



# AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW) Inc

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13/40A ROSLYN GARDENS RUSHCUTTERS BAY NSW 2011

## Southern Skies

THE NEWSLETTER OF AHSAN (NSW) Inc

SEPTEMBER 2019 ~ No 542

Honorary Life Members AHSAN (NSW) Inc: Ian Debenham : Senja Raymond Robey BEM : Dr Ronald Houghton DFC, LdH

THE SEPTEMBER AHSAN (NSW) Inc MEETING  
WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 4th COMMENCING at 8:00 pm.

PLEASE NOTE THE VENUE IN THE LOWER  
FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM AT THE  
NORTH RYDE RSL COMMUNITY CLUB.

The club is located at the corner of Pittwater and Magdala Roads, North Ryde. 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.

MEMBERS MEET FOR DINNER IN THE **RIVERVIEWS**  
**RESTAURANT** ON THE TOP FLOOR AT 6.30 pm.

**OUR GUEST SPEAKER** WILL BE PETER MAROSSZEKY WHO RETURNS TO GIVE A TALK ABOUT THE "REDEX" AIR RACES OF THE 1950'S. In 1954 the one (and only) *Redex Air Trial* was held. The Redex Company was formed in the UK in 1922 to manufacture fuel additives. The company first sponsored a very successful road trial in Australia in 1953, *the Redex Trial*, a 10,000km event. In 1954, (over 15,000km), there was an Air Trial as well over a route Sydney – Brisbane – Darwin - Alice Spring – Adelaide - Wagga Wagga - Sydney. Some 15 aircraft competed.

OUR REGULAR "THREE AMIGO'S " TALK in August was conducted by three members:

- **Bill Holswich** examined the "Two Study Books" owned by two WW2 airmen before the books were acquired by Bill's father to assist him in his Air Force exam studies.

- **Mike McGree** talked about aviation before during and after the Wright Brothers. He mentioned *Icarus* and the warning not to fly too close to the sun as the wax on his wings would melt. Needless to say *Icarus* ignored the warning and perished!

Early gliders, such as those built by George Cayley before the Wright flyers, and later developments, were discussed.



- Finally, **John Scott** gave a topical talk about aero philately and the previous issues of stamps relating to the Ross and Keith Smith flights from England to Australia in 1919. PE

**ON Thursday 1st August members and friends attended a luncheon to celebrate the awarding of two new NSW honorary life memberships to Dr Ron Houghton DFC and Senja Robey BEM.** Around twenty members, family and friends gathered at Sydney Rowing Club for a very pleasant lunch with waterside views on a lovely sunny day.

It was nice to see Ron and Senja having a good "Natter" to people whom they had not seen for some time.

During the celebration NSW President, Paul Ewoldt, presented Senja and Ron with certificates of appreciation for their contribution to the world of aviation. They expressed their gratitude to the Society.

### SENJA RAYMOND ROBEY

**Senja** was inspired to enter a career in aviation by her father, a physics teacher, who started the Air Training Corps flight at Sydney Technical High School. He would bring home charts and maps for aircraft identification.



A year after matriculating in 1943 Senja commenced work at the de Havilland Company at Camperdown followed by a move to Botany and later Bankstown, where Mosquitoes and Vampires were being produced. Her first flying experience was in the prototype de Havilland Drover, piloted by "Blackjack" Walker.

**She** began her flying training at the Royal Aero Club of NSW in 1949 and gained her Private Pilot Licence later that year. That same year she was invited by Nancy Bird Walton to attend a gathering of women pilots and 12 months later the Australian Women Pilots' Association (AWPA) was formed. Senja is now one of only a handful of original members.

**Whilst** continuing to work at de Havilland, she attained her Commercial Pilot Licence in 1953 and married fellow pilot Keith Robey the following year. After gaining her B2 instructor rating in 1962, she became an instructor at Illawarra Flying School and by 1969 she had accrued over 3,500 hours of instructing.

**Senja** formed Photographic and General Charter Pty Ltd in 1970 and was renowned for her accuracy and steadiness in charter and aerial photography. Senja continued instructing and obtained a multi-engine command instrument rating and acquired endorsements on some 60 different aircraft types.

**In** 1980, Senja became involved in the Australian Women Pilots Association (AWPA) operated “Fear of Flying” courses and continued her role as instructor with the Phoenix Aero Club until her recent retirement.

