

would capture the imagination of the Australian public. It would also be the first Australian organised attempt to fly from Australia to England. Frank Hurley immersed himself in fund raising. His principal financial supporter was T. E. Rofe, a struck off solicitor turned highly successful businessman and philanthropist. Sir Hugh Denison of the *Sun* and J. J. Rouse of *Kodak Ltd* were also generous donors. T. E. Rofe covered the cost of the Brougham, which was shipped to Sydney from San Diego in October, 1928, and named *Spirit of Australia*. It was registered G-AUIX. Meanwhile Hurley had engaged Flying Officer S. J. Moir as pilot and Flying Officer H. C. Owen as relief pilot and mechanic. Hurley would himself act as navigator, wireless operator and photographer during the record attempt. A test flight was planned to Bathurst on Wednesday October 17, 1928. As reported in *The Western Times*, "The *Spirit of Australia* piloted by Flying Officer Moir will leave Sydney at 8 o'clock to-morrow morning and is expected over Bathurst at 10 o'clock. The 'plane will not alight but will immediately return to Sydney. The *Spirit of Australia* is just making a trial flight, and will carry a full load in addition to petrol supplies for the plane." As it happened the Wright Whirlwind J5 gave trouble on the day, an indication of a recurring problem that dogged the later record attempt, and it was decided to complete the test flight over Richmond rather than risk a mountain crossing to Bathurst.

The Bathurst connection was through Percy Moodie, who was a very keen amateur photographer and cinematographer. Hurley had flown over Bathurst in the Vimy, on February 14, 1920, and wrote of his experience, "Ross was piloting. Keith studied the chart, and I had the window up taking snaps over the nose. The wind was blowing up my tunic at 80 miles an hour, and was decidedly nippy. Across Bathurst - by far the most imposing township - then a race with a goods train, with an engine fore and aft - and then the glorious vista of the Blue mountains opened up before us." Soon after his arrival in Sydney, Hurley commenced editing his film, *The Ross Smith Flight*. The film then went on a six month tour of Australia with Sir Keith following one itinerary and Sir Ross, with Frank Hurley, following another. Sir Ross Smith gave a talk in support of the film at the Burlington Picture Palace, Bathurst, and was given a civic reception at the Town Hall on Thursday July 1, 1920.

The departure of *Spirit of Australia* from Richmond aerodrome, at about 4.30 am on Tuesday October 30, was a highly theatrical affair. The crew members were attired in suits, with Hurley also wearing a bowler hat. Their appearance denied the physical endurance that would be required if the planned time to London of 10 days was to be achieved. And officialdom had finally given its blessing to a Ryan B-1 Brougham and all who flew in her, despite the long overwater crossings that lay ahead. A Federal cabinet minister, Sir Neville Howse, was at the aerodrome to see them off. Frank Hurley took with him letters from Prime Minister Bruce to the Prime Minister of Britain, Mr Baldwin, and from Sir Neville Howse to the Australian High Commissioner in London, Sir Granville Ryrie. There were also missives from Loyal Fascists in Sydney to Signor Mussolini, the Italian Prime Minister, and from the Papal Legate, Cardinal Cerretti, to the Pope in Rome. Charles Ulm was present to hand over a portion of the propeller blade of the Vimy, which he had carried in the *Southern Cross*. Finally there was on board a small silver statue of St Christopher, which had been blessed by Cardinal Cerretti.

Wyndham was the departure aerodrome chosen for the start of the record attempt. There had been unscheduled landings, due to engine problems, between Sydney and Wyndham. As the flight proceeded after leaving Australia, bad weather, treacherous aerodrome surfaces and lack of international co-operation in the Middle East, ruined any chance of setting a record. The flight eventually arrived at Athens during heavy rainstorms. Attempting to take off from Athens on November 26, before threatening storms caused further delay, the undercarriage of *Spirit of Australia* clipped a high clay bank and she crashed on her back, a complete wreck. St Christopher had seen to it that there was no fire, and had ensured that the crew escaped with only minor cuts and abrasions.

On November 14, at the beginning of a long delay for *Spirit of Australia* at Bandar Abbas, Persia, a meeting of Bathurst Council was in progress. A few days earlier a white envelope, addressed to the Mayor, had been found on the gaol flat. It contained a note, written in thick black pencil, which was read to the meeting. "This message comes fluttering down from the *Spirit of Australia* to greet our many good friends at Bathurst, and to wish them well-- Hurley, Moir and Owen." The envelope had been dropped by Frank Hurley. The Mayor of Bathurst in 1928 was Percy Moodie..... **John Scott**.

## LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

### A Coodabeen Champion Of Australian Aviation History.

#### The Ryan B-1 Brougham.

##### Part 3.

During January 1928, the Ryan B-1 Brougham was rarely out of the daily news in Australia. First there was the tragic disappearance of Moncrieff and Hood in G-AUNZ, and the subsequent fruitless search by air, land and sea. Then there was the public acrimony surrounding the Commonwealth Government's refusal to authorise the proposed Tasman attempt by Moody and Jolley in G-AUGR. But soon all the negative press generated by the two Broughams was swept away as newspapers began reporting the progress of Bert Hinkler on his solo flight from London to Australia in Avro Avian G-EBOV. He took off from Croydon on February 7, and by the time he reached Darwin on February 22, he had not only set a record of 151/2 days, but had been transformed into a national hero.

In many respects Hinkler was caught up by the Lindbergh phenomenon; the granting of superstar status to airmen who achieved some outstanding feat in the exciting new world of aviation. Even Horace Brinsmead, the Director of Civil Aviation, said in his welcoming speech at Bundaberg, "What Lindbergh, a great and modest airman, is to America, Hinkler is to Australia. It was no disparagement of Lindbergh to say that Hinkler was a world champion."

1928 continued as it began in Australia, with aviation, and those involved in it, continuously making news. On March 19, Bill Lancaster and Chubbie Miller arrived from London in Avro Avian G-EBTU, *Red Rose*. Chubbie was the first woman to fly from England to Australia. Then on June 9, after a sensational flight from Oakland, California; Smithy, Ulm, Lyon and Warner arrived at Brisbane in the *Southern Cross*. During June, July and August the visiting Supermarine Southampton II flying boats of the RAF Far East Flight made their majestic way around the Australian continent. And then at last, on September 10/11, the prize of the first aerial crossing of the Tasman was won by Smithy, Ulm, Litchfield and McWilliam in the *Southern Cross*. The New Zealand perspective of this flight is expressed by Neil Rennie in his book, *Conquering Isolation-The First 50 Years Of Air New Zealand*. "Charles Kingsford Smith's epic flight from Sydney to Auckland in *Southern Cross* in September, 1928, not only launched trans-Tasman aviation, perhaps more significantly it marked the beginning of the end of New Zealand's physical and psychological isolation."

During 1927 the famous Australian photographer, Frank Hurley, was on a one year contract with the Sydney *Sun* newspaper as Pictorial Editor. A great adventurer himself, he was inspired by Charles Lindbergh's solo flight from New York to Paris. At the time, Hurley was pioneering aerial reporting in Australia, often taking his camera aloft in the *Sun's* DH 60, G-AUFT. In fact Hurley was an established photographer in Sydney when the first powered flights were made there. He was a member of the Ashfield District Camera Club that met, photographed and dined with Harry Houdini after the latter's flight in his Voisin on April 18, 1910, at Rosehill Racecourse. When opportunities subsequently arose to become airborne with his camera, Hurley accepted with alacrity. During WWI he recorded events with his camera at the battle of Passchendaele on the Western Front from an observation balloon, and photographed bombing raids in the Middle East from the rear cockpit of Captain Ross Smith's Bristol Fighter. On February 14, 1920, when Ross and Keith Smith, with Bennett and Shiers, arrived in Sydney with the Vimy, Frank Hurley was with them. He had joined the flight at Charleville as photographer. During 1922 he conducted a scientific-photographic expedition to the Gulf of Papua using a Curtiss Seagull flying boat, and a Short Shrimp floatplane, on loan from Lebbeus Hordern. There was no doubt about Hurley's involvement with the early pioneers of Australian aviation. In 1928, feeling the need to experience yet another great adventure, he planned to join their ranks.

Frank Hurley reasoned that an attempt on Bert Hinkler's England-Australia record of 151/2 days, flying the route in reverse, and with a similar aeroplane to Charles Lindbergh's *Spirit of St Louis*,

The crash of Avro X VH-UMF Southern Cloud on 21 March 1931 resulted in a large and unsuccessful air search which lasted for 18 days and remained an unsolved mystery for another 27 years. An amateur photographer working for one of the contractors in the Snowy Mountains Project, found the aircraft in 1958. After telling co-workers of the find and showing them some of the relics collected, he disappeared to discuss his find with lawyers and seek the alleged reward.

The crash of Lockheed Lodestar VH-BAG of Queensland Airlines at Coolangatta Airport on 10 March 1949 killing 21 passengers and crew resulted in some much needed changes in managing the aftermath of such accidents. In particular, notification of the deaths to the next of kin and advice to next of kin prior to publication in the press was instituted. Additionally, new requirements for the provision of airport rescue and fire fighting services were recommended.

Whilst Graeme's presentation intentionally did not discuss the technical elements of the aircraft accidents, it did reveal some incredibly interesting social aspects of such events. The resulting question time covered several more of Australia's air accident history and could have gone on for hours.

### Guest Speakers Wanted

In the August 2004 monthly meeting, Ian Dolstra, Bill Holswich, Roger Kennedy and Robin Mead gave short, but very interesting presentations on one of their special interests in aviation. The nature of the meeting attracted many favourable comments, hence the Committee has decided to hold a similar night this year. The meeting will again be held in August at the Powerhouse Museum.

Roger Kennedy has already volunteered, so another two willing members who are interested in telling their story or discussing their special interest in aviation are requested to contact John Scott or Warwick Bigsworth.

### On the Internet

Kiwi Aircraft Images

([www.kiwiaircraftimages.com/aviation.html](http://www.kiwiaircraftimages.com/aviation.html))

This site provides an excellent collection of New Zealand aircraft, as well as much information on airfields, museums and air shows. Well worth a look if you are planning a visit to New Zealand.

Ruud's Classic Airliners

([www.ruudleeuw.com](http://www.ruudleeuw.com))

This excellent site features many pages on DC-3s and other old propeller driven aircraft. There is historical background on various types, a photo gallery of DC-

3s in Alaska and Canada, surviving US "Connies" with background information, Antonov An-8 and An-12, Ilyushins at Sharjah and much more.

Hawkseye Aviation Photos

(<http://fly.to/hawkseye>)

Phil Hawks operates this excellent site which features many aviation photos, and in particular spotting at various locations. One special section is dedicated to the Chinese Aviation Museum. Enjoy!

Wilfred White Photo Pages

(<http://wwwhite.fotopic.net>)

Here is another very interesting site featuring many vintage aircraft photographs taken at Old Prestwick Airport, Old Renfrew and Glasgow airports. Many prop types including Avro Yorks, various Douglas types, Convairs, Viscounts, Catalinas, and many more.

### 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Aviation Trivia Quiz

These are the questions and answers that were posed by quizmaster Jack Powell at the April meeting.

- (i) Who was the first man to enter the stratosphere and return alive?  
A. Auguste Piccard
- (ii) Lindberg flew the first solo crossing of the Atlantic from west to east. Who flew first solo Atlantic crossing east to west?  
A. Jim Mollison
- (iii) Name two amphibious twin engine flying boats used by the RAAF in World War II.  
A. Catalina, Douglas Dolphin
- (iv) Name two Australian pilots who flew business and alleged spy flights between war years.  
A. Sidney Cotton, Bert Hinkler
- (v) During celebrations for the centenary of Lawrence Hargrave a pilot endeavoured to re-enact Hargrave's box kite man lifting experiment. Who was the pilot?  
A. Ian Debenham

### Calendar of Events

**28-29 May 2005** Queensland Vintage Aircraft Group Flying Weekend, Watts Bridge Qld

**4 June 2005** Lunch with the Tigers, Luskintyre NSW

**11-12 June 2005** Temora Aviation Museum Flying Days Temora NSW

**Special Note: 6 July 2005 AHSA (NSW) monthly meeting, Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown**

### News

News items, other contributions, advertisements or requests for information etc for inclusion in the newsletter can be sent to AHSA (NSW) Inc at P.O. Box K346, Haymarket NSW 1238. or to Warwick Bigsworth via Email ([wbigsworth@iprimus.com.au](mailto:wbigsworth@iprimus.com.au)).



# AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW) Inc

ABN: 83 295 759 224

PO Box K346 Haymarket NSW 1238

## *Southern Skies*

The Newsletter of AHSA (NSW) Inc

**June 2005 No.385**

### **June Meeting**

The June meeting will be held at the Powerhouse Museum on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2005, commencing at 7.45pm. Enter from the Macarthur Street end and the meeting room is adjacent to the foyer. Visitors are most welcome and need not be accompanied by a member. Supper will be available after the meeting.

The guest speaker for the night will be Dr Richard Gates, who will discuss:

#### *A Brief Illustrated History of Evans Head Memorial Aerodrome: Heritage as Cash Cow*

In a two part illustrated talk, Richard will outline a brief history of the Evans Head Memorial Aerodrome during World War II as No.1 Bombing and Gunnery School, and later as No. 1 Air Observers School. The Evans Head RAAF Station was one of the first to be established as part of the Empire Air Training Scheme under the watchful eye of its first commander Valston Hancock. The RAAF Base covered 1555 sq km. The southern bombing range is still used by the RAAF today giving the RAAF 65 years of continuous history at Evans Head. Personnel who trained at Evans Head were sent to theatres of war all over the world including Milne Bay, North Africa and Europe.

In the second part of his talk Richard will examine critically a series of government failures and accountability issues in the management of the site, and review processes leading to the listing of the former RAAF Aerodrome on the NSW State Heritage Register in November 2002. The ongoing planning process for the future of the Memorial Aerodrome will also be described and discussed with focus on the 'hard' lessons of politics.

Dr Richard Gates is President of the Evans Head Memorial Aerodrome Committee Incorporated which was established in July 2000 to protect the aviation history of this former World War II Empire Air Training Scheme Aerodrome, and to encourage development of the site as a 'working airfield'. Richard lived at Evans Head as a boy, and has a 50 year knowledge of the area. Prior to his retirement he

was an academic at the University of New England, and before that the University of Melbourne and Monash University. Richard is co-editor of a revised edition (2004) of *Wings at War RAAF at Evans Head 1939-1945* which is a history of the Evans Head World War II RAAF Station. He's also published extensively in other fields and has given public addresses on a variety of topics from stress in judges, to fruit and vegetable choices in supermarkets, and vision in the monotreme echidna. Richard's father was in the first batch of RAAF personnel that travelled to Canada to train under the Empire Air Training Scheme as a pilot at Camp Borden, Ontario. His mother was the first Canadian war bride to come to Australia arriving here the day after the Japanese 'invaded' Sydney Harbour.

### **May Meeting**

The guest speaker for the May meeting was Graeme Payne who discussed a number of aircraft accidents that had occurred in Australia.

Graeme recalled how at an early age he travelled frequently between Sydney and Melbourne and became interested in aircraft and aircraft accidents.

During his research over the years, he has found that there have been about 10,500 commercial aircraft lost worldwide and about 300 commercial accidents in Australia since such operations began. He noted the grey area between airline, commercial and private flights and mentioned several private aircraft accidents where the number of fatalities exceeded the number of fatalities that were suffered in some commercial aircraft accidents.

The worst period of commercial aircraft accidents in Australia was between the end of World War II and the early 1950s. Several crashes and the social implications were also discussed. To allay the fears of the public and potential passengers, the Department of Civil Aviation made a film, which described the safety features of aircraft and the ground support infrastructure.

Some two weeks after the release of the film in 1948, the A.N.A. DC-3 VH-ANK Lutana carrying 13 passengers and crew crashed in the Liverpool Ranges.

relations disaster for the venture. On January 19, the factual details as understood by the financial organiser of the syndicate, Frank Goldberg, were published in *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

Frank Golberg stated that the aircraft to be used was indeed a Ryan B-1 Brougham, and no assistance from the Australian Government or the Defence Department would be requested. Mrs Moody would not be accompanying her husband. However, another member of the syndicate, Osmond Jolley, would be on board acting as radio operator. The purpose of the venture would be to advertise Australian products and enterprises. It was intended to take off from Mascot with New Plymouth the destination in New Zealand. Prime Minister Bruce commented on the conflicting reports concerning the type of machine that Captain Moody proposed to use, and reiterated his Ministry's opposition to the use of a land plane for the attempt. Moody and Jolley left Sydney for Melbourne to interview the Prime Minister and the Director of Civil Aviation in the hope of clarifying their intentions. Thereafter, a series of acrimonious articles concerning the venture appeared in the daily newspapers.

On January 23, the Minister for Customs, Mr Pratten, described the proposed flight as a "harebrained adventure." Geoffrey Hughes, President of the Australian Aero Club (NSW Section), declared that, "The present Moody-Jolley proposal is nothing but a 'stunt', and the placarding of the machine with advertisements and the carrying of a few samples to make it a commercial flight, is too ludicrous to be taken seriously." Frank Golberg responded that Mr Hughes, "displays an amazingly narrow conception of the term commercial flight, and used the word 'stunt' with a complete disregard for the scrupulous and minute precautions which are being taken to ensure the absolute safety of the Moody-Jolley flight." Sir Keith Smith stated that, "The most important thing is to stop other men from attempting to make the same flight, (as Moncrieff and Hood), in unsuitable machines."

Amid all this acrimony Geoffrey Hughes alerted the Federal Government to the fact that there were constitutional issues raised by the Moody-Jolley venture. He said, "It would appear that the Commonwealth Air navigation Act of 1920 and the Air Regulations of February 11, 1921, constitute the full power of the Federal Government in regard to regulating aviation in Australia. This power would, it seems, be limited to interstate trade and commerce. So far as I can ascertain, the Federal Government has no control over aircraft engaged in commerce within the borders of any state, nor of aircraft not engaged in commerce or carrying passengers, flying over any part of Australia." This information simply stiffened the resolve of Prime Minister Bruce, who warned that no facilities would be made available on government aerodromes for the assembly, testing or departure of the Brougham, and no special meteorological forecasts would be provided. In addition he pointed out that all the powers under current regulations would be invoked to penalise the perpetrators of any unauthorised flight. As far as the Moody-Jolley flight syndicate was concerned this proved to be game, set and match. 'Skip' Moody was again left with the responsibility for an aircraft that was fast becoming a financial embarrassment.

In February 'Skip' Moody found a new financial supporter in Roland Nott, an importer. His plans now involved the formation of a company, Airgold Limited, which would provide aerial services to the New Guinea goldfields. He found that the Director of Civil Aviation was willing to contemplate registering the Brougham for operations in the Australian Mandated Territory of New Guinea. By March 15, The Brougham was being assembled at Port Moresby. It was christened L' Oiseau de Tropicale, (Tropical Bird). On March 17, Moody flew the Brougham to Lae, which was to be its base for operations into Wau. The Brougham soon proved itself superior in payload and profitability to any of its biplane competitors. A second Brougham was ordered by Airgold. But then ironic fate intervened. On April 23, while returning to Lae for another load of freight, the Brougham was making an over water approach to the aerodrome when its engine stopped. 'Skip' Moody fought desperately to extend his glide, but went into the sea about 100 yards from the shore. In 'Wings of Gold', James Sinclair continues, "Somehow, using a pocket-knife, Moody freed himself from the cramped, fully enclosed cockpit; he was uninjured and was soon on dry land, but the accident spelled the beginning of the end for Airgold. The Ryan was little the worse for its total immersion in the warm salt water of the Huon Gulf, but there were no major repair facilities at Lae at this time, and the aircraft was left to slowly corrode away and in due course it was written off as a total loss. It was not insured."..... **John Scott.**

## LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

### A Coodabeen Champion Of Australian Aviation History. The Ryan B-1 Brougham. Part 2.

'Skip' Moody had been sought out by the New Zealand businessman, Louis Selfert, to become involved in the development of a Trans-Tasman airmail service. Selfert was the owner of the Ryan B-1 Brougham which was imported to Sydney after Moody's visit to the Ryan factory in the fall of 1927. However, the Director of Civil Aviation in Australia would not issue a certificate of airworthiness for the Brougham, and would not in any case authorise a Trans-Tasman flight using this type of aircraft. Therefore, Louis Selfert had withdrawn from the venture, leaving Moody with the responsibility for the future of the Brougham which was eventually to be registered as G-AUGR.

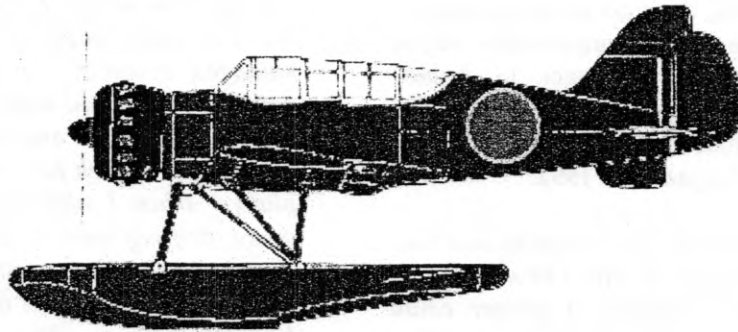
At the time Moncrieff and Hood were preparing for their Tasman flight attempt, 'Skip' Moody had retreated to his recently acquired, 30000 acre, property near Charleville. It must have been difficult for him to understand how it was that his plans to be first to fly the Tasman had found no support from the Australian authorities while Moncrieff and Hood, in an identical type of aircraft, had subsequently received support from the RAAF, and were allowed to take off for New Zealand.

Captain Percy H. (Skip) Moody could boast significant experience as an airman. He and his wife Helen also had strong community connections. Helen was the daughter of Richard Mantes, a wealthy station owner near Charleville, and was the niece of Sir Thomas MacKenzie, an ex-Prime Minister of New Zealand and a former High Commissioner for New Zealand in London. 'Skip' Moody had joined the RFC in 1916 and continued his career in aviation in Australia during the post war years. In 1920 he was chief pilot for the Aviation Service Company at Bathurst. He joined Qantas in 1924 and, at the time of taking leave to plan the Tasman venture, was its chief pilot. He had 2600 hours in his log book, and had not had an accident during his time with the company. He was one of the Qantas pilots who flew Prime Minister S. M. Bruce and his party during a tour of western Queensland. He had good reason to believe that his experience, and his contacts, would carry some weight with the authorities in both Australia and New Zealand.

It is probable that a new syndicate to take over the future of G-AUGR was in the process of formation soon after Louis Selfert lost interest. However, when news of the failure of Moncrieff and Hood reached 'Skip' Moody in Charleville, he and Helen made immediate arrangements to travel to Sydney to discuss the unfolding situation with his financial backers. They set out in their Buick to follow the unsealed track, proclaimed the Mitchell Highway in 1936, which leads all the way from Charleville to Bathurst. On Monday January 16, 1928, after three days of hard driving, Percy Moody drove his very dusty Buick into the driveway of his old friend and mentor, Percy Moodie, the aviation-loving chemist at Bathurst. It was there that he gave his first interview to a reporter from *The Western Times* concerning his revised plans to fly the Tasman. Details of the interview were published the next morning, and were repeated in *The Sydney Morning Herald* on January 18.

