



# 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

July 2010 No.441

*File 2010 - 2*

### **July Meeting - Different Venue**

The July meeting will be held at the Powerhouse Museum on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2010, commencing at 7.45pm. Due to other commitments within the Museum, this month's meeting will be held on the Ground Floor of the Harwood Building, which is the building to the south of our normal venue. From the car park proceed to the southern end of the building and through the main doors to our meeting room.

Visitors are most welcome and supper will be available after the meeting.

The guest speaker will be John Burleigh FRAeS, whose talk will be

### *The Bristol Aeroplane Company - A Centenary*

The Bristol Aeroplane Company, also known as the British and Colonial Aeroplane Company, was formed 100 years ago and was one of the great aircraft companies that was responsible for founding the British Aircraft Industry.

The lecture will outline some of the early history of Bristols and then recall in more detail some of John's personal experience in the twenty post-war years that he spent with the company.

Soon after its founding, the company quickly made a name for itself on the world's stage and a Bristol Boxkite was the first aircraft delivered to Point Cook. This started a very long association with Australia and the Australian Flying Corps and the Royal Australian Air Force.

In the 1930's Bristols expanded and, following some Government pressure, they took over another Bristol company, Cosmos Engineering which under the guidance of Roy Fedden was designing radial engines.

In 1935, following the British Government's decision to expand the RAF, the modern Bristol Aeroplane Company began to take shape. Blenheim, Beaufort and then Beaufighter aircraft were manufactured in great numbers both in UK and the latter two in Australia

John Burleigh joined Bristols as an aircraft apprentice in 1946 and witnessed the great changes in the company as it geared down from wartime

production and concentrated on surviving in the difficult post war years

After completing his apprenticeship with the Bristol Aeroplane Company, John joined the Flight Research Department where as a Flight Test Observer he was involved in the Bristol Brabazon program and the development of the Freighter and early Britannia systems.

In 1952 he joined the embryonic Guide Weapons Department at Bristol and was involved in the development program of the Bloodhound missile from its earliest days until it entered service with the RAF. He spent many years at the Bristol facilities in South Australia at Salisbury and Woomera, where he was the senior Bristol engineer for the RAF Service Acceptance Trials Unit. After returning to Bristol he was appointed Co-ordinator for the introduction of Bloodhound to the Royal Swedish Air Force.

He later migrated to Australia and joined Hawker De Havilland in Sydney where he held a number of positions including the marketing and support of Weapon Systems.

He then joined Short Brothers of Belfast as Regional Manager Aircraft Australia and was responsible for the introduction of the Shorts 330 and 360 aircraft into our Regional services

After the takeover of Shorts he established his own company, Pacific Dynamics, in 1979 and represented a number of overseas aerospace supply companies. Amongst these was the Oxley Developments Company, a world leader in the supply of Night Vision Goggle Lighting Systems for military platforms with whom he is still involved. In 2007 he sold Pacific Dynamics to Defcon Technologies.

John remains very involved in a number of Defence Projects involving Night Vision Systems and he also maintains a close working relationship with BAE Systems in South Australia.

Please join us for what will be a most interesting talk.

### **Committee Meeting**

A Committee meeting, commencing at 6.15pm will be held immediately prior to the July meeting.

## June Meeting

The Members' Night featured the showing of a selection of slides from the Fred Bowers' collection.

The historical nature of the slides, which included many from the late 1960s and early 1970s, was of great interest of all in attendance. Of particular note were air shows at Hoxton Park, Bankstown and Schofields with plenty of General Aviation types rarely seen these days, the Fokker F.VII/3m VH-USU *Southern Cross* whilst on exhibition in Hyde Park, as well as images of DC-6B, Viscount, DC-3, Catalina and Sandringham aircraft.

Allen Clarke gave a short eulogy about the late Jack Maillard's and his recent funeral.

Several members brought in a number of items of interest, which were later on display, along with a few book sales.

## Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown

Due to the failure of Bankstown Airport Limited's property development company, BAC Devco, plans to relocate the Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown have been put on hold.

For more than 3 years, the Australian Aviation Museum has been planning a move to Camden Airport. This move was precipitated by the acquisition of a large area of the South West corner of Bankstown Airport by a company planning to develop the area for Commercial use.

The new Museum was designed in the unique shape of an aircraft with many hours and thousands of dollars already spent on engineering plans.

As the Museum was located in the centre of this planned development, the company agreed to fund the building of a new Museum Complex at Camden Airport. This move was applauded by Camden Council, who some time ago asked the Museum to consider Camden as a base to encourage Tourism in the rapidly expanding Macarthur area.

Several weeks ago the Museum was stunned to be advised that the development company has been placed in Receivership, owing a considerable amount of money and effectively putting the Museum's future expansion plans on indefinite delay.

The Museum is now totally surrounded by earthworks which block access to the active runways. Had this work not taken place, the Museum would have been home to the Catalina owned by the Catalina Flying Memorial, while being converted to WWII "Black Cat" configuration.

Fortunately the Museum has several years of a lease with Bankstown Airport Limited left to run, so for the time being it will put all of its efforts into making the Museum the best it can on the current site. (Extracted from the Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown website.)

## Interesting Anniversaries

June 2010 included 2 important anniversaries of tragic Australian aircraft accidents.

The 10<sup>th</sup> June 2010 was the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the accident involving TAA F.27-100 VH-TFB *Abel Tasman*, which crashed into the sea on approach to Mackay Airport killing all 25 passengers and 4 crew. Nine of those passengers killed were schoolboys returning home for the Queen's Birthday long weekend.

The 26<sup>th</sup> June 2010 was the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the accident involving ANA DC-4 VH-ANA *Amana*, which crashed near York, Western Australia, shortly after departing Perth for Adelaide and Melbourne. The 5 crew and 24 passengers were all killed.

The 10<sup>th</sup> July 2010 will be the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the official start of the Battle of Britain. It officially ended on 31<sup>st</sup> October 1940 by which time some 1733 Luftwaffe and 915 Allied aircraft had been lost.

## Public Relations and Re-inventing History

In the June issue of *Loops & Landings*, John Scott raised the issue of Public Relations experts re-inventing history in the form of British Airways supposedly operating the Kangaroo Route between England and Australia for 75 years.

Keith White has now revealed another re-writing of history that he noted in the Autumn 2010 issue of the RAAF Association's *Wings* magazine. In an article by the State Secretary of the Association it reports that Lt Charles Kingsford-Smith and Burt (sic) Hinkler were members of the Australian Flying Corps. When Keith drew the errors to the attention of the article's author, the response was a reference to the RAAF Association's website!

Of course all our readers would know that Herbert (Bert) John Louis Hinkler was an air mechanic in the Royal Naval Air Service and later qualified as a pilot after the integration of the RFC and the RNAS into the Royal Air Force. The then Charles Kingsford Smith was in fact a member of the AIF, who with some 150 other Diggers joined the Royal Flying Corps. Neither Hinkler nor Kingsford Smith was a member of the Australian Flying Corps.

Qantas Public Relations rightly recorded the airline's involvement in the successful search for the teenage American sailor Abby Sutherland, who was recently in distress in the southern Indian Ocean. Whilst we don't doubt the flying qualities of the Airbus A330 aircraft concerned, we doubt this is one of them. The Qantas Corporate Relations Media Release stated: "After reaching the location, the aircraft spent around two hours hovering over the vessel to enable radio contact between the sailor and Australian Maritime Safety Authority spotters and also Federal Police, who were onboard the aircraft."

## Books

### **Into Oblivion, the Southern Cloud enigma, by Macarthur Job OAM**

On 21 March 1931, the Avro Ten VH-UMF *Southern Cloud* disappeared en route from Sydney to Melbourne and despite an extensive search at the time, no trace was found of the aircraft. Some 27 years later though, the wreckage was found in the Toolong Range in southern New South Wales by a Snowy Mountains Hydro Electric Scheme worker.

Mac Job's book contains a large selection of colour and black & white photographs and answers many of the questions arising out of the crash.

The book is available for \$29.95 plus \$5.00 p&p through Sierra Publishing PO Box 8137 Ferntree Gully, Victoria 3156, or online at [www.sierraaustralia.com](http://www.sierraaustralia.com).

### **The Terrace Sabre – A Vision Squandered, by Trevor Boughton**

This excellent 24 page A4 size book provides a fascinating chronicle on the life and times of CAC Avon Sabre A94-959.

Copies of the book are available for \$15 post paid from: Man and Aerial Machines  
5 Tea Tree Avenue, Aberglasslyn NSW 2320

### **Never a Dull Moment, by Phil Dulhunty OAM**

The second printing of Phil's fascinating autobiography is now on sale.

Books are available direct from Phil for \$50 plus \$15 P&P. Make cheques payable to Philip Dulhunty and send to Phil at Unit 2, 35-41 Waterloo Road, North Ryde NSW 2113.

## Book Sale

### **Mark's Book Barn**

Mark's Book Barn at 215 Homer Street, Earlwood NSW is offering a special 30% discount on aviation books and magazines to AHSA NSW members indefinitely; **but you must take a copy of this newsletter to the shop to receive Mark's generous discount.**

The shop is open Wednesday - Friday 1200-1700 and Saturday 1000-1500. Owner, Mark Burgess, can be contacted on 0417 065 089.

## AHSA meetings

### **Brisbane**

Meetings are held on the last Friday of each month in the "Meeting Room" at the Indooroopilly Library, Indooroopilly Shoppingtown, Station Rd, Indooroopilly. As the meeting is after library hours, entry is via a door from the car park. Visitors are welcome; contact Don Furlonger (07) 3371 5867.

Next meeting will be held on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2010.

## Melbourne

Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of the month, at the RAAF Association, 24 Camberwell Rd, Hawthorn East. Meetings start at 7.30pm. Contact Antony Grage, 0418 170 395.

Next meeting will be held on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2010.

## Calendar of Events

**3 July 2010** Temora Aviation Museum Showcase Day – Pacific Theatre. Temora NSW

**17 July 2010** Temora Aviation Museum Showcase Day – Jet Fighters. Temora NSW

**7 August 2010** Temora Aviation Museum Showcase Day- World War II. Temora NSW

**21 August 2010** Temora Aviation Museum Showcase Day – Vietnam. Temora NSW

**21 August 2010** Wings & Wheels Spectacular. Dalby Qld

**28-29 August 2010** Festival of Flight. Watts Bridge, near Toogoolawah, Qld

**11 September 2010** Wings over Warwick Air Show. Warwick, Qld

**11-12 September 2010** AAAA Chipmunk Rally. Goolwa SA

**17-19 September 2010** SAAA Annual Convention Cowra NSW

**18-19 September 2010** ADF Port Stephens Air Show. Williamstown NSW

**23-24 October 2010** AAAA Auster Rally and AGM. Kyabram Vic

**20 November 2010 – 27 February 2011** Ipswich Art Gallery – The F-111 Story. Ipswich Qld

## Special Events

**16-18 July 2010** – Centenary of the first flight of an Australian-built aeroplane, by John Duigan at Mia Mia, Vic in his Duigan Biplane. AHSA is an official Supporter of the Mia Mia Centenary Celebrations.

**17 July 2010** John Duigan Centenary featuring static displays, aerobatics and the Roulettes. Yarrowonga Aerodrome, Victoria

**July 25<sup>th</sup> 2010** - Museum Victoria is re-assembling the original Duigan biplane, and a viewing will take place on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> July at their Coburg store.

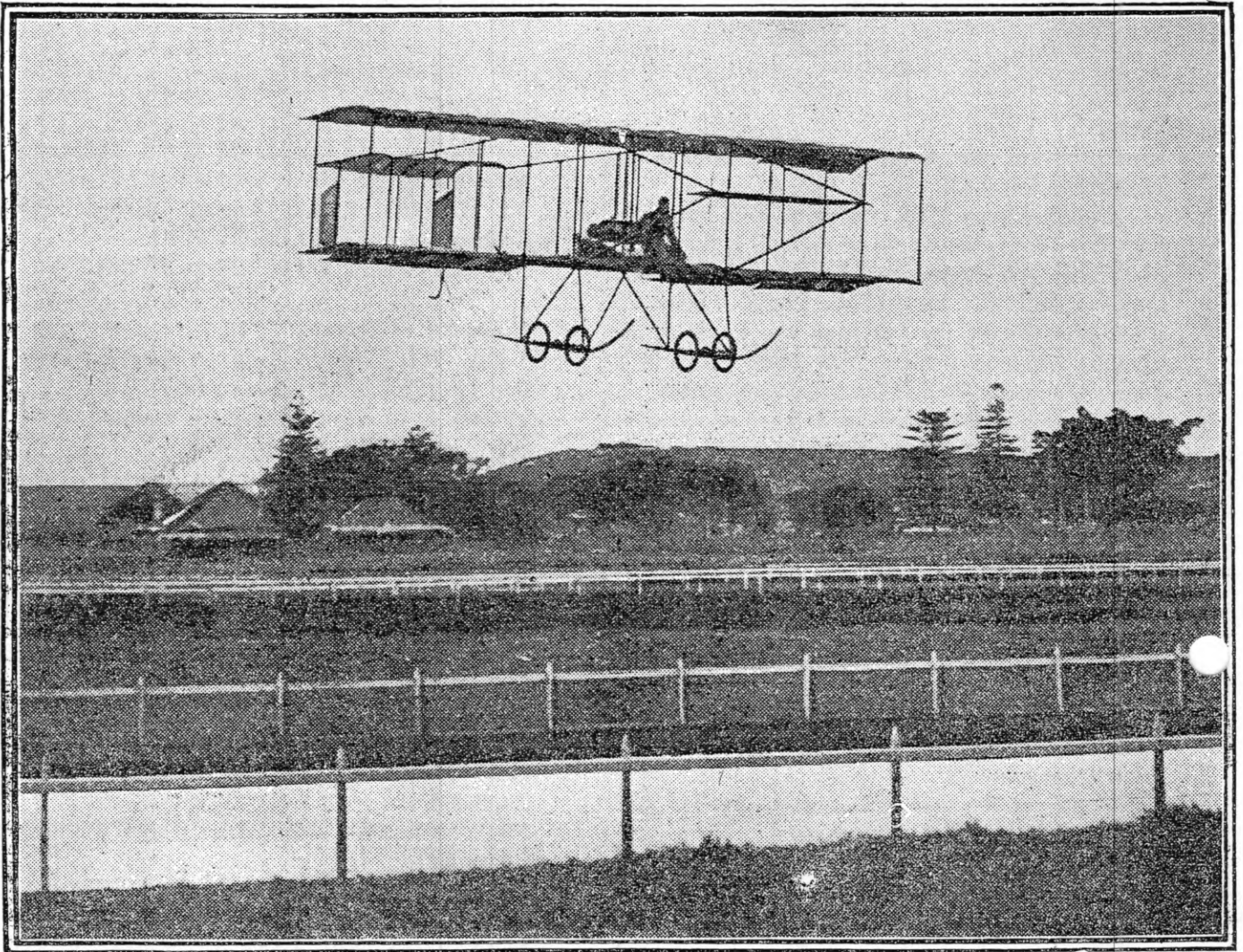
## Contributions and Contacts

News items, other contributions, or requests for information etc for inclusion in the newsletter can be sent to AHSA (NSW) at P.O. Box K346, Haymarket NSW 1238 or to Warwick Bigsworth, E-mail ([madsen2010@optusnet.com.au](mailto:madsen2010@optusnet.com.au)) or (02) 8824 7814.

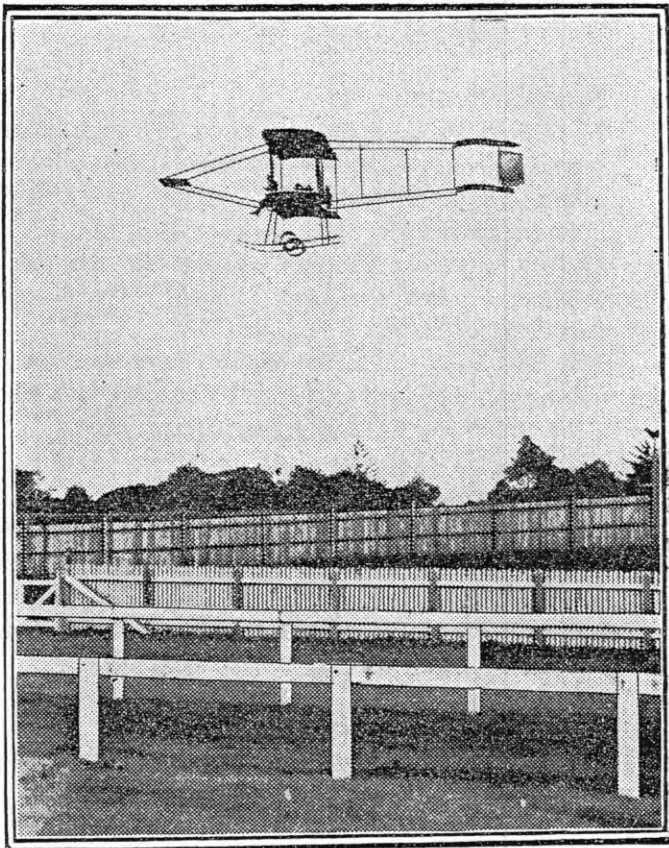
## Thanks

Thanks to Antony Grage, John Scott and Keith White for their contributions to this newsletter.

HAMMOND'S FLIGHT AT ASCOT YESTERDAY MORNING.



HAMMOND DESCENDING. THE BIPLANE IS SEEN FLYING ACROSS THE ARTIFICIAL LAKE IN FRONT OF THE GRANDSTAND.



FLYING OVER THE TREES OUTSIDE THE ASCOT RACECOURSE AT AN ELEVATION OF ABOUT 120 FEET EARLY YESTERDAY MORNING.



MRS. HAMMOND, THE FIRST LADY AVIATOR IN AUSTRALIA.

