



A H S A

AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW) Inc

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13/40A ROSLYN GARDENS ELIZABETH BAY NSW 2011

Southern Skies

THE NEWSLETTER OF AHS A (NSW) Inc

SEPTEMBER 2015 ~ No 498

2015-3 Sept/Dec

THE AHS A (NSW) SEPTEMBER MEETING will be held at the Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown on Wednesday, 2nd September commencing at 7.30 pm. Please note the venue. The Museum is located at the end of Starkie Drive, Bankstown Airport, and there is ample free parking. Visitors are most welcome and supper will be available following the meeting.

The speaker will be Roy Fox - Dubbed the 'Flying Orthodontist', Dr Roy Fox is a celebrated and passionate vintage aircraft collector, restorer and pilot who has a private airfield at his property by the Hawkesbury.

Many members will remember the challenging and interesting Arthur Butler Lecture presented by Roy some years ago. Roy's knowledge of aviation history of the 1920s and 1930s, the famous people who flew aircraft during this period, and the many people behind-the-scenes who kept the aircraft in the air will guarantee an informative evening.

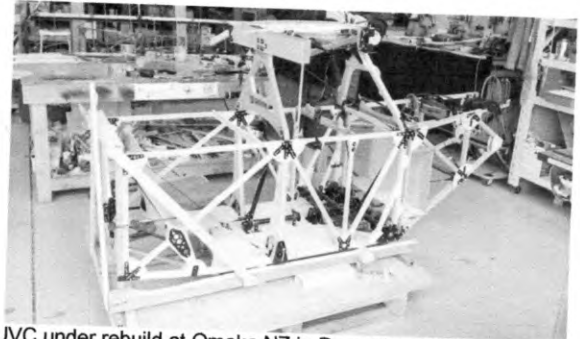
As a boy in Belfast, Fox grew up making aircraft models and listening to his father who worked for Short's, the aeronautic firm. He learnt to fly after he and his wife emigrated in 1979.

Soon after gaining his licence, Roy bought and restored his first vintage aircraft, a Short S16 Scion, built in 1932. Then "the disease got worse". Before long, he'd bought six old planes including an ex-Flying Doctor Fox Moth, a German-built Klemm L25 used in New Guinea during World War II, and a British-built Klemm which took part in the 1935 McRobertson Air Race London to Melbourne.

The jewel of Roy's collection is a single-seater Comper Swift, "the smallest plane ever to fly from London to Sydney". It flew the route in 1934, piloted by a "Mr Butler from Cootamundra". Butler was obviously something of an eccentric. "He flew the whole way in his carpet slippers because he wanted to keep the weight down. You can't believe some of the nutters involved in early Australian aviation. They were a delightful bunch!"

Roy took part in a safari to honour Rev Dr John Flynn: "He managed to overcome the porridge of bureaucracy, and he had a wonderfully muscular Christianity," he says. "Other countries have set up flying doctor services, including Russia. But they were state-run organisations which used military aircraft. There's something very Australian about the flying doctors relying on volunteers, who though not pacifists, were certainly not from the military."

An opportunity and update not-to-be-missed.



VH-UVC under rebuild at Omaka NZ in December 2014, showing the excellent craftsmanship. Photo by Graham Orphan

COMPER SWIFTS IN AUSTRALIA VH-UVC c/n S.32/10

Compiled by Geoff Goodall

- 1980-97 UVC stored dismantled in Jack Davidson's hangar at The Oaks Airfield, near Camden NSW
- .97 UVC purchased by Dr. Rob (Roy) Fox, Sydney NSW:
- Fox purchased the incomplete airframe plus 7 Pobjoy radial engines as a restoration project.
- (Dr. Roy Fox owns Klemm L-25 VH-UUR, Klemm Eagle VH-UTI, DH.89 VH-UTV and restoration projects Short Scion VH-UTV and Comper VH-UVC.)
- 1.14 VH-UVC was shipped from Sydney to New Zealand for airworthy restoration by JEM Aviation at Omaka NZ.
- Inspection by JEM Aviation found that all woodwork, including the wing spars, would need replacing but that metal fittings were in good condition. Work was also under way stripping down the Pobjoy engine collection, and new pistons being manufactured.
- JEM Aviation are working towards VH-UVC flying again in 2015

Neil Follett was a kid on the fence at Moorabbin in the late 1950s. He writes:

"My favourite Comper Swift moment happened at Moorabbin one day when VH-UVC was taxiing out in a strong wind and the aircraft would not turn where the pilot wanted it to. I was amazed to see the pilot (I think it was Keith Torr) undo his harness, climb out of the aircraft, lift up the tail and point the aircraft in the direction he wanted to go and then hop back in. Some 15 years later I recalled that incident when trying to turn Tiger VH-TIG onto the runway at Berwick, so I replicated the Comper pilot's solution."

At Essendon after being sold by the aero club, with Mickey Mouse cartoon on fuselage. Neil Follett collection





Members were a wrapt audience during the August meeting when raconteur, Ray Clamback, reminisced about his life before and after his aviation adventures.

Ray has been flying since 1960 in many capacities from forest survey work to instruction, to airline and to international ferry flying. He is a Grade One Flying Instructor, with IFR and multi-engine Training Approval for most aircraft.

Ray specialised in night flying from very early in his career and has over 1000 hours in Twin Comanches' night experience alone. He was one of the first few instrument rating trainers on Bankstown Airport in the early days of IFR training.

With Aminta, Clamback & Hennessy is the oldest and most respected flight school at Bankstown, Sydney.

Having completed over 350 Pacific, Indian and Atlantic Ocean crossings in single and twin-engined aircraft, and also many ferry aircraft movements across North America, Africa, Europe and Asia, Ray is perhaps remembered most by the media coverage of his ditching in the Pacific Ocean, his survival, and the international rescue. Indeed Ray has ditched 3 times, twice in the Pacific Ocean (1994, 2004) and once, nearer Bankstown in the Georges River. No Hollywood movie could better recount the calm-under-pressure, logical thinking and efforts to save energy that ensured the self-help of Ray's survival. Nor that 'Lady Luck' contributed with the US Coast Guard and presence of a cargo ship that were able to provide rescue on each occasion. The communication, co-operation and safety procedures are testament

of the technology of today.

Ray answered questions and elaborated on procedures of knowledge, preparation and skill to help survive a ditching. With humour, insight and tales-well-told, members were an attentive and appreciative audience.

SYDNEY'S AIRPORTS, AERODROMES, AND AIRSTRIPS

Sydney-siders are surrounded by a number of existing or previous airfields ranging from regular operations to emergency landing grounds.

The number increases if you count the private agricultural strips in the region, one of which was a crop-dusting strip running east/west along the Razorback Range south of Camden, which was also a convenient ELG (emergency landing ground) for gliders which might get caught short of height en route to or from Camden.

Motivation to research this list was after a trip to check out the proposed Badgery's Creek airport and finding a disused RAAF site nearby. I remembered my very first Tiger Moth trip as a teenager when we chased cattle through the gum trees at Hoxton Park, which has now become the site of a massive warehouse distribution centre.

Peter Coates

Some members may have visited the following fields by air or ground. They are all interesting historically:

Sydney Airport: Established circa 1920 on land leased from the nearby Ascot Pony Racing club (the north-eastern corner of the airport, more recently known for general aviation and "flight facilities" use). Access was via tram to the Ascot race course, and by road from Botany Road.

Initially it was just a relatively flat paddock of grass and sand. Gravel runways were added from 1932 - the first such strip 450 metres long; 2 additional gravel strips added by 1938.

The freight railway in the north was diverted after an accident between a train and a DC3. The Cooks River and Alexandria canal were diverted and new, concrete runways aligned 07/25 (main) and a shorter 16/34 constructed by 1954.

The latter was extended into Botany Bay from 1969, with a parallel strip added in late 1990s.

Rose Bay: The Sydney flying boat base from 1938 and chief international airport until circa 1950.

Closed in 1974. Seaplanes still fly from several locations in the Sydney area including Rose Bay.

Bankstown Airport: Now only 4th busiest by movements in Australia; apparently used to be number 1.

Multi-runway parallel strips, some crossing (but disused). Bankstown has three main parallel east-west runways - a long centre runway for high-performance aircraft, a northern runway for arrivals and departures, and a southern runway for circuit training. Originally planned in 1929 but not established until 1940 as an RAAF facility. Subsequently taken over by the USAAF and established as a key strategic air base to support the war effort, circa 1942.

It transferred from US to British Fleet Air Arm operations in 1945, and was known as Royal Naval Air Station Bankstown, or HMS Nabberley, until handed back to the RAAF in 1946.

Interestingly, several "dummy houses" were built to make Bankstown Airport appear as a farm, with disguised hangers and fake roads.

There was an underground command post on Black Charlie's Hill with gun pits located within and around the airport to protect it from air attack.

Another anti-aircraft battery was situated on high land on the corner of Bexley Road and Homer Street, Clemton Park. De Havilland and successors have been located at this airport since 1942, occupying the area south of the main runway. RAAF Mosquito bombers were built there.

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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 25 September 2015.

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.

The primary (centre) runway (11C/29C) is 1,415m x 30m, and limited to 50 tonnes MTOW. Marshall Airways and Sid Marshall's museum was based here, too.

Hargrave Park, Liverpool: An historic airfield (circa 1920s) now part of the residential suburb of Warwick Farm. Closed circa 1945. Was used for public housing thereafter with complaints about squalor.

Camden: Ex-WWII RAAF Kittyhawk base and in current civilian use. AKA 'Macquarie Grove', initial development was private and the airfield was 'loaned' to the government, a deal which became permanent after the war. RAAF Camden housed squadrons 15, 32 (Hudsons, Beauforts) and 78 (Kitthawks). Camden was also the first RAAF Central Flying School (CFS), before being moved to RAAF Tamworth.

Richmond: Current RAAF base - has been so since c.1937. Supplemental airport for Sydney from circa 1914, perhaps 1912. Home base for Sir Charles Kingsford Smith and Charles Ulm and their Fokker Trimotor 'Southern Cross' during the late 1920s.

Clarendon (see Richmond): As per the nearby railway station (railway now ends at Richmond but used to cross the Hawkesbury/Nepean and climb to Kurrajong) was the original airfield (perhaps slightly south of current site) and pre-dates Sydney Airport.

This area and Richmond also known as **Ham Common**. **William Ewart Hart** attempted to start a flying school from this site, circa 1912, as well as his Penrith site.

Belmore Park, an historic airfield circa 1911 or earlier in **Penrith** (now a housing development) was used as a base by **William Ewart Hart** for flights such as his 1911 journey from Penrith to Parramatta and return, and as a training site.

First recorded aircraft crash in Australia was of William Hart and passenger near Rooty Hill/Seven Hills. Also site of **Penrith Speedway** and historic **Thornton Hall**, North of railway. (See also **Jamison Park**, south of railway.)

Parramatta: Actual site of Hart's first and subsequent landings uncertain, but probably within what is now Parramatta Park.

Menangle: A 'dispersal' airstrip, a WWII runway built circa 1942 in case of Japanese attack on Sydney. Basically aircraft would fly to these dispersed sites and hide in the forest. Later used as an overflow for Schofields.

Bargo 'dispersal' airstrip, another WWII runway, as per Menangle.

Cordeaux 'dispersal' airstrip, another WWII runway, as per Menangle.

The Oaks 'dispersal' airstrip, another WWII runway, as per Menangle and others. The Oaks airfield was constructed circa 1942 as a satellite aerodrome to RAAF Camden. There was a 5000 foot x 150 foot sealed runway aligned 36/18 and split by Burragorang Road (complete with gates to stop stray cars!). Operations probably included Hudsons, B24 Liberator bombers and Kittyhawks. Not required post-war by the RAAF, it was offered for sale in 1946. The current strip is a private field, roughly the southern half of the wartime area. The original runway was removed but a 950m 18/36 main grass strip (perhaps wartime taxiway) was left and a new grass strip of just 400m added (aligned 09/27).

Ettalong/Woy Woy 'dispersal' airstrip, another WWII runway, as per Menangle. Believed to have been largely converted into a residential street running north/south.

Marsden Park airstrip, a WWII runway and later motorsport venue. There's an interesting link between this airstrip and Australian F1 motorsport engineer, Ron Tauranac.

Pitt Town 'dispersal' airstrip, a WWII runway and later motorsport venue.

Schofields aerodrome: A WWII RAAF base and Royal Navy Pacific operation for a few years thereafter; 3 intersecting runways; a motorsport venue 1950-59 (possibly conflicts with the RAN records of operation there in 1953); a Naval base (*HMAS Nirimba*) from 1959-circa 1974. Closed since 1994, although operations were reported up to 1998. Now a housing and educational site, with aerodrome land, including a 'blimp hangar' (recently removed,) and remaining portions of runway on sale from 2008.

Mt Druitt airstrip, 690 acres in area, circa 1942-1951; a WWII runway approx 1520m long, 2 hangars; later a motorsport venue (1950-53?). The race track was 3.6 kms long and situated on what is now Whalan Reserve, the Mt Druitt Industrial Area, and Madang Avenue Primary School.

Holsworthy airstrip, a current Army airstrip dating to WWII. (AKA **Luscombe airfield**). Main strip for army in Sydney, plus 2 smaller strips due south.

Hoxton Park airstrip, Cowpastures Road: 1098m long, oriented 16/34. A WWII 'dispersal strip' runway (in case of Japanese attack) Closed, redeveloped circa 2008. It did retain features from the war, including gravelled aircraft hide-outs and wartime drainage, taxiways and markings.

At the northern end of the runway could be seen 2 earlier forms of surface, one bitumen and the other gravel, and wartime drainage works were found under the runway. There was also a wartime taxiway leading off to the north-west, beyond what was the airport perimeter and evidence of aircraft 'hideouts' in the neighbouring eucalyptus forest.

There were 2 surviving taxiway bridges across gullies or drainage lines prior to redevelopment. There was further evidence of taxiways and hideouts to the east of the current runway. The original airstrip was 5000ft (1524m) long and 172ft (52m) wide. The runway has been shortened since World War II and the former runway extension is noticeable at the northern end of the runway. The aircraft revetments or hideaways west of the aerodrome may have been removed or destroyed during the construction of the M7 motorway and building of a large supermarket distribution centre.

Warnervale aerodrome, about 100km north of Sydney: It's big enough for a DC-3 but is increasingly hemmed in by development. There are "plans" for a new strip in the region.

Katoomba airstrip, about 100km west of Sydney.

Wedderburn airstrip, southwest of Sydney: Active. Single runway. Increased growth since closure of Hoxton Park.

Albion Park aerodrome, about 100km south of Sydney now the home of the HARS museum.

