

PRESIDENT'S REPORT, ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
AUGUST 19<sup>th</sup>, 1986.

The year 1985 - 1986 was most eventful and marked a watershed in the history of Queensland Air Museum.

Since the museum's eviction from Nudgee in 1980, Eagle Farm had been the organisation's home and a site of refuge for its collection of aircraft. Many work parties and thousands of hours had been expended on the aircraft and the grounds, whilst every effort had been made to secure a permanent site for the aviation museum.

However, despite years of expressions of support, by Members of Parliament, Q.A.M. was given notice of Termination of 'Permissive Occupancy'. Appeals to the Prime Minister Bob Hawke had resulted in a short extension to December 31st, 1985.

Publicity of impending eviction from Eagle Farm resulted in numerous offers of sites from around Queensland. Amongst these, a short list included Caloundra, Caboolture, Redcliffe and Toowoomba. The offer from Caboolture included temporary accommodation and in view of the urgency of the situation, the Caboolture offer was accepted by Q.A.M. members, on 10th December 1985, subject to further negotiation. However, at a special meeting held on 17th December, Councillor Harrison of Landsborough Shire Council informed the members of Q.A.M. that the Council was prepared to fund the cost of a building 22 x 30 x 9 metres.

Two days before Christmas, a letter was received by the President informing Q.A.M. that the December 31st deadline for permissive occupancy was final.

To alleviate the pressure, members of the Committee, Ken Woodrow, Mike Adams, Ron Cuskelly and Maureen Cuskelly arranged a meeting with local Member of Parliament (Mrs. Elaine Darling) as a result of which the Minister for Aviation was informed by telex of the choice of Caloundra as the site to which the aircraft would be moved by the end of June, 1986.

A programme for dismantlement and transportation was drawn up by Ken and Mike and notified to the Minister via the Airport Manager.

For the next six months, work parties dismantled and transported aircraft to Caloundra, first of all into a disused garage, owned by the ANZ Bank in the centre of Caloundra, pending erection of the new museum building.

By mid April, the building was under-way, after clearing and filling of the site by the Council. It was decided to have the floor concreted, rather than place the hangared aircraft on a dirt floor as would have been the case had a fence been purchased instead.

The major move of the Meteor, Canberra and one Sea Venom was successfully accomplished by Brambles on 13th June, 1986. The schedule for relocation had, with a few hitches, been met!

The whole saga of a volunteer community organisation, seeking only at great effort and expense, to preserve the nation's heritage for future generations is something all Queensland Air Museum members should be proud of. That these efforts should have been met by such deplorable opposition is something many will remember for a long time.

Within a few hours of our aircraft arriving safely at the Caloundra museum site, the process of re-assembly was commenced, organised and directed by Ken and Mike and assisted, not only by our Brisbane members, but also by our newly-joined Sunshine Coast members.

### The Building

The Blazely building was rolled to shape on site and erected in little more than a week. Attendance by the television crews from several national channels resulted in publicity, not only for Q.A.M. but also for the builders who had provided the structure at cost price.

Subsequently, a concrete floor, five inches in depth was laid over the entire area of the building. The \$50,000.00 voted by Landsborough Shire Council for the museum building, after paying for site preparation, structural erection and footings, paid for approximately half the cost of the floor. The residual amount owed by Q.A.M. after payment had been made by the Landsborough Shire Council was \$6,837.66.

The museum building is incomplete inasmuch that one end lacks a wall and is open to the weather. Structural detail drawings of proposed sliding doors to enable ingress and exit of museum aircraft have been kindly prepared by Ralph Freestun & Associates. However, the restricted space within the building necessitates further extension before a permanent end is funded and erected.

A sketch of the existing building with proposed addition (one of several options) has been prepared by Vick Clarke of Caloundra.

Inadequate site drainage is also a problem after heavy rain. Rocla have offered pipes to obviate this problem and we welcome this generous offer.

### Local Involvement

Following earlier publicity of the offer by Landsborough Shire Council, a number of Sunshine Coast people expressed interest in joining Q.A.M. However, since the arrival of aircraft and components and their installation in the museum building, a group of active Sunshine Coast members have really got 'stuck in' and have been busy restoring components, making equipment and liaising with visitors.

The visual impact of work being undertaken is striking as anyone who has recently inspected the beautifully restored livery on the Royal Flying Doctor Drover fuselage will agree!

Vic Clarke is ably co-ordinating local helpers and members at Caloundra whilst Ron Atherley is maintaining accounts and controlling expenditure.

### Restoration

As mentioned earlier, a beautiful example of repainting and signwriting is taking place on the Drover fuselage. This is changing the aircraft from the appearance of a derelict wreck to an interesting relic of earlier R.F.D.S. operations.

Restoration of Sea Venom components has commenced and Air Intake fairings for the Meteor's engine nacelles have been fabricated and fitted. Restoration of finish in the Canberra Bomber cockpit has also been commenced by Sunshine Coast members.

### Bicentennial Submission

The 1982 Bicentennial Submission has been revised and updated to feature the Caloundra location and has been re-entered to the Bicentennial Authority. After endorsement, our letterheads will be re-printed to include the Bicentennial logo as well as making the necessary amendment regarding our Patron.

