



## Combat Supporter Autumn 2018

### ***President's Report***

Welcome to the Autumn Edition of the Combat Supporter 2018. Well the year continues to gain momentum since I last penned, or should I say typed my piece for the Combat Supporter.

In February Combat Support Association Sponsored the HQCSG Induction BBQ and provided an Ex Service Organisation Information Presentation on the various support services available to past and present defence members. The presentation was well received, and several attendees thanked Rob Shortridge for the information provided. We are hopeful that the presentation will become part of unit inductions in the future and have provided a copy of the presentation to Combat Support Group.

Other Activities through February included a presentation to the Personnel Capability Officers (ADMINO'S) Forum, co-partnering with Defence Bank in providing free sausage sizzle and a drink to those who attended Defence Community Organisation Welcomes EXPO at Amberley Open Day. Special thanks to Mave for her herculean effort cooking the sausages and to the Defence Bank Staff for appeasing the hungry tummies. Attendance at the Regional Mental Health and Rehabilitation forum and Defence in Business Information Forum rounded out February.

On the 28 February 2018 Combat Support Association signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Alliance of Defence Service Organisations (ADSO) and became a member of the alliance. The MOU, while allowing Combat Support Association to maintain its independence, has agreed to provide resources in direct and indirect support of ADSO as the single ESO voice to Government on contemporary issue affecting the wider veteran community. CSA has already been engaged with providing comment on several issues and association members can expect to be asked to assist from time

to time, dependent on their location or experience. All communication with ADSO will be through the President as the initial Point of Contact.

March activities included the regular monthly engagement with Base personnel, supporting Ipswich RSL Sub Branch in the launch of the Ipswich Young Veteran Chapter, coordinating the post march ANZAC Day function with the 2 SQN Association and the Licensee at Harlequin Jack, and representing the Association at the Air Force Reception brought a close to March.

I conducted an office call on the Queensland Assistant Veteran Minister Jennifer Howard on the 10 Apr 2018 to discuss local veteran issues and provide information to the minister on Combat Support Association.

### ***CSA Improvements Update***

The establishment of a CSA National Coordinator network is progressing slowly, but it is progressing. I will be contacting those members who have indicated an interest in becoming a coordinator over the next couple of months. ABLIT our IT provider have confirmed they are able to provide a virtual meeting option. Further discussions with ABLIT will occur over the next couple of months. Since January CSA has developed an information pamphlet for distribution across CSG Units. Thanks to those who provided input into the development of the Flyer and to Tricia Wiles of Sweet Graph Design. The front page only is shown (twice) at the end of this newsletter.

Thanks for your continued support.

*R Wadsworth*

Ross Wadsworth  
President  
15 Apr 2018

## Secretary's Coordination Notes

### ANZAC Day 2018

#### Ipswich

- CSA will be represented at the Ipswich RSL Dawn Service commencing at 0428
- CSA will be represented by Mrs Trish Lomas at the Ipswich Wreath Laying Service
- CSA will be represented by our President at the RAAF Amberley Dawn Service. He will lay a wreath on behalf of the association.

#### Brisbane

- The Association will be marching in Brisbane for 2018
- CSA has been allocated to Group 7 Position 9 (look for our banner)
- **Form Up** NLT 11.00

**After** The venue for the CSA ANZAC Day After March Function is the Harlequin Jack which is situated above Central Station.

Access to Harlequin Jack is via the stairs situated to the left of the newsagent on the Central Station Breezeway. Similar arrangements to previous years will apply.