Fleurs Aerodrome: WWII strip and previous CSIRO radiophysics site was a parent aerodrome built on behalf of the Royal Australian Air Force during World War II. It is located at Kemp's Creek 40 km west of Sydney. Construction started on the aerodrome in 1942 and was still under construction in 1944 as part of a proposal to base a United States Navy Fleet Air Wing in Sydney should the need arise. Initially planned with three runways, No.1 (5000 ft) and No. 3 (6000 ft) runways were serviceable; however construction of

No. 2 runway (5000 ft) was abandoned. A total of eight aircraft dispersal hideouts were constructed and accommodation was a farm house and a former Civil Constructional Corps camp. In 1969, Fleurs was considered as a site of the second airport for Sydney. The aerodrome is now utilised as precision ground-reflection antenna range operated by the University of Sydney, known as the Fleurs Radio Observatory.

Calwalla: WWII strip in the southern highlands.

Ravenswood airstrip: A WWII dispersal strip attached to Fleurs but apparently not proceeded with.

Wallgrove Aerodrome - was a Royal Australian Air Force satellite and emergency airfield at Doonside, New South Wales, Australia during World War II. Built in 1942, the runway was 5000ft (1524m) long and 50ft (15.24m) wide, running roughly NW-SE. Wallgrove closed in 1946 and reverted back to farmland (historic "Bungarrabee"). A number of former hideouts or aircraft revetments are still visible, as is most of the runway. However an industrial area has been built over what was the southern end of the airstrip. Also known as "Doonside" airfield it became the site of OTC's marine communications transmitters.

Somersby - Lackersteen's Road: A private strip near Gosford on the Central Coast.

Cooranbong - now closed, formerly an extensive flying school base south west of Newcastle.

Wamberal: Another Central Coast airstrip that's been mentioned never actually confirmed where exactly it was ... on the beach? Or on the ridge above the beach?

The Entrance/Bateau Bay: An airstrip that became a high school (Central Coast, again).

RAAF Base Rathmines: Although not an airstrip of course it is also worth noting (Lake Macquarie, south and south west of Newcastle). Think flying boats, Catalinas, that sort of thing.

Tuggerah Aerodrome was an aerodrome constructed in 1942 by the Royal Australian Air Force as a dispersal ground and landing ground at Tuggerah, NSW, Australia during World War II. The runway ran south west to north east and was 5000 ft long x 150 ft wide.

The aerodrome had eight hideouts for medium bombers constructed. The United States Navy's Fleet Air Wing leased the aerodrome as a satellite field for Fleurs Aerodrome near Kemp's Creek, New South Wales. The aerodrome was abandoned after World War II.

Wallacia - west of Sydney: Single strip near Bullen's Animal World. Both no longer operational!

Wilton: Existing field south west of Sydney, used for skydiving. WWII dispersal airstrip. 3 triangulated runways.

Centennial Park - at least one early flight in and out, (including the Maurice Guillaux record airmail flight arrival in 1914).

Ascot Racecourse: Maurice Guillaux flew demonstrations there in 1914 and crashed badly. He recovered and flew from Ham Common, or Richmond if you prefer.

Jamison Park, Penrith: From perhaps 1930s into the 1950s the home of Penrith Aero Club.

Victoria Park racecourse: Another creative use of a horse racing track by early aviators.

Llandilo: May have been a dispersal airstrip or simply another name for Marsden Park - Was/is certainly a DCA HF Transmitter site.

Londonderry: The RAAF's HF Transmission site. Castlereagh was probably the nearest dispersal strip.

Castlereagh - dispersal airstrip and dragway.

Erskine Park Quarry airstrip.

Luddenham airstrip or Kennett's Field.

Wyong Airstrip: 1970-1990 originally a 2000 ft. strip but the direction was changed and a 3000ft. strip was made. This airstrip was made on an original landing site used by Reg Ansett c1936.... the airstrip was closed due to contaminated ground from chemical fire rendering more development unviable ... Site is now Mercure Koondah Waters Resort.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

September

- 06** Forty French aircraft bomb targets in Saarbrucken in Germany.
- 07** The first Zeppelin raid on the "Square Mile" of the city of London takes place, resulting in 18 deaths and 28 injuries.
- 09** The NSW Premier W. A. Holman sends a cable to the Agent-General in London seeking help to obtain aeroplanes for a proposed flying school at Richmond. Zeppelin L-13, commanded by Heinrich Mathy, raids London, dropping bombs between Euston and Liverpool Streets, resulting in 22 deaths and 27 injuries.
- 14** German pilot Ernst Udet returns to his base, at Belfort Germany, from a bombing mission, despite losing part of the upper wing of his Aviatik B.
- 16** Australian Flying Corps pilot, Captain W.H. Treloar, with his observer Captain B.S. Atkins, are captured by the Turks after a forced landing in their Caudron GIII near Kut, Mesopotamia.
- 30** The Australian Navy is given the exclusive privilege of receiving and transmitting messages by wireless telegraphy within Australia. JS

AVIATION CALENDAR OF EVENTS

→ → Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown → →
OPEN Wednesdays & Saturdays 10.00 am - 4.00 pm

SEPTEMBER 2015

Temora Aviation Museum, Temora, NSW.

Sep 05 Frontline Fighters: Spitfire, P-40 Kittyhawk, Boomerang
Sep 19 WWII Pacific Theatre: Hudson, Wirraway, Spitfire, Ryan
TEMORA AVIATION MUSEUM'S 3RD BIENNIAL "WARBIRDS DOWNUNDER" AIRSHOW will be held on November 20th and 21st 2015. Both event and camping tickets can be purchased from the Warbirds Downunder - website: www.warbirdsdownunderairshow.com.au



FOR THE TRAVELLER

29 Aug - 30 Aug [Gathering of Eagles - Australia](#)
Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield Inc.

September 2015

12 - 12 [Wings Over Warwick](#) Massie Warwick Aerodrome QRAA inc, Warwick Aero Club annual fly-in

13 - 13 [RVAC Dawn Patrol](#) Moorabbin Airport RVAC: *Dawn Patrol*, an annual event, now in its 37th Year.

→ → Thank you Peter Coates, John Scott, and aviation friends for submissions to this newsletter. Contributions should be sent to the Newsletter Editor: judyrainsford@hotmail.com

in 27 AHS A (NSW)

LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

“They Came On The Wings Of The Morning”.

The more I visit new Zealand the more I am impressed by the way New Zealanders value their aviation heritage. On April 7 this year I visited a new aviation memorial at Wigram, Christchurch. The name of the memorial is the *Charles Kingsford Smith Landing Site*. The memorial is located on Bennington Way within the new town development named *Wigram Skies*, which occupies part of the former RNZAF base. The memorial itself consists of a circular area with decorative paving showing the plan outline of the *Southern Cross* aircraft, bordered on one side by a wall displaying the name of the memorial on a light blue and silver panel, depicting the structural form of a wing. The first crossing of the Tasman Sea by air has a special significance for New Zealanders which is well expressed by the following words on an information panel at the site.

“The years between the the two World Wars saw many aviation ‘firsts’ but for New Zealand, few were as significant as the first trans-Tasman flight. After leaving Sydney on 10 September 1928, Australian aviator Charles Kingsford Smith and the crew of the Southern Cross battled fierce storms throughout the night before landing safely at Wigram Aerodrome the next morning.

This event represented the end of New Zealand’s isolation from the rest of the world and proved that international air travel was a viable possibility. For the first time New Zealand’s nearest neighbour, Australia, was brought within a day’s reach. Kingsford Smith was accompanied on this flight by co-pilot Charles Ulm, navigator Harry Litchfield, and radio operator Tom McWilliams, a New Zealander. The significance of this event was reflected in the vast crowd that turned out to see the Southern Cross landing at Wigram. More than 25,000 people - approximately one quarter of the total population of Christchurch at that time - gathered to witness the historic occasion, having been alerted by the radio reports which had followed the aircraft’s progress through the night.

Escorted by five Bristol Fighters of the New Zealand Permanent Air Force, the Southern Cross circled the aerodrome three times before coming in to land at 9.22 am., after 14 hours and 12 minutes in the air. Immediately, the huge crowd surged past the police and military guards to surround the plane and catch a glimpse of the four heroic airmen. As the crew disembarked they were swept up by the crowd, and only with great difficulty managed to reach the area where the official welcome and speeches were to take place. This Heritage Reserve marks the actual location of the historic arrival of the Southern Cross. The commemorative plaque you can see nearby was originally used in 1978 to mark the 50th Anniversary of this landing.”

The commemorative bronze plaque referred to above is located in the paved area and contains the following words, *“This plaque commemorates the 50th Anniversary of the landing of the Southern Cross after the first flight across the Tasman Sea on September 11th 1928. Co-commanders Sqn. Ldr. C.E. Kingsford Smith, M.C., A.F.C., Flt. Lt. C.T.P. Ulm, A.F.C., Crew H.A. Litchfield Navigator, T.H. McWilliams Wireless Operator. ‘They came on the wings of the morning.’ “* This commemorative plaque should have been familiar to me because I was there at the Wigram Aerodrome on September 10, 1978, when it was presented by the organising committee of the *Sir Charles Kingsford Smith 50th Anniversary Air Pageant*. The presentation was the last event on the air pageant programme, following a re-enactment landing by a tri-motor Drovler aircraft which had Harold Litchfield and his wife as passengers. Harold Litchfield laid the 50th anniversary plaque which was intended as a replacement for the granite slab which had been previously laid at the exact spot where the Southern Cross first touched New Zealand soil. The original laying ceremony was conducted by the founder of Wigram Aerodrome, Sir Henry Wigram, on September 28, 1928. During the first fifty years of its existence the granite slab was exposed to the elements and activities on the aerodrome, particularly to damage caused by grass cutters. It was replaced by the 50th Anniversary plaque, and is now securely preserved in the magnificent Air Force Museum of New Zealand, which is located on the site of the old Wigram RNZAF base. The words on the granite slab include the quotation, *“They came on the wings of the morning”*, which appears to have been taken from Psalm 139 in the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. Smithy took great pride in the sentiment expressed by, and was present at, the laying of the granite slab. He wrote in his book *The Old Bus*: “the spot where the Southern Cross first touched New Zealand soil was commemorated by the laying of a tablet by Sir Henry Wigram, known

there as 'the father of aviation' “.

Following the arrival of the *Southern Cross* at Wigram, it was planned that it would take part in a tour of New Zealand. However, bad weather was forecast, and the capacity of some landing grounds to accommodate the largest aircraft yet seen in New Zealand was doubtful. It was decided that the *Southern Cross* should remain at Wigram while the tour proceeded using three Bristol Fighters – Smithy and Ulm flying together – Litchfield and McWilliams flying with air force pilots. The tour to the north departed Wigram on September 14, and continued as far as Auckland. During the tour the Bristol Fighters landed at Blenheim on the way north, and again on the flight back to Wigram. Smithy liked the look of the level ground to the west of Blenheim, and chose the site of the future Woodbourne Aerodrome, then known as Fairhall's Farm, as a suitable location to take-off the heavily loaded *Southern Cross* on its return flight to Australia. With the Bristol Fighters back in Wigram towards the end of September, it was decided to abandon the tour of the South Island because of the prevailing bad weather. The crew of the *Southern Cross* were present at Wigram for the laying of the granite marker slab, on September 28, before departing for Blenheim at 2:30 pm. At Blenheim the *Southern Cross* awaited a favourable weather report before departing for Richmond at dawn on Saturday October 13. Kingsford Smith Avenue and Ulm Crescent are street names at the existing Woodbourne Airport commemorating that historic departure.

The *Southern Cross* 50th Anniversary coincided with the Centenary of the formation of Hornby, a suburb of Christchurch, which encompassed the Wigram RZNAF Base. Hornby was certainly in a celebratory mood and Air New Zealand came on board as the major sponsor for the 50th Anniversary Air Pageant at Wigram, planned for the week end of September 9/10. The organising team included the RNZAF, the Ministry of Transport, and the Hornby Centenary Committee, with the Aviation Historical Society of New Zealand assisting. Approaching the 50th Anniversary of the first fixed wing crossing of the Tasman, it was appropriate that a rotary wing aircraft should make an attempt. At the time, Helicopters (NZ) Ltd had a Sikorsky S.61N on lease from Okanagan Helicopters, (C-FDWC), which needed to be transported to Sydney. It was decided to fly it across the Tasman via Norfolk and Lord Howe Islands. The Sikorsky departed Kaitaia in New Zealand on June 12, 1978, with a male crew of four and a female passenger on board. Mrs Patricia Tait thus became the first woman passenger to cross the Tasman by helicopter.

Air New Zealand had special plans for Flight TE802 departing Sydney for Christchurch on Saturday, September 9. The aircraft operating the flight, DC.10 (ZK-NZL), would be carrying passengers and crew directly related to the crew of the *Southern Cross*. Harold Litchfield, then 77 years old and living on the Gold Coast, was a special guest with his wife. Sadly, Tom McWilliams had died aged 80 in April 1978, but his wife Winifred was on board. Charles A. Kingsford Smith and John Ulm, respective sons of Smithy and Charles Ulm, were also guests on the flight. The family representation included the crew of the commemorative flight. Up front were two sons of Tom McWilliams; Ross McWilliams (Captain), and Tony McWilliams (Flight Engineer). Poor weather, and a late arrival, aborted a planned, majestic low level pass over the crowd at the Wigram air pageant.

After so much detailed planning, the weather almost defeated the organisers of the 50th Anniversary Air Pageant. Saturday September 9, the “Family Fun Day”, dawned with constant drizzle, a biting wind, and a cloud base down to about 400 ft. The Civil Aviation Division cancelled all flying on the programme. However, Cliff Tait was able to take-off at about midday on his Trans-Tasman Commemorative Flight in Fletcher FU24-950, (ZK-USU). This was planned as a solo, single-engine, double crossing of the Tasman. Cliff hoped to fly non-stop to Sydney, refuel and return to Wigram within 24 hours. The weather on Sunday, the “Official Day”, had improved sufficiently to allow a modified flying programme. I remember waiting past midday for the return of ZK-USU when it was apparent the double crossing would not be achieved within 24 hours. Cliff arrived safely at about 2.00 pm, after an elapsed time of 27 hours. On March 1/2 this year we failed to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the first Tasman crossing by the *Southern Cross Museum Trust* replica Fokker FV11B-3M, (VH-USU). The replica was flown from Coffs Harbour via Norfolk Island to RNZAF Base Whenuapai near Auckland by three pilots; Colin Watt, Keith McCoy and Tony Mooy. Following a landing accident at Parafield Airport in May 2002, the replica is now undergoing restoration by HARS at Albion Park.

