



# AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW) Inc

ABN: 83 295 759 224

PO Box K346 Haymarket NSW 1238

## *Southern Skies*

The Newsletter of AHSA (NSW) Inc

February 2012 No.458

*file 2012 - 1*

### February Meeting

The February meeting will be held at the Powerhouse Museum on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2012, at 7.45pm. Enter from the Macarthur Street end and the meeting room is adjacent to the main foyer. Visitors are most welcome and supper will be available after the meeting.

The Guest Speaker for the evening will be Ian Debenham, whose topic will be

#### *Pan Am's Pacific Flights*

In January 1991 Pan American World Airways filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection with liabilities in excess of one billion dollars. By December 1991 it had finally collapsed with all its routes sold to competitors and assets disposed of.

In 1979 Pan Am was the USA's second largest airline, but from 1980 until its demise Pan Am didn't make an annual profit; only staving off the inevitable bankruptcy by selling its assets. The cause of the continual losses was given as a slump in passenger numbers; high cost of maintenance personnel; and finally high fuel costs and adverse travel advisories caused by the Gulf War.

When deciding on the sale of assets the Pan Am management focussed on the Pacific Division as the first major route divestment and in February 1986 the Pacific Division was sold to United Airlines. This sale ended over fifty years of operation in an area pioneered by Pan Am.

This parlous situation was a complete contrast to the Pan Am of pre-World War II of which, it has been said: "The name *Pan Am* is truly synonymous with aviation. For over 60 years it pioneered trans-ocean and intercontinental flying. It was the launch platform for aircraft types that set the standard by which all that came later were to be measured."

Ian will discuss Pan Am's determination to develop an air route between the USA and Australia in spite of opposition from the British Government using the Australian and New Zealand governments as its bulwarks.

Please join us for this important first meeting of 2012.

### Committee Meeting

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

### December Meeting

The December meeting was held at the Australian Aviation Museum, Bankstown with the theme of the meeting *William Ewart Hart* – with the history and discussion led by Keith White. Also contributing to the discussion was fellow W.E. Hart expert, Peter Finlay.

Keith recalled his long-time interest in W.E. Hart and the request made by AHSA Inc for him to write a history of

Hart for the March 2011 issue of *Aviation Heritage*. Keith went on to reveal the amount of conflicting information that has been written about Hart, particularly in previously published material, such as the book *Billy Hart*, and in a 1987 article in the *Sun-Herald*. He mentioned the number of issues still unsolved about Hart's activities: his first solo flight, the number of aircraft he actually owned and the perceived difficulties in turning the aircraft.

Keith also referred to Hart's involvement in the Australian film industry in 1912 – two years before the establishment of the Hollywood's industry. A most enjoyable evening was had by all, and more information will be revealed about Hart in future episodes of Keith's articles.

### Anniversary

February 19 commemorates 70 years since Darwin was attacked by Japanese forces. In two attacks on this day in 1942, Japanese aircraft caused widespread destruction to the port of Darwin, including the town's civil aerodrome and RAAF air base. The first raid, carried out at 9.55 am by 188 carrier-based aircraft, focused on the harbour before turning on the town itself.

With the advantage of numbers, the element of surprise and the absence of significant fighter opposition, Japanese dive-bombers were largely untroubled as they selected their targets. While buildings, installations and aircraft at the RAAF base were damaged in the first raid, the worst destruction came in a second attack carried out by 54 land-based bombers at 11.55 am.

This wrecked the remaining buildings, including many of the living quarters, and caused the majority of the RAAF's casualties (seven dead and five injured).

Allied losses during the day totalled 23 aircraft, eight ships and 255 people killed. Only five Japanese aircraft were definitely downed.

### Military Movements

To mark the end of an era, a formation of Royal Australian Navy Westland Sea King helicopters made their final flight over Sydney, Canberra and the Shoalhaven on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2011. The helicopters were retired after 35 years' service and 817 Squadron decommissioned after 48 years' continuous service at a traditional ceremony in Nowra on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2011.

817 Squadron's Commanding Officer, Commander Paul Moggach, led the formation, describing it as a fitting end to a remarkable career for these aircraft. "We call them the Mack trucks of the skies. The Sea Kings are a

very capable aircraft that has served Australia well, and all of who have maintained and operated them feels honoured to have done so," Commander Moggach said.

The amphibious and maritime logistics support role played by the Sea Kings will be undertaken by the new MRH90 Multi-Role Helicopter.

## Request for Information

### Butler Aircraft

AHSA Inc Honorary Secretary, Neil Follett, has been researching aspects of the Butler Air Transport fleet and is interested in ascertaining why Butler named all DC-3 and Viscount aircraft after Australian rivers or districts/ mountains starting with the letter "W". It would appear that "W" has some significance.

Any input should be forwarded to your editor.

## For Sale

### Airlines & Aircraft of the Ansett Group 1921 – 2002

AHSA (NSW) Inc member, Fred Niven, has produced his 8<sup>th</sup> edition of this excellent DVD.

The price is the same as the 2009 Edition 7, despite higher costs & much larger content - just \$35, including P&P within Australia. The 4.24GB DVD is only available in 'Word for Windows' format - not PDF format. It cannot be played on TV-based DVD-players.

New chapters, many hundreds of new photos, more videos (even colour videos of early Ansett Airways' aircraft & ANA's DC-5 VHCXC) and, of course, aircraft histories/photos updated to late-November, 2011.

If you would like to order one, or more, please contact Fred by phone on (03) 9544 3388, or at 27 Alfred Grove, Oakleigh East, Victoria 3166, or [fniven@bigpond.net.au](mailto:fniven@bigpond.net.au) - with number, mailing address & form of payment.

Payments (\$35 per DVD, inc P&P) can be made by EFT, cheque, money order or cash inside a piece of paper.

## The William Ewart Hart Centenary Celebration By Keith White

As mentioned in December's newsletter, the full text of Hart's typed letter dated 14 December, 1911 on his business letterhead to the Minister for Defence follows:

W. E. HART'S BI-PLANES                      'Phone 3813 City  
HEAD OFFICE:                      65 MARKET STREET, SYDNEY  
WILLIAM E. HART                      AUSTRALIAN AVIATOR  
CHARLES S. CLANCY, Manager

Dec. 14th. 1911

The Hon. G.A. Pearce,  
Parliament House.  
Melbourne.

Dear Sir.

Having reference to the interview which I had the honour to have last week on the subject of Aviation, I have decided that if your Department will assist me in this matter, I will open an Aviation School at Penrith, New South Wales immediately.

There are a few officers here whom I have booked as pupils, and I will have two Machines in perfect flying order at the school, which given favourable conditions will allow of my turning out about ten Aviators per quarter.

If I can secure assistance of your Department, it is my intention to import a Monoplane so that I will be able to give tuition in both classes of Machines. I intend to run this school in a thoroughly efficient manner. I understand it is the intention of your Department to devoting a sum towards the encouragement of Aviation. I would, therefore, be glad to know whether you are prepared to render me any assistance in the establishment of the School by giving me the instructing of the Military Officers, or otherwise, as I am anxious to arrange this matter at an early date. I will be prepared to visit Melbourne with the object of interviewing you thereon.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

(signed) W.E Hart.

The Minister wrote a side note on Hart's letter:

To Secretary

*Please acknowledge & reply will be sent as soon as decision arrived at. Matter will be decided in a few days.*

G.F.P. t8/12/tl

Nine months later, on 20 September, 1912, the Commonwealth Government approved the formation of "a Flying School and Corps".

## JANUARY, 1912. A NEW DIRECTION.

In forming his plan to open his flying training school, Hart's work direction changed from being a pupil under instruction to being a teacher giving instruction, quite a change considering he had only qualified as a pilot just over a month before.

As a flying instructor, Hart would have described the various features of his Boxkite to each pupil, including:

1. the Boxkite was powered by a 50 h.p. Gnome rotary engine, which, when started, threw out castor oil from the exhaust onto the people holding the machine back;
2. maximum speed in dead wind was 37 m.p.h. - motor cars on the road often passed the Boxkite in the air;
3. there was no throttle,
4. the engine was either "full on" or "off";
5. its speed was regulated by a switch which broke the ignition circuit,
6. altitude was read from an aneroid barometer worn suspended around the pilot's neck by a cord;
7. the pilot was seated on the aircraft's lower wing and had no protection from the weather. He could look down between his legs to the ground below.

Obviously, new pupils could have been hesitant to receive instruction from a new instructor, but, at the time of the school's opening, Hart said he had about a dozen pupils, one of whom, Major Charles Rosenthal, had been an official examiner during Hart's flying tests the previous November, and had allowed his son to fly with Hart on his last flying test.

As reported in *The Nepean Times*, 6 January, 1912, the guest of honour, Mr. Fraser, Mrs Fraser and their party left Sydney by motor car at 4 a.m. on Wednesday, 3 January, 1912. Why so early? It must be remembered that aircraft of the day were not strong or powerful, and flying was only undertaken when the weather conditions were

favourable. Early morning was usually an ideal time for flying.

When the official party arrived at Penrith, Hart had all the preparations in readiness for the school's opening and a flight. This must be one of the earliest official openings ever arranged and was completed by about 6 a.m. when "... the order was given to let go ..." and the next moment Hart and the Post Master General (PMG) were careering through the air at a rate of about a mile a minute. They travelled about 6 miles at an average altitude of 600 feet. The PMG was the first minister of the Crown to make a flight.

On landing, his enjoyment of the flight encouraged Mrs. Fraser, who decided to take a flight, which her husband thought was a little longer than his.

Remembering how few people had flown at the time, it is perhaps opportune to repeat some of the PMG's comments after his flight as reported in the *Nepean Times*:

"FRASER: While I felt a little doubtful about the project as I was going up in the motor car, when I got up in the aeroplane I did not feel much doubt about it at all. It produced rather an attractive sensation. I naturally for a moment or two watched Mr Hart very carefully; but when I saw the way he was manipulating the machine I became quite at ease.

I may make this remark in connection with my experience I think Australia is very fortunate in having such a reliable, capable aviator as Mr. Hart undoubtedly is, and who has advanced the science of aeronautics here to the stage it has reached at the present time. A man of his stamp may be of very valuable assistance in the event of any emergency. I cannot speak too highly of the opinion I entertain of his reliability and judgment.

I am very pleased to know we have a chap like Mr. Hart here. He takes no risks, and does not indulge in any show business. He simply conducts the trip from beginning to end to perfection."

On Saturday, 6 January, 1912, three days after the official opening of his aviation school Hart was involved in an accident variously headlined in the print media over the years since as follows:

- 8 January, 1912: Aeroplane Mishap/Mr. Hart and passenger/thrown from seats;
- 13 January, 1913: The flying machine/collides with a signal post/at Mount Druitt;
- 1 November, 1965: Freak landing shocked staff;
- 24 November, 1976 Australia's first air crash/ ended on rails;
- 22 May, 1980: Flying dentist buzzed top express.

The passage of time from the actual event seems to have introduced an element of sensationalism into the headlines for the accident when rewritten in the media.

All were reporting on the same accident which occurred when Hart was flying the Boxkite from Penrith to Parramatta with Major Rosenthal, who weighed about 18 stone -120 kgs. One article reported the Major was sitting alongside Hart on the biplane's wing, and another reported the major "... was centred on a kind of elevated dickey seat, which draped his hefty legs about the pilot's shoulders".

The biplane became difficult to handle when it met adverse winds near Mount Druitt Railway Station. It gradually lost height, and Hart elected to make a landing

alongside the railway line. Unfortunately, as he endeavoured to steer his biplane between posts, the aircraft's canvas wing hit a signal post and the aircraft capsized, throwing both men clear of the damaged aircraft. They suffered only minor injuries, and the Major was able to continue his journey to Parramatta, where a large crowd, disappointed and now dispersed, had been waiting the arrival of the aircraft and its "youthful aviator".

This was our first aircraft crash. Whilst Hart was endeavouring to land the Boxkite, the Blue Mountains express was travelling towards Penrith and approaching Mount Druitt Railway Station. When the train driver saw the aircraft in some distress, he was heard to comment:

"It's that mad Parramatta dentist Bill Hart." It is reported that at least one passenger in the passing train would have been pleased to know the aviator had not been hurt; she was Mrs. William Hart, the aviator's mother.

The Railways Department was "not amused", but later accepted Hart's apology. *The Nepean Times*, published Saturday, 13 January, 1912 reported: "The machine was brought back to Penrith (another report said Parramatta), where repairs were at once commenced. Mr. Hart has since decided on making a trip to New Zealand, where he will give exhibition flights. Everything was packed up and sent from Penrith on Thursday. Mr. Hart expects to be away only a few weeks." The trip does not appear to have eventuated, nor does it appear that Major Rosenthal ever qualified for a pilot's licence. In the Major's biography (entitled *Major General Sir Charles Rosenthal* and published in the *Victorian Historical Magazine* August 1969), his biographer, Warren Perry, wrote that the Major said he had his "...first crash with Mr Hart." Perry said that "This last comment suggests that he had other crashes but no evidence of other crashes has been found." Furthermore, no further mention of any flying activity involving Hart is made in the Major's biography.

Quoting from a more recent but unsourced article about the crash: "The plane appeared to be a total wreck, but Mr. Hart was not concerned: he told the papers with a little a pot of glue, some fresh wire and canvas, he would soon have it as good as new. Glue, wire and canvas ... they don't make aeroplanes like that any more! Perhaps it is just as well!"

As the trip to New Zealand does not seem to have eventuated, where did Hart and his aeroplane go? Assuming he had a second aeroplane, what happened to it and who conducted his flying school in his absence? Certainly *The Nepean Times* did not report any activity concerning him for the rest of January, 1912.

When I first became interested in the "Hart Story", it seemed from the material available that his aviation endeavours were uncomplicated, and he progressed from one event to the next in an orderly manner. But, since writing the article, "William Hart and his Bristol Boxkite", during November and December, 2010, for *Aviation Heritage*, together with continuing research, and writing this series of articles for our own newsletter, *Southern Skies*, I have found statements which question detail in those earlier reports/stories. Under the circumstances, I will continue using previously accepted "facts" and answer any new questions which may arise, and, if I

cannot answer a question, I will endeavour to do so when this series of monthly articles finishes.

FEBRUARY, 1912.

#### THE LUSTY INFANT HAD OUTGROWN ITS CRADLE

The above is another quote by a former president of our Society, Ron Gibson, from his 1969 paper, *The Penrith - Richmond Area - A Cradle of Aviation*.

Hart's movements following his plane crash at Mount Druitt and the non-event "trip to New Zealand" do not seem to have received any media attention.

Although his base at Belmore Park had been adequate for his activities, he had become aware of a flood-free plateau between nearby Richmond and Windsor known as Ham Common (also known as Richmond Common), which he described as being "the finest site in Australia for an aviation ground". He applied to Richmond Council to use the area for his aviation operations, and, during February, 1912, was granted permission to use the area.

He prepared to move his aviation operations from Penrith to Ham Common, where he proposed to build sheds "for several machines" on the land, and even had expectations of establishing an aeroplane factory here should his flying school prove successful.