After paying a glowing tribute to the lost airmen, Moncrieff and Hood, 'Skip' Moody outlined his plans for the Tasman attempt. As he was reported in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, "He would not think of attempting a flight across the Tasman in a monoplane, as the stretch of ocean was far too great, and the risk enormous. He hoped to make arrangements with shipping to keep in touch with his machine by radio continuously during the flight. He said that he would make the flight in an American seaplane which had just landed in Sydney, but was not yet unpacked. Mrs Moody, he said, was overjoyed at the prospect of accompanying him on the flight. The present time, he said was the most favourable for an attempt, and he intended setting out as soon as possible." All of this must have been a surprise to his financial backers, and also to Horace Brinsmead, the Director of Civil Aviation, whose approval of the venture would be necessary. Why 'Skip' Moody gave such misleading information to the reporter from *The Western Times* is not known. However, this was just the start of a public

## YOKOSUKA E14Y "GLEN" RECONNAISSANCE FLOATPLANE

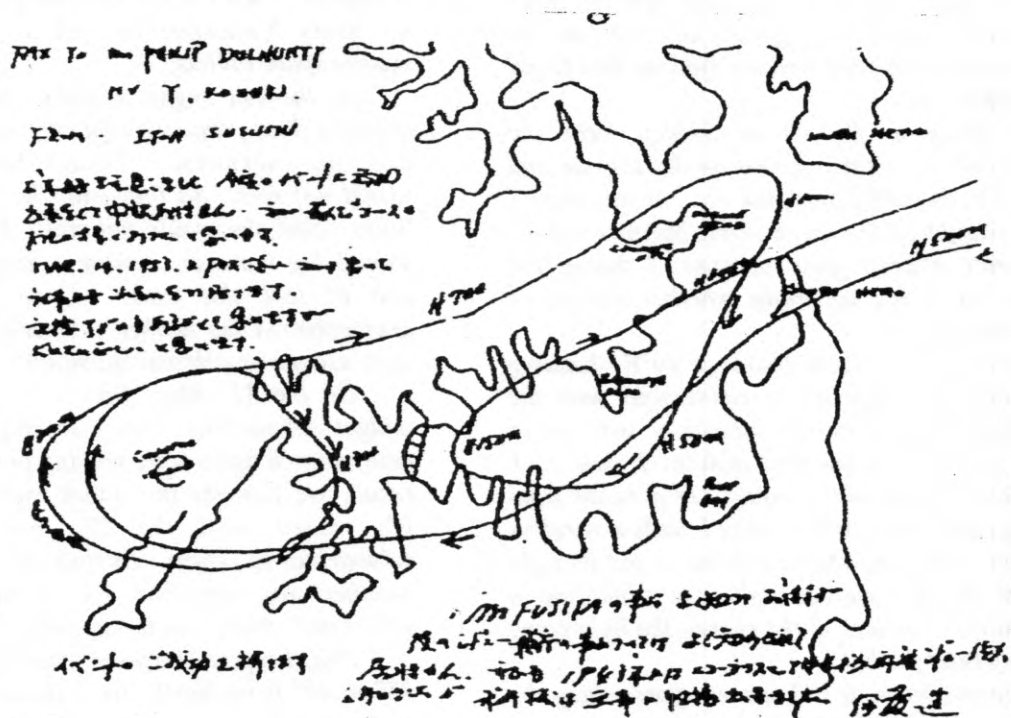


Itoh Susumu flew the Yokosuka E14Y "Glen" on his reconnaissance flights during World War II, as detailed in the above article. The aircraft was stowed in a cylindrical water tight hangar at the front of Japanese "I" type submarines.

The "Glen" was assembled on the deck of the submarine, and launched from a 20 metre inclined steel tracked catapult on the forward deck. The aircraft was broken down into 12 components for storage in the hangar. It was armed with a 7.7 mm machine gun mounted in the rear cockpit.

The fuselage and upper wings surfaces of the "Glen" were painted dark camouflage green while the underneath surfaces were painted dark grey. The sides of the fuselage featured a large red Rising Sun Japanese symbol.

### ITOH SUSUMU'S FLIGHT PATH OVER SYDNEY HARBOUR



Itoh Susumu provided Phil Dulhunty with the above map, which depicts the flight path of his Yokosuka E14Y aircraft over Sydney Harbour.

## Japanese Seaplane Reconnaissance - Part 2

In the 2004 Arthur Butler Memorial Lecture, Phil Dulhunty OAM discussed, amongst other matters, his connection with the Japanese reconnaissance flights over Sydney, just prior to the attack in Sydney Harbour by Japanese midget submarines. The following is the second half of the article that was first published in the AOPA Magazine in 1992.

*So we flew out of Sydney Port returning this time over North Head at a height of only 150 metres. At this height I remembered thinking a gunner could easily shoot us down but even as these thoughts passed through my mind I also thought about the next night when the midget submarines would be coming into the harbour. My colleague and I had to do a proper reconnaissance otherwise the attack by the midget submarines would be unsuccessful.*

*I enclose a sketch plan of our flight around Sydney Harbour to give you a better idea.*

*On this reconnaissance around Garden Island we saw two ships and then Yuwasaki said one was British warship of the Warspite type and the other an American warship. Generally broad ships were warships and narrow ships were cruisers so we were very pleased to identify two warships. I thought not so many ships there but if there were two or three warships this would be good for the midget submarines therefore I thanked my God we had found two warships there.*

*When trying to fly out of Sydney, near the entrance, I noticed a shining line on the surface and identified it as the anti submarine net. At this stage I was again caught up in search lights but was not the target of anti aircraft guns because, I guess, the Australians could not ascertain whether our plane was friend or foe.*

*I flew out from North Head at 40°E (heading 040°) for about 35 minutes to rendezvous with the mother submarine. Again the submarine was not to be found. So after about five minutes I flew back towards North Head until I could see a beam from Newcastle Lighthouse. At this stage I made a wireless transmission requesting the submarine to put its light on and even though I did not expect the submarine to do so due to the closeness of the enemy, the light came on for a very brief flash.*

*As we came down to 100 metres approaching the mother submarine I noticed, with trepidation, how the submarine was pitching about in the huge waves knowing full well that this type of landing could result in the float and rigging breaking. But land we must. I told Yuwasaki to take off his seat belt, open the window and hold the rigging. I myself took off my seat belt and further reduced height. Upon reaching the surface however a big wave lifted the plane up, as*

*if propelled by a big spring. Usually to overcome a situation like this, I would throttle out of it but, because time was of the essence, this time I did not.*

*The plane ended upside down in the water. I managed eventually to get out. I called for my colleague but could neither hear nor see him, hearing only the big waves and seeing only the broken plane. I wanted to search for Yuwasaki and dived under the plane. When I surfaced the plane was two metres away, drifting quickly away in the strong wind. I desperately tried to reach the plane without success and instead, due to the intake of seawater, started to become groggy. Then happily for me a lifeline appeared in the form of a rope from the mother submarine which I grabbed with great delight. A crewman from the mother submarine gripped my pilot uniform by the neck, as a mother cat would her kitten, and pulled me aboard. I asked about my colleague and was relieved to hear Yuwasaki had been rescued about five minutes before. I then reported to my captain.*

*I was confused as to why I could not swim properly at the time because I had certificates evidencing my prowess as a good swimmer. I was curious therefore to know why my swimming abilities deserted me, resulting in my gulping in quantities of seawater. Then I discovered my pilot jacket still held my heavy binoculars as well as a pistol gun with sixteen spare bullets.*

*As the sun began to make the sky brighter, the crippled float-plane very quickly started to drift away from the submarine. Though badly damaged, she would not sink. So they shot the floats full of pistol holes. Still she would not sink. Desperate the crew used a big hammer, making a huge hole in the float and at last she sank. Once this mission was accomplished the mother submarine quickly dived so as to escape unwelcome attention.*

*On the 31<sup>st</sup> May, from 7 to 7:30pm, while the midget submarines were attacking, we noticed that many search lights were moving probing the sky. As a result, we thought the attack must have succeeded. We waited until the 2<sup>nd</sup> June for the midget submarines to return. During this three day wait the weather was very bad, like a hurricane, with big waves and strong winds buffeting all those aboard.*

*Phil, I repeat the point where my plane sank was 35° to 40° from North Head, distance about 35 miles – please believe me.*

*I think it will be a difficult job to find it now but I wish you all the luck. I definitely hope to visit you in 1993. I am still healthy in spite of my age and would like to help in any salvage if your divers find it.*

*Sincerely,  
Itoh Susumu.*

Field and unusual images of B737 deliveries in progress. There is also access to the Me262 project.

#### 1000 Aircraft Photos

([www.1000aircraftphotos.com](http://www.1000aircraftphotos.com))

This site contains many excellent images of historic and modern day aircraft. There are a number of VH- registered aircraft including Butler Bat, DHA-3 Drover, CV-240, DC-3, DC-2, Short Scion, Lockheed Hudson and many more. Well worth a look.

#### Dave's Warbirds

([www.daveswarbirds.com](http://www.daveswarbirds.com))

This comprehensive site includes many pages on American aircraft in World War II, Naval Air War in the Pacific, ground, air and naval battles at Guadalcanal, battle damaged B-17s. There is access to several other sites created by the same person; you could spend hours here.

#### Airdata

(<http://homepages.ihug.co.nz/~airdata>)

This is a most entertaining New Zealand site with plenty of current news on the local scene, plus some particularly interesting photographs of local and visiting aircraft.

#### Aviation Marketplace by Bird Publishing

([www.bird.ch/avmark/links/e\\_link00.htm](http://www.bird.ch/avmark/links/e_link00.htm))

Bird Publishing provides this site, and these particular pages are full of aviation links. The wide selection includes many that are not on normal aviation specialty sites.

#### 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Aviation Trivia Quiz

These are just some of the questions posed by quizmaster Jack Powell at the April meeting. Answers next month.

- (i) Who was the first man to enter the stratosphere and return alive?
- (ii) Lindberg flew the first solo crossing of the Atlantic from west to east. Who flew first solo Atlantic crossing east to west?
- (iii) Name two amphibious twin engine flying boats used by the RAAF in World War II.
- (iv) Name two Australian pilots who flew business and alleged spy flights between war years.
- (v) During celebrations for the centenary of Lawrence Hargrave a pilot endeavoured to re-enact Hargrave's box kite man lifting experiment. Who was the pilot?

#### Calendar of Events

**30 April - 1 May 2005** Temora Aviation Museum Flying Days, Temora NSW

**14-15 May 2005** Bi-plane fly-in Caboolture Qld

**15 May 2005** Australia's Museum of Flight Airshow, Nowra NSW. Note: change of date to that which was advertised in last month's newsletter.

**28-29 May 2005** Queensland Vintage Aircraft Group Flying Weekend, Watts Bridge Qld

**1 June 2005** AHSA (NSW) Monthly meeting Powerhouse Museum

**4 June 2005** Lunch with the Tigers, Luskintyre NSW

**11-12 June 2005** Temora Aviation Museum Flying Days Temora NSW

**6 July 2005** AHSA (NSW) monthly meeting, Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown

#### Book Sale

**Fiji's Aviation Story** by Maurice McGreal

Long time AHSA member, Roger McDonald, has passed us information concerning the release of Maurice McGreal's latest book, "Fiji's Aviation Story", which is priced at \$34.95. Maurice has also written a hefty tome, "History of Civil Aviation in New Zealand" as well as his autobiography "A Noble Chance". All books are only available through the internet at the Cybermarket site.

"Fiji's Aviation Story" is available at:

[www.cybermarket.com.au/welcome/page43.php](http://www.cybermarket.com.au/welcome/page43.php)

#### 2005 Civil Aircraft Register

Tony Arbon's AustAirData has published the 2005 edition of the Australian Civil Aircraft Register. The tabulated format includes registration, type, construction number and the CoR's name and address. Cost is \$29.00 including postage, packaging and GST within Australia.

The CD version is also available and contains all the register information that is contained in the book with lots of additional features, but it is not compatible with Apple Macs. There is also a gallery which will provide a photograph of many of the types appearing on the register along with basic specifications of the type. Tony is offering the CD to AHSA members a special discount price of \$25.00 which includes GST and postage. Cheques or postal orders should be sent to AustAirData PO Box 1425, Caboolture Qld 4510.

#### News

News items, other contributions, advertisements or requests for information etc for inclusion in the newsletter can be sent to AHSA (NSW) Inc at P.O. Box K346, Haymarket NSW 1238 or to Warwick Bigsworth via Email ([wbigsworth@iprimus.com.au](mailto:wbigsworth@iprimus.com.au)).



# AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW) Inc

ABN: 83 295 759 224

PO Box K346 Haymarket NSW 1238

## *Southern Skies*

The Newsletter of AHSA (NSW) Inc

May 2005 No.384

### **May Meeting - THURSDAY 5 May**

The May meeting will be held at the Powerhouse Museum on **THURSDAY 5<sup>th</sup> May 2005**, commencing at 7.45pm. Enter from the Macarthur Street end and the meeting room is adjacent to the foyer. Visitors are most welcome and need not be accompanied by a member. Supper will be available after the meeting.

Note that this change of night is a one-off due to non-availability of the Powerhouse Museum on our normal Wednesday night. The June meeting will be held on the first Wednesday, as usual.

The guest speaker for the night will be Graeme Payne, who will discuss:

### *A History of Commercial Plane Crashes in Australia*

The aircraft accidents that have occurred in Australia over the years often influenced the procedures and standards that evolved in the airways operations and flying operations spheres of civil aviation. However, this talk will not address the technical or safety issues of the crashes, but rather how many of the past's crashes fit into the social fabric of Australia's history.

Graeme Payne started his working life as a cadet journalist on the "Sydney Sun" but finished up spending most of the next forty years involved with computers and telecommunications. A founding member of the Australian Computer Society in the 1960s, Graeme finished his professional career as Director of Offshore Internet Communications for Telstra. He will tell you about the origin of his interest in air crashes himself.

