months ago, is encouraged with, hopefully, a smaller price tag.

The JBSG had both an independent vidcon and one combined with the Board. It has continued to work on **constitutional alignment** as we have worked in SA on our amendments with the CWG. Chairman Jim Campbell has been informed of our developments by updated reports from Kevin Gogler. He has distributed our amended version to other Divisions as an example to be emulated. At the (four hour!) vidcon many of our paragraphs were amended or substituted by a "JBSG" option. They were not major disagreements. Kevin and I had a further consultation last Wednesday the 14th. We shall look at them today and present them, along with the other amendments, to our AGM.

JBSG Chairman Jim Campbell also called Divisions for a "stocktake and inventory" of each Division's activities. In response I have used the four-pronged set of tasks that we agreed upon last year: **Advocacy, Assistance, Camaraderie and Commemoration**. Although we have stalled in our personal advocacy for VEA pensions or MRCA/DRCA compensation some of us have worked on advocacy to governments or departments through membership of VHAC, DCG or of the "Consortium". The Federal government is yet to respond to recommendations from the Cornall report. We must acknowledge that our capacity to assist



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financially is limited. But we have responded to both a “COVID” delivery project and to a serving member’s family in need. We should also acknowledge that we are assisted immensely by the RAAF in our commemorative activities. And our camaraderie is dependent to a great extent on our ongoing relationship with the CESM. I have reported more fully on our “score card” for 2019/2020 in the Report, to be submitted in a few days, to our AGM.

AF 2021. Greg Weller will report more fully. The first commemorative event will be a NMAF Club Dinner hosted by the Royal Aeronautical Society in December. Numbers will be limited. The Moonta group is going ahead energetically, undaunted yet by the lack of funds for the Sir Richard Williams street sculpture. A commemorative medallion is proposed and a street sign requested. We hope to have up to at least a monthly AF2021 date in next year’s Veterans SA Calendar. When more dates are settled a small brochure has been requested by RSL for distribution to sub-branches.

We had a second meeting to discuss **naming decisions for the Repat** on the 8th. The previous criteria were agreed. Names remain confidential until Minister Wade has reviewed and/or accepted our recommendations.

Shadow Minister Labor MLC Blair Boyer appears to be as attentive and interested in the ESO community as his predecessor Hon Tony Piccolo. He invited several members of the Consortium to lunch on the 12th and agreed to an agenda which is being discussed as we meet. Those agenda items are among questions to be posed at the Premier’s “Town Hall” event at the TPG on the 5th of November at 2.00 pm.

Council changes. I referred last month to the changes to Council membership that will take place after the AGM. I have also recorded my indebtedness to those retiring, Bill Chappell, Arthur Jeeves and John Stapleton. Since then I have been delighted to receive Dave Helman’s nomination for Council as a Vice-President. It will give me great pleasure to welcome back Dave. Regrettably we will have places to fill. But should our Constitutional amendments be passed we can look for suitable candidates at leisure.

I would be pleased if any of this Council would join me at the RSL **Remembrance breakfast** at the Entertainment Centre, Hindmarsh. There are still available seats. Please note that it will be on the 4th of November, not the 11th, as suggested in the September minutes.

Robert Black President RAAFA SA, 19th of October 2020.