Earlier ANZAC Day marches in Brisbane. The first, 25 April 1916, at left, and in 1954 (below left). Images courtesy SLQ. (slq.qld.gov.au)

### Fundraising

Volunteers are still required for badge selling prior to ANZAC Day. Shopping Centre locations and dates (inclusive) are:

Yamanto	23 - 24 Apr18
Springfield Fair	18 to 24 Apr 18
Springfield Bunnings	21-22 Apr 18
Redbank Plains	19 and 21 Apr 18
Orion	18 to 24 Apr 18
Bunnings West Ipswich	22 Apr 18

POC is Rob Wadley, by mobile or email robhwadley@yahoo.com or contact

[Secretary@combatsupportassociation.org.au](mailto:Secretary@combatsupportassociation.org.au)

### CSA Meetings 2018

Management Committee Meeting (MCM)

16 Aug 18	09:00	RAAF AMB
15 Nov 18	09:00	RAAF AMB

General Meeting (GM)

15 Feb 18	11:00	SED New Farm
21 Jun 18	11:00	Coffee Anda, Ipswich

**AGM** 18 Oct 18, 17:30 Jets League Club, Ipswich

### Current Contact Details

Please ensure that your contact details are up to date. Any changes should be sent to the [secretary@combatsupportassociation.org.au](mailto:secretary@combatsupportassociation.org.au)

**Christmas Lunch** The Ship Inn, Southbank  
December 8, 2018 from 11:30

Dave Pepper  
Secretary CSA

## **ADMIN Officers in Malaya 1941-42**

RAAF ADMINOs served with both the RAAF and RAF in the Malaya Campaign of 1941-42. The two most senior positions, at Squadron Leader rank, were at Station HQ

Sembawang and, briefly at ABDA (America, British, Dutch and Australia) Headquarters in Java.

**FLGOFF Norm Platt** joined as a Clerk in 1927, commissioned in June 1941 and was posted to No. 1 Squadron, Singapore as Adjutant in November 1941. He'd taken over from FLTLT Rupert Dixon, pictured above on the right at Kota Bahru in September 1941, who was posted to Station HQ (Sembawang) (AWM P00688.001).

Norm Platt was at Kota Bahru when the Japanese landed on December 8, and later moved to Sumatra and Java where he suffered a slight wound in a bombing raid in February. He was captured in May 1942 and was interrogated and subject to the most severe torture for 26 days while held by the Kempeitai, at the Batavia Gaol, including repeated bashings and having water poured into his lungs. He moved to the Thai-Burma railway as Adjutant of Williams Force in October 1942 where his CO, LtCol John Williams AIF noted that *'not a day passed without someone in some way receiving encouragement in word or materially from him'*.

Norm Platt was discharged medically in 1949. He was awarded the MID in 1947, *'for personal courage and devotion to duty as a POW'*. He is seated on the far right in the pic above (AWM NWA0986) relaxing with fellow POWs at Darwin, on the way home. Sadly, Norm Platt died age 60 in a car accident in Melbourne in 1964 along with Dorothy, his wife of 35 years.

**FLTLT William (Bill) Wells** evacuated to Australia from Java in late February 1942 with 453 Squadron and thus avoided capture. But his reception at home



was cold; a Court of Inquiry had been formed to investigate the conduct and discipline of 453 Squadron in Singapore and Java, and the conduct and suitability of FLTLT Wells specifically.

453 Squadron was an Empire Air Training Scheme squadron raised by

the RAAF for service with the RAF. Based at Sembawang, it worked outwardly as a RAAF squadron.

Equipped with aged Buffalo fighters, squadron morale had suffered badly in air combats over KL and Ipoh early in the campaign, despite their reasonable success. The Court of Inquiry heard that the CO, an RAF officer and Battle of Britain veteran, avoided combat flights and was often absent from his post, especially in Java after the fall of Singapore. Bill Wells' loyalty was tested when the squadron ground crew were accused by senior RAF officers of cowardice and of leaving their place of duty under fire, which the Inquiry found was untrue. It did find that while he was suitable for his job,

Wells could have worked more closely with his CO, who was found to be temperamentally unsuited to command an Australian squadron.

Seconded to the RAF, **FLGOFF John McNally** was Adjutant 84 Squadron RAF, and arrived in Java barely in time for capture. His Superiors noted in his Confidential Report after his release: *'can be an excellent*

*worker ... unorthodox and thrusting on the job ... did excellent work in connection with secret radio ... quite fearless ... has done a lot of good for camps in general particularly in handling the Nipponese guards in charge of working parties'*.

