



PHOENIX

HISTORICAL AIRCRAFT RESTORATION SOCIETY JOURNAL

August 2021.



A Chance For Hope

by Darrel White

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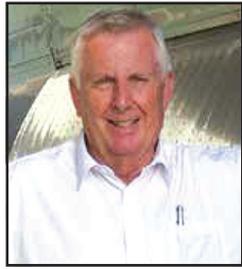
An Unnerving Coincidence

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Aircraft Profile

President's Report

Bob De La Hunty OAM
President and Chief Pilot.



THE new Lockdowns are having a devastating effect on all of us. Our thoughts go out to everyone who is in business or whose employment has been disrupted and the impact the Lockdowns are having on their lives. Everyone suffers from the travel restrictions and not being able to be with family and friends or take those long-planned holiday trips, that seem remote now for some time. Just a day's outing is currently out of the question for so many. At least we can make telephone and computer calls to ease our frustrations a bit but nothing will replace the real thing!!!

HARS is suffering too, not only from the dearth of visitors and the consequent lack of income but also the absence of our passionate members on site. The aircraft that we have saved need to be maintained and that is a major concern.

We are all sure there will be a light at the end of the tunnel, no matter how long that tunnel might be. We will find ways and means to sustain the journey through the tunnel.

On the other side we have many ongoing projects to look forward to. The:

- 707-138 project that the Vice-President's report will cover;
- Hanger developments at Shellharbour; and
- New Museum and storage facility development at Parkes,

to name a few apart from the many aircraft projects that we have for members to get involved with.

As you know, due to Covid we had to postpone our AGM last year. We will need to hold the AGM this year and your Committee is working on how to hold it given the current uncertainty with face-to-face gatherings. We will let you know soon what options we are considering.

The first half of this year saw an unusually busy flying program. Given the circumstances prevailing, we can be grateful to our Sponsors, Engineers and Flight Crews who made this all happen safely. We don't have a clear picture yet about future flying events for obvious reasons.

When we were open to visitors, our Tour Guides, Café Staff, Reception and Shop Staff members did a magnificent job. Our cash flow was looking very good and growing; then suddenly nothing. I am sure when the gates re-open, we will get back up to speed.

We trust this Phoenix will raise your spirits and passion in readiness for an exciting and challenging future when we are permitted to re-open.

Stay Safe everyone, Bob.

from the Vice

Maureen Massey
Vice President.



I TRUST by now everyone has received their Membership Renewal; if not, please let me know.

The renewal process is working well and, due to COVID, is being actioned at home. Thank you to everyone for emailing me their renewals or alternatively posting them to my PO box. That has made my job a lot easier and made it possible to continue with this task.

The new ID card you will receive this year will look exactly the same as those provided for previous years, but we are now using a different type of card which is embedded with a new micro-chip. Because of the location of this chip, please DO NOT punch holes in your ID card or store it with your old card. These actions may run the risk of destroying the chip or cause the readers on the doors to pick up the codes on both cards, resulting in you not being able to access HARS.

It is best to carry your new ID card in a separate pouch.

If you encounter any problems, please contact Jim Hayes or Ron Bull.

Finally, just a reminder to all that Renewals have to be completed by 30 August each year or under our constitution membership will cease.

Cheers

Maureen

Boeing 707 Update

Story:
Maureen Massey.

NEWS from Georgia is positive as work resumes on the 707. Nothing much has progressed since the pylons were removed and inspected, largely due to a downturn of staff at Stambaugh Aviation, particularly those familiar with the type.

However, a team has been allocated to continue with the job and I expect we will have a report in the coming weeks. The manufacture of the "T" chords (to accommodate the difference in attachment fitting widths) is going ahead, with thanks to sponsorship by Stambaugh Aviation for generously donating that cost to HARS, US\$58K.

Meanwhile, our flight crew have been busy behind the scenes preparing for the long flight across the Pacific to Australia. It is difficult these days to secure access to a 707 flight simulator to enable our crew to re familiarise themselves with the aircraft. However, we may have solved that problem thanks to Steve Howson's friend Peter Bates.

Peter organised and coordinated a visit to Sydney University Engineering facility so our HARS people could inspect and "play" with the B707-338 simulator located there. Unfortunately, Don Hindle was unavailable on the day, but I am sure he will be hard to keep away from the next visit.

Many thanks Peter for your input into making this possible and enabling our crew to use the facility as often as necessary in preparation for the 707's long flight from the States to Shellharbour.



The Sydney University B707 simulator.



Steve Howson left and Bob Small in the 707 simulator.

AROUND THE HANGARS



Connie Report

Story: Warren Goodhew.
Photo: Mark Keech.

OVER the last few months, the Connie has been undergoing some extra refurbishing in the cabin, with cleaning, repairing and painting around the forward section aft of the flight deck and forward of the galley. Aft of that activity, the passenger cabin section bulkheads are progressively being upgraded with laminex sheeting doing away with the vinyl covering.

On the outside, the fuel associated flexible hoses (20 on each engine of various sizes) are being replaced on engine numbers 3 and 4 with external fire sleeving applied. This has been a long, time consuming activity. Working in a confined space, it is not an easy activity for the persons involved. When completed, all engines will have had their fuel hoses replaced. Number 2 engine has also had its annual (Minor) inspection. Some airframe flexible hoses have also been replaced.



Connie's refurbished interior.

Convair 580 at Bankstown

Story & Photo:
Steve Howson.



Convair 580, VH-PDL at Bankstown.

THE restoration of our Convair 580, located at Bankstown Airport, is moving forward steadily. The team is completing the required airframe and engine inspections with rectification where necessary. In time we'll have an "authority to fly" permit issued with the intention of repositioning the aircraft from Bankstown Airport.

Two Convair 580's were very kindly donated to HARS by Steve Ferris the CEO of Pionair. Steve is a keen aviation enthusiast and is looking forward to seeing both his 580's flying again and with his engineering support and sponsorship the HARS "Convair team" will ensure that will happen.

Neptune 273 and 566 Report

Story: Kim Slattery
Photo: Terry Scanlan.

NEPTUNE P2 273 - The annual inspection was completed in March of this year.

This enabled 273 to participate in the RAAF Centenary on the 31st of March, which was held as a fly-over of Canberra with ex and current RAAF aircraft.

On Anzac Day in April, Neptune 273 participated in several fly-overs of both local War Memorials as well as Kiama.

The 90 day service on 273 is now due and will be completed during the month of June.

Neptune 566 continues to remain serviceable for ground operations, as well as crew training.



Neptune 273.

AROUND THE HANGARS



de Havilland DH-115 Vampire T-35 Report

Story & Photo:
Terry Wilson.

WORK on the Vampire restoration has slowed recently due to the unavailability of some of our key team members. We have now, at last, nearly completed all of the work on the hydraulic system - with newly refurbished hydraulic selector valves and accumulators having been installed. We will now connect the aircraft up to a powered hydraulic rig that provides system pressure, and then bleed and check all systems for correct operation. All going well, that should see the job done.

Other work that has now been started is a special servicing on the engine that involves, among other things, removing all of the combustion chambers, dismantling them, and inspecting the flame tubes for cracks and distortion. To prepare for this we have also been dismantling some spare Goblin engines to make sure we have some spare serviceable flame tubes – just in case we have to replace any on our ‘flying’ engine. One other critical task is to check for cracks in the engine compressor.

On the avionics front, we have mounted most of the hardware for our new installation in the aircraft and have had new wiring looms manufactured. We now await help from a suitably qualified engineer to install the wiring looms and complete the functional checks of the radios. Also, our new battery mounting setup has been completed.



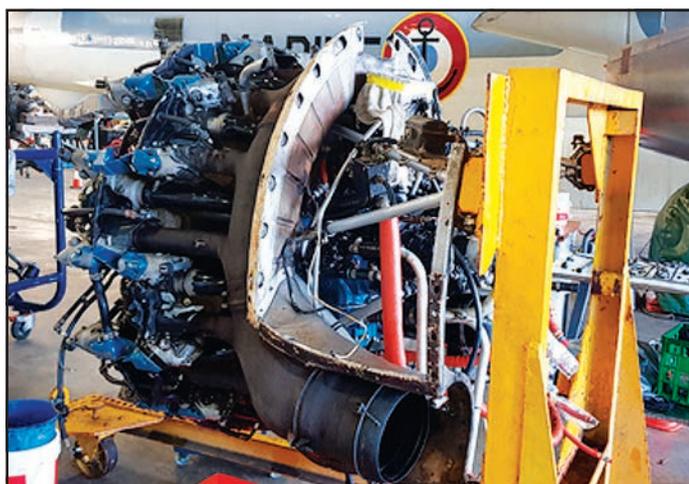
Engine with Combustion Chambers removed.

Dakota / DC-3 / Caribou

Story & Photo:
Clive Gibbons.

VH-EAE Dakota

AFTER the failure of the LH engine in VH-EAE the engine and propeller were removed. A replacement engine s/n



The new engine for VH-EAE.

364028 with 530.5hrs in service was purchased by HARS. The engine had been removed from DC3 VH-CWS in 2015 and stored as a spare engine. Cylinders 4 and 11 were removed from engine s/n 364028 for inspection of rings, piston and cylinder barrel all were found to be in good condition. The power section was inspected and appears to be in good condition. Valve clearances will be checked, leak rate check will be carried out and ignition timing checked. If the inspections and checks are satisfactory and the engine build up completed the engine will be installed in VH-EAE.

VH-AES – DC-3

Don Hindle and his crew polished the fuselage and wing on AES in preparation for a flight to Sydney on June 10th to attend a charity dinner at Sydney airport. See the full story on page 8.

VH-VBB – Caribou 234

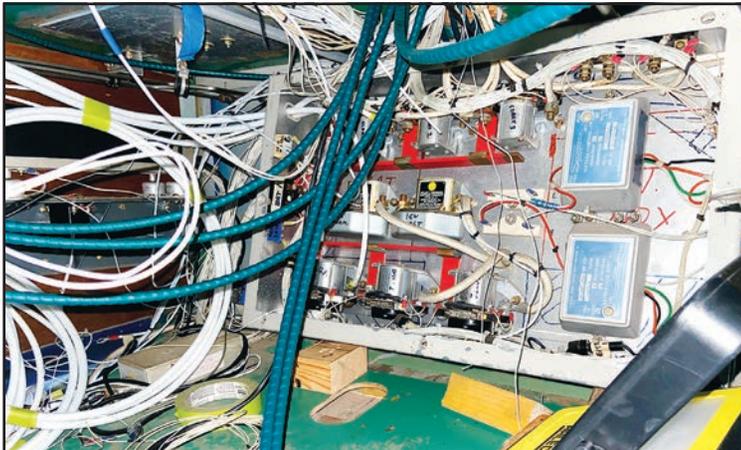
A successful flight was carried out by Caribou 234 on Saturday June 12 after number 4 fuel cell in the RH wing was changed due to a fuel leak.