### **April Meeting**

The 22<sup>nd</sup> annual aviation trivia quiz was hosted by Jack Powell, who presented the coveted Slipstream Trophy to this year's winner, Ian Dolstra. Jack prepared an excellent set of questions, which certainly set a few minds ticking. Five of the questions posed are included below, with answers available in the June newsletter.

Following the trivia quiz, Warwick Bigsworth

provided 100 slides in the 37<sup>th</sup> annual aircraft recognition competition. The Brian White Memorial Trophy was won by David Eyre with runner-up being Robin Mead, whilst the President's Trophy was won by Allen Clarke.

Warwick's selection of slides included several different models of Airbus aircraft, of which at least 2 or 3 examples stumped most of the participants; civil jets such as DC-8-73, TU-134A, IL-86 and F-28, turbo-props included ATR-42, DHC-7, Britannia, Belfast, Metro, King Air and Gulfstream 695B; executive jets featured Sabreliner, Citation Sovereign and Jetstar; helicopters included Sikorsky S-61, SA341 Gazelle, Kaman SH-2G Super Seasprite; and myriad general aviation types including SeaRey, Stits Skycoupe, Tri-R KIS; as well as military aircraft such as the F-16C, Boston, Crusader and B-47. There were the usual challenges – but with a panel of experts like this, who would be surprised?

### **Committee Meeting**

A Committee meeting, commencing at 6.30pm will be held immediately prior to the May meeting.

### **Guest Speakers Wanted**

In the August 2004 monthly meeting, Ian Dolstra, Bill Holswich, Roger Kennedy and Robin Mead gave short, but incredibly interesting presentations on one of their special interests in aviation. The nature of the meeting attracted many favourable comments, hence the Committee has decided to hold a similar night this year. The meeting will again be held in August at the Powerhouse Museum.

Three speakers are required, so any willing members who are interested in telling their story or discussing their special interest in aviation are requested to contact John Scott or Warwick Bigsworth.

### **On the Internet**

Northwest Aircraft Communications  
([www.microvoltradio.com](http://www.microvoltradio.com))

Allen Clarke has provided information on this site which has excellent pages on aircraft at Boeing

to investigate the availability of aircraft in the United States. In particular he was representing New Zealand business interests with respect to the inauguration of a Trans-Tasman airmail service. He had been directed to visit Ryan Airlines in San Diego to assess the B-1 Brougham. 'Skip' travelled on board *S. S. Venture*, with his wife Helen and her travelling companion Miriam Horne. On arrival in San Francisco they were contacted by Smithy and Ulm and shown over *The Southern Cross*. Miriam Horne claimed that she and 'Skip' accompanied Smithy and Ulm on a flight in *The Southern Cross*, thus making her the first female to fly in the *Cross*. They then travelled south to San Diego where 'Skip' was able to fly in a Ryan B-1 Brougham. He was favourably impressed, and an order was placed for delivery of one aircraft to Sydney. The Australian registration reserved for this aircraft was G-AUGR. On his return to Australia, 'Skip' Moody struck a brick wall when he revealed his plans to the Controller of Civil Aviation. Firstly the Ryan B-1 Brougham, being a United States manufactured aircraft, was not certified as airworthy in Australia. This was because the United States was not a signatory to the International Air Convention, and as a rule its aircraft were not built to specifications acceptable to the British Air Ministry, and therefore were not acceptable to Australia. Secondly, recently enacted Australian Air Navigation Regulations prohibited flights in single engine aircraft over water beyond a distance of 50 miles from land. 'Skip' Moody found himself with a Ryan B-1 Brougham, which he couldn't fly!

"Skip' Moody must have become extremely frustrated when an associate of Moncrieff and Hood, Captain J. L. Knight, announced their plans to the press on December 23, 1927. But then, on December 30, the Australian Prime Minister, intervened, announcing, "that in view of the fact that the New Zealand Government had not authorised the flight, and the stand which the Australian Government had adopted toward Australian citizens desirous of attempting a similar flight in unsuitable machines, I have told Captain Knight that the Australian Government does not approve the flight and have asked him that no further attempt be made to carry it out." A flurry of cables between the Australian and New Zealand Prime Ministers then followed, and on January 3, 1928, Prime Minister Bruce relented, announcing that his veto on the flight had been withdrawn. On that day, after only about 10 hours of flight testing during its time at Point Cook, *Aotearoa* departed for the RAAF base at Richmond. It arrived there on January 4, having been forced down at Bong Bong the day before, due to navigation problems and poor visibility. The portents for the Tasman crossing were not good.

Further tests and an engine overhaul were carried out at Richmond while Moncrieff and Hood awaited a favourable weather report. On January 10, 1928, the Sydney Morning Herald reported that, at 2.44am that morning *Aotearoa*, "mounted quickly into an unclouded sky, with the moon shining brightly overhead. The machine turned and faced towards the Southern Cross. Later she turned towards the heads in a straight line dead reckoning to the Trentham Racecourse at Wellington, and was quickly lost to sight." *Aotearoa* was never seen again.

By late afternoon Sydney time, when *Aotearoa* should have reached its destination there were many and conflicting reports of sightings coming from New Zealand. Captain Knight attended a dinner of the Motor Traders' Association in Sydney that night, and announced to the diners present that Lieutenant Moncrieff, although several hours overdue, had successfully put the machine down on Trentham Racecourse. Acting on this incorrect information the Vacuum Oil Company submitted a full page advertisement to the Sydney Morning Herald, which was published on January 11. It read, "Australia to New Zealand - the latest triumph of the air on Plume and Mobiloil. Hearty congratulations to Lieut. J. R. Moncrieff and Captain G. Hood, the first aviators to fly from Australia to New Zealand. Without doubt this is the most daring and spectacular flight ever attempted over Australasian waters. Flying a Ryan Monoplane fitted with 220hp Wright Whirlwind Engine, a similar machine to Colonel Lindbergh's famous 'plane, *Spirit of St Louis*, these two officers of the New Zealand Territorial Air Force completed the 1,450 mile 'hop across' without mishap. Truly an epoch making event and one to rank with the world's greatest achievements in the air." This ad summarises the fame that awaited Moncrieff and Hood had their flight been successful. Instead the venture was described by Stanley Brogden in his book, *History of Australian Aviation*, as, "a shocking tragedy which might have had a permanent retarding effect on the entire development of Australian aviation. The tragedy was all the worse for its stupidity." Meanwhile 'Skip' Moody was about to make his plans public..... **John Scott**.

## LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

### **A Coodabeen Champion Of Australian Aviation History. The Ryan B-1 Brougham. Part 1.**

The April, 2004 issue of the U.K. magazine *Aeroplane*, contains an article about NC6956, a Ryan B-1 Brougham, currently under restoration to flying condition at the Yanks Air Museum at Chino, California. When the restoration is complete, NC6956 will be the world's sole airworthy B-1 Brougham. The following page of the magazine reports on Vickers Vimy G-EAOU, which is preserved in the Vimy Memorial Building at Adelaide airport. It occurred to me that if the hopes and dreams associated with even one of the four B-1 Broughams imported to Australia, had been fulfilled, then we might have that aircraft similarly preserved today in Sydney, or perhaps in Wellington, New Zealand. As it happened, none of the early hopes held for any the Australian Broughams was realised.

Tubal Claude Ryan formed Ryan Flying Co at San Diego in 1922, and at the same time established workshops to convert war surplus aircraft for civil use. The first original designs of the company were the Ryan M-1 and M-2 which first flew in 1926, and were braced, high wing monoplanes. By January 1927, the company's next design, the B-1 Brougham, was about to start manufacture. At this point Claude Ryan had a disagreement with his partner Frank Mahoney and, with a payout of \$25,000, walked out leaving what was then Ryan Airlines Inc, and the manufacturing business, in the hands of Mahoney. The following week, on February 3, 1927, Frank Mahoney received a cable from Charles Lindbergh, "CAN YOU CONSTRUCT WHIRLWIND ENGINE PLANE CAPABLE OF FLYING NONSTOP BETWEEN NEW YORK AND PARIS STOP IF SO PLEASE STATE COST AND DELIVERY DATE. When Lindbergh visited the Ryan workshop on February 25, the chief engineer, Donald Hall, had a rough design ready, based on the Brougham. As history records, Lindbergh and his Ryan NYP, *Spirit of St Louis*, made the Atlantic crossing to Paris on May 20-21, 1927. There was an immediate demand for the NYP lookalike, the B-1 Brougham.

To be the first to cross the Tasman Sea by air, was the ambition of a succession of Australian and New Zealand airmen during the decade following WWI. Among them were Australians Les Holden and Frank Briggs who planned separately to attempt the crossing as early as 1921. On the New Zealand side, John Moncrieff proposed using a Beardmore Inverness flying boat in 1925, and Horace Wilson, George Bolt and Aynsley Brockett planned an attempt in a Vickers Vulture amphibian in 1927. However, the civil aviation authorities on both sides of the Tasman were not convinced that the crossing could be made safely in the aircraft proposed. Then in 1927, Lindbergh's flight in the *Spirit of St Louis*, suggested to some, in both Australia and New Zealand, that the Ryan B-1 Brougham would be a suitable aircraft to conquer the Tasman. Lindbergh had demonstrated the type's potential for range and reliability, and the cost of a Brougham put financing of such a venture within reach.

Once again John Moncrieff, with George Hood, a fellow pilot in the New Zealand Territorial Air Force Reserve, began serious planning for a Tasman attempt. Inspired by the successful Atlantic flight by Lindbergh, they obtained a quotation from Frank Mahoney for a B-1 Brougham. The amount of the quote, \$2500, was just within their budget, and they placed an order. Their connections in New Zealand managed to persuade their Prime Minister Mr J. G. Coates, despite the lack of his government's authorisation of the flight, to write a letter to the Australian Prime Minister, Mr S. M. Bruce, requesting that every assistance be given to the New Zealanders in support of their venture. Frank Mahoney shipped the aircraft to Melbourne where it arrived on December 21, 1927. It was transported to Point Cook for unpacking and assembly, with the assistance of the RAAF. Australian registration was applied for, and appropriately G-AUNZ was allocated. The Maori name for New Zealand, *Aotearoa*, was painted on the forward section of the fuselage. Meanwhile an identical B-1 Brougham also imported for an attempt on the Tasman, was languishing in a Sydney bond store.

In the southern spring of 1927, 'Skip' Moody took leave of Qantas to undertake a commission

thought we were friends, put the runway guide lights on so we could land – but of course we could not land!

As there were no ships in port we quickly returned to the mother submarine. During the return flight my colleague, Yuwasaki, an observer and sketch artist, said just flying around in a solo aeroplane made him feel a bit lonely, a feeling with which I had sympathy because I knew there would be no chance if the 300hp engine suddenly stopped – we would have to surrender. However I had every confidence in this engine which I felt was very sound.

On returning to the agreed place where the mother submarine was to pick them up, we found to our dismay that the submarine was nowhere to be seen. After flying about in a 20 mile radius from the point where the mother submarine was supposed to be, with still no sighting, I sent out a signal indicating where we were and that there were no enemies in the area. Then within two minutes, like a huge whale, the submarine surfaced from the depths of the ocean. Immediately I could see many sailors running to the deck preparing to receive us. With the submarine positioned to give protection from the wind and the waves, we landed safely.

After the plane was on board, the submarine quickly dived into the safety of the water. I then reported to the captain my negative findings of ships in Auckland port and the captain said: "thanks for your efforts, disappointing there were no ships but after you flew out received orders from Japanese Naval Headquarters to stop the search of Auckland and immediately go to Sydney for reconnaissance purposes.

I was glad at least he didn't leave without me!

### **Sydney**

As submarine I-21 navigated along south latitude 33°30' towards the west, the weather was very rough therefore speed was not fast and standing at the conning tower was a freezing proposition. Even with wet weather gear, everyone was cold. Though Southern Cross was shining and meant hot warm country, that year in May it was like late autumn and the weather was very cold.

We Japanese were expecting the British cruiser of the Warspite type which had participated in the Coral Sea Battle on the 8<sup>th</sup> May to be in the port of Sydney at that time. The cruiser had been damaged and sister submarine I-29 was chasing it till it was three miles away from Sydney and it subsequently escaped into Sydney port.

The Japanese navy thought a British warship was roaming about the east coast of Australia but it was actually the Australian heavy cruiser HMAS Australia or American heavy cruiser Chicago.

The order was received that by the morning of 29<sup>th</sup> May the Port of Sydney must be searched. Japan

was already six months into the war and this area had no war damage. There were many cargo boats in the harbour with all their lights on.

On the 29<sup>th</sup> May of that year there was a two hour break between the setting of the moon and the rising of the sun, a two hour period when it would be very dark. I therefore had to make calculations so as to do my search while there was still moonlight by which to see.

