



# **TAA / Australian Airlines 25 Year Club**

## **Newsletter No. 88**

## **April 2016**

**Editor: John Wren**

### **President's Report**

- We had our AGM on 16 March at the Skyways hotel where the year's activities were reported; and we voted for the four new Committee members - all over in an hour; after which we adjourned to the restaurant for a lovely lunch – partly funded by the 25 Year Club. The AGM was uneventful and proceeded to plan. The new Committee members elected for two years are Ray Splatt, Arnold Rogers, Jim Collins & John Wren.



- We would like to reach out to all ex TAA and Australian Airlines staff and let them know about the Museum and our 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. If you know of an ex staff member who is not aware of the 25 Year Club / Museum, please send us their email address [or get them to] and we will send all the 2016 Newsletters free of obligation or cost to keep them informed.
- We have a new Volunteer helping at the Museum – Brian Cain. Welcome Brian.



Michael Densley [member] hosts a program on Vision Australia Radio called "Trains, Planes & Automobiles" [1179 AM in Melbourne – see <http://radio.visionaustralia.org/our-networks/melbourne> to determine the frequency near you in Australia]. We recently recorded an interview with member Ray Baker [ex Captain, A300 Flight Standards Manager] that will be broadcast on 25/05 at 2030. Ray talked with Michael about his time with TAA, and we got in a few plugs for the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations. The 2nd interview was with Dorothy Thomas [member and ex Hostess & Travair girl] - see picture left. Dorothy's broadcast will be on 22/6 at 2030. A big thanks to Michael, Ray and Dorothy. [More interviews to come]

→ At the 12/04/16 Committee Meeting all positions on the Committee were thrown open and the following were elected, President: John Wren, Vice President: Kevin Anderson, Secretary: Arnold Rogers, Treasurer: Jim Collins. Chris Barnett [Volunteer] was elected to the new position of Membership Secretary. Thank you all for your further dedication. Your Committee is pictured below:



and a previous [1984] Committee – note the ‘young’ bloke [2<sup>nd</sup> from right] who had just joined the Committee and did 30 years service to the club, as Treasurer, at his retirement recently. Can you name them:



Names l to r Frank Austin, Len Heard, Frank Ball, David Stock, Lloyd Haines, Frank Sullivan & Frank Carmody.

## Newsletter

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 short movies. Surface mail will always be available for those without email access.

## Dates - 2016

1. 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations 9 September
2. Xmas Lunch 10 Nov
3. STAARS - 17 May, 16 August & 15 November.

## ‘Hawdon’ DC-3, VH-AES

As you are probably aware, VH-AES operated the first flight by TAA from Laverton to Sydney on 9<sup>th</sup> September 1946. After many years it was ‘retired’ onto a pole out the front of the terminal at Tullamarine for 20 years before being restored to flight condition. The aircraft was later transferred into the hands of Hawdon Operations Ltd [a private company - not owned by TAA or QF] managed by ex TAA staff. Things changed, and ex Qantas staff replaced most of the ex TAA staff.

We heard rumours of funding problems, and then the aircraft stayed at Avalon after the last Airshow hangered by Lindsay Fox. The 25 Year Club has been trying to find out what is happening, without much success, and to see if there was anything the membership could do to prevent this marvellous flight-capable aircraft from changing hands – given the historical nature and meaning to the 25 Year Club, TAA and its ex-staff. The latest is the aircraft has just been moved to Tullamarine for .....

## Former TAA Convair 240 VH-TAS



Newsletter 87 ran an article about our Convair aircraft, and where they are now. Gordon Reed wrote in to tell us “On July 18 2010 I visited the Proud Bird Restaurant to see if the former VH-TAS had taken up residence there however it had not so I drove out to Camarillo, CA and it is now registered as N396CG and being disassembled after a long period of storage. I gained access to the ramp and spoke to the engineers working on the aircraft. They advised that it was being prepared for road transport to Kansas City Downtown Airport to join the Airline Museum that is based there however I have no knowledge of that happening.” *Ed – the plot thickens. Anyone going to Kansas City?*

## HARS Convair

We have heard some more on the HARS [Historical Aircraft Restoration Society] Convair – There has been a slight delay with the ferry flight from South Africa due to a special cable having to be replaced with one manufactured in the US. Looks like a late May delivery now. Progress has been made including painting the aircraft in TAA colours – doesn't she look grand. [picture below]



## Aircraft Models for the Museum

Thanks to a generous donation to the Museum by Fred Harris, who is downsizing to smaller accommodation after an accident, and a chance meeting with our John Booth we now have a complete set of the 'Sunbird' series of aircraft that flew in New Guinea. And what a marvellous job has been done painting them. In the first picture below, notice the military paint on the Bristol Freighter next to a TAA Bristol Freighter with the same registration. Apparently we purchased 6 Bristol Freighters from the Pakistan military, and to introduce them into service faster, one was temporarily left in its military colours for flight training whilst the others were painted.



Included with the above [page 3] aircraft were two other models, a DC-4, VH-TAC and a DC-9 VH-TJL [in coral islander colours]. TAA was the first airline in the world to paint a scene on the tail of an aircraft. Two ‘scenes’ were completed [the other was Ayers Rock] and the third [Tassy holiday] was ready when Ansett objected. So no more!



