



Included in this edition:

- Historical Archives of Tasmanian Aviators. Captain Aubrey Koch MBE
- Tasmanian Glider Club Part 1
- Tasmanian Aviators – Cummings and Lovell Brothers
- Hart Aviation Services
- David Warren and the Black Box
- Swansea Demon Tragedy
- Leviathans of the Air – The Dornier X
- Did you know?
- “In the Air” Seminar
- Do you remember?
- The Classifieds

Editorial

Welcome to edition number ten of the TAHS Newsletter.

In this edition we continue the stories of notable Tasmanian aviators and their careers with the story of Ulverstone born Captain Aubrey Koch MBE and his incredible wartime experiences flying QEA Shorts flying boats.

Tasmania’s gliding history Part is commenced with Part 2 to follow in our Spring edition.

Also included is the history of little-known Hart Aircraft Services the third operator to offer commercial flights from Tasmania to the Bass Strait islands.

Launceston educated David Warren and his invention that may have saved thousands of lives.

Following our article “Demons over Waratah” in our last newsletter we follow this item with the story of a tragic incident involving a Hawker Demon during a flying display at Swansea on Tasmania’s east coast.

Aviation’s Leviathans continues with the Dornier X and a couple of interesting “Did You Know” snippets and our classified pages round off this edition.

Also, some photographs are included from our recent “In the Air” seminar at the Launceston Church Grammar School. A Tour of their Aviation Centre was undertaken with the Seminar.

Trust, you enjoy and remember feel free to make any comments or submit articles or historic facts.

Wayne Dearing

Newsletter Editor.



Historical Archives of Early Tasmanian Aviators

CAPTAIN ALBERT AUBREY KOCH, MBE.

Tasmanian born, **Albert Aubrey (Aub) Koch**, MBE (2 October 1904 – 21 June 1975) was a pioneering Australian military and civil pilot. He trained at Point Cook in 1926 and following graduation, accepted a Short Service Commission in the Royal Air Force (RAF) as there were no places available in the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) at the time. After four years of service in Egypt and Palestine, he returned to Australia and was commissioned into the Citizen Air Force, flying with No. 1 Squadron at Laverton, where he gained flying instructor qualifications. Soon after, he was employed by Guinea Airways as an aircraft captain and spent five years in Papua and New Guinea (PNG), gaining fame as the rescuer of the Archbold expedition. Koch was transferred to the RAAF Active Reserve upon going to PNG. He joined Qantas a year before World War II broke out, employed predominantly on the Singapore route. He was unfortunate to be the captain of the only Qantas aircraft known to be shot down during that war, when the Short Empire flying boat *Corio* was lost off Timor (*Circe* disappeared in 1942, possibly also shot down, and *Corinna* was destroyed by enemy action on the water at Broome, Western Australia). Post war he was recruited by Lester Brain on the formation of Trans Australia Airlines (TAA), specifically to be Senior Pilot on the DC4 Skymaster. At 45, he retired from active flying to become Inspector of Safety and Accidents, TAA. Koch married Clarice Grant in 1933. They had two daughters and two sons. This is his story.



Captain Koch in his TAA uniform

Born at Ulverstone, Tasmania on 2 October 1904, the son of R. W. Koch, and Elinor (Burton) Koch, Aubrey was educated at Clemes College, Hobart, and began an Engineering Degree at



the University of Tasmania. He was a keen rower and was in the bow for the 1925 winning crew in the inter-varsity eights in Brisbane. Aviation called, however, and he entered the RAAF Point Cook for pilot training in 1926, graduating at the end of the year and was one of six graduates from his course selected for a Short Service Commission in the RAF.

Koch was initially sent to England for training and assessment, where he flew the Avro 504, the Armstrong Whitworth Siskin, and the Bristol Fighter. Accepting a posting to the Middle East, he was attached to No. 208 Army Cooperation Squadron RAF at Heliopolis, Egypt. Whilst with the squadron, he flew operations on the Bristol Fighter and in August 1929 was involved in the suppression of the Hebron riots. In 1929 while on leave in Australia he met with Lieutenant Colonel Horace Brinsmead, the Controller of Civil Aviation to understand the skills he would need to find a commercial aviation position back in Australia. Brinsmead advised him to gain experience on larger aircraft and fortunately in May 1930, his Squadron re-equipped with Armstrong Whitworth Atlas. Koch was then allowed to convert to fly the Vickers Vimy at No. 216 Squadron, and flew as second pilot on Vickers Victoria aircraft. He returned to Australia at the end of 1930 at the expiry of his commission, arriving in Melbourne on 15 December.



No 216 Squadron RAF Vickers Victoria's at Ismailia (A A Koch)

On his return to Australia Aubrey found employment in public transport aviation was difficult to find, however, he was able to continue flying with the Citizen Air Force at No. 1 Squadron, Laverton.

To gain experience he flew as second pilot, without pay, for Australian National Airways and could consider himself lucky not to be aboard the ill-fated "Southern Cloud", when family commitments prevented him being part of its crew on its fateful flight.



In mid-1933 he was appointed instructor with the Australian Aero Club, based at Essendon Aerodrome and in November was recruited by Guinea Airways as a captain spending the next five years in Papua and New Guinea where he flew the Junkers W 34, the Junkers G 31, and the Ford Tri-Motor, gaining experience with sea operations when the W34 was float equipped.



File photo of Ford Trimotor similar to Koch's aircraft in New Guinea

During this period of time the second (1936–37) Archbold Expedition had become isolated when its own aircraft was accidentally destroyed in Port Moresby harbour. They were thought to be camped in the Blucher Mountains near the headwaters of the Strickland River, low on supplies and without fuel for its generators. Koch flew out of Mt Hagen in a Ford fitted with long range tanks, found the party and resupplied them by parachute with food and gasoline and gained some notoriety for his efforts. Among his many photographs taken during this period are several of the last known days of Amelia Earhart at Lae aerodrome.

Koch finally achieved his ambition of becoming a commercial pilot by joining what was then known as Qantas Empire Airways (QEA) on 4 July 1938. The Australian to Singapore service commenced on 2 August 1938 (the westbound service on 4 August). In the almost nautical language of QEA, he was promoted from "Extra Mate" to "Senior Mate" in October 1940. This allowed him to fly as relief Captain on the Singapore service. He was soon promoted to "Master", and in June 1943 to "Extra Master" fulfilling his ambition to Captain a commercial airline.

QEA was intimately involved in the war effort almost from its beginning and in late 1940's it was contracted to fly 19 PBY5 Catalinas from Honolulu to Australia on behalf of the RAAF. By a convenience, the crews were regarded as civilians (to meet American diplomatic niceties) for this operation, but on other RAAF contracts, particularly to combat zones, they were seen as serving in the RAAF Reserve. Koch and a crew that included the now famous aviator and author, P.G. Taylor, flew the final leg of one of the Catalina's delivery flights, arriving in Sydney on 24 October 1941, for the first time via Suva, Fiji.



File Photo of RAAF Catalina

The crew of this flight were determined to commemorate their mission by flying the first airmail delivery between Fiji and Australia and to that end they had a large number of "First Day Covers" (but without Airmail stamps). They were endorsed by the Suva Post Office prior to departure and by the Sydney Post Office on arrival (some examples of what became collector's items are held by the Qantas Museum). They also transported 200 pounds weight of ordinary mail on behalf of the Fiji postal authorities. This plan led to a serious disagreement with the American Airline Pan American, which had the contract to convey the air mail from Fiji but was not due to start operations until 9 November 1941.

