



TAA / Australian Airlines 25 Year Club

Newsletter No. 96

April 2018

Editor: John Wren

President's Report

- This is our first Newsletter for the year – about time I hear you say. Sorry, we are a bit behind for the start of the year. We have been very busy, and your Editor had problems with failing eyesight and a double hernia. The eyesight was fixed instantly with laser surgery and the hernia – well it took a while to organise and get operated on. But all good [nearly] now.
- We have had the **AGM** [see separate report] on the 18 April, and with one vacancy and one nomination, there was no election required. So the business of the AGM was concluded after the President's Report and we all sat down to a nice lunch and a chat with the folks that came. We'll have a pic of all the Committee in the next Newsletter.
- The **70th Anniversary posters** are into a 4th reprint and are in stock again. If you haven't got around to it yet, or want a great present, you could order one through the Museum –

Large 845 X 600mm \$25 each

Medium 590 X 410mm \$18 each

Small 420 X 300 \$14 each.

Postage & packaging to any Australian postcode is an extra \$14 for all sizes.

A truly great TAA memento.

- It's **72 years** this coming September 9th since TAA flew that first scheduled passenger flight from Laverton to Sydney. [And Qantas' 100th in 2020]. I have to be so careful how the 9th Sept. flight is described as there are other TAA flights that occurred before the 9th, for example the training flights that started midyear, the charter to the Federal Government to northern Australia and positioning of aircraft to Laverton. And it's 25 years since TAA / Australian Airlines was integrated into Qantas. Now you are happily reminiscing – here's a pic just for you:



Newsletter

The envelope your Newsletter arrived in has your 25 Year Club financial status printed on it, so you will know if you need to help us with another donation now, or when in the future. 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 establish their financial status from the covering email. Surface mail will always be available.

2018 AGM

Well, another AGM completed smoothly and with no elections, it all went very quickly. Since there was only one nomination for the vacant position from Eddie Creaney (Finance HO), Eddie was elected. There was a lot of interest after the meeting on general Museum matters and these questions were addressed by John Wren.

We then went downstairs to a reserved area for lunch [financially contributed to by the 25 Year Club] and a good old chat and catch up.

S.A. Reunion

TAA ADELAIDE REUNION SATURDAY 24 MARCH 2018

Held at the Alma Hotel Norwood this wonderful function was the second in recent times ably organized by Jeff & Jan Phillips and helpers.

The gathering of 90 plus TAA enthusiasts enjoyed great company and many years of memories. Films were shown of the TAA Museum Melbourne and the 1993 farewell held at Adelaide Airport with MC Neil Bastin. Many old uniforms and posters were on display.

A surprise guest was a recent very important historical find. The TAA SA & NT Personnel transfer register covering the early 1970's to 1992 was recently rescued from destruction. This fantastic bound book now resides in Perth under guard. All staff in attendance were able to see their relevant record. It is hoped that this book will soon move house to live at the TAA Museum.

Heartiest congratulations to Jeff and the crew...we all look forward to a reunion in 2020?

[Ed – article and picture from Jim Collins, who attended]



Museum Alterations

The Museum never stays the same from month to month – there is always something being added or altered. Below you can see the ‘maintenance crew’ at work altering a huge shelf unit into free standing benches to display more TAA / Australian Airlines memorabilia.



The “Maintenance Crew” L to R – Rick Schembri, Sam Favazza, Terry Masocco, Brian Cain and Ian Wood

DC-6 model

Another model in production is a DC-6 which we already have TAA decal colours for. John Booth has stepped up to the plate yet again to help us with the build, and this one should be interesting as we are trying to incorporate lights.

Hopefully we will have a pic of the finished model by next Newsletter if we can tie John down from his world wanderings.

TAA Apprentices - 'Year of 68' Reunion

A 50th Anniversary Reunion Luncheon held by the Maintenance & Engineering Apprentices of '68' at the Emerald Hotel in South Melbourne. A great time was had by all catching up and swapping yarns.



From Left: Joseph Cini, John Bolton, Angelo Scacco, John Ure, Sam Favazza, Ronny Reiss, David Crabtree, Graeme Hartney, Brian James, Ian O'Mara, Phillip Walshe, Bill Smithies, Charlie Rosa, John Fouracre, Peter Chambers.

