

THE CLIPPED WINGS



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE AIR DISPATCH ASSOCIATION OF
AUSTRALIA

DECEMBER 2017

President's Note

My sincere apologies for the delay in getting this edition of the Clipped Wings to our members. One of the major issues affecting committee and support members of the Association is a lot of these people are still holding down a normal job in addition to their association positions. This, coupled with personal issues and family commitments, can have an-ongoing effect.

Sadly, due these circumstances, we are late with this edition.

Your understanding in this matter is appreciated.

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President's Report



Hello Everyone, Its Summer time.

After some of the driest months on record, we started to get some rain around the end of October, and not before time. The bush is very dry and the chance of bushfires this year is very high so those of you who live in remote or bushfire prone areas, around Australia, please take care and ensure you have a bushfire plan in place.

In the past 12 months, we have reached a number of milestones such as:

1. A brilliant ANZAC Reunion in Melbourne, put together by Geoff Cutts and Graham Papworth
2. Our second annual Myola ball organised by Anthony Eddie
3. Our Red Light – Standby Dinner organised by Grant Foster
4. New merchandise designed and distributed by Geoff and Kim Harris
5. Our request for new DVA grants prepared by Ned Miller and Lou Heidenreich, and
6. Christmas drinks in Perth organised by Shane Mitchell

Your committee members and State Reps have been working overtime to organise outings and events for all members. If you have any ideas of events or outing that would interest our members, let us know and we'll see how we can assist.

Participants in Ron McCafferty's' 10-day tour of Scotland and Ireland and the UK ADA Reunion have been growing but we must know definite numbers by the end of December. At this stage we have between 18 - 24 Australians attending one or both the events, six from the US and eight from New Zealand so it will be interesting to see how many Brits turn up and for how long. In the last two editions, I mentioned a display for Air Dispatch at the National Vietnam Veterans Museum in Phillip Island, Victoria. This is now formally cancelled, due to lack of interest, and the trade will not be represented as a singular entity.

Since our last edition, we have been given some information regarding one of our past presidents, John Liston. John is in Hervey Bay, Queensland. He is suffering from lung and pancreatic cancer and the liver and spleen are not in good shape. He has commenced radiation treatment and a palliative care nurse checks up on him on a regular basis. I understand John (Curley) Nelson, in Perth, is also on the sick list. Our best wishes go to both JL and Curley.

Recently I was given information from our Secretary (Ned Miller) and our Treasurer (Geoff Harris) due to family circumstances of both committee members, they will be stepping down by the next AGM and have given us the courtesy of notifying us of their subsequent departures. Both Ned and Geoff will be sorely missed because their input has been above and beyond the call of duty. This means the ADAA will need a new Secretary and Treasurer. Please think seriously about supporting the association and

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contact one of the committee if you are interested in either one of the positions. I might also add these positions are open to ex or current Regs or Reservists.

Finally, with the year coming to an end, I would like to thank the committee for a job well done and wish all members and their partners the very best for the festive season. Thank you for your support throughout the year and may 2018 bring you everything you wish for.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year,

Take care

Cheers

Nick and Joyce



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Secretary's Report

I accepted this position as Secretary of the Association in May this year to assist the Association with its administration and to fill the gap that existed at the time, and help those that had previously been elected to the positions of the Management Committee.

Due to the unfortunate circumstance that led to that situation, I took over from Lou Heidenreich, the Assistant Secretary who was filling the position temporarily. Between us we had no opportunity for formal handovers of the position and no documented history or administrative files from the past.

The job started with the lodgement of the required documentation, forms and fees to the NSW Office of Fair Trading to keep the Association operational and meet the requirements of the Associations Act. The next step was to establish an office space and accumulate the required office supplies and equipment. With all the computer traffic coming from all directions it didn't take long to pick up a computer virus (in spite of the security precautions installed). That stopped the proceedings until such time that it was fixed.

