

Looking back. Moving into the year 2001 promises to again present challenges for the generation now charged with advancing aviation in Australia. I came across this photograph which, to me, at least, represented the end of the era of excitement and challenge in so much as aircraft were now more reliable, passenger comfort and service standards had become well established, and world aviation was now accepted by the travelling public as “routine”, and not like the early years of aviation.

This picture was taken on the flight deck of our first B737, on its first flight, replacing the B727-200, a cousin of the B727-100, the aircraft that introduced T-Jet travel to Australians in 1964. Computerisation is the catchphrase, with much of the cockpit activity now reliant on this technology. A recent trip “up front” courtesy of the flight crew demonstrated the changes made since my first “ride up front on the B727-100”, and the crew were only too pleased to elaborate on these changes, bringing my cockpit knowledge “up to date”.

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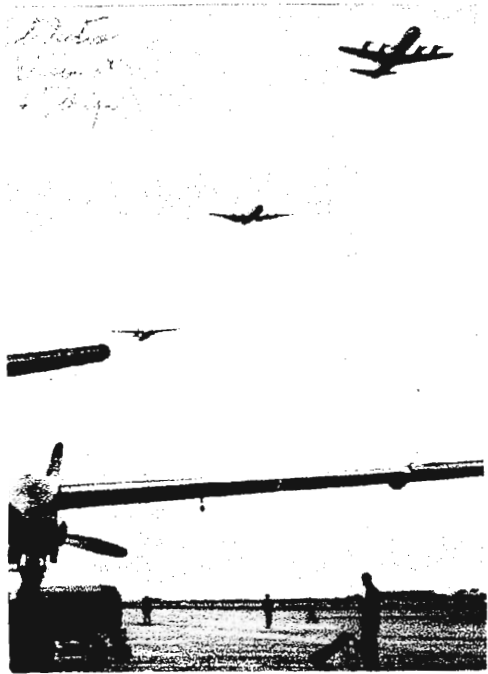
January 2001



Josie, after drawing the raffle with Libby. Frank Hawkins and Jim Meehan

THE MOTTO CONTINUES “TAA – The Friendly Way” was the heading of the article in the EPIC Centre News recently issued to inform families and sponsors of this centre, and I quote “TAA AUSTRALIAN Airlines 25 Year Club recently held a raffle raising \$5,700 for the EPIC Centre. This is a very special club with members who had worked with the airline for 25 years or more. They now have over 800 members, which is outstanding. They have also established a museum, situated at QANTAS HOUSE, 11th Floor, 50 Franklin St. Melbourne, which is worth a visit. It is open Wednesday and Thursday 10am to 3pm. The EPIC Centre sincerely thanks TAA AUSTRALIAN Airlines 25 Year Club for this wonderful support and also everyone who purchased tickets.

Your generosity made this the largest donation in the year 2000. Thank you everybody.

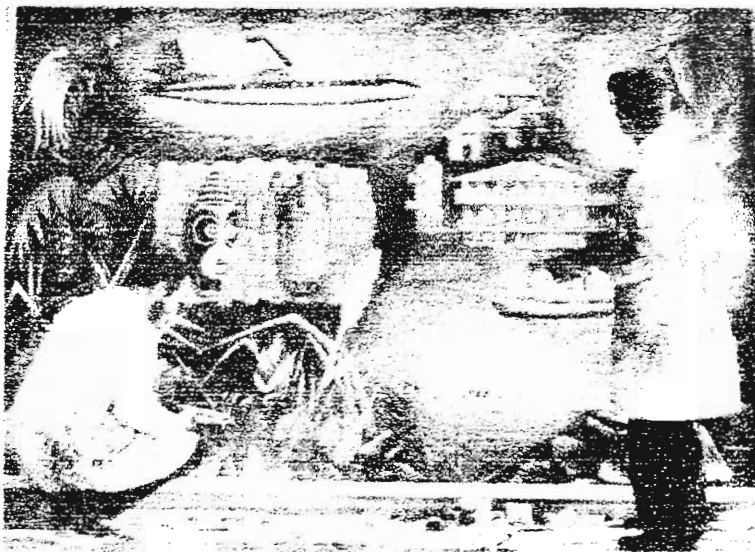


The pride of the 60's.

