



TAA / Australian Airlines 25 Year Club

Newsletter No. 101

May 2019

Editor: John Wren

President's Report

- The typo gremlins crept into the last Newsletter regarding the number of **B727-76's** we had in service. It was six [VH-TJA, B, C, D, E & F], not 4. Thanks to all the members who very kindly drew my attention to the typo.
- As reported in the last Newsletter, four members had been elected at the AGM [Terry Masocco, Paul Gluschenko, Dorothy Duan and Sam Favazza]. An existing Committeeman, **Jim Collins** [Treasurer], has since resigned from Committee [and as a Volunteer] due to medical reasons following a long operation. We all wish Jim well for the future and thank him for the many years of service to the 25 Year Club.
- Our biggest project for many years – the **refurbishment** of almost a quarter of the Museum is entering the final phase – thank goodness. We deliberately put off tours of the Museum [where we could] whilst the work was being undertaken so that we could show the Museum off at its best. We are nearly there with the changes and we are working in the Tours as best we can. There seems to be a Tour every day we are open for the next few months at least. Whilst that's good news it has put a lot of pressure on all the Volunteers. See article on progress below.
- One of the prizes at this year's **Foundation Day Lunch** [9 September] for a lucky member is a ride in one of the Qantas Simulators at the Flight Training Centre at Airport West. Yes, you will be able to have a fly! More to come on the Founders Day Lunch which is on the actual anniversary date of TAA's first scheduled revenue flight [DC-3 Hawdon] – so jot it in your diary now. Note there will be no Xmas function this year.
- A surprise visitor to the Museum recently was **Hugh Tansley** and his wife Linda – out to Australia for another visit, but this time to the TAA Museum to see Airbus A300 models – strange! Hugh was the Airbus Representative to TAA / Australian Airlines and spent most of his time here in Australia. After Hugh returned home [France I think] he sent an email saying “Thank you for your hospitality, and particularly for your patience when I wanted glass doors opened and items moved around, all for the sake of a "better" photograph. We both thoroughly enjoyed our time with you and it brought back all sorts of memories.” For the record – he hasn't changed a bit.
- We had a number of signs up at the entrance to the Museum to draw visitor's attention to our 'not for profit' status and hope that they would make a donation to the Museum. It seems that the spectacle of the Museum opening up before them drew them away from the **donation** advisories. Well, have we fixed that – thanks to some great work from Brain Cain [maker of the donations 'hangar'] and Rick Schembri [maker of the electronic sign]. See story below.
- Alan Whatman has been slaving away for months now tracking down the history and whereabouts of all TAA's aircraft. As you can imagine many of them have 'gone to god' through accidents, neglect, fire, crashes and parts 'robbers'. We are planning to put the finished product [including pictures] on our web site so you can look-up the aircraft of your choice.

Newsletter

This is our 101th Newsletter issued by the 25 Year Club. We hope you have been enjoying the content over the years and, if you would like to write an article, just send it to the Newsletter Editor at the Museum.