During this initial period, I was fortunate to have the assistance of Lou, who was back as Assistant Secretary, President Nicko, and Joyce who gave invaluable technical computer assistance, and Geoff and Kim Harris.

At a Management Committee in May the proposal to apply for a grant from DVA to fund a series of coach tours was put forward; and after consultation with the appropriate member at DVA the application was submitted in June. A liaison was established and maintained with that member, and at this stage, it appears that the decision on the application for the grant, which was originally scheduled for August, will now be announced in December.

Also in June, the unused portion of a previous grant was accepted by Department of Social Services to fill an immediate need to purchase a replacement computer for the Association.

And on 08 June, I attended the Office of the Federal Member for Gilmore (Nowra) to receive the 2016 Volunteer Grant Certificate on behalf of the Association in relation to a previous grant that was allocated for the training of volunteers and associated travel costs.

It was at this meeting that I met the President of the Nowra Lions Club and was invited to attend one of their meetings and explain what our Association is, what it does and how it came about. His members were very interested in the PowerPoint presentation and were extremely impressed with the origin and history of Aerial Delivery, the techniques and the professionalism of the Air Dispatcher.

What was to be a twenty-minute presentation turned out to be the best part of an hour with all the questions and discussion time.

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In July a couple of draft papers on recommendations for Management Operating Procedures and Activity Planning Procedures were produced and circulated for discussion with the aim of creating a standard; and informative documents for new Management Committee Members as they take up their post. With the exception of the Presidents endorsement, there was no response to the documents, the recommendation was withdrawn a month later.

Regular contact was made with Murrays Coaches to obtain quotes on suggested Tours to attach to the Grant Application, but as stated the outcome of the submission won't be known until the end of the year.

The periodic sausage sizzles have been very successful in adding to the Associations bank account, and a food processor was purchased to assist those that are engaged in the food preparation; as well as a couple of First Aid Kits to have on hand.

There has been an ongoing correspondence with the Office(s) of Fair Trading, our Honorary Auditor and myself about the requirement for the Associations need to have a Charitable Fund- Raising Authority. The outcome was that the Association is a Charitable Organisation and does require a Fund-Raising Authority to meet the requirements of the Act; this authority is being processed now and will be issued in the near future. In the meantime, we are authorised to continue our operations as usual.

I have had an interesting and educational six months, and now I find that due to unforeseen circumstances I need to vacate this position. I understand that Lou Heidenreich is to fill the vacancy again until such time as the next AGM.

Ned Miller

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Treasurer's Report

Closing of BOQ bank accounts

WE HAVE CLOSED our Bank of Queensland accounts

The transition to Westpac Banking is now complete.

Please amend any saved BOQ details you have saved in your records to the following

WESTPAC account

Account Name - Air Dispatch Association of Australia (Administration Account)

BSB – 032-814

Account Number – 485891

Thank you for your assistance in this matter, as you will no longer be able to deposit into the Bank of Queensland accounts and changing the details now will save any issues with your deposits going to the correct account.

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Fund Raising Report

Sausage Sizzles

Listed below are the fund-raising activities planned for the next 3 months. If you can, please contact the arranger to notify them that you are coming along and pick up a pair of tongs to help sell a few snags, you won't be disappointed.

- Saturday, 16 December Bunnings Wollongong – arranged by Nick and Joyce
- Sunday, 17 December Bunnings Valley Heights – arranged by Fozzie
- 2018, every 2nd Sunday of the month Bunnings Valley Heights
- 2018, every 1st Tuesday of the month Bunnings Woolongong

Another very busy 3 months coming up.

If you wish to organise an event in your area, please let us know and we will assist where possible.



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Merchandise Report

We now have our New ADAA Polo shirts available in two colour styles Maroon /white or Navy/white. Anyone wishing to purchase, please order through the website.

Only orders through the website will be processed, so that an accurate stock control and accounting of payments and the register of stock sent out can be maintained.