Following the delivery flight Koch returned to the East Indies operation and on 30 January 1942, when in command of the Shorts S23 Empire aircraft named *Corio*, was shot down off Timor by seven Japanese Zeros whilst carrying out a relief flight to Surabaya, Dutch East Indies. Of the eighteen people on board, five survived. Koch was wounded by gunfire in the left leg and left arm and broke his right leg in the subsequent crash landing. Despite the injuries, he swam about five miles to the shore where he was looked after by local people, until the Dutch Navy found the survivors some days later and rescued them with a Dornier flying boat. Some three weeks later, once again apparently tempting fate, he was in Darwin hospital on the day of the first Japanese raid on Darwin. By good fortune, the QEA Shorts S23 aircraft *Camilla* survived the raid and Koch was flown to Sydney for treatment.

He was unfortunate again on 22 April 1943 when, in command of this aircraft on an RAAF contract involving the transport of military personnel to Port Moresby, he found himself unable to proceed due to bad weather. With low fuel supplies on board he decided to attempt a night landing on the open ocean when off the coast of New Guinea. Some comment has been made that the relatively inexperienced RAAF co-pilot Sydney Peak may have contributed to the accident when he initially believed he caught sight of the sea then shouted it was still some distance below them. In attempting to regain control of the aircraft Koch had just



configured for landing, the *Camilla* stalled, struck the water and broke up. Koch would later recall that just prior to impact the altimeter was reading “*minus 30 feet.*”

Of the 31 people on board, 13 did not survive and for the second time in fifteen months Koch found himself struggling for his life. Koch spent about 18 hours in the sea before being rescued by the chance passage of a local steamer. Following the incident, A. B. Corbett, the Director-General of Civil Aviation, recommended to his Minister that in view of the circumstances no Court of Inquiry be held—in effect Koch was exonerated.



File photo of the illfated Shorts “Camilla” and below the “Corio.”





Following the war in 1946, the Australian Government determined to nationalise commercial air operations in the belief that air transport was primarily a public service, but it was prevented from doing so by a High Court decision. It therefore formed a government airline to compete with the private carriers (which was to be administered by the Australian National Airways Commission) and would operate as Trans Australia Airlines (TAA). Lester Brain was headhunted from Qantas and was appointed General Manager of the new airline. One of his first appointments was that of Captain Aubrey Koch to be Senior Pilot DC4 Skymaster. Brain would later be quoted as describing Koch as *"one of the best and most versatile pilots and navigators of his eraone of the most manly, courageous and honest characters I have ever known."*

Koch remained in this role for four years, however reoccurring disabilities developed from his war injuries forced his retirement from active flying in September 1950. With in excess of 17,000 flying hours, he now took up the role of Inspector of Air Safety for TAA.

In June 1955 he was appointed a Member of the Civil Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, the citation being: "In recognition of Captain Koch's long and distinguished service to civil aviation in Australia." He finally retired in June 1961, and settled at Mt Eliza, Victoria, where he died on 21 June 1975.



File photo TAA DC-4 Skymaster



The Tasmanian Glider Club 1929-1939 – Part 1

By: P.A.C. Richards, A.M.

The first glider which left the ground in Tasmania was designed and constructed by Messrs. W. Wedd and C. Halloran of Hobart. It was tested at Brighton in 1929 with Mr Wedd at the controls. A car was used for towing and after a few runs the machine rose some feet, but travelled only a few yards and on landing broke a main spar. The test was then abandoned. Shortly after this the Tasmanian Glider Club successfully flew a primary glider constructed by Mr. Charles Dixon, of Launceston. This machine was well constructed and gave excellent service while in operation.

Mr. Wedd spent the following three months redesigning and constructing his machine and on completion it was taken to Mt. Garret at Sorell for a test flight. After many unsuccessful attempts to make the machine fly, a speed of 40 miles an hour into a 20 miles per hour head wind was attained and the machine rose into the air, but the pilot, being inexperienced in flying, was unable to control it correctly and the flight ended in a crash, the machine being wrecked beyond repair.

A week after this flight, a Zögling primary glider constructed by Mr. C. Cliff in conjunction with Mr. B. Jones, was flown successfully at the Goodwood estate, with Captain F. G. Huxley at the controls. This glider was afterwards sold to the Hobart Gliding Club and many flights were made in it.

With the inauguration of the aerial service between Tasmania and the mainland impending, a branch of the Glider Club of Australia was recently formed in Launceston, with the laudable object of encouraging aeronautics in Tasmania. Good progress was being made and the first glider to be constructed in Tasmania was nearing completion in Launceston.



The Zögling Primary Glider



In February 1930 the *Mercury* reported:

"A Tasmanian branch of the Glider Club was formed," said Mr. C E. Dixon, the secretary, In an interview with a representative of "The Mercury" yesterday "with the idea of providing a safe means of operating aircraft, to make the youth of Tasmania 'air minded' and to encourage and develop aeronautics In all its branches".

"Within the past few years" continued Mr. Dixon, "extensive experiments have been carried out by enthusiasts on the mainland and abroad, with engineless planes of different types, with the result that it is now possible to glide for long distances in comparative safety, as the machines seldom reach a very high altitude.

Good progress has been made in putting the club on a firm-footing, and the construction of the first glider is nearing completion, and. will soon be ready for the air. Valuable assistance has been given to the' club by Mr. Norman Molesworth, of the Melbourne branch who has furnished a great deal of information, and the Aero Club has assured the branch of their support".

The article gave an excellent description of the glider, which was constructed of spruce and oregon pine and was lined with special aero plywood. It had a wingspan of 32 feet, each wing containing 10 spans constructed of spruce, the whole being covered with fabric. The cockpit was situated in the extreme front of the machine and sitting in this unprotected position, the student would not be injured by splintering wood, should the glider fail. Also, in this position he could "feel" the wind and judge and regulate the speed of the glider. The controls were similar to those on an engined plane, the rudder being operated by a crossbar.

The executive was anxious to increase membership and as members were eligible over the ages of 14 years of age, it was expected that the hobby would become very popular.

In October 1930 following the successful flights at Goodwood, Glenorchy, of the glider constructed by Messrs. C. Cliff and Basil Jones, an enthusiastic meeting at the Royal Autocar Club on the 27 October saw the formation of a gliding club in Hobart. There were 33 present, Mr. T. Fitzgerald being voted into the chair.

The *Mercury* reported:

Capt. F. G. Huxley referred to the valuable preliminary work of Messrs. Cliff and Jones and Capt. C. Peters In the construction and testing of a glider which was found equal to anything of its kind in Australia and modelled on the plans of a German machine.

Mr. Jones said that eight or nine weeks were occupied in the construction of the glider, which was of the same type as that which held the Australian record of 35 minutes. A primary glider was constructed first, and it was hoped to proceed later with a



secondary glider and a sailplane. Gliding was the kindergarten of aviation, and the thing now was to get a club going and learn to flying.

Capt. Huxley urged that gliding was a sport as well as skiing and other pastimes and was interesting as a sport alone, but it also had the advantage of providing valuable preliminary training for airplane work and not being costly, would put flying within the reach of many to whom airplanes were denied by expense. The Northern Glider Club had carried out 110 flights without damage and Southerners could do the same. In any case, the risk was not so great as that of falling from a motorcycle.

The cooperation between the North and South in establishing gliding was evidence when a camp meeting at Ross, with North vs. South gliding contests, had been suggested in jest.

Mr. Cliff expressed appreciation of the assistance afforded him and others by the Northern Gliding Club, as representing an example of the good feeling which should exist between North and South. Captain Huxley's assistance had been invaluable in instruction in handling the machine.

Capt. E. R. Cottier offered every assistance. Gliding was excellent training in air-mindedness.

Mr. Cliff stated that the machine used at Goodwood cost £121 9s. 10d., including labour, material and the tension rope used for launching. It was to be disposed of to the club (if formed) for £95, excluding the rope, which was valued at £10. The initial cost of a glider in Melbourne ranged from £80 upwards.

