



AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW) Inc

ABN: 83 295 759 224
PO BOX K346 HAYMARKET NSW 1238

Southern Skies

THE NEWSLETTER OF AHSA (NSW) Inc

OCTOBER 2013 ~ No 477

file 2013-3

Oct-Dec

October Meeting

The October meeting will be held at the Powerhouse Museum on Wednesday 2 October 2013 at 7.45pm.

The venue is the Amenities Room at the southern end of the Administration building. Entry is via Macarthur Street and car parking is immediately in front of the meeting room. Visitors are most welcome and supper will be available after the meeting.

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

AIRCRAFT MODELLING & ITS HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE will be the topic of speaker, Jono Willis.

Jonathan Willis, a mad modeller since spending his first round of pocket money as a kid on a Spitfire kit, developed a passion for modelling in childhood when living in England right next to Northolt aerodrome, the home to the Polish squadron during the Battle of Britain. There was a Spitfire gate guardian which he made his dad stop every time they drove past.

After 20 years in the Royal Australian Navy, not the Air force, his involvement with aircraft may seem odd! He has made many hundreds of models of all types - from AFV's, cars, figures, planes and all types of modelling kits and also a true love of scratch building models.

His models have been exhibited in museums and he currently has models on display at *Fighter World* at Williamstown Air Force base. He also makes models for old pilots and has made them on commission for other clients. He is currently working on a MK IVc Spitfire for a review of the kit.

As part of his modelling he does a lot of research to make sure that every detail is exactly correct and Jon has, in the past, done a lot of research for a great Australian aviation artist, Peter Randall-Kent.

Through modelling Jon has met many great fighter pilots and he is currently a member of the Spitfire Association and a life member of the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

The September Meeting

Our three speakers were fellow members of the Society. The first to speak was Colin Lock.

Having completed his first book, a history of Qantas flight engineering, Colin has embarked on the research for his second book, a biography of Connie Jordan, Qantas' first female licensed aircraft maintenance engineer. Colin gave an illustrated talk on his research to date on Connie. According to Bruce Leonard in his book, "A Tradition of Integrity", Connie was "...the first woman in Australia to hold a ground engineer's licence, and the first female engineer to be employed by an Australian airline".

Connie was a remarkable woman as she was an accomplished pianist and violin player with qualifications from Trinity College in London, a teacher of ballet and ballroom dancing, a pilot and a racing driver. Colin's presentation included photographs from Connie's personal album lent by her family as well as images of her certificates and licences. Connie seems to have had a problem remembering that she was born in 1908 as her licences show that she subtracted at least ten years from her age. The photographs of her make her decade subtraction plausible. Having gained her pilot's licence at the Royal Queensland Aero Club in 1936 she worked for the Club as an engineer until she joined Qantas at Archerfield in 1942. Her first Qantas assignment was to assist Cloncurry Station Engineer, Bill Williams, with the servicing of the company's Lockheed 10A VH-AEC 'Inlander' and the DH84 Dragon VH-URY 'John Flynn' used for the Flying Doctor Service. Connie returned to Archerfield in 1944 and was given the responsibility for engine test and certification. Her 'D' licence was endorsed for both in-line and radial engines.

Connie left Qantas in 1953 and married Paavo Karhula in that same year. Apparently Connie didn't let on to Paavo that she was born in 1908. He thought that she was born in 1917 as her certificates and licences stated.

The next speaker was Ian Dolstra who gave an illustrated talk about the 1933 Christmas mail flights from Amsterdam to Batavia. This particular year was particularly interesting for its introduction of new aircraft onto the route but it was also the introduction of a new company and their prototype aircraft. Also adding to the interest was the involvement of Captain Ivan Smirnoff, WWI Russian ace and, in 1933 a pilot with KLM. Smirnoff became a part of Australian aviation history as Captain of the Douglas DC3 PK-AFV "Pelikaan" which was shot down by Japanese Zeros near Broome on the 3rd of March 1942. However, back in 1933 Smirnoff flew another aircraft named "Pelikaan", a KLM Fokker F.XVIII, to rescue the Christmas mail when the experimental Fokker F.XX named "Zilvermeeuw" (Silver Gull) had engine failure at Amsterdam and was unable to carry the mail to Batavia. Also carrying Dutch Christmas mail to Batavia that year was the Panda Postjager, a private mailplane venture. To be able to compete for the Christmas mail the Postjager was rushed through the design and construction phases and was found to be below the design specification. However, the flight went ahead and on the Rome to Athens sector the right hand engine failed. The aircraft returned to Brindisi and another engine sourced but it was only due to arrive in Naples on December 22. It would then have to traverse Italy and be fitted and tested. The Postjager's attempt failed. Smirnoff and crew flew long hours to ensure that the Christmas mail arrived on time. Ian bought along some of his collection of souvenirs of the 1933 Christmas mail including two ceramic plates, first day covers and a biography of Smirnoff.

The final speaker for the evening was Paul Ewoldt who up-to-dated members with the planning for the re-enactment and associated centenary celebrations of the 1914 first airmail flight in Australia in July 2014. The aircraft proposed for the re-enactment flight is the Jabiru which is more powerful and robust than the original Bleriot used by Maurice Guillaux in 1914 but it still may have some difficulty dealing with the adverse winds expected in the initial phase of the flight from Flemington Racecourse to Seymour. The organizing committee has been advised that a lower powered aircraft would be a risk in achieving this first sector. From Seymour the route is to Wagga and, if the Temora Aviation Museum is willing, a side trip to Temora will be included in the itinerary.

From Temora the Jabiru will fly to Harden to overnight. The next day it will depart for Sydney to arrive at Bankstown. If it is achievable the aircraft will fly to Moore Park but the committee is prepared for a refusal by Sydney City Council and CASA to this sector of the flight. An alternate idea is to have a flyover of the city by a group of vintage aircraft to draw attention to the event. Tom Lockley has done great work in establishing contacts and developing the broad aspects of the re-enactment and is congratulated for his effort. Ken Garland has been active in sourcing an aircraft and pilot for the flight. The committee will request the assistance of AHSA Inc. members to co-ordinate the Victorian phase of the re-enactment. AHSA Inc. has given in-principle support to the project and is awaiting further information. Shell Petroleum has also given in-principle support to the project pending clarification of the project's details. They have suggested using a HARS Caribou as a 'chase plane' for the Jabiru and Doug Haywood, HARS Project Manager for the Caribou, has responded positively to the idea. With much detail and work to be done on this project the committee welcomes the assistance from any member willing to devote some time to the event's organisation.



21AUG2013

QANTAS FREIGHT'S FIRST B737-300F RETURNS FROM NEW ZEALAND

Qantas (QF, Sydney Kingsford Smith) cargo subsidiary, Qantas Freight, has taken delivery of its first B737-300(F), VH-XML (msn 23486), to be painted in the airline's distinctive red livery. The former Australian Air Express (XM, Melbourne Tullamarine) aircraft was in Christchurch prior to returning to Australia.

Australian Air Express is currently being rebranded to Qantas Freight after Qantas acquired Australia Post's 50% stake in the night-freight/express parcel operator late last year.

Its four B737-300(F) and single B767-300(F) cargo aircraft are operated by Express Freighters Australia (EFA, Sydney Kingsford Smith).

Qantas Freight also wet-leases three B747-400(F) freighters from Atlas Air (5Y, New York JFK) and two BAe 146-300(QT) aircraft from JetEx (JTE, Adelaide).

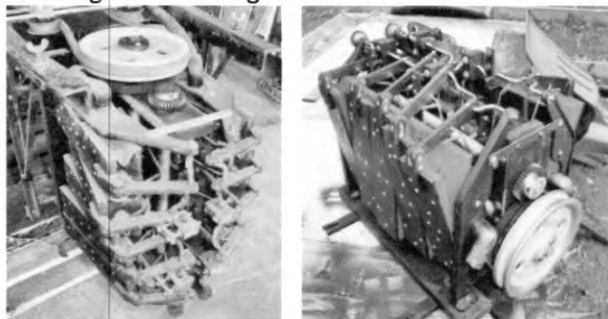
LINK TRAINER RESTORATION

nhillaviationheritagecentre

Work on the Link Trainer is guided by project manager, Neil Thomas, who has had considerable experience with Link Trainers having owned one himself during the early part of his career in the aviation industry.

Many functions of the Link trainers are powered by vacuum which means that there are numerous sets of bellows similar to a late 1800s pedal organ. Because these units are 60 years old and in original condition all of the special bellows material must be replaced. Neil Thomas has undertaken to do this work much to the delight of the other three members of the restoration group. His first effort, the restoration of a turning motor, is nothing short of amazing. Many of the parts of these machines are not designed for ease of servicing.

Although the time sheets are clocking up the hours, one machine is sitting back on its reconditioned base with a reconditioned turning motor, serviced vacuum motor, reconditioned flight simulating bellows and numerous other small bits and pieces in the process of cleaning and servicing.