**FLGOFF Colin (Col) Matheson**, a sheep grazer from SA, seen seated on the left *'relaxing at Darwin on the way home'* pic above, was another seconded to the RAF who spent his war as a POW on the Burma Thailand railway.

**Editor** (Sources: NAA Series A9301 personnel files and Series A705 casualty files, AWM.gov.au)





## From the Editor

A big thank you to our regular contributors who worked hard to ensure we could distribute *Autumn Combat Supporter* well in time for ANZAC Day.

Please take note of the need still, for volunteers to help with our major fund-raising activity. Note also, for SE Queensland residents, the arrangements for ANZAC Day.

Space considerations don't allow for any more than a cursory summary of Gallipoli (article below). For anyone with an interest in Gallipoli though, I would still recommend the official history of WW1 as one of the best accounts available. While Vols 1 and 2, that deal with ANZAC, are becoming more difficult to find, digital copies of both are available in full on the Australian War Memorial website, for free.

One of the tragedies of Gallipoli was the medical



evacuation plan, among a host of poor planning. Expected casualties were far higher than estimated resulting in an overload on resources ashore (like the Casualty Clearing Station pictured above, courtesy SLQ). There were no dedicated medical evacuation ships for 25 April, to evacuate the injured to the hospital ship offshore, and a reluctance to utilise the troop transports while still engaged in unloading.

The medical plan suffered more from a lack of coordination than effort, between Army and Navy (whose responsibility began at the high water mark) and between the various staffs at GHQ. The General Staff and not the Administration (Medical) Staff developed the plans. Nonetheless, estimates of wounded evacuated off Gallipoli on the first day are up to 2,000 with many still lying in the hills despite the quite remarkable efforts of the AIF medical staff and their stretcher bearers.

Regarding the short article on ADMINOs in the Malaya campaign of WW2 (above), I was quite fascinated to discover how active the RAF became in 1941, recruiting in Australia for junior combat support officers for Malaya. Roy Bulcock, recruited as a Supply Officer and who later wrote a book (*Of Death but Once*) about his time as a POW and with the RAF, is often quoted for his description of the controversial evacuation of Kuantan airbase in December 1941.

Another personal account, *Great was the Fall* written anonymously in 1945 by A RAAF Officer gives an insight into the forward RAF airbases in Malaya. I am quite certain the author is an Australian recruited by and serving with the RAF as an ADMINO. He is a WW1 AIF veteran and provides a low-level account of the major events through a series of letters home to his wife. Understandably, his letters and his book are heavily censored and run to an extent on rumour and opinion. He decries the RAF support system in Malaya and describes, inter alia, his own duties as Base Admin Officer with Fire Officer, Base Defence Officer and maybe more secondary duties thrown in, as futile. Not unexpectedly, we lost the campaign.

I'll include a more complete review of the rather mysterious RAAF Officer and his book in a future

Combat Supporter.

The image at left (AWM P00688.002) is of 1 Squadron Officers at Kota Bahru, late 1941. The Unit Admin Officer



(FLTLT Rupert Dixon) is the tall officer fourth from the right in the front row, seated beside the CO, WGCDR Reg Davis. Several of the officers in this photo later became casualties.

Don't forget the request for volunteers to help our major fund-raising activity, and CSA ANZAC Day arrangements. Your feedback on the newsletter is always welcome and encouraged. *Editor*

## Gallipoli 1915

The ANZAC landings at Gallipoli early on the morning of 25 April 1915 were part of a larger British and French campaign intended to open the Dardanelles to Allied shipping. A Southern Front might end the stalemate in France and Belgium, on the Western Front, and it would open a new route to Russia, closed by the stalemate. The Army objective at Gallipoli was to capture the forts that controlled the straits to allow naval access to the Dardanelles. A sea campaign in February and March 1915 had failed due to artillery from Ottoman shore batteries, and sea mines.