## The Library

After many years of storage under members' houses, our archival collection of books, magazines, manuals, etc. is being relocated to a room made available to Q.A.M. in George Street, Brisbane. The Department of Works have assisted in providing a good clean room and racking. John Sutherland has spent much time recording the documents to be included. John has been assisted by numerous members in this task.

A significant part of the library is comprised of the collection of books and magazines bequeathed to Q.A.M. by our late member Barry Flood. Items owned by the late Sturdee Green are also included.

## Outside assistance

Much assistance has been received from persons and organisations outside of Q.A.M. Indeed it is probably fair to say that without this sympathetic help we would not have achieved anything like the progress referred to in this report.

Acknowledgement is thankfully made to the following who come readily to mind:-

Landsborough Shire Council	Funding of building and general assistance and encouragement.
Brisbane Bottle Exchange Company	Supply of truck and driver to shift components to Caloundra.
South Brisbane T.A.F.E. College Podevin and Company	Restoration of Vampire wings. Provision of 6 tonne Crane and Driver to reassemble Canberra.
Caloundra Aero Club Caloundra Rotary Club Aldo Bevacqua ANZ Bank Aztec Transport Brambles Transport & Crane Rocla Pipes Austral Mining	Assistance of members on site. Supervision and co-ordination of concrete floor. Use of Service Station for storage. Assistance with transportation. Special rate for major move to Caloundra. Offer of pipes for drainage. Provision of truck with crane on many occasions.

## Finance

The financial report will be tabled at the meeting, however, we have been faced with two major expenditures pursuant to our relocation to Caloundra. The first of these, for \$5,000.00 for transportation of our aircraft has been met in full. The second, for concreting of the floor has only partially been met (\$5,000.00), leaving a debt of \$1,837.66. This sum must be found in the near future. A special fund-raising exercise will be imperative to settle this cost.

I have to express heartfelt thanks to Dave Bussey, who has donated \$3,000.00 towards the cost of the floor.

As if this were not enough, Dave has also assisted in the acquisition for the organisation of three engines.

Some donations are being made to our activity most weekends at the museum building, this is assisting in the purchase of materials for restoration of the exhibits.

We acknowledge the financial assistance received from the Minister for Tourism, National Parks and the Arts of \$2,000.00 towards the transportation of the Sea Venom, etc. This grant was made under the "Grants to Local Museums" scheme and follows previous grants made for cataloguing and restoration of exhibits. A request for 1986-1987 has been made to the Queensland Museum Director to assist in restoration of the aircraft at Caloundra.

#### Acquisition of further exhibits

We acknowledge with thanks, the donation by QANTAS of a Clark aircraft towing tug. This tug has been restored and repainted in the new QANTAS colours and will look excellent in the new building. It is fitting that QANTAS, the airline Queensland gave the world, should be the first airline to donate a major item of equipment to Q.A.M.

We also record the appreciation of our members to Dave Bussey for the initiative and assistance towards the purchase of three engines from Les Arthur's collection at Toowoomba.

#### Membership

Due to the relocation of our collection to Caloundra and the more highly visible nature of the aviation museum, we have gained numerous members. Most of these are, naturally, from the Sunshine Coast. Our membership stands at an all-time high.

#### Brisbane

Apart from the George Street Library development, there is still the need for a restoration centre in the Brisbane Region. Various plans and ideas have been mooted to cater for those members who are unable to travel to Caloundra on a regular basis.

#### Amberley

A small group of serving enthusiasts are restoring one of our Lincoln Gun Turrets, the Allison and Avon engines are also in the custody of the Amberley group.

#### Re-structuring

I see the need to spend some time and thought on a restructuring of Q.A.M. to give the Sunshine Coast members say in the running of the Queensland Air Museum. Our customary open democratic style of elections depends on the attendance of members at the A.G.M. The distance of the Sunshine Coast from Brisbane does obviously curtail attendance of many of our northern members and reduces their democratic right for a say in the A.G.M.

Now that we have a viable museum in the near future, a governing body may be required with delegated authority to run the museum.

This body, if created, should include Sunshine Coast members.

We have invited Air Vice Marshal Don Bennett to open the Q.A.M. Caloundra museum when he visits Australia for the Adelaide Pathfinder Force Reunion in April, 1987. We expect however to advertise opening of the museum to the public around Christmas 1986.

We shall be seeking sponsors to support our Bicentennial project. This will be put into effect after reprinting of our letterheads with Bicentennial logo following endorsement of the project which is assured to me.

The Stage II of the project still needs some thought.

#### Thanks for support

I have to acknowledge some incredible support during what was for many of us a most worrying period in our lives.

The number of wonderful people who have supported our project for Australia during the preceding year has been most uplifting. It is therefore not possible to name all of these people and organisations.

I must however single out the Sunshine Coast Model Aero Club for donating the results of their flying display at Sippy Down to Q.A.M. at a time of financial need.

I must also single out Councillor John Harrison from Landsborough Shire Council for his initiative and follow-up towards the relocation from Eagle Farm to a new home.

I thank all of our members for the support they gave me during this past year.

Out of adversity has come forth a new and positive future which is a monument to the Positive Thinking and Actions by our members and supporters. Q.A.M. in 1985-86 was clear evidence of the concern and efforts for Australia which alone is required to improve the Nation's future.

#### Conclusion of President's Report

R.H. HITCHINS.

(This document is an edited OCR facsimile compiled by Ron Cuskelly in December 2017)