

# PHOENIX



QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF THE  
**AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL FLYING MUSEUM**  
HISTORICAL AIRCRAFT RESTORATION SOCIETY, INC.



**Spring/Summer 2007**



## HARS Contact Details

### President

Bob De La Hunty, OAM  
 Phone: (02) 9894 5818  
 Home: (02) 9894 5775  
 Mobile: 0408 235 682  
 Fax: (02) 9894 6630  
 Email: delahunty@bigpond.com.au

### Executive Vice President - Marketing

John Brooker  
 Phone: (02) 9939 7513  
 Fax: (02) 9905 9496  
 Email: jwbrooker@bigpond.com.au

### Treasurer

Robert Greinert  
 Mobile: 0414 512 619  
 Fax: (02) 9451 4369  
 Email: thunderboltaus@bigpond.com

### Secretary

Maureen Massey  
 Mobile: 0400 818 557

### Manager Engine Workshop and Port Kembla Facility

Kevin Taylor  
 Phone: (02) 9520 6946  
 Mobile: 0422 902 545  
 Email: kgemtay@chilli.net.au

### General Manager Maintenance

Malcolm Hallowes  
 Phone: (02) 9868 4463  
 Mobile: 0410 498 081  
 Email: mha33269@bigpond.net.au

### Executive Committee Member

Jim Hayes  
 Mobile: 0421 664 199

### Manager Administration Services

Rees Hughes  
 Mobile: 0409 104 910

### Administration and Tour Manager

John Martin  
 Mobile: 0422 278 502

### Chaplain

Pst Grahame Abrahams  
 Phone: (02) 4256 3724  
 Mobile: 0429 995 649

### Phoenix Editor

Julie Hourigan  
 Mobile: 0409 770 803  
 Email: mhourig@bigpond.net.au  
 julie.hourigan@act.gov.au

### All correspondence

(including claims and invoices):  
 HARS Inc.  
 Cnr Airport Road and Boomerang Drive  
 Albion Park Rail NSW 2527

Phone: (02) 4257 4333  
 Fax: (02) 4257 4388

## Editor's Message:

By the time you all receive this edition of *Phoenix*, Christmas will have been and gone for another year. I hope that you all had a really great Christmas and hope that the New Year is one of many great adventures.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who helped Wendy and me prepare for the HARS Christmas Party and hope that all who joined us on the night enjoyed themselves as much as we did. Some HARS members were known to have partied all night...

We are planning to have a Christmas in July function this year—see page 21 for details.

I would just like to request that members continue to send in stories for future editions of *Phoenix*. Without your contributions there wouldn't be a newsletter.

## HARS Sponsors

HARS gratefully acknowledges our sponsors, past and present, and welcomes new names to this honour roll:

Adecs (Aust); ADC Krone; Aero Club of Arizona; Aero Weigh; Air BP; Aircraft and Aerospace Magazine; Air Services Australia; Mr. Bill Andronicos; Ansett Australia; Anzol Paints; AOPA; Mrs. S. Arms; Australian Aviation Magazine; Australian Native Landscapes; Australian Steel Mill Services; Australian Timken; Aviation Trim & Upholstery; Barloworld Coatings; Barker Lawyers; Bartrans; Bellinger Instruments; The Family of the late Mr Ron Bennett; Ian Berryman; BlueScope Steel; BlueScope Water; Boom Logistics; Boral Portable Buildings; Mr G Boyd; Bristol Paints; Mrs J L Brooker; Phil Buckland, Buckland Auto Electrical Pty Ltd; Chemetall; Chevron Companies (Calif); Cleary Bros; John and Jenny Cleary; Coates Prestige Hire; Collins Avionics Sales & Service; Colourtrue Labels; Country Fire Services; Geoff Cuthbert; Daltrans; Capt R Darwell; Mr T Dean; Mr R De La Hunty; Mr N Dennett; Dual Electrical Services (Melbourne); Ecolab; Eric Fordham Engineering; Fish Internet; Flightpath Magazine; Frejak Constructions; Mr R George; GNB Battery Technologies; Mr W Goodhew; Goodyear Air Treads; Gossamer Threads; Graham John Signs; Mr R Greinert; Mrs M Greinet; Hatch Associates; Hazelton Airlines; Capt R Heiniger; Hexcel Interiors; Hurdis Plumbing; Icon Internet; IMB Foundation; Independent Locksmiths; Industrial Maintenance Systems; Jecani Pty. Ltd.; Jeremy Flynn Memorial Trust; Mr B Kelly; Mr S Kennard; Kiama Municipal Council; Lockheed Aeromod Center Inc (Tucson); Mr G Loudon; Mr D Lowy; Lysaghts; Mr J McAlpine; Mainpac; Mascot Steel; Mrs M Massey; Gordon McDonald (Elect W'salers); Metro Products & Company; The late Capt B Millis; Minden Air Corp (Tucson); Geoff Morris; NCR Australia; Nostalgaier Models; Notebook Publications; Oilcheck; Olex Cables; Oxley Graphics; Pam Karcaji Signs; Mr G Paramour; Peter Ryan Earthmoving; R J Pettitt; Pima Air & Space Museum (Tucson); Protector Safety; Qantas Airways; Qantas Flight Hostess Club; Qantas 20 Club; QBE Aviation; Reflex; Reliable Pest Control; Rivers Locking Systems; Riverstone Printing; DC Roberts Aircraft Co; Robyn-Lea Services; Rockwell Systems Australia; Sharp Direct; Shell Australia; Shellharbour City Council; Miss T Smiley; Mr D Smith; Snap Printing Auburn; Mr G Squire; Mr A Stinson; RR Szabo; Mr A Tait; Tattersalls; Taubmans Paints; Telstra; TPE Integrated Services; Transfield Constructions; Transfield Services; Triangle Refrigeration; Trimble Navigation; Trojan Workforce; Trump Property Maintenance; Valspar Corp (formerly Anzol Paints); Weekly Trading Post; Mr K Weldon; Weston Printing; White Knight Paints; John Whitmarsh; Ms Gina Wilson; Wiltshire Engineering; Wollongong City Council.

**HARS web site: [www.hars.org.au](http://www.hars.org.au)**

### Associated web site

[www.notebookpub.com.au](http://www.notebookpub.com.au)

The **front cover photograph** was taken looking out the back window of Neptune 273 while circling over the Illawarra.

## President's Report



Welcome everybody to 2008.

The year has started with the continued process of growing and the exciting developments are:

- The restoration shop is in place and anyone visiting knows from the noise of riveting guns from 6.30am till 3pm, 5 days a week, that the projects within the facility are well and truly progressing. The tourism attraction of this facility cannot be overstated and although some people were concerned about the noise at various times it has so far proven that the sheer excitement that it generates is well worth the interruption to conversations. We have decided therefore that we will arrange a supply of earphones and earplugs for our tours so they can get with the program and feel part of what is going on.
- We were recently invited to participate in the Charles Kingsford Smith anniversary activities at Gerringong and we were represented by John Weller who has also been talking on radio programs. This has generated an increase in visitors, including WIN TV who came to visit and did a news item on the Southern Cross which again was to our advantage.

- As you will see from our website the structure is well and truly underway for the Super Hangar and we are all looking forward to what that will mean to our organisation.
- As most of you will know Greg Ackman from Mobile One Communications has bought a Convair 340 with an agreement to donate it to HARS once it has arrived in Australia. The first engineering teams will be working on the aircraft in February and at this stage we do not have any idea how long it will take, as not only does it depend on engineering aspects but money will be the prime factor as usual in any of these adventures.
- We recently had the senior management of Shell join us for a day and apart from a local flight in one of the C47's we were pleased to have cemented our close working sponsorship arrangement with Shell. We are now in the process of putting in place a three year agreement for operations that will essentially support the Illawarra community and operations in association with other major sponsors. We are very grateful to the 20 year relationship we have now had with Shell and look forward to supporting their customers and promoting Shell products and services.
- We are working closely with our mining company sponsors to have the Super Constellation repainted and corrosion protected. This will refresh the aircraft as it has been now some 14 years since it was painted in Tucson Arizona with the help of Lockheed. We are grateful to our mining company supporters for both the Super Constellation support as well as the C47 operations.
- The 'Wings Over Illawarra' event will be a major showcase for us and direct recognition for our sponsors of their support for preserving our aviation history. This support will enable young people to understand the rich heritage we have and they can be proud of Australia's achievements in aviation over a very long period of time. It will also enhance the tourism and employment opportunities in the Illawarra which is already happening.
- HARS has a major focus on OH&S to ensure we look after each other and our visitors in the safest possible way. It is up to all of us to have a priority culture in OH&S matters which can be achieved by using common sense, taking responsibility, wiping up any oil or water that you see on the floor in the hangar and ensuring there is nothing protruding that could injure people. Where there is, attach an appropriate flag or put a witches hat in place which will redirect traffic.

On behalf of the Committee we would like to thank all of our membership and sponsors for making HARS a place where we can enjoy each other's company and contribute to both our history as well as to the country's future.

Bob De La Hunty



## CONNIE'S BIG BROTHER

Brian Van de Water

The next time you are travelling somewhere by air in cattle (sorry -economy) class with your knees up near your chin, cast your mind back to the halcyon days of the mighty flying boats of the 1930s—when passengers enjoyed copious space to stroll the length of the deck and practice putting, and where meals were served with china and cutlery in restaurant style.

However, do not dwell too long on that idyllic picture—bearing in mind that flight to Europe occupied several days, and that air travel anywhere was the almost exclusive province of the wealthy. The average wage earner could only dream of flying to distant places.

These concepts of luxury travel survived well into WW2, when aircraft designers turned their thoughts to post-war air travel, and envisaged that the same or increased levels of space and service would be the norm. What would be required were staterooms, promenade decks, bars and dining rooms. This state of mind led to the development of a number of gigantic aircraft that were seen as the only avenue to satisfy these lofty objectives.

