



TAA / Australian Airlines 25 Year Club

Newsletter No. 111

June 2022

Editor: John Wren

President's Report

- The Committee and I hope you and yours have so far made it through the COVID pandemic OK. It is chilling to hear that the lethality of the latest version of COVID in just the last three months is equal to everything since the start of the pandemic in March 2019 – we just hope we can keep the Museum open and our Volunteers will continue their good work at the Museum. It was distressing to hear from some members who thought we were being over cautious with closure of the Museum for a short while by the Committee over and above the State, Federal and landlord COVID requirements to protect our Volunteers. The Committee I believe, did the right thing by our Volunteers.
- It has been a while since the last Newsletter; made difficult to produce by our printer's closure, the COVID restrictions and closure of the Museum. We have managed to keep the day-to-day background operations going with membership, accounts, emails, mail and deliveries of donations. We should be back to normal with Newsletters now.
- We were finally able to reopen the Museum on 22 March [Volunteers only] and everybody turned up eager to get back to where we last finished off and further enhance the displays, sort all the new donations and put them on display, complete our almost finished time line and start work on the Avalon Air Show design and build to make a fantastic display.

Visitors and Tours are still not permitted by our landlord due to COVID rules and requirements. Hopefully we will be able to get Tours going soon as we have an enormous list of tour reservations once we get the all clear.

- In the last Newsletter we ran a story about **Dr. T. Brown**. Spencer Park [TAA Finance Mgr.] wrote in with; "It was great to read of Dr T C Brown in Newsletter No. 110. His paper mentions a crash landing in Libya which he survived with "only" a fracture of the spine. To complete the story, I understand that during this crash he used his own body to protect a patient, with great danger to himself, an action for which he received the DFC. TAA was very fortunate to have this fine gentleman as Medical Officer." [Ed. Sadly Dr. Brown passed away on 13/2/22 aged 97 after a fall fracturing a vertebrae.]
- Airbus delivered the **last and final A380** recently to [Emirates](#), marking the end of a 16 year production run of [252 superjumbo aircraft](#). The aircraft ([MSN 272](#)) departed Airbus' Hamburg facility bound for Dubai as the 123rd A380 in the Emirates fleet. The airline, by far the A380s best customer, has taken nearly 50 percent of the A380s delivered. The test flight before delivery flew a track looking like a giant heart above Germany.
- We have been invited to again participate in the **Avalon Air Show** [Feb / Mar 23] as an Exhibitor and planning has already commenced with a design being drawn up and selection of memorabilia that will be displayed.
- Don't forget, if you are down sizing or writing your Will, we are always looking for more TAA and Australian Airlines memorabilia. And when we finally re-open to Members and the public – see if you

can make some time to visit the Museum, you will be amazed at all the memorabilia we have, and now its beautifully displayed in a timeline starting in 1946 through to the merge with Qantas.

- We have sorted through our collection of staff magazines and in-flight magazines and will commence scanning them when our new scanner arrives. The Staff magazine in particular is a gold mine of information on what was going on within TAA complete with pictures. It will help our research efforts and other parties needing background information for their stories, articles and thesis.
- The venue for our **Anniversary Lunch** has advised that they are open again so we have booked Friday 9th September [TAA's actual 76th anniversary date of the first scheduled revenue flight]. There is a full-page flyer giving all the details attached. Hope to see you there.
- We were advised that the last revenue flying passenger Convair has made its final flight in New Zealand. The flight departed Auckland and landed in Wanaka to go on permanent display at the National Transport and Toy Museum. The particular aircraft first flew in 1957.
- Volunteer Barbara Kerr, with some help from Doug McKenzie, has nearly completed laying out all our epaulets, badges etc of our pilots, Hostess', LAME's and Load Controllers into a large display case built by Volunteer Ian Wood. We are still missing a few pieces and will gladly accept any donations to display or add to a future display. Next is a display of destination bag tags and all the supporting tags that were used, tickets and travel documents. The fun never ends.....