AROUND THE HANGARS

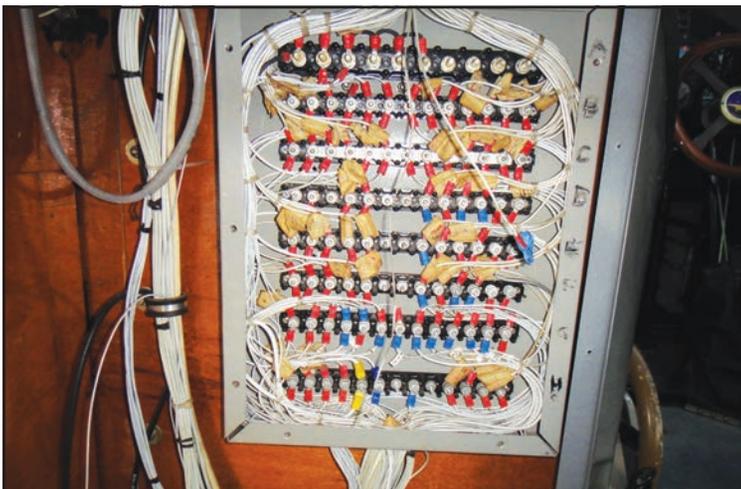


Significant Electrical System Upgrade to HARS Southern Cross. VH-USU

Story: Jim Thurstan
and Allen William
Photos: Allen Williams.



Looking forward from within the forward under floor baggage compartment of the main electrical junction box.



Main systems electrical junction box within the main cabin.



Some of the electrical wiring yet to be terminated on #1 engine

NOW nearing the completion of the extensive restoration of the HARS Southern Cross replica, comes a timely opportunity to upgrade and modify the aircraft's electrical, navigation and communications systems.

The engineers, carpenters and painters have mostly moved aside to allow our specialist electricians Joe Lautier, Phil Gannon and Henry Knight to work their magic with the all-important electrical and avionics systems.

The electrical work has turned out to be more extensive than first thought. Rather than patching up the original wiring which would have been acceptable, the electricians are excelling in bringing the systems up to modern standards and requirements throughout.

Engineering work orders have been raised to cover major changes such as: converting the original less than ideal compromise of 24 volt and 12 volt systems to 24 volt throughout; another to improve the aircraft 24 volt battery installations and a third to improve engine ignition systems. In addition, tasks such as:

- Installation of several additional junction boxes to allow easier inspection and servicing of the wing mounted engines.
- Re-writing of electrical, instrument, engine and airframe inspections and other schedules as specific to this one-off aircraft, in anticipation of the aircraft moving from the Experimental into the Limited category; and
- Undertaking revision of the Flight Operations Manual has been to accommodate the changes.

The aircraft is a replica of the famous original Fokker FVIIIB-3M Southern Cross. However as could be expected, the electrical, instrument and other systems are by necessity much more sophisticated than the original. It is a large three engine aircraft requiring a lot of work and materials.

Expensive yes. Time consuming yes. Worth it Yes. Exciting YES!

Work is now well advanced. Still, in our volunteer organisation it is difficult to predict exactly when it will be completed. Once all the wiring is completed and electrical power can be established, the aircraft will come alive allowing engine running, training and ground operation to begin, hopefully later this year.

Stan Keogh

Born in 1932 in Bellingen on the North Coast of NSW and raised on the family's small dairy farm, Stan attended a one teacher school with no homework and no exams. Stan says we just moved one row of desks to the right each year until reaching the end of the room. Afterwards he attended high school as a boarder.

The family moved to Sydney at the end of 1947 and aged 15 he joined Qantas Empire Airways as a ground engineer at Mascot working on L749s, DC-4s, Lancasters and DC-3s. Stan's first flight was in the Lancaster.

Stan spent time in the National Service during 1951 and spent his time at Williamtown attached to 78 Fighter Wing working on gas turbine engines (Rolls Royce Nenes). He experienced live cannon fire and the heat from a napalm bomb on Stockton Beach.

After National Service his apprenticeship continued, working in Hangars 20, 58 and 85 and then to the repair and overhaul shop. At age 21 and his 5th year of apprenticeship he acquired his engine and airframe licences on the DC-4 aircraft and was selected to undertake Comet II training in the UK, but this was cancelled after the grounding of the Comet fleet.

On the day he completed his apprenticeship Stan was transferred to Darwin. An L1049 licence was achieved in Sydney and then he was posted to Singapore and Jakarta.

Stan was back in Sydney in 1957 when he was transferred to San Francisco to join the 'Round the World' proving flight. Training for this adventure took place on the East Coast and in Canada getting exposure to snow and ice conditions. On to Gander, Shannon and London on possibly the first Qantas aircraft to fly across North America and the Atlantic. Stan turned 25 in London marking 10 years since leaving home in 1947. The return flight across the Atlantic took 16 ½ hours and on arrival at New York he met Sir Hudson and Lady Fysh. During the three months he was stationed



in the US and clad only in tropical clothes he contracted pneumonia and spent four days in hospital.

Back to Qantas's Brisbane base for the introduction of the Australia to Honolulu L1049 Super Constellation direct service and in 1958 married Elaine Coombe-Brown. Three days after the wedding they were in Honolulu for a nine month posting. On to the West Coast for B707 training and then on to Singapore for a two year posting where in 1960 their first son was born.

Comet IV training in London in 1961 preceded a fifteen-month posting in Djakarta as Engineering Manager. Their second child, a daughter was born during this time. Further postings saw Stan in Brisbane, Manila and Kuala Lumpur where their third child, a son was born.

Having served thirteen years in outstations and with three young children, the family packed up and returned to Sydney where they set up their first home in Epping.

A career change with Qantas saw Stan transfer to the Property Department where he was responsible for purchasing all the equipment needed in the offices. Stan worked in this role until retiring from Qantas on 1 July 1983

In 1990, Stan and Elaine moved to Kiama and bought into a B&B in the old Cottage Hospital on 1 ½ acres with both mountain and ocean views, continuing to commute to Sydney for employment.

Stan joined HARS in 2010 to work on the C-47/DC-3 aircraft and was pleased when we acquired a C-54/DC-4. He is still keen to see it made airworthy and enjoys his weekly day visit to HARS working with people from many walks of life and sharing the same passion for aviation.



Stan in National Service uniform 1951.

FLYING OPERATIONS

DC-3 Hawdon at Gold Dinner 2021

Story & Photos:
Mark Keech.



Hawdon standing proud at Sydney Airport

VISITORS to HARS over the last few months will have noticed a flurry of activity around our DC-3, Hawdon as the team worked hard to put a shine on the aircraft. While polishing is a regular task to keep it looking sharp, this year the aeroplane was being prepared for presentation on the red carpet at the Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation Gold Dinner which was held on Bay 71 at Sydney airport on 10 June.



Hawdon bathed in a golden light.

The Gold Dinner is one of the most important charity events in Australia and, since its inception in 1997, has raised over \$30 million for the Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation. This year an aviation theme brought the event to an enormous air-conditioned marquee at Sydney airport with runway 34L providing a backdrop to the entertainment. With almost 600 of Australia's best known celebrities each paying \$1,500 a seat, the pledges and auctions at the event raised a staggering \$4.8 million!



View from Hawdon's cockpit as it lands on Sydney's Runway 34L

And right there, on the red carpet, was our beautiful Hawdon, bathed in golden light for all the celebrities to admire as they arrived. The aeroplane was flown to Sydney earlier in the day and many of the Sydney airport staff were keen to see this classic aircraft on their apron once again. Despite the cold and rain, we welcomed a good number of the dinner guests onboard the aircraft throughout the evening.



Hawdon Crew L to R: Bob Small, Tom Payne, Mark Keech and Trevor Eisler.

This event carries on the tradition of our DC-3 Hawdon raising money for charity since 1989. It was well known for its flights around Port Philip Bay in Melbourne raising money for the Royal Children's Hospital and several other interstate flights for other charities.

ANZAC Day Flights

Story: Mark Keech
Photos: Mark Keech & Glenn White.



The Neptune, Caribou, DC-3, C-47 and P-51 Mustang lining up for departure.

LAST year, 2020 was very quiet for HARS flying activities due to Covid restrictions and we were unable to commemorate ANZAC Day in the manner that we would normally like to. Thankfully, we are now seeing many of the restrictions eased and this year we were able to fly no less than five aircraft over many of the local ANZAC Day ceremonies.

ANZAC Day is commemorated every year in Australia and New Zealand on 25 April, the anniversary of the beginning of the Gallipoli campaign of the First World War. Members of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) landed on the beach at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915 and while Australian forces had been engaged in earlier battles and other conflicts, Gallipoli was the first campaign to lead to significant casualties. ANZAC Day has become a time to remember all of those Australians and New Zealanders who served in all conflicts, 'lest we forget' the sacrifices that they made.

For this year's ceremonies HARS aircraft flew over Shellharbour, Kiama, Wollongong, Kangaroo Valley, Cronulla, Sydney, Mittagong, Moss Vale and Bowral! Aircraft

that participated in the event were: Neptune 273, Dakota 94, DC-3 Hawdon, Caribou 210 and Huey 898. The HARS aircraft were also joined this year by Mustang 199. Later in the week the two Dakotas and a Caribou also flew over a ceremony at Dapto.



Over the harbour preparing for the run in.



The Iroquois helicopter hovers waiting to depart.



In company with the Bou on the way home.

FLYING OPERATIONS

RAAF 100th Anniversary Flights



View of the AP-3C Orion from the C-47.

DURING the Month of March, HARS was invited to support two RAAF centenary activities; the RAAF Association flypast over the ANZAC Memorial in Hyde Park, Sydney on 26 March 21 and the RAAF Centenary Flypast over Canberra on 31 March 21.

The HARS element for RAAF Association flypast comprised five aircraft: Consolidated PBY-6A Catalina, De Havilland DHC-4 Caribou, Douglas DC-3 Dakota, Lockheed SP-2H



RAAF E-7A Wedgetail – “Usher”

Neptune 273 and the Lockheed AP-3C Orion. These aircraft, together with the HARS Navy Heritage Flight Iroquois, also conducted the Canberra flypast.