With fixed wing and rotary wing aircraft having conquered the Tasman, the challenge remained for lighter-than-air. This challenge was finally taken up by Dick Smith who, with his co-pilot John Wallington, successfully completed an east-west crossing by balloon in February 2000..**John Scott.**



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THE NEWSLETTER OF AHSA (NSW) Inc

OCTOBER 2015 ~ No 499

THE AHSA (NSW) OCTOBER MEETING will be held at the Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown on Wednesday, 7th October commencing at 7.30 pm. Please note the venue. The Museum is located at the end of Starkie Drive, Bankstown Airport, and there is ample free parking. Visitors are most welcome and supper will be available following the meeting.

The programme will include discussions of the future of the AAMB and venues for AHSA meetings.

AUSTRALIAN AVIATION HISTORY AVIATION MUSEUMS PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

Those who have read John Scott's *Loops & Landings* (included with this newsletter) will be very aware of the many aviation concerns held by Australians who advocate the need to preserve our Australian history of flying, flyers and flight records - a proud record that contributed to the advancement of aviation from 'mad' dreamers to moon landings.

This meeting will focus on the present situation to preserve aviation history (particularly in the Sydney region) confronting the AAMB and the Powerhouse - a task more challenging due to the size and dimensions of many aviation museum displays. We can also evaluate comparisons with other global aviation museums.

Mike McGree, who is one of the Board members, will give everyone an update about the AAMB and the future museum plans to be considered. Latest releases of plans for the PHM will be advised.

Paul Ewoldt will display some aviation museum guide books and John Scott will bring some of his collection of aviation museum handbooks to contribute to discussion of museums in the 21st century.

Member participation is invited by way of presentation of personal experiences visiting other aviation museums both in Australia and overseas.

During the September meeting Roy Fox reminisced about his life and aviation interests before and after he and Primrose arrived in Australia. Members listened as Roy explained the difficulties and diversions of being a collector and restorer of vintage aircraft. The opportunity to peruse photos, books and objects added to the evening's discussions and question time.

Roy has a private airfield at his property by the Hawkesbury River, and visitors on special open days are invited to look at, touch and smell these wonderful

vintage machines which have individual histories to explore:

- British Klemm Eagle VH-UTI
- Short S16 Scion VH-UTV
- DH83 Foxmoth VH-UVL
- Klemm L25 VH-UUR
- Comper Swift VH-ACG
- DH 82a Tiger Moth VH-CCD
- Comper Swift VH-UVC
- DH89a Dragon Rapide VH-UTV
- Boeing Stearman VH-LSJ

These aeroplanes were designed before, and were all flying during, 1937. As such they represent a snapshot of the Australian civil experience of flight. In these aeroplanes pilots and navigators were taught their trade for the war of 1939. They broke records and saved the lives of remote peoples in Australia and abroad. They have sought the souls of men through a mission field and trained the first Australian lady airline pilot. One has been the favoured mount of a Chinese-Australian instructor who taught the greatest of Australian World War 2 pilots to fly; another ran guns to a revolution in Borneo. The aircraft are inextricably linked to the people who were involved with them.

On Open Days: Travel By Car From Castle Hill take the Old Northern Road through Glenorie to Wisemans Ferry. Go through the village past the pub to the Gosford Ferry. Across the ferry turn right to Spencer and Mangrove Mountain and check your distance odometer to register exactly 8kms of travel. At 8kms or 5 miles exactly you should see a historic Wesleyan Chapel, the home of the Dharug and Lower Hawkesbury Historical Society. The entrance gate has a "Private Airstrip" sign on the river side of the road beside the Chapel. Go straight in down the concrete driveway.

Travel By Air Take the Northern Light Aircraft Lane to the Hawkesbury river and simply turn left following the river. There are power lines some 3 to 5 miles from the property so watch out!

Further information is available on 'The Missions 1937' website including accommodation details.

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PAYING TRIBUTE TO A PIONEER

FLTLT Daniel Kehoe, GPCAPT Paul Nicholas, Australia's Ambassador to Italy Mike Rann, and FLTLT Rowan Willson at the memorial unveiling.

TWO FLIGHT LIEUTENANTS HELP HONOUR ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS AVIATORS. CPL Aaron Curran reports:

ON A REMOTE mountain in Italy, a memorial and 8.4km hiking trail was opened on August 2 in honour of one of the world's most famous aviators, **SQNLDR BERT HINKLER**. SQNLDR Hinkler was a pioneer Australian aviator who served in the RAF and Royal Naval Air Service in WWI. He later set many aviation records including becoming the first person to fly solo from England to Australia in 1928 in an Avro Avian G-EBOV.

Although Hinkler had no formal connection to the RAAF, he was appointed an honorary squadron leader when he landed in Australia after his solo flight. He died during a global navigation attempt during an emergency landing in his de Havilland Puss Moth on Mt Pratomagno in Tuscany on January 7, 1933. **In front of almost 200 people, a memorial comprising a 1.4 tonne basalt boulder and a carved basalt replica of a No. 28 Squadron (RAF) crest was unveiled.** The boulder was sourced from Mon Repos Beach near Bundaberg in Queensland, where SQNLDR Hinkler first flew a glider in 1912.

The ceremony was an authorised Anzac Centenary commemorative special event.

Queensland event organiser Kevin Lindeberg said that SQNLDR Hinkler had served as a gunner/observer over Belgium and France from 1914–17 where he was awarded a DSM. "SQNLDR Hinkler became a fighter pilot with the newly formed 28SQN RAF in northern Italy in 1918."

FLTLTs Rowan Wilson and Daniel Kehoe, of Central Flying School, were invited to play the bugle and bagpipes at the ceremony.

FLTLT Willson said the actual crash site was 50m up the hill from the memorial. *"He landed in winter and it was thought he lost a propeller and had a forced landing. As pilots, FLTLT Kehoe and I thought about what he would do with an engine failure.*

"It was a pretty bad landing and Hinkler got out, but unfortunately died down where the memorial was. Everyone in the area we visited knew his name," he said. Hinkler was found 111 days later.

The Arezzo Aero Club performed a flypast during the ceremony. Mr Lindeberg said the service had a marked solemnity about it, which was enhanced with an Italian flavour.

"SQNLDR Hinkler was a trailblazer in an industry which changed the world forever. He started from humble beginnings to become a giant in this field of human

endeavour with all its inherent dangers.

"During his pioneering flight from England to Australia, SQNLDR Hinkler telegrammed his updates. The Australian Government told him it was reckless, but the closer he got the more they changed their tune." FLTLT Willson said, "Hinkler navigated with a few pages out of an atlas. It was incredible.

"Australian pilots were big on technical knowledge of aircraft systems. I suspect that kind of systems knowledge culture might have started with people like SQNLDR Hinkler, who used to fix his own plane on those huge flights," FLTLT Willson said.

"100 years ago we knew nothing about aeroplanes and everything we know now was learnt through trial and error."

<http://airforcenews.realviewdigital.com/>

ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES

AIR NEW ZEALAND FAREWELLS THE 737

Australian Aviation Express

September 7, 2015

by John Walton

File image of Air New Zealand's last 737-300, ZK-NGL. (Andrew Aley)



Air New Zealand has retired its iconic Boeing 737-300

aircraft, with the final flight, NZ557 between Auckland and Christchurch, operated by ZK-NGL on September 6. It closed a chapter of domestic and trans-Tasman aviation marked by the airline, well aware of the historic nature of these aircraft and the relationship New Zealanders have with them.

The Kiwi carrier operated the Boeing 737 for 47 years, since the delivery of the first 737-200 aircraft to predecessor airline National Airways Corporation (NAC), registered, appropriately enough, ZK-NAC, in 1968.

"For many New Zealanders, their first flight was probably on a 737 jet, so there are a lot of memories of this aircraft," Air New Zealand's fleet manager for the 737-300, first officer Angus Black, told *Australian Aviation*.

"Air New Zealand was the first airline in the world outside of the USA and Europe to operate the 737," Black said.

"Our 737-200 fleet made more than 825,000 flights during its 33 years with the airline. Our first Boeing 737-300 joined our fleet in early 1998 – delivered in a special millennium colour scheme. Since then we've operated a total of 23 737-300s."

Air New Zealand's first Boeing 737-300 arrived to supplant the -200 fleet in 1998. Indeed, "Air New Zealand purchased the last 737-300 'classic' produced by Boeing [ZK-NKJ] back in 1999. This particular aircraft has flown nearly 36,000 hours and was one of our last few in the fleet," Black says.

After operating its final commercial flight on September 6, ZK-NGL began a farewell tour of New Zealand, including operating scenic flights from Christchurch, Wellington and Auckland and visiting a number of regional centres.

Retirement from Air New Zealand service may not be the end of the line for the airline's last 737s.

"We'll prepare the final aircraft in the 737-300 fleet for sale. The sale is currently under negotiation so we can't go into details about that. However, it is likely they will continue to

be operated commercially," Black noted. Zealand operated the 737-200 for three decades. (Air New Zealand)



Comments "Just a small correction. Apart from operating domestically and trans-Tasman, the Air NZ B737 fleet, for a while, flew the famous **Coral Route**, Auckland, Nadi, Rarotonga, Tahiti. While carrying out staff duty, I flew the leg between Nadi and Rarotonga in one of their B737-200's."

Norman Hogwood September 14, 2015 at 5:20 pm

"I flew on the last flight. It was barely advertised, only found out when I got a heads up from a dispatcher mate. We should also be preserving one as they have become an icon of our travel and a most successful unsung transport success story. Ex ZK-NAD (19930/In66), the second 737 delivered to NAC still exists, in USA. It has a tangible link with Boeing and New Zealand as apart from being the first customer outside USA or Europe, NZ operated the very first two planes ever built by Boeing, the seaplanes operated by Walsh Brothers second hand in 1918. A whole 50 years would elapse before we bought the next, the model 737 in 1968. Indeed this history was not forgotten when ZK-NAC was rolled out, as a replica of the seaplane was posed with her to mark the link. Now we begin to see the value of ZK-NAD. *Paul* September 14, 2015

JETSTAR'S 11TH 787-8 ENTERS SERVICE



September 14, 2015 by australianaviation.com.au

Jetstar Boeing 787-8 VH-VKL at Melbourne Airport on September 13. (Victor Pody)

Jetstar's transition to an all Boeing 787-8 long-haul fleet is almost complete after the low-cost carrier's 11th and final Dreamliner on firm order entered revenue service over the weekend. The aircraft, VH-VKL, operated its first commercial flight on Saturday as JQ37 from Sydney to Bali, with the 787 departing Kingsford Smith at 1820 local time.

The entry of into service of VH-VKL will shortly be followed by the withdrawal of VH-EBE, which is the last Airbus A330-200 remaining in the Jetstar fleet.

The Airline Route website reported earlier in September Jetstar's final A330 service will be a Melbourne-Honolulu-Brisbane rotation, with JQ6 scheduled to touch down in the Queensland capital at 1625 on September 25.

The A330-200 will then be prepared to enter service with Jetstar parent Qantas.

VH-VKL was the last 787-8 for Jetstar on firm order. Jetstar operates the 787 to Asia (Bali, Bangkok, Osaka Kansai, Phuket, Singapore and Tokyo Narita) and Honolulu from various points in Australia.

Qantas announced at its 2014/15 full year results that deferred orders for three more 787-8s that were due to be delivered to Jetstar had been converted to 787-9s for Qantas.

While there are no more firm 787 orders for Jetstar, the Qantas Group does have 15 787 remaining options, which have firm delivery dates and a fixed price, and 30 remaining 787 purchase rights, which have a fixed price but no firm delivery date, that can be exercised between now and 2024/25 that could be allocated to either Qantas or Jetstar.

AHSA JOINT MEMBERSHIP FEES IN 2016

At a recent meeting of the AHSA Inc Committee it was decided that the fee for NSW Joint members should be increased to at least cover the cost of production and distribution of our Journal "Aviation Heritage". This would counter any disquiet amongst members that they were subsidising Joint members.

Accordingly, the Joint membership fee will have to increase from \$50 to \$57 for 2016. We hope that members will understand the necessity for this, and that their joint involvement in both our organisations is valued.

Basic fees for other AHSA members will not change in 2016 i.e. individual membership within Australia will remain at \$70.

per Antony Grage, President, AHSA Inc www.ahsa.org.au

Note: The subs. for NSW members will remain \$30.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

October 2015

- 01 Zeppelin LZ 11, *Viktoria Luise* is wrecked while being returned to its hangar.
- 02 The French airship *Alsace* is shot down by German flak at Tangnon, near Rethel, France at 11 pm.
- 12 Leutnant Max Immelmann records another victory in his Fokker Monoplane. The term *Fokker Fodder* begins to be used to describe novice allied pilots.
 - English nurse, Edith Cavell, is shot by the Germans for helping British prisoners to escape from Belgium to Holland.
- 13 Five Zeppelins bomb London. During this aerial attack RFC pilot John Slessor, flying a BE 2c, becomes the first man to intercept enemy aircraft over the UK. He does not shoot down any of the Zeppelins, and the raid kills 71 and injures 128.
- 15 Orville Wright sells the Wright Company to Harry Payne Whitney, T. Frank Manville and William B. Thompson, a group of New York Investors.
- 16 Nancy Bird is born at Kew, on the north coast of NSW.
- 23 The Kalgoorlie Aeroplane is christened in Kalgoorlie by the Mayoress of Kalgoorlie, and is then taken on a demonstration flight to a height of 1000 ft by A. E. Geere.
- 27 Andrew Fisher resigns as Australia's Prime Minister due to ill health, and is succeeded by Billy Hughes.JS

AVIATION CALENDAR OF EVENTS

✈ ✈ **Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown** ✈ ✈
 OPEN Wednesdays & Saturdays 10.00 am - 4.00 pm

OCTOBER 2015 Temora Aviation Museum, Temora, NSW.
Oct 03 Fighters: Boomerang, Meteor, Spitfire
Oct 17 Trainers to Fighters Spitfire, Boomerang, Tiger Moth, Ryan
TEMORA AVIATION MUSEUM'S 3RD BIENNIAL "WARBIRDS DOWNUNDER" AIRSHOW - November 20th and 21st 2015: Both event and camping tickets can be purchased from the Warbirds Downunder website:
www.warbirdsdownunderairshow.com.au



FOR THE TRAVELLER

WELCOME TO THE RAAF MUSEUM at POINT COOK (near Melbourne): The birthplace of the Australian Flying Corps and the Royal Australian Air Force, the museum tells one of Australia's most important aviation stories, that of the second oldest air force in the world. Admission is free but visitors over 16 will need photo ID to enter the RAAF Base.



Come to our IFD Spectacular and witness the brilliance of a sight and sound feast featuring the Mustang, Kittyhawk and Roulette Solo
On Sunday, 4 October 2015 --- Starts at 1:00pm sharp.
 Be on time to avoid missing this breathtaking event.
 Take a 360° tour of all hangars at the RAAF Museum.
 Find out about becoming a volunteer.

