

CONTACT



The official newsletter of THE AUSTRALIAN VINTAGE AVIATION SOCIETY

Issue 40 January 2022

www.tavas.com.au

Editor: Andrew Carter

Welcome to our **10th Anniversary** edition. As of the 12th January 2022, TAVAS will have been established for 10 years. Many said we'd never make it. Even some members who read the early newsletters where we set out our plan for establishing a unique museum, said it just couldn't be done. Yet, 10 years later, here we are still with plenty to report in this newsletter and a museum that has been operating successfully now for over three and a half years.

Needless to say, we are justifiably proud of all that we have achieved and this issue will cover many of the significant highlights. What it can't adequately cover is the biggest highlight of the last 10 years, which is some of the people we have met along the way – the people who made TAVAS what it is. To them we owe the greatest thanks.

12th January falls on a Wednesday and the museum isn't open then, so the 10th Anniversary party will be held on Sunday 16th at 1:00pm and you are invited. See the official invite with details on the last page.

So where to from here? A great question that I just can't fully answer at this stage. When we started the organisation we had a five and a ten year plan which have basically worked out as intended. We now want to see these aircraft and this fascinating period of aviation history exposed to a much wider audience and have been considering many ways of doing that, which we are still working through.

Included in this celebration, we have given you a PDF of the Flightpath magazine article on constructing and flying the E.III Eindecker and a link to all of the back issues of Contact newsletters, because as you read through this issue, you may want to refer to previous issues for more information.

So how did TAVAS get started? With a very simple idea. I had taken many people flying in my Pietenpol Air Camper, all who became fascinated by the wood and fabric construction and open cockpit flying. I wondered what could be done to educate and excite more people about this early period of aviation?

The answer came in a trip to Omaka NZ in 2011 where I saw the worlds' largest collection of WWI aircraft, many flying at the same time. Why wasn't anyone in Australia doing this? With the only centenary of WWI we will experience in our lifetimes only a few years away, we needed to set up something like that in Oz.

Simply put, very few people know that Australian's flew during WWI. Even fewer know that we had our own flying corps – we were the only Dominion of the Commonwealth to do so. Even fewer know what an Ace is, yet alone that Australia had any.

So the answer seemed simple – we needed to put together a collection of flying WWI aircraft that would highlight Australia's significant involvement in that air war. The aircraft had to fly, so people could see and understand the performance of the time. How hard could it be? We would find out over six years, officially opening the museum to the public in mid 2018.

We didn't stop with just obtaining aircraft, signage and memorabilia, we even produced our own books including a reprint of Richthofens, (an electronic copy of which we sent to members on the centenary of his death) and one I wrote about Lt Frank Alberry which can be purchased through the museum. I am now working on one with David Foxx of airscapemag.com that covers the history & the aircraft of the museum.

I hope you enjoy this issue as we look back at many accomplishments of the past decade. Thank you so much for your support through membership. It makes a large contribution to the running of this museum

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FIRST 10 YEARS

There are so many highlights over that time, starting with just forming the organisation. Getting the name registered and meeting all the ATO requirements as well as for Not For Profit status, was a huge undertaking and a great achievement, yet it really was literally just the very beginning.

TAVAS was officially launched as a legal entity on 12th January 2012 with myself, Nathalie Gochel and Peter Hexter as directors. An incorporated association was established with that, which allowed us to operate as a genuine recognised Not For Profit, Gift Recipient, charitable museum, meaning all donations to the organisation would be tax free.

Interestingly the ATO initially turned us down stating that it looked like a tax dodge for me and a couple of mates. Of course, nothing could be further from the truth but to overcome the issue, we selected 6 more directors which satisfied the ATO.

So we officially launched, with nine directors having backgrounds in teaching, aviation and the military. This broad range of experience to draw upon would set us up well in those early years.

From the outset, we were always a volunteer run operation. No one gets paid, everyone donates their time and energy to getting the show up and running and keeping it growing. That remains the same today and we have been incredibly lucky with the quality of many of the volunteers who have joined us over the years.

When we started, the only aircraft I owned was the Pietenpol Air Camper – a truly great wood and fabric open cockpit aircraft with a fascinating history, but more would be needed before we would be a fully fledged flying museum.

The intention was to partner with other like minded people and try to house their aircraft under the one roof. However, the tyranny of distance we endure in Australia, made that impossible, with the only other flying WWI types at the time located in Victoria and WA. So, we were going to have to obtain our own.

The First Aircraft

Obviously obtaining our first aircraft was a significant highlight and really a milestone for the organisation. We knew from the onset that we needed something that was instantly recognisable as WWI (the majority of people think every biplane they see is a Tiger Moth)

and it had to have a strong Australian connection. The answer was obvious – it had to be the Red Barons all red Fokker Triplane, not at all a common aircraft. In fact there was only one in all of Australia at the time, located at the Museum of Army Aviation at Oakey in S.E.QLD – and it was not an accurate example with an oversize fuselage and tail.

We were to source one out of Florida, the full details of which you can find in issue 3. Now we were newsworthy and well on our way to obtaining our goals.

