



Spring 2022 Newsletter

Hello to all Members and supporters,

I held off with this newsletter for good reason. Some positive conclusions were in the wind and if you can be patient long enough, good things happen!

In the passing of the few months since the Winter newsletter there has been a great deal of activity and progress towards our goal of finding the best outcome for the aircraft and our Restoration Team.

I would like to start with the Restoration report from our Vice President, Woolard, as it starts to set the scene for 'what is ahead'.

Fuselage: Skin & stringer repairs in blister compartment well progressed, worse than first thought. A window fitted post war also has to be removed & altered adding to the job. Work ongoing setting up the port fixed & rotating blister frames. Note that the cutting & moulding of the plexiglass sections for both blisters is underway off site.

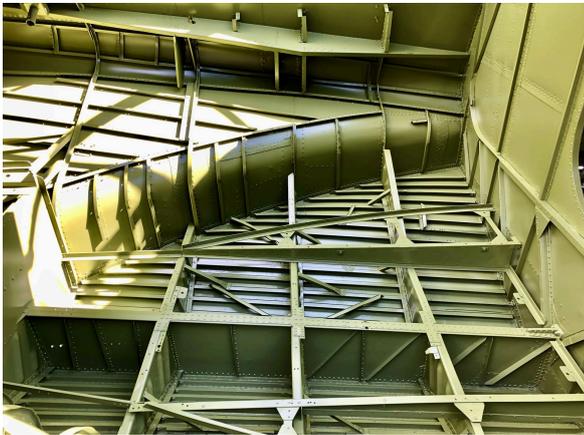
Much of the infrastructure for the **bow turret** is in place. Once again, the complete refurbishment of the actual twin gun turret is underway off site.

Work is also ongoing removing unwanted items from the fuselage interior plus carefully checking for any small items required for the refurbishment that are yet to be removed & repaired. Before the proposed relocation it is planned to pressure clean the entire interior to assist in removal of flaking paint, swarf & grime.

Centre Wing: Another bulkhead has been refitted; stringer replacement & repair ongoing. To their credit, three of the team have already begun working extra hours in an effort to have the wing ready for transport as soon as possible.

Relocation: A small team from the volunteer group has been formed to plan our proposed relocation & ensure it is carried out in an orderly manner. One of the

first actions was to decide how best all the Cat components would fit in the new building plus what infrastructure was required & where, ie, power & compressed air outlets. Much work has already taken place on how best to pack, support & cushion all the aircraft sections. Local business people have been more than helpful in providing materials & labour at a very cheap rate or free in some cases.



Thank you Terry - *A few admin. matters first:*

Supporters: The list continues to grow and we are very grateful for their unfailing support. If you have time, please go to our website as the major supporters are listed there: www.rathmines-catalina.com

Rathmines Base Tours: Bookings have continued over recent months and later this month we will host the Dungog Probus Club and also a visit from the Ramsgate (Sydney) RSL. About 30 in each group.

I was approached a few weeks ago by the President of Dobell House and as a result we have arranged a morning tea for them to be held at the Bowling Club along with our 'Rathmines Presentation'.

The Dobell committee see this as part of the Christmas celebration for their volunteers. We also agreed that mutual ongoing support and promotion of our respective ambitions was a good thing.

Memorial irrigation and fence projects: Our watering / irrigation system was finally completed last month and should provide an ongoing benefit to the appearance of the grounds, saving countless man hours and water!

The application for a grant to replace the existing walkway posts was unsuccessful (second time), undaunted we will try again. Committee approved the expenditure to have the pathway pressure cleaned and the contractor will be on site shortly.

The Relocation: As you have read in Terry's report there is a plan to relocate 'Our Girl' to an industrial unit located at Beresfield.

This is the culmination of numerous meetings and phone calls over many months. The very generous bequest from Ian Mclean has made all this possible.

Effective Tuesday Nov 15th, we have signed a 12-month lease to secure occupancy of this building and you can expect to see major aircraft components relocated over the next few weeks.

The timing was not our choice and the weather over the next few weeks will be critical. The Christmas break will also have an impact. A number of the restoration team and the committee have visited the new site and there is a very high degree of excitement.



It's ours - we have the keys



One of the many benefits will be the ability to display some of our memorabilia collection. Lariane and Penny continue their recording and catalogue work and advise 'about 80% done'... good work!

Naturally, the ability to work under cover on a level concrete floor and in lockable premises is a huge step forward for the restoration team.

The finer details of the lease and the future ahead are not able to be passed on at this time... 'commercial in confidence' applies.

Just a few words to express thanks and appreciation from the committee to our restoration volunteers. They continue to amaze me with their goodwill and work ethic. A number of them have put their hand up and are working extra days because of the relocation logistics/ time frame.

AGM: This was held, as planned, at the Rathmines Bowling Club last Thursday Nov 17th. A good attendance of interested members...thank you.

We have spent a considerable amount of time reviewing our Constitution and made several changes, primarily with the 'Objects'. These define what we do and where we are going. With the focus now away from Rathmines (restoration and display) there was a need for an update of the 2019 Constitution and this was put to a show of hands at the AGM and voted unanimously in the positive.

It is important to emphasise that at all times your RCA committee have been consistent with our commitment to continue with the Anzac Service and the 'Base Tours'.

Our audited 2021-22 financial accounts were accepted at the meeting. Thanks to our Treasurer, Philip, and auditors BPC Accounting.

The committee with one exception nominated for another term and I am delighted. They are a cohesive and hard-working group...my thanks and appreciation to each member.

James Marshall had requested to stand down. His workload within the Centennial Coal Group is enormous and with regret, I accepted his request. That said, James has offered to stay on in a volunteer consultancy role and that is good news for me....we enjoy a good working relationship.

We had one new nomination...from Phil Aris. Phil lives locally and has been working from home, for us, for several months, simplifying some Catalina data that we purchased from the USA a few years ago. You will see Phil's profile on our website shortly.

So, your committee for the next 12 months remains unchanged with the exceptions noted above.

I advised the members at the AGM and do so here, that this will be my last year as your President. I have always held the view that the position is not 'a job for life' and

the need for new ideas and fresh motivation is important. That said, I believe that at this critical period, continuity of names, faces and contacts is also important.

It has been a great pleasure and a great honour. I really look forward to the year ahead and seeing 'Our Girl' and her team settle into the new premises.

Christmas: Does it seem like 12 months ago!!! The RCA Christmas lunch was held on Friday Nov 18th (day after the AGM) at the Bowling Club. Sherrin and I enjoyed a relaxed and very pleasant afternoon with 'the team' and their wives.



As always, my best wishes and thanks for the support.

BILL