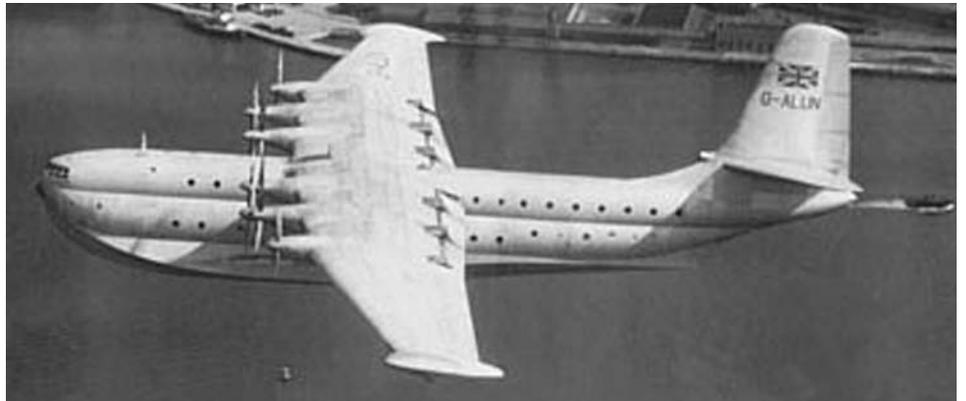
In 1943, the Brabazon Committee was tasked with specifying the type of aircraft the post-war British industry should build (under the British system, the manufacturers could not talk directly with the airlines as the Air Ministry provided the money and decided what was required). For shorter distances, such as within Europe, a range of small to medium aircraft was specified and, of these, only the Vickers Viscount became a commercial success.

For the longer routes, and trans-Atlantic in particular, the deliberations of the Brabazon Committee resulted in the most expensive white elephants in aviation history—the Bristol Brabazon with 8 engines, and the Saro Princess flying boat with 10 engines. Both were of physical dimensions close to those of a Boeing 747, but with only a small fraction of the engine power of the 747. Prototypes of both flew but never went into production.

The US was not immune to the giant aircraft syndrome, although there the airlines did talk directly to the



*Bristol Brabazon*



*Saro Princess flying boat*



*Hughes "Spruce Goose"*



*Convair XC-99*



*Lockheed Constitution*

manufacturers, and must share some of the blame for the US producing two aircraft which competed with the Brabazon and Princess in the competition for the most useless large aircraft in history. Before WW2, airline manufacturer collaboration resulted in the outstanding success of the DC3 and led to the design of the Constellation and DC4. However, as WW2

progressed, the cost of developing new aircraft designs skyrocketed, and the manufacturers sought military orders before proceeding with new airliner development. In a previous article, I gave an account of the superlative high speed Republic Rainbow which could have supplanted the Constellation and DC6/7, but was abandoned when parallel military orders were cancelled.

During WW2, Lockheed and Convair started development of two aircraft which they believed would satisfy post-war airline requirements, while at the same time providing for growing military troop transportation (the Hughes "Spruce Goose" was developed to carry troops but was never seriously considered for airline use) The vision of mass movements of troops combined with the vision of ultra - luxurious airline travel resulted in two giant aircraft which were built only in small numbers.

The Convair aircraft was the XC99, derived from the giant B36 intercontinental bomber. The XC99 used the same wing and six pusher R4360

Aircraft	Wing Span	Gross Weight	Total Horsepower
Saro Princess	67 m	157 tonnes	37800
Brabazon	70m	131 tonnes	18880
Convair XC99	70m	120 tonnes	18000
Constitution	57m	84 tonnes	12000
Boeing 747-400	64m	397 tonnes	238000*
Connie	37m	62 tonnes	13600

\*Equivalent horsepower

piston engines as the B36, but featured a new double deck fuselage very similar in appearance and size to today's A380 Airbus. Conceived primarily for troop transportation, the end of WW2 led to cancellation of military orders for the XC99 and negotiations with airlines failed to secure any orders.

The Lockheed Constitution was designed with the encouragement of the airline industry as well as the military. Pan American Airways approached Lockheed for a super transport aircraft, and the specification was finalised in late 1943. The aircraft was priced on an assumed production run of 50 aircraft, including anticipated orders from the US Navy. The specification stipulated that Navy aircraft must be capable of transfer to the airlines at the end of WW2.

The Constitution's first flight took place on 9 November 1946 and, in my opinion, it was the most elegant of the very large aircraft to emerge at that time and since then. No major problems

were experienced in flight trials, but only two were built and served only with the US Navy, before finally retiring in 1953. The post-war airlines rejected the Constitution, and there were two main reasons for this.

Firstly, engine power was inadequate for the Constitution and the other giant aircraft conceived during WW2. The largest piston engine available at the time was the Pratt & Whitney R4360 which produced 3000 hp, and the Constitution was powered by only four of these (and had less power than Connie which is much smaller). The Brabazon was designed in the expectation that 4000+hp turboprop engines would be available, but these did not reach maturity until the 1950s, and meanwhile required a multiplicity of lower power piston engines. The Princess had a grand total of ten 3780 hp turboprop engines, but by the time it first flew in 1952, flying boats were regarded as antiques and the Princess was totally rejected even by government controlled BOAC (three were built but only one flew - an extraordinary waste of money and resources)

Secondly and most important, post-war airlines came to realise that economics favoured smaller aircraft such as the Constellation and DC6/7 for long distance air travel - and that there was a growing market for lower priced but more crowded passenger amenities. This led to the emergence of economy class travel in the 1950s. These smaller aircraft were, by 1946, proven designs that could be purchased at a fraction of the cost of the gigantic dream aircraft and it would be twenty years before sufficient engine power was available to make a giant aircraft—the 747—economically feasible.



The flight deck of the Constitution provided space which would make our Connie flight crews green with envy!

This examination was re-discovered by Phil Gannon (ex QANTAS engineer, 1952-1991) and was among his father's papers and dates back to the 1930s and 1940s. His father FRANK GANNON was also heavily involved in aviation (see story next page).

## CIVIL AVIATION DEPARTMENT

### EXAMINATION FOR GROUND ENGINEERS: "C" AND "D" LICENCES: PAPER NO. 3

General Knowledge: TIME 2 HOURS

NOTE: Twelve questions only to be answered, one of which must be No. 7.

Marks will be deducted for bad hand writing, blots, and beer stains.

#### Questions

1. Compare the relative merits of sheet lead and sealing wax for repairing punctures in parachutes.
2. Assuming the truth of the axiom that all matter is indestructible, account for the disappearance of a bottle of gin from the examiner's desk last Thursday.
3. What do you know of:
  - (a) The micrometer.
  - (b) The hand brake.
 Explain how you would determine the annual rainfall of Tasmania using the above agricultural implements.
4. Who wrote the following lines, and why?
  - (a) "The Gannet is a stupid bird,  
It wallows round the sky,  
And everyone who see it says,  
My God! How does it fly?"
5. What effect is produced on the blood pressure by deciphering a Wackett blue-print.
6. What defects, if any, has golden syrup as a lubricant, and does the use of Lux tend to cause contraction in a piston ring.
7. Assuming that ten fitters, two foremen, and a girl work a night shift of nine hours for five nights per week, calculate to not less than three decimal places the girl's potential chances of retaining her virginity, making use of the Binomial Theorem and the Law of Human Nature. For this, and all other similar problems, the age of consent may be taken as 14.
8. Discriminate between:
  - (a) A designer's inadvertent error.
  - (b) A mechanic's bloody carelessness.
9. Do you consider that a zebra is:
  - (a) A black animal with white stripes.
  - (b) A white animal with black stripes.
10. Give the cycle of operations in an internal confusion engine and state the ratio of reduction between the slow running jet and the gear lever.
11. Given that the rate of production from the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation is 1 1/2 N.A. 33's in five years, estimate to the nearest penny the income of the Test Pilot, assuming that he is paid 17/6 per aircraft. For the purpose of this problem, it may be taken that the half aircraft proved faulty and was tested – twice.
12. Given that the compass course between Point Cook and Richmond is 30 degrees, what course would be flown by an RAAF pilot departing from Pt. Cook at 07.30 hours on a day when there is no wind. Assuming that only two forced landings occurred, would you put out flares two, or three nights later?
13. Draw a sketch of the pilot's cockpit in an Avro Anson showing clearly the position of the following instruments.
  - (a) The spittoon.
  - (b) The emergency cord.
  - (c) The anchor.
  - (d) The corkscrew.
14. Trace the progress of aviation from 1066 to the year in which the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation was formed. Give in your own words the reasons for its subsequent decline.
15. Detail the various uses of a rubber spanner in a modern aero-engine shop.
16. Draw a detailed diagram showing the plan, section and elevation of a vacuum under compression.
17. Who is Mr. Thorby? Is he:
  - (a) Chief Warder at Pentridge.
  - (b) Station Master at Spencer Street.
  - (c) A Lighthouse keeper.
  - (d) A fool.
18. "A straight line is the shortest distance between two points". In the light of recent RAAF experience, the above statement has proved to be false. Discuss the importance of this discovery.
19. Using Archimedes' Principle, Ohm's Law, and Rickett's point, prove that there cannot be more than three sides to a Triangle.
20. In what respects does a Gypsy Major Engine differ from a concrete mixer? Give the firing order in each case.
21. It has been stated that the phrase. "What goes up must come down", has an important bearing on both civil and military aviation. In what Bar Parlour was the phrase first uttered, and by whom?

**General Notes:** Candidates are requested not to remove the ink wells on departure. Those wishing to leave the room during the exam period must signify their wishes in the usual manner, by raising the right hand aloft. Candidates are also informed the examiner is not to receive gifts. His telephone number, however, is AA6402. All cheques should be crossed and the correct exchange added. Stamps will not be accepted.

## FRANK GANNON (1908-1954)

*The following extracts are from numerous articles written about Frank Gannon and kindly provided by Phil Gannon.*

Mr Gannon's entry into aviation dates from 1922. He became head teacher of aircraft construction at Sydney Technical College and was concerned about turning out more and better aircraftsmen and licenced engineers (a point which was emphasised in a comprehensive paper he presented at the Automotive Engineering Convention held in Sydney on 8 March 1938).

In 1928 he joined the late General Aircraft Co., at Mascot, builders of the Australian designed Genairco. This firm was wound-up during the depression and, some time later, Frank Gannon leased the factory and formed Turl and Gannon, a business which was later converted into a public company, Tugan Aircraft Ltd. Frank Gannon recalls that his association with Sir Charles Kingsford Smith led to the first mass production of multi-engined aircraft in Australia, when he undertook to construct for him three Gannets. This, incidentally, was one of the reasons for floating Tugan Aircraft Ltd. For this project, the company employed LJ Wackett (later Sir Lawrence) as technical adviser to supply drawings and stress analyses for the Gannet, which followed, more or less, the lines of the earlier Codock built by Wackett at Cockatoo Island Dockyard. The name Gannet was nominated by 'Smithy' since it was not only the name of a bird, but also a combination of the names of both Gannon and Wackett.

In 1935, Gannon resigned from Tugan Aircraft Ltd and Wackett was appointed manager. The company was later purchased by the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation and formed the nucleus of CAC.

Gannon's next step was the establishment of an aircraft materials and parts section for the Paul & Gray organisation. At the outbreak of World War II, he had organised the only aircraft material supply body in Australia, with branches in the various States. He was also responsible for the creation of the DCA Release Note system in Australia. During the war, he was engaged on various work with the Aircraft Production Commission and with Paul & Gray's development division.