Achieving a designated TOT (time on target) with aircraft having speed differentials of up to 90 knots creates challenges for the planning and execution of any flypast that HARS is involved with. Often the only time all the aircraft are in “formation” is over the target.

To achieve this the aircraft initially operate as a single ship or as a “pair” eg. Catalina and Iroquois, Caribou and Dakota, Neptune and Orion. Timings calculated for each element include take-off, hold departure and TOT. For both flypasts two holding fixes were utilised to assist with lateral and vertical separation:

one for the Neptune and Orion and one for the remaining aircraft. In the case of the Sydney flypast, different tracking from the hold to the target was also used to provide lateral separation needed to allow Orion and Neptune to safely overtake the slower aircraft as close as possible to the target such that the package arrived overhead in trail.

The Centenary flypast over Canberra was more complex than the Sydney flypast. A significant amount of planning for this event was undertaken by the RAAF. Prior to the event the “Air Boss”, Group Captain Tim Sloane, attended HARS to brief the flight crew. HARS elements then went to work to refine timings to ensure all six aircraft achieved the TOT over Commonwealth Bridge of 0027 UTC.

On the day of the Canberra flypast a final briefing was conducted. The weather was perfect and all aircraft serviceable. The plan was basically having six aircraft transit from Shellharbour airport (YSHL) and Nowra (YSNW) to Canberra, enter the TRA (temporary restricted area), hold, fly the display track, egress and return to base. Easy you say!

The Catalina departed first and was joined enroute by the Iroquois departing from

FLYING OPERATIONS

Story: Mike Price
Photos: Mike Price and Mark Keech.

YSNW. Next to depart was the Caribou and the Dakota followed by the Neptune and Orion. Approaching the TRA each "pair" contacted the E-7A Wedgetail aircraft callsign "USHER" for clearance to enter and proceed to their designated hold. The four slower aircraft entered the TRA from Tharwa via the VFR corridor while Orion and Neptune proceeded to the west of the Tidbinbilla restricted area.

Once established, holding patterns were adjusted to ensure that each package departed on time to achieve the combined TOT. The HARS package was number two of six behind the Temora-based 100 Squadron warbirds and ahead of the F-35 and F/A-18 fast jets. Any errors in timing could potentially result in the package being denied clearance to proceed to the target.

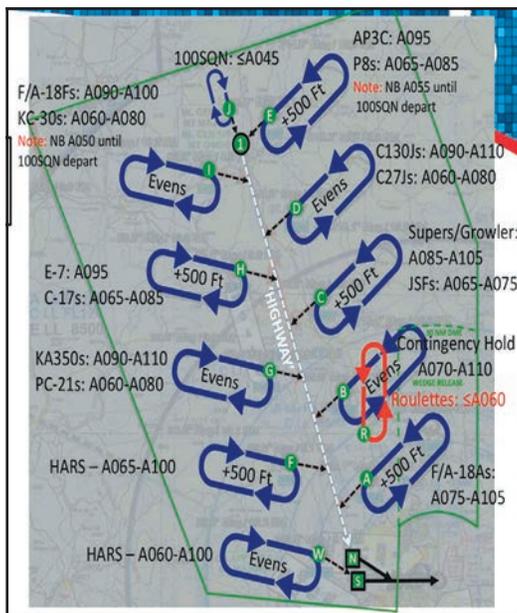
As expected, with masterful use of slide rulers, grease pencils and stop watches, all aircraft proceeded to the target in accordance with the plan. Three pairs became a formation of six overhead the target at TOT +/- 15 seconds. Once overhead the Catalina and Iroquois egressed via the south



The HARS C-47 as seen from the AP-3C Orion

of Lake Burley Griffin while the remaining four tracked via overhead Canberra airport.

Following the flypast, the Iroquois landed at Canberra for fuel prior to returning to YSNW, Catalina, Caribou and Neptune returned to YSHL and Orion proceeded to RAAF Base Edinburgh for scheduled maintenance.



The Formation Holding Patterns



The AP-3C Orion Team.

FLYING OPERATIONS

The DHC-4 Caribou at Cessnock



Off to another air show to woo the crowds.

ON Friday 12 March we set off to the Hunter Valley Airshow at Cessnock. A 1030 departure and a scenic trip up Victor 1 with spectacular views of the Greater Sydney region and beaches was a great start to the weekend.

With a very favorable forecast for Saturday, the very foggy

morning that we woke to was a bit of a downer but hey, it'd soon burn off?!

The aircrew brief at 0900 was thorough as usual, but still couldn't see my hand in front of my face. The presented flying program was acknowledged as "rubbery" with us realizing that the "Airboss" was going to have his work cut out for him that day. Gradually the fog cleared, and the flying program got underway just before 1100 (a bit under an hour late). The rest of the day progressed tremendously with huge interest in the Caribou by the visitors. As the biggest and greenest aircraft present, and the only one open for inspection, the lines were quite long but everybody was patient and keen.



Paul Bennet's pyrotechnic display.

Despite the temperature rising to the low 30s, the day was otherwise perfect. The Caribou flying display at around 3pm was likely one of the highlights, although there was quite a bit of Roulette, warbird, aerobatic and pyrotechnic competition! No doubt Paul Bennet knows how to "do" airshows!

Sunday morning saw a low overcast with predictions of significant rain, but we optimistically completed an

FLYING OPERATIONS

Story: Rod Holzwart.
Photos: Rod Holzwart & Howard Mitchell.

engine run and set up the “shop” just in time for the rain to start ... and rain it did! Thankfully with little flying possible and the Caribou offering one of the few dry spots on the airfield, the flow of visitors was still constant, although we did need to create a bridge to get the visitors across the quagmire to the aircraft.

The airshow organizers eventually managed to get a few aircraft airborne as the weather fluctuated and those hardy aircraft fans that remained got some value from their tickets.

We opted to take the safer course of action and chose not to fly but were all packed and eager to head home that afternoon. Much checking of the forecasts and weather radar pictures made it evident that things weren't improving. We again chose the safer option and retired to the Crowne Plaza.

Monday dawned still, clear and cool and, with the aircraft already prepared and loaded from the day before, we left just before 0900 for another scenic coastal journey to YSHL.

While the vagaries of the weather made the weekend more interesting, I'm quite certain the lovable Bou again made it a happy weekend for many people.



Laying down a bridge for the visitors.



Waiting to go on board the Bou on day two.



Crowds lined up waiting to see the Bou.

FLYING OPERATIONS

Caribou, Catalina, Iroquois at Temora

Story & Photos:
Carl Robinson.



The Huey 898 and Caribou 210 at Temora

AS air shows kicked off again following last year's COVID-19 enforced break, HARS was well represented at the Temora Air Force Centenary Showcase on 6 and 7 March with three participating aircraft, including our PBV-6A Catalina.

As usual, War Birds dominated the event, but our former RAAF Caribou 210 and ex-RAN Iroquois UH-1B 898, part of HARS Navy Heritage Flight, took centre-stage in both afternoon "Vietnam Formation" flights before a smaller than usual crowd of about 5,000 keen spectators.

Huey 898 was on its first long-distance tour since its restoration in Nowra late last year and a good two-hour flight, or roughly 350 kms, west over the Great Dividing Range and onto the NSW Central Western Slopes and Plains, wonderful grain country, and this old wartime RAAF base.

Handling logistics and management was HARS volunteer Vic Battese, a long-time RAN helicopter pilot who flew with the first deployment of the 135th Assault Helicopter Company (EMU) in South Vietnam. He shifted Huey 898 up to Temora with a stop in Gunderoo north of ACT to pick up Canberra-based RAAF veteran pilots Terry Wilson, another HARS volunteer, and Mick Haxell to fly in the actual aerial displays.

The mid-afternoon display of Vietnam War-era aircraft, featuring a fleet of Bird Dogs (L-19's) and a Cessna O-2A, saw our HARS Caribou 210 soaring steeply into the air and then into a high circuit while Huey 898 followed in a swirling cloud of dust to perform its own distinctive show.



Huey 898 making a dust storm.

Another Dakota for HARS

Story: Mark Scott.
Photos: Ian Poulter.



The Caboolture C-47A.

LATE in May 2021, HARS members from both our Shellharbour and Parkes museums travelled to Caboolture Airport in Queensland to begin recovery of our latest acquisition, a Douglas C-47A Dakota. The main tasks undertaken on this visit were removal of engine cowlings, propellers and engines. The wings, horizontal and vertical stabilisers and all control surfaces had already been removed. All these components are now in transit to Shellharbour and the remaining fuselage section will be transported as one piece in the coming months.

The aircraft is a rare A model C-47 'Gooney Bird' and a World War 2 Pacific theatre veteran, having served with the US Army Air Force's Air Transport Command. The aircraft came to Australia after the war in 1947 and was registered as VH-DMV and then VH-CAO, initially serving with the Department of Civil Aviation. In 1962 it was sold to Brain and Brown Air Freighters, hence its most recent registration number of VH-BAB. After 17 years with Brain and Brown and a total of 35 years of service it was cancelled from the register in 1979 and delivered to Chewing Gum Field Aircraft Museum, Tallebudgera, Queensland to become a display item. Since retirement, the aircraft has been displayed at several air museums including Drages Airworld at Wangaratta VIC, North Queensland Warbirds at Mareeba QLD and then Pacific Dakota Restorations Caboolture QLD.

While it was initially acquired as a source of parts to keep the HARS Dakotas operating, it is now hoped to restore this aircraft to airworthy condition.



Propeller removed and ready for shipment.



Ready for loading on the semi-trailer.

An amazing Anniversary Reunion at HARS between the Vietnamese Boat People and their RAN Rescuers 40 Years ago.

MG99/RAN 40th Anniversary Reunion at HARS, 20 June 2021.



The painting "A Chance Of Hope" by Darrell White.

FIRST, the hands of a couple hundred Vietnamese-Australians went up and then, "Now hands up, anyone who was involved in rescuing these wonderful people in the South China Sea 40 years ago," called out former Channel 7 foreign correspondent and reunion MC Ian Hyslop at the start of an amazing gathering of over 300 inside Hangar 1 at the HARS Aviation Museum on Sunday 20 June 2021, also World Refugee Day.

And a good couple dozen hands shot up, culminating a three-month search for the officers, air crew and sailors of the HMAS Melbourne and HMAS Torrens who rescued 99 Vietnamese men, women, children and infants from their drifting and broken down wooden boat in stormy seas 200 nautical miles east-northeast of Saigon, today's Ho Chi Minh City, on this day back in 1981.

