

Aviation Historical Society of Australia (NSW) inc

Airmail Centenary Commemoration Group

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Please continue to send me email addresses of people who would be interested in this project. If you are new to the project and want basic information, go to the website, 'Latest News' and read the 'Basic Information' file.

Tuesday 24 June: 18 days to go

Today, a newspaper article from the Adelaide *Mail* 100 years ago, dealing with Guillaux' visit to Adelaide.

This was a fairly typical 'show' – a first flight close to the airfield that was usually a racecourse, then a longer flight with some more close-in aerobatics to conclude. This is a long article, probably better read on the screen than printed (the bulletin is 8 pages). The article comes from the wonderful NLA *Trove* collection.

The Aero 145

Phil Dulhunty sent in this comment on the Aero 145:



I notice from your recent email that the Aero 145- VH-DUH may be participating in the last leg of the airmail flight. The Czech aircraft industry "Omnipol" was represented in Australia by Dulmison Aircraft and Kingsford Smith Flying School (Peter and Phil Brown) were the Sydney agents for Dulmison – Not Fawcett. I was the CEO of Dulmison Aircraft and one of the pilots who ferried the Aero 145's to Bankstown. We also imported the Meta Sokols, the Zlin and Morava plus the Blanik sailplane. All this was before Australia had any US dollars so there were no Cessnas, Pipers or Beechcraft. Brian Lewis of

Mittagong has done a fantastic restoration job on VH-DUH (all Czech aircraft had Aust Reg Nos. VH-DUA, B, C, etc.

The whole story is in my autobiography "Never a Dull Moment". Regards, Phil Dulhunty

Chris Byrne, the pilot, is working on the Aero to make sure it is in top condition for the mail run, Mittagong to Bankstown. A problem with this aircraft is that it does not respond well to crosswind takeoffs, so we hope for a calm day.

DHC-2 Beaver

Sy Alsepp has indicated that his de Havilland Beaver VH-SYS will be also flying the Mittagong-Bankstown leg. The Beaver is a rugged, Canadian-built aircraft made from 1947 to 1967. One of the users of the Beaver in Australia was the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Authority, whose two aircraft were a great boon to communication around this vast project. The picture shows the famous VH-SMA, a well-known aircraft to workers on the 'Snowy' from about 1955 to 1963.

The pictures are from the Ed Coates Collection. Above: the Aero in 1964 and below: VH-SMA in April 1958.



MASTER OF THE AIR

GUILLAUX AND HIS WONDERFUL BIRD

SPECTATORS ASTOUNDED.

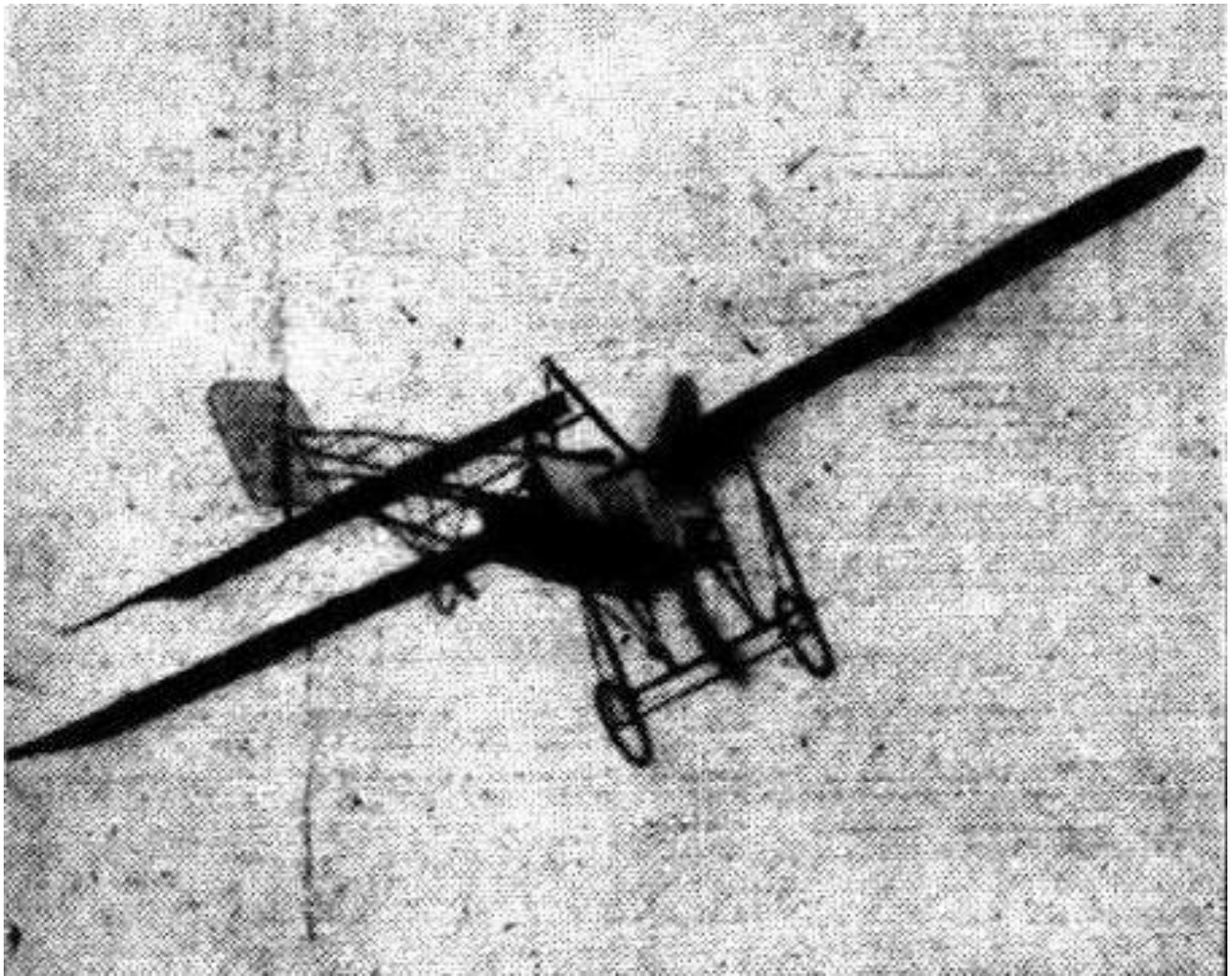
TO-DAY'S FLIGHT.

