

file 2014-1 Feb - May

AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW) Inc

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



A H S A

Southern Skies

THE NEWSLETTER OF A H S A (NSW) Inc

FEBRUARY 2014 ~ No 480

February Meeting

THE first 2014 meeting will be held at the Powerhouse Museum on Wednesday 5th February 2014 at 7.45pm. The venue is the Amenities Room at the southern end of the Administration building, which is to the south of the main building. Entry is via Macarthur Street and car parking is available immediately in front of the meeting room. Visitors are most welcome and supper will be available after the meeting.

THE meeting will feature a presentation of aircraft images from Eastern Europe and Moscow and a short DVD of the 2013 MAKS Air Show at Zhukovsky Aerodrome, near Moscow. Readers might recall the July 2013 meeting where one of the principals of Torii Tours, Ron Cook, was guest speaker. Ron led Torii's inaugural Eastern Europe and Russia tour in August, 2013, visiting a number of aviation-related locations including the Deutsches Museum in Munich; the Luftwaffe Museum at Gatow, near Berlin; the Polish Air Force Air Show at Radom, Poland; the Czech Air Force museum at Kbely, near Prague; also the MAKS 2013 Air Show at Zhukovsky and the air force museum at Monino, both near Moscow. John Scott and Warwick Bigsworth, who were both members of the tour, will present some of their photographic highlights of the trip.

ALL museums displayed a wide variety of exotic aircraft. The Luftwaffe Museum at Gatow featured many aircraft in the open and included former Soviet makes as well as other European and American types. A spectacular flying display and a mix of American, Russian and other European aircraft were on display at Radom. MAKS 2013 included many types of aircraft from the Cold War era, including various models of Antonov, Ilyushin, MiG, Myasishchev, Sukhoi, Tupolev and Yakovlev, plus new designs from those and other manufacturers. The flying display was somewhat hampered by the weather, however the Russian and other formation teams were excellent. The museum at Monino provided an opportunity to see some of those aircraft one

could only dream about - examples such as the Myasishchev M-4 Bison, Tupolev Tu-4 Bull, Tu-95 Bear, Tu-22 Blinder and Backfire long range bombers, Tu-114, An-8, An-10A, An-12 and An-24 turbo-prop transports, Tu-104, Tu-124, Tu-134 and Tu-144 jet transports as well as MiGs of all varieties, plus Sukhois, Yaks and more were on display.

PLEASE join us for a rare treat of exotic aircraft on the screen.

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

THORNTON ESTATE: BOXKITE SCULPTURE OFFICIAL LIGHTING-UP CEREMONY

MEMBERS will be very much aware from Keith White's highly detailed research into the life and times of Parramatta Dentist and Aviator, William Ewart Hart (circa 1911-1912), that Belmore Park, situated on the immediate northern side of Penrith railway station and part of the new Thornton estate, was Australia's first designated aerodrome.

Bill Hart flew his Boxkite/s from here and established his flying school on the site before moving to Ham Common at Richmond in 1912.

Having become a speedway and then used by the Army in successive years the area has now been developed by



The Boxkite Sculpture lit at night

Landcom as a new community with residential land for villas and free-standing garden homes, a cricket oval and a shopping centre, just a short walk from Penrith station.

The name, Thornton, commemorates the heritage-listed Thornton House formerly owned by the Smith family of Sheffield Shield fame.

AHSA member and Hart co-researcher, Peter Finlay, was invited to attend the ceremony on Friday, 6th December 2013, to display his R/C 1/12th-scale Bristol Boxkite. Keith White was unfortunately unable to attend but he was very much involved in making sure that the placard which describes some of Hart's flying activities was correct in every detail.

A magnificent stylised Boxkite structure dominates the entrance to the playing field and is lit at night. Peter, who was asked to give a short address to describe Hart's first flight from Penrith to Parramatta Park, with his dramatic approach to landing on 3rd November 1911, was privileged to be one of four people to operate the switch to activate the lights on Friday evening. The Penrith Mayor, Councillor Ross Fowler OAM, with Laura Player, a descendant of the Smith family, and Greg Edwards, a relative of Bill Hart, participated in the formality.

Other luminaries with connections to past days at Thornton were John Jones, the son of pioneer aviator and aircraft constructor "Jack" LJR Jones and his wife, Chesne, and Frank Kleinig, the son of Frank Kleinig, who raced his Hudson Special at the speedway. Peter and Frank (Jnr) were fellow competitors in the Formula Vee class circa 1969/70 at Warwick Farm and other Sydney motor racing circuits. The recognition of the pioneering "flying experiments" (W.E.Hart diary notes) at Thornton is long overdue and the stunning Boxkite structure with its biplane wings and double-decker tail-plane is a fitting memorial to the adventurer.

Peter Finlay



Peter displaying his 1/12th-scale R/C Bristol Boxkite in front of the illuminated Boxkite structure at the entrance to Thornton.

NOTICE OF 2014 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, 5th March 2014, commencing at 7:45pm.

Business

1. President's Report
2. 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

Members are requested to consider standing for the position of Honorary Secretary. After 14 years in that role, Warwick Bigsworth will not be standing for the position in 2014. The continued successful operation of the Society will be dependent upon the occupancy of the position.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

2014 Membership Subscriptions are now overdue. For those who have not paid, please follow the renewal information that was provided in the December 2013 issue of 'Southern Skies'. The annual subscription rate for AHSA (NSW) Inc is \$30. The annual rate for dual membership of AHSA (NSW) Inc and AHSA Inc is \$70.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Members are encouraged to assist in the provision of guest speakers at our monthly meetings. If you would like to participate, or you have a friend or relation who might be suitable as a guest speaker, please contact John Scott.

A GIFT FOR 'THE PERSON WITH EVERYTHING' ! PERSONAL JET FIGHTER

New start-up US jet manufacturer Saker Aircraft has unveiled plans for a Mach 0.99 'personal jet'. Resembling a stealth fighter, the two-seat Saker S-1 would be powered by two FJ44-4 turbofans and have a range of up to 1600 miles with external fuel tanks.

AEROSPACE

.... Not such a new idea.... Whilst waiting for the Archer aircraft I hired at Las Vegas airport (1980's) we stood beside a Russian MiG & was informed that the owner 'flies into the Casino regularly' in his much-loved personal aircraft - a real Russian MiG.

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FIRST AERIAL CROSSING OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC

The first aerial crossing of the South Atlantic was made by the Portuguese naval aviators Gago Coutinho and Sacadura Cabral in 1922 between March 30 & June 17 to mark the centennial of Brazil's independence. Coutinho and Cabral flew from Lisbon, Portugal, to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, covering a distance of 8,383 kilometres (5,209 miles).

THE JOURNEY

First aircraft The journey started at the Bom Sucesso Naval Air Station in the Tagus, near the Belém Tower in Lisbon, at 16:30 on March 30, 1922, in the Portuguese Naval Aviation aircraft *Lusitânia*, a Fairey III-D MkII seaplane specifically fitted for himself, with an artificial horizon for aeronautical use.

This invention revolutionized air navigation at the time, and, according to the Portuguese Navy Museum, testing it was also one of the reasons for the flight.

The first part of the journey ended on the same day at Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (Canary Islands), where the aviators noticed that the plane's fuel consumption was higher than expected. The journey resumed on April 5 when they departed for São Vicente Island, Cape Verde, traversing 850 miles. After making repairs on the *Lusitânia*, they departed on April 17 to Praia on Santiago Island, and then to the Saint Peter and Saint Paul Archipelago, already in Brazilian waters, where they arrived on April 17 after flying 1,700 kilometres (1,100 mi) over the South Atlantic. **They had reached that point relying solely on the Coutinho's sextant with its artificial horizon.**

However, when ditching on the rough seas near the archipelago, the *Lusitânia* lost one of its floats and sank. The two aviators were saved by the cruiser NRP *República*, which had been sent by the Portuguese Navy to support the aerial crossing. The aviators were then carried to the Brazilian Fernando de Noronha islands.

Second aircraft Enthusiastic Portuguese and Brazilian public opinion about the flight led the Portuguese government to send another seaplane of the same type to complete the journey. The new plane, baptized *Pátria*, arrived at Fernando Noronha on May 6. After being refitted the *Pátria* departed on May 11 with Coutinho and Cabral on board. They flew to the Saint Peter and Saint Paul Archipelago to resume the journey at the point where had been interrupted. However an engine problem forced them to once again make an emergency ditching in



Gago Coutinho and Sacadura Cabral in the *Lusitânia*.

the middle of the ocean, where they stayed 9 hours until being saved by the nearby British cargo ship *Paris City* which carried them back to Fernando Noronha.

Third aircraft A third Fairey III – baptized *Santa Cruz* by the wife of Epitácio Pessoa, the President of Brazil – was sent out, carried by the cruiser NRP *Carvalho Araújo*. On June 5, the *Santa Cruz* was put in the waters of Fernando Noronha and Coutinho and Cabral resumed their journey, flying to Recife, then to Salvador da Bahia, then to Vitória and from there to Rio de Janeiro, where they arrived on June



17, 1922, ditching in the Guanabara Bay. The two men were received as heroes by huge crowds, and were greeted by the aviation pioneer *Alberto Santos-Dumont*. Although their journey had lasted 79 days, the actual flight time was just 62 hours 26 minutes.

Coutinho and Cabral's transatlantic route.

Later transatlantic flights

Coutinho and Cabral's aerial crossing inspired numerous subsequent transatlantic pilots, such as the American Charles Lindbergh, the Brazilian João Ribeiro de Barros, and the Portuguese Sarmiento de Beires, all of whom crossed the Atlantic in 1927.

Obviously their pilots' licences required the ability to swim! Wikipedia Ed

?? Would this amazing flight be recognised today or would the flight be required to be conducted in the same aircraft and a more concurrent timeframe ?

FOR SALE

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. Having read the book over the Christmas break, I can recommend it as a worthy addition to any bookshelf. 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.

DVDs

FROM FRED NIVEN: AIRLINES AND AIRCRAFT FROM THE ANSETT GROUP 1921 – 2002 EDITION 9.

This revised edition of Fred's excellent DVD is now available. It covers all airlines and aircraft in the Ansett and A.N.A. Groups, from Western Australia Airways in 1921 to the aftermath of the demise of Ansett in 2002. The DVD is only suitable for playing on computers capable of playing Word for Windows files, not Macs without that facility or TV-based systems. Data and photo content is Word for Windows format only. Price is \$30.00 including P&P. See the web-site www.ansetthistory.info for purchase details.

DVD 1: ASA

FROM NIGEL DAW: AN ICONIC AIRLINE – THE STORY OF AIRLINES OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Following on from the book by the same name by Jim Evans and Nigel Daw, the 2 DVD set is now available. Memorabilia Compiled by Nigel Daw (play DVD on computer only) contains a wealth of additional information detailing the operations of ASA and its legendary predecessor Guinea Airways.

DVD 2:

FLYING THERE WITH AIRLINES OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA – produced by Richard Lockheed (play on computer or DVD Player). This DVD consists of three separate scenarios, but all have the common theme of flying ASA to "there". The first segment of the video follows a Fokker F27 Friendship crew on a Flight from Adelaide to Port Lincoln and Ceduna. During the return flight on the Ceduna to Port Lincoln leg, time is taken to reflect on Guinea Airways' and ASA impressive history from the early days in New Guinea, to the introduction of the Darwin routes, following the war and through to the eighties. Just two and a half months after the flight to Ceduna took place, it was announced on the 19th of February 1986 that ASA was finally about to shut down their engines forever on the 27th of June 1986. The last ever flight for ASA was flown by Fokker Friendship, VH-FNP, to Port Lincoln and return. Fortunately this historic event was captured on video tape and is available for all to remember now. Vale Airlines of South Australia.

The DVDs may be purchased from:

Nigel Daw E-mail: skyways@adam.com.au

Post: PO Box 428, Port Adelaide BC SA 5015

Australia-Wide \$24.95 + \$1-50 (P & H) = \$26.45

Direct credit funds to bank account: N K Daw: BSB 065148 Account Number 10273578

Detail: insert your name in that section.

REINVENTING THE (WHEEL) AIRSHIP

CARGO AIRSHIP

German company *Aeros* has revealed plans for two new vertical-take-off cargo airships. The company is proposing two sizes of rigid variable buoyancy air vehicles, the *Aeroscraft ML886* and *ML868*, which could carry 66 t and 225 t payloads, respectively. *Aeros* tested a proof-of-concept vehicle in 2012, which, the company claims, could be used to resupply oil rigs and move wind turbines in remote regions.

It is well known that the difference between profit and loss in the airline industry is very dependent on the costs of fuel. With environmental factors also contributing to the demand for efficiency it is forecast that America will seek to be self-sufficient by 2020-25 in its own oil requirements.