During the last few months Mrs. Hammond has made several flights in the air with her

## LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

### The First Aeroplane Flight Over Sydney's CBD.

On Tuesday morning, June 7, 1910, the postman delivered a large Russian leather envelope, addressed in gold capital letters, to Lawrence Hargrave Esq., 58 Wunulla Road, Woollahra Point, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia. Hargrave's family gathered around as he opened the envelope, the inside lining of which was of crushed-strawberry velvet. The contents consisted of a single sheet of thick foolscap on which was written in beautiful copperplate: "*H. R. H. Prince Ludwig of Bavaria, a protector of the Deutsches Museum, has been advised of the donation of your aeronautical collection. His Royal Highness expressed great pleasure at this most valuable augmentation of the collection of the museum for which he feels the warmest interest and has authorised me to communicate to you his appreciation. The undersigned grasps this opportunity of assuring you of his high esteem...Baron Lapsberg.*"

This ostentatious show of Royal Bavarian appreciation was in sharp contrast with what Hargrave believed was the apathetic rejection he had suffered from various institutions of the state of New South Wales. In particular Hargrave had assumed that the Sydney Technological Museum would be the grateful recipient of his cherished collection of models, which would then be permanently displayed and preserved. In fact he had donated nine of his monoplane models to the museum in 1891 at the time Joseph Maiden was its head. During 1905, when Hargrave offered the remaining seventy models of his collection to the museum, Richard Baker, an economic botanist, was the curator in charge. In rejecting Hargrave's offer, Baker claimed that he had no money in his budget to house the collection in glass showcases, which was a condition of the offer. In any case, he said that the models, previously donated by Hargrave, already occupied the largest, and most expensive, glass showcase in his museum. Baker eventually felt the discomfort of attacks by George Augustine Taylor in his various publications. In March, 1909, Taylor wrote: "What is Sydney doing? She permits the priceless models which opened the sublime mystery of the ages to rot in Hargrave's workshop at Woollahra Point, while the technological museum cannot find the necessary space to display them!" In a final prophetic warning Taylor wrote: "They may be eagerly snapped up by Great Britain, America, France, or Germany. Let Australia awake!"

At the same time that Hargrave received the elaborate letter of thanks from Prince Ludwig, the recently registered, *British & Colonial Aeroplane Company Ltd.*, was well advanced with the design and construction of its first aeroplane at Filton in the UK. In recognition of Hargrave's pioneering inventions, the new company named its first aeroplane – Boxkite. The irony could not have escaped Hargrave, because technical museums and learned societies, in both New South Wales and England, had shown such little concern for the preservation of his precious models. The Boxkite was flown for the first time at Larkhill on July 30, 1910. Within ten months, (on May 5, 1911), Bristol Boxkite No.10 became the first aeroplane to fly over Sydney's CBD.

Richard Baker saw an opportunity, in the first aeroplane flight over Sydney, to redeem some of his own reputation, as well as that of the Technological Museum. He made his attempt to do so in a letter to the editor of the *Daily Telegraph*, which was published on Wednesday, May 10, 1911. In his letter Baker admits that he had been a sceptic, with regard to Hargrave's vision of the future for powered flight, but then claims to have been converted. He also expresses a new appreciation of the Hargrave models displayed in his museum. While he doesn't mention his part in the careless loss of the bulk of Hargrave's models to the Deutsches Museum, he attempts to assuage his guilt by offering to assist with the acquisition of Bristol Boxkite No.10, so that it might become a permanent exhibit in the museum, (and perhaps become a substitute for the lost models). However, he failed to win the forgiveness of Hargrave or Taylor, or the preservation of Boxkite No.10, which failed to excite much interest amongst the more well-to-do-readers of the *Daily Telegraph*. Baker's letter follows:—

*Sir, – A number of Sydney's population witnessed the first flight of the aeroplane over the city,*

on Friday afternoon last, but I doubt if the sight of this latest triumph of man over the laws of nature caused similar thoughts to pass through their minds as it did through mine. I fortunately had a splendid view of the machine from the top windows of the Technological Museum, and what delighted me most was that this "man-bird" flew over this museum, and then, after he had passed out of sight and my meditation was over, I turned to mundane things, and the first that flashed through my mind was the contents of the largest showcase in this institution. I had in a measure been sceptical about the ultimate results of the aim of the models exhibited in that case, but after Friday's demonstration, who shall say that flying is a failure, or that Lawrence Hargrave toiled in vain? For here are exhibited in the case mentioned all the earlier efforts of that pioneer of aviation – from the simple kite to the compressed air machine, and then his box kite, which latter laid down a principle of aeronautics that is to-day embodied in almost all perfect flying machines.

The aeronaut who passed over the Technological Museum on Friday little thought, I make bold to say, that beneath him was the embryo that developed into the instrument that was carrying him through space. To me this particular occasion appeared as a happy coincidence, for here then was from abroad, a machine, the materialisation of an idea that emanated from the brain of an Australian, for the invention of Hargrave's cellular and box kites laid the foundation for this ultimate success. To me it was the living body of the models I had seen this inventor exhibit before our Royal Society.

It perhaps may not be known to some of your readers that there are exhibited a series of models showing the evolution of the flying machines, a collection that is unequalled in Australasia. But it requires rounding off. It wants the living article to complete the series, so that such a collection might inspire other Australians to work in this and other fields of original investigation. It seems therefore a pity that this, the first machine to navigate the air of Sydney and its harbour, cannot be retained, here for all time, and so I am wondering if any of your well-to-do-readers – the patrons of science – could be prevailed upon to purchase and present it to this Museum, and so have their names passed on for all time in this connection along with that of Lawrence Hargrave who has played no small part in this modern and wonderful means of locomotion. – Yours etc., Rich T. Baker, Technological Museum, Sydney. May 9.

At our next meeting, on July 7th, the guest speaker, John Burleigh, will give details of the Bristol sales mission that was in Australia during 1911, led by Sydney E. Smith, with pilot Joseph Hammond, pilot/mechanic Leslie McDonald and mechanic Frank Coles. The mission was equipped with two Boxkites, No.10 and No.11; Boxkite No.11 was not uncrated until it came into the possession of W. E. Hart. The flight over Sydney's CBD, during which Hammond circled the GPO with Frank Coles as passenger, was not the only Australian first for Boxkite No.10. Together, No.10, and Joe Hammond, achieved the first powered flight in Western Australia, (Jan 3, 1911); the first cross-country flight between two towns in Australia, from Altona Bay to Geelong, (Feb 18, 1911); the first passenger flight in Australia, his passenger was Frank Coles, (Feb 23, 1911); the first flight as a passenger by a woman in Australia, his passenger was his wife, (Feb 23, 1911); the first paying passenger flight in Australia, the passenger was Mr M.H. Baillieu, (Mar 2, 1911); and finally the first multiple passenger flight in Australia, the passengers were Frank Coles and Leslie McDonald, (Mar 26, 1911). If only Richard Baker had had the passion to pursue the acquisition of Boxkite No.10, there is no doubt that, today, the Powerhouse Museum might feel compensated for his neglect in losing the Hargrave models.

In December 1963, *Bristol Aircraft Ltd* became the *Filton Division of British Aircraft Corporation*, and the name Bristol disappeared from the list of great aircraft manufacturers. However, at the time of the 50th Anniversary of the company, a subsidiary, *The Bristol Aeroplane Company (Australia) Pty Ltd*, released a monograph titled, *Bristol Boxkites in Australia*. In it Bristol claims that the two Boxkites that came to Australia were Nos.10 & 12: "It had been understood that W. E. Hart, a dentist of Penrith NSW had agreed to buy No.12 but after the mission left Sydney, he repudiated the deal when asked for payment. He claimed that Sydney Smith had undertaken to provide flying instruction but was no longer able to do so. After a lengthy exchange of correspondence the Company let the matter drop, writing it off as a bad debt." That's not exactly what I heard! **John Scott.**



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## *Southern Skies*

The Newsletter of AHSA (NSW) Inc

August 2010 No.442

### **August Meeting**

The August meeting will be held at the Powerhouse Museum on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2010, commencing at 7.45pm. Enter from the Macarthur Street end and the meeting room is adjacent to the main foyer. Visitors are welcome and supper will be available after the meeting.

The guest speaker will be Tom Lockley, whose talk will be:

#### ***Bankstown Aerodrome and HMS Nabberley***

From January 29, 1945 to July 31, 1946, Bankstown aerodrome was an important Royal Navy base – HMS Nabberley - a Mobile Naval Operating Air Base (MONAB). It was also known as MONAB II and RNAS Bankstown. Until the base was officially leased to the Royal Navy, it had been RAAF Base Bankstown.

Tom will discuss the events leading up to, and following from this interesting period of occupation by the Royal Navy, covering the history of Bankstown aerodrome from 1940 to about 1960. His talk draws extensively on the research of Keith White and others.

Tom says that he has never worked in the aviation industry and his total experience as pilot is 25 terrifying seconds trying to keep a Piper Cherokee straight and level. But he has been reading about aircraft history for as long as he has been able to read, and since his retirement has spent a great deal of time in the library of the Australian Aviation Museum at Bankstown.

Please join us to hear about this important facet of local aviation history.

### **July Meeting**

The guest speaker was John Burleigh FRAeS, whose talk was *The Bristol Aeroplane Company - A Centenary*. The Bristol Aeroplane Company, also known as the British and Colonial Aeroplane Company, was formed 100 years ago and was one of the great aircraft companies that was responsible for founding the British Aircraft Industry.

The company was founded by Sir George White (sometimes known as Sir G. Stanley White), whose earlier efforts had brought electric trams to Bristol in 1895 and later buses to the city. White was inspired by aviation and met Wilbur Wright in Paris in 1909.

Initially, he bought the licence from the Zodiac Company for an aircraft which subsequently failed to leave the ground, but following dismantling and rebuilding the aircraft did manage to fly - just. He then constructed the Bristol Standard Bi-plane, later known as the Boxkite, which was based on a Henri Farman design.

The Boxkite had an early relationship in Australia, with two aircraft being imported, demonstrated by New Zealand pilot Joseph Hammond and one acquired by William Ewart Hart, who later became Australia's first licenced pilot. In 1912, Australia placed an order for 2 Boxkites, the first of which went to the Central Flying School at Point Cook.

John provided several images of Boxkites, followed by images and stories about Bristol Scouts. John recalled his time as an apprentice with Bristol, where a Bristol Scout that had been found in storage, and had been restored to flying condition. Due to some hesitation on his part, he missed a flight in the World War I vintage aircraft. He also spoke about the development of the Bristol Engine Division, which had come about following the acquisition of Cosmos Engineering. Cosmos had developed the Jupiter and Mercury engines, and had built Rolls Royce Hawk and Falcon engines, but following WWI ran into financial difficulties. The Air Ministry persuaded Bristol to buy the ailing Cosmos company.

John went on to describe many of the Bristol aircraft that have been manufactured over the years, including Bulldog, Fighter, Bombay, Blenheim, Beaufort and Beaufighter, and the reasons that led to the latter two aircraft being manufactured in Australia.

John commenced his apprenticeship at the Bristol Aeroplane Company's factory at Filton in 1946. He worked on aircraft that had been produced following the recommendations of the Brabazon Committee, including the Bristol 170 Freighter, and showed several interesting images of the aircraft in its early service. Of particular note, was an image on one of A.N.A.'s Bristol Freighters loading meat in the Air Beef Programme.

Amongst many other anecdotes, he recalled being in the flight test programme of the Brabazon itself and endured stalling trials which included a wing drop of 59°!

Following his time in the Flight Test Department, John became involved in the then top secret Bloodhound missile trials and as such visited Australia for tests at Woomera. He later assisted in the Bloodhound missile programme with the Swedish Air Force.

John's talk was accompanied by many rare images of a whole range of Bristol aircraft, engines and missiles, which were of great interest to the large audience.

### **Vale Dr David Warren AO: 1925 – 2010**

Defence and the Australian scientific community is mourning the death of Dr David Warren, inventor of the

Black Box flight data recorder, who passed away on 19 July at the age of 85.

Born in 1925 at a remote mission station in far north-east Australia, Dr Warren served as Principal Research Scientist at the Aeronautical Research Laboratories (ARL) in Melbourne, from 1952 - 1983.

Early in his career, Dr Warren was involved in accident investigations related to the mysterious crash of the world's first jet airliner, the Comet, in 1953.

He advocated the use of a cockpit voice recorder as a useful means of solving otherwise inexplicable aircraft accidents. He designed and constructed the world's first flight data recorder prototype at the ARL in 1956. This device became known as the 'black box'.

It took five years before the value and practicality of the flight data recorder concept was realised and a further five years until authorities mandated they be fitted to cockpits in Australian aircraft. The modern-day equivalent of Dr Warren's device, installed in passenger airlines around the world is a testament to his pioneering work. Dr Warren's flight data recorder has made an invaluable contribution to safety in world aviation.

In November 2008, Qantas announced that they had named an Airbus A380 aircraft after Dr Warren in honour of his contribution to aviation. Dr Warren was one of only two aviation pioneers who were there to see the unveiling of the names that would grace the new fleet. His name will join such aviation luminaries as Sir Charles Kingsford Smith and Nancy-Bird Walton in adorning one of twenty new planes.

Among many awards during his career, Dr Warren and his team also received the Lawrence Hargraves award in 2001 for their work on the Black Box flight recorder. He was appointed an Officer in the General Division of the Order of Australia in 2002 for service to the aviation industry.

Dr Warren simultaneously served as chairman of the Combustion Institute (Australian & New Zealand Section) for 25 years (1958 - 1983) and Scientific Energy Adviser to the Victorian Parliament (1981 - 1982).

*Courtesy Department of Defence Public Relations*

### Speakers Wanted

The October meeting will feature the popular short talks by three of our members. The talks can be related to your special research, collection of memorabilia or anything about aviation that you think might be of interest. Please contact John Scott or Warwick Bigsworth if you would like to be a speaker on this night.

### On the Internet

#### Pigs' Tales: Retirement of the F-111

[www.boeing.com/global/Australia/PigsTales/default.html](http://www.boeing.com/global/Australia/PigsTales/default.html)

This website is supported by the RAAF and features many aspects of the F-111 in Australian service. The F-111 is scheduled to be retired from Australian service in December 2010.

#### RAAF Mirage IIID/O

<http://imogiri.tripod.com/mirage/html>

This site features a wide selection of images of the Mirage in Australian service. The many images are

probably scanned from photographs or slides, however the quality and the range of aircraft included make most interesting viewing. Other types are also on the site, including RAAF Neptunes and Lincolns, and aircraft from the Indonesian Aviation Museum in Jogjakarta.

### AHSA Meetings

#### Melbourne

Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of the month, at the RAAF Association, 24 Camberwell Rd, Hawthorn East. Meetings start at 7.30pm. Contact Antony Grage, 0418 170 395.

**Wednesday 28th July** will be a Members' Night. The subject will be "The Viscount and the Electra". Members are invited to tell-and-show their recollections, anecdotes, trivia, photos and scrapbook extracts on these first turboprop airliners to enter service in Australia. The three Viscount crashes will be discussed by Mac Job and Alan Patching; Roger McDonald and Lance Fishman have rare photos of both types.

#### Brisbane

Meetings are held on the last Friday of each month in the "Meeting Room" at the Indooroopilly Library, Indooroopilly Shoppingtown, Indooroopilly. Entry is via a door from the car park. Visitors are welcome; contact Don Furlonger (07) 3371 5867.

**Friday 30th July:** Guest speaker will be Des Porter, who will give a talk on rebuilding and flying his de Havilland DH-84 Dragon, VH-UXG "Riama".

### Calendar of Events

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**21 August 2010** Temora Aviation Museum Showcase Day - Vietnam. Temora NSW

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### Thanks

Thanks to Peter Coates, Antony Grage and John Scott for their contributions to this newsletter.

## LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

### With Spirit and Dash. Part 1.

The meeting of AHSA NSW Branch members on September 2, 1971, celebrated the coming of age of the Australian Women Pilots' Association. On that night we were honoured to have as our guests, Meg Skelton and Margaret Kentley. Meg was awarded her "A" Licence, No 417, on December 7, 1929, and was an AWPAA Charter Member. Margaret owned Mooney M21, VH-ERX, in which she had been a competitor in the BP England - Australia Commemorative Air Race, Dec 1969 - Jan 1970, in which she was placed a creditable 19th. Meg and Margaret were keen aviation historians, and were custodians of the AWPAA historical film which was shown on the night. *"Australian Women Pilots' Association - Twenty One Years of History from 16 September 1950"*, by Marie Richardson, was also published to mark this milestone in the progress of AWPAA.

Margaret Kentley had been working on a history of women pilots in Australia, and later completed her manuscript titled, *"Sometimes the Pilot Wears a Skirt, 1920-1970"*. Her manuscript was acknowledged by Sheila Mann as the basis for the booklet she was commissioned to write for the Department of Aviation titled, *"The Girls were Up There Too, Australian Women in Aviation"*, Published as a bicentenary project in 1986. Whilst President of The Australian Institute of Navigation, Margaret Kentley also presented an address, *"Women of Courage, The History of Women in Aviation"*.

When Nancy Bird published her best selling autobiography, *"My God! It's a Woman"*, in 1990, it was apparent that there was considerable public interest in the achievements of Australian women in aviation. It was, therefore, with happy anticipation that I attended a gathering of mainly women pilots at the NSW State Library on March 17, 1991. The event was organised by the Library Council of NSW to witness the handing over of a cheque for \$10,000, to a professional author, to enable her to write the much needed history. In her acceptance speech, the recipient of the grant said that the writing of the history titled, *"Spirit and Dash, The Story of Australia's Women Pilots"*, had already begun. She said that she had not been discouraged by a male historian who quipped that her book would be a very thin one. As far as I know, *"Spirit and Dash"* has not yet been published. If it were, by chance, to see the light of day this year, far from being a very thin book, it would need an additional volume to cover the events of the last two decades alone. In the meantime, AWPAA Charter Member, Senja Robey, did us the great honour of presenting the *17th Arthur Butler Memorial Lecture* at our meeting on November 3, 1999. Her subject was, *"The Progress and Problems of Women in Australian Commercial and Military Aviation"*.

