



TAA / Australian Airlines 25 Year Club

Newsletter No. 83

May 2015

Editor: John Wren

Annual General Meeting

Well, another AGM under our belt; plenty of projects reported going at our Museum, finances have increased a bit and our member numbers have increased slightly despite the tragic losses reported in the Newsletter Vales of so many of our members over the year. The AGM was all over in about an hour after which there was a subsidised [by the 25 Year Club] meal which everyone seemed to enjoy. We had a bar just near our tables, so a few 'lemonades' were consumed.

So there you have it – pretty painless, nobody got dobbed in for a job like in the old days [all sorted out before]; so next year you might consider coming along and enjoying a subsidised meal with your mates. The new Committee was elected [four people, with the other four up for election next year] and I'm confident 2015 will be even more successful as we move towards our 70th Anniversary in 2016. The Committee is pictured below:



Rear: John Wren – President, Kevin Anderson – Vice President, Dorothy Duan, Jim Collins – Treasurer
& Arnold Rogers – Secretary *Front:* Paul Gluschenko, Sam Favazza & Bert Lawes

Our 'first' DC3

Member Bob Gilliland (SYD) emailed to settle the question of which was the 'first TAA aircraft'.

"VH-AES (Hawdon) was actually the second aircraft TAA accepted on the 3rd July 1946 and was placed into service on 9th September 1946 to operate the first TAA commercial flight. The first aircraft accepted by TAA was VH-AEO, on the 18th June 1946 and was placed into service on 3rd July 1946, used to train flight crews in preparation for commercial flights. Ironically, the day VH-AEO was placed into service was the same day that VH-AES was accepted by the company.

The legend that VH-AES was the first aircraft in the fleet has grown from the fact that it took all the glory by being the aircraft to operate the first commercial flight whilst its poor cousin, VH-AEO was doing the hard yards in providing a flying platform for crew training at Point Cook."

President's Report

- ➔ Member Des Lyttle emailed the Museum recently wondering if we could **help him with film footage** of the big Ford new car launch that happened in the A300 Hangar. The new Ford appeared coming out of the cargo hold of an A300 to much fanfare. Our recent film cataloguing the project was put to the test, and sure enough, film 1763 (out of 2500) caught all the action. Another satisfied customer!
- ➔ **Essendon Grammar School** has a teaching semester called 'Aeronautical & Flight Principales, and they approached Qantas for a tour of their Flight Training Facility as part of the course. Qantas asked the 25 Year Club to host the 2 groups of 25 students and show them through the Museum. Prior to the visit, one of the teachers came to the Museum and asked us to help prepare a series of questions which the students were later requested to answer following the Museum visit. It all went well, with thank you's from the school and Qantas. As a further 'experiment' with youth tours, we will have a Scout Group visiting soon as part of the local heritage portion of their training.
- ➔ We have started **revising the 'time line'** of our Museum display. Nearly all the non-TAA / Australian Airlines items have been removed and preparations to insert new items have progressed. Hundreds of new items will now be added.
- ➔ Your Museum looks good even with the 'time line' being adjusted to fit more items in – have a look at <http://taamuseum/Documents/Films/Museum.Mp4>
- ➔ We welcome new Volunteer Ronny Reiss to the Museum.
- ➔ The **movie film identification project** (identify and digitise our old film stock) is roaring ahead with over 2500 films identified. Still a few to go. The letter to the National Film Library requesting support for the 25 Year Club and Qantas jointly will be sent shortly. The **slide digitisation project** (passed the 13,000 slides mark) continues.
- ➔ **If you can help** with scanning documents / slides (we'll show you how if needed), I would love to hear from you.

Newsletter

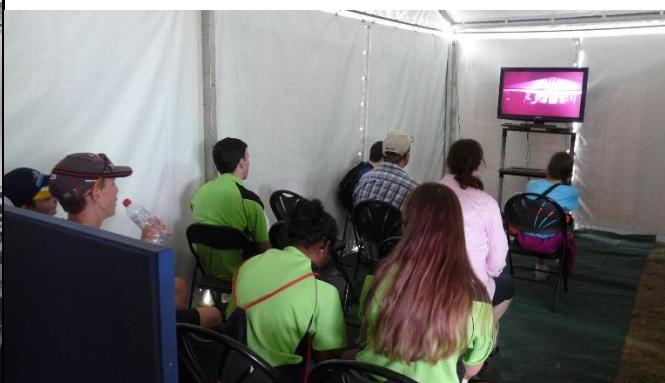
The Newsletter will be emailed to members who request it in lieu of surface mail. The email group will also be able to avail themselves of our movies that we have started making. Approximately 200 members have now requested delivery by email, and if this is your preference please let us know. Surface mail will always be available. Our Newsletter is being printed with the assistance of the Office of Bill Shorten MP. Many thanks are extended.