Before the digital age there were motors

ARTHUR BUTLER MEMORIAL LECTURE

The AHSA (NSW) meeting to be held on Wednesday 6th November will feature the 31st Annual Arthur Butler Memorial Lecture, which will be presented by Trevor Dean, recently retired Curator of the Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown. "The Aquatic Airman" will be the title of Trevor's lecture and will describe the life and times of Bryan Monkton. A more comprehensive description of Trevor's talk will appear in next month's newsletter.

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 🛎 **DID YOU KNOW** ..... you can order your Christmas Cake (yum) and cards and support the RFDS by ringing the South East Section office in Sydney 02 9941 8888 for an order form and catalogue or online at [www.flyingdoctor.org.au/shop](http://www.flyingdoctor.org.au/shop) ????

## URL'S TO INTEREST READERS OF 'SOUTHERN SKIES':

1. For many members an excellent and historic down-memory-lane "Look at life" video clip from The Rank Organisation, dated May 1964, about air travel in England from Heathrow Airport featuring BOAC and BEA airplanes. Published Apr 28, 2012

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J\\_Om7kdR\\_Pg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J_Om7kdR_Pg)

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### September 2013

**28** Queensland Air Museum Aero Engine Run Day, Caloundra Q'ld

**28-29** SABC Serpentine Annual Fly-in, Serpentine WA  
 October 2013

**05** Aviation Showcase-Fighters - Temora Aviation Museum, Temora NSW

**19** Royal Flying Dr Service Base Open Day as part of RFDS 85th anniversary and Broken Hill Aero Club's 75th birthday celebrations, Broken Hill NSW: Details [bnerville@bigpond.com](mailto:bnerville@bigpond.com)

**19-20** Tamworth Festival of Flight, Tamworth NSW

#### November 2013

**02** Warbirds Downunder Air Show 2013, Temora NSW

**03** NSW Sport Aircraft Club Open Day, Wedderburn NSW

**06** 31st Arthur Butler Memorial Lecture - Phm

**09** Rathmines Catalina Festival, Lake Macquarie, Rathmines NSW

**27** Hastings District Flying Club Open Day, Port Macquarie NSW

### AHSA MEETINGS

**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 George Palmer at [ahsa\\_qld@hotmail.com](mailto:ahsa_qld@hotmail.com).

*The next meeting will be 25 October 2013.*

**Melbourne Meetings** are held on the fourth Wednesday of the month at the 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 Grage on 0418170395.

Thanks to Peter Coates, Ian Debenham, and Warwick Bigsworth who contributed to this newsletter.

Contributions to the newsletter should be sent to the Editor  
 Email: [judyrainsford@hotmail.com](mailto:judyrainsford@hotmail.com)

*in A H S A (NSW)*



Members thank Juanita Franzi for her professional logo for correspondence.

**AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW) Inc  
AIR MAIL CENTENARY COMMEMORATION GROUP**

**AIM:** To advance public education and the heightening of Australians' interest in their Aviation Heritage.

**WEBSITE:** [www.australiasfirstairmail.com](http://www.australiasfirstairmail.com)    **CONTACT:** [guillauxcentenary@gmail.com](mailto:guillauxcentenary@gmail.com)



The Blériot XI monoplane, 1914 -2014 on display at the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney.  
Ref: <http://www.powerhousemuseum.com/collection/database/?irn=288461#ixzz2Wvdac7GL>

1914-2014: 100 years since Maurice Guillaux' air mail flight from Melbourne to Sydney:  
First air mail, first air freight, longest such delivery in the world at that time (16-18 July 1914).

For the information of members who may speak about the celebrations the following background demonstrates the advance of aviation, and particularly the contributions made by Blériot aircraft before the Australian flight.

### *SOME BLÉRIOT STATISTICS:*

|      |               |                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|------|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1908 | December 4    | Blériot aircraft unveiled at First Paris Aeronautical Salon                                                                                                                                                  |
| 1909 | January 23    | First flight of Blériot XI, 200 metres at Issy-les-Moulineaux                                                                                                                                                |
|      | March 9-15    | Continued flights at Issy, including first turns.                                                                                                                                                            |
|      | May 27        | First flight with 35 hp, 3-cylinder radial engine designed by Alessandro Anzani.                                                                                                                             |
|      | June          | Hubert Latham announces his intention to fly the English Channel.                                                                                                                                            |
|      | June          | Louis Paulhan flies the first Gnome engine constructed by Louis & Laurent Seguin on his Voisin.                                                                                                              |
|      | July 3        | Blériot remains in the air for 48 minutes, covering 26 miles in the XII. Foot badly burned in the exhaust.                                                                                                   |
|      | July 19       | Hubert Latham attempts his first flight across the English Channel.                                                                                                                                          |
|      | July 25       | Louis Blériot flies the English Channel & wins the £1000 <i>Daily Mail</i> prize (Gnome engine).                                                                                                             |
|      | October 17    | Blériot makes the first flight in Hungary, at Budapest.                                                                                                                                                      |
|      | October 30    | Blériot makes the first flight in Rumania, at Bucharest.                                                                                                                                                     |
|      | November      | Rodman Wanamaker brings a Blériot XI to the United States.<br>Flying at Pau, Miss Edith Cook becomes the first Englishwoman to solo. Baron Carl Cederstrom is the first Swede to earn a brevet, also at Pau. |
| 1910 | January 24    | Delagrangé dies in a crash at Bordeaux - the first Blériot fatality.                                                                                                                                         |
|      | February 10   | Julien Marnet takes a Blériot to Barcelona.                                                                                                                                                                  |
|      | March 10      | Emile Aubrun makes <b>one of the world's first night flights</b> , 12.4 miles, at Buenos Aires.                                                                                                              |
|      | April 27      | <b>First Blériot flight in Portugal.</b>                                                                                                                                                                     |
|      | May 8-16      | Léon Morane wins the altitude prize at a St Petersburg, Russia, air meet.                                                                                                                                    |
|      | May 21        | Jacques de Lesseps flies from Calais to Dover in 37 minutes to win the £500 Ruinart Prize & a <i>Daily Mail Cup</i> for being the second man to fly the Channel.                                             |
|      | June          | Morane sets a world monoplane record for duration of flight with a passenger, 85 km.                                                                                                                         |
|      | June 27       | De Lesseps makes a 330-mile flight around Montreal at an altitude of 2,000 feet.                                                                                                                             |
|      | July 23-Aug 4 | At a meeting in Brussels, Olieslagers wins the altitude (5,286 feet) and duration prizes.                                                                                                                    |
|      | August 10     | <b>Claude Graham-White carries the first 'unofficial' English airmail from Blackpool.</b>                                                                                                                    |
|      | August 16     | John Moisant completes the first two-man flight across the Channel with passenger, Albert Fileux, in a Blériot XI-2.                                                                                         |

tbcont'd

Reference: *Blériot XI The Story of Classic Aircraft* Tom D. Crouch: Smithsonian Institution Press Washington DC. Available Phm library Sydney.

## LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

### Edgar Percival

First of all, may I offer my apologies for this interruption to the **Rose Bay Diary**, which will resume with the November 2013, No 478, edition of *Southern Skies*. My excuse for the interruption is lack of research time due to a self indulgent overseas visit to a few air shows, and aviation museums, during part of August and September. In fact when I should have been at home on September 7th, casting my vote at the Federal Elections, I was attending the Duxford Air Show in the U.K. During a break in the flying programme I visited a stand, selling aviation books and ephemera, where a letter signed by Edgar Percival caught my eye. I thought that the asking price of one pound was more than reasonable and purchased the document. In fact there were attachments to the letter which made it clear that it had come from the files of Gordon Swanborough, a past editor of *Air International*. Let me share the contents with you.

#### Document 1: Edgar Percival's Letter.

16th March 1976

Gordon Swanborough Esq.  
AIR INTERNATIONAL  
P.O. Box 16  
Bromley, BR2 7RB  
Kent

Dear Sir,

I believe you hold in your library a copy of "British Civil Aircraft, 1919-59", Volume 2, by A. J. Jackson, published in 1960 by Putnam & Co. Ltd.

This book unhappily contained certain statements in regard to myself which were not accurate, and indeed caused some considerable damage to me in that they indicated that the designing of the Percival "Gull", "Mew Gull", "Vega Gull", "Proctor" and the "Q.6." had not been solely carried out by me but by others. This was quite untrue and I am enclosing a print of a notice setting out the details and the withdrawal of the statements to which I objected.

The volume referred to above has now been superseded by "British Civil Aircraft, Since 1919", Volume Two, second edition, published with new material, 1973, and by "British Civil Aircraft, Since 1919, Volume Three, second edition, published with new material, 1974, each by the same author and publishers, embodying the necessary corrections referred to above.