The weather, however, was very bad. On the night of the 28<sup>th</sup> the cloud had increased and also the wind was extremely strong. This resulted in the mother submarine, while navigating against the wind, radically pitching and ascending. This naturally made the operation of catapulting the seaplane from the submarine that much more difficult. The situation was aggravated by the fact that outside Sydney there are no islands to act as a breakwater against the waves. On that night the swell on the open sea was very high. However we knew the order had been received that the reconnoitre of the Port of Sydney had to be effected before the morning of the 29<sup>th</sup> therefore there was no chance of delay.

I, therefore, asked the captain to organise his strategy in such a manner that the seaplane would catapult out of the sub at the same time as the bow of the submarine rose out of its pitch. I also warned the captain that in all probability, upon our return, we would not be able to land safely so a rescue plan would have to be prepared.

At precisely 2.45am on the morning of the 29<sup>th</sup> May, when the mother submarine was at a suitable angle, my plane was catapulted out to begin the flight, at a height of 500 metres, to the Port of Sydney. Slowly slowly the height was increased until I could see the beam of the Sydney lighthouse. Just above the anti aircraft batteries, through to the City of Sydney, Yuwasaki and I could see many lights emanating from windows. Though there was moonlight, there were also many clouds which prevented us from seeing the surface of the sea. On the map Garden Island is a small island but to Yuwasaki and me it looked not like an island but a peninsula where ships were being made and repaired. We saw the Harbour Bridge and the Circular Quay. At Cockatoo Island we noted there were two or three destroyers in dock and on the west side of the island there appeared to be one light cruiser moored.

While reconnoitring around Cockatoo Island at a height of 300 metres three search lights were suddenly turned on and caught us in their beams. Naturally I rapidly increased height, getting into cloud to cover escape. The height of the cloud was about 700 metres which was very good for us to use as a hiding place but not very good for observing ships.

(To be continued in the May newsletter)

## News

News items, other contributions, advertisements or requests for information etc for inclusion in the newsletter can be sent to AHSA (NSW) Inc at P.O. Box K346, Haymarket NSW 1238 or to Warwick Bigsworth via Email ([wbigsworth@iprimus.com.au](mailto:wbigsworth@iprimus.com.au)).

## Japanese Seaplane Reconnaissance

In the 2004 Arthur Butler Memorial Lecture, Phil Dulhunty OAM discussed, amongst other matters, his connection with the Japanese reconnaissance flights over Sydney, just prior to the attack in Sydney Harbour by Japanese midget submarines. In 1993 the following article was first published in the AOPA Magazine, and Phil has kindly granted permission to us to reproduce the article here.

“Members may recall the articles in the June and July 1992 issues of AOPA concerning the Japanese seaplanes reconnaissance over Sydney Harbour the day before the midget submarine attack.

Members of the Seaplane Pilots Association of Australia staged a re-enactment of this pre-dawn reconnaissance which ended with the pilot, Itoh Susumu, crash landing alongside the submarine somewhere to the east of Sydney Heads. We were hoping that Itoh Susumu himself may have been able to visit Australia to take part in this re-enactment but due to political problems with the Minister, Senator Rae, not being prepared to issue an invitation, the flight was conducted without him.

Itoh, however, is still hale and hearty in his home town of Iwakuni in Japan and has offered to come out in 1993 to fly with us once more over his circuitous patch.

Although at 78, Itoh's memory of this flight has never left him and he is keen to help us locate, recover and restore his float-plane which lies somewhere on the bottom of the ocean outside Sydney Heads.

The Seaplane Pilots Association of Australia, together with the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol and Atlantis Divers Pty Ltd of Palm Beach, has been planning this operation for the past six months. Itoh Susumu has been trying to give us an accurate location of the sinking of the plane and we have asked him to re-think again a more accurate location of the aircraft as it would be like trying to find a needle in a haystack considering the effect of ocean currents and corrosion after fifty years lying on the seabed.

We have been in regular communication with Itoh Susumu, who is putting his thinking cap on, and his most recent letter recaptures again the story of his flight which we are reprinting here.

“Dear Phil,

### Suva Report

*When Japan started WWII submarines which carried hydroplanes on them were No. I-13, I-15, I-*

*17, I-21, I-23, I-25 and I-29, a total of eight submarines. I was on the I-21 from the Tateyama Naval Air Force.*

*September 1941 I participated in the attack on Pearl Harbour and afterwards went to the west coast*

*of America to chase the American fleet prior to returning to Yokosuka, Japan, and then moving to Kure, both naval bases; then 15<sup>th</sup> April 1942 left Kure to Truk Island for adjustment. On 27<sup>th</sup> April left Truk Island via New Caledonia, Noumea, to Fiji Islands for reconnaissance of Suva.*

*Forty five miles from Suva, one hour before sunrise on 18<sup>th</sup> May, I was catapulted out from the mother submarine. The sky was pitch black, visibility negligible with stars twinkling here and there. My plane went into the clouds at a height of 300 metres. I thought the cloud thickness would not be so bad at a higher altitude so climbed up to 2000 metres, flying by instruments, but even at this height I could not get out of the clouds. Then I reduced height and bursting out of the cloud I could see barrier reef and white waves. Seems that this position was the entrance of the port of Suva. There were white clouds hanging very low to the south east of the sea and a light shower of rain which I thought would be very good cover. So I went into the centre of Port at a height of 500 metres. I found out there were several small destroyers and one cruiser, Glasgow type, there.*

*When I flew to one side of this cruiser at a height of 400 metres I could see quite a few sailors on the deck brushing their teeth as they had just got up. My colleague and offsider in the back seat asked “Shall we shoot them?” to which I said “Don't be silly, we are spying so we should not make any noise, just wave to them.” So he did and then we noticed sailors on the deck also returning their waves as they thought it was a friendly plane and not a Japanese one. My plane had no identifications, having a light camouflage of green colour so that generally one could not tell from whose country the plane came. This action make no enemy aware.*

*After 1 hour reconnaissance flight around Suva, when the light became brighter, I left to fly back to the mother submarine. The mother submarine crew took only eight minutes to hoist the plane back on board, dismantle it and pack it away in the hangar to enable the submarine to submerge on its way to New Zealand.*

### Auckland

*From Suva the I-21 submarine navigated its way down south to Auckland, reaching that city on the 24<sup>th</sup> May. At 4am I flew out under cloud cover to reconnoitre Auckland but on reaching the beach near Auckland could not see because it was so dark there – upon turned north to Auckland Airport. Due to showering rain flew down to a height of 400 metres at which stage the airport personnel, because they*

Committee: Ian Dolstra, Bill Holswich, Roger Kennedy, David Marshall, Jack Powell, John Scott and Keith White.

At the conclusion of the AGM, Robin Mead gave a talk on the development of aviation in Africa, with a focus on the western part of the continent. Robin introduced the subject through his association with the late Eric Waite, who passed away in December last year. Robin paid tribute to Eric, whose career in journalism took him to South Africa, the then Rhodesia and Mozambique and where aviation proved to be of particular interest. Robin also spoke of Eric's huge contribution in getting Lawrence Hargrave's studies and achievements recognised.

Robin then described the early days of aviation in Africa which had developed because of the colonial and imperial systems that existed in the continent. He noted that the first recorded air activity in Kano Nigeria was a visit in 1925 by a Bristol Fighter from Khartoum Sudan when trouble amongst the local tribes arose.

He discussed the RAF's involvement in aviation in Nigeria and how Imperial Airways replaced the RAF services in 1935 with the introduction of Handley Page Hannibal aircraft and later DH-86s. World War II saw Kano as an important staging point in the Horseshoe Route, which was devised to avoid war zones.

Robin also showed a video which described BOAC VC-10 operations in Africa, as well as a large collection of photographs, articles, models and memorabilia relating to this most fascinating.

Special thanks were given to Robin, who prepared this excellent presentation at short notice.

### **End of an Era**

Aeropelican Air Services is expected to cease operation from Pelican (Belmont) Airport with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2005. Owners, IAP Group, which acquired the airline and Pelican Airport following the collapse of Ansett, intend to move operations to Williamtown Airport and sell Belmont Airport to property developers. The Wyong and Lake Macquarie Councils oppose the closure of the airport and relocation of the service.

Aeropelican commenced operations on the Pelican (Belmont) to Sydney service on 1 June 1971 initially with Cessna C402 aircraft and later with Twin Otters, which became a familiar sight along the coast between Sydney and Newcastle. The company now operates an Embraer Bandeirante on the Williamtown to Sydney route and this is expected to be supplemented by a Fairchild Metro 23.

### **Help Wanted**

#### **Powerhouse Museum DHA-3 Drover**

The Powerhouse Museum DHA-3 Drover Mk3A VH-FBC, which would be familiar to many of our readers, currently resides at the Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown. Society President and Powerhouse Museum Transport Curator, Ian Debenham, is seeking photographs of this aircraft in its earlier liveries and registrations. It was originally VH-FDA with the RFDSA (NSW Section), later VH-UNK, VH-UMA and ZK-DDD before returning to Australia as VH-FBC. If you can assist, please contact Ian Debenham through the Society address.

### **Aviation in Broken Hill**

South Australian aviation historian, Bob Wiseman is researching material in preparation for a book on aviation in Broken Hill. Bob is interested in photographs, timetables, newspaper clippings on any aviation matters relating to the airport from 1919 to the present.

Bob can be contacted at (08) 8352 3415, or at 29 Lasscock Avenue, Lockleys SA 5032, or email at [robertwiseman@optusnet.com.au](mailto:robertwiseman@optusnet.com.au).

### **Calendar of Events**

**2 April 2005** Lunch with the Tigers, Luskintyre NSW

**23-24 April 2005** Queensland Vintage Aircraft Group Fly-in, Watts Bridge QLD

**23-25 April 2005** Grumman aircraft Fly-in, Mudgee NSW

**23-25 April 2005** Antique Aeroplane Association of Australia National Fly-in, Swan Hill VIC

**30 April - 1 May 2005** Temora Aviation Museum Flying Days, Temora NSW

**5 May 2005** AHSA (NSW) Inc monthly meeting, Powerhouse Museum; this meeting is on a Thursday.

**8 May 2005** Australia's Museum of Flight Airshow, Nowra NSW

### **Special Note - May Meeting**

The AHSA (NSW) May monthly meeting will be held on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2005, due to the unavailability of the Powerhouse Museum on our normal meeting day.

### **Subscriptions**

Subscriptions are now overdue for 2005. For those few who have not yet paid their 2005 subscription, a pink reminder renewal form is enclosed. This will be the last Southern Skies distributed to those who do not renew their subscriptions.



# AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW) Inc

ABN: 83 295 759 224

PO Box K346 Haymarket NSW 1238

## *Southern Skies*

The Newsletter of AHSA (NSW) Inc

April 2005 No.383

### **April Meeting**

The April meeting will be held at the Powerhouse Museum on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2005, commencing at 7.45pm. Enter from the Macarthur Street end and the meeting room is adjacent to the foyer. Visitors are most welcome and need not be accompanied by a member. Supper will be available after the meeting.

The main business for the night will be the

### ***Annual Aviation Trivia Quiz and Aircraft Recognition Competition***

The 22<sup>nd</sup> annual aviation trivia quiz will be hosted by Jack Powell, who will present the coveted Slipstream Trophy to this year's winner.

Following the trivia quiz, Warwick Bigsworth will tease you with a vast selection of slides in the 37<sup>th</sup> annual aircraft recognition competition. Participants will compete for the impressive Brian White Memorial Trophy, whilst the person achieving the closest average score will receive the President's Trophy.

Last year's winners are reminded to return their suitably inscribed trophies for the handover ceremony.

There will be a small charge to enter the competitions, however for the chance of winning one of the handsome trophies and book prizes, the cost is small indeed.

Please join us for this light-hearted and entertaining night in the Society's calendar.

### **March Meeting**

The Annual General Meeting was held and comprised the President's Report, Honorary Treasurer's Report and election of office bearers for 2005. After the AGM, Robin Mead provided an excellent presentation on aviation in Africa.

In his President's Report, Ian Debenham said:

"Last year was, for me at least, another year of great interest with topics as diverse as John Goble's talk on technology and tactics of WW1 fighter aircraft; Fred Lane's naval perspective on the Korean War and Phil Dulhunty's Arthur Butler Memorial lecture on sea planes, given from his own personal experience

and expanded with the inclusion of some historical illustrations, notably the Japanese 'spy' flight over Sydney Harbour during WWII.

