



# PHOENIX

HISTORICAL AIRCRAFT RESTORATION SOCIETY JOURNAL



February 2021.

# HARS CONTACT DETAILS

Cover Photo: Jim Thurstan  
Southern Cross II.

## PRESIDENT:

**Bob De La Hunty** OAM  
Phone: (02) 4257 4333  
Home: (02) 4257 5915  
Mobile: 0433 941 306  
Email: delahunty@bigpond.com

## VICE PRESIDENT:

**Maureen Massey**  
Home: (02) 9522 6028  
Mobile: 0499 113 556  
Email: maureenmassey@bigpond.com

## TREASURER:

**David Neaves**  
Mobile: 0407 200 472  
Email: david@neaves.com

## SECRETARY:

**Ian Debenham** OAM  
Mobile: 0432 106 157  
Home: (02) 9874 0454  
Email: ian.debenham@hotmail.com

## GENERAL MANAGER ENGINEERING:

**William Smith**  
Email: william.smith69@gmail.com  
Phone: (02) 9501 5366  
Mobile: 0418 966 273

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

**John Croll** john.croll46@gmail.com  
**Gordon Glynn** gordonglynn@y7mail.com  
**Douglas Haywood** doug34@bigpond.com  
**Les Fisher** airframes43@yahoo.com.au  
**Peter Ward** peter\_ward777@hotmail.com  
**Steven Howson** stevenhowson@gmail.com

## CHAPLAIN:

**Rev. Grahame Abrahams**  
Mobile: 0429 995 649

## JUSTICE OF THE PEACE SERVICE

**Geoff Cuthbert J.P.**  
Contact Phone: 0438 255 627.  
Between 10:00am and 3:00pm.  
*Tuesdays and Thursdays in the Cafe.*

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

## Associated Websites:

*Tourism Shellharbour*  
[www.tourismshellharbour.com.au](http://www.tourismshellharbour.com.au)  
*Destination NSW*  
[www.destinationnsw.com.au](http://www.destinationnsw.com.au)  
*Wings Over Illawarra*  
[www.woi.org.au](http://www.woi.org.au)  
*AussieAirliners*  
[www.aussieairliners.org](http://www.aussieairliners.org)

## PHOENIX EDITOR:

**Maureen Massey**  
Mobile: 0499 113 556  
Email: maureenmassey@bigpond.com



## PRODUCTION COORDINATOR:

**Terry Scanlan**  
Email: tscanlan@bigpond.net.au

## SUB-EDITORS:

**Terry Scanlan**  
Email: tscanlan@bigpond.net.au  
**Steve Heesh**  
Email: steve.heesh@optusnet.com.au  
**Mark Keech**  
Email: keechma@gmail.com  
**Reg Collins**  
Email: regcol39@bigpond.com

## GRAPHIC DESIGNER:

**Chris Hudson**  
Email: peacockpub@hotmail.com

## ALL CORRESPONDENCE:

Secretary:  
HARS Incorporated.  
54 Airport Road  
Albion Park Rail, NSW 2527.  
Ph: (02) 4257 4333.

[www.facebook.com/hars.gen](http://www.facebook.com/hars.gen)



## In this edition

### Page 3

President's and Vice President's Reports.

### Page 4

Southern Cross Replica.

### Page 5

Last Qantas B747-438 to Victorville CA

### Pages 6-7

Boeing 707-138 Progress Report.

### Pages 8

HARS Member Profile - Lyn Toohey.

### Page 9

Relocation of VH-FBC Drover to Broken Hill.

### Pages 10

Fokker F-27 Report.

### Pages 11

Ever Wondered what a Maintenance Check is...?

### Page 12

Aircraft Profile.

### Page 13

Clancy Skybaby.

### Pages 14-15

HARS Parkes Museum Update.

### Page 16-17

The HARS Navy Heritage Flight Report.

### Pages 18-19

Qantas Centenary Celebration at HARS.

### Pages 20-21

A Virtual Round the World Flight for the RFDS.

### Pages 22-23

Happy 25th Anniversary CONNIE

### Pages 24-25

Celebrating 85 Years Since the First Flight of the DC-3

### Pages 26-28

History of Dakota National Air.

### Page 29

The Queen's Planes are in Rehearsal (Part 2).

### Pages 30-31

Emergency Landing at Williamtown.

### Page 32

A Ride in a RAN Sea Venom.

### Page 33

Remembering Cyclone Tracy.

### Page 34

2020 - The Year in Review.

### Pages 35-36

Award Winning Café Connie.

# President's Report



**Bob De La Hunty OAM**  
**President and Chief Pilot.**

HARS has come a long way since the group wanting to save history started together over 40 years ago now. As a not for profit volunteer group we can be proud of our collective achievements through thick and thin. We are all part owners through our membership and constitution and we all can do our bit to showcase everything we do well for visitors now and future generations. We still and will always have lots to do to keep everything looking good from facilities to aircraft.

We have a loose ends list that just when it seems to decrease something comes our way that we need to save. We are in no hurry to finish all projects and can at least know some of them are for future generations to tackle and are supported by sponsors. After WW2 we would have liked earlier generations to have done this and saved so many great aircraft that today we can only dream about, both civil and military. We have not done too badly considering all the speed humps we meet. You only need to see and hear the great comments after our visitors have toured both Shellharbour and Parkes.

Our major loose ends include further buildings and land at Shellharbour and the development at Parkes. The Navy site at Nowra is still on the table and if all develops, will provide an added facility for HARS Naval Aviation elements and access for flying operations. We are doing some of that now since our Iroquois commenced flying and is based there. The MIG 15 and 17 need to be transported to Shellharbour, the C47A in Qld recovered, the 707 as reported is underway with lots to still be done by our contractor, the Convair 580 recovered from Bankstown and lots of parts to be recovered from defence establishments. All this will be our legacy for future generations and contribute to our attractiveness as a tourist destination that will ensure our financial sustainability

We thank all of our volunteers for the vital part they play and our sponsors for their confidence in how we do things. Facebook reports and stories are amazing and a big boost to our enthusiasm when things get tough and we wonder what we are doing and why.

# from the Vice



**Maureen Massey**  
**Vice President.**

WELCOME to the first edition of Phoenix for 2021. Hopefully we can get back to producing another two of three this year.

We survived the COVID threat, and are slowly trading our way out of the slump that saw lots of businesses unfortunately, close their doors permanently. We owe our success to the determination and drive of our Management Committee, and I thank them all sincerely for that.

Without the support of our volunteers and sponsors also, HARS would not be in the position it is today, and the dedication of our members gives us the strength to carry on.

This edition of Phoenix is a newsy one, but we can always use more content, so if you are interested in submitting any articles, please contact Terry Scanlan or myself.

Cheers

*Maureen*

**COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS**  
**\$2.5 million**

Contact  
Oak Flats  
or  
Shellharbour  
branches  
4256 9511  
4295 1544

**Oak Flats and Shellharbour Community Bank® branches**

**Bendigo Bank**

Proud supporters of the  
**HISTORICAL AIRCRAFT RESTORATION SOCIETY**

**HOW GREAT IS THIS?**  
"Bendigo Bank gave us a great deal on our home loan. We even got \$500 to donate to our local club."  
- HARS Volunteer

Proud supporter  
Oak Flats and Shellharbour Community Bank® branches

# Southern Cross Replica

Progress report December 2020.

Story: Jim Thurstan.

Photos: Jim Thurstan and Mark Keech.



A proud Jim Thurstan by the Southern Cross II Tri-Motor.

HARS is happy to report that the last of our three Jacobs engines has been received beautifully presented, from the Historical Aircraft Engines company in Brisbane. That engine, like the other two, was successfully test run for several hours after overhaul, then packed up and transported down to Albion Park. It has now been fitted to the number one position on the left wing.

The three overhauled propellers have now been installed making them ready for our first engine running which everyone is so much looking forward to, probably around late February 2021.

The engines, propellers and components are now back in their original positions, having been fully overhauled and upgraded with the latest available modifications, all back to zero hours in their log books.

The main focus now is to complete a significant electrical system upgrade that will improve its operational safety and function.

HARS hopes to move the aircraft out of the Experimental category into the more demanding but operationally appropriate Limited category. To this end, the aircraft's Flight Operations Manual has been amended for the first time incorporating our new ownership and many improvements to both content and presentation.

Work is underway with the planned System of Maintenance, to move away from generic aircraft checklists, to checklists specific to the one off, actual aircraft, its engines and equipment.

**ABOVE LEFT: The three Jacobs engines are now fitted to the aircraft.**

**LEFT: The original Southern Cross.**



# Last Qantas 747 to Victorville

Story: Terry Scanlan.  
Photos: Mark Keech.

CAPTAINS Sharelle Quinn, Greg Fitzgerald and Owen Weaver visited HARS on 23 August 2020 to present HARS with some documentation of the flight of the last remaining Qantas Boeing 747-438 to the Mojave Desert in July of that year.

The memorabilia presented consisted of the QRH, flight plans, load sheets, 'mudmaps' and other documentation relating to the flight.