Taking pride of place on stage left was ex-RAN Grumman 2-SG Tracker 851 whose crew - represented at the Reunion

by former Petty Officer and Radar Operator George Casey - spotted the distressed 13.7-metre Nghia Hung on its last patrol of the day off the aircraft carrier HMAS Melbourne and touching off a massive rescue operation whose participants we tracked down for the Reunion.

Also, among those tracked down was Captain C.J. 'Chris' Frost of Torrens tasked with demolishing the boat as a 'hazard to shipping' after an earlier charge deposited by the last boarding party failed to explode. That truly brave act led to a touching reunion with the boat's builder and captain, Nguyen Van Tam, one of many get-togethers through a very emotional day for the Rescuers and Rescued alike.

On the other side of the stage before the four-hour show, the leader of the Melbourne Group 99 (MG99), as they were officially designated, Stephen Nguyen had a cheerful reunion with Commodore Vince Di Pietro AM CSC RAN Rtd who was flying Pedro 15, or Wessex 815, as plane guard

*A Phoenix
Four Page Special
on this
Wonderful Reunion*

off the HMAS Melbourne as Tracker 851 landed. He then flew the ship's doctor John Anderson (also present) over to the HMAS Torrens.

As a boarding party - represented at the Reunion by Leading Seaman QMG Peter Evans all the way from Perth, WA - headed through stormy seas towards the Nghia Hung, then LEUT Di Pietro flew ahead and hovered low over the stricken vessel until the Gemini arrived, an indelible memory for all involved. Both 21 years old at the time, Stephen and Vince had connected by phone and email months ago and this was their first face-to-face meeting. They hugged like old mates.

Another memory of Pedro 15's low hover over the Nghia Hung came from co-organiser of the group's escape from Vietnam, Tran Son and his then 13-month-old son Binh. Vince clearly remembered Son atop the boat's cabin, a burning bin of oily rags beside him in signal, rubbing his stomach in hunger. Today, Byrne - his Aussie name - is a successful real estate developer in Newcastle and brought the two older men together.

The day was full of many similar stories, helped along by a photo exhibition expertly organised by MG99er Amy Dolan-Brown, who with her husband Kevin helped with interpreting and processing the refugees on board the Melbourne as it continued to Singapore. Of the 99 rescued, 77 chose to settle in Australia.

HOW WE GOT OUR ACT TOGETHER

Of course, organising a reunion of this size -- always estimated between 200 and 300 -- was hardly an easy task and kicked off only in mid-March following a visit by nearly 50 MG99 refugees and family to see Tracker 851 after our discovery of its remarkable story a couple months earlier (see below). With HARS encouragement, the group agreed to a much larger 40th Anniversary function on 20 June 2021, coincidentally also World Refugee Day.

As a US Vietnam War correspondent and part of Australia's Vietnamese Community since my arrival here in 1977, two years after the Fall of Saigon, and now as a still-recent HARS volunteer, I took on the challenge of juggling three balls in the air -- HARS and MG99 but most-importantly what I called, in my best Yank Accent, "Rounding up the Aussies" in the rescue.

While MG99 had kept in touch with ship companies (officers



Stephen Nguyen meets Commodore Vince Di Pietro AM.



Tracker 851 that found the vessel.

of HMAS Melbourne and HMAS Torrens and held two previous reunions, lastly in 2012, nobody had ever gone looking for the sailors and air crew.

Quite unexpectedly, I scored instant results by joining their Facebook Groups, even one for the RAN Band (unofficial) which turned up the Chief Musician on the HMAS Melbourne, John Lennon, who shared his pictures but couldn't attend.

And then every day up to the Reunion brought endless surprises -- another contact, new information and historical tidbits bringing the story and participants together. The

MG99/RAN 40th Anniversary Reunion at HARS, 20 June 2021 *continued*



Reunion Organisers, P. J. Canell, Tim May, Carl Robinson, Ian Hyslop and Stephen Nguyen.

Navy Historian office in Canberra was particularly helpful. My wife Kim-Dung and I were also welcomed into the MG99 Organising Committee with bi-weekly meetings and daily calls.

At the HARS Aviation Museum, I received considerable support from Commander P.J. 'Pete' Cannell RAN Rtd (L), who flew both carrier and land-based Trackers and Wessex's in his navy career and whose military organisational skills were a crucial asset. My HARS YouTube Channel partner Tim May was constantly encouraging. I brought in an old friend and now retired broadcaster Ian Hyslop as MC. Other HARS members, especially Events Manager Sherryl Sherson, were always ready to assist, along with fix-all wizard Jim Hayes and on-top-of-everything Keith Kilpatrick. Bob De La Hunty and Maureen Massey were constantly



Tracker 844 doing the wing fold.

encouraging and all volunteers increasingly curious and interested.

AND A VERY SPECIAL GUEST

From the start, we foresaw a key - and hopefully spectacular - role at the Reunion from the HARS Navy Heritage Flight (NHF) which includes Tracker 851, of course, from our own still-operational Tracker 844 - also on Melbourne that day - to re-enact the dramatic discovery of that drifting boat and its 99 occupants in the South China Sea 40 years ago.

And as the Wessex's no longer fly, we also penciled our Huey 898 as a "Sounds of Vietnam" with RAN veteran with US Army 135th Helicopter Assault Company (EMU) in the war and HARS volunteer Vic Battese ready to fly.

With Tracker 844 undergoing its 10-year service and experiencing many time-consuming frustrations, mostly an entirely new style of engine hoses, Team Leader Terry Hetherington and Garry Holloway took on the 20th of June as their very own D-Day. Regardless, a fuel donation from Amy and Kevin remained firm. A hiccup or two. Sorry, no fly-past. Still too much for the Annual. Engines? Maybe one. And then finally on a blustery Thursday just before the Sunday reunion, both engines fired up and wings stretched out and folded. Ready for the Show!

AND THEN TO THE MG99/RAN REUNION

After all the preparations by the MG99 group and assistance from so many HARS volunteers, and not least clearing our Lockheed Super-Constellation 'Connie' and other aircraft out of Hangar 1 on Saturday, everything was ready at 1300 on Sunday, 20 June. Chairs for 250. Lots more at round tables to the side. Big stage and lectern. Banners. Exhibition. Food and Drinks. The flags of Australia and Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam). Musicians. Ian Hyslop and myself on-stage with Pete Cannell prepping the 'talent' from Left.

And quite a program it was, retelling the story of the rescue and never-before public recognition of the sailors involved. Keeping the reunion informal and relaxed, the focus was on the participants and highest VIP was a keenly interested CDRE Don Dezentje CSM RAN of today's Fleet Air Arm (FAA). After Stephen Nguyen's welcome, One Minute Silence and introduction of MC Ian Hyslop, Bob De La Hunty provided his own welcome to HARS with special mention to our volunteers who served in South Vietnam in military and civilian capacities.

Just before lunch, the reunion saw a brief aircraft display with a fly-past by Huey 898 and then Tracker 844 taxiing around from stage left and giving the rescued Vietnamese a sound memory of Tracker 851 who spotted them 40 years ago -- and a Wing Fold Salute. A wonderful round of applause all 'round.

The show continued through the rest of the afternoon

with several highlights: cultural and dance from the Vietnam Community of Australia (VCA) Wollongong Branch concluding with a rousing singalong rendition of 'We are Australians;' MC Ian Hyslop using his well-honed Q&A technique with rescuers we'd tracked down on-stage, including RAN photographer Rob Patterson who shot the rescue's most iconic images; the rescued Vietnamese wonderfully represented by the youngest on the refugee boat, now all grown up and laconic Aussies who downplay their wonderful career achievements.

The audience loved it all, including the many HARS volunteers in attendance.

And the final highlight - with Captain Nguyen Van Tam and Commodore Don Dezentze doing the honours – was the unveiling of the painting which sparked the sequence of events leading to the 40th Anniversary Reunion at HARS and titled 'A Chance for Hope.'

Only last January, New Zealand-based former RANer and marine artist Darrell White approached his brother and HARS volunteer Glenn for help on painting up a Tracker for his intended work and we discovered Tracker 851's unknown story – and like so many we are constantly finding at HARS.

Purchased generously on-stage from Darrell White by Sydney-based but not MG99 Vietnamese-Australian Dr Brian Cung and his wife Tran, 'A Chance for Hope' was then immediately donated to the HARS Aviation Museum as a token of appreciation for its care of Tracker 851 and a symbol of the community's gratitude to Australia.

HARS President & Chief Pilot Bob De La Hunty then gracefully accepted the dramatic painting and pledged to make it part of a permanent exhibition to the story of Melbourne Group 99.



Captain Nguyen Van Tam with Commodore Don Dezentze unveiling the painting "A Chance Of Hope".



HARS President Bob De La Hunty OAM accepting the donated painting "A Chance Of Hope" from Dr Bran and Tran Cung.



Group photo of the Rescuers and the Rescued.

DURING May a group calling themselves "Cruisin Along" visited the museum. This group of fun-loving people raise funds for various charities with activities including competing in various bashes. They have raised around \$600,000 in recent years. Two of their vehicles are shown here parked in front of our museum – a Ford LTD and a Ford Falcon.

"Cruisin Along" do a great job and enjoy themselves at the same time.



Ford Falcon and Ford LTD.

Museum progress.

There have been significant upgrades and additions to memorabilia displays in the reception area including adding a handmade model of our P2V-5 Neptune 302. Many thanks to Steve Keddie for building the P2 model.

Much of the progress on our aircraft collection is with the



The de Havilland Heron with three bladed propellers attached.

continued assistance of students from Parkes High School, who attend the museum on Thursdays.

de Havilland Heron.

The horizontal stabilisers, which are covered in fabric, have had some much-needed attention. As there is not the expertise amongst our Parkes volunteers to recover the stabilisers in fabric, the decision was taken to cover the torn surfaces with lightweight aluminium.

Parts of the fuselage and engine nacelles have been pressure washed, rubbed back and resprayed.

Three bladed propellers have been fitted to the left side engine nacelles. This required the fabrication of mounting struts to bolt to the wings. Whilst the propellers are not the

original specification, they are a vast improvement on no props at all!