The very first flight I did in that Triplane was another major highlight and milestone – that established us a flying museum. The mandate had been set and now met. Our display aircraft would fly. *See issue 8 for details on the first flight of the Fokker Dr.I Triplane.*

It was a truly poignant moment for me – I had been fascinated by this aircraft and its pilot for as long as I could remember. The very first plastic model I ever built as a kid was a 1/72nd scale one that I purchased when visiting my Grandmother on Lord Howe Island as a very young child. Now I was flying a full scale replica of that exact aircraft - albeit with a modern engine, disk brakes and a tail wheel.

The First Photo Shoot

When trying to do something as audacious as set up a unique vintage flying museum, it's not enough to just do it, you need to actively show people what's being achieved to get them excited and involved.

Leroy Simpson contacted me wanting to do air to air pics with the Tripe. He flew down from Townsville and hired Bill Haynes to fly a Foxbat with the door off, to get the first airborne photos. It wasn't a great day as far as the weather was concerned but now we had pictures we could send to magazines and grow the credibility of the organisation as a flying museum.



One of Leroy Simpson's pics from the first air to air

Housing the growing collection

When we began, we didn't actually have any location to house the aircraft. I was renting space in a hangar for the Pietenpol and had to rent another space in another hangar when the Tripe arrived. I had always assumed something suitable would turn up at the right time – and it did.

When the people leasing Jack McDonald's hangar 106 moved out, Jack very kindly offered us the use of it to work on the aircraft and build the collection, which we accepted enthusiastically.

I'd obviously heard of Jack McDonald, my dad even had a picture of himself taken alongside Jack's P-51 Mustang at Moorabbin airport sometime in 1964, but my first dealing with the man was when I saw his Hawker Demon fuselage hanging in the Warplanes museum and in need of work. I contacted Jack and asked him about it and offered to help him with it in anyway I could, even if it was just doing all the dirty cleaning jobs on it.

Jack is a kindred spirit. He was among the very first of the people genuinely interested in preserving flying aviation history in Australia. He was active in establishing the Australian Warbirds Association (AWAL). He has been a huge supporter of TAVAS and all we have done and we wouldn't have premises for the museum without his interest in keeping aviation history alive.

Jack would ultimately purchase the Bristol F2B Fighter from TVAL and have it repainted in Australian 1 Sqn colours thereby adding to TAVAS' reputation and airshows to come.



Jack with his magnificent Bristol Fighter at Amberley

With the arrival of the Engel's Fokkers from Germany and the use of Jack's hangar we held our first formal event to the public *Meet the Fokkers*, which was a great success. *See issue 6 for more details.*

In early 2018 we cleared all the aircraft out of the hangar, installed a feature wall, painted the floors and the toilet area, made provision along the walls for information boards and made the hangar a museum.

First rotary engine

You simply can't be a WWI aviation museum without a rotary engine. Given they were invented in 1907 and a technology that did not continue after WWI, it was not going to be easy to obtain one, yet alone a working one, yet alone one I wanted to strap to an aircraft and risk my life flying.

I received a call from the head of TVAL in NZ who said an original 1918 Gnome 160 had been offered to him from a friend in New York but as he didn't need any more engines, he wanted to know if I would be at all interested. I couldn't say yes quick enough.

When the engine arrived, our engineer extraordinaire Dave Walsh pulled it apart, worked out what was wrong with it, sorted it out and fitted it to the Fokker D.VIII. We now had a real working WWI rotary engine fitted to a museum aircraft. TAVAS was growing at a great rate and developing real credibility as it did.

CAMS rotary –

A phone call from Graham Orphan of Classic Wings magazine (also the guy behind the Omaka airshows), put us onto Tony Wytenburg at CAMS - Classic Aero Machining Services. Tony had an original 1916 Gnome and wanted to reverse engineer it and make brand new, 100 year old engines. If he could get 5 customers to stump up the money up front, due to economy of scale, he could make them at a very reasonable price.

So I and others agreed but when it came down to it only myself and one other went ahead with the purchase. I'm sure the others are kicking themselves now, as they'll never be available again at that price.

I liked Tony right from the start. A no bullshit kind of guy who said it as it was and did what he said. He told me some overseas customers were hesitant because they wanted a guarantee. He said "I don't know what else to tell them - I guarantee that I will make you a brand new, 100 year old engine that will look, smell & work just like the original"

That was good enough for me and with not much more than a verbal handshake, the deal was done and we became CAMS first ever customer.

The engine itself is absolutely magnificent, it is actual engineering art. It performs flawlessly and spares (if ever needed) will be no issue. The support we have received from Tony at every stage has been fantastic.

My only regret about the engine is we didn't put an order in for two at the time. It is the perfect engine

for almost anything in our fleet, the Sopwith Camel, Fokker Triplane or even the D.VIII. There is currently another one of Tony's engines in Australia and I hope to write about that in the next newsletter.

I have written extensively about CAMS rotary in issues 5, 9, 12, 14, 27, 31 & 34 and I highly recommend them.



Running the CAMS rotary for the 1st time, fitted to E.III

Flying the Eindecker

It was incredibly significant to house the worlds' first true fighter aircraft and something I had very much wanted to fly. I hadn't had any experience with wing warping aircraft or ones powered by rotary engines. I had hoped to get the D.VIII ready to fly first and be able to experience a rotary on a conventional controlled aircraft, but that wasn't to be.

