



TAA / Australian Airlines 25 Year Club

Newsletter No. 75

March 2013

Editor: John Wren

TAA / Australian Airlines 25 Year Club Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held on Wednesday 20th March at the Skyways Hotel and everyone attending enjoyed the meal which was subsidized by the 25 Year Club. As promised, the formal side of things were kept as short as possible, and no one was 'dobbed' for a job – so if you didn't join us this year, you can safely come next year!

A new Committee was elected for the next 12 months by financial members postal votes and votes on the day. Below is a pic of the new Committee of the TAA / Australian Airlines 25 Year Club:



L to R – Arnold Rogers (Secretary, John Wren (VP), Dorothy Duan, Ian Wood (Treasurer), Jim Meehan, Kevin Anderson, Jim Collins (President). Ron Adams (VP) (not in pic) was attending hospital.



Frank Sullivan retired at the AGM from the 25 Year Club Committee after holding the Treasurers position 'for ever' (well, 30 years has been mentioned). Frank, as most of the Members would be aware, was the Cashier at Franklin Street HO. Frank is looking forward to taking 'a back seat' but will still retain his interest in the 25 Year Club and the Museum.

Frank is pictured (*left*) at the AGM collecting Members donations for the AGM meal, which was subsidised by the 25 Year Club.

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STAARS (Simply TAA Retired Staff) Lunch – 19 February

A really great day – and the weather changed to a bearable 22C after a long string of hot days. It was great to catch up with old workmates and enjoy ‘the good old days’ at a fantastic (TAA / Australian) airline. Even the food was good. Just under 200 attended. If you haven’t been to a STAARS lunch at Moonee Valley Race Course before, give Kevin Anderson a call on 0419511179 for details.

The dates for the remaining **2013 STAARS functions** are **21 May, 20 August and 19 November**. Below are some pics from the 19 February STAARS meeting:



Vale - James Strong (1944 – 2013) - 25 Year Club Patron



James Strong passed away on 3rd March 2013 in Sydney of lung complications from surgery.

James became TAA General Manager in late 1985 (taking over from Frank Ball) and later (1993), went on to be CEO of Qantas. His near 5 decade of experience spanned multiple industries including aviation (TAA, Qantas), law (Coors), retail (Woolworths (Chairman), IAG, Rip Curl, Kathmandu) and insurance (QBE)

The TAA / Australian Airlines 25 Year Club Committee and Members extend their sympathy to his wife Jeanne-Claude and two sons Nick and Sam.

Flight Simulator

All of us (except pilots) have wondered what it would be like to fly an aircraft / simulator (or show the grand kids or friends) but the opportunity never arises. There is a huge demand from the public which is being met by private companys' setting up simulators for the public. Just down the road from our Museum JetFlightSimulatorMelbourne have started operating - with a TAA flavour. The simulator is the latest (B737-800) but the theme is definitely a bit earlier - TAA, with posters everywhere provided by your Museum. You can even buy TAA mementos (provided by your Museum)!



The simulator cockpit is set up just like the real thing but the very expensive motion part is replaced by four coordinated movie projectors – and yes, you can still get that queasy feeling if you move the yoke around too much. Without the expensive motion part – the price comes down to a very reasonable cost, and with 22,000 airports worldwide you can select for take-off and landing- it should be entertaining. Check out their website at www.jetflightsimulatormelbourne.com.au or call Dee or Brad on 1300 JETFLIGHT – they are at Shop 5, 386 – 387 Keilor Rd, Niddrie and tell them you are a TAA / Australian Airlines 25 Year Club Member.

Museum has TAA's sextant

Ever wonder why TAA used a sextant to navigate its brand new aircraft from Seattle USA to Melbourne (8800miles over water); the same 'technology' used by Capt James Cook back in 1770 on his trip to Australia? Well the Museum happens to have the very sextant used by TAA for all those trips (and returns when aircraft were sold) on display. And with help from an article by Ted Allen (Navigation Officer who did many of the trips) here is the story of the sextant.



By the markings on the sextant it started life with the US Air Force and was later acquired by TAA. But why use a sextant when inertial navigation systems or LORAN were available? Two reasons - Australia's well established airways, clearly defined by radio and navigation aids and the fact that TAA was a domestic airline. So TAA just didn't need all that expensive equipment.