THE RAAF MUSEUM'S BRISTOL BOXKITE REPLICA FLIES AT POINT COOK.

An historic moment in Australian military aviation was captured at the RAAF Museum. A Bristol Boxkite replica built at the RAAF Museum successfully completed flight testing on Wednesday 11 September 2013. The aircraft was flown by Air Vice Marshal Mark Skidmore (RAAF rtd). Air Vice Marshal Skidmore, a former F-111 pilot and test pilot with the RAAF's Aircraft Research and Development Unit (ARDU) at RAAF Base Edinburgh in South Australia, said the aircraft flew approximately one thousand metres and reached a top speed of about 42 miles an hour.



"It was an exhilarating and humbling experience, I am honoured and proud to follow those aviators who pioneered military aviation in this country. I now also have the honour of being the only RAAF pilot who has flown both the fastest and slowest aircraft in the Air Force. The Bristol Boxkite has a rich history in the evolution of military aviation in Australia, it was the first official military aircraft built in this country and used to train our first military pilots," Air Vice Marshal Skidmore said.

The idea for the project was that of RAAF Museum volunteers Ron Gretton and Geoff Matthews who first discussed the concept in February 2004 and spent the next two years gathering information about the Bristol Boxkite and also organising sponsors for the project. Their intent was to preserve the history of the aircraft and its connection to the RAAF's home of military aviation at Point Cook. The aircraft was completed in mid 2011 and full power runs of the engine were conducted in June 2013. Flight testing was conducted only after completing a comprehensive and stringent airworthiness process.

Developed in the UK in 1910 by the British & Colonial Aeroplane Company, the Bristol Boxkite first flew on 29 July of that year. It was 'state of the art' in its time and also one of the most successful trainers of the era.

A military Bristol Boxkite was flown in Australia for the first time on the morning of 1 March 1914, when Lieutenant Eric Harrison, an aviation instructor with the Central Flying School (CFS), took one into the air at Point Cook. The airfield was then the home of the Australian Flying Corps (AFC). The AFC, forerunner of the RAAF, initially operated two Bristol Boxkites between 1914 and 1917. The first military Bristol Boxkite to be built in Australia was constructed by CFS at Point Cook and flew its maiden flight on 10 August 1915. Lieutenant Harrison's historic flight in 1914 is however recognised as the starting point of military flying in Australia.

In recognition of this historical significance, RAAF Base Point Cook played host to the Centenary of Military Aviation in Australia event on 1 – 2 March 2014 with the Bristol Boxkite replica as a major drawcard.



The RAAF Museum's Strike/Recce Hangar is now open

Visitors can now view the F-111G 'Boneyard Wrangler', Canberra Bomber, F-4E Phantom and part of the tailplane from Lincoln bomber on display under the one roof.

These aircraft highlight some of the key developments in RAAF strike capability and the evolution to multi-role designs. The Lincoln aircraft was the last of the large, heavy payload, piston-engined bombers - replaced by the Canberra aircraft, the RAAF's first jet bomber and almost untouchable as one of the fastest and highest flying aircraft in its day. The F-4E Phantom introduced the RAAF to a new generation of strike bombers until the introduction of the F-111 which excelled for 37 years as the RAAF's most advanced 'swing wing' bomber.



Trident Mk 6 ARFF

In October 2010, the RAAF Museum acquired a Trident Mk 6 Aircraft Rescue Fire Fighting Truck (ARFF). This vehicle will join the RAAF Heritage Collection and add to a wide variety of support vehicles held by the RAAF Museum, representing another important facet of Air Force operations. The RAAF Trident fleet has recently reached the end of its planned serviceable life, which saw 14 vehicles primarily used to support flying operations at RAAF Bases Williamstown, Amberley, Richmond and Tindal. In addition to a crew of four, the Trident carries 5600 litres of water, 900 litres of foam and a variety of related aircraft rescue equipment. The Trident fleet has been replaced in RAAF Service by a fleet of 16 Truck Fire Airfield (TFA) Panther vehicles.



General Dynamics F-111C A8-125

Following the retirement of the RAAF's last F-111C aircraft in December 2010, the RAAF Museum is proud to receive F-111C A8-125 into the RAAF Heritage Collection. This aircraft is the first of the RAAF's F-111C aircraft received in 1973, and performed the final landing of the type in Australian service on 9 December 2010. Since arriving at Point Cook in May, A8-125 has been re-assembled by a team from RAAF Amberley, and is currently in storage. F-111G A8-272 is on display at Point Cook in the Strike/Recce Hangar display.

Interactive Flying Displays are presented at 1pm on Tues, Thurs and Sundays. Check location and opening hours before visiting.

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. *The next meeting will be 30 October 2015.* Contact George Palmer at ahsa_qld@hotmail.com.

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, and aviation friends for submissions to this newsletter. Contributions should be sent to the Newsletter Editor: judyrainsford@hotmail.com

in 28 AHS A (NSW)

LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

Sydney's Disappearing Aviation Museums.

Just over half a century ago, on February 18, 1965, when AHSA NSW Branch held its first AGM, the constitution and rules of the society were adopted. The objects of the branch were; "the same as those of the Aviation Historical Society of Australia, and in addition:- (i) To encourage the formation of aviation museums, and (ii) To seek official recognition from aviation authorities within Australia and its Territories." Fifty years later, with regard to object (ii) I think we are still seeking official recognition. With regard to object (i) I think we are still encouraging aviation museums in the Sydney area, but to very little effect. In fact as a Sydney based society we are at present in danger of witnessing aviation museums in the region behaving like the Cheshire Cat in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. The body slowly disappears until all that is left is an iconic grimace.

Once upon a time in the Sydney area, when AHSA NSW Branch was young, there were aviation museums, collections, airfields and air shows that provided an abundance of opportunities to the aviation enthusiast for a rewarding weekend visit. I was reminded by Peter Coates, in his *Sydney's Airports, Aerodromes and Airstrips*, in September's *Southern Skies*, that no longer is it possible to visit the Rose Bay Flying Boat Base, Schofields Aerodrome or the Hoxton Park Airstrip, because they no longer exist. The opportunity for plane spotting at RAAF Base Richmond or Bankstown Airport is also much diminished. At the end of 1968, the AHSA published the first of two guides to the location of *Museum and Preserved Aircraft in Australia*. The second edition was published in September, 1972. At that time the Sydney based weekend enthusiast might choose to visit:- The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences at Ultimo; The Camden Museum of Aviation at Camden Airport; The Marshall Airways Collection at Bankstown Airport, and by arrangement, the HMAS Nirimba Museum at Schofields Airfield. The AHSA guide also suggested that the Royal Aero Club of NSW and Chieftain Aviation, both at Bankstown Airport, were worth a visit. It was noted that various pole sitting Mustangs, Meteors, Vampires and Venoms were scattered around the Western Suburbs. By the time Lyndsey Evans published his *Yesterday's Wings, A Guide to Australasian Aviation Museums*, the Camden Museum of Aviation had moved to Narellan, and the first stage of the Powerhouse Museum had opened in Ultimo. The Marshall Airways Collection and the HMAS Nirimba Museum were no longer listed. However, Lyndsey reported the addition of two new venues:- The Hawker de Havilland Collection at Bankstown Airport and Der Adler Luftwaffe Museum at Condell Park.

There is no doubt that the frequency of air shows in an area is a major factor in generating and sustaining public interest in the history of aviation and in the support of local aviation museums. During the first three decades of the existence of AHSA NSW Branch, I attended thirteen air shows at RAAF Base Richmond and five at Schofields Airfield. During this period I enjoyed another ten air shows shared between Bankstown, Camden and Hoxton Park. Over the next two decades the frequency of air shows in the Sydney area dropped dramatically. The last major event I attended locally was the Defence Force Air Show at RAAF Base Richmond on the weekend of October 21/22, 2006. One of the factors leading to the demise of air shows in the Sydney area was perhaps their very success. The Schofields Flying Club, under the entrepreneurial leadership of its Secretary, Ian Honnery, conducted its first air show on September 26, 1976. Then followed a series of air shows at Schofields that culminated in the Schofields Flying Club and the RAAF combining to stage the Australian Bicentennial Air Show at Richmond in 1988. The Bicentennial Air Show was the largest to be held outside Europe and the USA up to that time. The expertise gained in the organisation of such a major aeronautical event was transferred to organising the biennial series of Australian International Airshows at Avalon Airport near Geelong, the first of which was held in 1992. Other factors, including costs, the closure of airfields, public liability, increased security awareness and the logistics of getting large crowds to and from locations like RAAF Base Richmond, have all played a part in the demise of air shows.

Graham Potts published his *Guide to Aviation Museums in Australia* in 1990. At the time of publication he was able to list only two museums in Sydney of interest to aviation enthusiasts. These were the Camden Museum of Aviation at Narellan, and the new Powerhouse Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences at Ultimo. The Camden Museum of Aviation has since been closed to the public for several years. Current lists of museums in NSW show that there are still two aviation museums in the

Sydney area accessible to the aviation enthusiast. These are the Powerhouse Museum at Ultimo, and the Australian Aviation Museum at Bankstown, which was born in 1994. AHSA (NSW) Inc has had a long association with, and is affiliated with both museums. Our President, Ian Debenham, was a curator at both museums, and our Society assisted the Powerhouse with aircraft acquisitions, (namely Beechcraft Queenair VH-AMB). Both museums have provided venues for Society meetings over many years and the AAMB is the custodian of the Society's treasured archives. Consequently it is of great concern that, at the time of writing of this edition of Loops & Landings, we are confronted with plans which will see the disappearance of both museums from their present locations. Relocations involve moving the Powerhouse to Parramatta, and the AAMB to Camden Airport. Could it be possible that, for a short period at least, Sydney's aviation museums will have completely disappeared?

I first read the name "Australian Aviation Museum" in connection with Bankstown in my Royal Aero Club of NSW Newsletter in the winter of 1990. The museum was part of the Club's rejuvenation plan. The Newsletter contained an architect's perspective drawing together with news that; "negotiations are well advanced for the establishment of an Australian Museum of Aviation at the Royal Aero Club. Australia's contribution to the development of the aviation industry worldwide - not to mention our participation in two world wars and the courageous exploits of our early aviators - is significant! The founding of a national repository for the artefacts and documentation which are currently scattered throughout the country - many in private ownership and consequently inaccessible - would provide a clear picture of the skills, achievements and determination which were the building blocks for the high standard of aviation in Australia today." The proposed museum development, located on Marion Street, included a new clubhouse, a 60 room motel and an air terminal for private carriers. One of the problems preventing the Club from achieving its grand plan was that it had been in and out of receivership since 1985. Its future viability was also threatened by the user pay and privatisation policies associated with the Federal Airports Corporation which commenced operation in January 1988. Finally, the winter of 1990 coincided with the, "recession Australia had to have." Sadly, in 1993, the RACNSW, together with its vision for an aviation museum, disappeared without a trace.

One of the most enjoyable meetings of AHSA (NSW) Inc was held at the Museum of Sydney on June 4, 2008. It took the form of a private viewing of the highly successful exhibition, *Flying Boats, Sydney's Golden Age of Aviation*. The curator, Matthew Holle, had taken more than two years to assemble the exhibition. He acknowledged the support, among others, of the Powerhouse Museum, the AAMB and our member Phil Dulhunty. Phil has had a long association with seaplanes, and worked tirelessly, without success, to establish a maritime aviation museum at Rose Bay in 2005. He is currently working on plans for a Catalina Memorial Museum at Rathmines.

The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, in Sydney, and the German Museum of Masterpieces of Science and Technology, in Munich, have a connection - not only in the similar objectives of each science museum, but in the early support the Deutsche Museum's aviation collection was given by Sydney's Lawrence Hargrave. Both museums are venerable; the proud traditions of the Powerhouse spanning over 135 years and those of the Deutsche Museum spanning 112 years. The Powerhouse has carried the responsibility of representing a young country to the world and of educating its citizens in the developing technologies of applied arts and science. The Deutsche Museum was founded on June 28, 1903, at a meeting of the Association of German Engineers as an initiative of Oskar von Miller, and although Europe was old, science and technology were pointing the way to the future. Unlike the Powerhouse, the Deutsche Museum has been through a century of turmoil that could have caused it to disappear completely. It still has a magnificent aviation collection at its original site on the Museumsinsel in Munich. Faced with an expanding aviation collection the Deutsche Museum opened an extension, the Schleissheim Aviation Museum, in 1992, at the historic Oberschleissheim Airfield on the outskirts of Munich. This dedicated aviation museum and workshop continues to develop. Back at the Powerhouse, development and expansion went well for 125 years. Ten years later, on September 18, 2015, it was depressing to read a headline in the Sydney Morning Herald: POWERHOUSE MOVE TO PARRAMATTA SEEN AS DESIGN FOR DISASTER.

Here's a thought. Would it be possible to rescue the aviation collections of Sydney and preserve them at an expanded National Australian Aviation Museum at Camden? It would require Federal and State finance combined with the finance already dedicated to relocating the AAMB. In this way the collections of Harold Thomas, the Powerhouse, the AAMB and the Flying Boat Museum could be presented as a truly National Aviation Museum at Camden, itself an historic airport.....**John Scott.**



AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW) Inc

ABN: 83 295 759 224

HON SECRETARY, PAUL EWOLDT : E paul.ewoldt@hotmail.com
13/40A ROSLYN GARDENS ELIZABETH BAY NSW 2011

Southern Skies

THE NEWSLETTER OF AHSA (NSW) Inc

NOVEMBER 2015 ~ Nº 500

THE AHSA NOVEMBER MEETING

will be held at the North Ryde RSL Community Club
on Wednesday 4th November at 7:45 pm.

Please note the venue. The club is located at the corner of Pittwater and Magdala Roads, North Ryde, and the meeting is in the Grand Pittwater Function Centre. There is ample free parking and visitors are most welcome. The facilities of the club are available to members and visitors for pre and post meeting refreshment and conversation.

*The meeting will feature the 33rd Annual
Arthur Butler Memorial Lecture
with guest speaker
Air Commodore Alan Clements
Commandant
Australian Defence Force Academy Canberra.
To Lead - To Excel*

Air Commandant Clements will provide a summary of his journey as an aviator, how the things learnt in aviation helped navigate his life, and how this knowledge is being used to help the youth in the Hunter / Newcastle area. He will also discuss the great privilege he had to fly the Gloster Meteor F8, its characteristics, and his respect for those who flew it in combat.