Amid the numerous photographs being sorted and grouped, Dorothy Tuff located this photograph of the "Pride of the Fleet", the Lockheed Electra, being followed by the Vickers Viscount 700, and the also newly introduced Fokker F27, aircraft introduced to replace the aging DC-6, DC-4 and DC3 fleet, bringing Australian Aviation into the "Turbo-prop" era.

The Electra was introduced to service the main trunk routes on the East Coast, and the long haul to Perth, the Viscount to satisfy the feeder services to the major capitals, and the F27 to replace the DC-3 on the smaller country and outback services.

Recently we lost John Watkins, the man attributed with many changes in the way TAA selected its aircraft, and in particular with his major contribution in the development of the Fokker F27, as many of the needs of TAA were incorporated in its development and based upon the information supplied by John Watkins. Considering this period, one must concede that TAA was seen to be an ever-changing image in the public arena.



Reading some of the old This Air Age magazines I came across an issue dated September 1961, in which was contained a touch of nostalgia that I had forgotten, a mural that was painted to celebrate the entry of TAA services into the Territory of Papua New Guinea.

In keeping with the artistic emotion of the times TAA commissioned two Dutch "Masters", Louis Koppers and Jan Van Fucht to depict the tropical and unchallenged atmosphere expected with a visit to TPNG. The mural was displayed on the main foyer wall at the Swanson St Office.

1961 also saw the 10,000,000th passenger being carried on TAA services. Mrs Val Blogg and husband (presumably 10,000,001) being recognised with this honour during the 15th anniversary celebrations since the commencement of TAA operations in September 1946.

Sydney Airport also received approval for an extension to the main runway, taking the landing area from 5,500 feet to 7,500 feet and a completion date of 4 years hence. Sydney was recognised as Australia's busiest (major) airport with 53,878 aircraft movements during the previous year, and it was the same year that approval was given for the purchase of land at Tullamarine for the development of a new airport and terminal facilities at Melbourne. The first official passenger flight into an out of Tullamarine would occur 10 years later with Alitalia taking the honours. My goodness, is it really 40 years ago all this commenced.

And believe it or not, we have commenced to collect items of interest relating to our competitor, ANA and then Ansett-ANA, and our collection is growing. Our inquiries to Ansett indicate that they do not have a facility like ours, and that they have discarded much of their history, so we have created a small section dedicated to this and other airlines memorabilia that comes our way. Waste not want not, for it all played a part in our history.

Update on staff travel.

QANTAS staff travel have issued a revised staff travel policy updating the STAR staff travel scheme that effects retirees, effective as from 1 January 2001.

Summary of the changes that will effect retirees are as follows –

1. Group A – Retiree, spouse\ travel companion and children under the age of 26 years now permits
- unlimited QEA trips per annum on domestic and international services.
2. Group B – retirees parents {and brothers and sisters if deemed eligible} and children over 26 years of age
- Unlimited QEB trips per annum on domestic and international services.
3. The inclusion of children 26 years of age and over in Group B benefits.

In light of the changes it is suggested that members re-assess the current benefits under which they retired, as international travel restrictions imposed on the TN scheme can be adjusted should the members now wish to incorporate an overseas travel component by joining the STAR scheme.

There is also the indication that changing to the STAR scheme will alter (increase) the priority onload of members who join this scheme.

E tickets – Change of ticketing procedure

QANTAS have also introduced “E” (electronic) ticketing for all domestic staff travel, and members should now be aware of the revised booking and ticketing procedures.

When making a domestic booking members must now either phone or fax details to –

PHONE 8336 5302

FAX 8336 5301

After which you will receive in the mail a booking advice that will include a booking reference number. You must record (or if returned by FAX) retain this number for presentation at the airport.