Kind regards

Kim Harris



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ARTICLES OF INTEREST

The F88 AUSTEYR in Australian Service

1988 – 2017

The Steyr AUG 5.56mm bull pup rifle was designed in the 1960s by Steyr Mannlicher GmbH and was adopted by the Austrian Army in 1978. The AUG is gas operated with a short stroke piston capable of semi and full automatic fire and is of modular construction. Manufactured using high grade Polymer and advanced Alloys, the barrel however is hammer forged steel with a chrome lined bore and surrounded by an alloy shroud. Fire selection is achieved by a two stage trigger, first stage is semi-automatic, second stage is automatic; the safety catch is the push through type (reminiscent of safety catches on cheap .22 rifles). It uses a 30 round Polymer see through magazine which is not compatible with the M 16 type of magazine. Every rifle is fitted with a 1.5 X optical sight in a fixed mounting. It is an Assault rifle, It can perform two functions as either a rifle or a Sub Machine Gun, civilian semi automatic versions of such weapons are not Assault Rifles they simply Semi Automatic rifles.

In 1977 NATO commenced a trial to select a new rifle cartridge, the Belgian SS109 5.56 mm cartridge was selected as NATO standard (STANAG 4172). Australia adopted the NATO cartridge as the Cartridge Ball F1 5.56 mm NATO which uses a different propellant to the Nato version, and conducted a trial to select a new rifle. The Colt M16A2 and Steyr AUG were selected to take part in a trial to decide which would be our new service rifle. Unofficial word from the trials indicates that the Colt M16A2 was the preferred rifle but Colt would not allow it to be licence built here at that time. The Steyr on the other hand came to the trial with a manufacturing agreement attached and so the Steyr was adopted for service as the F88 AUSTEYR 5.56 mm Individual Weapon.



F88 Austeyr Individual Weapon, 5.56 NATO

When it was announced that the 5.56 NATO cartridge had been adopted, defence spin doctors went into overdrive to convince a doubting Army that the 5.56 NATO cartridge was just what every soldier could want. A notion that was rudely upset by events in Afghanistan in later years.

Problems:

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The first problem to come to light was the ejection port, it was perceived by some to be too small to allow the chamber to be inspected when conducting safety precautions. Solution to this one would think would be to enlarge the ejection port, but no, the solution was to remove the barrel when carrying out safety precautions.

The second problem was the non-folding cocking handle which could be easily damaged (on the last ever 1 ATSR field exercise, Regal Wings 92 one of 39 Air Equip's P1ns rifles had the cocking handle break off rendering the weapon useless). Nothing has been done to rectify this despite it being well known by Army that soldiers wanted a folding cocking handle.

SASR REJECT THE F88

In February 1998 1 Squadron, SASR deployed to Kuwait as part of Operation Desert Thunder. Working alongside US Special Forces who were armed M4 carbines equipped with accessories from SOPMOD (Special Operations Peculiar Modifications). Kits (issued on a scale of one kit per four soldiers). Each SOPMOD kit contained the following; One M203 Grenade Launcher with a 9 inch barrel, One AN/PVS-17A Mini Night Sight, One AN/PEQ-2 Infrared Target Illuminator, One Aimpoint Comp 2 Red Dot Sight, and One Sound Suppressor. SAS concluded that the F88 with its fixed optical sight was no match for the M4 and the accessories it could use. They further concluded that the F88 was ergonomically unsuited for SF use.

A team of Infantry experts were dispatched to Kuwait to see what could be done to make the F88 more acceptable for Special Forces. However nothing could be done in the short term to address SAS concerns, and as a consequence SAS adopted the M4 carbine and SOPMOD kit.

F88S-A1

Shortly after the rumblings from Kuwait, the army replaced infantry F88 with the F88S-A1. The F88S-A1 had a mil standard rail in place of the fixed optical sight.



F88S-A1 with Mil Standard Rail

Infantry equipped with F88S-A1 could now use either the 1.5X Steyr Optic or the 3.5X C79 Elcan Wildcat sight. This version of the Steyr now equips all ARA and ARES Infantry and RAAF ADGs. This version also had the addition of an Automatic Lock out (ALO) this allows the weapon to be fired as a semi automatic only but the switch located on the tip of the trigger can be quickly disengaged to allow automatic fire when needed.

