



The Old Fliers Group

Attached to the Royal Aero Club of WA (Inc).

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Last Meeting

At the June meeting we heard an interesting talk on the experiences of Lachie McTaggart who, with Frank Burt, flew from England to Australia in 1950. Lachie gave a most interesting account of a leisurely flight that was mixed with excursions to notable tourist destinations and places of interest. There were however, moments of excitement and frustration when dealing with the bureaucracy in certain countries.

On one occasion I detached myself from his talk to observe the faces of his audience. Without exception, all were deeply absorbed and all had a look of deep interest on their faces. Thank Lachie for a most entertaining discussion.

Lachie's talk was preceded by *Mini Speaker* Frank Cocks who generated a lot of discussion and questions relating to his paratrooper's mini motorbike on display. The bike was a type similar to those used on D-Day. Frank told us that, while the bike was a marvellous idea, it did not prove to very useful to the troops in the rugged battlefield terrain. Frank also produced a Lee Enfield .303 rifle (suitable neutered) and an American tin helmet, both of which attracted much discussion.

Call for Mini Speakers

The introduction of the *Mini-Speaker* slot has proved very entertaining and we are looking for more volunteers. Do you have an interesting short story or incident that could fit into the 10 minute time-slot? If so, contact Brian John at the next meeting and he will slot you in at some future date.

Call for Cash

As we move into a new financial year, it is necessary to mention the subject of money.

Our unique little organisation needs over \$450 per year to keep going. At \$5.00 a pop, it requires at least 90 people to reach into their pocket. We have a mailing list of nearly 130 – half of which are contacted by email and the other half by surface mail. Stamps, envelopes, photocopying and name tag holders are our only expenses.

To keep the show on the road, your sub of \$5.00 can be paid at the next, or any future meeting, or send it to:

Old Fliers Group
C/- Royal Aero Club of WA
144 Eagle Drive
Jandakot Airport
WA 6164

Of course, if you have paid a sub in the last three months, or have made a substantial cash donation (as some have) in the last year, this request does not apply.

Proposed Tour of UK and France

Tony Munday and Brian John have been working on a proposed tour of UK and Europe in May 2006. I have taken the liberty to print Tony's proposal on the back of the page (or as a separate page for emails.)

If you are planning an overseas holiday next year, give serious thought to Tony's proposal. His contact details are on the attachment.

Next Meeting

When many Perth folk think of Catalinas their thoughts turn to the Crawley and Matilda Bay facilities that existed in WWII. Many recollect the RAAF/Qantas "double-sunrise" flights to Ceylon and the US anti-submarine operations in the Indian Ocean. However, Catalinas were used in many other roles in the conflict. At our next meeting, to be held at noon on Friday July 29th at the Royal Aero Club, the main speaker will be Fred Robins who will talk on RAAF Catalinas engaged in mine-laying operations in and around Japanese harbours in the Pacific and northern areas. He will also tell us how the Catalina was used for air-sea rescue in the south-west Pacific and islands to the north.

The Catalina was a notable aircraft and debatably the most successful flying boat in WWII. First flown in 1935 and put into service in 1937, it contained many unique features. Most important was the parasol cantilever wing that did away with the typical multiple wing struts so common on flying boats of the day. It was the first to use wingtip floats that were retractable. The flexible amphibious models that were developed later were widely used, both during and after the war. The Catalina's versatility made up for its lack of speed, while its range was about 2500 nautical miles in standard trim -this was extended to well over 3000 for the flight from Crawley to Ceylon.

Come along and hear more from Fred on this fabulous aeroplane, and how it was by the RAAF used in WWII.

The *Mini Speaker* of the day will be Roger McDonald who will talk about his experiences and the use of the aeroplane with the "long arm of the law."

Hope to see you there.

Brian Hernan