AIR COMMODORE ALAN CLEMENTS was born in Townsville, QLD on 28 Feb 1963. After graduating from high school in 1980, he undertook an apprenticeship and was subsequently employed as an electrical fitter mechanic with the Queensland Electricity Generating Board. Alan entered the Royal Australian Air Force as an aircrew cadet on 20 Aug 1985 to undertake pilot training, graduating in December 1986. He was posted to the School of Air Navigation to fly HS748 aircraft with subsequent flying tours as an instructor on CT-4 and Macchi aircraft before undertaking F/A-18 conversion in 1993. He served as an F/A-18 instructor until a posting in 1997 to Force Development as the desk officer responsible for the fighter capability.



His F/A-18 executive flying appointments include Flight Commander 77 Squadron, Executive Officer No 2 Operational Conversion Unit, and culminated with Commanding Officer 77 Squadron in 2005 and 2006.

In December 2006 Alan was promoted to Group Captain and posted as Chief of Staff Air Combat Group. In January of 2009 he was posted as Officer Commanding Number 78 Wing and responsible for Hawk 127 aircraft, fast jet aircrew training and technical specialist training for ground crew working on F/A-18, Hawk and F-111 aircraft. In September 2010 he was posted as Director Defence Aviation and Air Force Safety.

Air Commodore Clements' operational deployments include Chief of Staff of the National Command Headquarters for Operation SLIPPER in 2002, and air operations Battle Director of the Middle East area in the USAF CAOC (Al Udeid) in the first half of 2010. On promotion to Air Commodore in October of 2011 he was posted to Director General Force Structure Review.

Air Commodore Clements assumed the duties of Commandant of the Australian Defence Force Academy in December 2013.

Air Commodore Clements' hobbies include aerobatics, flying vintage aircraft, tennis and golf. He is married to Helene with two daughters, Rebecca and Daniele.

A.G. CLEMENTS
Air Commodore, Commandant ADFA

READY FOR TAKE-OFF

QANTAS DOCUMENTARY

COMING TO CHANNEL 9 ON FRIDAY 30.10.2015

Everyone is fascinated by travel and what goes on behind the scenes of an airline. So we're excited to showcase the Qantas brand by sharing some of the many amazing stories from across Qantas - from the operations, the customers and most importantly, our people.

Officially called *Ready For Take-off*, the multi-episode documentary will launch on Channel 9 at 7.30pm, Friday 30 October (AEDT) and will bring the Australian public behind the scenes of our great airline with Qantas people as the story tellers.

For the past 14 weeks, camera crews have captured more than 700 hours of footage in the air and on the ground - regionally, domestically and internationally - for our Qantas documentary.

QF
Many AHSA members may be ex-employees and have their own personal Qantas histories to reminisce through this programme.

MY GOD WHAT A WOMAN!

CELEBRATING THE 100TH BIRTHDAY AND MEMORY OF
NANCY- BIRD WALTON AO, OBE, DSTJ

Aviation Pioneer : Founder of the Australian Women Pilots' Association (AWPA)
On 16th October 2015 (Nancy's official birthday) two AHSA members attended a celebration at Darling Island Wharf, Pyrmont, to commemorate the founding of AWPA by Nancy Bird in 1950, and her efforts and inspiration to female pilots to overcome the barriers against women flying in the pilot's seat.

Nancy was the first Australian woman to USE* her commercial pilot's licence in a commercial capacity when she barnstormed the towns, and later became the pilot for the Children's Far West Health Scheme in Bourke. Later she established her own flying business in Charleville and then Cunnamulla. In the era when pilot numbers were low Nancy's books have contributed many facts to our aviation history - she knew our early pilots personally.

Guest speakers included Geoff Timms (HARS), Kevin Weeldon, AM (Luskinyre Tigers, Rutherford) and Anna Holman, Nancy's granddaughter. Nancy's vibrant personality and inspiring interaction to advance aviation in Australia and overseas provided a rousing group of anecdotes.

I sat with (C17 etc) pilots - 4 RAAF girls and 2 RAN girls - a testament to the success of Nancy's achievement s.

Hosted by Catherine Fitzsimons, AWPA's ACT/NSW State President, the evening provided a celebration in true Nancy-Bird Walton style.

JR

****Phyllis Arnott was the first in Australia to gain a Commercial Pilot's Licence but did not use it for commercial purposes - a too-common error in reporting.**

28 06 29 - ARNOTT Phyllis R Miss: Licence #330 : DHGO Math : NSW Aero Club

28 02 31 - "B" Licence # 334 - 1ST AUST FEMALE COMMERCIAL

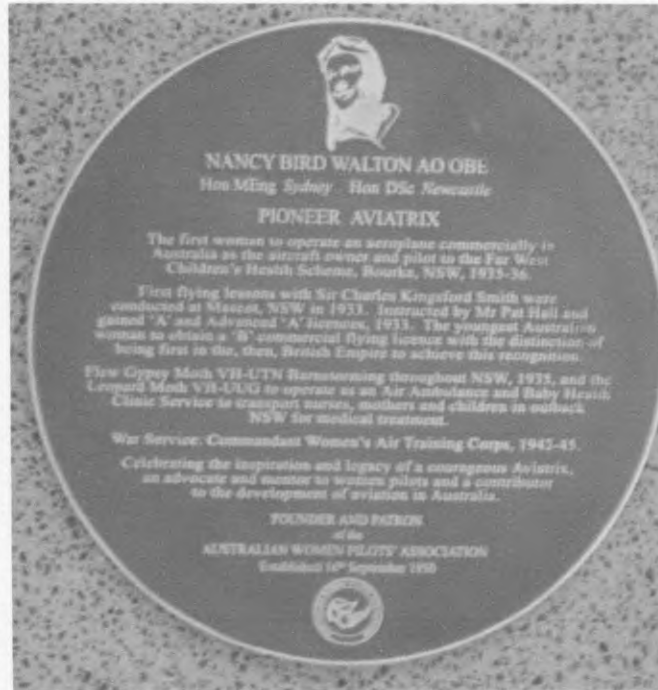
29 09 33 - de Low BIRD Nancy Miss: Licence #1150 : DHGO Math : KSAS NSW (KingsfordSmithASchool)

21 03 35 - "B" Licence # 494 - (Youngest employed Commercial pilot in British C'wealth)

The WOMEN'S AIR TRAINING CORPS IN AUSTRALIA DURING WW2



WATC General Hat Badge - Worn on the beret and forage cap by all squadrons other than Victoria



The Women's Air Training Corps was a voluntary civilian organisation which was established at Archerfield in Brisbane, Queensland on 17 July 1939 by Mrs Bell, the wife of Group Captain J.R. Bell. The group comprised a number of local girls who were attempting to train themselves at Archerfield airfield to be ready to undertake aircraft work in the event of a war. Flying Officer M.T. Bell was the Commanding Officer of the WATC from 1939 to 1941.

Commemorative plaque - Terminal T3 Mascot Sydney

When Mrs Bell moved to Melbourne when her husband was transferred she was asked by the Women's Voluntary National Register to establish a WATC group in Melbourne. In no time Mrs Bell had established 10 Squadrons each of 100 girls. Two of these squadrons trained on motor transport and one each in wireless telegraphy, stores, cooking, photography and draughting, clerical work, as aircraft hands, on aero engines, and miscellaneous duties.

More Divisions of the WATC were then formed in Tasmania, then New South Wales, South Australia and Western Australia. Mrs. Bell then went on to become the Australian Commandant of the WATC.

The WATC provided voluntary service to the RAAF as drivers, clerks, etc.

Mrs. Bell was then appointed acting Director of the WAAAF in 1941 when it was formed. She resigned from that position in 1941.

The famous Australian Aviatrice, Nancy-Bird Walton, was the New South Wales (NSW) and Australian Commandant, of the Women's Air Training Corps (WATC) from 25 July 1942 to 1 November 1944.



The Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force (WAAAF) was not approved by the Australian War Council until 9 January 1941.



WATC Shoulder Title - Worn on the uniform epaulettes



WATC Metal button - Worn on officer's khaki uniform tunic

For SALE**AIRLINES & AIRCRAFT OF THE ANSETT GROUP 1921 - 2002, EDITION 10.**

Fred Niven, a Melbourne based member of AHSA and AHSA (NSW), is the unofficial historian of the Ansett group of companies and its predecessors and has previously published a DVD on the companies' histories and their aircraft and much more.

He has now released Edition 10 of his research, a new edition of the *Ansett History USB*, which now includes 33 videos, with data and content, up-to-date as of 1 September 2015.

The 8GB USB has enabled Fred to include the videos and 15 new sections; it has over 14,500 pages and over 17,000 photographs/graphics.

The USB can be purchased for \$35 via EFT, money order, cheque or cash, or for \$37.50 via PayPal. For further details, email Fred at fniven@bigpond.net.au, giving name, mailing address and form of payment. Take a look at the website www.ansetthistory.info WB

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TL

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

November 1915 - 2015

JS

- 01 The RNAS adopts the same roundel as the RFC, and discontinues the use of the Union Jack on the fuselage sides of its aircraft.
- 03 Flt Sub-Lt H.F. Towler, RNAS, takes off in a Bristol Scout C from seaplane carrier *HMS Vindex*. This is the first British takeoff by a landplane from a ship designed as an aircraft carrier.
- 06 A Curtiss AB-2 flying boat, piloted by Lt Cmdr Henry Mustin, is catapult launched from USS South Carolina while underway. This is the first launch of an aircraft from a moving ship.
- 12 Hundreds of cheering spectators welcome over three hundred men to Sydney who have joined a march from Gilgandra to enlist in the war.
- 13 Flying a BE.2c, RNAS Ft Cmdr J.R.W. Smyth-Pigott makes a night bombing attack on a Berlin-Constantinople railway bridge over the Marista River at Kuleli Burgas. He will receive the DSO for gallantry for this action.
- 18 The German navy *Schutte-Lanz Airship SL.6 (D1)*, explodes while airborne killing all on board.
- 22 The building of a Caudron type aeroplane is completed in Brisbane by the Queensland Volunteer Flying Civilians organisation.
- 27 The Federal Government decrees that no males of military age may leave Australia without a passport.

**ON THIS DAY IN AIR FORCE HISTORY: 1944/10/22 22/10/1943
LANCASTER FLEW UNDER HARBOUR BRIDGE**

On this day, Lancaster B111 ED930 ("Q for Queenie"), with the RAAF tail number A66-1, made an unauthorised flight under the Sydney Harbour Bridge while on a public relations tour. Originally sent to Australia as a prototype for local production (which did not eventuate), the aircraft was used after its arrival in June 1943 to promote sales of war savings bonds around Australia. "Queenie" arrived at Richmond on 20 October in preparation for carrying out a series of exhibition flights over Sydney. During one of these sorties the crew, captained by Flight Lieutenant Peter Isaacson, decided to 'buzz' the building housing the headquarters of RAAF Eastern Area at Edgecliff, on Double Bay, before taking A66-1 beneath the Harbour Bridge-in defiance of a 1931 regulation banning such flights. The Lancaster was not the first aircraft (nor even the last) to break this prohibition, but it was the largest.

PC From RAAF Facebook page

Long Island, N.Y., November 2, 1929—

Twenty-six women fliers gathered over tea in a noisy hangar to organize the Ninety-Nines, an international women pilots' organization. After briefly considering names such as the Gadflies and Bird Women, the group adopted first president Amelia Earhart's proposal to name the club after the total number of charter members, which ultimately climbed to 99. Open to any woman with a pilot's license, the Ninety-Nines assisted female fliers in "aeronautical research, air racing events, acquisition of aerial experience, maintenance of an economic status in the aviation industry, [and] administering through the air in times of emergency...." Among the Ninety-Nines' early special interests were "airmarking the skyways like the highways" by painting identifying markers on the roofs of hundreds of buildings, and the Amelia Earhart Scholarship program, which supported women's place in aviation.



AWPA WOMEN HAVE PAINTED THE COMPASS MARKER ON THE HARDSTAND AT DARWIN NT AS WELL AS OTHER AIRPORTS.

SYDNEY AIRPORT January 1971 - WHERE ARE THEY NOW ?



A Qantas Boeing 707 waits for a Pan Am 707 to land before moving out to take off. This 707 carries the US number N7099. It was leased as a cargo carrier. On this day, the 11th of January 1971, it was heading to Melbourne. Its colour scheme differed from that of other Qantas 707s, the underside being painted grey. It had only entered cargo service a few days earlier. Its lease with Qantas ended in October 1971. It was broken up in Amsterdam in September 1993 after major damage was found in the wing - but the nose section was retained and sunk in a lake near Tiel in The Netherlands as a dive wreck.

THE SECRET FUEL THAT MADE THE SPITFIRE SUPREME

No one questions the valor of the RAF pilots & crews who held off Hitler's *Luftwaffe*. But they had a secret edge, not available to the Germans: 100 octane aviation gasoline, produced by a new catalytic cracking process which improved the performance of their Spitfires & Hurricanes. British refineries could not produce this secret fuel, and it was purchased almost entirely from the United States. The primary facility which produced this fuel was the ESSO refinery at Baytown, Texas. Logisticians delivering the goods are indispensable & unsung heroes of war.

A previously untold story has emerged of how, through a "miracle" chemical breakthrough, Spitfire and Hurricane fighters gained the edge over German fighters to win the Battle of Britain. An American scientist and author has claimed that the famed pair of war-winning aeroplanes gained superior altitude, manoeuvrability and rate of climb by a revolutionary high-octane fuel supplied to Britain by the USA just in time for the battle.

Books, documentaries, and movies have chronicled the brilliant contribution of UK designers and engineers behind the legendary fighter planes that won the Battle of Britain, preventing invasion of the British Isles.

The courage and sacrifice of RAF pilots who flew the aircraft is rightly celebrated and their bravery has become an inspirational chapter of the British national story. What has not been known until now, however, is the story of the revolutionary aviation fuel supplied to the RAF by an American company, using a process invented by a Frenchman, without which Spitfires and Hurricanes might not have achieved crucial dominance over the *Luftwaffe*.

The Royal Society of Chemistry read the claims about Eugene Houdry, and his process at the Sun Oil Company, in a paper written originally for the journal *Invention and Technology* by American science writer Tim Palucka. The introduction to the paper by Palucka says of Houdry: "His miraculous catalyst

turned nearly worthless sludge into precious high-octane gasoline and helped the Allies to win World War II." He continued: "That process would make a crucial difference in mid-1940 when the Royal Air Force started filling its Spitfires and Hurricanes with the 100-octane gasoline imported from the United States instead of the 87-octane gasoline it had formerly used."