HAVE YOU PURCHASED YOUR
COMMEMORATIVE POSTCARD ?

'AGE SHALL NOT WEARY THEM'

Some members will remember Jim Hazelton, brother of Max (He of Hazelton Airlines = HZ/HZL, fame).

Jim still has his own aviation business, also at Cudal - Hazelton Agricultural Services!

At 84 years, Jim's still very active as you'll see below:

20,000km - and 60 HOURS IN CESSNA CARAVAN

Sat, 28 Dec 2013 News: Queenstown Lakes



'The adventure of a lifetime' - with an experienced pilot on board.

A 29-year-old Queenstown pilot, Antony Sproull, Air Milford's operations manager, left the resort yesterday bound for a 20,000km flight ferrying a \$2 million 14-seat Cessna Caravan home for his father, Air Milford owner Hank Sproull.

After collecting the aircraft in Athens he will fly during the 60-hour journey home with two experienced Australian ferry pilots, Jim Hazelton (84) and Richard Purdy, at his side.

Mr Hazelton will direct the flight paths through the epic journey.

"Jim has the knowledge and contacts to lead us through the safest flying routes," Antony said.

The trio will fly home via the Greek Islands and Egypt, spending New Year's Eve on the Nile.

They will then fly across the Red Sea via Saudi Arabia to Southern Oman, the Maldives and Cocos (Keeling) Islands in the Indian Ocean, thence to Broome, Western Australia, on to Alice Springs and plan to land in Queenstown in mid-January.

The "near new" 675hp 208 Caravan has 300 hours on the clock and comes with state-of-the-art cockpit technology ('the glass cockpit') - the first of its kind to be operated between Queenstown and Milford Sound.

The plane's Garmin G1000 GPS instrument technology meant Air Milford had the potential to operate commercially into Milford on instrument flight rules (IFR), enabling flights to continue in bad weather. Hank Sproull is IFR rated.

"It's basically three iPads across your cockpit and that's your instrumentation - You've got three flat screen iPads handling your controls.

"This GPS technology is very new and a huge advancement. On average, we can only fly into Milford 250 days a year because of bad weather. This might push that out to potentially 300 days, so it's a huge economic advantage for Milford and Queenstown."

Their journey can be viewed through the Air Milford website:

<http://www.odt.co.nz/news/queenstown-lakes/286716/20000km-and-60-hours-cessna>

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 2014 1-2 Centenary of Military Aviation Air Show, Point Cook, VIC.

03 1942 - Japanese attack on Broome

09 Tyabb Air Show, Tyabb, VIC

31 1921 - AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE ESTABLISHED -
WORLD'S SECOND OLDEST AIR FORCE.

A REMINDER FOR YOUR DIARY:

per John Scott:

SIGNIFICANT AUSTRALIAN AVIATION CENTENARIES OF 2014

2014 will be a year of commemorations:

- 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;
- The first B.A.S.E. jump in Australia;
- At Melbourne, Victoria, the formation of the *Australian Aero Club*;
- The first C.F.S. pilot training course;
- The first deployment overseas of military aircraft;
- World War I, which broke out on 4th August 1914.
- *Meanwhile* - pilots like Hawker, Guillaux, A.W. Jones, A. Delfosse Badgery, "Wizard" Stone, V.P. Taylor, and J.C. Marduel thrilled the crowds.
- *Not forgetting the AHSA commemoration of Maurice Guillaux' first Australian Air Mail Flight and Australia's first air freight - Lipton Tea and OT Juice - 16 to 18 July 1914 - from Melbourne to Sydney in his Bleriot XI.*
- The first loops in Australia were carried out in 1914 by Maurice Guillaux, first in Sydney and then in Newcastle, NSW. Guillaux was an exhibition pilot employed by Louis Blériot (1872 - 1936). Maurice Guillaux returned to France after war was declared.

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 28 February 2014.

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.

✈ Thank you Peter Finlay, Peter Coates, John Scott, Ian Debenham, and Warwick Bigsworth for submissions to this newsletter. Contributions should be sent to the Newsletter Editor- Email: judyraingsford@hotmail.com

in A H S A (NSW)

The first air mail flight

ONE of the most notable flights of the pre-World War 1 era occurred between 16-18 July 1914, when Maurice Guillaux flew from Melbourne to Sydney carrying 1785 postcards (Australia's first official airmail) and, with them, some OT Juice and Lipton tea (Australia's first air freight).

THE flight took two days, five hours and 43 minutes to cover the 937 km (582 miles). Airmail had been carried previously in Britain, Canada and the USA. However French pilot Maurice Guillaux's flight was believed to be the longest of all.

AT the time it was a sensational news story, making headlines worldwide, but only a few weeks later World War I broke out and this remarkable flight was almost forgotten.

An Australian icon - the Blériot XI monoplane, 1914 -2014, on display at the Powerhouse Museum Sydney.



About your postcard

THE most collectable philatelic item of the re-enactment will certainly be these postcards.

THERE are exactly 1785 postcards, believed to be the number carried by Maurice Guillaux.

THE postcards are modelled on the originals and will be transported as part of the re-enactment. They will have first priority on the lead Jabiru aircraft.

AS well as securing your special collector's item, your purchase helps support the re-enactment flight and the preservation of Australia's aviation history.

How the Purchase System Works ...

'Early-Bird' Orders Reserve 1st choice of numbers

1. Log in: <http://www.australiasfirstairmail.com> and follow the prompts:
2. **"Buy now - Visit our shop now"** -
3. Go to the shop and select the number of the card you would like -
4. You then have a choice of **'standard'** or **'premium'** cards: ... standard cards (\$30) have the 60c stamp only ... premium cards (\$35) have the 60c stamp and the \$2.60 stamp -
5. Complete the purchase by following the prompts -
6. Purchase details and receipt number can be printed off with details and you will also receive a **Certificate of Purchase** by post .
7. The 2014 commemorative stamps will be produced on **1 July 2014**.

Your Certificate is your Record ...

This is to certify that

Your name
Your address
has purchased

re-enactment postcard No. 0000

Your premium postcard will be affixed with both the 60c and \$2.60 Australia Post commemorative stamps.

Delivery address:
Purchaser's Address
Contact number:
XXXXXXX

Your Email address:

**PURCHASE
YOUR POSTCARD
~AVAILABLE NOW~**



The original 1914 postcard

What happens next

YOUR postcard will be sent to Melbourne to be available for the re-enactment flight.

DURING the period 12-14 July 2014 it will be carried to Sydney and imprinted with a special logo modelled on that used for the 1964 (50th Anniversary) re-enactment.

ON 18 July 2014, the exact date of the centenary, the cards will be imprinted with a date stamp and posted by registered mail in a fully sealed envelope to the address listed on your certificate.

DON'T have a credit card? Buy from our philatelic dealer - no extra charge!

Thank you for your support ...

THE Airmail Centenary Commemoration Group of the Aviation Historical Society of Australia, NSW (Inc) is coordinating the re-enactment of the original airmail flight from Melbourne to Sydney planned for 12-14 July 2014. FULL details of the organisation and commemorations, including the terms and conditions under which your purchase has been made, can be found at the website: www.australiasfirstairmail.com.

ALL proceeds from postcard sales support the organisation & conduct of the re-enactment flight.

ANY surplus will be paid into a fund that will be used to preserve Australia's aviation heritage.

A full financial statement will be published on this website at the conclusion of the program :

guillaux.centenary@gmail.com

ALL people participating in the commemorations thank you for purchasing this postcard.

WE are sure that it will be a valuable memento for you.

*Ian Debenham OAM President
Aviation Historical Society of Australia (NSW) Inc.*



LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

Rose Bay Diary – Part 7.

In a letter to his wife Frida, from Sydney on 26 May 1936, the Air Superintendent of Imperial Airways, Herbert Brackley, wrote: "Arrived here yesterday afternoon, to-day is foggy and Scotch mist obscuring what otherwise would be beautiful scenery. Not a moment has been left to us. We were grabbed on arrival to go to the opening of the I. A. Exhibition which the Prime Minister and many important people attended. I am having an interview with the P. M. this evening." Herbert Brackley was in Sydney as a result of the announcement by Imperial Airways, on 20 December 1934, of the all-up Empire Air mail Scheme. This announcement was followed by an initial order with Short Brothers for 28 'C' class Empire flying boats for service on all its trunk routes. These unilateral announcements had major implications for Qantas Empire Airways and the Australian Government. The Government was advised by land plane advocates Edgar Johnston, Controller of Civil Aviation, and Richard Williams, Chief of the RAAF, to oppose Imperial's plans. They believed that flying boats were unsuitable for Australian air routes and that defence requirements also demanded the continued use of land planes by QEA. There then followed eighteen months of inconclusive negotiations. This was the situation when Herbert Brackley flew into Sydney, as a passenger onboard an RAF Short Singapore III flying boat, at the end of his route survey for the proposed flying boat service between Singapore and Sydney. Significantly, it was Brackley who had the responsibility for selecting flying boat bases along the route, including the important terminal base of Rose Bay.

Imperial Airways needed all the help it could muster to persuade the recalcitrant Australians to provide the co-operation it needed to implement the Empire Air Mail Scheme as planned. Loyalty to the British Empire, although diminished following the Great War, was still an Australian sentiment that could be exploited in 1936. Planning for Brackley's arrival in Sydney involved a dramatic landing on Farm Cove in the giant four-engined RAF flying boat on Empire Day, May 24. However, bad weather delayed his departure from Brisbane, and the delay saw him arrive just in time for the opening of the Exhibition, on the 6th floor of David Jones's George Street store, at 3 pm on Monday May 25. The High Commissioner for Great Britain in Australia, Sir Geoffrey Whiskard, officially opened the Exhibition which was titled "Flying Over The Empire". On display were 150 photographs taken along the Empire air routes of the world, as well as models of aeroplanes including flying boats. On July 3, the first of the 'C' class flying boats, *Canopus* (G-ADHL), was launched at the Short's Rochester factory, and flew for the first time the next day. The urgency for some conclusion to the negotiations between the Australian and U. K. governments was becoming extreme.

By November 1936, the editorial mood of the *The Sydney Morning Herald* seemed to change in support of the air mail plan, and was critical of the delays caused by Australian Government indecision. Perhaps the Exhibition at David Jones had been a factor in changing the Herald's mood despite its editor having an opinion about the suitability of Rose Bay as a base. Following the closure of the Exhibition, the aeroplane models were retained by QEA presumably to be returned to London. However, eventually the Second World War intervened, and QEA gave the models to the Sydney Technological Museum. As a country boy, during holiday visits to Sydney in the 1940s, I was introduced to the Exhibition which was on display at the museum under the title, "The Evolution of Commercial Aircraft as Developed by Imperial Airways Ltd., 1924-1937." I remember the superb quality of the models which are still preserved by the Powerhouse Museum. The collection is an important reminder of the fractious negotiations that preceded the introduction of the Empire Air Mail Scheme. After all, even though Imperial Airways won the flying boat v land plane argument, if the Australian Government had not insisted on retaining control of the Darwin-Singapore sector of the route, QEA's experience as an international airline would have ceased back in 1938.

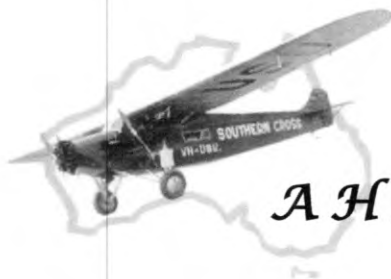
I have often wondered about the naming of the Short S 23 flying boat. In his book "Shorts Aircraft Since 1900", C. H. Barnes comments: "In the absence of any type-name other than Imperial Airways' designation of 'C' class, (it) became universally famous by its popular name Empire Boat; later

Imperial Airways adopted the official class-name Imperial Flying Boat, but the popular name continued to stick." Why was the Imperial Airways board apparently reluctant to give a defining type-name to the Short S23? There was a precedent for the honouring of cities through the naming of British flying boats. With relevance to the cities along the air mail route to Australia there were the Supermarine Southampton; Short Calcutta; Short Rangoon and Short Singapore. The name, Short Sydney, has a nice alliterative ring to it. Imagine the public relations coup in the antipodes if the S 23 had been so named. Even the odd Australian politician might have been won over to Imperial's grand plan. Imperial's longer term vision was for a connection to New Zealand followed by a Pacific crossing to Canada, then on across the Atlantic by flying boat to the UK, thus connecting the Empire by circumnavigating the globe. The loss of control of the Singapore - Sydney section of the route effectively thwarted the master plan, resulting in Imperial's route being prevented from progressing past Singapore. Perhaps the Imperial Airways board was never in a mood to honour Sydney through the naming of its beautiful new flying boat.

