

What's News?

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Catalina Flying Memorial Ltd wins Government Grant

We are pleased to announce that the Catalina Flying Memorial Ltd (CFML) was successful in its application for funding to assist its volunteers under Volunteer Grants 2010. This will see the CFML awarded \$3,500 to enable the purchase of much needed equipment for our volunteers working on VH-CAT at Bankstown.

The Australian Government recognises that community organisations and their volunteers play a vital role in our local communities, donating their time, skills and understanding to our most vulnerable and disadvantaged Australians, helping out in times of crisis, preserving our environment and enriching our cultural life.

The \$21 million Volunteer Grants are a way for the Government to recognise and value the hard work of Australian volunteers who make a real and lasting difference in our local communities. This grant funding is also a way the Government can help ease the financial pressure for non-profit organisations, assist their volunteers and encourage more people to get involved in their community.

The money will be used to purchase ladders, trolleys and various items of safety equipment to enable our volunteers to access all those difficult to reach places on the aircraft and to facilitate the movement of heavy items. This will go a long way towards helping the CFML maintain its "safety first" culture.

Colin Cool

Proceeds from the Kirribilli RSL Memorial Pool to go to the CFML

We are also pleased to announce that Mr Martin Boffey, CEO of the Kirribilli Ex-Service Club ("Kirribilli Club") at Milsons Point wrote to us to advise that all coin donations made by members and guests to the memorial pool in the club's reception area will be pooled and forwarded on to the Catalina Flying Memorial.

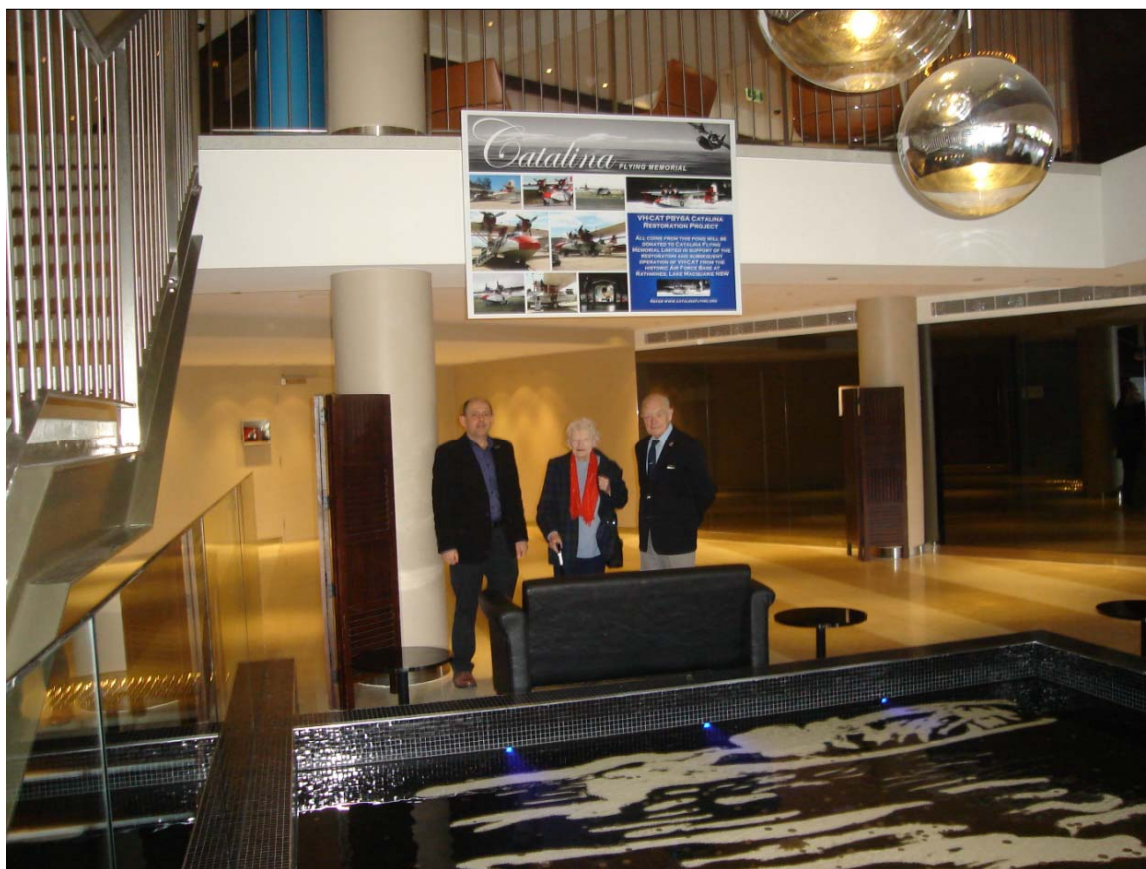
This follows the recent visit by members of club to the CFML at Bankstown in June (refer to the July newsletter for details). News of such ongoing and enthusiastic support by such entities is both exciting and encouraging and will ensure our project gains much needed exposure.