This year, on September 16, AWPAA will achieve its Diamond Jubilee – another cause for celebration. *The Centennial of Licensed Women Pilots* is also being celebrated around the world during 2010. Clare Walker, Chair of the Royal Aeronautical Society's committee for Women in Aviation and Aerospace, explains in her article in the April issue of *Aerospace Professional*: "A century ago, on 8 March 1910, Elise Deroche, who became better known by the grander title, Baronne Raymonde de Laroche, flew herself into the record books as the first woman in the world to achieve her aeroplane pilot's licence." Elise was granted Licence No 36 by the Aero Club of France. A web site has been set up to promote this centenary. A recent news item posted on the site will be of interest: "Rosemary Arnold, the first woman helicopter pilot in Australia has joined us! As part of a project to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of AWPAA, she has researched women pilots' history in Australia. That project is now part of the exhibit in Australia's first women pilots museum. With additional research, she authored a 200 page book full of the stories of Australia's pioneer women pilots. Her new book titled: *"First Females Above Australia – Australia's First 100 Years of Women Pilot Firsts"*, is in the process of being Published."

Women were airborne in Australia during the last decade of the nineteenth century, but as visitors from America giving exhibitions in balloons and parachutes. Back in 1971, when AWPAA had just turned twenty one, Ron Gibson, the then President of AHSA NSW Branch, completed his book:

*"Australia and Australians in Civil Aviation, Vol. 1, An Index of Events from 1823 to 1920"*, which was published by Qantas Airways Ltd. In Ron's thoroughly researched chronology, he makes reference to only four women. In summary these references are: **5 December 1909** - 29 glider flights were made, at North Narrabeen Beach, by George A. Taylor, Edward Hallstrom, Charles Schulz, Mrs Florence Taylor and Mrs Emma Schulz. Mrs Florence Taylor was the first woman to fly in Australia; **23 February 1911** - Flying from Altona in Victoria, Joseph Hammond was accompanied by his wife for a flight of 12 minutes duration to a height of 3000 feet, making Mrs Ethelwynd Hammond the first woman aeroplane passenger in Australia; **15 November 1919** - Miss Hilda McMaugh successfully passed her flying tests at the Central Aircraft Company's flying school at Northolt, England. She received Pilot's Certificate No 7818 from the Royal Aero Club and became the first Australian Woman to do so.

Clare Walker describes the attitude, expressed by a typical male pilot of 1910, in connection with the awarding of a licence to Elise Deroche: "Aviation is not a sport for women! I have never understood how the Aero Club allowed the principle of giving Pilot's licences to women. Women lack the calm and sang-froid which are the two most indispensable qualities required when facing danger." This kind of attitude prevailed in the all male world of aviation in Australia into the years following WWI. Nevertheless, pressure from women, eager to learn to fly, had been increasing until, at the start of 1927, the state sections of the Australian Aero Club were forced to accept female students. However, hostile male attitudes still persisted. Mrs Millicent Bryant became the first woman to be granted a pilot's licence in Australia, being issued with "A" licence No 71 on **23 March 1927**. Miss Phyllis Arnott gained her "A" Licence No 330, on **28 June 1929**, and her "B" Licence, No 334, on **28 February 1931**, thus becoming the first qualified commercial woman pilot in Australia, although she did not subsequently fly commercially.

Between the dates of issue of Phyllis Arnott's "A" and "B" licences, Amy Johnson completed her epic solo flight from England to Australia. Amy landed at Darwin on May 24, 1930. The influence on male attitudes to women pilots, brought about by Amy's achievement, was considerable. Meg Skelton and Phyllis Arnott were two of the six women pilots who provided an aerial escort for Amy, when she flew into Mascot, as a passenger in an Avro Ten from Brisbane, on June 4. The editor of *Flying*, the Journal of the Aero Club of New South Wales concluded his editorial of June 1, 1930: "A girl with less than a hundred hours' flying experience – essentially one of the new generation of Club-trained pilots that is springing up throughout the Empire – has left the whole world feebly gasping at her skill and stamina, and shattered one of man's few remaining illusions of superiority. But, however keenly mere men may feel this startling inroad into their preserves, there is surely not one pilot, man or woman, who will not hail Amy Johnson as one of the stoutest-hearted pilots that the great game of flying has produced."

A few month's later, after Phyllis Arnott had gained her "B" licence, in the same journal the editor wrote: "Miss Phyllis Arnott is to be warmly congratulated as being the first lady pilot in Australia to obtain her commercial licence. She is an excellent pilot and in addition to having done all that is needed for a "B" licence she has piloted club machines on tours to Gerringong and Melbourne, and is one of the comparatively few pilots in the Club who passed the Aerobatics course. Passengers to Melbourne by air may yet arrive at Mascot one day to find an attractive young lady in charge of one of A.N.A.'s large Fokkers. Good luck to Miss Arnott and may many more of the fair sex follow in her footsteps." That brave vision for Australian women pilots, expressed by the editor in 1931, would take some time to be realised.

On Friday, September 21, 1990, I had the pleasure of meeting Phyllis Arnott. She was a guest at a special reunion lunch at the RACNSW Clubhouse at Bankstown. Gaby Kennard who, the previous November, completed her solo flight around the world, was also a guest. At the time, the RACNSW was in need of some morale boosting motivation, and we got it in spades from our after lunch speaker, Nancy Bird Walton. On the occasion of its 88th birthday Qantas named the twenty A380 aircraft it had on order. Four of the A380s were named after women; Nancy-Bird Walton; Phyllis Arnott; Lores Bonney and Gaby Kennard. Next L & L – who was the remarkable Miss Hilda McMaugh?.....**J. Scott.**



# 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

September 2010 No.443

### September Meeting

The September meeting will be held at the Powerhouse Museum on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2010, commencing at 7.45pm. Enter from the Macarthur Street end and the meeting room is adjacent to the main foyer. Visitors are welcome and supper will be available after the meeting.

The guest speaker will be Senja Robey BEM, whose talk will be:

#### *Diamond Plus 1 – Senja's 61 years of flight 1949 – 2010*

Senja Robey's aviation career has tracked the years parallel to the growth of the Australian Women Pilots' Association, and at this meeting we will be recognising the achievements of AWPAs' women pilots.

On 29<sup>th</sup> August 1949, Senja Robey received an invitation from Mrs Charles Walton to join her at the Royal Aero Club's Clubhouse, Mascot, on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September at 10.30am. This year celebrates the Diamond Jubilee (60 years) of this meeting of women pilots.

In the words of Nancy Bird Walton, "*AWPA: They are a dedicated and decisive group of women of consequence.*"

Senja Robey learnt to fly in 1949 in Tiger Moths at The Royal Aero Club at Mascot, NSW. Cross country flying was done with map, compass, watch and basic skills with no DI, VSI and no Nav Aids. The air was cold in the open cockpit, the aerodrome bumpy with grass and dirt.

Senja's logbooks must list a virtual history of aircraft: Avro Cadet, DH Hornet Moth, DH Leopard Moth, Desoutter and DH Dragon. Then the more sophisticated aircraft were included: Chipmunks, Austers, Miles Gemini, Chrislea Super Ace, Wackett Trainer and even a Piper Cub on floats. As a passenger on a Mosquito test flight, Senja relates vividly a close inspection of Sydney's northern beaches when the view was up at the lighthouse, rather than down!

The scene changed when import restrictions were lifted and Cessnas, Pipers and Beechcraft improved comfort and flying aids. As an Instructor since 1962 and operator of a C172 on photography and charter work in the early 1970's, Senja's varied experiences recorded the aviation changes and growth in Sydney.

In 1982 Senja was invested with the prestigious Livery of the Guild of Air Pilots and Navigators (GAPAN) in recognition of her long career in aviation during which she taught hundreds of students to fly and ferried scores of aircraft to new owners.

She was awarded the BEM in 1976, and Paul Tissandier Diploma in 1974, for Services to Aviation and

she is also the recipient of a Master Air Pilot certificate from the Guild. Senja received the Nancy Bird Trophy in 1965 and 1975.

Senja is a Director of Robey Air Pty Ltd and Phoenix Aero Club at Camden and has held CFI and committee positions with government and aviation groups. For many years she has worked on various industry committees, including the Regional Airspace Users' Advisory Committee (RAPAC).

Please join us for another entertaining evening.

### Committee Meeting

A Committee meeting, commencing at 6.15pm, will be held immediately prior to the September meeting.

### August Meeting

The guest speaker at the August meeting was Tom Lockley, whose talk was on the history of Bankstown Aerodrome and in particular, *HMS Nabberley*.

Early in 1940, Bankstown airfield site was heavily timbered and quite undeveloped. Work began on the airfield before the land was resumed; even the Bankstown council grader was co-opted under emergency powers.

The airfield was taken over by the RAAF on 2 December 1940. During 1941 it was used as a staging base for 451 Squadron (which served in Africa and Europe) and 453 Squadron (which flew Brewster Buffalo aircraft in the forlorn Malayan campaign of 1941-2). There was also a WAAF training camp. But its main purpose was as home to 2 Aircraft Park, which received, assembled and distributed aircraft to other fields.

Before the Pacific war began, the aircraft were all trainers for the Empire Air Training Scheme, and on December 9 1941, the RAAF at home had only 187 combat aircraft, of which the most capable were Wirraways!

The period December 1941 to May 1942 saw amazing advances from the Japanese military forces, which had been seriously underestimated in pre-war assessments. The Royal Navy was forced to abandon the Pacific region, thereby incurring the wrath of General Macarthur and the leaders of the US Navy.

However, US aircraft arrived quickly. They had been destined for the Philippines but, because of the dire military situation, they were diverted to Australia and a US Army P-40 squadron was based at Bankstown within eleven weeks of the Pearl Harbour attack. P-40 aircraft equipped squadrons which were rushed to defend New Guinea and elsewhere. The accident rate was horrendous,

not surprising when it is remembered that, for example, 75 Squadron was formed on 6 March, equipped with P-40s and sent to New Guinea to fight fifteen days later.

A United States P-39 Airacobra squadron was also based at Bankstown in mid-1941. Lieutenant Leo Cantello was killed while courageously flying his Airacobra at night to try to attack a Japanese submarine shelling Sydney on the night of 8 June 1942.

A hospital and the large 'American Hangar' on Birch Street were built by the US during 1942, and Bankstown was a significant US base, the locals referring to their suburb as 'Yankstown'.

By the end of 1943, the danger to Australia had passed, and the Americans had largely moved on. Bankstown reverted to its roles of supplying aircraft and acting as temporary host to various units. De Havilland developed its factory on the eastern side of the airfield during this period.

During 1944, the European naval war was beginning to abate, and the British Government was eager to return to the Pacific. It is apparent that a strong motive was to reassert British influence in the region as well as to take part in the final subjugation of Japan. The US authorities agreed to this, but only on the basis that a fully self-sufficient force was provided.

The resultant naval fleet was the largest ever assembled by the Royal Navy – 278 major vessels ranging from battleships to floating docks, supported by over a hundred transport ships and many smaller vessels such as LCTs. It went to war as part of the US Navy, commanded by Admiral Nimitz.

Bankstown aerodrome was a major part of the support structure, being taken over by the Royal Navy as a Mobile Naval Air Base (MONAB 2) - *HMS Nabberley*. Nowra, Jervis Bay and Schofields airfields were also taken over as MONABs. Bankstown's major role was again the reception, assembly and distribution of aircraft, and many Australian workers were involved. Indeed the first aircraft, a Corsair fighter, was assembled at Bankstown on January 18, 1945, eleven days before the formal establishment of *HMS Nabberley*.

The British sailors were received in Australia with enthusiasm. Some 655 of them married local girls and many later migrated to Australia under the assisted immigration program. Australians were also impressed with the power of naval aviation, and two aircraft carriers were acquired for the post-war Fleet Air Arm. Many FAA aircraft were serviced at Bankstown.

It was thought that the war would last until mid-1946 and huge stockpiles of aircraft and equipment were made. However, the atomic bombs assisted an early end to the war, and the lend-lease aircraft stored at Bankstown were dumped at sea.

Over 160,000 personnel were demobilised from the RAAF 1945-1948. There was great enthusiasm for aircraft activities, and the facilities at Bankstown were rented cheaply to many entrepreneurs, including Sid Marshall, Doug Fawcett, John T Brown and V J Madsen, whose pilot was a young Jack Curtis.

The result was a period of exciting development and enterprise at Bankstown. In October 1966 *Aircraft* magazine listed 17 significant post-war aviation projects,

and over half of these had been based at Bankstown. Bankstown and its satellite at Hoxton Park hosted over 600,000 aircraft movements at the peak of this activity.

Tom's presentation was accompanied by a large number of images of RAAF, RN and US military aircraft, as well as the development of the aerodrome during and after the war years.

### **Not Long to go for the RAAF's F-111C**

As the end of the F-111 era draws to a close, the long-range strike aircraft were still flexing their muscles when they took part in their final Exercise Pitch Black, which was conducted in the Northern Territory during a three week period during July.

Four F-111s from No. 6 Squadron RAAF Amberley, Queensland, took part in the exercise which commenced on 16 July. After 37 years, the iconic F-111s are the longest current serving aircraft in the Royal Australian Air Force's fleet.

Wing Commander Micka Gray, Commanding Officer No. 6 Squadron, said the F-111 has been very successful for a very long time.

"The F-111 was an aircraft ahead of its time. It was one of the first twin-engine swing-wing aircraft and has enormous flexibility for range and endurance".

It is affectionately known as the "Pig" for its ability to hunt at night with its nose in the weeds, thanks to its terrain-following radar.

"No. 6 Squadron has a long and proud history," Wing Commander Gray said. "I am sure the end of 2010 will be an emotional time for many people when we say goodbye to the Pig."

The F-111 arrived at Amberley in 1973 and No. 6 Squadron has now flown the formidable strike jet for nearly four decades.

"The F-111 is just a magnificent aircraft. I first flew it 22 years ago as a young fella and I've flown a lot of hours in it. It touches you just to be part of the F-111 community whether you are flying it, maintaining it or supporting it".

The F-111 can strike day or night in any weather. Its Pave Tack targeting system can locate targets at night and in bad weather and provides laser designation for laser-guided weapons. The radar warning system detects incoming radar emissions and alerts the crew to potential surface or air attacks.

The F-111 remains a vital component of Australia's air combat capability in concert with the F/A-18 Classic and Super Hornets.

Pitch Black 10 has been the largest RAAF Field Training Exercise for 2010 and involved a combination of day and night flying from RAAF bases at Darwin and Tindal.

The exercise involved participants from the Australian Army and elements of the Singapore, New Zealand and Thailand air forces participating in the tasking, planning and execution of Offensive Counter Air and Offensive Air Support operations in a coalition environment. The F-111s returned to Darwin for Exercise Kakadu in August and will return again for Exercise Singaroo to be held in September. The venerable aircraft

will be duly farewelled from service at the end of the year.  
*Courtesy Defence Public Relations*

### **From the *Brisbane Times* on August 4, 2010**

Strict US military regulations will govern the future of about 10 F-111s when the Royal Australian Air Force retires the planes from service this year.

At least 10 of the planes will be available for sale by tender, with the RAAF keeping up to seven, and four others to be destroyed.

Of the fleet of 21 F-111s, the RAAF will retain four planes to go on display around the country, with up to three more being retained behind the scenes to preserve military heritage.

With four unsuitable for display and headed for the scrap heap, at least 10 will be up for grabs.

The F-111s have been based at RAAF Base Amberley for almost four decades, but residents west of Brisbane who have become accustomed to the planes overhead can take heart.

Two will remain at the base on public display and should be in place next year, said a defence spokesman. (*Reported to be A8-126 and A8-138, Ed*).

Another one will be on display at the RAAF Base Edinburgh in Adelaide (*reportedly A8-132, Ed*), while one will be on display at the RAAF Museum in Point Cook, Victoria, (*reportedly A8-125, Ed*).

The United States government imposes strict regulations on the demilitarisation of planes it sells to allies, meaning anyone who picks up a second-hand F-111 will also pick up the bill for work the RAAF will do to meet these demands.

A Defence spokesman wouldn't put an asking price on the planes, saying only that it would need to be enough to cover the RAAF's costs.

"The minimum price would be the amount required to recover the cost of demilitarisation to United States Government requirements, and the cost to make the aircraft safe for public display, involving the removal and treatment of hazardous materials," he said in a statement.

"This work would need to be undertaken or contracted by Defence. Other costs and arrangements, such as transport, insurance, etc, would be the responsibility of the recipient."

And he said prospective buyers hoping to take their new toys for a spin would be disappointed, with no flyable aircraft being made available for public sale.

"Aircraft that are fit for purpose will be offered for sale by tender for use as static displays," he said.

"This will be subject to the recipients meeting relevant laws relating to hazardous substances and International Traffic in Arms regulations.

"F-111 aircraft are subject to International Traffic in Arms Regulations, which place significant restrictions on how military equipment purchased from the United States can be re-used, transferred or even destroyed."

### **On the Internet**

#### **Salute to Veterans Oshkosh 2010**

<http://marcbrecy.perso.neuf.fr/Oshkosh.html>

This five minute YouTube video clip shows some of the spectacular sights at this year's Airventure 2010 at

Oshkosh. Included are DC-3s galore, DC-2, B-17, Ford Tri-Motor, jet and prop warbirds and current military aircraft such as the V-22 Osprey, F-16 and C-17.

### **Jean Batten – The Garbo of the Skies**

<http://www.nzonscreen.com/title/jean-batten---the-garbo-of-the-skies-1988>

Not an Australian, I admit, but this film about the famous New Zealand aviatrix is well worth a look. Jean Batten CBE was the Patron of the New Zealand Association of Women in Aviation until her death in 1982. This film clip is released through NZ on Screen.

### **Birth of the DC-8**

<http://www.dc8.org/video/birthvideo.php>

For those with affection for noise and smoke in civil aircraft, you're sure to enjoy this video. It features the concept, design and early flights of this first generation jet airliner. Some are still flying today, although most have been re-engined with quieter and more efficient turbo-fan engines.

### **Book Release**

#### ***Not a Poor Man's Field*, by Michael Waterhouse**

Just released is *Not a Poor Man's Field*, which explores Australia's colonial experience in New Guinea before World War II. This is a dramatic account of small miners, an extraordinarily rich gold discovery, visionaries and the construction of giant dredges, power stations and townships in a remote jungle area.

