

DS

January 2014

**** LUNCHEON SEMINAR ****

Friday, 7 March 2014

at the Royal Canberra Golf Club,
Yarralumla

Speaker: Senator David Fawcett BSc MBA MAICD psc

'Sovereignty'

From the President

A belated welcome to 2014 – may it be a good year for all our members and for your family members and friends.

The year has started particularly well with the welcome news of the elevation of our co-patron and Vice Chief of the Defence Force, Air Marshal Mark Binskin to Companion of the Order of Australia. On your behalf I have written to Air Marshal Binskin extending the Association's congratulations on his outstanding honour. Indeed, we congratulate all our Defence award recipients. A full list of Australia Day honours and awards is accessible via the website: www.itsanhonour.gov.au

As so often happens over the 'period of reduced activity' many elements of the RAAF were still hard at work while our broader community was enjoying a break over the recent Christmas/New Year break. As the Chief of Air Force has reported in a recent message to Air Force members, RAAF activity during 'the break' included air-lifting supplies to South Sudan.

'Between 26 December 2013 and 12 January 2014, Air Force responded to a request by the United Nations to conduct a series of airlift missions under Operation ASLAN, the ADF's commitment to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). Air Force members are part of the 20-strong ADF contingent which will continue to assist the UNMISS effort in South Sudan.'

'This airlift involved a C-17A Globemaster and its crew which departed Australia on Boxing Day, and was later joined by a C-130J from Al-Minhad Air Base in Dubai. In total, the aircraft flew 36 sorties over the period and delivered more than 430,000 pounds of cargo to the South Sudanese capital of Juba. The aircraft delivered United Nations personnel along with water purification kits, sanitation equipment, shelters and other personnel equipment for UNMISS.'



**Newsletter
of the
RAAF
STAFF COLLEGE
ASSOCIATION Inc**

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'The majority of the C-17A's missions were conducted from Djibouti in eastern Africa and Brindisi in Southern Italy. The C-130J Hercules crew travelled to Djibouti and Liberia on the continent's west coast, and Cameroon, in central Africa, to pick up cargo and personnel destined for Juba.'

'The airlift greatly assisted UNMISS in its response to a humanitarian crisis which developed in mid-December as a result of violence between South-Sudanese factions. The RAAF's efforts were recognised at all levels, with senior United Nations representatives expressing their gratitude for Australia's support.

'This deployment marked the first time Air Force has deployed an extended airlift capability to the African continent since the completion of Operation TAMAR in 1995, the ADF's peacekeeping effort in Rwanda. Most, if not all, of the locations were unfamiliar to the C-17A and C-130J crews involved.'

'This airlift effort has set a precedent for 2014, demonstrating the breadth of operational tasks our Air Force can expect to face.'

In his message CAF indicated that throughout 2014, the RAAF will maintain its support to existing overseas commitments such as Operation SLIPPER, and remain ready to meet the challenges within our region and across the globe. In short, Air Force continues to deliver air power around the clock, throughout the year.

After the RAAF Staff College Association's extended break since the November 2013 annual general meeting, our next luncheon seminar is scheduled for Friday 7 March. That date has been selected for its close proximity to a number of other activities that might attract out-of-town members to Canberra. These include the Sir Richard Williams Foundation regional air power seminar on Tuesday 11 March and the RAAF air power conference on 12-13 March. See the respective websites for more details about both events. (Links are on the RAAF Staff College Association website.) Friday 7 March is also the beginning of the Canberra Day long weekend, so we hope not to lose too many of our Canberra-based members to the traditional South Coast long weekend exodus.

The speaker for our 7 March seminar will be former Army test pilot and now government Senator David Fawcett, who will address us on the issue of 'Sovereignty. A link to Senator Fawcett's biography is on the next page.

The luncheon seminar program for the remainder of the year is:

Thursday 19 June Speaker: (Speaker: Air Vice-Marshal (Retd) Margaret Staib, CEO Airservices Australia)

Friday 17 October ((AGM) Speaker: TBA - note proximity of date to the RAAF retired officers dinner on Saturday 18 October)

Finally, in response to queries arising from the self-indulgent meanderings in the last edition of DS, I can report that (along with my long suffering wife), I visited seven aviation repositories last September/October: the Planes of Fame Museum at Chino (Los Angeles) and Valle (Grand Canyon); Castle Air Museum (Atwater, California); Pima Air and Space Museum and AMARG at Davis Montham Air Force Base (both at Tucson, Arizona); San Diego Air and Space Museum; and the Pacific Aviation Museum (Ford Island, Oahu). We (or at least I) enjoyed very full days at each location, on occasion arriving at opening time and leaving just ahead of the closing doors at the end of the day.

Fortunately each location offered at least a cold drink and often an excellent café – just as well since we encountered hot weather throughout. At Castle for example it was 100°F in the shade, and all 62 of the aircraft there were outdoors in full sun. Website links below will guide you to more information about the various museums. An executive summary of the aircraft we saw is a link on the “Members’ notices” page on the RAAFSCA website. (Note the Alenia C-27J Spartans already at AMARG – this aircraft type is yet to enter the RAAF inventory!)

I look forward to seeing you at lunch on 7 March at the Royal Canberra Golf Club.

Regards,

Ian Pearson

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Website links:

RAAF Staff College Association website – www.raafsca.org

Senator David Fawcett’s bio –

<http://www.senator.fawcett.net.au/DJFawcett%20Bio%20Brief%20Jul%202011.pdf>

Planes of Fame Museum - <http://planesoffame.org>

Castle Air Museum - <http://www.castleairmuseum.org>

Pima Air and Space Museum - <http://www.pimaair.org>

AMARG - <http://www.amarcexperience.com/ui/>

San Diego Air and Space Museum - <http://sandiegoairandspace.org>

Pacific Aviation Museum - <http://www.pacificaviationmuseum.org>