On the motion of Capt. Cottier, it was decided to form a club and accept this offer. The following first officers were elected: Secretary, Mr. Basil Jones; Treasurer, Mr. L. Owen; Committee, Messrs. A. Drysdale, C. Clift, E. R. Cottier, C. Wedd, and Capt. C. Peters; Hon. Instructors, Captains Huxley, Peters, Cottier, and Mr. Cooper; Hon. Auditors Messrs. P. St. Leger and A. Stump.

An entrance fee of 10s. 6d. and annual subscription of £1 1s. was decided on for full gliding members, with a subscription only of 10s. 6d. a year for non-gliding members. Provision was also made for junior non-gliding members up to the age of 16 years at annual subscription of 5s., with the privilege of full membership later on full payment.

The secretary was instructed to inform the Tasmanian section of the Aero Club of the formation of the club. There were a large number of applications for membership.

By late January, Gliding had come to stay in Tasmania, and it was great to observe the advancement the pupils of the Tasmanian Glider Club had made. This group of enthusiasts could be seen in action during any suitable weekend or holiday at White Hills just a few miles southeast of Launceston.



The *Advocate* reported:

To date 408 flights have been made, with no accident that has caused any hurt to the 32 pupils who have flown. Flights of 300 yards have become quite normal glides; the record distance is 620 yards and the duration is two minutes. This to the uninitiated may sound trivial, but some of the mainland clubs are happy to speak of good flights lasting 23 seconds and of distances of 250 yards. The Tasmanian Glider Club is anxious to extend the movement in this State.

It was said that the property at White Hills was perhaps the best in the Commonwealth. It lies on portion of the properties of Messrs. Adye and T. Gee at White Hills and gave wonderful training slopes facing any winds. One particular locality has excellent gliding and soaring positions close to each other available for northerly, north-west, westerly, south-west, and southerly winds, so that should the wind gradually swing round there will be no waste of time changing grounds. The only winds which will render a change necessary were S.E. and easterly winds and to cross to these little time was required.

The land had been down with permanent pastures for many years, and free from ploughing furrows and other obstacles. No fences obstructed the use of the best training slopes. Mr. T. Gee allowed the club to clear away several subdivision fences to make a safe "B" certificate course, which includes turns round given points, and where obstacles would cramp the style of trainees. The ground carried natural grass, which stood the wear of running the glider towing car even in wet weather.

The *Mercury* reported:

The site is about one mile N.E. from the Western Junction aerodrome, which is on a flat portion of the same class of soil. It is eight miles from Launceston, and about a mile from Relbia, on the Relbia - Evandale road. Almost every weekend the glider is taken from Launceston, packed carefully on a trailer, and within half an hour is assembled and tested. It is then moved on another light trailer to the selected take-off, the patent tail release is driven into the ground, and flying commences.

In October 1932 the Tasmanian Glider Club took to the air with its new machine the "Dragon-fly 2." The initial test flights were held at the gliding terrain at White Hills after the machine had been assembled at 33 George Street on Saturday afternoon, and final adjustments made. The next morning the machine was towed to the flying field and re-assembled. Mr. B. F. Wilmot flew the new machine for the first time. It was only through the hard work of the few members who retained interest in the club after the untimely destruction of the machine, with its hangar, at White Hills about 16 months earlier that the club was able to take to the air again.

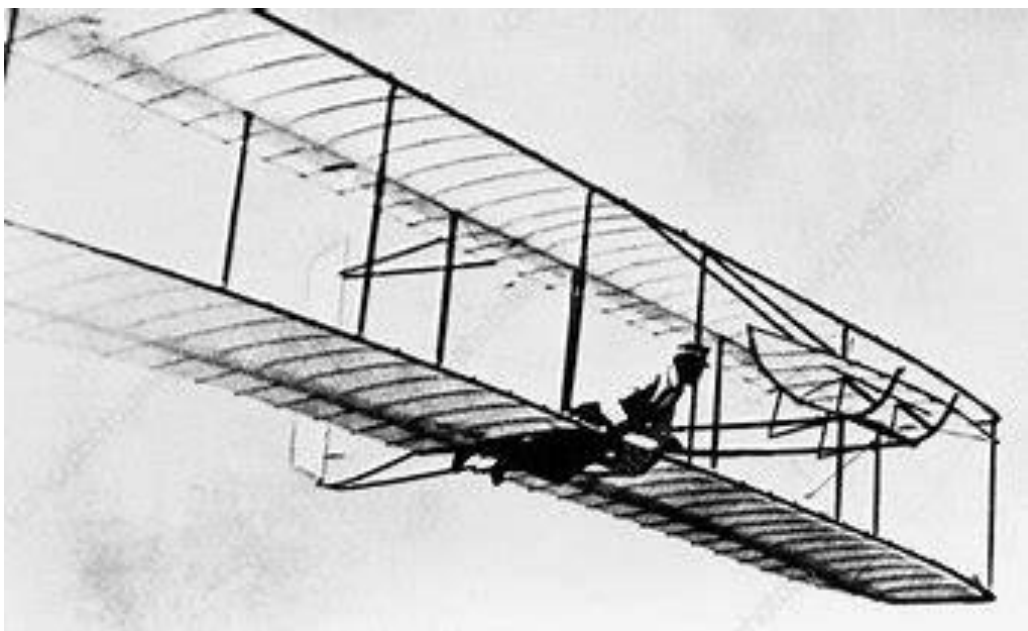


Of interest was the weight of this machine. The Examiner reported:

The excellent work that Messrs. Dixon and Tyson have made of the Tasmanian Glider Club's new machine, "Drag-an-fly 2," is testified by the weights recorded when the machine was put on the scales for the first time last Saturday. The two wings weighed 91.5lb., the centre section 601b., the rudder and tailplane 29.11b., And the nacelle 17.71b. Thus as a primary or Zoegling glider the new machine weighs only 180.6ib., which, despite the fact that the machine has a larger wing span than the "Drag-an-fly 1," compares with 182lb. for the original machine. The addition of the nacelle on to the gilder converts the primary machine into a secondary or Pruning plane weighing 198.3lb. The extra weight is hoped to give the machine more speed, while it is also hoped that the streamlining effect of the nacelle will result in considerably improved performances. The members of the club are justly proud of their new machine.

In 1937 some five years later and after three years of absence from the air, Drag-an-fly 2, aboard its trailer was towed from the city to Franklin village for flight Interest in gliding in Tasmania has been revived, largely as a result of the formation of a club at Hobart.

In the next Newsletter we will conclude the story. The [full article](#) is available on or website.





Noteworthy Tasmania Aviation Families – The Cummings and Lovells

By: W. Dearing

In TAHS Newsletter No 5 we presented an article on the World War 1 ace Eric Cummings. In the next Newsletter (No 6), in an article on the Stanley History Museum, their displays on the three Lovell brothers who were World War 2 aviators were highlighted.

Further research has produced some fascinating similarities between the brothers of the two families, their involvement in aviation in both world wars and their careers following the end of hostilities:

- Two Tasmanian families with three brothers in each household.
- Both sets of siblings served in one form or another in either the AFC or RAAF in an aircrew capacity.
- The brothers of each family served and flew in the face of significant danger in some of the most hazardous theatres of both conflicts.
- In spite of the dangers faced, the courage of all brothers was apparent, being rewarded with a DFC, a DFM, a MM, an American citation and Russian citation.
- Both families faced the tragedy of losing one brother in each of the conflicts.
- Similarly, the four remaining brothers continued their careers in aviation as either a pilot, mechanic or administrator.
- Following the end of the conflicts, apart from a short visit, none of the remaining brothers returned to live in the state they were raised in.
- One brother from each family became instructors during the relevant war.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P01432.002

**Left to right: Mervyn, Eric and Roy Cummings,
1917**



**Left to right: John, Arthur and William Lovell,
1941**

A brief summary of the six aviators follows below. More detailed information on the [Cummings Brothers](#) and [Lovell Brothers](#) is available on our website.