## Sydney Apprentice Reunion



John Muir sent in the following story: “The photo in your last Newsletter re the 1966 apprentice reunion caught my attention. My name is John Muir - I am on the right of the attached photo and next to me is Nev Walker then Nev Burton We are three of the original twelve first TAA apprentices (1950-1954) employed in Sydney. Left on the photo is Keith Brown, second apprentice intake (1952-1956). We have maintained contact since these memorable years. Of the original 12, we have lost contact with five, three (that we know of) have sadly passed away and four of us remain in contact. Of the second intake, five are still in contact, at least one deceased and no contact

with the others. Nev Walker remained with TAA/Qantas until he retired. I was an Electra F/E, 1960-1964 then went to Qantas. (I was on the same F/E course as Stan Mar, Vince Mee etc.) Of my lot, until retiring, two of us were Qantas F/E’s and two were maintenance. Just a little thumbnail from Sydney that may have got lost in history. Note - the first aircraft that most of us worked on were BCPA’s DC-6’s.” *Ed – thanks John, a most interesting article. For info BCPA [British Commonwealth Pacific Airlines] and TAA shared the same Chairman [Arthur Coles], Engineering Director [John Watkins] and a lot of other support from TAA for its 10 year life before being taken over by QF.*

## Tramcar Restaurant – 9 May

Members of the 25 Year Club braved the rain and wind on the 9<sup>th</sup> May to have lunch on the Melbourne Colonial Tramcar Restaurant. Many of the 24 attendees had been aboard before, but it’s believed this was a first for all of us to be there for lunch.

Although the wait was cold, blustery and wet, from the time we boarded the Tram, it was superb. Even the sun came to the party later. The décor was lovely, the table settings magnificent, and the company excellent.

We started moving as soon as we were all aboard, going first to Spencer Street where we changed lines, traveling through various areas of Melbourne, culminating at Acland Street, St Kilda where we turned around to do the reverse itinerary. Drinks started arriving as soon as we were seated and the two dips already on the table were very tasty. For entrée there was a choice of duck or salmon, mains were chicken or beef and we had a cheese platter to finish with. The food was exceptional and drinks were plentiful, both alcoholic and non-alcoholic. The staff were all very friendly. There was nothing about the two hours we spent on the Tram that could be faulted. Definitely recommend. [Ed. Article & pics by Kevin Anderson]



## “Keeper of the Keys”

New Volunteer Brian Cain was asked to undertake a project at the Museum sorting out our huge number of keys / locks, and adding to those numbers where necessary. New locking devices were created and specialized locks fitted to display cabinets. Now our key cupboard is organised and we can find the right key instantly! [Oh, and Brian’s partner, Lesley makes fabulous chocolate slices that all the Volunteers tuck into at lunch break] Thanks Brian, & Lesley.



## Catering display

Is there a retired catering staff member out there that could help us identify all the catering equipment we have and sort it into the years that it was used. We will shortly be revising the Museum layout and want to include a specific catering section. Just give us a call at the Museum [9280 8113] to arrange your visit.

## Victorian 'Wings Away' 'retired'.

The Hosties [Flight Attendants now] of the Victorian Branch of 'Wings Away' have had their last meeting this month. From the very early days of TAA retired Hosties could join Wings Away in their state and, apart from the social aspect, raised lots of money for charity. With declining numbers, it was decided to close the Victorian Branch.

However all is not lost. You may recall in the last Newsletter we had a visit to the Museum by the group and a few said they would help as Volunteers at the Museum. Looking forward to that. Meanwhile, below are a couple of pics taken at the [very] last meeting.



*L Pic, L to R – Clare Russell, Wendy Bartley & Marjory Carney. R Pic, Jan Wilkes & Helen Stanley*

## 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]

<b>Marjory Emily Briginshaw</b>	Comptomitrist HO	Aged 89	28/01/16
<b>Mike Cherriman</b>	Supply Material Mgmt.	Aged 67	07/02/16
<b>John [Jack] Sweeton [FM]</b>	Production Inspector PP	Aged 91	11/02/16
<b>Charlie Morgan</b>	LAME L.M. MEL	`Aged 76	26/08/15
<b>Richard [Dick] Stevens</b>	Senior Stock Analyst	Aged 95	24/02/16
<b>Brian Jackson</b>	FEO	Aged 81	29/02/16
<b>John [Jack] Grant</b>	Instructor AMD	Aged 97	21/03/16
<b>Colin Funch</b>	Training Officer		16/03/16
<b>Dorothy Lauchland</b>	Hostess	Aged 91	01/04/16
<b>Barry Rudkin</b>	Captain	Aged 74	25/03/16
<b>Robert [Roy} Fletcher</b>	LAME Coolangatta		
<b>Lionel George Potter</b>	Freight / Cargo	Aged 93	27/04/16
<b>John [Jack] Huggard</b>	Machine Shop Supv.	Aged 90	20/04/16
<b>James [Jim] Spence</b>	Personnel Mgr	Aged 90	26/03/16
<b>Margaret Coles</b>	Flt. Attendant Supv.		30/04/16

## 25 Year Club Membership available to everyone

Because most of our 25 Year Club members are very busy, we have made it possible for anyone with an interest in TAA / Australian Airlines to join to allow our club to keep functioning with new members and Volunteers to help at the Museum. So, now our club has three levels of membership:

1. **Full Member** – must have served 25 Years minimum with TAA / Australian Airlines  
OR must have served 15 years minimum with TAA / Australian Airlines plus 10 or more years with Qantas
2. **Associate Member** – must have served 15 years or more with TAA / Australian Airlines
3. **Friend of the Museum** – may have some airline service, or not, but must want to be involved in the preservation / display of TAA / Australian Airlines memorabilia.

**Full Members** and **Associate Members** have exactly the same entitlements, including attending Club AGM's and being able to vote and make nominations for Committee. **Friends of the Museum** may attend the Museum free of charge, attend organised functions and be eligible to be a Volunteer and receive the Newsletter.

So, if you know of anyone that has not joined the 25 Year Club because of some misunderstanding about eligibility, you now have all the info [and an application to join below] to resolve the issue for them.



### 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