



## The Old Fliers' Group

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

Coordinator: Brian John, Ph 9883 8001

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The February meeting saw our facility filled to capacity – all were eager to hear our two speakers.

#### Mini Speaker

As *Mini Speaker* for the meeting, John “Bomber” Bailey told us of a mission which departed from Foggia (about half way up Italy) to fly to Monfalcone at the top of the Adriatic. Over the target a wayward skipper got his Liberator in the wrong place at the wrong time and when an aircraft at a higher altitude released its bombs, three at least, struck the aircraft below. Fortunately, there were no explosions and no one was seriously injured. The lower aircraft suffered a good deal of damage to the fuselage and the port inner engine. The crew managed to fly the damaged aircraft back to Foggia on three engines, where, after inspection, it was declared write-off. The photos below shows the damage to the aircraft.



*The damaged Liberator in flight.*



*The damaged Liberator on the ground.*

During his talk, John happened to mention that during WWII he chalked up 108 ops – thirty-six in Liberators, thirty-two in Wimpies and the remainder in Hurricains!

#### Speaker of the Day

Our *Speaker of the Day* was Stan Schur who opened the eyes of most of the members with his talk about his early life in Rhodesia. He started with a brief history of the country and finished with a word or two on the current state of Zimbabwe. He summed it up by saying that by the 1970s Rhodesia had become the “bread-basket” of Africa, but in more recent times it has become the “basket-case” of Africa.

Stan’s earliest memories included yellow Tiger Moths being flown by young pilots in the Empire Training Scheme which was established during WWII. After WWII Rhodesia established its own Air Force, which Stan joined in 1954 – flying Tiger Moths, Harvards and Vampires. In later years the Air Force acquired Hawker Hunters and Canberra Bombers to deal with insurgents and terrorists who were causing unrest and devastation in the country.

Stan also told of his time as a farmer. He won the prestigious prize of “Farmer of the Year” and a coveted Nuffield Scholarship which took him to USA to study up-to-date farming techniques. His farm became a show-piece and an example of best farming practice. Unfortunately the events of the 1980s and 1990s saw it taken over and ruined by the current “government”.

Thanks go to both of our entertaining speakers.

#### Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on this Friday, March 27<sup>th</sup>. The *Speaker of the Day* will be Les Jubbs who will talk about the Air Transport Auxiliary. What’s that, I hear you ask? Why not come along and find out.

Our *Mini-speaker* will be Peter Melsom who will tell us of his connection with an aircraft that disappeared in 1970 and was not found until 1984. It promises to be another interesting meeting.

Hope you can make to the Royal Aero Club at noon on this Friday, March 27th.

Brian Hernan