Even though his plans for developing his Ham Common operation ceased following his serious accident in September 1912, his foresight in choosing the area for aviation use has been justified in subsequent years. Various operators, including the N.S.W. State Aviation School, used the area which was taken over by the Federal Government in 1923, and, with expansion, became what we now know as RAAF Base, Richmond.

There appears to be no information about his flying school or other activities during the month of February. Certainly, no reports of Hart and his activities could be found in Penrith's own newspaper, *The Nepean Times*.

This month's article commenced with the statement: "The lusty infant had outgrown its cradle". He had developed the potential to go forward, and relocating his activities to a new base at Ham Common would give him that opportunity. (to be continued....)

#### 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 25th January:** Members' Night – nominations of people from around the world who have had a significant influence on Australian aviation history over the past 100-odd years. Members attending will be asked to speak to their suggestions, and this will be preceded by Roger McDonald showing a film "*Flight Path*", produced 60 years ago by the Department of Civil Aviation, showing air traffic control of airline operations in NSW in the 1940s and '50s. Roger says it's a beauty!

##### Brisbane

Meetings are held at 7.00pm for 7.30pm on the last Friday of each month at the Royal Queensland Aero Club, Archerfield. Visitors are welcome; contact Don Furlonger (07) 3371 5867.

**Friday 27th January:** Murray Adams will speak on his wartime experiences flying Spitfires and Tempests, including diving a Tempest at a high sub-sonic speed. Murray will be attending a reunion of survivors of No. 80 Squadron RAF in the UK early next year.

#### Calendar of Events

**4 February 2012** Showcase Day – British Built – Temora Aviation Museum, Temora NSW

**18 February 2012** Showcase Day – Korea to Vietnam - Temora Aviation Museum, Temora NSW

**4 March 2012** Tyabb Air Show – The first 50 years – Tyabb, Victoria.

#### 2012 Subscriptions

Subscriptions are now over-due for 2012. Please use the renewal form enclosed with the December newsletter, and pay the modest fee at the AHSA (NSW) February 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 is \$55 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) Inc at P.O. Box K346, Haymarket NSW 1238 or to the Editor, Warwick Bigsworth via E-mail ([madsen2010@optusnet.com.au](mailto:madsen2010@optusnet.com.au)) or on (02) 8824 7814.

#### Thanks

Thanks to Roger McDonald, John Scott and Keith White for their contributions to this newsletter.

### Aviation Historical Society of Australia (NSW) Inc

#### Notice of Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Aviation Historical Society of Australia (NSW) Inc will be held at the Powerhouse Museum, Harris Street Ultimo on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2012 commencing at 7:45pm.

#### Business

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

Warwick Bigsworth  
Honorary Secretary

## LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

### A Centenary For The New South Wales Aero Club - Final.

I suspect that Tuesday December 5, 1911, was deliberately chosen by George Augustine Taylor as the day Bill Hart would be presented with a silver shield, and Aviator's Certificate No 1, by *The Aerial League of Australia*. His reason for choosing December 5 was to establish a connection with his own day of aerial triumph exactly two year's earlier, and to remind everyone that it was he, Taylor, who was Australia's first aviator. The presentation to Bill Hart was made at a meeting of the Aerial League at the rooms of *The Royal Society*, with Colonel Vernon in the chair. During the meeting Brigadier-General Gordon moved an affirmation of the necessity for the immediate and serious consideration of the establishment of a system of aerial defence for Australia. This motion was seconded by Captain Ernest Stowe, and supported by the Mayor of Parramatta, Alderman Jago. The following day Bill Hart left by train for Melbourne to meet with the Minister for Defence, and to urge the government to establish aviation schools at Melbourne and Sydney. Hart stated that, if he was appointed to control the schools, he could turn out a dozen aviators in six months.

Where was Charles Lindsay Campbell, the politically well connected and passionate advocate of aerial defence for Australia, when the Who's Who of Sydney's aviation elite gathered at *The Royal Society's* rooms on December 5? *The Sydney Morning Herald* of December 4 had continued the coverage of Campbell's recent activities in Sydney, with information about his demonstration of War Kites at Manly Beach on the previous Saturday. But in its report two days later, of the Aerial League meeting, the name of Charles Lindsay Campbell is not recorded as an attendee. It seems that Campbell had not yet been admitted to the influential inner circle of Sydney's aviation heavyweights. As a consequence, would he now be condemned to an irrelevant future, involving the weekend demonstration of obsolete war kites from Sydney's beaches? The answer to this question was provided by a Commonwealth Government announcement just before Christmas.

Newspaper advertisements, placed by the Secretary of the Department of Defence, began to appear in Sydney papers on December 23. "Applications from Expert Mechanists and Aviators desirous of being appointed to the Defence Department will be received...up to and inclusive of Thursday, the 1st February, 1912." The annual salary offered was £400 inclusive of all allowances except travelling. For Charles Lindsay Campbell, here at last was the opportunity he dreamed of. Secure employment in an occupation where his passion for aviation could be fulfilled. He may also have harboured a sense of entitlement for the job. He had expended years of hard work, and had depleted his personal fortune, in his endeavours which included encouragement of the Australian Government to create the very positions now advertised.

Campbell would have to move quickly because of the short period before applications closed on February 1. He lodged an intention to make a late application, after the closing date but before final selection of candidates. In asking for this indulgence, he explained that it was his intention to qualify for an aviator's certificate as soon as possible. Following the government advertisement, W.E. Hart announced the founding of his own aviation school at Penrith, charging a fee of 100 guineas to train students to the standard required for examination by observers from the Aerial League. However, Campbell was not prepared to submit himself to the mercies of the Aerial League. Therefore, he had no alternative but to pack up his long suffering family yet again, and set off on the long and expensive journey to England. Before departing Sydney at the end of January, he approached his political supporters for letters of introduction. These were provided by; the Prime minister, Andrew Fisher; the External Affairs Minister Josiah Thomas; the Governor of Queensland, Sir William MacGregor, and the Lord Mayor of Sydney, Sir Allan Taylor. Several of these letters were to introduce Campbell to Sir George Reid, Australia's High Commissioner in London.

Campbell arrived in England at the end of March, during a formative period of development in military aviation. At the same time as the Australian Department of Defence called for applications for the positions of mechanists and aviators, before Christmas, 1911, the Under Secretary of State for

War in the U. K. announced a Military Aeroplane Competition for the purpose of selecting aeroplanes for the Air Battalion. Manufacturers were required to have their competing aircraft at Larkhill aerodrome in Wiltshire by July 31, 1912. Following his arrival in London, Campbell met with Sir George Reid. On April 5, he wrote a letter to Australia's Prime Minister from temporary accommodation in Bayswater: "I am writing later to Mr Pearce after I have finished the round of Hangars and am filing and noting down everything on the subject especially as regards the organisation of the Military and Company Aerodrome and Schools," and then prophetically: "I need not thank you again for your continued support since first Mr Fraser introduced me but if The Almighty spares my life and I win through I will prove it in my whole hearted work for the Commonwealth." Sir George Reid facilitated Campbell's information gathering efforts. Over the Easter weekend, April 5 - 8, an invitation from Claude Grahame-White was arranged for Campbell to be present at Hendon to witness competition and exhibition flying. Assistance was also provided with the enrolment of Campbell at the British and Colonial Aeroplane Company Flying School at Larkhill. Campbell would thus be on the spot to observe first hand the preparations for the Military Aeroplane Competition.

With his family accommodated at Maida Vale in London, Campbell found digs at Amesbury near Larkhill. He commenced flying training there on April 25, and between lessons worked on engines and airframes in the flying school hangars. His progress was rapid, achieving his first solo flight on May 10. His confidence was such that, on May 13, he lodged his formal application for the position of aviator, with the Australian High Commission. He passed the tests for Aviator's Certificate No. 220, on a Bristol biplane, under Royal Aero Club supervision, on May 19. It was his 49th birthday. The certificate was officially announced on June 8.

A myth was spread amongst the aviation fraternity at Larkhill, no doubt created by Campbell himself. This myth was entrenched by the historian R. Dallas Brett in his two volume, *The History of British Aviation 1908-1914*, John Hamilton Ltd, 1934. Dallas Brett wrote; "It will be recalled that the the Australian Government had sent Mr Lindsay Campbell to England to learn to fly with a view to placing him in charge of the organisation of a Flying Service for the Commonwealth." The reality was that Campbell had come to England at his own initiative and expense. Although he had cultivated the relevant politicians in Australia, they were not involved with assessing the applicants for the Commonwealth positions. Arrangements had been made for the British War Office to do the assessments and to recommend the successful applicants to the Australian Military Board. On July 8, the Minister for Defence announced that Harry Busteed and Henry Petre had been selected. Considering the strong competition from experienced aviators already operating in the U. K., Campbell never really had a chance. He was formally advised by letter on July 31, that his application had been unsuccessful.

During July, the Bristol flying school was evicted from Larkhill to make room for aircraft competing in the Military Trials. By July 21, Campbell had been relocated to the flying school's branch at Brooklands. Dallas Brett described the chaotic state caused by merging the Larkhill and Brooklands operations: "their fleet of eight machines was up and down continually all day long, with more than twenty pupils." Campbell was now faced with the unfamiliar operating environment of Brooklands, coping with over stretched instructors, and perhaps in a depressed state of mind. He was also in the process of converting to a more challenging aircraft, the Bristol Prier Monoplane. Early on Saturday morning, August 3, he took off on a solo flight in the monoplane, and climbed to 600 ft. When flying over Byfleet on his return to the aerodrome, the engine appeared to lose power. He was unable to maintain control and the monoplane crashed into a meadow off Chertsey Road. Campbell was removed from the wreck and carried to the nearby King's Head Inn where he died in the presence of a doctor. This was the first death of an Australian as a result of an aeroplane accident.

Campbell's wife Lilian, and sons Lindsay and Keith, 4 years and 18 months respectively, were left destitute in London. A sum of £280 was soon raised by concerned individuals. The Agent-General for Western Australia arranged first class passages for the family back to Perth. On August 3, 1914, an *In Memorium* in *The West Australian*, inserted by Lilian, advised that Campbell too had been returned to Australia. His ashes were interred in the Presbyterian section of Karrakatta Cemetery..**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

March 2012 No.459

### March Meeting

The March meeting will be held at the Powerhouse Museum on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2012, at 7.45pm. The venue will be the Amenities Room, at the southern end of the Administration building, which is to the south of our former meeting venue. Entry is via Macarthur Street and car parking in the normal area, or immediately in front of the meeting room. Visitors are most welcome and supper will be available after the meeting.

The meeting will be the **Annual General Meeting**, which will include The President's Report, The Financial Report, Election of Office Bearers and other business.

After the AGM, a DVD on aircraft restoration will be shown.

Please join us for this important meeting.

### Committee Meeting

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

### February Meeting

Prior to the commencement of the February meeting, Warwick Bigsworth acknowledged that our President, Ian Debenham, had been awarded the Order of Australia Medal in the recent Australia Day Honours' List. Ian's award was in recognition of his service to the research, documentation and preservation of Australia's aviation history and heritage.

Guest Speaker for the evening was Ian Debenham, whose topic was *Pan Am's Pacific Flights*.

In January 1991 Pan American World Airways filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection with liabilities in excess of one billion dollars. By December 1991 it had finally collapsed with all its routes sold to competitors and assets disposed of.

When deciding on the sale of assets the Pan Am management focussed on the Pacific Division as the first major route divestment and in February 1986 the Pacific Division was sold to United Airlines.

The name Pan American Airways was initially used by a group led by a Captain J K Montgomery to bid for the US foreign air mail contract offered by the US Postal Service in 1926. This group was one of three intending bidders for the contract which, for the successful party, would heavily subsidise the establishment of air services to Cuba from Key West in Florida. Juan Trippe headed another bidder, Aviation Corporation of America, for which he had secured sole rights to Cuba. With much manoeuvring, all bidders merged, with Trippe becoming President of the airline, and over the next few years developed a wide network of routes in the Caribbean, Central and South America.

Trippe met many obstacles in his attempt to develop routes across the Atlantic, but pressed ahead with expansion across the Pacific, via the mid-Pacific islands and The Philippines to Asia.

He sought access to New Zealand, which was welcomed by the New Zealand government, albeit with limitations. New Zealand wanted reciprocity to enable a British Corporation approved by the New Zealand government to operate to a US port on similar terms afforded to Pan American Airways. The latter was required to inform the US State Department, which in turn noted that this was an agreement between the New Zealand government and Pan American.

After much dispute between the governments of New Zealand, Great Britain and the USA, a survey flight was carried out by Pan American Boeing 314 "*Honolulu Clipper*" on the San Francisco-Honolulu-Canton Island-Noumea-Auckland route on 22 August 1939 and a twice monthly service commenced on 12 July 1940. The service was interrupted during the war with Japan, but Pan American resumed its service from San Francisco to Auckland on 1 June 1946 and extended it to Sydney on 28 January 1948.

Pan American Airways, under the astute leadership of Juan Trippe had fought its battles for the Pacific routes and finally won. The Pacific Division was the most economically viable of all the airline's divisions, yet was the first to be sold off when Pan American had no other assets, except its routes, to sell.

Ian's talk was far more comprehensive than this very brief résumé and covered the extensive inter-government debate about the grab for sovereignty over remote Pacific islands and the development of trans-Pacific services by British, New Zealand, Canadian and Australian interests.

### Who Would have Thought?

Singapore Airlines (SIA) will bid farewell to the Boeing 747 aircraft as it makes its final journey from Singapore to Melbourne and back on March 24.

The airline will be retiring the B747 jet as part of its policy of maintaining a new fleet, spokesman Nicholas Ionides told *The Straits Times* (Singapore).

"SIA flew its first 747 in 1973, and at one point, it had more B747s than any other airline in the world, said the report. In March 2003, the airline had 39 B747 passenger aircraft in its fleet. Today, it only has three." (In fact, both Japan Air Lines, with over 60 and United Airlines with over 40, had larger fleets. Ed.)

"SIA's big-aircraft needs are now mainly served by the Airbus A380, which is a more cost-effective and fuel-

efficient plane to fly. The airline now has 15 A-380s with four more to be delivered in the next few months. The SIA spokesman said the local carrier has no immediate plans to order more A-380s or Boeing's new 747-8.

The phasing out of the B-747 aircraft has also made it difficult for frequent fliers on the SIA Saver Scheme to redeem miles because the older aircraft services only limited flights. But from March 8, SIA will allow frequent fliers on the Saver programme to book business and first-class flights on the A-380 and other new aircraft."

SIA's Cargo subsidiary will continue to operate its 11 B747-400F freighters.

## Request for Information

### JJ Hammond

Last year a plaque commemorating J.J. Hammond was unveiled in Hammond Place at Sydney (Kingsford Smith) Airport. If any of our readers has photographed it, AHSA Inc Honorary Secretary, Neil Follett would be most grateful for a copy. Anyone able to provide an image should contact the Editor.

Neil is still searching for an answer in respect to why Butler Air Transport named its Viscounts and DC-3s after Australian rivers and districts starting with the letter "W".