They have also made the requisite corrections to the history of the Edgar Percival "E.P.9." aircraft, and to that of the "Saro-Percival Mailplane" (wrongly referred to in the earlier editions as the "Spartan Cruiser, or the "Spartan Mailplane"). Mr Jackson shewed me the courtesy of letting me see the references to me before publication of these later volumes.

I am now writing to ask that you be good enough to withdraw "British Civil Aircraft, 1919-59", Volume 2, from your library and to see that it is not in any circumstances issued or lent to anyone, or indeed used in any way, for I am most anxious to ensure that the statements of which I complained are not republished in any way, or indeed repeated by word of mouth. Such republication would amount to a repetition of the statements of which I complained, with the appropriate consequences.

I hope you will be good enough to let me know that you have received this letter and will meet my request.

Yours faithfully

E. W. Percival.

#### Document 2: Attachment to Percival's Letter.

##### FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Attention is called to the photostat copy below of a statement by Putnam & Co. Ltd., published by them in *Flight International* of 8th February 1968, in correction of erroneous and

damaging statements in reference to Mr E. W. Percival and the aircraft he designed. These statements were contained in the book, British Civil Aircraft, 1919-59, Vol. 2, by A. J. Jackson, published by Putnam & Co. Ltd., 9 Bow Street, Covent Garden, London, W.C.2., in 1960. Damages were paid and the corrections and apologies made by Putnams as the result of legal action taken by Mr. Percival.

**BRITISH CIVIL AIRCRAFT 1919-59, VOLUME 2, by A. J. Jackson.**

**STATEMENT.**

Mr E. W. Percival has drawn the attention of the author and the publishers of this work to various mis-statements in regard to the Percival Gull, Mew Gull, Vega Gull and Q.6. Aircraft.

It should be made clear that all these aircraft were designed solely by Mr Percival and that none of them was designed by Mr R. H. Bound or Mr A. A. Bage as is stated in the text. Mr Bound in fact assisted Mr Percival as draughtsman of the Prototype Gull and was chief draughtsman when the Mew Gull was designed. Mr Bage was first draughtsman and then a chief draughtsman in Mr Percival's firm, from which he retired in 1939.

Further the Prototype Gull of 1932 was not a derivative of the Hendy 302 nor was it built at Yate but in a small workshop at Maidstone that had been used previously by the late C. H. Lowe Wylde for building gliders. Furthermore Mr Basil Henderson was never at any time in the employment of Mr Percival or any of his Companies, nor did the Gull series originally bear type numbers P.1., P.2. etc.

The author and publishers regret these inaccuracies which were based on data he had no reason at the time to doubt.

**Putnam & Co. Ltd. 9 Bow Street, Covent Garden, London, W.C.2.**

**Document 3: Copy of Gordon Swanborough's Reply by Return Mail.**

17th March, 1976

Edgar W. Percival Esq.,  
72 Chesterfield House,  
Curzon Street,  
London, W1.

Dear Mr. Percival,

Thank you for your letter of 16th march, 1976. I confirm that we have noted the comments you make therein and that we have taken action to ensure that the information in "British Civil Aircraft, Vol. 2, of which you complain, is not republished by us.

Yours sincerely,

Gordon Swanborough  
Editor.

**Document 4: Copy of Swanborough's Letter to the Editor of Aeroplane Monthly.**

Space does not permit the reproduction of this document. However the following background and extracts will be of interest. The year of Percival's letter to Swanborough, 1976, will be recalled as the year of the AHSA National Conference at Wodonga, held over the weekend of November 5-6, at which Edgar Percival was our special guest. Percival died at his Curzon Street home on January 21, 1984. His brother Robert prepared an obituary published in Aeroplane Monthly, September, 1984, in which he claimed that Edgar had never really been accepted into the British establishment and was not given the credit he deserved. A decade later, again in Aeroplane Monthly, June & July, 1994, Ian Harwood's article, "Gull Genesis", was published. As a result "Document 4" came into being. It is a copy of a letter written by Gordon Swanborough to the editor of Aeroplane Monthly complementing Ian Harwood's article and describing his 1976 correspondence with Percival. Here are a few short quotes from Swanborough's letter. "If we accept Percival's protestations at face value, then at very least he would appear to have been guilty of plagiarism of the first order, for there can be no doubt that the prototype Gull was a close copy of the Hendy 302 if not a deliberate evolution thereof".."The veiled threat of legal action in the final sentence suggests that Percival had become almost paranoid in his efforts to maintain his claims".." P.S. I still have the offending BCA Vol 2 . Destroying books is not in my nature".The National Museum of Australia has possession of the Percival Collection.**John Scott.**



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ABN: 83 295 759 224  
PO BOX K346 HAYMARKET NSW 1238

## *Southern Skies*

THE NEWSLETTER OF AHSA (NSW) Inc

NOVEMBER 2013 ~ No 478

### *November Meeting*

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**A Committee meeting** commencing at 6.15pm will be held immediately prior to the November meeting.

### *Arthur Butler Memorial Lecture*

The meeting will feature the 31st Annual Arthur Butler Memorial Lecture with guest speaker Trevor Dean, recently retired Curator at the Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown and formerly Vice-President of that organisation. His talk, *The Aquatic Airman*, will feature the life and times of Bryan Monkton.

Bryan Monkton's extraordinary life is as full of excitement, intrigue and Hollywood film stars as the finest fiction novel. His many hair-raising tales include mine-laying in a Catalina mere feet above the sea at night during World War II, and through many years of facing severe storms and emergencies in commercial aviation.

After the war Bryan founded two airlines, the first in Australia, having become the unintentional owner of five large war surplus flying boats, the second in the USA. Later he survived engine failure in the middle of the Pacific, a rocket attack in the Belgian Congo and much more; even his final flying adventure was a test of skill and courage as he flew and navigated the very last flying boat to cross the Atlantic.

Trevor spent three years with Bryan until his untimely death in 2003, helping him write his amazing book "The Boats I Flew", and in the process gaining a rare insight into the life of this amazing Aviator and Gentleman.

Trevor will discuss the battles Bryan fought with Qantas and Pan American, both of whom saw him as a threat to their operations, his false charge of blowing up a Qantas Catalina, the challenge of establishing the first airline to service Lord Howe Island, his amazing encounters as a Contract Captain for European Airlines

and his adventures delivering aircraft to Australia from international destinations, one flight almost his last!

Bryan's "secret" life will also be discussed; a side of this man few people knew existed!

Trevor has been around aviation for most of his life, his first flight at the age of three in a Sunderland Flying Boat with his father, RAAF Commissioned Warrant Officer William Hector Dean MBE (Dec'd).

Wanting to be a RAAF Pilot from that first flight, Trevor's ambition to fly had to wait for many years, as his father sadly passed away at the early age of just 49. In 1963 Trevor became one of the first students to go solo with the Navair Flying School, his Instructor being the late Ken May, a former Royal Australian Navy Commander and Flying Instructor, who taught his students to land as if the runway was an Aircraft Carrier Flight Deck.

Over the years Trevor has had the opportunity to fly a number of different aircraft including Seaplanes, Helicopters and perhaps the most unusual, the Whitman's Airship! He was the Founding Vice President of the Australian Aviation Museum, Bankstown and took over from AHSA President Ian Debenham as Honorary Curator, retiring this year after more than 20 years involvement with the Museum in many capacities.

Trevor has been a member of the Australian Warbirds and is a current member of the Spitfire Association. For the past 20 years he has been a member of the Texas based Commemorative (formerly Confederate) Air Force, dedicated to preserving and flying WWII aircraft. He is currently the Australian Wing Leader, and once had the experience of crewing Boeing B-17 Bomber Sentimental Journey at an Air Show in Texas.

Over many years of international travel Trevor has been privileged to meet, and in many cases befriend, well known Aviators such as Memphis Belle Commander Colonel Robert Morgan; WWII

Chief Spitfire Test Pilot Alex Henshaw MBE; AVG Flying Tigers Flight Commander David "Tex" Hill; B-29 Commander Brigadier General Paul Tibbets; the first Australian to go into Space aboard Space Shuttle Challenger in 1984, Dr. Paul Scully-Power; and Kermit Weeks, founder of Fantasy of Flight, whose collection of historic aircraft in Florida includes one of Bryan

Monkton's former aircraft, Sunderland Pacific Chieftain.

Trevor was a close friend of the late Nancy-Bird Walton AO, OBE, a wonderful lady and pioneer Aviator sadly missed, and is a friend of Rosemary Arnold, Australia's first female Helicopter pilot.

Please join us for this premier event on our monthly meeting calendar. Members are requested to bring a small plate of finger food for supper after Trevor's lecture.

