

Happy New Year to All.

The new year continues to present challenges, including a rotten computer virus, that unfortunately caused havoc with our computer connected to the internet, so if anyone else received an e-mail from the museum we sincerely apologise for the inconvenience and frustration caused by some mindless fool somewhere in the world.

To all members who requested newsletters to be e-mailed, please be patient, we will only commence this when we are totally assured that this cannot happen again.

Thanks Frank - It now takes pride of place.

Just before Christmas the museum received what we consider to be the pearl in the history of TAA.

Many people will remember that much admired aircraft model of the Convair 240, you know the one that resided in the General Manager's Office. If you were lucky enough you may have seen it with the various flashing and indicating lights working you were indeed privileged. Thanks to Frank Ball this is now on display at the museum, taking pride of place near the entrance, and surrounded by many photographs of the people of that era. Frank was also kind enough to include a bit of written history of when it was received and how he came to "acquire" it.

The model was presented to Lester Brain on the 7th December 1947, the day the first of the Convair aircraft arrived and remained as part of the "office furniture" (with J.P. Ryland, Lyn McKenzie, and Frank Ball during their occupancy of the position) until he retired on the 26th November 1985.

The model was presented to Frank as not only a memento of the his years in the position of G.M. of the airline, but also as a reminder of his contribution that this aircraft and an incident that had occurred in those early years, that changed cockpit and flying procedures world-wide. This is a story that still has to be told and I am sure that one day we will be able to relate this in greater detail than we are able to at this time. I might also add that the model was re-configured to be a reminder of that particular set of circumstances.

The model, considering that it is over 50 years old, is in excellent condition reflective of the T.L.C. and the respect for a fine aircraft, and the lights continue to work, confirming the workmanship and expertise of the people of this period.

On behalf of all the members I would extend a very special "Thank You Frank", this is and will continue to be a very treasured item that can now be appreciated by all the members of the 25 year club and patrons of the museum.

Tramboat Tour -

This outing has proved to be very popular, and unfortunately the limited seating capacity caused some members to miss out, for which we sincerely apologise. Again, on outings where seating is restricted by the capacity of the venue we have to accept the replies which are received first. Should a second trip be programmed at a later date, then consideration may be given to members who applied for the first trip who were unable to be accommodated.

New Display Cabinets Thanks to Don Owen the museum has recently purchased two glass display cabinets from Lauriston Collection in North Essendon, which will allow us to better display and protect some of our "smaller treasures". These are now located at the museum, and Avis, Dorothy and Lois have been allocated the task of selecting suitable items for display.

Again by popular demand .

The Club has arranged for the second outing this year to be –

Ballarat Begonia Festival and Winery Tour

Date Sunday 21st of April 2002.

Cost per member / Partner \$ 25.00 per person.
Non members and guest \$ 35.00 per person

Again seats are limited – so plan and book early if you wish to attend..

Closing date – Monday 8th of April 2002.

Tour includes –

- * Morning tea – Ballarat Bowling Club
- Visit to botanical gardens including Robert Clarke Conservatory
- Winery visit on way home
- All entry fees to locations
- Lunch at the Ballarat Bowling Club.

Pick-up points Therry Street - 8.30 AM - Parking available on roof - return 5.15PM Approx.
Moonee Ponds - 8.45 AM – (outside KFC) - return 5.30PM Approx.
Airport West - 8.55AM - (Hotel car park) - return 5.45PM Approx.

All queries to Ross Mcdonald - 9338 2518

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Please return to Ross Mcdonald - Events Co-ordinator
TAA 25 Year Club
11th Floor
50 Franklin Street,
Melbourne 3000

Please return by Monday 8th of April 2002.

Members Name Partner.....

Guests \ NON member\s Name \s

Total No. in party

Enclosed is my cheque \ money order to the value of \$.....

Pick-up Points – please indicate where you will be joining the group

Therry Street Moonee Ponds Airport West

Annual General meeting –

This year the AGM will be held on the 19th of March 2002, at 6.00 PM, at 50 Franklin Street.. The refurbishment of the canteen area has caused this gathering to be relocated to the Museum on the 11th floor, and our new configuration will permit this meeting to be held in familiar surroundings.

It is hoped that our usual array of refreshments will be available, however the hot food will have to be confined to items that require the minimum of attention due to the loss of the canteen ovens and hot water facilities. WE WILL HAVE LIMITED SEATING AVAILABLE IN THE MUSEUM.

It would be greatly appreciated if you, as a financial member, do intend attending this evening that you phone the museum on 86962692 and leave a message on the answering machine. This will assist us with organising the appropriate catering and reduce the overall cost and handling with this revised venue.

Joke –

Cardinal Joe had spent his life dedicated to serving the community, and for 55 years he had made sure that his “flock” was well attended. Eric “fibber” Felten, had originally begun his career as a train driver, union delegate, rising through the ranks to serve his last 10 years before retiring as a Politician. Both died on the same day and found themselves in a queue at the pearly gates, waiting in line to be admitted.