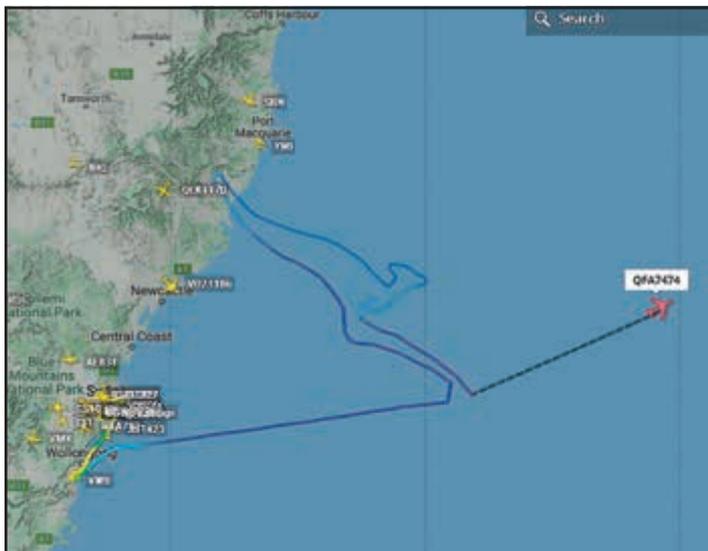
Both Sharelle and Greg gave entertaining accounts of the flight from departure to arrival at their final destination and explained many of the technical issues that had to be addressed when doing the low-level flight over the City of Sydney and Shellharbour Airport. Of particular interest was the account of their flight planning and execution of the 'Roo'. This part of the operation created an electronic trail of their flight



Captains Sharelle Quinn, Greg Fitzgerald with Maureen Massey and Steve Howson.

which when viewed on FlightAware and other Apps traced the image of

the classic Kangaroo that is on the tail of all Qantas aircraft.



ABOVE: The electronic trail that represents the Qantas Roo.



RIGHT: Memorabilia from the flight.

# Boeing 707-138 Progress Report

WORK is underway on the 707 project in Georgia, even though the USA is suffering badly from the COVID-19 Pandemic.

All four pylons have been removed from the aircraft, opened up, cleaned and fully inspected. Most of the discrepancies found have been cleaned and treated, or pieces fabricated to replace cracked or severely corroded brackets. Only two of the exterior pylon skins were corroded past the point of clean or repair and will have to be manufactured for replacement. One lower steel strap will also have to be replaced. All in all, minimal, considering the age of the aircraft.

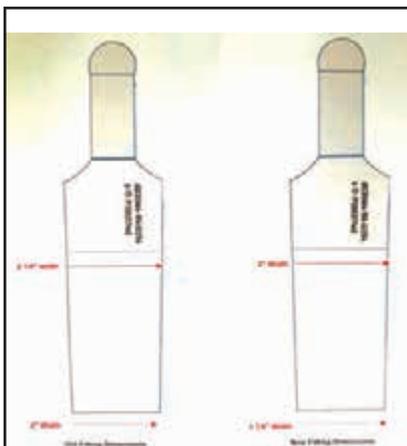


These photos give a good idea as to the extent of work that has been and continues to be performed on the pylons at this stage.



All the pylon attachment fittings ordered have arrived in Georgia and work is well underway on the replacement. Sourcing of these parts was quite an exercise and resulted in us purchasing 2 off Inboard Mid Spar Fittings from Omega Air in Ireland, 1 off I/B Mid Spar Fitting from GM Air in Florida and another I/B Mid Spar Fitting from Boeing in Seattle.

The Outboard Fittings had to be made from scratch, as none were available on the shelf and Boeing delivered 4 off to Stambaugh Aviation in Georgia in December.



Old and New Fitting Dimensions

All new fittings were purchased undrilled, as Stambaugh had experienced problems in the past with oversized holes or wrongly located holes in fittings coming out of Boeing registered agents in India and China.

Also, even though the new fittings have the same part numbers, some are manufactured in different widths which poses a problem with the

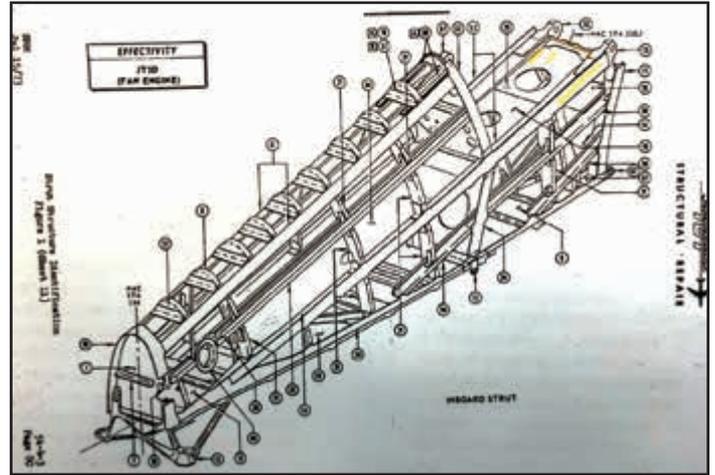


attachment to the wing. To overcome this problem, "T" chords will be manufactured and fitted to the pylons to accommodate the new attachment to the wing. Fortunately, only two (2) of the new purchased fittings need these chords. These "T" chords come as an additional cost of \$US 58,000.00 for both.

A Borescope inspection was requested on the engines and result – "All four engines 'passed' Borescope." No discrepancies were noted that would preclude it making a ferry flight. There were concerns over their condition from such a long storage time, but the fact that the aircraft had not flown for approximately two years before it was positioned at Stambaugh Aviation, worked in our favour.

As you can see, the 707 Project is progressing well and we are relying heavily on Stambaugh Aviation, as our HARS contractor, to fulfill the task of bringing the aircraft back to airworthiness condition for its Ferry Flight to Australia. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and our geographic location, it is almost impossible to have any HARS crews in Georgia to assist with this project, and it is increasingly difficult to manage its progress from afar.

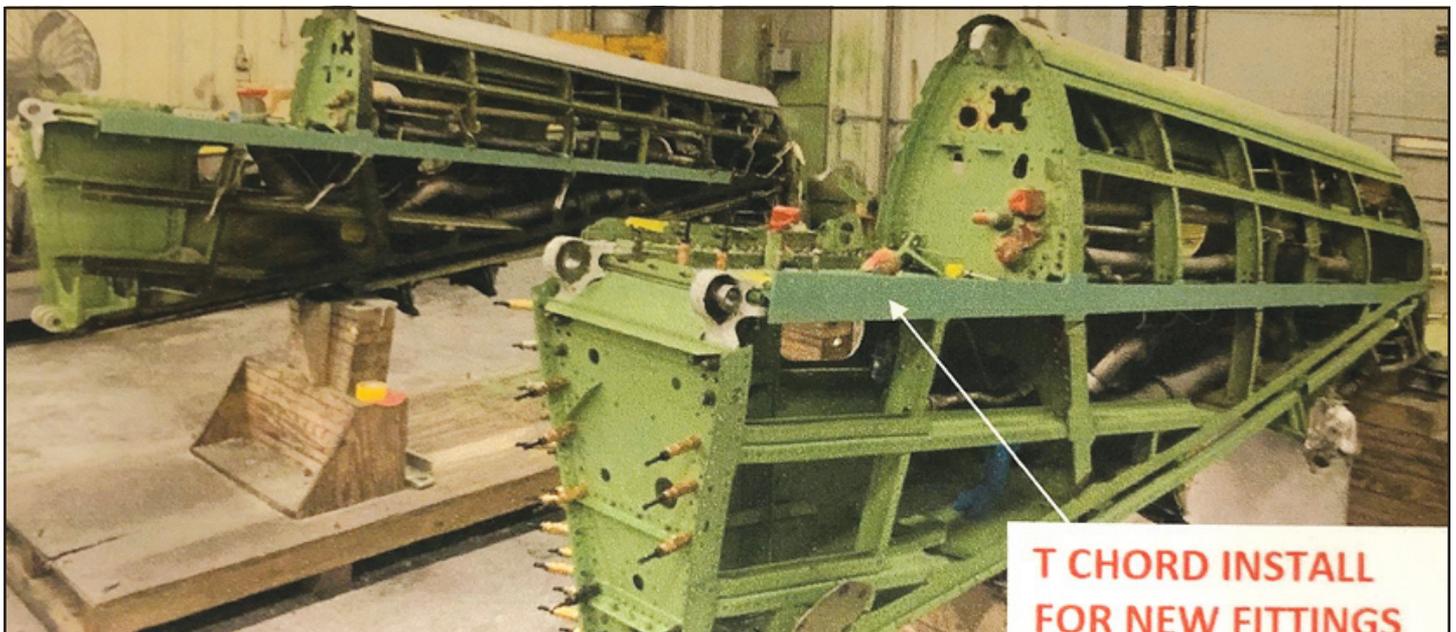
The 707 project is indeed a challenge, not that HARS has not faced that before, and I am certain that with the continued support of our sponsors and supporters, this will result in having N707JT stabled at our home base in the Illawarra.



Inboard Strut Structure Diagram.



ABOVE & BELOW: Pictures showing the "T" Chord Replacements.



## Lyn Toohey

BORN 1939 to Leo and Jean Baptist. Dad in the tyre game and mum a milliner. I grew up in Earlwood and attended primary school at Our Lady of Lourdes. At age 8 commenced classical ballet training in Sydney. Completed primary school in Earlwood then travelled to Randwick to Brigidine College to complete high school. Still studying dance and finishing High School with Intermediate certificate, I commenced a hair dressing 4 year apprenticeship with Norman Flohm, Pitt street! Sydney. During this time met the love of my life John. After completing my apprenticeship John and I married in April 1959. Needless to say, ballet was put on hold.

Moving to Bankstown when Daughter #1 was born. Daughter #2 followed soon after.

In 1965 we moved to Collaroy Plateau and the girls started school in Narrabeen. With the girls at school, I began part-time work managing hair salons in Dee Why and the Plateau.

In 1968 daughter #3 arrived (a bit of a shock) and John progressing to management level with DuPont, we were transferred to Melbourne; a truly great time. However, after only 3 years in Melbourne we were requested to return to Sydney. Having sold our home on the Plateau we began the task of searching for another home.

We decided to move west where we purchased a little fibro house (with a great kitchen) on 5 amazing acres at Kentlyn, north east of Campbelltown; a truly great place for the girls to run wild.

When all the girls commenced school and looking for extra \$\$, I started part time position with the Education Department as a teacher's aide assisting with PE and dance.



Lyn the Ballerina.



This of course led me back to ballet. So, I completed my teachers certificate in tap, ballet and jazz and opened my dance school in 1984. John and I also started our own business in pre-press dealing with the newspaper industry and government departments. Lots of overseas travel; when home back into the office plus preparing dance students for dance exams, concerts etc. and weddings.