Initially I faced the prospect with some trepidation especially as there was only two other people alive in the world who had flown an accurate reproduction such as this and they weren't providing me with any information.

It was Jack McDonald who said "it looks right, so it will fly right, so just get in and fly the bloody thing!" which I did and it was magnificent. It literally felt like going solo for the first time, all over again. *See issue 14*



David Claes took this fantastic photo of the E.III airborne for the very first time

Women of Aviation weeks

This was an incredible world wide initiative that was introduced to Australia by Tammy Augustin, a friend of Nathalie's. Tam ran it in Bathurst, Nathalie ran one at Caboolture. The media generated from that was what really launched it in Australia and it grew from there to be a large annual event now held at many airfields right across the country.

There was a hell of a lot of organisation required by Nathalie for those days to be the great success they were. The days themselves were very long and tiring but incredibly worthwhile.

Initially it started with just me flying the women in the Pietenpol Air Camper but grew to have multiple guest speakers and many aircraft & pilots from Caboolture airfield help out, all under Nathalie's direction.

We have literally introduced girls from age 6 through to 90, to small aircraft flight and given many of them their first experience in open cockpit aircraft. Some have gone on to take flying lessons, whilst others not only conquered their fear of flight going up in the Piet, they actually loved the experience!

Women of Aviation events were covered in detail in issues 9, 13 and 17.



A happy flyer who was considering changing careers and came along to our Women of Aviation event to see if she wanted to take up flying as a profession

Flying the D.VIII

Having flown the first fighter of the war, I was excited to be able to fly the last German fighter of that same war. Even more so as it was fitted with the first rotary engine we purchased, which by then was almost 100 years old. It is a real team effort to get this started and airborne, but worth it. It is one of the nicest flying aircraft I have ever encountered and must have been a truly impressive aircraft in its day.

Its biggest limitation is the visibility afforded the pilot by the wing in a turning fight. To gain enough lead, you actually have to look over the top wing at your opponent until you bring him in close to the correct firing position and then look underneath the wing and through the gun sight.

Full flying report on the D.VIII in issue 18



The magnificent Fokker D.VIII airborne for the 1st time

Flying with 1 Sqn

This really was an incredible moment and perfectly captured exactly what TAVAS was established for. We could quite literally fly 1 Squadron's very first Fighter Attack aircraft alongside their latest to commemorate 100 years since 1 Squadron first conducted offensive flying operations in June 1916.

To actually have the RAAF high command sign off on this was an accomplishment in itself. To do the photo shoot was an incredible opportunity. We got to work with some amazing people at 1 Sqn and they really could not have been more accommodating.

Full details of the shoot and more pics in issue 18.



This great photo taken by David White sitting in the front seat of my Pietenpol Air Camper whilst I flew alongside Jack in his Bristol with the CO and XO of 1 Squadron cruising by. Well worth the effort.

Magazine articles and covers

TAVAS has been covered extensively in many articles in Australian, British, American, New Zealand & even one French magazine. We've even made the cover of many magazines (see pages 9 & 10 of this issue). The first full article and magazine cover was thanks to Mark Smith (see tribute to him on pg 11). He covered

us in the lead up to our attendance at the 2015 Avalon airshow. A truly great article and front cover.

Holding our first flying event

This was probably the most significant moment in TAVAS history to that time. We were finally displaying our own collection to the general public at our airfield and showing aviation through the ages. We had truly come of age and achieved what we had set out to do. We could only continue to grow and improve from there, which we did. More coverage of all the airshows we held and attended are covered on pages 7 and 8 of this newsletter.



Just part of the crowd at our very first TAVAS airshow

Opening the museum

The culmination of 6 years work. We finally achieved what we had set out to achieve. We had a collection representing aircraft types from 1901 to 1931 and a collection of flying WWI type aircraft. We were able to house it in Jack's hangar which we had done a lot of work to, to change it from just another hangar full of aeroplanes, into a clean, well laid out museum with a chronological time line. We had stories detailing the development of aviation around the sides, including Australia's early involvement in aviation as well as a wall dedicated to all the Australian fighter aces of WWI. It was a feature wall which divided the workshop from the museum allowing us to continue to work on projects as required.

The official opening took place on 2nd June 2018 and two news channels and two national magazines gave us nation wide coverage of the event. *See issue 26.*



The website

These days you don't seem to really exist until you have your online presence established with a website. Our first one was a really amateur production formed mainly by yours truly. It didn't look like much but it was designed to be easy to navigate and obtain all the information. I received a lot of emails from people praising me for that and the information contained on it however, that did nothing to detract from the substandard look and feel of the site.

Robin Pavley came onboard after having seen us on the news and hearing what we were trying to achieve and deciding we were mad. He did a lot for us with videos and online content including an improved version of the website.

That all changed dramatically when David Foxx from airscapemag.com became involved. All things online and digital graphics really is this guys' forte and what he has done for us over the years has been nothing short of extraordinary. He took it upon himself to redo TAVAS website and the result is far greater than we could have hoped for and has drawn so many comments about how far superior it is to what we had before. It really has given us the professional and fresh image that we desperately needed.

