



January 2024

Aviation Historical Society of Australia (Qld) Inc.

Find out more about us at <http://www.ahsaqld.org.au>

Contributions and suggestions welcome! Send to the editor Jeff Nielsen – jeffniel@optusnet.com.au



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Important Dates for Members

- 23rd February – “Aussie Dambusters“
by Darryl Holden
- 22nd March – “Why were seven men so keen to fly to Sydney that fateful Friday afternoon?“
by Philip Castle
- 24th May – “Air Accident Investigations“
by Ian McDonell
- 28th June – “The RAAF Flying Boat Experience“ by AIRCDRE John Meier
- 25th October – “Building a Boomerang for Kermit Weeks“ by Matt Denning

AVIATION HERITAGE

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It is usually published in March, June, September and December.

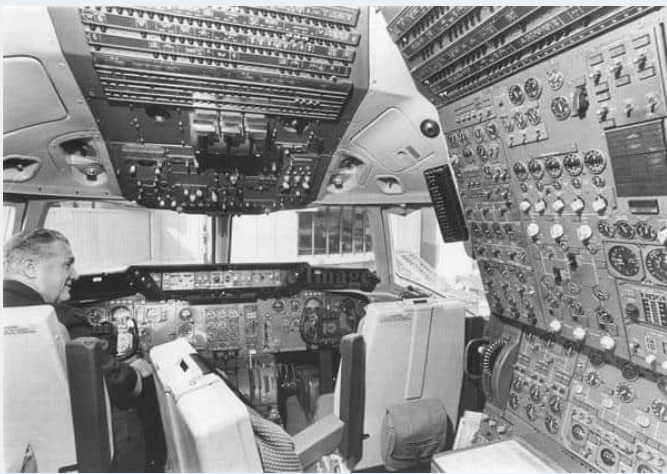
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Uncle Bob Bacon's Brain Teaser (UBBBT)



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PLANESPOTTERS.NET



In the final issue of DOWNWIND for 2023 (November) I posed the question “what was the legacy aircraft to which the flight deck image belonged”? It was of course the DC-10 and above is an image of the last one flying in commercial service, TAB’s freighter CP-2555.

Others certainly do still fly, mainly as military USAF KC-10A Extender flight refuellers and other designations in foreign air forces plus there are 4 flying with 10 Tanker Air Carrier and used as water bombers, Omega still has one and of course, Orbis (the eye people) still has one flying.

The winners of the spotters prize were: Warwick Bigsworth, David Carter, Lionel Arnold, Patricio Bravo and Warwick Henry ... in other words, to bowdlerise Captain Louis Renault’s words, “...the usual suspects” ??

In the years since I began this column, I have never yet stumped everyone; someone - and usually more than one – gets it right. So, no more Mr Nice Guy. This year I fully intend to be as difficult as possible, so be warned: expect some very difficult ones and sometimes without any clues.

I’m starting fairly gently in the hopes that this one will at least knock out some of those clever aerophiles who seem to know everything. Next month’s will be a doozy however.



Send your answer direct to me, Bob Livingstone, at ev982@netspace.net.au.

Good luck
Uncle Bob

Vale Geoff Goodall

By Robert Livingstone

It is with a heavy heart that I advise the death of one our titans: Geoff Goodall passed into the history he was so comfortable with at 2am on January 5th 2024.



In his favourite photo, Geoff beams from the window of Russell Legg's Anson VH-BAF at Ballarat on 15 February 1987 (photo Russell Legg)

While not tall, Geoff was a big man with a big sense of humour, big in personality, big with family, big in Australian air traffic control and big in the world of aviation history, having written books and innumerable articles and filled the internet with his Aviation History site, all part of his legacy.

It's difficult to Google an aircraft type without being directed to Geoff's site. He was the pre-eminent aviation researcher, travelling the world to record the warbird scene, burrowing into the archives and talking with the owners and pilots of the aircraft of our Australian aviation history before they themselves passed.

It's lucky that I did not have to write this in February 1987: we were both at the Ballarat airshow; I might have arrived in style with Jack McDonald in the AWM's B-25, but Geoff managed a ride in Avro Anson VH-BAF, a flight I coveted but never achieved. The Anson and another type (long forgotten) missed a collision by a hair's breadth overhead the field as I looked up and gasped in shock. We are fortunate that we had him for a further 37 years.

Via con dios, Geoff; may your crossing of the Styx be in your favourite aircraft type.

From Ian Mcdonell:

I could not think of a better way to do this for Downwind than a set of his photos of a variety of aircraft. Geoff was incredibly well travelled with his Warbirds Directory passion, and was a very fine photographer.



The French Aeronavale Lancaster WU16 at West Beach 30/11/62



Twin Mustang N12102 taxiing at Harlingen Texas 10/79



Grumman S-3A 160507 on US Kitty Hawk Indian Ocean 16/7/81 when Geoff was a guest of the USN, having been flown onboard by them.