The news that Rose Bay might become a flying boat base did not go down well with the local residents. A Citizens' Committee was formed in opposition; complaining that unsafe air and water operations, aircraft engine noise, and the devaluing effects of "industrialisation" on the suburb, would all be the unacceptable consequences of the base. Woollahra Council and the NSW State Government were also galvanised into opposition; as were institutions like the Rose Bay Convent. It must have been difficult for the "air minded" minority, like the Breckenridge sisters and Graham Reddall, who were by now young adults, to argue the benefits of the base with their fellow residents. The local controversy did not deter the trio from pursuing their love of aviation. Graham had wanted to learn to fly but there was a problem with his medical. Nevertheless, an examination of his photographic collection shows that he spent many hours at Mascot during the 1930's. He recorded a flight with Captain Frank Follett, on 19 March 1933, in Adastral Airways DH60M, (VH-UOR). At the time, Frank's sister Evelyn was a qualified pilot and co-director/secretary of Adastral Airways. Graham's contact with the Follett's may have been a factor in Marie Breckenridge finding employment at the *Air Centre*, which was located in Martin Place, and opened in 1935 by Evelyn and her sister Beatrice. The *Air Centre* was an aviation information repository, library, and airline booking agency. In the meantime, Vida Breckenridge found employment with Frank Cridland Pty Ltd, which was a customs agent and had been an accredited passenger booking agent for the first Australian National Airways Ltd, as well as the aerial freight delivery agent for the airline. Within the Rawson Road household, it is not surprising that Charles Breckenridge also succumbed, and began subscribing to aviation periodicals.

There were other, older, citizens of Rose Bay at the time who found themselves irrevocably drawn to aviation. One unlikely convert, living in O'Sullivan Road, was the son of a judge, educated in the UK and Sydney University, a Doctor of Medicine, an army medico who earned a Military Cross for his service in Gallipoli and France, a lecturer and researcher, and a specialist in tropical medicine who conducted early research in Papua New Guinea. His name was George Heydon, and he took to the air as a pilot with the Royal Aero Club of NSW in 1935 at the age of 53. He became the owner of DH60G, (VH-UWB), in April 1935. Graham Reddall got to know Doc Heydon, and first flew with him as a passenger in VH-UWB at Mascot on 22 May 1937. The subsequent contribution by Doc Heydon to gliding in Australia, both as a participant and benefactor, is recorded at the gliding club in my home town of Bathurst.

At the end of 1937, even as Captain Jack Burgess left England in command of Imperial Airways 'C' class flying boat *Centaurus*, (G-ADUT), on his route proving flight to Sydney, the Australian Government had not formally ratified agreements with the UK Government, or QEA, for the new air mail service. Hudson Fysh complained that: "Not a tap has been done in the Netherlands Indies or Australia to prepare bases." At this time Vida Breckenridge started a log of flying boat movements at Rose Bay. *Centaurus* arrived on Christmas eve, 1937. It departed for New Zealand at 4 am on December 27. At Mechanics Bay in Auckland, *Centaurus* moored off the Pan American Airways wharf, where Sikorsky S-42B *Samoan Clipper*, (NC-16734), was preparing to depart on the first South Pacific air mail service between New Zealand and San Francisco. Loyalty to Empire was tested.. **John Scott.**



AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW) Inc

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

A H S A

Southern Skies

THE NEWSLETTER OF A H S A (NSW) Inc

MARCH 2014 ~ No 481

March Meeting

The March meeting will be held at the Powerhouse Museum on Wednesday 5th March 2014 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 is 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. It will be followed by Peter Coates's input re the DVD.

Subscription renewals for 2014 are now overdue.

Unfinancial members will not be eligible to vote at the AGM, and this will be the last issue of *Southern Skies* that will be distributed to members who have not renewed their subscriptions. The Membership Renewal notice was included with the December issue of *Southern Skies*.

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

The February meeting featured a collection of images taken by Warwick Bigsworth during the Torii Tours Eastern Europe and Russian tour in 2013. The images were taken at the Deutsches Museum Munich, where both the island museum site and the dedicated aviation site at Schlessheim were visited; at the Deutsches Technik Museum in Berlin; the Luftwaffe Museum, Gatow, near Berlin; the Polish Air Force Air Show at Radom in Poland; the Czech Air Force museum at Kbely, near Prague; and the MAKS 2013 Air Show at Zhukovsky and the air force museum at Monino, both near Moscow.

John Scott, who was also a member of the same tour, provided for perusal a number of books, programmes and magazines concerning the above venues and displays and also showed a DVD of the MAKS 2013 Air Show. Despite the commentary being in Russian, the flying display and camera work on the DVD were both of very high quality.

Help Wanted

Neil Follett, the Editor of A H S A Inc's *Aviation Heritage*, is also a keen collector of images and information about monuments, plaques and the like commemorating events in Australia's aviation history.

He has been working on recording Australia's aviation memorials and monuments for over twenty years now. He started with his list of about 60 known ones and thought he would end up with about 300

Keith Anderson : Mosman NSW jr in about three years. He now has over 2000 recorded. It was always Neil's intention to publish his research in book form, but because of recently received quotes ranging from \$10,000-00 in B & W for 500 copies to \$23,000-00 for 1000 copies in colour, he has decided to put his material in DVD form and consequently can illustrate every memorial - hence his search for photos.



Keith Anderson : Mosman NSW jr in about three years. He now has over 2000 recorded.

Below is a list of three memorials in churches, plus one other, for which he is seeking assistance:

- HOLROYD UNITING CHURCH
Cnr. Guildford & Byron Rds, Guildford
A brass plaque to Gnr. Alan Neil Blackley. RAAF.
- ST.GILES PRESBYTERIAN WAR MEMORIAL CHURCH
Cnr. MacMahon & Park Rd, Hurstville.
A stained glass window to Ronald Perry. RAAF
- UNITING CHURCH
Cnr. Tyron & Nelson Rds., Lindfield
A stained glass window to P/O Wilfred Burrows.
- YAGOONA
Cnr. Hume Hwy. & Saltash St. Large rock with two plaques to Qantas employees.

Neil has requested that perhaps one or more of our members can assist with these and to photograph them for him. Ideally, on each one he would like an overall photo showing the memorial's setting, the memorial itself and a close-up of any plaque to show the wording.

Neil can be contacted at: nfollett@optusnet.com.au.

HAVE YOU PURCHASED YOUR

COMMEMORATIVE POSTCARD ?

RAAF BUTTERWORTH AIR FORCE BASE - historic memories for

Posted on February 6, 2014 by hafizuddinulaiman

The Butterworth AFB will be transformed into a leisure-oriented development under a proposed joint venture (JV). Leading the project would be TSR Capital Bhd, Lembaga Tabung Angkatan Tentera and Pembinaan Bukit Timah Sdn Bhd to transform the 1,007-acre site via a land swap deal. It said the joint venture company will be the master developer of the leisure-oriented project. The 407 hectares land occupied by the base in Teluk Air Tawar – which is about 8km from Butterworth directly opposite Penang Island – would be transformed into “a city of arts and leisure,” it said in a filing to Bursa Malaysia. **The air base will be relocated and reconstructed at a site soon to be identified.**

The proposal, which is currently being negotiated between the parties, was along the lines of the public-private partnership concept and details of the agreement would be released after definitive and conclusive terms had been agreed upon and a formal agreement entered into by the parties concerned.

“The Government shall pay the JVC for the new air force base through a land swap at current market value of the Government land, which included but was not limited to the 407ha land where the existing Butterworth AFB is situated,” the statement said. The land swap meant that the Government need not fund the cost of relocating and reconstructing the air force base, and also secured it the opportunity to participate in the redevelopment of the land via LTAT’s 30% interest in the JVC.

Butterworth AFB has been the main military installation in this country ever since the earlier years of World War 2. Initially known as the RAF Butterworth, it was a part of the British defence plan for defending the Malayan Peninsula against an imminent threat of invasion by the Imperial Japanese forces during World War II. During the Battle of Malaya, the airfield suffered some damage as a direct result of aerial bombing from Mitsubishi G3M and Mitsubishi G4M bombers of the Imperial Japanese Navy Air Service based in Saigon, South Vietnam. Brewster Buffalos from the airbase rose to challenge the escorting Mitsubishi A6M Zero fighters but were mauled during several of these engagements by the highly trained and experienced Japanese fighter pilots. The RAF airfield was subsequently captured by units of the advancing 25th Army (Imperial Japanese Army) on 20 December 1941 and the control of the airbase was to remain in the hands of IJA until the end of hostilities in September 1945. Whereupon the RAF resumed control of the station and Japanese prisoners of war were made to repair the airfield as well as to improve the runways before resuming air operations in May 1946. In 1957, the RAF closed the station and it was transferred to the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) and it was promptly renamed as **RAAF Butterworth**, becoming the home to numerous Australian fighter and bomber squadrons stationed in Malaya during the Cold War era. The Australian fighters and bombers played a significant role in providing air support during Operation Firedog during the

many Australians

Emergency and later was part of Commonwealth air defence contribution against the might of the then Angkatan Udara Republik Indonesia (AURI now TNI-AU) during the Konfrontasi.

From 1970's onwards, the airbase played an important part to support Malaysia's fight against the communist threats. Being the northernmost and nearest base to communists hotspots especially those near the Thai-Malaysian border, a dark episode loomed over the airbase when a Sikorsky S-61A-4 Nuri helicopter operated by No 3 Skn was shot down by the communist terrorists over Gubir with the loss of all hands on-board.

The RMAF Butterworth, as the airbase was known back then, is also the birthplace of Malaysia's jet fighter units namely No 11 Skn with CAC CA-27 Sabres in 1967. During Ops Gubir, F-5 fighters from the airbase were launched to pound communist hideouts in Gubir, Kedah. This feat was later repeated again decades later, when two Hawk and five Hornet jets from No 15 SKn and No 18 Skn were deployed to Labuan AFB from the airbase and took part during the opening hour of Ops Daulat in March 2013. Having had relinquished its control over the airbase in June 30, 1988 to the RMAF, the RAAF still maintained an infantry company (known as Butterworth Rifle Company) as well as a detachment of AP-3C Orion from No 92 Wing. The Five Power Defence Arrangement (FPDA) also has an Integrated Air Defence System HQ (IADS HQ) located at the airbase.

It is unknown whether these factors have been considered in the proposed development plan as Butterworth AFB has a long and rich history and heritage that is significant to this country. For the record, the Butterworth AFB is the second RMAF airbase which will be closed down after decision being made to close and redeveloped the historically important and significant Sg Besi AFB in Kuala Lumpur. PC

THE END OF A CESSNA ERA

(Courtesy of *Flying for Life* – MAF Australia)

The ubiquitous Cessna 206 was retired from operation by the Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) in Papua New Guinea in December 2013 after 45 years of service. On 19 December 2013, 3 of the aircraft flew from Mt Hagen to Horn Island, thence on to Cairns and Mareeba. The last aircraft flew to Mareeba on 30 December. MAF purchased their first Cessna 206 in 1967 and had two significant advantages over the aircraft they replaced, the Cessna 185. They were turbo-charged which made a huge difference in carrying capacity as well as safety in highlands operations. They were also a lot easier to load, boasting a large side cargo door, and carried more than the 185 tail-dragger. In 1987, MAF reached the maximum number of 206s at one time, when there were 15 such aircraft. Several 206s have logged over 20,000 hours. P2-MFG, which started its service in PNG in January 1976, flew 21,230 hours over 30 years in PNG without an accident.

In MAF service, the Cessna 206 has been replaced by the GippsAero GA8 Airvan.

3 URL's for your Australian Aviation history:**6 MUSTANG AIRCRAFT THAT WERE SUBJECTED TO
ATOMIC BOMB TESTING AT EMU FIELD SA ON
15 OCTOBER 1953**

Three clips, each about 10 minutes, but an engrossing story. Do take the time to watch this interesting story and if you have read Len Beadell's books it doubles the interest!

- **Mustangs at Emu Part 1:**

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q8_xQcfls3A

- **Mustangs at Emu Part 2:**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WA1wvAiu2o>

- **Mustangs At Emu Part 3:**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Snhrqd5RT-A>

- Watch a Mustang start with no oil and cylinders dry....with sand!!!

**LOSS OF CONTROL INVOLVING SCALE-REPLICA SPITFIRE NEAR
PARAFIELD AIRPORT, SA, 17 MARCH 2013**

What the ATSB found - (AO - 2013 - 051)

On 17 March 2013, the owner-pilot of an amateur-built scale-replica Spitfire aircraft (VH-VSF) was participating in an air display at Parafield Airport, SA. The pilot performed a number of airborne passes above the runways in various directions and completed the display with a slow speed pass at 400 ft with the landing gear and some wing flap extended.

