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On the Saturday morning, a bunch of troops gathered at the KWSC in readiness for a tour of the Caloundra Air Museum on the Sunshine Coast. Once again the mode of transport was car pool which seemed to work perfectly. The tour was arranged by that old Depot Doggie, Mal Sayers who is the Senior Vice president of the Vietnam Vets Association, Sunshine Coast and who he doesn't know up that way isn't worth knowing.



The Queensland Air Museum is situated at Caloundra Airport and had its beginnings in 1973 when a group of aviation enthusiasts who comprised the Queensland Branch of the Aviation Historical Society of Australia decided to “put their money where their mouths were” and do something about preserving Australia’s aviation heritage by purchasing a Canberra bomber. The fact that the fledgling museum had no suitable site to display such an aircraft was not allowed to stand in the way of their enthusiasm!

As a result of the considerable media publicity which followed, the Canberra was moved to the new “Pioneer Valley Park” horse-drawn vehicle museum at Kuraby where it was placed on display at the invitation of the Hunter family. The Canberra was officially unveiled on 2nd June 1974 thus inaugurating the Queensland Air Museum.

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Almost exactly one year later, the collection doubled in size with the arrival of Meteor WD647. The Museum's second aircraft acquisition was in complete contrast to the first in that it was an outright gift from the British Government, whereas the Canberra had to be purchased from the Australian Government. The Meteor was destined never to join the Canberra at Kuraby, for sadly "Pioneer Valley Park" closed, and QAM found itself thrust into a nomadic existence which was to last for another 10 years! It is a lasting tribute to the members involved that the Museum survived the tribulations that followed.



In May 1977, the Canberra was moved to a leased site at Lower Nudgee where it was later joined by the Meteor, Sea Venoms WZ910 and WZ898 and Vampire A79-828. With the development of the new Brisbane Airport floodway, QAM had to go and after much anguish and lobbying, the aircraft were moved to a "temporary holding area" on Brisbane Airport in April 1980. During QAM's occupancy of this site, the Canberra featured in a much-publicised [extortion attempt against Trans-Australia Airlines](#). Although local Department of Aviation officials were sympathetic towards QAM, the Minister of the day had an apparent personal vendetta against the Museum and exorbitant rental demands effectively led to QAM's eviction from Brisbane Airport.

The resultant publicity came to the attention of Landsborough Shire Councillor, John Harrison, who persuaded the Council to facilitate QAM's relocation to Caloundra. The offer of a modern hangar type building on Caloundra Aerodrome was too good to refuse, and the Canberra, Meteor and two Sea Venoms were transported to Caloundra on 14 June 1986. By this time, only the Meteor was ready for display, so a band of local volunteer members set about preparing the collection for an opening ceremony on 4 April 1987. The fact that a respectable display was ready on schedule is a tribute to the members involved. The official opening of the Museum was performed by Mrs. Ly Bennett, wife of the late Air Vice-Marshal Don Bennett of "Pathfinder" fame who had been QAM Patron until his death in September 1986. Ly Bennett graciously agreed to assume the role of her late husband until her own death in October 2000.

The road leading to the Museum has been officially named Pathfinder Drive in honour of the Pathfinder Force founded by Don Bennett.

A second, much larger display building (Hangar 2) was officially unveiled on 3 July 2004 and an extension to Hangar 2, The Allan Vial Path Finder Force Annexe, was officially unveiled on 16 August 2006.

The Museum is open every day except Christmas Day, from 10.00am to 4.00pm and is definitely worth a visit.

The F-111 on display, (A8-129) was delivered to the RAAF in June 1973 and was flown by 1 Sqn at Amberley.

It was retired in December 2010 and delivered to the Museum in May 2013.

Mal had arranged for the local "Meals on Wheels" people to provide a snack in one of the hangars for the troops, which of course was very well received.



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Then, after a good look around, it was back into the cars and head south again, in readiness for the big dinner that night.

KWSC had once again worked their magic on the Kittyhawk Room, transferring it from last night's Meet and Greet into a setting for a formal dinner.



