



AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION of RETIRED AIRLINE PILOTS and AVIATION PROFESSIONALS

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Issue 37 (Sep-Nov)

EDITORIAL

Another year almost done with the Jacarandas signalling the end of winter. Unfortunately, not the end of Covid though and with no roadmap to opening up Queensland it is looking increasingly difficult for our interstate members to attend the end-of-year Christmas luncheon.

For those of you who haven't attended this function be assured it's a great event and as Phil Elliott said in a recent email to the committee these functions are "an important part of our retirement."

This issue includes Part II of Dave James' story of his time post '89 in Germany. It's an interesting story and at the risk of labouring a point, Lee and I are sure that many (if not all) of you have similar tales to tell. So, let's hear them.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Like most of us in QLD, I have just returned from a few days away. It seems I have seen more of QLD during Covid than ever before. Hopefully things will move on over the coming months allowing members from interstate to travel further.

Preparations are under way for the upcoming Christmas Luncheon at Victoria Park, Herston on Thursday the 2nd of December. A nomination form is attached to this newsletter so please reply sooner rather than later with numbers to help us organize tables and requirements. You will of course receive email reminders over the coming weeks as usual.

Gold Coast members who would like to travel to the event by bus should indicate using the form. Availability of the bus and its associated cost will be advised prior to the date.

Your committee looks forward to catching up with everyone and to another successful day.

TREASURER'S REPORT

We have a combined total of fixed deposit and working account at Suncorp of \$9744.06. There are still quite a few outstanding subs so if you think you might be in arrears, please contact either the secretary, Geoff Noble or me and we'll give you the drum on your status.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

A warm welcome to a new member, Capt. Scott Kitching (ex QF, B747) who joined us in September. This takes the total to 13 new members for 2021. Welcome all.

RIP

Captain Rick Dorney 1947-2021. (Ex AN. At the time of going to press we have no further details.)

Captain Charlie Long (Ex AN. Charlie was not a member but will be known to many ex AN members.)

Captain Geoff Greene (Ex TN/QF. No further details.)

Captain Chick Williams (Ex AN. No further details.)

VALE

Captain Russell Corney (1941-2021)
(From Captain Walter Gowans)



Russell learnt to fly in New Zealand and after gaining his commercial licence in the early 1960's joined Mandated Airlines in October 1965. He obtained a command on DC3's whilst with Mandated. After New Guinea was awarded independence in 1972, Russell transferred to Ansett based in Melbourne as a First Officer.

Russell attained his command on the F27 in February 1981 and moved to the Boeing 737 in the mid 80's where he remained until the dispute in 1989. He stood shoulder to shoulder with the rest of us during this period and was unemployed until joining Compass Mk1 in February 1991 flying the Airbus A300/600R in command. December 1991 saw him unemployed again when Compass was illegally closed down.

After a few months he found employment again with Compass Mk2 flying MD82's and 83's. Unfortunately, that airline only lasted six months, so once more he was out of work.

As luck would have it, right at that moment AWAS was looking for six experienced Boeing 737 pilots to be part of a team with eighteen engineers to go to India with four B733's to start up a new airline called Jet Airways for an entrepreneurial Indian. Russell spent a couple of years with Jet Airways based in Bombay training and checking Indian pilots into the airline. When the AWAS contract with Jet Airways terminated he joined Air Pacific on the B737NG's based in Nadi where he remained until his retirement.

Upon leaving Nadi Russell and Susie relocated to the North Island of New Zealand where they planned to spend their remaining years. Sadly, Susie passed away after a short illness in July 2019 and then, after a short illness, Russell passed away suddenly on August 30 this year. He was 80.

Captain Stuart Arnold (1923-2021) **(From Captain Brian Crane)**

‘Stuey’ (as he was known in the airline) was born and raised in Sandgate. He had met his wife Raye when he was a youth, so they were childhood sweethearts.

Stewart joined the RAAF during the war, flying C47’s. Posted to India, he was attached, with other Australians, to the RAF who were flying trips to China over the “Hump” via the renowned “aluminium trail”. He told me stories of the “pompous Poms” at their base. He witnessed the overflying of their base by a C46 Commander aircraft and experienced two runaway incidents on their Curtis Electric propellers.

After the war he worked some time as an articled clerk for a law firm, then joined the new TAA as a First Officer and flew DC3’s and the Convair. When he gained his command, I flew with him throughout Western Queensland. He always shared the flying and was a perfectionist in his attitude. He taught us a lot about flying. He converted to Viscounts but bid back to get a better seniority position.