As well as the sextant you need a clock, compass, star almanac, chart, logarithm tables to help with the sums and a ruler to keep things straight. Of course the aircraft needs to have a periscopic sextant mount (in the aircraft roof in the forward galley) to allow the sextant sight to be outside the aircraft and 'see' the stars. If its raining when the aircraft takes off the mount has to be exercised (pushing the sextant in and out of the aircraft mount numerous times) until out of moisture conditions as the rain water freezes the mount externally. (*Ed – on a ferry flight I was on we had to descend low enough to melt the ice on the mount and then resume cruise altitude*)

It's a busy time for the navigator getting ready for the 'star shoot' rushing between the chart and sextant – all being done against the clock as timing of the 'shot' is critical. (*Ed. – I did have a go at a star shoot at a quiet time – a real experience*). In latter years when returning our 'old' aircraft, a strap down inertial navigating system (a spare A300 INS) was installed on the floor in the aisle around row 4. This gave an added backup to the sextant but could not be used as the 'legal' navigation reference as it was not certified on the aircraft. (*Ed – the strap down INS started to be installed on ferry flights when on one occasion 400 miles off the US coast our 'star shoot' was not possible owing to atmospheric conditions so the navigators best estimate turned out very accurate*)

All the B727 and DC9 aircraft were made with a periscopic sextant mount and they were used for both delivery and return after sale. Now all aircraft have INS so the sextant was retired to the Museum – look for it next time you visit.

Avalon Airshow

The TAA / Australian Airlines 25 Year Club was invited to mount a display at the recent Avalon Airshow, where we won the prize for the Best GA / Airline Display . Thanks to the Museum volunteers who put the display together, packaged it all, transported it down to Avalon and laid it out into an 'award' winning



presentation. We had lots of visitors reminiscing about 'flying TAA the friendly way' and fond memories revived. Also visiting the Airshow was our first flight aircraft ("Hawdon") which is in the foreground of the picture (below right) along with two other DC3's.

The plaque and trophy are pictured left and below, centre.



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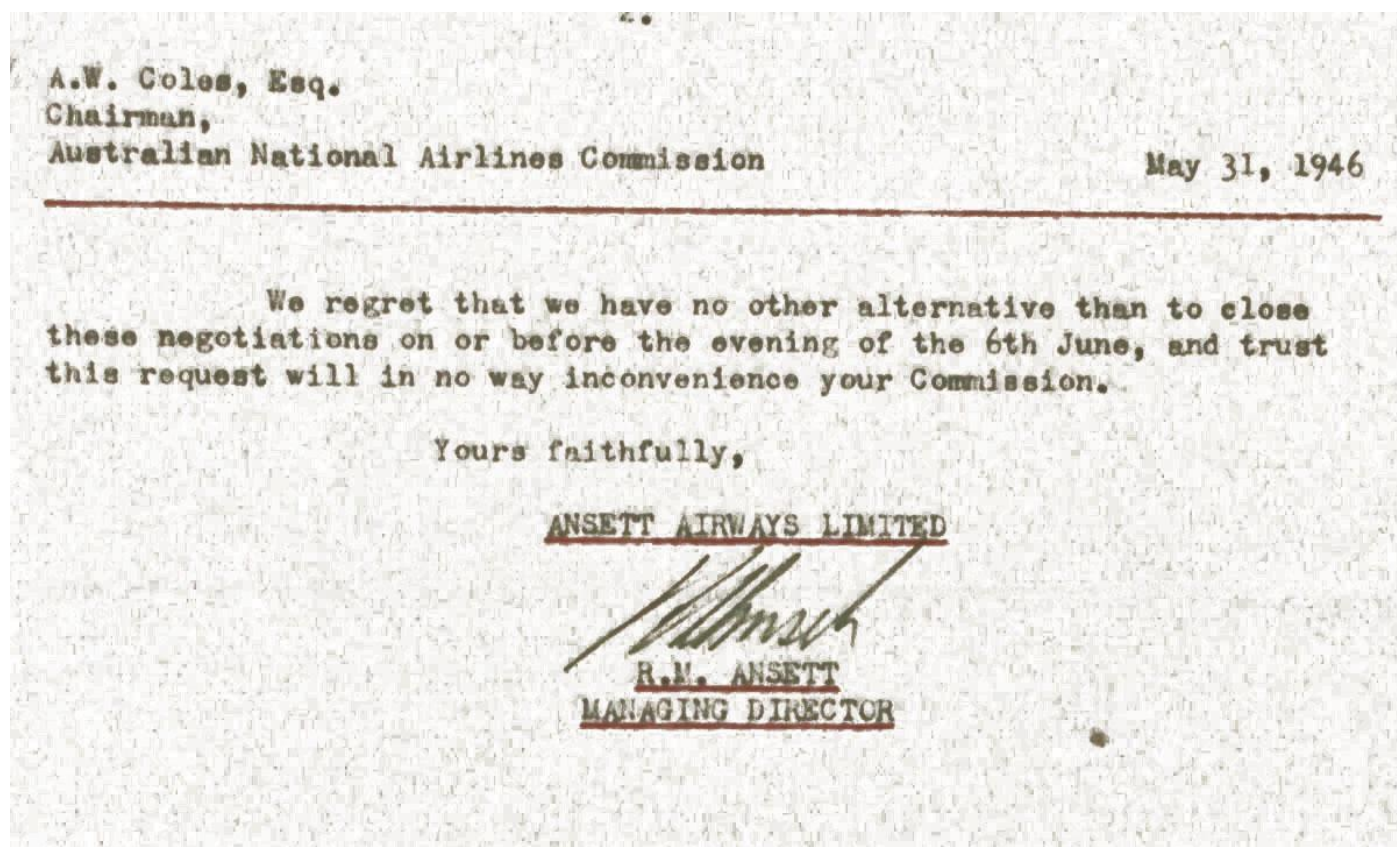
Our Newsletter is being printed with assistance from the Office of Bill Shorten MP. Many thanks.