F88 GLA

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When the Army deployed to East Timor in 1999 the F88 had not been equipped with an under barrel Grenade Launcher. Troops deployed with the older M79, not a good look for a modern army. The Army purchased the RM Equipment 40mm M203P1 Grenade Launcher and equipped it with a Knights Armament Quadrant sight fitted with a Firepoint Red Dot sight. The unit is fitted to the F88S-A1 using an Inter bar interface which is fitted by an armourer. There is no provision for a Bayonet on this model.



F88 GLA

Afghanistan

Exposure to combat in Afghanistan revealed several short comings; the first of these was the failure of the weapon to function properly when using American 5.56 Nato ammo. The second problem was the weapon had no viable night sight and finally the need to equip most rifles with flashlights. Flashlights are a necessity on rifles when one is searching the darkened Mud houses without many windows or electricity that most Afghans live in.

A surefire L72 Night Aiming Device (NAD) and a surefire flashlight was positioned on the right hand side of the rifle and this set up seems to work OK. Using American ammunition could not be addressed as the F88 gas system is designed to use the Australian F1 5.56 NATO ammunition.

One other problem raised its ugly head, the poor performance of the 5.56 NATO Bullet on targets beyond 500m and especially the poor ratio of first shot kills at any range. The Taliban well aware of the poor performance of the 5.56 NATO, were opening contacts at 700-800m knowing that their 7.62x39 were still effective at that range. The SAS had faced this same problem in 2001 and had overcome this problem by adopting a limited number of Knights Armament SR25 7.62 NATO semi auto rifles so that each patrol would have at least one of these Designated Marksman Rifles (DMR).

Australian Infantry solved the problem in 2009 by adopting the H&K 417 semi Auto rifle in 7.62 NATO and fitted with a Trijicon 6X48 ACOG (Advanced Combat Optical Gunsight). These rifles are issued to the best shots in a section.

They also replaced the F89 Minimi, using initially the 7.62 Mag 58 MG and later adopting the Mark 48 7.62 Maximi which as a beefed up Minimi is lighter than the Mag 58.

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The F88S-A2

Introduced with much publicity in 2009, the F88S-A2 was a necessary upgrade to meet operational requirements in Afghanistan. Changes were as follows;

Larger Ejection Port

Rejigged gas system to allow use of American ammunition

Longer Mil Standard rail on top of the rifle and a short rail on the R/H side.

Colour of the barrel assembly has been changed to khaki to reduce recognition signature.

When these rifles were first issued in 2009 a problem arose with fully loaded 30 rd magazines, when manually cocked the magazine would not fully lock. In the end the solution was to only load 27 rds in each magazine. In 2010 THALES made a number of reliability enhancements to the F88S-A2 to redress this problem.

The F88S-A2 equips all soldiers in Afghanistan and those training to go there.