On arrival at the airport and subject to baggage weigh-in requirements you will either –

1. With baggage – present yourself at the baggage counter and quote or provide the document with the reference number – remember to have your ID card (or drivers licence) and you will be issued at boarding pass – seating at this point will be economy, and if a business class ticket has been purchased then you will need to present your (ecy) boarding pass in the departure lounge where the lounge staff will assess the situation and upgrade the seating if possible.
2. Without baggage – present yourself at the customer service centre again with your document, where you will again be issued with a economy seat, and again required to present this in the departure lounge for upgrading assessment.

Note Business class staff travel details are recorded at the time of booking and remain on your booking data within the computer for lounge or counter staff to see.

In all cases where a business class ticket has been purchased, and economy seating is all that has been available NO REFUND applies.

QANTAS have introduced a dress and conduct code that MUST be adhered to at all times.

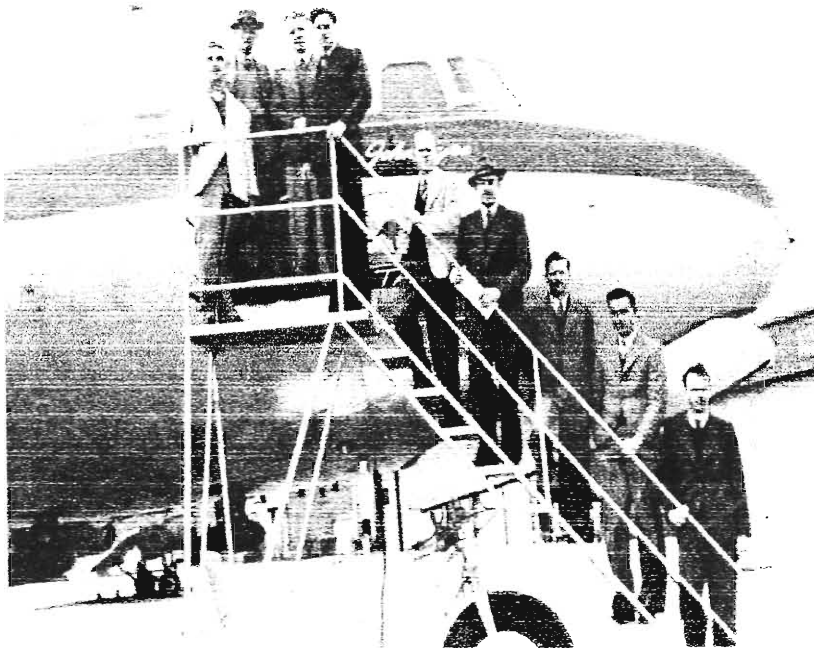
Although the QANTAS telephone system has changed with the closure of the Melbourne switchboard, the direct in-dial number, **8696 2692** will continue to be used, but if you contact the QANTAS switchboard (now Sydney) you will be connected to extn **62692**.

OLD FILMS

Recently Jeff Fry (ex TAA Flight Engineer) obtained for the Club a digital Video (Recorder) Camera, plus the computer software necessary to convert video taken by the camera, to a format that can be transferred to VHS video or CD-Readable Disk. Jeff is now experimenting with this equipment so that we can create permanent records of the 300 odd cans of 16mm and 35mm film we have managed to locate. A couple of interesting 16mm films located include one that recorded the delivery flight of our first Convair Aircraft, and a second film titled "This Air Age" Copy 1, recording many early aircraft used in Australia and the development of the TAA aircraft fleet up to the introduction of the first Boeing 727-100 (76) aircraft.

Another "Blast" from the Past.

As received from Captain Norm Crouch.



A CONTRIBUTION FROM THE PERSONAL MEMWARS of Captain Norm Crouch.

Norm sent us in this photograph of the original DC4 flight crew undergoing the 1st training course for conversion from the original DC 3 aircraft fleet.

The photograph was taken at the end of 1946, and a number of recognisable characters appear in this picture- Rt to Lt – the instructor (American) Harper, Clive Foreman, Mike Fitzgerald, John Groves, - Norm Crouch – Bill Waterton, Rus Kennard, Graham Lance, and Vern Polley

Thanks Norm, nice to hear from you

Skydoctor – The book by Dr. Len Dawson.