In 1945, Gannon transferred from Paul & Gray Ltd to their newly-formed agency company, Allison Gray & Co., where he established an aircraft agency section. He

left this organisation in 1952 to become Managing Director of British Aircraft and Engineering Pty Ltd., Sydney and had been associated with the selling and development of the Blackburn & General Aircrafts 'Beverley/Universal Freighter'. He believed that these

aircraft would suit Australian conditions, especially in the outback.

Frank Gannon was also a close personal friend of Qantas pioneer Arthur Baird who also coincidentally passed away in the same year.



*The Tugan Aircraft Ltd 'Gannet'*



*The 'Gannet' in flight*



*Historical photograph of Mascot Airport showing the location of the Tugan Aircraft Company Ltd c1934 (an area now occupied by Domestic Terminal/Jet base)*

## DEDICATION OF HANGAR 1

### *Memoir of Jeremy*



Written by Christopher Flynn,  
15 October 2007

Father Jeremy Flynn was the third son of Vincent John Flynn and Jean Marie Flynn, of Bellevue Hill, Sydney. He was born at Orange on 4 April 1942, while his father was serving in the Australian Armoured Corps and like his brothers Vincent John and Christopher, he attended Jesuit schools in Sydney, firstly Campion Hall at Point Piper (1949-1954) and then St Ignatius' College, Riverview (1955-1959).

In 1960 he was accepted by the Archbishop of Sydney, Cardinal Gilroy, to study for the Catholic priesthood in the Sydney diocese and he was ordained as deacon in 1970 (he served

as deacon to Pope Paul VI at the solemn papal Mass celebrated at Randwick Racecourse in December of that year), and as priest on 22 August 1971.

During a break from his studies, Jeremy became qualified as a pilot, taking his first solo flight on 14 October 1966 from Bankstown and up to 15 April 1996 he had recorded in four log books over 3,287 hours of flying.

After his ordination as a priest he served as an assistant priest in a number of the parishes of the diocese of Sydney, including Naremburn, Auburn and Richmond. In 1980 he offered to work for three years as the priest of the Orokolo mission, which had been established in the 1890s at Kavava on the shore of the Gulf of Papua, and which is now in the diocese of Kerema, Papua New Guinea. He returned to Australia in 1983 and, after further service as an assistant priest in Sydney suburban parishes, was appointed as parish priest of Newtown, where he stayed until the time of his death on 21 April 1996.

Many of the people in the parishes where Father Jeremy worked, and many of his brother priests, still remember him with gratitude and affection. He treated everybody with equal respect and in an open and friendly way. He was always conscious of his high calling as a priest and ready to discuss and dispute on the right occasion, but knowing that faith is a gift and that adherence to the truth in



*Cessna 130, VH-REK*

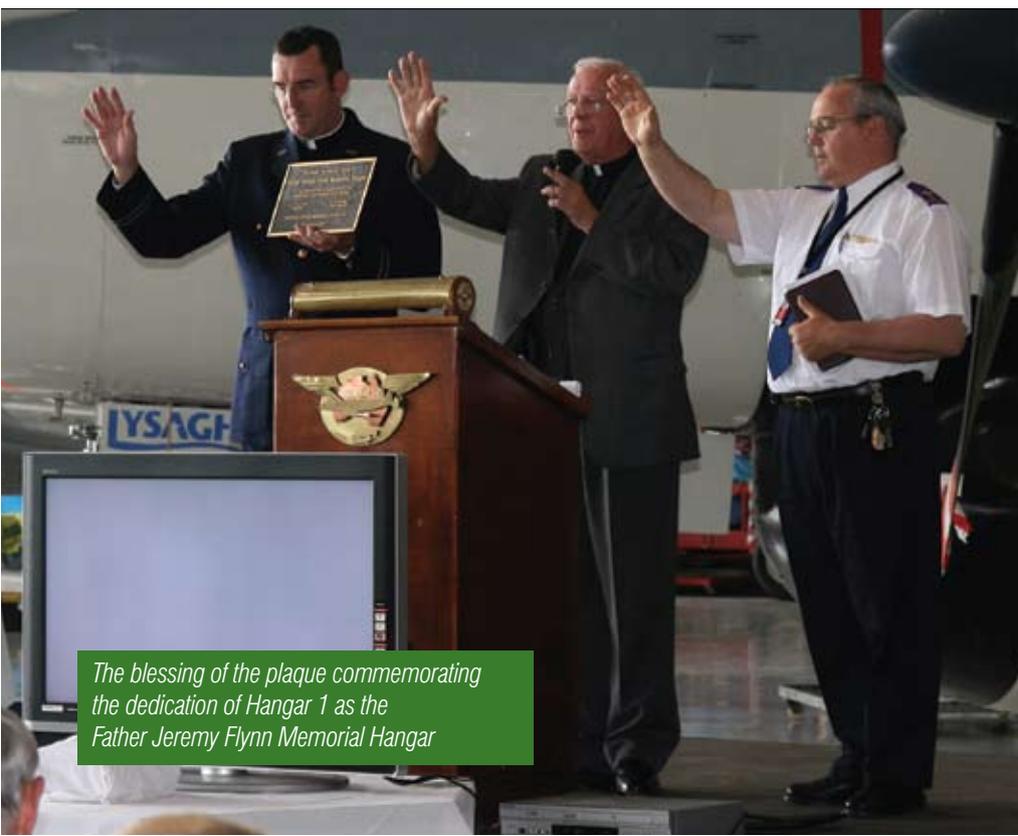


*De Havilland T-35A Vampire, VH-FJW*

the communion of the Catholic Church can never come from brow-beating.

He was always glad to keep in touch with his family, including his Playoust and Adams relatives who were always ready to offer him hospitality and encouragement, but especially with Paula and me and with our children in whose progress he was very interested. It is good to know that our son John spent some months staying with Jeremy at Newtown in the winter of 1994 after he had left school in England the previous year and before starting a degree course in history at Manchester University. During that time Jeremy flew John in his Cessna 310 VH-REK to Innisfail and Ayers Rock. Jeremy would have been delighted to know that in 1998, after gaining two degrees at Manchester University, John was to follow him in undertaking to prepare for the priesthood, and that he was ordained in 2006 as a priest of the diocese of Salford (the English diocese which includes Manchester and some surrounding towns).

Paula and I and all our relatives are very much honoured by the decision of the board of HARS to dedicate a new hangar in Jeremy's memory at their permanent home at Albion Park. We hope that in this way Father Jeremy Flynn will continue to be remembered as one of the many people who have shared in all the common friendship, the hard work and the commitment which still go to sustain HARS and all its projects.



*The blessing of the plaque commemorating the dedication of Hangar 1 as the Father Jeremy Flynn Memorial Hangar*

## A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY ABOUT OUR BOY GEOFF...

Story and photograph published in the *Kembla News* Friday 16 February 1973

# DAPTO DISH REPLACES CALL GIRL

**Geoff Cuthbert's the biggest private ear in Australia.**

**And his electronic eavesdropping apparatus is about the most sensitive in the business.**

What's more, he is just as likely to go pussy-footing around in the darkest hours of the night to listen in to scraps of code that would be complete nonsense to most of us.

Geoff is a radio ham—with a difference.

President of the Illawarra Branch of the Wireless Institute of Australia, he is at present deeply delighted with the local branch's acquisition, restoration and use of a radio telescope at Dapto.

The telescope, previously operated by the CSIRO was handed over to Wollongong University in 1961.

Three years ago the Wireless Institute, with the financial backing of the university, started to build equipment to carry out 'moonbounce' experiments, on a radio frequency of 432 megahertz.

Fifteen of the 80 members of the institute belong to our works.

Geoff said last week he had become interested in amateur radio from reading an article about it in the *Kembla News*.

He had joined the club, qualified in one year by passing the exams conducted by the PMG Department, and became a licensed radio operator.

Presidency of the local group and that group's interest in the Dapto project had expanded his knowledge of communications in the ultra high frequency bands.

He said the moon did not seem so romantic when it was simply used as a reflecting device to bend radio signals.

Nor was the weak Morse signal as pleasant to listen to as the voice of a woman 'ham' on the other side of the world.

'You might say we have fallen for a Dapto dish instead of a Danish call girl', he said. 'But it is all in the interest of science'.

'It takes 2 1/2 seconds for a radio signal to travel to the moon and return and this at 10<sup>27</sup>,



PICTURE: with astronauts zipping off on a weekend flyaway to the moon, and radio bugs bouncing casual how-de-does off its surface, somehow romantic hand-holding by moonlight seems to have lost its punch. From the foot of Dapto's ear on the heavens, Geoff Cuthbert looks to an outside moon swinging on its earth orbit, undisturbed despite the waywardness of men.

or point 27 zeros of the signal we send out'.

'We have had to devise some very sensitive equipment to do this'.

'In plotting the signal, we have graphically recorded the moon's wobble on its axis'.

'Our 30ft dish is one of the best in the world being used by amateurs'.

'Before the CSIRO moved to Parkes our gear was used as the pilot plant for the Parkes radio telescope'.

'Private firms have assisted us in providing some equipment and we are using some transistors and integrated circuits not yet available on the open market'.

'No qualifications are needed to join our club and we invite inquiries from interested persons'.

'Apprentices, doctors, truck drivers—we have all sorts of average blokes with a common interest, radio communications'.

'It is a fascinating hobby and one that is developing all the time', Geoff said.

## Australian Air League

Natalie Cordoba

My name is Natalie Cordoba and I am a 15 year old Leading Cadet of Albion Park Girls Squadron based in the HARS hangar at Albion Park Airport. When I first joined in early 2006 we were based in the Control Tower, which was okay considering there were only a few cadets at that point of time.

For those who don't know what Australian Air League is about, it is basically a young youth organisation that inspires young people with an interest in aviation. Formed in 1934 the Air League continues a strong tradition of drill, discipline, flying and education.

We had to move out of the Control Tower but our squadron was lucky enough to move into the Jeremy Flynn Memorial Hangar and boy did we grow. Even my little sisters have joined the squadron making it a family event. We are now officially the largest NSW girl's squadron, not only that but we are one of the best squadrons, winning many awards and trophies at various events and reviews. Recently at the Group Review held at Lithgow our squadron participated in 12 events and we were placed in 9 of them. Things like this make our Officer Commanding 1st Officer Lynnette King extremely proud of our squadron.

The reason for our successful growth would have to be our location at the HARS hangar. Most cadets from other squadrons around Australia only have textbooks and photos to see what a rudder or an elevator is, but our squadron is fortunate enough to have the Connie with three rudders that we can see with our own eyes.



