



The Old Fliers' Group

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

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Bulletin No 148 September 2017

****NEXT MEETING**** **Friday September 29th 2017.**

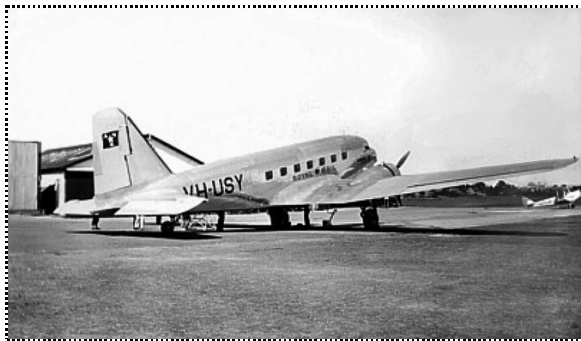
Speaker of the Day

Close to eighty people attended the last Old Fliers Group meeting to hear Tony McGrath talk about Australian National Airways in Western Australia.

Australian National Airways (ANA) was formed when Holymans Airways Pty Ltd (which operated from Tasmania to Melbourne and Sydney) merged with Adelaide Airways Ltd. Both companies had interests in shipping and could see a future in air travel. The across-Australia route from Perth to Adelaide was particularly attractive.

It was decided to make an offer to Western Australian Airways (WAA) to take over their operation. Brearley and the WAA board of directors accepted the offer, and so ANA came into being with air routes that virtually covered Australia.

The DC-2 VH-USY *Bungana* had been purchased by Holymans Airways in 1935; it was the first all-metal airliner to be delivered to Australia and it lifted the standard of air travel with the comfort of hostess service and hot meals. The route was Perth, Kalgoorlie, Forrest, Ceduna, and Adelaide.



The Bungana at Maylands in 1937.

In mid-1939 the DC-3 was introduced, Forrest was dropped as a refuelling stop, and the service continued to Melbourne. In July 1946 ANA began a regular service from Perth to Kalgoorlie. It placed enormous pressure on the Airlines (WA) Ltd service which operated over the same route.

In 1946 the Douglas DC-4 *Skymaster* was introduced to service the routes, Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane.

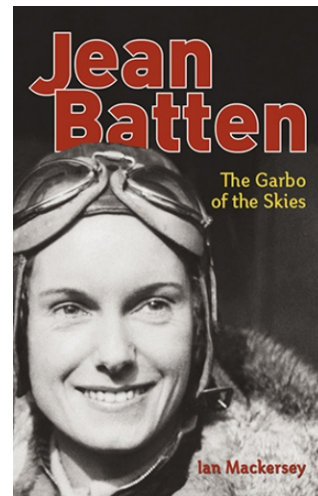
In July 1955 the Douglas DC-6 *Sky Chief* was introduced, but ANA was in trouble. The Federal

Government had set up TAA in 1947 as direct competition. It was concerned by the participation of ANA in Air Ceylon, Cathay Pacific and BCPA. ANA struggled for a number of years and was eventually taken over by Ansett in 1960 and so the world of aviation in Australia changed for ever.

Jean Batten

Steve Rogers told the story of Jean Batten, a New Zealand aviator, who broke numerous records in her early aviation career.

After taking up flying, with the encouragement of her mother, the pair visited Australia where Jean was introduced to Smithy and taken for a fly in the Southern Cross. With mother never far from her side, Jean sailed to England in 1930 so she could pursue her dreams of flying.



In December of that year she became the first New Zealand woman to be awarded the British Air Ministry 'A' Licence (Commercial Licence). Next in her sights was to beat Amy Johnson's solo England to Australia flight record. Jean learned how to manipulate the media (and men) in order to raise the required funding for her record-breaking attempts.

She did not fly during World War II but drove an ambulance. In 1947 she moved to Jamaica where she drifted into obscurity. In 1966 she decided to make a comeback. In 1969, after more than thirty years out of the spotlight, the 60 year old inexplicitly re-emerged. For the next ten years she travelled the world giving interviews and getting involved in aeronautical events. Then as suddenly as she re-emerged she moved to the Mediterranean island of Majorca, where in isolation and obscurity she died and was buried in a pauper's grave.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be at the Royal Aero Club, at noon on Friday September 29th. John Wager will talk about the life of Lawrence J. Hartnett who developed the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation. Your editor will talk about events involving hypoxia.

Hope to see you there.

Brian Hernan.