



## The Old Fliers' Group

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

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#### NEXT MEETING Friday November 28<sup>th</sup>

#### Last Meeting

At the October meeting Brian Floyd gave an interesting account of his earliest memories of aviation events. Brian grew up in Mt Lawley on the fringe of the Maylands circuit area and on the track to Rottneest. He was drawn outdoors at the passing of nearly every aircraft. At the age of nine his uncle took him to Maylands and paid for a flight in an Aero Club DH.60 Gipsy Moth, VH-AJX. It was a flight that changed Brian's life.

His fascination with aircraft drew him to Maylands on many weekends. He recalled seeing the Vickers Viastra, the DH.66 Hercules and the Australian National Airways (ANA) Douglas DC-2, *Bungana*. Later, during WWII, he saw a wide range of aircraft, including such types as the Flying Fortress, Liberator and Kittyhawks.



*A Liberator and Flying Fortress at Maylands.*

At the age of fourteen Brian started work at the Department of Aircraft Production at Maylands. Later, he learned to fly and after gaining his commercial licence he moved to Hong Kong where he flew for Cathay Pacific, firstly in DC-3s, and on up to B747s.

#### Harry Baker

In the second part of the meeting, your editor covered the story of Harry Baker, starting with his time as a motorcycle racer and speedway rider. Harry achieved initial success at the 1924 Lake Perkolilli race meeting. After more successes in 1925, Harry purchased a 1000cc Brough Superior and at the 1926 meeting he became the first person in WA to reach 100 miles per hour on land.

Some years earlier a record-breaking American by the name of Erwin "**Cannonball**" Baker visited Australia and raced successfully in the Eastern States. After being the first in WA to achieve 100 miles per hour, Harry also became known as "**Cannonball**" Baker; the name stuck with him for the rest of his life.



*Harry "Cannonball" Baker at 100 mph in 1926.*

In 1927, Harry learned to fly and in 1929 flew for Herman Ittershagen in the Klemm monoplane as a flying tractor salesman/serviceman. In 1930, Harry started Baker Aviation with a DH.60 and in 1931 he joined W.A. Airways flying, firstly, the DH.50, and later the DH.66 Hercules and the Vickers Viastra on the Perth-Adelaide service.

When Norman Brearley sold W.A. Airways to ANA in 1936 Harry became the route captain on the DC-2, *Bungana*, on the Perth – Adelaide service. It was the start of a long and distinguished career with that company which saw him deliver the company's second DC-4 across the Pacific, and later take on a number of senior positions both as a pilot and as a manager of the company.



*The ANA DC-4 Amana at Guildford Airport.*

#### Next Meeting

The next OFG meeting on Friday November 28<sup>th</sup> will be the last for the year. Patricia Moran will be the main speaker. She will tell us of her experiences as a nurse in Wyndham and the North West in the 1960s.

A parking fee exemption has been arranged for the meeting time slot 10.30 to 2.30 Friday, so hope to see you at the Royal Aero Club just before noon for lunch – and the traditional Christmas pudding.

Brian Hernan