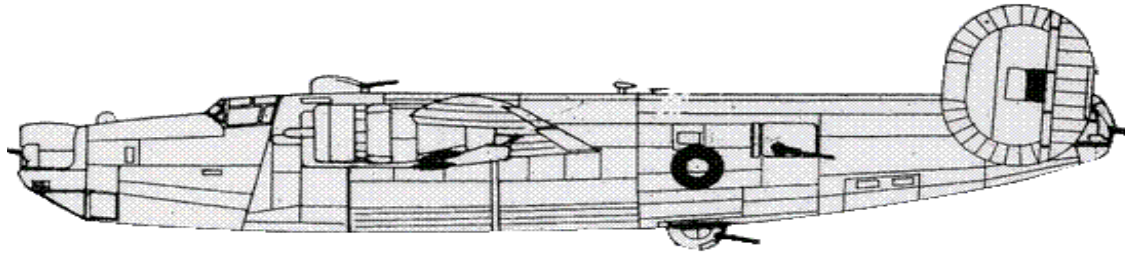


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"Liberator Relives"

Patron: Grp. Capt. Carl Schiller (Ret) OAM CSM

B-24 Liberator Memorial Australia Incorporated

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Thanks to Tim Pallas and his staff who print this newsletter free of charge.

September/October Newsletter



Lest we forget

Vale,

Colin Grey OAM.

It is with sadness we were notified that Colin had passed away on 20 September.

Colin was the driving force in the uncharted early days of our Liberator's restoration. Colin traveled extensively, recruiting members, obtaining donations, collecting parts,

arranging work camps, presenting our purpose to Federal, State and Local Governments and obtaining the Hangar 2 lease that started us on the physical restoration of our Liberator. He also laid the stepping stones that have included adding a restored Hangar 1 to our Museum precinct.

Hangar closure

The lockdown has now been extended and is subject to reductions in the daily number of COVID-19 cases in the future. Museums will be in the last group to have their restrictions lifted.

This situation has an impact on our operations, namely, volunteer morale, membership numbers, visitor numbers, shop sales, event planning, hangar maintenance and security.

Due to the impact of the Coronavirus on our printing source, this Newsletter has been assembled with black and white photos rather than the usual colour.

Membership annual renewals

94% of annual fees have been received, thank you. Just a reminder, if you are in the % that has forgotten, we would appreciate your payment.

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Hangar news

Our sixth email committee meeting was held on Saturday 12 September 2020.

There is a need to service the hangar defibrillator and purchase an additional one for the new hangar when it opens. We have applied for a grant to purchase a new one and cover relevant training.

Reduced membership was noted and continues to cause concern. Our funding model will be reviewed and modified in conjunction with our new database that will define specific areas of potentially productive external sources of support.

Members are reminded that the AGM has been cancelled this year due to COVID-19 restrictions. The current Committee and Executive will remain in place until December 2021.

Thanks to our “ghosts” who keep an eye on our hangar security, grounds maintenance, communications and our volunteers’ welfare.

Museum Precinct news

A status report on Hangar 1 was received on 2 September from the Senior Project Manager, Melbourne Water.

The detailed design is 70% complete. It is planned to submit the Planning Permit application to Wyndham City Council by the end of September. The scope of the EPA audit is being developed, and confirmation of the scope is expected from the Auditor by the end of September.

Our objective is to have the detailed design complete prior to Christmas and the planning permit approved by early next year.

In spite of the virus, progress is continuing on Hangar 1 and we are encouraged by that.

Facebook recruitment scheme

Bill Kirkwood, who hosts a Facebook page titled “**Friends of the RAAF B-24 Liberator**”, has generously provided space and support for our

invitation to join our membership group, make a donation, become a hangar volunteer and visit us when the hangar reopens.

Liberator, 2020 work in progress

Work is continuing off-site on our second and third front turrets. The parts used on these were considered salvageable but marginal. Consequently, the work content and attention to detail on these turrets are greater than that of turret one.



Detailed work is also being carried out to produce control wheel emblems replicating the Consolidated item that was originally fitted but lost.



Forthcoming events

No events are currently planned.

Oxford, 2020 work in progress

Due to the hangar closure, no work was carried out on the Oxford during this period.

Museum arrivals

Two B-24 technical manuals have been donated and will be dispatched to us after the postal service returns to normal.

For Gabrielle



What the travel agents don't tell you

“Scotland has only two seasons, July and Winter.”

Not forgotten



Back row. Max Thomas (radio operator), Arthur Norris (WAG), Peter Henderson (top gunner), Bruce Neal (nose gunner), Merv Fletcher (tail gunner), Harold Cobden (engineer), John Warwick (ball gunner).