THE CUMMINGS FAMILY

Raised in Franklin in south-eastern Tasmania, the three brothers Mervyn, Roy and Eric were the sons of Doctor Harold Cummings and Marcia Jowell.

Mervyn Harold Cummings, the eldest brother enlisted and was appointed as a driver, carting supplies and transporting wounded on the battlefields of the Western Front. In late September 1917, Mervyn, now a Sergeant, was organising the evacuation of injured troops from Hoge, Belgium when he received word that an ambulance had been hit. Without hesitation he raced back and recovered the wounded crew. A few days later Mervyn showed the same devotion to duty when retrieving survivors from an ammunition store that had exploded regardless of the shells that were continually bursting overhead. For his bravery in the field, he was awarded the Military Medal.

Mervyn transferred to the Australian Flying Corps and commenced his pilot training in July 1918, graduating in March 1919 and appointed as a Flying Officer (Pilot) and subsequently commissioned as a Second Lieutenant.

Upon his return to Tasmania, he assisted Eric in the Peace Loan Flights in 1919.

Mervyn and his wife moved to Sydney in August 1921 and he retained his interest in flying. He died in August 1977.

Eric Douglas Cummings was the second of the three brothers to enlist in the AIF. He also saw service at Gallipoli. Subsequently posted to France in June 1916 Eric transferred to the Australian Flying Corps in September 1917 and commenced his training. He was posted to No 2 Squadron AFC, being appointed a Flight Commander on 17 October 1918.

Eric went on to score nine confirmed aerial wins, qualifying him as a Flying Ace. His bravery would win him a Distinguished Flying Cross. More of his story is presented in the article [here](#).

Following the end of the war the Australian Government, together with the States and Territories, launched a programme aimed at raising money to assist returned service personnel to readjust and recover from their injuries, the "Peace Loan". Eric was quick to offer his services in assisting this programme, aided by his brother Mervyn.

To publicise the fundraising activity, Eric flew a Sopwith Pup over downtown Hobart on 28th August 1919, an aerobatic exhibition which including eight loops. After his departure from Hobart, he flew to Launceston's Elphin showgrounds, then onto Longford and Westbury where leaflets were dropped. Then at Sheffield, Eric was forced to land at because of engine trouble. Upon examination of the engine, Mervyn declared "*we are done, the valve push and pull rod is broken*".

Eric continued in the Royal Air Force as a Flying Officer till 1928 when he was transferred to Class A Reserve of the Royal Air Force; he would remain in the reserves in various capacities until World War II.



Eric Cummings died in Sydney on the 27th of October 1979, aged 83 years.

Roy Lytton Cummings was the third brother to enlist in the AIF. He saw a short period of service in the final month of the Gallipoli campaign and was then re-mustered as a driver. He saw service in France before transferring to the Australian Flying Corps and commencing flying training in early 1918. Roy quickly displayed an impressive flair for flying, his commanding Officer wrote to Cummings' father saying: "he came to me as a pupil and did so well I had him made an instructor".

On the morning of 28th August 1918, Roy was undertaking a training flight with a pupil around the aerodrome in England, when another plane with a pupil undertaking a solo flight suddenly turned his machine upwards and crashed into Roy. The two machines were about 700 feet up when they collided and were partially locked together when they fell. All three men were killed instantly.

THE LOVELL FAMILY

The Lovell brothers Jack, Arthur and William (Bill) were three of thirteen children of Ernest and Ellen Lovell of Mella, outside of Smithton.

Arthur Carrington Lovell was born in 1913 receiving his initial schooling at Smithton and Launceston Junior Technical School. Arthur had a keen interest in flying and gained his pilot's licence in 1935 and flew with the Royal Victorian Aero Club before joining Australian National Airways (ANA).

When World War 2 broke out the Australian government requisitioned ANA's four DC 3's, and seconded their pilots to the RAAF, thus commencing Arthur's incredible wartime flying history.

From 1941 Arthur flew innumerable flights, usually from Cairns and Townsville, to various ports in New Guinea carrying supplies to the country and returning with civilian evacuees. Following the retreat of the Japanese forces from the Philippines, flights from Brisbane to Manila and return were also conducted. All of these flights were undertaken in unarmed aircraft with no fighter support, leaving the aircraft vulnerable to Japanese fighter attack, particularly in the early stages of the war. In 1942 Arthur received an American citation for his service in New Guinea and the Pacific.

Following the war Arthur continued his career with ANA and the merged Ansett - ANA. In 1953 he captained the crew that flew the DC 6 aircraft "Kurana" (VH-INW) back to Australia on its delivery flight. He also captained the aircraft that flew Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip during their 1954 Australian tour.



When Arthur retired, he had flown aircraft from a Tiger Moth to a Boeing 727 and had over 23,000 hours in his logbook. Arthur Lovell died on the 8th of February 1984 aged 80 years.

John Henry (Jack) Lovell was born on the 17th of May 1917. He enlisted in the RAAF in January 1941 and following training was appointed as a Wireless Operator/Air Gunner embarking from Sydney for the UK in November 1941. He joined 207 Squadron (RAF) in May 1942, flying in Avro Lancasters, with a rank of Sergeant.

In October 1942, his aircraft took part in an attack on Le Creusot in France. En route the aircraft developed engine trouble and was unable to continue the mission and subsequently set a course for base. Nearing the French coast, and at a height of only 40 feet above the English Channel, his aircraft was attacked by three enemy float planes. During the ensuing combat the crew destroyed two of the enemy aircraft and drove off the third. They eventually landing back safely in England. Subsequently Jack Lovell was awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal. (DFM)

The following month, on the 7th of November 1942, Jack's aircraft was shot down over France when on a bombing mission and he was killed.

William Thomas (Bill) Lovell was born in 1916 and enlisted with the RAAF in 1940 serving throughout the conflict as a navigator with the rank of Flight Lieutenant. Bill embarked Sydney in May 1941 for the UK and after further training joined 455 Squadron RAAF. The squadron became famous as part of the "ANZAC Strike Wing", that was formed from Australian and New Zealand squadrons, flying Handley Page Hampdens. The squadron undertook anti-shipping and anti-submarine operations. In 1942 Bill was part of a small detachment that went to Russia conducting operations with the Soviet Union. This included one mission that attempted a bombing raid on the German Battleship "Tirpitz" in the fiords of Norway.

In August 1943 Bill returned to Australia as an instructor at 7 EFTS Western Junction, then a navigational instructor at the General Reconnaissance School at Bairnsdale Victoria from January 1944. He was discharged from the RAAF in June 1946.

Following the war, Bill continued his career in aviation in an administrative role with Qantas.

William Thomas Lovell died in Brisbane on the 29th of October 2005.



Hart Aircraft Service – Bass Strait Service to Tasmania 1933 - 1934

By C. Byrne

Three companies were flying passengers and mail across Bass Strait during late 1933 and early 1934. Tasmanian Aerial Services with DH.84 Miss Launceston. Matthews Aviation operated via King Island with the Windhover amphibian, which was reported in our last [Newsletter](#). The third was Hart Aircraft Service with the Avro Ten, *Tasman* (the old *Southern Sky*).

James “Bob” Hart

James Robert Hart was born in the United Kingdom in 1891 and used the name “Bob.”

He joined the Royal Flying Corps in England in 1912 when it was first formed. He stayed in the RFC for the duration of the First World War and specialised in ground engineering.