### October Meeting

Guest speaker was Jono Willis, Vice President of the International Plastic Modellers' Society NSW Branch, who spoke about the hobby and displayed a fine range of aircraft and vehicles. Jono's interest in aviation was sparked by growing up near the RAF Base, Northolt, England from where he saw a wide range of aircraft. After his family migrated to Australia, Jono joined the Royal Australian Navy, where he served for over 20 years.

Jono's passion now lies with the construction of plastic models, not only of aircraft but also vehicles and other militaria. He described how plastic modelling has developed in the use of materials and the desire to provide as much intricate detail as possible. Manufacturers of such model kits come from world-wide, with some of the Czech, Italian and Japanese products being of many of the rarer military aircraft. After-market companies specialise in the provision of minute items such as fuel gauges, hoses, gun reflector sights which could be 1/48 or 1/72 scale. Fully detailed cockpits are the norm now. Many models are now fully hand painted, rather than using decals, and many models are now equipped with comprehensive details on Australian markings. A boxed plastic model kit now includes hundreds of large and small parts as well as a very detailed guidance book on construction; a distant world from the old Airfix and similar kits with one or two folded pages of instructions.

Jono also builds models to order; clients include Australian War Memorial, Fighter World, Fleet Air Arm Museum as well as military squadrons and individuals who desire models of a particular aircraft type in its service life.

Members of the International Plastic Modellers' Society construct military and civil aircraft, ships, vehicles and people and the Society holds workshops and regular meetings. The Society meets at Ryde Ex-Serviceman's Club, 724 Victoria Road, Ryde NSW on the 4th Saturday of each month. Visitors are welcome to attend meetings which commence at 1.00pm, although members meet informally at about 12.30pm. For more information visit the website [www.ipmsnsw.org](http://www.ipmsnsw.org).

### BI-PLANE PARK ROSEHILL

AHSA member, Peter Finlay, attended the opening ceremony of Bi Plane Park in Prospect Street, Rosehill, on Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> October 2013. The Park has been established very close to the site where Syd Staff and Frank Peacock built a semi-biplane in circa 1910.

Peter's report includes his article for *Aero Australia*:

*"In Parramatta, Syd Staff built an aeroplane in the paddock almost opposite the Rosehill Primary School in Prospect Street. Syd's machine failed to fly when tested at the adjacent Rosehill Racecourse while fitted with a 25 horsepower engine built by Williams of Burwood. This was installed as a pusher with the propeller at the rear of the motor. A year or so later when Syd and his pilot-cum-engineer, Frank Peacock, re-engined the monoplane with a Gnome 50 hp rotary engine Peacock was successful in becoming airborne. Unfortunately, the delay caused the pair to be beaten by John Duigan to claim the honour of being the constructor of the first Australian-built and designed aircraft to fly. (Said to have flown July 18, 1910 but this could not have been with Hart's Gnome as he did not obtain his Boxkite ensemble until September 1911).*

*The effort nearly sent Staff to the financial wall and the talented craftsman then had to work hard to re-build his carpentry and building business to support his family. He is barely recognised for his pioneering efforts."*

The Lord Mayor of Parramatta, Councillor John Chedid, officially opened the function and Peter was introduced to him.

I was invited to display my 1/12<sup>th</sup> scale model of Hart's Boxkite and some photographs at the park opening. This was greeted with much interest by children and adults alike.

Indeed, two young men expressed interest in becoming pilots and I enjoyed giving them an outline of the steps required to achieve their most worthy goal. (Become very good at Maths and work hard to earn the money required to learn to fly OR join the RAAF).

Several young lasses also asked intelligent questions and I was delighted that they all understood how wings work. (Well they mightn't have been familiar with  $c/l \frac{1}{2} \rho v^2 S$  but they knew that lift increases in proportion to the square of the speed... I was most impressed.)

Syd Staff's granddaughter, Audrey Meisenhelter, whom I met previously when giving a talk on Bill Hart at the Parramatta Historical Society, was present and she gave me a cutting from the *Parramatta Sun Magazine* of September 2012 which featured Syd Staff's and Frank Peacock's adventures with Harry

Houdini when he flew at Rosehill in April 1910.

The park is very nicely laid out and includes a structure built to resemble a Bi Plane as a children's play centre. This is positioned on a "runway".

Being opposite the Rosehill School, council is keen to foster interest in local history and pride in community. The Bi-Plane Park would seem to assist in these aims.

Hopefully, a contact at Parracity, Lilly Wang, will provide some photos for later inclusion in the newsletter.

Peter Finlay

### HISTORY OF FLIGHT ~ BIRTHDAYS

**1906 November 12, Paris:** Alberto Santos-Dumont, a Brazilian living in Paris, made the first powered flight by a European aircraft when he flew the box-kite biplane **14-bis** 722 feet at an average speed of 25.06 mph. The **14-bis** was an awkward aircraft, with a tail-first design and no seat for the pilot. Santos-Dumont operated the controls standing up, with the long tail and fuselage stretched in front of him and a 50-hp Antoinette engine behind.

**1929 November 2, Long Island, NY:** Twenty-six women flyers gathered over tea in a hangar to organise the **Ninety-Nines**, an international women pilots' organisation. After briefly considering names such as the Gadflies and Bird Women, the group adopted first president Amelia Earhart's proposal to name the club after the total number of charter members which ultimately climbed to 99.

Open to any woman with a pilot's licence, the **Ninety-Nines** assisted female fliers in "*aeronautical research, air racing events, acquisition of aerial experience, maintenance of an economic status in the aviation industry, (and) administering through the air in times of emergency...*"

Among the **Ninety-Nines'** early special interests were "*airmarking the skyways like the highways*" by painting identifying markers on the roofs of hundreds of buildings, and the *Amelia Earhart Scholarship Program*, which supported women's place in aviation.

Prior to modern maps and navigation instruments, and modern advances in the GPS digital age, these simple efforts afforded an important aid in cross-country navigation, particularly when flying over vast distances with few features for recognition enroute.