Volunteers

The real highlight of TAVAS has been many of the amazing people we have met along the way. None more so than our own volunteers. We are a volunteer organisation and TAVAS couldn't exist without them. Many have helped over the last 10 years, in a variety of ways, and I am grateful to all of them.

None more so than those volunteers who keep TAVAS museum open to the public four days a week. Without them, there would be no museum.

The newsletters

In 40 newsletters and 9 updates, we have provided 544 A4 pages of content with 285,700 words and an incredible number of pictures. With all that text (and if you combine it with the text written on all the museum display boards), I've written the equivalent of more than half as many words as used in the epic classic *War and Peace*, although Tolstoy did write that twice (using a quill pen) as his house maid used the initial finished manuscript for kindling, forcing him to sit down and start again!

The layout of the newsletters was supposed to be consistent, each being 12 pages long but many issues had many more pages. The first page always had a picture of the featured aircraft for that issue in the top right hand corner.

Where possible, it was to cover a members build or at least a build of interest to our members. News, fighter comparisons, Australian Aviation history and looking back exactly 100 years ago to learn all about what was happening in the world then.

I introduced the updates in between newsletters to keep members better informed as 3 months between newsletters started to become too long.

Where to now - what's in store for the next 10 years?

I have been going to Caboolture airfield since 1993 and was always impressed by it and its location and always thought it would be the ideal spot to have this collection. We were meant to be part of a much larger museum there but small minded individuals and petty rivalry combined with bruising some big egos of some monumental wankers, mean that didn't happen.

There is absolutely no understanding of the value of this museum from the local council or its importance to the area and so we don't receive any support from them or their tourism promotional arm.

Combine all that with the significant affect covid has had on visitor numbers over the last 21 months and it becomes obvious that we may not be where we need to be.

We did exceptionally well during our first year, just above what we had predicted but since covid we just haven't been able to reach similar numbers again. Despite all the extensive marketing we have done, online and off line, all of the media attention we have had through TV, magazines, newspaper, radio as well as being actively promoted by Brisbane Tourism, we still remain S.E. Qld's best kept secret.

I appreciate that we are a niche within a niche, still nearly all those coming through are blown away by the concept and what they learn. Yet the majority of them still only find us through a search on Google as to 'what to do in the area'.

We continue to look at all options for the long term viability of TAVAS.

TAVAS AIR DISPLAYS

It had always been our intention from the very beginning to hold flying displays. That was the whole point of creating a flying museum. Why gather a collection of flying aircraft, if you're not going to fly them, demonstrating their performance to the public? You might as well just be another static museum.

We wanted to hold events over the period of the Centenary of WWI. It started in late 1914 and flying in earnest (well fighters at least) didn't occur until 1915, so we intended to run our first show in 2015. That however, wasn't to be.

The extreme small mindedness of the president of the aeroclub at that time, the politics and the stupidity we were up against amongst a small collective of idiots, meant it just wasn't going to happen. So our first event took place in 2016. Even that took some careful political manoeuvring to make happen.

The airshows were run over the Anzac Day weekend each year for several reasons. When we first started, we just didn't have the money to pay other aircraft to fly in and display. Many ex-military aircraft based at Caboolture would participate in Anzac Day flyovers around the area, so we knew they would be practicing over that long weekend. Their coming and going for practice was seen by the crowd as part of that initial display.

Also, we had looked ahead and worked out that the Anzac Day weekend in 2018 fell over 21st and 22nd of April, exactly 100 years after the Red Barons death, which we could re-enact at that time as part of a show

Although ideally, I would have wanted the last of the WWI centenary airshows to have been held on the 10th and 11th November to mark 100 years since the armistice, weather at that time of the year is always bad and a show at that time would not have worked.

That said, weather in April in S.E. Qld is not much better and at least one day of each of our shows each year was marred by bad weather. Still we managed to pull off some pretty impressive shows despite all the limitations.

The real secret to success came with asking seasoned Airshow ringmaster (and long time TAVAS member) Ray Vuillermin for help. He knew how to deal with the politics of the airfield, certain difficult individuals & of course CASA. His advise, contacts and assistance were to make for much better events.

Dave Walsh introduced us to Matt and Leslie Fisher who had worked closely with Ray at the Bundaberg airshows each year. They were able to assist airside in a big way, taking care of and running the volunteers for much of that.

Still the biggest thing most people don't realise is what you see airside is literally only 20% of the work. The other 80% is getting all the approvals and getting the non airside things to work (car parking, ticketing, entry to the show etc) and one that Nathalie and I had to do each year and it is always a hell of a lot of work.

At the 2017 show, having Jacks F2B Bristol and our SE5a performing at the same event was the first time I truly felt we had made it. We were demonstrating Australian WWI aircraft to the public alongside other WWI aircraft. It was a great sense of achievement.



The beginning of the 2017 show with two Australian iconic aircraft battling the most iconic aircraft of WWI

The 2018 event was the culmination of so much work. It tied in with the (unofficial) opening of the museum. We had multiple WWI types flying at the event and showcased aircraft right through to the modern day RAAF starting with a flyby of the Bristol F2B and Super Hornet together, followed by an incredible handling display by that jet. Later that day a C-17 performed a 300 knot pass at 300 feet before doing a low and slow dirty pass. It felt like all the work of the past 6 years had been worth it and we had fully achieved what we set out to.