## ATTENTION: Former Members of 33 Squadron



As you may well be aware, the classic Boeing 707 is coming to the end of its service life within the RAAF. We at 33 Squadron are looking to hold a celebration to mark this occasion. We would like to send expressions of interest to those who were previously part of 33 Squadron and have some experience with the aircraft. I have asked HARS to disseminate this expression of interest to all HARS members who were formerly in the RAAF and served with 33 Squadron.

Initial planning consists of an informal dinner to be held in the B707 33SQN maintenance hangar on 28 June 2008. Other formal celebrations will follow.

I am happy to act as a point of contact for anyone who wishes to pursue this occasion and can be contacted at: [simon.press@defence.gov.au](mailto:simon.press@defence.gov.au); phone (02) 4587 3310 or 0409 885 693.

Thanking you  
Flight Lieutenant Simon Press 33SQN

## The Cat Boats Are Flying Tonight

(Sung to the tune of "The Man on the Flying Trapeeze")

They fly through the sky with a nonchalant air,  
With Zeros they play like tortoise and hare,  
And the word gets around for the Japs to beware,  
The Cat boats are flying tonight.

They hang on the bomb racks a dozen or more,  
And 20lb frags simply litter the floor,  
So start up the donks and we're off to the war,  
The Cat boats are flying tonight.

With many a sigh for our warm little cots,  
We thread our way through the steamers and yachts,  
And take to the air at a full 60 knots,  
The Cat boats are flying tonight.

After plugging along for an hour or two,  
The skipper looks around at his trustworthy crew,  
The observer's asleep and the engineer too,  
The Cat boats are flying tonight.

Comes a break in the clouds and a light down below,  
The skipper has had it, so says "let 'em go",  
And mixed bombs and beer bottles rain on the foe,  
The Cat boats are flying tonight.

The clouds are clamped down onto Cairns like a vice,  
The wireless op twiddles his dials once or twice,  
"I can't get a bearing, the set's on the ice",  
The Cat boats have had it tonight.

The wobble pump's gone and the compass is swinging,  
But on through the night the great Cat boat is winging,  
Then the engines cut out and we hear angels singing,  
"The Cat boats won't make it tonight".

So down through the clouds on the old bank and turn,  
Then somebody yells "And there's Cairns just astern",  
And down on the water the landing flares burn,  
The cat boats just made it again.

We lasso the buoy after fighting the tide,  
Then off into town for a quick one at Hides,  
And so ends one more of our hair raising rides,  
The Cat boats were flying last night.

Though dicing with death every day of our lives,  
We still find some time for our girl friends and wives,  
Whacko, when the two forty hourly arrives...  
The Cat boats will not fly tonight.

This poem was given to Warren Gengos at the Edinburgh Airshow this year by Doug Nicholas. Doug's father, RP Nicholas (47374) was a military photographer and was with the Catalinas at Bowen and Mollie Island. As a Cat pilot, Warren agrees with everything in the poem, including the 20lb fragmentation bombs rolling round on the floor. They used to toss them out the blister during bombing runs. The take-off speed from the water is 60kts and of course the reference to having a beer at Hides is accurate. Hides Hotel is still running in Cairns today. The reference to the 240 hourly inspections in the last verse is also correct, as these would take a number of days to complete.



## Yesterday's Aircraft

Brian McKay

I spent my teenage years growing up on the Canadian prairies during World War II. This was a time when the Empire Air Training Scheme was in full swing in Canada, and every day I would be thrilled with the passage of flights of Tiger Moths, Harvards, Avro Ansons, Beaufighters, Fairy Battles, Cessna Cranes etc. With an older brother off flying Spitfires in the Middle East, it was no wonder I developed a keen interest in anything related to flying.

However, for one reason or another, I never seemed to be able to swing a ride in a plane—not in any case until 1948 when I was 19 years old. At that time I had a job working for the fur trade department of the Hudson's Bay Company. This was in Churchill, a post in northern Manitoba, on the terminus of the Hudson Bay railway. The 'Bay' in those days moved much of their supplies to outlying posts by float planes. They also maintained two war-surplus Catalina amphibians and it was on one of these I 'enjoyed' my first flight.

Our (Churchill) post manager asked me one day to drive out to the large military base (war-time ferry strip for bombers to Europe) about 10 miles east of town. There sat a 'Cat' and a truck load of supplies which several of us immediately put a shoulder to, loading it all on the plane. These were basic food items such as flour, sugar, tea, beans etc, virtually all of which I recall were in 100lb bags. After stowing these, the pilot said to climb aboard and find yourself a bag or two to lie on, while he flew west to a fur-trading post at Duck Lake, about 250 miles from Churchill.

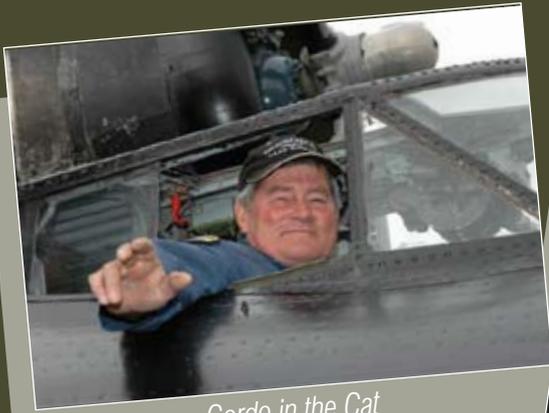
Well, I couldn't decide which was worse—the long uncomfortable ride on bags of sugar, or the noise from those two big radials on the wing above. My only visibility was out two blister windows on the side of the body, and when we finally put down on a lake near the western outpost, I was sure this was the 'end'. Water seemed to fly everywhere and I fully expected we would just keep going under. Of course, no such thing happened, and once the pilot taxied up to the dock, unloading got underway, after which we returned to Churchill with only a light load of furs destined for markets down in Winnipeg and Montreal.

So, now 60 years later, when you ask what interest I have in HARS—I am a member as a result of a lifelong interest in flying and adventure, plus about 100 hours of private flying years ago on Champion tail draggers and Cessna 150s. I am willing to put my hand to anything volunteers are requested to do and hope I prove to be a useful member to our society!



Hudson's Bay Company Catalina at Churchill c1948

## 2007 Edinburgh Airshow



Gordo in the Cat



Trev and Mal topping up Connie's tanks



Air Commander Australia Air Vice Marshal (AVM)  
Mark Binskin and his dad Don



Fred in the Dak



Bill and Bob in front of the Nepi



Some of the crowd queuing up to look inside the Cat

## South Australia Mining Tour



*Two Daks flying together*



*Getting ready to leave Ceduna*



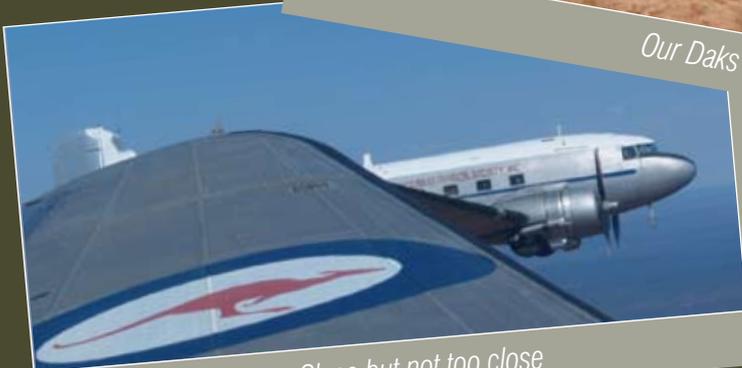
*Must have been a photo opportunity*



*Is that dust or rain making its way towards the Dak?*



*Our Daks side by side at Ceduna*



*Close but not too close*

## A NORTHERN MYTH

Peter Reardon

'Where in the hell is Humpty Doo?'

Well, this was the question I asked my Operations Manager at Aerial Agriculture Pty Ltd (Air Ag) in his Bankstown office in December 1965. He pointed to the general locality on his wall map, with his finger resting just a little to the southeast of Darwin. My next question to myself was, 'why do I need to know this?'

Air Ag had contracted to the Agricultural Department of the Northern Territory Administration (NTA) and Commonwealth Scientific & Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) to supply a Beaver, Bedford aircraft loader, loader driver, and pilot for a month in the wet season of January 1966. The objective was to evaluate the effectiveness of aircraft in aerial spreading of superphosphate, Townsville Lucerne and rice in selected locations in the top end between Katherine and Darwin.

It was a long and challenging trip in every respect. I felt like Wiley Post when I actually found Brunette Downs in the middle of the stark Barkley Tablelands, and again when I found Katherine before finally landing at 'Strauss' airstrip, Noonamah. It certainly made me fully appreciate how difficult it must have been for the early pioneering airmen and Qantas pilots who navigated their way along this track in their string and rag biplanes.

Previous attempts at rice growing at Humpty Doo in the 1950s, by Art Linkletter (United States TV host of 'Candid Camera') as Territory Rice, and others, had ended in failure. They had visions of growing rice in the Murrumbidgee wetlands along the Adelaide River and exporting it to markets in South-East Asia.

As part of the Territory Rice project to get fertilizer onto the crop (without damage), an airstrip was carved out of the coastal plain around 1954 – 1955 and a compacted gravel surface formed that was suitable for the operation of an Agricultural DH-82.

American agricultural pilot, Bill Kemp, who came from Archerfield and the Brisbane Valley around Gatton, operated the DH-82. The Tiger Moth

was used to aerial top-dress the rice paddies with fertilizer (probably Superphosphate and/or Sulphate of Ammonia). The airstrip then became known as 'Kemp Field'. A few years after Bill's efforts at Humpty Doo, and on the recommendation of my chief flying instructor at Archerfield, it was to be a dawn visit to Gatton to watch the same Bill Kemp, 'dusting' in his DH-82 during the winter of 1962 that started me on the path to becoming an agricultural pilot! Agricultural Tigers carried about 150 kg of fertilizer and were phased out of agricultural operations by 1965.

The best recommendation Bill gave me that morning at Gatton was to get a job flying 'something a bit more modern, more power and something that carried at least 500 kg' if I really wanted to make a living at it! I took his advice, and after obtaining my Commercial Pilot Licence and Agricultural Pilot Class II Rating in early 1964, started my Ag flying career carrying 500 kg loads in Cessna C-180s and Piper Pawnee PA-25-235s in the New England tablelands. I changed companies in mid 1965 to fly the de Havilland Beaver with Aerial Agriculture Pty Ltd at Bankstown. The Beaver carried 1,020 kg— half the take-offs, half the risk, half the flying time and greater remuneration for a given tonnage output on any one day!