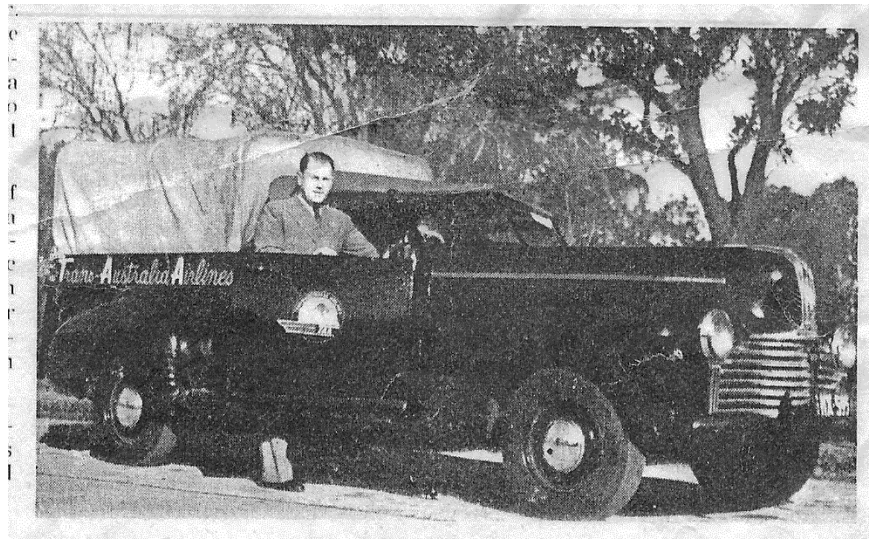
Newsletter

This is our 111th Newsletter issued by the 25 Year Club. We hope you have been enjoying the content over the years. If you would like to submit an article, just send it to the Newsletter Editor at the Museum. If you are currently receiving the Newsletter by mail and can receive it by email instead, please let us know to help drive down the cost of stamps [\$1.10 each].

Nice holiday

We came across an article in the Museum archives recently about a TAA driver, C. Harrup and his wife who, for their annual leave agreed to deliver a new Pontiac Utility from Melbourne all the way to Cairns. The trip was 2615 miles and used 172 gallons of fuel and 16 pints of oil. 12 days drive up and 12 hours flying back, with TAA of course!

The Gin Gin [QLD] locals noticed the Utility [with TAA on the side] during a stop and enquired if TAA was going to start flying to Gin Gin!



The Pontiac Utility sporting the Australian National Airlines Commission insignia on the driver's door and Trans-Australia Airlines down the side.

A Special Donation



Just a few weeks ago, Frank Sullivan [*at left in pic*] brought Libby Ralph to the Museum with boxes of photographs and memorabilia from the estate of past Member Peter Ralph.

Peter acted as company photographer occasionally and kept copies of his ‘treasures’ which he promised to the TAA Museum when he passed.

Terry Masocco [*at right in pic*] was at the Museum [still in lockdown] to accept the very generous donation.

We already had a number of Peters pictures on display – they are just so good having been taken with a large format camera – and most are in colour.

Now that we are back at the Museum, we will unpack the boxes and work out where we can display the pictures.

Former TAA aircraft



AVIACSA B727-276 Reg. XA-SLG [Mexico] operated the last B727 passenger service in Mexico on 6 March 07. The aircraft was of course former TAA VH-TBM “Albert Namatjira”. Photo by Aussie Airlines

Unique Memorabilia

Some unique memorabilia have been donated to the Museum by Mr Max Backous who, as a young boy flew on a TAA flight to Sydney in 1946 [9 weeks after TAA started]. Mr Backous contacted the Museum to offer his actual flight ticket, official flight log and a personal recollection, after discovering the items in his personal files at home. His memories of his flight highlight how different flying was during TAA's early years. Max told us:

"To celebrate his wedding in Sydney, my brother arranged a return flight from Melbourne for his family to attend. He wanted something special and thought that as few people flew at this time, it would be special treat for us

Saturday 15 November 1946, on a clear fresh and sunny morning, we travelled by coach from the city to the RAAF base at Laverton. A short time into the flight the Captain entered the cabin and greeted his passengers. As the youngest passenger, he asked how I was enjoying the flight and said he would come back with a souvenir for me. Later he returned and told me to keep watching, as soon we would be flying directly over Canberra. I was excited, but my mother was worried as to who was flying the plane. On approach to Sydney we flew into cloud and rain and I could see nothing out of my window. It became very bumpy, and my mother became quite distressed. Suddenly the bumpy ride stopped, the engine noise lowered and I realized that the nose of the aircraft was higher than the rear. We were on the ground and taxiing. Sadly, my mother refused to fly again and we had to return to Melbourne by Pioneer Coach. It was another 21 years before I flew again."

The TAA official flight log records the "Royal Mail Airliner" as the "Hume" (VH-AFA).

The items have been framed and are now on display in the Museum..



