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February 2018



**Newsletter
of the
RAAF
STAFF COLLEGE
ASSOCIATION Inc**

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****** LUNCHEON SEMINAR ******

Friday, 16 March 2018

at the Royal Canberra Golf Club, Yarralumla

Speaker: Air Commodore Tony McCormack
Recently returned Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff U5
United Nations Command, Korea

'An update on the Korean Peninsula'

(nominations via separate Luncheon Notice & Registration Form)

From the President

On behalf of your committee I wish you a very happy New Year. Yes, it is a little late to mark the first day of the year on the modern Gregorian and Julian calendars. However, for all of our members who have served in Butterworth, Vietnam, Singapore, (and perhaps elsewhere where the lunar New Year is observed), the timing is nearly perfect for recognising the imminent start of the year of the Dog. Specifically, 2018 will be the year of the Earth Dog, the first time this particular 'variation' on lunar dog years has been used since 1958, and a lot of water has passed under the bridge since then! That said, I trust that 2018 will be anything but a dog of a year for you.

Members will recall discussion about the challenges associated with attracting a respectable turnout for our lunches in the depths of a Canberra winter. For this reason (and the timing of my private travel this year), your committee has decided to experiment with a timing change that will push our mid-year meeting towards spring, and our final meeting for the year past the alignment we have had in recent years with the RAAF Retired Officers dinner – more a start of Christmas and end of year festivities. The fact is that the alignment previously observed has had little effect on increasing our lunch attendance. However, I recognise that in trying to please many, we may have upset a few, and for this your committee apologises. Let's see how the timing for this year's lunches works and perhaps revisit the issue at the AGM. In the meantime, I trust you will be able to support our lunches, and noting that the charge levied on guests is no higher than for members, you will encourage others to attend as your guest, (if only on a 'Dutch treat' basis).

This brings me to the speaker and topic for our 'pre-spring' (rather than mid-winter) lunch. On Friday 24 August notable Air Force historian, (and author of the RAAF Staff College history, 'Strategy and Red Ink'), Doug Hurst will address us on 'The Far East Air Force 1949-1971'. This topic is of interest to an audience beyond our members and specifically, to members of the Australian Aviation Club (AAC), some of whom missed Doug's presentation to them on this topic last year. Noting the significant overlap between the AAC's membership and our own, and subject to there not being an objection to the idea, the intention is to extend the invitation to that lunch to members of the AAC as a further measure to boost our attendance numbers at a time when they have traditionally been low. I trust that this initiative meets with your approval.

Now, to the matter immediately at hand – our next lunch on Friday 16 March, where our guest speaker, Air Commodore Tony McCormack will address us on the very topical issue, ‘An Update on the Korean Peninsula’. Having only returned to Australia in the past few weeks after three years in South Korea as Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff U5 in United Nations Command, Korea, it’s unlikely that right now there is a better qualified person in Australia than Tony to provide us with very well informed insights into recent, and possibly likely future events on the Korean peninsula. Like me, I expect you will be watching the current political manoeuvrings in the margins of the winter Olympics, as no doubt Tony will be as he finalises his presentation for 16 March.

To conclude with a minor administrative matter, those attending our AGM last year will recall my comments about meal options at our lunches and in particular, recognition of members’ overwhelming preference for a red meat main course dish. The intention for 16 March and future lunches will be to select a single red meat dish, rather than having an ‘alternate drop’. This follows my experience from the middle of last year when I was served a red meat dish. Those at my table served the white meat dish had daggers in their eyes – all aimed at me! Notwithstanding the new single red meat dish policy, as has always been the case in the past, Royal Canberra Golf Club kitchen staff are very willing to accommodate our members’ special dietary requirements. In short, if your dietary requirements are incompatible with a red meat dish main course, please make those requirements known at the time you submit your acceptance to attend the lunch.

Once again, we can look forward to an interesting, and developing presentation, an enjoyable lunch and of course each other’s company on 16 March. As always, I look forward to seeing you then.

Kind regards,

Ian Pearson

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