During the early '90s my husband's health declined quite badly resulting in a double lung transplant in September 1995. After a four-year battle, John died March 1999.

A new beginning with the year 2000 arrival, I sold our business and dancing school. Spending lots more time with daughters and sons-in-law and 6 incredible grandchildren, I even went on pilgrimage, took up tennis and joined Probus. So, after running a large home with 5 acres to mow etc I "retired" to Wollongong 2009. And, as they say, the rest is history.

Love living here at Links, took up golf (now a tragic), joined the social committee, am President of the Aged Care Auxiliary. I'm still a committee member with Probus, underwent open heart surgery and then, neighbours, Jim and Valerie Thurstan, introduced me to a magical place HARS. WOW!! 2015 opened another new adventure with Tour Guide training and making new friendships which I am truly grateful.

With the re-opening of HARS in June 2020, (after closing due to Covid) was so great to see and catch up with "old" friends and share stories and laughs. I feel really blessed. I have 3 beautiful daughters and their husbands, 6 incredible grandchildren, dare I say 4 feral great grandchildren and you my friends.

# Relocation of VH-FBC Drover to Broken Hill

Story & Photos:  
Kerry Gnaden.



**The newly painted DHA-MK3a Drover.**

IN March 2018, HARS assisted the Royal Flying Doctor Service to dismantle a DHA-3 Drover Mk3a at Bankstown Airport. This aircraft was part of the Australian Aviation Museum's (AAM) collection which was on loan from the Powerhouse Museum. This particular Drover, VH-FBC S/N 5019, was built in 1956 and was used by the RFDS, registered as VH-FDA, operating out of Broken Hill, NSW. Due to the closure of the AAM, it was gifted to the RFDS for display at their Broken Hill Museum which is being upgraded to include 5 aircraft types used by the RFDS since its formation in 1928 as the AIM Aerial Medical Service by the Rev John Flynn.

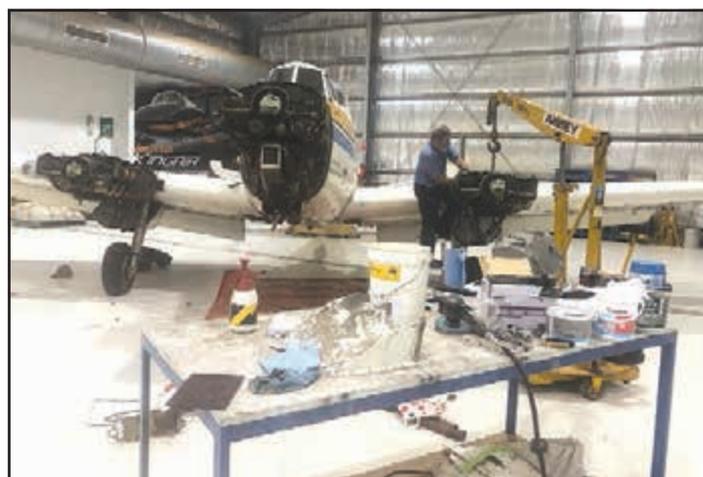
The Mk3a Drover is a modified version of the Mk2 version we have at HARS. The modifications involved replacing the Gipsy Major engines with three Lycoming O-360-A1A horizontally opposed engines and is fitted with a modified tailplane of increased span and dihedral. Changes were also made to the flap control system and the tail wheel assembly. The RFDS Mk3a's were configured to carry the pilot, two medical staff and two stretcher patients and were operated in the Northern Territory, outback NSW and Queensland.

In August 2020, HARS once again assisted the RFDS to re-assemble this aircraft for static display in their museum. With Ken Goodhew I flew to Broken Hill on Tuesday 25th August to meet up with other Volunteers Jim Sutton, a retired LAME, and John Larkin, Project Manager for the Museum upgrade.

Upon arrival, we found that Jim had managed to assemble the wings and undercarriage to the fuselage, ready for us to complete the control surfaces. The flaps and ailerons needed washing before assembly due to the desert dust storms that prevailed during the drought. Once assembled on the aircraft, Ken began the process of re-cabling the flaps and ailerons so they could be retracted and the ailerons become level. I continued to secure the various fairings and covers. Next was the exercise of fitting the tailplane to the

aircraft. This proved to be quite difficult and time consuming as there was very little tolerance to jiggle the tailplane into position. John was controlling the forklift whilst the three of us pulled and jiggled the tailplane into position. Once in position we bolted the tailplane to its attachment points and attached the fairings. Jim began the process of fitting the 3 Lycoming engines to the aircraft and attaching the associated items that were removed during dis-assembly at Bankstown. I assisted Jim by attaching the propellers. Ken continued the job of re-cabling the flaps and ailerons. By the end of Thursday evening, the aircraft was basically re-assembled. The only items left to be attached were the engine cowlings which were being undercoated by John in preparation for Jim to paint the aircraft in its traditional RFDS livery of the 1960's. This was completed during the following week. Prior to our departure on Friday morning, the four of us re-attached the cowlings to the engines.

The RFDS looked after Ken and me most graciously and we had a most enjoyable experience. We look forward to the time when we can go back for the grand opening of the new museum display being managed by John, sometime in 2021.



**Attaching the engines to the Drover.**

# Fokker F-27 Report

Story: Peter Tomkinson.  
Photos: Keith Newton, Mark Keech and Terry Scanlan.



**VH-EWH and VH-TQN.**

CRITICAL to the F27's success was the Rolls Royce Dart engine which demands a lot of current on start-up and a large Ground Power Unit has been brought back into operation for this task with major help from several HARS members.

To enable easy access into VH-TQN, entry stairs were

fitted enabling the Tour Guides and visitors to inspect the aircraft. Several new members have joined the F27 Team which now include four LAMEs and one AME.

The Fokker F-27 was instrumental in connecting country regions of Australia to major cities, and it is the intention to 'Return the Friendship' to airworthy condition



**Cockpit of the F-27.**

**BELOW:**

**A model made by Steve Keddie of  
VH-TQN in TAA colours.**



# Ever Wondered what a Maintenance Check is?

**Story: Terry Scanlan, Jim Marshall  
and Warren Goodhew.  
Photos: Terry Scanlan.**

YOU may have noticed that our engineers have been very busy in recent weeks and so I made enquiries as to what they were doing with our operational aircraft.

Jim Marshall and Warren Goodhew kindly gave me the information I sought. Turns out that it was annual inspection time and most of our operational aircraft were undergoing these inspections.

The annual checks are done at certain intervals and these are either 12 months from the last check or 100 hours of operations.

All systems of an aircraft must be inspected in conjunction with a CASA/AWAL approved inspection program in Airframe/Electrical/Instruments and Radio categories. Supplementary to the general inspection program which must be complied with are periodic service bulletins and Airworthiness Directives (A/Ds) applying to various categories. All hidden areas of the airframe are accessed by opening inspection panels and checks are made for cracks, corrosion, damage, loose rivets and fluid leaks.

The aircraft must be lubricated as per the maintenance manual using a variety of different oils and greases for the components as specified. All this inspection generates rectification which must be actioned and functional checks carried out to verify the systems before the Maintenance Release can be signed by the appropriate LAME and the aircraft can be released for further flight.

This is also the time for the A/Ds to be checked for what is applicable to the particular type and if it is due to be actioned. There is also recurring maintenance to be checked; this brings up items that may have to be changed or inspected at a predetermined time such as cabin fire extinguishers that may have to go for hydrostatic inspections.

These inspections can be carried out by an Aircraft Maintenance Engineer (AME) under the supervision of



**Underwing inspection panels opened for inspection.**

a Licenced Aircraft Maintenance Engineer (LAME) and if completed to his satisfaction, is then certified for the completed inspection. Any outstanding defects should also be rectified and certified, in some cases dual certification may be necessary if a vital operating system such as flight controls is disturbed.

The annual maintenance inspection for the engines is twofold, MINOR and MAJOR. The MINOR is undertaken virtually every year and the MAJOR every two years. These are carried out with cowls open and generally involves a complete inspection of all components in place and secure, as well as checking for no abnormal fluid leakage. A wheeze check is accomplished by motoring the engine to detect abnormal exhaust noises from the cylinders. Oil filters are inspected for metal contamination, power recovery turbines for cracks caused during their high temperature operation. The propellers are included. The MAJOR in addition to the MINOR requires some fuel filter inspections and ignition timing for smooth operation and an electrical supplement inspection of instrument indication transmitters, generator brushes for wear etc.

Once all of the required tasks are completed the maintenance check concludes with an engine run to confirm the effectiveness of the check.



**Jim Marshall inspecting the port side landing gear.**



**Warren, Wayne and Trevor doing a cylinder head inspection on Connie.**

## de Havilland DH.82A Tiger Moth A17-394



### de Havilland DH.82A Tiger Moth

The de Havilland DH.82A Tiger Moth is a two-seat, single-engine biplane developed from a series of aircraft that started general aviation in Great Britain after the First World War. Designed by Geoffrey de Havilland the prototype DH.82 Tiger Moth was developed to meet a British Air Ministry specification for an ab-initio training aircraft. It first flew on 26 October 1931 and quickly became a commercial success being exported to more than 25 countries and manufactured in seven countries, including Australia.

The fuselage is a steel tube frame covered in plywood and fabric and the wings are of wooden construction also covered in fabric. The Tiger Moth is powered by a 130 horsepower Gipsy Major engine, inverted to improve forward visibility, which is started by hand swinging the wooden propeller.

By the time the Second World War broke out Tiger Moths were being used by most Commonwealth air forces as the primary, basic trainer. Between 1940 and 1945 de Havilland Australia built 1,085 Tiger Moths at its plants in Mascot and later Bankstown, the engines being manufactured by General Motors in Victoria.