Avalon International Airshow 2015

The Club established an extensive display at the recent 2015 Avalon Airshow, held 24th February to 1st March. We had a large marquee of approx. 12x8 metres, filled with many displays from our museum. Our display attracted hundreds of visitors over the four open days; on the Sunday alone it is estimated more than 600 people visited. Information pamphlets about the Museum and TAA's history were handed out, these are certain to attract more visitors to the museum. In one section we had a theatrette playing DVDs of TAA history, which turned out to be a welcome rest area for many visitors. A truck and tandem trailer were hired to transport the gear to and from the Museum on the days either side of the open days; this was a huge effort.

Special thanks are extended to members Arnold Rogers, John Wren, Bert Lawes, Dale Anderson, Fred Manabat, Alan Whatman, Barry Gawne, Kelvin Hawthorn, Jim Collins, Jim More, Alain Ribas, Chris Barnett, Sam Favazza, Richard Schembri, David Wren and Evan Collins who volunteered their time to help pack and transport the gear to and from the airshow and also to 'man' the display during the show. Their support helped make our Airshow display the success it was.

Kevin Anderson - Airshow Coordinator



STAARS (Simply TAA Retired Staff) Lunch – 19 May 2015

Another goody, and despite the light rain, well attended. Great meal, good company and many friends from TAA / Australian Airlines. Will we see you at the next get together on 18 August? The next STAARS lunch will be the 20th Anniversary of the inaugural lunch organised by Lance Erwin following his retirement. Great things are planned - will we see you there on 18 August?



UPCOMING EVENTS

STAARS (Simply TAA Retired Staff) Lunch – 18 August & 17 November

The STAARS (Simply TAA Retired Staff) lunch is held on a quarterly basis from 11:15am–2:00pm at the Moonee Valley Legends Bistro, corner of Thomas & Wilson Streets, Moonee Valley, where approximately 200 people attend. If you haven't been to a STAARS lunch or want more information, give Kevin Anderson (0419 511 179) or Lance Erwin (03 9386 4056) a call for details.

Founders Day Dinner 2015

This year's Founders Day dinner [the 69th] will be held on 10 September with drinks starting at 6:30 at the William Angliss (Melways 1AB2) facility [entry from Lt. Lonsdale St. off Spencer St]. Applications will be in a later newsletter. Please keep the date free.

Christmas Lunch 2015

The Xmas lunch will be held on 12 November starting at 11:30 for drinks at the William Angliss (Melways 1AB2) facility [entry from Lt. Lonsdale St. off Spencer St]. Applications will be in a later newsletter. Please keep the date free.

Tours

Tour 1. The Airways Museum on Monday 15 June at 10:00 am.

We have been invited to a reciprocal visit of the Airways Museum at Essendon Airport following their members (32) visiting the TAA Museum recently.

A few of us went to the DCA Museum to follow-up on their visit, and had a look around. **You won't be disappointed with this tour** – it is really interesting and shows a great cross section of DCA's equipment and involvement in Australian aviation. Not to be missed. Cost is the donation of a gold coin. Make your own way to the Airways Museum located at the rear of Building 44. Enter *via* Edgar Johnston Lane. Melway Map Ref 16 C7.

Viscount VH-TVR

Further to the article from Peter Robinson we ran in the last Newsletter – we thought you may be interested in an alternative view of the acquisition of VH-TVR that we found in the TAA Staff Magazine.

“Bart Woodgate, Manager – Technical Services recalls the strange and rather dramatic circumstances surrounding the purchase of the ‘John Murray’ from Cuba’s Cubana Airlines in 1961. It was at the time when the Electra’s wings were being revamped. I came in one morning and there was a signal waiting for me to proceed to Havana immediately. Cubana wanted to sell an 818 series Viscount. In order to speed things up I was booked through our Burbank office to travel via Los Angeles, Miami and then Havana.

