

This American 5th Air Force hanger at Charters Towers in Queensland is thought to have been the only example of aviation architecture ever listed by the National Trust. Regrettably, it was destroyed by a freak storm eighteen months ago.

Old buildings and new museums

The interest in aviation museums shows little sign of abating with no fewer than half a dozen new museums being slated for development in the last twelve months. What is even more encouraging is that most of these proposals center around the re-use of historic buildings, particularly those with strong aviation connections. These developments signify a significant shift in attitude characterised by the recognition that our aeronautical heritage consists of bricks and mortar, as much as wood, wire and fabric. They also suggest a widespread realisation that it is our aviation architectural heritage which is equally at risk.

Plans have been announced in Longreach (Qld) to establish a multi-million dollar Qantas Founders' Memorial Museum, centered on the company's original



airport hanger which is Australia's oldest aviation industry building (the AAEC's factory on Botany Road, Mascot, having earlier been bulldozed). This is thought to be one of only two aviation structures listed by the Australian Heritage Commission on the Register of the National Estate.

Reg Ansett's former garage-cum-hanger, now located at Hamilton in Victoria, has also been earmarked for a museum development while in Sydney, the Royal Aero Club of New South Wales have commenced planning for a new museum to be housed in the former Kingsford Smith hanger which is to be relocated from Mascot.

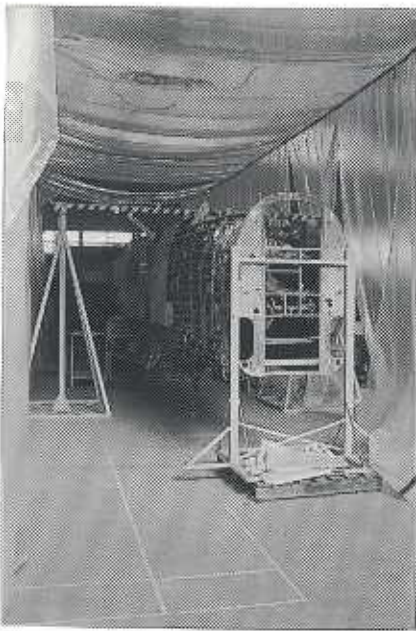
The MacArthur Era

Foundation in Brisbane has also come up with a variation on this theme by announcing that they intend setting up a museum in a bunker at Kowguran, formerly occupied by the RAAF's 3CR Explosives Store.

While these initiatives are to be applauded it is increasingly apparent that our architectural heritage is in a most vulnerable state. Although hundreds of Bellman hangers for example were built and manufactured in Australia, not one has ever been listed by the Australian Heritage Commission or the National Trust. The latter did see fit in 1984 to list a former American Fifth Air Force hanger at Charters Tower but sadly, this was destroyed recently by a freak storm.

Old buildings and New Museums (cont d)

Equally alarming is the news that the Catalina hangar at Bowen (Qld) and the Holyman building in Hobart are both under the threat of demolition. While some municipalities (such as Bundberg) have taken a lead with respect to preserving our aviation architecture it is evident that prompt action is required if we hope to take a representative selection of our built environment with us, into the 21st century. Ironically, it is the bricks and mortar which are proving to be far more vulnerable than the wood, wire and fabric.



Any guesses? Work on the RAAF's "Bicentennial" Boston, A28-8, continues at snail's pace.

Replica *Ibis* Completed

Bundberg's (Qld) Hinkler House Committee took delivery of its replica *Ibis* at an official ceremony on September 15th. The twin engine amphibian is the second Hinkler design to have been replicated, the Monoplane glider having been built there in the 1970s (now displayed in the Tourist Information Centre). It is the *Ibis* however



which will no doubt cause many of us to stand up and take notice, as it represents a triumph of engineering and resourcefulness.

The full scale replica was built from sketchy plans obtained from Southampton where the widow of Hinkler's co-builder was still living. Funds for the project came from the Hinkler House Committee, via admission charges to the city's house museum.

How then, you may well ask, is it possible to build a replica twin-engine aeroplane (albeit, static) on the strength of gate taking? The *Ibis* has to be seen to be believed, attention to detail leading one to believe that if it couldn't take to the air, then it could certainly move along the ground under its own steam. This is without doubt the most exemplary replication project to have been completed in Australia, the total cost being less than \$15,000. The Committee turned to the local Bundberg Foundry when it became apparent that they couldn't afford the exorbitant price of a 1930s Salmson radial. The Foundry set to and made a second engine which would survive even the most critical external scrutiny. Little matter indeed that the crankcase was made from a solid block of metal.

The *Ibis* has emerged as an inspiring blueprint, an example well worth

Drover VH-FDS which was recently retrieved from Tasmania for the Queensland Air Museum

emulating. The replica will be displayed in the new Bicentennial Museum which has been erected alongside of Hinkler's original cottage.

Catalina for Townsville

A committee has been convened in Townsville to investigate the feasibility of setting up a Coral Sea Battle memorial in that city. Top priority for the committee, which is thought to be operating under the auspices of the City Council, will be the acquisition of a Catalina for static display in the proposed Memorial Museum. Recent newspaper reports suggest that the committee has already initiated enquiries in the United States with a view to acquiring a suitable airframe.