#### Technical Data

Manufacturer: de Havilland Australia  
Role: Trainer  
Crew: 2  
Length: 7.3 m  
Wingspan: 8.9 m  
Height: 2.7 m  
Powerplant: 1 x de Havilland Gipsy Major, 4 cylinder, air-cooled, inline, piston engine, 130 horsepower  
Maximum takeoff weight: 803 kg

#### Performance

Maximum speed: 175 km/h (95 kn)  
Cruise speed: 148 km/h (80 kn)  
Range: 486 km (262 NM)  
Service ceiling: 13,600 feet

#### Armament

Nil

Some civilian-owned Tiger Moths were pressed into service by the Royal Australian Air Force during the war but the majority of the RAAF Tiger Moths were built by de Havilland in Australia.

When it started to become clear that war in Europe was inevitable the British government, realising that they would be short of trained pilots, set up the Empire Air Training Scheme – a plan to train pilots remotely in the dominions. Training bases were established in Australia, Bermuda, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa and Southern Rhodesia. The Tiger Moth was used as the primary training aircraft in all of these countries and the scheme trained over 37,000 aircrew in Australia alone.

In all 861 Tiger Moths were used by the RAAF, some of the de Havilland production run were delivered to the other Commonwealth countries participating in the EATS. It was the basic trainer for thousands of Australian pilots during the war and continued to be used for training in the RAAF until 1957. After the war Tiger Moths were disposed of by the hundreds and many of them made their way into private ownership, the type forming the basis of the post-war civil flying movement. Many of these aircraft are still active today, including the HARS Tiger Moth, VH-DHV.

Built in 1941, the HARS aircraft saw service with the RAAF in No. 5 Service Flying Training School based at Uranquinty, NSW.





**Clancy Skybaby.**

THE newest addition to the HARS aircraft fleet is a 1961-built Clancy Skybaby. Originally designed by Sydney brothers Allan, William and Jack Clancy, the Skybaby first took to the air in February 1931. Constructed of a steel tubing and timber frame it is covered in fabric and powered by a two-cylinder Praga engine. Many examples of the type have been built over the years in Australia, New Zealand and even the United States.

The HARS aircraft was generously donated by John Cameron and it had previously been on display at the now closed Australian Aviation Museum at Bankstown, NSW. The engine has been inspected and appears to be sound. Over the coming months the Skybaby will be reassembled and the engine restored to running condition.

## Visitors Comments



### “ **Enjoyed my Morning**

*I just want to say how much I enjoyed my morning at the Museum I was lucky enough to have Frank (I hope I have his name right, I'm hopeless with names) as my guide What a wonderful man, so full of knowledge and stories I was just looking to fill in an hour or so, 2 hours later and I'm still wanting more Thank you for making my day so enjoyable Sue-Ann. This e-mail was sent from a contact form on hars.org.au*

*Sue-Ann Lloyd .*

*Date of Tour: Monday 14th September*

### **Beyond Expectations**

*Good afternoon. Today I have visited the HARS Museum and wish to*

*provide feedback on my family and myself visit. The museum is beyond expectations; its material and display are worldwide best-in industry and unique in its offer (I am Italian). The enjoyment was enhanced by your volunteer Chris that went above and beyond his role, providing exceptional customer service and involvement. I hope you can further increase the visibility of this gem and “market” the museum and its content furthermore (I discovered it by coincidence and did not imagine what would had been waiting for me).Very well done, we will visit on more occasions!*

*Best regards, Andrea*

*Date of experience: January 2021.*

”

# HARS Parkes Museum Update



## Ex RAAF P2V-4/5 Neptune A89-302

DURING the past year there has been much activity at Parkes, the most notable of which has been the progress on restoration of ex RAAF P2V-4/5 Neptune A89-302.

Neptune 302 has now been reassembled and is on display at the museum, a huge effort considering at this time last year the aircraft was in

many pieces, some stored at Austop (our warehouse facility on the western side of Parkes) and some at the museum. Each section was repainted before reassembly, with a large effort by Parkes and visiting Albion Park members in October 2020 seeing the fin, wings, jet pods and wing tanks being fitted over a two-day period.

The interior has also been resprayed. There is still some sheet metal repair work required on the outside of the aircraft which will be progressed during the coming year. Work has also commenced on restoring the interior of the aircraft, which is considered a life size jigsaw puzzle given the number of components to be



Looking aft in the interior of Neptune A89-272.



The Cockpit instrument panel, Mike De La Hunty taking a break.

identified, assembled, and installed.

Continuing work on P2V-7 Neptune A89-272 has included further painting, replacement of cockpit windows, repairs to the starboard wing (damaged in a storm last January) and the installation of the cockpit instrument panel. The internal fuselage has also been repainted and work continues to reassemble the internals of the aircraft.

The Wessex Helicopter has also received attention with main rotor blades and mock rear rotor blades manufactured and installed.

Parkes High School students have provided much valuable assistance with all our work at the museum during the year.

Planning to build a new facility for our museum at Parkes Airport is well advanced. A Memorandum of Understanding has been received from Parkes Council with a Development Application now being prepared. The new facility is proposed to include covered concrete hard stands for aircraft display together with a building for reception and aircraft displays. The DA and Grant "Shovel Ready" application requires a commitment to have the museum open 7 days per week. A major volunteer recruitment drive will be undertaken in coming months to support the additional opening days.



Parkes High School Students also used Neptune 272 for fire fighting training.



The Wessex with main rotor blades installed.

## Visitors Comments

### Wonderful tour

“ Great experience. Dave took us on a wonderful tour of the facility. Boarded the Caribou & Orion to have a good look around. Brilliant place to visit & Dave is very knowledgeable about the aircraft & entire facility. Highly recommended & a BIG Thank you to all the volunteers!

Sarah A, Sydney.

Date of Tour: October. 2020.

### Great place to visit

Great place to visit. The staff and volunteers are so friendly and helpful. Kids are able to climb into the cockpit of the planes and helicopters. They loved it and learned so much. Highly recommend visiting.

Mands333, Sydney.

Date of Tour: October 2020.

”

# The HARS Navy Heritage Flight Report

TWO Navy Heritage Flight (NHF) airframes are now airworthy again - NHF Grumman S-2G Tracker 844 and NHF Bell UH1B Huey 898.

At present Tracker 844 is undergoing its 10 yearly maintenance checks of all hoses and associated couplings, and it is grounded until that check has been completed. Huey 898 is airworthy, subject to routine maintenance checks being satisfactory.

Tracker S-2G 851 will be restored to taxi-able status while Tracker S-2E 845 (based at Albion Park) and Tracker S-2E 842 (Based at Air Affairs Nowra) will be static display/gate guard status.

Volunteer teams are actively restoring NHF Bell Huey 893 and Navy Auster 896 and we plan for both to be airworthy within 12 months.



Tracker 844



Huey 898 at HARS



Huey 893



Auster 896

Work continues on the long-term restoration of C-47 N2-90 to airworthiness and the Sea Venom (WZ895) for static display.

The Wessex helicopters 832 (based at HARS Albion Park) and 813 (based at HARS Parkes) airframes will reach static display status only.



**Tracker 845.**



**Dakota N2-90 and Sea venom (foreground).**



**Wessex 832.**

Sea Fury (WG 630) is in safe display storage at HARS Albion Park whilst a team of aircraft engineers develop a restoration plan.

The NHF aircraft are an added value to the HARS historic fleet and will prove popular with our many visitors from both Australia and overseas.



**Wessex 813 cockpit at Parkes.**



**Sea Fury.**

# Qantas Centenary

**Story: Steve Heesh**  
**Photos: Mark Keech, Terry Scanlan**  
**and Tony Horneman.**

OUR National carrier Qantas turned 100 on 16 November 2020. On that date in 1920 The Queensland and Northern Territory Aerial Services Limited was incorporated in Queensland. That provides Qantas with a number of claims to fame:

- The oldest continuously operating airline in the World;
- The oldest airline in the English-speaking World; and
- The third oldest airline in the World after KLM and Avianca.

Take your pick - whichever way you look at it, this event was cause for celebration – and celebrate we did!

To mark the occasion, HARS held a

barbecue at the HARS facility at Shellharbour Airport on Sunday 15 November. It was held under the wings of VH-OJA, our very own 747 entrusted to us by Qantas back in March 2015. This event was attended by about 210 guests, a mixture of HARS Members, Qantas staff, past and present, a significant proportion being crew. With entertainment from a crew-based band, English and the Doc, the day was made more festive by many of those present coming decked out in their old uniforms. The famous Pucci uniform provided a wonderful splash of colour as well as memories of a bygone era. Not to be outdone,



**Sunset over the Illawarra Escarpment provided an inspiring setting for the Centenary Dinner.**

many pilots came decked out in their braided splendour.

This barbecue provided an opportunity to mark the end of some careers tragically cut short by the shutdown in the wake of COVID 19 virus as well as to renew old friendships with colleagues and aircraft such as the 747, Super Constellation, DC-4, DC-3, Convair 440, Catalina and Drover flown by Qantas and its constituent carriers such as TAA/Australian Airlines. Many of those present had operated those particular aircraft or types.

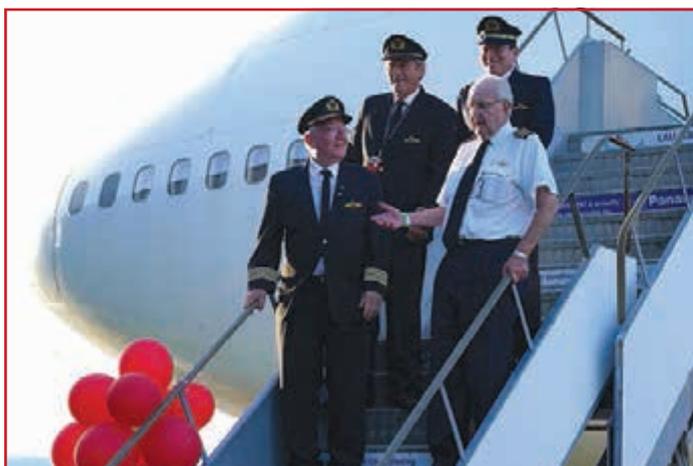
The anniversary was also marked on the day (Monday 16 November 2020) by a black-tie dinner held in Hangar 1 attended by 130 guests. The evening commenced with drinks and canapés above the wing of VH-OJA in the reception area on level 1 of the HARS facility. The windows of that room frame the OJA's vertical stabiliser – and therefore its Flying Kangaroo.

