



Victory Loans and The Sunderland Flying Boat in Tasmania

Author: Paul A.C. Richards AM, November 2021

The Visit of the Supermarine Southampton Flying Boats in 1938

The Saro Supermarine Southampton Flying boats visited the Tamar prior to the outbreak of the Second World War was recorded in the Examiner in this article.

In December 1931 the *Examiner* newspaper reported ¹:

NEW FLYING BOAT FOR TASMANIA

The assembling is nearly completed in Melbourne of the Windhover three engined flying boat recently imported by Matthews Aviation, of Essendon. The company hopes to put the machine into operation on the Tasmanian service before the end of the week, when the Christmas tourist season will begin. The Saro Windhover, which is the largest flying boat in Australia, has a wingspan of 54ft. 3 inches.

The new Amphibian for the Tasmanian air service which will be inaugurated soon by the Matthews Aviation Co. Captain Frank Neale will pilot this three engined British machine on its maiden flight to Launceston about December 15 and an overall length of 42ft. Both machines and engines are of all British construction, and Shell oil and spirit will be used on the service. Captain Frank Neale will be in charge of the flying boat, and it is hoped to make three return trips weekly across the Strait. The smaller Cutty Sark, which made several visits to Tasmania last season, will also be used.

A previous experience of the Sunderland Flying boats in the Tamar prior to the outbreak of the Second World War was recorded in the Examiner in this article:²

WILL BERTH AT ROSEVEARS Visiting Flying Boat Squadron

When the five R.A.F. flying boats now on their way to Australia to attend the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the founding of New South Wales visit Launceston in February, they will berth in the river off Rosevears. This information was contained in a letter received at yesterday's meeting of the Marine Board from the Air Board in Melbourne. The letter also asked the Marine Board to provide suitable moorings, Sand stated that a representative of the R.A.A.F. would visit Launceston to select the exact sites for these. The board agreed to provide the moorings and to do everything possible to assist the squadron, charging only out of pocket expenses. The flying boats, which comprise the No. 204 R.A.F. flying boat squadron, are due February 17, and the Master Warden (Mr. W. Robinson) suggested yesterday that the officers of the squadron might be taken on a tour of the river to given them an opportunity of appreciating its possibilities as a flying boat and seaplane base.



VICTORY LOANS AND THE SUNDERLAND FLYING BOAT IN TASMANIA

Three of the flying boats arrived on 17th February 1938 as reported by the Examiner:³

FLYING BOATS FIRST R.A.F. CRAFT HERE

Flight Over City Prevented by Slight Engine Trouble

The first R.A.F. machines to visit Tasmania, three Saro flying boats of 204 Squadron, Mt. Batten, Plymouth, alighted on the Tamar at Rosevears yesterday morning after a crossing of less than three hours from Melbourne. With the flight across Bass Strait, they had covered more than 13,000 miles since they left England on a 150th anniversary cruise to Australia.

Slight trouble with one of the flagship's engines, probably a result of her immersion in Sydney harbour, compelled the boats to land without circling over Launceston, and the commanding officer, Wing Commander K. B. Lloyd, later expressed his regret that city folk had not been able to see the boats in the air.

The three huge, twin-engined craft were sighted by watchers from Rosevears shortly before 10 o'clock. With the sun glinting on their metal hulls, they swept around gracefully to pick up special moorings that had been laid by the Marine Board. Within a few minutes the sky-blue ensign of the Royal Air Force was fluttering from each of the boats.

The flying boats had left Melbourne at 7.15 and had crossed Bass Strait by way of Wilson's Promontory and Flinders Island. A deviation from their intended course to take them over the island was made at the request of the Prime Minister (Mr. Lyons) and the Premier (Mr. A. G. Ogilvie, K.C.).