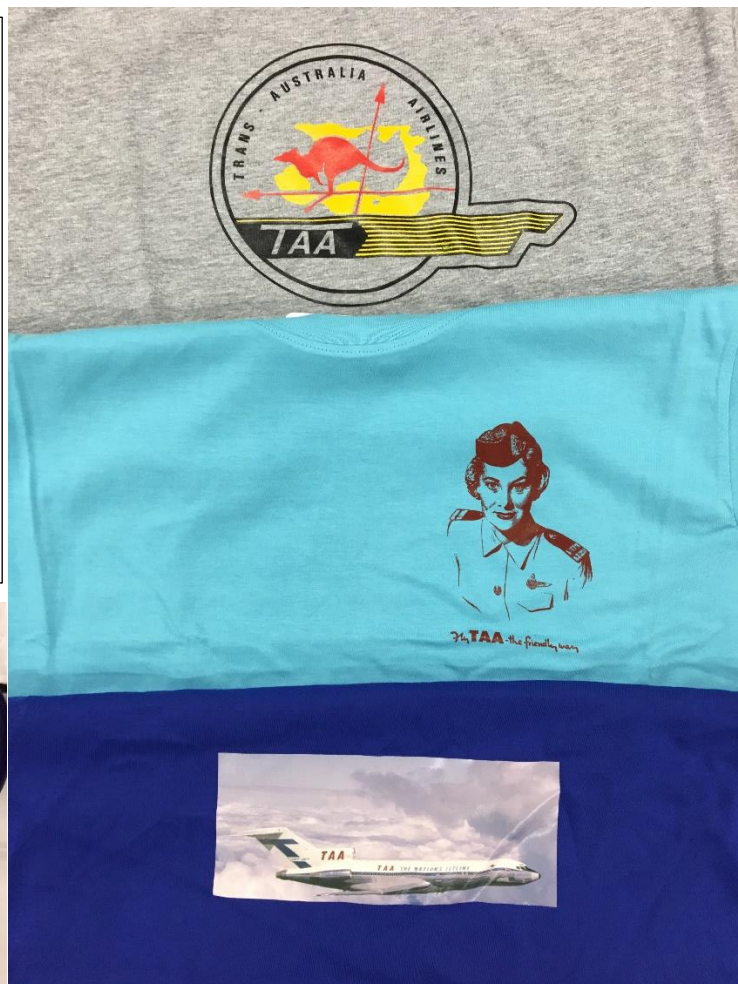
The envelope your Newsletter arrived in has your 25 Year Club financial status printed on it, so you will know if you need to help us with another donation now, or when in the future. The Newsletter will be emailed to members who request it in lieu of surface mail [saves on postage]. The email group will also be able to click on links to various movies, and establish their financial status from the covering email. Surface mail will always be available.

Sale items available at the Museum

We have had a very good response to our first effort with TAA items for sale at the Museum. So much so that we thought we had better repeat to details.

Mugs [below] are always popular and in demand so our version has the TAA and Australian Airlines logo on one side and a picture of VH-TJA, the first of our 100 series B727's, on final approach to Essendon Airport on 16 October 1964 at 2:45 pm. We are selling the mugs for \$10.

We also have good quality **T shirts** [folded at right] – grey [Men's sizes] aqua [Ladies] and blue [Kids sizes]. We are selling the T shirts for \$20 [Kids \$15] *Photos by John Wren*



It was recently reported that 500,000 rivets were used in a DC-3's construction and when laid end to end would cover a distance of 15,625 feet, or three miles!

Partial face lift for Museum

You will recall that during the Xmas & New Year's break a dedicated team of Volunteers led by Terry Masocco pulled down the floor to ceiling dividers that made the Museum dark and restrictive. We are still putting the finishing touches on the remodelling however you can see in the pics below where we are up to currently. All that's left now is sorting the items for display into the correct time-line. Job well done by Terry Masocco, Ian Wood, Brian Cain, Terry McNeil and Alma Barron. *Photo's by John Wren*



'Hawdon' in formation



Nice picture of 'Hawdon' in formation with another of HARS [Historical Aircraft Restoration Society] DC-3 aircraft at a recent 'fly-in'.

It's really great to see this aircraft [built in Nov 1942] having worked its way through the War and end up at TAA for our first scheduled revenue flight on 9 September 1946.

Photo by J. Sharples



Another picture of 'Hawdon' on the ground with its flying partner based at HARS. It will be interesting to see if the new coating that was applied to 'Hawdon's' fuselage after painstaking polishing will last the 10 years the manufacturer claimed it would. Worth a try given the amount of effort that is required to polish the whole exterior.

Photo by M. Keech

60 years [on 24 June] after the first Electra

An interesting article from the TAA Staff Magazine dated June 1971.

ELECTRAS RETIRE AFTER 96,000 HRS.

The Lockheed Electra has been retired from TAA's fleet. The final services for the airline were operated within about three hours of each other on April 30 by two Electras.

The distinction of operating the last flight went to the aircraft VH-TLB, which flew from Sydney to Brisbane on Flight 1922, arriving at 9.50 p.m. The aircraft was commanded by Captain Bruce Taber.

A few hours earlier Electra VH-TLA operated Flight 2890 from Sydney to Brisbane, arriving at 5.07 p.m. Pilot in charge was Captain Ken Humphries.

TAA took delivery of its first Electra prop-jet on June 24, 1959. This aircraft, VH-TLA, was named after the explorer John Eyre. It entered service on July 8. The other Electras were VH-TLB, the John Gilbert, and VH-TLC, the Charles Sturt. VH-TLB was delivered to TAA on July, 19, 1959, and VH-TLC on August 29, 1960.

