

AVALON

It doesn't get any better

Did you know that Avalon Airport was founded when the Commonwealth government purchased the land as a site for the construction of the Canberra Bomber in the 1950s – and that this year, the Australian International Airshow is celebrating its 10th event – or 20th anniversary – at the site?

This year's event will also celebrate 100 years of civil aviation in Australia – and the 90th birthday of the Royal Australian Air Force.

Fittingly, therefore, to mark the first and fourth of these major milestones, the organisers of the iconic airshow will unveil a newly restored sample of the iconic RAAF bomber, which will be on display as a centerpiece at this year's event.

The Canberra Bomber was Australia's first jet bomber, and an example of the aircraft has stood as a gate guardian to Avalon Airport for many years.

Airshow CEO Ian Honnery said this aircraft had been on display for more than 25 years at Avalon, and this was a wonderful opportunity to restore it to its former glory, to ensure it remained a part of Australia's aviation history.

The first Australian-built Canberra Bomber entered service in 1953 and the Avalon gate guardian saw action in Vietnam as part of the 35th Tactical Fighter Squadron, from the late 1960s.

Once restored, this Canberra Bomber will not only represent the RAAF but will also be a memorial to all those squadron members who served with the aircraft and to the men and women who manufactured and flew it at Avalon.

With the RAAF celebrating 90 years as the nation's air arm, this year's Australian International Airshow at Avalon is set to be the best ever.

With Super Hornet fighters and Wedgetail early warning and control aircraft newly come on line to the RAAF's inventory since the last airshow, the local air warriors have much to be proud of.

But, with organisers already talking up the possibility of the US Air Force perhaps bringing stealth aircraft to the show for the first time, the excitement is building.

It won't just be the machinery that will star, though. Following closely in the footsteps of aviation legends Chuck Yeager (the first man to break the speed of sound) and Andy Thomas (Australia's first astronaut) as special guests at the two most recent shows, Australia's own Red Bull Air Race legend Matt Hall will highlight at this years event.

A former Royal Australian Air Force F/A-18 fighter pilot, Matt Hall is one of Australia's most accomplished pilots. The 39-year-old has taken on the world's best pilots in the Red Bull Air Race World Championships and acquitted himself extremely well last year, racking up two podium finishes and 31 race points throughout the season.

Matt said he was looking forward to performing at Avalon 2011 to help mark the 90th anniversary of the Royal Australian Air Force.

"The Australian International Airshow is one of the most renowned air shows in the world and I am honoured to be part of it," Matt said.



"With record crowds expected, it will give me a great opportunity to put on a display for lots and lots of people who might not have had the chance to see my aircraft in action before."

Ian Honnery said he was delighted that Matt would be part of the spectacular line-up this year.

"Matt is one of the country's most dynamic young pilots and audiences can expect plenty of excitement from his performances."

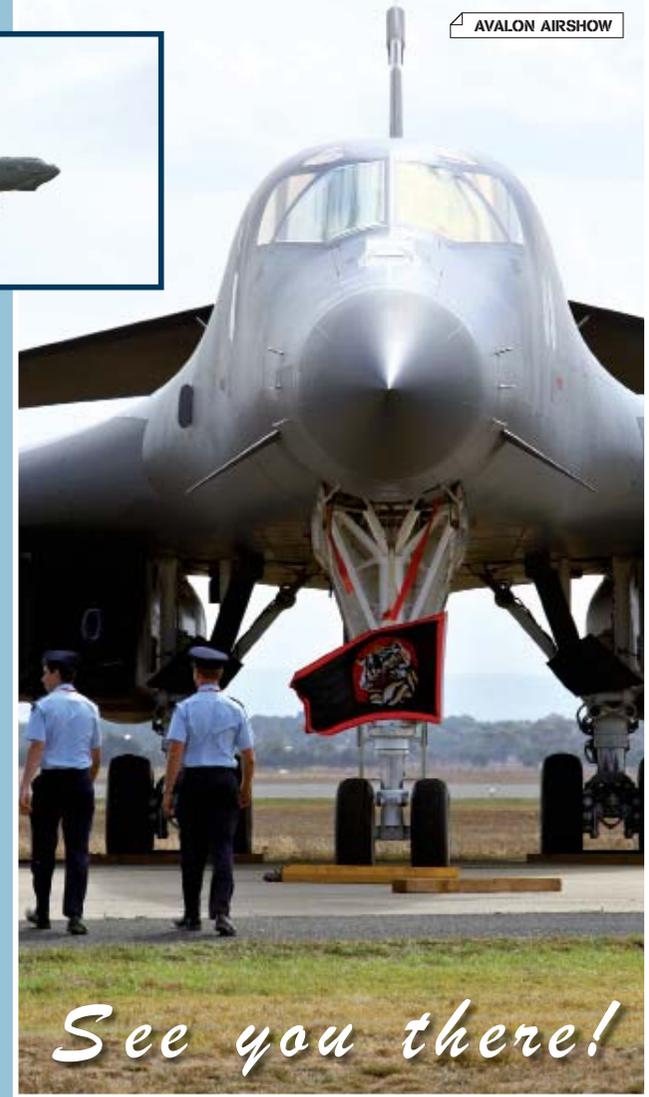
Matt is also hoping his appearance at the 2011 Australian International Airshow will help inspire the next generation of Australian pilots.

"One of the things I am trying to do with Matt Hall Racing is to promote the aviation industry in Australia and especially try to motivate young people who may be interested in a career as a pilot."

Matt will be guest speaker at a major careers and skills forum during the airshow, which will aim to encourage students to take up a career in aviation and aerospace.

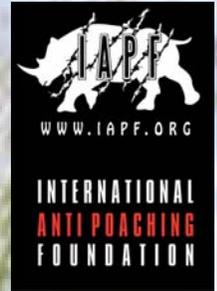
A record number of military, historic, commercial and general aviation aircraft from around the world and around Australia are expected to take part in static and flying displays this year, and the ever-popular trade display is nudging 600 companies – including CONTACT, for our fourth time! Stop by and say g'day to the CONTACT crew next to the northwest exit (stand 3N9, if you want to be specific) of the massive white-tent exhibition halls.

The 2011 Australian International Airshow will be held from 1 to 6 March, with gates open to the public after 2pm on Friday the 4th, at Avalon Airport between Melbourne and Geelong.



See you there!





The illegal trafficking of wildlife and dead-animal products is the third largest criminal industry in the world.

But, according to two Aussies intimately involved, for every one organisation dedicated to animal protection across the World, there are 738 organisations, set up for the benefit or advancement of the human species.

Where is our focus, they ask?

**Raw for
Africa**

**Military skills
applied in new fight**