Members have responded to the offer by Dr. Dawson, for these books to be offered at a special club price (\$22.00 as against the RRP of \$33.00 plus postage) and I am pleased to report that sales have progressively increased.

In response to this, Dr. Dawson has again written to the club, about an individual who was also part of this history and one who had a significant influence during the years the Royal flying Doctor Service operated throughout Queensland. This is the era of the BEEF BARONS who were dominant in the region and whose life-style was somewhat different than today's experience. There were no made roads, no regular (once a week) road services, and the RFDS was an un-scheduled visitor to these isolated homesteads. Dr. Dawson included the obituary of Lilian Kidd, the last surviving member of the KIDD dynasty, and era when "men were men, and it took 3 weeks to ride the South boundary of these expansive properties"

Dr. Dawson included this, for he also recall the part played by the TAA pilots of the RFDS, and not in the official history prior to Windorah airstrip being completed, when the aircraft would land and taxi up to the homestead fence, where they would be greeted by the Kidd family and provided with food and refreshments,

before continuing their journey. An excellent picture is included in Dr. Dawson's book, along with many other photographs of "life in the outback".

I have appended a copy of the obituary (unabridged) as I thought it provided yet another insight into the life, loves and hardships of the legendary outback in a period that reflected at least in part the harshness of this great land.

Tasmanian Re-Union.

We have scheduled this re-union for Saturday 24th of February 2001, to be held at Montgomery's Hotel, Hobart, and special arrangements regarding accommodation and the evening dinner have been made at a discount rate. Accommodation - \$ 89.00 per double per night, and the evening dinner which will be 3 course with choices – choice of 3 entrees, choice of 3 main meals, choice of 2 deserts, will be \$25.00 per person.

Interested parties should respond NOT LATER THAN 9th OF FEBRUARY 2001, to

Frank Sullivan

40 Clarence Road

Wantirna 3152

Telephone 9801 1350

New aircraft models now in the museum.

As part of our museum development, some moths ago we embarked on a plan to obtain models of all the aircraft types as used by TAA over the years. Some models were available from various sources, but others had been lost (or not produced) when QANTAS assumed domestic operations.

Now included in our collections are –

DHC -3 Single engine Otter.- Painted in "Sunbird" colours.

Cessna 180,

Piper Aztec

Lockheed Loadstar

Hillers Helicopter.

Bell Helicopter

DH Dragon.

N24 Nomad – RFDS

Bristol Freighter

DHC 6 – Twin engine Otter - Stained wood

Grumman Mallard. - Painted in Coral Islander colours

DH Dove – Painted in RFDS colours.

We propose, in the new year, to re-organise our fleet display to shown the progression of aircraft over the years and the improvements introduced by TAA Australian.

In addition we have purchased a Dash 8 – painted in QANTAS Colours, and QANTAS have provided a model of a Boeing 747 -400 which will become the centre-piece for the QANTAS display in the museum.

Vale

Frank Fisher – Flight Crew Ops – 8th December 2000

Norman Read – Finance HO – November 2000.

Ivan East – Flight Crew- November 2000

Joke –

A fellow walked into a bar carrying a small canvas bag and a small square case and ordered a beer and a small Scotch whisky. He bent down to the carry bag, and gently lifted a little man who was only 18 inches tall up on to the bar, and then reached down opened the square box and extracted a small stool, placing this on the bar for the little man to sit on.

This intrigued the barman and others in the lounge, as both leisurely drank their drinks without conversing. This got the better of the barman, and the other patrons, who gradually edged their way closer to the duo, who by now were on their second drink.

The barman, totally intrigued whispered to the taller patron, “ Tell me, who’s your friend, and what’s he do for a living?”

