



South Australian Division

President's Report for Council, Friday January 21st 2022.

Meetings and Functions. 17th of December Opposition spokesman (Boyer) meeting before Council; 20th funeral for Doug Hoile; 22nd meeting with Greg Weller and Gary Petts re Division newsletter; 23rd meeting with Bill Denny, Ian Smith and Bill Hignett; 4th of January funeral for Jack Thomas, aged 101 ex POW; 5th Funeral Bill Young (Mitcham); 10th Adelaide Airport evening event re Vickers Vimy; 14th meeting of Consortium re Thailand pavers; plaques etc. 15th SAAM History Group; 17th funeral for Angus Schulz.

The regular meeting with **Blair Boyer** was cancelled for Covid-19 related concerns. It would have been under four weeks since the State borders had been flung open. He and his PA had become aware of veteran concerns about the Thailand pavers, the "stolen" Anzac Highway plaques, the NEM award denied SA firefighters, the TPGP Steering Committee etc. The TPG Car parking had not been requisitioned for the Oval Test crowd, but a "Drive-in" cinema occupied it two evenings later.

Funerals. In the intervening month we have farewelled several veterans. Our Association was involved at the funeral for the late Doug Hoile (ex-452 SQN Spitfire pilot) on 20 December at Magill and we had attended Brenz Kriewaldt's at Elizabeth two days before our last Council meeting. Since that date we have farewelled WW2 veteran and Mitcham member Bernard (Bill) Young on the 4th of January. Mitcham Chaplain and former RAAF Police and Chaplain Brenton Daulby OAM conducted services for Doug and Bill. (Bertram) Angus (Harold) Schulz, former State Treasurer of the Association and stalwart of the 24 Squadron Association, died on the 2nd of January. Two other veterans but not association members have also died recently. Ex-POW Jack Thomas aged 101 died on the 12th of December. His funeral at Heysen chapel on the 3rd of January was well attended. He was perhaps the last SA Legatee and the second last former member of the 2/3rd Machine Gun Battalion (CO was AS Blackburn VC). The last, Keith ("Chook") Fowler, also 101 was present, together with many family members of that Battalion. The others recent deaths are: WW2 veterans Fred Sharon ex-RAAF No 1 Airfield Construction SQN, who died on the 30th of December and John Francis (Jack) Marshall DFC, ex- 35 Pathfinder SQN, who died on the 30th of December, and John Ayliffe DFC Leg Hon. (see below). Fred Sharon's funeral was on the 14th of January at Gawler. I had a prior engagement but hope that others might have been able to attend.

Greg Weller has engaged new (Mitcham) member Gary Petts to take over as Editor of our **Division Newsletter**. This is a most pleasing development following Bill Chappell's decision to retire last month. The last editions of "**Plane Connection**" were excellent. Bill's twenty plus years of major involvement with our newsletter (with two previous names) is acknowledged with most sincere gratitude. His service will also be acknowledged in detail in the first edition under "new management". I met Gary with Greg on the 22nd. Many new ideas and a new name have been suggested. Greg will submit the proposals in detail for the Council's consideration. The number of issues per year, its distribution, style and content and relationship to web site and Facebook are all under review. Because of a prior engagement I was unable to join a preliminary MS Teams meeting on Monday the 17th to discuss the website.

The following day I met with Ian Smith and Consortium leaders, Bill Denny and Bill Hignett to discuss several important veteran issues. I met the two Bills (with Keith Fowler and Andrew Thomas) later and have had many interchanges since by email. Apart from discussing Jack Thomas's life and funeral we wished to prepare an agenda for a **Consortium meeting** on the 14th of January. The issues are: denied recognition of SA military volunteers relating to the award of the National Emergency Medal for fighting bushfires; the promise, in writing and verbally, to add Thailand pavers to the Anzac



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Centenary walkway; the lost or stolen Anzac Highway plaques; deceased Veteran children's education services and support; and an update on the Queensland RSL lottery imbroglio. Cheryl Cates has indicated that, in the absence of agreement and with failed mediation, it will go to arbitration between QRSL and RSL Australia.