What was also a highlight for me was the inclusion of talks by members. Passing over my contribution, we benefited from Des Cooke's reminiscences of his aviation career and the subject areas of Roger Kennedy, Ian Dolstra and Robin Mead. Bill Holswich also gave us a fascinating insight into his special interest. I am always impressed by the aviation knowledge that the Society's members possess and hope that 2005 will see more members sharing their aviation interest.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the committee members for their support, Warwick Bigsworth, our extremely competent secretary and newsletter editor; John Scott for his ever interesting and well researched "*Loops and Landings*"; and John Swanson for his handling of the Society's funds.

Thanks also to the members, for without you there is no Society."

Honorary Treasurer John Swanson was unable to distribute the Financial Statement for 2004 due to a typographical error in the audited report. The correct Report will be available at the April meeting or on request. In a brief verbal report, it was stated that the Society was in a sound financial position with excess income over expenditure being \$580.70 as a significant improvement over the previous year when expenditure exceeded income by \$313.75.

All positions of office were declared vacant and Allen Clarke presided over the election of office bearers.

The results were of the election were:

President:	Ian Debenham
Hon Secretary:	Warwick Bigsworth
Honorary Treasurer:	John Swanson
Archivist:	Jim Payens

contribution to the invention of the aeroplane, was in August last year, on the ABC's Rewind programme entitled, *Hargrave and His Kite*. Ian Debenham also appeared on the programme, and was our guest speaker on the subject last September. As to whether the Wright Brothers knowingly used any of Hargrave's inventions; the answer is probably no. Mr D. J. Swaine of Victoria, Australia, did put that question to Orville Wright back in 1945. On July 30, 1945, Orville replied, "You ask whether we found any of Hargrave's work useful. In none of our gliders, nor in any of our power machines, was anything from Hargrave used. Our first invention, a system of control for aeroplanes, could not be applied to a Hargrave kite." But read carefully Warwick Bigsworth's summary, in last year's October newsletter, of Ian's talk. Hargrave's link with the Wright Flyer is clearly via the Chanute biplane glider, "but only by the further innovation and perhaps inflated ego of Chanute."

In 1899 Hargrave's box kite enticed Samuel Franklin Cody away from his travelling Wild West show, *The Klondyke Nugget*, then performing in England. This fascination with the box kite led to his refinement of Hargrave's system of man lifting kites, which subsequently enabled observers to be carried to heights of over 2500ft. Cody eventually became employed at the British Army's Balloon Factory at Farnborough, and there he was involved with the design and building of aeroplanes. On October 16, 1908, Cody made the first official flight in Great Britain in his British Army Aeroplane No 1. Thus Hargrave's box kite featured prominently in first flights, through Cody in England and through Santos-Dumont in Europe. And of course the box kite was the basis for design of the Voisin biplane flown by Harry Houdini at Diggers Rest, Victoria, on March 18, 1910.

The Bristol Boxkite made its first flight from Larkhill, Salisbury Plain in England on July 30, 1910. This aircraft made a huge contribution to pilot training and aeronautical progress worldwide, with a production line running until October, 1914. One of the last such contributions was from Boxkite No 133, which was shipped to Australia in January 1913. The last Australian Flying Corps pilot to qualify in this aircraft was Lt. L. J. Wackett, in October 1915, the year of Hargrave's death.

On the occasion of my birthday last year, which was also the 111th birthday of Hargrave's box kite, I received from my son Peter, who is currently working in South Africa, a copy of John William Illsley's book, *In Southern Skies*. (Our newsletter does not have exclusive title). This book is a history of early aviation in Southern Africa, from 1816 to 1940. It was perhaps no surprise to learn that the first powered flight in South Africa was achieved with a Voisin biplane similar to that of Harry Houdini. The pilot was Monsieur Albert Kimmerling who took to the air at East London, South Africa, on January 1, 1910. The first South African to fly a powered aeroplane in South Africa was John Weston. He did so on July 1, 1911, at Turffontein in a Bristol Boxkite. He subsequently gave many air displays, during 1911 and 1912, in South Africa and Mozambique. It was in Mozambique, about fifty years later, that Eric Waite became a licenced pilot.

Eric was apprenticed to radio station 2KA Katoomba, in 1951, as a sixteen year old. He was then transferred to 2DU, Dubbo. It was there that he was introduced to flying by the Chief Instructor at Dubbo Aero Club, Nancy (Ellis) Leebold. He left Australia for Mozambique in 1957 and completed his flying training there. As it turned out Eric was in Southern Africa during Harold Macmillan's forecast *Wind of Change*, and he used light aircraft to report on a decade of conflict. These experiences formed the basis of the talk he gave to AHSA NSW Branch on May 6, 1987. At the time, Eric was living at Stanwell Park, and as the centenary approached, of Hargrave's ascent beneath a string of box kites, it was inevitable that he would play a prominent role in its commemoration. This he did through the Lawrence Hargrave 1994 Commemorative Association Inc. Eric was also our speaker for the 12th Arthur Butler Memorial Lecture, which he presented on October 5, 1994. The title of his address was, "A Hargrave Eulogy in Hindsight by an Aviation Historian of the Future".

While looking at South African web sites I found a photograph of Eric Waite, then in his twenties, smiling, good looking, the world his oyster. The site was of South African Old-Time Radio, and past employees were reminiscing about good times at LM Radio. The photograph caption reads, "Eric was an Aussie from the Macquarie radio network, strolling his way around the world, who stopped for a couple of years at LM Radio. Good guy. He taught me flying so have several pix of LM from the air, actually not too high up. Scared quite a few people." Not a bad way to be remembered!.. **John Scott**.

## LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

### The Humble Box Kite.

My thoughts have been of Eric Waite since reading his obituary, written by Ian Debenham, in our February newsletter and again in the latest newsletter of the Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown. It is not that I was ever in close personal touch with Eric, but I did very much enjoy his contributions to Australian aviation history through both the written and spoken word. He was, after all, a media professional.

My thoughts were reinforced on Australia Day, when I read Bruce Elder's article in the Sydney Morning Herald extolling Australia as a remarkably innovative nation. Under a sub-heading, *Humans and Flight*, Elder wrote, "It might be true that the first successful aeroplane flight occurred at Kittyhawk in the United States and was the brainchild of the Wright Brothers, but the first powered flight occurred in 1894 when Lawrence Hargrave connected four of his famous box kites together, added a small engine and achieved lift off, albeit with a plane that flew little more than a few metres. Hargrave is symbolic of so much Australian innovation. He was interested in the invention, not the money to be made. Consequently, while his competitors overseas were secretive about their experiments, Hargrave freely provided the results of all his experiments." I could almost hear Eric's voice giving a radio interview, correcting the article and giving the facts of Hargrave's achievements, but at the same time enjoying the exposure the opportunity provided.

Some good things have happened on my birthday, February 15. For example on that day in 1994, The Hon Paul Keating, Prime Minister of Australia, turned the first sod in a ceremony to mark the start of works for the Bankstown Aviation Museum. Also on that day, in 1893, Lawrence Hargrave produced his first box kite, initially with circular cells. The following day a square celled box kite was constructed.

As President of The Lawrence Hargrave Foundation Eric wrote, "In 1892 Hargrave turned to the study of air currents and the lifting-power of kites. In 1894, on the 12th of November, he was lifted 16 feet into the air in a 21 mph southerly, at Stanwell Park, beneath four great box kites. His own words sum up this magnificent achievement at a time when those who worked to attain mastery of the air were more often than not regarded as crackpots: "*A safe means of ascending in a flying machine is now at the service of any man who cares to try.*" His box kite became the standard followed in much of the world for fuselage, wings and empennage design. Voisin of France was the first to exploit the design fully, and the first ever public demonstration of a powered heavier-than-air aeroplane was made by Santos-Dumont, at Bagatelle meadows on the Paris outskirts, in a machine, an assemblage of box kites, called 14-bis, in 1906."

In his biography of Santos-Dumont, Peter Wykeham puts Hargrave and his box kite in the following context. "The forerunners of the aeroplane, as opposed to the *professors of aerostation*, are easily traced through da Vinci, Cayley, Pockock, Stringfellow, Penaud, Ader, Lilienthal, Langley, Hargrave, Pilcher and Chanute. By the end of the nineteenth century, Pilcher and Lilienthal had shown that a heavier-than-air machine could be controlled in the air, using gravity as the motive force and body balance to preserve equilibrium; and Chanute had collated their results. But with Pilcher and Lilienthal both dead, and the threshold of powered flight still to be crossed, there was a natural hesitation. Far away in Australia, Lawrence Hargrave was working on the aerodynamics of box kites, and in America Chanute was digesting and publicising his results. The Wright Brothers had managed to bring all this research to the point of a first flight, but they might almost have been working in Tibet, for all that the rest of the world knew about them. The key to the eventual solution in France was the legacy of Lilienthal, the stimulus of Chanute with his collation of Hargrave and others, the support of wealthy Frenchmen who were not afraid to subsidise what some people thought lunacy, and the persistence of Captain Ferber."

The last time I heard Eric Waite putting the case for a proper recognition of Hargrave's

AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW) Inc

FORM OF APPOINTMENT OF PROXY

I, .....

of

.....  
(address)

being a member of the Aviation Historical Society of Australia (NSW) Inc

hereby appoint .....  
(full name of proxy)

of

.....  
(address)

being a member of that incorporated association, as my proxy to vote for me on my behalf at the Annual General Meeting of the association, to be held on the 2nd day of March, 2005 and at any adjournment of that meeting.

.....

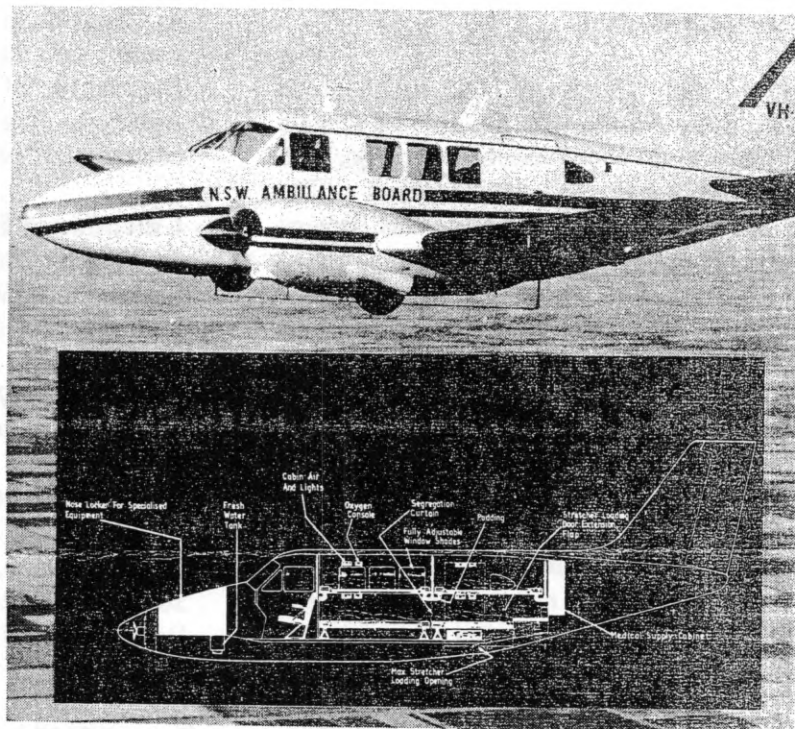
Signature of member appointing proxy

Date .....

Note: A proxy vote may not be given to a person who is not a member of the association.

# ALPHA MIKE BRAVO

NSW  
guardian  
angel



**T**HERE'S a very special Beech A.80 Queen Air airborne in NSW skies, which is unique. It is the only Queen aerial ambulance of its kind yet built.

Alpha Mike Bravo was officially handed over to the chairman of the New South Wales Ambulance Board, Mr J. G. Stephens, last month by the NSW Lieut.-Gov. Sir Kenneth Street (see picture).

Although basically a normal Queen Air, AMB has been greatly modified inside the passenger cabin to better fit it for its new role as a fully-IFR aerial ambulance to be available 24 hours a day for emergency medical service within the State.

## Modifications

All the airframe modifications were designed and executed by Hawker de Havilland at the company's Bankstown plant.

The modifications include lengthening the cabin to allow two sets of stretchers to be accommodated. The cabin entry door has been enlarged to sim-

ply the loading and unloading of stretcher patients.

Racks and floor fittings have been incorporated in the cabin fixtures to mount special medical equipment for in-flight administration to seriously ill patients, and a medical oxygen unit is a permanent fitting.