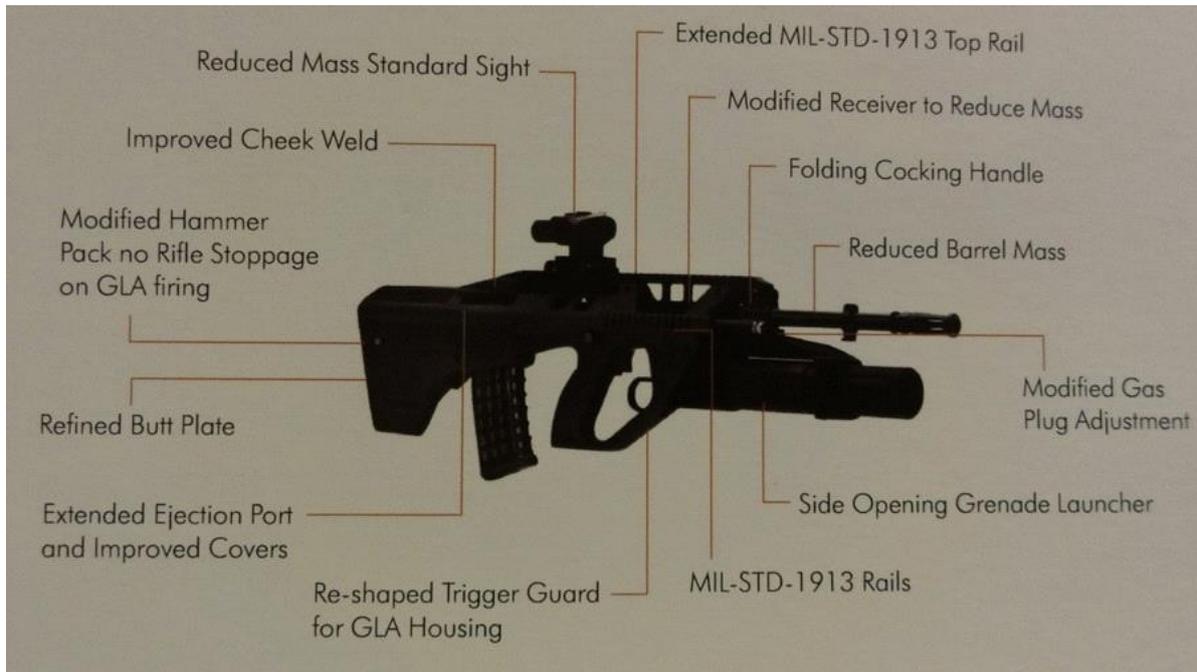
F 88SA2 with 1.5 Steyr optical sight showing longer top rail

Enhanced F88 Austeyr

The EF 88 is a significant upgrade of the Steyr platform, part of the LAND 125 Soldier System project, it will replace all existing F 88 types in service.

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Upgrades include-



The EF88 will be issued to Infantry with a Trijicon 4x ACOG sight, all other soldiers will receive a Trijicon 1.5x ACOG on their rifles. A new side opening Grenade Launcher has also been adopted for use on this rifle, the trigger of the grenade launcher is located inside the trigger guard of the rifle. This rifle will equip the army until at least 2025.



EF88 with Grenade Launcher and Trinjicon 1.5x ACOG sight

New Zealand

NZ adopted the Steyr rifle when we did, but dissatisfaction with the with the Steyr caused the NZ Defence Force to look for a replacement. After trialling several different conventional rifles they selected the Lewis Machine Tool companies CQB16, as of may 2017 this rifle has replaced all Steyrs.

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LMT CQB16 5..56 rifle.

The CQB16 is essentially a copy of the M16/M4, but better machined, it has a 16 inch barrel, although some will be supplied with 18 inch barrels. In NZ service this rifle will use the Mk 262 77 grain match bullet which is now the standard NZ rifle cartridge (the rifle can be used with any 5.56 NATO cartridge).

Conclusion

The Steyr will equip Australian soldiers until 2025 when it is due to be replaced, by what, we do not know at this time. One determining factor will be if NATO replaces the 5.56 NATO cartridge with something more effective. Or perhaps I should have said when the US decides to adopt something more effective.

John Goddard

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**An Article by Rick Goodman
in "The Age" 22 November 2017**

Fake war vet with 'more medals than Cosgrove' tells court he was a secret agent

A convicted fake war veteran claims he really was a special agent in Vietnam and Afghanistan, only he can't show any proof because it's all top secret. But a judge has decided Neville Donohue's war stories are lies, and warned him to drop an appeal bid or risk a lot more jail time.



Fake veteran 'Major General' Neville Donohue.

Donohue, 65, is appealing against a four-month jail term he received for impersonating a war veteran and other dishonesty offences. He spoke at an Anzac Day service in Kalorama in 2013, sporting rows of shining medallions from far-flung military campaigns.