Mons. Maurice Guillaux, the French aviator, who has been astonishing thousands with his wonderful air feats in the eastern States, gave his first public exhibition at the Cheltenham Park Racecourse this afternoon. His display was truly astounding, and there was a warm reception awaiting him when he concluded his last flight for the day. There were quite twenty thousand people on the racecourse, not to mention several thousands on the surrounding allotments. Those in the stands rose from their seats, and the spectators outside rushed to the landing site cheering and shouting frantically as the airman swooped gracefully to earth for the last time. A wonderful exhibition it had been, that merited every cheer of the great reception that followed. Many of the crowd were wildly excited, rushing hither and thither in their eagerness to catch glimpses of the man and the ma-



AVIATOR GUILLAUX.

In one of his wonderful evolutions during this afternoon's flight.
Photo. Edwards & Errington.



chine. Everybody was anxious to see the man who had such complete mastery of the air, and not infrequently they obstructed the purpose of M. Guillaux and his assistants, setting manager, mechanics, &c., a difficult task to clear the way with no other language than French at their disposal. Fortunately there was not the slightest mishap. Indeed, it seemed impossible for anything to go wrong in M. Guillaux's hands. A bird could not have had more control of its actions than he had over those of his great flier. He was as calm and collected as though he sat in an armchair. This impression was gained even when he flew upside down with a thousand feet of air separating him from mother earth. With the aid

of glasses one could see him sitting there stolid and self-possessed, his hands on the levers that raised the planes to take him up or down or to turn the rudder which took him to left or right. On his return to earth people crowded round him when he stood still, trotted by his side as he hurried hither and thither attending to the details of his flights. But they saw no extraordinary being. Just an ordinary looking man, short of stature and sparsely built, his head adorned by a curly mass of black hair—that sort of hair which bespeaks strength and determination. In his face there was something that told of iron nerve and strength of purpose, too; in fact, it was the visage of an old general who has come through many campaigns the master. Strapped sideways and longways like a baby in its first chair, he looked peculiarly insignificant in the little cabin where he controls

the whole mechanism of engine, planes

the whole mechanism of engine, planes, and rudder; but we had not been watching his wonderful manoeuvring two minutes before we realised what forces there were underlying that placid and ordinary outward appearance.