After a boarding call by MC Tony Trenbath, guests then moved to Hangar 1 to enjoy a three-course meal. With the venue appropriately themed for the evening by the Super Constellation, guests were delighted to find they were seated under and adjacent to this 1950s icon which was the mainstay of the Qantas long haul fleet at that time.

The meal was punctuated by an announcement at about 6:45 pm



**Uniforms from the past – above, the famous Pucci and right the Pilots' braid**



# Celebration at HARS



**The Centenary Dinner under the Super Constellation.**

During the evening guests were provided with musical entertainment by the Dashing Eights, a group of musicians who for their day jobs crew Qantas' Dash 8 fleet. They were also addressed by two retired captains, both HARS members with impeccable Qantas credentials. Warwick Tainton joined Qantas through the first course of the Qantas Cadet

Pilot Training Scheme commencing his 47-year Qantas career in 1965. Heavily involved in the establishment of the Qantas Founders Museum in Longreach, Warwick spoke of the founders of Qantas drawing out the skills, dedication and attitudes which became the

requesting all guests to move outside to witness what was to become the highlight of the evening. As dusk fell, all eyes turned to the north of the field where the lights of an aircraft became visible apparently on approach to Runway 16. As the size and shape of this approaching aircraft emerged, it became obvious this was a twin-engine jet of significant proportions. Passing overhead at 1,000 feet, many shed a tear as they

identified the aircraft as the Qantas Centenary-liveried Boeing 787 Dreamliner, VH-ZNJ. On a 100-minute flight to mark the Centenary, QF100 passed over Shellharbour Airport to acknowledge the event underway in Hangar 1 and to pay its respects to Qantas' first 747-400, VH-OJA. It continued South and 15 minutes later returned to make a further equally-low level pass as it headed North. Those on the ground were able to use their mobile phone torches to say 'Thanks' as ZNJ flew into the darkened sky towards Sydney to undertake a fly-over of Sydney Harbour as part of the Qantas celebrations for the day.

HARS President and Chief Pilot Bob De La Hunty OAM, proposed a toast to Qantas recalling parts of its history including the characteristics of its founders and those many thousands of staff who have followed who built the airline being recognised by this celebration.



**QF100 marks the Centenary Dinner.**

foundations of the airline's longevity. Reg Darwell, who joined Qantas in 1958 as a junior executive trainee (aka office boy), found himself working directly for its founder Sir Hudson Fysh. Located in the mail room, Reg shared insights into the personalities, disciplines and issues evident to him in those days. In 1961, he achieved his boyhood dream of becoming a pilot and attained the position of Qantas' number



**Bob De La Hunty proposes a toast to Qantas.**

one pilot in seniority before retiring in 2000.

The overwhelmingly positive response from guests indicates these events were a great success. This was predominantly attributable to the dedication and commitment of a large number of HARS members who volunteered many hours in the planning, preparation and execution of each event. Both events showcased the HARS facility as a unique and very appealing function venue with the potential to become a source of revenue in the future.



**The Birthday Cake.**

# A Virtual Round the World Flight for The Royal Flying Doctor Service



Forty Eight Airports and 37,000nm.

HARS has a very close relationship with the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) with its ownership of a DHA-3 Drover, VH-DHM an ex RFDS aircraft that served with the RFDS in the early 60s. HARS has flown the Drover out to the RFDS base in Broken Hill several times in support of the RFDS.

Early in November 2020 several HARS members manned two full cockpit simulators and flew them around the world landing at 48 airports and covering 37,000nm. All of this was done without leaving HARS at Shellharbour Airport and at Chipping Norton, Sydney where the second simulator was based. The flights were 'virtual' and flown online with hundreds of other flight simulator enthusiasts and all for a good cause, raising money for various charities.

The HARS members were participating in the annual



WorldFlight event with a focus on raising money for the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS). Since its inception, the Australian division of WorldFlight has raised in excess of \$370,000 for the RFDS and has funded many of their activities including 'Fly Around

Clinics', CDMA mobile telephones for the Doctors to use, testing equipment for their GPS navigation equipment and medical equipment carried onboard their Beechcraft King Air aircraft.

The simulator that was based in Hangar One at HARS is a Boeing 737-800 owned by HARS member Mark Chapman and the simulator at Chipping Norton, Sydney is a full motion Boeing 747-400 cockpit owned by Matt Sheil and crewed by HARS member Terry Scanlan along with several other crew members.

The flights are operated on the online VATSIM community with the crews experiencing air traffic control services from highly trained 'virtual' air traffic controllers who practice real world procedures.

The Boeing 737-800 simulator was stationed in Hangar One and the HARS DHA-3 Drover was positioned nearby. The Drover was an aircraft type that the RFDS used in the late 40's and early 50's and was used to transfer patients to hospital. HARS has had a long association with the RFDS and has participated in fund raising flights with the HARS Connie and Drover.

The two simulators raised \$15,000 for the RFDS with a collective total of \$40,000 raised by five cockpit simulators in the Australian contingent of the WorldFlight Group.



The crew in Hangar 1 with a DHA Drover used by the RFDS in the 60's left to right, Paul Dibden, Ron Bull, Steve Yerbury (RFDS), Mark Chapman and Dick Woodrow.



The B737 simulator in Hangar 1.



HARS member Terry Scanlan and the B747-400 simulator .

# Happy 25th Anniversary CONNIE



In the beginning 1992.



A happy lot of volunteers .

*OUR February 2021 edition marks a significant passage of time in the history of HARS as twenty five years ago on February 3, 1996 the C-121 – L1049 Super Constellation, VH-EAG arrived in Sydney. The following is an extract from the Phoenix magazine of February 3, 1996 Author - Gary Squire*

## **AN EPIC FLIGHT**

February 3, 1996 just before noon- after five years of effort VH-EAG triumphantly taxied into the Qantas Jet Base at Sydney Airport, its pathway lined with well-wishers and followed by a flotilla of mini buses and other vehicles. As the door opened and the crew descended from the aircraft, the crowd which lined the viewing enclosure erupted into applause - applause due to every member of HARS, every sponsor and supporter, and every Aussie Connie Supporter.

For the first time in thirty-three years, an Australian owned Lockheed Super Constellation was on Australian soil. One of only five airworthy examples of the Constellation family in the world today, here in Australia – Australian owned.

VH-EAG left Tucson around midday on January 24 and left the west coast of the USA on Australia Day, January 26 from Oakland. Total distance Tucson to Sydney was over 13,500km, time in the air just under 36 hours – via Oakland,



Connie today.

Honolulu, Pago Pago and Nadi.

Whilst minor works were carried out during a day stop at Oakland after the shakedown from Tucson, and the engineers carried out precautionary maintenance at every other stop, VH-EAG performed exceptionally well during the flight. The arrival over Sydney on the morning of February

3 was a tribute to the fine efforts of all the engineers and others responsible for the restoration.

Lockheed Super Constellation VH-EAG "Southern Preservation" is at last in Sydney – congratulations are due to all those responsible.



Connie on the tarmac at Pago Pago.

# Celebrating 85 years since the first flight of the DC-3



**C-47, VH-EAF departing for Sydney Harbour.**

THE 17th of December 2020 marked the 85th anniversary of the first flight of the DC-3 and to celebrate HARS took the opportunity to fly our military version of the DC-3, VH-EAF, over Sydney Harbour.

It was 32 years to the day after the Wright brothers first took to the air when the prototype DC-3, originally known as the Douglas Sleeper Transport, took to the skies over Santa Monica. The DC-3 became instrumental in establishing the airline industry in the 1930s and made air travel popular in the United States.

Its rugged, over-engineered design meant that it was an

obvious choice as a transport / utility aircraft when the Second World War broke out and a military version was produced, the C-47.

Also known as the Dakota, over 16,000 DC-3s and C-47s were produced from 1935 to 1949 and, when the war was over, thousands of them were converted for civilian airline use. In Australia, many airlines operated the type, including Qantas, Australian National Airways and Trans Australia Airlines.

The flight to Sydney Harbour was in Dakota A65-94, an aircraft that was built as a C-47 for the Royal Australian



**HARS members onboard the flight to Sydney Harbour.**

Air Force in 1945. This aircraft holds the record for the longest serving aircraft in the RAAF, having been delivered, and seeing service during, the last months of the Second World War and operating continuously until 1999. It has been operated continuously by HARS Aviation Museum since it was acquired from the Air Force, so this aircraft celebrated 75 years of operations this year.

After departure from our base at Shellharbour airport we flew 60 nautical miles up the east coast past Sea Cliff Bridge, Stanwell Park and the Royal National Park, then onto Cronulla where we passed under the approach path for Sydney Airport. From Sydney Heads we climbed to 1,500 feet and continued to Long Reef while our clearance for the Harbour Scenic was processed. After a short hold we were approved to head in towards the Harbour Bridge and Opera House where we conducted a number of orbits in each direction to allow the crew on board to get a good view. We then departed via Sydney Heads and descended back down into the Victor One lane to return to Shellharbour airport.

We were extremely lucky with the weather as there had been rain on the days before and after, and thunderstorms were forecast for the day. Our thanks to the HARS Engineers and Flight Crew for making this happen.



**TOP RIGHT:**

**Abeam the Sea Cliff Bridge**

**MIDDLE and RIGHT:**

**Several passes were made over the iconic Harbour Bridge**

# History of Dakota National Air

BY the early 1970s the DC-3 was at last being retired from airline service in Australia which resulted in a number of these aircraft being put up for disposal. The C.A.A. was concerned that some of these might end up in the hands of people without the discipline and expertise to maintain and safely operate this class of aircraft, particularly in a commercial capacity so was inclined to discourage such ventures.