Territory Rice had eventually folded and ceased all operations in the late 1950s due not only to issues such as the salt water in the dry season and magpie geese, but also the high capital costs, ongoing funding, remoteness of the markets and low yields. However, Kemp Field remained as the one visible relic of the failed project, but had become partially resumed by the undergrowth and scrub at the time I arrived there in January 1966.



*Kemp Field 1966 – cleared from the flood plains at Humpty Doo.  
Photo: Peter Reardon © 1966*

Trials on a variety of test plots, soil types and vegetation were conducted at Noonamah, Howard Springs, Thorax reserve (near Berrimah), Coomalie Creek, Litchfield, Adelaide River, Jindare, Tipperary, Katherine, Manbuloo, Beswick Mission, Bamyili Mission and Moroak. I was able to use many of the surviving WWII airstrips for these operations and found them in remarkably good condition. Those used, or visited, include Strauss, Pell, Coomalie Creek, Long, Fenton, Douglas, Livingston, Gould and Batchelor.

The operations at the 'Thorax Reserve' were conducted from the main runway at Darwin International Airport. Darwin's newspaper reported that:

'Aerial Agriculture broke new ground at the weekend when they were the first to use Darwin Airport for aerial sowing operations.

They used the airport to scatter 34 tons of super at the Thorax reserve for the Primary Industries Branch. The Department of Civil Aviation cut off part of the airport for the operations on Saturday morning.

Mr Reardon's De Havilland Beaver aircraft was in and out of the airport 34 times at an average of once every five minutes.'

I probably still hold the 'record' for the most departures and arrivals at Darwin International Airport for a working agricultural aircraft. As the normal practice was to land with the hopper spreader doors open (to dislodge any product that may be hung-up), the runway section allocated for my operation had to be swept with a huge, vehicle mounted, vacuum sweeper after every takeoff and landing!

As we were using different rice varieties and different application rates, I could neither miss any portion of one paddy nor drop it into an adjoining paddy. The spread had to be accurate within one metre of all levy banks. It could be on the levy bank, but not short of it, or into the next rice paddy. A further complication and difficulty was that not all the rice paddies were neat geometrical designs as they were configured to best reflect the terrain and water levels—not to suit a straight swath for an Ag pilot.

No other company pilots had ever attempted to achieve such accuracy to

my knowledge. I was in the 'hot seat' to pioneer the flight path, aperture opening setting of the hopper, speed, and height to fly as well as determine the effective swath width and seeding rate. This was a hot, trying and intense process that took several hours of flying over a dry rice paddy with 'catching trays' laid out to measure/count the results of each test run. Each sortie would take about 12 minutes – most of which was travel flight to the 'test' paddy and completing procedural turns after each test swath run of about 10 – 12 seconds (the hopper aperture was only opened in very short burst on each swath run).



*De Havilland Beaver (VH-AAX) at Kemp Field rock pool – 1966  
Photo: Peter Reardon © 1966*



*Humpty Doo rice paddies – 1966  
Photo: Peter Reardon © 1966*



*Marker with flag on rice paddy at Humpty Doo – 1966  
Photo: Peter Reardon © 1966*

So that the rice would settle into the prepared paddy and sink through the water into the soft earth below, it had to be 'pre-germinated' by soaking for 24 hours in water in a specially constructed 'rock pool' right beside the airstrip. This would have the first 'tails' of the rice seed's root system already exposed for sowing into the paddies. Unfortunately, we found that while the Beaver hopper could easily carry over 1,000 kgs of granulated fertilizer, pre-germinated rice was bulky and quite warm. A full hopper load of pre-germinated rice only weighed approximately 400 kg.

While this kept the maximum operating weight of the Beaver well below normal limits, it made for a great deal of extra flying to distribute a given tonnage of rice seed. A full load of granulated superphosphate (1016 kg) would cover 8 hectares in about two to three minutes at a rate of 50 kg/hectare in one or two swath runs. A load of granulated fertilizer would normally average five to six minutes between spreading sorties, i.e. about 10 – 12 ground/air/

ground cycles per hour. With rice, this increased to about 13 - 14 minutes between sorties, i.e. about four ground/air/ground cycles per hour.

By comparison, a full load of pre-germinated rice (400 kg) would cover only 2.5 hectares and take about eight minutes on the swath to actually spread. This was due to the short duration spent on each swath run over the small rice paddies and the high number of procedural turns required to return for the next swath run before the hopper was emptied. To treat 80 hectares with granulated fertilizer would involve 10 take-offs and about one hour's flying. To treat the same area sowing rice would take 34 take-offs and about 5.5 hours flying with two refueling stops.

After a few days of the calibrating runs, we established that the best and most accurate results were achieved by operating the Beaver at 100 knots and 15 metres. The hopper aperture opening to give the required rice application rate was established. We also soon found that the rice, being lighter than granulated superphosphate,

achieved a swath spread of only 7 metres compared to the usual 20 metres for granulated fertilizer. Thus each swath run needed to be flown very accurately and using natural 'markers', as was the case for pasture improvements, would not be sufficient for rice sowing.

A solution was simple; we would use three human 'flag' markers carrying a large red flag while standing on the levy bank at the start of the swath run, in the middle of the rice paddy and at the end levy bank. As the Beaver passed overhead each marker in turn, they would pace out the required 7 metres distance and be in position by the time I had the Beaver lined up for the second pass and continue this process until the operation was completed.

Unfortunately, and in addition to everything else, the arch enemy of the Territory Rice Project, the magpie geese, were also to prove an 'operational hazard' for my operation. Geese residing in the rice paddies would be suddenly and severely disrupted by the noisy Beaver zooming overhead

and so, they would become airborne. Unfortunately, their favourite flight level was also about 15 metres—the same as mine!

Now, I am sure you can see the problem here—might is right, right? Well, not necessarily, as the acceleration rate for a flock of magpie geese is considerably less than a Beaver approaching at 100 knots. Equally for me, one or two 'unwanted guests' through the cockpit windscreen, or into the wing or engine, was not a desirable outcome either! The geese must have thought that I was the 'Big M' of the air.

Not to be defeated by the geese, the solution was that in addition to the red flag, each 'marker' was to have a shotgun! No, not to shoot the geese, but to fire a shot into the air a few seconds before I flew over their heads with the Beaver lined up on the swath run.

Well, from the cockpit it looked pretty spectacular. I could see the first marker with the red flag, followed by a puff of grey smoke above the marker as he disappeared from sight below the round engine cowling of the Beaver. The magpie geese would become airborne en masse followed by immediate 'break left' and 'break right' formation turns to clear a pathway for my Beaver's swath run. This scene would be repeated as I approached the second and third markers and added to the already exciting task at hand.

I must say that my survival relied totally upon maintaining absolutely harmonious working relations with the markers to ensure that my trust in them was not misplaced as to when to 'pull the triggers'! (As a delay of one of two seconds by them could possibly have seen me 'shot down' - with birdshot buried in a very embarrassing position of my person that would make sitting impossible for some time after).

Work was hot, humid, and very tiring for myself and the markers in the rice paddies. At least I could jump out of the cockpit now and then and have a cooling 'soak' in the rock pool - along with the soaking bags of rice. But the markers were stuck in the open until the spreading was completed. Heat in the aircraft was extreme coming not only from the environment, but also from the Pratt and Whitney radial engine in

front and the heat generated by the pre-germinated rice in the stainless steel hopper at my back.

Black metal trim on the throttle quadrant was so hot from the engine and sun beating in, that I had to resort to flying with wetted chamois gloves just so that I could manage the throttle and pitch levers at all. Factory fitted air vents were virtually ineffective. As a solution, I had fabricated a piece of clear Perspex to fit into the gap left when the right cockpit window was lowered halfway. It had a large hole cut out of it and was held in place with a rubber trim inserted between the sliding window and the door surround. An aluminium scoop was fitted to the outside of the hole that directed the incoming air stream across the cockpit to help with ventilation. It was not air-conditioning, but the best 'solution' to keep air moving and myself as cool as possible in the cockpit.

On one particular day, it was extremely hot and oppressive. Spreading was taking longer than expected and the human markers were literally being 'poached' as they stood in the paddies with their flags and shotguns. My loader driver and I had a system of using Avgas to slowly drip onto cans of fruit juice that would be cooled by the evaporation and were thus able to keep cool water and juice levels up to compensate for fluid loss by sweat. The guys in the paddies were not so lucky.

As an act of kindness and, more importantly, to ensure that the shotguns were always pointed away from my Beaver, I did a low and slow run to 'drop' a can of cool pineapple juice for each of the human markers.

The spreading and application of the aircraft were deemed successful by the NTA and CSIRO. However, the magpie geese were proving a real problem once again. We tried dyeing the rice different colours and even tried various flavour additives - but they were not deterred. Successful germination and growth could only be ensured by keeping continuous guard over the rice paddies until the crop was above the water level.

After another season, the rice spreading trials were abandoned due to the economics of geese patrols and lower than expected yields. From my personal point of view, the efforts were rewarding and our part of the trials was proven. The techniques

and procedures we had pioneered at Humpty Doo were later to become part of the established aerial rice sowing industry in the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Areas and southern states in the subsequent years.

Then, around 25 years later, whilst employed as an air safety investigator, I had a chance meeting with the then new Minister for Aviation. As the conversation progressed, it became clear to me that he was telling of his days spent in the Top End where he worked as an assistant in the rice fields at Humpty Doo. It was here that he had apparently first seen rice being sown by air. He went on to tell the story of how on one particular day, the 'crop duster' pilot had dropped him a cool can of pineapple juice to keep him going. He said that he had never met that pilot and always wanted to thank him for the kindness.

We exchanged a few more details and it was then obvious and clear to both of us that the Minister and I had 'almost' met before - me in the Beaver supplying him with cool juice while he was a 19-year-old lad I had used as a marker below. He laughed when I told him that I had stopped telling that story decades before and said that he had 'only one small complaint'— I failed to drop him a can opener!

My then director was horrified when I told the Minister that I thought all good bushmen were resourceful and at least carried a pocketknife! We shared a good laugh and he seemed satisfied that we had met after all that time. Who would have thought that one of those human markers would end up a Federal Minister a few decades later?

Thus, there was more than one 'Northern Myth' that survived the events surrounding the introduction of aerial agriculture in the Top End and Humpty Doo.

**Members  
please log onto our  
website**

**[www.hars.org.au](http://www.hars.org.au)**

**to catch up on all the  
latest information and  
activities**

## A LAME apprentice in the early fifties

### Reg Barker

It was my privilege to work in the aviation industry when only a teenager. In 1950, I was one of a batch of 15 indentured apprentices to be employed by TAA at Mascot—their first batch. Of the 15 apprentices, five trained on engines, six on airframes, two on electrical and two on instruments. I was one of the six trained on airframes.

