



QUEENSLAND
WARBIRDS & VINTAGE
AIRCRAFT ASSOCIATION [QWVAA]
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NEWSLETTER JULY 2020

Welcome

Welcome to the new Queensland Warbirds and Vintage Aircraft Association (QWVAA) newsletter. In the past, the newsletter and updates have fallen somewhat by the wayside and the Committee of Management (CoM) have decided to renew the newsletter as a way of keeping in touch with the membership.

Our goal is to hopefully expand our members' involvement in the club, as well as revitalise and encourage an expansion the membership through working with other likeminded organisations around SE QLD.

The newsletter will be sent to members every 2-3 months and will provide an update on the happenings at QWVAA, around Watts Bridge Airfield, and the plans that CoM has for QWVAA.

QWVAA, previously QVAG AFM, has a rich history and this is cemented- literally- in the fact that we occupy the most historical building on the airfield, dating back to the Second World War.

At QWVAA, we want to encourage active member participation, to ensure that the passion for vintage and warbird aircraft in Queensland has a long-term, viable home.

We hope that you enjoy the features of the new newsletter, and if you feel you would like to see some additions or have some news to share, please contact the Secretary of CoM, Shane Tobin, at secretary@qwvaa.com.au or 0402 132713.

Thanks to Tom Fisher and Ross Parker for photos in this edition



Your Committee

Your Committee of Management (CoM) are active members who are elected at each Annual General Meeting.

Regular CoM meetings are held as well, and members are always welcome and encouraged to attend.

Your current Committee is:

President: Gill Vardi
Vice President: Andrew Horsburgh
VP Warbirds: Richard Waugh
VP Vintage: Mark Purdie
Treasurer: John Yates
Secretary: Shane Tobin
Membership Officer: Gianni Serafino

To get in contact with the Committee, email the Secretary, or alternatively, email info@qwvaa.com.au

Building Works

Our QWVAA building dates back to the Second World War, and it's time for a bit of renewal! Over the course of May through to July, a series of working bees were held to clean up the main area of the building, remove old furniture, sand and plane windows and even gut and replaster the back rooms to make them into an office area and sleeping bunk quarters.

Thank you to all who attended, and look out for emails from the Membership Officer for notification for the next working bee. Help is always appreciated!



The gutted back rooms

Future working bees will continue to work on the building interior and there are plans afoot for a new ablutions block. We will be calling on members to assist with the construction when the time comes!



Re-plastering underway!



Richard Waugh gets his hands dirty while Tom Fisher supervises the minions

Flying Days



CoM is committed to increasing the number of active members at QWVAA, and what better way than to do what we do best- fly our toys!!



With the relaxation of COVID related conditions, we held the first of what we hope to be monthly flying days on June 27. The last Saturday of the month was nominated, as it allowed us to fly and work with our friends at the Queensland Aerobatic Club on their flying day too.





The last weekend of June was well attended by some current and new members, and the flying and activities flowed on well into the Saturday evening with a dinner at the Toogoolawah Hotel, followed by more flying on Sunday.

A number of aircraft attended, including a “herd” of Yak52s, Yak50s, Trojan, Winjeel, Tiger Moths and many others. Close formation, tactical formation training and aerobatics were done under the close supervision of a planning and operations umbrella similar to Red Thunder.

Remember, you don’t have to own or fly an aircraft to attend. There’s lots of room for anyone who has a passion for flying- be it photography, historical events, or even just wanting to be around aircraft!

Our next flying days are scheduled for the weekend of 12th and 13th of September. Look out for the email reminders.



Members enjoy dinner at the Toogoolawah Hotel

QWVAA Shirts

COMING SOON



QWVAA will soon have in stock a new design of polo shirt available for members to purchase! Stylish, practical and the perfect way to show your membership of the club.

Stay tuned for the final design, colour choices and prices.

A huge thanks to Gill Vardi for making the arrangements!

Brisbane Airshow

One of the more disappointing elements of the COVID-19 outbreak and lockdown was the postponement of the much anticipated Brisbane Airshow to be held at Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield.

The Airshow has been postponed until the weekend of **3-4 July 2021**.



QWVAA will play host to guests of the Airshow and will have a “café” running on the weekend to raise funds for building works. If you can spare a couple of hours on either day of the Airshow, your help will be greatly appreciated!

The Airshow organisers are also looking for volunteers for the weekend.

Go to www.brisbaneairshow.com.au for more information

New Members

Welcome to the newest members of QWVAA:

Mike Teague

Matthew Burleigh

Angus Tobin

We look forward to seeing you soon!

Hangar Stories

Each newsletter we are going to introduce a member and their aircraft that they own. With such a wide variety of aircraft and history of both aircraft and owner, we expect some great photos and reading.