When I arrived in Miami 24 hours later I was told there was no way of getting into Cuba without a visa. Castro had been in power only two years and there was still a certain amount of anti American feeling at that time. As an Australian I was told I could get a visa if I went to Prague! Apparently the Czech’s were handling Cuba’s visas. The only other alternative was a ticket to Jamaica and tell the airline to have my bags ready for disembarkation at Havana. When I landed at Havana I met a local tourist official who got me through customs but without my luggage, which I had to see fly off to Jamaica. I then had a consultation with a lawyer in the airport restaurant who offered to help me out. I was booked into a hotel with only the clothes I was wearing and then suddenly realised my predicament. Here I was in a hostile country with an invalid passport and no visa trying to buy and aeroplane. Had I been questioned it would have appeared very suspicious.

The following morning my anxiety increased when I tried hard to convince the local barber that I wasn’t an American, while he shaved me with a cut-throat razor. Despite my precarious position I managed to locate Cubana headquarters after a 303 rifle had been pointed menacingly at my chest. The negotiations for the sale went smoothly and I very quickly made preparations to leave Havana that day. Back in Miami I went in search of my baggage. A ground hostess at the airport knew my name immediately and said that Mr. Woodgate and his lost baggage were known throughout the Caribbean. However, I had to wait 48 hours before my bags turned up. I was very glad, after five hair raising days, to be travelling first class back to Australia.

The story has an equally unusual ending. Back in Melbourne Bart received a terse letter from the American Army wanting to know why, on his return trip, he had travelled economy class when he was booked first class, and what had he done with the refund! To this day Bart has no idea how the American Army managed to get into the act.”

Vale

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

Brian Gelfe	Captain		23/02/15
Neville Grady FM	Captain	aged 90	18/04/15

TAA Boeing 727-276 Reg. VH-TBK

You may recall the article in the last Newsletter on the fate of some of our aircraft. That caused member Brian Price from WA, who was recently in Denmark, to advise that VH-TBK did not end up on a pole as originally intended, but rather permanently parked next to '727 Communications' main building from which a sealed walkway has been attached to the aircraft. It is the company's Board Room!

Intrigued with this, I wrote them a letter and received the following from Tom Elert, 727 Communications Strategic & Creative Director. He advised "Our Boeing B727-276 is now called "Lady Patricia" - the last name she carried when she was in operation in the UK in 2001. We bought the plane in South End, UK where the plane was grounded and parked. It was disassembled and trucked to Denmark where we had built an Airport Terminal like building which houses our communications agency - 727 Communication. Here Lady Patricia was re-assembled by British flight engineers and attached to our building with "gate 7". Since 2003 Lady Patricia has served us greatly and created a landmark in Denmark since it is placed on one of the busiest freeways in Denmark (E45). Our awareness rate grew dramatically after we launched the concept in November 2003 and created a good business case. Today 727 Communications employs about 60 creative people and marketing professionals."



The magnificent Board Room. Lounge [see pic at right] is beyond the partition.

Lounge. See at rear left the flight attendants' pull down seat and main entry door.



Sealed walkway between the main building and the Board Room, with door open. 'Aircraft' is named 'Lady Patricia'

Aircraft VH-TBK permanently connected to the building via a walkway and used as the company's Board Room.

Brisbane 25 Year Club BBQ at Caboolture Airfield – 27 May

The BBQ was at Caboolture Airfield, the home to many vintage aircraft. Among these is the ex Flying Doctor Drover that was flown and maintained by TAA staff some of whom are currently our members. We have even attracted members from Melbourne with Mike Conway and Ray Johnson attending.

This year the TAVAS group obtained a Bristol Fighter from the Peter Jackson collection in New Zealand and recently flew their Eindecker E3, one of only two accurate replicas flying in the world.



To the technical people, this aircraft does not have ailerons but achieves roll control by the method of twisting the wings like a bird does.

The engine is an exact copy of a WW1 Gnome rotary. This looks like a radial but the cylinders rotate with the propeller and there is no throttle. Engine speed is controlled by switching the engine on and off. Amazing ! considering that this was flight 100 years ago.

Membership renewal is due

Members, please note your membership renewal is due at the end of June. Your commitment is not taken for granted, but is very much appreciated. Your fees go toward the ever continuing task of the addition, maintenance and preservation of the memorabilia and history of Trans Australia Airlines/Australian Airlines.



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 one for each) 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 Building, 7 York St, Airport West, Vic. 3042

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

*Please ensure you include your name on bank transfers **AND** to confirm your bank transfer:

Return this form by mail **OR** Send an email to: taamuseum@bigpond.com

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

TAA/Australian Airlines 25 Year Club Inc ABN: 25 953 761 724

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