After the war, he came to Australia in 1921 and was initially employed as a mechanic and aircraft engineer with the Shaw-Ross Engineering and Aviation Company, before becoming the first resident engineer for the Department of Civil Aviation at Essendon. He had this role for eight years and he was the first licensed ground engineer in Australia.

He established the Hart Aircraft Service in 1929 to perform aircraft repairs and maintenance. This included servicing the Avro Ten monoplanes of Charles Kingsford Smith’s Australian National Airways.



Essendon Aerodrome, (L – R) Government Hangar, Hart Aircraft Service Hangar, Larkin Hangar, Matthews Aviation Hangar and the ANA half hangar, ~ 1930s (State Library of Victoria)
(Note the Desoutter monoplane in front of the Hart Hangar)

Hart also were the agents for the Desoutter monoplane in Australia. They purchased *Miss Flinders* from Jeffrey & Jenkins, and then on sold it to Lawrence McKenzie Johnson in March



1932. Hart purchased their own Desoutter (VH-UPR) in 1932. This plane is now part of the Moorabbin Air Museum Collection in Melbourne.

Bass Strait Service

When Australian National Airways was liquidated, its planes and other assets were offered for sale by Tender. The Avro Ten *Southern Star* was advertised as “airworthy except for slight repairs”. (The *Southern Star* was the plane which undertook the [first Airmail flight](#) between Australia and England in late 1931).

Hart Aircraft Services purchased the *Southern Star* (VH-UMG), which they renamed the *Tasman*. The plane could carry 10 passengers.



VH-UMG “Southern Star” in ANA Livery over Melbourne (Ed Coates Collection)

On 04 April 1933, Hart Aircraft Service started their bi-weekly service between Melbourne and Launceston. The service departed Essendon at 8 a.m. arriving at Western Junction at 11 a.m., then returning at 1.30 p.m.

At this time Matthews Aviation were conducting a weekly service from Melbourne to Launceston via King Island, using their Windhover Amphibian, which could carry 5 passengers. Tasmanian Aerial Services were operating a twice weekly service to Flinders Island and King Island with *Miss Currie* and *Miss Flinders*. (Note, Tasmanian Aerial Services did not start their service to Melbourne until *Miss Launceston* arrived in September 1933).



In mid-April 1933, the service from Essendon was forced to land on Flinders Island and stay overnight due to bad weather. The service from then on would then stop at Flinders Island as required, to drop off and pick up passengers, including on 12 May 1933, as reported by "The Examiner":

Yesterday was a red-letter day for Flinders Island residents, for they received a visit from the world-famous aviator, Air-Commodore Sir Charles Kingsford Smith, who, with Mr. J. Turner, chief pilot of the Hart Aircraft Service piloted the air liner Tasman from Melbourne to Launceston. A passenger was picked up on the island and brought to Launceston. The Tasman is to call at Flinders Island when required.

In May 1933, with winter coming on and services impacted more by the weather, the service was changed to a weekly service.

From 22 August 1933, airmail services commenced with the three companies carrying airmail between Flinders and King Islands, Tasmania and the mainland, which included Hart Aircraft Service. This provided an additional income source for all the operators.

The summer schedule of two flights per week started again on 25 September 1933, with the *Tasman* leaving Melbourne on Mondays and Thursdays, then making the return flight from Western Junction on Tuesdays and Fridays.

This is when *Miss Launceston* of Tasmanian Aerial Services commenced operating its Melbourne to Launceston service.

The *Tasman* was caught in a strong gust of wind while attempting to landing at Flinders Island on 21 December 1933 and it was turned up on to her nose, and the centre propeller was smashed. The engine stand was also bent. The damage left the plane out of action for a number of days in the busy holiday season.



In January 1934 a number of engine issues plagued the plane. On the 12 January 1934 one of its engines cut out at Flinders Island. The plane returned to the Western Junction aerodrome, with a full load of passengers on two engines. A fault in the lubrication system in the engine was identified which resulted in a seized bearing. The plane was then flown to Melbourne on two engines with two passengers. Then another incident occurred on 18 January 1934 when the crankshaft of an engine broke before leaving Melbourne, which caused delays till it was repaired.

Even with these problems, the *Tasman* carried more than 120 passengers during January between the mainland and Tasmania.

More engine trouble was experienced on 26 February 1934 when the *Tasman* was flying over Launceston with a Fox Movietone cameraman on board who was filming the city. The plane landed safely at Western Junction, where it was found that a connecting rod had broken and had scored the cylinder block. The machine stayed in Launceston until a new engine was shipped from Sydney and installed. The plane was then flown back to Melbourne on 10 March 1934 for a complete overhaul.

While in Launceston awaiting repair, Hart Aircraft Service suspended its Bass Strait service on 02 March 1934 due to the engine trouble.

In April 1934, when it was announced that Tasmanian Aerial Services had won the Government Airmail Tender to on the Bass Strait route, Hart Aircraft Services did not restart its Bass Strait Service.

In August 1934, the *Tasman* was sold to Australian Transcontinental Airways of Parafield (Adelaide). It later crashed at Mascot in November 1936 and was written off.

In 1936, Victorian and Interstate Airways Ltd, (VIA) was founded at Essendon by veteran pilot Frank L. Roberts. VIA went on to operate airline services to northern Victorian towns and into NSW. VIA purchased Hart Aircraft Service in August 1937, with Bob Hart remained as Chief Engineer at VIA. VIA became the main light aircraft maintenance organisation at Essendon, servicing RAAF aircraft during WWII.

Bod Hart died in 1951, aged 60.



Tasmanian Aviation Giants – David Warren – The Inventor of the “Black Box”

By C. Byrne

David Warren was one of the four children of Reverend Hubert and Elle Warren. Hubert Warren was a member of the Anglican Mission for Aborigines at Groote Eylandt in the Gulf of Carpentaria for nearly 20 years. It was here that David Ronald de Mey Warren was born on 20 March 1925. He was the first child of European descent to be born on the island.

The family moved to Tasmania in 1932 when his father became the Rector of Cullenswood, near St Marys in the Fingal Valley of Tasmania. The 9-year-old David was enrolled at Launceston Grammar school as a boarder in 1934.

David was given a crystal radio set by his father while he was at Grammar. It interested him greatly and he taught himself how it worked. It was an early indication of his interest in science and technology.

Hubert was then appointed to take charge of St. Thomas's Church at Enfield in Sydney. Hubert would fly to Sydney first and the family would travel later by boat. Thus, he was a passenger on the Holyman's Airways DH.86 *Miss Hobart* on the flight from Launceston to Melbourne on 19 October 1934. Tragically the plane was lost in the sea near Wilson's Promontory, the two pilots and 10 passengers were killed. David was 9 years old.

The Warren family later relocated to Sydney and David attended Trinity Grammar School. He continued with his interest in radio by studying to be a radio operator (or “Radio Ham”).





David graduated from the University of Sydney with an honours degree in Science in 1944, after which he taught Mathematics and Chemistry at Geelong Grammar School for two years. This was followed by two years as a Chemistry lecturer at the University of Sydney.

Then he took a position with the Woomera Rocket Range and studied the chemistry of rocket fuels at Imperial College in London, where he gained a PhD in 1951. Upon return to Australia, he was transferred to Aeronautical Research Laboratories (ARL), the section of Australia's Defence Department to work on aviation fuels.

It was here that he undertook his official research and also started to work on what would become the Black Box. The idea initially arose in 1953 when he was part of a panel investigating why the de Havilland Comet, the world first commercial jet airline, was prone to crashing. (David was on the panel because of his expertise in aviation fuel). Without any flight information, the panel could only speculate on potential causes. (The problem would eventually be traced to the design of the square windows).

He had recently visited the first post-war Trade Fair in Sydney and had seen a new voice recorder, the Telefunken Minifon Portable Wire Recorder, which was marketed as a dictation machine for businessmen. He thought that this type of technology could be used as a cockpit voice recorder.

