



## The Old Fliers' Group

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

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#### July Meeting

#### Vale Frank Colquhoun (1909 – 2010)

Ted Fletcher paid a fine tribute to the late Frank Colquhoun at our last meeting. He spoke of Frank as a man of vision, improvisation and endurance – and a most respected aircraft engineer.

Frank joined Western Australian Airways in 1923 at the age of fourteen and had his first flight off the Esplanade in a Bristol Tourer flown by Charles Kingsford Smith. In 1924 Frank was among the first staff to move to the “new” Maylands Aerodrome. In the years that followed he played a major part in the development of aviation in this State.

Frank displayed remarkable ingenuity in the recovery of the downed Lockheed *Electra* on Napier Downs station in 1942. In dreadful conditions, he managed, in 37 days, to rebuilt a radial engine, created an airstrip and drag the aircraft with a team of 28 donkeys so it could take off.



*The salvage of the Lockheed Electra on Napier Downs.*

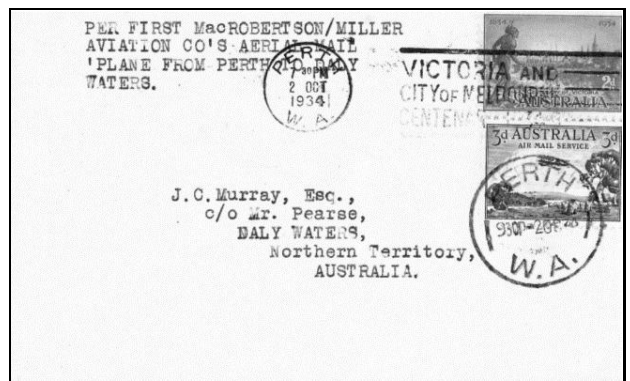
Frank witnessed the progress from single-engine, to twin-engine, to four-engine, prop-jet and finally pure-jet aircraft. While employed with MMA he held the position of New Project Engineer in the group of specialists that saw the introduction of the Fokker F27 *Friendship* and the F28 *Fellowship*.

In 1968, Frank was asked by the Department of Foreign Affairs to fill a post as an aviation engineering adviser as part of Australian Aid Abroad, firstly in Nepal, then Malaysia and finally India. He retired from Ansett Australia in 1978.

#### Speaker of the Day

Ian Howell continued to trace the history of the development of the air mail system in Western Australia

and overseas. Starting in April 1934 when MMA won the contract from WAA, Ian displayed samples of the first air mail from Perth to Daly Waters. That mail was to connect to the international system, but the system changed dramatically when Imperial/QEA established the international connection between London and Sydney – and WA became a spur line instead of an integral part of the overseas network.



*First MMA air mail to Daly Waters.*

Ian's thorough preparation and delivery resulted in a talk that displayed a blend of aviation history and philately.

Sincere thanks go to both of our speakers.

#### Centenary of Flight Stamps



Australia Post has produced a set of three stamps (above) to commemorate the early flights of Colin Defries, John Duigan and Harry Houdini. The issue will be withdrawn in September 2010. At just on \$5 per set, they could make a nice present for someone – but be quick.

#### August Meeting

The *Speaker of the Day* at the next meeting will be Kevin Bailey who will relate how he restored his 1936 model Stinson Reliant. The support speaker will be Dennis Gorton who will tell us how he engineered an engine for his aircraft.

So try to make it the Royal Aero Club on Friday, 27th August at noon for lunch and to hear our interesting speakers. Hope to see you there.

Brian Heman