The Australian women members of the **Ninety-Nines** recently repainted the large compass rose on the tarmac at Darwin airport, thereby celebrating this early aid in 'airmarking' in an Australian territory of vast distances.

~~~~~  
Remember these for an anti-stress smile??

Pilot: Aircraft handles funny #####

Eng: Aircraft warned to straighten up, fly right, and be serious.....

CENTENARY POSTCARDS

One of the major developments in the Air Mail Flight re-enactment is preparation for the sale of 1785 numbered postcards, modelled on those carried on the original flight. The sale of these will be launched at the December AHSA meeting. If you are interested in acquiring one of these valuable collectors' items, make sure that your email address has been sent to guillauxcentenary@gmail.com. You will then receive newsletters which will keep you fully informed about the flight and other activities that will occur during the centenary commemoration period.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

November 2013

- 02** Warbirds Downunder Air Show 2013, Temora NSW
- 03** NSW Sport Aircraft Club Open Day, Wedderburn NSW
- 06** 31st Arthur Butler Memorial Lecture - Phm
- 09** Rathmines Catalina Festival, Lake Macquarie, Rathmines NSW
- 10** Flight Heritage Museum Fly-in, Caboolture, Q'ld
- 16** Vintage Wings & Wheels Open Day, Moorabbin Air Museum, Moorabbin Vic
- 27** Hastings District Flying Club Open Day, Port Macquarie NSW

December 2013

- 07** Aircraft Showcase - Pearl Harbour - Temora Aviation Museum, NSW

January 2014

- 10-12** Great Eastern Fly-in, Evans Head, NSW

AHSA MEETINGS

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 George Palmer at ahsa_qld@hotmail.com.

The next meeting will be 29 November 2013.

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A number of members meet casually for dinner from 6.00pm at the Tower Hotel opposite the RAAFA. Visitors welcome. Contact Antony Grage on 0418170395.

Thanks to Peter Finlay, Ian Debenham, and Warwick Bigsworth who contributed to this newsletter.

Contributions to the newsletter should be sent to the Editor
Email: judyrainsford@hotmail.com



**AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW) Inc
AIR MAIL CENTENARY COMMEMORATION GROUP**

AIM: To advance public education and the heightening of Australians' interest in their Aviation Heritage.

WEBSITE: www.australiasfirstairmail.com **CONTACT:** guillauxcentenary@gmail.com



The Blériot XI monoplane, 1914 -2014 on display at the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney.

Ref: <http://www.powerhousemuseum.com/collection/database/?irn=288461#ixzz2Wvdac7GL>

1914-2014: 100 years since the Maurice Guillaux' Air Mail flight from Melbourne to Sydney:
First air mail, first air freight, longest such delivery in the world at that time (16-18 July 1914).

For the information of members who may speak about the celebrations the following background demonstrates the advance of aviation, and particularly this small selection of the contributions made by Blériot aircraft before the Australian flight.

(Cont'd)

SOME BLÉRIOT STATISTICS:

- | | | |
|-------------|-------------------|--|
| 1910 | November 4 | Japanese military officials visit Issy for a flight on the two-seat Blériot recently purchased by their government. |
| 1911 | March | Earle Ovington imports a new Blériot to the United States. It is quickly copied by local manufacturers. |
| | September 14 | Earle Ovington, operating out of a temporary post office at Sheepshead Meadow NY, carries the first US airmail in his Queen Blériot. |
| 1912 | April 21 | Harriet Quimby becomes the first woman to fly the English Channel. Quimby had earlier become the first licensed woman pilot in America (August 1911). |
| | July 1 | Harriet Quimby and William Willard die in the crash of a Blériot XI-2 at Boston. |
| 1913 | March | Lt Alexandre de Kouzminski makes the first flight in Macau. He later makes the first flights in Siam and Cambodia as well. |
| | March 11 | Edmund Perreyon sets a new world record altitude mark (19 291 ft). |
| | August 19 | Adolphe Pégoud tests the Bonnet parachute at Buc. |
| 1914 | JULY 14-16 | MAURICE GUILLAUX FLIES THE FIRST AUSTRALIAN AIR MAIL FROM MELBOURNE TO SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA. (This record not included in the reference book.) |
| | August 12 | Lt Skene and R.K. Barlow become the first English airmen to die on active service in wartime when their Blériot XI-2 crashes. |
| | August 19 | Capt Joubert de la Ferte completes the first RFC reconnaissance flight of the war. He is accompanied by G W Mapplebeck in a BE2b. |

ORIGINAL BLÉRIOT MACHINES SURVIVING: 25 original Bleriot machines are recorded, mainly in museums: 3 in England, 4 in France, 2 in Italy, 7 in USA and a single aircraft in other countries. The entry for *Australia* reads:

"*Australia:* Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences, Sydney - Flown by Maurice Guillaux on the first Melbourne-Sydney airmail flight, 1914. The machine is also reputed to have been used by R P Carey to fly the first loop in Australia, 1914."

The photograph of the Blériot upside down in Melbourne would seem to confirm this statement.

FROM 1901 TO 1914 Louis Blériot produced some 45 distinct aircraft designs but no complete record of the number of each type manufactured has survived. The system of distinguishing types by christening them with a numeral is apt to prove a mystery, especially where there are no known machines intermediary between XII and XXXI. Number XI are known; Number *XI-bis* are recognised; even Numbers XII and XIII have been heard of by repute. But where are XIV, XV and their successors? Number XXI can be called the '*military two-seater*', and the discrepancies accepted, particularly as some aircraft were strictly experimental and others produced in very small numbers.

LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

Rose Bay Diary – Part 5.

In the late afternoon of Thursday, August 12, 1926, Alan Cobham relaxed as a guest in the comfort of the Royal Sydney Golf Club at Rose Bay. Earlier that day he had been given a civic reception at the Sydney Town Hall, and later paid a visit to the Australian War Memorial Museum, then located in the Exhibition Building in Prince Alfred Park. Cobham's hosts during the visit were Sir Keith Smith and the museum's founder, Charles Bean. The exhibits of most interest to Cobham were three aircraft involved in the pioneering development of aviation. The first was the Ross and Keith Smith Vickers Vimy, G-EAOU, the first aircraft to fly from England to Australia. The second was the Parer and McIntosh DH9, G-EAQM, the first single engine aircraft to fly from England to Australia, and the third was the Goble and McIntyre, Fairey III D, A10-3, the first aircraft to circumnavigate Australia. Cobham had been in Sydney only one day since arriving in his DH 50J, G-EBFO, which he had flown as a float plane from England to Darwin, where it was converted to a land plane for the overland crossing. He later wrote: "On this flight to Australia, I was pioneering and preparing the way for the big flying boats of the next decade, and when I was in the air, it certainly gave me much more confidence to have floats underneath me instead of wheels." As he looked out from the golf club over the stunning back drop of Rose Bay, perhaps he noted to himself that here was an ideal location for an Empire Flying Boat Base.

As a result of the amalgamation of four major British airlines, Imperial Airways Ltd was incorporated on March 31, 1924, as the subsidised, "Chosen Instrument" of the British Government for the expansion of international air travel. In particular it was the aim of the Government to have Imperial Airways connect the far flung nations of the British Empire. By the time Alan Cobham reached Australia he was already regarded as one of the world's most experienced pilots, and had completed route proving flights for Imperial Airways. Cobham was acquainted with Stanley Goble and Francesco de Pinedo, two aviators who had also experienced the delights of Rose Bay. The names of these three aviators are forever linked by the records of international aviation awards and trophies. The list of recipients of the Britannia Trophy shows **1923**: Alan Cobham for his flying tour of the Middle East and North Africa; **1924**: Goble and McIntyre for the circumnavigation of Australia; **1925**: Alan Cobham for his London to Rangoon return flight, and **1926**: Sir Alan Cobham for his Empire route survey flight from Rochester to Melbourne. The Federation Aeronautique Internationale awarded Francesco de Pinedo its inaugural Gold Air Medal for **1925**. The second Gold Air Medal was awarded for **1926** to Sir Alan Cobham for his Empire route survey flight from England to Australia and return.

In 1926, Stanley Goble was in London as Australia's Liaison Officer at the Air Ministry. He made a special trip down to the Short Brothers works on the River Medway at Rochester to witness the June 30 departure for Australia by Alan Cobham and his mechanic Arthur Elliot. The DH 50J had been launched on its new floats only two days before and, experienced though he was, Cobham had never previously flown a float plane. Perhaps he got a few tips from Stanley Goble because he quickly mastered the art of operations from water. From Sydney, Cobham flew G-EBFO to Melbourne and then back to Darwin via Adelaide. At Darwin G-EBFO's floats were refitted and Cobham retraced his route back to England where his arrival was magnificently orchestrated by Sir Samuel Hoare, Secretary of State for Air. At 2:30 pm on October 1, 1926, G-EBFO alighted on the Thames in front of the Houses of Parliament at Westminster before an estimated one million people who crowded bridges and embankments. At that moment G-EBFO was the most famous aeroplane in the world.

When Cobham was in Sydney there were two aircraft in town, Goble's Fairey III D, and Cobham's DH 50J, which were involved in the award of the Britannia Trophy. The sad fates of Goble's Fairey III D and de Pinedo's Savoia-Marchetti S.16ter are recorded in earlier editions of *Rose Bay Diary*. But what became of G-EBFO? A letter to the editor of the English magazine *Flight*, from a ground engineer working in faraway Carnarvon, Western Australia, published in the July 18, 1935, issue, provides an answer: "Dear Sir, The enclosed photograph which may interest *Flight* readers, is of the remains of an historic DH 50. It was in this machine that Sir Alan Cobham flew from London to

