



The Old Fliers' Group

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

Coordinator: Stephen Rogers – Email: henol@bigpond.net.au

Bulletin No 133 April 2016

****NEXT MEETING**** **Friday April 29th**

Last Meeting

The schedule for the last meeting underwent two last-minute changes. A week before the due date of the meeting Alex Kerr had to cancel, and the night before the meeting new information came to hand that we thought desirable to present.

The 'new information' related to the 46th anniversary of the Cathay Pacific connection from Perth to Hong Kong. On April 1, 1970, a Cathay Convair 880 flew the first leg – Hong Kong to Perth, and on the following day, April 2, the first flight, Perth to Hong Kong, was flown – at the controls of the return flight was Captain Brian Floyd – a regular attendee at our OFG meetings.

After being introduced by ex-Cathay Captain Charles Page, Brian Floyd told us about the joy of being involved in the historic flight from Perth to Hong Kong.

At the end of Brian's address, Charles Page, who is a collector of aviation stamps, presented Brian with a commemorative envelope that was carried in the mail on Brian's flight on April 2 1970.

Broome Attack, March 1942

Your editor related the story of the Japanese attack on Broome. At about 10.00 am on the morning of March 3, 1942, the most devastating air attack on WA during WWII was carried out.

Nine Japanese A6M2 Zero fighters, almost unopposed, destroyed nearly every aircraft on the ground at Broome Aerodrome and on the water at Roebuck Bay. The Zeros were supported by a 'Babs' reconnaissance aircraft that took the following photograph from about 6000 feet during the raid.



Broome on the morning of the raid.

The attack lasted less than 30 minutes, but during that time seven land-based aircraft and fifteen flying boats were destroyed. Dozens of people on the flying boats were killed or wounded. Many of the victims were Dutch nationals – men, women and children who remained on the flying boats while they were being refuelled. About thirty American military personnel were lost when a B-24 Liberator was shot down shortly after it took off at the beginning of the raid. Precisely how many people died in the raid, and who they were, will never be known.

There were countless acts of heroism carried out, particularly by those people on or near the blazing flying boats that spewed burning petrol and oil onto the surface of the bay.



Wreckage can still be seen at low tide.

There was only one Japanese casualty. A Dutch pilot, Gus Winckel, who fired a machine gun 'from the hip' as the raid took place, shot down a Zero.

After the Broome raid, three Japanese Zeros shot down a Dutch DC-3 from Java as it passed over Carnot Bay, about 60 miles north of Broome. The northward bound Zeros were returning to their base near Koepang.

Four people on the DC-3 died in the attack and a "special package" went missing; it was later located by a beachcomber who shared the contents with his friends and local aborigines – the special package contained thousands of diamonds, which, in today's currency, would be worth about \$20,000,000.

Next Meeting

The next OFG meeting, on Friday April 29th, will feature the re-scheduled Alex Kerr who will speak on the subject of China's activities in the South China Sea.

Hope you can make it to the Royal Aero Club just before noon for lunch and to hear our speaker.

Brian Hernan