

Engineer Branch Newsletter - Summer 2019

End of Year Luncheon:

The EOY Luncheon was held on Wednesday 6th November once again at the Batman on Collins venue with an enthusiastic turnout of Engineer Branch Members, Guests and Wives. Unfortunately, the earlier proposal to have an expert speaker address the luncheon on the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) was unable to be fulfilled, and so John Clarkson's "Plan B" was invoked (Engineers always have a Plan B, and C, *und so weiter*).



Our Master of Ceremony John Clarkson introduced Plan B to the gathering – a Trivia Quiz, based on Air Force history, including questions about Air Force engineering. All tables competed with a combination of enthusiastic knowledge, puzzled lack of knowledge, and pure guesswork, and for no material prize – just the pride and glory in winning. The questions were grouped in four rounds - "From the 1974 Stud List", "Aircraft", "Vietnam", and "Units".

John's Trivia Quiz was thoroughly entertaining, and congratulations are in order for a fine example of "Imagineering".

A sample of the 39 questions presented (and none was actually trivial) follow:

Round 1. Stud List.

(a) A "who am I question" – Born Townsville 1901, joined the RAN College in 1915, transferred to the RAAF as a FLTLT in 1923, gaining my wings then attended the Imperial College of Science and Technology, was the first airman to make a free-fall parachute jump from an Australian Service aircraft and was the first parachute instructor, 17 years on the Air Board and instrumental in establishing the Technical Branch, my brother was a giant of the Australian aircraft industry, and I was the first AMTS and retired from the RAAF in December 1959.

(b) Other than ranks, what was the difference between the PAF list and the WRAAF list?

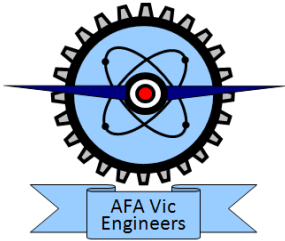
Round 2. Aircraft.

(a) While A23 was ultimately allotted to the Pilatus PC-9A, to what aircraft was A23 originally allotted?

(b) Name the first ten aircraft, in order, in the 3rd series of type A serials – for example the A1 was the Bell Sioux.

(c) We purchased 100 single-seat and 16 dual-seat Mirage aircraft: How many were written off during service, and how many of these were due to technical faults? The high-time aircraft A3-17 accumulated how many hours (to the nearest 100 hours) before being sold to Pakistan? Altogether 53 were sold to Pakistan.

(d) What is the oldest aircraft in the ADF Fleet?



Engineer Branch Newsletter - Summer 2019

Round 3. Vietnam.

- (a) When did the last four Caribou's fly out of Vietnam, and which Caribou was the first to fly in and the last to fly out?
- (b) How many Caribou's did we Cat 5 (write-off) during the 7 ½ years and nearly 80,000 missions in Vietnam, and how many due to enemy action?
- (c) 2SQN – Canberra's – in Vietnam between April '67 and June '71, flew just short of 12,000 bombing sorties. How many Canberra's did we lose and under what circumstances?

Round 4. Units.

- (a) Ham Common near Richmond on the outskirts of Sydney was selected as a suitable site for a landing ground in 1912 and the NSW Education Department established a flying school there in 1916. What year was the site purchased to become the RAAF's third airfield?
- (b) Twelve C-130A's were purchased in 1958 for 36SQN, and a "large" maintenance hangar was required. Where did this hangar come from?
- (c) OTS was based at Rathmines; what year did OTS relocate to Point Cook?
- (d) Only one Frognall Reunion was actually held at Frognall. When, and why only one?

(Answers at end of this Newsletter.)

Some "Happy Snaps" of the Gathering

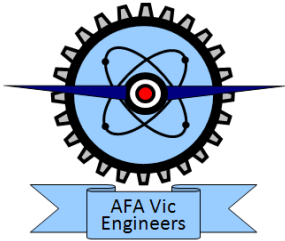


The Three Wisest Persons in the Room

Christine Hogendijk

Carol Gould

Beverly Dillon



Engineer Branch Newsletter - Summer 2019

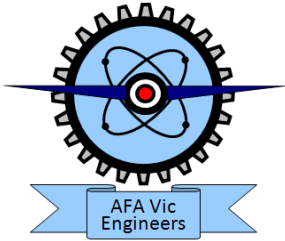


Just a few of the Rouges' Gallery:

Top left to lower right: John Adams, Noel Schmidt, Michael Kolowale, Brian Fuller, Allan Hobby, Bill Belton, Bob Bennett, Geoff Schmidt, the concentrating quad of Val Robinson, Bob Brackin, Laurie Hulse and Alan Gibbs (and some of those questions were really hard...) and Noel Hadfield (Keeper of The List).