## On the Internet

### Tocumwal Historic Aerodrome Museum

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

This website contains a wealth of information about the museum and includes stories, maps, photographs, news articles and scale models. Of interest to most will be the vast number of images taken during and after World War II. Disturbing though, are the images of the destruction of so many aircraft after the war.

### The Hugo Junkers Webpage

[http://hugojunkers.pytalhost.com/ju\\_home.htm](http://hugojunkers.pytalhost.com/ju_home.htm)

The AHSA Forum provides an opportunity to exchange and seek information from fellow aviation history buffs. One of the subjects recently covered was Junkers aircraft, which revealed this website.

The site also provides a vast amount of detailed information, including Junkers' Biography, Junkers' Airlines and their affiliates, Aircraft Types, Production Lists and summaries, engines, museums and relics.

## Anniversaries

### Japanese Attack on Broome

March 3, 2012 will commemorate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary on the Japanese attack on Broome which left at least 88 people dead and 24 Allied aircraft destroyed. Many of the casualties were civilians evacuating from the Netherlands East Indies.

Aircraft destroyed were a Qantas Short C Class Flying Boat; a RAAF Short C-Class Flying Boat, 2 RAAF Lockheed Hudsons; 4 Royal Netherlands Navy Convair Catalinas, 5 Royal Netherlands Navy Dornier Do-24K flying boats; one Netherlands East Indies Air Force Lockheed Lodestar; 2 US Navy Convair Catalinas; 2 RAF Convair Catalinas; 2 USAAC B-17E Flying Fortresses, one USAAC B-24 Liberator; and one KNILM DC-3. Aircraft

shot down included one USAAC B-24 Liberator, one KNILM DC-3 and one Japanese Navy Mitsubishi Zero.

For more information, see the excellent website: <http://www.ozatwar.com/wa12.htm>.

## Vickers Vimy

March 14, 2012 will mark the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of approval being given for the Vickers FB-27A Vimy IV aircraft, in which the Ross and Keith Smith Wally Shiers and Jim Bennett made their historic flight from England to Australia in 1919, to be handed over to the Australian War Museum (later Memorial). The machine had been stored at Point Cook since March 1920, originally in the custody of the Australian Air Corps and then, from April 1921, of the new Air Force.

When the RAAF adopted its 'A' series aircraft numbering system in August 1921, the Vimy was designated A5-1 in anticipation that Australia would eventually operate four of these long-distance heavy bombers. Nothing came of this plan, and the Smiths' machine was handed over to the War Museum instead. In 1955, the Vimy was transferred to the Department of Civil Aviation, and finally placed on display at Adelaide Airport. The RAAF re-allocated the aircraft number 'A5' to the Westland Wapiti in 1929.

## For Sale

*An Iconic Airline – The Story of Airlines of South Australia*, by Jim Evans and Nigel K. Daw.

Former A.S.A Captain Jim Evans and aviation researcher and historian Nigel Daw have produced this excellent publication providing a detailed account of the history of Airlines of South Australia and the mainland operations of its predecessor, Guinea Airways. From 1960 to 1986 the airline faithfully served the people of South Australia.

The book also provides a summary of important dates in aviation history in South Australia, passenger and staff oral stories, routes and ports served histories, fleet lists and competitors. The hard-back publication contains approximately 280 pages and is crammed with interesting photographs and memorabilia.

It is a worthy addition to the bookshelf of anyone interested in Australia's airlines.

What a pity though that no-one has yet produced an equivalent book on Airlines of New South Wales and Butler Air Transport.

Purchasing details are included in the flyer within this newsletter.

## Airlines & Aircraft of the Ansett Group 1921 – 2002

This is the 8<sup>th</sup> Edition of Fred Niven's excellent DVD on the Ansett Group.

The price is just \$35, including P&P within Australia. The 4.24GB DVD is only available in 'Word for Windows' format - not PDF format, and cannot be played on TV-based DVD-players.

New chapters, many hundreds of new photos, more videos (even colour videos of early Ansett Airways' aircraft & ANA's DC-5 VHCXC) and, of course, aircraft histories/photos updated to late-November, 2011.

If you would like to order one, or more, please contact Fred by phone on (03) 9544 3388, or at 27 Alfred Grove, Oakleigh East, Victoria 3166, or [fniven@bigpond.net.au](mailto:fniven@bigpond.net.au) - with number, mailing address & form of payment.

Payments (\$35 per DVD, inc P&P) can be made by EFT, cheque, money order or cash inside a piece of paper.

## **The William Ewart Hart Centenary Celebration**

**By Keith White**

**MARCH, 1912 - A NEW START.**

At this point, it seems Hart had "drawn a line in the sand" and put his time at Penrith behind him. Recently, I was told authoritatively that he moved his operation to Ham Common following an approach from Richmond Council to do so. This may be correct, but, with a newsletter printing target to meet and no time to research the claim at this time, I will continue to accept that the decision was of his own choosing. As you, the reader will appreciate, regardless of why he moved; the fact is he did move.

It would have been quite a project for Hart and his assistants, but the major attraction to the people of the Richmond area would have been the arrival ... by train ... on 4 March, 1912 of his Boxtite biplane. An article published in the magazine, *The Motor in Australia* (April 2, 1912), reported that the airfield "will soon be ready for the public's inspection."

On 9 March, it was reported that a prospectus had been issued for a new company, Hart's Aviation Company Limited. The company was being formed to takeover and carry on as a going concern the business at 65 Market Street, Sydney and known as W.E. Hart's Aviation School. Nominal capital was to be £3500 divided into 3,500 shares of £1 each. Hart would be allocated 1,250 shares for plant and machinery plus 650 shares for the goodwill of the business and for existing contracts. Other subscribers to the new company included his father, his business manager, Charles Clancy, and Richard Stanton, a real estate agent.

Among the objects of the new company was the clause: "To establish depots and agencies in different parts of Australasia and elsewhere and to promote and give exhibitions of aviation and to promote race meetings and speed and test trials for aviators, motorists, cyclists and others and to offer and donate for competition distribute prizes..." - quite ambitious!

According to the Parnell/Boughton Bicentennial project, *Flypast* (published 1988), estimates of "revenue from exhibitions in different states would bring in £3,750 p.a., pupils' fees £900, 100 passenger flights @ £5.5.0 total £5,200 less £624 to cover expenses."

One very interested local was a schoolboy named Edgar Wikner Percival (born 23 February, 1897), who lived near Hart's airfield. He became an eager assistant at the early morning flights from the airfield. One story about him was that he would often be late bringing in the family cattle because he was watching and/or involved in the airfield activities. He became the well-known pilot and built the famous Percival Gull and other aircraft - but that is another story.

On 29 March, the Boxtite "was to have gone up at noon that day" so rumour said. Rumour was wrong. The wings were not ready." (*Hawkesbury Herald*).

(To be continued...)

## **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.

### **Brisbane**

Meetings are held at 7.00pm for 7.30pm on the last Friday of each month at the Royal Queensland Aero Club, Archerfield. Visitors are welcome; contact Don Furlonger (07) 3371 5867.

## **Calendar of Events**

**3 March 2012** Aircraft Showcase – Trainers to Jets. Temora Aviation Museum, Temora NSW.

**4 March 2012** Tyabb Air Show – The first 50 years. Tyabb, Victoria.

**17 March 2012** Aircraft Showcase – Fighters. Temora Aviation Museum, Temora NSW.

**25 March 2012** Internode Parafield Air Show. Parafield South Australia.

**25 March 2012** Open Day – Canberra Airport ACT.

**6-7 April 2012** Natfly 2012 Recreational Aviation Australia Fly-in. Temora NSW.

**15 April 2012** Wings, Wheels, Wine and Wool Air Show. Mudgee NSW.

**21 April 2012** Aircraft Showcase – Three Conflicts. Temora Aviation Museum, Temora NSW.

**12-13 May 2012** Wings, Warbirds and Wheels Air Show. Maryborough Qld.

**26 May 2012** Raglan Old Station Fly In and Heritage Show. Raglan Qld.

## **2012 Subscriptions**

Subscriptions are now over-due for 2012. Please use the renewal form enclosed with the December newsletter, and pay the modest fee at the AHSA (NSW) March 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 is \$55 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.

Un-financial members will not be permitted to vote at the Annual General Meeting, and this will be the last newsletter distributed to un-financial members.

## **Contributions and Contacts**

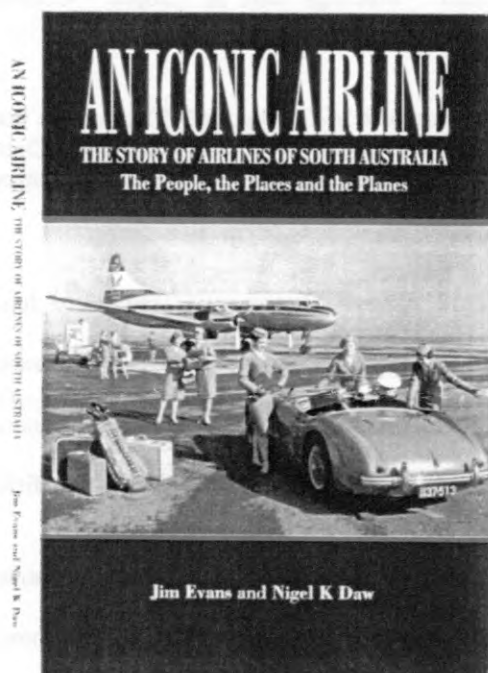
News items, other contributions, or requests for information etc for inclusion in the newsletter can be sent to AHSA (NSW) Inc at P.O. Box K346, Haymarket NSW 1238 or to the Editor, Warwick Bigsworth via E-mail ([madsen2010@optusnet.com.au](mailto:madsen2010@optusnet.com.au)) or on (02) 8824 7814.

## **Thanks**

Thanks to Peter Coates, Bill Holswich, John Scott and Keith White for their contributions to this newsletter.

# "AN ICONIC AIRLINE " The Story of Airlines of South Australia

## NEW BOOK NOW ON SALE



*An Iconic Airline* primarily contains information pertaining to the former airline that served South Australia over three decades.

More however it tells the story of the airline's predecessor, Guinea Airways, which started in 1927 as an Adelaide company based in Papua New Guinea.

Guinea Airways commenced flying passenger services in South Australia during 1937, and in 1959 Ansett Transport Industries Ltd gained control of the company, renaming it Airlines of South Australia.

In his Foreword, former airline captain Wal Taylor describes the airline's undoubted success as unique, due to the great *esprit de corps* that ran through the whole staff structure, with people looking forward to going to work because they wanted to be there, not because they had to be.

He says, "Good-hearted humour was ever present, a mark of people enjoying each other's company, and happy in their work. Because of this, operational flying standard was maintained at a high level, day by day, and indeed year by year, as was customer service."

*An Iconic Airline* is a detailed summary of the company's operations and its people, but most importantly it contains one of the most comprehensive photograph histories of aircraft of the period in print today.



This is the story of '**The People, the Places and the Planes**'. From 1960 to 1986 the airline faithfully served the people of South Australia.

The book provides a summary of important dates in aviation history in SA, the story of Guinea Airways mainland operations, passenger and staff oral stories, routes and ports served histories, fleet lists and competitors. Relive the nostalgia of the era. The publication contains approximately 280 pages and is crammed with interesting photographs and memorabilia.

**Purchase price** for the book is **\$39-95 plus delivery cost** (via DHL). **Delivery costs** are as follows:

- 1) **Adelaide Metropolitan area \$5-00** (books delivered by authors);
- 2) **Courier cost \$11-00 to any city/metro area within Australia.** If a shipment travels to a **country or rural address the cost will be \$21-00.**
- 3) For delivery to any other area or overseas please apply to the authors e-mail at: [skyways@adam.com.au](mailto:skyways@adam.com.au)
- 4) Please advise your street address as the book will be delivered by courier.

Payment arrangements may be made as follows:

- 1) Via the secure website [www.airlinesofsa.com](http://www.airlinesofsa.com) which offers credit card facilities;
- 2) Direct credit to bank account J Evans & N K Daw: BSB 065118 A/C: 10418606  
Insert your name in the 'details' panel. Then send an e-mail to [skyways@adam.com.au](mailto:skyways@adam.com.au) with your details of the transaction.
- 3) Post a cheque for the book purchase and delivery cost to: J Evans and N K Daw, PO Box 428, Port Adelaide BC SA 5015. Please include your name and address details.

The book will also available via the following outlets from 3 February 2012:

- A) Adelaide Airport Post Office, Shop2, Commercial Centre, Export Park, Adelaide Airport;
- B) South Australian Aviation Museum Inc, 66 Lipson Street, Port Adelaide.

**Enquiries to:** Jim Evans or Nigel Daw at: [skyways@adam.com.au](mailto:skyways@adam.com.au)

AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW) Inc

FORM OF APPOINTMENT OF PROXY

I, .....

of

.....

*(address)*

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

hereby appoint .....

*(full name of proxy)*

of

.....

*(address)*

being a member of that incorporated association, as my proxy to vote for me on my behalf at the Annual General Meeting of the association, to be held on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2012 and at any adjournment of that meeting.

.....

Signature of member appointing proxy

Date .....

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

## LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

### It was the best of times, it was the worst of times,... – Part 1

I have detected, by the glazed look in the eye of my faithful reader, that *Loops and Landings* has lingered too long in the mists of pre W.W.I aviation history. While planning a change, I was recently caught up in the excitement of *The Golden Age of Aviation* after reading Peter Finlay's article about Elly Beinhorn in the latest issue of *Aero Australia*. Peter's article also reminded me that, during her visit to Sydney in 1967, Elly was the guest speaker at a meeting of AHSA NSW Branch on June 15 of that year. Thanks to the skills of a then very youthful David Eyre, her talk was transcribed for publication in the *AHSA Journal* of September – October, 1968. I suspect that the person who was the key, to Elly coming to talk to us, was Nancy Bird Walton, just as Nancy later brought Jean Batten to our meeting in April 1980, and again to our Christmas Party in December. If only Nancy was still with us, and able to talk about her friendship with Elly, and to recall her own experience of *The Golden Age of Aviation*. We must now rely on her considerable legacy of books and archives. In particular, Nancy Bird's experience of the last two years of the Golden Age, (1938 - 39), was absolutely unique.

In 1938 there could not have been a more stark contrast, in the tale of two cities, than between Nancy Bird's workplace, Cunnamulla, in southern Queensland, and Berlin, the capital of Nazi Germany. Nancy suffered the extreme heat of the summer of 37/38 in Cunnamulla, where air conditioning or even electric fans were things of the future. She was still paying off her Leopard Moth on a budget so tight that it would not allow her to buy a newspaper. Meanwhile in Berlin, a correspondent for the British magazine *Flight* wrote: "Behind the Air Ministry lie the gardens that belonged to the Houses of the old Prussian Diet. General Goering's Ministry, (as Prime Minister of Prussia and the four - year plan), is housed in the former Senate House. He lives alongside in the former palace of the Prime Minister of Prussia. On the other side of his palace, stands the former House of Deputies of Prussia. This last is now the German Aero Club. The assignment of the Prussian House of Deputies to the Aero Club von Deutschland by General Goering is almost breath - taking. It is as though the House of Commons were handed over to the Royal Air Force. Every officer in the German Air Force must belong to the Club". In March 1938, Nancy abandoned the discomfort and austerity of Cunnamulla. Six months later she was the guest of honour at a luncheon in the magnificent dining room of the German Aero Club in Berlin, given by the Club's President.

