



The Old Fliers' Group

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

Coordinator: Brian John, Ph 9883 8001

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First meeting of 2008

We broke all attendance records at the first 2008 meeting. If we get many more along we will be in big trouble. Brian John was quite right when he said, "Thank goodness for the apologies." Had those who apologised arrived we would have been bursting at the seams.

January Speakers

We were treated to two memorable speakers at the last meeting; each had an intimate knowledge of their respective subjects and each had the talent to deliver their material in a most professional manner.

Mini Speaker

There could have been none better than our *Mini Speaker*, Charles Page to talk on Wing Commander Charles Learmonth. Charles Page has written the soon to be published book, *Wings of Destiny*, which covers the life and times of Learmonth. Page is also the coordinator of the movement to preserve the name of Learmonth Airport in the Exmouth Shire.

After giving a detailed background on Wing Commander Learmonth, Page exposed the width and depth of support that he has received in his push to preserve the name of the existing airport. The response has been nothing less than astounding. If you haven't yet done so, register your objection by normal mail with:

Mr. P. Anastasakis, CEO
Shire of Exmouth
PO Box 21
Exmouth WA 6707

Or by email with:

Email: ceo@exmouth.wa.gov.au
Cc: cr_Fleav@exmouth.wa.gov.au

A complete list of councillors is available on the Exmouth Shire website at: www.exmouth.wa.gov.au

It is my personal belief that it is immoral to change the names of memorials to our war dead for economic gain.

Speaker of the Day

Our *Speaker of the Day* was Jenny Mills who spoke about her grandfather, Colonel George W. Barber, who attended the autopsy of the Red Baron in April 1918—the day after the Baron was shot down.

Colonel Barber was responsible for the management of the Australian Army Medical Services in France—that included the Australian Flying Corps.

While there were a number of versions of how the Baron met his end, it now generally agreed the fatal shot was fired by Sergeant Popkin of the 24th Machine Company, Australian 4th Division.

It was obvious that Jenny had done a great deal of research into the reports and correspondence relating to the matter. Thank you Jenny for the presentation of a fine paper.

Book Donation

Thanks go to OFG member and keen aviator, Denis Gorton, who last month donated a number of aviation books to the Royal Aero Club library. If any other member decides to reorganise their bookshelf the Club is always happy to take donations.

Geraldton Commemoration

A ceremony to commemorate the establishment of No 4 SFTS will take place at 5.00 pm on March 1st, 2008, at Geraldton Airport. All are welcome to attend. A memorial that consists of portion of an Avro Anson will be unveiled. President of the National Servicemen's Association, Mr. Dennis Moss, can be contacted on 9964 3825 for further information.

In addition, it is appropriate to mention here that a recently released book covering the history of No 4 SFTS can be obtained from the author and self-publisher, Doug Brenkley. Doug can be contacted by phone on 9448 6384. The cost of the book is \$60.00 for the case bound version and \$45.00 for the soft cover copy. Postage is extra.

February Speaker

The next *Speaker of the Day* will be John "Bomber" Bailey who will tell us about the unusual missions that took place in 1944 when crews flew Liberators to Warsaw to supply the Polish partisans.

At this stage, the timeslot for the *Mini Speaker* will be filled by a report on the progress on the Learmonth name change.

Mini Speakers

We have had a number of offers from prospective Mini Speakers for the 2008 calendar; however, there is room for more. Do you have a memorable story, incident or yarn that could be told in 10 to 15 minutes at a future meeting. If so, let me know on Friday.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Friday 29th February at the Royal Aero Club, starting at 12 noon. Hope to see you there.

Brian Hernan