## 'Furnishings'

Further cabin "furnishings" include oxygen suction equipment, an emergency resuscitator, a maternity kit, and a well-stocked drug cabinet.

Four stretchers will be carried as standard equipment, and there is room for an additional four seated patients, as well as pilot and nursing sister.

The Queen Air will be based at Sydney and will be crewed by East West Airlines. The NSW Ambulance Board anticipates that a second, similar aerial ambulance will be required before the end of this year.

**BUSINESS  
AVIATION  
TWIN  
ENDORSEMENTS**

“Oklahoma Gal” with much excited anticipation, as she will be another cherished addition to our growing collection of superb Warbirds.

We have heard that “Oklahoma Gal” has a proud history, flying in the Pacific with the 317 TC (Jungle Skippers), carrying a wide variety of cargo, and making drops on some very hot locations. The aircraft is listed as having received some flak damage for her devotion to duty.

A huge amount of ‘TLC’ has been put into previous restoration on this aircraft, which is why we here in Cairns will be able to share her history with the general public, together with the other Warbirds which are now on show here in airworthy status.

Currently being dismantled in Wangaratta in readiness for transportation to her new home in the North, she will be on show with a theme role, yet to be decided, but hopefully to continue in her current livery; the rebuild will make for an exciting 2005.

We are very fortunate to have very experienced DC-3 approved engineers and pilots, having lived their ill-spent youth with “Bushies” Bush Pilot Airways, needless to say, the revival “Bushies” stories abound in the hangar, so some home truths I’m sure will surface.

Roy Fordham.

### **And More to this Story**

The particular aircraft is a C-47.30.DK c/n 25495 and was originally operated by the USAAF as 43-48234. After World War II it was imported to Australia and became VH-DMV registered to the Department of Civil Aviation on 6 October 1947. (D M V, being in recognition of Daniel McVey, who was Director-General of Civil Aviation from 1944 – 1946). On 9 February 1951, it was re-registered as VH-CAO and operated by DCA in airways flight checking duties.

It was sold to Brain & Brown Airfreighters Pty Ltd and re-registered as VH-BAB on 10 February 1962 and operated with that company until sold to Malcolm Long in 1979. It was put on display at Chewing Gum Field Museum, Tallebudgera, Queensland until sold to the museum at Wangaratta, Vic. Since the demise of that museum, vendors have been anxious to find a new buyer and home, and fortunately the North Queensland Warbirds have acquired the aircraft.

The aircraft is also significant in that it was the first aircraft, as VH-CAO, to land at Adelaide’s new West Beach Airport on 16 December 1954. On that day,

the aircraft carried out final checks on visual and instrument landing aids and communications systems and landed on Runway 23 at 12:00 noon, and the control of the airport was transferred from the Department of Works to the Department of Civil Aviation. The airport was subsequently opened to commercial operations on 16 February 1955.

### **Calendar of Events**

- 5 March 2005** Lunch with the Tiger Moths, Luskintyre NSW
- 6 March 2005** Goolwa Great Air Spectacular, SA
- 11-13 March 2005** Wright Flyer Replica Launch, Narromine NSW
- 15-20 March 2005** Australian International Air Show. Avalon VIC
- 25-28 March 2005** Natfly – RAA, Narromine NSW
- 25-28 March 2005** Australian National Aerobatic Championships, Parkes NSW
- 26-27 March 2005** Temora Aviation Museum Flying Days Temora NSW
- 26-27 March 2005** Cunderin Easter Airshow, Cunderin WA
- 2 April 2005** Lunch with the Tigers, Luskintyre NSW
- 6 April 2005** AHSA (NSW) Aviation Trivia and aircraft recognition competitions
- 23-24 April 2005** Queensland Vintage Aircraft Group Fly-in, Watts Bridge QLD
- 23-25 April 2005** Grumman aircraft Fly-in, Mudgee NSW
- 23-25 April 2005** Antique Aeroplane Association of Australia National Fly-in, Swan Hill VIC
- 30 April - 1 May 2005** Temora Aviation Museum Flying Days, Temora NSW
- 4 May 2005** AHSA (NSW) Inc monthly meeting, Powerhouse Museum
- 8 May 2005** Australia’s Museum of Flight Airshow, Nowra NSW

### **Subscriptions**

Subscriptions are now overdue for 2005. For those few who have not yet paid their 2005 subscription, your prompt return of the renewal form and money to the Honorary Treasurer would be appreciated.

### **Lost and Found**

One blue and white umbrella was left at the February meeting, and can be collected at the March meeting.

### **News**

News items, other contributions, advertisements or requests for information etc for inclusion in the newsletter can be sent to AHSA (NSW) Inc at P.O. Box K346, Haymarket NSW 1238 or to Warwick Bigsworth via Email ([wbigsworth@iprimus.com.au](mailto:wbigsworth@iprimus.com.au)).

## **Flying Boat Museum**

Guest Speaker at the 2004 Arthur Butler Memorial Lecture, Phil Dulhunty OAM, has advised that the NSW Maritime Authority has agreed to give the Seaplane Pilots' Association and other parties a 3-6 month occupation license of the Rose Bay Afloat structure.

This is an interim gesture to give the organisers time to prepare and submit a Development Application to the Maritime Authority and the Woollahra Municipal Council for a Flying Boat Museum. Already it has taken possession of what was once Flanagan's Afloat, The Imperial Peking Restaurant, Sydney Afloat and lastly Rose Bay Afloat with Maxim's Restaurant.

The organisers are now in the process of collecting items, appointing a curator and redesigning the structure to represent the Art Deco building which was the International Terminal in the 1930's - 1970.

The organisers have also been successful in their application to the Australian Taxation Office and have been endorsed formally as a Deductible Gift Recipient, so that any donation of money or kind may be claimed as a deduction from taxation liability.

Whilst they are busy preparing the D.A. and plans for re-structuring, they plan to have a member in attendance and set up a temporary display of photos and memorabilia including books and videos. If you have any items for inclusion they would greatly appreciate it, as it will help convince the authorities they are serious about having a world-class exhibition.

The facility will be ideally suited for charity functions so that in addition to raising funds for the Museum, the Museum will be able to provide a service for other worthwhile charities in conjunction with its own interests.

The Museum organisers are looking for input, ideas, encouragement, introductions, influence; anything that will support its campaign. Contact the Hon Sec AHSA (NSW) in the first instance.

## **Beech Queen Air VH-AMB**

One of the exhibits in the Powerhouse Museum is the Beech Queen Air VH-AMB, which was the first of the specially modified aircraft constructed for the then NSW Ambulance Board. A total of five Queen Airs were operated by East West Airlines on behalf of the Ambulance Board.

The Queen Airs were replaced by Beech B200C Super King Airs which were initially operated by East West,

and later by Skywest and Pearl Aviation Australia. These in turn have been replaced by specially modified B200 King Airs which are now operated by the Royal Flying Service of Australia (South Eastern Section) on behalf of the Ambulance Service of NSW.

Brian Southwell has kindly contributed an extract from the March 1967 issue of *Aero* magazine, describing the introduction of VH-AMB. The extract is to be found on Page 4 of this newsletter.

## **DC-3 News**

### **Dakota National Air**

Members will be pleased to know that local DC-3 operator Dakota National Air (DNA) is back in business and operating out of facilities at the Australian Aviation Museum, Bankstown.

Under a deal struck between the Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown and DNA, six DNA DC-3s form part of the Museum's static displays. All DNA flights arrive and depart from the Museum facility on Milperra Road side of Bankstown Airport.

DNA owns a total of seven DC-3s. VH-BPN, -DNA, -DNF, -MIN, -PWN, -SBL and -UPQ. SBL and DNA are both currently airworthy and flying charter passenger and cargo. VH-MIN will be the next aircraft back on the operating line; however it is unlikely that any of the others will be brought back to an airworthy condition. Six of the seven DC-3s are permanent residents at Bankstown on the Museum's leased airside property. DNF is still resident at Warnervale Airport.

### **North Queensland Warbirds - Mareeba**

**Ghosties and Goulies** – from our North Queensland correspondent.

We in the North have our fair share of "trick or treaters" but with Halloween now past I can happily reveal a real treat for future visitors to the North Queensland Warbird scene. No tricks though, this is for real, a Ghost from the past maybe, but in fine form, no not a Goulie, but a magnificent 'Goonie'; yes our own C-47 with quite an interesting history.

I won't go into great detail at this stage, as I am sure many of you will be aware of this particular aircraft, having spent quite a lot of time on show in Queensland already, I'm sure it's charm would have been magnetic enough to draw much attention to all devout followers of the worldly Goonie Bird.

Suffice to say at this moment in time, we here in Cairns / Mareeba, are awaiting the arrival of



# AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW) Inc

ABN: 83 295 759 224

PO Box K346 Haymarket NSW 1238

## *Southern Skies*

The Newsletter of AHSA (NSW) Inc

March 2005 No.382

### **March Meeting**

The March meeting will be held at the Powerhouse Museum on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2005, commencing at 7.45pm. Enter from the Macarthur Street end and the meeting room is adjacent to the foyer. Visitors are most welcome and need not be accompanied by a member. Supper will be available after the meeting.

The main business for the night will be the

### *Annual General Meeting*

The meeting will comprise the President's Report, Honorary Treasurer's Report and election of office bearers for 2005. Nominations for office bearers will be called at the meeting.

At the conclusion of the AGM, Robin Mead will give a talk on the development of civil air routes in Africa. Robin spent a number of his early years in West Africa and has since had a deep interest in African aviation. As he has undertaken much research on the subject, this is sure to be a most interesting address.

Please join us for this important night in the Society's calendar.

### **Committee Meeting**

A Committee Meeting, commencing at 6:30pm will be held immediately prior to the March monthly meeting.

### **February Meeting**

The meeting featured the film: *The Flight of the Southern Cross*, which was specially commissioned by Captain Allan Hancock and allegedly shot using Charles Ulm's camera. Society President, Ian Debenham, revealed that some of the film was actually shot in a studio. Nonetheless, it showed much of the drama associated with the epic flight, and the large audience found the film most interesting.

The film generated much discussion on various facets of the flight, particularly the flying skills of Smithy

during such weather and the navigation skills of Lyons. And of course, airport security was non-existent; haven't times changed?

### **On the Internet**

Aeroclub.com

([www.aeroclub.com.au](http://www.aeroclub.com.au))

This Australian website provides a comprehensive list of recreational aviation organisations and contacts, as well as an excellent list of current events. Not just the major air shows but also relatively minor fly-ins at rural aerodromes.

Douglas Aircraft Company Long Beach

([www.wilexa.com](http://www.wilexa.com))

This interesting site looks at the history of the Long Beach Douglas Aircraft Company, later McDonnell Douglas and Boeing factory which is gradually being converted into Douglas Park Factory and produces the Boeing 717 and C-17 Globemaster III.

East Anglia Aircraft Research Group

([www.sweffling.freemove.co.uk](http://www.sweffling.freemove.co.uk))

This is the website of an association involved with aviation archaeology in the eastern counties of England. It provides details and research concerning many crashed aircraft of the World War II period.

Gatwick Aviation Society – Aircraft Registers

([www.gatwickaviationsociety.org.uk/registers.html](http://www.gatwickaviationsociety.org.uk/registers.html))

This component of the Gatwick Aviation Society's website provides access to many international aircraft registers. It seems to have better access than other web sites, which often provide "unofficial" sites.

SAA Museum Society

([www.saamuseum.co.za](http://www.saamuseum.co.za))

This is the South African Airways Museum Society website, which features details of the museum and its aircraft, which include a B747-200, an L-1649 Starliner, Vickers Viking, Lockheed Lodestar, DH Dove, and CASA built JU52/3. It also provides some very interesting links. Well worth a look.

*Into the fiery centre of heaven,  
I want to rise and rise  
Up to the heights,  
Where even the angels bow down dazzled  
And see God with eternal eyes.*

There is a similar passion expressed in John Magee's "High Flight", which ends with the lines:

*I've topped the wind-swept heights  
with easy grace,  
where never lark,  
or even eagle flew –  
And, while with silent, lifting mind  
I've trod  
The high untrampled sanctity of space,  
Put out my hand and touched the face of God.*

Both John Magee and Stefan Zweig lost their lives during the early years of World War II; John Magee in a mid-air collision over Lincolnshire in December 1941, and Stefan Zweig two months later, by his own hand, in Petropolis, Brazil, having fled Europe because of the Nazi persecution of Jews. As coincidence would have it, Petropolis is where Alberto Santos-Dumont built a summer house towards the end of WWI, and which is now preserved as a national monument and museum. Santos-Dumont is regarded by his countrymen as the 'Father of Flight'. In a series of flights in his 14-bis biplane, between September 13, and November 12, 1906, at the polo ground in the Bois de Bologne near Paris, Santos-Dumont was the first to fly a powered, heavier-than-air machine in Europe. Any Brazilian will tell you that, unlike the Wright Brothers, Alberto's flights were public, his take-offs unassisted by a catapult and rail, and were not sustained by strong winds like those that blew at Kitty Hawk.