In the County Court in Melbourne on Wednesday, Donohue argued that he had travelled far and wide in his military career but he was sworn to secrecy as a covert agent. "I was planning and conducting covert operations," he told the court. "I served under a number of different names at different times."

Prosecutor Daniel Porceddu said Donohue was living in a "fantasy world". "You're just making it up," Mr Porceddu said.

A frustrated yet sympathetic Judge Geoffrey Chettle agreed. "Aspects of this case at times verge on farce," he said.

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"It's probably sad in a way the number of medals pinned to his chest at the Anzac Day service." "They couldn't have been earned by anyone. He's got more medals than Cosgrove", referring to Australian Governor-General Sir Peter Cosgrove, whose war decorations include the Military Cross.

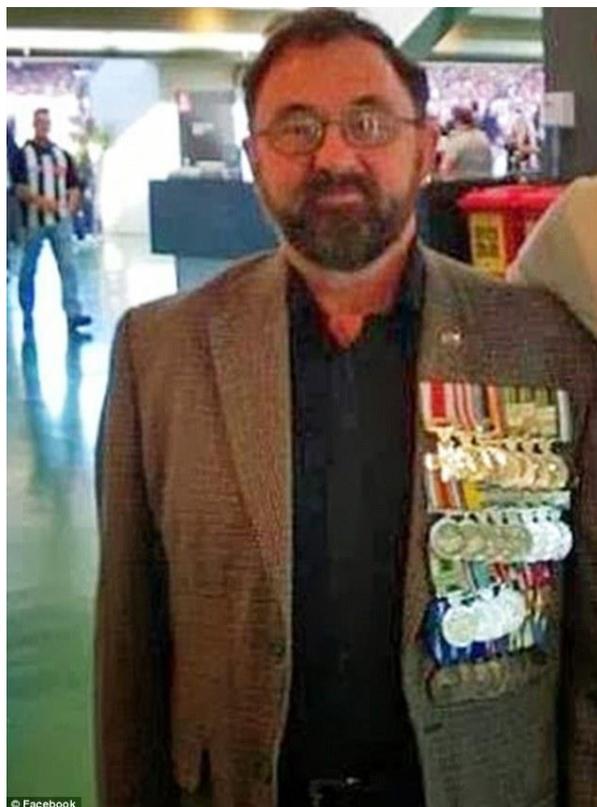
Donohue also sought to appeal against his convictions for some charges, but was unsuccessful on all but one count.

Judge Chettle found him not guilty of impersonating a returned soldier at a Remembrance Day service in 2014.

But the judge strongly urged Donohue to drop the appeal against his sentence while he had the chance, saying he got off lightly in the lower court.

"The magistrate in this case is one of life's gentle souls," Judge Chettle said. "I am warning you, it is not in your interests to go on. There is a risk you will get a lot more time." If the appeal is not dropped, the judge will re-sentence Donohue for nearly 30 charges, including falsely claiming medical expenses.

Donohue, who is on bail during the appeal, was given a night to think and ordered to return to court on Thursday.



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WARNING ORDERS

2018 Tour to Scotland and Ireland

Ron McCaffery of the UK Air Despatch Association has put together a tour to Scotland and Ireland.

The UK ADA has organised the 2018 international reunion after this tour.

If you would like to view the itinerary you can by going to:

<http://www.tours-international.com/tours-for-individuals/air-dispatch-scotland-ireland-2018>

ADAA members can login to view the prices. he password is – mccaferry



Itinerary

Day 1 Friday August 10

Arrival into Glasgow airport. Transfer to your hotel. Join your travel companions for a welcome drink before dinner and overnight.

Day 2 Saturday August 11

Breakfast. Meet your tour guide and set out on an introductory tour of central Glasgow. This is a city that flourished in Victorian times due to the shipbuilding industry and international trade. Drive around George Square with its ornate City Chambers and visit Provand's Lordship, Glasgow's oldest house built in 1471. The house was originally part of a hospital and has been extensively restored and furnished. Dinner and overnight.

