



## The Old Fliers' Group

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

Coordinator: Brian John, Ph 9883 8001

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#### Learmonth Action

Charles Page could not attend the last meeting, but he submitted a report that was presented to members. It covered the depth of concern displayed by our members, kindred groups and the general public at the proposed name change of the Learmonth Airport by the Shire of Exmouth. It was mentioned that protests came from high-ranking defence personnel, politicians, other local government bodies and many more—even some from overseas.

Basically, the message from Charles was: “*Maintain the rage,*” and encourage others to protest to the Exmouth Shire CEO by normal mail or email to:

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

Or by email to:

Email: [ceo@exmouth.wa.gov.au](mailto:ceo@exmouth.wa.gov.au)

#### February Speaker of the Day

Our *Speaker of the Day* at the last meeting was John “Bomber” Bailey, who spoke on the relatively little-known push by the British to deliver arms and supplies to the Polish partisans, known as the “PK”, during the latter stages of World War II. He began by giving the historical background to operation and the need for the flights to start in Italy instead of England.

RAF Group 205 flew Liberators from Foggia in Italy, to Warsaw, and return—a journey of over 2000 miles. The long flights usually started in the afternoon and they returned to their base in Italy the next morning. Between times they spent the night over hostile territory with the prospect of being attacked by day fighters, night fighters, ack ack—and even ground fire as they made their low and slow passes to drop the supplies by parachute at designated areas in and near Warsaw. In a moving talk the audience was quietly stunned to hear of the high attrition rate and the sacrifices that the Group made to achieve their aims.

Thank you “Bomber” for an enlightening delivery that added another chapter to our knowledge of World War II.

#### February Mini Speaker

Hilly Rostowsky reported on his trip to New Zealand where, among other things, he visited Tom Dick in Christchurch. Tom spends his time as a testing officer for the Civil Aviation Authority of New Zealand. He has wide-ranging interests and a deep love of aviation. During his visit, Hilly sowed the seed for the establishment of a New Zealand Old Fliers Group, similar to ours.

Hilly’s report was delivered in a light-hearted way, which the audience found to be both informative and amusing. He topped his session off with a couple of aviation jokes that were much appreciated.

#### New Zealand Tour

It is well-known that New Zealand has marvellous scenery, top aviation museums and very hospitable people. With this in mind, Brian John has developed a plan for an Old Fliers Group to tour the *Land of the Long White Cloud*. Already, he has established that Tom Dick will drive the tour bus and John Douglas will be tour leader. John Douglas grew up in New Zealand and returns almost on an annual basis—he has lots of contacts and knows both islands extremely well.

At this early stage the tour expected to depart Perth on Sunday October 5th, 2008, and return three weeks later on Sunday October 26<sup>th</sup>. If you think that you will need a holiday about that time, make sure you attend this coming meeting where more details and the proposed itinerary will be available.

#### Book Release

At the next meeting, this Friday, Doug Brenkley will talk about his recently released *History of No 4 SFTS*, which operated at Geraldton during World War II. The book should be of great interest, especially to a good number of our members who trained at Geraldton.

#### 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. For those who have already offered, will you re-confirm, please.

#### Pearce Graduation

Some of the members of the OFG were privileged to attend the graduation of twenty-four officer cadets of No 210 Advanced Pilots’ Course at Pearce last week. It was a great occasion with a number of polished flying displays.

#### Next Meeting

The March *Speaker of the Day* will be Don Stephenson who will tell of his experiences in Catalinas and Liberators during WWII; mainly in the S.E. Asia Region.

Come along to the Royal Aero Club this Friday, March 28<sup>th</sup>. The lunch, to be followed by proceedings, will get under way at 12 noon. Hope to see you there.

Brian Hernan