My first memory of my time at TAA was just after I began working there. I arrived at work to be greeted by a senior leading hand LAME Ted Anelzark with the words "Reg, would you like to go for a test flight?" A DC3 had had an engine change during overnight servicing. It was my first experience in flying and I can still remember the thrill of it—the roar of the Pratt and Whitney 1830s as we took off. We did a fairly large circuit, including flying over the Harbour before landing. Ever since then I've had a special affection for these great aircraft.

At the time, TAA's fleet (at least those we saw at Mascot) consisted of DC3s, DC4s and Convair 240s—the DC3s being the backbone of the fleet. There were four DC4s—TAA, TAB, TAC and TAD—five Convairs—TAO, TAP, TAQ, TAR and TAS. All the aircraft were given the names of famous Australian explorers—John Eyre, George Bass, Matthew Flinders and so on.

I enjoyed working on all of these, learning the trade from men who'd served in the War. They used such expressions as 'bombers must fly' and one they'd heard from the Americans 'remember Pearl Harbour'.

However, I spent most of my time working on the four DC6s used by British Commonwealth Pacific Airlines (BCPA). Mascot was their base in Australia. They had an arrangement with TAA that we did all the maintenance on the aircraft. There were four DC6s in the fleet—BPE, BPF, BPG and BPH. The aircraft were similar in many ways to the DC4s, but improved in some important areas. Of these, the most significant were the bigger engines, Pratt & Whitney



*A BCPA DC6 running up at Mascot*



*VH-TAA undergoing overhaul for its C of A outside the hangar at Essendon*



*An Ansett DC3 after it had crashed into a goods train on the old strip at Mascot*



*A BEA Viscount at Mascot*

R2800s instead of the R2000s on the DC4s, and they were pressurised.

My own impressions of them were that they were lovely aircraft and very reliable. Despite the long distances that they had to travel, to San Francisco then on to Vancouver cruising at about 300 knots, we seldom had any mechanical problems. They were fitted out internally to provide every comfort to the passengers. The seats folded down to form bunks and there were other bunks that folded down from above—where hand luggage is stored these days. The crew consisted of the captain and first officer, a flight engineer, a navigator, a wireless operator and the hostess.

An unusual feature in the maintenance procedure was that a full test flight took place before every overseas flight, which meant in practice, that we apprentices had the chance

to fly in them quite often. I can remember on one occasion, standing behind the pilot as we landed. Somehow I got away with it!

Sadly we lost one DC6—it crashed into a mountain outside San Francisco. When we first heard the news we were all concerned that one of us who'd worked on her were responsible. However, the crash was caused by a navigational error.

BCPA folded in the mid 1950s and TEAL (now Air New Zealand) bought the DC6s.

Apart from the DC6s, the other aircraft that impressed me were the Convair 240s. They were fitted with Pratt & Whitney R2800 engines, similar to those on the DC6s. They were the first of their type to fly in Australia and gave TAA a big advantage over ANA and Ansett when flying on the same routes. They were much faster than the DC4s and of even greater importance they were pressurised which made them much more attractive to passengers.

The Southern Cross resided in the corner of one of our hangars and also, for a short time, an Ansett DC3 that had a prang with a goods train (at least that's what we were told).

As part of our training we spent six months at Essendon to gain experience in aircraft overhaul. Whilst there I worked on a DC4 that was having a total overhaul for its Certificate of Airworthiness (C of A). While at Essendon TAA allowed us to fly back home to Sydney a few times, often on Convairs.

I also spent six months at RAAF Richmond as a 'Nasho'. I had hoped to have a go working on something a little different from my norm, say a Mustang. But in the end I finished overhauling a Dakota—A65-63.

Towards the end of my apprenticeship, the Vickers Viscount came on the Australian scene. In 1954 TAA purchased a number of the 720 model.

All in all I thoroughly enjoyed my time at TAA. Those five years left me with a fascination for aircraft that has remained with me to this day—so it's great to be at HARS even though, as a very ancient airframe engineer, my role is a very very small one.

## An introduction to the Australian Historical Flying Museum (AHFM)

### Michael Hough Chairman AHFM Board

It is my pleasure to write the first of a regular series of articles explaining the purposes, progress and activities of the Australian Historical Flying Museum (AHFM). The AHFM is a subsidiary organisation of HARS, and is controlled by a Board which at present meets regularly at least four times each year and currently consists of:-

- Professor Michael Hough ( Chairman)
- Mr Bob De La Hunty ( President and Chief Pilot of HARS)
- Mr John Brooker ( Vice President of HARS)
- Mr Bob Barker, Solicitor
- Mr Dean Riebolge, Bluescope Steel
- Mr John Weston from WestonPrint

As is now very evident, the second major building erected by HARS at Albion Park Regional Airport has been the AHFM building, and in the short term (prior to Hangars 2 and 3 being erected) the 2 levels of the AHFM building serve the useful purposes of short term storage for aircraft and components. At the same time we are actually commencing the buildup of the first stages of the Museum exhibits.

The first obvious AHFM exhibit for the Cockpit Hall is the PBY Catalina hull, which along with the recent (sponsored) purchase of another Super Constellation cockpit is the beginning of a major AHFM asset. Actual cockpits of similar major aircraft flown by HARS will be accessible to the public—and within which DVD based replays of the actual cockpit flight experiences can be easily experienced.

This Cockpit Hall feature will ease the growing pressure to see into the actual aircraft in the HARS Hangars, and also address the reality that since “9/11” the previously available experience of being allowed into actual aircraft cockpits has been banned.

### The importance of AHFM in promoting and assisting HARS

An obvious question is:- 'Why does HARS need a separately named Museum and subsidiary organisation?' The main reasons are:

- The separation of HARS and AHFM enables AHFM to offer public access and interactive contact with historic aviation objects (e.g. aircraft cockpits, engines, fuselages and related artefacts (radios, and radars) which do not need to be maintained to flying standards).
- The AHFM building provides experiences which offer the general public aviation related access and activities in ways that justify that the actual HARS areas ( Hangars 1, 2 and 3) can be appropriately restricted and controlled for visits by the public or non HARS members.
- The AHFM building will offer a series of facilities to support HARS e.g. administration offices, members' area and meeting spaces as well as being a registered training organisation with conference and training room.
- The AHFM building will house, display and preserve important aviation history and artefacts such as the De Havilland collection, and aviation related models and publications.
- The AHFM building will house the HARS shop, a coffee/snack area, the tour/visitation program as well as the opportunity to hire specific facilities (eg conference and training rooms). This will all raise revenue to support the main activities of HARS
- The AHFM will offer opportunities and interests to HARS members who want to support HARS but do not have a strong direct skills background in aviation. The AHFM has a strong need for support in areas such as: the shop; in tour guiding; in running the conference and training rooms; and in developing and maintaining the Cockpit Hall and aviation related displays.

### The AHFM objectives

The following are the approved bases for the operation of AHFM.

#### VISION

To provide a world class Museum based facility to attract physical and virtual tourists to HARS and the Albion Park Regional Airport (APRA), and provide them with high class experiences related to the **preservation and flying of historic aircraft of significance to Australia.**

#### MISSION

The AHFM's role is to provide support to HARS through the provision of a targeted set of tourist oriented activities and facilities based around the Museum building.

#### OBJECTIVES

To support HARS by providing the following services and/ or facilities:

- The support of HARS by providing-
  - Administrative offices for the operation of HARS
  - Offices and board style meeting facilities for HARS and AHFM executives (namely; President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Committee Members of HARS, and the AHFM Chairman)
  - Meeting and recreation areas for HARS members
  - Facilities for the historic aircraft restoration business run by HARS
  - Facilities for approved related collections (eg Cleary Brothers collection)
  - Legal protection for the aircraft assets of HARS
- To provide a revenue base to HARS through the operation of the following-
  - The HARS shop
  - The provision of cafe type snack food
  - The provision of a range of tours of both the AHFM and HARS
  - The Offering of a conference facility for up to 150 persons
  - The hire of education and training facilities to approved hirers

- Coordination of ground displays of HARS aircraft and related equipment, and the ground component of Open Days
- Education, conference and training facilities to support the following:-
  - Training needs of existing HARS members (eg member induction and update training, skill training, guide training)
  - Training needs of skill development activities relevant to the future needs of HARS (eg aviation related apprentices and trade training, Air Cadets, Air League and Air Scouts)
  - Education and training needs of the general public
- To display static elements of the HARS collection of aircraft and related objects
- To provide 'hands on' aviation based experiences
- To preserve and display collections of national significance to the history of Australian aviation (eg the De Havilland collection)
- To provide a world class tourist experience—both physical and virtual—for visitors to HARS and to APRA, by operating to the design concept provided following and already endorsed by the AHFM Board.

## A design concept for the Museum

When the AHFM facilities are fully developed and operating they will be based on the following.

### LEARNING ABOUT THE MUSEUM

The Museum is actively promoted through the following agencies:

- NSW regional and local tourist bodies through brochures and inclusion in tourist literature
- Bus companies, tour groups and accommodation facilities (eg major hotels and resorts)
- Community supported media (eg newspapers and radio community events)
- Passive signs in the region (eg road signs)
- Internet web site accessed through relevant other websites (eg tourism/HARS websites)

- Media journals (eg *Phoenix*, airline in flight magazines, aviation news articles)
- HARS and AHFM appear in Google Earth Maps and on web searches.

### APPROACHING THE MUSEUM

- When approaching the Museum by road transport there are a series of deliberate well designed signs at 20km, 5km, 1 km and turnoffs indicating HARS and the AHFM
- When approaching by rail there are signs at the railway station and then clearly marked directions on how to get to HARS and AHFM by walking or by taxi.
- When approaching by air there are clearly marked logos on the roofs of the buildings
- At the closest road intersections there is a static aircraft display clearly identified with HARS and AHFM (eg VH-NEP).

### ACCESSING THE MUSEUM

- When approaching Boomerang Drive there are clearly marked 'How to get to AHFM' signs at all obvious decision points (eg turns and roundabouts)
- There are clear direction signs to parking and short term drop off points for cars and busses and tour groups. These should include access for persons with disabilities
- A clearly displayed ENTRANCE sign should welcome visitors to the Shop entrance. The pathway should be concreted and safe and the entrance area planted attractively.