Cardinal Joe, the ever friendly fellow, struck up a conversation with “fibber” and the men exchanged life’s experiences until it was their time to be received.

God looked at the cardinal Joe and said – “go to the left – and you will be admitted, follow that angel”.

God looked at “fibber.” and said – “Go to the right, follow that angel and you will be admitted.

Cardinal Joe was led to his place in heaven, - a small 10 x 10 room with a bunk, window, small en-suite, and small lounge\kitchen. Cardinal Joe thought “ Sparse, but comfortable”

“Fibber” was led to a large palatial residence overlooking the lake, with a balcony with chairs and a table, whilst his accommodation consisted of a large bedroom, separate kitchen, huge lounge, a bathroom with sauna, and coloured television in most rooms.

After settling in both men proceeded to the community areas, and on meeting again each conferred about their accommodation, ultimately returning to each others areas to view the arrangements.

Cardinal Joe was somewhat “miffed” as to why he had received the “rough end of the stick”, so to speak, and decided to raise this matter when granted an audience with his Lord.

The opportunity soon arose and after the necessary niceties, Cardinal Joe said “ Lord – Why is it that after 55 years of service to the church, I am located in such austere accommodation when Mr. Felten, who only spent 10 years serving the people he represented, has been provided with such a palatial abode.

The lord looked at Cardinal Joe and said – “In heaven and where you are, there are many honourable Popes and Cardinals. Eric on the other hand is the first of his kind to make it here.

Cathcart ! – Never heard of it.

Most city bred Australians would be scratching their head if they were asked to pinpoint the location of Cathcart, but surprisingly enough, TAA had a very close association with one of its “famous sons” a man who was the son of a local farmer, later to rise through the ranks of the RAAF and later become the Chairman of TAA, - his name was Fredrick Scherger (later to become Sir Fredrick), and a man who was “recruited” for TAA.

And where is Cathcart? – Well its about 8 kilometres West from Ararat.

Sir Fredrick was indeed a very colourful character, chosen to test fly the first Wirraway in March of 1939, when he was a flight lieutenant, and by 1940 some 200 Wirraway aircraft were ready for action. Rising to the rank of Group captain, Fredrick Scherger commanded N0.10 Rapid Response Group, consisting of 6 squadrons, ready to meet any challenge, and indeed this period of his life was extremely intense.

In 1965 Sir Fredrick was knighted in recognition of his outstanding contribution to wartime aviation in defence of his country, and was also to become the first RAAF Officer to hold the rank of Air-Chief Marshall.

Its funny how little things jog one's memory, and in my case, Sir Fredrick was indeed a man to be admired, not only for his achievements, as he often refused the attention extended to senior management, and would "wander" up to the check-in counter with the ordinary passengers, and if the queue permitted, he would often take the time to talk with the counter staff about various aspects of the "job", occasionally football, but mostly about TAA.

The museum has a shield in recognition of the cadet pilots who achieved Dux of the class and who joined under this scheme, and the shield is a reminder of his term with TAA.



This picture was extracted from the staff magazine *This Air Age* dated July 1971, and shows the other well known and familiar faces of John Watkins (seated) with Sir Frederick, John Chapman, and John .P. Ryland.

The occasion was the retirement of John Watkins and John Chapman, and at a function held at Head Office on Tuesday 20th July 1971.

Each of these men made significant contribution to the success of TAA, John Watkins with his engineering expertise, whilst the others all had colourful flying and leadership qualities.

50 Years of Service –

John Beaton and Barry Twigg were farewelled at a function held at Melrose Receptions on the 4th of February and I am pleased to report that the evening was indeed a very memorable one.

Their years of service were an indication of their years of friendship with the many who attended this functions, and by the wide and diverse nature of professions, from Pilots, Aircraft Engineers and associated areas, Personnel, Management, Supply and Support services, Catering and Traffic, Operations and just too many to list.

It was a great opportunity to again renew and recall that part of their working lives, that allowed all in attendance to reflect on both their achievements and the achievements of the airline that set the standard for domestic air travel that has still to be achieved by the existing operators – TAA The Friendly Way – and this evening proved it.

Rebirth of Australian Airlines

It's marvellous how the good things in life manage to resurrect themselves, and in our case it is the "son" (meaning a younger version) of Australian Airlines alias TAA, that now appears to be re-entering this cycle.

Firstly the name. How could one not associate this with the past?, and although the livery has changed and adapted to be in keeping with the times, the Kangaroo has returned in a recognisable and visually acceptable form, sprinkled with a touch of historical indigenous art, showing the compassion that was evident when the original airline was formed and as it evolved over the years.

TAA was originally a one class airline, servicing limited routes, but presented with the challenge, it responded with innovation and a degree of professionalism that would take it to the leadership position in this country, and a position it maintained through "thick" and "thin".