This fairy tale started on February 22, 1938, when Billy Hughes, who was then the Minister for External Affairs, signed an agreement giving KLM, and its associated Royal Dutch East Indies Airways, (KNILM), permission to operate a service from Amsterdam via Batavia to Sydney. This agreement meant that for the first time a foreign airline would operate services into Australia. KNILM dedicated three Lockheed 14, Super Electra aircraft for the Batavia to Sydney sector, with a long distance seating layout for eleven passengers. A proving flight was planned for June, followed by the inaugural scheduled service to arrive in Sydney on July 5. This service would make Kingsford Smith Airport a truly international airport for the first time. For such a significant inaugural flight it was important for the airlines to gain as much favourable publicity as possible by arranging an appropriate VIP passenger list. Thus it was planned that the inbound passengers from Batavia to Sydney would include the General Manager of KNILM, a couple of members of the Council of the Netherlands Indies, and the Chief Editor of the local Press Association. For the return flight there would be additional seats available. A couple of Australian aviation correspondents would be approached to fly as guests from Sydney to Batavia and return in the expectation of their positive press coverage. Also, a notable Australian personality as a passenger would be ideal to publicise the service. What about a young, attractive, high profile Australian aviatrix? The Sydney agent for KLM and KNILM was instructed to approach Nancy Bird, in faraway Cunnamulla, with an offer of a seat on the inaugural service from Sydney.

Nancy Bird had been building her public profile in newspapers and magazines since gaining her 'A' Licence at Mascot in September, 1933, while she was a seventeen year old. She had been seldom out of the news since. Her reputation as an outstanding pilot was reinforced when she won

the Ladies Trophy in the Brisbane to Adelaide Air Race in December 1936. While she was stationed at Bourke, flying in support of The Far West Children's' Health Scheme, John Kingsford-Smith arrived to make a film for Cinesound, documenting the work of the Aerial Clinic. The film was titled, *Angel of the Outback*, which eventually carried her name throughout Australia and overseas. For example, the American magazine, *Popular Aviation*, which covered the two decades of the Golden Age, had a contributor who had seen *Angel of the Outback*. As a result, Nancy was entrenched as an international identity in the January, 1938, issue of the magazine, when it published an article by Clark S. Parker titled, *Nancy Bird – Air Ace*. However, during 1937, after a satisfactory six month trial of a preliminary agreement, The Far West Children's' Health Scheme tried to reduce costs by negotiating a new contract with Nancy which she believed would not be financially viable for her. As a result, she relocated to Charleville relying on charter work without much success. By the start of summer at the end of 1937 she had moved again, this time to Cunnamulla. When John Flynn passed through Cunnamulla on his way to Birdsville, he was shocked to find Nancy despondent and exhausted. The proposal that came in the New Year from KNILM, via its agent the KPM Shipping Line, could not have been better timed.

Nancy received the invitation to be a guest on the inaugural Sydney to Batavia service, while she was still based at Cunnamulla. At the time she was considering whether there really was a future in operating a charter business in the extreme conditions of Australia's outback. The KNILM invitation, if accepted, would at least be a brief holiday, but it also set her thinking about the wider opportunities it represented. Then, at 10 am on February 28, 1938, she received an urgent call from a Mr F. Carter wishing to be picked up at Goodooga and flown to Sydney to visit his sick wife. Nancy took off from Cunnamulla before dawn the next day, and after picking up Mr Carter, arrived at Kingsford Smith Airport at 2 pm. Two days later, in the early morning light, Nancy and her passenger took off on their return flight to Goodooga. They were soon approaching the Blue Mountains west of Sydney where clouds and mist were almost down to the tree tops. In her autobiography, *Born to Fly*, Nancy wrote: "Suddenly what I had been feeling for months came to a head – everything inside me revolted against those clouds and those mountains... so I turned back and landed again at Mascot... I didn't want to fly ever again... I suppose I had really had a sort of controlled nervous breakdown. I really didn't recognise it as that – I really didn't feel anything except a very strong desire not to fly again in that dreadful western turbulence."

When Nancy returned to Sydney from the isolation of the outback in March, 1938, she was still only twenty two years old. She had flown commercially for the last three years. With maturity beyond her years, she now focussed on new plans for her future. She would have to sell her Leopard Moth and dispose of her hangar at Cunnamulla to stabilise her finances. While KNILM had expected that she would have time only for a flight to Batavia and return, she now informed them that a flight all the way to Amsterdam would be most acceptable. This was an opportunity for her to see something of the world, but at the same time she was planning her future in aviation, not as a pilot, but in traffic and passenger management in civil aviation. This could be a working holiday, she thought, during which she could get practical experience at airports in England, Europe and even America.

In March, 1938, Australia was in the middle of its Official Programme of celebrating the sesquicentenary of Arthur Phillip's arrival with the First Fleet at Port Jackson. In his foreword to the programme, the Premier of New South Wales, Bertram Stevens, invited the world to: "share our surf and our sunshine; cities, mountains and bushland. We shall meet in celebration of what has been done in the past century and a half – in anticipation of what will be done here in Australia, in the still better years that lie ahead." It was the best of times. At 10:00 pm on Saturday March 12, 1938, German troops marched into Austria and Hitler proclaimed the union of Austria with Germany, thus breaching Article 88 of the Treaty of Versailles. A prophetic editorial in *The Sydney Morning Herald* on the following Monday ended with: "Germany's blow has made a future war nearly inevitable. It can be averted, if at all, only by a plain and uncompromising declaration by the peace-minded Powers of the point beyond which they will not tolerate further aggression." It was the worst of times....**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

April 2012 No.460

### April Meeting

The April meeting will be held at the Powerhouse Museum on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2012, at 7.45pm. The venue will be the Amenities Room, at the southern end of the Administration building, which is to the south of our former meeting venue. Entry is via Macarthur Street and car parking in the normal area, or immediately in front of the meeting room. Visitors are most welcome and supper will be available after the meeting.

The meeting will be the

### Annual Aviation Trivia and Aircraft Recognition Competitions

This year's 29<sup>th</sup> Aviation Trivia competition will be presented by Keith White, who will provide a variety of questions designed to test your aviation knowledge. Winner of the competition will receive the Slipstream Trophy and a book prize.

The 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Aircraft Recognition Competition will be conducted by David Eyre who will provide a selection of exotic images of civil, military and no doubt sport aircraft. Participants will compete for the Brian White Memorial Trophy, which will be awarded to the winner, and the President's Trophy will be awarded to the participant with the median score. Both will also receive a book prize.

Previous winners are reminded to return their trophies for the hand-over ceremonies. Please join us for this entertaining and light-hearted evening.

### March Meeting

The March meeting was the Annual General Meeting, which comprised the President's Report, Treasurer's Report and Election of Office Bearers.

### AHSA (NSW) President's Report 2012

Despite my concerns last year that the new 'rules' of the Museum and the redevelopment of the Powerhouse building would provide some challenges to the regularity of the monthly meetings, the year past has been remarkably stable for the Society in my opinion. It is interesting to me more than concerning that the March meeting should reflect the predicted unpredictability of the meeting location, in this case. Briefly I performed my usual role in notifying the Museum and its Security people of the intended meeting and then went to book the amenities area as usual only to find that the area had been booked by the Asian Art Society. Intrigued by this unprecedented clash I enquired of the Curator responsible whether there was any hope of the Asian Art Society meeting elsewhere and why was there

this conflict of meeting date for the two societies? I was informed that the Asian Art Society always meets on the second Wednesday of the month. Somehow they had neglected or disregarded the fact that 2012 is a leap year and the 'first' Wednesday of the month was, in fact, the last Wednesday of February. I wonder if Julius Caesar foresaw such a possibility for confusion when he introduced the Leap Year in 46BC. However, although I'm sure the date confusion will not cause us inconvenience next month I have already booked the amenities area even though this was not an allowed procedure to follow last year. For the May meeting and subsequent, except for the school holiday meetings, and if the Museum redevelopment goes to plan, we will be returning to the PLCs in the Powerhouse building. I expect the school holiday meetings to return to the amenities area.

Can I ask you all to consider ways to increase the Society's membership? My view is that the younger generations, more at home with computers than we, is not of a mind to leave their computers one night a month and join the Society to enjoy a night of aviation history in association with kindred spirits. It seems that they prefer the company of their computer and faceless contributors in various aviation chat rooms. Is there any way we can entice them from their computers to join us for a face-to-face chat about the various aspect of aviation history? My youngest daughter has established us on a little corner of Facebook but hasn't had the time to develop the site further. Any and all ideas will be gratefully received.

Can I also ask you to consider putting your hand up to take on the role of the Society's executive? The current executive has been performing its role for a long time, and, speaking only for myself, I could do with a break.

My thanks go to the committee members for their continued support and advice; Warwick Bigsworth, our extremely hard working, competent secretary and newsletter editor; John Scott for his ever interesting and well researched "*Loops and Landings*" and for taking on the role of Treasurer when I wasn't able to continue with it. I would also like to thank Barry Collins' son, David, for his audit of the accounts.

Thank you all for your interest and commitment to aviation history.

Ian Debenham OAM  
President

### Treasurer's Report

As Treasurer, Ian Debenham provided the following audited Income and Expenditure Statement:

Aviator", Spencer timed his film for release in the city at the Lyceum Theatre on the day of the race in June.

Meanwhile, his company, Hart's Aviation Company Limited, was registered on 26 April, 1912. I wonder what insurance cover he had, if any! (To be continued )

## 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 28 March:** Peter Carr, one of the very early members of the Ultra Light Aircraft Association of Australia and its successor the Sport Aircraft Association of Australia, will talk about how the introduction by DCA in 1953 of ANO100.18 led to the successful growth of the movement that has simplified private flying for thousands of amateur aviators in this country.

### Brisbane

Meetings are held at 7.00pm for 7.30pm on the last Friday of each month at the Royal Queensland Aero Club, Archerfield. Visitors are welcome; contact Don Furlonger (07) 3371 5867.

**Friday 30 March:** Retired Qantas captain, Warwick Henry, owns and flies an L5B, a genuine warbird, which saw service with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Commando Group in India and Burma in 1944-5. Warwick joined TAA in 1970. He was seconded to the Northern Territory Aerial Medical Service on two occasions, initially flying de Havilland Doves, then later on N24A Nomads. He flew the F.27, DC-9, B737, B727 and A300 in airline service and all told, has flown 83 types of aircraft.

The Stinson L5 Sentinel is one of the least known but most widely used airplanes of the US Army Air force. It was used nearly everywhere that the US Army or Marine Corps operated in WW11 and Korea.

## Sydney Meetings

In order to maintain a wide range of interesting topics that our Guest Speakers present, members are requested to consider any friends or contacts who might be a suitable speaker.

We are also seeking three of our members to provide short presentations for our annual Members' special interest evening. This year, the meeting is programmed for October and the Committee wishes to confirm this event as soon as practicable. Talks are usually about 15-20 minutes and might feature a special interest, past or current research or attendance at a recent aviation-related event.

Members who know of friends or contacts who could be guest speakers, or members who wish to participate should contact John Scott to register their interest.

## Wings over Illawarra Air Show 2012

This year's Air Show will be held on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> May and will feature rare and special interest aircraft from the HARS fleet, and from Temora and Nowra Museums. This year the featured type is De Havilland Aircraft, including Tiger Moths, Chipmunks, Rapide, Caribou and others, and also includes displays of vintage and classic cars and

motorcycles with the featured marque being MG-TC, TD and TF series.

A number of specialty stalls and displays will also be on hand.

## Anniversaries and Events

**14 April 1912:** L G Marshall of Alphington, Vic made three flights in his biplane constructed for the Commonwealth military aeroplane competition; it had been improved after an unsatisfactory first flight on 17 February. On 3 June at Northcote Park 1000 spectators paid to see an exhibition flight; the engine would not start, the crowd became restive, creditors seized the aircraft, and Marshall became bankrupt. In 1936-7 he was Mayor of Collingwood. (refs: Meggs, *Australian Built Aircraft and the Industry*; Parnell and Boughton, *Flypast*)

**The Military History & Heritage Victoria 2012 Conference** *In the Shadow of War – Australia 1942* opens on 21 April 2012. The line-up of eminent presenters and range of topics to be covered is on their website [www.mhhv.org.au](http://www.mhhv.org.au). The conference is a great start to Military History and Heritage Week. The cost is \$160 for AHSA members for the full two day conference or \$110 for one day. Two new military history releases are being launched by Cambridge University Press at the conference. Registration forms are on the website or you can ring the MHHV Secretariat – speak to Zoe at (03) 9650 9650 or email [mhhv@igsa.com.au](mailto:mhhv@igsa.com.au).

## Calendar of Events

**6-7 April 2012** Natfly 2012 Recreational Aviation Australia Fly-in. Temora NSW.

**15 April 2012** Wings, Wheels, Wine and Wool Air Show. Mudgee NSW.

**21 April 2012** Aircraft Showcase – Three Conflicts. Temora Aviation Museum, Temora NSW.

**5 May 2012** Aircraft Showcase – Australian Frontline. Temora Aviation Museum, Temora NSW

**6 May 2012** Wings over Illawarra Air Show. Albion Park NSW

**6 May 2012** David Hack Classic Aircraft Meet Fly-in. Toowoomba NSW

**12-13 May 2012** Wings, Warbirds and Wheels Air Show. Maryborough Qld.

**19 May 2012** Aircraft Showcase – WWII to Korea. Temora Aviation Museum, Temora NSW

**19 May 2012** Watts Bridge All-in Fly-in. Watts Bridge Qld

**26 May 2012** Raglan Old Station Fly In and Heritage Show. Raglan Qld.

## Contributions and Contacts

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

## Thanks

Thanks to Peter Coates, John Scott and Keith White for their contributions to this newsletter.

## LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

### **It was the best of times, it was the worst of times,... – Part 2.**

If *The National Trust of Australia (NSW)* had existed in 1938, and if it had called for nominations from the public for 100 Australian Living Treasures, it is certain that young Nancy Bird would have been elected to the list. Six decades later, when the list was established for the first time, Nancy's name was high on it. When she arrived back in Sydney from Cunnamulla, in March, 1938, there was genuine admiration in the country for what she had achieved in an environment that would have challenged most of her aviator brethren. Public interest was such that there was a call for a book on her life as an aviator. Nancy set to work with an author, Dulcie Ilene Dutton, to write her first autobiography titled, *Wings to Aid*, which was ready for publication by the end of June in *The Western Mail*, in serialised form. As the news of her intention to leave Australia spread, questions were asked about why she was being forced out of the country. She was referred to in the press as the *Angel of the Outback* and the *Flying Samaritan*, and one report made the comparison: "All Australia remembers with gratitude the services performed by the late Sir Charles Kingsford Smith for the advancement of aviation in the Commonwealth. Yet, when the time arrived for him to take a job in Australia as he desired, there was no work for him to do. Now, Nancy Bird, whose aerial ambulance work and successful piloting have already made her name a byword in Australian aviation, is faced with a similar problem. Unfortunately, it appears that Australia has no opening for her, and the services of this plucky young pilot will be devoted to the interests of another country."