Melbourne, and London to CapeTown, these flights being recorded on the sides of the fuselage. About six years ago it was purchased by West Australian Airways, and fitted with a "Nimbus" engine in place of the "Jaguar". Pilot Heath flew into fifth place in the Western Australian Centenary Sydney to Perth Air Race with this bus after a series of mishaps on the way. From then on, till it was forced down in heavy scrub on a sheep station, it was in continuous service on the Nor'-West Mail Route. The remains now lie behind the hangar at Carnarvon Aerodrome. Signed, P. Donegan, Mac Robertson Miller Aviation Co." Cobham's mechanic, Arthur Elliot, perished on the way out to Australia as a result of a pot shot, from someone on the ground, as G-EBFO passed over the Tigris-Euphrates marshlands forced down to a height of about fifty feet during a dust storm. If G-EBFO had been preserved it would now be an enduring memorial to Arthur Elliot who died pioneering one of the world's great air routes.

When Cobham, and his replacement mechanic Alan Ward, arrived at Darwin on August 5, the Controller of Civil Aviation, Horace Brinsmead, was there to greet him. Brinsmead was flown to Darwin in the Department's DH 50. By 1926 the DH 50 was so popular with Australia's pioneering airlines that Qantas, West Australian Airways and Larkin Aircraft Supply Co. went on to build additional DH 50s in Australia under licence. The DH 50 even caught the eye of the Chief of the RAAF, Richard Williams. He convinced his Minister that the RAAF needed a DH 50, with its enclosed passenger cabin, for the transport of VIPs, such as the Governor General, when the occasion arose. This requirement didn't explain why DH 50, A8-1, came to the RAAF on April 29, 1926, equipped with floats. What was really on the mind of Williams was a plan for an epic flight to outdo that of his arch rival, Stanley Goble. Williams proposed a flight to Papua, New Guinea, Solomon Islands, New Hebrides, New Caledonia, Fiji, Tonga and Samoa, and return to Point Cook. He had just the pilot for the adventure, Flight Lieutenant Ivor McIntyre, who had circumnavigated Australia with Stanley Goble. However, while Goble and McIntyre had shared the exposed cockpits of the Fairey IID, Richard Williams and his mechanic, Les Trist, would be ensconced in the enclosed cabin of the DH 50, with McIntyre once again exposed to the elements in an open cockpit. Also, that part of the flight out into the open South Pacific, from where the coast hugging route ended at the Solomon Islands, would be extremely risky.

At about 3:30 pm on Saturday, September 25, the noise of an aeroplane engine alerted the Breckenridge family to the arrival of Group Captain Williams as his DH 50, flew low over 14 Rawson Road, from the direction of Bondi, for a smooth landing on Rose Bay. Ivor McIntyre taxied back to the shore where A8-1 was hauled up on the beach. Although the resources of the RAN were close at hand, Richard Williams preferred to rely on the RAAF alone, and was greeted by Sergeant Style who had travelled in from the Richmond Aerodrome. It was the end of the first day of William's ambitious Pacific Islands Survey, and already there was trouble. A leaking water jacket was solved by replacing the engine. Fortunately, the Randwick Experimental Station had a spare Siddeley Puma from the Wackett Widgeon project. There was a delay of four days before the flight north could be resumed. The departure attracted a crowd of a couple of hundred which cheered as: "The machine passed HMAS Tingira and circled round a merchant vessel lying near the entrance to the bay, but did not rise. It was then headed for Garden Island and for nearly half an hour moved about the surface of the harbour." And so the survey flight proceeded, with a forced landing in failing light in the open sea off Southport, then a call for a new propeller, continuing water jacket problems, and finally a complete engine failure at Tulagi in the Solomon Islands. At this point the Minister for Defence, Neville Howse, ordered Williams back to Point Cook, thus avoiding the risk of the long Pacific Ocean crossings.

On Sunday afternoon, December 5, Vida and Marie Breckenridge joined the large crowd at Rose Bay waiting to welcome Group Captain Williams and his crew, who were returning from the Pacific Islands Survey. The Official Reception Party included the Acting Minister for Defence, Mr Marr; Wing Commander Wackett with a RAAF contingent; members of the AFC Association including fellow officers of Williams from No1 Sqn AFC, and representatives of the Aero Club. They waited in vain. Williams chose to fly well out to sea, bypassing Sydney altogether. Ivor McIntyre was awarded his second Oswald Watt Medal for his part in the Pacific Islands Survey. However, his relationship with Richard Williams had deteriorated during the survey, and he later resigned from the RAAF. He died on March 12, 1928, following an aircraft accident. Stanley Goble was a pallbearer at his funeral. **J. Scott.**



AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW) Inc

ABN: 83 295 759 224
PO BOX K346 HAYMARKET NSW 1238

Southern Skies

THE NEWSLETTER OF AHS A (NSW) Inc

DECEMBER 2013 ~ No 479

December Meeting

The December meeting will be held at the Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown on Wednesday 4th December 2013, commencing at 7.30 pm. To ensure that adequate time is available to enjoy the museum exhibits, particularly those placed outside, it is suggested members plan to arrive at about 7.00 pm.

Our guests at this meeting will be members of the *Australian Society of World War 1 Aero Historians*. This year we invite members to pay the discounted, "Friends of the Museum", entrance fee of \$5.00 to help defray the cost to the museum of providing the society with this exceptional meeting venue.

The meeting will review:

SIGNIFICANT AUSTRALIAN AVIATION CENTENARIES OF 2014

John Scott will provide a brief introduction to the events of 1914, with information about planned commemorations. Then Tom Lockley will present details of the current plans of the *Airmail Centenary Commemoration Group* which will commemorate Maurice Guillaux and the delivery of the first official airmail from Melbourne to Sydney during July 16-18, 1914. This will involve the launching of an upgraded website and the inauguration of the sale of exactly 1785 postcards, modelled on those carried in the first air mail.

1914 was quite a year. It witnessed the triumphant return of Harry Hawker with his Sopwith Tabloid biplane. Then followed a string of Australian aviation firsts: The first flight of a military aircraft; the first flight of a seaplane; the first flight of an Australian built dirigible; the first powered flight in Tasmania; at Goulburn, the formation of the *Australian Aero Club*; the first C.F.S. pilot training course, and the first deployment overseas of military aircraft. Meanwhile pilots like Hawker, Guillaux, A.W. Jones, A. Delfosse Badgery, "Wizard" Stone, V.P. Taylor, and J.C. Marduel thrilled the crowds. And, don't mention the war, which broke out on 4th August 1914.

Supper will be served after the meeting which is part of the Christmas spirit that is always evoked at our traditional December meetings at Bankstown.

2014 ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

This issue of *Southern Skies* is accompanied by the 2014 Subscription Renewal form, which includes the details of AHS A (NSW) Inc and AHS A Inc Joint Membership.

Due to expected increased costs in administration the Committee has agreed that it is necessary to increase the annual subscription rate for AHS A (NSW) Inc to \$30. The annual rate for dual membership of AHS A (NSW) Inc and AHS A Inc is now \$70.

Joint Membership entitles members to receive the AHS A (NSW) Inc newsletter *Southern Skies* 11 times per annum, free attendance at meetings which includes supper and usually features a guest speaker, and the AHS A Inc quality journal *Aviation Heritage* and AHS A Newsletter, which are published 4 times per annum. They are also welcome to attend meetings in Melbourne with a token amount payable for supper.

Members who wish only to retain an AHS A (NSW) Inc membership pay \$30 for the newsletter and meetings.

Members can pay by cheque or via direct bank deposit: Account Name: Aviation Historical Society of Australia NSW Branch. (BSB) 062 009; Account Number 00904128. If you choose to pay via direct bank deposit, insert your name in the reference box and advise the Membership Secretary, Peter Coates by Email at peter_coates@optusnet.com.au. Please include in your advice to Peter your address, contact details and whether you wish to receive *Southern Skies* via Email or by hard copy.



An interesting photograph of aerofoil tip vortices, you can see the propeller pitch - a B17 Flying Fortress?

NEW BOOKS



'The pilots in the longhaul fleet at Qantas have carried Australians to the world, supported by highly skilled engineers and operational ground staff. These are their fascinating stories of passion and commitment. Essential reading for anyone in love with flying.'
Former Qantas B747-400 captain, Bill Anderson has released his latest book, *A Lifetime in Longhaul – The Bigger Picture*.

This is a sequel to his earlier book, *A Lifetime in Longhaul*, and the new book features stories and recollections of seven senior Qantas Captains and four long serving senior ground staff from the Operational departments of Engineering, Flight Dispatch and Operations Control. These are all 'hands on' people and their stories allow you to experience the many day to day problems and decisions that occur in the running of a major world airline. These two books take you to the heart of the operations areas of Qantas Airways. The books can be purchased online through Bill's website www.billanderson747.com with a RRP of \$30 each plus P&P or billanderson747@gmail.com.

NOVEMBER MEETING

The 31st Annual Arthur Butler Memorial Lecture was presented by Trevor Dean, who spoke about the life and times of Bryan Monkton - *The Aquatic Airman*, and noted that it was at the Arthur Butler Memorial Lecture in 2000 where he first met Bryan.

Trevor said that he had been privileged to meet a number of leading aviation identities, all of whom had amazing stories to tell, and believes that Bryan Monkton could have held his own with any one of them.

Although Bryan Monkton was a flying instructor prior to World War II, his prime passion was for life at sea during the conflict. He applied to join the RAN as a commissioned officer, but a delay of at least 6 months would ensue if he followed that desire, so he applied to and was accepted by the RAAF. He was posted to Great Britain where he flew Hawker Hurricanes, but he was transferred back to Australia as the Japanese closed in. Much to his annoyance he was posted to flight training, but after numerous protests was appointed to a flying boat squadron. During this time, he flew Catalinas on night mine-laying missions, and the Martin Mariner and Dornier Do.24K in 24 Squadron.