He became a Check Captain and throughout his career continued the supervisory role on Electra’s, DC9’s and the Boeing 727. He served a brief time as Assistant Regional Captain. He resigned this post as he wanted to get back to the job he wanted, flying. He also loved driving and well past his 90th year he would travel all over SE Queensland.

Stuart lost his treasured wife Raye to breast cancer, holding her hand till the end. Tragedy again struck him when his younger brother Graham (also a TAA Captain) died of cancer.

Late in his retirement he eventually went into care and managed with family support care.

I was proud to consider him a fine pilot and close friend since 1956.

OUR STORIES

Part Two of DAVID JAMES on LIFE in GERMANY during REUNIFICATION



(This an account of my experiences whilst living and working in Germany from 1990 to 2000. We all remember the momentous events of 1989 when life in the Eastern Bloc changed forever.)

After about six months of my flying for Condor, ex Interflug Pilots began to be employed. This meant, from then on, that on many occasions, my co-pilot was East German. Flying together for a week or more meant that we got the inside story on what life had been like in the former DDR.

Our new colleagues had a tough job to qualify for Condor. They had been flying Russian built aircraft with all the manuals and procedures in Russian. These aircraft were a generation behind the modern Boeings operated by Condor. The Boeings are a two-crew flight deck, The Russian types were usually four crew, Captain, First Officer, Flight Engineer and Navigator. Suffice to say the former Interflug pilots had a lot to learn including reading and speaking English.

Not only were the Russian aircraft expensive to crew but burnt much more fuel and carried fewer passengers. They were also so noisy that they were banned from Western airports. We named them after Western aircraft such as the DC9 and the Bristol Britannia which they resembled but were already obsolete in the West.



DC9-ski



Britanniaski

One of the first former Interflug Pilots I got to know well was First Officer Dieter Mielke. Yes, Mielke, not a common name but he was not related to the master of fear. Throughout his life in the DDR, when introducing himself to someone new he would stand to attention with a serious expression and say one word.... Mielke. The reaction was usually silence as the other person would be thinking, is he related and would he therefore be a Stasi member, and what should I say? Dieter always enjoyed it, not so sure about the other person involved. Dieter had been a First Officer on the four-engine turbo prop the Britanniaski. He said that on every flight one of the four aircrew rostered would be a Stasi member or informer. Usually, each crew member thought they knew which one was Stasi, but were never really sure. In any case they had to be very careful about what they said because, like all airline aircraft there was a cockpit voice recorder fitted. The last three hours were recorded, routinely downloaded and listened to by the Stasi.

The Stasi infiltrated every aspect of people's lives. Dieter's wife worked in office and she and Dieter had organised their annual leave to coincide so they could go to go on holiday to the Black Sea, one of the few destinations outside the DDR, allowed. Frau Mielke had some sort of a disagreement with her supervisor. Suddenly Dieter's leave dates were changed, no more Black Sea holiday. All organised by the Stasi as punishment for Frau Mielke not toeing the line.

Another former Interflug First Officer was in line for promotion to the Airbus A310, the only western aircraft operated by Interflug and the only one that flew to Western destinations. This chap was married to a doctor employed by the government. They decided to divorce. Next thing the promotion was withdrawn. Reason given: being divorced with no children, what would stop him from defecting when operating to the West? Before anyone was allowed to go to the West the Stasi would approve it only if some family remained in the East to persecute in the event of defection.

Flying East German passengers was a delight. Most of them had never flown before, let alone been outside the DDR. In those days it was still allowed for passengers to visit the flight deck which they frequently did. All of them never believed they would ever have such freedom.,

One of my Australian compatriots, Trevor, already had some connections with Germany before we started with Condor. Trevor's wife Elke is originally from Germany and still had friends in East Berlin. Trevor, Elke and their two small children had visited Elke's friends several times during the 70s and early 80s. Whilst there they sometimes used the teenage friend of the family to babysit, Frauline Kasner. She is pictured here. Her married name is Angela Merkel, now the German Chancellor.



As we got to know more about how the Stasi operated, Trevor began to wonder about those he had associated with while visiting Elke's friends. At the time of the Die Wende the Stasi tried to destroy as many files as they could but only scratched the surface. The new united Government opened the files to the public. Trevor went to Leipzig where most of the files are held and sure enough two of his wife's friends were telling the Stasi all that was said and done. He found reports of conversations with "the Australian Pilot". His movements around East Berlin were reported in detail.