During their careers with TAA these aircraft flew a total of 96,720 hours and made 76,363 landings. All three aircraft are now awaiting sale. Two are in Brisbane and one in Melbourne.

The Electra was the first heavy aircraft purchased by TAA under the terms of the Two Airline Policy requiring that the two major domestic carriers introduce aircraft of comparable capacity on the same day.

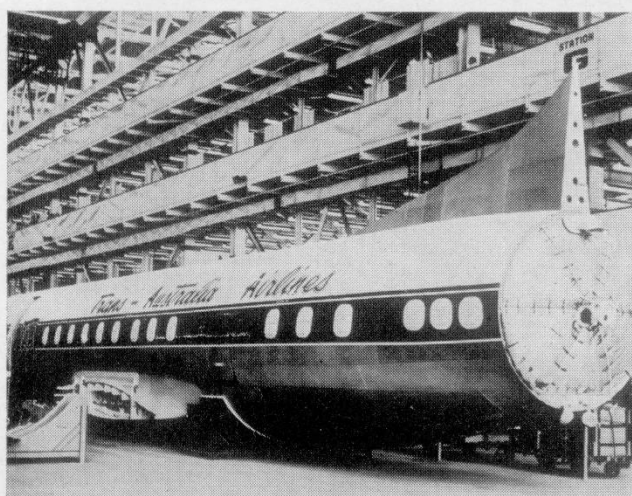
At the time of their introduction the Electras established a number of "firsts" in Australian airline history.

The Electra was the first aircraft operated by TAA with a maximum gross weight in excess of 100,000 lbs. (113,000 lbs.), the most costly at \$2.2 million an aeroplane, the fastest (cruising speed 405 m.p.h.), and it had the longest range (2,900 miles).

The retirement of the Electra means that TAA's fleet standardisation programme, Operation Streamline, is almost complete. Under this plan the airline sought to reduce the number of aircraft types in its fleet from 16 to four (Boeing 727, DC9, Friendship and Twin Otter). Only a few evergreen DC3s in Papua/New Guinea prevent the airline from claiming it has reached the final objective of Operation Streamline.



TAA's Electra VH-TLA on one of its early flights from Mascot Airport, Sydney. When it retired on April 30 the John Eyre had flown 34,063 hours over a period of 12 years.



The fuselage of the John Eyre in TAA's old colour scheme was assembled (above) at Lockheed's production plant in Burbank, California.



In a previous Newsletter we featured the Museum's new 'Donations hangar' built by Brian Cain. It was such a feature that people didn't even realise it had a slot in the top for donations. After talking with Rick Schembri a solution was proposed that made it impossible to miss the slot where donations could be given. The red 'donations' sign is packed with electronics to illuminate the sign and point to where the donation can be deposited. The little lights chase each other and then immediately restart. You'll just have to come to the Museum and see it!

We are very pleased with the result; donations are up and it looks really great. Well done Brian and Rick.

Photo by John Wren

Link Trainer



When the Volunteers recently visited the Qantas Simulator facility next to the Museum, we saw the **TAA Link Trainer** in the entrance foyer. We have often been asked "what happened to the 'Link'". Well now we know – it was right next door in the restricted area that we don't usually have access to. Naturally we snapped a pic for you, and **Barry Gawne** was kind enough to provide the following article. [*Foreground – control desk. Background – the Link Trainer complete with TAA paint scheme!*]

Photo by John Wren

The Link Trainer was invented by Edwin Link in the 1930s and continued to be built in modified versions into the 1950s. It was designed to teach pilots the basics of instrument flying without using an expensive aeroplane, and was widely used by the military and airlines in Western countries until the advent of modern simulators. New pilots in TAA had to do 20 or 30 hours in this 'devilish machine' before they were allowed to finish off their instrument rating in the aircraft type they had been allotted. The Link instructor sat at the adjacent control desk and communicated with the 'victim' through an intercom. An automatic 'crab' pen inscribed the progress of the 'flight' on a map display with a glass top. This enabled the instructor to fully debrief the 'victim' [student] afterwards. During the 1960s the TAA instructors were George Kohler, 'Stormy' Fairweather, and Dave Feather.

Info

We often get requests to include 'life stories' of members who have passed away. As you may imagine that would take up a considerable amount of space, and unfortunately in some issues, the whole Newsletter.