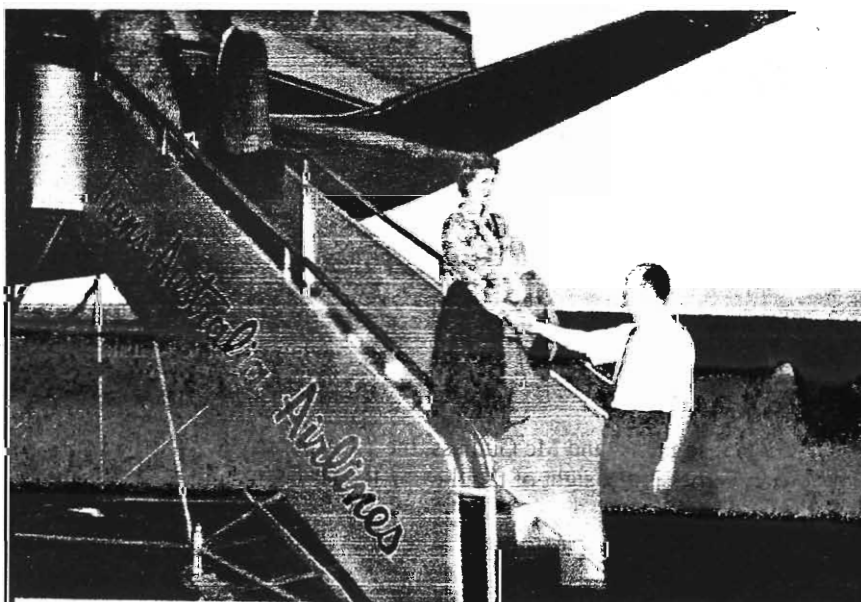
The man responded saying that his friend was a concert pianist, and that he could play anything classical, and without sheet music.

The barman, in disbelief, said “What about a demo?” to which the man replied, “It’ll cost you 2 extra beers and scotches”! so the barman poured the drinks and placed them on the bar.

The fellow reached down again to the case and produced a miniature grand piano, placing it delicately on the bar. The little man stood up and re-arranged the seat so that he was comfortable and asked for suggestions. “Bach’s piano concerto number 1” came the first request, and after consuming the 2 whisky’s, the little man began to play, and on completion the patrons in the bar applauded loudly. A second request was made, but before he would play he required that his glass again be filled, which was agreed, and again he played, and so the afternoon progressed until the barman lent forward and said” Tell me where did you get this magnificent fellow?

The reply came “Well, one evening I was walking home along the banks of the Yarra river when I heard a cry for help, and looking out to the middle of the river, I saw an old woman in difficulties, so I jumped in, dragged her to the bank, applied mouth to mouth and revived her and after getting her on to her feet she said that she was a witch. This I could not accept but because of my kindness she said she would grant me one wish, and she must have been deaf for I finished up with an 18-inch pianist.

Still looking back



Miss Margaret Martin, the one-millionth passenger to travel by TAA Viscount, is congratulated as she boards the aircraft for her flight. She was presented with a portable radio and a refund of her fare from Cairns to Melbourne.

Another flashback – This just goes to prove that air travel was gaining in popularity as this picture is of the one-millionth passenger who flew on our Viscount aircraft, the registration is VH-TVF and the paint scheme was the original delivery colour scheme.

I can remember the days at Essendon which now seem so primitive when compared to the luxury of today’s departure lounges; when you boarded passengers in all weather conditions, the high pitched “scream” of the engines, and the difficulty in placing and removing the passenger stairs. Things have improved.

Obituary – Lillian Florence Kidd. 1907 – 1998

Aged 90 years and 11 months. (2 weeks short of her 91st Birthday.

Lillian Florence Kidd – Bub - as we all knew her, was born in Jundah Hospital on the 13th September 1907, the fifth child and 4th daughter of James and Frances Kidd, the only one of 6 children to be born in a hospital. The 4 older siblings were born at “Old Galway”(station) while Tom, the youngest was born at “Mayfield” (station)

Prior to “Bub’s” birth the family had just moved to “mayfield” where Bub was to spend the next 74 years of her life. Previously her father was manager of the original “Galway” station, now known as “Currareva”, a station originally settled by the Dirracks. Her mother Frances – nee Hammond – was a third generation of pioneer settlers in the Channel Country, and family celebrations (birthdays and Christmas) were held at the original Hammond family property “TENHAM” and at “HAMMOND DOWNS”, where her mother grew up.

