

OCTOBER LONG WEEKEND



FAMOUS: The Rathmines Catalina Flying Club aims to bring a Catalina back to its shores.

Flypast to bring back memories

By MARTIN DINNEEN

RATHMINES RAAF station will welcome a fleet of seaplanes and a throng of people today for the annual Rathmines Catalina Festival run by the Catalina Flying Club.

The club is close to once again having a Catalina grace the waters in front of the base, with one bought but stranded in Holland requiring new engines after blowing one six months ago.

A host of seaplanes will fly into the bay today for a festival aimed at funding the purchase of engines and the stranded plane's passage to the Catalina Flying Club.

Philip Dulhunty, from the Catalina Flying Memorial, said the process of getting the flying boat to Australia had been a long-time dream that was so close to fruition.

"Everything was going so well until a test flight, when on take off an engine went

FUN ACTIVITIES

TODAY

Olive Tree markets, the Junction Public School grounds, 9am-3pm. Arts, crafts, organic food, coffee and live music.

Hunter Wetlands,

Shortland, showing Monday as well, 10am, Shakespeare et al presents *Wind in the Willows*.

Mattara Spring Art Exhibition, Heritage Boiler

Shop Building, Honeysuckle, 3pm. Rockers and Revheads dance lessons, Wheeler Place, 5pm-8pm.

TOMORROW

This is Not Art Fair, Civic Park, markets, music, art and Super Picnic from noon till 5pm.

Maitland Markets, Maitland Showground, Blomfield Street, 8am-2pm.

boom and a piston went straight through the cylinder," he said.

The Rathmines base was home to the famous flying boats during World War II. Due to the secrecy of their role, their true story is only just being revealed.

While amphibious, the US-built Catalina was slow, cumbersome, poorly armed and did its damage by flying

at low altitude at night to avoid radar, dropping mines attached to its wings.

They flew missions into almost every Japanese-held harbour during the war.

The festival begins at 10am with a flypast of an RAAF Hawk 127 at 11am, a Tiger Moth formation flypast at 3.30pm and the chance to get close to a variety of seaplanes.