Looking back on the late thirties, in her autobiographies, Nancy admitted to her naivety at the time. This was not surprising in a young woman who had been isolated in the outback, even to the extent, due to budget restraints, of excluding newspapers as a source of information. In many ways Nancy's uncomplicated view of the world was an asset. It enabled her to navigate the shoals of indecision before leaving Australia, and to avoid the many pitfalls associated with the political nightmare she was heading into in Europe. Her clear and simple objective while overseas was to learn all she could about commercial aviation. There is no doubt that KNILM had invited Nancy to fly with them for the publicity she would generate in Australia. When she revealed her plan to travel all the way to Amsterdam, KLM saw that they could use her international reputation to their advantage.

During the autumn and early winter of 1938 there were concerted efforts to dissuade Nancy from her overseas adventure. There was no more energetic advocate to keep her in Australia than Ivey Marden who lobbied state and federal governments, as well as women's rights groups. Even Florence Taylor got behind the effort to persuade Nancy to stay. In *My God! It's a Woman*, Nancy wrote: "Many women had taken an interest in my activities. They were the leaders of emancipation and because I had broken into a traditionally masculine field, they saw me as an example. There was even a poster that read, "Will Australia lose Nancy Bird?"

On Saturday, April 23, Nancy was an official guest at the Sesquicentenary RAAF Airshow at the Richmond Base. Also present was the Minister for Defence, Harold Thorby, together with his wife and two daughters. On the following Thursday, in the House of Representatives, the Minister was asked some embarrassing questions about the state of the RAAF, and his claims about the N.A.33, the newest aircraft on display at the airshow. It had been pointed out by aviation correspondents that its top speed was far short of the Lockheed 14, Super Electra; the KNILM airliner in which Nancy Bird was soon to leave the country. Further questioning revealed from Mr Thorby that the front-line strength of the RAAF was only 96 aircraft. Women pilots were soon in the news offering some support for the nation's air defences which were in an obviously weak state. Betty Mullins set about establishing a Women's Flying Corps, and said she had the support of prominent women's organisations. Nancy Bird said that: "Women would be of great service in the event of war. They would be valuable in flying ambulance services and in transport and commercial work." Barbara Hitchins also emphasised the support to aviation in wartime that could be provided by women. Harold Thorby was reported in the press as saying: "I do not believe there is any lasting place in either defence or

commercial aviation for women. This heavy and arduous work must remain part of man's domain. Aviation takes women out of their natural environment, the home and the raising of a family. I do not think the community considers flying a woman's job either."

Then came the incident known infamously as the *Darwin Bungle*. It resulted in the *London Daily Mail* calling for the resignation of Australia's Minister for Defence, Harold Thorby. In the House of Commons, Rear Admiral Sir Murray Sueter gave notice that he would be asking questions of the Secretary of State for Air, Sir Kingsley Wood, about the bungle. The origins of the bungle went back to February 9, when Harold Thorby informed Fergus McMaster, the Chairman of Qantas, that KLM would be allowed to begin their service to Australia on July 1, or earlier if the Empire Flying Boat service was able to be inaugurated beforehand. As it happened, a pre-inaugural flying boat service, under the command of Scotty Allan, arrived at Darwin on July 4, with eight journalists on board as guests of Imperial Airways. By coincidence, the inaugural KNILM service also landed at Darwin on July 4. Nancy Bird had been explaining for weeks, the importance of efficient ground handling of passengers as commercial aviation developed into the future. The inaugural KNILM transit through Darwin was a demonstration of Dutch efficiency, under Captain 'Fiets' van Messel, even to landing a shade ahead of schedule. By contrast, for the flying boat *Challenger*, everything that could go wrong, did go wrong. Not the least of the disasters was the crew and passengers being left aboard *Challenger* for more than an hour in the heat, and with a heavy swell running, after she had been secured to her moorings. All of the passengers were seasick. Passenger facilities on shore were not yet completed. The journalists complained that the arrangements in Darwin were prehistoric. The *Darwin Bungle* was covered in detail in newspapers in Australia and the UK. It could not have been a more depressing introduction for a first time visitor to Australia, or a worse advertisement for Qantas.

Nancy needed more time than expected to finalise the sale of her Leopard Moth. After discussions with the Dutch airlines, it was decided that she would leave Australia on the third scheduled flight of the KNILM service from Sydney leaving at 5 am on Sunday July 17. This provided the opportunity for an Australian journalist to take her seat on the inaugural flight from Sydney. During the weeks before her departure she was the guest of honour at functions organised by various women's groups in Sydney. At a luncheon speech to The *Quota Club* on July 11, Nancy said, "There is no future in the air for women as pilots; I have sold my machine and given up my career as a pilot to concentrate on commercial ground organisation. If possible I want to obtain a job at some of the airports in Holland, England and America, to learn first-hand everything I can about traffic and passenger management in civil aviation." The following day she and Jim Broadbent were guests of honour at a lunch given by the *Royal Aero Club of New South Wales* at the Pickwick Club. Jim Broadbent had, back in April, made what was to be the last of the great Australian record breaking flights before WWII. In G-AFEH, a Percival P10 Vega Gull, he broke Jean Batten's Darwin to Lympne record. Finally, on July 15, she was farewelled at a reception held by *The National Council of Women*. She expressed her disappointment at not being invited to make the Empire flying-boat broadcast: "It was just another knock on the chin from Australian aviation." In fact it was a Gunnedah girl, Muriel Howlett, who did make the broadcast, and was a passenger on the notorious *Challenger* flight. She was employed by the BBC to cover the inaugural flying boat service from Southampton to Rose Bay.

At last the time had come for Nancy to leave on her grand adventure. She was armed with letters of introduction from Edgar Johnston, Australia's Controller of Civil Aviation, which would prove invaluable for her meeting the people who could assist most. It was a cold winter morning departure. Her mother, two of her sisters and young brother John, as well as Mr and Mrs Monte Fowler, were at Kingsford Smith Aerodrome to say farewell. Mrs Elink Schuurman, the wife of the Consul-General for the Netherlands was a fellow passenger. Photographs show the happy passengers and well wishers alike, gathered around on the tarmac at the entry steps to the departing Lockheed. The first day of the flight was described by Nancy: "We took off from Kingsford Smith Aerodrome for Darwin, and started on a 2500 miles journey across Australia in a day. As we climbed into the sky the beauty of Australia's eastern coastline lay before us. We lunch at Cloncurry, in the hangar, and are soon on our way again, another distance of 840 miles before sundown. We spend the night at Darwin.".....**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

May 2012 No.461

### May Meeting

The May meeting will be held at the Powerhouse Museum on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2012, at 7.45pm. The venue will be the Amenities Room, at the southern end of the Administration building, which is to the south of our former meeting venue. Entry is via Macarthur Street and car parking in the normal area, or immediately in front of the meeting room. Visitors are most welcome and supper will be available after the meeting.

Guest Speaker for the evening will be Peter Finlay, whose topic will be:

#### **Mercy Flight to Disaster - the loss of RAAF Lincoln A73-64.**

The talk will feature a Power Point presentation with images and diagrams plus two short videos to illustrate the tale of Peter's family's involvement in the crash of 10Sqn RAAF Lincoln A73-64 at Easter 1955.

Peter's father, Sqn Ldr Jack Finlay, was a member of the crew of the ill-fated mercy flight from Townsville to Brisbane. The aircraft collided with the slopes of Mt. Superbus, failing to clear the top by just 200 feet. Superbus is the highest point in SE Queensland.

With his brother and some of their sons, Peter has made two forays to the mountain, the second of which (at Easter 1988) located the crash site where they secured a memorial plate to the Lincoln.

At Easter in 2005, members of Peter's family and those of the RAAF crew plus bush walkers and woodsmen from Emu Vale gathered to hold a service to mark the 50th anniversary of the disaster at Emu Vale.

Peter was a racing driver and advanced driving school proprietor between 1970 and 2010, and currently is a photographer/ writer and contributor to *Aero Australia* magazine. He was the principal aviation researcher for Peter FitzSimons' book *Charles Kingsford Smith & Those Magnificent Men* published by HarperCollins Australia.

He has sailed catamarans to national championship race-winning standard and he won the NSW Speed Hillclimb championships in 1994/5/6 in a 550 HP March single seater racing car. He raced Formula Ford cars in England and Europe in 1972/3. He recently restored a 1946 MG TC (much to the admiration of our President, Ian Debenham – a fellow MG enthusiast).

Please join us for another interesting facet of Australian aviation history.

### Committee Meeting

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

### April Meeting

The 29<sup>th</sup> Aviation Trivia competition and the 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Aircraft Recognition Competitions were the main feature of the evening. Prior to the competitions, local author, Justin Sheedy made a short presentation on his latest book, *Nor the Years Condemn*. The book is available as a "print on demand" from Amazon.com.

Keith White provided the questions for the aviation trivia quiz, which was won by Ian Debenham, and hence now holds the attractive Slipstream Trophy for the next year. Some of the questions from the quiz are included later in this newsletter.

David Eyre presented the aircraft recognition competition which included 100 images of vintage, civil, military and sport aircraft. Whilst there were a number of "telephone number" registered aircraft that had participants guessing, there was still a variety excellent shots from David's large collection of aircraft images. Winner was Warwick Bigsworth, who took away the Brian White Memorial Trophy; runner up was Robin Mead and winner of the President's Trophy was Peter Finlay.

### Acknowledgement

A brief summary of the Society's accounts at the end of 2011 was included in last month's newsletter. Part of the Total Income included a generous donation of \$925 by The Early Birds Association. That Association was wound up in 2010, and because AHSA (NSW) Inc had assisted it for several years, the Trustees graciously made the generous contribution to our funds as part of the distribution of its assets.

AHSA (NSW) gratefully acknowledges the contribution made by The Early Birds Association and thanks the Trustees, and in particular former Secretary Treasurer, Don Hamilton, for the kind donation.

### Vale

#### **Arch Steinbeck OBE**

Former President of The Early Birds Association, Arch Steinbeck OBE passed away on 12 April 2012, at the age of 95. In his early days he had worked at de Havilland in the propeller factory, and was known to have been a good friend of Jim Broadbent.

### Return to Service A380 VH-OQA

The Qantas Airbus A380 VH-OQA *Nancy-Bird Walton*, which experienced a catastrophic uncontained engine failure shortly after take-off from Singapore on 4 November 2010, arrived back in Sydney on 22 April

following extensive repairs over the past 18 months. The aircraft undertook its first test flight on 14 April, followed by another test flight and eventually the return to Sydney, departing Singapore late on 21 April and arriving in Sydney the following morning. The aircraft carried Qantas executives, most of the crew who were on the original flight and media representatives.

Investigations so far have identified a defect in an oil feed tube as the cause of an engine fire, which led to the engine failure.

### **Biofuels**

On Friday 13 April, a Qantas A-330 (VH-EBP) flight from Sydney to Adelaide operated on a mixture of vegetable oil and jet fuel.

In his interview with the *Sunrise* television program, the aircraft's captain said there was a 50/50 mix in starboard engine and 100% avtur in port engine, just so they can compare fuel burn. It was the first such flight in Australia, although a number of similar flights have been made in Europe, North America and New Zealand.

### **Boeing 747**

Following the report concerning Singapore Airlines' last passenger flight with the Boeing 747, it reminded me of airlines that have used B747s on their Australian services.

The only remaining B747 series passenger aircraft operating into Australia are those used by Air Pacific, United Airlines, British Airways, Malaysian Airlines and Qantas; all of which are the -400 series. Seasonal services were operated this last southern summer by Thai International and Korean Air. Cargo B747s are still operated by Atlas (on behalf of Qantas), Singapore Airlines, Cathay Pacific, Malaysian Airlines, Korean Air and soon Thai Cargo, although other itinerant cargo B747s will sometimes be seen in Australia.

But in the past, the following airlines regularly flew B747s to Sydney, with some also operating to Brisbane, Melbourne and Perth:

Ansett (300 & 400 series), Aerolineas Argentinas (200), Continental (100 & 200), Northwest (100, 200 & 400), Pan American (100 & SP), Canadian Pacific/CP Air (200), Air Canada (400), Air New Zealand (200 & 400), Korean Air (200, 300, 400 & SP), Air China/CAAC (200, 400 & SP), Mandarin Airways (SP), Cathay Pacific (200, 300 & 400), Japan Airlines (100, 200, 300 & 400), All Nippon Airways (100 & 200), Singapore Airlines (200, 300 & 400), Philippine Airlines (200 & 400), Garuda Indonesia (200), Thai International (200, 300 & 400), Air India (200), Middle East Airways (200), Olympic Airways (200), Alitalia (100 & 200), UTA (200, 300 & 400), Air France (200 & 400), KLM (200, 300 & 400), Lufthansa (200 & 400) and South African Airways (200, 300 & SP).

Cargo B747 flights were regularly operated by Evergreen International, Flying Tiger, Pan American, Polar Air Cargo, UPS, Federal Express, Martinair and Cargolux, but with the exception of the latter, with older model aircraft.

### **Burmese Treasure**

Several members have referred me to the recent article in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, courtesy of *The Telegraph*

(UK), which has reported the plans to raise a lost "squadron" of Spitfires that have lain buried in Burma since the end of World War II. They were revealed in early April when David Cameron, Britain's Prime Minister, visited Rangoon.

A Lincolnshire farmer, David Cundall, who devoted 15 years of his life to finding the aircraft has spent £130,000 (\$200,000) of his money, visited Burma 12 times, persuaded its secretive regime to trust him, and all the time sought testimony from a dwindling band of Far East veterans in order to locate the Spitfires.

His treasure hunt was sparked by little more than a throwaway remark from a group of US veterans made 15 years ago to his friend and fellow aviation archaeologist, Jim Pearce. Mr. Cundall said: "They told Jim: 'We've done some pretty silly things in our time, but the silliest was burying Spitfires.' And when Jim got back from the US, he told me." Mr. Cundall realised the Spitfires would have been buried as they had been shipped, still in their crates. Before they were shipped to the Far East, they would have been waxed, wrapped in greased paper and their joints tarred, to protect them against the elements.

The first step was to place advertisements in magazines, trying to find soldiers who buried Spitfires. "The trouble was that many of them were dying of old age," Mr. Cundall said. He visited Burma over and over again, slowly building relations with its junta. Finally, he found the Spitfires, at a location that is being kept a secret. Mr. Cundall said: "We sent a borehole down and used a camera to look at the crates. They seemed to be in good condition." Ground radar images showed that inside the crates were Spitfires with their wings packed alongside the fuselages.

The final obstacle to recovering the Spitfires, however, is political; international sanctions forbid the movement of military materials in and out of Burma, and it was also feared the regime would not allow any foreign excavations.

But because of the new, reforming stance of the government, the sanctions on movement of military material may be lifted on April 23. With the help of Mr. Cameron and his visit to Burma, a deal is being negotiated and hopes are high that it will conclude with President Thein Sein granting permission for the dig.

### **The William Ewart Hart Centenary Celebration By Keith White**

MAY, 1912 - LITIGATION.