### THE SHOP

- On entering the Shop there should be interesting display items to attract all age interests and examples of the audio visual materials should be running but silent. The Qantas mini aircraft should provide a 'sit in' experience for children and this should be a free photo opportunity although the Shop should sell disposable cameras
- A security system should be obvious and otherwise people are encouraged to browse
- There should be a sit down relaxing area to enable people to purchase a light snack or refreshment and consume it. This should NOT

compete with the Aviator Lounge and signs indicating that full dining experience is available at the Aviator Lounge should be prominently displayed

- The Shop staff should be helpful and able to advise on Museum and aircraft tours as well as sell tickets
- The Shop should clearly lead into the Museum and a sales barrier should be obvious and lead people through into the various Museum experiences
- A clearly marked sign including tour prices and times should be displayed in the shop area. The tours planned at present are:
  - Museum entrance and self guided tour
  - Museum guided tour including cockpit experiences
  - Historic aircraft tour of Hangars 1 2 and 3
- Each tour should be accompanied by a few lines of descriptor that explains what each tour offers and likely time required

### THE SELF GUIDED TOUR

This tour enables persons to walk around the public areas of the Museum on both ground level and level 1, and experience: current displays selected by the Museum from its collections; interactive audio visual history of each aircraft in collection; audio visual history on key personalities of HARS and Australian aviation; a look into the Cleary Collection and the Greinert Rebuild line from a viewing platform, and down into Hangars 1 and 2 from the viewing balconies on level 1; and view the audio visual in the Theatre on level 1 of the Museum.

### THE GUIDED TOURS

#### The Museum Tour (1 hour)

At announced regular intervals, a guide will explain the Museum and give a quick overview of the public areas, then give controlled access to the cockpit collection on ground level and enable viewing and listening of the audio visual of actual takeoff/ flight and landings of; Constellation, Catalina, Tracker and other cockpits. At the end of this tour the cockpit areas will be cleared and secured and tour members invited to revisit the public areas as a self guided tour.

### The Aircraft Tour (1 hour)

At announced regular intervals the HARS aircraft available in Hangars 1, 2 and 3 will be viewed as a guided tour, but commencing with a trip to the viewing platforms in level 1 of the Museum to preview the aircraft.

### SPECIALIST ACCESS TO THE MUSEUM COLLECTIONS

Access to the HARS/AHFM historic materials (eg the Boeing collection, the De Havilland collection, plus original HARS books/manuals etc) will be restricted to specially approved visits as these materials will be stored in the non public/members only areas.

However the intention is to digitise the collections as quickly as possible and digital copies (eg CD's and equivalent) will be catalogued and sold through the shop.

### LEAVING THE MUSEUM

All exits from tours will be back through the HARS shop where people will again have the opportunity to browse and purchase.

A visitor survey will be undertaken in the Shop area with a significant prize available to those who fill it out (eg a draw for one seat on a Connie or DC3 flight as a prize).

### POST VISIT RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE MUSEUM

A 'thank you for visiting us' sign(s) will be prominently displayed at exit and the HARS/AHFM website details will also be prominently displayed.

### ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE MUSEUM

A nominated HARS aircraft with appropriate crew to be located between Hangar 1 and the Terminal Building and be started and taxied at announced times on specified days (eg Saturdays and Sundays at 1030 hrs, 1230 hrs and 1430 hrs)

### VIRTUAL HARS AND VIRTUAL AHFM

An online version of the tours and visits will be constructed and offered and a live WebCam feed offered through the websites to view activities in Museum and Hangars 1, 2 and 3. These are a useful security feature as well as a great online marketing tool and source of income.

### The planned future layout of AHFM

Once Hangars 2 and 3 are developed, the following will become the long term layout and functions of the Museum building:-

- Ground floor ( front or northern side)
  - Shop and public entrance on north west corner with Hangar 1, with shop entrance leading into public toilets, stairs and lift access to level 1 of Museum, and stair access to viewing platform for Museum ground floor
- HARS reception and HARS members entrance (existing Museum door) on northern inside of Museum adjacent to the shop. This will offer HARS members' sign on/HARS enquiries
- Cockpit and aero engine display hall occupying northern ground floor bays of Museum. This area will provide aircraft cockpits of (eg Connie, Catalina, C47, Tracker) so that members of the public can sit in an actual aircraft cockpit and watch DVD's taken from the cockpits of the actual HARS' aircraft, plus inspect sectioned/intact aircraft engines
- Restoration projects occupying middle bays between cockpit and aero engine display hall and historic aircraft restoration bays
- North east bays (Cleary Brothers tractor collection) representative sample
- Ground floor (rear or southern side)
  - The rear half of the Museum building is fully allocated to the historic aircraft restoration business
- First floor (north western side)
  - Stair and lift access leading to the coffee and snack area and public toilets
  - Art and display galleries
  - Viewing Platform into Hangar 1
- First floor (north eastern side)
  - Access to 150 seat conference theatre, IMB Education wing with 20 seat IT computer classroom and a 20 seat training room, and office and store rooms to support training
- First floor (south western side)
  - Members' social area and kitchen
  - De Havilland collection and aviation archives
  - Fire escape stairs

- First floor (south eastern side)
  - Access to HARS administrative area; Reception; Board Room; offices for HARS President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and AHFM Chairman; files and record storage; photocopy and print facilities
  - Viewing platform to Hangars 2 and 3
  - Fire Escape Stairs

### The strategic importance of AHFM in actively engaging the public and developing long term public support for HARS

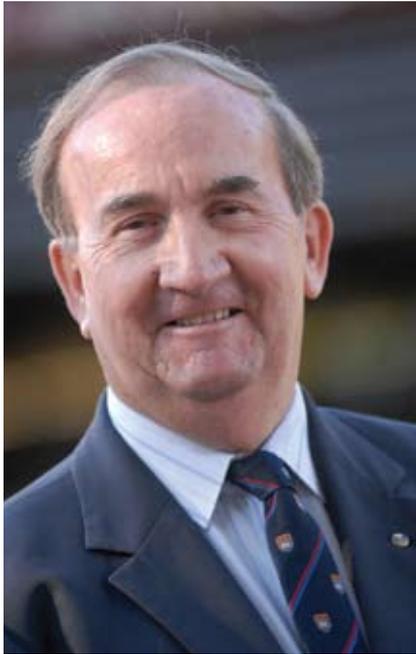
It is important for all HARS members and supporters to understand and appreciate the need for HARS to actively relate to and involve both the public in general and the Illawarra region in particular, especially now that HARS is both located on Council owned, long term leased facilities, and also receiving public funds to support some of its developments.

Shellharbour City Council (SCC) is, and has been, extremely supportive of HARS in the development of its present facilities and future expansion plans, and it is essential that we actively promote and further develop the goodwill and support of the public so that we can retain and justify the confidence that the SCC has already invested in us.

One important role that AHFM can play for HARS is to actively promote the facilities and activities of HARS in such a way that the specialised core business of HARS—maintaining and flying aircraft of historic importance to aviation in Australia—can be both supported and protected by AHFM as it provides the important tasks of engaging the public interest in what HARS is doing, as well as winning 'hearts and minds' for the long term acceptance, further growth and continued support of HARS in the Illawarra region.

I hope that this extensive brief on AHFM will generate your support for our Museum's activities, as well as explain and where necessary justify why AHFM is an important part of the future of HARS.

## Chairman of the Australian Historical Flying Museum (AHFM) Board: Professor Michael Hough AM RFD ED JP



Dr Michael Hough joined the Board of AHFM in 2006 and became Chairman after the resignation of Mr John Cleary from the Board. Michael is a Professorial Fellow at the University of Wollongong NSW Australia, where he works in both the Graduate School of Business and Professional Education, and in the Australian Centre for Educational Leadership. He is a Visiting Professor to the University of Lincoln in the UK, and a Fellow of the IC2 Institute of the University of Texas, Austin, Texas USA. His current interests are in New Technologies and their impacts on organisational behaviours, Quality Management and Business Excellence in the Professional Services sectors, and the uses of Project and Risk Management as intellectual property.

He holds Bachelor degrees in Mechanical Engineering (NSW), and in Psychology (Macquarie), has a Diploma in School Administration (Armidale CAE), has Graduate Diplomas in Education and Industrial Engineering (Newcastle NSW), Masters in Education Administration (UNE), and Doctorate in Education (Georgia). He also has a Cert 4 in Workplace Assessment and Training (TAFE Illawarra).

He has worked as a Professional Engineer with the BHP Group, as a Maths/ Science Teacher and Head of Science Department in NSW state high schools, Lecturer and Senior Lecturer at Riverina CAE, and Head of School and Professor at the University of Wollongong.

He was the academic developer of the Australian Public Sector Management Course and the NSW Police Command Development program, and he holds directorships of several regional organisations—the Wollongong Conservatorium of Music; and the Flagstaff Group for people with disabilities. He is also the Chairman of the Board of the Illawarra ITeC—which is an organisation providing regional development services such as long term unemployed skill development training, New Careers for Aboriginal people, Work for the Dole and business incubation and development.

He is an active Rotarian—has been a Rotary Club President (twice)—and is a Paul Harris Fellow. He has been National President of the Australian Council for Educational Administration, a Fellow of the Australian Council for Educational Leaders, a Fellow of the Australian College of Educators and a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management. He is also a Justice of the Peace.

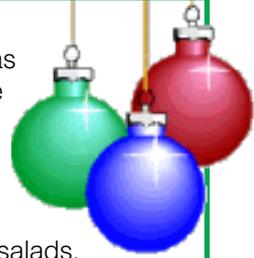
Michael was a Cadet Pilot Officer in 21 Flight Air Training Corps, holds the rank of Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) in the Royal Australian Armoured Corps, and is a qualified military parachutist. He has commanded the University of NSW Regiment and various 8/13 Victorian Mounted Rifles Armoured Corps Units at Troop and Squadron Level. He served with the Australian Army in South Vietnam, and has been awarded the Reserve Force Decoration (RFD) and the Efficiency Decoration (ED).

He was appointed a Member (AM) in the Civil Division of the Order of Australia in 2006 and was Wollongong's Citizen of the Year in 2004.

His other interests beside historic aircraft are vintage British cars and bikes. He currently owns an MGTF1250, a 3.8 Mk2 Jaguar Saloon and a Norton 750 Commando Dunstall motorbike.

## CHRISTMAS IN JULY

Australians love a traditional Christmas dinner, however the typical midsummer heat on Christmas Day means that many families are forced to focus on salads, because it is just too hot to get enthusiastic about a traditional big roast with pudding etc.