Grumman TBM N9187Z Harlingen Texan 10/77 air to air from TBM N53503



Unique Stinson L-5 converted to a biplane N69083 at Flabob California 25/11/90



Chinese Tu-2 20-465 at Santa Teresa New Mexico War Eagles Museum on 10/11/92

Events



Our Christmas lunch at the Lucky Star Tavern at Sunnybank Hills with 13 members and partners attending.



As guest speaker at our November meeting Denis Baker gave a remarkable presentation on the complex design features of the CAC Barra Sonobuoy.

Retrospection by Warwick Bigsworth

Re: Beech 200 Super King Air VH-AAV Accident 21st February 1980

Bob Livingstone's Retrospection article about the Super King Air accident involving VH-AAV in the October issue of Downwind and Warwick Henry's further comments in the November issue brought back memories of subsequent litigation that occurred some 13 years later.



At the time of the accident, which was on 21st February 1980 and not as previously described on 27th October 1978, I was Senior Air Traffic Control Check Controller for Control Tower and Approach/ Departures positions at Sydney. I was not on duty at the time of the accident, but on the following day was tasked with reviewing whether all actions taken by ATC had been appropriate and whether there had been any failing on its part. I ascertained that all procedures had been correctly followed and there was nothing more the controllers could have done to avoid the accident.

The litigation was initiated by the families of the deceased passengers against:

- The Commonwealth in two parts, one against the then Department's Flying Operations Branch for allowing Advance Airlines to use a reduced power take-off procedure, which they claimed contributed to the accident; and, against Air Traffic Control for not permitting the aircraft to land, hence negligence;
- Pratt & Whitney Canada, the manufacturer of the engines; and
- Beech Aircraft Corporation, the manufacturer of the aircraft.

There was no attempt to pursue the pilot's estate; he left behind a child and a widow, who was expecting a second child.

The main reason for the litigation was to increase compensation to the kin of the deceased. The Civil Aviation (Carrier's Liability) Act 1959 incorporated matters from The Warsaw Convention as amended at The Hague (1955) that did, in short, permit compensation of the equivalent of USD25,000 per each person deceased. Some of the deceased left up to 3 children, now under the support of grandparents or the like, but USD25,000 would not sustain the families for long. In order to receive more compensation, the plaintiffs would need to prove negligence on the part of the defendants.

By the time the litigation commenced, the Civil Aviation Authority had been established, but the defendant was still the Commonwealth. I was now CAA's Manager, Airways Operations NSW, and responsible for the provision of Air Traffic Control and Flight Service in NSW. I was nominated as the CAA expert advisor to the Commonwealth and joined the Defence team.

At the same time these proceedings were under way, a high-profile Rugby League footballer had sued an evening newspaper in Sydney for publishing a near naked photograph of him in the club's dressing room. He was awarded \$440,000 damages, although this was reduced on appeal. So, the media made much out of the orphans and dependants who got just a portion of USD25,000 for each fatality from the accident compared to the footballer.

My objective was to ensure that ATC staff were not held accountable for an accident which they could not have prevented.

Subsequently, the litigation against both Pratt & Whitney Canada and Beech Aircraft Corporation was dropped; amongst many other issues, neither company was inclined to send any representative to Australia to participate in the defence. Action was also dropped against the Flying Operations Division of the Department. Hence the sole defendant was the Air Traffic Control facet of the Commonwealth.

The Plaintiffs tendered witnesses including an experienced Beech Super King Air pilot, a retired US ex-controller who was a so-called professional witness, a former B727 captain and a former ATC union official.

These witnesses provided some interesting and controversial evidence. The former B727 Captain claimed that ATC could have directed the landing B727 (VH-RMO) to go-around and turn onto an easterly heading and remain south of the Runway 34 threshold. In my evidence I stated that in my experience as a Tower controller and Approach controller and flight deck experience and discussions with Boeing 727 crews, when at low speed with full flap and undercarriage down, B727s were not manoeuvrable to that extent until the crew had "cleaned up" the aircraft, i.e. at least retracted some of the complex flap system and perhaps the undercarriage. In this case VH-RMO was about 100 feet above surface level and would need a severe turn to remain south of Runway 34.

The experienced Beech Super King Air pilot acknowledged that the best climb performance would have been achieved by flying straight ahead after the engine failure; single engine climb should be at least 350 feet per minute. However, the witness suggested that VH-AAV could have executed a slow left turn crossing the runway centreline and then approached Runway 34 from the right. The evidence in the Board of Accident Inquiry was that the aircraft had descended below the level of the runway extension, so was never going to be in a position to execute the turn as suggested by the witness.

The American former air traffic controller stated that the Sydney controller should have reacted quicker and sent the B727 around. The witness had never been to Sydney; had not spoken to the controllers concerned, and relied solely on the brief provided by the Plaintiff's Counsel. The Commonwealth's Counsel determined that the witness made a living as an expert witness and was reputed to say anything for a dollar, and in fact, the Judge considered the witness as unconvincing.