Bub’s early education was at the Windorah State School, riding in each day on horseback from “Mayfield” with her two older sisters Kitty and Meg and her brother Jim. There were periods when there was no teacher in Windorah, so a governess was employed. Two of the governesses married and lived in the district, Miss Mary Murphy married Sandy Doyle and resided at “Munro” station – later bought by the Hammond family of “Ingrella” (station). Mary Murphies place was taken by the lovely Mary Daly, who married Bub’s uncle George Hammond and resided at “Hammond Downs” Her mother may have thought it was easier to send Bub to boarding school rather than maintain a steady supply of governesses much to the disappointment of the local bachelors, so Bub attended the “Star of the sea” convent at Southport for a short time, then the remainder of her school years at Loudre Hill convent in Brisbane, where she excelled in music.

On completion of her education in 1926, Bub returned home to “Mayfield” now being run by her father with the help of her brother Jim, and has continued to be run by the Kidd kin to this day.

Having lived most of this century (20th), Bub saw changes that her pioneer forefathers never dreamed of – the invention of the motor car and the birth of aviation.

With the establishment of the Flying Doctor service at Charleville in 1943, “Mayfield” became the base for the Windorah district. Dr. Allan Vickers with pilot Len Mc Neil at the controls landed for the first time on the black soil plain (a stony strip of land) on the 13th of November 1943.

Knowing only too well from first hand knowledge the loss of family members owing to no medical assistance being available the Kidd family wholeheartedly supported this wonderful service. (In 1889 Bub’s grandfather, Ned Hammond died from injuries as a result of a fall from a horse, leaving a wife and four young children with another due to be born a few months later. Bud’s mother at seven, was the eldest. Bub’s older sister Isobel, died infancy, on 21st April 1906, and is buried on the sandhill near “Old Galway” homestead.

An “all weather” airstrip was constructed by Jim Kidd right in front of the “Mayfield” homestead.

In 1950, when Lake Eyre was filled for the first time in the history of the settlement, inland Queensland was isolated for months, and it was during this time that the all weather airstrip at “Mayfield” was referred to by TAA pilots as “the life blood of the West”. realising the plight of the family marooned on the stations with no medical supplies, fresh fruit or vegetables, not to mention “longed for mail”, Ron Anderson, the Senior TAA pilot based in Charleville phoned his head office in Melbourne from “Mayfield” giving a graphic description of the situation to which TAA responded with some urgency – thus was born TAA’s channel country service, and it was tradition that meals were provided free to TAA pilots and passengers at “Mayfield”, which was also established as an all important refuelling depot. On one occasion after departing “Mayfield” and heading West, the aircraft was engulfed in a blinding dust storm, that effect the compass reading, and visibility was almost nil. Fortunately one passenger who had boarded at “Mayfield” was an aboriginal stockman, and with his “Bush bred instincts” and “First hand knowledge of the locality”, he was able to guide the pilot safely to their destination.

While not receiving the accolades bestowed on Hudson Bush and Mc Guinness, the TAA pilots who established the channel country service in the early 1950’s were heroes in the sight of families on the far flung and isolated stations, whose only contact during prolonged floods was the old pedal transceiver, with the bases in Cloncurry and Charleville, and the food drops from the (mainly) TAA aircraft.

Aviation has come a long way in the last 50 years. Bub’s nephew Sandy has owned his own light aircraft, a Cessna 172 for 36 years, logging thousands of hours, while Bub’s grand nephew, James Kidd, conducts his own helicopter mustering business.

For many years the people of the Windorah district enjoyed a free movie evening held on the front lawn under the starlit sky. Such classics starring Greer Garson and Walter Pigeon, musicals with Jannette Mc Donnell and Nelson Eddie and the very popular John Wayne westerns were enjoyed. For some of the older residents this was their first experience with moving pictures and they were baffled by this modern technology. One craggy faced old stockman was so fascinated by the MGM (roaring) lion at the introduction of the film that he recoiled back with shock (thinking it was about to bounce) that he "took off" as fast as his legs could carry him. It took the youngest and fastest runner in the crowd to chase and catch him, and explain that it wasn't for real.