The RSC is inviting experts and the public to challenge the new claim and if it remains intact then the society will send the report to aviation and military historians to mark the newly-discovered contribution of chemists to victory in one of the key battles. Eugene Houdry, born in France, developed, after settling in the USA, one of the earliest catalysts to convert useless crude oil into high octane fuel. He revealed the "cracking" process at a Chicago chemicals conference in 1938. The 100-octane fuel that resulted from the Houdry Process increased the Spitfire's speed by 25 mph at sea level, by 34 mph at 10,000 feet. This extra speed gave the British fighters in the summer of 1940 the edge over the *Luftwaffe* above the English Channel and in the skies of London. South-east German invasion was abandoned and Hitler turned eastwards, allowing the UK armed forces time to regroup and to revive. "*Luftwaffe* pilots couldn't believe they were facing the same planes they had fought successfully over France a few months before. The planes were the same but the fuel wasn't," said Palucka.

Tim Palucka says that in the 1943 book 'The Amazing Petroleum Industry', V A Kalichevsky of the Socony-Vacuum Oil Company explained what high-octane gasoline meant to Britain. Kalichevsky wrote: "It is an established fact that a difference of only 13 points in octane number made possible the defeat of the *Luftwaffe* by the RAF in the fall of 1940. This difference, slight as it seems, is sufficient to give a plane the vital edge in altitude, rate of climb and manoeuvrability that spells the difference between defeat and victory.

→→ Engineers/fuel members may like to comment...

~ AVIATION CALENDAR OF EVENTS ~

→→ Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown →→
OPEN Wednesdays & Saturdays 10.00 am - 4.00 pm

NOVEMBER 2015

TEMORA AVIATION MUSEUM'S 3RD BIENNIAL "WARBIRDS DOWNUNDER" AIRSHOW - November 20th and 21st 2015: Both event and camping tickets can be purchased from the Warbirds Downunder website:

www.warbirdsdownunderairshow.com.au

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. *The next meeting will be 27 November 2015.* Contact George Palmer at ahsa_qld@hotmail.com.

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 aviation friends for submissions to this newsletter. Contributions should be sent to the Newsletter Editor: judyrainsford@hotmail.com *in 29 AHSa (NSW)*

LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

Mr. Scott Told Us, "Be Good Historians And Record History-Accurately".

With this issue, the newsletter of AHSA (NSW) Inc, *Southern Skies*, has reached No 500. As far as I can discover, the first NSW Branch newsletter was mailed out to members in September 1969. The newsletter commenced: "The purpose of this newsletter is to inform members about the activities of the NSW Branch; about Branch Members and to pass on points of interest to Branch Members." It continued: "At our last meeting held on Thursday, September 4th, we were given a lecture on *How to be a Good Historian and Record History - Accurately*, given by Mr G. Scott, a history writer. The lecture was most interesting and at times humorous. Mr Scott preceded his lecture with a short reminiscence of Essendon Aerodrome during the twenties, where he worked for a time with the Larkin Company." During 1969, the AHSA Journal, (now titled *Aviation Heritage*), was published in Sydney and was the responsibility of members who were then also joint members of AHSA NSW Branch. At the time Neville Parnell was the Journal Editor. No doubt the membership was inspired by the lecture given by Mr Scott. Many of those early members have continued, over the last half century, to enhance the record of Australia's aviation history through their published research. *Loops and Landings* is a beneficiary of that research, but there has been no formal acknowledgement. I would like to take this opportunity to personally acknowledge and record my thanks to:- Eric Allen, Greg Banfield, Trevor Boughton, David Eyre, Ron Gibson, Roger McDonald, Neville Parnell and Peter Ricketts.

The members of AHSA, and others who, over the past half century, have contributed to the the history of Australian aviation in the pages of *Aviation Heritage*, also deserve our everlasting gratitude. Vol 1, No 1, of the AHSA Journal was dated January, 1960. The Organising Committee's introduction to the Journal commenced: "With this issue of the Journal we make our first contribution to the recording of Australia's aviation history. Aviation, (we are considering balloons in that term), in Australia is over one hundred years old but the main progress in the field has occurred almost entirely in the span of the last fifty years. Much has happened in the half-century and much has been recorded in many places. But the sad fact is that most of the information is not readily available. Usually the pursuit of some obscure item requires endless patience before even the reference, let alone the fact itself, can be run to earth." Members of the 1960 Organising Committee have witnessed, no doubt with keen anticipation, the milestones reached in the development of the internet as the 20th century came to a close. The web-based search engines introduced in the 21st century have had a further profound effect on the ability to research past events. However, what was achieved without the aid of the world wide web is quite outstanding. In August 1988, the then Minister for Transport and Communications Support, Peter Morris, wrote in his Foreword to *Flypast*: "More than 30 years of painstaking research, involving interviews and myriad files, some in unexpected places, have been devoted to *Flypast*, Australia's first comprehensive reference book on the Australian aviation industry." The authors, Neville Parnell and Trevor Boughton, both pioneering members of AHSA, created a miracle of publication in the time before the advent of the information superhighway. Further tribute was paid to the founding members of AHSA by Mark Clayton during the inaugural Australian Aviation Museums Conference at the NSW State Library in November, 1989. "The organisation which has had the greatest impact in this country, and which represented the harbinger of change, was the Aviation Historical Society of Australia. This non-profit enthusiast organisation was founded in 1959, just three years after its American counterpart. While initially at least it was never concerned with preserving aircraft it did succeed in generating and focusing the interest which led eventually to the formation of our first aviation museums."

Before AHSA was founded there were many individuals who, during the first decades of the 20th century, were inspirational, and who set the scene for the early recording of Australia's aviation history and the preservation of its heritage. Foremost was Lawrence Hargrave, who in 1901, was in communication with the Curator of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Richard Baker. Hargrave was offering his collection of models and research apparatus to the museum. One of Baker's reasons for his refusal was that the museum already had an exhibit of Hargrave's earlier models. Were these earlier Hargrave models the first aviation artefacts, apart from boomerangs, to be preserved in

museums? The preservation of our military aviation heritage was part of the overall vision of Charles Bean during the Great War. The establishment of the Australian War Records Section during the war, and the post war creation of the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, form part of the Bean legacy. Oswald Watt was another individual who was alert to the importance of preserving our aviation heritage. At the time of his death in May, 1921, he was the driving force behind a plan to build a memorial to commemorate the achievements of both Lawrence Hargrave and the crew of the Vickers Vimy, G-EAOU. In his will, Oswald Watt left £500 to The Australian Aero Club for the purpose of honouring high achievement in Australian aviation on an annual basis. This endowment established what in effect is the first Australian aviation hall of fame. When twelve years old Austin Byrne watched Maurice Guillaux fly over his home in 1914, a passion for aviation was sparked. He was in Brisbane in 1928 to see the *Southern Cross* land after crossing the Pacific. Then followed a long life dedicated to the preservation of Australia's aviation heritage. Ernie Crome founded *The Air mail Society of NSW* in May 1932, and has left us a priceless record of pioneering flights through aerophilately and in related publications. Just a century ago, the preservation of Australian aviation heritage received a double baby bonus. First born was Nancy Bird on October 16, 1915, followed by Nelson Eustis on October 21. Both individuals commenced their work in raising awareness of Australia's contribution to the progress of aviation during the 1930s. Nelson Eustis published the first edition of *The Australian Airmail Catalogue* in October 1937. He founded *The Australian Airmail Society* in October 1968 and has several publications relating to aviation history to his credit. We treasure Nancy Bird through her achievements, her advocacy of aviation history, and her honorary life membership of our society.

It is satisfying, in this No 500 issue, to report that Charles Ulm, the 2015 nominee of AHSA (NSW) Inc, was inducted into the Australian Aviation Hall of Fame at a most successful dinner and ceremony held at Wagga Wagga on September 19. Charles Ulm's son John, grandsons Charles and Ben, and great granddaughter Stella, were guests at the function. Stella was named for her great grandfather's Airspeed Envoy, (VH-UXY), *Stella Australis*. Since it was officially launched on August 24, 2010, the AAHOF has conducted four annual induction ceremonies, commencing in 2012. The inaugural inductee was Lawrence Hargrave. Since then there have been thirty two individuals, and four organisations, inducted into the AAHOF, as well as a special recognition of the Indigenous Peoples of Australia for the design and practical use of the aerofoil - the Boomerang. AHSA (NSW) Inc is proud to have 2014 AAHOF inductee Senja Robey BEM as a member. One of the goals of the AAHOF was to establish a "virtual" hall of fame by mid 2012, followed by a "physical" hall of fame by 2017. The "virtual" hall of fame, now at <www.aahof.com.au>, is already a valuable resource. It is noted that the AAHOF Board of Directors includes a Charles Sturt University Nominee which ensures continuing academic support. The University also provides the venue for the annual dinner and induction ceremony. There is a paragraph on the AAHOF web site which is worth quoting: "Every day a special part of Australia's aviation heritage passes on with the people who were involved in it. Like all history, unless those who remain tell the stories of those before, those stories are lost forever".

The first decade and a half of the 21st century has been fruitful with opportunities to promote Australian aviation history and heritage. Commencing with December 17, 2003, the centenary of powered flight, AHSA (NSW) Inc has been an active participant in commemorating the centenaries of Australian heavier-than-air flight. How our Airmail Centenary Commemoration team, led by Tom Lockley, took on its impossible task, and achieved miracles, will be long remembered. It is a reminder that significant national anniversaries lie ahead in the not too distant future. We are currently experiencing advances in the historical record of Australia's early military aviation as a result of the Anzac Centenary commemorations. *Southern Skies* has reported these achievements over the past two years including in Issue No 499; the unveiling of a new memorial and hiking trail in memory of Bert Hinkler at Mt Pratomagno in Tuscany. There are individuals and committees already working to plan celebrations for two approaching national anniversaries. These are the Vickers Vimy's 100th, and Captain Cook's 250th. For Sydney there is a unique coincidence. The centenary of the Vimy's landing on the north shore of Botany Bay is February 14, 2020, while Captain Cook's 250th occurs on the southern shore on April 29, 2020. Standing on the north shore, as a monument to aviation, is the Sydney (Kingsford Smith) Airport. From the Captain Cook monument on the southern shore you can see the Sydney Airport control tower. NASA named its 5th shuttle *Endeavour*, and it carried a memento of Cook into space on its maiden flight. There has to be a good historian somewhere who can link these anniversaries. Where is Mr Scott when you need him? Mr G. Scott that is!. **John Scott**



AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW) Inc

ABN: 83 295 759 224

HON SECRETARY, PAUL EWOLDT : E paul.ewoldt@hotmail.com
13/40A ROSLYN GARDENS RUSHCUTTERS BAY NSW 2011

Southern Skies

THE NEWSLETTER OF AHS A (NSW) Inc

FEBRUARY 2016 ~ No 502

THE AHS A FEBRUARY MEETING will be held at the Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown on Wednesday 3rd February commencing at 7.30 pm. Please note the venue.

The museum is located at the end of Starkie Drive, Bankstown Airport, and there is ample free parking. Visitors are most welcome. Supper will be available following the meeting.

HAPPY NEW YEAR: THE FEBRUARY SPEAKER, DR PETER HOBBS, from the University of Sydney will introduce our 2016 program. His talk entitled "SPIN DOCTOR FRANK COTTON AND THE AUSTRALIAN ANTI-G SUIT 1947 -1950" will ensure a most instructive meeting.



BA BSc Melbourne MMedicalHum PhD Sydney -
Research Associate

Peter's Research interests include:
History of Australasian science, technology and medicine;
Animals and technologies as historical actors;
Military medicine and defence science and
Aviation safety.

"It may, unfortunately, be safely assumed that air accidents will increase in number proportionately to the increase in hours flown. This may be accepted as being so until the time arrives when safety in flight is less dependent on the frailty not of aeroplanes, but of the human element directing them it is probable that not less than 80% of them have been caused by bad flying rather than by bad aeroplanes."

Horace Brinsmead, 3 February 1930

Having been awarded a Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA) for commencement in 2016, Peter is exploring a new direction in aviation safety and crash investigations, including its role in shaping the historical geography of 'airspace' in twentieth-century Australia.

His current project is "Black box re-order: technology, air safety and Australian airspace, 1938-68". Commencing in mid-2016, the DECRA project will focus on Australian systems of aviation safety in civil and military settings over three critical decades. Ending with the final major airliner crash in Australia, this work will explore both human-technology interactions and the ways in which safety systems created a novel twentieth-century environment: airspace.

SOLO FLIGHT UK - SYDNEY : TRACEY CURTIS-TAYLOR

British pilot Tracey Curtis-Taylor landed at Sydney on 9th January 2016 after completing her 21 000km solo flight from Farnborough to Sydney in a 1943 Boeing Stearman biplane.



Inspired by pioneer woman pilot Amy Johnston's 1930 solo flight from the UK to Australia, Tracey departed Farnborough near London on October 1 2015, and visited 23 countries enroute. The flight achieved her personal challenge to fly her Boeing Stearman *Spirit of Artemis* around the world to commemorate the achievements of early women pilots, and to inspire women to achieve their goals.

Sponsored by Boeing, the president of Boeing Australia and South Pacific, Maureen Dougherty, congratulated Tracey: "Tracey's flight is a wonderful reminder of how far aviation has advanced and the role women have played since those early days of flight." Sydney members of the Australian Women Pilots' Association also welcomed Tracey on her arrival at Mascot.

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE THE AHS A (NSW) INC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

As you are aware, Ian Debenham will be standing down as President of our society at the AHS A's AGM in March. As our committed and able President for so many years members are requested to consider the election of a new President.

AHS A JOINT MEMBERSHIP FEES IN 2016

At a recent meeting of the AHS A Inc Committee it was decided that the fee for NSW Joint members should be increased to at least cover the cost of production and distribution of our Journal "Aviation Heritage". This would counter any disquiet amongst members that they were subsidising Joint members.

Accordingly, the **Joint membership fee** will have to increase from \$50 to \$57 for 2016. We hope that members will understand the necessity for this, and that their joint involvement in both our organisations is valued.

Basic fees for other AHS A members will not change in 2016 i.e. individual membership within Australia will remain at \$70.

per Antony Grage, President, AHS A Inc

www.ahsa.org.au

To avoid confusion please note: The subs. for NSW members will remain \$30.

DC-3 ENTERS NINTH DECADE

December 22, 2015 by australianaviation.com.au

The Douglas DC-3 is still going strong 80 years after its first flight took place on December 17 1935. The first DC-3s were built for American Airlines and featured either eight sleeper berths (called the Douglas Sleeper Transport) or a standard configuration of 21 seats.

The DC-3/C-47 was powered by two R-1830 Pratt & Whitney engines producing 1,200 brake horsepower at takeoff and 1,050 maximum continuous bhp.

