



## The Old Fliers Group

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

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## Bulletin Sheet No 16, August 2005

### Last Meeting

It was an absolute pleasure to hear Fred Robins' talk on his experiences in Catalinas during WWII. He held 65 attendees spellbound with his interesting description of the role played by his squadron – mainly mine laying in the Japanese-held harbours to the north of Australia.

Fred took us into the cockpit and through a typical takeoff and landing in this grand aeroplane. He also took us on a typical 20 hour, three aircraft mission, departing from Yampi Sound in WA to fly into enemy-held territory.

Fred not only described the role of the pilot but explained how the other eight crew members – the co-pilot, navigator, flight engineers, wireless operator and riggers. The riggers fired guns from the blisters at the waist of the aeroplane. Another of their jobs was to plug the holes that resulted from ground fire so the boat would stay afloat on landing back at base.

The popularity of the talk might have been measured by the number of questions that were put to Fred both during and after his delivery. On behalf of all who attended, "Thank you very much Fred."



*Fred Robins, "July Speaker of the Day".*

Fred has written a book on his exploits in the Catalina – the first run has sold out but the second run will be available soon. Titled *The Cat has Nine Lives*, it is a most interesting read. The title comes from the fact that the RAAF Catalinas engaged on mine laying had a crew of nine people.

The July *Mini Speaker*, Roger McDonald, told us of his early experiences at Narrogin - in gliders with Brian John and in powered aircraft with John Douglas. Later, as a police officer, he spotted three escapees from the air, landed in the same paddock as them and took them into custody! In the short time available he mentioned other

stories of how aircraft were used in the police force before the establishment of the Police Air Wing.

Many thanks to Roger for a light hearted look at aviation.

### Caught on Camera



*Stan Watt and Colin Morton, both were Kittyhawk pilots in North Africa and Italy during the WWII.*

### Call for Mini Speakers

We are still looking for mini-speakers. Do you have a short story to tell, a humorous incident or even a "tall story" that could be aired in 10 minutes? If so, contact Brian John.

### Address Please

At the last meeting I collected cash from a number of new members but failed to take their address, hence I cannot mail this Bulletin to them. If you know of anyone who was a "first-timer" at the last meeting could you keep them up to date until I get their addresses.

### Future Meetings

Dates of future meetings. Mark them in your diary

now: Friday, August 26<sup>th</sup>  
Friday, September 30<sup>th</sup>  
Friday, October 28<sup>th</sup>  
Friday, November 25<sup>th</sup>

### This Month

This month's *main speaker* is Brian Floyd who will talk on flying into and out of Kai Tak, the old airport at Hong Kong. Brian spent many years with airlines based at Hong Kong – even before sophisticated nav-aids were installed.

This month's *mini speaker* will be Peter Yates who will take you on a ride in the Mustang that he flies for Bill Wyllie. Incidentally, Peter also had a long association with Hong Kong, Cathay Pacific and Kai Tak.

Hope to see you there.

Brian Hernan