This conservative and cautious attitude persisted for a long time and was further entrenched by the tragic DC-3 accident



**Captain Graham Lowder in the DC-3.**

in Holland. On that day a DC-3 of the Dutch Dakota Association was on a pleasure flight with 28 passengers and crewed by two highly experienced airline pilots but without a great deal of Dakota time and who did not fully understand the aircraft systems. The aircraft suffered an engine failure and what should have been a routine propeller feathering followed by a safe single engine landing was mishandled. Control was lost causing the aeroplane to crash killing all 32 occupants. The thought of something similar happening here was enough to put the wind-up CAA/CASA well and truly.

In the early 1980s a NSW business man who held a private licence and owned a Cessna attended an aircraft auction just out of curiosity, on a whim put in a bid and left owning an ex T.A.A. DC-3, VH-SBL and wondering what he was now going to do with it. His solution was to buy another four DC-3s and decide to set up a charter company which he registered as Dakota National Air then starting the long arduous business of applying for a charter licence and an A.O.C. He realised that he would need to hire a chief pilot who thoroughly understood the DC-3 and who would be readily acceptable to the regulator. Jack Curtis was one of the great characters of Australian aviation, widely known as a genial, well liked and admired man and who had a great deal of DC-3 experience with T.A.A. including three years as a supervisory captain in Papua New Guinea, so it was a real coup for the new company when they were able to sign Jack up as Chief Pilot elect.

He made it quite clear that he would only take on the task



**Dakota National Air aircraft at Bankstown.**



VH-SBL in TAA Sunbird Services livery, taken in Port Moresby. Seems to be a Connie in the background.

if he had a free hand to run the show in accordance with T.A.A. manuals, procedures and standards including initial and renewal training to the airline standard which was well above the minimum allowed. Also the aircraft would be flown in accordance with IFR procedures and all captains would maintain a command instrument rating so the training and recency expenses would be quite high which the owner grumbled about occasionally but knew that he would have to accept it or look for a new chief pilot.

All flying training was carried out at Richmond, courtesy of the R.A.A.F., which was a marvelous location having an ILS, a long runway with flat surrounding terrain, full A.T.C., a resident fire and rescue service and all with no landing fees or movement charges. We always enjoyed a great rapport with the Air Force, no doubt helped by a standing invitation for the Base Commander, usually a Group Captain, to jump in the left-hand seat occasionally and fly a couple of circuits.

Anyway, eventually the required licences were obtained and what would be the last commercial operator of the DC 3 was open for business.

Being a 1930s design the DC-3 cannot meet all modern performance standards which some companies accepted and kept their fingers crossed and hoped that they would never suffer an engine failure in a critical situation. Not so T.A.A. who, industry leaders in such things, after much research and analysis developed a procedure and profile which if followed precisely and the aeroplane flown extremely accurately would enable a loaded DC-3 to have an engine fail at a critical point in a take-off and to complete the maneuver and climb away. Some years later this technique paid off for D.N.A. when VH-BPN departing

Rockhampton at all up weight had an engine expire right at the V 1 / V 2 speed of 81 knots, completed the take-off and circled to land.

My own love affair with the DC-3 started in 1961 when after qualifying as DC-3 first officer with T.A.A. I was posted to New Guinea where I enjoyed three years of stimulating and exciting flying. I actually arrived in the Territory pretty much at the same time as our very own VH-AES, Hawdon, which had been transferred there to be the first true passenger aircraft complete with air hostesses and all the trimmings. This much pleased the local travelers as up to that point all passengers flew in unlined, uncomfortable C-47 aeroplanes with fold-down, side saddle seats with cargo, baggage and livestock lashed between them on the cabin floor. All the T.A.A. fleet in PNG. were painted in an attractive "Sunbird" colour scheme and registered in the SB - block with AES becoming SBA.

Many years later I reached age sixty which at that time was the mandatory retiring age for the long range international flying I was then doing so returned to Australia. I met up with my old friend Jack Curtis who to my great delight offered me a casual pilot slot which I grabbed with both hands. After a thorough refresher course and a period of concentrated command training, Jack reckoned he was game to turn me loose as a captain, later handing over to me the check and training responsibilities. During my line training with the boss it was satisfying to us both that here we were 38 years later sitting together in the same cockpit again even sometimes on the very same aeroplane, VH-SBL. It really wasn't all that special, in fact an old Pidgin English expression "something nothing" covers it but we two old codgers got rather a kick out of it. He had a policy of only taking on captains with substantial DC 3 time which

# History of Dakota National Air (continued)



Passengers on a Cape York tour.

meant that most of us were in our sixties or early seventies. There was a group within CASA which expressed concern that a 50-year-old aeroplane on high capacity charter work crewed by two Dad's Army veterans and a middle-aged flight attendant might not be all that good an idea. The senior decision makers in the Authority did not see a significant problem which subsequent history vindicated.

Our hosties - and they insisted we called them that and not flight attendants - were all retired airline ladies most having flown DC-3s, some in the rough and tough stuff of Western Queensland in the summertime. They were from an era when hosties were expected to and had time to interact with the customers. Our lot excelled at it and the passengers loved them for it, they were a priceless asset.

Engineering support was a bit patchy in the first years being contracted out to a Bankstown company which had all the necessary approvals, but the quality of their work varied. All this changed in late 2001 when D.N.A. was indeed fortunate to obtain the services of Clive Gibbons, a highly experienced, capable and versatile LAME and from that point on there were no more engineering problems and the aeroplanes went like clockwork. Clive of course is now a valued senior member of the HARS engineering team.

The flying was varied and enjoyable with some ad hoc charters but the "bread and butter" stuff being day trips up to the wineries, night "champagne" flights over Sydney Harbour and the CBD plus sightseeing flights up and down the Sydney beaches from Manly to Cronulla and return at 500 feet, the maximum allowed height on this special airway. This has to be one of the most spectacular sight-seeing outings in the country. Prized by the crews, were

the 14-day package tours run by DNA in the winter time up through western NSW and Queensland to Horn Island and return coastal to Sydney. One of my treasured memories is flying at 1500 feet from Cape York to Cooktown.

In the summer months it was Southwards, down the NSW coast, hop across to Flinders Island for the first night stop then all-around Tasmania, King and Kangaroo Islands and then back through regional Victoria and NSW. The passengers on these trips were either aviation enthusiasts beforehand or were equally hooked after the first few days. We encouraged them to think of it as their own private aeroplane for the duration and invited them to participate in the running of the show where possible. Most delighted in preparing the aircraft each morning, pulling the props through by hand prior to the first start of the day, assisting with the refueling and topping up the engine oil from 4-gallon drums. Many close and enduring friendships amongst passengers and crews resulted from these wonderful trips.

The company prospered for quite a while, but we all know how difficult it is to survive in the aviation business let alone make a quid out of it. Towards the end, the owner was having other business problems, costs kept increasing while revenue was decreasing until it reached a point where sadly it was no longer viable so Dakota National Air reluctantly closed its doors thus ending the last commercial DC-3 operation in Australia. Thankfully due to HARS the DC-3 is still alive and well and importantly, active.

I am very grateful to have been a part of this great adventure.

# The Queen's Planes are in Rehearsal

Monday 18 January, 1954,  
Sydney Morning Herald (NSW).

## PART 2

*"The Royal standby Dakota has five Rumbold seats and a cherry Wilton carpet. The staff Dakotas have 12 seats arranged in the same style as a DC-3 airliner.*

*Four men from NSW will crew the Royal Dakota, they are Squadron-Leader L.J.G. Cornish from Richmond, Squadron-Leader C.W. Brackenbridge from Epping, Pilot Officer J.R. Newson from Richmond and Flight-Lieutenant T.C. McGrath from Richmond. Sister C.E. Bury from Metung (Vic) will be nurse hostess.*

*The Airways Division of the Dept of Civil Aviation has promulgated special regulations for the control of flying operations during the Royal flights. These include:*

*1. All other aircraft are prohibited from taking off or landing on any strip for 15 minutes before a Royal aircraft is expected to depart or arrive, or for 15 minutes after it has left or arrived.*

*2. The routes which will be used by the Royal airliners have been declared restricted areas, and can only be used after clearance by the Dept of Civil Aviation.*

*3. No aircraft will be permitted to fly within 2,000 feet above or below the plane in which the Royal couple travel. Planes will not be allowed to fly within 20 miles of the track taken by a Royal aircraft, and they will not be permitted to fly less than 30 minutes ahead or behind it.*

*Mr M.E. Greentree, senior operations controller, Kingsford Smith Airport, Mascot, will travel to the airports and strips used by the Royal planes and personally brief the crews*

Compiled by Maureen Massey  
Photo: Terry Scanlan

*who will fly the Queen and Duke.*

*Some of the landing areas are not fitted with the same air navigation aids as city airports. The Dept of Civil Aviation, therefore, has decided to install special communication channels, navigational aids, instrument let down apparatus, and meteorological gear to these areas.*

*During the Royal visit RAAF long-range Lockheed Neptune anti-submarine patrol planes and Lincoln bombers will make daily weather observation flights up to 800 miles to sea from the southern east coasts of Australia to gather information for special weather forecasts. The information gathered will be radioed through to tour officials, and this may involve a change in the Royal programme.*

*The Neptunes and Lincoln aircraft will fly out over the Tasman to patrol the west coast when the Royal Yacht is on its way to Home Island, where Mr and Mrs Clunies-Ross will receive the Queen and Duke."*

NOTE: The Duke of Edinburgh, a Marshal of the Royal Air Force, first flew solo on December 21, 1952, after 90 hours flying. He learned to fly in a Chipmunk trainer, and later took a more advanced course in a Harvard. Since then, he has flown many types of aircraft. During the Coronation, he used a helicopter to fly from Buckingham Palace to official appointments.