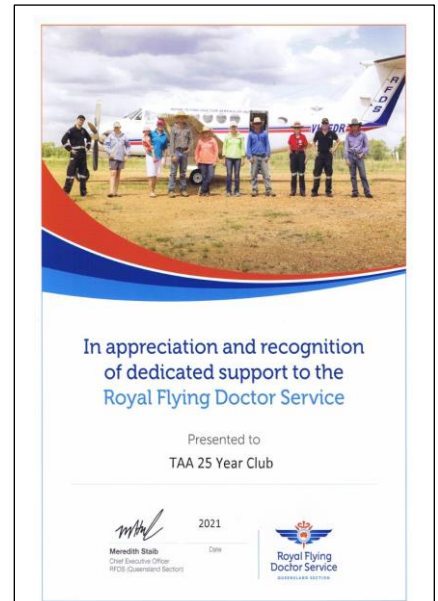
[Max Bockous [right] with Terry Masocco showing him how he framed the memorabilia for display in the Museum]

News from South Queensland 25 Year Club

The Queensland Branch of the 25 Year Club recently celebrated its 45 Anniversary and, feeling all nostalgic sent us the following:

“On Wednesday the 24th of November the South Queensland Chapter of the TAA / Australian Airlines 25 Year Club held its annual Members Luncheon at the Kedron Wavell Services Club. Members and Guests numbered forty-four in total to enjoy lunch and reminisce over old times.

Wednesday the 24th of November was a milestone day for the South Queensland Chapter of the TAA 25 Year Club as on this day 45 years ago they held their first meeting in the Department of Transport building at Brisbane Airport. The then TAA Maintenance Supervisor Jack Taylor had received a letter from the Victoria Club inviting him to form a Queensland Chapter.



In keeping with our support of the Queensland Royal Flying Doctor Service which, in the early days the aircraft were flown and maintained by TAA staff, we have made another donation and received a certificate for our contribution.

The Queensland Chapter would like to wish all readers a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.”

31st August, 1976.

Mr. J. Taylor
Maintenance Supervisor
Trans Australia Airlines
Brisbane Airport

Dear *Jack*

As you had on previous occasions enquired about the progress and activities of our TAA 25 Year Club, I thought that possibly you may be interested in forming a Queensland Chapter.

In addition to our Head Office and Victorian Club, of which we now have excess of 500 members, New South Wales and Western Australia have formed their own Chapter with a great deal of success and enthusiasm. The benefit of the 25 Year Club is that it provides an interest and means of contact to members whilst in their employment with TAA and most important of all, in their retirement. General Manager Lynn McKenzie is General President of the TAA 25 Year Club and he displays a personal interest in the progress of the club and all of the activities.

Should you be interested in forming a Chapter covering the Queensland region, it would be my pleasure to give you assistance and guidance. I am certain that the General Manager and Trevor Fenton would attend the inaugural meeting for election of Office Bearers. As in the case of Victoria and New South Wales, the meeting was followed by liquid refreshments by the good grace of the State Managers.

News from South Queensland 25 Year Club cont.

Don't you just love the mention in the letter to Jack Taylor of "liquid refreshments by the good grace of the State Manager". But hey, when the President of the 25 Year Club is the TAA General Manager, it's just so easy!

The South Queensland Branch was set up differently to the Victorian Branch in that all monies raised goes to the Royal Flying Doctor Service, hence the Certificate. Since 2002 they raised about \$7000. A tidy sum for a small organisation. Well done.

Info received from QF Staff Travel

"Helping you fly smarter

As a valued Qantas flyer, we're writing to let you know about key improvements we've made to help you fly smarter and safer when travelling on **Qantas staff travel bookings**.

As our domestic and international borders reopen, our airport staff are focussed on helping our customers return to the skies. As such, **all current and former employees plus their beneficiaries are expected to complete check-in online or via the Qantas app (download here)**. Not only will this assist our airport staff to be available to support those who need extra assistance, but it will also reduce congestion in our airports in line with our Fly Well program. For staff travellers with special needs, please refer to the Staff Travel Program Conditions.

To complete fast, easy and contactless check-in, please follow these 3 simple steps:

1. Open the Qantas app on your phone > Trips > Add Upcoming Trip
2. Enter your booking reference and last name > Add Trip
3. Select Check-in and follow the steps to complete the process.

Your digital boarding pass will then be available in the Qantas app for you to use at bag drop and for boarding. You can also monitor your onload and regrade status by refreshing your digital boarding pass, as well as make seat changes once your ticket is confirmed. Remember, online check-in opens 24 hours before your flight. If you check-in for your domestic flight earlier than two hours prior to departure, you'll be checked-in to standby. If you check-in within two hours of departure, you'll either be allocated a seat or checked-in to standby, depending on flight loads. If you're placed on standby when you check-in, there's no need to see the airport team for assistance.

Please ensure you share this information with your nominated travel beneficiaries so they too can take advantage of the digital check-in experience. A staff travel check-in guide is available in the Document Library on [Staff Travel Online](#).