Towards the end of this pass the pilot radioed the tower to coordinate a landing and accepted runway 21 Left with an 11 kt crosswind. By now the pilot had turned right and the Spitfire was near the extended runway centreline and 1 km from the runway threshold at a slow speed. A left turn was then observed and, soon after, a wing dropped and the aircraft entered a steep descent. The aircraft crashed in a factory car park, fatally injuring the pilot and substantially damaging the aircraft.

What the ATSB found

The ATSB found that while coordinating a landing clearance with air traffic control and flying a low level circuit with a close downwind and base in turbulent conditions, the pilot inadvertently allowed the airspeed to decay. In the subsequent turn (downwind) to adjust the circuit the aircraft aerodynamically stalled, descended steeply, and impacted the ground. The aircraft was prone to aerodynamically stall with little or no aerodynamic precursors and it was not fitted with a stall warning device, increasing the risk of inadvertent stall.

Safety message

Flying in an air display is different to normal operations and places additional demands on a pilot. Pilots who participate in air displays should consider the demands involved and to the extent possible ensure that the

complete sequence, including landing, is planned and rehearsed.

Although amateur-built aircraft operated in the experimental category are not required to be fitted with a stall warning device (preferably with aural output), owner-pilots should consider the benefits of such devices as a last line of defence against stalling.

Sad tales in pilot history: the speed - the turn - the height: *3 strikes you're out* but then there was the turbulence - the wheels down - the runway aspect *Countdown*

FLYING ABOARD THE HANDLEY PAGE HP-42.

IMPERIAL AIRWAYS 1931 TO 1939!

Flying the airlines in the thirties was a lot more fun than it is now. It was more leisurely and had more class. Certain elitist and anti-British people had no time for these period "rich types". People like these, the risk takers (especially with their own money), were the backbone of the UK. They flew from the first airline operations across the Channel in 1919. **If people** had serious money in the 1930s and travelled internationally, they may well have flown on one of these large (130 foot wingspan) Handley Page bi-plane aircraft, which were the mainstay of British Imperial Airways at the time. They carried 26 passengers in first class only in three different compartments. The first class saloon, the bar and cocktail area, and the smoking section. These machines were ubiquitous and extremely safe. No passenger in a HP-42 was ever killed in 10 years of international and domestic operations from 1930 until 1940. Very comfortable in seating, leg room and service, passengers were served hot meals on bone china with silver cutlery, free liquor flowed, and overnights were in the very best hotels. There was no rush, no waiting in lines and everyone was well dressed. Flying along at a few thousand feet one could see every interesting feature passing below - down to the quality of the washing on the backyard clothes lines! At 95 to 100 mph. one also had time to look at the passing panorama. It took four days to a week (depending on headwinds and weather) to fly from London to Cape Town, South Africa. **By only** flying about four hours a day passengers stayed at the best hotels in Europe, Cairo, Khartoum and the Victoria Falls. All stops to India also made for an interesting choice of destinations. Old fashioned and good mannered ideas and behaviour, like dressing up to have evening drinks on the balcony and certainly not ever being in a hurry - one can only salivate at how pleasurable that would be. In a modern jet, one can get from A to B quickly, even with stop-overs, but nowadays there is nothing to be seen on the ground from 35,000 feet, the modern airline food is at best, basic, unless you are in first class, and passengers are

so jam-packed in that one tends to feel like an immigrant in steerage as the Clipper Ship (ca 1844) creaks and strains along. We will not get on to the subject of terminals.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 2014

- 1-2** Centenary of Military Aviation Air Show, Point Cook, Vic.
03 1942 Commemoration Japanese attack on Broome
09 Tyabb Air Show, Tyabb, Vic.
15 Showcase – Spitfire and Trainers – Temora Aviation Museum, Temora, NSW.
22 Australian National Aviation Museum Book Fair, Moorabbin, Vic.
29 MAF Family Day, Camden, NSW.
31 1921 Commemoration: Australian Air Force established: – World's Second Oldest Air Force

April

- 5** Showcase – WWII Pacific Theatre – Temora Aviation Museum, Temora, NSW.
17-20 Recreational Aviation Australia – NATFLY – Temora, NSW.
27 Wings, Wheels and Wine, Mudgee, NSW.

12-14 July - Not forgetting the AHSA commemoration re-enactment of Maurice Guillaux's first Australian Air Mail Flight and Australia's first air freight - Lipton Tea and OT Juice - 16 to 18 July 1914 - from Melbourne to Sydney in his Bleriot XI.



re-enactment of Maurice Guillaux's first Australian Air Mail Flight and Australia's first air freight -

Lipton Tea and OT Juice - 16 to 18 July 1914 - from Melbourne to Sydney in his Bleriot XI.

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 28 March 2014.*

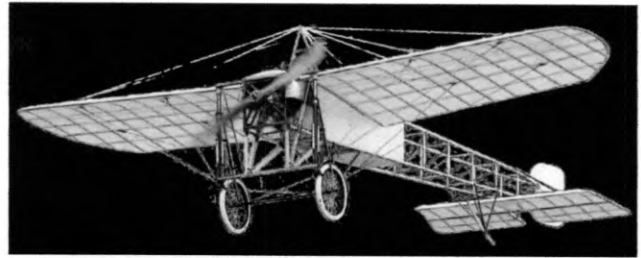
Melbourne Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of the month at the RAAF Association, 24 Camberwell Rd, Hawthorn East, in the auditorium. Parking is available under the building - enter from the lane at the south end. The meetings start at 7.30pm - ring the bell if the front door is shut.

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.

✈ Thank you Peter Coates, John Scott, Tom Lockley and Warwick Bigsworth for submissions to this newsletter. Contributions should be sent to the Newsletter Editor- Email: judyrainsford@hotmail.com

in A-H-S-A (NSW)



An Australian icon - the Blériot XI monoplane, 1914 -2014, on display at the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney

The first air mail flight ...

ONE of the most notable flights of the pre-World War 1 era occurred between 16-18 July 1914, when Maurice Guillaux flew from Melbourne to Sydney carrying 1785 postcards (Australia's first official airmail) and, with them, some OT Juice and Lipton tea (Australia's first air freight).

THE flight took two days, five hours and 43 minutes to cover the 937 km (582 miles). Airmail had been carried previously in Britain, Canada and the USA. However French pilot Maurice Guillaux's flight was believed to be the longest of all. **AT** the time it was a sensational news story, making headlines worldwide, but only a few weeks later World War I broke out and this remarkable flight was almost forgotten.

BY SECURING YOUR SPECIAL COLLECTOR'S ITEM, YOUR PURCHASE HELPS SUPPORT THE RE-ENACTMENT FLIGHT AND THE PRESERVATION OF AUSTRALIA'S AVIATION HISTORY.

**PURCHASE
YOUR POSTCARD
~AVAILABLE NOW~**



The original 1914 postcard

How the Purchase System Works ...

'Early-Bird' Orders Reserve 1st choice of numbers

1. Log in: <http://www.australiasfirstairmail.com> and follow the prompts:
2. **"Buy now - Visit our shop now"** -
3. Go to the shop and select the number of the card you would like -
4. You then have a choice of **'standard'** or **'premium'** cards: ... standard cards (\$30) have the 60c stamp only ... premium cards (\$35) have the 60c stamp and the \$2.60 stamp -
5. Complete the purchase by following the prompts -
6. Purchase details and receipt number can be printed off with details and you will also receive a **Certificate of Purchase** by post .
7. The 2014 commemorative stamps will be produced on **1 July 2014**.

Guillaux was an exhibition pilot employed by Louis Blériot (1872 - 1936). The first loops in Australia were carried out in 1914 by Maurice Guillaux, first in Sydney and then in Newcastle, NSW. Maurice Guillaux returned to France after war was declared.



LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

Rose Bay Diary – Final.

The year 1938 marked the sesquicentenary of European settlement in Australia. The NSW Minister for Labour and Industry, The Hon J. M. Dunningham MLA, was in charge of celebrations. The highlight of his programme was to be Wednesday, January 26, Australia Day. On that day a water pageant on Sydney Harbour would re-enact Captain Arthur Phillip's landing, followed by a city pageant portraying major events of the last 150 years. Activity on the water would continue with an Anniversary Regatta, together with the Big Game Angling World Championship. There was one more thing. Getting in early through an announcement in *The Sydney Morning Herald* on New Year's Day under a heading **PLANES NOT WANTED**: "Mr Dunningham expressed concern at the possibility of commercial aeroplanes flying over the scene of the re-enactment of the landing of Captain Phillip. The re-enactment of this historic event, Mr Dunningham said, should not be marred by the intrusion of planes." Other, on-water, activity programmed by Mr Dunningham included the Australian Power Boat Championship to be held on March 19, at Rose Bay. Meanwhile, our aeroplane spotter, Vida Breckenridge, recorded the first aerial activity at Rose Bay for 1938. On January 6, Grumman G21 Goose, (VH-AAY), practised takeoffs and landings on the bay. The amphibian had been uncrated and assembled at Mascot, and was on its way to New Guinea for use in oil exploration.

The next event recorded by Vida was the much anticipated return, on January 10, of *Centaurus* from New Zealand. A large crowd and an official welcoming party gathered at Lyne Park. The first glimpse of *Centaurus* was as she approached low over Bellevue Hill, gliding quietly down for a smooth landing on Rose Bay at 12.55 pm. Within ten minutes she was secure at her moorings. The sole passenger was Tom White, of Australian Flying Corps - Half Flight fame, who was the Federal Minister for Customs, and a future Minister for Civil Aviation. The welcoming party included the Australian representative for Imperial Airways, Mr A. E. Rudder, who informed the press that: "*Centaurus* would not return to England before the opening of the 150th Anniversary celebrations, but might be January 27." Also arriving in Sydney, on January 25, were five Saro *London* flying boats from 204 Sqn RAF, flying all the way from Plymouth to help Sydney celebrate its 150th birthday. The prospect of *Centaurus* and the five Saro *Londons* making a low flypast at the very moment Arthur Phillip re-enacted his invasion at Farm Cove, probably gave Mr Dunningham his worst nightmare. It is said that his sudden death on May 26, 1938, was a result of the stress he suffered as head of the sesquicentenary celebrations. John Montgomery Dunningham was awarded a knighthood, posthumously, in the King's Birthday Honours List in June.

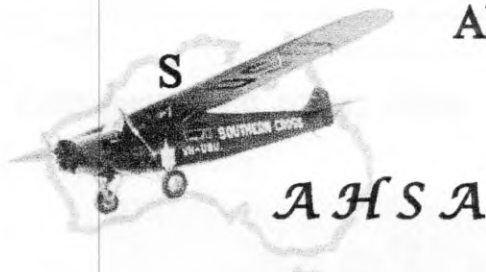
Comparison of the modern, streamlined monoplane, *Centaurus*, with the rather ancient looking *London* biplanes, could have been hailed by the Australian Government, through its Civil Aviation Board, and the UK Government, through its "instrument of choice", Imperial Airways, as evidence of the remarkable progress they had jointly fostered in the forward planning and implementation of the Empire Air Mail Scheme. Instead, the delays caused by protracted negotiations, and the unenthusiastic approach to installing the infrastructure required between Darwin and Sydney in particular, simply added to the dissatisfaction both governments were experiencing with their respective organisations. In May 1938, an Australian government committee was formed to report on the progress of arrangements for the inauguration of the Empire Flying Boat Service. In the UK the government was equally unhappy with Imperial Airways. It commissioned Lord Cadman to chair a committee to report on the performance of the airline. Lord Cadman submitted his report to Parliament in March 1938. An editorial on June 9, 1938, in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, under a headline, **THE AIR MAIL SCANDAL**, commenced: "Nothing could be worse than the showing of the Minister for Defence, and the Government in the confusion over commencement of the flying boat air mails." Urging an inquiry on the lines of the Cadman Committee the editorial concluded: "It remains to be added that the report of such a committee would be not for shelving, but for the enlightenment of, and for the action by Parliament at the earliest possible moment." In the UK, the highly critical Cadman

Report led to the resignation of the Managing Director of Imperial Airways, George Woods Humphrey, followed by the demise of Imperial Airways itself, through its merger with British Airways on November 24, 1939, to form the British Overseas Airways Corporation. In Australia the Civil Aviation Board fared no better. Edgar Johnston lost his job as Controller-General of Civil Aviation, and the Civil Aviation Board was abolished. A new Department of Civil Aviation, independent of the Department of Defence, was formed on November 14 under the control of Mr A. B. Corbett, who got the job apparently as a result of his experience as Deputy Director of Posts and Telegraphs.