As mentioned in Part 1, HARS is now the custodian of the "Queens" Dakota and it can be viewed in our Museum at Shellharbour Airport, 7 days a week between 9.30am and 3.30pm.



# Emergency Landing at Williamtown

## RAAF Base United Airlines Flight 815

ON Friday 27 March 1987 the east coast of Australia was experiencing some severe weather events. On this night United Airlines Flight 815 operating from Los Angeles to Sydney was running 13 hours behind schedule due to an unexpected engine change in Los Angeles. Scheduled into Sydney at 1830 local time, inclement weather enroute from Los Angeles caused the aircraft to consume a lot more fuel than planned. Closure of Sydney Airport some thirty minutes prior to landing gave the crew little option but to look at diverting to an alternate airport, either Brisbane or Melbourne. However as the aircraft did not carry enough fuel to divert to either of these two destinations, the only option was a secondary diversionary field, Williamtown RAAF Base.

We were standing by in the United Airlines flight operations centre in Sydney when the aircraft radioed to advise they were diverting to Williamtown. However we knew that once the aircraft was on the ground, we would not be able to communicate and this presented a serious problem. The runway at Williamtown RAAF Base was of sufficient length, width and strength to accommodate a Boeing 747SP but this had never been done before as the runway was a Code 4B; that is it was certified only for aircraft significantly smaller than the 'mini Jumbo' then on approach.

The crew advised that they were unable to raise Williamtown control. The lack of a response resulted from the radios being shut down for the weekend. It seemed they do not expect wars on the weekend! I obtained the Base phone number, made a call, and a young female voice answered. I introduced myself as the Duty Engineer for United Airlines in Sydney, asked for her identification and she informed me that she was on night watch at the Base and she held the rank of Flying Officer. I then asked her to switch on the radios as a Boeing 747SP was inbound and about to land. She must have thought I was a crank at first, playing some practical joke. As she did not know how to operate the radios, I suggested she call Richmond RAAF Base to confirm my bona fides, which she did. She was now panicking slightly as she told me there was no one on the base; they had all gone to the pub as it was Friday night.

I suggested she call the pub and request the senior officer to return to the field and provide assistance. This she did noting that the phone call had resulted in the pub being emptied of all the patrons as they wanted to see this big machine land at their field. It must have been quite a sight.

I kept the Flying Officer on the line and asked if the RAAF could provide us with fuel informing her that I would take care of the accounting on Monday. She was not sure if

this was possible as all the fuel dispensing tankers were typically emptied for the weekend for safety reasons. Fortunately a senior ranking officer from the pub arrived and he informed us that in fact there was one 5,000 imperial gallon dispensing tanker which had not been emptied and this really cheered me up.

By this time the flight had landed and I had lost communications with the aircraft. As VHF radio and phones were out, I asked Qantas whether I could use their Boeing 747 parked at the gate outside our office to communicate on HF with our aircraft. Permission was given and with the help of Richmond RAAF Base communications, I called the aircraft up and advised that we would want them to fill up using the RAAF tanker. The next problem was access to the fueling points under the wing of the aircraft. This was solved by getting a wooden ladder and standing it on the tanker against all safety considerations. Fortunately the hose connections were a standard IATA plug type that fitted the aircraft fuel receptacles. The Flight Engineer had climbed down from the cockpit through the Main Equipment Centre and a ladder located behind the nosewheel onto the ground to facilitate the fuelling process. This was accomplished within 30 minutes.

After many expressions of gratitude, the aircraft, readied for departure taxied to the end of the runway and provided a very spectacular take off for the multitude of locals. I thanked the young Flying Officer who by this time had really got into the swing of things and felt that she had accomplished a major task....which she had. I advised

her that I would write a letter to the Base Commander to be on his desk on Monday expressing our appreciation and gratitude for the use of his field, his staff and fuel, as well as lauding the assistance provided by all. This proved to be an embarrassment for the young Flying Officer as in all the excitement she forgot to call the Base Commander (Air Commodore Dennis Robertson) to inform him, as protocol dictates. I think my letter worked as I received a most favourable reply inviting us to land at Williamtown at any time. Some years later, Qantas had to divert a Boeing 747-300 into the Base.

However, our problems were not over, and in fact were about to start. Customs and Quarantine Regulations dictate that a carrier from another country must observe these regulations. This means that the passengers had to get off the aircraft with all their baggage and go through the entire routine....this was not possible as there were no ladders, steps or loading/unloading equipment that could service an aircraft of this height and size.

I contacted the Customs and Quarantine during this period whilst John Clark our Duty Senior Flight Controller

***“The enormous effort and camaraderie exhibited by all from Williamtown to the local staff was exceptional and well received.”***

**Story: Peter Marosszekky.**

**Photo: Generic,**

contacted United's Chicago Operations Control Centre to advise them of the situation and that we were still planning on dispatching the aircraft on its return flight to Los Angeles that evening. However, as we were now getting close to curfew at Sydney Airport, we needed to get special dispensation from the Minister for Transport in Canberra. Approval was granted without any problems to depart at midnight.

On hearing that our aircraft had landed in Williamtown, the full force of Public Service mentality came into play as we were informed that the aircraft would be impounded at Williamtown until the appropriate staff arrived and gave clearance. The fact that access to the aircraft from the ground was not possible did not seem to deter the Customs and Quarantine officials.

So, we just went ahead and told the Captain to get out of there expeditiously as the inclement weather had dissipated. The aircraft arrived in Sydney at 2155 giving us just under two hours to disembark the passengers, remove all the freight, unload and clean the galleys as well as undertaking a full clean to comply with health regulations. This was done in an extraordinary fashion and the staff all round were exemplary in their efforts. During this time, we fuelled the aircraft (336,000 lbs/ 156,000 US gallons) in 50 minutes, serviced the engines and performed a full walkaround inspection.

The new crew boarded and completed their cockpit checks and the full complement of passengers were loaded, along with baggage and freight. The aircraft pushed back at 2345

giving the pilot 15 minutes to take-off before the revised curfew deadline.

Unbeknown to us at that time was that Quarantine and Customs had organised a bus load of staff to go up to Williamtown to clear the aircraft the next morning, obviously unaware that their Sydney staff cleared the inbound passengers without realising that they were off the diverted flight UA815; talk about the left hand not telling the right hand!

The next morning we were confronted by a couple of irate Customs and Quarantine officials when we explained that we had little choice if for no other reason than the hotels were full in Sydney and the inbound passengers would have no where to stay. They reluctantly accepted this position and we received a letter of admonishment.

The enormous effort and comaraderie exhibited by all from Williamtown to the local staff was exceptional and well received by senior management and the passenger services people who had the job of organizing and keeping the passengers happy.

Chicago Operations Centre staff were quite ecstatic as they had very little control of these type of operational events from their geographical location. These diversions normally would cost close to \$1M in 1980 terms.

This diversion was possibly the least expensive I have ever encountered.



**United Airlines Boeing 747SP Registration N147UA.**

# A Ride in a RAN Sea Venom

Story and Photo:  
Graeme Baseden

I was a Midshipman undertaking flying training at Point Cook in 1965. Sometime around November 1965, myself and the other 3 Midshipmen on 58 Course, were told to take our flying suits and helmets with us and were taken across to the RAAF Base at Laverton for an introduction to flying in an RAN jet aircraft. This aircraft was the De Havilland Sea Venom which was classed as an interceptor. The aircraft had a crew of two, a Pilot and an Observer (Navigator/Tactician).

On arrival we were given a briefing on the aircraft and the required safety instructions. These related to how to undertake an ejection from the aircraft, if required, how to remove and replace the safety tag for the seat and not to touch anything else in the cockpit. A walk around visual inspection of the aircraft is then undertaken and it's time to climb the ladder and get onboard.

The Observer's seat on these aircraft is set lower than the Pilot's as his role is to watch the radar screen and other electronic instruments and operate the bomb sites etc. Your ears are about level with the cockpit combing when you are sitting in the seat. Once in the seat, the ground crew assist with strapping you in. Being an ejection seat, you are strapped in pretty tightly but you still have to be able to reach the safety tag at the base of the seat

to remove it and pass it to the ground crew. They also show you the tag that is removed from the top of the seat and place it in a holder on the top of the seat. They also ensure you have the bungee straps properly secured around your legs, just above the ankles. These straps hold your legs back against the seat when it ejects; otherwise it can fly forward and you lose both legs at about the knees. This means the seat is armed and you can now be ejected from the aircraft.

Time to start. The pilot goes through his pre-start and start checklists. As the engine starts to spool up, you are glad you have your helmet on as it is a very noisy engine when starting. Checks complete and clearance to taxi is given. One problem with being in the Observer's seat when you are an excited young trainee pilot is that it is quite hard to see much outside the cockpit due to sitting down almost below head height and you are well strapped in. With a bit of a view, we taxi out to the operational runway doing the pre-take off checks as we taxi. At the holding point, we request permission to take off. Permission granted, we turn onto the runway and full power is applied. Not like a take-off in the Winjeel, you are pressed back into your seat and speed very rapidly builds up. Pilot calls V1 and shortly after VR and away we go into

the "wild blue yonder" doing around 300 knots - in the Winjeel we cruise at about 110 knots. It was a quick climb to about 5,000 ft. Before you know it, we are out past Point Cook and over Corio Bay, contact is made with the destroyer and we head down the Bay towards Port Phillip where the ship is stationed. I'm trying to watch what the pilot is doing and look out of the cockpit to see how we are approaching the ship, not easy I can tell you. We undertook several different approaches to allow the ship's radar and guns to be calibrated. I got a quick glimpse of the ship as we turned at the end of each run, the turns being reasonably tight as we pulled about 2-3 Gs on each one. I did note that the pilot did not have to use much force on the stick to manoeuvre the aircraft.