My strong impression of East Germany up to 1989 is of dishonesty. Drug cheating at the Olympics, Stasi blackmail, infiltration of West Germany institutions and suppression of all forms of freedom.

In my ten years in Germany the situation in the former DDR radically changed for the better. Unified Berlin, the new Capital, is one of most interesting and exciting cities in Europe. Leipzig airport has new runways and the terminal building straddles the upgraded autobahn. The buzz in the city has gone from the Adelaide of the fifties to the Melbourne of today. I revisited Dresden in 2010 and can report that the hotel barges have long been replaced by real hotels. After a public appeal and fundraising the Frauen Kirche has been rebuilt. Dresden is again one of the top tourist destinations in Germany. The Deutsche Einheits (German Unification) has to stand as one of the great achievements of the last century. Sixteen million people have been freed and now live in a well governed and just society. A fitting end to the effects of the worst war in history.

HISTORY



This B-17E, serial #41-2446, arrived in Honolulu 10 days after the Pearl Harbor attack. The following February, it was assigned to the 22nd Bomb Squadron of the 7th Bombardment Group in northern Australia. The Imperial Japanese Navy had seized the Australian base at Rabaul, in New Britain. Army bombers were put under the command of the U.S. Navy, and a mission was hastily planned to strike at the invasion fleet. Six B-17Es took off at midnight on Feb. 22, 1942. They were separated by storms enroute, and B-17E #41-2446, piloted by Fred Eaton, eventually arrived over the target —

Japanese ships in the harbour at Rabaul.

The bomb bay doors stuck on Eaton's first run, so he came around again. Anti-aircraft fire punctured the wing fuel tank. A6M "Zero" and A5M "Claude" fighters swarmed the bomber; after a half-hour running battle, the frustrated fighters gave up. Eaton was running for Port Moresby, on the other side of New Guinea. But with mountains ahead and the B-17's fuel tanks nearly empty, he knew he'd have to put the crippled bomber down. He brought the B-17 down on what he mistakenly thought was a flat, green field in the jungle. The Flying Fortress splashed into Agaiambo Swamp, settling into five feet of water and thick grass, and there it lay for more than a half-century. RAAF pilots who glimpsed it from overhead dubbed it the "Swamp Ghost."

Aviation enthusiast Alfred Hagen supervised the recovery of the Swamp Ghost in 2006. The arduous process required the bomber to be disassembled in the swamp and the pieces flown out by helicopter. The wreckage spent four years on the docks in Lae pending the New Guinea government's approval to export it. Stored for a time in California, the B-17E "Swamp Ghost" returned to Hawaii in 2014.

THE AEROPLANE BLACK BOX



On Friday 19 October, 1934, the passenger plane Miss Hobart fell from the sky to the sea. Eight men, three women and a baby boy fell with her, swallowed - it's believed - by the waters of the Bass Strait. The plane's wreckage was never found.

One of those on board was a 33-year-old Anglican missionary, Rev Hubert Warren (pictured at end), who had been travelling to his new parish in Enfield, Sydney. His wife Ellie and four children had stayed behind, intending

to follow by boat. The reverend's last present to his eight-year-old son, David, had been a crystal radio set that the boy treasured deeply.

As a boarder at Launceston Boys' Grammar School in Tasmania, David Warren tinkered with the machine after lessons, learning what made it work. He charged friends a penny to listen to cricket matches, and within a few years was selling home-made copies at five shillings each. By his mid-twenties, David Warren had studied his way to a science degree from the University of Sydney, a diploma in education from Melbourne University and a PhD in chemistry from Imperial College, London. His specialty was rocket science, and he went to work as a researcher for the Aeronautical Research Laboratories (ARL), a part of Australia's Defence Department that focused on planes.



In 1953, the department loaned him to an expert panel trying to solve a costly and distressing mystery: why did the British de Havilland Comet, the world's first commercial jet airliner and the great hope of the new Jet Age, keep crashing? [Why Did The de Havilland Comet Keep Crashing? - Plane & Pilot Magazine](#) He thought it might be the fuel tanks; but there were dozens of possible causes and nothing but death and debris as evidence. The panel sat down to discuss what they knew.

"People were rattling on about staff training and pilots' errors, and did the fin break off the tail, and all sorts of things that I knew nothing about," Dr Warren recalled more than 50 years later.