The evening was opened by Greg Peake, the President of the RSL Sub-Branch who welcomed everyone to the evening and who read the Ode at 7.00pm

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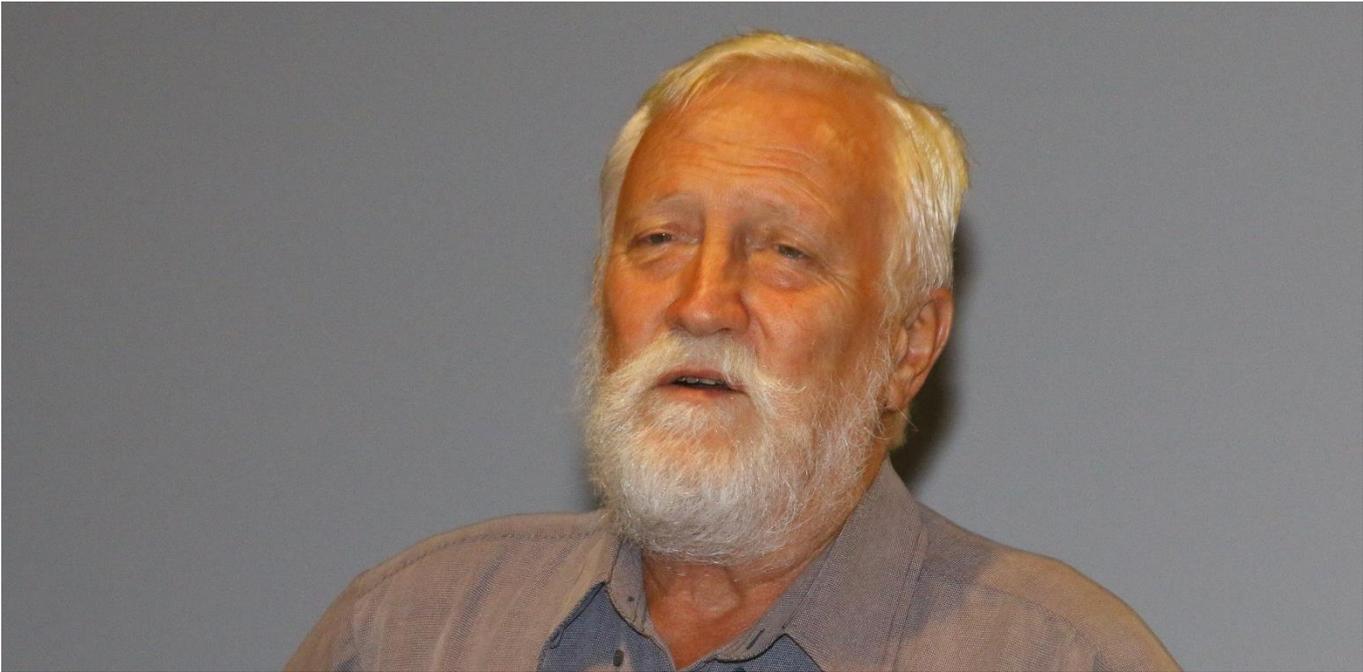


Then the evening was handed over to John Broughton who MC'd the night and who, I'm sure everyone would agree, did a fabulous job. Anyone who knows John knows when ever he's around there's never a dull moment and this night was no exception. He kept the night flowing with all sorts of events and before you knew it, it was time to call it quits.