Westland Wessex Helicopter, ex Royal Australian Navy

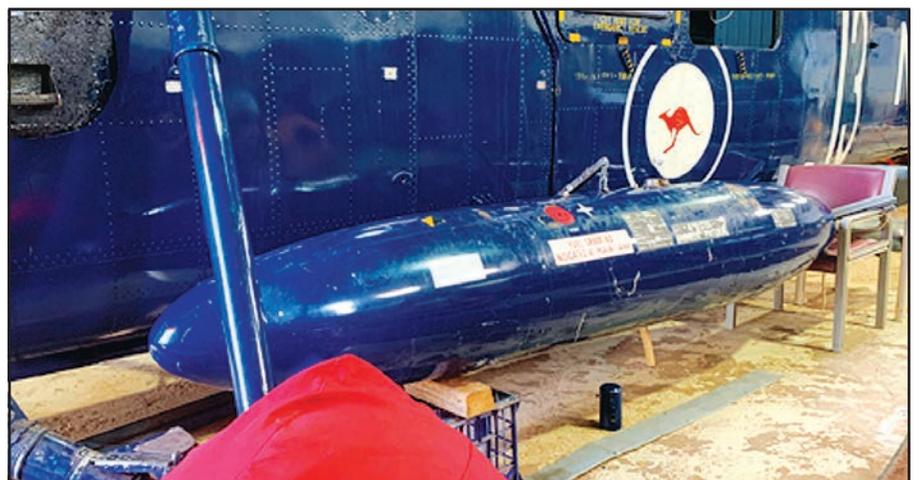
The main activities on this aircraft have been fabricating a fuel tank mounting for the port side of the aircraft, completion of antennae cabling, and fitment of a landing light under the nose.

Convair 580

The interior of the aircraft has been completed, interior lining of the aircraft is being refitted and the pilot seat is being repaired. Recently there have also been engine runs and taxiing done on the aircraft.

P2V-5 Neptune 302, ex Royal Australian Air Force.

Work continues on the more detailed restoration of this aircraft. Recent work has centred around fabricating panels to cover the damaged trailing edges and painting of the right-wing flaps.



Port side of the Wessex showing external fuel tank.

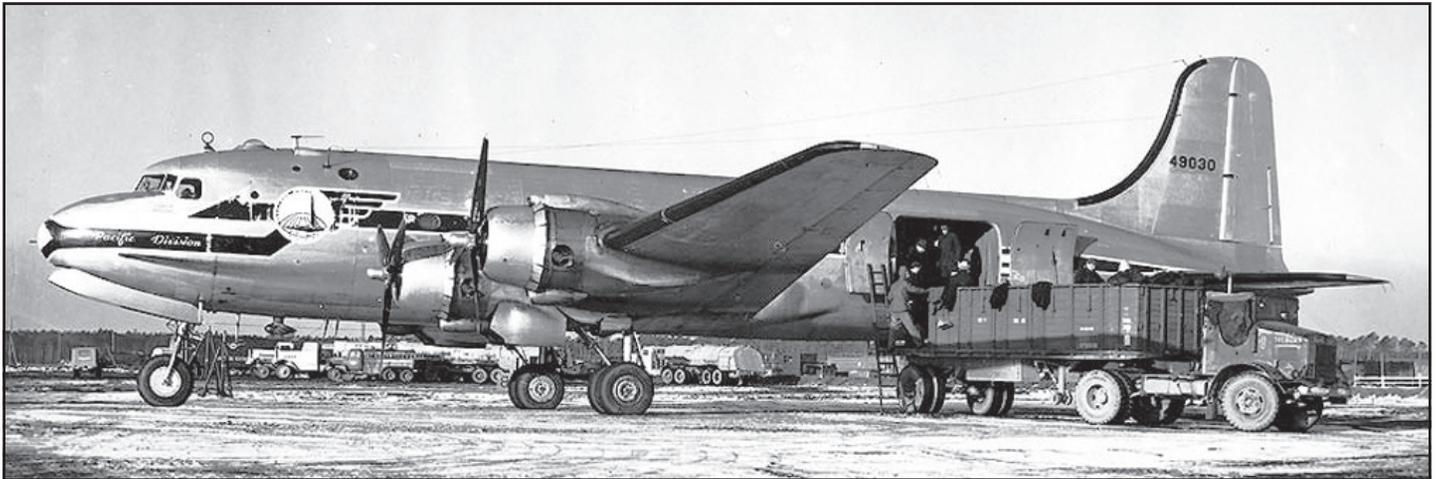
The Berlin Airlift and our C-54 Skymaster

Researched by Doug Philpott.

Story: Terry Scanlan

Photos: Courtesy of the USAF

With thanks to some recent research by HARS member Doug Philpott it has been revealed that HARS C-54 Skymaster VH-EAY participated in the Berlin Airlift shortly after the end of World War II.



A C54 Skymaster being loaded.

ON June 24 1948, the Soviet Authorities blocked the Autobahn, the main highway into Berlin from the West, indefinitely. The reason given was for 'repairs' but in fact it was to create a blockade to try and force the Western Allies of Britain, France and the United States to leave Berlin to the Soviets.

The allies quickly formed a plan to supply food, fuel and other goods to the people living in the western part of the city. The operation was code-named "Operation VITTLES" and then became known as the "Berlin airlift" (or as the West Berliners called it the "Air Bridge"). Originally planned as a short-term measure, it became obvious that the Soviets were not going to lift the blockade and so began a year-long operation to supply West Berlin using hundreds of American, British and French cargo planes.

At the start of the operation the allies were delivering 5,000 tons of supplies to West Berlin every day and by the end of the blockade they were delivering 8,000 tons of goods every day. Over the course of the airlift more than 2.3 million tons of cargo was delivered to the people living in West Berlin.

At the start of the Berlin Airlift a variety of aircraft were used by the RAF, including Avro Yorks, Handley Page Hastings and Douglas Dakotas. The US saw the benefit of the Dakotas and employed

their C-47 Skytrain aircraft. There were problems with the C-47 namely that they were slow to load and unload due to a lack of a winching system.

The American command soon realised that they would need a hardier cargo platform and requisitioned the C-54 Skymaster for the task. The aircraft was faster and easier to load and unload its 10 tons of cargo. Eventually the Americans replaced the C-47s with the C-54 Skymaster.

According to Doug's research our C-54, 44-9126 was definitely used during the Berlin Airlift and was also photographed at Gatow AB Airfield at the time of President Truman's visit to the Potsdam Conference in July 1945.



The HARS 44-9126, second from the left at Gatow (circa 1945).

Aircraft used in the airlift..... <https://disciplesofflight.com/aircraft-of-the-berlin-airlift/>

Movie Making on OJA by Fox Studios

Story & Photos:
Sherryl Sherson.

THE events at HARS Aviation Museum continued to intrigue the members and visitors when Fox Studios bumped-in for a two-day filming event commencing on the March 17, 2021.

200 crew, 3 make up trucks, 2 food trucks, 5 scaffolding trucks, 2 lighting trucks, 1 generator truck with a massive generator that made no noise, plus others, too many to mention arrived at the 747 compound at 0400 on Wednesday March 17. The film is called TTYOL – Three Thousand Years of Longing – keep your eyes out for this one, a little tamer than Mortal Combat. TTYOL is produced and directed by George Miller at a cost of \$60 million USD



and will be due for release in January 2022. Lead role played by Tilda Swinton, a charming actress who took the time to speak with several HARS Members.

There were many teams of highly skilled Audio and Lighting Engineers who worked seamlessly to produce the necessary footage with minimal fuss. Very impressive. Both days went like clockwork thanks to the efforts of Roger Blakey (and his Engineering skills) who

managed to restart the IFE (Inflight Entertainment) on OJA, David Barnes OJA Manager, Pete Hoier and Keith Kilpatrick. However, we could have done without the 66mm of rain over the filming period.



OJA the Movie Star.



Tilda Swinton, playing the lead role.



Scaffolding erected for R5 access.



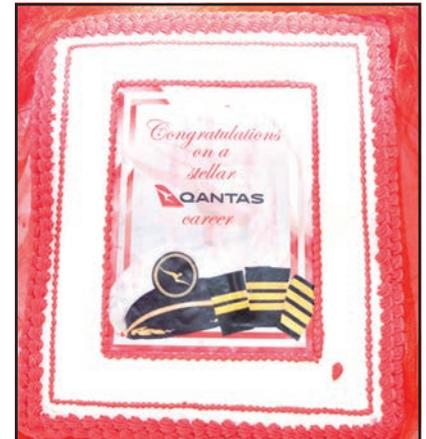
Demounting the fence for access.

Retired Qantas Pilot's Function

Story: Sherryl Sherson
Photos: Tony Horneman.

SATURDAY February 13, was a special day for many Qantas Pilots as HARS welcomed the many retired pilots and their partners for a social gathering in hangar 1 to help celebrate the camaraderie and for some, lifelong friendships as they retired from Qantas.

Captain Paul Martin was the organizing personality at Qantas and together with Cabin Crew led by Lea Saunders made the night a memorable one lasting late into the evening.



The Commemoration Cake.

Below: The "Rock Bottom" Band with members L to R Andrew Wallis, Dick Tobiano, David Berkman and Don Blau.



HARS President Bob De La Hunty OAM addressing the gathering.



HARS Inaugural High Tea

Story: & Photos: Sally McConachy.

HARS held its inaugural High Tea on Friday 11th June. The event took place on the upper deck of the 747, OJA. A full capacity of 24 guests took part along with four cabin crew and one engineer. Guests were treated to a glass of bubbles on arrival, a full safety demonstration followed by the high tea service conducted from a Qantas meal cart. The cabin crew showcased a range of former Qantas uniforms for the service.

Café Connie supplied a selection of delicacies including finger sandwiches and sweet treats. Guests listened to an address by Bob De La Hunty and were invited to the flight deck for a photo opportunity at the conclusion of the service.

The event was considered a resounding success and plans are under way to hold the High Tea on a regular basis and group booking are available.



Lea Saunders serving up the High Tea delicacies.



HARS members enjoying the inaugural OJA High Tea experience.



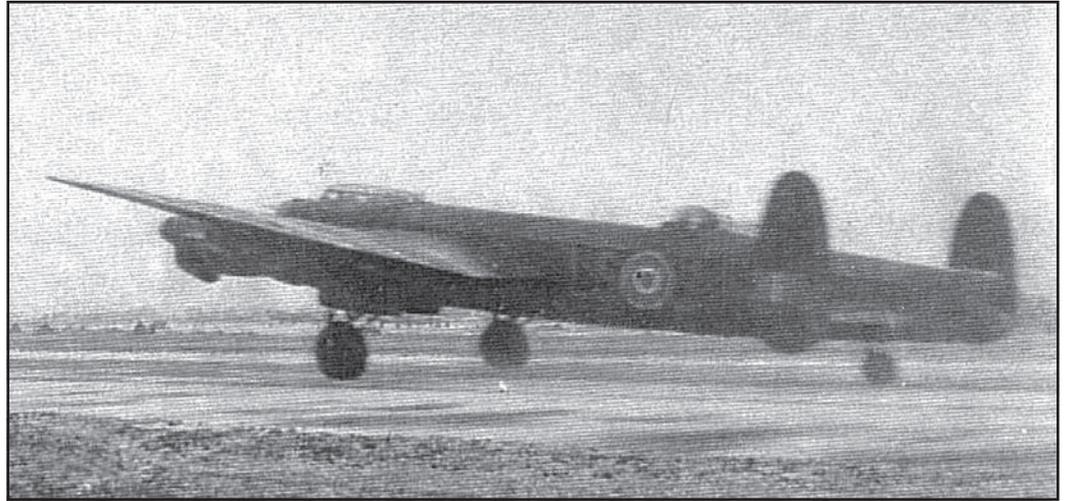
The High Tea crew, Lea Saunders, Roger Blakey and Sally McConachy.