The first flight began right on time. There was no hitch and no fussing and fuming with the machine. While two assistants held the bird-like frame in its place M. Guillaux tested his engine and propeller. The latter whirled at a terrific rate, and when the spectators saw the tan and dust from the galloping track 20 ft. away flying into the air as though disturbed by a whirlwind they realised the strength of those mighty wings that were to carry a man a thousand feet above his

fellow. With a whirr like a motor cycle the machine dashed off, and in less than 50 yards it was scudding along a few feet from the ground. Then it rose to a height of 50 ft. flying in circles, so that the crowd got a remarkable good view of everything. The machine volplaned from side to side, dived like a bird, and then, rising higher and higher, suddenly turned and fell towards earth, the wind whistling through its planes, so great was the pace at which it travelled. For the first time we thought M. Guillaux had lost control, but he soon brought the machine up with a beautifully graceful swoop to right or left, and then began the next evolution. Graceful as a bird it shot from side to side just as we see a swallow gliding on outstretched wings, carried along by its own momentum. Soon he went higher into the air, so far that we had to perform contortions with our necks to see him. Up he went in a sort of spiral route, and

contortions with our necks to see him. Up he went in a sort of spiral route, and then most of us experienced the thrill of seeing the first aviator loop the loop. The machine seemed to duck backwards, turn completely over, and then swoop down at a great rate, with propeller slowed down to almost a stop. Then followed what appeared to be a horizontal fall which for the first time brought our hearts into our mouths, but a graceful swoop and the biplane was brought back into its true balance. Nine times in all M. Guillaux performed this wonderful feat, and there was something different about each attempt. Sometimes the biplane seemed to go backwards and upwards, other times forward and downwards, while on other occasions the loon was on one side or the other. Naturally it was necessary for a greater height to be attained when looping the loop, but every motion was plainly visible, and it was easy to distinguish the aviator's head as the biplane swam gracefully along on its back.

Several times during his flight M. Guillaux skimmed over the heads of the crowd. Once he passed within a few feet of them. The spectators, however, were not in the slightest perturbed. The wonderful mastery M. Guillaux had over his machine inspired them with the greatest confidence, and they sent up appreciative cheers which the aviator calmly acknowledged with a wave of the hand. Once he did startle a lonely spectator out in the centre of the course—a place, by-the-way, on which the public were not supposed to encroach. The machine swooped down so close that this man thought it was coming to earth. He dashed off towards the outer fence, his body crouched and casting frightened glances over his shoulder. But no harm came to him, and M. Guillaux made his descent with all the grace of a bird in a space which had been cleared for him.

SPACE WHICH HAD BEEN CREATED FOR HIM.

The hero of the afternoon was then conveyed round the course in a motor car decorated with the tri-colour of his country, and he received a great ovation as he passed the crowds that lined the course. There was a rush to the centre after the first flight, and eager spectators thronged round the machine. The second flight was retarded as a result, but the troopers soon cleared a course, and when the propellers stirred up huge clouds of dust the crowd's inquisitiveness abated somewhat. The second flight began with volplaning and looping exhibitions, but after a quarter of an hour the plane headed for Adelaide, and M. Guillaux surveyed the city and the southern suburbs. The machine grew smaller and smaller to the gaze of the Cheltenham spectators, but after half an hour's absence it came into plain view again, and further evolutions were performed right over the course. A final descent was made shortly before 5 o'clock, and the aviator was cheered to the echo. He was congratulated by His Excellency the Governor (Sir Henry Galway), who was an interested spectator of the whole proceedings, moving about freely among

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the crowd in his endeavour to secure the best view of the aviator. The machine was again surrounded by curious thousands, but, of course, they made no attempt to handle it. Great interest was evinced in its mechanism, and several hundreds of people remained until quite dark examining the wonderful new bird.

M. GUILLAUX INTERVIEWED.

Soon after the daring aviator had descended a representative of "The Mail" had a chat with him.

"You had an excellent trip?" the pressman queried.

"Yes. It was one of the most successful trips I have made in Australia," M. Guillaux replied.

"And the atmosphere?"

"Oh, that could not have been better. There was hardly a breath of wind."

"What route did you take on your second trip?"

"I made direct for Adelaide, and circled over the city for a while, and then made for the southern suburbs."

"You appeared from Cheltenham to be in close proximity to the hills?"

"Yes. I flew very near to the hills, and they did look pretty, too; one of the prettiest sights I have seen in my experiences."

"Could you see much of Adelaide from where you were?"

"Adelaide appeared to me like three huge blocks, and was much larger than Melbourne appeared to be."

"You apparently attained a great altitude?"

"I went as high as eleven thousand feet."

"Were you able to see the people on earth from that height?"

"I was just able to discern small spots about the size of sixpenny pieces."

A HUGE CROWD.

M. Guillaux's manager stated after the flight that the attendance had been larger than at any previous exhibition in Australia. The aviator also pointed out that South Australians had shown more appreciation than in the other cities. He liked to hear the applause as he flew close to the crowd, and frequently waved his hands in response. Sometimes the crowd had been a trifle too eager, and for a time he had been chary about making the second flight, as he feared that some mishap might occur because of the inquisitiveness of the spectators.