Although general agreement about the implementation of the flying boat service had been reached in 1937, *The Empire Air Service (England and Australia) Act 1938* was not given assent to by the Australian Parliament until July 1, 1938. Contracts for the construction of a hangar, slipway, jetty, administration offices, and a control tower at Rose Bay, had been let over a period commencing in 1937, but construction overall was behind schedule. Mr Thorby, the Minister for Defence, assured an unhappy Mayor of Woollahra that the works at Rose Bay were of a temporary nature, pending construction of a permanent terminal at Botany Bay. This was the situation at Rose Bay when the event commemorated on the plaque: "At 7 am on 5th July 1938 Qantas Airways (in conjunction with Imperial Airways) commenced flying boat operations from Rose Bay." On the following day, July 6, Vida Breckenridge wrote a letter to her father Charles, who was in Queensland on business. Vida's words put the reader on the spot at the time: "Marie and I went down to Lyne Park at four o'clock this afternoon and saw the flying boat *Challenger* arrive - the first to land in Rose Bay with passengers and mail from England. The control tower, and one of the galvanised iron workshops, has been painted cream. A small jetty has been completed for the arrival of passengers. It extends about halfway along the side of the baths with a gangway leading to a pontoon. Two fast launches brought the passengers to this jetty this afternoon. There was a large crowd of people down there to see the boat arrive - the arrival was broadcast by three different stations. The piles for the slipway now extend past the end of the baths and they are still working on it, also digging out the soil behind the sea wall. They have commenced to take the turf off the area where the hangar is to be erected, and the turf is being used on worn patches on the public part of Lyne Park. We have only just discovered that the public is allowed into the part reserved for the flying boats while the workmen are there, but when the men leave, and over the weekend, it is fenced off. We noticed at the back of the control tower the two huge wheels they put under the flying boat to bring them from the water up the slipway. They are painted with silver paint and look very strong."

The *Challenger* was on a 'running in' flight from the UK, and carried passengers made up mainly of members from the press corps. Their reports about the state of preparation for the reception of passengers in Darwin led to questions being asked of the Secretary of State for Air in the UK Parliament. In her letter, Vida also mentioned the relaxed attitude to the presence of members of the public around the work site. Perhaps this relaxed approach to workplace health and safety was a factor in the death of William Hayes on March 16, 1939. Working as a rigger on the erection of the hangar, William Hayes was killed when he was crushed by a collapsing steel truss. He left a wife and three young children.

The Rose Bay Flying Boat Base was officially opened by the Acting Governor General, Lord Huntingfield, on August 4, 1938. Vida also recorded the first arrival of *Coriolanus*, (G-AETV), at 11 am on September 21. *Coriolanus* was one of the BOAC boats trapped at Rose Bay following the capture of Singapore by the Japanese. Taking Australian registration in 1942, (VH-ABG), she gave exceptional wartime service to Australia. She was the last operational 'C' class flying boat when hauled from the water at Rose Bay for the last time on January 8, 1948. George Roberts offered to buy her for long term preservation. However, QEA received a better offer from the Sheffield Grinding and Salvage Co of Auburn. All that now remains of *Coriolanus* is one propeller mounted on a wall of the Rose Bay RSL Club. In 2005, Phil Dulhunty was the leader of a group which submitted a proposal to the Woollahra Council and the NSW Maritime Authority for the creation of a National Flying Boat Museum at Rose Bay. The authorities were unsympathetic to the proposal at the time. In this centenary year of seaplane operations in Australia our maritime aviation heritage deserves renewed focus. **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 AHS (NSW) Inc

APRIL 2014 ~ No 482

APRIL MEETING

THIS meeting will be held at the Powerhouse Museum on Wednesday 2nd April 2014 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. **NB We advise members that parking is no longer available at the Powerhouse** due to construction work being carried out on the eastern side of the Harwood building. Parking in Harris Street will be available from 7pm but there will probably be competition from TAFE students for spots. Otherwise there is paid parking in the Entertainment Centre car park or parking in surrounding streets. Visitors are most welcome and supper will be available after the meeting.

SUBSCRIPTION renewals for 2014 are now overdue.

The Membership Renewal notice was included with the December issue of *Southern Skies*. Members will not receive future issues of *Southern Skies* if they have not renewed their subscriptions.

THE March Meeting was the Annual General Meeting, which comprised the President's Report, Treasurer's Report and Election of Office Bearers. Ian Debenham, 2013 President, provided the following report:

AHSA (NSW) PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2014

"THE Powerhouse Museum is soon to undergo a major change that will undoubtedly impact the Aviation Historical Society. To continue working within its much reduced budget major staff cuts are in the offing. The curatorial areas are destined to be cut down with the loss of *Transport* as a discrete area of interest. I must add that *Transport* will be subsumed into one or other of the proposed new areas such as Engineering, Design or Urban Systems. On Monday 17th of February I attended a briefing on the Museum's new Strategic Plan given by the Museum's new Director, Rose Hiscock. In the part of her briefing regarding partnerships, I had the opportunity to ask about the Museum's view of affiliated societies. Ms Hiscock advised that the role of the affiliated societies had not yet been discussed so no definitive answer could be given. She went on to point out that, while some affiliated societies were of value to the Museum and had added to the museum experience, some societies had used the Museum without contributing towards that use in kind. I hope she sees that the Aviation Historical Society contributes to the Museum while using the Museum facilities through the combined knowledge of its members and its association with other aviation groups.

When given the opportunity I will certainly be pressing this point to her. My view is that with the diminution of Australian aviation historical knowledge within the Museum brought about through retirements and perhaps the upcoming redundancies, the value of the Aviation Historical Society to the Museum should increase to fill the knowledge gap. Time will tell if the Museum accepts my view.

THE Airmail Centenary Group has been working hard to achieve a suitable commemoration of the original 1914 flight from Melbourne to Sydney. Despite some setbacks they have a number of activities in place that will publicise the centenary in fine style. Thanks go to Tom Lockley for his lead and continued enthusiasm for the project; to Paul and Christine Ewoldt for their enthusiasm and support of Tom; to Ken Garland, Antony Coleiro and Judy Rainsford for their detailed work on the organization of the centenary flight and to Juanita Franzi for her marvellous graphic design work. MY thanks go to the committee members for their continued support and advice: Warwick Bigsworth, our extremely hard working, competent secretary; John Scott, for his ever interesting and well researched "*Loops and Landings*" and for his role of Treasurer. I would also like to thank Barry Collins' son, David, for his audit of the accounts. I would also like to thank Judy Rainsford for her writing and editing of "*Southern Skies*". I'm sure you will agree that her efforts are excellent. Also thanks to the contributors to the newsletter. Hopefully more members will assist with articles for inclusion.

THANK YOU all for your interest and commitment to aviation history.

Ian Debenham OAM
President"

HONORARY TREASURER'S REPORT

THE Honorary Treasurer, John Scott, provided the audited Financial Report for 2013. He advised that the Society's Income for the year was \$3,184.26, and Expenditure being \$2,165.19. The Total Assets as at 31st December 2013 were \$10,652.06 and Total Liabilities were \$1,845.00.

ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

Results of the election of office bearers for 2014 were:

President:	Ian Debenham OAM
Hon Secretary:	Paul Ewoldt
Hon Treasurer:	John Scott
Membership Secretary:	Peter Coates
Photo Archivist:	David Eyre
Archivist:	Christine Ewoldt
General Committee:	Roger Kennedy Judy Rainsford



"THE SUIT IS LIKE A SPACECRAFT, IT HAS TO FULLY KEEP YOU ALIVE FOR EIGHT TO NINE HOURS"

Tim Peake will be the first British astronaut to go to the International Space Station (ISS) in November 2015 for a six-month mission.

Speaking about the US and Russian spacesuits, Peake revealed some facts about their life-supporting role.

The Orlan was the first pressurised spacesuit he wore.

"Like Soyuz, it starts with classroom work."

He learned that the arms and legs of the Orlan suit use cloth tags to change the length to get the right length for the user and that there are three glove sizes, small, medium and larger. It has a front control panel and systems for air circulation, primary and backup communications, CO₂ removal, drinking water, glove heaters, emergency functions and cold and hot water for thermal regulation.

"It can be 120° in the positive Celsius in the sunshine and minus 150° in the shade."



The Orlan is designed to be a thick suit to protect against micrometeoroid damage from very small particles. Peake said, *"The suit can handle a hole the*

size of a one penny piece, it will over-pressurise and accept that the oxygen is leaking out of the suit, so you go to emergency oxygen flow. You have a number of controls. You have a number of warning messages appear, much like a head-up-display, in the bottom left and right side of the helmet screen with warning lights, You have emergency actions to perform in the event of depressurization."

GRAPPLING WITH ROBOTICS

Peake may also be called upon to grapple with the Space Exploration Technologies (Space X) Dragon spacecraft or Japan's HTV with the ISS' Canadarm2 robotic arm. For this he will be going to SpaceX and Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency for familiarisation with the spacecraft. As well as loading and unloading, the astronauts learn about the systems and what to do if there are any problematic situations and if repairs need to be conducted.

NEW ADELAIDE AIRPORT CONTROL TOWER COMMISSIONED



The new ADL \$16.9 million control tower at Adelaide Airport, commissioned by *Airservices*, was opened in 2013 to provide what Adelaide Airport has described as "a generational change in air traffic control, moving from a paper-based system to electronic".

At 44 metres high, the new tower, which is more than twice the height of the former building built in 1983, mirrors the 'glass cockpit' concept of modern aircraft and features 32 customisable touch-screens. The display system integrates flight and operational data, surveillance and voice communications into one sophisticated tower-specific design.

Airservices CEO Margaret Staib said the new Adelaide tower is *Airservices'* third air traffic control tower to be equipped with the latest state of the art technology which is, "a significant change in providing air traffic control services, moving from the traditional paper system to a new fully digital system and will greatly enhance our service delivery in Adelaide."

"It ensures we are in a position to meet the anticipated growth for air services and provide safe, efficient air traffic operations in Adelaide well into the future. We are committed to using the latest technology to safely and efficiently manage passenger aircraft throughout Australia, particularly at our major airports."

"By investing in new and emerging technologies, we will be establishing the foundation for Australia's next generation air traffic management environment," Staib added.

Specialised single pane glazing on the tower cabin ensures stringent optical, thermal and acoustic performance to ensure air traffic controllers can carry out their tasks safely.

Adelaide Airport CEO Mark Young added: "The new tower adds yet another layer of safety and efficiency for passengers travelling to and from Adelaide Airport. "Airports are essential to the Australian economy and contribute about \$17.3 billion to the Gross Domestic Product. This shows why the efficient use of our airspace and airport infrastructure is so vital to ongoing growth."

HAVE YOU PURCHASED YOUR
COMMEMORATIVE POSTCARD?

BOMBS and statistics in WW2

"The USAAF policy was to conduct precision bombing whereas the RAF policy was to mostly conduct area bombing. But let it be noted very specifically that the distinction between these two policies was vanishingly small when the actual facts of bomb fall were subsequently plotted."

"The bottom line is that the distinction between concepts of area bombing and precision bombing as featured through WW2 is purely political. Precision has far higher public relation merit because it suggests only the target is hit. The truth tells something quite different." WgCdr John Stubbington

FACTS FILMS AND FANCY

Wartime history reveals more accurate records of events during the second world war. Writing political wartime psychology, the journalistic need for a popular headline, and community wartime trauma, who, then, could attest the accuracy of war reports and war stories?

The period during, and the decades following, WW2 were also the growth of movie entertainment. The true records of history are too easily distorted by the movie-makers' arts.

One movie that focused attention on bombs, bombers, and the airmen who flew them, became a classic. The film made in 1955, *'The Dam Busters'* (Operation 'CHASTISE') excited audiences with its story of the bombing of dams in the German Ruhr valley (on 16-17th May 1943) using a 'bouncing' bomb developed in the UK by Barnes Wallis.

It is interesting to read the Butt Report assessment in 1941 of the UK Bomber Command's accuracy**:

Of aircraft reports after bombing an assigned target, overall only one in three bombs landed within five miles of the aiming point. For targets in the heavily defended Ruhr, the figure was one in ten. For medium level bombing, another study estimated that in daylight, 9 070 bombs would be required to achieve a 90% probability of a hit on a 30m x 20m (100ft x 60ft) target.

The 'bouncing' bomb, (codenamed 'Upkeep') was a depth charge or mine released with backspin to extend its range, and required an accuracy of no more than a few yards.

RELEASE HEIGHT 60ft
RELEASE SPEED 232 mph
UPKEEP BACKSPIN 500 RPM

Some scepticism of the accuracy required for successful use of *Upkeep* was understandable in such circumstances as reflected in the Butt Report.

Operation 'CHASTISE' achieved brilliant flying precision, 'the most precise bombing attack ever delivered', but was only one raid in Bomber Command's five-month campaign in the Battle of the Ruhr - 43 raids, 18000 sorties and 872 aircraft lost.