The DC-3 proved one of aviation's most successful programs, with about 16,000 aircraft built between 1935 and 1946 – comprising 600 or so civil DC-3s, over 10,000 military C-47 Skytrain/Dakota variants plus aircraft licence-built in Russia and Japan. The C-47 provided the bulk of US and allied nations' airlift capabilities in WW2, while after the war surplus C-47s were converted into DC-3 airliners in their thousands and they would play a central role in the development of the postwar airline industry across the world.

The Air Nostalgia DC-3 was built as a C-47 for the US Army Air Force (serial 44-76552) before it headed to Australia to join the Royal Australian Air Force (as A65-91). After its service with the RAAF, the aircraft found a home with various Australian airlines and featured in an ABC television documentary, before being sold to Air Nostalgia in 1996.

With a completely restored and modernised interior, VH-TMQ has 28 seats and operates charter flights from Essendon. *Australian Aviation* Traffic columnist Gordon Reid captured some images of Air Nostalgia's DC-3 VH-TMQ at Essendon Airport on December 17 2015, 80 years to the day since the DC-3's first flight.



Air Nostalgia DC-3 VH-TMQ at Essendon Airport on December 17 2015. VH-TMQ previously flew with the RAAF. The DC-3 is based at Essendon Airport. (Gordon Reid)

Reminiscences

* I have 3,500 hours in the airplane and loved every minute of it. By the way the pilot is landing with the tail too high. The aircraft lands best in a tail low attitude but not in a three point attitude. Ray S

* The photos were taken during take-off, not landing. The flaps are retracted for take-off. Jim D

* I flew the 3 for about 4000 hrs between 1957 and 1965. ...All the ones I flew had the Wright 1820s and my ears are still ringing...That bird got us in and out of a lot of places in all weather conditions. Long live the mighty 3.... John C

* I have worked on every part of this great aircraft. After getting my airframe and power plant certificate I joined North Central Airlines who had a fleet of DC-3s..The fabric control surfaces required frequent refurbishing and the Wright 1820 engines needed cylinder(jug) changes. The lower cylinders were messy to change due to the oil. .The aircraft had a locking tail wheel for flight. On the ground it could be unlocked for taxing or towing. If you forgot to unlock it you could shear the lock pin, nasty job to change. Robert K L

* Was this the first aircraft with an aluminium skin ? My father has some beaut photos of the DC3/Dakota in Papua New Guinea some 74 years ago where they both were fighting the Japanese – how good was/is this aircraft ! Peter deJ

HOBART AIRPORT MASTERPLAN APPROVED

January 6, 2016 by australianaviation.com.au



Jetstar A320 at Hobart Airport. (Rob Finlayson)

Minister for Infrastructure, Warren Truss, approved the latest masterplan for Hobart Airport before Christmas. Central to the plan, under which the airport maps out how it will address forecast passenger growth over the next 20 years, is the planned extension of the airport's runway (12/30) to 2,751 metres.

"Approval of this plan allows for the construction of the proposed 500 metre runway extension, to which the Australian Government is contributing \$38 million," Minister Truss said in a December 23 statement.

"The runway extension will further build on Hobart and Australia's ability to support our Antarctic operations. It will also provide new opportunities for direct international flights to South-East Asia, creating opportunities for growth of both tourism and freight."

Construction of the runway extension has a total project cost of \$40 million and also involves the relocation of nav aids, the construction of jet blast walls, and the extension of the airport's HIAL (high intensity aviation lighting) with associated road works.

Final go-ahead is subject to approving a Major Development Plan for the project, currently undergoing community consultation. The airport recently began work on a \$25 million terminal redevelopment project. Hobart Airport accommodated 2.18 million passengers in 2015, forecast to grow to 2.6 million by 2020.

SABRE AT MACH 1

Vinyl LP recording of First RAAF Sabre Breaking the Sound Barrier.
Worth a listen - brings back memories.....

<http://aviationspottersonline.com/boom-first-raaf-sabre-recording-sonic-boom/>

December 5, 2015 • Posted under: [Military](#), [Warbirds](#) by [Leigh Atkinson](#)
Tags: [Avalon](#), [CA-26](#), [CAC Sabre](#), [prototype](#), [RAAF](#), [Sabre](#), [Sound barrier](#)



The Vinyl LP recording via the link is a pretty amazing piece of Aussie aviation history of the First RAAF Sabre Breaking the Sound Barrier.

A94-101, the first CAC Sabre, the prototype, is pushed through the sound barrier in a dive as the Pilot, Flight Lieutenant W Scott, chats casually with Geelong Radio station 3GL announcer Bill Acfield on the ground.

It was recorded on the 21st of August 1953 not even one month after the Sabre's first ever flight (back on the 3rd August) at Avalon airfield near Geelong, Victoria, Australia. The recording was transmitted live and even played by other radio stations and was released on vinyl and sold as a fund raiser for the hospital in Geelong, from where this recording has been taken.

The recording is of the first "official" flight of the prototype aircraft and includes the sounds of the sonic booms as the sound reaches the ground where Bill Acfield stands with his recording equipment, and the casual banter between the radio announcer and the pilot as he hurtles toward the ground exceeding 700mph in the process.

"I came across the recording a number of years ago. Having grown up in Geelong at a time when the RAAF's F/A-18 Hornets were being assembled and flight tested across the bay at Avalon, it was an amazing connection for me, my hometown radio station and hospital. It also gave me a greater understanding of the importance of Avalon to our country's aviation history."

A94-101 was the first aircraft to break the sound barrier in the southern hemisphere (on a flight prior to this recording) and now resides at RAAF Point Cook Museum.

Comment: Bill Acfield was my father, and often spoke to me about the Breaking of the Sound Barrier Broadcast and other occasions about the same time when Bill Scott got into trouble for frightening the residents of the SW suburbs of Melbourne with sonic booms. He told me

that the program was only ever broadcast twice: once on that great day in 1953 and again in the mid 1970's. Dad was working for the ABC on 3LO when he heard that Bill Scott had died (I believe in Malasia while working for QANTAS). He brought his copy of the broadcast into work the following night and played it as a tribute to Bill. Another minor point of interest is the fact that I ended my nearly 40 year career as an Air Traffic Controller in the position of Tower Manager of Essendon and Avalon. **Bill Acfield** did most of the PA during air displays at Avalon during the 1950's as he was local and an ex Spitfire pilot. He told me the most spectacular thing he ever saw at Avalon was during the first public unveiling of the **Canberra bomber** which just whistled overhead a few times and was quite an anticlimax. One of the test pilots (I don't know if it was Bill Scott) and an engineer jumped into a **Lincoln** and performed a display the like of which had not been seen before from a low flying 4 engine bomber. This included a stall turn at low level with the engineer operating the throttles in pairs to aid the rudders. Authority frowned somewhat and some disciplinary action was taken..... Richard Acfield 17.12.15

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

FEBRUARY 1916 - 2016

JS

02 German Navy Zeppelin LZ 54 is shot down by British aircraft over the North Sea, following a raid on England.

06 The airline Deutsche Luft Reederei flies its first freight service between Berlin and Weimar.

Max Immelmann is in action for the first time flying a three gun Fokker E.IV.

07 The RFC forms its first single seat fighter squadron - No 24 - flying Airco DH-2s.

11 The Premier's Office, NSW, announces that His Excellency the Governor is pleased to approve the establishment of a School of Aviation at Richmond NSW.

14 Almost 15,000 recruits join a mutiny at Liverpool NSW over an unacceptably harsh training regime. One soldier is shot dead.

16 Field Marshal Lord French assumes control of London's defences against air attack.

18 Italian Caproni bombers make their first air raid on Serbia, attacking key installations in Ljubljana.

19 The Austrian physicist, Ernst Mach, dies aged 77 at Haar near Munich. He was an early researcher into the connection between aerodynamics and the speed of sound.

21 The battle of Verdun begins on the Western Front. This battle sees the first major use of large formations of fighter planes.

26 French ace Jean Navarre claims his 4th & 5th victories over the Verdun battlefield.

AUSTRALIA JOINS ANTARCTICA'S HEAVY JET CLUB AT LAST

by Ben Sandilands



A regular US C-17A takes off from sea ice over five US ski-equipped C-130s at McMurdo Sound.

It's taken an eternity as far as Antarctic exploration is concerned, but Australia has joined the south polar continent's heavy jet club with a cargo delivery flight from Hobart to its Wilkins Blue Ice Runway using an RAAF C-17.

Wilkins started very limited wheeled jet operations in January 2008 using an Airbus A319 flown under contract by Skytraders.

However this first of a series of trial missions using the C-17 means large and heavy consignments that would have otherwise been sent by sea, once or twice a year, can be turned around within a day.

It's an advantage long known and exploited by other Antarctic powers including the US, NZ, UK, USSR, and modern day CIS, Argentina, South Africa and Norway using a variety of graded ice runways for wheeled aircraft, groomed skiways for ski equipped flights, and at times, hard frozen sea ice fields suitable for all modern and past jets and piston propelled aircraft mainly at McMurdo Sound.

Extensive use of the Russian IL-76 four-engined high wing jet is made by western adventure travel companies, mainly between Chile and a blue ice runway on the Union Glacier, which can be used as a staging strip for small turbo-prop flights supporting ski tours to the south pole and climbing trips in Vinson Massif area.

The first civilian passenger airliner flight to an airstrip on the Antarctic continent may have been made in 1957 when a Pan American Stratocruiser, a double deck four-engined piston propeller airliner, flew the Christchurch-McMurdo route. (There could have been an Argentine DC-4 before then, the historical details being elusive.)

Despite its comparatively small size, the Australian A319 has performed many missions outside its original concept, including crucial flights for medical emergencies as far afield as McMurdo as well as logistics support to or through the US base for other Antarctic treaty nations.

Together with a second A319 it has been a popular charter choice for supplementary election campaign

flights for the Canberra gallery, for touring royalty, and on a regular basis, the shuffling of detainees between Christmas Island, Nauru and Manus Island.

It would only take a small number of C-17A Antarctic flights to render the A319s a minor contributor to Australia's Antarctic lift.

The Wilkins Blue Ice Runway is, when maintained, capable of taking any modern airliner or jet freighter in visual conditions, just like various other graded or bare ice strips in the seventh continent. It has on occasions been made unavailable because of surface melting at the height of the polar 'summer'. The RAAF flight arrived at Wilkins when it was clear, with low winds, and -10C.

Air services to the Casey station area began in the later 1950s, when modified Neptune bombers served the US base at Wilkes. Wilkes was ceded to Australia in 1959 and used as a base until the nearby station at Casey was established in 1964.

The Neptunes were a hybrid piston and jet engined aircraft with a set of both attached to the wings, and assisted in Antarctic operations by retractable skis augmenting the wheeled undercarriage and disposable JATO or jet assisted bottles that acted like booster rockets to get the complete assembly off the rather scrappy ice runway used at Wilkes.

While the runway would have been more convenient to today's Casey station than the Wilkins Blue Ice strip, it was severely affected by the heavy snowfalls associated with its proximity to the sea, a point made abundantly obvious to this reporter and an assessment party led by Australia's first science and environment minister, Senator James Webster, when we arrived at nearby Lanyon Junction in a US Coast Guard ski equipped C-130 Hercules from McMurdo Sound in 1979.

That trip was supposed to lead to the prompt selection of a runway that could support the Australian Antarctic program through non-stop flights from Hobart or Melbourne, or perhaps Perth.

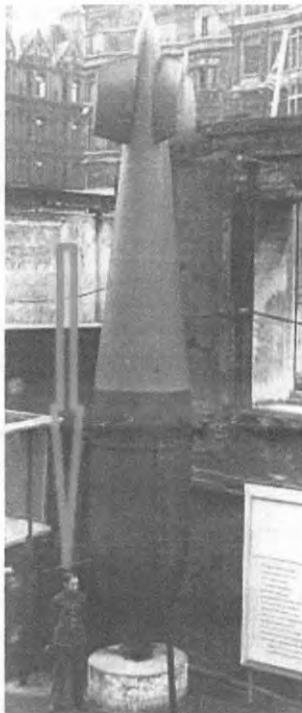
It took 29 years to see the Wilkins strip become a jet capable reality, and as of now, nearly 37 years later to take its first large jet.

On 9 November 1961, the 'Bluebird' one of the special Antarctica capable Neptunes, crashed shortly after taking off from Wilkes, killing five of the nine people on board. Australia's Antarctic Division has done a fine job in recognising that otherwise forgotten air disaster, although if you visit the site, it may bring tears to your eyes.

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RAF STATION GATE DECORATION FOR 15 YEARS

WHEN THE RAF DISCOVERED THAT A 15 YEAR-OLD 'GATE GUARD'
GRAND SLAM BOMB --- WAS ACTUALLY LIVE !!!!



Vintage News
Strangeness, 6 November 2015

Apparently when Lincolnshire County Council were widening the road past RAF Scampton's main gate in about 1958, the 'gate guards' there had to be moved to make way for the new carriageway. Scampton was the WWII home of 617 Sqn, and said "gate guards" were a Lancaster..... and a *Grand Slam* bomb.

When they went to lift the *Grand Slam*, thought for years to be just an empty casing, with a RAF 8 Ton Coles Crane, it wouldn't

budge. "Oh, it must be filled with concrete" they said. Then somebody had a horrible thought No!..... Couldn't be? ... Not after all these years out here open to the public to climb over and be photographed sitting astride! Could it? Then everyone raced off to get the Station ARMO. He carefully scraped off many layers of paint and gingerly unscrewed the base plate.

Yes, you guessed it, live 1944 explosive filling! The beast was very gently lifted onto a RAF 'Queen Mary' low loader, using a much larger civvy crane (I often wonder what, if anything, they told the crane driver), then driven slowly under massive police escort to the coastal experimental range at Shoeburyness. There it was rigged for demolition, and when it 'high ordered', it proved in no uncertain terms to anyone within a ten mile radius that the filling was still very much alive!

Exhaustive investigations then took place, but nobody could find the long-gone 1944, 1945 or 1946 records which might have shown how a live 22,000 lb bomb became a gate guard for nearly the next decade and a half. Some safety distance calculations were done, however, about the effect of a Grand Slam detonating at ground level in the open. Apart from the entire RAF Station, most of the northern part of the City of Lincoln, including Lincoln Cathedral, which dates back to 1250, would have been flattened.

The *Grand Slam* was a 22,000 lb (10,000 kg) earthquake bomb used by RAF Bomber Command against strategic targets during the Second World War. It was the most powerful non-atomic bomb used in the war.

Known officially as *the Bomb, Medium Capacity, 22,000 lb*, it was a scaled-up version of the Tallboy bomb and closer to the original size that the bombs' inventor, Barnes Wallis, had envisaged when he first developed his earthquake bomb idea. It was also nicknamed "Ten ton Tess".