**Senja** has had a general aviation flying career for over 65 years and accrued over 14,000 hours. She has given a lifetime of service to aviation as recognised throughout the industry for her professionalism and guidance to other aviators.

**Senja** was awarded the Order of the British Empire Medal in 1976 and was inducted into the Australian Aviation Hall of Fame in 2014.

*As an acknowledgment of her contribution to aviation, particularly regarding flying training and the AWPA, the Aviation Historical Society of Australia (NSW) Inc is proud to award Senja Robey Honorary Life Membership.*



**DR RONALD HOUGHTON** DFC BSC(Hons) MSC PHD FRAES FRGS FRMS

**Ron Houghton** joined the RAAF Reserve in 1941 and enlisted in 1942. After training in Australia, he was posted to the Advanced Flying Unit in the United Kingdom, followed by a posting to an Operational Training Unit. He later flew Halifax bombers and completed 33 missions with Bomber Command after which he was posted to Fighter Command, where he flew Spitfires and Hurricanes until war’s end. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross in 1945 for “skill and fortitude in operations against the enemy”.

**Upon** discharge in November 1945 Ron re-joined the RAAF Reserve and soon afterwards was employed as a pilot by Qantas. Following a successful flying and executive career at Qantas, he flew for Air Lanka and

Philippine Airlines, particularly assisting those airlines to introduce the Boeing 747.

**After** retirement Ron completed a PhD in aeronautical engineering at the University of Sydney, eventually becoming an Honorary Associate. In 2014 Ron was one of seven veterans flown to France to be awarded the French Legion of Honour.

Ron currently serves as President of the Bomber Command Association in Australia.

*As an acknowledgment of his contribution to wartime and civil aviation, the Aviation Historical Society of Australia (NSW) Inc is proud to award Dr Ron Houghton Honorary Life Membership.*

### BOOK REVIEW

**Sir Alan John Cobham, the flying legend** : Colin Cruddas

(6.5. 1894—21.10. 1973) the British aviator and pioneer of long-distance flight who promoted “air-mindedness” in the British public.



**Aviation** adventurer, explorer, pioneer – Sir Alan Cobham was all of these. He rose to prominence at a pivotal point in history, when the aeroplane needed champions to rescue it from the realms of just being a daredevil hobby and to set it on the path to become an efficient and effective form of transportation.



**Cobham** entered the Royal Flying Corps in 1917 and in 1921 joined Geoffrey de Havilland’s new aircraft company, for which he undertook a succession of long-distance flights: 5,000 miles (8,000 km) around Europe; 8,000 miles (12,800 km) across Europe and North Africa; 12,000 miles (19,300 km) through Europe to Palestine, Egypt, along the North African coast, and back through Spain to the Cape of Good Hope and back; also to Australia and back.

From 1926, the year in





## ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

### SEPTEMBER 1919 - 2019

Chronology GL

**10** After World War I, **The Schneider Trophy** competition resumed in 1919 at Bournemouth, where in foggy conditions the Italian team won. They were later disqualified and the race was voided.

- Following the defeat of Germany in World War I, the victorious Allies signed the Treaty of Saint-Germain ceding parts of pre-war German-Austria to Italy and Czechoslovakia. Austria was also forbidden to unite with Germany.

**11** Italian World War I ace Giovanni Ancillotto makes a six-hour nonstop flight from Rome to Warsaw, where Poland's Prime Minister, Ignacy Jan Paderewski, greets him personally upon his arrival. Ultimately, the flight results in Italy selling 75 Ansaldo biplanes to the Polish Air Force.

**16** The Colombian airline Compañía Colombiana de Navegación Aérea (CCNA) (Colombian Air Navigation Company) is formed. On September 26, 1919, the company was legalized in the First Notary Office of the city of Medellín, before Notary Zacarías Cock B., as stated in public deed # 2448, thus giving rise to the first commercial civil aviation company in Colombia and in the Americas, called "Colombian Air Navigation Company" - CCNA.

**19** Compagnie des Messageries Aériennes (CMA), established in February 1919 by Louis-Charles Bréguet, Louis Blériot, Louis Renault and René Caudron, commences a regular service between Paris and London, using ex-military Breguet 14s.