TRAINING - BOMBING ACCURACY BY BIKE

Air Fighter Control Wrens at the Training School for Fighter Pilots, RNAS Yeovilton, 1941.

**This strange-looking activity was designed to monitor the accuracy of bombing by fighter pilots undergoing training. The baffle board restricted vision and concentrated attention on bomb aiming accuracy..... only 73 years ago!

Ed

For those interested in a most interesting debate that still, as then, surrounds the bombing of the Mohne, Eder & Sorpe Dams refer -

<http://media.aerosociety.com/aerospace-insight/2013/05/17/dambusters-debated/8134/>

618 Squadron (Mosquitoes) was deployed to Australia in late 1944 with the intention of using *Highball* (the smaller version of *Upkeep*) against Japanese capital ships. For political and operational reasons the Sqn was not used. The book 'A Most Secret Squadron' by Des Curtis (Grub Street Publishing 2009) provides the full story of 618 Sqn.

AirCdre Terry Davies

Ref: Aeropace July 2013

RECENT BOOKS

Taking to the Skies, by Jim Eames. (Allen and Unwin, January 2014). *Great yarns of Australian aviation from a man who lives and breathes flying. RRP \$29.99. Available at ABC Shop and on-line.

Australian Eagles: Australians in the Battle of Britain, by Kristen Alexander. (Barrallier Books, Griffith ACT. (ISBN 9780987414229. Published in mid-2013. Kirsten is also the author of *Clive Caldwell*, *Air Ace* and *Jack Davenport*, *Beaufighter Leader*. All of Kristen's books are available at good bookshops and on-line.

Historic film clips

HINDENBERG, pictures - & keep reading the interesting history from comments when scrolling down!

<http://www.theatlantic.com/infocus/2012/05/75-years-since-the-hindenburg-disaster/100292>

Michel has also provided an obituary notice for his grandfather. The mourners were led by Guillaux's father and his son Bernard, then about 15. The notice describes Guillaux as a *Flight Sergeant and chief test pilot of the Morane factory*. The brothers Morane, founders of the Morane-Saulnier operation, attended the ceremony.

It was also attended by M. Caudron, Guillaux's former employer, M. Marlin from the Rhône engine factory, and many famous aviators such as Edmond Audemars and Georges Guynemer, himself to die later that year.

Many French and British officers were also present and the hearse was covered with wreaths including those from French and English military pilots.

Guillaux's name is listed on an honour board in the French Consulate-General offices in Sydney, as a French-Australian victim of the war. He was not Australian, but the entry is an interesting tribute to a man who made a considerable contribution to the development of Australian aviation during his two hundred days in Australia.

It is surprising to note how many people who later became famous in the aviation world had their first exciting experience of flight as a result of Guillaux' activities. I have found four of these, including Kingsford Smith himself, who said that the mail flight was a real inspiration. If anyone finds a similar case, please let me know.

We also received a very interesting letter from Gary Sunderland, an AHSA Victoria member, who has a wonderful free-flying model of a Bleriot XI. He raised a number of questions about the controls and the engine of the PowerHouse Museum Bleriot. Maybe we will get some insights on these things when the Bleriot is lifted down from the ceiling of PHM, due to happen in the next few months. It will only be down for a short time, and I will endeavour to let everyone know when this is happening.

Please continue to send in material that you find that sheds more light on the interesting period just before the outbreak of war.

Thank you!
Tom Lockley



Join the celebration...

- Do you live in one of the places that are shown on the diagram?
- Are you a plane owner or pilot who would like to take part in this exciting event?
- Do you have historical records from this period? We are collecting this material now so it will not be lost forever.
- Do you have ideas that may help?
- Do you just want to keep in touch? Send your email address to guillauxcentralnz@gmail.com

visit www.AustraliasFirstAirmail.com to reserve your unique postcard!

LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

The French Connection - Part 1.

The *History of New South Wales From The Records*, G. B. Barton, Government Printer, 1889, records that the idea of European settlement in Australia was conceived in 1783. During that year James Matra, a crew member who had visited Botany Bay on board the *Endeavour*, enlisted his friend Sir Joseph Banks to formally support a plan to resettle colonists who had remained loyal to England during the American War of Independence. Matra was born in New York and his parents had lost everything in the aftermath of the war. The location for the new colony was to be Botany Bay, and in the original plan the new settlers were to be free agents. When the plan was brought to the attention of the Home Office, presided over by Lord Sydney, it was realised that, rather than American loyalists, Botany Bay would be an excellent destination for the ever increasing number of convicts under sentence of transportation. George Barton wrote: "Matra no doubt felt the chill which every great originator has been doomed to feel, as soon as the project warmed by the fire of genius has been brought into contact with the cold surface of practical politics." During 1783 there were other fires warmed by genius being lit beneath hot air balloons in France by the likes of Joseph and Etienne Montgolfier. The first untethered manned flight was finally achieved on November 21, 1783, from the Bois de Boulogne by Pilatre de Rozier and the Marquis Francois d'Arlandes in a Montgolfier balloon. Benjamin Franklin, who was in Paris at the time, kept his old friend Sir Joseph Banks in touch with these events. Thus the history of manned flight and European settlement in Australia are shown to run in parallel, with a strong Australian-French association from the very beginning. By coincidence, 1783 was also the year that the French government resolved to send an expedition to the Pacific to complete the unfinished work of Captain Cook. By further extraordinary coincidence, the Commander of the expedition, Jean-Francois De La Perouse, brought his two ships, *La Boussole* and *L'Astrolabe*, into Botany Bay on a day which was to become most significant in the European history of Australia, 26 January, 1788. La Perouse found ships of the First Fleet already at anchor in Botany Bay. Captain Arthur Phillip had arrived a few days earlier but on that day was absent in Port Jackson.

While *Balloon Mania* was embraced by the French from 1783 onwards, the English had reservations because of the balloon's inability to navigate. During the first half of the 19th century Sir George Cayley took up the challenge of heavier-than-air flight as a means of practical navigation. His scientific analysis and practical achievements in the field resulted in the title *Father of Aerial Navigation* being given to him. During the same period, the work of William Henson and John Stringfellow kept England in the forefront of research into heavier-than-air flight. The first President of *AHSA NSW Branch*, Ron Gibson, commenced his chronology, *Australia and Australians in Civil Aviation*, with the entry: "Sparked by the glowing reports of possible flights from England to India in Henson's Aerial Steam Carriage - letters patent had been granted on 29 September 1842 - several correspondents in the infant colony burst forth with accounts of the work they had done in the field of aviation." The lack of financial support for Henson's proposed *Aerial Transit Company* seemed to dampen progress in England at a time when the French were moving to reclaim their earlier pre-eminence in the field of aeronautics. During 1852 the French aeronautical pioneers founded *The Societe Aerostatique et Meteorologique de France*, the first such professional society to be formed. Members of our own society should also be grateful to the Frenchman, Gabriel de La Landelle, who played a part in the naming of *AHSA* by creating the word **Aviation** in 1862.

While serving as a naval surgeon on board *HMS Hesper*, Dr William Bland shot dead the purser, Robert Case, on April 7, 1813, during a duel. This resulted in his conviction for murder, and his arrival in Sydney as a convict on July 14, 1814, the bicentenary of which will be celebrated on *Bastille Day* this year. No history of Australian aviation commences without mention of Dr William Bland and his *Atmotic Ship*, a dirigible airship. In his chronology, Ron Gibson wrote: "A model and drawings of the *Atmotic Ship* were shown at the Crystal Palace, London, in 1852 and at the Paris Universal Exhibition in 1855. Rumour has it that the French Emperor was restrained by his finance minister from buying the

model at the Paris Universal Exhibition." On October 1, 1986, Ron Gibson delivered the *Fourth Arthur Butler Memorial Lecture*, which he titled, *From Bland to Bond, The Airship In Australia*. He said on that occasion that in 1968 he had contacted French authorities seeking information about the Paris Universal Exhibition and the possible whereabouts of Bland's model. Ron's enquiries were unsuccessful but he speculated that the model may have informed the subsequent progress of dirigible development in the second half of the 19th century, through the work of Frenchmen like Henri Giffard, the Tissandier Brothers, Paris resident Alberto Santos-Dumont and finally Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin of Germany. The thought that the earliest artefact of Australian aviation history may still exist in some Parisian repository is intriguing.

In *Flypast, A Record of Aviation in Australia*, Parnell and Boughton record the first advertisements promising the spectacle of balloon ascents in Australia. These first advertisements were placed by French aeronauts. There was an advertisement from an unnamed Frenchman for an ascent from Little Bourke Street, Melbourne at 7 pm on December 19, 1853. There is no record of an ascent being attempted. The next was from M. Pierre Maigre for a flight from the Sydney Domain at 2 pm on December 15, 1856. Maigre had tactfully named his balloon *Sydney*, and gained vice-regal patronage for the event. However, everything that could go wrong did go wrong, and an impatient crowd, estimated to be about 12,000, were deprived of the promised spectacle and turned nasty, resulting in the destruction of the balloon and the death of an 11 year old Thomas Downes. This was the first aviation related death in Australia. Thomas Downes' tombstone in Sydney's Camperdown cemetery is decorated with a hot air balloon. Maigre may well have been a second fatality as, pursued by an angry mob, he ran for his life to find safety in the South Lodge of Government House.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, French ingenuity was reflected in the work of Jean-Marie Le Bris and Felix du Temple who built on the achievements of Henson and Stringfellow. On October 9, 1890, Clement Ader finally achieved a "hop" in the steam powered aeroplane he named *Eole*. However, the French pioneers still struggled with the availability of a lightweight power source. There was also the elusive solution to the problem of a stable, controllable airframe. There had been improving world-wide communications in the last decade of the nineteenth century and news began filtering through to France of the success of an Australian experimenter. Just at the time it was needed, Lawrence Hargrave presented some possible solutions in the form of his cellular box kite, and he also pointed the way to a lightweight power source in the form of radial or rotary engines. The American disseminator of aeronautical information, Octave Chanute, visited Paris in 1903 and, on April 2, gave an illustrated lecture to the Aero Club de France describing his own, and the Wright Brothers, progress in gliding. Ernest Archdeacon immediately formed an aviation committee within the aero club with the intention of ensuring that France would be the first to achieve sustained flight in an aeroplane. Ferdinand Ferber and Gabriel Voisin experimented with replicas of the Wright glider without success. The work of Gabriel Voisin and Louis Bleriot finally broke through in 1905, in the form of a float-glider using Hargrave box kite principles. Then, coming through the pack, Alberto Santos-Dumont, flying his ungainly looking conglomeration of Hargrave box kites named *14-bis*, flew a distance of 60m at a height of about 5m on October 23, 1906, before a large crowd at Bagatelle, near Paris. For this, Santos-Dumont was awarded the Deutch-Archdeacon Prize for the first officially observed flight further than 25m. Earlier, Lawrence Hargrave had written to Santos-Dumont with advice about rudder control for the *14-bis*. Following Santos-Dumont's success, Hargrave received a letter from his friend Charles Whittell saying: "I take up my pen in disgust. Vide last week's *World News* and no credit to you even in the Dumont machine."

The news that the Wright Brothers had already flown at Kitty Hawk on December 17, 1903, was only faintly heard in Europe. The Wright Brothers were aware of the commercial potential awaiting the exploitation of their achievement and chose secrecy above publicity. However, the claims of being the first to fly by the French could not be ignored, and a *Wright Flyer, (Model A)*, was crated and sent to France in July 1907. It was another year, August 8, 1908, before Wilbur Wright demonstrated the *Model A*, at a small racecourse at Hunaudières. That flight revolutionised aviation in Europe, and inspired many in Australia, especially the headmaster of Wesley College, Melbourne.....**John Scott.**



AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW) Inc

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A H S A

Southern Skies

THE NEWSLETTER OF AHSA (NSW) Inc

May 2014 ~ No 483

SPECIAL EDITION 1 - Celebrating Maurice Guillaux with his Bleriot XI in Australia 8 April 1914 - 22 October 1914

MAY MEETING - PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGED VENUE.

The May meeting will be held at the **North Ryde RSL Community Club** on Wednesday 7th May at 7:45 pm. The club is located at the corner of Pittwater and Magdala Roads, North Ryde. The venue for the meeting within the club is the **Grand Pittwater Function Centre**. There is ample free parking at the club. Visitors are most welcome. The facilities of the club are available to members and visitors for pre and post meeting refreshment and conversation.

ANNUAL AVIATION TRIVIA AND AIRCRAFT RECOGNITION COMPETITIONS.