The British Corps and the French Corps (total over 50,000 men) would land on the southern tip of Gallipoli Peninsula, at Helles, to attack the forts and batteries while the ANZACs (around 20,000) would land to the north at Gaba Tepe, ANZAC Cove, to prevent Turkish reinforcements advancing south.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Division AIF commenced landings at dawn on 25 April, aiming to establish positions on the high ground and provide cover for the ANZ Division which would follow and advance across the Gallipoli peninsula. But the plan went terribly wrong.

The ANZACs landed about 2km north of their intended site and faced vastly different terrain. A narrow beach rose immediately into rugged hills and steep ravines. Inland, sharp ridges instead of the plateaus they'd expected. And they grossly underestimated the strength and quality of Turkish resistance. British intelligence was unaware of recent Turkish reinforcements and ignorant of their fighting



ability. To the Turkish, this was their land and they would defend it fiercely.

The ANZACs advanced no more than a few hundred metres inland. The landing forces were held to a perimeter less than 2km long. A battle of attrition ensued. Trench warfare and stalemate set in despite some fierce attempts to break through by both sides, at ANZAC and at Helles.

At Helles an initial objective was the small town of Krithia, gained and abandon on Day One. In May, two ANZAC Brigades were moved south to join the Second Battle of Krithia but the Turks held and trench warfare resumed. The Third Battle of Krithia in June also failed.

The Allies launched a major offensive in August, with another British Corps landing at Suvla Bay north of ANZAC Cove. That too, quickly became a stalemate as forces were held to the beach head. Numerous other battles occurred in August; Lone Pine, Quinn's Post, Chunuk Blair, The Nek, Pope's Hill and more. Allied forces had been increased from an original five Divisions to over fifteen including 2 Division AIF.

Battle casualties were high. Illness from insanitary conditions added to the list (not included below). Typhoid, dysentery and diarrhoea typically, amplified by inadequate medical care and provision for evacuation.



	Casualties	Dead
Ottoman	165,000	56,650
Australia	26,110	8,141
New Zealand	7,500	2,779
UK	120,000	34,100
France	27,170	9,800
India	4,800	1,360

With no chance of success, and despite some opposition amid fears of high casualties, ANZAC and Suvla were evacuated by 20 December and Helles by 8 January, with no significant casualties.

**Editor** (Sources: AWM.gov.au, Army.gov.au, Gallipoli-association.org, nzhistory.govt.nz, Map nam.ac.uk. Note, casualty estimates vary, those shown are representative from various sources.)

## *Welfare Corner*

A lot has been happening at the federal level.

### **ANAO audit into Efficiency of veterans' service delivery by the Department of Veterans' Affairs**

Submissions have closed but Alliance of Defence Service Organisations (ADSO) has put in a response on behalf of its member organisations.

### **Productivity Commission Inquiry**

On 28 Mar the Government stated that there will be a Productivity Commission Inquiry into the system of compensation and rehabilitation for veterans. Note that this not a DVA centric review, the Productivity Commission will examine the full gamut of compensation and rehabilitation for veterans and this hopefully will include the Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation which, up until recently appears to have escaped any in depth examination of their processes.

The inquiry will examine whether the system of compensation and rehabilitation for veterans is fit for purpose now and into the future. It follows the Government's response to a report by the Senate Standing Committee on Defence, Foreign Affairs and Trade on suicide by veterans and ex-service personnel.

The Commission will also review the governance arrangements, administrative processes and service delivery of the Veterans' Affairs portfolio.

The Commission is due to report to Government within 15 months.

Public consultation will be undertaken as part of the inquiry and the Government encourages all interested parties to participate. Further information and the terms of reference are available on the [Commission's website](#). Link to the press release [here](#).