One of the permanent exhibitions currently on show at the National Museum of Australia in Canberra is called *Eternity*. It is inspired by the obsession of Arthur Stace, who wrote the word *Eternity* over half a million times in perfect copperplate, in chalk, on the streets of Sydney, from 1932 to 1967. The exhibition attempts to look at Australian history through the stories of fifty unique individuals who made a significant personal contribution to the nation. Emotional themes are used in the exhibition, (Joy, Hope, Passion, Mystery, Thrill, Loneliness, Fear, Devotion, Separation and Chance), to represent the driving force in the lives of each individual. Of the ten emotional themes, Passion is considered, by the curator, to be most characteristic of one individual honoured in the exhibition. That individual is Austin Byrne, the most dedicated Australian aviation enthusiast of the last century.

The lifespan of Austin Byrne neatly overlies the first century of flight. He was born on February 25, 1902, at Wickham, NSW. Being one of seven children, he had left school by the time he was twelve and had commenced work at the Cohen and Co store at Harden. His passion for aviation was sparked by Maurice Guillaux, who flew over his house in a Bleriot monoplane in July 1914. He was further inspired by the flying aces of WWI and the exploits of the pioneering aviators in the decade following the war. However, it was the 1928 Pacific flight of the *Southern Cross* and her crew, particularly his fellow Australians, Charles Kingsford Smith and Charles Ulm, that changed Austin Byrne's life forever. By 1932 he had commenced work on a shrine of remembrance to immortalise the achievements of Smith and Ulm. His tribute was substantially complete by the time it was exhibited at the Royal Easter Show in 1938 and again in 1939. At the latter he stated that, "As from today, I dedicate this my life's work, the *Southern Cross Memorial*, and bequeath it to the youth of my country, for them to hold in trust for future generations with the hope that it may inspire many to the glory of our great country."

Austin Byrne never married but throughout his life he maintained his obsession to keep the memory of Smith and Ulm alive, both at home and overseas. It was not until 1970 that the Commonwealth Government accepted his *Southern Cross Memorial* as a gift, and eventually passed it into the care of the National Museum of Australia. Austin Byrne died in June, 1993, and is now himself remembered by the *Eternity* Exhibition for his life's work as a passionate aerophile..... **John Scott.**

## LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

### The Passion Of The Aerophile.

I remember an AHSA NSW Branch meeting long, long ago at which, in order to fill a void caused by the non-attendance of a guest speaker, members were asked to speak for about five minutes on what had sparked their interest in aviation. It was clear that the members who spoke had been inspired at some point by an encounter with an aviator, an aircraft, or just the sheer majesty of flight. One of the books on my reading list this summer was *A Passion For Wings, Aviation And The Western Imagination 1908-1918*, by Robert Wohl. The author explores the relationship of the pioneering years of flight to the social and artistic life of the day. The origins of the passion aroused by aviation in individuals, predisposed to the new technology, are cogently explained.

In the introduction to his book Robert Wohl writes, "This is the history of a complex of emotions - the passion for wings - and the impact that it had on Western culture during the decade between 1908 and 1918. Strange as it may seem to us today, weary veterans of crowded commercial airliners and depressing airports, the invention of the aeroplane was at first perceived by many as an aesthetic event with far-reaching implications for the new century's artistic and moral sensibility. Long dreamt about, enshrined in fable and myth, the miracle of flight, once achieved, opened vistas of further conquests over Nature that excited people's imagination and appeared to guarantee the coming of a New Age." Robert Wohl originally intended to cover the whole of the 20th century in a single volume. His research unearthed so much material that he decided to limit the first volume to the decade between 1908 and 1918, and to write a further two volumes to carry his theme up to the present day. His first volume was published in 1994. From 1994-95 he served as the Lindbergh Professor at the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D. C. The second volume of his trilogy, which will cover the period from 1919-1945, is currently in progress.

Commenting on Bleriot's crossing of the English Channel on July 25, 1909, Wohl writes, "He was the first to claim the legacy of Icarus and show that human beings could traverse large bodies of water by means of wings. As Bleriot himself succinctly put it, it was above all by conquering the sea that aviators would advance the conquest of the air and excite the enthusiasm of crowds." These words foreshadowed the fame that would attach to the future aviators who would conquer the great oceans of the world, Australians being prominent amongst them. The Austrian writer and poet, Stefan Zweig, wrote of Bleriot's achievement, "In Vienna we shouted with joy when Bleriot flew over the Channel as if he had been our own hero; because of our pride in the successive triumph of our technics, our science, a European community spirit, a European national consciousness was coming into being. How useless, we said to ourselves, are frontiers when any plane can fly over them with ease, how provincial and artificial are custom-duties, guards and border patrols, how incongruous in the spirit of these times which visibly seeks unity and world brotherhood! This soaring of our feelings was no less wonderful than that of the planes, and I pity those who were not young during those last years of confidence in Europe." In his poem "the Flier", Stefan Zweig imagines himself as an aviator ascending defiantly towards the heavens. The English translation reads:

*Free!*  
*Alone!*  
*Oh vast unending loneliness!*  
*My glance no longer batters itself against things,*  
*The air is pure of breath and words.*  
*To live is to soar.*  
*Blessed glory on wandering wings!*  
*Still I feel*  
*Over the silence the sound of heavenly sounds.*  
*I want to penetrate through the cold*



# AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW) Inc

ABN: 83 295 759 224

PO Box K346  
Haymarket NSW 1238

## *2005 Membership Renewal*

Name:..... Phone Number.....

Address:.....

Fax Number..... Email:.....

Signed:.....

*Send \$25 Annual Subscription to Treasurer, AHSA (NSW) Inc, PO Box K346 Haymarket NSW 1238*



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PO Box K346  
Haymarket NSW 1238

## *2005 Membership Renewal*

Name:..... Phone Number.....

Address:.....

Fax Number..... Email:.....

Signed:.....

*Send \$25 Annual Subscription to Treasurer, AHSA (NSW) Inc, PO Box K346 Haymarket NSW 1238*



# AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW) Inc

ABN: 83 295 759 224

PO Box K346  
Haymarket NSW 1238

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covered his aviation experiences in Africa. However, he is better known to aviation historians as the President of the Lawrence Hargrave Foundation.

Eric was formerly a radio broadcaster with a love of music, amateur theatricals and history. As a long-time Illawarra resident he developed a passion for Hargrave and devoted much of the last fifteen years of his life to promoting the genius of our pioneer aviator. It was Eric who drew together the small group of people and encouraged them to commemorate the centenary of Lawrence Hargrave's kite lift experiment. Those who were at Stanwell Park back in November 1994 at those most successful celebrations will remember the diminutive Eric walking around meeting people and enthusing about Hargrave and his genius despite the fact that Eric was newly released from hospital, having survived a major heart attack.

Eric never lost his enthusiasm for promoting Hargrave although ill health limited his progress. He is irreplaceable and the world is the poorer for the loss of Eric Waite. Rest in peace Eric.

Ian Debenham

### Calendar of Events

**5 February 2005** Lunch with the Tiger Moths Luskintyre NSW

**5-6 February 2005** Temora Aviation Museum Flying Days, Temora NSW

**6 February 2005** Bairnsdale Air Show, Vic

**2 March 2005** AHSA (NSW) Inc Annual General Meeting, Powerhouse Museum

**5 March 2005** Lunch with the Tiger Moths, Luskintyre NSW

**6 March 2005** Goolwa Great Air Spectacular, SA

**11-13 March 2005** Wright Flyer Replica Launch, Narromine NSW

**15-20 March 2005** Australian International Air Show. Avalon Vic

**25-28 March 2005** Natfly – RAA, Narromine NSW

**26-27 March 2005** Temora Aviation Museum Flying Days Temora NSW

### Subscriptions

Subscriptions are now due for 2005. Please complete the enclosed subscription form and return as soon as practicable.

### News

News items, other contributions, advertisements or requests for information etc for inclusion in the newsletter can be sent to AHSA (NSW) Inc at P.O. Box K346, Haymarket NSW 1238 or to Warwick Bigsworth via Email ([wbigsworth@iprimus.com.au](mailto:wbigsworth@iprimus.com.au)).

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## Aviation Historical Society of Australia (NSW) Inc

ABN: 83 295 759 224

PO Box K346 Haymarket NSW 1238

### Notice of Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Aviation Historical Society of Australia (NSW) Inc will be held at the Powerhouse Museum, Harris Street Ultimo on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2005 commencing at 7:45pm.

### Business

1. Accept President's Report
2. Accept Honorary Treasurer's Report
3. Elect Office Bearers for the current year:
  - (a) President
  - (b) Vice President
  - (c) Honorary Treasurer
  - (d) Honorary Secretary
  - (e) Committee
4. Any other business

Warwick Bigsworth  
Honorary Secretary



# AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW) Inc

ABN: 83 295 759 224

PO Box K346 Haymarket NSW 1238

## *Southern Skies*

The Newsletter of AHSA (NSW) Inc

February 2005 No.381

*file 2005-1*

### **February Meeting**

The February meeting will be held at the Powerhouse Museum on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2005, commencing at 7.45pm. Enter from the Macarthur Street end and the meeting room is adjacent to the foyer. Visitors are most welcome and need not be accompanied by a member. Supper will be available after the meeting.

The theme of the meeting will be a Members' Night, featuring the film: *The Flight of the Southern Cross*, which was specially commissioned by Captain Allan Hancock and shot using Charles Ulm's camera. It includes the initial section from Los Angeles to Oakland, as well as all the following sections, and the actual Morse code messages made by radio operator, Jim Warner, are deciphered and included on the film.

Buy, sell and swap will also be available for those wishing to trade in aviation memorabilia. Please join us for another entertaining night of Australian aviation history.

### **Committee Meeting**

A Committee Meeting, commencing at 6:30pm will be held immediately prior to the February monthly meeting.

### **December Meeting**

The December meeting was held at the Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown, where the theme was appropriately *In Recognition of Bankstown Airport*. Unfortunately representatives from the Museum were unable to attend; however, an interesting talk was given by Warwick Bigsworth on some of his recollections at Bankstown initially as a young enthusiast in the early 1960s, later as a student pilot and later during his air traffic control career in the 1970s and 1980s.

Warwick recalled some memories of the manufacturers and sales agents, such as Commerce International and later Ansett General Aviation - Piper, Dulmison Aircraft - C.Z.L, Mooney and

Brantley, Hawker de Havilland - Beechcraft and Britten-Norman, Austerserve - Austers galore, and Rex Aviation - Cessna. He also discussed the abundance of large flying training organisations such as The Royal Aero Club of NSW which operated Victa Air Tourers, Cherokees, Chipmunks, Comanche and Aztec; Illawarra - mainly Cessna 172s and Cherokees, Kingsford Smith Flying School - mainly Piper Colts, Navair - Cessna 150s and 172s and Rex Aviation - Cessna 150, 172 and 182.

Warwick's recollection of such activity generated much input from the audience, and the mention of Fairey Fireflies, Fairey Gannets and Hawker Sea Furies in storage brought back many memories. There were of course busy major overhaul facilities at Bankstown and aircraft such as Catalinas, Bristol 170 freighters, DC-3s and even DC-4s were noted during the 1960s and 1970s. These days, there is a proliferation of DC-3s (albeit only a few airworthy) and HS748s, awaiting sale or a less worthy end.

Warwick also showed a number of slides and prints of a wide range of typical and some unusual visiting aircraft at Bankstown. These included Phil Dulhunty's Percival Proctor, the country's first Britten-Norman Trislander operated by Barringer Resources, Aero Exploration's Twin Pioneer, Marshall Airways DC-2 and Lockheed 10B, Illawarra target-towing Mustangs, DH-60G Moth, Bowden Air Transport DHA-3 Drover, several corporate aircraft, ex-Japanese Self Defence Force Short Bros. Skyvan, Airlines of PNG DHC-8, and various DC-3s.

Members and guests also viewed the large collection on display at the Museum.

### **Vale**

#### **Eric Waite - an obituary**

Eric Waite passed away on December 26, 2004, aged 69, after a long fight against heart disease. Eric may be remembered for his talk to the Society, entitled "Flying Through the Winds of Change", which