



The Old Fliers' Group

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

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****NEXT MEETING**** **Friday January 27th 2017.**

Last Meeting

We finished an excellent year with eighty-five members in attendance, all of whom enjoyed the speakers, the lunch, and the usual Christmas pudding. Also, we conducted our 'end of year' free raffle, which was won by John Morrison – a joyride in a Tiger Moth.

First Speaker

Your editor covered the story of Clayton Hutton who was an intelligence officer who worked for MI-9, a sub-section of British Military Intelligence, during World War II. He devised escape and evasion equipment for downed airman in Europe.

Hutton developed the silk map, which was far superior to the paper equivalent in that it could be stored in a limited space and was waterproof. He was also responsible for the development of tiny magnetic compasses that could be secreted in the back of a tunic button, or in other unusual places.

The idea was that the crew of an aircraft shot down behind enemy lines should have a means to evade capture or, if subsequently captured, they could escape and make their way to safety.

Thousands of British and Allied crews made their way back to Allied territory with Hutton's maps and secret equipment.



A compass in a tunic button.

Speaker of the Day

Our *Speaker of the Day* for November was John Wager who told us about the role of the Catalina during World War II. He spoke about his encounters with the Catalina aircraft. He witnessed the first to

leave WA to fly the non-stop 5,632 km leg to Ceylon on the Double Sunrise route. These flights were necessary to maintain communication with England.



Double Sunrise Catalina No.2, Altair Star.

John reminded us that after WWII Winston Churchill quoted that "if Germany and Japan closed the ring" (between Europe and Asia) then the future would have been very bleak.

In April 1942 a Canadian pilot, Sqd. Ldr L Birchell, in a Catalina, warned of a Japanese fleet approaching Ceylon. The fleet included five aircraft carriers. Birchell sent out a radio message before being shot down. His radio call resulted in the Japanese being repulsed, the ring was not closed, and the course of WWII was changed dramatically.

Annual Subscription

The annual subscription remains the same as last year at \$20.00. You can pay 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".

Help Please

The Aviation Museum at Bullcreek is looking for members/helpers. If you have anything to offer please contact Don Crane at aero@inet.net.au or on 9401 0403.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be at the Royal Aero Club, at noon on Friday January 27th 2017. Frank Cocks will tell us of the exploits of Jimmy Woods. As well, you will see some rare and historic photos of early aviation in WA.

Hope to see you there.

Brian Hernan.