From the Commissions web site:

The Productivity Commission should have regard to the current environment and challenges faced by veterans, including but not limited to:

- whether the arrangements reflect contemporary best practice, drawing on experiences of Australian workers' compensation arrangements and military compensation frameworks in other similar jurisdictions (local and international);
- the use of the Statements of Principles as a means to contribute to consistent decision-making based on sound medical-scientific evidence, and
- whether the legislative framework and supporting architecture delivers compensation and rehabilitation to veterans in a well targeted, efficient and veteran-centric manner.

The perceived risk of these two reviews is that it is more efficient to provide the services to veterans through Human Services and that would be a tragedy, and Veteran entitlements should be normalised with the wider society.

Governments have always said there will be a DVA and the Unique Nature of Military Service will always be recognised, but how far can they be trusted?

## **Delivering Better Services for Veterans and their Families**

Following is a summary of the Ministers press release. The full text can be found [here](#).

Veterans and their families will receive increased support services and income support payments after the Senate passed new legislation in Mar 18. The legislation delivers the improved services for veterans and their families and delivers a significant part of the Government's response to the concerns raised in the Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Reference's committee report.

The legislation provides for veterans and their families, who play such an essential role in a veteran's health and wellbeing, additional services under these new measures which include increased access to childcare assistance, home care and counselling.

There is also a new income support payment for veterans with mental health problems who are unable to work so they have a source of income. This will reduce the stress placed on both the veteran and their family in what can be a difficult time.

Partners of veterans may also be eligible for the Veteran Payment and veterans with dependent children may be entitled to the maximum rate of Family Tax Benefit Part A without being subject to the Family Tax Benefit means test while they receive the Veteran Payment.

From 1 May 2018 a new pilot program, the Coordinated Veteran Care mental health pilot will commence which aims to support to veterans in rural and regional areas with chronic mental health at the mild to chronic status combined with co-morbid health conditions.

Veterans who have suffered a catastrophic injury will also be supported with access to household and attendant care services based on their individual needs.

## **Suicide Prevention Pilot**

The 2017-18 budget provided funding to pilot a suicide prevention initiative in the Brisbane area.

This pilot will assess the benefits of providing wrap around support to veterans and ex-serving Australian Defence Force (ADF) members following their discharge from hospital for a suicide attempt or crisis. The pilot service will also support veterans who may be at risk of suicide because of their mental health or other factors.

DVA has partnered with 'beyondblue' to adapt and deliver its existing suicide prevention model, 'The Way Back Support Service,' to ex-serving ADF members.

Following admission to hospital for a suicide attempt or mental health crisis, a veteran will be referred to 'The Way Back' as part of the hospital discharge process. For up to three months, the service will support the veteran to engage with their hospital discharge plan, develop a safety plan and connect with informal and formal supports. The service acts as a conduit between hospital and community-based clinical and support services.

The pilot service will commence from mid-2018 and conclude by mid-2020.

*Rob Shortridge*

WELFO CSA





## Are you considering transition to civilian life? Do you need assistance with lodging DVA claims?

If you answer yes to either Question please contact Combat Support Association or Ipswich & District Veteran Support Group who have partnered together to provide **SUPPORT** through **TRANSITION, ADVOCACY** on veteran related issues and submissions of Department of Veteran Affairs claims and WELFARE assistance.

### Combat Support Association provides:

**Transition:** Individual advice and sourcing services for the development of individual Transition Plans.

**Representation:** Represent on Veteran Issues as part of a networked Ex Service Organisation.

**Welfare:** Source Veteran or community services to support individual, family or unit needs.

### Contact

secretary@combatsupportassociation.org.au  
president@combatsupportassociation.org.au  
www.combatsupportassociation.org.au



### Ipswich & District Veteran Support Group provides:

**Advocacy:** Assess entitlements of serving and ex serving members of the Australian Defence Force to claim on DVA and then provide assistance to submit those claims in accordance with legislation.

**Welfare:** Sourcing services within the wider Defence Community to support individual welfare needs.

Consultations and claim lodgement is free.

### Contact

Monday to Friday 0830 -1230  
Phone 07 38123822  
Email ipswichdvsg@gmail.com



## APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby apply for membership of the (air force) Combat Support Association Inc. as an Ordinary member.

