



The Old Fliers' Group

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

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

Bulletin No 163 February 2019

Report on our last meeting

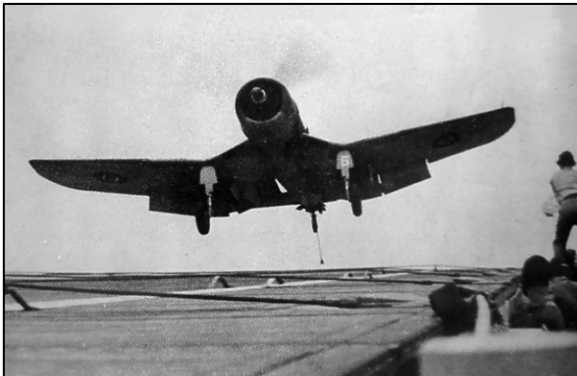
About ninety people attended our January meeting. It was pleasing to see a number of new members and visitors.

First Speaker

John Wager told the story about a British Fleet Air Arm pilot named Keith Quilter. After his initial training, Quilter moved on to the American Corsair aircraft and took part in the war in the Pacific Ocean during the latter stages of WW2.

Quilter completed his flying training in 1944 at a time when the British believed that its Navy should support the U.S. forces in the Pacific in the final stages of the war. It was after VE Day that over 250 aircraft and 10000 sailors and aircrew took part – including Quilter.

Under a Lend-Lease Agreement with the U.S. Government, the British aircrew, in the main, flew the Chance-Vought Corsair from British carriers.



A Corsair landing on a carrier.

During an attack on Owase Bay in Japan Quilter was shot down and crashed in the ocean. Fortunately he survived, but fairly soon he then saw the ominous shape of a black submarine slicing through the water toward him. Fortunately, it was a U.S. vessel which took him on board. It was not possible to transfer him to a ship or a shore base before the Japanese surrendered, so Quilter saw VP Day on the U.S. submarine USS *Scabbardfish*.

John drew some of his information from a book called "The Kamikaze Hunters" by Will Iredale.

Hermann Ittershagen

Next, members heard about Hermann Ittershagen. He was born in 1872 in Germany and arrived in Western Australia in 1903. He first tried his hand at farming near Manjimup before starting a successful wickerwork business in West Subiaco

(Now called Shenton Park). Hermann was highly skilled in that type of work, having previously completed an apprenticeship in his uncle's factory in Germany. With an eventual staff of nearly a dozen in Perth, he produced high quality prams, basinetts and cane furniture.

During a trip to Germany in 1922 he visited the Lanz tractor factory and was impressed by the Lanz Bulldog crude oil type. At that time, most W.A. farmers carried out their field work with a team of horses. The tractor sales took off. Before long, Ittershagen and his specialised staff were touring country areas to carry out sales and service work.

It reached a stage where he felt that an aircraft was needed to efficiently service his customers, so he imported two Klemm monoplanes and made the decision to employ Harry 'Cannonball' Baker as his pilot.

Hermann felt that Maylands was too far away from Subiaco, so he leased endowment land from the University of Western Australia and built West Subiaco Aerodrome.



The Klemm and the Lanz Bulldog at West Subiaco.

Ittershagen found ample work for the aircraft so he formed the Aerial Commerce Company which called for additional staff. Next, he became the German Consular Agent for W.A. which gave him access to a wide range of people in society.

He then became agent for Mercedes trucks, and later established the successful Subiaco Flying Club which promoted gliding; later set up the W.A. Flying Club.

The Depression of 1930, and then WW11 had a serious adverse effect on his businesses.

Hermann died in 1940.

Next Meeting

The next OFG meeting will be at the Royal Aero Club, starting at noon on Friday, 22 February. Our Speaker of the Day will be Bevan Marshall who will talk about 'The confessions of a safety officer', and Bob Murphy will talk about 'Dryblower' Murphy.

Hope to see you there.

Brian Hernan.