



HARS
AVIATION
MUSEUM
www.hars.org.au



December 2019 Newsletter

Australia's Aviation Heritage



Season's Greetings

From all of us here at HARS Aviation Museum we wish all of you, our readers, a happy and safe festive season. HARS Aviation Museum and Café Connie will remain open during the entire festive season and school holiday period, except on Christmas Day. The holiday season is a great time to come and visit us and check out what has been added to our collection during 2019.

An afternoon with John Travolta

On 4 November John Travolta made a surprise visit to HARS! The American actor, singer and dancer, famous for his roles in *Saturday Night Fever*, *Grease* and *Pulp Fiction*, was in Australia for a tour of speaking engagements. He has had an interest in aviation since childhood and has been a friend of HARS for almost twenty years so it was a delight to welcome him back for another visit and a flight in our Lockheed Super Constellation, *Connie*.



John Travolta with Connie

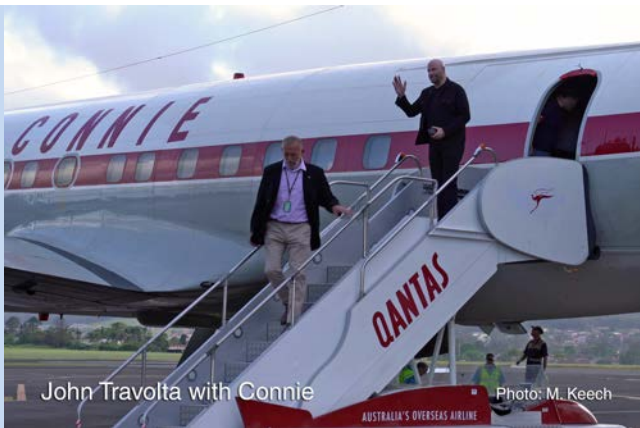
Photo: M. Keech



Matt, Bob, John and Maureen

Photo: M. Keech

John has donated his ex-Qantas Boeing 707-138 aircraft, still painted in Qantas markings, to HARS. The aircraft is currently in Brunswick, Georgia where it is being prepared for the flight to its new home at Shellharbour Airport early next year. During his visit John met with many HARS volunteers and visitors and enjoyed a tour of the museum before going for a flight in the Constellation. Thanks John for being so generous with your time and patient with the multitude of people wanting selfies!



John Travolta with Connie

Photo: M. Keech



Connie crew

Photo: M. Keech



Meeting the press

Photo: M. Keech



Greeting the fans

Photo: M. Keech

It is hoped John will return again next year when the 707 is delivered.

RAAF Base Edinburgh Air Show

On the weekend of 9 and 10 November HARS Aviation Museum attended the RAAF Base Edinburgh Air Show with no less than four of our large aeroplanes! The air show, with the tagline, "Vimy to fifth generation in 100 years", commemorated the centenary of the Great Air Race from Great Britain to Australia.

On 12 November 1919 brothers Ross and Keith Smith departed London in a converted WW1 Vickers Vimy bomber reaching Darwin on 10 December to win the £10,000 prize. The registration of the Vimy, G-EAOU, led to the affectionate tag, "God 'elp all of us", and the team certainly faced many challenges on their journey into the history books, including storms, snow, rain, heat, dust, bird strikes, flooded landing fields, mechanical issues, and exhaustion. As well as the £10,000 prize, the Smith brothers were knighted for their tenacity and courage in this extraordinary feat of endurance.

The air show featured the usual favourites including aerobatic displays by Paul Bennet and Matt Hall, a range of South Australian historic aircraft, the Spitfire and Hudson from Temora, Ross Pay's Hurricane and the Caboulture Mustang. As the air show was hosted by the Air Force, virtually every type of current RAAF aircraft was represented in some form. For many this was their first time seeing the Roulettes flying the new Pilatus PC-21 and the first time seeing the Lockheed Martin F-35A Lightning II displayed.



RAAF Base Edinburgh has long been home to Australia's maritime surveillance capability and, thanks to the HARS contribution, the air show was able to feature four generations of maritime surveillance aircraft. Now home to the Boeing P-8A Poseidon, Edinburgh is also where our Lockheed AP-3C Orion was based for most of its Air Force service. Other HARS aircraft that were displayed in the maritime surveillance section of the show were the Lockheed P2V-7 Neptune and the Consolidated PBV-6A Catalina. Representing the transport squadrons and the Vietnam War effort, the HARS de Havilland DHC-4 Caribou also put on a spirited display. All of the HARS aircraft proved to be very popular with the crowds and there were long queues to enter them during the static display section of the show.