It is also the story of how risk-taking pilots, flying aeroplanes ranging from single engine plywood biplanes to large Junkers G31 freighters, opened up an otherwise impenetrable country. New Guinea led the world in commercial aviation throughout the 1930s; world records were often set and as often broken. In 1931, aircraft in New Guinea flew more freight than aircraft in any other country, one third more than the next largest, Germany, and more than France, Great Britain, the USA and Australia combined.

There are many photographs, statistics and historic papers from the likes of Bulolo Gold Dredging and Guinea Airways, of which the author's grandfather was a Director.

The book discusses early encounters between villagers and Europeans from both white and black perspectives, as well as the indentured labour system which drew New Guineans to the goldfields from all over the country. Other themes include the camaraderie of white settlers in an alien environment, race relations in a colonial society, the ineffectiveness of Australia's administration of New Guinea under a League of Nations mandate and the Japanese invasion and its consequences.

See the enclosed flyer and the website below for more information on the book and how to purchase.

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

### ***Into Oblivion - the Southern Cloud Enigma* by Macarthur Job, forward by John Ulm**

Mac Job's book details the events leading up to the disappearance of the Southern Cloud as well as the search, the suppressed evidence and the discovery of the aircraft some 27 years after it crashed. The riddle of this accident

still poses more questions than it answers. The book is available through Sierra Publishing for \$29.95 plus \$5.00 p&p at Box 8137, Ferntree Gully, Victoria 3156 or online at [www.sierraaustralia.com](http://www.sierraaustralia.com).

### Speaker Wanted

The October meeting will feature the popular short talks by three of our members. There is one place left to talk about your special research, collection of memorabilia or anything about aviation that you think might be of interest. Please contact John Scott or Warwick Bigsworth if you would like to be a speaker on this night.

### Australian Defence Force Air Show – RAAF Base Williamstown, 18-19 September 2010

Expect to see:

- Royal Australian Air Force F-111s, F/A-18A/B Hornets, the new F/A-18F Super Hornet, AP-3C Orions, C-130 Hercules, C-17 Globemaster III, Hawk 127, B737 Wedgetail and the Roulettes PC-9 aerobatic formation display team;
- Navy Seahawk and Sea King helicopters, plus the famous Dancing Squirrels display team and the new Agusta A109E;
- Historic "warbirds" from the Temora Aviation Museum and other organisations, including the Avon Sabre, Hudson, Mustang, Spitfire, Meteor, Boomerang, P40 Kittyhawk, L-39 Albatros and Tiger Moths, many of which will fly;
- Aircraft from the Historical Aircraft Restoration Society: Super Constellation, Neptune, Catalina and Dakota;
- The renowned Red Bull Air Race pilot, Matt Hall;
- A specially fitted out hangar with more than 70 commercial and military displays;
- Hands-on static displays, including a special exhibit from the Army's School of Infantry;
- Bands, military working dog handling displays, helicopter joy flights, rides and a range of hands-on activities.

For more information on the show, access arrangements and admission prices, see the website: [www.airforce.gov.au/AirShows](http://www.airforce.gov.au/AirShows)

### AHSA Meetings Melbourne

Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of the month, at the RAAF Association, 24 Camberwell Rd, Hawthorn East. Meetings start at 7.30pm. Contact Antony Grage, 0418 170 395.

**Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> August:** will continue the theme of Viscounts and Electras. Guest speaker will be Don Whalley, who was senior engineer for DCA investigating the Viscount crashes at Winton and Port Hedland. He will talk about the findings of the Port Hedland investigation, which led to significant improvements in airliner safety. Roger McDonald and Lance Fishman will also show slides of Australian Viscounts and Electras with local airlines and their later owners.

**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September:** Members' Aviation Recognition Competition – Barry Colledge, Dave

Anderson and last year's winner Geoff Hearn will amaze and confuse us with a selection of slides taken from unusual aspects of obscure aeroplanes and forgotten aerodromes, and will test the audience's knowledge of the historical significance of these glimpses of times past.

### Brisbane

Meetings are held on the last Friday of each month in the "Meeting Room" at the Indooroopilly Library, Indooroopilly Shoppingtown, Indooroopilly. Entry is via a door from the car park. Visitors are welcome; contact Don Furlonger (07) 3371 5867.

**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> August:** Guest speaker will be Mike O'Sullivan who hosted the visit to his Supermarine Aircraft Company at Moggill in June of this year. He has always been immersed in aviation. War surplus aircraft such as Spitfires, Mustangs and Avro Ansons were stored on the family property and in the course of time an Anson was made flyable.

**Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> September:** Because access to the Meeting Room of the Indooroopilly Library on the normal meeting date is not available, it is planned to visit the aviation library of member Dick Sanders at his home on the last Saturday of September. Members will be notified of the address details.

### Calendar of Events

**28-29 August 2010** Festival of Flight. Watts Bridge, near Toogoolawah, Qld

**4 September 2010** Showcase Day V-12s, Spitfire Mk VIII and P-40, Temora Aviation Museum. Temora NSW

**11 September 2010** Wings over Warwick Air Show. Warwick, Qld

**11-12 September 2010** AAAA Chipmunk Rally. Goolwa SA

**17-19 September 2010** SAAA Annual Convention. Cowra NSW

**18 September 2010** Showcase Day Trainers, DH-82A & Wirraway, Temora Aviation Museum. Temora NSW

**18-19 September 2010** ADF Port Stephens Air Show. Williamstown NSW

**2 October 2010** Showcase Day Bombers and Attack, T-28, A-37B, Hudson, Temora Aviation Museum. Temora NSW

**2-3 October 2010** Rotors, Wings and Wheels Fly-in. Museum of Australian Army Flying. Oakey Qld.

**23-24 October 2010** AAAA Auster Rally and AGM. Kyabram Vic

**20 November 2010 – 27 February 2011** Ipswich Art Gallery – The F-111 Story. Ipswich Qld

### Contributions and Contacts

News items, other contributions, or requests for information etc for inclusion in the newsletter can be sent to AHSA (NSW) at P.O. Box K346, Haymarket NSW 1238 or to Warwick Bigsworth, E-mail ([madsen2010@optusnet.com.au](mailto:madsen2010@optusnet.com.au)) or (02) 8824 7814.

### Thanks

Thanks to Peter Coates, Antony Grage, Tom Lockley, Gareth Morgan, Judy Rainsford and John Scott for their contributions to this newsletter.

## LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

### With Spirit and Dash - Part 2.

It started as a pleasant tour by automobile through the Scottish countryside, organised by Vera Hedges Butler. She had as her companion, twenty four year old the Hon. Charles Stewart Rolls. Her father Frank Hedges Butler made up a threesome. All went well until Vera's Renault 4.5 developed a faulty petrol feed, and the party was forced to abandon their adventure. The year was 1901 – ballooning was gaining a renaissance on the continent, and the British were also starting to take the sport seriously. Vera knew a professional balloon pilot, Stanley Spencer, and as compensation for the abandoned Scottish tour, she organised a flight for herself, her father and the Hon. Charles. Thus it was that, in the early morning of September 24, 1901, the group of four rose from the Crystal Palace in a balloon named, *City of York*, and, at a height of about 5000 ft, drifted towards the open spaces of Kent. It was while passing over Sidcup that Vera conceived the idea of an aero club to promote the interests of all ballooning enthusiasts. *The Aero Club of the United Kingdom* was born, while airborne. The birth was celebrated by the traditional consumption of Champagne.

Under Vera's influence it was agreed that membership of the club should be, "open equally to ladies and gentlemen subject to election". This did not stop a decision initially to refuse the issue of Aeronaut's Certificates to women members on the grounds that, "they were prone to lose their heads too easily". It took someone with the drive of the Hon. Mrs Assheton Harbord to smash down that barrier. She passed all tests necessary to gain Certificate No. 16, thus becoming the first qualified woman aeronaut in the United Kingdom. With the Royal prefix added, the club started issuing certificates to pilots of aeroplanes on March 8, 1910...the same day that *The Aero Club of France* issued Certificate No.36 to Elise Deroche. On that day *The Royal Aero Club* issued two certificates; No.1 to Mr J.T.C. Moore Brabazon and No.2 to Vera's motoring companion, the Hon. C.S. Rolls.

The first woman in the United Kingdom to be awarded an aeroplane pilot's certificate was Mrs. Hilda Beatrice Hewlett, who was forty seven years old at the time. Her Royal Aero Club Certificate No.122 was issued on August 29, 1911. She qualified at her own flying school, Hewlett and Blondeau, on a Farman biplane. Her instructor was M. Blondeau. Hilda was the wife of a prominent romantic novelist of the day, Maurice Henry Hewlett, and had substantial financial backing. She not only started a flying school at Brooklands, but set up an aeroplane factory there as well. Later in 1911, she became the first mother to teach her son to fly, although she shared his instruction with M. Blondeau. Sub-Lieut F.E.T. Hewlett R.N., who was twenty at the time, secured Certificate No. 156 on November 14, 1911. One week earlier, Mrs Cheridah de Beauvoir Stocks was the recipient of Pilot's Certificate No.153, making her the second qualified woman pilot in the United Kingdom.

Following the horrendous upheaval of the Great War, those associated with aviation in the United Kingdom began to take stock. The advances in aeronautics, driven by the war years, were beyond anything that had been foreseen. As the tenth anniversary of the issuing of the first Pilot's Certificate by the RAC approached, an idea developed to honour the pioneering contribution of the first hundred pilots to receive these certificates. A dinner was organised at the Connaught Rooms in London for the evening of July 12, 1920. It was appropriate that, since Vera Hedges Butler had launched the Aero Club in a balloon named, *City of York*, the Guest of Honour should be H.R.H. the Duke of York, who was himself a pilot. The gathering was chaired by Major General J.E.B. Seely, who had been an original proponent of the Royal Flying Corps and was now, in 1920, fighting to create the position of *Secretary of State for Air* in the Parliament. Sadly, the guest list contained the names of few women. Vera Hedges Butler was not on the list, although her father Frank was. The United Kingdom's first woman pilot, Mrs Hilda Hewlett, was invited and did attend, as did her business partner, and flying instructor, Monsieur G. Blondeau. Of the first hundred pilots who gained their certificates from the RAC, seventy five were still living at the time of the dinner, and forty six were able to attend. Among those forty six were the first and second Australians to qualify for Pilot's Certificates;

Group Captain A.M. Longmore (No.72) and Wing Commander H.R. Busteed (No.94). There was a poignant moment during the evening when a silent toast honoured the memory of the twenty five pilots who had not survived. The first of these was Vera Hedges Butler's companion, the Hon. C.S. Rolls. Another whose memory was honoured was Mr J.J. Hammond.

There is immense sadness surrounding the death of Joseph Hammond. His young life was already filled with adventure before he courted and wed Ethelwyn Wilkinson. They were married on November 19, 1909, at her Parish Church in Seaford, Sussex. Ethelwyn was his wife as he became absorbed with the new sport of flying. He qualified for a Pilot's Certificate in France, (Aero Club of France No.258 on October 4, 1910), before passing the Royal Aero Club tests, (RAC No.32 on November 22, 1910). When the Bristol sales mission was in Australia during 1911, Ethelwyn was heralded as our *First Aviatrix* for the courage she displayed during her flights as a passenger over Melbourne and Sydney: "Mrs Hammond waved her hand to the crowd as she flew over their heads, and they sent up a mighty cheer. At no time did she use her hands to hold on to the machine. She could be seen through the field-glasses to be carrying on a conversation with her husband". At the time of these flights Ethelwyn was just twenty one years old. However, by early 1914, Ethelwyn seems to have disappeared from the life of Joseph Hammond. As New Zealand's first official government pilot, Joseph was sacked on January 24, 1914, for the indiscretion of giving a joyride to Miss Esme McLelland. Esme was performing with the Royal Pantomime Company in Auckland at the time. Joseph Hammond was killed on September 22, 1918, when his Bristol Fighter crashed at Indianapolis, Indiana, USA. After serving with the RFC during WWI he was back with Bristol as a test pilot demonstrating the Bristol Fighter in America. His funeral was attended by thousands of citizens, with honour guards from both American and British soldiers and airmen. But no next of kin could be identified. With no living relative coming forward to claim it, his body was interred, through the generosity of the Fisher family, in their mausoleum at Crown Hill Cemetery, Indianapolis.

On August 4, 1914, Great Britain declared war on Germany. On that day the *Royal Aero Club* issued only one Pilot's Certificate. Sergeant A. R. May, a Royal Flying Corps trained pilot, received Certificate No.863. Of the 863 certificates, awarded by the RAC before WWI, only two were to women; Hilda Hewlett and Cheridah de Beauvoir Stocks. Throughout WWI, the RAC continued its practice of issuing certificates to military trained pilots from the RFC, RNAS, RAF and to many from the AFC. There were no women issued with certificates during this period. After the Armistice on November 11, 1918, civil flying was severely restricted. In the UK the *Air Navigation Regulations 1919 Act*, for the control of civil flying, came into effect on May 1, 1919. However, it was not until October that the first, post war, privately trained pilots began to be entered on the RAC Certificate list. Then in November, for the first time since November 1911 – a women was issued with a Pilot's Certificate. She was an Australian nursing sister who qualified, in under four weeks, for Certificate No. 7818 dated November 15, 1919. She thus became the third woman in the UK to receive a pilot's licence, and the first to cope with the demanding curriculum developed for the training of military pilots during WWI. Her Central Centaur 4 was not unlike an Avro Avian in appearance, much advanced on the technology of the Farman biplanes of Hilda Hewlett and Cheridah de Beauvoir Stocks.

It was little wonder that a film crew from British Pathe was dispatched to Northolt aerodrome, in northwest London, to record the activities of this female phenomenon. Cables were also dispatched to the major newspapers in the antipodes. The Hobart *Mercury* reported on November 19, 1919: "AUSTRALIAN LADY AVIATOR RECEIVES PILOT'S CERTIFICATE. London November 17. Miss McGough, an Australian Red Cross nurse, has passed the tests at the Northolt aerodrome in Middlesex, and has received a pilot's certificate from the Rolls-Royce Aero Club". Because of the incorrect spelling of her name, and the *Great Air Race* occupying space in the daily papers, the trail went cold for Australia's first woman pilot. In 1971, Ron Gibson was able, by further research, to correct the name to McMaugh and find the number and date of her RAC certificate. However, because he was aware of only the *Mercury* report, he assumed she lived in Tasmania. The original misspelling, and the later incorrect assumption about where she lived, were two, but not the only, reasons why Hilda Hope McMaugh was neglected by Australian aviation historians during her long life, which ended on March 30, 1981.....**John Scott.**



# 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

**October 2010 No.444**

### **October Meeting**

The October meeting will be held at the Powerhouse Museum on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2010, commencing at 7.45pm. Enter from the Macarthur Street end and the meeting room is adjacent to the main foyer. Visitors are welcome and supper will be available after the meeting.

The theme of the evening will be a Members' Night, with three of our members providing a short talk on one of their special items of interest.

Jack Powell has been an active member of the Society for many years, serving as a Committee member and valuable contributor to the Newsletter. He has a great passion for flying boats, holds a considerable aviation library, and for this meeting, he will speak on the charters arranged by AHSA to fly on the Ansett Flying Boat Services Sandringham to Lake Eucumbene during 1974.

Keith White, our current Honorary Treasurer, also has a substantial book collection and a keen interest in aviation history, particularly the life and times of W.E.Hart and B-24 Liberators. For this meeting, though, he will speak on the research that he has undertaken in respect to the Fairey Swordfish in Australia.

Anthony Coliero has been involved in aviation for most of his working life. He has been an aircraft maintenance engineer, a commercial pilot and flying instructor. He is currently an Airbus A330 Ground Instructor employed by QANTAS at the Flight Training Centre at the Jet Base at Mascot. As a Ground Instructor his tasks are to teach A330 Performance, Operating principles, Standard Operating Procedures, Flight Guidance Systems, fault rectification and Airbus CRM to new Second Officers, First Officers and Captains converting over to the fleet as well as to RAAF pilots converting onto the A330 MRTT (tanker). A course runs for one month and culminates in the candidates' first simulator ride. On successful completion, candidates go on to their Full Flight Simulator Phase of their training then line flying orientation.

Last month, in her talk about her aviation career, Senja Robey decried the decline in pilot skills. In part, technology has had a hand in this as much of the pilot's workload is taken up by automation. The Airbus family of aircraft rely heavily on automation, and while this has made the pilot's task easier, it has introduced a new set of problems. Airbus recognise this and have produced a training video titled Airbus Golden Rules which details how best to manage their automated flight deck so as not to become a passenger in your aircraft. Anthony will provide a brief introduction of the A330, followed by a short training video and then discussion on the Airbus 8 Golden

Rules. A small mock-up of the A330 'Man-Machine Interface' (cockpit panels) will also be displayed.

### **September Meeting**

Guest speaker was Senja Robey BEM, whose talk about her 61 years of flying and the formation of the Australian Women Pilots' Association was indeed a gem.

Senja admitted that she was bitten by the flying bug when still at school. She started work as a costing clerk at the de Havilland factory at Annandale on Parramatta Road and frequently went to the Mascot factory where DH-82A Tiger Moths were being constructed. She recalled a visit to Bankstown, not long before the demise of Flt Lt Hubert Boss-Walker, who was pilot of the Mosquito that crashed at Bankstown following the "faulty fitting in the wing box spar". The Mosquitoes were subsequently grounded until re-winged.

Whilst she was keen to learn to fly, such activity was restricted due to fuel rationing, but in 1949 she joined the Royal Aero Club of NSW and commenced her flying training – the beginning of a 61 year career, so far! Senja flew an early flight with fellow de Havilland employee Brian "Black Jack" Walker, but her flying instructor was one Keith Robey – later to become her husband.

Senja recalled some of her many flying experiences on tour with the Royal Aero Club of NSW – flying either Tiger Moths or Hornet Moths in outback NSW. Amongst those who participated in such flights were Sam Dodd and Leonard Teale. Sam was of course a colourful aviation identity for many years in NSW. His requirement for Senja to attain her Private Pilot Licence was a morning cross-country flight Bankstown - Bargo - Richmond – Bankstown for by the reciprocal track in the afternoon.