Join us for this year's **31st Aviation Trivia Competition** which will be presented by Ian Dolstra, who will provide a variety of questions to test your aviation knowledge. The winner of the competition will receive the **Slipstream Trophy** and a book or DVD prize.

The **46th Aircraft Recognition Competition** will be presented by David Eyre who, from his extensive collection, will show a selection of exotic images of civil and military aircraft. The winner of the competition will receive the **Brian White Trophy** as well as a book or DVD prize.

This year there has been a change of rules for the **President's Trophy**. There is still some mystery about the new rules but a brown paper envelope is involved. The winner of the **President's Trophy** will also receive a book or DVD prize.

The 2013 winners are reminded to return their trophies for the handover ceremonies at the conclusion of the meeting. There will be the usual small entry fee to cover the cost of prizes etc. Please join us for this entertaining and light-hearted evening

SUBSCRIPTION renewals for 2014 are now overdue.

The Membership Renewal notice was included with the December issue of *Southern Skies*.

We encourage members to continue their membership despite this disruptive period whilst the committee are seeking alternative changes to the meeting venues, particularly as parking convenience is an important consideration also.

This year marks a period of aviation centenaries and AHSA members fulfill an important role in researching, recording and commemorating the important contributions that were made in Australia to the development of aviation.

THE APRIL MEETING WAS DEVOTED TO THE LAUNCH OF THE AIRMAIL CENTENARY COMMEMORATION EVENTS

APRIL diary

08: Maurice Guillaux arrives in Sydney on the *SS Orontes* with his *Bleriot XI* crated in the hold: accompanied by Messrs. Rupeausseu, Maistre, Cominos, and du Coque.

20: Maurice Guillaux tests his *Bleriot XI* at Victoria Park Racecourse during a private demonstration at which he performs the first *loop the loop* in Australia. He is congratulated by **W. E. Hart** who attended the demonstration.

25: Maurice Guillaux gives Newcastle its first flying demonstration at the Newcastle Showgrounds, including *looping the loop*.



The French Consul-General, **M Eric Berti**, was a special guest of AHSA at this meeting.

Tom Lockley, on behalf of the Airmail Centenary Group, outlined the progress of the centenary preparations with a Powerpoint presentation that introduced the many historic facts that research has revealed about Maurice Guillaux and his amazing flights and feats in his Bleriot. This included authentic film of Guillaux flying his Bleriot in Melbourne.

Tom detailed the plans for the re-enactment flight by a Jabiru aircraft between July 12 and 14 this year, and the arrangements being prepared at regional townships that were stopping places on Guillaux's original flight and will be visited again during the re-enactment. This year's flight will depart from Essendon Airport.

Tom displayed a book he has prepared on the life of Maurice Guillaux, together with pamphlets, booklets and certificates for presentation to those who participate.

Following Tom's presentation, Peter Coates' interesting DVD featured images, taken by Bob Livingstone, from the **RAAF Centenary Air Show held at Point Cook on March 1 and 2 to celebrate the flight of Australia's first military aircraft**. The presentation included flying and static shots of almost all types of aircraft currently in service with the ADF. Historic aircraft from the RAAF Museum, HARS, the Temora Aviation Museum, and private owners, were also featured, together with photos of the B-24 Liberator under restoration at Werribee. Many of these aircraft types were also flown by the RAAF at various times.

This meeting was held at the North Ryde RSL Community Club. It is disappointing that this aviation affiliated society has lost its close association with the Powerhouse Museum. The Director advised that the role of affiliated societies had to contribute value to the Museum and add to the museum experience. Sadly, the *Aviation Historical Society of Australia* is not recognised as a contributor to the Museum through the combined knowledge of its members and their association with other aviation groups. The committee is investigating alternate meeting venues with parking facilities in as central an area as possible. We hope members will support the committee during their negotiations.

Airbus A380 & Boeing B737 on approach to LAX



What a great photo, Did you even see the 737 at first glance? And the Airbus is farther away!!

How is this for a size comparison? Somewhat startling.

This shows an Airbus A380 and a Boeing B737 flying parallel approaches into LAX (Los Angeles, California)

PC

PROUD DAD AHSa (NSW) member, Don Binskin is a proud Dad, given his son Air Marshall Mark Binskin AC has been promoted to the position of Chief of the Australian Defence Force with effect from July 2014. Air Marshall Binskin, who gave the Arthur Butler Memorial Lecture to the Society in 2011, will become Air Chief Marshall when he takes up his new position. Congratulations to the family.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

MAY

02: A crowd of 60,000 witnesses **Maurice Guillaux's** first public flying exhibition at *Victoria Park Racecourse*. He repeats the performance on May 9.

08: **Maurice Guillaux** tests Lebbeus Hordern's *Farman Hydro-aeroplane* at Double Bay. This is the first flight of a seaplane in Australia.

14: **Signor Edmondo Bianchi** arrives in Sydney on board *RMS Maloja* with a plan to establish an aviation school which involves the importation of five *Bleriot* aircraft. Signor Bianchi was a pilot in the *Italo-Turkish war of 1911-1912* when aeroplanes were used in war for the first time.

16-30: **Maurice Guillaux** gives flying exhibitions at Wagga Wagga on May 16, at Albury on May 23, and at Melbourne on May 30.

28: A *Flying Festival* is held by *Oxford University* to raise £2000 for an aeroplane to present to Australia. Sir George Reid delivers an address at Oxford Town hall. **Gustav Hamel**, the pilot for the first *UK Scheduled Air Mail Service*, was to demonstrate the loop-the-loop at the festival but disappears flying over the English Channel on May 23.

30: **Arthur Jones** gives an exhibition in his *35 hp Caudron biplane* at Loton Park, Perth, abbreviated by engine trouble.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 2014

- 03** Aviation Showcase – Trainers to Fighters: Temora Aviation Museum, Temora NSW
- 04** Wings over Illawarra, Albion Park NSW
- 04** David Hack Classic Meet, Toowoomba Qld
- 11** **Seaplane Display & centenary commemoration of seaplane flight by Maurice Guillaux, Rose Bay, Sydney.**
- 17** Aviation Showcase – Bomber/Attack: Temora Aviation Museum, Temora NSW.
- 31** Open Day and Fly-in, Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield, Qld.

June 2014

- 07** Aviation Showcase – Fighters – Temora Aviation Museum, Temora, NSW.
- 21** Aviation Showcase –North American Aviation – Temora Aviation Museum, Temora, NSW.

July 2014

- 05** Aviation Showcase –WWII to Korea – Temora Aviation Museum, Temora, NSW.
- 5-6** Queensland Aviation Museum Open Cockpit weekend, Caloundra Qld
- 12-14 July** - *The AHSa commemoration re-enactment of Maurice Guillaux's first Australian Air Mail Flight & Australia's first air freight - 16 to 18 July 1914 - from Melbourne to Sydney in his Bleriot XI.*
- 19** Aviation Showcase –Trainers to Fighters – Temora Aviation Museum, Temora, 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 30 May 2014.

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

✈ Thank you Peter Coates, John Scott, Warwick Bigsworth and Tom Lockley for submissions to this newsletter.

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

in 14 AHSa (NSW)



**PURCHASE
YOUR POSTCARD
~AVAILABLE NOW~**

The original 1914 postcard

FROM THE AIRMAIL CENTENARY COMMEMORATION GROUP

The Centenary Commemorations have begun



At the last meeting of AHSA, M Berti, Consul-General of France, launched the commemorations of Maurice Guillaux' time in Australia one hundred years before. There was a presentation of the history of Guillaux' activities during his eventful 200-day time in Australia, and of his life before and after this period.

TIGER MOTH FLYPAST, SYDNEY AND NEWCASTLE, ANZAC DAY 2014

25 April 1914 was not Anzac day. On that day Guillaux gave his first public aerobatic display in Australia, at Newcastle Showground. (He had given a 'by invitation only' display at Victoria Park, Zetland, the previous Monday). His aircraft was the first seen in Newcastle. 12 000 people watched the display. Newspaper reports were rapturous: Guillaux' spectacular aerobatics had never been seen before in Australia: previous aviation displays had been tame by comparison.



The Luskintyre Aviation Museum commemorated this event as part of their Anzac Day flypast. Three Tiger Moths flew over Newcastle and Sydney, led by World War II veteran Lancaster pilot Bill Purdy.

After the flypast the aircraft flew back to Luskintyre where AHSA representatives Tom Lockley and Judy Rainsford presented the participants with certificates and badges on behalf of AHSA to mark the occasion.

The Luskintyre Aviation Museum also received a commemorative citation signed by NSW President, Ian Debenham, and the French Consul-General, M Eric Berti, from AHSA and the French community in Australia.

The flight was a wonderful beginning to the next few months of activity which will culminate in the re-creation of the Melbourne-Sydney mail flight on 12-14 July this year.

THE NEXT EVENT: 100 YEARS OF SEAPLANES, MAY 11 2014



picture a128591 State Library NSW

On Friday 8 May 1914 Maurice Guillaux flew Lebbeus Hordern's Farman 'hydro-aeroplane' from a specially erected facility at Double Bay (the end of Bay Street). He and his team had assembled and prepared the aircraft over the previous four days, and the *Herald* reporter described the care and the skill that Guillaux

exhibited during the process. He was certainly not just a skilled pilot!

This was the first seaplane flight in Australia, and the Seaplane Pilots Association of Australia is commemorating the event on Sunday 11 May this year.

The basic event will be held at Rose Bay in the morning of Sunday 11 July. There will first be a flypast of seaplanes over the harbour. The aircraft will make use of the Victor One route and the R405 A and B special area for use with seaplanes and helicopters. After assembling into groups of aircraft of similar performance, they will fly from North Head to Middle Head at 1000 feet and then follow the northern shoreline of Sydney Harbour to the Northern Pylon of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. The groups will then turn and fly eastwards along the southern shoreline. When they pass Garden Island the aircraft will descend to 500ft and fly over Rose Bay at low level. Four or five of the larger aircraft will actually land and taxi to Rose Bay beach located at the South Eastern end of Rose Bay.

There will be a display of seaplane-related historical material. The Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown, AHSa, and the APAA will join with the permanent display at the adjoining Rose Bay RSL. There will be a brief on-ground formality involving M Berti, Consul-General of France in Australia and probably also Malcolm Turnbull, the Federal Member for Wentworth, at about 10am and the seaplanes will depart for a combined rendezvous at Rathmines.

The current list of flying boat participants is as follows: Rohan Whittington (Super Petrel LS) 24-7997; Phil Lee (Super Petrel 100) 19-7249; Jay Laybutt (Super Petrel) 19-5405; Ben Hunter (Searey) VH-TAD; Keith Clark (Searey) VH-ZRA; Brian Dehlsen (Searey) VH-BCU; Ben Hutchinson (Lake Buccaneer) VH-LUG; Harvey Prior (Lake Buccaneer) VH-LAK; John Daley (Lake Buccaneer) VH-TZT; Bill Handley (Lake Buccaneer) VH-DQN and Phil Dulhunty, President of SPAA in his Cessna C180 VH-BNJ.

Sydney Seaplanes intend to participate with their Cessna Caravan and it is hoped that Peter Lynch will be able to attend bringing his wonderful Grumman Mallard.



Picture: <http://www.mydailynews.com.au/>

We hope for a good attendance at Rose Bay, despite the fact that May 11 is Mother's Day.

The solution to the resulting family problem is simple: bring Mother to Rose Bay to celebrate her special day also!

THE WORK OF JUANITA FRANZI

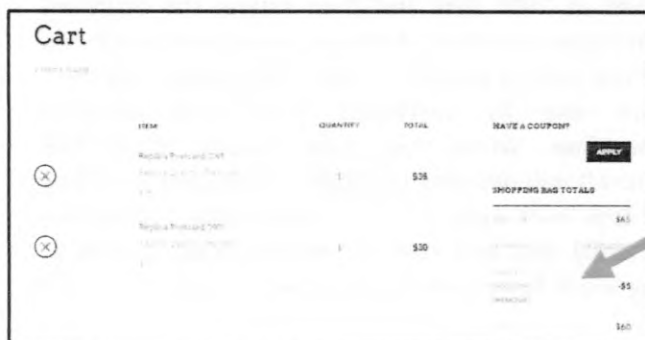


Juanita Franzi of *Aero Illustrations* is a hardworking and indispensable member of the Airmail Centenary Commemoration Group. Those AHSa members who have purchased their commemorative postcards will have received their *Certificate of Purchase*, which itself is a very 'collectible' item.

Juanita is responsible for the production of the basic three-fold pamphlets that describe the original flight and the re-enactment event. Some 5000 of these have been printed, and have been distributed widely. For the Anzac Day flyover, Juanita produced the first of our special certificates that are being presented to aviators and others who make a significant contribution to the commemorations. The Luskintyre recipients were indeed impressed and appreciative. The certificates are numbered so that we can keep track of all the many participants. This list will shortly be available on our website.