RAAF C-17 low and slow dirty pass down the runway



Australia's 1 Squadron, then and now. Our 2018 show started with the Super Hornet passing the Bristol F2B at crowd centre before the Bristol landed so that the Rhino could put on the most impressive display

- The major Airshows we have held or attended are -
- Avalon 2015 (see issue 13)
 - TAVAS Vintage Fly-in 2016 (see issue 18)
 - Old Station 2016 (see issue 18)
 - TAVAS GWFD 2017 (see issue 22)
 - Wings over Illawarra 2017 (see issue 22)
 - TAVAS GWFD 2018 (see issue 26)
 - Red Thunder Airshow 2018 (see issue 26)

We have been asked to perform in far more airshows than that but the reality of having pilots available and getting aircraft like these to other venues has always been incredibly difficult. Still, we have managed to display far more WWI aircraft and their history to far greater audiences than any who have come before us in the last 90 years.

Other regular appearances for us that we flew in for were at QAM's annual open cockpit days held at Caloundra (see issues 11 & 19), Archer Falls (issue 16), the Aviation Australia's open days held at Brisbane International airport (see issues 19 & 31) and displays for the Redcliffe RSL (see issues 11, 14, 18, 28) and the special Make a wish day (issue 19).



A period looking shot of the Red Baron about to roll in on two aircraft of the AFC - 2017 TAVAS GWFD show

An airshow is a major event in terms of financial and physical effort, on a scale very few can appreciate. The amount of work behind the scenes leading up to it from a year out, is astronomical. It proved to be very taxing on such a small team as ours, with minimal volunteer support each time. So the decision was made just to run one every 2 years. So far Covid has put a stop to that. At this stage we really don't know when we are likely to run another one.



Behind the fence during the 2018 TAVAS GWFD show



Taxying past a Qantas B787 at Brisbane International

A huge thank you to all the volunteers who have helped make each of our airshows, and attendance at others, possible. It has been a huge commitment from a small group of people and to each of them I am ever so grateful.



Paul Strike in the Triplane shoots me down in the SE5a at Wings Over Illawarra airshow in 2017