Perhaps the most exciting flying experience was in a Mosquito with "Black Jack" Walker along the coast from Broken Bay at very low altitude and enjoying a close encounter with a passing ship and of course, a single-engine barrel roll!

Following an invitation from Nancy Bird-Walton to meet with other female pilots at the Royal Aero Club of NSW at its Mascot clubhouse in August 1949, it was agreed that they would meet again the next year to form The Australian Women Pilots' Association. Senja is the only foundation member to still be flying, and during that time, she has held the positions of State Secretary, State Treasurer, State President and Federal President of AWPA. AWPA celebrated its Diamond Jubilee in September.

Senja became a flying instructor in 1962 and has trained hundreds of aspiring pilots since then, initially at

Illawarra Flying School, but for many years she has been the Chief Flying Instructor of the Phoenix Aero Club which was formerly at Hoxton Park, but now at Camden.

Many questions, particularly about current flying training practices followed Senja's entertaining talk.

## Obituaries

### Vale Tom Watson OAM

Tom Watson died peacefully in Sydney on September 3, 2010, in his ninety third year. Members will remember him as a pioneer of, indeed the father of, aerial agriculture in Australia. He was a contributor to *Southern Skies* in March, 2002, through his memoir, *Guinea Air Traders Moves Into the Migrant Trade*. We were privileged to have Tom as our 20th *Arthur Butler Memorial* speaker on November 6, 2002. On February 18, 1999, he became the inaugural recipient of the Lawrence Hargrave Award from The *Royal Aeronautical Society (Australian Division)*. In the Australia Day Honours list for 2003, Tom was awarded the *Medal of the Order of Australia* for service to the aerial agricultural industry. Despite this recognition, seemingly coming at the end of a long and distinguished career, Tom never considered himself to be retired. He continued to be engaged with the industry he helped pioneer by regular attendance at conferences and conventions at home and abroad, including in the USA this year.

Tom was born in Narrogin, Western Australia, on July 13, 1918. He attributed his hero worship of the flying aces of WW1, and then of Hinkler and Kingsford Smith, for his early love of aviation. In 1934 he joined *The Royal Aero Club of Western Australia* at Maylands, as a junior member, and had flying lessons with the redoubtable Captain C.W. Snook. However, when it came to his medical, on the way to applying for a pilot's licence, he failed the colour blind test. In a bitter reaction to this setback Tom joined the Naval Reserve. This ensured that, at the outbreak of WWII, he was immediately called up to serve in the RAN. However, he could not shake off his love of aviation and managed a transfer to the RAAF on October 9, 1940. He was posted as a Fitter 2E, first to Deniliquin, and then to Rathmines. Overseas service followed in the UK and Europe with RAAF Squadrons, 10, 461, (Sunderland), and finally 463, (Lancaster). Tom did not return to Australia until February 1946.

Back in Australia Tom found employment with *Qantas* for a period, and then accepted the position of Chief Engineer with *Guinea Air Traders* in PNG. By this time he had convinced the DCA that his colour blindness was of a mild form, and he proceeded to qualify for his pilot's licence. During 1949, he was introduced to a struggling company, *Air - Griculture Control*, which had taken over the Experimental Pest Control Division of *East West Airlines* in Tamworth. Following the failure of *Air - Griculture* Tom purchased its assets, and in 1952 *Aerial Agriculture Pty Ltd* was launched.

The rest is a very exciting history, too detailed to recount here. Suffice to say that *Aerial Agriculture Pty Ltd* eventually employed a staff of 150, and operated a fleet of 75 aircraft. It owned more DHC-2 Beaver aircraft than any other civil operator in the world. It was, therefore, a fitting tribute to Tom when a single DHC-2 Beaver circled

Camellia Chapel, at Macquarie Park Crematorium, at the time of his memorial service on September 10, 2010.

### Francis Mason: Norfolk aviation historian and Battle of Britain authority

One of the United Kingdom's foremost aviation historians, Francis Mason, has died after a long illness, four days before his 82nd birthday.

A former RAF officer with 25 Squadron at Horsham St Faith's, he was later a top designer for Hawker Aircraft and even named the "Harrier" before embarking on a career as an author and publisher. He even had the envelope on which the first harrier jump-jet was first drawn by a member of his team.

He wrote more than 80 books including the definitive account, *Battle over Britain*, which extended to 636 pages and took some 12 years to complete. It went on to sell more than 30,000 copies but was only published thanks to the support of the McWhirter twins, Norris and Ross, of Guinness Book of Records fame.

Educated at Winchester and Cheltenham, he graduated at the RAF College, Cranwell. He spent eight years with the RAF and also flew Vampires and Meteors from Coltishall and St Faith's, now Norwich International Airport. He served at radar stations including Neatishead and the eastern sector operation centre at Bawburgh until 1956, when he left the RAF.

By 1963, he had acquired a taste for writing with four books to his credit and had edited *Flying Review International*. In late 1964, with £3 capital, he started *Profile Publications*, which was an early specialist part-publisher of subjects including aircraft, cars, ships, tanks, ships, firearms and even coins.

His research was meticulous and to give just one example, it took him more than 1,000 hours of research to write the 500,000 words for *The Avro Lancaster*, published in 1989. And he wrote the book twice, one on a typewriter and then again on computer. A talented artist, he also did most of the sketches and paintings.

His other books, including a history of 25 Squadron, *Hawk's Rising*. He wrote a history of another wartime fighter, the *Typhoon*, which he had also flown. "The pilots really were brave men - those planes were big, smelly and dangerous," he told the EDP in 1988 when "The Hawker Typhoon and Tempest" was published.

*Courtesy edp24.co.uk website*

### Tocumwal Reunion

October 14, 2010 will mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the final lowering of the RAAF Ensign at Tocumwal Aerodrome. The Tocumwal Historic Aerodrome Museum has had a ¼ scale B-24 Liberator bomber constructed, which will be pole-mounted at the main entrance of the Tocumwal Golf Club, in commemoration of the 54 Liberators stationed there in WWII and as a tribute to the young men who risked their lives in them.

Whilst the event is a celebration of the B-24 Liberator and 7 OUT Tocumwal, it is also an acknowledgement of the many men and women who served in the other units, such as the longest serving 7AD, the 2RD, 5OTU, 7CRD, 13ARD, 14AFD, HQ, 5 Hospital, PTU and the Squadrons.

The program will feature the RAAF Band and detachment which will replicate the 1945 march-out from the base, by marching through the restored original entrance gates to the Liberator site for the raising of the Ensign and the dedication.

Visits to the Tocumwal Aerodrome Museum and other local museums have been arranged, and it is expected that the Roulettes aerobatic display team will also participate.

### **Powerhouse Discovery Centre Open Day**

Women in aviation and flight will be celebrated at The Powerhouse Discovery Centre in Castle Hill on its Open Day, which will be Saturday October 9, from 10:00am. The day's program will include a special lecture by Australia's first female pilot for a major airline, Captain Deborah Lawrie (Wardley).

The Powerhouse Discovery Centre's manager, Christopher Snelling, said visitors can join Captain Lawrie for an insightful lecture as she shares her story of becoming Australia's first female to break into the male-dominated flight decks of Ansett Airlines.

"She first obtained a private pilot licence in 1971, aged 18, and a commercial pilot licence in 1973", she said.

Following numerous rejected applications into the Ansett pilot training program, she took her case to the Victorian Equal Opportunity Board, who ruled Ansett's refusal to employ her was illegal and ordered Ansett to include her in its next pilot training program. The case is still used as a legal precedent.

Today, Captain Lawrie works as a flight safety investigator and flies the Airbus A320 with Jetstar.

Visitors on the Open Day will also be treated to a behind-the-scenes tour of the Sir Henry Barraclough Collection of early 20<sup>th</sup> century aero engines.

The collection includes a three-cylinder Anzani engine, a French le Rhone and Gnome, the rare American Liberty engine, a rare Whittle W2/700 turbojet, a Rolls Royce Merlin and an Australian designed Harkness Hornet.

There will also be a demonstration and display by transport artist, Steve Leadenham, make-and-do activities for young visitors and much more.

*Courtesy Hills Shire Times*

### **Caloundra Aviation Museum**

Well known Queensland aviation historian Ron Cuskelly has advised the following good news in regard to the Caloundra Aviation Museum;

The Queensland Premier, Anna Bligh, announced on 2 September that the proposed relocation of the Caloundra Aerodrome by Sunshine Coast Regional Council would not be approved by the Government.

The decision provides certainty for the 220 workers and 20 small businesses that are operating at the aerodrome and in particular the Caloundra Aviation Museum which attracts thousands of visitors every year. The Premier said "that shifting the facility (aerodrome) simply does not stack up for the community and it does not stack up economically. We have looked long and hard at the options on this issue. The studies we have undertaken reveal that the cost of relocating the aerodrome could

easily exceed \$100 million. Clearly, in the current tough economic times, that is a cost that Queensland taxpayers should not and cannot bear. These studies have also found that the cost to assist the 20 existing businesses, 13 leaseholders and the air museum to relocate could amount to a further \$15 million. Aerodrome businesses, the museum and the Sunshine Coast Regional Council have sought certainty on this matter. I hope for all of them that this decision provides that certainty. The decision also provides the certainty the council needs to finalise the Caloundra south structure plan."

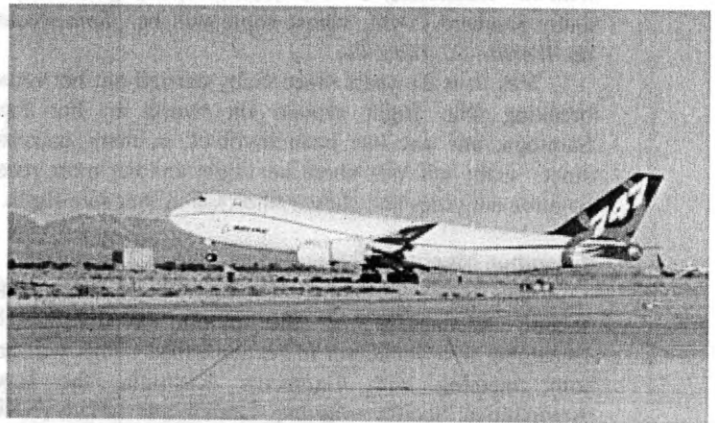
Ron notes that it is just a pity that it took ten years of prevarication to reach an obvious decision.

### **Heavy Lift! Boeing 747-8 Freighter**

Boeing engineers stretched the fuselage of the iconic 747 to create the new 747-8 Freighter. The bigger aircraft boasts a designed maximum takeoff weight (MTOW) of 975,000 pounds (442,253 kg), compared to the 875,000 pound (396,900 kg) MTOW of its predecessor, the 747-400 Freighter.

To prove the airplane is capable of taking off with such a heavy burden, the Boeing Test & Evaluation team loaded the test aircraft, RC521, with plenty of fuel and stacked dozens of steel plates, each weighing 3,000 pounds, into the cargo hold.

When it was all packed and loaded, the aircraft weighed about 1,005,000 pounds (455,860 kg).



Boeing 747-8 Freighter, rotates off the runway in Victorville, California

On 23 August this year, with the new GENx-2b engines each providing over 70,000lb of thrust, RC521 lifted off the ground and soared into the California sky. The first Boeing 747s had P&W engines each with about 46,000lb of thrust and MTOW 750,000lb (340,195kg).

After a four-hour flight, Boeing's Capt. Stemer and the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration's Capt. Bob Stoney landed RC521 safely back in California, completing the flight that began with the heaviest takeoff in Boeing's history.

*Courtesy The Boeing Company.*

### **Information Wanted**

Aviation historian, Ben Dannecker is currently preparing an article on the Percival P.50 Prince VH-RSX, which was used by the Royal Aero Club of NSW. Ben is

particularly seeking any high resolution photographs of the aircraft to add to his research for the article. In the first instance, Ben would be grateful for any images of the aircraft that may already be scanned, emailed to him at low resolution first and then he will sort out things from there. He is happy to pay up front for any costs associated with supplying any images.

On a parallel topic, Ben is also seeking any images/drawings etc of the four Lodestar topdressers converted at Bankstown for New Zealand by Fawcett Aviation after design work by Fairey Aviation.

If you can assist Ben on either of these projects, please contact him at berlintram@yahoo.com.au, or PO Box 1478, NOWRA NSW 2541.

### On the Internet

#### Fourays - The Australian Army Aviation Association

[www.fourays.org/home.htm](http://www.fourays.org/home.htm)

This very informative web-site contains some excellent articles, with subjects that include the Norden Bomb Site; the Nomad Story – an Opportunity Lost; History of Australian Army Aviation; and several aviation movie downloads.

### AHSA Meetings

#### Sydney

#### November Meeting

This year's Arthur Butler Memorial Lecture, to be held on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November, will be presented by Gaby Kennard OAM, whose topic will be "*Solo Around the World – 21 Years On.*"

Yes, it is 21 years since Gaby carried out her record breaking solo flight around the world in her Piper Saratoga; and she has been involved in many activities since. Gaby will talk about her flight and her more recent aviation activities and show a short CD of her solo flight.

#### December Meeting 8<sup>th</sup> December 2010

This year's December meeting will be held on the second Wednesday of the month, Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> December at a venue yet to be confirmed. This will be a joint meeting with Engineers Australia, the Royal Aeronautical Society – Sydney Branch and AHSA (NSW) Inc. The Eminent Speaker will be Mr John Hart-Smith, formerly a Senior Engineer from The Boeing Company.

Mr Hart-Smith went to the U.S.A. from his native Australia in 1968 to work for the Douglas Aircraft Company just as it merged to become McDonnell-Douglas. In 1997, Boeing acquired McDonnell-Douglas, and he was employed by Boeing.

During his many years in aerospace, Mr Hart-Smith established a worldwide reputation as an expert in aircraft structural joints and bonding. He acted as a consultant on projects for NASA, Lear Fan and the U.S. Air Force. He was an outspoken critic of The Boeing Company during the development of the then Boeing 7E7, later to be known as the 787, because of the company's reliance on outsourcing. His comments, which were made in 2003, became quite prophetic.

Full details, including confirmation of the meeting venue, will be provided in forthcoming newsletters.

### Melbourne

Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of the month, at the RAAF Association, 24 Camberwell Rd, Hawthorn East. Meetings start at 7.30pm. Contact Antony Grage, 0418 170 395.

**Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> October:** A talk entitled "In Defence of Bomber Command" will be given by Peter Isaacson AM DFC AFC DFM. Peter flew Lancasters with the Pathfinder Force, and with his crew brought Lancaster "Queenie VI" out for a war bond tour of Australia (flying under the Harbour Bridge on the way). After the war he started a publishing company which had great success with local newspapers and travel guides.

### Brisbane

Meetings are held on the last Friday of each month at the Royal Queensland Aero Club, Archerfield. Visitors are welcome; contact Don Furlonger (07) 3371 5867.

Next meeting, Friday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2010.

### Calendar of Events

**2 October 2010** Showcase Day - Bombers & Attack, T-28, A-37B, Hudson, Temora Aviation Museum. Temora NSW  
**2 October 2010** Old Bar Beach festival and Fly-in. Old Bar NSW

**2-3 October 2010** Kilcoy Wings of Life Charity Fly-in and Trade Show. Archer Falls Airfield Qld

**2-3 October 2010** Wings and Wheels Exotic Car Show. Moorabbin Vic

**2-3 October 2010** Rotors, Wings and Wheels Fly-in. Museum of Australian Army Flying. Oakey Qld.

**14-15 October 2010** B-24 Liberator Reunion. Tocumwal NSW

**16 October 2010** Showcase Day – Korea. Temora Aviation Museum, Temora NSW

**16-17 October 2010** Jamestown Flying Group Fly-in. Jamestown SA

**16-17 October 2010** Horsham Aero Club Fly-in. Horsham Vic

**23-24 October 2010** AAAA Auster Rally and AGM. Kyabram Vic

**6 November 2010** Showcase Day – Piston Fighters. Temora Aviation Museum, Temora NSW

**13 November 2010** Airways Museum Open Day. Essendon Airport Vic

**14 November 2010** NSW Sport Aircraft Club Open Day. Wedderburn NSW

**20 November 2010 – 27 February 2011** Ipswich Art Gallery – The F-111 Story. Ipswich Qld

### Contributions and Contacts

News items, other contributions, or requests for information etc for inclusion in the newsletter can be sent to AHSA (NSW) at P.O. Box K346, Haymarket NSW 1238 or to Warwick Bigsworth, E-mail ([madsen2010@optusnet.com.au](mailto:madsen2010@optusnet.com.au)) or (02) 8824 7814.

### Thanks

Thanks to Peter Coates, Ron Cuskelly, Antony Grage, Bill Holswich, Gareth Morgan, John Scott and Keith White for their contributions to this newsletter.

## LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

### With Spirit and Dash - Part 3.

Following the death of Nancy Bird Walton on January 13, 2009, Harper Collins published an updated edition of *My God! It's a Woman*. It is a most remarkable book – a literal Who's Who of everyone involved in the pioneering years of aviation in Australia. It is my fervent hope that in some future edition an index will be added. In that index you would find references to all of the women mentioned in this series of Loops & Landings, including; Florence Taylor; Baronne Raymonde de Laroche; Hilda Hewlett; Millicent Bryant; Phyllis Arnott etc. And yet there would be one notable omission – the name of Australia's first woman pilot – Hilda McMaugh. It is something of a mystery why Hilda herself never spoke about her achievement in later years. If anybody could have discovered Hilda's secret it was Nancy who, during her long and active life, met, befriended, communicated with and supported so many people and organisations involved with Australian aviation history, including our own society. And yet Hilda's story somehow eluded Nancy. Apart from their obsession, as young women, to enter the male dominated world of aviation, the two had much else in common. Hilda was born along the Macleay River just west of Kempsey – Nancy was born at Kew, just south of Kempsey. In later life both were dedicated to providing medical services to people in country and outback NSW.