Back at ARL he wrote a report outlining the idea, titled "A Device for Assisting Investigation into Aircraft Accidents" which was published in April 1954. The report didn't generate any interest, so David only worked on the idea in his own time, although with support of his immediate Supervisor. He acquired a Minifon recorder and quietly worked developing a prototype over the next four years using it and parts from his crystal radio set.

From these components the first ARL Flight Memory Unit (FMU) prototype was developed which would record 4 hours of cockpit voice recording and also data from 8 instruments every two seconds.

In 1957, with a more supportive manager, ARL built a prototype FMU and the Australian civil and defence aviation authorities were invited to assess it. They were not supportive, either because they thought it was not necessary, or for privacy fears.

Support would come in 1958 when David was asked to explain his idea to a visiting English official who David did not know. After explaining how the FMU worked, the identity of the official was revealed to be Air Vice Marshall Sir Robert Hardingham, the Secretary of the UK Air Registration Board. He was very impressed.

Soon David was on a plane to England with Sir Robert and tested the recorder on the last leg of their flight. The reception the FMU received in the UK was the complete opposite to that in Australia.



As well as demonstrating the FMU to Government and Industry representatives, he was also interviewed on BBC TV and radio.

A video of a 1958 interview is available here:
<https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-australia-49031957>

It was at a London Press Conference that the term “Black Box” was coined by a journalist. Although the unit was stored in a red case, the unit itself was enclosed in a black Bakelite case, and “black box” was also a generic word from electronics engineering, and the name stuck.

On his return, the ARL now gave David its full support. He now had a research team of three others to turn the demonstration model into a pre-production prototype. On 23 March 1962, the team were ready to test their FMU in a Department of Civil Aviation Fokker Friendship, which was a success.

ARL worked with EMI in Australia to develop a commercial unit. Although EMI did undertake some pre-production work, the project stopped when EMI could not dedicate the resources needed for the project because of the pressure to support the Woomera rocket range activities.

When David had demonstrated the FMU in England in 1958, a British firm, S Davail & Son approached ARL about the production rights. They subsequently released a commercial Black Box flight recorder based upon David’s prototype in 1962. An American company, United Data Control, also developed a commercial Black Box at the same time.

On 22 September 1966 an Ansett-ANA Vickers Viscount crashed near Winton in QLD, killing all of the 29 crew and passengers. As an outcome, the following year, Australia became the first country in the world to make both flight data and cockpit voice recorders mandatory on all airliners.

Although David may have developed the Black Box, he never received any financial royalties. ARL did not apply for patents until many of the design elements were already in the public domain. This allowed companies elsewhere in the world, particularly in the United States, to



develop the idea, thereby capturing a growing market as the installation of flight recorders became mandatory around the world.

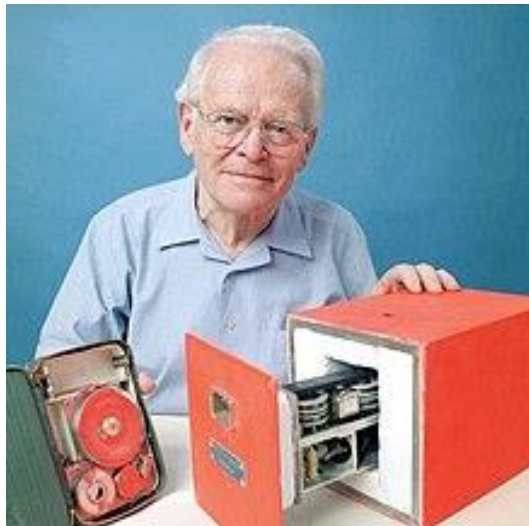
David retired as Scientist at ARL in 1983.

In the 2002 Australia Day Honours, he was awarded the Order of Australia for “service to aviation industry, particularly through the early conceptual work and prototype development of the Black Box flight recorder.”

Dr David Warren lived to see Qantas name an Airbus A380 after him in 2008. VH-UQI commenced commercial flights in January 2011.

David died on 19 July 2010, at the age of 85.

(ARL now part of the Defence Science and Technology Organisation)



David with the Minifon Recorder and a “Black Box”



SWANSEA DEMON TRAGEDY

Author: W. Dearing, May 2022

In Issue 9 of our Newsletter we detailed the story of two RAAF Hawker Demons and their crews incredible escape from two aircraft forced to make emergency landings at Waratah in 1937. This story is available [here](#).

Twelve months prior to this incident, Hawker Demon A1-3, the same aircraft that was involved in the Waratah crash landing, was involved in an incident at Swansea on Tasmania's east coast but this time with tragic results.

This particular story, as with so many others, commences in triumph but ends in tragedy.

In December 1933, 17-year-old Swansea resident Mabel Cotton completed her flying instruction at Brighton aerodrome. It took her under seven hours, as opposed to the average of nine, as reported in the "Mercury" on 6th December 1933:

In consideration of the fact that Miss Cotton had no previous instruction whatsoever and had been a passenger in an aeroplane on two previous occasions only, the accomplishment probably constitutes a record for a woman pilot.

So, it was not unusual to find her parents and younger sister, 17-year-old Jean Cotton, here at the Swansea airport to view three RAAF Hawker Demon aircraft on 6th February 1936.

The Hawker Demons had flown from Victoria to Tasmania for a training flight to attend the various air pageants and to give Air Displays at Swansea on February 6th; Hobart on the 11th; Wynyard on the 12th and Cambridge on the 15th.

The aircraft had flown from Launceston to Swansea where they landed and following lunch, they planned to return to Launceston. Around 200 spectators watched as the aircraft took to the air around 2.30 p.m. The first two planes lifted off without incident, but the third, aircraft A1-3 flown by Pilot Officer Eric Vane Lansell, failed to become airborne from the small runway in time and ploughed into a section of the crowd who were standing at the end of the runway.

Tragically Jean Cotton and her mother Louisa were both killed instantly. It was thought they had been struck by the aircraft's propellor. Several other members of the public were fortunate to escape injury by flattening themselves on the ground to avoid the aircraft. Mr Cotton was standing some distance behind his wife and daughter and was not injured.

The disabled Hawker Demon with its propellor badly damaged landed heavily a short distance later collapsing its undercarriage. Neither Pilot Officer Lansell, nor his observer Sergeant Richard James Tonks were injured.



Pilot Officer Lansell had been a member of the RAAF for about 20 months and had over 300 hours flying experience at the time.



Newspaper photo of the damage to the Hawker Demon A1-3 following the incident (Examiner 07 Feb 1936, p7)

The aircraft was guarded overnight, then it was dismantled and transported by road to Western Junction airport the following day.



Hawker Demon A3-1 being recovered following the Swansea Incident prior to transportation to Western Junction then onto Sydney to Number 2AD for repair



At the Coronial Inquest conducted following the accident, Pilot Officer Lansell stated that he had met Jean Cotton immediately before the take-off and she had entered the cockpit:

Witness said that after lunch at Swansea he was introduced to Miss Cotton by Captain Huxley. In a conversation between the three, the remark was passed that Miss Cotton had entered the cockpit of his machine during his absence, but had left it on observing his approach, because she thought she might be doing something wrong.

Witness said he invited Miss Cotton to re-enter the cockpit, and when she did so he stood on the side and pointed out the various Instruments and told her the purpose for which they were used. "I then asked to be excused, as I had to report to Flight Lieut. Heffernan," he said. "That was the extent of my acquaintance with Miss Cotton."

He said that preparations were then made for taking off. He had taxied down to the starting-off place, following McLean's machine, but on the way he did not notice a hole in the ground that had been referred to by the other pilots. I taxied down and kept seawards of the runways of the other two machines," he said. "My direction of take-off was approximately the same as the others, but I was a little to the left."