Ed. Thanks to Sam Favazza for the details and pic

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]

Nita Goldsworthy	Hostess	aged 86	06/04/18
Shanna Rokas	Repair Analyst	aged 69	13/04/18
Max Peters	FEO	aged 74	15/04/18
Ian Johnson	LAME	aged 87	03/04/18
John Ramsbottom	LAME	aged 63	13/11/17
Les Caden	A/C Painter		10/01/18
Neil Ross	Instrument Tech	aged 85	11/12/17
Bjorn Ekeburg	LAME		07/03/18
Joan Pendergast	Hostess		/03/18
Dawn McKewen	Hostess		/02/18
Miriam MacCartney	Secretary Internal Audit	aged 78	17/01/18
Murray "Mocca" Renison	Stores Supervisor	aged 78	/01/18
John Jones	Capt.		/11/17

Roy Russell – Foundation Member 100th Birthday



Happy birthday goes to Roy Russell on his 100th birthday complete with letter from the Queen and QLD State Premier. Bob Merson [President of the QLD 25 Year Club] was lucky enough to get an invite to the great occasion and tells us “the last time I spoke to Roy was when I was a young LAME in Brisbane and he was one of the Cabin Services Supervisors in TAA Catering Section at Brisbane [Eagle Farm] airport. Roy started with TAA on 10 October 1946 – and still has an impeccable memory; congratulations Roy. “

Ed. Thanks to Bob Merson for this article.

Next STAARS dates for 2018

15th May, 14th August and 13th November



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) 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 FTC, 7 York St, Airport West, Vic. 3042
Bank transfer – to 'TAA 25 Year Club': C'wealth Bank BSB: 063 007 Account No.: 0090 1577
Please include your name on bank transfers and, return this form by mail **OR** send by email to:
taamuseum@bigpond.com . **For enquiries:** Phone: 03 9280 8113 / 03 9280 8114.

Convair model

We have finally found an aircraft model builder to take on the building from scratch of a five foot long Convair Model 240. We have been sitting on the drawings for ages trying to find a builder to take it on. Construction should start soon. We will keep you all informed of progress in forthcoming Newsletters.

The aim is to build the aircraft as VH-TAQ which was the first Convair to be delivered to TAA and would later carry the Queen during her visit to Australia in the early 50's. Some of the history of VH-TAQ:

In December 1946 TAA placed an order with the Consolidated Vultee Aircraft Corporation of San Diego, California for 5 of their new model 240 aircraft. This model went into production after American Airlines ordered 100 and Western Airlines ordered 20. Western reduced its order to 10, so TAA was offered 5.

The prototype Convair 240 made its first flight at San Diego on 16 March 1947. It was powered by 2 Pratt & Whitney R2800 engines and was designed to carry 40 passengers in 4 abreast seating in pressurised comfort at 270 mph [434 kph]. A total of 176 were built for civil operators whilst a further 391 went to the United States Air Force before production ceased.

Fuselage number 64 was built as a Convair 240-5 and registered to Trans-Australia Airlines as VH-TAQ. It was later named 'John Forrest'. VH-TAQ was the 3rd aircraft in TAA's order for 5, but due to modifications being carried out on the first 2 aircraft it became the first aircraft to be delivered to Australia.

When TAA announced their order for the Convair it came under constant criticism from the national press. The thought of putting 40 passengers in an aircraft with only 2 engines seemed ridiculous, and how was a short-range aircraft like the Convair going to cope with the delivery flight from California to Australia?

VH-TAQ departed Lindberg Field, San Diego on 26 August 1948 under the command of Capt. J. Chapman with Capt. F. Fischer in the righthand seat. After departing San Diego, fuel stops were made at Tulsa, Chicago, Montreal, Goose Bay, Bluie West One and Keflavik before the first rest was taken at London, Heathrow. At London the aircraft created much interest as it was the first of its type to be seen in Europe. From London the aircraft continued through Rome, and Cyprus to Basra where the night stop was made. Then to Karachi, Delhi and Calcutta – night stop – Rangoon, Singapore – night stop – Makasar, Darwin – night stop – Alice Springs to Melbourne, Essendon where VH-TAQ arrived on 7 September 1948 after having flown 17,729 miles [28,532 Km] in 78 hours 32 minutes.

VH-TAQ operated TAA's first Convair service on 18 October 1948 under the command of Capt. F. Fischer on the Melbourne / Sydney / Brisbane route.

Early in 1954 VH-TAQ was fitted out with a special VIP interior for use by the Queen during their Australian tour. 6 flights under the command of Capt. J. Marshall were made in February / March.

VH-TAQ was retired at Essendon on 5 August 1956 after completing 21,031 flying hours with TAA.

Ed – thanks to a TAA article by Gordon Reid for the details the details above.