



April 2009



# MUSEUM HAPPENINGS

*Welcome to the Museum of Australian Army Flying April Newsletter.*

The Museum has recently received advice that an application for funding from the Queensland Government's Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) has been successful. The \$5,250 grant will fund the production of an interactive DVD on the MAAF which will enable visitors to gain a better understanding of Army flying operations, the Museum's collection and the history of Oakey airfield. Production of the DVD will commence in August for completion by the end of 2009.

Impact Images is on track to have all aircraft text panels completed and installed prior to Anzac Day 2009 activities. Thank you to all those individuals and organisations who sponsored the production of a panel. Your sponsorship will reduce the demand on our operating funds and enable other essential activities to be undertaken.

On Friday, 1 May 2009 MAJGEN Tony Fraser will officially name the Museum's memorabilia room the "Terry Egan Room" in recognition of the late WO2 Egan's significant contribution to the establishment of the MAAF. The naming ceremony will commence at 10.00am and will be followed by morning tea. If you wish to attend the opening, please advise Helen Bawden, [nedwab@bigpond.net.au](mailto:nedwab@bigpond.net.au) or 07 46911622, by 20 April 2009.

As many of you are aware, a motion was passed at the Annual General Meeting of the Museum of Australian Army Flying on 20 September 2008 for the Board to undertake a survey to measure MAAF members' support/opposition to the Army History Unit's (AHU) intention to change the name of the Museum to the "Australian Army Aviation Museum". The survey has been completed and the Army History Unit has been advised of the results which are:

At closing date for submissions of 27 April 2009:

65 responses were received from the Museum's current financial membership of 195  
47 members opposed the name change  
17 members supported the name change  
1 member offered no comment

In the April 2009 edition of its newsletter On Target the Australian Army Artillery Museum advised that, by direction from the Army History Unit, its name has been changed from the National Artillery Museum. The newsletter article is included below.

*"The National Artillery Museum has undergone a name change and is now the Australian Army Artillery Museum. This change in name was directed from Army History Unit and affects all museums across the Army Museum network.*

*Apparently the visibility of the Museums within Defence was not clear, especially in Victoria. Whilst wide consultation was supposed to have been conducted, our interpretation of wide must differ from that used, the name change is now in place and changes in signage has already begun on Museum displays. We hope Army history unit will cover all costs involved in the major signage affected. If you have visited the Engineer museum at Moorebank you will note the major road sign at the entrance to the Engineer School has already been changed.*

*Whilst the change in name may not sit well with everyone we need to appreciate it is a direction from Army History unit and it has been implemented. We have been allowed to continue to use the generic North Fort title.*

*So operationally it will have little effect on us and hopefully will resolve the problems experienced in Victoria".*

It would appear that the Army History Unit has begun the renaming process for Army museums under its command. We will provide updates on the MAAF situation as information comes to hand.

**Geoff McKenzie**  
Chairman  
MAAF Board



**CURATOR'S CORNER**  
Brian Reardon



RAAF museum at Point Cook. The second aircraft has been offered to the MAAF.

So what is a Deperdussin and what is its significance to Army aviation and the museum? It is a 1910 French designed monoplane powered by a 35 hp three cylinder Anzani engine, which was just about enough to achieve flight. Its controls were very basic, being the elevator, rudder and the early method of wing warping to assist its graceful manoeuvres. It was also one of the three types of aircraft selected by the Government at the time for use at the newly established Central Flying School at Point Cook. The initial purchase of training aircraft for the school was a Bristol Boxkite, two Deperdussins and two BE2a Tractor Airplanes.

While the Boxkite had the honour of making the first military flight and was in essence, the ab-initio trainer, a role it filled for nearly two years, the Deperdussin had a less glorious career. The first Deperdussin, CFS 4 crashed and was written off on the 9<sup>th</sup> March, 1914; a few days after the first flight. It was then decided that the second Deperdussin, CFS 5 would be used for ground training and taxiing. Interestingly, this aircraft survived the best efforts of the students at the time, and is now stored in the care of the Australian War Memorial. So as you can see, while relatively unknown the Deperdussin aeroplane is very much a part of our Army aviation history and would be yet another example of that early technology. I might add here that both aircraft have been built to a flying standard and although the lack of a suitable engine prevents this, Jack has been meticulous with the precision and the engineering of his reproduction.



I also took the opportunity while in Melbourne to visit Point Cook and check on the progress of Project 2014. This project is the brainchild of a couple retired RAAF engineers, Group Captain Ron Gretton and Wing Commander Geoff Matthews who are building a flying replica of the Bristol Boxkite with the aim to re-enact the first military flight on its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary on the 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2014.

Ron and Geoff have been quietly working away on the project for some four years now and have just about completed and acquired all the necessary components. They were a little frustrated at the beginning as there appeared that there were no plans for a Bristol Boxkite either here or overseas. Fortunately, the early stages of planning coincided with our museums preparations to re-locate to our new building. Prior to this happening we had to have our Boxkite completely restored, this required the aircraft to be completely stripped down and all the struts, widgets, turn-buckles, bracing wires and control surfaces refurbished. This was a great opportunity for Ron and for days he was seen climbing in and around the airframe measuring, taking photos, drawing profiles and making cardboard cut-outs of every conceivable item that went into a Boxkite. The restoration of our aircraft was carried out by Lynette Zuccoli's Aerotec Queensland workshop.