December RMIT Alumni Meeting:

Once again, the RMIT Alumni with Engineering Branch Members met for a fine lunch, prepared and served by the Hospitality Students at the William Angliss Restaurant (550 Little Lonsdale St) on Monday 2nd December. This is a regular event and brings Engineering Branch members back into contact with RMIT staff, present and past, and reinforces the connections forged by many of our Members back in their RMIT academic days.



Engineer Branch Newsletter - Summer 2019

Next Meeting:

The Committee's next meeting will be Monday 3rd February at the Mail Exchange Hotel (Bourke St near Spencer St) at 12 noon, and visitors are most welcome. If wanting to come along, just advise Noel Hadfield on 9511 7775, for catering purposes. Our committee meetings are very light-hearted affairs, with much reminiscing (and occasional lamentations), and importantly, the lunch menu and quality are excellent.

June 2020 Luncheon

As indicated in previous editions of Contact, the Committee is still planning that a Senior Scientist Guest Speaker from the CSIRO will talk about "The Square Kilometre Array" (the SKA) at our next luncheon in June 2020. The SKA is a hugely significant radio-astronomy project proposed for Western Australia. For further reading, just Google "The Square Kilometre Array".

Answers to the "Trivia" Questions:

Round 1: (a) Ellis Charles Wackett. (b) No birth dates on the WRAAF list (never ask or reveal a lady's age).

Round 2: (a) The Australian Aircraft Consortium's proposed Wamira turboprop training aircraft.

(b) The "A" Series: A1 – Bell Sioux, A2 - Bell UH-1B/H Iroquois, A3 – Mirage IIIO/IIID, A4 – Caribou, A5 – Sud Aviation Alouette III, A6 – Viscount, A7 - MB326H Macchi, A8 – F111A/C/G & RF 111C, A9 – P3 Orion, and A10 – HS748.

(c) Oldest aircraft in the ADF Fleet is the A21 F/A-18 Hornet, first one delivered December 1985.

Round 3: (a) In Vietnam, the last Caribou left in February 1972 and A4-179 was first in, last out.

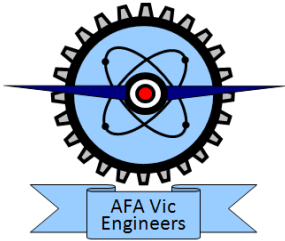
(b) Three Caribou were Cat 5, one by enemy action - mortar fire on ground at That Son (FLTTLT Kev Griffin was the ENGO).

(c) Two of the 2SQN Canberras were lost; A84-231 was a "lost trace" November '70, and A84-228 shot down by a SAM March '71.

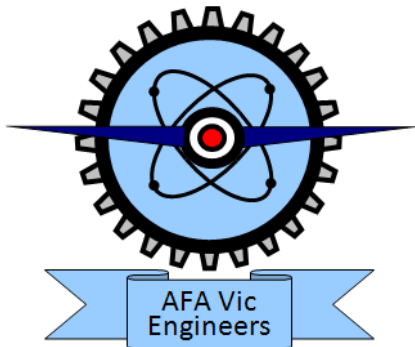
Round 4: (a) The Richmond site was purchased by the RAAF in 1923. The large C-130A hangar came from the Rathmines former Catalina Base, and was disassembled, floated by barge along the coast and Hawkesbury River to Windsor, to be reassembled by the Works Warrant Officer at Richmond.

(b) OTS relocated in 1961.

(c) The first and only Frognall reunion was in 1977, and due an empty keg "falling" on a home-built TV, not surprisingly, further reunions at Frognall were not to be....



Engineer Branch Newsletter - Summer 2019



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We wish you all Ongoing Good Health and Happiness,
and a Joyful Time with Family and Friends in the
Festive Season

Carl Dillon

On behalf of David Graham and the Committee