Front row. Arthur Ward (navigator), Keith Chapman (Skipper), Theo Rutter (co-pilot), Bob Brown (bombardier).

A Bombardier's story



Flt Lt John B. Gilbert, RAAF

John passed away recently aged 97. His daughter, Susan Waters, contacted us and asked if we would be interested in his RAAF and USAAF activities as a Bombardier for our Newsletter. Susan indicated that her dad had a personal collection of memorabilia and information she would make available to us. As a result, we will include this story over three editions of our Newsletter.

John flew as a Navigator / Bombardier based at Nadzab and Dobdura in Papua New Guinea with the 65th Squadron, 43rd Heavy Bombardment unit of the US Fifth Army from December 1943 until April 1944. This unit was named the “Lucky Dicers”.

In April 1944 a raid was successfully carried out on Hollandia by six Liberators of this group, fully crewed by Australians. All six returned safely. Flt Lt Gilbert was the lead Navigator.

The Bombardier's Oath

Mindful of the secret trust about to be placed on me by my Commander in Chief, the President of the United States, by whose direction I have been chosen as Bombardier training and mindful... of the fact that I am to become guardian of one of my country's most priceless military assets, the American bombsight... I do here, in the presence of All Mighty God, swear by The Bombardier's Code of Honor to keep inviolate the secrecy of any and all confidential information revealed to me, and further to uphold the honor and integrity of the Army Air Force, if need be, with my life itself.

(Transcribed from a document included in Flt Lt Gilbert's memorabilia)

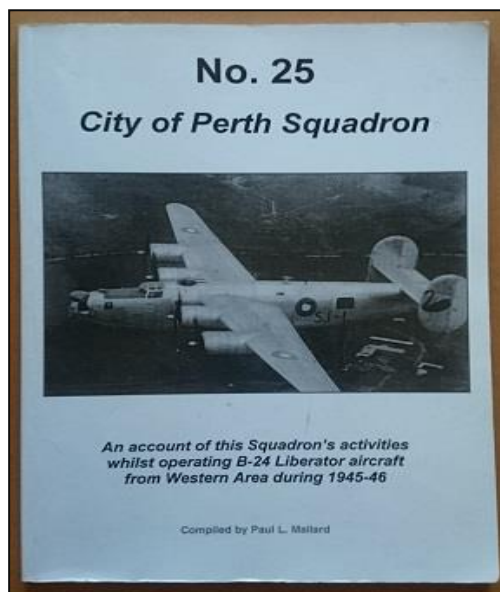
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The French connection, good news!!!!

Merv Schneider of Nhill, one of our senior veterans, has informed us that our Newsletter search for a photo of A72-133 reminded him that a photo of 133 appeared in a book about 25 Squadron (with which he flew). He could not remember the author or the name of the book.

Thanks heaps, Merv.

A Google search revealed the following for sale at \$295.00!!!!



If you have a copy, or know the location of one, could you please confirm that a photo of A72-133 is included.

Hangar news continued

Our seventh email committee meeting was held on Saturday 10 October.

The three outstanding motions were accepted.

Hangar security was reviewed and Graham's improvements explained.

Discussion took place on the work required to be carried out prior to the move to Hangar 1.

Graeme Hore provided an update on his off-site work on the Liberator.

A response to Rathmines (Catalina restoration) was assembled, with suggestions about their rivet request to be forwarded.

Discussion then centred on actions required prior to and after the hangar re-opens (once State Government allows this) on prioritising and re-engaging volunteers.

Lyn Gorman, our President, will represent us at the annual AMNN forum and AGM (via Zoom) on 7 November.

B-24 Model



Following a request in the previous Newsletter re model building of a RAAF liberator, this magnificent effort was submitted by Harry through his Grandfather Robert Dixon. Well done, Harry!

President's Message

We continue to live with uncertainty about when we can re-open the hangar and museum. As the timing depends on Victoria's State Government, we can but make the most of it.

As you will have read, work is continuing on the Hangar 1 project; off-site work on the Liberator is being done; and the committee continues to meet monthly by email. We are giving a lot of thought to what will be needed once we can return to the hangar.

We have pursued three grant opportunities to try and bring in some revenue for specific items when our income is so reduced this year. We were successful in our application for a Toyota Community Grant. The money will fund two lunches and planning meetings to re-engage volunteers once the hangar can re-open, as well as funding our Vice-President to work with a video marketing company in Werribee on a social media campaign to re-attract visitors to the

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hangar. The results for the other two grants will not be announced until the end of October and the beginning of December.

So, I encourage you to remain involved via our Newsletter and perhaps by 'phone or email. Do encourage anyone you know who might be interested in membership of our association to get in touch with us.

Meanwhile, stay safe and well.

Lyn Gorman, President.

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Edited by Lyn Gorman .

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