



The Old Fliers' Group

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

Coordinator: Brian John, Ph 9883 8001

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November Meeting

As is customary, we finished the year with our November meeting. It was a great meeting with a record attendance of nearly 120 members who enjoyed the usual lunch which was followed by Christmas pudding brandy custard. Thanks must go to the girls in the restaurant for their great service throughout the year and for putting on the "Christmas Pud" at no additional cost.

Two Mini-speakers

We decided, for a change, that it might be appropriate to have two mini-speakers at our end-of-the-year meeting.

Our first was Brian Walley who told us of how he and his fellow inmates celebrated Christmas in a German prisoner of war camp. He told us of the wide range of skills that his fellow inmates possessed. There were men from all walks of life, mechanics, salesmen, printers, artists, painters, tailors, etc. – but apparently none had any skills in the production of a Christmas pudding – when only makeshift ingredients were available. No matter how they tried, all failed – not once, but year after year.

Our second mini-speaker was Peter Hummerston, He told us of the good work done by the "Honour Avenue Group". This band of volunteers maintains the memorials and hundreds of plaques that line the avenues in Kings Park. Erected to commemorate the efforts of fallen soldiers, the metal plaques and their wooden supports need to be maintained and repaired to keep them in good shape.

It was most disappointing to hear of the amount of vandalism that takes place. It is impossible to understand why vandals would want to drive over, mow down, uproot, deface and even spray-paint such sacred objects. The efforts of the "Honour Avenue Group" are to be admired, particularly when they go back again and again to do their good work.

Speaker of the Day

Our last speaker of the day for 2008 was Caroline Wynton-Rhodes who briefly spoke of her experiences in aviation before moving on to tell us about her grandfather – who flew for the Luftwaffe, both in World War I and World War II. Most were intrigued

as the story unfolded. Her grandfather, Theodore Osterkamp, flew Fokkers in the first war and Me109s and FW 190s in the second. He was awarded the Blue Max, Iron Crosses 1st and 2nd Class, Knights Cross and Gold Cross for his efforts. Carolyn displayed the medals during her talk.

Grandpa Theo was a highly respected pilot and administrator but toward the end of the war he fell from favour in the Luftwaffe hierarchy and was forced to resign his commission. So disappointed was Grandpa Theo in the German developments that he eventually took a file and removed the swastika from his pilot's wings. Carolyn had photos of the wings both before and after the removal. Her talk was fascinating – to say the least. Many thanks Carolyn.

Call for Cash

Once again it's time to raise the awful subject of money. You can pay the annual subscription of \$10.00 at the next meeting, or any future meeting should you wish. Alternatively, you can mail it to the Brian Hernan, 1 / 4 Kings Park Ave, Crawley, 6009. Cheques must be made out to "The Old Fliers Group"

Speakers and Mini Speakers

We already have had a number of offers to fill the 2009 calendar; however, there is room for more. Do you have a story that fits into a 15 minute mini-speaker slot, or maybe a longer story that might fit into the 35 minute speaker-of-the-day slot. Question time is not included in the above time allocations. Once again, we expect that World War II stories will constitute about half of our talks.

Next Meeting

The January meeting will be held on Friday January 30th and we have arranged for Caroline Wynton-Rhodes to return to tell us about the father who served in the RAF in Sunderland flying boats.

The mini-speaker will be Tony Mitchell who last year purchased a T28 Trojan. He will tell us about it, and how he managed to fly it across Australia to get it home.

Hope you can make to the Royal Aero Club for lunch at noon on this Friday, January 30th.

Brian Hernan