TAVAS ON MAGAZINE COVERS

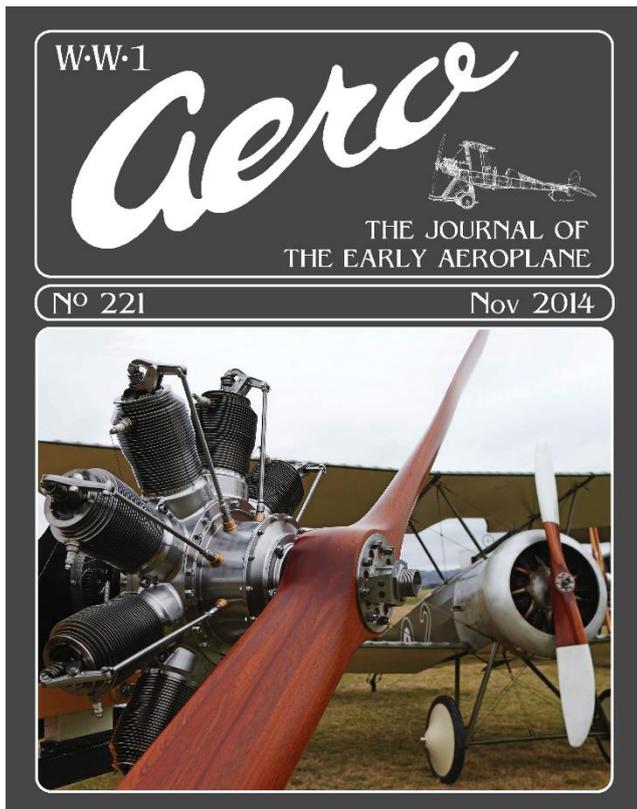


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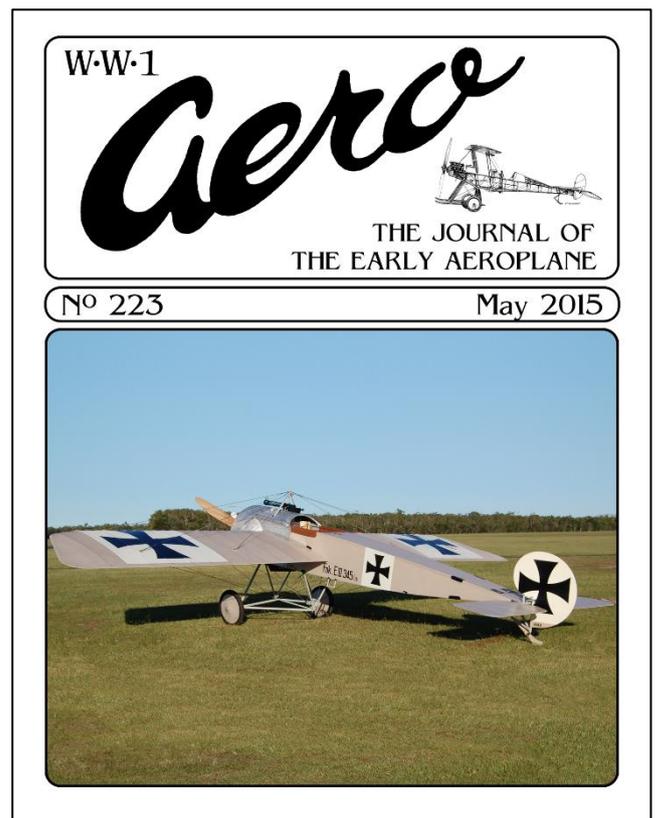
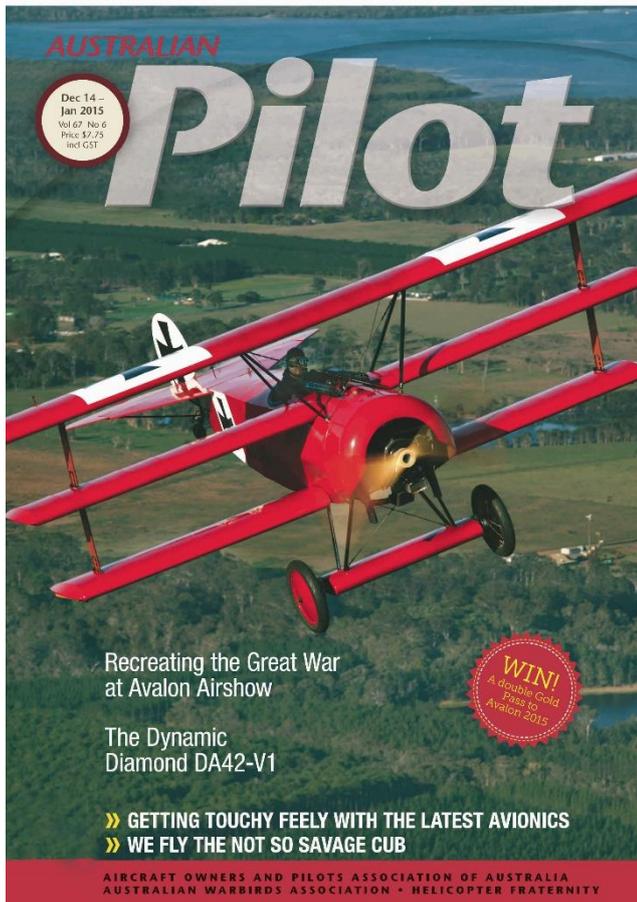


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Mark Smith photo



David White photo

SPORTPILOT

RECREATIONAL AVIATION AUSTRALIA / FEBRUARY 2017 VOL 67 (2)

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Photo by David Claes

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A replica of the Fokker Dr.1 Triplane flown by the Red Baron who was shot down 100 years ago. This and other WWI aircraft will be flying on April 21 - 22 at The Australian Vintage Aviation Society's Great War Flying Display at Caboolture Airfield QLD. Photo by Mark Smith.

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Mark Smith photo (above and below)

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Andrew Carter piloting a Fokker E.III Eindecker over the Glass House Mountains on Queensland's Sunshine Coast. This is the only 100% accurate reproduction of this aircraft flying anywhere in the world. Photo by David White.

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Photo by David White

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PICTORIAL TRIBUTE TO MARK SMITH



Mark was a truly unique individual with an extensive background in news journalism and an extreme love of aviation. Many of us like to think we're the most incredibly passionate when it comes to this but I have never seen anyone in Mark's league. He literally loved and was excited by, every single aspect of flying and wanted to share that with other like minded people and get others excited and involved in aviation as well. His enthusiasm was infectious and he succeeded in his quest like so very few before him.

I first met Mark when he was the editor of the AOPA Australian Pilot magazine. This was a mag that was unreadable under the previous editor. I'd never met anyone who didn't turn up their nose whenever you mentioned that publication to them. Under Mark, it became one of the best, easiest and enjoyable to read aviation magazines on the market.

He came to Caboolture to cover our involvement in the upcoming 2015 Avalon airshow, bringing WWI aviation to the masses and literally highlighting 100 years of fighter development (our Fokker Eindecker was going to be displayed alongside the F-35 Fighter, highlighting the first and the very latest in Fighter aircraft design).

He was incredibly giving of his time, the photos he took were all very well thought out and grabbed your attention and his air to air work was great. He had a knack of getting everything he needed within about 10 minutes of being airborne.

He just had a great idea of where the light was best and where he needed you and in what position, to make best use of that light.

Many times I've had him say "now turn right, now left, drop your right wing" and wonder why. When we got on the ground he would say he saw a cloud that would have made for a good back drop or he liked the way the light was bouncing off that cloud, or the way the light was coming through the cloud. It all sounded a bit artsy at the time but when you saw the finished results, you couldn't argue with them. They were all superb.

Mark was incredibly impressed by what we were doing and the challenges we were up against. It soon became apparent to him why no one else in Australia had done what we were doing and so he put a lot of effort into supporting us along the way and giving us coverage wherever he could.

Mark ended up leaving that publication and taking over Sport Pilot, the Recreational Aviation of Australia magazine. Even though most of our aircraft were not registered with RAAus, Mark still gave us as much coverage as possible at every opportunity. Given that we needed to expose what we were doing to as wide an audience as possible, Mark's efforts were always greatly appreciated.