P2V-7 Neptune prepared for flight

Photo: M. Keech



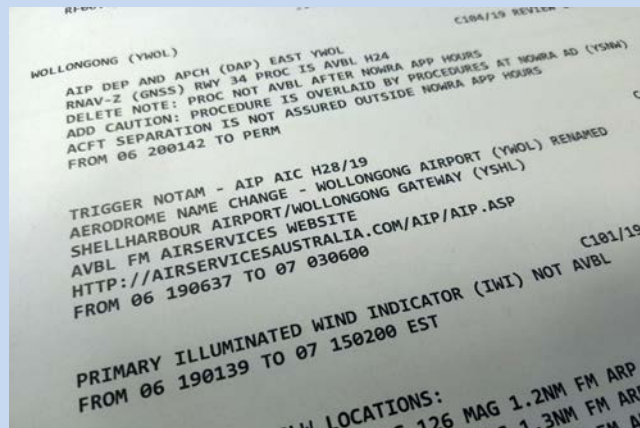
HARS team

Photo: M. Keech

Remembering that HARS is an entirely volunteer organisation funded by donations and sponsorship, it would be an extraordinary effort to fly one of our historic aircraft the 600 nautical miles to Edinburgh but we succeeded in flying four aircraft there and returned them safely to their home at Shellharbour Airport. Thanks must go to the 40 members who accompanied the aircraft but also to the many engineers and other HARS members who supported the effort in so many ways.

Airport name change

Note that our airport has had a name change. What was previously known as Illawarra Regional Airport or Wollongong Airport (YWOL) is now to be known as Shellharbour / Wollongong Gateway Airport or Shellharbour Airport for short. The new ICAO code for Shellharbour Airport is YSHL. The change occurred at midnight local time on 7 November and flight plans submitted on 6 November for 7 November with YWOL as the departure point became invalid overnight!



Rest assured though that HARS Aviation Museum is still located at Albion Park Rail regardless of the name of the airport.

November Tarmac Days

Despite six of our aircraft being away on missions, including the RAAF Base Edinburgh Air Show, the November Tarmac Weekend still had plenty to offer our visitors. Aircraft featured in Hangar One were:

- Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation CA-9 Wirraway
- Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation CA-25 Winjeel
- Convair CV-440
- Corby CJ-1 Starlet
- de Havilland DHA-3 Drover
- de Havilland T.35 Vampire
- Department of Aircraft Production Mk. 21 Beaufighter
- General Dynamics F-111C
- Government Aircraft Factory III(F) Mirage
- Grumman S-2G Tracker

- Hawker FB.11 Sea Fury

On the Saturday our visitors were treated to the sight and sound of our Douglas DC-3 'Hawdon' as it departed on a mission to Queensland for its sponsor. On the Sunday the Grumman S-2G Tracker performed a flight to support the annual Kite Day at Stanwell Park, home of Australian aviation pioneer Lawrence Hargrave. The Kite Day commemorates the 12 November 1894 flight by Hargrave using 4 box kites tethered together to lift him into the air.



Hawdon prepared for departure

Photo: M. Keech



Tracker departing for Stanwell Park

Photo: I. Poulter

Illawarra Convoy

The Illawarra Convoy was held on Sunday 17 November, starting from the West Cliff Colliery near Appin and ending at Shellharbour Airport. The event was a tremendous success raising over \$15 million over its 15-year history. The winning bid for the position of lead truck in the convoy was \$500,000, with the lead motor bike position fetching \$105,000.

HARS Aviation Museum was represented at the post-Convoy family fun day at Shellharbour Airport, with one of our Fokker F-27's and our P2V-7 Neptune 281 on static display.



Neptune on display at Convoy

Photo: W. Halford



Fokker on display at Convoy

Photo: W. Halford

Did You Know...

...Qantas recently flew a Boeing 787-9 non-stop from London to Sydney in 19 hours and 19 minutes? This is the second time Qantas has completed a non-stop London Sydney flight, the first was in 1989 by our Boeing 747-438 "City of Canberra", which retains the distinction of having travelled the greater distance.

...in 1919, a modified WW1 Vickers Vimy bomber, piloted by Ross and Keith Smith, was the first Australian-crewed aircraft to fly from Great Britain to Australia in under 30 days? They departed Hounslow Heath on 12 November 1919 and arrived in Darwin on 10 December 1919 with a total flight time of 135 hours 55 minutes and covering 17,911 kilometres.

...Qantas recently retired its last Rolls Royce RB211 powered Boeing 747? The RB211 engine was fitted to 35 Qantas 747's (200 through to 400 series) which collectively accumulated 12,496,901 engine hours.

Café Connie

Next time you're visiting Illawarra Regional Airport drop into Café Connie! Breakfast and lunch menus offering a wide selection of hot and cold foods are available at very reasonable prices. The Café's beverage offering features barista coffee with milk shakes, smoothies and soft drinks. If you're passing our way, why not drop in for coffee and a chat with our friendly staff, or if you're planning a visit to the Museum, you can now make a meal of it.



Next Tarmac Days

Upcoming Tarmac Days will be held on 13, 14, 15 December 2019 and 10, 11, 12 January 2020.

Membership

Are you or a friend interested in joining our tour guide or reception/shop staff ranks? We are actively looking for volunteers to join these areas; lots of laughs and mateship are guaranteed. Maybe you or your partner have a few spare days a month that you would like to contribute to the smooth running of our Museum. An information session for potential new members will be held at 11:00 am on Saturday 14 December. All are welcome.

For further information about membership please visit <http://hars.org.au/contact-us/>. Select 'New Member Enquiries' in the 'Who would you like to contact?' field.



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