I am sure that this will again be the case, and wish Denis Adams and the members of this group, all our best, but request that in creating this airline that they continue to take the steps necessary in saving their history for the benefit of future generations.



Seen here and extracted from the QANTAS NEWS magazine is Denis Adams with the proposed livery painted on a B767 model. In the background – the Kangaroo – and since this is black and white in the newsletter, the lower half of the aircraft is white – the upper section is painted ochre – reflective of the “RED CENTRE” – and I am sure that the reborn AUSTRALIAN AIRLINES will continue the fine customer service established by its predecessor.

Denis (many will remember him as that young “trainee” in TAA) has been charged with establishing and operating this wholly owned but independently operated QANTAS subsidiary, with future plans to operate to nationally as well as internationally. Good luck Denis

Victorian railways Newsletter dated September 1968.

Could not resist this one – Whilst glancing through the mail I came across this newsletter sent by Kevin Anderson, and titled “Rail Users Say”

And I quote –

“Trans-Australia Airlines is most appreciative of your efforts in locating a small package of aircraft parts dispatched from Sydney on Saturday 13th of July, by passenger train, which arrived at Spencer Street at 10.30am on Sunday 14th.

As Mr. Bakes informed you, the parts were urgently required at Essendon Airport, and your curtesy and attention to this matter were appreciated very much indeed.” Unquote Signed F.R. Jennings Supply Manager – writing to Mr. W. Creighton, Stationmaster, Spencer Street.

One can only assume that “someone” in Sydney thought that the “Southern Aurora” was quicker than “James Cook” VH-TJA. Obviously a train buff. Thanks Kevin.

Having a Birthday ? Milestones are significant and as we all get a little older, if you know of a member who is about to reach a milestone then please let us know.

One that springs to mind is RICHARD HALL, who many will remember worked tirelessly on the establishment of TAARSAN – TAA’s first automated reservations system. Well, Richard is turning 60, early February, and currently operates “the Pioneer Cottages” in Bright, with his wife Elizabeth, and should you wish to contact Richard, here’s the phone number 03 5755 1233.

From all the members and especially from those members who worked with you – Have a Happy 60th.

The museum has a copy of the original TAARSAN Manuals on display.

National Conference - Adelaide - March 2002

This year the National Conference evolving the various Chapters of the 25 Year Club will be held in Adelaide, with the arrangements being co-ordinated by Helen Bevan, on behalf of the S.A. Chapter.

An additional evening is programmed as a special event for local members, and an excuse to have an evening out with the interstate members, planned for the Friday (15th of March) at the Airport Club, Adelaide Airport, where food and refreshments may be purchased at club prices on this evening.

The conference should again be most interesting, as we have to finalise the National Executive representatives, and a few minor outstanding items along with the recruitment of new members.

The outcome of this event will be published in the next newsletter.

Very interesting. - 1

A recent visit to the Museum by John Tilton (PR Mgr) proved to be a special event as we were presented with a book - FOKKER - 50 Years., in which TAA figures prominently in the visual portrayal of the development of the aircraft, and as we have previously reported it was John Watkins and his engineering expertise that had a substantial influence on this aircraft. Originally required as a replacement for the aging DC3 aircraft with short runway capabilities, the F27 as it was known was accepted by many other airlines both in Australia and overseas. Ansett and many of the subsidiary intrastate airlines, MacRobertson Miller in WA, and in fact every state had one operator who used this aircraft for its rural services. The book is on display in the museum.

Very Interesting – 2

Again we are indebted to the astute members of the club who continually locate and collect historical items for the museum, and in the case David Wayne and Paul have contributed with yet another historical document dealing with the Civil Air Regulations, and the Federal Aviation Authority that obviously had an effect on how we, as the major operator, performed with the every day operation of our airline.

This will be investigated further and appropriately allocated to its part of history in our museum. Thanks for your vigilance – we really appreciate it.

Publication – These eagles A history of the RAAF at war.

Herb Phillips was browsing through this “borrowed” book published by Australian War Memorial in 1942, and came across a number of references to the exploits of some other the people who worked for TAA – such people as Frank Fischer (Cpt.) Reg Rechner(Appointed Sate Manager S.A. and N.T.) and Ron Widmer (Cpt0 , The book contained many photographs and Herb photocopied a few but we were unable to reproduce these for this publication ---- Thanks for your efforts Herb – Come and see us.

Vale

Alan Paton - Engineering Tullamarine - December 2001

Ralf Patterson - Flt Engineer – Operations - December 2001

Cpt Col Tiller - Flt Crew – Operations - December 2001

Eddie Wright - Finance HO and Catering - 26th February 2001

Eddie was indeed the epitome of the Finance Dept ever diligent with the finances, specific with detail and a good friend to many people who knew him as a friend. He was always there when needed.

Eddie died after a short illness aged 72, and he will be missed - the loss of yet another “Old Friend”