Perhaps the most notable item of interest about Hart during the month of May, 1912, concerned the outcome of his involvement in an earlier incident which occurred whilst he was based at Penrith when, it is reported, he and his Bristol Boxkite made several flights lasting about an hour over a dairy and stampeding cows.

As reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 10 May, 1912, he had been sued in the Sydney District Court the previous day by Hugh Byrne, of the Elizabeth Dairy Epsom Road, Waterloo, who claimed "that the defendant propelled an aeroplane over, upon and against his land, on which his dairy cows were de-pasturing (sic), made a great noise and disturbance with the machine, and thereby frightened, disturbed and stampeded the herd, with the

result that two of the cows were killed, and others injured, besides which the supply of milk was greatly diminished, and he was hindered and disturbed in carrying on his business. Plaintiff further claimed that the defendant broke and entered on his premises wherein the cows were being de-pastured."

This was the first claim of its kind to be made in Australia, and, of course, another first to Hart. It must be remembered that there were no air traffic regulations operating in 1912.

The plaintiff said in evidence that he "... had an interview with Hart, when he offered to accept £10 in satisfaction. Hart said he would send his manager along to settle the claim, but the appointment was not kept."

"His Honour said the plaintiff was not now necessarily bound to that offer. It might be a reasonable one at the time when the expenses of a law suit (sic) were to be considered."

Some extracts from that section of the report covering Hart's defence follow:

- "it was not an actionable wrong for an aviator to pass over a man's land."
- "On no other occasion had complaints of stock being frightened been made, excepting at Penrith, when a racehorse owner asked him to make a detour. Stock as a rule did not take any notice. Fowls and chickens took fright, as they seemed to think that the machine was a hawk. There was not much sound from the machine - not nearly as bad as a motor-cycle racing. He did not notice the Plaintiff's cattle stampeding."
- "He certainly did not think it would be safe to fly at a lower level than 200ft at the spot referred to. He could not recollect passing over the plaintiff's farm..."
- "At Richmond, where he occasionally flies, the cattle try to chase the machine rather than being frightened."

His Honour said the question to settle was narrowed down to the height of the machine at the time. As far as he could see, it was not a case of trespass, but he did not bind himself to that. He gave a verdict for the amount claimed.

That evening, Hart is reported to have said: "The decision is a serious one for aviators. I will fulfil my present engagements, but it is my intention not to take part in any other flights until the decision has been finally tested...the legal risks are too great. If the verdict is held to be correct, it will retard aviation in Australia very seriously indeed."

Two months later, on July 9, 1912, the Wagga Wagga newspaper, *The Daily Advertiser*, published the following news item:

#### Aeronaut's Liability

#### The Scaring of Stock

#### Farmer Recovers Damages

Paris, France: The Civil Court has ordered M. Farman, the famous aeronaut, to indemnify a farmer for the damages caused to his stock through an aeroplane alighting upon his farm and causing animals to injure themselves in a stampede.

A variation to this problem is mentioned in Sir Hubert Wilkins' autobiography (published in 1961/2). In 1921, Wilkins was aboard the British airship R34 to gain

experience to pass an air-navigator test. Weather had delayed the airship from landing. He used the time to practise observing from the air. "When we tired of this, we amused ourselves by betting on the chickens that raced across the fields, running away from our shadow..." and perhaps engine noise as well!

In the same book, this time in 1929, again in an airship, the Graf Zeppelin, and flying over Soviet Asia, he commented: "It was strange to watch these people bolting at the approach of the Zeppelin, like the chicken and cattle in other countries."

Even today, light aircraft must fly at a minimum of 1,500 ft over a built up area ... and aircraft noise continues!

#### BUILDING A NEW AEROPLANE

About this time, Hart was joined by Sydney-born Frederick Esk Sandford (born 1890) who assisted him in the design and construction of a new aeroplane. In my article in *Aviation Heritage*, September, 2012, I wrote that Sandford had been involved with building the New Zealand aircraft, Manurewa No.1 before joining Hart. I now understand he became involved with the N.Z. project after working with Hart, and not before.

On 11 May, 1912, it was announced that Hart was building a new aeroplane in his father's timberyard at Parramatta. As reported in the magazine, *Flying*, 22 December 1929, he spoke of his then new project: "One of my ventures in aeroplane construction was a pusher monoplane, which I believed was going to be the fastest to date. It was cut down so fine that it would not leave the ground. It did rise once, when it hit a bump in the flying field and hopped a few feet, but it collapsed in a heap when it touched the ground again...we wrote 'finis' to that effort by removing the engine and pouring petrol around the wreckage, which we fired."

Meanwhile, the race preparations continued with an announcement on 18 May that the secretary of the Aerial League of Australia would appoint supervisors for the race.

Before closing the story of Hart's activities during the month of May, you have probably noticed that I have hardly mentioned his aviation school since reporting it was opened in January, 1912. Also, I may have given the impression that his aviation activities, particularly involving the flying school, evolved around him with little or no outside support. Certainly, the media reports concentrated on him; after all, he was the centre of attention!

One problem in researching Hart's aviation career has been the lack of access to any diaries, day journals, etc. which he may have kept. After he died, his widow continued to live in Sydney until 1950/1 when she and their young son moved to Melbourne. I have been unsuccessful in making contact with their son, William, who, I understand, worked in the trucking industry in Melbourne, and, anyway, may not want to discuss his knowledge of his father's aviation life.

Hart would have had help in maintaining records of the daily operation of his business, both at Penrith and Ham Common. Some brief thoughts on a few of those matters: records of students training for their certificates, working on his new monoplane which crashed, handling

the build-up to the air race in mid-June, records of joy flights, visitors to the new base, cash control, erection of aircraft hangar/s, fine-tuning the Boxkite for the race, travel between home and his bases, and so it goes on; too many more to mention here!

So, who helped him run his Penrith and Ham Common bases?

We know that initially there was L. McDonald, who left in early November, 1911, then C. Clancy was engaged as his manager. I hesitate to mention Edgar Percival, his young neighbour. ....???

**CORRECTION:** Elsewhere, I have stated that the American, A. B. Stone, who had challenged Hart to an air race in June, 1912, held Aviator's Certificate No.10 issued by the Aero Club of France. I am now advised that, whilst he learnt to fly in France, he received the Aero Club of America's Certificate No. 15 (Errol Martyn's letter dated 6 September, 2011 to the Editor, *Aviation Heritage*, December, 2011). (To be continued)

### AHSA Meetings

#### Melbourne

Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of the month. Meetings start at 7.30pm. As the April meeting falls on **Anzac Day** the meeting will not be at the RAAF Association but, courtesy of the Australian Aircraft Restoration Group, at the **Moorabbin Air Museum** on the corner of First Street and Second Avenue, Moorabbin Airport. Visitors welcome – contact Antony Grace on 0418 170 395.

**Wednesday 25th April: NB - CHANGE OF VENUE (see above).** Keith Meggs will read extracts from Volume 4 (still to be published) of his book "*Australian Built Aircraft and the Industry*", which will cover the period 1946-1985.

#### Brisbane

Meetings are held at 7.00pm for 7.30pm on the last Friday of each month at the Royal Queensland Aero Club, Archerfield. Visitors are welcome; contact Don Furlonger (07) 3371 5867.

**Friday 27th April:** Guest speaker will be Glen Conrad. It could be said that Glen is a "colourful" personality who has done what he loved best; flying interesting aeroplanes. He will talk about operating C130s in Africa with the UN Food-Aid programme and other operations. Glen learned to fly at the Point Cook Aero Club while serving in the RAAF. After separating from the Air Force he had a foray into aircraft sales and aerodrome ownership, then relocated to El Salvador to fly in combat against the Sandanista rebel movement, and has had many other aviation adventures. Glen now lives in retirement on the Gold Coast.

#### Sydney Meetings

The Society Committee is seeking three of our members to provide short presentations for our annual Members' special interest evening. This year, the meeting is programmed for October and the Committee wishes to confirm this event as soon as practicable. Talks are usually about 15-20 minutes and might feature a special interest,

past or current research or attendance at a recent aviation-related event.

Members who know of friends or contacts who could be guest speakers, or members who wish to participate should contact John Scott to register their interest.

### Aviation Trivia Quiz

Here are just a few of the questions posed by Keith White at the annual aviation trivia quiz. Answers next month.

1. During WWI, in which armed service did Bert Hinkler serve?
2. Why did Arthur Butler fly from England to Australia in 1931?
3. From where and when did Q.A.N.T.A.S. commence its first scheduled flight?
4. From where did P.G. Taylor depart Australia when flying *Frigate Bird II* to South America in 1951?
5. Who was the person who suggested the name of the aircraft *Southern Cross*?

### Calendar of Events

**28-29 April 2012** AAAA Auster Rally. Middlebrook Station, near Scone, NSW

**29 April 2012** Berrima District Aero Club Open Day. Mittagong NSW

**5 May 2012** Aircraft Showcase – Australian Frontline. Temora Aviation Museum, Temora NSW

**5 May 2012** Mission Aviation Fellowship Aviation Discovery Day. Camden NSW

**6 May 2012** Wings over Illawarra Air Show. Albion Park NSW

**6 May 2012** David Hack Classic Aircraft Meet Fly-in. Toowoomba NSW

**12-13 May 2012** Wings, Warbirds and Wheels Air Show. Maryborough Qld.

**19 May 2012** Aircraft Showcase – WWII to Korea. Temora Aviation Museum, Temora NSW

**19 May 2012** All-in Fly-in. Watts Bridge Qld

**26 May 2012** Raglan Old Station Fly In and Heritage Show. Raglan Qld.

**2 June 2012** Aircraft Showcase – Pacific Theatre. Temora Aviation Museum, Temora NSW

**9-10 June 2012** Sydney Aviation and Car Show. Bankstown NSW

**10 June 2012** Darwin Air Show and Adventure Day. Darwin NT

**16 June 2012** Aircraft Showcase – Korean Conflict. 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) Inc at P.O. Box K346, Haymarket NSW 1238 or to the Editor, Warwick Bigsworth via E-mail ([madsen2010@optusnet.com.au](mailto:madsen2010@optusnet.com.au)) or on (02) 8824 7814.

### Thanks

Thanks to Peter Coates, Ian Debenham, John Scott and Keith White for their contributions to this newsletter.

## LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

### **It was the best of times, it was the worst of times,... – Part 3.**

From July 1938 it was possible to fly from Sydney to Amsterdam in eight days with KLM and its associate KNILM. The airliners on the route were the KNILM Lockheed 14 Super Electras, Sydney to Batavia, and the KLM Douglas DC3s, from Batavia to Amsterdam. Both types were configured for eleven passengers. KLM was now also competing over the route with the slower but more comfortable Short S.23, C– Class flying boats, of Imperial Airways and Qantas Empire Airways. KLM provided their passengers with two standard suitcases, one placed adjacent to the passenger's seat for use during the trip. Pullman seats were fitted for maximum passenger comfort. Nancy Bird spoke of her experience as a KLM passenger: "There were only eleven seats to provide more comfort for passengers on long trips, and lots of leg room. There is also an adjustable leg rest, and by dropping the chair back one can sleep in a very comfortable position. It is very pleasant when feeling drowsy to sink off into slumber at 10,000 ft or more. Rugs are provided for each passenger; these seemed somewhat unnecessary in the tropics but before the journey was over I was glad of mine when flying at high altitudes. Although the cabin never becomes really cold, it gets a little bit nippy and its rather cosy to be tucked up into a rug at that stage." All flying was during daylight hours, and the Captain managed the formalities on behalf of passengers at each of the overnight stops. At each of these stops there was a comfortable bed, and even time for some limited tourist excursion. There was just one restriction giving a hint that all was not well with the world. All cameras had to be surrendered and sealed in a trunk on the aircraft before departure. In nearly all the countries along the route it was forbidden to take photographs from the air or on the ground.

Nancy left Australian soil for the first time early on Monday morning, July 18, 1938. Taking off from Darwin in the KNILM Lockheed, she crossed the Timor Sea to land at Koepang for refuelling and a second breakfast. There was a further stop at Den Pasar, ( Bali ), before flying on to Batavia, the capital of the Netherlands East Indies, which was reached in the late afternoon. Nancy spent a week in Batavia as a guest of KNILM. In her autobiography, *Born to Fly*, there is a photograph of the dinner party given by KNILM at which she was the guest of honour. Other guests included the Australian Consul, airline executives and their wives. Captain 'Fiets' van Messel can be identified in the group. On Tuesday, July 26, Nancy left Batavia for Singapore where she was the guest of KLM for a week. During the social round in Singapore she met another internationally famous Australian woman pilot. She was a West Australian girl, born Jessie Maud Beveridge, who married an Australian journalist Keith Miller in 1919, and who, on May 16, 1936, was married a second time to an *Imperial Airways* pilot, John Pugh. Best known as 'Chubbie' Miller, she was the first woman to fly, as a passenger, from England to Australia, arriving at Darwin on March 19, 1928. Her pilot was Captain Bill Lancaster, and their aeroplane was an Avro Avian, G-EBTU, named *Red Rose*. Nancy was able to relate to 'Chubbie' her own experience of flying in *Red Rose*. During 1934, she hired the Avian from Joe Palmer for a flight from Sydney to King Island in the Bass Strait. Nancy had Cliff Carpenter flying with her as an instructor. Nevertheless, they still became lost searching for King Island, and were fortunate to have sufficient fuel to make it back to the mainland.

Nancy reported details of her travels back to the editors of the women's pages in Australian newspapers. She described her departure from Singapore: "I joined the Dutch air-liner at Singapore on August 2, and began a five and a half days' journey to Amsterdam. I seemed to have made many friends during my all too short week in Singapore, and a bunch of them gathered at the airport to say "cheerio" when I boarded the plane. I was given seat No 1, which is at the back of the air-liner, and enabled me to see all the cabin and other passengers throughout the journey." The first day of the journey consisted of a short flight to Medan in northern Sumatra, where passengers were accommodated overnight. Nancy discovered a monument at Medan airport commemorating the arrival of the first KLM airliner in the Netherlands East Indies. A Fokker F.VII, under the command of Thomassen a Thuessinak, passed through on its way to Batavia on November 24, 1924.

An early morning departure from Medan enabled passengers to enjoy breakfast on the verandah of the Penang Aero Club just across the Strait of Malacca in Malaya. During breakfast Nancy watched two bright blue Tiger Moths next to the club being prepared for a competition later in the day. Then it was on to Bangkok, capital of Siam, (to be renamed Thailand on June 24, 1939), for lunch. Don Muang airport then was primarily a base for the Royal Siamese Air Force, but the size of its buildings, hangars and the existence of concrete runways greatly impressed Nancy. The second overnight stop was Rangoon, capital of Burma. Here there was time to visit the magnificent Golden Pagoda. It was again an early morning take off for the flight across Burma and out over the Bay of Bengal to arrive at Calcutta airport in time for breakfast at the Bengal Flying Club. The next landing was at Allahabad and then Jodhpur for the third overnight stop. Nancy joined her fellow passengers for an inspection of the massive Mehrangarth Fort, one of the largest in India.