"I found myself dreaming of something I'd seen the week before at Sydney's first post-war trade fair. And that is - what claimed to be the first pocket recorder, the Miniphon. A German device. There'd been nothing before like it..." The Miniphon was marketed as a dictation machine for businessmen, who could sit at their desks (or on trains and planes) recording letters that would later be typed up by their secretaries. David, who loved swing music and played the clarinet, only wanted one so he could make bootleg recordings of the jazz musician Woody Herman. However, when one of his fellow scientists suggested the latest doomed Comet might have been hijacked, something clicked for him.

The chances that a recorder had been on board - and survived the fiery wreck - were basically nil. But what if every plane in the sky had a mini recorder in the cockpit? If it was tough enough, accident investigators would never be this confused again, because they'd have audio right up to the moment of the crash. At the very least, they'd know what the pilots had said and heard. The idea fascinated him. Back at ARL, he rushed to tell his boss about it.

Alas, his superior didn't share his enthusiasm. Dr Warren said he was told: "It's nothing to do with chemistry or fuels. You're a chemist. Give that to the instruments group and get on with blowing up fuel tanks." David knew his idea for a cockpit recorder was a good one. Without official support, there was little he could do about it - but he couldn't get it out of his mind.

When his boss was promoted, David pitched his invention again. His new superior was intrigued, and so was Dr Laurie Coombes, ARL's chief superintendent. They urged him to keep working on it - but discreetly. Since it wasn't a government-approved venture or a war-winning weapon, it couldn't be seen to take up lab time or money. Dr Warren said the chief superintendent had cautioned him: "If I find you talking to anyone, including me, about this matter, I will have to sack you." It was a sobering thought for a young man with a wife and two children. But his boss's backing extended to sneakily buying one of the precious new dictation recorders, and chalking it up as "an instrument required for the laboratory..." Encouraged, Dr Warren wrote up his idea in a report, titled "A Device for Assisting Investigation into Aircraft Accidents", and sent it out across the industry.

The pilots' union responded with fury, branding the recorder a snooping device, and insisted "no plane would take off in Australia with Big Brother listening". That was one of his better reviews. Australia's civilian aviation authorities declared it had "no immediate significance", and the air force feared it would "yield more expletives than explanations". Dr Warren was tempted to pack it all in. However, he took to his garage and assembled his 20-year-old radio parts. He'd decided the only

way to overcome his critics' mockery and suspicion was to build a solid prototype. It would be the first ever "black box" flight recorder.



One day in 1958, when the little flight recorder had been finished and finessed, the lab received an unusual visitor. Dr Coombes, the chief superintendent, was showing round a friend from England. "Dave!" he said, "Tell him what you're doing!" Dr Warren explained: his world-first prototype used steel wire to store four hours of pilot voices plus instrument readings and automatically erased older records so it was reusable. There was a pause, then the visitor said: "I say Coombes old chap, that's a damn good idea. Put that lad on the next courier, and we'll show it in London."

The courier was a Hastings transport aircraft, making a run to England. You had to know somebody pretty powerful to get a seat on it. Dr Warren wondered who this man was who was giving away tickets round the world to somebody he'd never met. The answer was Robert Hardingham (later Sir Robert), the secretary of the British Air Registration Board and a former Air Vice-Marshal in the RAF. In David's words: "He was a hero. And he was a friend of Coombes, and if he gave away a seat, you took it."

A few weeks later, Dr Warren was on a plane bound for England - with strict instructions not to tell Australia's Department of Defence what he was really doing there, because "somebody would frown on it". In a near-unbelievable irony, the plane lost an engine over the Mediterranean. Dr Warren recalled: "I said, 'Chaps, we seem to have lost a donk - does anyone want to go back?' But we'd come from Tunisia and it was about 45 degrees overnight. We didn't want to go back to that hellhole." They decided they could make it if they ploughed on. He recorded the rest of the flight, thinking that even if he died in that limping transport plane, "at least I'd have proved the bastards wrong!" "But unfortunately, we didn't prang - we just landed safely..."



In England, Dr Warren presented "the ARL Flight Memory Unit" to the Royal Aeronautical Establishment and some commercial instrument-makers.