He also described the take-off and how he could not see the people standing at the far end of the runway once the plane was moving:

He considered that the people on the aerodrome were in a safe position when he took off. His machine became air-borne shortly after he had passed the row of sags. Actually it became air-borne before he had acquired sufficient air speed. This was due to bump on the ground. "I noticed that my machine dropped a little after becoming air-borne," he said. "I lowered the nose for the purpose of picking up my air speed, thus holding the machine straight in order to get my speed as quickly as I could with a full maximum of safety. We are taught to-day that it is the general practice of service pilots." He said that when that distance in the air there was not a clear view of the ground directly in front, for it was obscured by the engine. It was a pilot's duty before he took off to see that everything was clear in front, and thereafter a view was obtained by looking out the side. On the occasion in question, he looked out on the left side until the line of sags was passed, and then he looked out from the opposite side. He thought he was three or four feet from the ground when flying level. "A fraction before the impact I attempted to climb," he said, "although at that point I would have liked a little more flying speed. When I made the attempt to ascend by easing the control column back a fraction of time seemed to elapse before the plane commenced to rise. It was only a fraction after that I felt the impact." He only felt the one impact, he said, and did not feel the tail hit the ground, unless it was instantaneous with the impact. From the moment the machine became air borne until the collision his mind was very fully occupied with the machine, He said that looking over from the right of the plane when passing the sags his mind registered a view of two people, and one in particular waving arms



The Coroner concluded the pilot was to blame and he charged Lansell with manslaughter:

He must or should have known where the people were, and it was perfectly easy for him to have taken the same course as his predecessors. "I think the pilot was guilty of a miscalculation of the height he was above the ground," said the Coroner. "He had a duty cast on him which he did not fulfil, and I find that the deaths of Mrs. Louisa Kate Cotton and Jean Cotton were caused by their being struck by an aeroplane of which Lansell was pilot, and that the reason the aeroplane struck them was that he negligently piloted it. I consider his negligence was culpable, and it is my painful duty to commit him for trial. Lansell, who was committed to stand his trial on a charge of manslaughter at the sittings of the Criminal Court at Hobart on April 21, was granted bail in a recognisance and a surety each of £25.

The Coroner also concluded:

People should not be allowed to get in front of these machines in any circumstances. It should never have happened, and people should have been warned. The machines apparently were taken up to one end of the ground, the people at the other end, and the machines driven straight at them.

(It must be remembered that in 1936 aviation was still in its infancy, and virtually unregulated compared to today's standards).

Following the Coronial Inquiry, the Tasmanian Solicitor General stated he did not support proceeding with the trial ("Examiner" 26 March 1936):

The Solicitor General (Mr. P. L. Griffiths) stated at Launceston yesterday that as far as he was concerned the trial would not be gone on with. The Attorney General's Department, Hobart, stated that a definite decision had not been reached.

Tasmania's Attorney-General (Mr E. J. Ogilvie) reviewed the accident's finding and following an opinion expressed by the Solicitor General, he decided not to file the manslaughter indictment against Pilot Officer Lansell.

Lansing continued his career with the RAAF until 1948.

The Cotton family were highly respected and their tragic deaths deeply affected the east coast community. Following a very large funeral service, Mother and Daughter were buried at Kelvedon.

As was the case of Ashton-Shorter, the pilot of Hawker Demon A1-3 that force landed at Waratah, fate and tragedy was also not done with Swansea's Cotton family, but that's another story we will explore in the next newsletter.



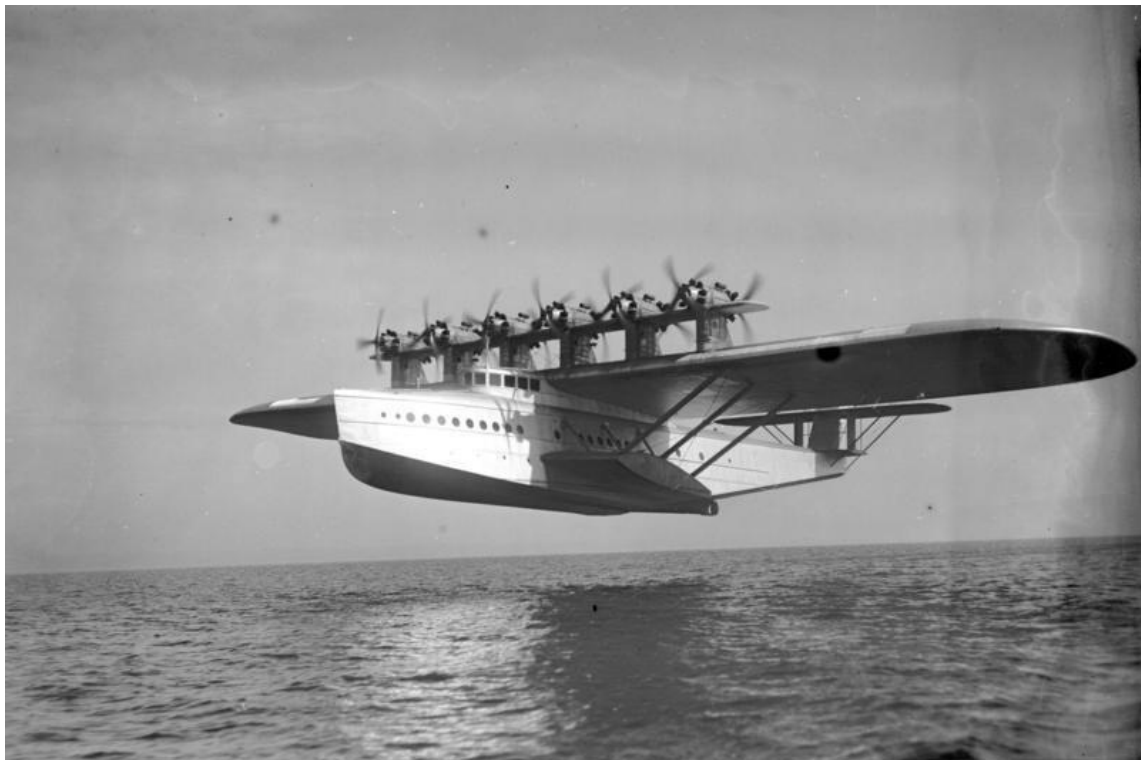
Leviathans of the Air - Part 2 – Dornier X

By: W. Dearing

First conceived by Claude Dornier in 1924, planning started in late 1925 of an ambitious new flying boat, which was completed in June 1929. It was designed to carry 66 passengers on long-distance flights or 100 passengers on short flights. The Dornier Do X was the largest, heaviest, and most powerful flying boat in the world in 1929.

The Do X was financed by the German Transport Ministry and in order to circumvent conditions of the Treaty of Versailles which limited German aviation production, a specially designed plant was built at Altenrhein in Switzerland.

This large flying boat was popular with the public, but with a lack of commercial interest, as well as suffering a number of non-fatal accidents, only three of the planes were built.



