



The Old Fliers' Group

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

Coordinator: Brian John, Ph 9883 8001

Bulletin Sheet No 42, January 2008

Next Meeting

January Meeting on February 1

Due to the last Friday of January falling on January 25th, so close to the Australia Day weekend, the January meeting has been postponed one week and will be held on February 1st.

Future Meeting Dates

Mark the following meeting dates in your diary now:

January Meeting	Friday February 1
February Meeting	Friday February 29
March Meeting	Friday March 28

Also note:

The last Friday in April, the 25th, is Anzac Day. Therefore the meeting scheduled for this date will also be postponed by one week.

April Meeting	Friday May 2
---------------	--------------

Last meeting of 2007

The November 2007 meeting was one with a difference—the menu included turkey and Christmas pudding.

It was pleasing to finish the year with many guests and new members.

There were a number of unusual announcements to finish the year. Rosalie Hamilton was able to inform us that her son-in-lad had pulled up some possible aircraft parts on his anchor while fishing north-west of Kalbarri. Authorities are in the process of identifying the items. It could prove to be a significant find.

Your scribe was also able to announce that the Old Fliers Group, together with the Royal Aero Club, (in concert with the now defunct Civil Aviation Historical Society), plus the Vintage Sports Car Club, have made progress in their efforts to have a memorial plaque erected at the site of the old West Subiaco Aerodrome. The aim is to commemorate the pioneer aviators, glider pilots and racing drivers who performed West Subiaco venue in the 1930s.

November Mini Speaker

The November Mini Speaker was Ted Fletcher, who, in his inimitable form, told us of the structural failures in the de Havilland Puss Moth aircraft. It was interesting to note the tardiness of both the manufacturer and the bureaucracy to rectify the problem. It could never happen today—could it?

Speaker of the Day

The Speaker of the Day, to finish the year, was Frank Cocks, who told the story of how the Jeep was developed in the early 1940s. Starting with the Bantam Car Company who produced the BRC; later Ford produced the GPW and then

Willys produced the Quad. The eventual vehicle was the Jeep which matured into the rugged machine that did such great work during WWII and after.

We saw photos of Jeeps in all guises; nearly submerged, then as a rail locomotive, as a snowmobile, a gun platform, an ambulance, a swamp crawler, a flying fox, and even as a “flying machine”.

We learned that in England and Australia, toward the end of the war, attempts were made to attach a rotor to a pylon situated approximately between the two front seats. The large rotor blade provided the lift as the jeep was towed at speed behind either a ground vehicle or an aircraft.

The Australian engineer who developed the project was John Watkins. The pilot was Ken Fruin—and with a bit of research, maybe we can find his reports on the handling characteristics of the “Flying Jeep”.

Thanks

Thanks go to our November speakers, and to all other speakers who have given us great stories over the past year. The appreciation of you efforts is reflected in the constantly growing attendance, which over the last three months has averaged just on one hundred.

Call for Cash

It is time to raise the grubby subject of money. The executive has, on your behalf, decided that the annual subscription should be increased to \$10.00.

Speakers and Mini Speakers

We already have had a number of offers to fill the 2008 calendar; however, there is room for a few more offers. Do you have one that fits into a 15 or 35 minute slot? Preference will be given to WWII stories. But be warned; in 2008, speakers will be given a warning bell at 10 and 30 minutes, respectively, and then must finish in the next 5 minutes. (Question time is not included in the above allocations).

Next Meeting

At the first meeting of the year, on February 1st, we will hear from Jenny Mills who has a great story. Her grandfather was a doctor who attended the autopsy of the Red Baron. The Mini Speaker will be Chas. Page, who will discuss the proposed name change for Learmonth Airport. Come along and have your say—and protest to the Exmouth Shire. Chas. Page is the author of the recently released *Wings of Destiny*, which covers the life of Charles Learmonth.

I hope to see you at the Royal Aero Club at noon on Friday February 1st for a relaxing lunch and interesting talks.

Brian Hernan