



# The RUSI Gazette



Anglesea Barracks

Edition No 4/2018 dated 20 Nov 2018



## ARMY HELO OPS VIETNAM

### 161 (Indep) Recce Flight

Colonel Peter Bysouth AM, DFC, gave an inspired address to members on Thursday 23 August 2018 on the operations of the 161 (Indep) recce Flight in Vietnam.

As a 23 year old Sioux Helicopter Pilot, Peter was awarded a DFC for his actions in Vietnam. Peter went on to enjoy a very successful career in the Australian Army Aviation world and retired to Hobart soon after leaving the Army. Peter is pictured below (right) being presented with a Certificate of Appreciation by Hobart Branch Past President, FLGOFF Col Webb.



## ATA PILOT FROM WWII DIES - THE END OF AN ERA

### Mary Wilkins Ellis ATA

2nd February 1917 - 25 July 2018

Mary Ellis was the last of the Attagirls, the ATA pilots who ferried aircraft from factories in WWII to frontline squadrons. She flew an incredible 76 different types, often with only a compass and chart with no experience of the aircraft she was to fly.

Seated in her first Spitfire, Mary was asked by a mechanic, "How many times have you flown one of these?" She replied "Never," and he fell off the wing.

The Wellington bomber was the largest she flew. Having landed and taxied a Wellington to a stop, Mary climbed down the ladder to be greeted by the ground crew who asked her where the pilot was. "I'm the pilot," she said. It was not until they had searched the aircraft that they believed her.

At the end of the war Mary delivered the very first Meteor jet. "You will run out of fuel in about 35 minutes, so make sure you're down by then." She did.



Mary Ellis (above left) in 1942 as an ATA Pilot and again in 2018 celebrating the Centenary of the RAF. She was 101 years of age.

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## **THE CENTENARY OF THE ARMISTICE 1918 - 2018**

A group of members from Hobart travelled to Canberra from 09 to 13 November 2018 to attend the Centenary of the Armistice at the Australian War Memorial and some other associated ceremonies.

Members attending were, SQNLDR and Mrs Robertson, WGCDR & Mrs O'Hara, FLGOFF & Mrs Webb, MAJ & Mrs Young, Mr & Mrs Watling and SQNLDR & Mrs Delia from Victoria

SQNLDR Robertson laid a wreath at the Last Post Ceremony on Saturday 10 November and the group attended the 11am Remembrance Service on Sunday 11 November 2018. Some photos of the event are below.



*This was the Wreath Card attached to the Wreath that was laid at the AWM on Saturday 10 November 2018 at the Last Post Ceremony*



**The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier  
11 November 2018**



SQNLDR Alan Robertson laying a Wreath on behalf of the RUSI at the Last Post Ceremony at the AWM Saturday 10 Nov 2018.

**Fascinating!****STORY****NUMBER****ONE**

Many years ago, Al Capone virtually owned Chicago . Capone wasn't famous for anything heroic. He was notorious for enmeshing the windy city in everything from bootlegged booze and prostitution to murder.

Capone had a lawyer nicknamed "Easy Eddie." He was Capone's lawyer for a good reason. Eddie was very good! In fact, Eddie's skill at legal maneuvering kept Big Al out of jail for a long time. To show his appreciation, Capone paid him very well. Not only was the money big, but Eddie got special dividends, as well. For instance, he and his family occupied a fenced-in mansion with live-in help and all of the conveniences of the day. The estate was so large that it filled an entire Chicago City block.

Eddie lived the high life of the Chicago mob and gave little consideration to the atrocity that went on around him. Eddie did have one soft spot, however. He had a son that he loved dearly. Eddie saw to it that his young son had clothes, cars, and a good education. Nothing was withheld. Price was no object.

And, despite his involvement with organized crime, Eddie even tried to teach him right from wrong. Eddie wanted his son to be a better man than he was. Yet, with all his wealth and influence, there were two things he couldn't give his son; he couldn't pass on a good name or a good example.

One day, Easy Eddie reached a difficult decision. Easy Eddie wanted to rectify wrongs he had done. He decided he would go to the authorities and tell the truth about Al "Scarface" Capone, clean up his tarnished name, and offer his son some semblance of integrity. To do this, he would have to testify against The Mob, and he knew that the cost would be great. But, he testified.