Bub's culinary talents were legendary. Huge crowds were entertained during "Race week" when the whole district and visitors gave their support to the RFD race meetings.

Over the years several Governors stayed at "Mayfield". Governor Nathan was the first governor to visit that part of the west in 1924 and had to be boated across the Cooper River, as the bridge wasn't constructed until 1949. Sir Leslie Wilson, Queensland longest serving governor visited in 1946, and Sir John and Lady Laverack, Queensland's first born governor, were guests at "Mayfield" in 1952, and Sir Henry and Lady May Abel Smith, the last English born governor visited several times.

One's fondest memories are associated with their local church and so it was with Bub. She was very proud of the fact that the local Windorah church, where she answered the Latin mass for a number of years, was opened free of debt in 1939.

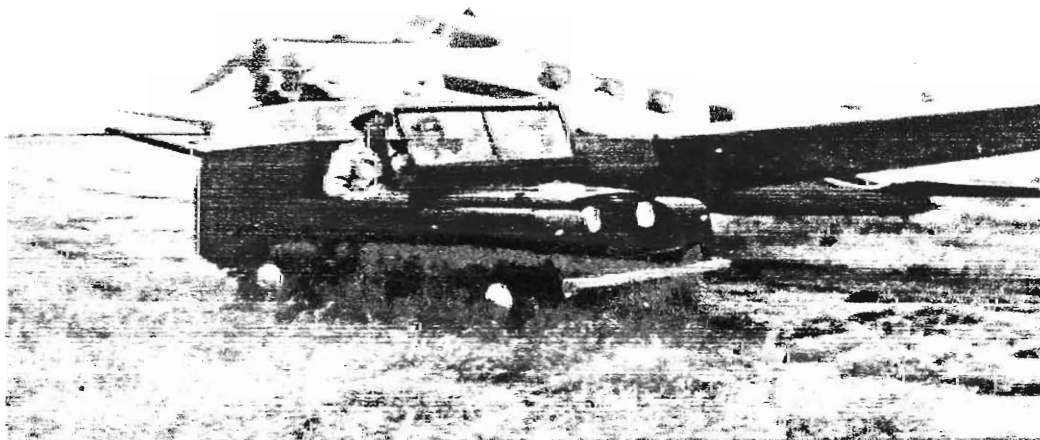
With the failing health of her two elder sisters, Kitty and Meg, Bub, with their cousin Francie Hammond, left "Mayfield" on 7th June 1984, to reside at Cleveland. Kitty died 18 months later and Meg two years from leaving their beloved "Mayfield". Sadly the following year on 7th of June 1985, fire destroyed most of the "Mayfield" homestead.

Bub was soaked in the love and traditions of the old western lifestyle into which she had been born, hence her wish to be buried in the district she loved so dearly.

Bub's funeral service was conducted by Fr. Jeff Scully, on 7th September under the shade of a magnificent bean tree at the "Ourdell" homestead, her eulogy was read by Brian Tully, (Tenham) and Margaret Anderson of St Joseph's Convent, Quilpie, read a special tribute to Bub. A memorial mass was held at the Star of the Sea church, Cleveland on 17th of September, the celebrant, Fr. J. Browne and the congregation was treated to the glorious soprano voice of soloist, Maree Hammond. Laurie Shaw (Hong Kong), Bub's grand nephew read her eulogy at her memorial mass.

End

(Foot note -- With a little imagination, and now still being able to talk with some of the TAA pilots who assisted in the RFDS, and the development of the Gulf and Channel country services, one can really comprehend just how difficult it was for these people, and the hardship that they endured prior to and in the early years of operation of the Royal flying doctor Service.)



CHORE John Flinn, as pilot in the early days of the RFD, as visited by Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh in the North Queensland District of Queensland, Australia, Royal Flying Doctor Service, 1952. Photo by John Flinn, as pilot in the early days of the RFD, as visited by Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh in the North Queensland District of Queensland, Australia, Royal Flying Doctor Service, 1952.