Following the war, Bryan purchased 5 Sunderland flying boats, with financial backing from Hugh Reskymer "Kym" Bonython, a highly decorated former Mosquito pilot. Bryan was required to move the Sunderlands and 22 engines from Rathmines to Rose Bay within 21 days after the sale had been settled, and

this was achieved with the assistance of several former RAAF pilots. These aircraft became the fleet of Trans Oceanic Airways.

Trans Oceanic began operating freight and passenger services to Noumea. Families on Lord Howe Island sought Bryan to operate to that island as well. Despite early opposition from DCA, Bryan was eventually permitted to operate on the Rose Bay – Lord Howe route, with the first service on 1 August 1947.

Trans Oceanic's crews included Sir Patrick Gordon (PG) Taylor, Hugh Birch, Jimmy Broadbent, Phil Mathieson and John Poate. Trevor related a number of tales about these pilots and the growth of Trans Oceanic which became an irritant to Qantas, with Sir Hudson Fysh stating that his airline was the preferred airline of the Australian Government and requesting Bryan to withdraw from Noumea. Trans Oceanic continued to Noumea, therefore in retaliation, Qantas commenced operations to Lord Howe Island. The Qantas Catalina mishap at Lord Howe Island and sabotage of another Catalina at Rose Bay were discussed; Brian was suspected by Qantas of being involved in both occurrences, which he always denied. He did suggest to Trevor that it could have been a disgruntled former employee who he had recently sacked.

In 1953, the Trans Oceanic Airways fleet was sold to Ansett Flying Boat Services which continued to operate the Rose Bay – Lord Howe Island route until 1974. Bryan sought a new venture – South Pacific Air Lines – which planned to operate Solent flying boats between Honolulu and Tahiti, via Christmas Island. Unfortunately this met with strong disapproval from Juan Trippe, founder of Pan American World Airways, who had similar "preferred airline" views like Hudson Fysh. The final blow was the declared use of Christmas Island as a potential nuclear testing facility.

Trevor described more of Bryan's adventures flying assorted aircraft such as the DC-4, DC-5, DC-6, DC-7, Britannia and Caravelle. He also carried out a number of ferry flights across the Pacific. Later he flew for Charles Blair's Antilles Air Boats and commanded the former Ansett and Antilles Air Boats Sandringham across the Atlantic.

Bryan's adventures were well worthy of the book he finally published in 2006 after delays caused by disinterested publishers who only wanted manuscripts from recognised authors. I'm sure Bryan would have been proud of the final result, thanks to Trevor and a fellow director from the Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown, Ken Christie. Unfortunately, Bryan passed away on 29 May 2003. I'm sure Bryan would also have been proud of Trevor's fine presentation.

Thanks to those who contributed to the provision of supper, especially Barbara and Bill Holswich for their generous effort and donation.

RAAF BASE WAGGA HERITAGE CENTRE MILESTONE

The RAAF Base Wagga Heritage Centre has reached a significant milestone, recently hosting its 10,000th visitor.

The Heritage Centre has been open three days a week for just over three years and is managed by two Air Force Reservists and staffed by less than forty community volunteers who act as Host Officers to visitors. The Heritage Centre plays an important role in preserving Air Force history and providing a focus on the RAAF's involvement in the Riverina. It provides access to the history and memorabilia of military aviation and military training conducted at RAAF Base Wagga.

The housing of the Heritage Centre in the old guardhouse is significant with an interesting history, as this was the first building established at RAAF Base Wagga in 1940. Its 50 years of functioning as a guardhouse and telephone switch provided the Base with effective communications and a secure access point.

One of the striking features is the static aircraft at the front gate next to the Heritage Centre. These aircraft represent over 50 years of RAAF flying history and are accessible for the public to view and photograph. On display are:

Canberra Bomber which saw active service in Vietnam;
Meteor which was the first jet-engined fighter introduced into RAAF service;

Sabre which was a second generation fighter and deployed on stand-by during the Malayan Emergency;

Mirage which was a third generation fighter and was involved in deployments through Asia;

Winjeel which was the post-war initial trainer for the RAAF.

Outside the Heritage Centre are specially developed gardens and picnic and BBQ areas. A commemorative section has been developed for *No. 31 Squadron Beaufighters* formed in Wagga in 1943 and disbanded at the close of WWII. It was the only operational squadron to be based at RAAF Base Wagga.

Inside the Heritage Centre are important photographs and memorabilia to represent over 50 years of service to the RAAF and the local region. For ease of viewing some elements of history have been classified into trade training, catering and supply, ceremonial and the apprentice training. Other important elements of the history of RAAF Wagga's functions are spread throughout the display rooms.

The Heritage Centre is located on the Sturt Highway at the entrance to RAAF Base Wagga, Forest Hill. Entry is free: OPEN Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays 10.00am to 4.00pm excluding Easter Sunday and Christmas Day.

For further information please contact the Heritage Centre (02) 6937 5405 (during opening hours only).

Posted: 18 Nov 2013 03:00 PM PST

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS
& a Happy & Healthy New Year
to All Members & their Families



Add a title for our Christmas party

CALENDAR OF EVENTS**December 2013**

07 Aircraft Showcase - Pearl Harbour - Temora Aviation Museum, NSW

January 2014

10-12 Great Eastern Fly-in, Evans Head, NSW

March 2014

1-2 Centenary of Military Aviation Air Show, Point Cook, VIC.

09 Tyabb Air Show, Tyabb, VIC

AHSA MEETINGS

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Contact Antony Grage on 0418170395.

✈ Thanks to Gary Sunderland, Peter Coates, John Scott, Ian Debenham, and Warwick Bigsworth who contributed to this newsletter.

Contributions to the newsletter should be sent to the Editor - Email: judyrainsford@hotmail.com



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The Blériot XI monoplane, 1914 -2014 on display at the PowerhouseMuseum Sydney.
Ref:
<http://www.powerhousemuseum.com/collection/database/?irn=288461#ixzz2Wvdac7GL>

1914-2014: 100 years since the Maurice Guillaux' Air Mail flight from Melbourne to Sydney: First air mail, first air freight, longest such delivery in the world at that time (16-18 July 1914).

LOOP - the - LOOP in Australia

The entry in the book: *Blériot XI The Story of Classic Aircraft*, which was referenced in the November newsletter:

"Australia: Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences, Sydney - Flown by Maurice Guillaux on the first Melbourne-Sydney airmail flight, 1914. The machine is also reputed to have been used by RP Carey to fly the first loop in Australia, 1914."

has encouraged the following letter of correction from Gary Sunderland:

" Re the mention of 'R.P. Carey' (sic) in the Newsletter, R.G. (Graham) Carey never performed loops or any other 'stunt flying'. He was a very cautious and safe pilot. The complete story of his flying 'our' Blériot, in the Powerhouse Museum now, is provided in 'A Message from the Clouds' by Des Martin and Bertha Carey, Martin 2004 *

The first loops in Australia were carried out in 1914 by Maurice Guillaux, first in Melbourne and later, Sydney. Guillaux was an exhibition pilot employed by Blériot and returned to France after war was declared.

In 1916 Carey bought the abandoned Blériot and employed Edwin Prosser as mechanic and flying instructor. This Blériot was the 1913 model 'aerobatic' with a strengthened airframe and a special harness (not just a seat belt). It was unusual in having just a 50 hp engine (most aerobatic Blériots were fitted with 60 hp Gnome engines). Prosser's flying displays usually included many loops and other stunts as well.

They formed the Ballarat Flying School and Prosser taught Carey to fly. Actually they operated from the Bacchus Marsh racecourse, just two miles from where I

am writing this letter. Carey had a transport business between Melbourne and Ballarat.

Carey flew the Blériot from Bacchus Marsh to Point Cook and there performed the required tests for the Australian Aero Club 'Certificate'. Licences were not introduced till 1919.

In 1917 Carey flew the Blériot from Bacchus Marsh to Adelaide, then Gawler, in stages, giving flying displays for war charities along the way. He then returned in the same fashion. Many passenger flights were performed by this Blériot which had only one seat. As far as I can determine the passenger sat on top of the 'fuselage', behind the pilot, with legs, and skirts, behind the pilot's seat back. I have yet to see a photo of anyone in this precarious position so this is just my guess!

** The book is available from E.F. Martin, 45/355 Dorset Road, Croydon Victoria 3136 "

This correction needs to be advised to the *Smithsonian Institution Press Washington DC* for their Australian records to be accurate.

QUESTION: What harness system did Guillaux use ??

LOOPS & RECORDS & HARNESSSES or lack thereof

The November newsletter Blériot list also included

"1912 April 21 Harriet Quimby becomes the first woman to fly the English Channel. Quimby had earlier become the first licensed woman pilot in America (August 1911)."

LESS than 3 months after her (cross-Channel) triumph Harriet Quimby made her last flight. She had arrived at the Harvard-Boston aviation meet at the end of June 1912 with a brand-new, all-white 70-hp Blériot monoplane. As part of her performance she agreed to take the meet manager, William AP Willard - father of Curtiss exhibition flier Charles Willard, - out over Dorchester Bay and around the Boston Light.

LATE in the afternoon of July 1, she assured a solicitous friend that she had no intention of crashing in the bay. "I am a cat and don't like water," she said. Then she and her 190-pound passenger took off. Blanche Scott was in the air at the time competing for a prize and Ruth Law was ready to take off on her first plane ride having just started flying lessons (she would later set national records to great acclaim in the USA).

