



## “Liberator Relives”

*Grp Capt Carl Schiller (Ret) OAM CSM*

B-24 Liberator Memorial Australia Incorporated

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## LEST WE FORGET



### President's Message

After the long Christmas and New Year break, it has been nice to resume 'normal operations'. However, with the wonderful work being done by the Hangar 1 project contractors, we have had to adjust (happily!) to a new 'normal'. We recently had a meeting with Melbourne Water, SFP-JV and Wyndham City Council representatives, and it was wonderful to note the progress that has been made, the clear vision SFP-JV has of the H1 project and to witness the excellent communication among all parties.

Meanwhile, good progress has been made with the B-24 Liberator restoration and work on our other aircraft

I sincerely hope none of our members has been affected by the extreme heat and bushfires this summer, and I hope you can enjoy the remainder of this season.

### Aircraft Restoration Projects

#### B-24 Liberator

The most conspicuous developments have been the work on the B-24 Liberator tailplane (almost completed), and the engine pod that has been fitted to the port wing.

Cleaning of some of the interior of the Liberator is also underway.

During the closure period the Aircraft was weighed by a company experienced in this. The results will help us in planning for and moving the B-24 Liberator from H2 to H1 (probably next year!). As the engine pod (referred to above) was fitted after the aircraft was weighed, it was weighed separately and its weight added to that of the aircraft.



*The fuselage of A72-176 being removed from George Toye's property near Moe, to be transported to Werribee  
(Photo courtesy of Rick Hanning)*



*The fuselage of A72-176 being removed from George Toye's property near Moe, to be transported to Werribee  
(Photo courtesy of Rick Hanning)*



*Part of the fuselage of A72-176 being loaded onto a truck to be transported to Werribee  
(Photo courtesy of Rick Hanning)*



*A port side engine pod being fitted to A72-176  
(Photo courtesy of Paul Rourke)*



*A port side engine pod being fitted to A72-176  
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*A port side engine pod being fitted to A72-176  
(Photo courtesy of Paul Rourke)*

## The Avro Anson

The Anson nose cone team is completing installation of the windshield around the cockpit area.

Work has begun on fitting out the rear of the firewall bulkhead. Some of the parts must be completely stripped, media blasted and painted before they are ready to be installed. This is quite a complex and time consuming procedure.

## Electrical Division

The bulkhead radio operator IIS switch that was removed for restoration has been treated and is ready to be painted.

The link panel from the bomb bay to the cockpit right-hand-side switches has been stripped to fabricate panels. The power bus bar hinges and new panel are works in progress.

The rear crew member heater fuse box has been refurbished, although a new lid is needed.

## Hangar 1 Project

The contractor's work on Hangar 1 and around our hangar is proceeding well. They are trying to minimise the impact on our volunteers and visitors, with the only changes at present relating to the entrance to our precinct and parking. However, there will be clear signage to assist those coming to our hangar. SFP-JV and Melbourne Water held a community information session in a marquee outside our hangar on 12 February when nearby residents had an opportunity to express their concerns and ask questions. Thirty-five people attended, and 33 also visited our museum in H2.

Thank you so much to our volunteers who helped during this event, and our thanks to SFP-JV and Melbourne for their efficiency in organising and overseeing the event.

## Forthcoming Events

Our annual commemorative service will be held at the Shrine of Remembrance on Monday 23 March, beginning at 11.00 and ending by 12 noon. Members and their families are invited to attend. We suggest you arrive by 10.45. If you wish to lay a wreath, please arrive by 10.30.

## Members

Ian Waters, one of our members who works closely with our Secretary to improve our database, has recently completed an excellent video for the Leyburn Historical Society entitled *Leyburn: The War Years*. It provides information, for many years kept secret, on the role of 200 Special Duties Flight comprising six modified B-24 Liberators, three of which crashed during operations. It also commemorates the 32 airmen who lost their lives during these B-24 missions, as well as nine Leyburn base ground crew.

The video is available at:

<https://youtu.be/Lae9CpHpcCc>

(The following was contributed by our member Gabrielle Hogan in an email to our Secretary and is published here with her permission.)

###

Did I ever post to you a copy of my husband's little book which he named 'My Battle'? It was of his wartime reminiscences (printed in the days when it cost a fortune to do so, which was around early eighties). Harl wrote it only for his children and family and friends, and we were all really glad, being so much younger (I was twenty years younger than Harl). His gift was always the written word. He did not have it published. It cost enough in those days to have it made into a book.

The idea of writing a book about his wartime flying started when he used to take out our two children, Louise and Harland, very young then, as they were

born in 1963/4, to enjoy the experience of line fishing from his aluminium twelve footer, known to all owners as their 'tinny'. They were asking him then - "what did you do in the War, Daddy?" It was due to this question that he had the idea to write down his reminiscences which became eventually, his book titled 'My Battle'.

For Gabrielle

*I skipped work because of an eye problem. I couldn't see myself in the office today.*

### **New release of a book first published in the 1970s**

Peter Ingman of Avonmore Books has requested that we include the following in our Newsletter because it includes material on B-24 Liberators operated by Qantas in a quasi-military operation.

Geoff Goodall, *Double Sunrise: Qantas Empire Airways Indian Ocean Wartime Services 1943-1946* (Avonmore Books, 2025 edition)

If you are interested in this book, please contact Avonmore Books directly at:

PO Box 217  
Kent Town SA 5071

08 8431 9780  
0412 602 380  
peteringman@bigpond.com

### **Jack Palance and B-24 Liberators**

**Walter (Jack) Palance** enlisted in the United States Army Air Forces during World War II, and was trained as the pilot of a B-24 Liberator bomber. He suffered head injuries and burns during a 1943 crash, with various sources citing it as a patrol off the coast of California, or a training flight near Tucson, Arizona (at what is now Davis-Monthan Air Force Base). He was discharged in 1944 after undergoing reconstructive surgery, which contributed to his distinctively gaunt appearance.

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