After a two and a half hour flight the next morning the DC3 landed at Karachi. Nancy reported: "The most striking thing at Karachi is the airship mooring mast and hangar, which is simply colossal." Built as part of the Imperial Airship Scheme, this installation waited in vain for the arrival of R101 after its loss near Beauvais in France on October 5, 1930. After leaving Karachi, the DC3 followed the coast west to the small Iranian seaport of Djask, and landed to refuel. Taking off from Djask, the visibility was reduced by dust haze for most of the flight up the Persian Gulf to the fourth overnight stop at Basra in Iraq. In contrast to the British journalists opinion of Darwin, Nancy was full of praise for the passenger facilities at Basra: "The airport hotel contains 40 bedrooms, complete with green tiled bathrooms, and extensions are to be made at an early date. There are large lounges, expensively furnished reading and writing rooms, waiting rooms and every convenience. Offices of the various companies are on the ground floor, also post offices, customs, doctor, etc. The airport control tower is in the centre of the building, the land planes alight on one side and the flying boats on the river side."

The last overnight stop was Athens, and it would take a long day of flying to reach that destination. The first landing was at Baghdad for a quick brunch. Then on to Lydda in Palestine, and Alexandria in Egypt. A crossing of the Mediterranean ended at Rhodes for refuelling before the final leg to Athens. It was Saturday night in Athens, and somehow Nancy had time to visit The Acropolis and then enjoy the night life at the Alexandria Club. She may have regretted the late night because she had to be ready at 4:15 am the next morning to leave her hotel for the airport. From Athens the first landing was at Budapest in Hungary, for lunch and fuel. Soon after leaving Budapest the flight crossed the Czechoslovakian border on its course to Leipzig in Germany. On the ground at Leipzig, Nancy and her fellow passengers experienced an ominous tension. She wrote: "It seemed so strange to be told I couldn't go here or I couldn't go there." At the time things were indeed very tense in the area around Leipzig and the border with Czechoslovakia. Following the success of his occupation of Austria five months earlier, Hitler had, in May, ordered the clandestine mobilisation of his forces in preparation for a surprise invasion of Czechoslovakia in September. Unaware of the drama that would unfold during the next few weeks, Nancy boarded her KLM DC3 in Leipzig for the final leg of her long journey. She was warmly welcomed at Schiphol Airport by KLM's Mr. de Vogel, (Dutch for Bird).

As the guest of KLM, Nancy found herself at a hotel in Holland's exclusive seaside resort, Scheveningen, in The Hague. The Publicity Manager for KLM, Princen Geelings, was not alone in the company assuming that Nancy was: "one of those girls who had 'convinced' a director that she was worthy of a free trip to Europe." However, after her first press conference for KLM, Geelings was completely won over. In Nancy's words: "The Dutch recognised that I was a curiosity in the world of aviation. They understood the value of marketing and promotion and saw in this rather naive and quite unsophisticated young Australian an opportunity to expand the public's awareness of air travel."

Presiding at Nancy's press conference was KLM's Executive Director, Hans Martin. Having passed the test of her first press conference with flying colours, it was time for her to meet the founder of the airline, Albert Plesman. Nancy and Albert met informally at a pavement cafe in The Hague, she only vaguely aware of his status in the airline world. After this meeting, Plesman instructed all KLM offices in Europe to render every assistance to Nancy. The Plesman association also opened doors and flights with Lufthansa, Air France, ABA of Sweden, and DDL of Denmark..... .. **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

June 2012 No.462

### June Meeting

The June meeting will be held at the Powerhouse Museum on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2012, at 7.45pm. The venue will be the Amenities Room, at the southern end of the Administration building, which is to the south of our former meeting venue. Entry is via Macarthur Street and car parking in the normal area, or immediately in front of the meeting room. Visitors are most welcome and supper will be available after the meeting. Thanks to John Scott for the following introduction.

This meeting will be a members' celebration of:

#### **A Century of Australian Air Races and Air Shows**

In this newsletter, Keith White continues his series on the centenary of W. E. Hart. His contribution this month is devoted to Australia's first air race, between Bill Hart and "Wizard" Stone, which took place a century ago on June 29, 1912. At our June meeting we will pay tribute not only to Bill Hart, but also to all those Australians who have participated in air races and air shows over the past one hundred years. Air racing internationally, particularly during the period between the world wars, contributed enormously to the progress of flight. Air shows continue to play a vital, multi-faceted role, bringing together the aircraft industry with commercial and military operators, as well as the general public.

Peter Finlay will be providing a short PowerPoint presentation of the Hart-Stone air race saga. This was part of Peter's address to the Penrith City Library Historical Conference on 10<sup>th</sup> March this year. He will also bring to the meeting his 1/12<sup>th</sup> scale Bristol "Boxkite" No. 10 built from a short kit of a Farman IV. Hopefully it will have its electric motor installed by then so he can demonstrate the effects of gyroscopic precession and propeller torque which so upset Hart on his first flight from Penrith to Parramatta in No 10.

The meeting will resolve the mystery of the monument in the Shire of East Loddon, Victoria, which commemorates, "Australia's First Official Air Race". There will be discussion about the importance of Australian air races such as: 1919 - England/Australia; 1920 - NSW Aerial Derby; 1929 - Sydney/Perth; 1934 - MacRobertson England/Australia; 1936 - Brisbane/Adelaide, and even, 1953 - London/Christchurch, (60th Anniversary next year).

As it is a members' night, members are invited to bring any programmes or memorabilia about air shows or races over the past century. As always, there will be the opportunity for discourse between members, and for the traditional buy, swap and sell.

Please join us for another evening of interesting aviation history.

### May Meeting

Guest Speaker for the evening was Peter Finlay, whose talk on **Mercy Flight to Disaster - the loss of RAAF Lincoln A73-64** was indeed a most interesting and thought provoking subject.

On Easter Saturday, 9<sup>th</sup> April 1955, RAAF Lincoln A73-64 departed Townsville for Brisbane on a mercy flight carrying a 2-day-old baby for treatment in Brisbane. The aircraft crashed almost 4 hours later when it flew into Mt Superbus, the highest mountain in Southern Queensland. The aircraft had been the only serviceable one available and was captained by the C.O. of No.10 Squadron, Wing Commander John Costello. The navigator for the flight was Squadron Leader John (Jack) Finlay, Peter's father.

Peter gave a detailed account of the matters leading up to the flight and what is known of the flight itself. It was determined that from departure Townsville, the aircraft diverged from the nominal track by 7° starboard, which coincidentally was the magnetic variation in the area. The Inquiry into the accident found that the aircraft was not fitted with appropriate navigation aids to carry out an IFR flight; it was not fitted with H2S radar which was a ground scanning radar system and used for navigation; and, the compass had not been swung after major maintenance. RAAF air traffic control at Amberley had not been alerted to the flight, and when becoming aware of being lost, the captain failed to take advantage of loitering at a safe altitude to establish its true position.

In 1984, Peter and members of his family undertook a bush walk to find the remains of the aircraft. They found some pieces of wreckage, but decided to return on a better equipped expedition at a later date to search and film the aircraft. The second expedition was undertaken in 1988.

Peter showed a video of the expeditions, which included the filming of the placement of a memorial plaque on the aircraft to commemorate those lost in the accident.

Naturally the talk generated much interest amongst members and guests, and many questions about the accident and Peter's expeditions ensued.

Suffice to say, is that if an Inquiry into such an accident today was held, it would be far more robust and open than that carried out in 1955. Perhaps one of the significant aspects of the disaster was whether it was necessary for the flight to be undertaken during the early hours of 9<sup>th</sup> April 1955, rather than later in the morning when a more suitable aircraft was available.

## Wings over Illawarra Air Show

The Wings over Illawarra air show was held at Albion Park aerodrome on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> May, with a large crowd in attendance. The line-up of aircraft was varied with representations from the HARS collection, Temora Aviation Museum and the RAAF. The flying programme included displays by Caribou, C-47, Neptune, Catalina, Super Constellation, Tiger Moth and Drover from HARS, Meteor, Wirraway and Hudson from Temora Aviation Museum, plus other warbirds including: Mustang, Kittyhawk, Vampire, and Wirraway aircraft.

The RAAF PC-9 Roulettes performed a polished display and the Fleet Air Arm UH-1B Iroquois provided a display as well as carrying the Army Red Berets parachute team. The RAAF also had a C-130J Hercules and King Air 350 in attendance as well as a support Sikorsky S-76 helicopter. The Navy had a Sikorsky S-70B on static display.

One particularly interesting flypast was that of de Havilland aircraft; the above mentioned Caribou, Tiger Moth, Drover and Vampire, as well as a Beaver and a Chipmunk. Our North Queensland correspondent, Roy Fordham, would have been impressed!

On static display were HARS' other two Lockheed SP-2H Neptunes, Aero L200A Morava, Douglas C-54, CAC Winjeel, Cessna 310B, Piaggio P.166, DHC-4 Caribou, English Electric Canberra, Hawker Hunter plus its second C-47 and CA-28 Ceres in the hangars. Other ex-military aircraft of note included a Pilatus P3-03 and Aero Vodochody L-39 Albatros, North American AT-6D Texan, Grumman TBM-3 Avenger, Cessna A-37 Dragonfly and Harvard.

Other interesting civil aircraft were a NSW Police EC135 P2 helicopter and NSW Air Ambulance King Air 350 and King Air 200 and AW139 helicopter.

Unfortunately, the flying programme lost its way early in the day; parachutists could not commence their drop because of engines running on the ground after the supposed closure of airspace. The joy-flight operations by the local helicopter operator were carried out on the grass area between a taxiway and crowd barriers, resulting in taxiing aircraft having to divert onto the grass. Whenever the helicopters did arrive and depart, debris and grass were thrown up all over spectators. In future events, it would be preferable to have commercial helicopter flights arrive and depart from a discreet site. It was also unfortunate that the vast number of ground staff were positioned all over the apron. Whilst there was, no doubt a valid reason for some of the volunteer staff to be on the apron, there is also no doubt some took the opportunity to have a clear view of the flying activity. It was most frustrating to those that had paid to attend the event to have vast numbers of fluorescent vest-wearing "crew" obstructing their view.

Notwithstanding the above criticisms, it was a most enjoyable show.

## New Aircraft for and Imminent Departures from the RAAF

On 10 May, the Minister for Defence announced the purchase of 10 Alenia C-27J Spartan Battlefield aircraft. The C-27J will replace the Caribou aircraft which was retired from service in 2009 after a career spanning more

than four decades. The Minister said that the C-27J complements the capabilities of the C-130 and C-17 aircraft and uses common infrastructure and aircraft systems such as engines, avionics and the cargo handling systems. The first aircraft are expected to be delivered in 2015 with the Initial Operating Capability scheduled for the end of 2016. The aircraft will be based at RAAF Base, Richmond. Readers who attended the Avalon Air Show in 2011 may have observed the spectacular handling display by the Italian crew, and which attracted the attention of CASA flying operations inspectors.

At the same time, the Minister announced the withdrawal from service of the Lockheed Martin C-130H Hercules in July 2012. Four of the aircraft are being gifted to Indonesia.

## First Flight

GippsAero, the Australian subsidiary of Indian auto-maker, Mahindra Group, successfully completed the first flight of its GA10 turbo-prop aircraft at Latrobe Regional Airport on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2012. The 10-seat turbo-prop aircraft, which is powered by a Rolls-Royce 250 engine and based on GippsAero's GA8 Airvan, will be marketed to a variety of roles including passenger and freight transport, air survey and surveillance. GippsAero hopes to begin shipping the GA10 next year.

Another major milestone by GippsAero was achieved in late March when GA8 Airvan #175 rolled off its assembly line, and in so doing makes Airvan the most produced Australian designed and manufactured civil aircraft in history. The title has until now been held by the N24 Nomad, however with the completion of the latest GA8 aircraft, the Airvan has now taken this title.

## Aviation Trivia Quiz Answers

Here are the answers to the questions posed by Keith White at the annual aviation trivia quiz.

1. During WWI, in which armed service did Bert Hinkler serve?  
A. Royal Naval Air Service
2. Why did Arthur Butler fly from England to Australia in 1931?  
A. To propose to and marry his girlfriend before someone else did.
3. From where and when did Q.A.N.T.A.S. commence its first scheduled flight?  
A. Charleville to Longreach, 11 December 1920
4. From where did P.G. Taylor depart Australia when flying *Frigate Bird II* to South America in 1951?  
A. Grafton, NSW
5. Who was the person who suggested the name of the aircraft *Southern Cross*?  
A. Keith Anderson

## AHSA Meetings Melbourne

Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of the month at RAAF Association, 24 Camberwell Rd, Hawthorn East, in the auditorium. Parking is available under the building – enter from the lane at the south end. The meetings start at 7.30pm - ring the bell if the front door is shut. A number of members meet casually for dinner from 6.00pm at the Tower Hotel opposite the RAAFA. Visitors welcome – contact Antony Graze on 0418 170 395.

## Brisbane

Meetings are held at 7.00pm for 7.30pm on the last Friday of each month at the Royal Queensland Aero Club, Archerfield. Visitors are welcome; contact Don Furlonger (07) 3371 5867.

## Calendar of Events

**2 June 2012** Aircraft Showcase – Pacific Theatre. Temora Aviation Museum, Temora NSW

**9-10 June 2012** Sydney Aviation and Car Show. Bankstown NSW

**9-10 June 2012** Queensland Vintage Aircraft Group – Best of British Fly-in. Warwick, Qld

**10 June 2012** Darwin Air Show and Adventure Day. Darwin NT

**16 June 2012** Aircraft Showcase – Korean Conflict. Temora Aviation Museum, Temora NSW

**30 June – 1 July 2012** Queensland Air Museum Open Cockpit Weekend. Caloundra Qld

## The William Ewart Hart Centenary Celebration

By Keith White

June 1912

### THE INTERNATIONAL AIR RACE.

The month of June, 1912 was destined to be the high point of Hart's aviation career. His contest with Stone was cancelled on 15 June, due to unfavourable weather, and rearranged for 29 June. Initial preparations for the first date would have required a relocation of most of his aviation operation from Ham Common to Ascot Racecourse, where it would have remained for the new race date.

In turn, this would have disrupted whatever aviation training plans he may have had in place for his pupils, as well as the developmental work, in conjunction with Esk Sandford, on his new monoplane and any other projects which he would have been progressing at Ham Common.

So, with little to no media reports of other activities for the month, the air race comes to the fore providing plenty of interest.

After A. B. "Wizard" Stone issued his challenge to Hart in April for three air races, the American continued his theatrical/barnstorming tour. He visited Bathurst with his Metz-Bleriot monoplane and his "Globe of Death" act, which was followed by appearances at Orange and Dubbo. By the end of May he was at Rockhampton where he is reported to have made the first powered flight in Queensland.

On 4 June, he made a second flight, this time racing a car over 15 miles. On the fifth circuit of the race, and a lap ahead of the car, he turned away to a nearby cricket ground and crashed, but his aircraft was ready to race Hart on 15 June.