As a result, Mark became a great friend. However, he was the type of guy that everyone who had some interaction with him considered a great friend.

For a guy who literally travelled all around Australia, nearly always at his own expense, to take his own photos and interview the pilots and their machines, from single seat, powered aero chutes, right through to an SR-71 pilot living on the Gold Coast, he was known throughout the industry as one of the most passionate and professional people in the game.

So it was an incredibly sad day when we learnt of his passing on 23rd July 2019. I can honestly say we won't come across anyone like him again. He will be missed.

The following pages contain images Mark took on different occasions over many years coming to visit us at TAVAS. They don't necessarily reflect his best work, they are pictures that have significant meaning to me and for TAVAS and they serve as a fitting memorial to the work of a truly unique individual.



Mark was flying with Ray Vuillermin in his DH82 Tiger Moth to take this picture of me flying Jack's Bristol F2B Fighter, with Renni Forbes in the rear seat. Australian Warbirds Association used this in their annual calendar.



David White and Mark Smith have taken many truly brilliant photos of the Triplane flying. This is my favourite of Marks and one we have used many, many times in all forms of promotion, advertising and marketing. He had already taken many great pics from a shoot earlier that day but the light in the late afternoon prompted Mark to send us all skywards one more time so he could get this one picture.

Marks signature photo was the silhouette of his subject. He just loved taking them.







THANK YOU DAVE WALSH



Dave is a softly spoken, humble, family man, with an extensive background in aviation engineering. He is the stalwart behind TAVAS being a flying museum.

He joined Trans Australia Airlines (TAA) back in the 1960's and worked on piston engine aircraft, turbo-props, turbo jets and turbo fans. He also had a stint in the RAAF working on the Canberra Bomber and did an engineering course on the F-111 but finished up with the Air Force before that was introduced.

Dave has been associated with Caboolture airfield almost since its inception. He used to house the Warplanes museum in his large hangar on the airfield. He was an active member of trying to get a large heritage centre established on the airfield, involving multiple museums. This would of (and should of) been truly spectacular and a huge attraction for the area. Sadly, the same small minded idiots I wrote of earlier were able to sabotage that brilliant concept.

TAVAS was to be just the smallest part of that larger entity. When it wasn't to be, we went ahead anyway and set up our own unique museum. Dave has been there to help in some manner almost since the start. Dave was there to unpack the Fokker Triplane when it arrived from Florida. He used his crane to put the wings in place and fit them to the airframe.



When we moved that aircraft into Jacks hangar, Dave just went to work getting it airworthy and has done the same with every aircraft we have brought into the museum.

In many ways I guess I am seen as the public face of TAVAS and many members know of me through these newsletters. Nathalie is known for being the one who works diligently behind the scenes, setting up events and making the day to day operation of TAVAS work and for those reasons we're the ones that people associate with TAVAS.

The simple fact is anyone can buy aircraft and host events. Getting vintage aircraft flying and keeping them flying is the real challenge. As a volunteer NFP museum, TAVAS simply doesn't have the funds to pay a full time engineer or even rent the services of one for the amount of work we need completed. So we have been incredibly fortunate to have Dave Walsh step up and take over the maintenance of the entire fleet.

Early aircraft are not what you would call 'easily accessible' from a maintenance point of view. I guess back in the day if you really had to work on something inside the fuselage you would just strip some of the fabric back, do what you had to and then get someone to repair the fabric. We do not have that luxury, so it is quite common to walk in and only see the soles of a pair of Volley sneakers appearing out of the cockpit as Dave has inserted himself in upside down and backwards to work on cables or controls, usually located behind or under the pilots seat.

Dave always has limited time and too many tasks in the museum and usually works alone to get them done without distraction, but where we have been incredibly fortunate is that when Dave does require help, it's always with other highly experienced guys, John Kerr and Dave Condie, both who have similar backgrounds to Dave & who have been instrumental in keeping the fleet flying.

To have a Certificate of Airworthiness issued for each of the aircraft, Dave works with the only engineers qualified to do such things, initially Stephen Dines and then Dennis Stacey, giving us one more flying aircraft in the collection each time.

Dave use to work as instructor with TAA, teaching engineering and systems to pilots and engineers. That is a real skill and one that has come in handy time and

again, having to explain complex technical operations to us simple pilots (and even to CASA on occasion!)

There is a classic episode of *the Simpsons* where Homer needs open heart surgery. The conversation with the doctor goes like this –

Dr. Hibbert: Homer, I'm afraid you'll have to undergo a quadruple coronary bypass operation.

Homer: Say it in English, Doc!

Dr. Hibbert: You're going to need open-heart surgery.

Homer: Spare me your medical mumbo jumbo!

Dr. Hibbert: We're going to cut you open and tinker with your ticker.

Homer: Could you dumb it down a shade?

Quite often I feel like Homer in that above exchange, when Dave is explaining the inner workings of, or the operation of, something essential in the fleet. To his credit, he just remains ever patient and continues to *dumb it down a shade* until I get it and we can move on in a safe manner.



Dave doing what he does best, explaining how the rotary engine works, in simple terms, to a crowd of interested onlookers at one of our engine run days

No challenge has ever seemed to faze the man. When we obtained our first rotary he just set about making it right and getting it fitted to the Fokker D.VIII, not at all worried that he had never seen or worked with one before (or even knew anyone who had).