Lancaster LL806 “ J for JIG”

RAAF 15 SQUADRON MILDENHALL

BILL Smith approached me and said that the Committee had been discussing World War 2 Bombers and had realised that I had a special interest in the Lancaster and asked me if I would write an article on the famous Lancaster. At last I have decided to give it a go.

The Lancaster is important to me as my father was a Lancaster pilot flying out of Mildenhall in England, but before I tell you of his experiences, I will start with some of the history of my interest. While I was still in primary school, I found dad's Lancaster pilots information book (like what you get with a new car) and took it to school to show my mates. However, I was caught by the headmaster and the book confiscated, he then returned it to my father. Instead of getting into trouble, my father sat me down and told me all about the Lancaster. The only thing I remember was that he said it took 44 gallons of petrol to get off the ground. My father was responsible for getting me interested in aeroplanes and got me some plans and balsa to build a rubber band powered plane – lots of test flights but no success. Then I got a 5cc glow plug engine, but we could never get it to run properly. Finally, I obtained a 2.5cc Diesel engine and then I was away building control line planes, crashing them and rebuilding for the next flight. Finally, as a 17-year-old boy, while I was waiting for my leaving certificate results, I started to build a 15-inch wingspan “TEMPEST II”. Somehow, when the



Lancaster “J for JIG”

farm was sold, the model came to Wollongong and now at last as a 76-year-old grandfather, I am now completing it (not to fly).

In a way it was the Lancaster that caused me to join HARS. I have also restored an XK150 Jaguar and Hit-and-Miss farm engines and members of the Jaguar club knew of my interest in Merlin aircraft engines. When a club member bought an old Jaguar in the country, he came back and told me that the farmer had a Merlin in his shed pulled apart and wanted \$500 for it. I needed manuals etc. before I bought it and was eventually referred to Bob De La Hunty; Bob did send me some information, but the engine was gone. Bob told me that HARS was relocating from Bankstown to Albion Park and asked if I was interested in joining. Application form was sent and I joined before any planes came to the Illawarra, so I have seen HARS grow from the ground up.



Geoff Cuthbert in the Perth Lancaster Cockpit.

I did not get my father's flying “logbook”, but my sister did photocopy all his training and war time pages for me. While working for BHP, I managed to redo the pages and just this year I had it professionally completed and bound. I had also obtained a copy of “Bomber Command War Diaries” so I was able to read the official history of his operational flights. I also applied to the Australian Air Force for my father's “Bomber Command Bar” and received it.

I have always had the desire to sit in the pilot's seat of a Lancaster and look out at those 4 Rolls Royce Merlins and his instruments. We



Richard Cuthbert and Crew on return from the 100th sortie

went for a holiday in England and I went to the Museum at Duxford, but they would not let me into their Lancaster due to radiation danger from the instruments. Last year we went to Perth to get inside the Lancaster in their museum. It was fantastic getting into the Lancaster and working my way up to the cockpit, but then the guide would not take the dummy out of the pilot's seat for me.

Got a "No" from the War Memorial for "G" for George as well. Just one last little story, my barber, Bert Potter, the only person to cut my hair since I arrived in Wollongong and still does in his garage aged 92, was a barber trainee and saw "G" for George fly down Crown Street do a "U" turn and then fly up Crown Street with bomb bay doors open so low you could feel the blast from the high revving Merlins.

Now for the story of my father, he started at No 8 EFTS Narrandera in DH82 Tiger Moth and undertook 6 hours training before his solo flight and doing 29 hours in total.

He first sailed to Canada and joined 7 SFTS Macleod Flying Anson's with a total of 153 hours between March and July 1943. He then sailed for England and was posted to 3 PAFU Bilbury flying Oxfords for a total of 60 hours between November and March 1944. It was then on to No. 26 O.T.U. Little Horwood and into Wellingtons with bombing training and some long trips up to 4.5 hours day and 5.5 hours night

flying with his crew with a total of 90 hours by the end of June 1944. Next a short stay at No. 1651 Heavy Con Unit Wrattling Common flying Stirlings day and night flying for 48 hours mostly with his crew. Then came the Lancaster at No. 3 L.F.S. Feltwell but only for 12 hours. This was the end of his training with a grand total of 469 hours.

"We looked over this rather tired old Lanc and you could feel the thoughts going through our heads – will we or won't we finish this war together".

Then came the operational posting to RAAF 15 Squadron Mildenhall. It was here that the crew were introduced to their now famous Lancaster "J for Jig": It is now listed in the book TON-UP-LANCS. In this book there is a section given by Ken Dorsett, dad's rear gunner, when they were introduced to "J" for Jig.

We looked over this rather tired old Lanc and you could feel the thoughts going through our heads – will we or won't we finish this war together. Well, much to our relief we did. J-Jig turned out to be a good old lady. She took a few chunks of flack and had her rivets strained to breaking point by "corkscrews" and the landings (not Hoppers speciality) which must have played merry hell with her undercarriage. Nevertheless, she got us through with the aid of Hopper (despite the landings) and Lady Luck sitting on our shoulders. She even finished with us on a long haul to Kongsberg now known as Kaliningrad just to prove she could do it. Other than that, just an old bomber in the stream that made the 100.

Lancaster LL806 “ J for JIG” *continued*

It was my father and his crew that took “J-Jig” on her 100th operational flight. “J-Jig” became rather famous after this and completed 134 bombing sorties. She then flew 3 Manna trips delivering food to the Dutch and then 3 Exodus trips bringing Allied prisoners of war back to Britain. This credited “J-Jig” with 140 flights to jointly hold the record with Lancaster ED888 Mother/Mike Squared.

Jig remained with 15 Squadron until finally Struck off Charge on 6th December 1945 and scrapped. It is a shame that such a historic and valuable plane was just scrapped.

My father did not talk much about his war experiences but did tell of some of the more humorous incidents such as on the first time he and his crew undertook a 4 hour training flight with a full bomb load they overshot the end of the runway at about 60 MPH and ended in a market garden cabbage patch. The farmer was not amused and my father was a little embarrassed. Another was when they were on the way to Germany, the mid upper gunner drifted off to sleep and fired a stream of tracers over the front of the cockpit. My father immediately put the Lancaster into a steep spiral dive and the flight engineer lifted off the floor and landed on the roof; on pulling out, the engineer drifted down and ended up a crumpled heap on the floor.

There was also a sad event when on the run in on a bombing run, his friend who was flying beside him was hit by a bomb dropped from above and the Lancaster exploded. My father had to keep on with his bombing run and then turn for home.

During “Jigs” long life my father and his colleagues crewed her on 18 of her war sorties and one of these was “Jigs” 100th trip when the landing was recorded on news film. A short time later when the crew were on leave and were in a picture theatre, the report of “Jig” was shown and the crew all shouted out “that’s us”, the film stopped and all in the theatre cheered the crew.

There is also a slight error in the story of “Jig”, but who would let an error spoil a good story. It was plane “A” that

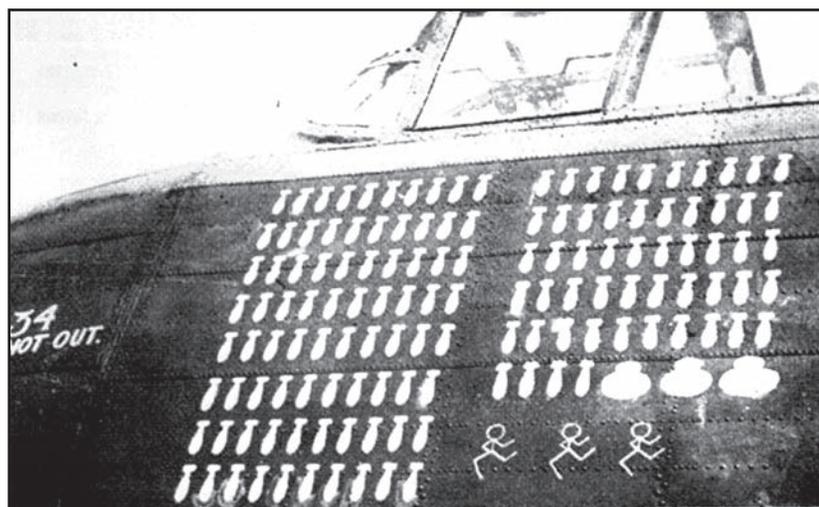
my father and crew took to Konigsberg on 6th Jan 1945 not “Jig” and was listed as a “gardening trip”. My father never talked about his missions except for this mission he said that they took two thousand one hundred and fifty gallons of fuel and instead of mines as reported - they were loaded with bags of sand. The official story was mine laying, but my father said as they dropped the bags of sand and the German ships in the harbour were held there for 3 days while mine-sweepers searched for the mines they saw dropped. This was a night operation and was nine and a half hours at the controls of the Lancaster.

He said as his Lancaster came over the boundary one of the engines stopped being out of fuel. Not only were they the only squadron to fly out that night, but it was a smaller squadron than usual, consisting of only 10 Lancaster’s. My father said that only 5 returned; those lost ran out of fuel on the way home.

My father’s version of that mission is so different to the version in Bomber Command War Diaries which makes me believe that it was a secret mission at the time and must have been important as Bomber Command’s Arthur Harris was on the base to welcome the crews home. I’m still looking for information on this operation and to determine what the results for the war effort were.

Reading from my father’s logbook, the targets they bombed were: - Wilhelmshaven, Heinsberg, Homberg (twice), Senkirchen, Gelsenkirchen, Fulda, Cologne, Oberhausen, Siegen, Trier (three times). Next was Coblenz where flack damaged an engine and put the instruments out of order. Then Vohwinkel, Nuremberg and I now have a piece of German shrapnel that was taken from a fuel tank on their return. They also went to Ludwigshafen which was JIG’S 100th operational sortie. Also, Krefeld and then finished with a trip to Enkerschwick to complete their tour of duty.