The Brits loved it. The BBC ran TV and radio programmes examining it, and the British civil aviation authority started work to make the device mandatory in civil aircraft. A Middlesex firm, S Davall and Sons, approached ARL about the production rights, and kicked off manufacturing. Though the device started to be called "the black box", the first ones off the line were orange so they'd be easier to find after a crash -

and they remain so today. Peter Warren believes the name dates from a 1958 interview his father gave the BBC. "Right at the end there was a journalist who referred to this as a 'black box'. It's a generic word from electronics engineering, and the name stuck."



In 1960, Australia became the first country to make cockpit voice recorders mandatory, after an unexplained plane crash in Queensland killed 29 people. The ruling came from a judicial inquiry, and took a further three years to become law. Today, black boxes are fire-proof, ocean-proof and encased in steel. And they are compulsory on every commercial flight. It's impossible to say how many people owe their lives to data captured in the death throes of a failing plane - to the flaws exposed, and the safety innovations that followed.

David Warren worked at ARL until his retirement in 1983, becoming its principal research scientist. He died on 19 July, 2010, at the age of 85. For more detail

and TV footage from 1958 of David Warren explaining his invention to the BBC, please follow the links below.

[This little-known inventor has probably saved your life](#)
[What is in a black box?](#)

EVENTS

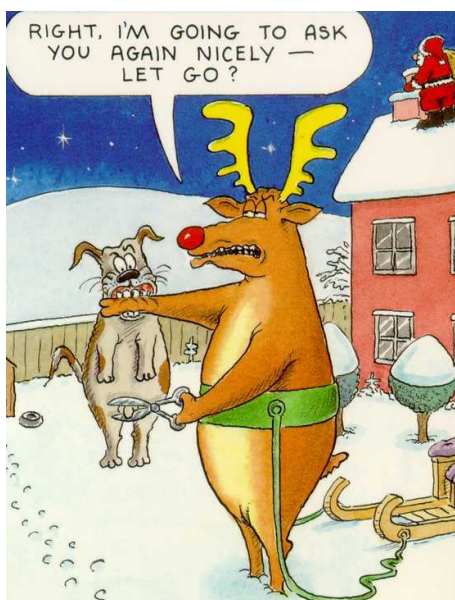
Annual Christmas Lunch: *Victoria Park Complex, 261 Herston Rd, Herston QLD 4006.*
Thursday, 2 December.

HUMOUR

A friend of mine always helps me out with maps and diagrams, pointing out all the little symbols and what they mean ...

The guy is a legend.

I got an email saying I'd won \$1 million because I could read Maps backwards.
I thought to myself, "That's just Spam."



The wife has been missing a week now. Police said to prepare for the worst, so I have been to the charity shop to get all her clothes back.

While I enjoy the sport, I could never date a tennis player.
Love means nothing to them.

What is the most tragic Olympics story?
A gymnast walks into a bar.

I was driving this morning when I saw an RACQ van parked up.
The driver was sobbing uncontrollably and looked very miserable.
I thought to myself that guy's heading for a breakdown.

\$20.00 Annual Subscriptions were due 1 July. You can check if you are current by emailing the secretary.

For accounting and recording purposes, payment by Direct Deposit is preferred. **Suncorp BSB 484 799 Acct No 000044125 AARAP.** Remember to include your name when you do the transfer. However, if electronic transfer is not possible, please send your cheque to AARAP, P.O. Box 172, Isle of Capri, Qld, 4217

For contributions, comments and/or suggestions, please address your feedback to the Editors:

Ken Hoy (0419 303 479) kenhoy@me.com

Lee Godfrey (0417 192 416)



AARAP Christmas Lunch THURSDAY 3 December 2020

I / WE..... (Please Print)

WILL be attending the LUNCH to be held at: -

Victoria Park Complex
Herston Road
Herston

THURSDAY, 2nd DECEMBER 2020 (1200h to 1600h)

COST: \$65 PER PERSON.

Attending, as my guests, will be: -

.....
(Subject to numbers a bus may be provided. Cost will also be dependent upon numbers.)
I WILL require seats on the Gold Coast Bus.

MEMBER.....
PARTNER.....
GUEST (S).....

I have Direct Transferred THE ABOVE TOTAL to the AARAP Account.

(Account Name: AARAP BSB 484-799 Account Number: 000044125)

NOTE: To Account Description add your name and initials so we know it's yours.

Your Transaction Description is AARAP.

Email: Treasurer Chris Weston westonlink@hotmail.com

OR

A cheque, made payable to AARAP for the above TOTAL is enclosed.

Mail to: - Capt. Chris Weston, Treasurer AARAP
PO Box 172
Isle of Capri Qld 4217