

## Wings Over Illawarra -

Nov 28 2021

The annual visit (except for 2020 due to COVID-19) to Albion Park Airport was, as expected, an absolute ripper. The days leading up to the event were a real worry and it was half expected for the event to be washed out. However, on the Sunday, despite being heavily overcast most of the time, the weather remained clear and the clouds were high enough to give the



A Messerschmitt at an air show...



Farewell old faithful friend – you have done us proud. The star of WOI, F/A-18 Hornet, on its final public appearance. The type was in service with the RAAF from 1984 to 2021 and was formally retired the following day at a service at Williamtown.

enthusiastic spectators an uninterrupted view of the various flying displays, which were both exciting and interesting.

2021 marked the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of the RAAF and they provided a broad display, both static and flying, of their modern fleet of military aircraft. They were deeply

supported by both WWII and post-WWII aircraft from the various private flying groups, especially the Temora Aviation Museum.

Of particular significance was the final public display of the venerable McDonnell Douglas F/A-18 Hornet, which has been retired to make way for the all-new Lockheed Martin F35 Lightning II.

Both of these aircraft gave a very interesting insight into their capabilities accompanied with an absolute deafening cacophony of sound. As Ray Davies said “and that is how you turn kerosene into noise”.

The display of stunt flying could only be described as stomach-churning. The manoeuvres that modern aerobatic aircraft can perform without falling out of the air are absolutely crazy, especially when flown by some of the world’s leading stunt flyers.







Who didn't own (or want to own) a Datsun 1600?

The static displays around the tarmac area also deserve a special mention. Many aircraft were open and available to the public for internal inspection and long queues were noted at the Super Constellation, the Boeing 747-400 and the F-111. Apart from the aircraft on static display, there were various rides for the kids, good merchandise stalls and excellent display tents by the three armed services. If you didn't take your own picnic hamper to the event there were numerous food stalls with a great selection of fare to feed the tape worms.

The main disappointment on the day was the poor attendance of classic cars and the arrangements for display thereof. We were parked on the eastern end of the east-west runway approach area which was great considering that a lot of the grass area was underwater. However, there was a



Mk IX Spitfire

poor selection of cars and the majority were moderns, not classics, plus we were not parked in groups. The organisers issued a survey sheet after the event and we have been able to make own concerns known.

All in all, a truly worthy event to wind up our outdoor outings for the year, especially after such a crummy year. It is a crying shame that we did not get more club members to attend as there were only 5 Morries in the line-up. I find it hard to believe that there are so many members who don't have an interest in our aviation heritage.

Bob Gilliland (Photos: Bob Gilliland, Les Whale, Owen Sinden)



V-10 engined Audi R8 or Morris Minor?  
Everyone knows a classic!





US Navy's WWII torpedo bomber  
Grumman Avenger

Plenty of static displays: 'Connie' the  
Constellation (above) while the Southern  
Cross replica caught the attention of  
David Bursill and John Bowmer



F/A18 replacement, the highly-sophisticated and extremely noisy F35 makes an  
impressive low-level fly-over. Internal (stealth) weapons storage on right







Aerobatic displays were breathtaking



Boys light up! When the afterburners are lit (reheat to our UK friends), the noise levels increase dramatically.  
F 35 (left) and F/A 18