The Queensland Air Museum's latest acquisition, Nomad VH-BFH, is only the second Nomad to find its way into an Australian Museum

Q.A.M. Developments

Recent arrivals at the Queensland Air Museum's Caloundra facility include RAN Tracker N12-133160 (coded "NA") and DHA-3 Drover VH-FDS. The S-2A Tracker came from Schofields, and is the only trainer variant to have been used by the Australian Navy.

The Drover, named "Miss Eliza", was being operated by Air-Rep Service Pty Ltd of Perth when, in 1973, it suffered a landing accident on Tasmania's remote Trefoil Island. It was subsequently ferried by barge to Smithton where it was taken over by the Lions Club who, in turn, gave it to a Deckington farmer. Although the engines and cowlings were removed at the time of the crash the airframe is still structurally complete.

The QAM is presently negotiating to obtain ownership of FDS, thus doubling the number of Drover airframes in its collection.

Norseman Rediscovered

A team of 27 Squadron reservists led by the Curator of the RAAF Garbutt Museum, Flg. Off. Pat Kenny, have relocated the crash site of Norseman A71-4 in far north Queensland. The three crew of the Norseman were all killed when the pilot of the No.5 Communications Unit aircraft attempted a crash landing at Iron Range in February 1946. The propellor

was recovered for the Garbutt Museum and other parts are to be retrieved at a later date. Flg. Off. Kenny has investigated many similar crash sites in north Queensland.

Fawcett Memories

The Fawcett 120 VH-BQC recently took to the air again, thirty-seven years after its maiden flight. Built as a Tiger Moth replacement, the one-off Fawcett was also evaluated (and found wanting) by the Australian Army. The all-metal prototype was designed by Luigi Pellarini who must surely rank as Australia's most influential aircraft designer. Stored for many years at Bankstown, the prototype reappeared briefly during the late 1970s after having been re-engined. One can only hope that this remarkable aircraft will eventually find its way into an institution like Sydney's Power House Museum, or the proposed National Air & Space Museum of Australia.

Airlines of Tasmania are rapidly phasing out their Herons. VH-CLX was sold to a local farmer last year and already, the airline has begun cannibalising a second airframe (pictured).



Jet Ranger for Power House

The C.A.A.'s new Chairman Mr Dick Smith has donated his Bell 206B to Power House Museum in Sydney. Mr Smith, who has been a long time supporter of the Museum, will of course be recouping some of his investment by taking advantage of the Commonwealth's Taxation Incentives Scheme for the Arts.

VH-DIK is the machine which Dick Smith flew on most of his record flights including his 1983 solo round-the-world helicopter flight. DIK is the first machine of its kind to find its way into an Australian museum, and one of only a handful of helicopters preserved in this country.

1989 Conference Proceedings

The publication of last year's proceedings was delayed by the late arrival of conference papers. It is anticipated that these will be ready for distribution prior to the 1990 conference.

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Annual General Meeting

The organisers of this year's conference have scheduled an AGM for the afternoon of Saturday, November 17th. Items presently listed for discussion include the timing and location of next year's conference, 1991 discussion papers, the impact of the Commonwealth's proposed Heritage Collections Council, the ratification of the AAMA's Articles of Association and the appointment of executive officers. Groups or individuals wishing to contribute to the agenda should contact the Secretary beforehand.

Heritage Collections Council

The Cultural Ministers' Council in Rotorua has approved the establishment of a Heritage Collections Working Group with funding for three years to study, among other things, where Australia's valuable heritage collections are located, ways of increasing public access to those collections and the resources needed for their conservation. Described as "the most important initiative for museums since the Pigott Report of 1975" the Council will provide the mechanism for a more co-ordinated, and nationally based approach to heritage management.

The Working Party, which is to be based in Adelaide, will focus on collections rather than institutions and accordingly, where appropriate, attention will be paid to collections in private hands. Local and regional issues affecting policies and collections will also be recognised. As

the Working Group will no doubt be looking at aviation collections you would be well advised to obtain a copy of the Council's Strategic Plan from your nearest state branch of the Museums Association of Australia.

AWM Technology Pavilion

The Federal government has allocated \$5 million for the stage one construction of the Australian War Memorial's new Technology Pavilion.

Planning for the Pavilion began in the early 1980s when the AWM's technology collections began to outstrip the available storage capacity. The Pavilion is expected to house vehicles, guns and marine craft as well as aircraft.

Battle Pieces

Launceston's Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery is probably the last place where we would think to go looking for pieces of Fairey Battle. For many years the Museum's only concession to aviation was a Derwent jet engine which was tolerated, one suspects, because of its association with a prominent Tasmanian river.

All that changed when, one day not so long ago, a civic minded citizen walked in with the complete stabiliser (sans elevator) of a Fairey Battle which he wanted to donate. Sadly though, the donor couldn't throw any light on where the piece originated.

The Air Force operated an EFTS at Launceston during the war so it is not unreasonable to suppose that more advanced trainers like the Battle also transited through Tasmania. The stabiliser, which is complete and still showing evidence of green-brown camouflage, has since been incorporated into a local military history display.