When the success [of the Tallboy bomb] was proved, Wallis designed a yet more powerful weapon..... 'This 22,000 lb. bomb did not reach us before the spring of 1945, when it was used with great effect against viaducts or railways leading to the Ruhr and also against several U-boat shelters. If it had been necessary, it would have been used against underground factories, and preparations for attacking some of these were well advanced when the war ended.' — Sir Arthur Travers Harris (1947).

On 18 July 1943, work started on a larger version of the Tallboy bomb, which became the Grand Slam. As with the original Tallboy, the Grand Slam's fins generated a stabilizing spin and the bomb had a thicker case than a conventional bomb, which allowed deeper penetration. After the hot molten Torpex was poured into the casing, the explosive took a month to cool and set. Like the Tallboy, and because of the low rate of production and consequent high value of each bomb, aircrews were told to land with their unused bombs on board rather than jettison them into the sea if a sortie was aborted.

After release from the Avro Lancaster B.Mk 1 (Special) bomber, the Grand Slam would reach near-supersonic speed, approaching 1,049 ft/s (320 m/s), 715 mph (1150 km/h). When it hit, it would penetrate deep underground before detonating. The resulting explosion could cause the formation of a camouflet (cavern) and shift the ground to undermine a target's foundation.

Unlike Tallboy, Grand Slam was originally designed to penetrate concrete roofs. Consequently, it was more effective against hardened targets than any existing bomb. The first Grand Slam was tested at the Ashley Walk Range in the New Forest, on 13 March 1945. By the end of the war, 42 Grand Slams had been dropped on active service.

Comment: Of course, without the detonator, it wouldn't go off anyway.

I'll bet the demolition people had to use a LOT of explosive to trigger it; anything designed NOT to go off before penetrating through concrete and deep into the earth wouldn't be much of a problem I feel.

I can't speak for the stability of TORPEX over 15 years, though the fact that it was transported on a lowloader through the UK would suggest that no one was overly worried.

Bob Livingstone

→→ Australian Aviation Museum Bankstown →→
OPEN Wednesdays & Saturdays 10.00 am - 4.00 pm

RECORDING HISTORY - CAN YOU HELP?

Jim Hazelton : In the latest edition of 'Classic Wings' there is a request from a guy named Mark Nelson who is writing a book on Jim on behalf of Jim's family. Mark is seeking 'memories' from anyone who knew Jim. He can be contacted via <marksbooks.nelson@gmail.com>. PC

History of Sydney Airport : A request was made for any information on Mascot and the development of Sydney Airport to develop a website that looks at three modules related to its past, present and its future. Following on from Jim Eames' book published in 2000 this will be an excellent initiative to broaden the dissemination of the airport's significant history. The plan is to have the website 'go live' in mid to late 2016.

This is an ideal opportunity to record the history of the airport and ensure that information presented on the website is accurate.

*Comment: * I have a booklet, 'From Bullocks to Boeings', an Illustrated History of Sydney Airport, by Jennifer Gall, published in 1986 by Department of Aviation, Airports Division. It is A4 size softcover, in landscape format. Perhaps some of the Sydney members might have it. If a copy of that can be located it would be a big help to them. At the time of publication, runway 16/34 had been extended to present length but 16L/34R was still a long way off. For my copy I have occasionally added extra pages of the airport layout as it changed with the addition of 16L/34R and other smaller changes over the years since..... I happen to have a copy of a commemorative reprint edition of the first Gregory's Street Directory of Sydney & Suburbs as published in 1934. I have attached a scan of the page showing Mascot Aerodrome as it was then.*

Warwick Henry, AHSA Q'land; pilot in DCA days.

*A copy of the A4 book 'Lauriston Park', is a wonderful record of the area, together with Google information.

*The Qantas' 80th Years ('Sydney, one of the oldest continuously operating airports in the world, celebrates 80 years of operation.') & 90th Years videos have old film clips that offer authentic information for both research and interest to the aviation historian. Ed.

Connie Jordan, Qantas Engineer : Colin Lock is writing a book on Connie Jordan, who obtained her 'A' licence in 1936. Please contact Colin should you have any information on Connie. Colin is hopeful that either Qantas Engineering or the Qantas Founders Museum will publish his research. <cflock48@bigpond.net.au>.

KEEPING RECORDS - WHERE ARE THEY NOW ?

"A significant development in Nhill's Aviation History occurred in 2008 when the Nhill Community (Vic) appointed a committee to explore the establishment of a lasting memorial to commemorate the existence of the WWII Training Base at the Nhill Aerodrome.

Massive progress and impressive development was directed by the Nhill Aviation Heritage Centre Board during the next few years, including the Avro Anson restoration project; the return of an Avro Anson to the aerodrome for the first time in 60 years; start-up of the first restored Avro engine; the Link Trainer restoration project; preservation of the Aeradio Building - the last in Australia; new bitumen where none has been since WWII, and Airshows.

The impact this development has had on the Nhill Community is highly significant because it has largely been driven by the support of the people.

Nhill has now been offered the chance of a life-time - to own a very rare aircraft, one of only four known to be in flying condition. This aircraft is an AUSTRALIAN-BUILT WIRRAWAY of the type that was part of the RAAF Base at Nhill during WWII. It should be noted that during WWII the Nhill RAAF Base had about 20 to 30 Avro Anson aircraft, about 10 Wirraway trainers and several Tiger Moth biplanes. Many other types were at Nhill for short periods but these three were recognised as part of the Nhill Base and the only aircraft that the NAHC Board consider highly important to Nhill.

Because of the Wirraway's rarity (less than 10 or 12 in the World) it was never envisaged that a Wirraway could be part of the Nhill Aviation Heritage Centre collection. However, recently the most remarkable offer has been made to the Nhill Community: *What is believed to be the best presented Wirraway in the World has been offered on condition that it is removed from flying certification and displayed as a fully operational aircraft to perfectly match NHILL'S AVRO ANSON.* The cost is substantial but considered by the Board to be a bargain. If this offer is missed the chance will never happen again."

Nhill Anson Newsletter #34

<http://nhillaviationheritagecentre.com.au/>

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. *The next meeting will be 29February 2016.*

Contact George Palmer at ahsa_qld@hotmail.com.

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, Paul Ewoldt and aviation friends for submissions to this newsletter. Contributions should be sent to the Newsletter Editor: judyrainsford@hotmail.com

jr31 A-H-S-A (NSW)

LOOPS AND LANDINGS

Inspired by John Kingsford-Smith

Christmas Greetings From Australia - Final.

The January 1, 1931, issue of *Flying*, the official journal of the Aero Club of New South Wales, contains an editorial with a sobering assessment of the possible effect of the Great Depression on civil aviation in Australia: "Aviation, like every other undertaking, must enter 1931 with a completely changed outlook, and be prepared for a period when nothing will be as easy to accomplish as it has been in the past. It is useless not to see and face calmly the facts of to-day...What is needed for 1931 is some optimism - not the foolish enthusiasm that cannot see difficulties, but calm, unselfish determination to meet and overcome the problem of the day." On New Year's Day there was also news of Smithy's return from his honeymoon: "Air - Commodore Kingsford Smith and his wife returned to Melbourne to-day in the SS *Nairana* from Tasmania. They will reside in Sydney. Although Air Commodore Kingsford Smith, who is a director of Australian National Airways Ltd, will frequently fly to Melbourne, he has announced his intention to undertake no more ocean flights, and will devote himself to civil aviation." The two New Year's Resolutions announced by Smithy, "no more ocean flights", and, 'devote myself to civil aviation", would have pleased the Chairman of ANA Ltd, Frederick Stewart, as much as they did Smithy's new wife Mary. Indeed, while on his honeymoon in Tasmania he had shown a new enthusiasm for getting involved in company affairs. He wrote: "During our stay in the island I was much impressed by the general desire expressed by the people for the establishment of a regular and efficient air-service between the mainland and the island". Within a couple of weeks of returning to work, on January 19, 1931, Smithy piloted *Southern Cloud*, (VH-UMF), on the inaugural Bass Strait service, flying from Launceston to Melbourne.

By the beginning of 1931, the Labor Premier of NSW, Jack Lang, was struggling with the fallout from the Great Depression. In February he proposed that Australian Governments should stop paying interest to British bondholders. This, together with NSW Labor's equivocal relationship with the Communist Party of Australia, was the last straw for some on the Conservative side of politics. A paramilitary group named the *New Guard* was formed to stand ready to resist any Bolshevik style revolutionary move against Australia's Constitutional Monarchy. The leader of the *New Guard*, Eric Campbell, was Smithy and Ulm's solicitor, and the firm, *Campbell and Campbell Solicitors*, acted for ANA Ltd. Eric Campbell was a director of ANA Ltd, and the Chairman, Frederick Stewart, also became a member of the *New Guard*. Smithy and Ulm were drawn into the murky machinations of the *New Guard* at a time they could least afford the distraction. Up to this time there had been great goodwill flowing from the State and Federal Labor Governments towards Australia's national heroes, Smithy and Ulm. The Australian Post Office organised the issue of stamps honouring "Kingsford Smith's World Flights", in 2d, 3d, and for air mail, 6d values. The stamps were issued on March 19, and just when ANA Ltd needed to draw on the bank of Government Goodwill, its association with the *New Guard* ensured that that goodwill would rapidly evaporate.

For his record setting flights during 1930 Smithy received his second Oswald Watt Medal and the Britannia Trophy. For his Atlantic flight he received, jointly with his co-pilot Evert van Dijk, the Royal Netherlands Aeronautical Association Gold Medal. On Thursday, March 19, the first day of issue of the "Kingsford Smith's World Flight" stamps, Smithy piloted *Southern Moon*, (VH-UMI), from Melbourne to Sydney carrying special flight covers bearing the stamps. Two days later, on Saturday, March 21, he read in the Sydney Morning Herald that he was to be the first recipient of the Segrave Memorial Trophy for his Atlantic and Anglo-Australian flights. The Herald explained that the trophy would be awarded on an annual basis to: "the Briton accomplishing the most outstanding demonstration of the possibilities of land, air or water transport, and stimulating others to uphold British prestige by demonstrating how courage, initiative, and the spirit of adventure can assist mechanical development". At the same time Smithy was reading his morning papers that Saturday, ANA Ltd's Chief Pilot, Captain Travis Shortridge sat in the cockpit of the *Southern Cloud*, (VH-UMF), at Mascot Aerodrome also reading the Sydney Morning Herald. Shortridge was in command of the scheduled Sydney to Melbourne service, and he

was checking the SMH weather report before boarding passengers. At 8.10 am, with his co-pilot Charles Dunnell and six passengers on board, Shortridge taxied away from the ANA Ltd hangar. *Southern Cloud* was in the air headed for Melbourne at about the scheduled departure time of 8:15 am. On Saturday evening, at his home in Double Bay, Smithy received a telephone call from Charles Ulm informing him that the *Southern Cloud* had not arrived in Melbourne.

The disappearance of the *Southern Cloud* had a devastating affect on both Smithy and Ulm. Of the two weeks of continuous aerial search Smithy wrote: "personally I have never been in such a state of exhaustion as during those nightmare days. To add to our mental distress we had been flying for eight hours a day in the most arduous and nerve racking circumstances over terrible country." At this vulnerable moment the aspirations of Charles Ulm to expand ANA Ltd services on the Australia-England route came under threat from Imperial Airways and Qantas. On March 31, the UK Postmaster General announced that an agreement had been reached with Imperial Airways, Qantas and the RAF to run two round trip air mail flights from London to Melbourne. Qantas had agreed to fly the mails from Darwin to Brisbane. It was apparently assumed that ANA Ltd would then pick up the mail in Brisbane and deliver it to Sydney and Melbourne on its scheduled flights. It was further announced that the first experimental air mail flight was planned to leave London, almost immediately, on April 4.

The first experimental air mail flight left London on schedule. However, flying the Batavia - Koepang leg of the route on April 15, Imperial Airways DH 66, Hercules, *City of Cairo*, (G-EBMW), ran out of fuel and crashed as it approached Koepang. The only airline with personnel and equipment capable of safe, long distance, over water flight, immediately available to rescue the mail, was ANA Ltd. It was remarkable that Smithy, who was then in a state of mental and physical exhaustion, and bound by his resolution, "no more over water flights," should agree to be part of the rescue mission. Assisted by Scotty Allan, Smithy flew the *Southern Cross* from Sydney to Koepang, (April 21-23). The first experimental air mail was then taken over by ANA Ltd and flown to Darwin on Anzac Day for the hand over to Qantas. ANA Ltd then took delivery of the first return air mail for London and flew it to Akyab in Burma for transfer to Imperial Airways, (April 27-May 3). At Akyab the *Southern Cross* waited three days for the second experimental air mail which had left London on April 25. On May 6 ANA Ltd loaded the second experimental airmail and flew it to Darwin for transfer to Qantas, (May 6-11). In the meantime, to avoid further embarrassment, Imperial Airways negotiated with West Australian Airways for the purchase of a replacement DH 66, Hercules, (VH-UJQ). It was thus able to take delivery of the second return air mail from Qantas in Darwin on May 18 for onward delivery to London.

Smithy should have returned to Sydney in triumph, after his brilliant rescue of the British experimental air mails. Instead he found ANA Ltd already abandoning its scheduled services, his own equity in the company worthless, and his regular income gone. He took his beloved *Southern Cross* on a joy flight sortie into country NSW. He then decided to attack the solo records for Australia-England and England-Australia in an Avro Avian, *Southern Cross Minor*, (VH-UQG). He took off from Sydney on September 21 on a flight disrupted by illness, not arriving in London until October 7. Medical advice caused him to abandon the return flight. He arrived back in Australia mid November onboard R.M.S. *Orford*. Charles Ulm, meanwhile, had conceived one last throw of the dice for an international airline rebirth of ANA Ltd. This was the *First All-Australian Air Mail* from Australia to England and return, under the command of Scotty Allan, delivering Christmas mail. Lending great prestige to the project was the Australian Controller of Civil Aviation, Horace Brinsmead, who was a passenger on the flight. The loss of the *Southern Sun*, (VH-UNA), at Alor Setar on November 26, and the subsequent life shortening injury suffered by Horace Brinsmead when the KLM airliner he joined to continue his flight crashed at Bangkok, simply compounded ANA Ltd's woes. The recently returned Smithy was once again called upon to save the day. He left Sydney in the *Southern Star*, (VH-UMG), on December 1, picked up the mails and crew at Alor Setar, arriving at Croydon on December 16. Despite Scotty Allan seriously damaging the *Southern Star* in a forced landing on a flight between Hamble and Croydon, Smithy finally got away on January 7, 1932, arriving back in Australia on January 13. There had been much drama involved in delivering what was ANA Ltd's last message to the world, printed on the special flight covers carried: **Christmas Greetings From Australia..John Scott.**