



The Old Fliers' Group

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

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February Meeting

Once again the attendance at the February meeting was about ninety. Proceedings got under way with a delightful poem from Fred Robins who explained the difficulties in backing a trailer. It was interesting to hear how frustrating the exercise could be!

The Mini Speaker was Mal Yeo, who spoke on the development of West Subiaco Aerodrome. In 1929 it was established by Herman Ittershagen who had a wickerwork business in Shenton Park. Later he obtained the agency for Lanz Bulldog tractors and later still he imported two Klemm aircraft. This led him to establish the West Subiaco Aerodrome and the Subiaco Flying Club. He employed Harry Baker as his "flying serviceman" and later as his instructor at the Club.

In 1931, Ittershagen was responsible for the building of the Brooklands one-mile race track that surrounded the airfield. Flying and gliding were conducted at the field, as were car and motorbike racing and a number of pageants attracted large crowds. However, the Depression took its toll on his businesses and the aerodrome closed.

The Speaker of the Day was Ian Howell who spoke on the newly arrived Catalina at the AFA Heritage Museum, which, by the time you read this bulletin, will be in place alongside the Lancaster.

Ian also covered the history of the Catalina and the role that it played in WWII, from its design and production in the early days to its use by the US forces, the RAF, the RAAF and the Royal Netherlands Air Force.

Ian related how the Catalina was responsible for the sinking of more enemy shipping than any other single type of aircraft during WWII. This, of course, had a direct effect on the outcome of the war.

It was obvious that Ian had done an enormous amount of research on his paper which was delivered in a professional manner to the appreciation of all present.

The New European Tour

Tony Munday has spent a great deal of time planning the next fabulous tour. He has finalised the itinerary and the cost has been established. A copy is attached to this email. If you are on normal mail you can obtain details from Tony, in person, at the next meeting, or by phone on 9386 3902. Alternatively, Tony can be contacted by email at: lunarian@cygnus.uwa.edu.au.

Old Flier's Request

Just before the last meeting, the Royal Aero Club received a letter from Susanne Wright, the manager of the Anglican Aged Care Centre in Karrinyup. One of her aged residents, Mr. Lester (Les) Thomas, who was suffering from terminal cancer,

had said that he would like to "fly one last time". Aged 82, he had flown with RAF Squadron 206 during WWII and had a lifelong love of flying.

The letter of request was passed to the OFG and read at the last meeting where it was proposed that members could make donations to cover the cost of the flight. In a generous gesture, Leo Feakes offered to take Les for "one last flight" in his Beechcraft Baron, free of charge.

Leo set up the flight for the following Thursday and arranged transport for Les. But, the day before the proposed flight Leo was contacted by Susanne Wright to say that Les's health had deteriorated and the flight would have to be cancelled. Les passed away three days later.

At least we tried.

Beaufort Restoration

An Australian Beaufort Bomber, A9-141, (VH-KTW) is being restored to flying condition in Brisbane. Ralph Cusack, who heads up the restoration group, says that finance is urgently needed to finish the project that was begun in 1982. All donations, no matter how large or small, are welcome. All donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible and can be made to:

The National Trust of QLD.
Beaufort A9-141 Special Appeal
PO Box 462
Hamilton Central
QLD 4007

Progress can be observed at the following:

www.Beaufortrestoration.com.au

Why don't you check it out now? Hold down the CTRL key and click on the above address.**

March Meeting

The Main Speaker at the March meeting will be Harold Rowell. He is an ex-RAAF and ex-MMA pilot who accumulated near-record hours and experience in the air. His talk will focus on the adverse effects of fog – one of which nearly ended his career in the north of this state.

The mini speaker will be John Bailey who has an interesting short story to tell about the "Birmingham Small Arms Bomb." (Whatever that might be!)

Come along to the Royal Aero Club at noon on Friday March 30 to hear our speakers and have a nice lunch for the modest sum of just \$12.00.

Hope to see you there.

Brian Hernan

** This obviously only applies to email recipients!!!