The Adelaide Airport event for the **Vickers Vimy** on the 10th of January was divided into two groups for Covid reasons. The project of removing the aircraft from its present site to a purpose-built temperature-controlled exhibition venue is huge and costly, but it is funded. It will be a long way from the car park and not accessible from the airport lounge. The story of the Epic Flight will be seen, and plaques describing it will, one hopes, line the path of the Vimy's translocation. Engineers, Architects and Artlab are all part of the team. Unfortunately, it will be June before the opening and October when the public may access the exhibition. I have invited two team members to visit us to see our relevant artefacts and memorabilia.

In the last two weeks we have become aware that the Smith family home "**Aviemore**" at Gilberton, is under threat of demolition (see two articles from the Sunday Mail of the 2nd of January). I have written to the Walkerville Council objecting to any demolition in the "development" proposal by Mr George Vanco, who purchased the property in 2019. Several parties are in disbelief that such a historic and important building could be threatened, nor that it is not already on the Heritage Register. HTSA, Lainie. Helen Stein (North Road cemetery), SAAM and others will have an interest. Perhaps the Adelaide Airport, DEW and the Government should also be concerned about the threat for demolition.

14th. **Consortium meeting**. There was very good attendance and discussion, very little disagreement and mostly favourable outcomes. Journalists may be briefed for publicity over the Premier's apparently broken promise with respect to Thailand pavers: "I'll pay for it; make it happen". Lainie Anderson, Andrew Faulkner and others will be approached. A letter will be sent to the Premier who has suggested that the matter will be discussed at the VAC, which has blocked it on at least three previous occasions. This suggestion, either to change his mind or to refer the matter, once again, to the VAC is considered insulting to the veteran community. Any veteran objections or reasons are not disclosed. Who are they and what is the problem? Conflict of interest may be perceived.

15th. **SAAM History group**. A fascinating presentation was given by David Vincent on the representation on aircraft of the red Kangaroo. The first was in WW1 by Australian Captain Watt, flying for France. Both TAA and Qantas used the logo. Many of the more recognisable images derive from the 1938 Australian penny.

The funeral for **Angus Schulz** was conducted at the Broadview Uniting Church on Monday the 17th of January. Attendance was by invitation only. I recited the Ode before the Last Post. I shall do the same at the funeral of **John Colin Ayliffe DFC** Leg Hon. Ex 455SQN RAAF. It is to be held on Thursday the 20th at the Holy Cross Church, Goodwood. I thank Greg and Kevin Gogler, who researched the veteran's meritorious service and contacted daughter-in-law Teresa Ayliffe.

Desecration of the bronze plaque recognising **Robert Bungey DFC**. On the 3rd of January Nathan Klinge, CEO of the War Veterans Home, Myrtlebank, sent me and other Consortium members an email with two images. One was of the bronze plaque unveiled last June; the other was of an inscribed stone plaque, attached to the pavement in front. It was headed "All service is recognised" and added that war memorials are not for individuals. As a criticism of the Council and of the Bungey story it was most discourteous. Bill Denny was the person to handle the matter. Soon after his email to Mayor Mary Wilson the offending item was removed. Although the perpetrator may have a view



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held by some and even perhaps officially recognised there are multiple named “individual memorials” as precedents: Blackburn House; Jamie Larcombe Centre; Andrew Russell living centres; “Diver” Derrick Bridge; Sir Richard Williams sculpture and, within the Council itself, the Herbert bridge.

DEW correspondence regarding **TPG parking arrangements**. Councillors will have seen correspondence between Secretary Warwick and David Edwards who appears to have replaced Bev Voigt as the Departmental staff member chairing the routine management committee meetings. He has sent proposed parking space diagrams, requesting agreement. This is inappropriate. We must be aware that, though our lease agreement entitles us to have access for parking, there has been no agreement within the committees as to how or where we should park nor how numbers might be regulated. All we have had in the past is a “card”, issued to defined individuals, that can elevate the boom gate, if down.

Robert Black. President, 21st of January 2022.