This is a brief explanation of my love of flying and aircraft in general. After I left school, my father went back flying and soon became a flying instructor at Bankstown Flying School. Here I had my first flight in a Chipmunk and as I was wearing throat mikes, I had been warned not to have any breakfast and on the way to the training area I was flying in. I had been told straight and level but went up 200 feet. We did everything a Chipmunk could do, stall turns, loops, inverted flight and more. I was making such a noise in the throat mike that my father asked if I wanted to put down to recover but I said, “no keep going”. On return to Bankstown, he offered to teach me to fly but I was doing shift work, going to tech and saving to build a house so had to regrettably decline. Unfortunately, my father died in a twin Comanche in a flat spin in Townsville. I am restoring the Wirraway to fly in memory of him. I still love to fly and am looking forward to flying the Wirraway.



J-JIG's tally of 143 bombs dropped, 3 Manna Trips and 3 Exodus Trips.

Trains and Planes Sunday

Story: Ian Badham.
Photos: Brad Johns.

THE thrill of aircraft and steam trains in a joint operation between the Illawarra Light Railway Museum and the HARS Aviation Museum made the second Trains and Planes Sunday a special occasion in March.

Visitors were delighted with the combination of aircraft tours and train rides beside Shellharbour Airport.

This time the historical Kiama Picnic Train became part of the joint operation with their guests from Central Station invited to alight from the train at Albion Park station and then join the free shuttle bus to travel between the museums.

The planning of the event had been welcomed by many from both museums and it was well sponsored by Warrigal Charters for the bus and Wave FM for radio promotions, supported by additional media and television interviews to boost interest in visiting the museums.

Many now share a belief that a joint operation can succeed to promote both transport museums in Albion Park, with thanks to Carolyn Dumont who was our honorary coach captain driving the Warrigal Charters bus all day between the museums and Ian Badham who travelled on the Picnic Train handing out brochures promoting both museums; a true public relations exercise!



The Kiama Picnic Train, hauled by 1950s, Baldwin Steam Locomotive 5917 at Central Station bound for Albion Park Rail.

As the Trains and Planes Sunday has seen the second year running in 2021, it is building an even stronger relationship between both museums, as on the day members from both museums were welcomed to share each other's experiences. Now, a barbeque is being planned as a further opportunity for members of both museums to get together.

As a wonderful way to spend a Sunday, it also brings an understanding of the opportunity which the bringing together of members of both museums along with an enhanced experience for visitors as a plus for all participants ... HARS Aviation Museum, Illawarra Light Rail Museum, the Kiama Picnic Train and Warrigal Charters Bus company.

Well done and I thank all for their support as the Trains and Planes Sunday is a great event for everyone to enjoy.



A steam locomotive at the Illawarra Light Rail Museum

HARS Member Mark Kelly Recounts F111C A8-137 Ejection

A Bit of history first...

I graduated from number 94 RAAF Pilots Course in 1976 having trained on Winjeel and Macchi aircraft, which are proudly displayed at HARS. On graduation, I was posted to fly Caribou aircraft at number 38 Squadron and operated the aircraft throughout Australia, New Guinea, Indonesia and also as part of the RAAF Detachment in support of United Nations Peace Keeping in Kashmir. Operating the Caribou in the Himalayan mountain area is another story I'm happy to pass on to those who visit HARS. The Caribou was a reliable and great asset to the UN operation. A4-210 which is currently flown by HARS, was one on the aircraft that flew in this challenging environment. I am proud to now fly as part of the HARS Caribou team.

The F111C entered service and expanded the strike aircraft capability of the RAAF. Having flown a tactical aircraft such as the Caribou, my experience was sought after as the number of available fighter pilots became limited. I was the first RAAF non-fighter pilot to be posted to the F111C. The takeoff speed of the F111C exceeded the maximum flight speed of the Caribou, so it was a bit of an awakening for a young 22-year-old pilot. There is a RAAF video at the Australian War Memorial that tells the story of my first F111C flight and the aircraft I flew, A8-134, is now on display at the AWM in recognition of its service in Timor. I must say that the enthusiasm I showed in this video interview has my children rolling their eyes and commenting "oh dad..."

The history of the F111 is told at HARS and the aircraft on display is not to be missed. The F111 was a powerful and potent force and played its part in the defence of Australia, deterring any possible aggressor.



A very young Mark in the cockpit on an F-111C.

The tale I wish to recount is one part of my F111 story. On the 24th August 1979, not long after finishing my training on the aircraft, my navigator Al Curr and I ejected out of F111C A8-137 in Ohakea New Zealand while on a military exercise.



Mark with A8-134 at The Australian War Memorial Canberra.

We were taking off as part of a 4-ship formation after four days of heavy rain. During the takeoff roll on Ohakea runway 27 at around 130 knots (240 kph) the nose wheel hit a large pool of water causing an engine compressor stall, or "flame-out" in both engines. With no engine thrust to continue the takeoff, I applied maximum braking, however the aircraft hydro-planed and only decelerating 40 knots before the F111C continued off the end of the runway and at 90 knots, departed towards 'Fog Hollow' paddock, a drop of over 30m.

F111 aircraft have an arrestor hook which I deployed, but unfortunately the arrestor cable, which would have assisted stopping wasn't available. As my aircraft went over the cliff at the end of Ohakea runway 27, we were left with no survival option but to eject and the command given "Eject, Eject, Eject"!

The F111 has an ejection capsule, the size of a small car, in which crew remain in their seat as a 'shaped charge' cuts the capsule free of the aircraft and rocket motors propel the capsule at high 'g loading' upwards around 500FT. Parachutes then deploy and the capsule, with crew still strapped in their seats, comes down to earth with an airbag under the capsule to cushion the impact. However, I liken the impact to sitting on a wooden deck chair, on the roof of a house, and just jumping off while seated. Ouch!!! but even so, such a better outcome than the alternative. Our capsule landed next to the burning wreckage of A8-137. This was the 55th RAAF ejection from an aircraft and notably, the first successful ground ejection.

While I suffered extensive back injuries from the ejection, both the navigator Al Curr who was unhurt and I returned to flying the F111.

The inquiry found contributing factors to the accident were the pooling of water on the runway and the fact that the F111C did not have chined tyres, therefore the water from the nosewheel sprayed sheets of water into the low hung engines which caused their failure. Lots of lessons learnt, just like you see on 'air crash investigators'.

Since this time, I have been a RAAF Flying Instructor, F111C pilot (again), before moving on to a 35-year civil aviation career as a B747 Airline Captain with Qantas. Due to COVID, I retired as a B747-400 Senior Training Captain (TRE) in 2020 with around 25,000 flight hours and just one more take-off than landing, thanks to my Ohakea story. And of course, my B747, the 'Queen of the Skies', is also on display at HARS.

HARS has many tales of aviation history to tell and I along with the HARS team, stand ready to share our aviation stories.



Mark's Capsule after landing,



The F111 remains after the fire,

Unforgettable 911



Captain Pete Hoier,



SEPTEMBER 11 2001, or 911 as it is more commonly known, will long live in the memories of many as one of the most bizarre aviation incidents of all time. An event where four perfectly serviceable aircraft were used as weapons of terrorism heralded a new frontier in the war against terrorism. Conceived and planned with military precision, it was only detected when, to the horror of the World, it was executed creating an impact without precedent. In 2001, I did not expect to encounter 911 in most unusual and rather unrelated circumstances many years after the event.

Although the tragedy was largely centered on the East Coast of the USA, its immediate impact reverberated around the World, particularly in the airspace in and adjacent to North America. My role as a Boeing 747-400 Captain with Hong Kong-based Cathay Pacific Airways found me in Vancouver scheduled to operate the second leg of CX889, the daily JFK/YVR/HKG flight. That flight was scheduled to depart Vancouver at 0235 local on 11 September 2001 having arrived from New York at 0050 local. With me on the flight deck were a Vancouver-based Senior First Officer (Relief Commander during my rest periods), a First Officer and a Second Officer both based in Hong Kong. After getting airborne at 0250 local, we climbed to our initial cruising altitude and set course for Hong Kong, 10,269 kilometres to the South West. As it was customary to follow specific air routes in those days, our flight planned track was initially to Anchorage and then on radar vectors to the R220 NOPAC route.

At the top of climb and established in the cruise, I took the opportunity to hand over to the Relief Commander and retire to the crew rest to take a three or four hour rest. Back in the passenger cabin, our passengers were being taken care of by the 14 flight

| Year 2001 | AIRCRAFT | | Commander | Holder's Operating Capacity | Journey or Nature of Flight (See Part I - Instructions) | | | DAY FLYING | | | NIGHT FLYING | | |
|---------------------------------|----------|--------------|-----------|-----------------------------------|--|---------|-------------|------------------------------|------------------|--------|------------------------------|------------------|--|
| | Type | Registration | | | From (Dep) | (Times) | To (Arr) | Pilot-in- command (P1) | Co-pilot (P2) | Dual | Pilot-in- command (P1) | Co-pilot (P2) | |
| | | B-1 | | | Totals brought forward | | | | | | | | |
| September 9 | B747-400 | HOR | SELF | PI | HRG - YVR | | | | | | | | |
| 11 | ✓ | HUB | SELF | PI | YVR - ANC | | | | 6:20 | | 6:00 | | |
| 13 | ✓ | HUB | SELF | PI | ANC - HRG | | | | 1:20 | | 2:30 | | |
| 25 | ✓ | HOS | SELF | PI | HRG - MNL - HRG | | | | 10:45 | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | 3:50 | | | | |
| October 2 | ✓ | HOL | SELF | PI | JFK - YVR | | | | | | 5:50 | | |
| 4 | ✓ | HUG | SELF | PI | YVR - HRG | | | | | | 13:00 | | |
| 15 | ✓ | Hoz/P | SELF | PI | HRG - TPE - HRG | | | | 1:35 | | 1:40 | | |
| 18 | ✓ | Hoy | SELF | PI | LAX - HRG | | | | 10:00 | | 4:05 | | |
| | | | | | | | | | 12:15 | | | | |
| November 19 | ✓ | HOS | SELF | PI | HRG - FRA | | | | 6:55 | | 4:00 | | |
| 21 | ✓ | HOU | SELF | PI | FRA - HRG | | | | 3:40 | | 2:10 | | |
| 27 | ✓ | HVA | SELF | PI | BRX - SIN - HRG | | | | 3:00 | | 5:30 | | |
| 30 | ✓ | HOT | SELF | PI | HRG - SYD | | | | 8:45 | | | | |
| December 4 | ✓ | HOP | SELF | PI | SYD - HRG | | | | 3:00 | | 5:10 | | |
| 8 | ✓ | HOP | SELF | PI | HRG - ADL | | | | 8:00 | | 2:00 | | |
| 12 | ✓ | HOP | SELF | PI | ADL - MEL - HRG | | | | 2:00 | | 1:20 | | |
| 18 | ✓ | HVA | SELF | PI | HRG - NBO | | | | | | | | |
| Grand Total: 16339 hrs. 00 mins | | | | | Totals carried forward | | | 6721:10 | 3379:15 | 451:15 | 4351:25 | 1222:20 | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | 70:55 | |

Pete's Log Book.

attendants crewing the flight, enjoying the inflight meal and entertainment or also, like me, taking a nap.