He worked it out very quickly and took great delight in explaining its working to others, especially other engineers, all of whom were always so amazed by it.

Dave's real expertise came in getting that engine running. We were at the 2015 Avalon airshow and a lot of our credibility resided on having that 97 year old engine running. I had the head of TVAL look at it. He came up with some suggestions that didn't work. Their head engineer had a look and couldn't sort it out. The engineers under him were all stumped.

This was a company that had many different types of rotary engines working, had in fact reverse engineered these engines and should know them best. The entire time Dave just kept saying that he thought this was the issue, they all kept disagreeing with him. So, finally when they all gave up, Dave patiently set about making the fix he deemed necessary. Sure enough, he got that engine running.

Firing that engine up for the first time, at Avalon & in front of the TAVL engineers was incredibly satisfying and showed the complete understanding Dave has of complex working machinery and his tenacity to just sit down and systematically work through each issue to get the result that he knows is inevitable, regardless of everyone else thinking that it is impossible.

Simply put, no mere engineer could look after the TAVAS fleet. It does take a unique individual who has to have the broad background of experience Dave has, combined with his ability to reverse engineer components in his mind, thereby finding solutions to problems that have not been experienced for close to a century.

Dave has been responsible for getting every aircraft ready for its CoA, for deciding when the test flights are done and how, for getting them ready for airshows and other displays and for hanging aircraft in the museum from the roof. He is constantly welding, fixing or creating some piece of equipment to support the operation and to keep it all going.

So to Dave, on behalf of the literally tens of thousands of people who have now seen WWI aircraft flying in this country because of your efforts, thank you so very much.



Dave on his jury rigged platform, disassembling the Camel for road transport to its new home at TAVAS

100 YEARS AGO

2nd Oct – Scott Crossfield is born. He would go on to be the first man to break Mach 2 and the first to fly the X-15. He is best known for sitting in an X-15 during a ground run and pouring coffee from a thermos into a cup, when the aircraft exploded. He was pulled from the fireball unharmed but had spilt his coffee in his lap. The next day the newspaper headline read *X-15 rocket plane explodes – pilot wets pants!*

18th Oct – The first Pop Up toaster is patented.

20th Oct - Germany and the Allies come to agreement over reparation payments in meeting at Wiensbaden.

20th Oct - Treaty of Ankara signed between the French Third Republic & Government of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, ending the Franco-Turkish War.

November – Hyperinflation was rampant in Germany, where 263 Marks was needed to buy one American dollar, more than 20 times greater than the 12 Marks needed in April 1919. Comparatively, 20 Marks were needed to buy one British Pound in 1913, 43 were required by the end of the War. By November 1919 (1 year later) 149 Marks were needed. By December of 1921 268 Marks were required for one British Pound.

The amount required to be paid to the allies for war reparations was \$122 Billion by February 1922 but the entire country only generated \$90 Billion in GDP. It was obvious that Germany would not only default on its payment but the entire country would become bankrupt, yet the French insisted on forcing blood from a stone, after all, what could go wrong? They would find out in 1939.

3rd Nov – Charles Bronson soon to be American actor is born.

4th Nov - The Sturmabteilung or SA (Brown Shirts) is formally established by Adolf Hitler. Their first official act was physically assaulting Hitlers opponents.

9th Nov - Partito Nazionalista Fascista formed in Italy by Mussolini.

12th Nov - Wesley May, with a five-gallon (19 litre) can of gasoline strapped to his back, climbs from the wing of one aircraft to the wing of another in the first “air-to-air” refueling.



May, with can of gas strapped on his back, steps off one Curtis Jenny to another to do first refuel in flight

12th Nov - Washington Conference for Limitation of Armaments takes place, to limit the Naval arms race and work out security agreements in the Pacific.

13th Nov - US, France, Japan and British Empire sign a Pacific Treaty.

9th Dec - Thomas Midgeley Jr., a young engineer at General Motors, had grown tired of the annoying noises made by internal combustion engines when running, sounds referred to as *knock* or *pinging*. Midgeley experimented with diverse elements until he found success with lead. Thanks to the activities of that day, we do not have to deal with the clattering of engines today. Lead remained one of the widely used antiknock agents despite its adverse effects on the human body. (However companies today have since started phasing out the manufacturing of engines that require lead but not yet in aviation).

That’s all for this, our 10th anniversary special. I do hope you’ve enjoyed looking back on all we’ve done over the last decade. Who knows what the next one will bring?

See the birthday party invite on the following page. All members and a plus one welcome. For catering and covid requirements, we do need RSVP please. Email names to info@tavas.com.au

The next update is due out mid February and the next Newsletter at the end of March.

Until next time, build light and strong – and fly safe.

Andrew Carter



PLEASE JOIN US FOR
OUR 10TH ANNIVERSARY

Celebration held at TAVAS museum
Hangar 106 Caboolture Airfield

When: Sunday 16th January 1:00pm

Beer, Wine, soft drink and cake provided

RSVP: by Sunday 9th January

Due to ongoing Covid requirements,
we need the names of people
who are coming, by this date.

email info@tavas.com.au