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# The UIVER Flyer

News from the Uiver Memorial DC-2 Restoration Project.



The hard work of the volunteers is reflected in the aircraft's new skin.

## Our DC-2 will shine at the opera

The Uiver memorial DC-2 is getting dressed up for its night at the opera. On Saturday, March 18, the DC-2 will literally give a polished performance as the backdrop for Opera in the Hangar, when the cacophony of hammers, drills and

riveters will give way to the more melodious sounds of sopranos, tenors and baritones.

The restoration volunteers are replacing the exterior panels on the DC-2 fuselage, returning the dull, grey metal to the highly polished finish the airliner boasted when it emerged from the Douglas Aircraft Corporation factory in 1934.

Opera in the Hangar, a major fundraising event for the Uiver Memorial Community Trust, will be presented by Opera Scholars Australia, featuring conductor Guy Noble, a chamber orchestra and the Albury Scots School Pipes and Drums. The program will range from Rossini, Donizetti and Lehar to Cole Porter and from classics such as Lakme's Flower Duet to the iconic songs of Edith Piaf and Vera Lynn.

Tickets for Opera in the Hangar are available from EventBrite or the UMCT website. There will be canapes and drinks before the two-hour performance with a 20-minute interval.



The restored panels take on a new lustre after polishing.

Founded in 1998 by Graeme Wall and Margot Cory-Wall, Opera Scholars Australia is a development program for young classical singers, usually 18 to 26, who show potential for a career in opera. The training program is augmented by performances; best known in this area is Opera in the Alps but OSA has also staged Opera in the Market, at Melbourne's Queen Victoria Market, and Opera in the Cave at Blanche Cave Naracoorte.

Opera Scholars Australia is operated by a board of directors with general manager Amelia Christo and patrons Yvonne Kenny and Teddy Tahu Rhodes.



The fuselage will become the stage backdrop for Opera in the Hangar.



Dick Smith poses in his helicopter now in Sydney's Powerhouse Museum.

## Our latest donor is Dick Smith

Former entrepreneur, adventurer, pilot and now philanthropist Dick Smith has donated \$5000 to the Uiver restoration project. The donation has been made through the Dick and Pip Smith Foundation, after Mr Smith heard of the Albury project and was contacted by project manager Russ Jacob.

Dick Smith has given millions of dollars to charities and projects, starting in 1977 when he chartered a Qantas Jumbo jet to fly over the South Pole, that raised \$70,000 and generated regular Antarctica flights by airlines and charities.

He started Dick Smith Electronics in 1968 with \$610 and sold it to Woolworths in 1980 for \$25 million. In 1986 he started the Australian Geographic magazine which he sold in Fairfax Media in 1995 for \$41 million. In 1999, he started Dick Smith Foods to sell only Australian products with the profits going to charity. By the time he closed the business in 2016, he had given away \$10 million.

His adventures flying around the world in fixed wing aircraft and helicopters brought him many records but also influence within the aviation industry which led to his appointment as chairman of the Civil Aviation Authority 1990-92 and later deputy chairman and chairman of the Civil Aviation Safety Authority 1995-99 during which he campaigned against what he said was over-regulation and compliance costs killing the aviation industry.

Today, many charities, service clubs and a host of projects have benefited from his largesse. In one year alone, 2015, Dick Smith gave away \$15 million.



Santa Monica Airport today. It will be closed in five years

## Birthplace of the DC-2 to be closed

The US birthplace of the original Uiver and Albury's memorial DC-2 aircraft is to be closed after more than 100 years. After years of campaigning by residents, the local council has won approval from the Federal Aviation Administration to shut Santa Monica Airport, one of the oldest airports in the country and once the busiest single-runway airport in the world.

The Douglas Aircraft Corporation, formed nearby in 1921, moved to what was then called Clover Field when it opened as an airport in 1922. All the Douglas Commercial (DC) series of piston-engined aircraft were built there, starting with the DC-1 prototype in 1933, to be followed by the DC-2 in 1934 and then the iconic DC-3. The KLM DC-2 that became the Uiver was built at Santa Monica before being shipped by sea to The Netherlands where it was reassembled.

After the outbreak of the Second World War, Douglas set up other factories around the US and in 1958 moved its headquarters to Long Beach when authorities refused to allow the runway at Santa Monica to be extended for the development of the DC-8 jet airliner. The airport is historic also because it hosted pioneer aviators such as Amelia Earhart, Howard Hughes and Wiley Post. The first circumnavigation of the world by air, achieved by the US Army, left from the airport in March 1924 in a fleet of aircraft custom built by Douglas, and returned to Santa Monica 45,000 kilometres later.

When it opened in 1922 as Clover Field, named after a First World War pilot, the airport was surrounded by farms and orchards but as the area developed, residents began complaining about noise and pollution. Many of the surrounding homes were built for some of the 44,000 workers employed by Douglas but new homeowners were not so enamoured with the airport. The local council has been lobbying the FAA for years to close the airport which after 1958 became a general aviation and “reliever” airport for Los Angeles International Airport 10 kilometres to the south.

Businesses on the airport, which fought court battles against closure, were forced to close, claiming the council imposed onerous conditions when their leases were up for renewal. Shortening the runway in 2017 and imposing noise limits prevented small jets from using it.

When the airport closes in 2028, the council says the 87 hectares (215 acres) will become parkland, although sceptics on social media have predicted the value of the land will be too great a temptation and housing and retail developments will eventually follow.

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## Keep those rivets pouring in

Nothing in the restoration hangar could have been achieved without the support from the community and with the project so dependent on donations and the rebuild of the DC-2 memorial aircraft moving steadily forward, our Give A Rivet fundraiser is becoming increasingly important.

With about 900,000 rivets needed and each one valued at \$2, simple mathematics give some idea of the scale of the task in resurrecting the DC-2 as the centrepiece of the proposed Uiver museum.

The QR code below or the [Give A Rivet button on our website](#) makes donating simple and every dollar raised helps to advance the project.



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## Help us spread the word

We want the whole community to know about our project and you can help by forwarding this newsletter to others in your address book, either through email or social media. You could encourage them to also forward on the newsletter so we can expand our circulation, and invite them to subscribe and join our emailing list. A small effort could have a big impact.



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