



CATALINA FLYING MEMORIAL LTD

ACN: 103492440

Patrons:
Sir Richard Kingsland AO CBE DFC
Nancy Bird Walton AO OBE Hon ME Syd
Chairman:
Neville Kennard



35-41 Waterloo Rd
North Ryde NSW 2113
P hone: 02 9870 7277
Fax: 02 9870 7299
Email philip@dulhunty.com
www.catalinaflying.org.au

HISTORY OF VH-CAT

Our PB6A Catalina now registered VH-CAT started life as Serial No. 46665 on the New Orleans production line in 1945 as part of an order for the US Navy. It flew with that air arm as Bu46665 and briefly became N9555C when finally declared surplus to requirements in August, 1956. It had previously been in storage since the early-1950s.

The American registration was brief as, by 1957, it had been transferred to the Chilean civil register as CC-CNG. The registered owners were TRANSA who did not use CC-CNG and it remained in storage until 1959 when it too was bought by Roberto Parrague's ASPAR, becoming CC-CNP in the process.

On his visit to Easter Island PG Taylor noticed a derelict Catalina there called "*Manutara*" but did not realise the significance of this.

Some years previously, Commandante Roberto Parrague had attempted a South Pacific crossing in a Chilean military Catalina which he had named *Manutara* after the bird of the same name, which according to legend, flew to Easter Island laid one egg and died. The people of Easter Island shook their heads and warned that according to the legend, *Manutara* would never leave the island. During the take off for the return journey the rough conditions caused the wing to break and she did in fact die there. Her broken body was there, when PG Taylor arrived and when he saw her he was glad he had equipped Frigate Bird II with JATO (jet assisted take-off).

PG Taylor's Catalina which he flew to Chile, and is now in the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney was called Frigate Bird II after his first crossing from Mexico to Australia via Tahiti in the Catalina "Frigate Bird".

PG Taylor with so many ocean crossings under his belt had the greatest respect for the Frigate birds, which inhabited the vast oceans of the world forever skimming the wave tops and seemingly never to rest.

For this pioneering flight from Sydney to Valparaiso all crewmembers were made honorary officers of the Chilean Air force and P G Taylor himself was awarded "Al Merito Bernardo O'Higgins" after the first president and founder of the Chilean Republic.

PG Taylor met and had many discussions in Valparaiso with Commandante Roberto Parrague where he learned that *Manutara* was the Chilean name for Frigate Bird! And that in honor of *Manutara* he had named CC-CNP "*Manutara II*".

In 1970 *Manutara II*, CC-CNP was ferried to Canada for conversion to a water bomber so that ASPAR could diversify into the forest fire fighting business. In this new role, CC-CNP was first given the tanker number '65' but later became '35'. CC-CNP flew to Spain in July, 1988, and remained there flying under charter to ICONA.

By the end of the decade, the Chilean registration CC-CNP had been restored and it was operating in Portugal, owned by Victor de Brito of Aerocondor but still with its name *Manutara II*.

As a fire bomber its role was short lived as the more efficient special purpose Canadian CL415 aircraft came on to the market and were awarded the contract.

CC-CNP (*Manutara II*) has been waiting ever since in the Sierra Mountains of Portugal for the Catalina Veterans of Rathmines Australia to save her from laying one egg and dieing.

She will be returning to the role of a BLACK CAT to which she was originally born and is now registered in Australia as VH-CAT but will always keep her name, *Manutara II*.



STOP PRESS!

We have been contacted by James Walruff of 1904 Meadlowlark Drive Raymore MO 64083 USA who advises that *“in late 1945 I was in Patrol Bombing Squadron 62 (VPB 62) based at Whidbey Island WA. About that time the squadron received new PBY-6A's replacing our old PBY-5A's. I was in crew No. 1 and 46665 was assigned to us. I flew in her for most of a year. We rotated to the Aleutian Islands during this time flew through the island chain from Kodiak to Attu as well as to Nome and up the Bering Straits to Point Barrow. Attached is a copy of my flight log for the last two months I was there which indicates many of the places the plane took us. I was discharged a few months after returning to Whidbey Island.*

I had been aware that later this went as surplus to Chile, then to Canada for conversion to a fire bomber, then to Spain and Portugal. And now by going to Australia it will have covered a good part of the globe.

Congratulations and a big thank you for enabling the old girl to live a long and fruitful life”.

Phil Dulhunty