Bill Purdy's certificate (number 001) can be seen on the left.

The light and recreational aircraft community is enthusiastic in their support for the re-enactment flights and related activities. Almost every day we receive a new offer of participation. This grass-roots support means that the re-enactment flight will be a great success.



Special offer for purchasers of the re-enactment postcards...

Now that the lower numbers are largely sold, we are offering a discount for people who buy more than one card in a single order. If your cart total is \$60 or more, you can claim this discount. Make your purchase as usual and proceed to the 'Cart' stage.

In the HAVE A COUPON box, enter *buy2* and your total will reduce by \$5. If your total cart order is \$150 or more, enter *buy5* and your total will reduce by \$30. We also have a very special deal for people who wish to spend \$300 or more, please contact guillauxcentenary@gmail.com for details.

THE APRIL MEETING WAS DEVOTED TO THE LAUNCH OF THE AIRMAIL CENTENARY COMMEMORATION.

Celebrating 100 years since the arrival in Sydney of French Pilot Maurice Guillaux with his Bleriot XI and his crew.



Research and Recollections - Filling in the Details of an Aviation Pioneer

'Maurice in a car: Michel says he was a 'works' driver for Renault before becoming an aviator. It would be interesting to identify this fascinating vehicle.' JR April Newsletter

It took no time for our Transport volunteers at the Powerhouse Discovery Centre, Castle Hill, to trace the interesting and stylish vehicle featured last month. Richard Pike and Fred Gooch emailed the following:



'You will find that the car is a **Peugeot Bebe**. They were designed by Ettore Bugatti and manufactured by Peugeot and were popular between 1912 and 1916.

This also fits in your time line.' FG

'I agree with Fred that the car seems to be a Peugeot Bebe. The radiator, badge and the front axle/suspension look correct. It sure is a small car, however the scuttle shape is not like other Bebes. Another body builder may have used his own design and also mounted the light near the driver to allow the driver to move the light around by hand, maybe to spot aircraft.' RP

FOR THE OBSERVER:



Is the Petrol cap on the Peugeot Bebe the same as the 'mascot' seen in this photograph of Maurice Guillaux in the Bleriot?

Could it be part of the Hirondele trophy?



Trophée "Nouvelle Hirondele" ?

Elle a fait le printemps, un beau printemps en ce jour historique du 29 avril 1913, cette "**Nouvelle Hirondele**" rend hommage au record du monde de distance en une journée, 1255 km en 9 heures, entre Biarritz et Kollum au Pays-Bas, un record battu par l'aviateur **Maurice Guillaux** (1883-1917), à une vitesse moyenne de 140 km/h... chapeau l'artiste !

This address will take you to the memorial at his grave.

<http://aerosteles.net/fiche.php?code=nanterre-guillaux&type=nd&valeur=92&lang=en>



The detail in the high relief of Maurice Guillaux reflects the admiration and respect for his aviation achievements

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OUR REF.

YOUR REF.

17th July, 1964.

Dear Mr. Birtles,

We should like you to accept, with our compliments, this historic, commemorative cover which is being carried on the aircraft making the now-famous re-enactment of Australia's first airmail flight. The stamp is one of two issued by the P. M. G. 's Department to commemorate the original airmail flight in Australia in July, 1914.

This flight between Melbourne and Sydney, carried a consignment of Lipton's tea - making our product the first air cargo carried in Australia!

The freight we paid for the consignment - plus some other considerations made to the aviator, Maurice Guillaux - helped to make the flight possible. Our contribution, 50 years ago, makes us proud today that we were so closely associated with the history-making flight.

Lipton's tea has been a pioneer in the tea industry for generations, and even today we are busy pioneering some exciting and new moves. You will have learned by now about our latest and greatest pioneering move - the introduction of Quick Tips tea.

Quick Tips will be backed by tea's biggest ever TV advertising campaign in N. S. W. Your co-operation in the introduction of this new line will bring mutual advantages to us all.

We hope this small souvenir of the re-enactment flight will be of interest to you and your colleagues. It is our way of sharing with you the fun and excitement of the re-enactment ceremony.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

G. F. McMullen
General Manager



LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

The French Connection - Final.

The Oswald Watt Gold Medal is awarded; "For the most brilliant performance in the air or the most notable contribution to aviation by an Australian during the year." If a similar award had been in existence during the decade from 1911, when Oswald Watt received his pilot's certificate, to 1921, when he drowned at Bilgola, there is no doubt that he would have been a recipient for several of those years. Of the actual awards he did receive, the French decorations of the *Legion d'Honneur* and the *Croix de Guerre*, stand apart. Oswald Watt was a dedicated francophile. After his much publicised divorce in Sydney in 1913 he travelled to Cairo, bought himself a Bleriot XI, and commenced activities as a civilian pilot. In May 1914, he moved to Paris and located his monoplane at the Bleriot aerodrome at Buc nearby. Two days before Britain declared war on August 4, Oswald Watt had already joined the *French Foreign Legion*, and was posted to the *Service d'Aviation Militaire*. He also offered his Bleriot XI to the French, and was initially posted to 30 Squadron flying Bleriot XI. Subsequently he joined 44 Squadron at Toul, flying Maurice Farman F.11 *Shorthorns*. There could be no stronger symbol of the aviation connection between France and Australia than the nose art on Oswald's Farman. The words *Advance Australia* were painted on the nose with a *Kangaroo Rampant* on both port and starboard sides. He served France with distinction for the first eighteen months of the war before transferring to the Australian Flying Corps, serving in the Middle East with No 1 Sqn AFC, from September 1916 in France in command of No 2 Sqn AFC, and from February, 1918, back in England in command of the AFC's 1st Training Wing. The aviation connection with France was further strengthened by the service and sacrifice of the many Australians in both the RFC and AFC squadrons operating in France.

Like many pioneers of his time, Oswald Watt came to aviation via a passion for motoring. He has the distinction of being the first to set a record time for a car driving between Sydney and Melbourne. At the time, he was a captain in the *New South Wales Scottish Rifles*, and aide-de-camp to the Governor of New South Wales. He left Sydney GPO, with his mechanic Gerard de Lisa, at 6 am on September 2, 1907, driving a French built, single-cylinder De Dion-Bouton. They reached Melbourne 2 days, 17 hours and 26 minutes later. Watt's time was considerably lowered by a 15/20 HP Talbot driven by Harry James, the Dunlop Tyres publicity manager, and Charles Kellow, a Melbourne car dealer. Their target was something less than 24 hours, but after leaving Melbourne they arrived at Sydney's GPO at 4.10 am on January 16, 1908, 25 hours and 40 minutes later. Soon to be aviator, Fred Custance, was co-driver with G. G. White in a 35 HP Talbot when they lowered Charles Kellow's time by 4 hours and 21 minutes, arriving at Sydney GPO at 6:15 pm on December 10, 1909. That puts Fred Custance in Sydney the day after Colin Defries first became airborne in a Wright Model A at Victoria Park Racecourse. We need to go back to Paris to discover another link between Charles Kellow, Colin Defries and the first aeroplane imported into Australia.

Perhaps it was the charge of having negligently driven a motor car in Brighton Road, Elsternwick, on March 25, 1908, causing the death of a horse and injury to its owner – or more likely it was the need to visit England and the Continent in connection with agencies for his car dealership. In any case Charles Kellow soon boarded a steamer and sailed off to England. The first news about him from abroad came in a correspondent's report in Australian newspapers dated London, May 22. The headline was **VOYAGES IN THE AIR MADE BY MELBOURNE MEN**: "Messrs. C. B. Kellow and A. J. Staughton, who are visiting England and the Continent, have had some interesting experiences. Yesterday they made an ascent from Battersea, (London), in the Hon. C. S. Rolls' balloon. The balloon went to a height of 4800 feet, and travelled to the shores of the North Sea, going at the rate of 40 miles an hour. Mr Kellow has also made an ascent at Paris in Mr Henry Farman's aeroplane." If the correspondent's report is correct, Charles Kellow was in London on May 21, having left Paris some days earlier. How much earlier is of interest. History records that Charles Furnas was probably the world's first aeroplane passenger. The date was May 14, 1908, and his pilot was Wilbur Wright, flying a modified 1905 Flyer at Kill Devil Hill, Kitty Hawk, N. C. The date of Kellow's flight with Farman must have

been only a matter of a day or two later. The records also show that the first notable aeroplane passenger in Europe was Ernest Archdeacon on May 29, with Henry Farman flying his Voisin-Farman 1-bis. If Kellow did in fact fly with Farman at Paris it would have been during trials Farman was then conducting at Issy. Was Kellow used as trial human ballast before the high profile Ernest Archdeacon was put at risk? Whatever the facts, it seems that an Australian was in Paris in May, 1908, witnessing the exciting progress in powered flight, and may have been one of the first aeroplane passengers.

Drivers on the 1907 Grand Prix circuits in Europe included names like Henry Farman, J. T. C. Moore-Brabazon, René Hanriot and a twenty three year old Colin Defries. Then, on July 24, 1908, the *London Times* reported that Defries had been convicted of driving an unregistered motor car at excessive speed on Bromley Road, Catford. Unfortunately Defries had been convicted many times before for exceeding the speed limit, and twice his driver's licence had been cancelled. As a result of this latest conviction he was now disqualified from driving for twelve months. Just two weeks later Wilbur Wright demonstrated at Hunaudieres what the world acknowledged was a revelation in aerial navigation. It is probable that Colin Defries, deprived of his licence, still looked for involvement with automobiles. Australia could offer a fresh start in the area of sales for the products of UK and European manufacturers. It is not known whether he met up with Charles Kellow before they both boarded the *S. S. Mooltan* in London on August 28, bound for Port Melbourne. They had nearly six weeks together on board to discuss their mutual interest in automobiles, and Kellow's recent aviation experiences, before the *S. S. Mooltan* docked in Melbourne on October 5. Colin Defries was soon made a member of the *Royal Automobile Club*, and there met Lawrence Adamson, the headmaster of Wesley College, who was also fascinated by automobiles, and more lately by aeroplanes. Thus the seeds were sown for the importation of the first aeroplane into Australia. The *Stella*, a Wright Model A, arrived in Sydney from France on board *R.M.S. Otranto* on November 15, 1909.

The aerial crossing of the English Channel by Louis Bleriot on July 25, 1909, initiated Australia's early involvement with the Bleriot XI. The third week of February 1910, saw two newly arrived Bleriot XI's on display in Australia – one in Melbourne, imported by Lawrence Adamson, the other in Adelaide imported by Fred Jones. The first aeroplane sales mission to Australia came from France. A Bleriot team arrived in Melbourne on September 5, 1910, with its demonstration pilot Gaston Cugnet. The mission's Bleriot XI and its mechanic, Charles Ercole, arrived the following month. Cugnet was the first pilot, holding an internationally recognised aviator's certificate, to fly an aeroplane in Australia when he flew the Bleriot XI at Altona on November 15, 1910. Harry Houdini had already flown at Diggers Rest on March 18, in a Voisin biplane, which was also imported from France and under the close supervision of Houdini's French mechanic Antonio Brassac. The history of Bleriot in Australia continued with A. B. 'Wizard' Stone's import of a Metz-Air-Car, Bleriot type, from the USA, in which he made the first flight west of the Blue Mountains at Bathurst on April 19, 1912. From 1909, the Bleriot XI became a popular template for Australian local constructors, hoping to get themselves into the air. However, Maurice Guillaux's demonstration of his Bleriot XI, during 1914, created another surge of interest in the type. This resulted in the importation from France of three more Bleriot XI's. After the outbreak of war, the Defence Department accepted the offer of one of these, owned by Tom Reynolds and located at the Kellow-Falkiner motor works in Melbourne. By the end of 1914, the Central Flying School possessed seven aeroplanes, four of which were from French companies. These were CFS 4 & 5, Deperdussins, (built in London by the British Deperdussin Company); CFS 6, Bleriot XI, (the gift of Tom Reynolds); and CFS 7, Maurice Farman Hydroplane, (the gift of Lebbeus Hordern).

One of the more poignant French connections with Australian aviation concerned a Caudron G.III. During 1913/14, three of the type were flown in Australia by Arthur Jones, Andrew Delfosse Badgery and Jean Claude Marduel. Early in 1915, the Indian government asked for assistance from the Australian Flying Corps in its campaign against the Turks in Mesopotamia. A small force, known as the *AFC Half Flight*, left Australia in April, 1915. When his Caudron was forced down due to engine trouble near Basra on July 30, Lt. George Merz, and his NZ Defence Forces observer Lt. William Burn were killed by hostile Arabs. Lt. Merz was the first Australian military pilot to die in action. **John Scott.**