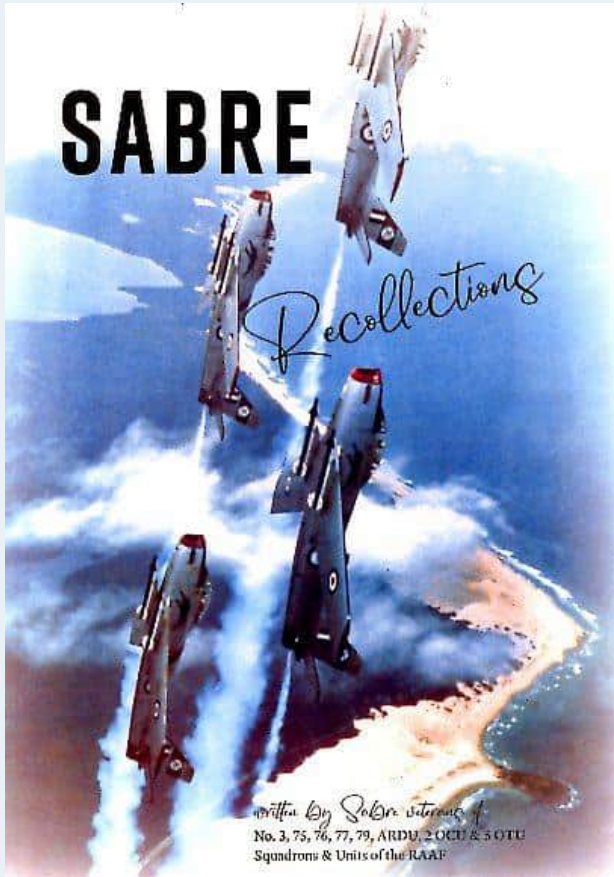
The former Union official claimed (incorrectly) that he was a very experienced Tower and Approach controller, and that after the accident, the staff on duty had conceded to him that they could have done more and that they had "stuffed-up". This witness had offered his services to the Plaintiff's legal team for financial consideration. In his findings, the Judge severely criticised the witness as to his credibility and considered that it was shameful that he broke the confidence of union members for whom he was meant to represent. In fact, none of the controllers concerned had made any such statement to this union representative.

The Judge found that air traffic control had not been guilty of any mishandling of the tragic events, hence the families were not granted any financial damages from this trial. The media, particularly Channel 9, severely criticised the decision and played on the National News and A Current Affair a seemingly fabricated version of the control tower / pilot transmissions, and of course compared the damages awarded to the footballer with this outcome.

Following the verdict, the Defendant's Counsel and team, including me, were asked to make a statement to Channel 9. However, Counsel advised that no statement or comment should be made, and despite the sensationalist report on the National News and Current Affair, by the next day, it was only yesterday's news.

Book Review

by Bob Livingstone



SABRE RECOLLECTIONS

written by Sabre veterans of 3, 75, 76, 79, ARDU, 2OCU & 5OTU Squadrons & Units of the RAAF
first published July 2022, my copy the November 2022 reprint with amendments, compiled and edited by Christopher Ryan (3 Squadron RAAF) and design and layout/artwork by Sandra Nipperess (volunteer RAAF Williamtown AHC), published and printed in Newcastle.

First impressions are of a beautifully designed and produced tall-A4 soft-cover book on glossy art paper, 208 pages chock-full of colour and B&W images and artwork.

The stories and anecdotes are in themed sections such as “Butterworth”, “Loss of Life” and “Ubon” and surrounded, backgrounded and illustrated by the images and artwork mentioned.

It is no dry and dusty textbook but full of life (and a little death), humour and interest.

Sandi's father was ground staff in 450 Squadron RAAF in the Western Desert in WWII and it is her work which lifts this book well above average. Highly recommended. Though it mentions that only a few copies are left, I bought mine at Sabre Recollections of the RAAF CAC CA27 Avon Sabre (booksonwaraustralia.com), \$49 + p&p; it arrived quickly and well packed without damage.

Postscript: There is a 3 Squadron Mirage book available as a download at [The Lizards That Flew.pdf](http://TheLizardsThatFlew.pdf) (3sqnraafasn.net)



Members arriving at Archerfield for our January meeting experienced this spectacular sunset. The UFOs are just the meeting room lights reflected in the window glass.

Another Rare Bird Discovered by Ian McDonell

This is called a D and C Boomerang Mk 1 with c/n DCBO 0096001 PP (nearly a record length of c/n).
Photo 18/11/2023 at Caboolture.

First registered 09 02 2000

First flew under third owners 2023

Currently 17 hours on the clock!



Not hard to guess what the designer was trying to emulate.





Lounge Area, Terminal Building,
Archerfield Airport, Brisbane

Friday 23 February 2024, 7:00pm for 7:30pm - 9:00pm

"The Aussie Dambusters" by Darryl Holden

I am a retired Royal Australian Air Force pilot who joined in 1966 and served in the Vietnam War, Malaysia and the Middle East. I have a particular interest in Bomber Command of the RAF during WWII.



This presentation is about the Australian aircrew who participated in the famous Dambuster's mission on 16/17 May 1943 (Operation Chastise).

While most people know the story, I will concentrate on the mission and the crews and what happened to them after the raid.

We will also live stream this **physical meeting** to our out-of-town members via:-

zoom