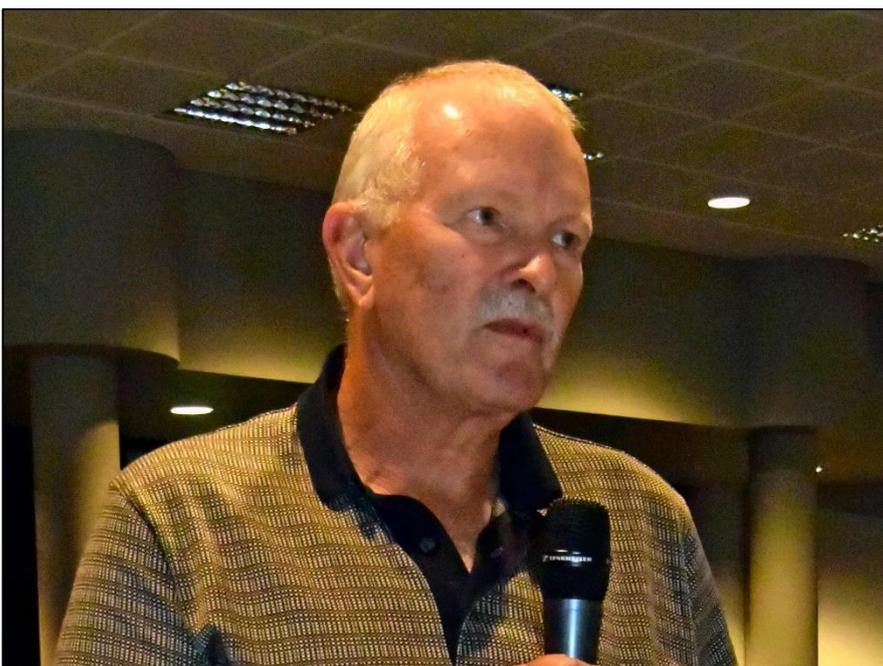




He'd arranged for one person on each table to stand for a few moments and relate an amusing, and in some cases, embarrassing, moment of their time in the RAAF. That went down real well.



Kev Rosser unloading on his time in the RAAF.



Adrian Heinrich related an amusing story of when he was a young poolie at Laverton and had to polish the boss's floor with one of those cantankerous old floor polishers.

Being a young bloke, fresh onto pool, he wasn't all that clued up on the tilt steer method of driving the beast and it seems the Boss's carpeted area suffered quite a bit of a damage, after which Adrian did what any smart young bloke would do – he dumped everything and bolted.



Some of the sought after prizes which were donated by [Jaycar](#) and [Inspirations Paint](#).



A man was telling his neighbour, 'I just bought a new hearing aid. It cost me four thousand dollars, but it's state of the art. It's perfect.' 'Really,' answered the neighbor. 'What kind is it?' 'Twelve thirty'.

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Sue and Dave Muir-McCarey with Keith Beardsmore eyeing off the prizes.



The reunion dinner in full swing.

Some of the tables:

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Got caught having a pee in the local swimming pool today.
The lifeguard shouted at me so loud I nearly fell in.

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"Jesus Loves You."
Nice to hear in church but not in a Mexican prison.



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Then it was time for dinner and the Club excelled once again, the food was magnificent and plentiful with “*some people*” lining up a second time. You couldn’t have done that at Richmond many moons ago.



Some faces in the crowd.



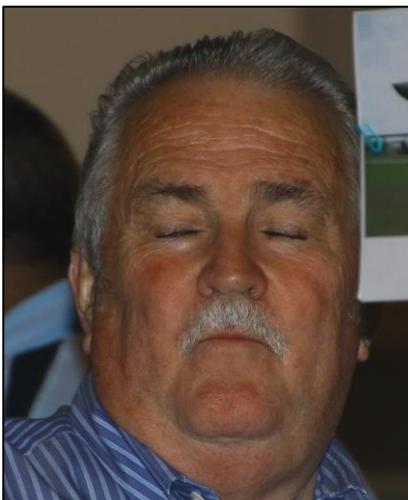
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John Broughton, Dave Muir-McCarey.

2 old ex-5RMT bodgies,
whose memories are far
better left untold.



And what do they say – no show without Punch!!



Sheryl and Trev Benneworth.

I saw my mate Charlie this morning, he's only got one arm bless him.
I shouted - "Where you off to Charlie?"
He said, "I'm off to change a light bulb."
Well I just cracked up, couldn't stop laughing, then said,
"That's gonna be a bit awkward init?"
"Not really." he said. "I still have the receipt, you insensitive bastard."

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And it's obvious the bloke who said "Age shall not weary them" didn't have a clue what he was talking about!

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On Sunday morning, at 9.30am, those whose heads weren't thundering, headed for the Chermside Bowls Club for a spirited game of lawn bowls.



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Anne Van Der Linden showed the blokes how it's done.

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All those who fronted for the bowls game, none of whom had regularly played the game, really enjoyed themselves and were pleasantly surprised how hard it is. Those damn balls have a mind of their own and tend to wander off to the left or right which makes it very hard to hit that little white ball at the other end and if you give it a bit of oomph, it tends to over-run the green and drop into the ditch at the other end.

That morning just might have attracted a few converts.....

'That damn wife of mine is a liar,' said the angry husband
to a sympathetic pal seated next to him at the bar.
'How do you know?' the friend asked. 'She didn't come home last night,
and when I asked her where she'd been,
she said that she had spent the night with her sister, Shirley.
And I know that's a bloody lie because I spent the night with her sister, Shirley.'

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