Within the year, Easy Eddie's life ended in a blaze of gunfire on a lonely Chicago Street . But in his eyes, he had given his son the greatest gift he had to offer, at the greatest price he could ever pay. Police removed from his pockets a rosary, a crucifix, a religious medallion, and a poem clipped from a magazine.

The

poem

read:

*"The clock of life is wound but once, and no man has the power*

*To tell just when the hands will stop, at late or early hour.*

*Now is the only time you own, live, love, toil with a will.*

*Place no faith in time, for the clock may soon be still."*

## **NUMBER TWO**

World War II produced many heroes. One such man was Lieutenant Commander Butch O'Hare USN. He was a fighter pilot assigned to the aircraft carrier Lexington in the South Pacific

One day his entire squadron was sent on a mission. After he was airborne, he looked at his fuel gauge and realized that someone had forgotten to top off his fuel tank. He would not have enough fuel to complete his mission and get back to his ship. His flight leader told him to return to the carrier. Reluctantly, he dropped out of formation and headed back to the fleet.

As he was returning to the mother ship, he saw something that turned his blood cold; a squadron of Japanese aircraft was speeding its way toward the American fleet. The American fighters were gone on a sortie, and the fleet was all but defenseless. He couldn't reach his squadron and bring them back in time to save the fleet. Nor could he warn the fleet of the approaching danger. There was only one thing to do. He must somehow divert them from the fleet.

Laying aside all thoughts of personal safety, he dove into the formation of Japanese planes. Wing-mounted 50 caliber's blazed as he charged in, attacking one surprised enemy plane and then another. Butch wove in and out of the now broken formation and fired at as many planes as possible until all his ammunition was finally spent. Undaunted, he continued the assault. He dove at the planes, trying to clip a wing or tail in hopes of damaging as many enemy planes as possible, rendering them unfit to fly. Finally, the exasperated Japanese squadron took off in another direction. Deeply relieved, Butch O'Hare and his tattered fighter limped back to the carrier

Upon arrival, he reported in and related the event surrounding his return. The film from the gun-camera mounted on his plane told the tale. It showed the extent of Butch's daring attempt to protect his fleet. He had, in fact, destroyed five enemy aircraft.

This took place on February 20, 1942, and for that action Butch became the Navy's first Ace of W.W.II, and the first Naval Aviator to win the Congressional Medal of Honor. A year later Butch was killed in aerial combat at the age of 29. His home town would not allow the memory of this WW II hero to fade, and today, O'Hare Airport in Chicago is named in tribute to the courage of this great man.

So, the next time you find yourself at O'Hare International, give some thought to visiting Butch's memorial, displaying his statue and his Medal of Honor. It's located between Terminals 1 and 2.

## **SO WHAT DO THESE TWO STORIES HAVE TO DO WITH EACH OTHER?**

### **Butch O'Hare was "Easy Eddie's" son!**

(Editor: SQNLDR A.W. Robertson Executive Officer RUSI of Tasmania Inc.)

## MAKING A HELICOPTER CAPTAIN FOR VIETNAM OPS

On Thursday 13 September 2018, Wing Commander Wayne 'Noddy' Parsons gave a presentation of the 'Making of a Helicopter Captain' for operational service in Vietnam. Noddy flew Iroquois (Hueys) with No 9 Squadron RAAF during an operational tour in South Vietnam.

The presentation was most enthralling and at the conclusion, a presentation of an RUSI of Tasmania Gold Medallion of Merit was made to Wayne by AVM Peter Scully.

The photo below shows WGCDR Wayne Parsons receiving the Medallion and Certificate from AVM Scully.



*WGCDR Wayne Parsons (left) receiving his Gold Medallion of Merit from AVM Peter Scully. Wayne Parsons was the Senior Air Force Officer Tasmania from 1980 to 1982.*

## THE MAN WHO NEVER WAS – OPERATION MINCEMEAT

In May 1943, the Allies became concerned to persuade the Germans that the launch of an invasion through the soft underbelly of Europe would be made through Greece and not Sicily.

On Thursday 18 October 2018, SQNLDR Alan Robertson gave an interesting and informative brief on this, the greatest deception by Naval Intelligence of World War II. *The Man Who Never Was – or Operation Mincemeat* was the story of that brilliant deception hatched up by two officers in the Naval Intelligence Division at the Admiralty in Whitehall.



*SQNLDR Al Robertson  
Executive Officer RUSI of Tas*