



## The Old Fliers' Group

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

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#### **\*\*NEXT MEETING\*\***

**Friday August 25<sup>th</sup> 2017.**

#### **Last Meeting**

We had another good rollup to hear our two speakers tell their stories – Bruce Cullen and Rob Turner.

#### **Bruce Cullen**

We were privileged to hear 95 year-old Bruce Cullen tell us about his time in the RAAF as an electrician and later as a pilot during WWII. After spending his early years on family farm near Narembeen, in 1941, and at the age of seventeen, he enlisted in the RAAF. He began his service life as a trainee electrical technician and on completion of training he was paid six shillings and sixpence per day – that's 65 cents in current coinage.



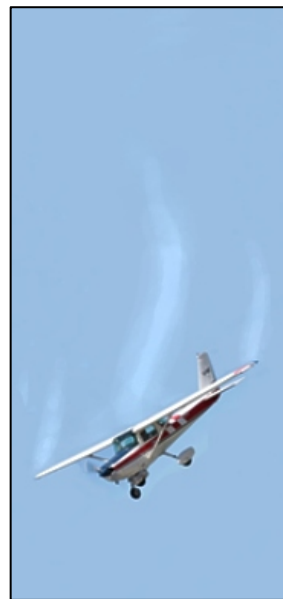
*Bruce at enlistment and with his wings.*

After working at a number of bases throughout Australia he mustered into aircrew and began his elementary training at Cunderdin in 1944. After that he was posted to Geraldton for twin training. He soloed in mid-1944 with a grand total of 160hrs 30mins. Next he was posted to the Aircrew Officers and NCOs Course in Victoria where he studied astro-navigation, tropical survival, unarmed combat, instrument flying and he did a course on high altitude flying. Then he was posted to No 35 Transport Squadron in Townsville.

When the War in the Pacific finished in August 1945 the squadron was tasked with flying troops and ex-POW's home to Australia. It was a 4-day return journey in a C-47 (Douglas DC-3). For a time he was based at Morotai, flying just the Morotai-Japan legs. He was discharged on August 15 1947 with the rank of Warrant Officer. He finished by saying, "As far as he knew, he finished the war without firing a shot at the enemy – nor the enemy firing a shot at him!"

#### **Rob Turner**

Rob Turner returned to entertain us with recollections of his successful attempt to create a world record for the number of consecutive turns in a spin – he managed 74.



It was in 1987 that he achieved this feat in a standard Royal Aero Club Cessna 152 Aerobat, VH-UWC. He informed a local TV station of his impending attempt and they arrived on the morning with a full crew – and so did all the other TV stations in Perth.

With the necessary airways clearance and associated approval Rob climbed to 13 500 feet just south of Jandakot where he began the spins. The TV coverage was featured in the news in Perth, the Eastern States and overseas. (One overseas report claimed that

Rob's effort was nearly as dangerous as Evel Knievel's attempt to jump across the Grand Canyon!)

Rob's record stood for 16 years and was beaten by a U.S. pilot who carried out more spins – inverted.

Special thanks go to both of our speakers for their entertaining and at times humorous presentations.

#### **New Sound System and Projector**

The new sound and projection system performed well and with a bit of 'tweaking' will be even better in the future.

#### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be at the Royal Aero Club, at noon on Friday August 25<sup>th</sup> 2017. Tony McGrath will talk about the early days of Australian National Airways in Western Australia and Steve Rogers will tell us about the famous New Zealand 'aviatrix' Jean Batten.

Hope to see you there.

Brian Hernan.