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The UIVER Flyer

News from the Uiver Memorial DC-2 Restoration Project.



Uiver Trust chairman Pieter Mol with Philip Robertson. Picture: IAN COSSOR.

Choc king's grandson special guest

The grandson of the man responsible for the air race that brought the Uiver to Albury in 1934 was a special guest when the Albury and District Historical Society gathered in the restoration hangar. Philip Robertson, who

lives at Splitters Creek, has made aviation his lifelong career, from Ansett pilot to air safety consultant, and is now striving to get national recognition for his grandfather's efforts to promote air travel across the globe, a vision he shared with KLM when it entered the DC-2 in the London to Melbourne air race. Macpherson Robertson (1859-1945) founded the MacRobertson's chocolate and confectionery company in 1880, producing such sweet icons as Freddo frogs, Old Gold, Snack and Cherry Ripe. It also brought chewing gum and fairy floss to Australia from the US. Some of its products are still on the store shelves today, although the company was sold to Cadbury in 1967. Macpherson Robertson was also a philanthropist, supporting a host of causes ranging from the sport of croquet to some major projects including finance Douglas Mawson's Australian and New Zealand expedition to Antarctica for which Macpherson was knighted in 1932.

In 1934, he joined Horrie Miller to form MacRobertson Miller Airlines in Western Australia and the same year sponsored the air race that brought the Uiver to Albury.

Philip Robertson said his grandfather wanted commercial passenger aircraft to compete, and that the air race would test the possibilities of a quick, commercial aviation passenger service between England and Australia. The Comet, which was the overall winner, was a two-seater racer that was the precursor to De Havilland's legendary Mosquito, the "wooden wonder" twin-engined fighter-bomber of the Second World War, but the KLM entry was an airliner and the company set out to prove that an international air service was viable, even to the point of carrying passengers and mail in the race. As he toured the Albury hangar, Philip was impressed with the restoration project, which he described as "magnificent". He said it was essential that the story of Albury's role in saving the Uiver was kept alive because it was part of an even bigger story – the development of the global aviation industry we know today and the

significance of the 1934 air race that Macpherson Robertson brought to fruition by his sponsorship should never be underestimated.

Historical society president Geoff Romero made a similar point when he said the story of the Uiver was in danger of being “undersold”. It was not just an Albury story but a world story, he said. It appears in movies and books and is known across the globe and a great deal of support would be needed to make the dream a reality. There would need to be more contributions such as Dick Smith’s \$5000 donation, Mr Romero said. The restoration of the DC-2 and plans for a museum were fantastic. He saw it as a major tourist attraction, attracting coachloads of visitors. “Just imagine, a museum with a café and coach tours making this their lunch stop.”



Historical society members hear from their president, Geoff Romero.

The bargain bookshop is open

The book shop is open. A vast collection of literature to excite the aviation enthusiast is now on sale at the Uiver restoration hangar and most cost just \$5. The collection from the estate of the late Keith Meggs covers every aircraft that has ever flown from the balloons of the earliest aviators in the 19th century to the modern jetliners of today.

Biographies of the pioneers and the combat pilots of every almost conflict since 1900 mingle with action novels and an encyclopaedic range of tomes dedicated to the world's classic aircraft and the adventures of the men and women who flew them.

The books can be viewed during the hangar's normal hours, Wednesday and Saturday, 9am to 2pm. Proceeds from the books are being divided between the Meggs family and the Uiver restoration project.

Also found in the collection were some valuable rare volumes which are being offered separately. These books, which include first editions and some signed by the author, can be viewed at the hangar on Wednesdays by appointment with David Crotty on dcrot@icloud.com.



The underside of the wing centre section has been stripped bare.

A small move but the next big step

There has been a significant shifting of the “furniture” in the Uiver restoration hangar – the wing centre section of the DC-2 has been moved into open space so the volunteers have better access, as that part of the project begins to gear up.

The wing centre section is the key part of the airframe; it houses the landing gear and carries the engines and with work on the fuselage heading into the home straight, attention is turning to the next major component. As with so much of the DC-2, the wing centre section was heavily corroded and will

have to be substantially rebuilt, requiring hundreds of metres of aluminium extrusions and thousands of manhours.



Volunteers are ramping up work on the wing centre section.



The Men's Shed members hear the Uiver story. Picture: KAREN NEWTON.

Tour sheds light on the project

The Wodonga Men's Shed is the latest community group to take a tour of the Uiver restoration hangar. Project manager Russ Jacob hosted 26 members of the group for the 1½-hour visit.

Over morning tea they heard of the story of the Uiver's forced landing at the Albury racecourse, the history of our DC-2 and plans for an Uiver museum. They also toured the hangar to see the progress of the restoration, achieved by the volunteers.

Hangar tours by community groups are becoming a regular event, not only to help fundraising but also to spread the word on the restoration and museum project, particularly the historical significance of the Uiver's flight across the world.

With your rivets, we have nailed it

The thousands of rivets that have been donated so far have helped the DC-2 restoration project reach so many milestones since work began but there are many milestones still to come which is why the Give A Rivet fundraiser never loses its importance.

It is a simple way to support the project, each rivet is worth \$2 and every dollar will find its way into the DC-2 that will become the centrepiece of the Uiver museum.

You can use the QR code below or the [Give A Rivet button on our website](#).



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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