The “workshop” that the project is taking shape in is more a wooden hut similar to any of the small wooden buildings seen beside most Bellman Hangars on most RAAF airfields. The real problems will arise when assembly commences as they will then need to have hangar space for a large aeroplane. Luckily at present, all the beautifully crafted struts, booms, skids, control surfaces, wings, rudders, propeller, metal fittings and turn-buckles, all neatly stacked around the walls resemble something out of a large IKEA flat pack.



Naturally there are some concessions to modern technology and general safety. A modern Rotec seven cylinder radial engine sits proudly on its mounts awaiting installation and because of this; there will be a small instrument panel beside the pilots left knee so that he can monitor the engine performance. A trial assembly of the framework is the next job and the manufacture of the hundreds of bracing wires to hold it all in place. It will then be disassembled so that the fabric work can be carried out, and then final assembly will begin with the aim of test flight sometime in 2010. That will give them plenty of time for flight testing; the only thing required for the anniversary flight will be good weather.



## THE MAAF SPANNER BANGERS (MSB) CLUB WO1 Gary Watson



**“No matter how old a mother is, she watches her middle-aged children for signs of improvement. “**

And on the subject of mothers, I have always found it intriguing to watch how many of the volunteers (particularly the more senior “crusties”) relate to our ever fluctuating population of trainees who frequent our workshop while awaiting courses or postings. I suppose when your grand children are about the same age as some of the young soldiers, it is only natural that you will take them under your wing and provide a bit of life experience (some would say wisdom) from the highway of life.

The trainees are introduced and assigned to a volunteer for the day and will generally act in the capacity of a tradesman’s assistant (TA). This is dependent on individual knowledge and ability as some trainees happen to be qualified tradesmen. It is a tremendous learning experience for the trainees (and some volunteers) as the train smash of generations unfolds on the hangar floor.

Fuelled with copious quantities of cynical banter mixed with some youthful lip, the **Lost Generation** battles it out with **Generation Y**. But it should come as no surprise that old age and treachery generally comes up trumps. Here are some of the more interesting requests for tools and explanations for their use I have heard come out of the volunteers when engaging our future army generation.

### **Extending Tape Measure**

Designed for those awkward situations where the distance being measured always seems to be longer than the tape. This tape measure is printed on an elastic strip, allowing it to stretch that bit further.

### **Cold Chisel Set**

Set of chisels. Note: Must be kept in a freezer below 0 Centigrade.

### **Gas Welder**

Suitable for welding combinations of all common gases, e.g. joining oxygen to acetylene; nitrogen to helium; argon to carbon dioxide; etc.

### **Indian Rope**

Self supporting rope for use in situations where access to the top end is restricted. Specially imported, and sold by the imperial yard.

### **Reversible Drill**

A battery powered drill that has two settings: normal for drilling holes and reverse for filling them in again.

**Single Ended Sash Clamp**

Designed for situations where only one side of the work piece needs to be clamped.

**Spirit Level Bubble**

A replacement bubble for a spirit level.

And not forgetting two old favourites.....

**Sky Hook**

Useful for hanging items up where there is nowhere available to attach a normal hook.

**Left Handed Screwdriver**

A screwdriver suitable for sinister craftsmen, or for screws with left hand threads.

And so as the dust in the hangar settles.....the score is..... **Grumpy Old Men – 1, Nintendo Players – Nil.**

Finally, all projects continue along with the Bird Dog dais completed (awaiting a time for placement in the museum) and the Mustang propeller stand now firmly in position in the museum car park.

The last three weeks has seen three more display aircraft go up on their stands which will help preserve the aircraft, specifically the tyres. The tail plane section on the Winjeel is almost completely fitted, the Porter team are still busy gluing vinyl to the various timber floor panels and the Spitfire guys have just received the latest lot of frames from the Waterjet Cutters in Brisbane.

Another busy month in the workshop.

So until next time, keep bangin those spanners!

**WOIC MSB**

**EDITOR’S EDITS**



It is hard to believe that Easter is on us again. On behalf of the Board of Directors, Office Staff and Volunteers I wish you a most blessed Easter. If you are travelling, please be safe and I hope Easter Bunny comes to visit your house!



Anyone who has an article, information or photos they would like to share with MAAF members (of either historical or present day interest) please send to me and I will include in future Newsletters. The Newsletter is designed not only to keep members informed of “Museum Happenings” but is also a great way of disseminating interesting information amongst members.



**A14-652 having her wheels jacked up and as she looks now**

**Oakey Fly-In**  
**3-4 OCTOBER 2009**  
**ROTORS, WINGS n WHEELS**

Museum of Australian Army Flying  
Army Airfield, Oakey, Qld 4401. Phone 07 46917666  
Open 10.00am to 4.00pm daily. Closed Good Friday, Christmas Day and Boxing Day  
Admission: \$5.00 adults, \$12.00 family (2 adults and up to 3 children) and \$2.00 children.