



Believe it or Not!! – Aviation Mysteries of Tasmania and Bass Strait

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There are seemingly certain parts of the world where strange things are seen, and even stranger things happen. The Bass Strait Triangle is one of those places. This mysterious part of the world runs from the southern coast of Victoria over the stretch of water that is the Bass Strait and into regions of Tasmania.



Holyman's Airways DH86 "Miss Hobart"

In October 1934, while crossing the Bass Strait in perfect weather conditions for flying, the airliner "Miss Hobart" would vanish without a trace. There were 11 people on board, nine passengers and two pilots. Neither they, nor even the smallest amount of wreckage was ever discovered despite extensive searches by military aircraft and vessels.

Aviation experts, both at the time and today, believe the loss of the "Miss Hobart" to be a genuine mystery not least due to the de Havilland DH86 aircraft being one of the most advanced of its era. It made use of four independent engines, with the likelihood of all four engines failing at the same time being almost universally dismissed. Even if that had happened, the plane was designed so that it should have been able to be guided to an emergency landing.

The last transmission from the "Miss Hobart" spookily shares a detail with that of the Jason Manifold account in 1978. The crew allegedly claimed they could hear the sound of a plane around them, and there were even several reports of an "aerial machine" coming toward them. They then reported that the humming sound had suddenly stopped. Nothing more was heard from the "Miss Hobart" after that.



On the same day that Fred Valentich disappeared, on October 21, 1978, (refer Newsletter Issue Number 2) Roy Manifold would capture a picture, shown above, of a strange object in the sky over Bass Strait. Whether the object in the picture is connected to Valentich's disappearance or not is open to debate, but it is considered to be a genuine picture (in that there has been no manipulation of the image).

Roy's son, Jason, was with his father on the evening in question. He says that while his father had gone inside his shed after taking the picture, Jason remained outside watching the sky. Although he didn't see anything, he could hear the sound of a plane engine overhead. Instead of gradually fading off into the distance, however, the engine suddenly came to a stop "as if someone had turned a radio off." Then, there was nothing but silence.

Manifold believes what he heard was connected to the disappearance of Valentich. What makes this seemingly trivial detail all the more intriguing is that, coincidentally or not, it happened almost 44 years to the day that "Miss Hobart" disappeared.

Almost a year following the disappearance of the "Miss Hobart" airliner, another plane, the "Loina", (pictured below) would vanish while traveling from Melbourne to Tasmania. The aircraft had just radioed the control tower in Tasmania to say it was preparing to make its approach to land at Flinders Island when it suddenly went silent. It carried three passengers and two pilots

While none of the five people on board were ever located, a search of the waters did recover some wreckage. Three of the plane's seats were discovered, as well pieces of the petrol tank. Perhaps most intriguing, however, was a small piece of the floor of the plane. There



appeared to be a burned patch only several centimetres wide. Further analysis suggested that the area had been in flames, and other material appeared to show someone had tried to “intensely” stamp it out. Whether this small detail had anything to do with the fate of the plane is unknown.



Holyman's Airways DH86 "Loina"

As you might imagine, there were numerous accounts of strange events in the Bass Strait during World War2. However, when it is considered that there were no official reports of any enemy fighters even entering the strait, perhaps it is a little strange that 17 military planes were lost in this stretch of water during the war years alone. There were also other, less fatal incidents.

In 1944, a strange “dark shadow” came out of nowhere and flew beside a Bristol Beaufort bomber for almost 20 minutes over the Bass Strait. Then, without warning, it shot upward at an amazing pace and vanished.

Two years earlier in 1942, an Australian fighter pilot took his plane over the Bass Strait after orders to investigate reports of strange lights made by fishermen. As he surveyed the area, a huge bronze disc came out of the clouds and settled alongside the plane for several moments before vanishing as quickly as it had appeared.

SO, THERE YOU ARE BELIEVE IT OR NOT!!