



AUSTRALIAN AMERICAN ASSOCIATION – GOLD COAST DIVISION NEWSLETTER

May, 2019.

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Website being revised

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT.

Well here we are early May and just held this past weekend one of the biggest events that Australian American Association Gold Coast Division hosts during our calendar year that being the Commemoration of the Battle of Coral Sea in May 1942.

After months of organizing and preparation by our Committee and specifically by Billie Jo McCann I would like to thank you all along with other volunteers within the AAA-GCD that assisted and participated in making this such a successful event.

I will recap the event more specifically for those members and friends who were not in attendance and maybe it might whet your interest to attend or even participate in future years. Unless you have experienced such a Commemoration Service it is truly a very impressive occasion. The fact we once had three members who were actually veterans of the Battle Coral Sea is pretty special in its own right. All are now deceased.

As part of the invitation to many dignitaries, we came across an unusual situation this year as the sitting Government called an election which meant they went into “caretaker mode.” What it meant to us on the Committee organizing the service was it became very complicated to find anyone to attend to represent the various bodies and it was a bit “hairy” as we had no Prime Minister’ representative, and a number of our regular MP’s that normally attend could not do so. We certainly had to work hard to come up with the goods as they say but we were victors in the end.

It also turned out the US Ambassador and US Consul General had other obligations and so we were fortunate to have Colonel Raymond M. Powell USAF, who is Senior Defence Attache in the Canberra Embassy who came as representative to the United States Mission in Australia. Colonel Powell read the Message from the President of the USA and laid a wreath on the USA’s behalf.

Our representative for Prime Minister Scott Morrison was Stuart Robert MP, Member for Fadden and our Assistant Treasurer who read the Message from the Prime Minister of Australia and laid a wreath on the Australian Government’s behalf.

Our Guest Speaker was Lieutenant Colonel Terrence G. Propravak, Jr. USAF (retired) who happened to be on an assignment in Brisbane and volunteered to fulfil this role. His speech was very enlightening as he spoke regarding the aspect of the Air Force’s participation in this Battle and that it was not just the Navy who fought back in May 1942. Lieutenant Colonel Propravak Jr also laid a wreath as a remembrance.

Other dignitaries representing various bodies was Lieutenant Commander Gerald Savvakis RAN, representing the Royal Australian Navy laying a wreath on the RAN’s behalf.

Major Garth Callender, who is in the Army Reserves, read our Prologue and Councillor Dawn Crichlow OAM represented the Gold Coast City Councillors and also laid a wreath on their behalf.

Two of our newest members Dr Phillip Morris and Dr Stephen Weinstein, participated in the service reading the Prayers of Intercession and the Committee appreciated their volunteering to do so. I would like also to thank our Treasurer Howard Campbell who once again did a sterling job as our Emcee for the day. Much appreciated. As mentioned earlier, our three Battle of Coral Sea Veterans were acknowledged during the service and a wreath was laid in their memory and their respective contributions during the Battle.

Another fact that I found out on the day is one of our best friend is actually a widow of her husband had been in the Merchant Navy and fought at the Battle – amazing that it be a small world after all.

Thanks were extended to our Gold Coast City Band, the TSS Naval Cadets, Reverend Michael Uptin and the various RSL’s and other

veterans groups present for their service during previous wars and for their attendance today. May we never forget those gone before us. Lest We Forget.

Upon completion of the service a reception on the balcony at the Surfers Paradise RSL was held.

Faye Brutlag, President AAAGCD



Our Prayer readers, Dr. Philip Morris, Dr. Stephen Weinstein and Revd. Michael Uptin wait patiently for the Commemoration service to begin.



Our President Faye welcomes all to the Commemoration Service.



Representing the RAN Lt Cmdr Gerald Savvakis, representing the US Embassy Col Raymond M. Powell and a candidate for Moncrieff Ms Angie Bell.



Our hardworking organiser & secretary, Billie Jo McCann with President of War Widows Association and Carole Morris a member of our AAAGCD

COMING EVENTS

Meet & Greet Dates
SOUTHPORT YACHT CLUB 4TH
WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH

May 22nd 2019, 5.30 - 7.00 PM

June 26th 2019,

July 24th 2019.

Other functions planned.

June 2019 Springbrook – details to be announced

July 4th, 2019 Gold Coast Historical Society and Museum 8 Elliott Street (off Bundall Road) Surfers Paradise Details to be announced



Our guest speaker Lt Col Terrence G. Propravak Jr.

Hope you can make one of functions in the future.

Membership Renewals will be sent out at end of May.