Hilda McMaugh has not been forgotten by the people she cared for and lived amongst for most of her life. It's just that, even in her own community, she is not remembered for being the first Australian woman to be issued with a pilot's certificate. Her enduring memorial is the *McMaugh Gardens Hostel*, for aged care, at 39 King Street, Uralla. *McMaugh Gardens* will celebrate its 20th Anniversary on October 28 this year. When the hostel was officially opened by Senator Stephen Loosley on February 23, 1991, speeches were delivered applauding Hilda's dedication to the well being of the citizens of the Shire of Uralla, and for her generous bequest which made the building of the new hostel possible. In preparation for the official opening, it was hoped to provide substance to a faint rumour that Hilda McMaugh had once been a pilot. Hilda had not spoken about it during her time at Uralla. A grand niece, Norma Balzer, recalled that: "She went to Europe in the war, and learned to fly in Egypt. She got a licence when she came back, and I forget whether the story was that she was the first woman, or one of the first two women, to have a licence in Australia". To clear the matter up, before the opening of the new hostel, Dr Betty Batt of Uralla wrote to the Ministry of Defence in the UK, seeking information. After an extensive search of RAF records, the Director of Personnel could find no reference to Hilda. Not for the first time, the trail of Hilda's aeronautical achievement went cold.

Hilda was born on March 11, 1885, the second daughter of George and Clementina McMaugh. It is best to ignore the birth date shown on Hilda's Royal Aero Club certificate – March 11, 1891. At the time of her birth, the McMaugh family was living on *Pee Dee* station along the Macleay River, west of Kempsey. Hilda's lifelong love of horses was, no doubt, a result of her upbringing on a property where horses were her companions. Early in the twentieth century she answered the call of nursing as a vocation, and undertook training in Kempsey. By the beginning of WWI, she had moved to Armidale with her parents, where her father had established a business dealing in cattle. The McMaughs lived in a house, in Armidale, named *Torrington*.

In 1916, the White family mansion, *Booloominbah*, (now part of the University of New England campus on the outskirts of Armidale), was offered to the Red Cross as a convalescent home for wounded men returning from the Great War. Hilda served as a nurse at *Booloominbah* during 1916 until she decided to join the AIF, and serve overseas with the Australian Army Nursing Service. Her date of enlistment was August 26, 1916. She sailed from Sydney on board HMAT *Kanowna* on March 21, 1917, and disembarked at Suez on May 1. The hospital in which she served was the 14th Australian General Hospital at Abbassia on the outskirts of Cairo. The hospital had been converted from Egyptian Army Barracks, and operated from 1915 to 1919. As well as war injuries, there were a number of diseases associated with the region, particularly malaria, dysentery and pneumonia, which

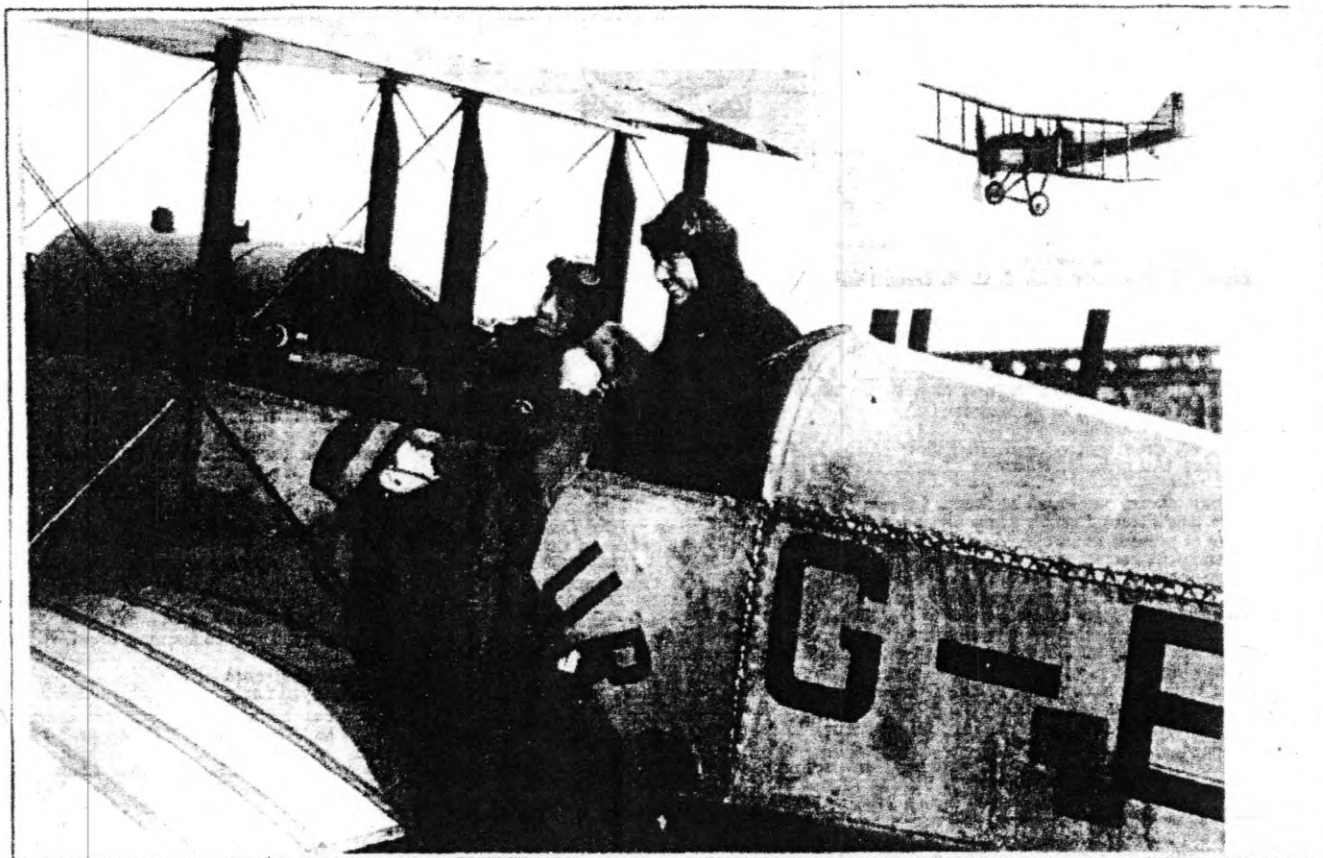
kept the hospital overworked throughout the Sinai and Palestine campaigns. Hilda's experience of the variety of medical cases at the 14th AGH, would be put to good use during her later life of service to the people of Uralla. In May, 1919, while still in Egypt, she was promoted to the rank of Sister.

Towards the end of May, 1919, Hilda was granted leave to travel to London for the purpose of attending a course at Mansions Motors in York Street, Westminster. She sailed from Port Said on board HMTS *Caledonia* on May 28, disembarking in London on June 7. What was Hilda's purpose? There is a confusing snippet from *The Queenslander*, January 24, 1920: "Miss McMaugh has been spoken of as a nursing sister in the AIF, but this is not the case. She utilised her service as a motor driver." And there is also the information from her grand niece that Hilda learned to fly in Egypt. It is possible that Hilda had her first experience of flying in Egypt, perhaps by way of an illicit joyride with a RFC or an AFC pilot. For whatever reason, a highly motivated young woman arrived in London, determined not only to learn to drive a motor vehicle, but also to fly an aeroplane. In an interview given immediately after she received her pilot's certificate she was able to compare the experiences of driving and flying: "Then I began to feel that it, (flying), was the easiest thing in the world, much easier and safer than motor driving – no crowds, no police up there".

If Hilda had arrived in London a few months earlier she would have found civil aviation still effectively grounded as a result of wartime regulations. The flying school and aerodrome which she chose for her training were not available for civilians until mid 1919. Northolt was founded as a RFC aerodrome in 1915, and became an important home defence base with night landing facilities to enable air defence against German Zeppelin and bomber raids. By May 1919 it was a RAF base giving refresher courses in flying to military pilots. In June 1919 it was licensed as a joint RAF and civil aerodrome. This enabled the Central Aircraft Company to operate a flying school and charter flying business at Northolt, and to accept Hilda as a student pilot for training in their brand new Central Centaur IV aircraft. Her instructor was an ex RFC officer – Captain Sykes OBE. The training environment in which Hilda found herself was more military than civilian, with experienced RAF pilots operating from the same aerodrome setting a standard against which she would inevitably be compared. She also had the challenge of the uncertain weather of late autumn in England, and was facing a time limit by which to gain her pilot's certificate – November 22 – the sailing date of HMAT *Aeneas*, which was to bring her home to Australia.

The Central Aircraft Company Ltd was typical of organisations which had been devoted to the war effort, but now faced an uncertain future due to the different and diminished demands of peace time flying. Formed in 1916, as a subsidiary of the woodworking and joinery firm of R. Cattle Ltd, Central Aircraft Co was a subcontractor for the manufacture of aircraft and components at its Kilburn factory during the war. In early 1919, the company decided to embark on the production of civil aircraft of original design. The Central Centaur IV, designed by A. A. Fletcher, was the first of the company's new aircraft to fly. It was a three-seat two bay biplane of conventional wooden construction with fabric covering. Following the prototype, the next seven production aircraft were powered by Anzani 100 hp radial engines. Unfortunately, post war demand for private ownership proved to be poor. To find use for their aircraft, Central set up the flying school at Northolt aerodrome. This was the situation when Hilda commenced her training in early October, 1919.

Hilda qualified for her pilot's certificate after only four weeks training at Northolt. A remarkable achievement for any pilot at the time. According to her instructor, Captain Sykes, "she has proved to be an apt pupil, looping the loop and performing other stunts without a tremor." When interviewed at Northolt, Hilda said: "The first two days I thought I was no good at all. Then I began to feel that it was the easiest thing in the world, much easier and safer than motor-driving – no crowds, no police, up there. The weather has been against me, but I have managed to get enough flying practice to finish before I sail. Now I feel like a bird". *The Queenslander*, January 24, 1920, provides more evidence of Hilda's motivation: "She merely made up her mind to be the first Australian woman pilot, and she returned to the Commonwealth recently, having triumphantly carried out her purpose". And even more intriguingly, from the *Brisbane Courier*: "She left for Australia with the intention of taking part in commercial aviation". During her long ocean voyage home, Hilda contemplated her future...**J. Scott.**



Nurse McMaugh, at the Central Aircraft Co.'s aerodrome at Northolt, where she is taking her ticket, goes up with Mr. Sykes, O.B.E., for a spin. An Australian pupil at the school wishing her a good trip. Inset: A snap of the above pair in the air, taken from a sister Central Aircraft 'bus.

To view the British Pathe video newsreel film of Hilda at Northolt Aerodrome

go to:-

<http://www.britishpathe.com/record.php?id=29263>

Competitor's Certificate No. 7818

MCMAUGH, Miss Hilda Hope

"Torrington", Armidale, New South Wales,  
Australia.

Born 11th Mar. 1891 at Kempsey, Macleay River,  
Nationality British N.S.W., Australia

Rank, Regiment, Profession Nursing Sister, A.A.M.S.

Certificate taken on C.A.C. Centam 4

At Central Aircraft Co., Northolt, Ruislip

Date 15th November 1919.



Miss Hilda Hope McMaugh  
7818  
15/11/1919.



# 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

**December 2010 No.446**

### **December Meeting**

The December meeting will be held at the Powerhouse Museum on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2010, at the earlier time of 6.30pm for a 7.00pm start. The meeting will be a joint meeting hosted by Engineers Australia and the Royal Aeronautical Society, Australian Division, Sydney Branch and will be held in the Coles Theatre at the Museum. Enter from the Macarthur Street end and the theatre is just past our normal meeting room.

A light supper will be provided prior to the meeting.

The meeting is also one of The Eminent Speaker Series for Engineers Australia, and the Guest Speaker will be Dr. John Hart-Smith.

This talk will look at some of the most important lessons about aircraft structures that John has observed during a long career in the aircraft industry. The emphasis is on good ideas that have yet to be fully exploited. There are also warnings about bad ideas that should not be repeated. Past practices are shown to represent a very fertile source of good ideas that are still applicable today, even though some of them have fallen into disuse.

It will be shown that the development of significantly better aircraft is still possible through progressive refinements, without the need for revolutionary changes that introduce a whole new set of challenges to overcome. The emphasis is on technical issues, but it will be explained how many of them never would have become an issue if appropriate business practices had been followed.

Born and educated in Australia, Dr. Hart-Smith worked in the United States' aerospace industry with Douglas Aircraft and ultimately with Boeing. His work on adhesively bonded joints and bolted composite joints is renowned world-wide. He has contributed much to creating scientifically sound analyses of the strength of composite laminates, being co-inventor of the SIFT failure criteria for fibre-polymer composites. In addition, he has become an expert in the design of fatigue-free aircraft fuselage structures, by designing better joints.

He has recently completed the re-analysis of the classical buckling analyses, confirming that the experimentalists were right after all, and that the predicted buckling stresses were too high, by factors ranging from 2 to 3 for the various cases. These new analyses represent the culmination of work started 45 years ago at Monash University.

### **November Meeting**

The 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Arthur Butler Memorial Lecture was presented by Gaby Kennard OAM, with her theme being *Solo Around the World – 21 Years On*.

At the age of 44 she achieved her goal of completing Amelia Earhart's 1937 round-the-world flight attempt flying her eight year old single engine Piper Saratoga VH-GKF, which she had named "Gerty". The circumnavigation of the world took ninety nine days, fifty seven days longer than planned. Gaby departed Bankstown on the 3rd of August, 1989.

Gaby introduced her talk by acknowledging Arthur Butler and then showed a ten minute DVD, which was a compound of original footage and re-enactments that covered the highlights of her flight. Following the DVD she gave a more detailed narrative of the flight touching upon the raising of sponsorship funds - a difficult task as she had no credibility that she could achieve her goal. She found that as she proceeded, more sponsors provided funds. Gaby also spoke of the modifications carried out on the Saratoga including the installation of the auxiliary fuel system that filled the aircraft's cabin. Despite the hard work of the engineers the fuel system developed a fault causing the engine to starve of fuel when Gaby endeavoured to change from the main to the reserve tanks. The aircraft lost thousands of feet of altitude before she could re-start the engine. The starvation occurred several times before Gaby found a fuel selection that worked. As well, a split pin had been omitted from the retaining nut of one of the main wheels. Fortunately this was rectified before it caused a serious incident.

Another major problem for Gaby was the failure of her Omega navigation system out of Sydney. Although rectification was carried out in Cairns the Omega failed again and Gaby relied on dead reckoning for her flight across the Pacific. Having reached Lae in New Guinea and after a brief stay, Gaby found that her life jacket and EPIRB had been stolen. She managed to acquire replacements but of a lesser quality, prior to departure. After Lae her flight took her to Majuro in the Marshall Island group and her next port was to be Honolulu. However, severe head winds depleted the fuel supply and she was forced to land at a United States military base on Johnson Island. Her initial welcome wasn't cordial but the suspicious officials soon warmed to her, offering her ice cream and allowing her to purchase fuel to get to Honolulu. From Honolulu she flew to Oakland and this leg showed the problems with the complex fuel system.

While in America she had the fuel system and the Omega system repaired before continuing on to Brazil. The flight from Natal to Dakar in Africa, across the Atlantic, proved harrowing because of electrical storms which shut down her Omega and the aircraft's electrical

systems. Having survived this scare the remaining flight to Australia was relatively uneventful although she had to avoid certain areas that were considered trouble spots on her route such as Libya.

Gaby returned to Bankstown to a heroine's welcome; her thirty ninth and final touchdown of her historic flight.

### **QANTAS A380 Incident**

Here are just some of the problems Captain Richard de Crespigny had aboard Airbus A380 VH-OQA *Nancy-Bird Walton* on flight QF32 following the No. 2 engine explosion just after departure from Singapore on 4<sup>th</sup> November:

- massive fuel leak in the left mid fuel tank (the aircraft has 11 tanks, including in the horizontal stabiliser on the tail);
- massive fuel leak in the left inner fuel tank;
- a hole on the flap canoe/fairing that you could fit your upper body through;
- the aft gallery in the fuel system failed, preventing many fuel transfer functions;
- fuel jettison had problems due to the previous problem above;
- large hole in the upper wing surface;
- partial failure of leading edge slats;
- partial failure of speed brakes/ground spoilers;
- shrapnel damage to the flaps;
- total loss of all hydraulic fluid in the Green System (the aircraft has 2 x 5,000 PSI systems, Green and Yellow)
- manual extension of landing gear;
- loss of 1 generator and associated systems;
- loss of brake anti-skid system;
- unable to shutdown adjacent No.1 engine after landing due to major damage to systems;
- unable to shutdown No.1 engine using the fire switch!
- Therefore, no fire protection was available for that engine after the explosion in No.2 engine
- Electronic Centralised Aircraft Messages (ECAM) warnings about major fuel imbalance because of fuel leaks on left side that were unable to be fixed with cross-feeding;
- fuel trapped in Trim Tank (in the tail), hence, possible major C of G out-of-balance condition for landing.

Captain de Crespigny was in the left seat, and the First Officer in the right; the Second Officer was in the 2nd observer seat (right rear, also with his own Radio Management Panel, so he probably did most of the coordination with the ground); a senior Check and Training captain was in the 1st observer seat (middle) and he was training another Captain (who was in the 3rd observer seat [left rear]) to be one also. All 5 crew were "flat out", especially the First Officer who would have been

processing complicated ECAM information and procedures that were seemingly never-ending!

A job well done by all!

It is understood that due to the damage caused to the wing of VH-OQA, a new port wing will need to be provided. Qantas resumed A380 services between Australia and London on 27<sup>th</sup> November.

### **Tocumwal Reunion**

#### **By Keith White**

When my wife Pat first read the details of the Tocumwal reunion, her immediate reaction was: "Are we going?" There was no need for further discussion.

On October 12<sup>th</sup>, we left Sydney by car and took two days to drive to Tocumwal via Wagga Wagga, where we stayed overnight, and Jerilderie. The weather was terrible, particularly after leaving Wagga Wagga when, for long periods of time, the windscreen wipers were working at maximum speed. This weather did not auger well for the dedication on October 14<sup>th</sup>. However, on the day, the weather was overcast, but thankfully, no rain.

