



## The Old Fliers' Group

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

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#### NEXT MEETING Friday January 30<sup>th</sup>

#### Last Meeting

The November meeting got under way with Harry O'Neil and Ken Pittman telling us about their experiences at Albany during the ANZAC Centenary Commemoration. They gave a brief but thorough coverage of their observations and of the events that took place.

Harry spent time some talking to the son of the late Tom Scotland – who was a Pathfinder and *Speaker of the Day* at the OFG meeting in January 2005. Harry also came across two long lost ex-RAN friends of John (OFG barman) Ridgway.

Ken Pittman produced a number of good photographs and also gave us an excellent coverage of the events and ceremonies that took place over the weekend.

The highlight of the weekend was the award of the Legion of Honour, France's highest accolade, to Tom Lofthouse from Bunbury, and Albany brothers Eric and Murray Maxton. They said they were humbled and honoured to receive the award. The three were referred to as "National treasures, heroes and legends". Congratulations to them all.

Members will recall that Tom Lofthouse was *Speaker of the Day* at the August 2014 OFG meeting.

#### Speaker of the Day

Our November *Speaker of the Day* was Patricia Moran who spoke of her time as a nurse in the 1960s. She completed her initial training at Fremantle and her midwifery training at St John's, Subiaco, before travelling and working over East. In 1965 she joined the WA Medical Department as a double certificate nurse based in Wyndham.

Patricia started work at the old hospital in the "old Wyndham town". It was a shock to the system – no air conditioning in the nurse's quarters and few ceiling fans. She went on to describe the discomfort of moving to an area of high temperature and high humidity where the residents endured facilities quite different to those in the city. She made lots of friends and met lots of "characters" who added to a wonderful, and sometimes sad, life experience.

Her professional duties included those normally associated with the hospital, plus assisting in evacuation of patients from remote areas by charter aircraft. Some treatment was conducted in bough sheds at the edge of the airstrip. Other duties included escorting special cases to Perth by MMA Fokker Friendship. Some seriously ill or injured, others may have been heavily sedated or in a straight jacket.

Her time in Wyndham coincided with the building of the Ord Dam and the flooding of Lake Argyle. There were many visits to Kununurra where farmers were establishing cotton crops. Recreation consisted of visiting scenic locations and swimming in rock pools.

Pat's easy style of presentation was both informative and entertaining. It was very much appreciated by members.



*Patricia assists in a patient transfer on an MMA flight.*

#### Annual Subscription

Once again it's time to raise the subject of money. You can pay the annual subscription of \$10.00 for the year 2015 at the next meeting, or any future meeting should you wish. Alternatively, you can mail a cheque to Brian Hernan, 1 / 4 Kings Park Ave, Crawley, 6009. Cheques must be made out to "Royal Aero Club".

#### Last Year's Top Excuses

*I ran out of cheques.*

*I ran out of postage stamps.*

*I was counting on you to forget.*

*The Merc takes all my spare cash.*

*I had a serious amnesia attack.*

#### Next Meeting

The next OFG meeting on Friday January 30<sup>th</sup> will feature Patricia Moran again, this time with stories of her time with the Royal Flying Doctor Service in the Wyndham area in the mid-1970s. It promises to be another very interesting session.

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. Come early for a chat if you desire.

Brian Hernan