We are extremely grateful for such support. A very big thank you to Mr Boffey and the members of the Kirribilli Ex Service Club.

Below is a copy of the poster that now resides above the memorial pool.



On Saturday 7 August 2010, I took the opportunity to see the display for myself and in the process, enjoy the company of a few special friends, dining at the club's bistro. The display was very fine indeed, as evidenced by the following photograph (next page).



Kirribilli RSL Reception area with poster and in the foreground, the Memorial Pool. Standing beneath the poster are (L-R): Colin Cool, 109494 ACW Val Gibbens (nee Kirkwood) and 420265 FTLT Ron Prentice.

Photo: Carole Gibbens

A wonderful afternoon was had by all. Many thanks again to the crew at the Kirribilli RSL.

Just an aside, I'd like to say a few words about Ron Prentice, the gentleman standing at right in the above photograph. Ron is now 90 Years of age and I can tell you, he is an absolutely remarkable man in so many ways. During the war, Ron served as a pilot with 461 Squadron RAAF which operated the Short Sunderland flying boat.

The RAAF had two UK-based Sunderland squadrons operating during the war – 10 & 461 Squadrons. 10 Squadron was formed in 1939. 461 Squadron was formed on 25 April (ANZAC Day) 1942 (hence it was often referred to as the ANZAC Squadron). Throughout the war, these two squadrons sunk a total of 12 U-boats, which is quite a remarkable feat when you consider that finding a U-boat in the vast expanses of the Bay of Biscay and the like to be very rare indeed. The vast majority of Sunderland aircrew will tell you that they managed to get through the entire war without seeing

anything – their war was one of long, seemingly endless and boring searches over vast stretches of ocean.

461 Squadron accounted for six of these U-boats over the three years from their formation to the end of the European conflict. Ron Prentice just happened to be the First Pilot of the Sunderland that sunk U-boat U-571. The following link will take you to a Wikipedia article about the sinking of U-571.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_submarine_U-571

The captain of the aircraft was FTLT Richard David (Dick) Lucas. When Dick's tour came to an end, Ron took over the crew as Captain, seeing his operational tour out as Captain. Ron was also a fully qualified navigator and flying instructor and following his tour with 461 Squadron, saw the war out training pilots to fly the Sunderland. Ron has said to me on several occasions, the most recent being over coffee at the Kirribilli Club that he reckons he could still fly a Sunderland today if there was one still flying. I believe him!

I hope to tell you more about Ron and his Sunderland days in a future newsletter.

I should also mention that a Hollywood blockbuster movie was made in the year 2000 called simply *U-571*. In this movie (which, I should point out was a total work of fiction), a U-boat called U-571 was captured, enabling the German coding machine Enigma to be acquired by the British for the first time. When the real U-571 was sunk (not captured, as in the film) by Dick, Ron and their crew on 28 January 1944, the Enigma code had been well and truly unravelled by the allies long before. So it appears that the only similarity between the movie and actual events was the name of the U-boat.

Colin Cool

ADF Air Show at RAAF Williamtown – 18 & 19 September 2010

RAAF Williamtown will be hosting the Australian Defence Force (ADF) Air Show over the weekend of 18 & 19 September 2010. Parking will be available from 7am, gates are open to the public at 8am. We understand that Protickets are looking after ticketing and the cost will be \$25.00 per adult.

The CFML will have a stand set up with a display of photographs as well as merchandise for sale. A great opportunity for a bit of fund raising and promotion of our project!

So please put this date in your calendar to ensure you don't miss out on this spectacular event. And while you're there, please make sure you visit our stand and say Hi to our hard-working volunteers.

2010 Catalina Festival – 23 October 2010

Here's another one for your calendar folks – the 2010 Catalina Festival.

Preparations have begun for the fourth annual Catalina Festival at Rathmines. This year's event will be held on Saturday 23 October 2010. The Festival will be held at the usual location at Rathmines.

More information will be provided as it comes to hand. Another great fund-raiser for our project!

New Members/Donations

The Catalina Flying Memorial welcomes the following members to the Aussie Cat Club:

Life Members

Bruce Richardson
Len Linfoot

One year Members

Phillip Johnston

A very big thank you to all of the above for their support!

News or comments

If you have any news or comments regarding the website, please forward to Colin Cool (colin.cool@jemena.com.au) or Jill Brandon (info@catalinaflying.org.au).