We drove out to the Tocumwal Golf Club, the grounds of which were the site of the R.A.A.F. Headquarters and Barracks. There we saw a model of a Consolidated Liberator bomber with a wingspan of 28 feet (8.53m), mounted on a pole some 20 feet (6.2m) above the ground. The model was constructed by Geoff Reichelt, a model builder from Brisbane.

It makes a spectacular entrance to the Golf Club, particularly in its "flying" attitude of banking to port. It is identified as the R.A.A.F. aircraft A72-176, which is the number carried by the Liberator being restored at Werribee, Victoria by the Liberator Restoration Fund.

For the dedication there was plenty of open space for the assembly of some 300 people including:

- A RAAF marching detachment;
- A RAAF ceremonial band (both from RAAF Base Wagga Wagga);
- Two groups of children from local schools;
- Local citizens; and
- Visitors, like Pat and me, from far and wide.

Unfortunately, the weather conditions prevented an anticipated fly-over by PC-9s from RAAF Base Sale.

Mr Bob Brown, president of the Tocumwal Historic Aerodrome Museum, was the Master of Ceremonies. The Guest Speaker was Air Marshall S.D. Evans (Retd), whose speech reminded the audience of the seriousness of those dark days of the 1940s and the major concerns of possible invasion of our country by Japanese Forces in 1942. The dedication ceremony was quite a moving experience.

We had lunch at the Clubhouse, following which we were entertained by the RAAF Band playing popular tunes from the 1940s. An official dinner was held that evening at the Clubhouse. All in all, the spirit of the day made for a memorable occasion.

The next day was spoilt by rain, causing the planned events, including an anticipated display by the RAAF Roulettes from RAAF Base Sale, to be cancelled.

Last, but not least, the dedicated people of the Tocumwal Historic Aerodrome Museum are to be sincerely congratulated for their commitment to the long task of planning and organizing this extraordinary reunion.

### **And a bit more Tocumwal Information**

On 14th October, 1960 Tocumwal base closed. The Air Force flag was lowered for the last time at the base as it was formally closed by Group Captain George Pither, the Commanding Officer of No 1 Aircraft Depot at Laverton.

The 12 men normally stationed there were transferred immediately after the ceremony. About 50 aircraft of various types remained, awaiting disposal by the Department of Supply.

When built in 1942, the base (then known as McIntyre Field) was the largest in Australia, covering 20 square kilometres and with 100 kilometres of roads.

Originally intended to take heavy bombers of the USAAF, the strategic need for the base had already passed by the time it was completed and it became a Repair and Supply Depot instead.

Placed on a care and maintenance basis in 1946, it had operated as Detachment B of No 1 Aircraft Depot since 1950.

### **DC-6B Flights Cancelled**

It is sad news for those looking forward to seeing or flying on the DC-6B in Australia next year. The flights were being promoted by Yesteryear Aviation on behalf of Namibia Commercial Aviation which owns the world's last passenger configured DC-6B V5-NCG. The owner of the company, Mr Chris Schutte, passed away on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2010, hence the tour has been cancelled.

### **F-111 Last Flight**

Paul Daw, well-known aviation enthusiast from Adelaide, was fortunate enough to attend RAAF Base Amberley on 23<sup>rd</sup> November for a Media Day and Briefing which detailed the final week of operations by the RAAF F-111C aircraft. Paul has kindly provided this report:

Four versions of the F-111C were specially parked outside the Headquarters building during the briefing: A8-109, A8-125, A8-134 and A8-113 (sporting special tail logo F-111 *Australia 1973-2010* as seen at RAAF Base Williamstown in September).

Aircraft A8-126 (special tail logo) A8-138 and A8-148 conducted demonstration flying for media guests. Aircraft A8-135 was parked at the operational apron and A8-129 was in maintenance in 6 Squadron's hangar.

Thirteen F-111Gs, (out of the 15 which had been acquired from the USAF and delivered in 1994/95), were parked with 2 F-111Cs in a compound near the museum.

All 11 F-18 Super Hornets delivered so far (A44-202 to A44-212) were present, with at least 5 or 6 flying during the day.

The RAAF went out of its way to answer questions, provide photo opportunities and generally encourage all present to get the max out of the day. Like the others, I was extremely grateful for this opportunity.

F-111 final events occur on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> and Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> December. Those days have been set aside for RAAF staff and those of contractors to farewell the aircraft as it performs its last operational sorties and a few local flights.

From information since received there will be flypasts of Ipswich, Brisbane and a small number of nearby country towns. On Monday 29<sup>th</sup> November flights over central and southern Queensland, northern NSW, Richmond and

Sydney were planned. And the grand finale will be on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> December when there will be a flight over Brisbane, Ipswich and the Sunshine Coast and another over the Gold Coast and coastal areas to Evans Head NSW. The latter will be the last flight and therefore retirement of one of the world's most successful strategic long range strike fighters.

### **Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown**

The Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown has announced that its planned move to Camden Aerodrome is back on! Following a positive meeting with the Liquidators of the development company originally supplying the funds for its move to Camden Aerodrome, the Museum has announced that the Liquidators have agreed to renew the Agreement and supply the necessary funds to begin construction of the new and much larger Museum Complex.

More details will be announced shortly, and further information will be provided in *Southern Skies* when it comes to hand. Interested parties are assured that the Australian Aviation Museum is still fully operational and actively seeking more volunteers, particularly in the areas of computers, auto mechanics, retail sales and Museum display.

The Museum warmly welcomes anyone with an interest in Aviation.

### **Queensland Aviation Museum**

The Queensland Aviation Museum at Caloundra has recently received two interesting aircraft for display.

A PZL Lim-2 (aka MiG 15) was delivered to the Museum in early November and a CAC CA-16 Wirraway, VH-WIR (A20-652) which is being flown from Adelaide is expected to arrive at Caloundra on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2010. The Wirraway has been kindly donated by The John Villiers Trust.

Visit the web-site at [www.qam.com.au](http://www.qam.com.au) for further details on the Museum.

### **Information Wanted**

When it was located at Mascot Aerodrome in the 1930s, the Royal Aero Club had an Honour Board mounted on a wall of the Club House. It is understood that the Honour Board and/or Club House was destroyed by fire.

Judy Rainsford is seeking photographs of the Honour Board or a book containing such photograph(s), on behalf of the son of George H Towart who flew with the Club in the early 1930s. George's name was on the Honour Board and took his son on only one flight (at Bankstown) as he thought flying was too dangerous!

Please ring Judy on (02) 9489 6153 if you have any information that may help with this search.

### **On the Internet**

#### **Saunders Roe Princess**

[www.flixxy.com/saunders-roe-princess-flying-boat.htm](http://www.flixxy.com/saunders-roe-princess-flying-boat.htm)

This interesting film clip depicts the newsreel hype generated about the future of air travel with the Saunders Roe Princess, powered by 12 Bristol Proteus turbo-props. The construction, test and demonstration flying, and demise of the aircraft are depicted. However, with only

three built and no sales forthcoming, they were sold for scrap.

### **Aerohub - The New Zealand Aviators' News and Information Hub**

[www.aerohub.co.nz](http://www.aerohub.co.nz)

This site includes not only New Zealand matters, but also plenty on Papua New Guinea – featuring tales from aviators who flew there before and after Independence, a vintage gallery, profiles on unusual military aircraft (particularly World War II types) and much more.

### **Aviation Association of WA Inc**

[www.aviationwa.org.au](http://www.aviationwa.org.au)

This new site features the latest WA-related aviation news and Association news. It also includes an Enthusiasts Section, Articles/Historical Section; Airline Histories; Aviators, particularly those who have played a significant part in WA's aviation scene; and Preserved Aircraft in WA.

Some sections are still under construction, but well worth a look.

### **New Book**

**Pre-publication offer: *The RAAF Hudson Story – Book Two***

We have received the following advice from Dave Vincent, an Adelaide based member of AHSA and well-known author of several books:

As fellow-members of the AHSA with possible interest in aircraft of the Second World War and after, you may like to know of a pre-publication offer for the second volume of his history of Lockheed Hudsons in Australia and RAAF service.

If you are interested, please reply to Dave via e-mail at [djvincent@chariot.net.au](mailto:djvincent@chariot.net.au) and he will send you a follow-up email detailing purchase information.

Dave is providing a special offer to members of AHSA with a reduction in price from \$70 to \$50 (not including postage), as long as payment is received by 11th December 2010.

Stock of *The RAAF Hudson Story Book Two* is expected to be available by late December, but a more accurate date will be provided to purchasers as December unfolds.

### **Calendar of Events**

**20 November 2010 – 27 February 2011** Ipswich Art Gallery – The F-111 Story. Ipswich Qld

**4 December 2010** Showcase Day – Jet Fighters. Temora Aviation Museum, Temora NSW

**18 December 2010** Showcase Day – Pacific Theatre. Temora Aviation Museum Temora NSW

**7-10 January 2011** The Great Eastern Fly-in. Evans Head Memorial Aerodrome NSW.

**15 January 2011** Showcase Day – Vietnam. Temora Aviation Museum Temora NSW

**5 February 2011** Showcase Day – Jet Fighters. Temora Aviation Museum Temora NSW

**19 February 2011** Showcase Day – V-12s and Trainers. Temora Aviation Museum Temora NSW

**27 February 2011** Wings over Illawarra Air Show. Wollongong NSW

**1-6 March 2011** Australian International Air Show. Avalon Vic

**24-26 March 2011** Australian Light Aircraft Championships. Maitland NSW

### **AHSA Meetings**

#### **Melbourne**

Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of the month, at the RAAF Association, 24 Camberwell Rd, Hawthorn East. Meetings start at 7.30pm. Contact Antony Grage, 0418 170 395.

**Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> December:** The AHSA Christmas Barbeque at Moorabbin Airport: meet at noon at the grass near the used aircraft sales park. BYO partner and aviation-minded friends, plus food, drinks, chairs, hats – fire and conversation will be provided. The Australian National Aviation Museum ([www.aarg.com.au](http://www.aarg.com.au)) will be open, and will welcome AHSA visitors.

#### **Brisbane**

Meetings are held on the last Friday of each month at the Royal Queensland Aero Club, Archerfield. Visitors are welcome; contact Don Furlonger (07) 3371 5867.

There is no meeting in December, of course, so we'll look forward to seeing Queensland members and visitors on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2011.

### **Subscriptions**

Subscriptions are now due for 2011. If you have a renewal form enclosed with this newsletter, please fill in the form and pay the modest fee at the AHSA (NSW) December meeting or send to:

The Membership Secretary,  
AHSA (NSW) Inc  
94 Allambie Road  
Allambie Heights NSW 2100

The subscription rate for the combined AHSA (NSW) Inc and AHSA Inc membership has risen to \$58 for the year, whilst the subscription for AHSA (NSW) Inc alone remains at \$25. Please make your cheque or money order payable to AHSA (NSW) Inc.

### **Contributions and Contacts**

News items, other contributions, or requests for information etc for inclusion in the newsletter can be sent to AHSA (NSW) at P.O. Box K346, Haymarket NSW 1238 or to Warwick Bigsworth, E-mail ([madsen2010@optusnet.com.au](mailto:madsen2010@optusnet.com.au)) or (02) 8824 7814.

### **Thanks**

Thanks to Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown, Engineers Australia, Queensland Aviation Museum, Peter Coates, Anthony Coleiro, Paul Daw, Ian Debenham, Antony Grage, John Scott and Keith White for their contributions to this newsletter.

THE PRESIDENT AND COMMITTEE OF AHSA (NSW) INC WISH ALL MEMBERS AND READERS A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A PEACEFUL AND HAPPY NEW YEAR.

## **LOOPS AND LANDINGS** Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

### **With Spirit and Dash - Final.**

March 8 is a day to remember. On that day, in 1910, the all male directors of the *Aero Club of France* granted Elise Deroche Pilot Certificate No 36. This recognition of her skill, enthusiasm and courage, enabling a woman to enter for the first time this exclusive male fortress, was remarkable for the social and economic conditions of the time. Only two years earlier, 15000 women garment makers in New York had been forced to march in the streets to demonstrate for better working conditions. Their wages were less than half that of an equivalent male worker, their poor working conditions often led to premature death, and they had no right to vote. This was just one demonstration of many in America and Europe which resulted in the *International Conference of Women* being held in Copenhagen in 1910. One resolution of this conference was that an *International Women's Day* be observed each year to monitor the achievements of the growing women's movement. The first *International Women's Day* was in 1911. By 1913, it was universally agreed that *International Women's Day* should be celebrated on March 8 each year. As a direct result of the Copenhagen conference, and with the passing of time, special interest associations of women were formed in most countries throughout the world. The AWPA is one such association, and it is listed in the register of Australian National Women's Peak Organisations. In a media release last June, the then Australian Minister for the Status of Women, The Hon. Tanya Plibersek wrote: "8 March, 2011, marks the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day, and will be a terrific opportunity for women and men to come together to reflect on what has been achieved and the challenges ahead."

The century of *International Women's Day* overlies, and runs parallel with, the first century of participation of women in aviation, both overseas and here in Australia. The past century is the theme of Rosemary Arnold's book: *First Females Above Australia, The First one Hundred Years of Women Pilot Firsts 1909 – 2009*. Of all the vocations for women, aviation was always going to be one of the hardest in which to find employment. In Australia the task of changing male attitudes, to the notion of "suitable" work for women, would prove to be especially difficult. Rosemary's book contains the stories of over 100 Australian women aviators who had the right stuff to challenge the status quo. Even so, progress has been slow, and would have been slower without the external influence of the women's movement, the consequent enactment of legislation dealing with discrimination and women's rights, and the particular expertise of the AWPA.

When *The Royal Aero Club* gave a Wings Presentation Dinner for the first group of qualifying students after the end of WW1, Hilda McMaugh was the only woman recipient among four hundred men. On her return to Australia her voice, as an advocate for women who aspired to be part of the new and exciting world of aviation, fell silent. History records the significant achievement of individual Australian women pilots in the twenties and thirties, but there was no co-ordinating advocate to promote the potential that women offered as participants in the commercial side of the industry. There was no advocate, that is, until an articulate young activist by the name of Nancy Bird was first heard in the land. In the meantime another Bird, also an authoritative female voice, was occasionally recorded in Australian newspapers commenting on aviation matters. Many years earlier this spokeswoman, when she first decided to become involved in aviation, adopted the pseudonym of Grace Bird. She is better known as Hilda Hewlett, the first British woman to qualify as a pilot. Her biography, *Old Bird – The Irrepressible Mrs Hewlett*, written by Gail Hewlett, was published in the UK last April. Celebrations are planned in the UK next year to acknowledge the centenary of Hilda Hewlett becoming a pilot. There will be a stamp issue, and an exhibition at the Science Museum: *Women in Aviation and Aerospace*.

You will recall, from *With Spirit and Dash – Part 2*, that Hilda, and her business partner Gustave Blondeau, taught her son Francis to fly. Francis went on to a distinguished wartime career with the Royal Naval Air Service. Immediately after the war he set off for New Zealand, where he became involved with the Canterbury Aviation Company. In 1914, Hilda separated from her husband Maurice,

and at the end of the war the firm *Hewlett and Blondeau Limited* was wound up. That is why she decided to join her son and make a new home in New Zealand. Her only other child, Pia, and her family, followed her. From 1919 onwards, through the inter war years, Hilda's name could be found on the passenger lists of liners sailing between New Zealand and the United Kingdom. She was of sufficiently high profile to be interviewed whenever she found herself in an Australian port, and invariably made comment about the progress of aviation. In 1931, she was a passenger on the KLM, Amsterdam – Batavia air service. From Batavia, she travelled by sea, on board *S. S. Nieuw Holland*, arriving at Brisbane where she was interviewed on Sunday, October 4. She said that her fervour for flying had increased over the years, and it was her greatest regret that she could not travel all the way to Australia and New Zealand by air. She had some encouraging comments about *Imperial Airways* and the proposed *All – Red* air route from the UK to Australia, and wished very much to be able to talk to Air – Commodore Kingsford Smith. In 1932, at her home town of Tauranga, New Zealand, she became the inaugural President of the local Aero and Gliding Club. She died in Tauranga on August 21, 1943. Her body was buried at sea as she had requested. According to its web site: "The Tauranga Aeroclub continues to be a place to gather for those who love flight."

To set the scene for Nancy Bird's entry into the world of aviation, Australian newspapers published a speech by Mr W. R. Perkins, (Conservative), discussing the Air Estimates in the House of Commons during March, 1932. "It is common knowledge among pilots that, with certain exceptions, women in the air are notoriously dangerous... also women pilots cannot be utilised in wartime owing to international conventions. Therefore, it is a waste of public money to teach them to fly." Even Charles Kingsford Smith, who took Nancy for her first flying lesson, told her that he disapproved of women pilots. Nancy was not deterred, and soon qualified for her "A" Licence No 1150 on September 29, 1933, followed by her Commercial "B" licence No 494 on March 21, 1935. By then she was aged 19, and was the youngest woman in the British Commonwealth to achieve this goal. She was also the first woman pilot in Australia to put her commercial licence to work. However, the next three years, flying in the harsh conditions of the NSW and Queensland outback, almost broke her spirit. In an interview published in *The Sydney Morning Herald* on July 12, 1938, she conceded that: "There is no future in the air for women pilots. I have sold my machine and given up my career as a pilot to concentrate on commercial ground organisation."

During those hard years flying in the outback Nancy became well known, and was soon noticed by women's groups such as, *The Country Women's Association*, *The National Council of Women* and *The Quota Club*. In her autobiography Nancy wrote: "Many women had taken an interest in my activities. They were the leaders of emancipation and because I had broken into traditionally masculine fields, they saw me as an example." In May, 1938, Nancy became a member of *Ninety Nines*, the national women pilots' organisation of America. During 1939, she had the opportunity to visit members of *Ninety Nines* in America, and received considerable assistance and encouragement. The benefits of special focus women's groups were understood by Nancy, and the seeds of *The Australian Women Pilots' Association* were sown. Just as "Old Bird" had boarded a KLM aircraft in 1931 in Amsterdam, on her way to Batavia and the antipodes, so too Nancy Bird boarded a KNILM Lockheed 14 in Sydney on July 17, 1938, on a life changing voyage to Batavia and beyond to Europe and the UK, returning by sea via America. Crossing the Pacific, during July/August 1939, she met and fell in love with Charles Walton. But, like "Old Bird", her love of aviation simply increased with time.