TASMANIAN AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY Incorporated

VICTORY LOANS AND THE SUNDERLAND FLYING BOAT IN TASMANIA

The Visit of the Sunderland Flying Boat to Support the Victory Loans in 1945

The Short S.25 Sunderland flying boat was designed to be a long-range reconnaissance patrol bomber. The first flight was in 1937 and were produced up until 1946. Approximately 750 were built.

The RAAF received six of these flying boats to primarily transport passengers and freight.

The first of these, A26-1, was built in 1943 and arrived in Australia in March 1944.⁴

On 31 March 1945, the plane was requisitioned by the Air Board to tour all five states to raise submissions for the 3rd Victory loan. After the tour ended on 30th April 1945, it was returned to the RAAF.

The Visit of the Sunderland Flying Boat to Support the Victory Loans

During the course of World War II, four Victory Loans and one Austerity Loan were raised. Whilst the loans offered very favourable terms, they were promoted primarily using the rhetoric of nationalism and civic duty rather than individual gain. With stores short of products at Christmas time, the government encouraged the gifting of war savings certificates and war savings stamps instead.

However, as an encouragement, the RAAF despatched Sunderland Flying Boats to Tasmania offering flights to those who had invested in Government bonds. The *Examiner* reported in March 1945:⁵

FLYING BOAT'S VISIT

The Sunderland flying boat which is to visit Tasmania in connection with the Third Victory Loan is due to arrive in Launceston next Tuesday. Arrangements will be made for all those who have contributed £100 or more to the loan to be taken up for flights.

The *Examiner* reported in early 03 April 1945:⁶

The interruption of the interstate tour of the Sunderland flying boat owing to bad weather at Newcastle, will not affect the Tasmanian itinerary in support of the Third Victory Loan.

Captain of the Sunderland, which has a crew of 10, is Flight-Lieutenant M. S. Mainprize, D.F.C., formerly of the famous No. 10 Squadron, R.A.F. Coastal Command. He gained his decoration for outstanding service in anti-submarine patrols, during which he bagged a U. boat in the Bay of Biscay.



The photograph of the Sunderland birthed at Rosevears on the Tamar hangs in the Dining Room at the present Rosevears Hotel.

The next day the *Examiner* reported:⁷

Huge Flying Boat Circles Over

City Citizens were keenly interested in the huge Sunderland flying-boat which circled overhead yesterday during its Third Victory Loan tour visit to the Tamar. The Sunderland reached Rosevears at 9 o'clock after flying over the city and during the morning made several passenger flights, taking up contributors of £100 or more to the loan, as well as members of the local loan committee. These included the Mayor (Ald. Clark), who is chairman of the committee, Mr. W. Gellie, the deputy chairman, and Ald. Henty. The flying-boat left for Hobart early in the afternoon. Members of the flying-boat's crew are Flight-Lieut. M. S. Mainprize, D.F.C. (captain), Flying-Officer B. Buchan, Warrant-Officer E. C. O'Brien, Warrant Officer R. Wilson, Flt.-Sgt. B. Love and Sgt. R. Anderson. All are members of No. 10 Squadron, R.A.A.F., the first Australian squadron to serve in Britain. While overseas they took part in anti-submarine patrols over the Atlantic and Mediterranean, in the evacuation of Crete and in the transport of wounded from Malta.

WILL ENCIRCLE TOWNS

The Sunderland will fly over and encircle many towns throughout the state after its departure from Hobart to-morrow. So far as time permits, the flying boat will visit the following centres: Huonville, New Norfolk, Hamilton, Queenstown, Gormanston, Strahan, Zeehan, Rosebery, Smithton, Stanley and Wynyard. It will then fly over north-west towns to Deloraine before crossing Bass Strait to Point Cook.