BUT if you don't own an aircraft- fear not! We would also love to hear about your stories as well. How you became involved in aviation, your favourite aircraft and why, the favourite photo you took and the like.

For future editions please email Shane Tobin at secretary@qwvaa.com.au with photos and your story.

CAC WIRRAWAY Owner: Ross Parker



During the mid 1930s it was apparent that Australia could not rely on foreign sourced aircraft in a time of conflict, so a task force was dispatched overseas to identify the most suitable aircraft for the newly created Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation to build.

It was a shock to the parliament and many di-hard military types when an American low-wing monoplane was selected over the usual British hardware. Nonetheless it was finally approved and the North American Inc. (same company that produced the P-51 Mustang and later the T-28 Trojan) NA-16 was chosen as the base model.

After design modifications such as retractable undercarriage were implemented, production of the Wirraway began with the first ones into service in 1939 and served as the primary trainer for Australian military pilots throughout WWII.



Design upgrades through the production run of 755 aircraft saw the type change from MkI to the final MkIII (695). It was also allocated the Training and General Purpose roles and with a dire shortage of fighters, some were armed with two forward firing machine guns and a rear seat rotating gunner position and pressed into combat. As pilots of nimble aircraft (such as Yaks and Nanchangs!) would imagine – it was a dismal failure as a fighter – BUT – has been credited with one kill against a Japanese Nakajima Ki-43 Hayabusa – so don't mess with the Wirraway! Certainly, the Generals back in Canberra who heard the news didn't believe it...

Another little-known fact that irks the Boomerang fighter pilots is that not a single verified victory was ever attributed to that type during combat!

And so, to the story of 695. We have the original logbook which is interesting reading. She was manufactured in January 1945 and began service the following month in the training role but soon it was obvious that the war was turning in favour of the Allies and training was winding down. 695 was rotated through flying and storage for its service life and was finally retired in 1957 with only 600 hours on the clock! The aircraft changed hands a number of times but never flew until the Mustang Fighter Trust in Caboolture purchased the aircraft and began a full restoration 1994-97. So, she has been flying now since 1997 and still only has 1500 hours on the airframe at 75 years of age! I am the only original syndicate member remaining from those days and share the Wirraway with Steve Boyd who is an Airbus Captain with Cathay Pacific living in Brisbane who also flies his L-39 Albatros jet with Fighter Pilot Pty Ltd based at Archerfield.

What's the Wirraway like to fly?

The name Wirraway is an Aboriginal word for Challenge and I can assure you that this is SO true. There are a couple of gotcha situations (check the ADF Serials website to see the attrition rate) but the main 'challenge' is landing in crosswinds. Some say the Wirraway is harder to land than its cousins, the Harvard and T-6 but I can't comment on that (although Cam Rolph-Smith agrees). It can be a handful for sure and every Wirraway pilot can tell you of their 'moments' with the beast. It's not over till the park brake is set. In the air she's a fully aerobatic but graceful lady. Nothing happens in a hurry, even with full control deflection – like some people I know!



Steve and I at Warplanes Pty Ltd have put a lot of effort (read \$\$\$) and love into the aircraft over the last decade and we believe it is now the best of its kind – only three remaining airworthy in the country. We are very proud of our grand old lady and look forward to having QWVAA pilots and families fly with us to enjoy the Wirraway experience.

I realise that the Wirraway is not a run-of-the-mill Red (Radial) but I have been most grateful for the welcome that the RR group has given me and the aircraft.

Ross (Rosco) Parker- BIO

From 9 years of age I was bitten by the bug of flying for the RAAF. This dream continued throughout my schooling and eventually I was selected for No.26 Course RAAF Academy (along with Les "Knox!" Knox BTW). – *Groan!!* I hear from the direct entry troops but that was the decision we made at we stuck with it to graduate from pilot training on 101 Course (with Tim "Boggy" Windsor and Richard "Woof" Waugh) in 1977.



My first tour was on Caribous and what a time was had! Early command and lots of big radial engine time! A great start for my flying career.

I was plucked from piston engine obscurity to be posted straight to a command seat on BAC1-11s at 34Sqn for the usual long tour followed by a year on B707s from where I left Oz for Cathay Pacific Airways. I lived in Hong Kong for over 30 years and initially flew B747-200/300/200F and then spent 21 years on the B777-200/300/300ER and have held most appointments along the way (except management!).

I've flown the Wirraway for over 20 years and have owned the Trojan for over 3 years now.



"Rosco" (right) with RAAF course mates at Red Thunder 2019. L-R "Woof", "Boggy" & "Knox!"

My better half is Estella from Hong Kong who was an Inflight Service Manager with Cathay for 35 years but who deserves a medal for being with me for more than 20 years!

In summary, I'm a die-in-the-wool aviation tragic who looks back on a life of fulfillment that only aviation can provide and forward to the enjoyment of flying real/old airplanes with mates for many years to come.