All too soon it was time to head back to Laverton. On the way back the pilot turned the hydraulics off and invited me to try and move the control column. Reaching over and pushing like mad made absolutely no impact on the column. Aerodynamic lectures came into my head and I realised the airflow over the surfaces was such that it was almost impossible to move the controls at high speed. He told me that as the speed falls off and we approach the runway, you can actually manoeuvre the aircraft without hydraulics and this is one of the manoeuvres you are taught when learning to fly the Venom.

We are now in the circuit for Laverton on the downwind leg, suddenly he flicks the stick over for a turn onto the base leg, it was so fast and tight that my helmet banged the combing and I checked my helmet to ensure it hadn't been cracked as it felt like it was very hard. Not so rough on the turn to finals and following a very smooth landing, we taxied back to the apron. Cockpit opened with the ground crew handing me the tag to put back into the seat to disarm it. Undo the bungee cords and harness and climb out ready to brag to the air force types back at Point Cook about what we did today.



Mike De La Hunty, Don Payne and Pep Cordoba with abandoned Sea Venoms at HMAS Albatross.

# Remembering Cyclone Tracy

Story:  
Bob St John.

ON Christmas day 1974 half a dozen families from RAAF number 37 Squadron had congregated at one house in North Richmond to celebrate Christmas. All the men decided that it was about time (it was 1100) that we had our first beer for the day when the telephone rang and we were told to report to the Squadron as there was a problem in Darwin and we had to get as many aircraft up there as possible.

That was 1100; by 1400 I was airborne on my way to Mascot airport in Sydney where we picked up 4 doctors and 12 nurses. At 1600 we were on our way to Brisbane to pick up 100 Honda AC generators and by 1800 we were on our way to Darwin.

By the time we arrived at Darwin airport, a half a dozen Hercules aircraft had already arrived and the RAAF troops had cleared 3,000 feet of junk off the runway to enable us to land.

The doctors and nurses were taken to the hospital to prepare the most badly injured to go south and they brought

a truck to remove the generators.

I took time out to find a mate of mine who lived on the Air Force base. I borrowed a jeep and headed for his house. It was extremely difficult. All of the houses on the base were built on a concrete slab under which you could park your car and hang the clothes when it rained. The house proper was built on top of the slab. From what I could see from the headlights and weaving around the debris, which also included a C-47 which was half a mile from the tarmac and had one undercarriage leg missing, there was nothing left only the slabs!

I finally arrived at my mate's house. All the RAAF houses were gone, just the slabs remained. My mate's house was silent when I first arrived but that didn't stay for long. There were half a dozen people drinking the last of the cold beer and cooking steaks before it went off. I declined their offer of a coldie and a steak as I had to get back to the aircraft.

When I arrived back at the C-130, all the crew had departed somewhere

so I thought it would be a good time to catch up on a little sleep. However, it was so humid and hot that sleep was impossible.

It didn't take long before the crew arrived back at the aircraft and we started raise litters for the trip down south. Not much time elapsed before ambulances arrived and we loaded up about 60 litter patients to take them to Adelaide. It was so nice to get airborne at dawn and be cool again! It took about 6 hours to get to Adelaide and after we deposited our wounded, we were off to Richmond for a well-earned rest. It was dark when we arrived back at base. The only thing that kept me upright was one of the doctors who, every hour, gave a block of chocolate.

Total duty time was 35 hours without sleep.

There was a staff car to take me home and damn it all there was another staff car which arrived exactly 8 hours to collect me from home. Oh well back to work!!

## Visitors Comments



### “ Brilliant Day in November 2020

*My 5yo son and I visited on a very wet blustery day in Kiama. What a brilliant place! I just can't believe it's volunteer run. So professional, so clean (great covid measures - temp checks, tons of handwash, lots of space and bathrooms spotless) and so interesting. The fact that it's a guided tour means this place gives the big museums in Sydney a run for their money.*

*We were shown around by Rob McCubbin who was a 40+ year Qantas Captain and very bright aviation enthusiast/engineer.*

*My son had the most wonderful time, many people welcomed him, we had a private tour and Rob was really mindful of his age and answered a million 'why' questions from my son, all the while checking we were ok for time and he wasn't too tired.*

*We did 2.5 hours, highlights included the personal stories from the volunteers, sitting in the cockpit of a Qantas 747, and seeing many interesting planes, small and large from around the world, including jet fighters at 3x the speed of sound.*

*Volunteer John was also amazing, showed my son round the entrance displays while I had a cup of tea and sent him away with some aviation mementos that my son will treasure.*

*My son also got colouring in sheets and a warm welcome from everyone at the hangar.*

*I'd highly recommend this place. I'm not an aviation enthusiast but it was so interesting and the stories of the people and pilots are so engaging. Next time I go on a plane I'll really appreciate it differently.*

*The on-site cafe has lots of options. Service was slow as we got there just as a plane landed but the staff were lovely and threw in a free choc bar because of our wait, which didn't really matter as we weren't in a rush. It was open same as the museum, 930-330.*

*Thanks Rob, John and everyone for making Harry's day! Really memorable and you've made a lifelong aviation fan!*

*Date of experience: November 2020.*

”

# 2020 – The Year in Review

Story: Ian Poulter.  
Photo: Mark Keech.

The year 2020 will no doubt be remembered as one where the world changed forever and threw up challenges to all, both as individuals and as a society.

The challenges for HARS were, and potentially continue to be significant. The lock down from late March to mid-June meant cash inflow all but ceased. Expenses however continued, so it is a credit to the financial management exercised by our committee that HARS came through this difficult period largely unscathed.

Notwithstanding Covid-19, our two museums, Albion Park and Parkes, saw some significant additions to the collections and some important milestones were marked.

## HARS Albion Park Museum:

- One of our ex RAN Historic Flight, Bell UH-1 Iroquois has been returned to airworthy status. The aircraft is currently based at Air Affairs facilities on HMAS Albatross airfield, with the aircraft visiting HARS Albion Park for a day over the November tarmac weekend,
- Significant progress has been made on our Tri Engine Fokker FV111B Southern Cross replica. During the year, remaining fabric repairs were completed, further painting done, and the biggest change has seen the completion

of overhaul and refitting of all three engines. The main work now required is the electricals, which may be completed during the first half of 2021,

- Ex RAN Heritage Flight Douglas C-47, and a Grumman S-2G Tracker were relocated from Nowra to HARS Albion Park. This was a challenging project, requiring the disassembly of the aircraft to components suitable for road transport. Transportation from Nowra required wide load permits to be obtained,
- In July HARS hosted a “Farwell to the 747” event for Qantas staff. This marked the departure to storage of the last Qantas 747, VH-OEJ, with the aircraft performing a low level “goodbye” pass over Shellharbour Airport, (article on page 5)
- November was the 100th Anniversary of the formation of Qantas. To mark this occasion two events were held at HARS, the first being an afternoon BBQ for Qantas staff, current and past, the second event being a black-tie dinner held in hangar one. Both events were well attended, (article on pages 18-19)
- To mark the 85th anniversary of the DC-3’s first flight on 17 December, HARS flew one of our C-47s from Shellharbour airport,

coastal to Long Reef on Sydney’s northern beaches, thence over Sydney Harbour before returning to Shellharbour airport, (article on pages 26, 27 and 28).

- HARS aircraft, including “Connie” featured in a new safety briefing video for Qantas,
- The SBS TV documentary series “Come Fly With Me” included many scenes filmed at HARS and on HARS aircraft.

## Parkes Aviation Museum:

(see article on pages 14-15)

- Lockheed P2V-5 Neptune 302 was painted and reassembled during the year. This aircraft is particularly significant as it is believed to be the only surviving P2V-4/5 in the world,
- Lockheed P2V-7 Neptune 272 has had further cosmetic work externally, but more significantly much progress has been made on restoring the interior of the aircraft,
- Planning for a new facility at the Parkes Airport has progressed, with a Memorandum of Understanding agreed with Parkes Council. The next stage is to lodge a Development Application, which is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2021.



# "Award Winning" Cafe Connie

**Story: Maureen Massey**  
**Photos: Maureen Massey,**  
**Terry Scanlan and Mark Keech**

Café Connie has done it again, for the third consecutive year, won Best of the Best Café award for 2020. This Award is sponsored by Wave FM and covers a large area in the Shellharbour region. It is a very competitive award, and many cafes are nominated. The public vote determines the winner and it is judged on the standard of food, friendliness of staff and value for money.

Congratulations to Joan and her staff who work tirelessly to achieve all these factors, and the reward confirms that dedication.

Café Connie offers a comfortable and relaxing environment to share a coffee and snack in, both inside the hangar and outside under the newly refurbished garden area. The cafe offers a wide range of delicacies including freshly cut sandwiches, homemade cakes and slices, sausage rolls, pies, quiches, steak sandwiches and, of course, the famous Connie Burger. All very pleasing on the palate!

Even during the Pandemic, Café Connie provided take-away coffee and food to the many people passing by



The "Best Cafe" Award

needing that very important "fix". Group bookings are slowly recovering and there are now numerous bookings taken for the coming months from Social Clubs, Probus Groups, Car Clubs and the like all wanting morning tea and/or lunch along with a tour of the Museum. Joan is happy to provide more information and can be contacted on 0425 319 491.

HARS also caters for larger groups, corporate functions, conventions, weddings, film crews and special



Coffee and cake.

celebrations. These functions are proving very popular with HARS offering a venue that is unique with special backdrops and themes found nowhere else in Australia.

For more information on these bookings please contact Sheryl Sherson on 0412 274 411.



Joan at work.



Café Connie.

# "Award Winning" Cafe Connie



Above: Outdoor Area.

Left: Cafe Menu.

Right: Carolyn and Gavin working the Café

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



The HARS Shop offers a wide range of souvenirs, clothing, caps, aircraft models, books and aviation memorabilia for sale. It provides a pleasant area to come in and browse and is open 7 days a week from 9:30am to 3:30pm.