



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

## February 2020 Newsletter

*Australia's Aviation Heritage*



### January at HARS

January was a huge month for HARS with visitors keeping our Tour Guides, Reception and Café staff very busy. Weather and fire conditions made it difficult for people to continue with their usual summer holiday plans but HARS was there to provide welcome relief and an interesting place for families to bring their visiting relatives and friends.

The opportunity to fly some of our aircraft during the month was a bonus for our visitors who got to see first-hand the work we do in preserving Australia's aviation heritage. We also had a number of fly-in visitors with some very expensive business aircraft on our ramp which added some interest for our visitors.



DC-3 'Hawdon' flew in January

Photo: M. Keech



...as did Caribou 234.

Photo: M. Keech

In breaking news, we have also welcomed a new addition to Hangar One in the form of a magnificently restored Australian Mustang. Ex-RAAF CA-18 Mustang, A68-199 is now owned by a local pilot who has asked us to provide shelter for his aeroplane. For the foreseeable future the Mustang will be located at HARS and the owner intends to regularly fly it here at Shellharbour Airport. Standby for more detailed information about the history of this spectacular warbird...



A welcome visitor

Photo: M. Keech



The magnificently restored A68-199

Photo: M. Keech

## Bushfire aerial fire-bombing

Without a doubt this has been the worst bushfire season we have ever seen with major fires continuing to burn across multiple states. Aerial fire-bombing has featured as one of the major tools firefighters are using to combat these fires with many organisations from around the world bringing many different aircraft types to assist with this effort.

The HARS aircraft collection includes many types that have been, or continue to be used, for aerial firefighting around the world. These include:

- Consolidated Catalina (our Black Cat was once used for fighting fires in Chile, Argentina, Spain and Portugal),
- Boeing 747,
- Lockheed Neptune,
- Convair (various models),
- Grumman Tracker,
- Lockheed Orion,
- Douglas DC-4.

None of the HARS aircraft retain their firefighting capabilities and, as we operate in the 'limited' category the regulations would not allow any of our aircraft to be used in this role, but we have been assisting Shellharbour Airport during the bush fire emergency. HARS has provided support for movements involving RFS activities such as chartered jets transporting firefighters for South Coast operations. Each year we also provide support for Canadian fire-bombing helicopter operation, Valhalla, which uses Shellharbour Airport as a base for their intense operations.



The HARS Catalina was built in New Orleans for the US Navy in 1945, too late to see any action during World War Two, but was flown in various roles until 1960. After spending twenty years in storage the aircraft was converted to a water bomber in the 1980s and began its new life in Chile and Argentina before being transferred to Spain and ultimately Portugal where it ended its firefighting career. The Catalina was acquired by HARS in 2002 and was restored to airworthy condition before being flown to Australia from Portugal. HARS volunteers have added blisters and a nose turret to return the aircraft to its World War Two configuration. It is currently the only airworthy Catalina in Australia and is now painted to represent RAAF 43 Squadron aircraft A24-362, which was flown by the late HARS member, Rees Hughes.

## January Tarmac Days

Aircraft on display in Hangar One and the surrounding areas include:

- Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation CA-9 Wirraway
- Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation CA-25 Winjeel
- Convair CV-440
- Corby CJ-1 Starlet
- de Havilland DHC-4 Caribou
- de Havilland DHA-3 Drover

- de Havilland T.35 Vampire
- Department of Aircraft Production Mk. 21 Beaufighter
- Douglas C-47B Dakota
- General Dynamics F-111C
- Government Aircraft Factory IIIO(F) Mirage
- Grumman S-2G Tracker
- Hawker FB.11 Sea Fury
- Lockheed AP-3C Orion
- Lockheed C-121C Super Constellation

Engines were run on the Grumman S-2G Tracker and the Lockheed AP-3C Orion while the de Havilland DHC-4 Caribou and the Douglas C-47B Dakota delighted our visitors by taking to the sky. Our friend and HARS member Brett Leech was also there offering flight experiences for our visitors in his magnificent Bell 47G Sioux helicopter.



## Wings over Illawarra 2020

Preparations are well underway for this year's Wings Over Illawarra airshow to be held on 2 and 3 May. While the final flying program has yet to be released it is shaping up to be bigger than ever with HARS, as always, being a major contributor to the action.

Details of the event and tickets can be found at [wingsoverillawarra.com.au](http://wingsoverillawarra.com.au).

## Trains and Planes Sunday

HARS Aviation Museum and Illawarra Light Railway Museum are combining to put on their first-ever joint day of fun and adventure for all the family.

Visitors will be able to ride the trains at Illawarra Light Rail Museum and then see the planes at HARS Aviation Museum all in one day with a free shuttle bus between the museums on Sunday 16 February.

Trains and Planes Sunday is a new event hosted by the dedicated volunteers at both locations to showcase their step into the romance of travel in a bygone age complete with aircraft engine runs and rides behind a working locomotive from Australia's industrial railways.



Illawarra Light Railway Museum

Photo: B. Johns



Illawarra Light Railway Museum

Photo: B. Johns

It's a unique opportunity for train travel, aircraft tours, car and vintage farm machinery displays combined with travel between the popular museums on a free shuttle bus. Visitors will pay full price for their first museum of choice then receive a 20 per cent discount to the second museum for this day only linked by a free-of-charge shuttle bus between the museums at Albion Park Rail and Shellharbour Airport to make a great day out.

HARS Aviation Museum is located at 54 Airport Road Albion Park Rail, just off the Princes Highway on eastern side of Shellharbour Airport. Illawarra Light Railway Museum is located at 48A Tongarra Road Albion Park, on the southern side of Shellharbour Airport.

## Did You Know...

...the first flight of the Consolidated Catalina took place on 28 March 1935? Considered obsolete at the start of World War Two, it provided excellent service in the maritime surveillance and search and rescue roles throughout the conflict with production totalling 3,305 aircraft, the RAAF acquiring 175.

...the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation Wirraway was an Australian military aircraft manufactured between 1939 and 1946? Although intended as a training and general purpose aircraft it was pressed into combat roles including ground attack, light bomber and fighter. In the fighter role it is credited with only one victory against Japanese fighters.

...the Airbus A350-900/1000 family are constructed from 53% carbon fibre? The other major materials are aluminium and aluminium alloys, titanium and steel.

## Café Connie

Next time you're visiting Shellharbour 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.



John Travolta visits Café Connie

Photo: M. Keech

## Next Tarmac Days

The next Tarmac Days will be held on 14, 15, 16 February and 13, 14, 15 March 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 8 February and Saturday 7 March. 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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