Over the years many Australian families and organisations have opted to have a Christmas dinner in July celebration, in the middle of winter when it's nice and cool and great for tucking in to a sumptuous big feast. **This is exactly what HARS will be doing this year—giving each of you the chance to tuck into a sumptuous big feast!**

We will begin the Christmas in July celebration with the **HARS Church Parade**. As per previous years, our Pastor, Grahame Abrahams, will conduct a Service commencing at 3.00pm at the Shellharbour Uniting Church. Following the Service, you are invited to stay for a cup of tea with other members of the congregation. Then it's back to HARS for pre dinner drinks prior to sitting down to a Christmas dinner.

**WHEN:** 5 July 2008

**WHERE:** HARS (somewhere in amongst the aircraft)

**TIME:** Pre dinner drinks from 5.30pm

**DINNER:** Serving to commence at 6.45pm

**COST:** \$35.00 per person

This is a fund raising opportunity for HARS and it is hoped that it will be strongly supported by members and friends.

Bookings can be made at the HARS shop for either individuals or table groups (up to 8 people). Payment can be made by cash, cheque or credit card.



## ROUND-THE-WORLD SUPER CONNIES

Gary Squire

Although Qantas commenced operations in 1921, it remained a relatively small bird in the wide skies of aviation until after World War 2. In 1947 all that changed, when the Australian Airline, for the first time in its own right, flew a service from Sydney to London using its new Lockheed L749A Constellations on what became the famed Kangaroo Route. Just last year, Qantas celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of this occasion with great pride. They did so with good reason; the combination of the Kangaroo Route and the Constellation elevated Qantas to the status of a truly international competitor. No longer was Qantas confined to the backwaters of our peripheral nation and its immediate surrounds. In 1954 Qantas spread its wings further by immediately employing its new, larger and longer-range L1049C Super Constellations on a trans-Pacific route between Sydney and San Francisco.

Another important anniversary in the history of Qantas was witnessed on 14 January 2008—again involving the Super Constellation. On that date in 1958, Qantas Empire Airways (QEA) became the first airline in the world to offer a service which circled the globe, when newly-acquired L1049G Super Constellations VH-EAO 'Southern Aurora' and VH-EAP 'Southern Zephyr', with wing-tip tanks, set off in opposite directions from Melbourne's Essendon Airport on a service via San Francisco, New York, London and Asia to span the globe.

The Qantas board perceived the idea of connecting the two long-range services, Kangaroo Route and Pacific route, to create a true trans-global network. In the current era of airline partnerships and code sharing, round-world flying is considered commonplace, but in the 1950s no airline was doing it. The idea in itself was a novel innovation, but coming from one of the world's smaller airlines it was quite remarkable. Australia was uniquely placed in the world to consider the undertaking. The US airlines would be unable to emulate the Qantas initiative because of the division of traffic rights between Pan

American, the only US international airline at the time and the US domestic airlines, which monopolised the rights to fly internally across the country.

Negotiations opened in Washington in May 1975, under the direction of Australian Department of Civil Aviation's Director General Sir Donald Anderson, to gain the right for Qantas to close the loop by crossing the United States and thence the Atlantic. By conceding traffic rights to and through Australia for Pan Am, Anderson won the case for Qantas.

A goodwill circumnavigation flight was undertaken by VH-EAO 'Southern Aurora', under the command of Captain Ralph Bruce, commencing in Sydney on 20 December 1957. The inaugural revenue services launched from Melbourne on 14 January 1958; both aircraft headed north to Sydney and from there EAO turned east to London via Nadi, Honolulu, San Francisco and New York, while EAP 'Southern Zephyr' headed west to Djakarta, Singapore, Bangkok, Calcutta, Karachi, Bahrain, Athens, Rome and on to London. EAO was commanded by Captain M Bamman, EAP by Captain R J Davis. The two aircraft met in London while crossing paths and finally completed the epic journey in Sydney on 20 January. Each Super Connie had flown over 43,000

kilometres, to this writer's knowledge without significant technical fault.

Qantas branded itself 'Australia's Round-the-World Airline' and commenced twice-weekly services, one each from Sydney and Melbourne. Two other services met up with BOAC in San Francisco in a joint round-world service. The routes were taken over by the Boeing 707-138 from 1959 and Qantas became one of only a handful of airlines offering a jet service over the prestigious North Atlantic route.

In 1964, a newly-delivered Boeing 707-138B V-Jet, VH-EBM 'City of Launceston', inaugurated a second world-girdling service dubbed the Fiesta Route, from Sydney via Nadi, Tahiti, Acapulco, Mexico City, Nassau, Bermuda and London, returning via the Kangaroo Route. It was the only direct service connecting Mexico with Europe.

Ultimately, costs and route viability saw an end to the Fiesta Route and Qantas services across the North Atlantic, in 1968 and 1973 respectively. The current era of global partnerships means that a return of the Flying Kangaroo to the Blue Riband Atlantic route is highly unlikely in the future. But the fiftieth anniversary of the world's first round-the-world airline service reminds us of the proud history of our international airline Qantas, a part of which is preserved by HARS' Super Constellation VH-EAG 'Southern Preservation'.

*Front of envelope shows the date stamp 14 January 1958—the date the aircraft left Australia. The reverse side shows the date stamp 20 January 1958—the the aircraft*



*Photo opposite shows VH-EAO and EAP in Sydney at the conclusion of their inaugural round-the-world revenue service, 20 January 1958 (Qantas)*

## Mustang VH BOB World War II fighter visit to Illawarra Regional Airport, Albion Park Rail, March 8–16 2008



Mustang VH BOB is coming to Illawarra Regional Airport, Albion Park Rail between 8-16 March 2008. This will be the second visit for this Australian built Mustang World War II fighter aircraft and will coincide with HARS Open Day on 8 March.

Mr Bob Eastgate has owned and operated Mustang VH BOB for over 36 years. He and a group of dedicated engineers painstakingly restored this magnificent aircraft and, in the process, modified the aircraft to accommodate a passenger seat. The aircraft is maintained by the same engineers but now includes Bob's son Robert who has grown up in this aviation environment and is a qualified aircraft engineer.

The plane is based at RAAF Base, Pt Cook.

Bob has his own maintenance facility there and an Air Charter Operator's Licence.

Many regard the Mustang as the finest piston engine fighter of World War II. In a dive the Mustang is capable of flying at 910 kph. A passenger has the opportunity to hear the sound of the huge 1650 hp Merlin engine, feel its power and experience some of the aircraft's combat manoeuvres.

People interested in having a flight in this Mustang aircraft should contact Bob and Barbara Eastgate on

**Phone/fax: (03) 9372 0780,  
Email: [b.eastgate@bigpond.com](mailto:b.eastgate@bigpond.com)**

Further information about the Mustang can be found on their website at

**[www.mustangjoyflights.com.au](http://www.mustangjoyflights.com.au)**



## BUILDING REPORT

Construction started on 7 January 2008 of our new Superhangar facility. Bluescope were true to their word and started on site one week earlier than originally scheduled. Our construction crew is one of the most professional and friendliest I have ever encountered making for less stress on my part.

Planning for the new Superhangar started in January 2007 and contracts were only signed in late November, giving one an idea of the benefits of computers and technology. The building was fabricated in a computerised facility in Brisbane and has hardly seen the hand of man. Our last two buildings were completely opposite, largely fabricated by hand.

Once the framework is completed, hydraulic works will commence for roof and toilet facilities. The slab and cladding will follow on from there. All up we anticipate our shell will be completed by end March. Plans for moving the engine shop from Port Kembla are under way and Kevin's team will be our first installation priority.

Back in the Main Entrance Building things proceed apace with construction started of the ground floor amenities, staircase handrails and retail shop extension. We are moving the shop from the Terminal Building to combine our tours with the retail opportunities they present.

In Hangar One we had planned for the construction of the hangar doors and their tracking to commence in January but have been hampered by the absence of our builder. Last seen headed for the Middle East before Xmas, we have sent out a search party.

This year promises to be as hectic as last year from a building point of view. We had looked forward to having some respite from the building program until the President mentioned "Hangar 4" the other day...



## An Unwelcome Visitor

Robert Greinert

Mondays and Tuesdays are very quiet days at HARS. You would be lucky to see one or two members around and the restorations shop works on half shifts on those days. Recently, Allan Brooker decided to take advantage of the peace and quiet and undertake some study in the computer room as he gears up to be a First Officer at Rex Airlines.

Allan joined the restoration shop crew for morning tea and we were all having a wonderful time until he decided to return to his studies. As I passed by he called me over and asked me to stick my head in the computer room. There, lying under the very seat he had been occupying was a five foot long red belly black snake.

Not normally a case for panic, just call Wires and they will send out the snake catcher and our friend will be returned to the wild. However this snake had a peculiar effect on the small group in the hangar that day and it somehow managed to bring out the Steve Irwin in some of us.

Jack Smid rushed off into the metal shop and promptly returned with a 20 litre aluminium can and a snake catching pole he had just fabricated up in two minutes flat. Our poor hapless snake tired of all the attention and soon slithered out into the hangar pursued by brooms, rakes and any other device we could find to push him back outdoors.

At one stage Jack engaged the beast and almost succeeded in getting him into the can. Finally our agitated visitor declared that he had enough and went into the Cobra pose and we all backed off. A truce developed and "Snakey", as he was now christened, slithered off and went under the door leading into the computer mainframe room.

The man from Wires turned up and we found that no one had a key to the room so we had to call Jim Hayes who really didn't believe us but came anyway. The door unlocked, the man from Wires walked into the room and closed the door behind him. We all rushed up the staircase to view the action from the window. I grabbed my cell phone convinced I would be dialing 000 shortly. I completely forgot that we



### Featuring

- **Historical Aircraft Restoration Society (HARS) aircraft**
- **Sport Aircraft Association of Australia (SAAA) aircraft**
- **RAAF aircraft, including the Roulettes**
- **Temora Aviation Museum aircraft**
- **Other attractions include:**
  - **Various vintage cars and motor bike clubs**
  - **Food stalls**
  - **Children entertainment**
  - **Light Rail Museum train rides**



**Historical Aircraft Restoration Society  
Illawarra Regional Airport  
Albion Park**

**Gates open at 9.30 am**

Free admission to some areas  
Admission to aircraft area \$5 per person  
Inspection of aircraft \$5 per person  
Parking inside airport grounds \$5 per car

Proudly sponsored by



Sport Aircraft Association of Australia



Shellharbour City Council

have Paramedics just across the way with the Air Ambulance helicopter.

Eventually Snakey was located and a battle royal proceeded as he was flushed from his hiding spot. The man from Wires eventually grabbed our five foot monster by the tail with both hands and yanked him out. Placing him skillfully in a bag he emerged victorious. He was pretty blasé about it all and was really more interested in looking at the airplanes. I gave him a Complimentary Family Pass and asked him to relocate Snakey as a priority. We had enough excitement for the day.

Thanks to Wires for their prompt response.