Day 3 Sunday August 12

Breakfast. Travel alongside the famous Loch Lomond, renowned for its unsurpassed beauty and through the deep valley of Glen Coe, notorious for the Campbell massacre of the Clan Macdonald in 1692. Drive through Fort William and stop at the Spean Bridge Woollen Mill, which offers a good

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selection of quality Scottish goods. Short cruise on Loch Ness to keep an eye out for 'Nessie'. Dinner and overnight.

Day 4 Monday August 13

Breakfast. We visit a whisky distillery, learn how its distilled and sample some. Continue south to St Andrews, renowned as the 'Home of Golf' and for its university, Scotland's oldest. Spend some time to explore on your own. Drive south to Edinburgh. Overnight.

Day 5 Tuesday August 14

Breakfast. This morning tour the principal sights of Edinburgh. Drive along the bustling Princes Street and through the gracious, wide streets of the 200-year-old Gregorian New Town. Walk along part of the Royal Mile where compact medieval houses reach 11 floors tall. Visit Edinburgh Castle, which dominates the city and contains the Scottish Crown Jewels and the Stone of the Scone. The balance of the day is free. Dine at a Scottish Evening on some excellent Scottish cuisine followed by a lively show with songs, stories and traditional dancing. Overnight.

Day 6 Wednesday August 15

Breakfast. Day at leisure in the Scottish capital. Option: In the early evening we'll head to the esplanade of Edinburgh Castle for the Military Tattoo (*additional cost*) - for a fantastic evening of music, pomp and pageantry, which ends with the spectacle of the lone piper patrolling the battlements, silhouetted against the night sky. Overnight.

Day 7 Thursday August 16

Breakfast. Depart Edinburgh early this morning and drive south through Ayrshire and along the coast, At Cairnryan take a ferry ride to Belfast and enjoy a casual lunch on board. Visit Titanic Belfast to learn about this famous liner which was built in the adjacent docks. State-of-the-art displays describe working conditions in the shipbuilding industry and the construction of the Titanic. Drive south to Dublin and check into your hotel. This evening is free. Overnight.

Day 8 Friday August 17

Breakfast. Tour central Dublin today to see fashionable shopping areas around Grafton and Nassau Streets, view elegant Georgian squares and pass the General Post Office, where the 1916 Uprising started. Walk through the campus of Trinity College with a student guide to view the illuminated manuscript of the 8th century book of Kells and learn how monks created this and other masterpieces. In the evening enjoy a canal dinner cruise with traditional Irish music aboard a former Guinness barge through central Dublin. Overnight.

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Day 9 Saturday August 18

Breakfast. Travel through the midlands of Ireland, stopping for photos at the stately Rock of Cashel. Visit a farmhouse for tea with scones and watch skilled sheep dogs herd sheep. Continue south to visit Blarney Castle and kiss the famous 'Stone of Eloquence'. Also visit the Blarney Woollen Mills where you can find quality Irish-made goods. Drive to Killarney, picturesquely set beside lakes and mountains. Check in at your hotel and relax before dinner. Afterwards you may like to explore some of Killarney's famous singing pubs. Dinner and overnight.

Day 10 Sunday August 19

Breakfast. Visit Ross Castle set on Lough Leane. Then embark on the Ring of Kerry - a winding route with breath-taking sights of mountains and coastal views. Cross to Valentia Island by bridge to visit the Skellig experience which describes the austere lives of early Christian monks on the nearby islands. Enjoy a casual lunch and stop in Sneem to admire brightly painted houses. Pause at Moll's Gap for stunning views before returning to Killarney where you have an evening free for independent dining and activities. Overnight.

Day 11 Monday August 20

Breakfast. Take a ferry ride across the River Shannon to reach the Cliffs of Moher, a spectacular wall of sandstone that reaches 700 feet above the Atlantic Ocean. If you wish, you may visit the Bunratty Folk Park, have a drink in the 200 year old Durty Nelly's Pub or shop at the Bunratty Mills. In the evening head to Bunratty Castle for a memorable medieval style feast where the lords and ladies will serenade you with song and harp music, evocative of the Middle Ages. Overnight.