What would have happened?

The Museum has on display a four page letter signed by R.M.Ansett dated 31/05/46 offering Ansett Airlines to the ANAC (Australian National Airlines Commission - which ran TAA) for Pds102,476.

The offer was for the whole airline, including 3 DC3's (Pds 25,818 the lot) that were being converted from military to civil configuration, 2 Lockheed 10 passenger aircraft (Pds 5,546 the lot), an Airspeed Envoy 6 passenger aircraft (no book value), a Porterfield 2 passenger aircraft (Pds 150), and Hangars at Essendon and Hamilton (Pds 7,248 & Pds 481).

The offer wasn't accepted by the ANAC, and the rest is history. Now there's something you can bring up at the dinner table one night, and the evidence is right there in the Museum!



Above – the 4th (signature) page of the Ansett offer to TAA signed by none other than R.M. Ansett.

Lend a hand at the Museum?

We are always looking for some additional help at the Museum even if it's only one day a month. Come along one day and 'suss' out the Museum, and talk to the guys – you will most likely run into someone you know from TAA.

And please don't throw out any TAA or Australian Airlines items – we are always happy to accept donations of ANYTHING that was a part of the airline.

New book released – “The Purple Stripe” a History of Flight Engineers in Australia

Brian Hill has been busy putting together a history of Flight Engineers in Australia with almost 900 pages detailing much of Australia's airline history and FEO aircraft types. It was available at the recent STAARS luncheon at a reduced introductory price. You can email for more information to feohill@netspace.net.au

New Staff Travel Numbers

VIC: Tel 8336 4747 **NSW:** Tel 02 9424 8747 **QLD:** Tel 07 3666 3747 **Fax:** 02 9490 1818

If you are on a QF internal phone, the new extension is 48747. All other staff travel numbers stay the same.

Vale

Stephen Gange (Engineering) 18/01/13 aged 51. He was on duty in Sydney participating in the regular morning maintenance phone hook-up meeting. Steve started with TAA as an apprentice Electroplater where following his apprenticeship, he obtained a position in Engineering; completing an Engineering Degree at night school. He held many positions throughout Engineering rising to Engineering Manager Melbourne.

Ron Brooking (Porter ADL 58 - 91) 06/01/1. Big supporter of the 25 Year Club who ran the raffles at the lunches/dinners etc. in Adelaide.

John Tilton (Public Relations Mgr MEL) 12/12

Peter Braybon (Eng. LAME) 15/03/13 Aged 79, ex apprentice, worked in New Guinea then BNE retired 09/06/98 after 48 years service.

John Mitchell (Chief Flt. Eng.) 15/01/13

Gerry Hayes 02/10/12 – Foundation Member.

George Hughes (Dock Maint. Supt. AMD Heavy Maint.) 30/01/13 Aged 68

James Hamilton ‘Gerry’ Gerrand 12/10/12

Kevin McGarry (Line Maint. Ess) 08/02/13

Geoff Cutcliffe (Travel) 20/12/12 – Joined TAA in Hobart 1961. In MEL in 69 as Travel Training Mgr. Left TAA in 1979.

Margaret O’Callaghan 06/03/13 - (Flt. Att.) based in MEL.

Bob Markcrow (Project Mgr.) 27/02/13

Capt. Don Graham Jordan 06/12