There is a reminder of the history of the women's movement, and its relevance to Australian women pilots of today, who seek to become employed by the airlines or the armed services. It can be found on page 50 of the book, *Letting Fly*, by Elaine McKenna & Deborah Lawrie: "International Women's Year -1975, saw the establishment in Victoria of a Committee for the Status of Women which recommended the introduction of legislation prohibiting discrimination." One of the consequences was the legal case, *Wardley v Ansett* under the Equal Opportunity Act 1977 (Vic), the outcome of which is now well known. During October 2010, the month after AWWPA's 60th birthday, Jetstar ran a series of full page ads in *The Sydney Morning Herald* featuring the photo of a four bar captain, in the cockpit of an A320-232, smiling confidently at the reader. And - My God! It was a woman. **John Scott.**



# 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

November 2010 No.445

### November Meeting

#### Arthur Butler Memorial Lecture

The November meeting will be held at the Powerhouse Museum on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2010, commencing at 7.45pm. Enter from the Macarthur Street end and the meeting room is adjacent to the main foyer. Visitors are welcome and members are requested to bring a small plate of food for our special supper after the meeting.

The 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Arthur Butler Memorial Lecture will be presented by Gaby Kennard OAM, with her theme being *Solo Around the World – 21 Years On*.

Gaby Kennard created history by being the first Australian woman to fly solo around the world in her single engine Piper Saratoga VH-GKF. She departed Bankstown on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1989 and dedicated the journey of over three months to the American aviatrix Amelia Earhart. During the flight, Gaby experienced many harrowing events including instrument malfunction, theft of vital emergency equipment in Rabaul, unforecast headwinds leading to an emergency landing and severe storms across the Atlantic Ocean.

For achieving this flight, Gaby was awarded the prestigious American Harmon Aviatrix Trophy for the outstanding aviatrix of the year.

Gaby will recall her adventures and experiences on the flight, along with a short video, and talk about some of her recent activities since this record breaking flight.

Please join us for the premier event on our calendar.

### October Meeting

The October meeting featured talks by three of our members, each with a topic about very different facets of Australian aviation.

Keith White related the saga of the somewhat unorthodox introduction of the Fairey Swordfish into Australian service at RAAF Pearce, Western Australia.

In March 1942, RAAF Station Pearce was the base for No. 25 Squadron equipped with Wirraways, No. 14 Squadron equipped with Hudsons and the newly formed No. 77 Squadron to be equipped with Kittyhawks.

Early that month a number of crates were unloaded at Fremantle to be delivered RAAF Pearce. No. 25 Squadron expected Wirraway parts and No. 77 Squadron expected the first of the Kittyhawk equipment, but instead the contents of the first crate revealed the parts of a dismantled Fairey Swordfish. The Officer Commanding, Group Captain Paddy Heffernan, ordered that the aircraft be assembled, as were the other five aircraft which were found in the other crates. Two aircraft were allocated to

No. 25 Squadron, three allocated to No. 14 Squadron and the other as a general duties aircraft.

The aircraft were not on any formal charge list, but did come to the attention of Headquarters, which ordered their withdrawal from service and return to Fremantle. The last operational flight was recorded on 28<sup>th</sup> April 1942, however GC Paddy Heffernan made a final "farewell" flight one day later.

There is still conjecture as to why the aircraft came to be in Perth. It is possible the aircraft were bound for embarkation on the HMS Hermes, which was sunk off Ceylon in April 1942, whilst another theory was that they might have been bound for Hong Kong, which fell to the Japanese in December 1941.

No.25 Squadron has the distinction of being the only squadron to fly the Swordfish from Australian soil.

Jack Powell, who is renowned for his passion of flying boats, spoke about his journey on one of the charters arranged by AHSA to fly on Ansett Flying Boat Services Sandringham VH-BRC to Lake Eucumbene during 1973. Jack's talk was supported by an excellent range of images, (courtesy of Ken Garland who scanned and presented them on DVD), from embarkation at Rose Bay to arrival at Lake Eucumbene. AHSA members from Victoria met the aircraft at the lake and they subsequently undertook a scenic flight over the Snowy Mountains. Jack told of the return flight and showed further images taken on the return trip.

Being of flying boat flavour, Jack also showed a number of images of sister aircraft VH-BRF and of the Supermarine Walrus, VH-ALB, and to top it off, images of Wirraways and the B-29 at Tocumwal, and the aircraft from the Sid Marshall collection at Bankstown.

Anthony Coliero is an Airbus A330 Ground Instructor at the QANTAS Flight Training Centre at Mascot. Senja Robey's comments on modern flying training and understanding the basic rules of airmanship at her presentation at the September meeting prompted Anthony to speak on the training methods being employed during conversion to the Airbus family of aircraft.

Anthony noted that Airbus has recently released a stall recovery briefing following the investigation into the crash of the Air New Zealand A320 into the Mediterranean Sea during a test flight in 2008. It would appear that following a malfunction in the angle of attack sensors, the crew failed to adhere to the proper speed limits, leading the aircraft to stall at an altitude from which recovery could not be achieved.

An Airbus video was shown, describing the Eight Golden Rules, which could also be seen as vital elements of good airmanship. The insight to the electronics of the Airbus and the procedures undertaken during the simulator were of great interest to all present.

Anthony also provided many facts and figures about the A330 and its operations in Qantas service.

### **Happy 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday Q.A.N.T.A.S.**

On 16<sup>th</sup> November 1920, Queensland and Northern Territory Aerial Services Ltd was registered in Brisbane with an authorized capital of £100,000 in £1 shares.

The Registered Office of the company was at Winton, Queensland and Fergus McMaster Provisional Chairman. Provisional Directors were A.N. Templeton, Alexander Kennedy, P.J. McGuinness and T.B. McIntosh.

Pilots were P.J. McGuinness and W. Hudson Fysh, with W.A. Baird the mechanic.

### **Honouring No.77 Squadron's Korean War contribution**

On 13<sup>th</sup> October, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Defence Science and Personnel, Warren Snowdon honoured the contribution made by a courageous group of Royal Australian Air Force personnel who formed the first Commonwealth unit to conduct combat missions in the Korean War, more than 60 years ago.

Mr Snowdon spoke about the RAAF's No. 77 Squadron deployment to the Korean War, during a commemorative ceremony at Point Cook near Melbourne. The ceremony was held to unveil a new plaque in Point Cook's memorial precinct which honours the No. 77 Squadron's contribution and replaces a previous plaque.

Commissioned by the Korean Veterans' Association Australia and No. 77 Squadron Association, the new plaque includes the names of all 41 personnel of No. 77 Squadron who lost their lives.

The Chief of Air Force, Air Marshal Mark Binskin and senior retired Air Force officers, some of them veterans of the Korean War, joined Mr Snowdon at the presentation.

No. 77 Squadron conducted more than 4,800 missions supporting the United Nations ground forces and targeting North Korean military installations and supply lines such as railways and roads.

"In all, 41 of the Squadron's personnel died. Thirty-five of them RAAF and a further six personnel on exchange from the Royal Air Force. Seven of the Squadron's pilots became prisoners of war.

"It is important that the sacrifices made by No. 77 Squadron and all Australian personnel in the Korean conflict be remembered and honoured. The people of the Republic of Korea live in freedom today due to their efforts," Mr Snowdon said.

Throughout the war, more than 17,000 Australian service personnel served with honour and distinction. No. 77 Squadron was honoured by the South Korean President for exceptionally meritorious service and heroism, and 3RAR was honoured by the United States President for their extraordinary performance against the enemy near Kapyong.

Three hundred and thirty-nine Australian men and women died in the Korean War. More than 1200 were wounded, and 29 suffered the ordeal of being a prisoner of war. *Courtesy Defence Media*

### **AHSA Meetings**

#### **December Meeting 8<sup>th</sup> December 2010**

A reminder that this year's December meeting will be held on the **second** Wednesday of the month, Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> December, at the Powerhouse Museum. This will be a joint meeting with Engineers Australia, the Royal Aeronautical Society – Sydney Branch and AHSA (NSW) Inc. The Eminent Speaker will be Mr John Hart-Smith, formerly a Senior Engineer from The Boeing Company.

Full details will be provided in the December newsletter.

#### **Melbourne**

Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of the month, at the RAAF Association, 24 Camberwell Rd, Hawthorn East. Meetings start at 7.30pm. Contact Antony Grage, 0418 170 395.

**Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> October:** A talk entitled "In Defence of Bomber Command" will be given by Peter Isaacson AM DFC AFC DFM. Peter flew Lancasters with the Pathfinder Force, and with his crew brought Lancaster "Queenie VI" out for a war bond tour of Australia (flying under the Harbour Bridge on the way).

#### **Brisbane**

Meetings are held on the last Friday of each month at the Royal Queensland Aero Club, Archerfield. Visitors are welcome; contact Don Furlonger (07) 3371 5867.

Next meeting, Friday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2010.

### **Calendar of Events**

**6 November 2010** Showcase Day – Piston Fighters. Temora Aviation Museum, Temora NSW

**6-7 November 2010** AAAA Tiger Moth Rally. Leeton NSW

**13 November 2010** Airways Museum Open Day. Essendon Airport Vic

**14 November 2010** NSW Sport Aircraft Club Open Day. Wedderburn NSW

**20 November 2010** Showcase Day – Forward Air Control. Temora Aviation Museum, Temora NSW

**20 November 2010 – 27 February 2011** Ipswich Art Gallery – The F-111 Story. Ipswich Qld

**4 December 2010** Showcase Day – Jet Fighters. Temora Aviation Museum, Temora NSW

### **Contributions and Contacts**

News items, other contributions, or requests for information etc for inclusion in the newsletter can be sent to AHSA (NSW) at P.O. Box K346, Haymarket NSW 1238 or to Warwick Bigsworth, E-mail ([madsen2010@optusnet.com.au](mailto:madsen2010@optusnet.com.au)) or (02) 8824 7814.

### **Thanks**

Thanks to Peter Coates, Antony Grage and John Scott for their contributions to this newsletter.

## LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

### With Spirit and Dash - Part 4.

St Elmo was dear to Hilda McMaugh's heart. He was the bishop of Formiae in the Campagna, Italy, and was martyred early in the fourth century. The method of his martyrdom, having his intestines slowly drawn out by a windlass, was particularly excruciating. The use of a windlass caused him to be adopted as the patron saint of sailors and maritime navigators. Unsurprisingly, he is also invoked by those with intestinal pain, especially appendicitis, and by women in childbirth. Hilda had experienced St Elmo's protection on the high seas during her absence from Australia. After her arrival back in Sydney, on January 21, 1920, she reported to the Liverpool Army Camp for a final medical examination before her discharge. During her service in Egypt she suffered occasional bouts of abdominal pain, which was suspected of being appendicitis. The examining doctors at Liverpool offered her an appendectomy before discharge, which she declined. St Elmo had protected her while she was overseas. He could be relied on now for protection against maladies abdominal. St Elmo and Hilda remained together until her death on March 30, 1981.

Australia's first woman pilot was discharged from the AIF on March 16, 1920. During the time she spent in Sydney after her return, Ross and Keith Smith passed through on their way to Melbourne. Hilda would have been aware of the aviation activity at Mascot aerodrome. If she had been serious, about a future in commercial aviation, the opportunity was there at least to make enquiries. Maybe she did. But she would have been anxious to get home to her parents in Armidale as soon as possible. As it happened, after a short time at home, she appears to have finally cleared her head of thoughts of a future in aviation. What she did set out to achieve was, in many ways, far more fruitful than anything she could have achieved in aviation, where sex discrimination would have been a constant brake on her progress. Perhaps discrimination was a reason for her abandonment of aviation.

After looking around the district, Hilda saw the need for a hospital to serve the community of Uralla, a town located just 23 km south west of Armidale. She renovated and extended an abandoned public school on the corner of Park and Queen Streets. In due course she became the licensee and resident manager of a private hospital, registered for 13 beds, complete with an operating theatre. The new hospital provided medical, surgical and midwifery care. She named her new creation, St Elmo. For the official opening, on Wednesday February 21, 1923, she was able to ask a favour of one of the patients she had cared for at the 14th AGH at Abbassia, General Sir Charles Cox. *The Uralla Times* reported: "The official opening ceremony was quite brilliant. Headed by Sir Charles and Lady Cox and civic representatives, the frocking of the ladies, and the presence of the Armidale Band, added distinct touches to the gathering."

In the PERSONAL column of *The Uralla Times* for June 16, 1924, there is a list of patients at St Elmo: "Mr J. Doughan for medical treatment; Mr J. H. Parsons for rheumatism treatment; the infant son of Mr A. H. Cross, double pneumonia; Jean, daughter of Mr S. Fitzgerald, pneumonia; Mrs J. Parnell, medical treatment. Mr J. Crapp underwent an operation on Saturday last, and his condition today is satisfactory. Mr E. J. Williams has been a patient during the past week." Hilda was supported by her nursing staff and visiting doctors, but the responsibility on her shoulders was enormous. No individual of similar financial standing could achieve today, what Hilda did ninety years ago. The cost of medical indemnity insurance alone, in the 21st century, would be prohibitive. However, even back in the nineteen twenties, she could not escape the stress of responsibility for the duty of care to her patients. It says much for her character that she survived this self imposed stress, until St Elmo gave up its registration in the mid nineteen fifties, when Hilda was approaching her seventies. By that time, it was said that half the population of Uralla had been born at St Elmo, under the safe supervision of Matron McMaugh.

At a time in life when most would welcome retirement, Hilda embarked on a new enterprise. St Elmo was to be turned into a boarding house. Catering for its patients had always been a function of St

Elmo Private Hospital, and Hilda, herself, had attracted a reputation as an excellent cook. At the time, one of the routes used by Ansett's Pioneer Bus Tours passed through Uralla on the New England Highway. An Ansett Travel Hotel was located at Tamworth. It wasn't long before Hilda managed to filter off some of this trade to St Elmo. Hilda also built a swimming pool and a tennis court on the premises, which added to the overall attraction. In time, as motels became dotted along the highways, St Elmo probably lost its charm to all but the most dedicated of its clientele. Mr & Mrs Johnson, the last of Hilda's employees, remained to care for her at St Elmo until she died in her ninety seventh year. Hilda never married. She outlived all of her close relatives. It was her wish that her body be cremated. That is why she made her last journey to the Beresfield Crematorium, near Newcastle, for a short memorial service, unattended by friends or family.

The bulk of Hilda's estate, at the time of her death, consisted of the value of the property known as St Elmo. In her will, she bequeathed St Elmo to *The Uralla Home for the Aged*. This generous bequest inspired an approach to government for supplementary funds to enable a new hostel to be built. The approach was successful, with the new *McMaugh Gardens Hostel*, for aged care, ready for occupation in October, 1990. At about the time you read this newsletter, those connected with the *McMaugh Gardens Hostel* will be celebrating its first twenty years of service. Hilda Hope McMaugh will be remembered for the remarkable contribution she made to her community at Uralla. At this point *Loops & Landings* acknowledges the kind assistance of Arnold Goode and *The Uralla Historical Society* for the provision of so much detail of Hilda's life. In return, *The Uralla Historical Society* now has more substance to confirm Hilda's place, in Australian aviation history, as the first Australian woman pilot. It is one of those happy coincidences, that the celebrations at Uralla fall within the Diamond Jubilee Year of the Australian Women Pilots' Association. I'm sure that the confirmation of Hilda's aeronautical achievement, originally intended to be announced at the opening of *McMaugh Gardens Hostel*, will now be made during the 20th anniversary celebrations.

Of all the references I have seen, there is only one in which Hilda appears to give advice to Australian women pilots of the future. In *The Queenslander*, January 24, 1920, her interviewer wrote: "Miss McMaugh has expressed the opinion that it is easier to fly than to drive a motor-car, but she thinks a woman should not attempt to do so until she is at least four-and-twenty, and her nerves have steadied down." This would be unwelcome advice for the six women pilots interviewed for an article in the September, 2010, issue of *Aviator*, titled, *Aussie Women Flying High*. Before age 24, all six were well on their way to their current positions of airline captains or as service pilots with the RAAF and the RAN. Each of the six women also highly rated the influence of role models like Deborah Wardley, and Nancy Bird for their choice of a future in aviation. At the conclusion of the article, Rosina Booth, who started flying when she was sixteen, and is currently a pilot with Regional Express Airlines, commented: "Flying is becoming a more popular career option, because it's more accessible and a more acceptable environment for women through the efforts of the women who came before us to put a female face to the career." This is a timely reminder of the importance of knowledge of our aviation history as an influencing factor on the future. This awareness of past achievements and sacrifices contributes to the expanding role for women in aviation. Sadly, over the past ninety years, Hilda Hope McMaugh played no part in motivating young Australian women, because she was unknown. Hopefully, as more is understood about her early ambitions and setbacks, she will be added to the list of significant Australian women aviators of the past century, and will, in turn, play a motivational role.

Norma Balzer, a grand niece, attended *Armidale Teachers College* during the 1940s, and took a taxi to Uralla to talk to Hilda. When the subject came to Hilda being Australia's first woman pilot, Norma recalled, "there was an article in a paper about someone else who was, I think, said to be first. I asked Hilda to show me the newspaper cuttings about her that my mother had seen, but she wouldn't. She said a newspaper man had asked her for them and she had burnt them." Margaret Kentley interviewed Hilda at Uralla in 1977, for her unpublished book, *Sometimes the Pilot Wears a Skirt, 1920-1970*. Margaret experienced a similar reluctance, on Hilda's part, to talk about her experiences as a pilot. Rosemary Arnold's book, *First Females Above Australia – Australia's First 100 Years of Women Pilot Firsts*, to be published this year, does contain Hilda's story. This recognition is long overdue. **J.Scott.**