Day 12 Tuesday August 21

Breakfast. Transfer to Dublin airport

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UK ADA 2018 Coventry Reunion

Tuesday 21 August

Travel from Dublin to Birmingham. UK ADA will arrange transport from airport to hotel - free day

Wednesday 22 August

Visit to the helicopter museum at Weston-Super-Mare then in the afternoon on the way home a visit to the town of Bath.

The longest trip will be from the hotel to the helicopter museum at Weston-Super-Mare, which is about 2 hours.

Thursday 23 August

Visit the Garden of Remembrance and the Air Dispatch Window at All Saints Church, Down Ampney & 47 AD Sqn at RAF Brize Norton

Friday 24 August

Visit Stratford on Avon (Shakespeare) & Warwick castle (a medieval castle)

Friday night looks like the UK ADA people will start to attend and they are looking at a buffet style meal and get together

Saturday 25 August

Visit the National Arboretum including the AD Tree and the AD Memorial Stone. That evening the Formal Reunion Dinner

Sunday 26 August – Breakfast then disperse to do your own travels



2018 Coventry Reunion

The reunion will take place over the weekend of August 24th - 27th at the Quality Hotel Coventry

Our friends from Australia and New Zealand

Will be joining us for the weekend so if you would like to meet up with them, please make an effort to attend

You can choose to stay for 2 or 3 nights and the cost includes Dinner, Bed & Breakfast. A coach will be available for the visit to the National Memorial Arboretum

Further details will be available at a later date

The poster features a central logo with a crown, wings, and the letters 'AD' inside a circle, flanked by the Australian and New Zealand flags. A row of stars separates the text sections. Small airplane icons are at the bottom corners.

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PATRON'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Well it is that time of year again, to be honest I don't know where the year goes but I trust 2017 has been good to you all.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the efforts of your committee and the President in particular. Associations such as ours rely on people willing to make a significant commitment to progress the interests of its members. The committee has been very active, raising a substantial amount of money for the reunion next year, including funding the widow of one of our past member's, which is a great initiative, delivered another successful Myola Day Ball in Penrith as well as progressing other initiatives specifically aimed at supporting the Associations members. Their efforts often go unheralded, but they make a difference as they continue to serve their Mates and their families. In many instances they have worked hard to support a number of our members when they have needed it most and for that I am genuinely grateful.



Of course they are well supported by you the members. I encourage you to continue that support, be it helping out at fundraising activities, supporting the Myola Day Ball, injecting new ideas in to the committee or simply finding the opportunity to catch up with old Mates. An organisation such as ours is only as good as its members and we are very fortunate to have such a strong and committed member base.

While our member base is strong there is always room to grow. I know the committee are exploring ways to increase the number of recent and current service members joining the Association. It is important that we can clearly articulate the benefits of what we do, not just for them as individuals but that sense of ongoing service and support to their Mates that come from our organisation. It is these very important intangibles that can sometimes be hard to sell but in my view is the primary reason the Association has endured for so many years. While the committee are working hard on this I would ask each of you to take the opportunity to promote the virtues of the Association when the opportunity allows.

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Finally, can I ask you to continue to look after each other. A quiet word here, or a helping hand there is sometimes all that is needed to make a difference to someone who is struggling. Since taking up my role as Patron, the most encouraging stories I have heard from many of our members have been around the support you provide each other during the difficult times. This validates the need for Associations such as ours, brings comfort to our members and their families and is an acknowledgment of the quality of our members.

Karen and I wish you a merry Christmas and all the best for 2018 and look forward to catching up with you in the future.

Kind Regards

Brigadier Mick Ashleigh
Patron

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VALE

Pte Cyril (Nobby) Clark
1 AASO and 176 at Wallgrove

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Past Patron:	Major General David Ferguson

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