To address the matter we have included a section within our 25 Year Club web page for full 'life stories' at <http://www.taamuseum.org.au/TAA25YearClub/TaaLifeStories.html> and <http://www.taamuseum.org.au/TAA25YearClub/MembersVale.html>

QLD 25 Year Club outing at Goodwill Bridge



[L to R Jill Reynolds, Akarta and Peter Caldwell, Dave Walsh, Dave Reynolds, Kerry Huston, Julie Walsh, Scott Warton, and Carol Barnes]

Our friends at the South QLD Branch of the 25 Year Club recently had an outing with the meeting point on the Goodwill Bridge [above right]. The bridge links the Botanical Gardens and Government buildings on the City side with Southbank and the Maritime museum. Southbank was the site for Expo 88 and is now an excellent parkland. From all reports a good time was had by all.

Flight Attendant [Hostess] Training Centre – Airport West

We heard rumours that the entry way to the Flight Attendant [Hostess] Training Centre at Airport West [right next to the Museum] was about to get a face lift now that JetStar have settled in as the new occupants. If you have ever been to the Training Centre you would have noticed a very large display of photographs of TAA hostesses gracing the walls. Apparently, they want to put JetStar pictures up in their stead, so we did a deal to recover all the pics for the Museum. The pics below show the entry way as it is today. In amongst the pics are a few of Keith King [one below] who recently passed away after a long illness [see Vale below]



At left, Keith King also features on the wall of pictures [a number of times] – see Vale below.





How to start an airline really fast

After the name Trans – Australia Airlines was registered and the General Manager was appointed on 3 June 1946 there was a rapid build up of staff, and by the 14 September [just after our first scheduled revenue flight on the 9 September 1946] we numbered 541, including 63 pilots.

With a daily return service to Sydney, increasing to twice daily on 23 September the pace continued by increasing Melbourne - Sydney to four times daily and extending to Brisbane on 7 October. Further extensions before the end of the year included Adelaide, Perth, Hobart and Launceston.

The first of four DC-4 Skymasters arrived in October 1946 with the others not far behind.

Building work was actively proceeding in the fitting out and furnishing of city traffic terminals at Phillip House in Phillip St Sydney; Myers Building in Lonsdale St Melbourne and Terrica House in Adelaide St Brisbane. All was ready by October 1946 at which time TAA declared its services fully open to the public.

Electronic lead testing at the Museum

To remain compliant with Fed. legislation, the Museum has to have all electrical cables constantly recertified to ensure we don't have any 'shocks' due to the leads deteriorating or from unseen damage within the lead.

We asked Ron Hee to attend the official Course, and he was approved to do the task. After buying the test equipment we were ready to go.

Seen at right is Ron Hee testing one of the donated TVs with Sam Favazza producing the compliance record and test tag.

It will take just a little longer to get around the whole Museum. Well done Ron and Sam.



Vale

Our sincere condolences are extended to the families and friends of past TAA/Australian Airlines work colleagues. Fond memories will remain. [FM = Foundation Member]

Jan Forder	Flight Ops Admin MEL	Aged 77	12/04/19
Pat O'Rafferty	Supply MEL	Aged 89	13/04/19
Melva Denole (Murray)	Hostess BNE	Aged 74	29/03/19
Keith King	Hostess Training MEL & SYD	Aged 72	13/05/19



TAA/AUSTRALIAN AIRLINES 25 YEAR CLUB INC. MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

Name:Spouse's name:

Address:

City:State: Postcode:

Phone:

Mobile:Email:

TAA/Australian Airlines/QANTAS service: Start date: Finish date:

Primary area of work & where:

Preferences (Please circle) Newsletter: Mail / Email Other correspondence: Mail / Email

Additional comments:

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Donation: 1 year - \$20...3 years - \$60.....5 years - \$100.....Other amount \$.....Gift: \$.....

Cheque – payable to 'TAA 25 Year Club' mailed to:

Membership Co-ordinator, TAA 25 Year Club, Qantas FTC, 7 York St, Airport West, Vic. 3042

Bank transfer – to 'TAA 25 Year Club': C'wealth Bank BSB: 063 007 Account No.: 0090 1577

Please include your name on bank transfers and, return this form by mail **OR** send by email to:

taamuseum@bigpond.com . **For enquiries:** Phone: 03 9280 8113 / 03 9280 8114.