TASMANIAN AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY Incorporated

VICTORY LOANS AND THE SUNDERLAND FLYING BOAT IN TASMANIA

The Victory Loans

In March 1945 it was announced that although advance subscriptions had been received for several weeks, the Third Victory Loan would not be officially opened until mid-March when in a series of broadcast addresses the leader of the Federal Country Party (Mr. Fadden), the leader of the Liberal Party Mr Menzies), and the Prime Minister (Mr. Curtin) will ask Australians to support the thirteenth of the loan appeals put before them since March, 1940. The response to previously launched appeals had been satisfactory, and the money raised had been Instrumental in keeping our homeland free from invasion and in changing the European war outlook. However, in 1940, and for more than three years subsequently, there had been a very real danger that gangsterdom would prevail, as between them Germany and Italy controlled more than half of Europe and their appetite for more territory was unsatiated.

Australia materially assisted in changing the position. Her soldiers, equipped and maintained by funds raised in the Commonwealth, played a leading part in the events which led to the ejection of the enemy from North Africa, paving the way for the elimination from the war of Italy, and making possible the direct assault on Germany, which had reached a stage where the complete rout of Nazism was foregone conclusion. In the most convincing way possible, the value which the people of the Commonwealth place upon freedom has been demonstrated, and the money subscribed for defence purposes was so well spent that the men who did the actual fighting have never had cause to complain at inadequacy in the quantity or inferiority in, the quality of the munitions with which they were furnished.

Those who subscribed to previously launched loans invested their money to good purpose. They and all others in a position to help were now asked to carry on the good work against aggressor nations by providing further funds to help in financing Australia's war effort from motives of patriotism and. self-interest.

As the war was coming to an end there was a danger that with the utter defeat of Germany rapidly approaching a tendency to relax in contributing to the cost of the war. But even when Nazism and all it stands for have been eliminated, an equally aggressive nation, Japan one much nearer home will have to be forced to disgorge its ill-gotten gains and respect the rights of other countries. Japan is bent on establishing a new order — appropriately termed a 'new disorder' by punsters — and as appetite grew and not satisfied with her territorial gains in Western Asia, but aims at bringing all the lands in the Pacific Ocean under her control. Fortunately for us, her dream of annexing Australia and New Guinea was dissipated by the reception she met at the hands of our own and American servicemen. The enemy, however, still held the Netherlands East Indies and other islands in the south and southwest Pacific at that time, and until they have been driven from them and forced to make a radical change in his foreign policy, the safety of Australia will continue to be menaced. Gratifying though the progress made under the direction of General MacArthur and Admiral Nimitz is, there was a long and hard row to hoe before Japan will be forced to admit defeat.



TASMANIAN AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY Incorporated

VICTORY LOANS AND THE SUNDERLAND FLYING BOAT IN TASMANIA

Consequently the task confronting the United Nations was a formidable one, but as far as Australia was concerned it would be rendered easier if there was to be a hearty response to the appeal now being made for further funds for war purposes. It was hoped to raise at least £100,000,000 before April 27th, the due date for the closing of the loan. It was felt at that time that the amount was well within the financial capacity of the people of the Commonwealth.

There can be no question of the Third Victory Loan failing through inability to support it, for much more than the £100,000,000 asked for is lying to the credit of depositors at banks, while review of the attendances at racecourses and other pleasure resorts should leave little room for doubt concerning the spending capacity of the populace generally. It will be a patriotic gesture to lend money to the Commonwealth for defence purposes.

¹ Examiner (Launceston, Tas. : 1900 - 1954), Wednesday 9 December 1931, p. 6

² Examiner (Launceston, Tas. : 1900 - 1954), Friday 10 December 1937, p. 9

³ Examiner (Launceston, Tas. : 1900 - 1954) Friday 18 Feb 1938, p 6

⁴ <http://www.adf-serials.com.au/2a26.htm>

⁵ Examiner (Launceston, Tas. : 1900 - 1954), Tuesday 27 March 1945, p. 4

⁶ Examiner (Launceston, Tas. : 1900 - 1954), Tuesday 3 April 1945, p. 4

⁷ Examiner (Launceston, Tas. : 1900 - 1954), Wednesday 4 April 1945, p. 4