In the lead up to race day, an official programme containing 32 pages was printed. It measured 208 cm by 140 cm. Its front page reads:

"Under patronage of His Excellency The Governor-General and the Minister of Defence for Australia ... First International Aviation Contest ... (controlled under personal direction of Philip Lytton) ... W.B. Hart (Australia) v. "Wizard" Stone (America) ... Sydney to Parramatta & Return ... Saturday, June 15 1912 ... Price, 6d." Around the

border of the page, a sponsor's name in large letters was printed repeatedly!

On 14 June, 1912, *The Sydney Morning Herald* had an advertisement two columns wide and six inches deep with full details of the occasion. It was most comprehensive, including charges for general admission at 2/- and grandstand enclosures at 2/- extra, as well as a special price for the Rosehill grandstands at 2/- only. Special tram services were arranged from Circular Quay and Central Railway to Ascot Racecourse.

The programme itself was full of information about the race and its contestants, paid advertising, details of Carnival Officials and the *Conditions Covering this Unique Contest*, which were:

"Four posts to be erected, not less than 30 feet high and placed at equal distances round the circle at Ascot and Parramatta not less than one mile in circumference. The aviators, after passing the Judge's Stand, shall circle outside posts not less than three times before leaving the course and starting on the cross-country to Parramatta. Arriving at Parramatta, each aviator is compelled to land in enclosure, and remain on ground, with motor not working, not less than ten minutes. On the return journey the same conditions shall apply as in starting.

The aviator making the fastest time to be adjudged the winner; should both aviators meet with mishaps which prevent them continuing the contest, the man who has covered the greatest distance shall be declared winner."

The race was publicised as "THE SENSATION OF THE CENTURY", "AUSTRALIA'S FIRST AERIAL RACE", and "FIRST INTERNATIONAL AVIATION CONTEST", which it was not, and stated that "The Aero Club of Great Britain Rules to govern the contest".

Incidentally, Stone, who was under contract to Philip Lytton for his Australian/New Zealand tour, was named "Eugene Stone" in the programme, which also included the following article:

### "AN APPRECIATION

W. E. Hart, by qualifying as the first Australian Aviator, not only distinguished himself personally, but also actually removed a reproach upon the nation. There are no lines of Lindsay Gordon's more hackneyed than those which run:

No game was ever yet worth a rap  
For a rational man to play,  
Into which no accident, no mishap,  
Could possibly find its way.

Australia, as is well known, possesses the finest athletes in the world, men and lads who play all the games for all they are worth. It rather looked as if we were side-stepping aviation on account of that very element which Gordon declared to be necessary to make sport appetising to us. It is in this connection Mr. Hart has to be thanked, as well as congratulated."

I trust the above has given you, the reader, an appreciation of what was one of the biggest attractions to be available up to that time for the people of Sydney, and, remember, this was only eight years and six months after the Wright Brothers made their first powered flight ... and it was not even race day!!

He had considerable difficulty, owing to the trees in the vicinity, to affect a landing, but here his great experience stood him in good stead. By clever manoeuvring, he steered his machine into the narrow roadway, with practically no damage.

At 5 o'clock Stone was still guarding his machine, surrounded by an eager crowd, who had hurried to the scene. He was waiting for a motor car, which was bringing him a fresh supply of petrol, upon receipt of which he intended to resume his journey and complete the course.

To ascend again, however, he anticipates considerable trouble, owing to the little space afforded him to make a preliminary run.

"Follow the tram track", a humorist advised Stone as he stood guard over his machine, but the worried and disappointed aviator only smiled.

### VICTORY FOR HART

Captain George Taylor, secretary of the Australian Air League (sic) and referee and starter from Botany of to-day's race, when seen stated that Hart had been awarded the race, as he had complied with all the conditions agreed upon, and had completed the distance - 14½ miles - in 23 minutes 52 seconds.

Hart after reaching Parramatta was informed of Stone's accident, thereupon again ascended, and made a search for his missing opponent." (end of *The Evening News*' report of the race).

Incidentally, did you notice in the above *Evening News* report mention of "a motion -picture operator" ...at Surrey Park and of *The Sydney Morning Herald* report of "a cinematograph machine which was taking pictures" at Parramatta Park? Do those films still exist? More research is required.

A local newspaper, *The Alert*, on 18 February, 1932, published an article, "Old Lakemba Recalled - Sidelights on Early Days". Written by its editor it included a report of Stone's landing. The following extracts are from that article:

#### "Early Airman in Lakemba

It was upon clear land near where the big public school is now built ... that the famous American airman, "Wizard" Stone was forced down ... during his sensational race with Hart, the Parramatta dentist. Hart... had a terribly old contraption of a 'bus' while his opponent flew a light, powerful, up-to-date monoplane.

#### Lost in Clouds

Stone, rising to 5,000 feet at the start, lost his direction in heavy cloud and found himself down towards Como; worked his way back to Punchbowl, and, flying low in circles over the railway bridge, decided to land ... he made a perfect landing, only injuring the undercarriage slightly. I was at the time with my son nearby, and we were with the flyer within a minute or two of his landing. Speaking with a strong Yankee drawl, he asked where he was exactly, and had we seen Hart? His goggles were smothered with an oil film. "No, I'm not hurt", he said, "but I'm damn mad at getting corralled in the clouds and losing all sight of Hart."

By this time quite a crowd had gathered round, running from all directions. Stone said he was booked to

leave Sydney by steamer on Monday morning for Brisbane, and asked if transport to wharf by road could be arranged. "I can strip the wings," he said, "quite easily if I can get a little help and a few tools." I arranged with Mr George Potter of Canterbury by phone from the St George Hotel to send out his biggest wagon and a few horses. Soon the rider of the skies had lost her wings and was hoisted safely on to the wagon. By this time it was quite dark, and the first stage of the journey ended at the St George Hotel, where our American visitor learned how spontaneous Australians can be in their appreciation of men of courage and resource.

### Belmore's Demonstrative Welcome

Stone's visit was more the less welcome because it was unexpected and somewhat forced. Belmore and Lakemba recognised him as a good sport, and besides, 21 years ago close personal contact with airmen was quite an uncommon experience; so while a guard kept watch outside the hotel over Stone's machine, the crowd inside had become bigger and more demonstrative as the drinks went round in their admiration of the visitor. Mr George Potter later garaged the whole outfit in his big stables at the rear of the town hall, and I found afterwards that Mr Potter delivered it on to the steamer also at Darling Harbour and refused to accept any payment whatever because he felt poor Stone was at the time up against it."

Although Stone did not win the air race, it seems he may have enjoyed his "end of race revelry more than his race opponent, who, as reported above, "left his machine at Parramatta Park and returned home with his father by rail."

Another observation about Stone and the air race: whilst Hart would have had some knowledge of the area between Surrey Park and Parramatta Park. Stone did not. As reported above in the article about the race published in *The Evening News*, Stone is quoted as saying: "Only one thing troubles me, and that is that I have no idea where Parramatta Park, the finishing post, is. However, I think I will get there all right." What an admission!! It is hardly a compliment to his race opponent. How seriously did he really approach the air race?

As an experienced pilot of his time, "flying the course" before the event would seem to have been a reasonable precaution for him to take! But then, he has been described as "wisecracking, barnstorming "Wizard" Stone ...", photographed in the cockpit of an aeroplane with a cigar in his mouth (*Aussie Air Stories* 11, 1987), so maybe his approach was not based on taking a reasonable precaution!?

(To be continued)

### Contributions and Contacts

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

### Thanks

Thanks to Peter Coates, Ian Debenham, John Scott and Keith White for their contributions to this newsletter.

## LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

### **It was the best of times, it was the worst of times,... – Part 4.**

On April 16, 1959, Trans Australia Airlines first Fokker Friendship, VH-TFB, Christened *Abel Tasman*, touched down at Essendon after a nine day delivery flight from Schiphol Airport in Amsterdam. One of the VIP passengers on board was Mr. Abel Tasman, then a young research chemist and a descendant of the famous Dutch navigator. In the naming of its first Friendship, TAA paid tribute to the long association between Australia and Holland, which now stretches back over four centuries to the time Dutch mariners discovered and gave the name *New Holland* to the hitherto "unknown southern land." By the time Nancy Bird found herself a guest of KLM, the ancient maritime connection between Australia and Holland had been augmented by an aviation connection. Early in the *Golden Age of Aviation*, from 1925 with Hubert Wilkins, and from 1928 with Charles Kingsford Smith, great fame was brought to the Fokker name by Australia's aviation pioneers. But it was the MacRobertson Air Race, from Mildenhall to Melbourne in October, 1934, that really cemented a new bond between the peoples of Australia and Holland. For KLM, the success in the air race of its newly introduced DC 2, *Uiver*, resulted in a public relations bonanza with consequent commercial rewards. There was every reason for the young Australian aviatrix, Nancy Bird, to be welcomed with open arms by KLM when she arrived in Holland in 1938.

Nancy spent two weeks as a guest of KLM, based in The Hague, from the day of her arrival on August 7, until her departure for the UK on August 22. She wrote that during this time: "The Dutch were marvellous to me, flying me everywhere in Europe as their guest." A highlight of these travels was a visit to Le Bourget Airport near Paris. Air France invited her to inspect its ground facilities for passengers and showed her over its work horse, the Potez 62. This airliner could accommodate 14 to 16 passengers in a spacious cabin which was sound proofed, and equipped with heating and air conditioning. At Le Bourget, Nancy was standing on historic ground. Her young life encompassed the two decades since August 25, 1919, when the the world's first scheduled daily, international, commercial airline flight was flown in a DH 16, from Hounslow in London, to Le Bourget. And now KLM was contemplating using Nancy to promote the most recent air route connecting the UK to the Continent – its service from the new Ringway Airport near Manchester to Schiphol.

On June 25, 1938, Sir Kingsley Wood, the UK Secretary of State for Air, officially opened Manchester's new airport at Ringway, located about ten miles south west of the city. At the time it consisted of a prepared grass landing area of about 250 acres. Manchester boasted that it was the first municipality in the UK to provide a civil airport, and now had finalised arrangements with KLM to operate an international service from Ringway to the continent. Nancy's presence in Holland as its guest provided KLM with an ideal opportunity to use her, in the role of *Famous Empire Aviatrix*, to be at the centre of a promotion for its new service. KLM finalised plans to fly her to a formal reception at Ringway on Monday, August 22. When Nancy arrived at Ringway she was surprised to find the terminal building decorated with large poster photographs of herself advertising KLM's new direct service. Guests at the reception included Lord Trent, representing the UK government, and officials from KLM and the Dutch government. Nancy was welcomed by Manchester's Deputy Mayor and his wife, who was Amy Johnson's sister. Nancy also provided a copy of her biography, *Wings to Aid*, for serialisation in Manchester's *Sunday Chronicle* under a new title, *Emergency Angel*. Thus, on her arrival in the UK, KLM had gone a long way in promoting Nancy from the status of famous aviatrix to that of international celebrity. This elevation would have its advantages, but also carried the potential for exploitation and isolation. In the meantime she enjoyed all the hospitality that Manchester, and the nearby cities of Liverpool and Blackpool, could provide. It was the end of August before she boarded a Railway Air Services, DH89 Rapide flight at Manchester, and escaped to London.

In London, Nancy's first visit was to Australia House on the Strand. She had letters of introduction to the Australian air liaison officer with the Air Ministry, who was the key to creating her itinerary over the next few weeks. She found him, "a cheery, unruffled soul, unassuming and

courteous,"and also very helpful in arranging the contacts she required. He was of course Australia's first air V. C., Group Captain Frank McNamara, who had taken up his appointment at Australia House in January, 1938. Starting at the top, an interview was arranged for Nancy with Sir Francis Shelmerdine, the Director- General of Civil Aviation in the UK. She was put in touch with other Australians in London involved in aviation, including her old friends from the RACNSW, Denzil and Andrew Macarthur Onslow. They had purchased a DH 84 Dragon and had placed it on the Australian register as VH-AAO, intending to fly it back home. Nancy was offered a seat on the Dragon to return with them, but declined because she planned further visits to Europe and the USA. However, she did accept a test flight over London with Andrew in the Dragon. Denzil and Andrew left Croydon Airport on September 11 and, after an eventful trip, arrived at Mascot on October 22.

Arrangements were also made for Nancy to meet Edgar Percival for an inspection of his factory at Luton Airport. By 1938, Edgar had achieved great success as the builder and pilot of his series of record and race winning Gull and Mew Gull aeroplanes. When Nancy visited Luton, the new Percival Q6, a twin engined monoplane, was coming off the production line. Edgar took Nancy on a demonstration flight in the Q6. Then followed inspections of activities at Heston Airport, and De Havilland's factory at Hatfield. A visit was organised to the new Imperial Airways flying boat terminal, which was opened at the Southampton Docks in March, 1938. She even managed a flight to Scotland with Scottish Airways, the only airline, during all her time away from Australia, on which she had to pay her fare, (£3.00).

Meanwhile, as Nancy was familiarising herself with civil aviation in England, Hitler's intention to invade Czechoslovakia had become apparent to France and Britain. As with Austria, Hitler believed that his occupation of Czechoslovakia would not cause France and Britain to declare war in accordance with their respective agreements, (France with Czechoslovakia, and Britain with France). But now, much to his irritation, he was forced to discuss his intentions with Britain's leader. On September 15, Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain boarded an aeroplane for the first time in his life, and flew to Germany for a meeting with Hitler at his summer retreat at Berchtesgaden. There he was told by Hitler that his reason for invasion was the Czech government's refusal to allow self determination for the German speaking residents of the Sudetenland who wanted to be part of Germany. This mountainous region of Czechoslovakia was contiguous with the German and Austrian borders. On September 22, Chamberlain flew back to Bad Godesberg on the Rhine for a further meeting at which Hitler stated his intention to proceed with his invasion within two days. After a bitter exchange the date was altered to September 28, and then October 1. This sent Chamberlain scrambling to recruit Mussolini to persuade Hitler to agree to a further meeting with the leaders of Britain, France and Italy at a conference in Munich on September 29. Although the Czech government was not represented, Britain, France and Italy subsequently forced her to cede the Sudetenland to Germany to avoid war.

Nancy was concerned by the developing crisis, and it must have seemed like another world to be caught up in the obligations of her new found celebrity status. During September she attended the premiere of the Paramount Pictures movie, *This Man is News*, where she rubbed shoulders with Charles Laughton, Elsa Lanchester and Valerie Hobson. There was an approach by a London publisher to turn her serialised biography into a book. She was invited to the country for a weekend, and to dinner at a mansion in Berkley Square, where she was the only guest to wash her grapes in her finger bowl.

On September 30, Neville Chamberlain returned from Munich, landing at Heston Airport in British Airways Lockheed 14, G-AFGN. Chamberlain's speech, as he stepped off G-AFGN, was captured on film for posterity: "We, the German Fuhrer and Chancellor, and the British Prime Minister, have had a further meeting today and are agreed in recognising that the question of Anglo-German relations is of the first importance for our two countries and for Europe. We regard the agreement signed last night... as symbolic of the desire of our two peoples never to go to war with one another again." Later, in front of 10 Downing Street, he added: "My good friends, for the second time in our history, a British Prime Minister has returned from Germany bringing peace with honour. I believe it is peace for our time. Go home and get a nice quiet sleep". It was the best of times..... **John Scott.**