Thank you and safe flying, Qantas People Services - Staff Travel *Qantas Airways Limited* "

TAA DC3 Reg. VH-AEO

Relatives of Member Brian Jackson sent a picture [thanks Brian] of one of our aircraft in a dilapidated state near Port Douglas Queensland. The signage next to it advised:

“In late 1942, this C-47 DL rolled off the production line of the Douglas Aircraft factory in Longbeach, California. It was destined for Australian shores as part of the USA 5th Air Force and it arrived in Brisbane in Jan 1943. As is usual with most US wartime aircraft it was given a name, “GERONIMO”. After service based in Mareeba and Brisbane in 1944, it was to become one of 12 other C-47’s to be handed over by the US Airforce to the Commonwealth Government. After a refit and overhaul it was registered VH-AEO and entered service with ANA in March 1945. It was to fly with ANA for 13 months until handed over to the newly formed Trans-Australia Airlines. This was TAA’s first registered aircraft and flew their inaugural flight between Melbourne and Adelaide in Dec 1946. As a passenger aircraft it was to last until 1956 when it was refitted for aerial survey work. In 1957 it was passed from TAA to East West Airlines. “Geronimo” ended its lengthy service with EWA in 1976 and it sat at Tamworth NSW waiting disposal. Late 1978, “Geronimo” was flown to Maitland, NSW for delivery to a DC3 operator called Trasmair. This was the last flight as Trasmair ceased operations in 1981.

An Australian film crew during 1983 repainted the aircraft in the war time olive drab. “Geronimo” had a sex change and was now called “Miss Fortune” and carrying a film producers telephone number on its tail. “Miss Fortune” was transported by semi-trailers to Cairns to take part in a film called “Sky Pirates”. In the film the pilot, John Hargraves, crashes on the Barrier Reef. After the [film] crash it was ferried back to Cairns Wharf and was placed in Tonkin Metal Industries scrapyard.

After stumbling onto “Geronimo”, now in 50 pieces, Heritage Homestead asked to buy a wing or the nose. Mr. Vic Tonkin kindly donated “Geronimo” to us to preserve it for posterity. No sooner said than done three semi-trailers and two cranes later “Geronimo” stands as a visual memorial to all those fortunate enough to visit Heritage Markets.” [Ed. With the Museum closed, none of the above ‘facts’ have been verified]



Foundation Day Luncheon

When: Friday 9th September 2022

Where: **William Angliss**

550 Little Lonsdale Street Melbourne

Time: 11.30 - 2.30

Cost: Member & Partner \$35
per person

Non-Members \$37 per person
(3 course meal included)

Drinks at Bar Prices

Note: Easy wheelchair access available



Bookings close: Tuesday 23rd August 2022

---Booking Form for group bookings or individuals

Individual Booking Name/s: Mobile Number:

Number of guests attending: For group bookings up to 10 per table, please supply attendees' names below:

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Phone Bookings: Phone TAA Museum on 9280 8113 on Tue or Thu, between 10am – 2pm

Cheques payable to 'TAA 25 Year Club' mailed to Qantas FTC, 7 York St, Airport West VIC 3042

Bank Transfers *: TAA 25 Year Club; BSB: 704 865 Account: 02190853 Reference: FDL and 'Your Surname'

* Please include your name on the transfer and return this form by post or email TAAmuseum@bigpond.com

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]

Peter McClintock	Marketing	Aged 79	12/04/22
Geoffrey Lushey			14/11/21
Warren Eggleshaw		Aged 99	28/08/21
Dr. T. Brown	Medical	Aged 97	13/02/22
Susan Clarke	Secretary – Cairns		xx/04/22
Capt. John Hyland	Flt. Ops.	Aged 86	26/03/22
Keith Holland	Reservations	Aged 92	01/04/22
Marilyn Hamilton	Hostess – BNE	Aged 78	xx/05/22
Laurie Lawrence	Tarmac Foreman – MEL	Aged 95	27/01/22
Frank Hallam	Airport Mgr. – MEL		04/06/22
Irene Caddle	Comms. Supvr. – ADL	Aged 78	16/06/22
Geoffrey Stephens	Flt. Deck Mgr. – ADL	Aged 87	16/02/22
Ezio D'alberto	Elec. Fitter – AMD – MEL		20/06/22

*** Note the **change** from Commonwealth Bank electronic transfer details to **Qudos Bank** details. ***



**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:
 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, and for **Bank transfer**: “Trans Australia Airlines Museum Acct” @ Qudos Bank [Indue Limited] BSB: 704 865 Account No.: 02190853
 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.