SOME 5000 spectators watched the Quimby two-seater skimming out over the harbour, flying smooth as a gull in the 8-mile breeze. Easily she rounded the Light, came back over the Squantum airfield at 3000 feet and circled over the Bay while gradually descending for a landing. Suddenly the Blériot plummeted in a precipitous dive. At "about 1500 feet" recalled Ruth Law later, *"the passenger just went out of the plane. We were not belted or fastened in any way, at that time. He went up in an arc, out of the plane, as if he had jumped."* The pilot fought to get the plane under control but seconds later was thrown out of the plane herself. Pilot and passenger hit shallow water within seconds of each other and were crushed to death on impact with the mud. Blanche Scott, still in the air, witnessed the catastrophe from above, while the plane "glided down and lodged itself in the mud".

"AMBITIOUS to be among the pathfinders," wrote the *Boston Post*, "she took her chances like a man and died like one." *Women Aloft*



LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

Rose Bay Diary – Part 6.

Tom Bavin, the Leader of the Opposition in the NSW Parliament, presented the prizes at Kambala on December 13, 1926. The girls of Kambala School cherished their commanding view over Rose Bay, and must have been comforted by their similarly named Headmistress, Miss Roseby. In her speech Clara Roseby informed the assembly that Kambala had had no failures in public examinations during the past two years. The presentations commenced with Year V, Class Prize: to Vida Breckenridge, then continued down the classes to the Year I Examination Prize: to Marie Breckenridge. Charles and Anna Breckenridge would have been very proud of their daughters. Beyond the Kambala curriculum, the Breckenridge sisters had experienced the very beginning of the new "Air Age" by the comings and goings of aviators and their seaplanes through Rose Bay during the pioneering years of national and international air routes. Then in May, 1927, one of the defining events of the twentieth century took place. It was the crossing of the Atlantic Ocean by a lone pilot, Charles Lindbergh. This outstanding achievement created a new awareness of the progress made by aviation, and also generated a phenomenon – the universal adoration of aviation heroes. More than ever before, the world, particularly Australia, became "Air Minded". The year 1928 then saw a string of international achievements by Australian aviators; Bert Hinkler; Hubert Wilkins; Smithy and Ulm among them. These airmen were immediately elevated to hero status by their fellow countrymen, especially by the young. Graham Reddall was one such youthful aerophile who was smitten by the romance of man's conquest of the air. He was the rear neighbour of Marie Breckenridge, living at 24 Chamberlain Avenue, and was born in 1915, the same year as Marie. After his death at Rose Bay in 1972, his extensive aviation collection became the centrepiece of the AHSA (NSW) Inc archives.

With aviation so much in the local news during the first half of 1928, the arrival in formation of four, multi-engined, Supermarine Southampton II flying boats, escorted by a flight of RAAF aircraft, flying low over Sydney Harbour at lunchtime on August 1, could not but cause great excitement. The event was accompanied by drama when one of the RAAF aircraft, (DH9a. A1-25), carrying the official cinematographer, was forced to ditch off Bradleys Head. The two men on board were quickly rescued by a naval pinnace from Garden Island. The flying boat formation was the *RAF Far East Flight* which left Felixstowe on October 14, 1927, to conduct a "Showing the Flag" tour to Australia and Hong Kong before reforming as 205 Sqn RAF, to be based at what is now Seletar in Singapore. The RAF flying boats, like de Pinedo, arrived in Australia at Broome. Lawrence Wackett was there in his Widgeon II to greet them, and to escort them around the coast to South Australia. At Adelaide, Stanley Goble was preparing to continue the escort to Point Cook in one of the two newly acquired RAAF Supermarine Southampton I, (A11-1), flying boats. Unfortunately, just as he was leaving the dock by launch, to ready for take off, a freak wind overturned A11-1, and the long planned escort had to be abandoned.

When the *Far East Flight* arrived in Sydney, the RAF airmen were given a civic reception at the Town Hall. In his reply to the welcome, the Commanding Officer of the flying boats, Group Captain H. M. Cave-Browne-Cave made a prophetic speech in which he said: "This flight is entirely different from any previous flights to Australia. Sir Ross Smith, Parer and McIntosh, Hinkler, Cobham, Kingsford Smith; all these were pioneers, working close to their own endurance and that of their machines. Their contributions to aviation were immense. But it is necessary that someone should follow them to demonstrate that their triumphs were not merely isolated phenomena." In other words, the period of pioneering was now to be followed by regular air travel. A reporter, reflecting on the size of the flying boats, wrote in *The Sydney Morning Herald*: "They open a vision of air travel in a grand and reposeful manner. Here it becomes possible to think of a trip by air to England, which would seem less wearying and bone-twisting than one may have felt it to be, curled up in the back seat of the quivering, noisy, restricted machines we have known to now." The next day the Herald reported events in London that had also occurred on August 1: "Members of the House of Commons and their friends gathered on the terrace at Westminster to watch the mooring of the giant flying boat Calcutta, designed for the

England-Australia service. It is fitted with a restaurant, and accommodates 15. It will cruise in home waters before going to Australia." Imperial Airways was following in the slipstream of the *Far East Flight*. The Short Calcutta was soon put into service on the section of the Empire route from Genoa to Alexandria. On March 29, 1929, the route was extended to Karachi in India. Just one month earlier, on Saturday February 23, Stanley Goble had demonstrated the capability of flying boats by carrying out the first non stop flight between Hobart and Sydney, flying in command of a RAAF Supermarine Southampton I. However, there would still be a lot more water under the hull before an Imperial Airways flying boat finally reached Rose Bay.

Graham Reddall was thirteen years old, and on holiday at the end of 1928, when he was given the Boxing Day gift of his dreams; his first flight in an aeroplane. A WW1 fighter pilot, "Bunny" Hammond, with his partner Alby Lewis, had formed a company named *Hammond Aerial Transport Ltd.*, which was barnstorming from the shores of Lake Illawarra South. Young Graham was taken aloft by "Bunny" Hammond in DH 60X Moth, (G-AUFT). It was not long before he had his second flight, with F. W. Leggatt from Mascot in DH 60 Moth, (G-AUAH), on April 29, 1929. When he took to the air for the third time, again with F. W. Leggatt on November 8, 1931, in DH 60 Moth (VH-UFV), Graham decided to write an in flight record of his experience: "Took off at 10.10 am. We are now up and there are not many pockets. Mascot is right below and the engine is roaring merrily. The buildings look awfully small. I feel O.K., beautiful up here, not much vibration, also not much wing rock, splendid bus. Cooks River right below. We are making good speed, and that looks like the Harbour Bridge in the distance. The bridge looks splendid, we are right above it. This is a wonderful world, the harbour looks beautiful. I wish we were up longer. The Captain is a splendid pilot and I would go anywhere with him. Damn. I think we are going home again. Yes we are shutting off. A last look round – we are landing – Good Bye." Graham's next flight was with what was possibly the first commercial operation from Rose Bay. Pilot E. Stephens was conducting joyrides from Rose Bay in a DH 80 Puss Moth, (VH-UPO), fitted with floats and named *Puss in Boots*. During that flight on Saturday, February 27, 1932, Graham's experience would have been similar to the *Sydney Highlights* offered by the current operator from Rose Bay, *Sydney Seaplanes*. Maybe Graham's flight did not extend to Bondi Beach, and he certainly would have missed the Opera House, but otherwise he would have: "Experienced the thrill of a seaplane flight over Sydney's icons, the Harbour Bridge and the famous harbour."

At about the time Graham Reddall was enjoying his first seaplane experience from Rose Bay, a meeting between Hudson Fysh and the British Government-appointed director of Imperial Airways Ltd, Sir Walter Nicholson, was taking place in Brisbane. This meeting followed a letter dated June 16, 1931, from Fysh to the managing director of Imperial Airways, George Woods Humphrey, suggesting possible future co-operation between the two companies. Although the Qantas and Imperial boards long regarded Darwin as an important destination, being the future commercial airways gateway to Australia, their joint experience of involvement in the England-Australia Experimental Air Mails of April - May, 1931, was a wake up call. The air mail experiment was saved from fiasco only by the intervention of Australian National Airways. This evidence of possible competition on the route prompted Fysh's contact with Woods Humphrey. And when Australian National Airways went on to conduct its own *First All - Australian Air Mail*, carrying the Christmas mail to England at the end of 1931, and returning mail to Australia in the New Year, the Qantas – Imperial embrace grew stronger in defence of their mutual ambition to eradicate competition on their respective sectors of the Empire route.

In a final demonstration of its ownership of the air route from England to Australia, Imperial Airways sent its Air Superintendent, H. G. Brackley, in command of a survey flight leaving Croydon on May 29, 1933, arriving at Sydney on June 26. The aircraft chosen for the survey was an Armstrong Whitworth AW15 Atalanta, (G-ABTL), named *Astrea*. Australians were given their first glimpse of a four-engined, streamlined airliner, and they were impressed. On its way back, *Astrea* landed at Longreach to pick up Hudson Fysh as a passenger for London. July 1 saw Imperial extend its Empire route from Karachi to Calcutta; on September 23 the service reached Rangoon, and on December 9 Imperial arrived at Singapore. After Fysh's return from London, the Qantas – Imperial Airways partnership was formalised as Qantas Empire Airways Ltd, registered in Brisbane on January 18, 1934...**John Scott.**