Approximately two hours out of Vancouver, our passengers became aware of the dastardly events unfolding back on the East Coast, the origin of many of those passengers on board. Some passengers tuned into the BBC channel through the aircraft's inflight entertainment system and heard the terrible news of an aircraft crashing into the World Trade Centre. The passengers alerted the flight attendants who in turn passed the information onto the flight deck crew. My crew immediately woke me and I returned to the flight deck. I listened in disbelief to the events occurring in New York City as the Relief Commander briefed me on the instruction from Anchorage Control to land immediately at Anchorage International Airport.

I advised Anchorage Control that we were above the maximum landing weight of the aircraft (285,000 kilograms) and would have to jettison at least 60,000 kilograms of fuel which would take at least 30 minutes.

I was directed to take up a holding pattern nearby and instructed "do not to leave the holding pattern without clearance - fighters are airborne."

As an indication of the tension prevailing in the area at

that time, we were advised by ground staff that Korean Airlines flight 85 bound for Anchorage had been forced to land at Whitehorse Airport in the Yukon. We subsequently learnt that due to a language misunderstanding, controllers believed that flight might have already been hijacked. This resulted in Canadian and U.S. authorities ordering the United States Air Force to surround the Korean Airlines plane and force it to land in Whitehorse and to shoot it down if the pilots did not cooperate. In addition, the Governor of Alaska ordered the evacuation of large hotels and government buildings in Anchorage. Also in Alaska at nearby Valdez, the U.S. Coast Guard ordered all tankers filling up with oil to head out to sea.

Canadian officials evacuated all schools and large buildings in Whitehorse before the plane landed safely.

Needless to say, we complied immediately with the instructions by staying within the parameters directed, dumped the fuel and then we were radar vectored to Anchorage, approximately 100 kilometres North West of our holding position.

On landing at Anchorage, we were amazed at the scale of the ground operation. We were further directed on landing to keep the doors closed and the passengers seated until security personnel had entered the aircraft. We were to learn later that diversions to Anchorage were

**"Gander:
38 aircraft, 6,122
passengers and 473 crew
swamped the population of
that city of less than 12,000
people."**

Unforgettable 911 *continued*

minimal compared to those on the East Coast, particularly airports such as Gander: 38 aircraft, 6,122 passengers and 473 crew swamped the population of that city of less than 12,000 people. Many years earlier a regular transit stop for trans-Atlantic flights, by 2001 Gander had shrunk to become a small regional airport.

At the time we touched down in Anchorage, in addition to being directed not to open our doors let alone disembark our passengers, we had no idea of the duration of the grounding nor if or when we could unload baggage. It was obvious the authorities in Anchorage were also unaware of the plans. However, as time passed, the scale and nature of what we came to understand was a terrorist attack became apparent as did the enormous scope of the grounding.

Eventually accommodation was arranged for the crew and passengers and we were permitted to disembark, still with no idea of plans to resume the journey to Hong Kong. As a result, several of our passengers, particularly those who had originated in New York and other East Coast locations elected to abandon the flight and return home overland by whatever means they could.

We, as a crew, were checked into a hotel so we could rest and remain prepared to fly at short notice as soon as the grounding requirement was lifted. Accommodation for passengers was found ranging from international hotels to boarding houses – there was no Airbnb in those days!

After a stay of three days, we were issued with a clearance and departed for Hong Kong, 8,149 kilometres to the South West with a slightly reduced passenger load than when we arrived in Anchorage. During the course of that flight, the tension generated by the terrorist attacks was very evident. For example, security on departure was rigid, radio exchanges with ATC were far more explicit and frequent and the demeanour of the officials in Hong Kong was strict and far more detailed than usual. Nevertheless, we were all very relieved to finally reach our destination, albeit three days later than expected.

Now fast forward to 2016 when I retired from Cathay Pacific, resettled in Kiama not far from Oak Flats where I was brought up and joined HARS to maintain my interest in things 'aviation'. Although my Anchorage 2001 visit came to mind from time to time, it wasn't an event which constantly emerged from my memory. It certainly created an impression but as years passed, it was slowly becoming a distant memory – until 2019 when I heard about a musical which was opening at the Comedy Theatre in Melbourne. It wasn't the title, 'Come From Away,' which aroused my interest. Rather it was the subject matter – the story of how the town of Gander in Newfoundland dealt with the influx of visitors which literally descended in the wake of the grounding of air traffic in North America following the

attacks on the World Trade Centre. Having lived through a similar experience, I could certainly relate to the subject matter and thought I would enjoy the show.

Without delay, I bought tickets for my son, his partner and myself and booked accommodation for the three of us at the Citadines On Bourke in Melbourne. We speculated on the way down what to expect with me, having been through the experience, albeit in Anchorage, probably the best source of information.

On arrival at the hotel, we duly checked in, were given our room keys and associated documentation and took the lift up to our rooms. We were allocated adjacent rooms – not always a given! However, it wasn't until we compared our room numbers as we entered our respective rooms that we noticed:

"...those who had originated in New York and other East Coast locations elected to abandon the flight and return home overland by whatever means they could."

I had been allocated Room 911

This was purely a random allocation. Everyone was astounded – the three of us, the hotel staff and some of the actors in the show who I met later.

Thus my 911 experience stretched 18 years and of course will be at the forefront of my thoughts on 11 September this year – the 20th anniversary of that horrendous event.



HARS Attends the Volunteer Expo

Story: Terry Scanlan.
Photo: Ian Poulter.

ON May 20 2021, HARS volunteers, Ian Poulter, Lyn Toohey, Bill Colarich and John Croll attended the Volunteer Expo at the Wollongong Town Hall.

Our volunteers handed out brochures, discussed all aspect of volunteering at HARS and signed up around 16 potential volunteers to attend our June 'New Member Briefing Session'. These sessions are held on the first Saturday of every month.



Lyn Toohey and Bill Colarich manning the HARS stand.

An Unnerving Coincidence

Story & Photo:
Gary Squire.

ON March 8 2014, Malaysia Airlines Boeing 777-300 registered 9M-MRO disappeared somewhere in the Indian Ocean after departing Kuala Lumpur as flight MH370, bound for Beijing.

Over six months later, on 22 September 2014, no sign of the aircraft had yet been found, despite exhaustive investigations and an intense search. On that date, I departed Sydney for Christchurch on a holiday with my wife and two friends, aboard Emirates Boeing 777-300 A6-EBQ. My friend Mark is, like myself, very interested in aircraft and we both whiled away much of the flight in our seats just behind the starboard wing observing the control surfaces in operation. Mark asked me if a particular inboard panel was a flap and I said I thought it was an inboard aileron. When Mark said he had noted it operating with the flaps we agreed almost in unison, "flaperon", which made our wives titter; did such a word even exist?? We later confirmed we were correct, and promptly forgot the matter.

The coincidence came about some ten months later when we read the newspapers on 31 July 2015. The first part of missing MH370 was thought to have been located on a beach on Reunion Island, near Mauritius in the Indian Ocean. Although it would need to be confirmed by Malaysia and Boeing experts after close

examination, they believed the part to be the starboard flaperon.

It looked remarkably like the wing panel that had puzzled my friend and me during our trans-Tasman flight. The coincidence was not that we'd flown in a similar type of aircraft – lots of people have done that. But that our attention had been directed to that particular part.



AIRCRAFT PROFILE

Story: Mark Keech
Photos: Mark Keech

de Havilland DHC-4 Caribou A4-234



de Havilland DHC-4 Caribou

The de Havilland Canada DHC-4 Caribou is a Canadian-designed and produced specialized cargo aircraft with short takeoff and landing (STOL) capability. First flown in 1958 the Caribou expanded on the company's other rugged STOL aircraft - the DHC-2 Beaver and DHC-3 Otter. The Caribou was primarily a military tactical transport aircraft but also had a career with a small number of civilian operators, including Ansett-MAL who used one in New Guinea.

Australia's involvement with the Caribou began in the early 1960s when the Royal Australian Air Force chose it as a replacement for the Dakota. Many of the RAAF Caribous were delivered directly to Vietnam to support Australia's involvement in that conflict.



Technical Data

Manufacturer: de Havilland Canada
Role: Transport with STOL capability
Crew: 3
Length: 22.1 m
Wingspan: 29.2 m
Height: 9.7 m
Powerplant: 2 x Pratt & Whitney R-2000,
Twin Wasp radial engines,
1,450 horsepower each
Maximum takeoff weight: 12,927 kg

Performance

Maximum speed: 348km/h (188 kn)
Cruise speed: 296 km/h (160 kn)
Range: 2,300 km (1,242 NM)
Service ceiling: 24,800 feet
Take-off length: 221 m
Landing length: 200 m

Armament

The Caribou carries no defensive armament

The first RAAF Caribous arrived at Richmond in April 1964 but later that year, deliveries were diverted directly to Vietnam to form 35 Squadron which was affectionately known as 'Wallaby Airlines'. During service in Vietnam, the Caribou quickly demonstrated the air power capabilities and operational versatility that were to characterise the aircraft's service with the RAAF over the next 45 years. The design of the Caribou enabled the rapid loading and unloading of passengers and cargo from short, rough semi-prepared airfields that were inaccessible to most other aircraft.

After the withdrawal from Vietnam RAAF Caribou went on to serve in many international deployments operated by 35 and 38 Squadrons. RAAF Caribous were retired in 2009.

Caribou 234 was delivered to RAAF in August 1965 and, after five years service with 38 Squadron was deployed to Vietnam where it joined 35 Squadron and has the distinction of being the last RAAF aircraft to leave when Australia ceased its involvement in Vietnam. HARS Aviation Museum acquired Caribou 234 in 2011 and maintains it in airworthy condition along with Caribou 210.

The medals displayed on the nose of the aircraft represent each of the theatres where the Caribou served with distinction in its 45 year career.

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Bob De La Hunty
President and Chief Pilot
HARS

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- HARS Volunteer



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