



Birthday Parade

Around 600 Air Force cadets gathered at RAAF Base Richmond on Sunday 12 June to mark the 70th anniversary of the Australian Air Force Cadets (AAFC).

Spectators were wowed by a spectacular parade on the flight line at Richmond, reviewed by Commander Air Lift Group Air Commodore Gary Martin.

Cadet squadrons from Hawkesbury, Camden, Randwick, Ryde, Armidale, Canberra, Glenbrook, Kempsey, Taree, Gosford, Nowra, Shellharbour, Wollongong, Wagga Wagga, Dubbo, Orange and Bathurst participated.

Director General AAFC Air Commodore Roger Harrison said that, over the past 70 years, the AAFC had given thousands of young people the skills and experience to enhance self-esteem and self-discipline.

AAFC traces its origins back to February 1941, when the War Cabinet approved the formation of the Air Training Corps as part of the Air Force Reserve. The original intent was to provide general education to young men aged between 16 and 18, interested in joining the Air Force.

Girls were permitted to join in 1982, and form around 25 per cent of the organisation today.

In 2001 the Air Training Corps was renamed the Australian Air Force Cadets, and remains a volunteer youth organisation, with more than 7000 cadets at AAFC squadrons around Australia.

AAFC is open to Australian citizens between 13 and 18 years old. Information, including contact details for local squadrons, is available from www.aafc.org.au



Youth Congress

Parliamentary Secretary for Defence David Feeney opened the inaugural Defence Youth Engagement and Development Congress in Sydney on 28 May.

The two-day forum brought Navy, Army and Air Force Cadets and other Defence and community youth organisations together to discuss youth engagement and development initiatives and to consider ways in which youth organisations can assist Australian youth with the challenges and choices of adolescence.

Senator Feeney said Defence supported more than 20 different youth engagement and development programs across Australia, including the ADF Cadets, the Defence 2020 Youth Challenge, the Indigenous Youth Connections Program and the Young Endeavour Scheme.

"This congress is an important vehicle through which all youth organisations can share experiences, examine challenges and create opportunities for future co-operation," Senator Feeney said.

Future Leaders

Sunday 10 July 2011 saw the Australian Air Force Cadets (AAFC) and 2 Wing South Queensland conduct their annual Cadet Corporal's Graduation Parade at RAAF Base Amberley – with 100 cadets graduating.

The AAFC cadets had just completed an intensive 10-day live-in leadership course, incorporating dress and bearing, drill and ceremonial, instructional technique, fieldcraft, organisational behaviour, Air Force service knowledge and bush navigational proficiency.

Training-detachment commander Squadron Leader (AAFC) Paul Rowbotham said it amazed him how the cadets were prepared to give up a week of their school holidays to participate in a strict, regimented environment.

"They are exceptional young people who are committed to learning and excelling. They restore one's faith in the youth of today," he said.

New Navy Cadet Council

Words MIDN (ANC) Izaak Gurney, NCC Chairman

On 3-5 June, Navy Cadets from all over Australia gathered at HMAS Harman in Canberra, as representatives of ANC flotillas, where they formed the inaugural National Cadet Council (NCC) – an initiative by senior ANC leaders to allow cadets to have an input into the ANC, in order to maximise opportunities the organisation can provide to cadets.

While at HMAS Harman, the cadets discussed a number of issues facing the ANC, with senior officers including Commodore Geoff Geraghty, Captain Eliot Fisher, Commander Bob Heffey and Commander Geoff Hurren.

Among the issues discussed were; continued recruitment of youth into the ANC; retaining senior cadets; defining senior cadet roles; national training; and, the role of staff.

Cadets and staff proposed, evaluated and reviewed a number of strategies to address these issues, with all parties contributing to the discussion in good spirit.

As a result, a number of key points were taken away by ANC leaders, with many more expected to come.

While in Canberra, cadets were also given an opportunity to explore the sights and attractions of the capital, including Parliament House, the Royal Military College and ADFA, before ending the trip with a visit to the Australian War Memorial.

The NCC initiative was a major step towards Flotilla Cadet Councils (FCC) and Training Ship Cadet Councils (TSCC), which are expected to form in coming months to perform the same purpose as the NCC on a flotilla and unit level, enabling all cadets to have an impact on the organisation.

The NCC strongly urges all cadets to start documenting things that they feel need addressing within the ANC, to effect change, improvement or introduction, so that the ANC may provide premier experiences to cadets.

Chair of the new Navy Cadet Council MIDN Izaak Gurney, Captain Elliott Fisher and NCC Secretary MIDN Daniel Skipworth.



Hornets Nest

I read with interest your article on 'Cadet Corner' in the June, 2011 issue of CONTACT. As a devoted reader of your magazine, I was surprised to see a lack of information on cadet activities, an article that our squadron members look forward to with keen interest.

We are not sure if you would be interested in hearing from our squadron, but I will give you a brief run down on our various activities.

Riverwood Squadron of the Australian Air League (AAL), has more than 80 cadets and NCOs on roll. I have five other officers, all volunteers, who assist me with the running of the squadron and its activities.

Our cadets are very active in the community where our Squadron Drum Corps, Flag Party and Marching Units participate in community street parades, festivals, fetes and activities both locally and around country NSW. This year alone, our members participated in several community activities such as the Tamworth Country Music Cavalcade, ANZAC Sunday where we performed at six parades and ceremonies in one day, ANZAC Day Dawn Service and the street march through Sydney.

In July, the Squadron Drum Corps shifted locations for our weekly band practice, to the St Ives Show Ground, where we provided a drum corps for horse sensitivity training for the mounted-horse units participating on Reserve Forces Day. We have been doing this for several years now, and enjoy the opportunity to diversify our 'client base'. Performing for a bunch of horses is definitely a novel experience for our cadets – and for the horses!

Riverwood Squadron are known as the 'Riverwood Hornets', and have the envious record of being the 'Most Outstanding Squadron in NSW' for the past seven consecutive years.

In 2007 our Squadron Drum Corps performed on stage at Acer Arena in Homebush with Keith Urban.

A couple of the aims of the AAL are to instill the spirit of air-mindedness in the youth of Australia and to promote good citizenship. At the squadron, we conduct parade nights each week on a Friday between 7–9.30pm, supplemented with weekly band practice on Saturday.

Our parade-night program consist of training and development in drill and field activities, physical activities, theory and model



making. We have a terrific setup with three aircraft simulators for cadets to use as part of their training program. One of these sims is 4m long, has an hydraulic canopy and is based on an FA/18 Hornet.

The Squadron operates from a building in Riverwood, known as 'The Hornets Nest', which is the last remaining structure from the WWII US Army Hospital Complex constructed in the area in 1943.

We've been working on renovating our 'Nest', where we have constructed a memorial in the main compound, adorned with surplus military wares such as a 25-pounder cannon, a Caribou propeller and a Sea Venom engine.

Over the years, numerous squadron members have joined Defence, and several have served in the Army. In fact, one former member is currently in 2RAR.

Several of our Cadets have had their service to the community recognised with the awarding of the prestigious 'Young Citizen of the Year' from Hurstville and Canterbury City Councils.

Irrespective of their career choice, our cadets have had excellent opportunity to associate with like-minded people, learn new skills, develop their own leadership abilities and those of others – and, of course, make good friends.

Group Lieutenant Chris Bailey, Officer Commanding, Riverwood Squadron, Australian Air League

Interested in joining? Phone (02) 9153 0898 or email riverwoodhornets@hotmail.com



A couple of our simulators inside our Hornets Nest.



Our Drum Corps leading the Matraville RSL ANZAC Sunday Parade in 2011.