



The Old Fliers' Group

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

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NEXT MEETING

Friday March 27th

Last Meeting

At the February meeting John Wager told us of the life and times of Sir Harry Ricardo who was one of the foremost researchers and designers in the early years of the development of the internal combustion engine.

Born in 1885, Ricardo's interest in engines developed into a long career which led to him setting up one of the world's best-known engine development companies in the field of both petrol and diesel technology for stationary engines, land vehicles and aircraft.

In 1914 Harry visited engineering companies in America, Holland, Sweden, Italy and Germany. On August 1, 1914, while at Aachen in Germany, he was prudently advised to return immediately to England – World War I was only weeks away.

During 1917 he designed a 6-cylinder tank engine that developed 150 horsepower and by the mid-1930s he was working 'behind the scenes' for Rolls-Royce, Bentley, Bristol, Napier, Citroen and Fiat. Among his early American clients were Caterpillar, Chrysler and Harley-Davidson.

By the middle of WWII he had set up a sophisticated workshop to study premature fuel detonation, which is generally known as 'knock'. His developmental work was carried out in close cooperation with Shell Oil Co.



Sir Harry Ricardo, and the historic plaque.

Aero engine design was one of Ricardo's specialities. He spent a great deal of time developing the sleeve valve engine. Bristol was one company that achieved success with its large sleeve valve radial engines. In 1949 Ricardo worked with Frank Whittle on the development of the jet engine.

Throughout his life he always acted as a consulting engineer – he played a vital role in bringing about the

British victory in two world wars. His name was never directly connected with any specific make of car or aircraft. Nonetheless, his contribution to such companies as Rolls-Royce led to innumerable advances in the performance of civilian and military engines. He died in 1974, having seen Ricardo Consulting Engineers grow to into one of the world's foremost engine research establishments.

Also

Covered in the "mini talk" section of the meeting, was the story of a pilot (un-named) who, in bad weather, made an apparently reasonable decision to land on a disused coastal airstrip. Unknown to him, the strip was not an "all weather" one and he was unaware that it had received heavy rain in the previous few days.

On landing his aircraft became hopelessly bogged on the runway – until a fisherman with a four-wheel drive vehicle and plenty of rope casually came to his rescue. With a great deal of trouble they manoeuvred the aircraft onto the main road in the hope of finding a parking place until the weather cleared. While moving along the road, with the fisherman leading the way, the local policeman happened by. He was most helpful and suggested the best place to park the aircraft was in a short street in the nearby town.

When this was accomplished a second aircraft appeared overhead and mistakenly thought the parked one had landed on the short street! – so he carried out a spectacular 'performance' landing, much to the amazement of the onlookers – but there was a happy ending.

The ever-helpful policeman assisted with overnight accommodation and arranged a partial road closure for the departure of both aircraft on the following morning.

Apology

Last month there was a hiccup between the airport management and the parking company staff. We received a sincere apology from those involved.

Next Meeting

The next OFG meeting on Friday March 27th and will feature Trevor Jones who will tell us about a flight in a light aircraft from the west coast of America to Oshkosh in Wisconsin to attend the famous AirVenture show.

A parking fee exemption has been arranged for the meeting time slot 10.30 to 2.30 on Friday 27th, 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