



The Old Fliers Group

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

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Bulletin No 176 January 2021

Our first luncheon meeting since February 2020. 75 members confirmed they would be there, and I think we exceeded that.

Wonderful!

There were friends to catch up with and new stories to tell.

Bevan Marshall told us of the heady days in 1987 when the yachting World came to contest the 12 metre races off Fremantle.

Alan Bond had imported a Skyship 600 to watch the racing from and to promote his beer.

Bevan was tasked with certifying it as safe to fly in Australia.



Airship Industries Skyship 600 imported by Alan Bond in 1987. Remained on register as VH-HAA until Bond's bankruptcy in 1992. Used to promote Swan Beer, owned by Bond Corporation.

Bevan explained how a mere film of membrane polymer like Gladwrap served to contain the 6,666 cubic metres of Helium.

Inflating and deflating internal ballonets displaced the Helium so causing the airship to ascend or descend.

VH-HAA remained on the register until Bond's bankruptcy in 1992.

During the interval Mike Reeve won the free raffle for a flight in a C152.

Mike and Judy drive from Eaton near Bunbury to attend.

Carrot cake was then served in lieu of the traditional Christmas pudding we missed out on last November.

Don Gordon was our next speaker and he told us about the 'Prone Meteor'.

In 1942 a FW190 landed at RAF Pembrey in South Wales.

The pilot had mistaken the Bristol Channel for the English Channel.

The boffins examined the FW190 closely and discovered that the pilot flew it in a semi-prone position.

This way he was able to withstand higher G forces than pilots flying Spitfires and Hurricanes.

This led to the early 1950s experiment where a Gloster Meteor was converted to accommodate a "prone" pilot.

That is where the problems started said Don.



The February meeting is on Friday 26th and our two speakers will be Brian Mollan and John Ridley.

There is no need for those who paid their \$20 member fee last year to pay this year, otherwise payment can be made on the day.

For those receiving emails, I will ask, closer to the date, for RSVPs.

This way there will be no need to register (for Covid) at the door on the day.

Thank you to all our members and guests who attended and made this meeting a great success.

Stephen Rogers