



The Old Fliers' Group

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

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NEXT MEETING Friday October 30th

September Meeting Report

Mini-speaker

Our *Mini-Speaker* for September was Richard Ewing who gave a progress report on the construction of his home-built Sonex aircraft. In a series of photographs that showed the various stages of production, it was possible to see the components take on the shape of an aeroplane after the three years of part time work.

Richard explained that care was needed to avoid errors throughout the entire process. One drill-hole in the wrong place can cause enormous problems!



The Sonex takes shape.

Speaker of the Day

Your editor presented the story of Sir Hubert Wilkins. Few Australians have been held in such high regard – and yet fewer in this country have even heard of him, let alone know much about his life as an explorer and aviator.

Wilkins was a noted photographer, war correspondent and polar explorer. He spent years exploring the Arctic

region by adopting the survival techniques of the Eskimos. Twice during WWI he was awarded the Military Cross for his displays of bravery. He “went over the top” on many occasions to assist the troops and to take photographs of the action. General Monash described him as “the bravest man he ever has seen”.

Later, Wilkins used a variety of aircraft in his polar exploration and was the first to fly across the North Polar Region – from Alaska to the Norwegian island of Spitsbergen. Later, he introduced aerial exploration to the Antarctic.

Three times he crossed the North Atlantic in airships (Hindenburg and Graf Zeppelin) and he attempted to travel under the ice cap to the North Pole in a submarine, the *Nautilus*.

His list of achievements and awards is outstanding.



Wilkins in a Lockheed Vega in Antarctica.

Parking

The new parking arrangement has not worked particularly well for OFG members. The ‘free’ car park filled up by about 11.30 and about five vehicles had to pay for parking in an adjacent pay area.

Next Meeting

The next OFG meeting on Friday October 30th and will feature Wayne Parsons who will tell us about the dangers of flying in North Africa and the Middle East.

See you at the Royal Aero Club just before noon for lunch and our usual proceedings.

Brian Hernan