### (Category 1) Ex Service/Serving Member:

Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Served from: \_\_\_\_\_ to: \_\_\_\_\_

Service Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Rank: \_\_\_\_\_

Decorations \_\_\_\_\_

### (Category 2) Dependants of Ex Service/Serving Member:

Name of Relative: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Service Details of Relative: \_\_\_\_\_

I declare the above information to be true and correct. I hereby agree that, if admitted, I will abide by the Rules and By Laws of the Association. I enclose \$10 as my initial subscription, or \$100 to join as a Fully Paid Up member.

Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

We declare that the applicant meets the membership criteria detailed in the Association Rules and By Laws.

Proposer: \_\_\_\_\_

Seconder: \_\_\_\_\_



## **YOUR AVIATION HERITAGE CENTRE**

On Sunday 5 June 2011 the RAAF Amberley Aviation Heritage Centre officially opened. Dignitaries, former and current servicemen gathered to see the unveiling of the first stage of the Centre. The Heritage Centre is designed to tell the story of the Air Force, but more importantly the Air Force at Amberley from 1940 right through the war years until now.

Former Chief of Air Force Air Marshal Mark Binskin AO initialized the program to celebrate the relationship between the RAAF and the community by establishing heritage centres to be run through a partnership between Air Force and the community. Another former CAF, Air Marshal Geoff Brown AM as Deputy Chief was the Chair of the RAAF Heritage Advisory Council and was instrumental in our formal establishment.

The RAAF has also embarked on a program of rejuvenating its static display aircraft that have been suffering the effects of outdoor display. This has already paid off with an increase in morale within the service.

The RAAF Amberley Aviation Heritage Centre display includes:

- Australia's first Canberra bomber A84-201,
- English Electric Canberra A84-125 built by English Electric and delivered to Australia in May 1952,
- General Dynamics RF-111C A8-126, delivered to the RAAF 1 June 1973,
- Bell Iroquois A2-771 UH-1H # 67-17573 9771 which was delivered to RAAF 9 SQN in Vietnam in 1968. Returning to Australia in December 1971.
- Bell-47G Sioux A1-738. The Sioux was the first rotary aircraft operated by the Australian Army. A1-738 was the last Sioux to be flown in Vietnam on the 13 September 1971,
- Douglas A-20G Boston 42-86786 'The Hell 'N Pelican II', and
- DHC Caribou A4-236, a combat veteran that also saw humanitarian service in PNG, Indonesia, Pakistan, East Timor and the Solomon Islands.

Volunteers at Amberley have a long history of restoring aircraft, having completed the Boston and Catalina for the RAAF Museum. The restoration of these aircraft was completed whilst an annex of Point Cook was located at RAAF Amberley. They will now work on aircraft that will remain at the Aviation Heritage Centre including Canberra bomber A84-242, one of the last Canberra aircraft to return to Australia from Phan Rang, Vietnam.

The Centre is currently based in two hangars that were used for F-111 maintenance. Next year a portion of the administration building will have displays and a Gift Shop.

The RAAF Amberley Aviation Heritage Centre is open every Tuesday and Thursday for Community Groups of 10 or more, in their own coach or bus. For more information please contact RAAF Amberley Public Engagement Section on Ph: (07) 5361 1245 or e-mail [AMB.PES@defence.gov.au](mailto:AMB.PES@defence.gov.au). The RAAF Amberley Aviation Heritage Centre is also open on the second Sunday of every month with public parking at the RAAF Amberley Bowls Club car park, where a shuttle bus service will depart for the Centre every 20 minutes.



**Recognising the Aviation History of RAAF Base Amberley**

## Combat Support Association



Promoting the welfare  
and transition of  
ADF Combat Support  
Personnel, past and  
present and their families.

Are you considering  
transition to civilian life?

Do you require assistance  
with transition, submission of  
DVA claims or welfare support?

[www.combatsupportassociation.org.au](http://www.combatsupportassociation.org.au)

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