**24** The 1919 Schneider Trophy race – the first since 1914 – is flown at Bournemouth in the United Kingdom. An Italian *Savoia S.13* is the only finisher,



but is disqualified for missing a turning buoy. When judges ask pilot Guido

Janello to complete another lap, he runs out of fuel.

**30** The British Aerial Transport Company begins domestic flights between London and Birmingham in a *Koolhoven FK.26*.

- Commander Biard, flying the Supermarine route between Southampton and Le Havre, knocks his passenger out during the flight. The man, a Belgian banker named Lowenstein, wanted to open his umbrella to protect himself from the wind and rain.

## INTERSTATE NEWS

**MELBOURNE MEETINGS** are held on the fourth Wednesday of the month in the auditorium of the RAAF Association, 24 Camberwell Rd, Hawthorn East. 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 are welcome. Website <http://www.ahsa.org.au/> Contact Dave Prossor, President, [president@ahsa.org.com](mailto:president@ahsa.org.com)

**BRISBANE MEETINGS** are held on the last Friday of each month in the Lounge Area, Terminal Building, Archerfield Airport, Brisbane. Visitors are welcome. Next Meeting: Friday 27th September 2019 - 7:00 for 7:30pm Peter Dunn, Secretary, advised that the AHSA Q'land web site links to Victoria Museum's Facebook page - <http://ahsaqld.org.au/> Contact [ahsaqld@gmail.com](mailto:ahsaqld@gmail.com) or Warwick Henry at 0417 771 563

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS : 2019

### THE TEMORA AVIATION MUSEUM'S AIRCRAFT DISPLAYS

**Email:** [info@aviationmuseum.com.au](mailto:info@aviationmuseum.com.au)

**Website:**

<http://www.aviationmuseum.com.au/event/aircraft-showcase>



**CORRECTION:** The RAAF HERITAGE AND HISTORY SYMPOSIUM article in the August issue refers to: "The overall theme of the conference was to bring together the RAAF team from *the Office of Air Force History* to engage the "Civilian" population".

This reference should read "the RAAF team from.... *the Directorate of History Services (DHS-AF), within the History and Heritage Branch – Air Force.*

The Office of Air Force History is a sister 'directorate' to the DHS-AF in the Branch. Per Wgcdr David Fredericks

### FACTS not FICTION

**USD \$40,000** In 1987 American Airlines saved \$40,000 by removing one olive from each salad served in first class.

**Wingspan** The wing-span of the A380 is longer than the aircraft itself. Wingspan is 80m, the length is 72.7m.

**10 tons** Lufthansa is the world's largest purchaser of caviar, buying over 10 tons per year.

**iPad** By American Airlines switching pilots' paper manuals to iPad they will save \$1.2 million in fuel.

Thank you, Gordon Lasslett, John Scott, Paul & Christine Ewoldt, Tom Lockley, and aviation friends for submissions to this newsletter.

Contributions should be sent to the Newsletter Editor: [judyrainsford@hotmail.com](mailto:judyrainsford@hotmail.com) **in72 AHSA (NSW)**

## Smith Celebration flight : the first philately

Singapore Post has released the first commemorative philatelic items.



There are two first day covers; the other one has the miniature sheet (overleaf). The items may be purchased at <https://shop.singpost.com/>

### The covers come with a printed page, *100 Years of First Email, of which this is an extract:*

As we have noted, there was tremendous pressure to carry more fuel and equipment. Both space and weight must have been important factors in making the decision to carry certain items. Even a communication set had to be discarded - what more letters and envelopes from enthusiastic philatelists! Nevertheless, mail was carried, albeit a very small number, from the United Kingdom. Perhaps, only 21 covers originated from the United Kingdom. More covers were carried after Baghdad and 11 covers were thought to have emanated from Singapore. Altogether, it is possible up to 364 covers were carried at various stages of the flight. More could have been carried but did not bear the special stamp. "First Aerial Post 12 Nov 10 Dec 1919 England - Australia". This special stamp was produced by the Australian Government and subsequently affixed to the covers carried when they arrived in Melbourne.



There have been other stamp issues based on the flight.

It is believed that Australian commemorative issues are to be released October 1 2019.



Raid Londres-Port-Darwin par le pilote anglais ROSS SMITH sur biplan "Vickers Vimy"



Tom Lockley