Dornier Do X First Flight 12 July 1929

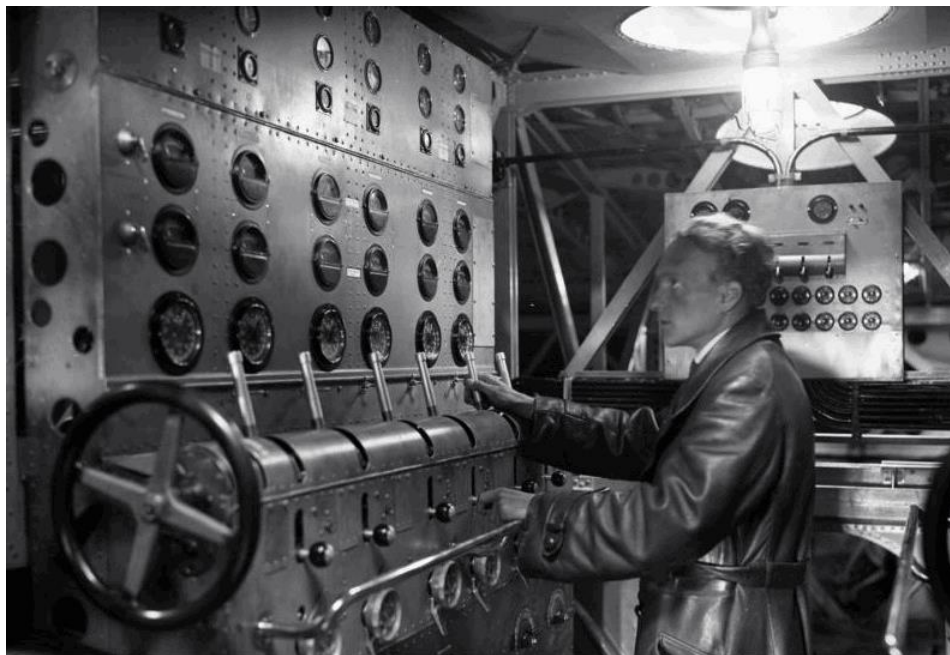
The Do X was designed as a semi-cantilever monoplane. The hull was built from duralumin (an aluminum alloy). The wings were composed of a steel-reinforced duralumin framework covered in heavy linen fabric, covered with aluminium paint. To stabilise the flying boat when



on water, instead of using wing floats, it used fuselage mounted "stub wings." Passengers would enter and leave the flying boat by these stub wings.

The Do X had twelve 391 kW (524 hp) Bristol Jupiter air-cooled radial engines in tandem push-pull configuration mountings, with six tractor propellers and six pushers mounted on six strut-mounted nacelles above the wing. The nacelles were joined by an auxiliary wing to stabilise the mountings. The engines were prone to overheating and could barely lift the Do X to an altitude of 425 m (1,394 ft).

The engines were managed by a flight engineer, who controlled the 12 throttles and monitored the 12 sets of gauges. The pilot would relay a request to the engineer to adjust the power setting, in a manner similar to the system used on maritime vessels, using an engine order telegraph.



The Engineer operating the 12 engines

The luxurious passenger accommodation approached the standards of transatlantic liners. There were three decks.

On the main deck was a smoking room with its own bar, a dining salon, and seating for the 66 passengers which could also be converted to sleeping berths for night flights. Behind the passenger spaces was an all-electric galley, lavatories, and cargo hold.

The cockpit, navigational office, engine control and radio rooms were on the upper deck.

The lower deck held fuel tanks and nine watertight compartments, only seven of which were needed to provide full flotation.



Dining in the Dornier DO X

Three aeroplanes were built (X1, X2 and X3).

The first Do X was initially used by the Dornier company, and then by the German national airline, Deutsche Luft Hansa. After a successful 1932 tour of German coastal cities, Luft Hansa planned a Do X flight to Vienna, Budapest, and Istanbul in 1933. The voyage ended after nine days when the flying boat's tail section tore off during a botched, overly-steep landing on a reservoir lake near Passau in southern Germany.

While the accident was successfully covered up, the Do X eventually became the centrepiece of Germany's new aviation museum *Deutsche Luftfahrt-Sammlung* at Lehrter Bahnhof. The Do X remained an exhibit until it was destroyed during World War II in a Royal Air Force air raid in November 1943. Fragments of the torn-off tail section are now displayed at the Dornier Museum in Friedrichshafen.

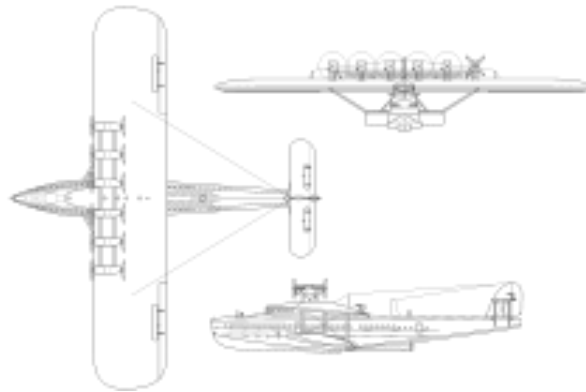
The other two planes entered service in the Italian Air Force, the X2 in August 1931, and the X3 followed in May 1932. Based at the seaplane station at La Spezia, in Northern Italy, they were used primarily for prestige flights, officer training cruises, aeronaval manoeuvres, and publicity flights.

While the Dornier Do X was never a commercial success, it was the largest heavier-than-air aircraft of its time and demonstrated the potential of an international passenger air service.



AIRCRAFT SPECIFICATIONS

- **Crew:** 10-14
- **Capacity:** 66-100 passengers
- **Length:** 40.05 m (131 ft 5 in)
- **Wingspan:** 47.8 m (156 ft 10 in)
- **Lower wingspan:** 10 m (32 ft 10 in) (sponsons)
- **Width:** 4.8 m (15 ft 9 in) maximum hull beam
- **Height:** 10.25 m (33 ft 8 in)
- **Wing area:** 486.2 m² (5,233 sq ft)
- **Empty weight:** 28,000 kg (61,729 lb)
- **Gross weight:** 49,000 kg (108,027 lb)
- **Fuel capacity:** 16,000 l (4,200 US gal; 3,500 imp gal) in 8 tanks in hull and wings + optional 8,600 l (2,300 US gal; 1,900 imp gal)
- **Oil capacity:** 3,600 l (950 US gal; 790 imp gal) in six nacelle tanks with 1,300 l (340 US gal; 290 imp gal) in a hull tank for in-flight replenishment
- **Powerplant:** 12 × Siemens Jupiter 9-cylinder air-cooled radial piston engines, 391 kW (525 hp) each
- **Propellers:** 4-bladed fixed-pitch wooden propellers



Performance

- **Maximum speed:** 242 km/h (150 mph, 131)
- **Cruise speed:** 170 km/h (110 mph, 92)
- **Range:** 1,700 km (1,100 mi)
- **Service ceiling:** 3,200 m (10,500 ft)

Video Links

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=II2YtZ_ahMA

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2aaXfqxFrQ>



DID YOU KNOW?

MISS FLINDERS, now on display at Launceston Airport, enjoyed a colourful and diversified career none the least a calling into the world of politics as illustrated by this article in the Advocate, Friday 11 May 1934, Page 2

Campaigning by Air

The De Soutter monoplane, which has been hired for taxi work by Mr. H. R. Lord, of Latrobe, in the conduct of his election campaign, returned to Western Junction aerodrome today. The machine was piloted by Mr. K. M. Frewin and visited various parts of Mr. Lord's electorate. After landing at Swansea the aeroplane was flown to the Brighton landing ground to-day, and thence flew to Latrobe, via Adamsfield and the Great Lake. Mr. and Mrs. Lord alighted at Latrobe, and the machine was brought back to Western Junction.

Mr Harold Lord was not successful in his bid to enter Tasmanian Parliament at the 09 June 1934 State election. He was one of the key people who developed the Latrobe Aerodrome in 1931, which we will describe in our next newsletter.

WHY DO AUSTRALIAN AIRCRAFT REGISTRATION BEGIN WITH “VH – “?

In July 1919 the International Commission for Airline Navigation (ICAN) allocated civil airline registration prefixes to every nation. Members of the Empire were given the letter G- followed by the next one or two letters signifying the country itself.

For Australia it was G-AU and New Zealand G-NZ. This operated until 1927 when the International Radiotelegraph Convention in Washington USA produced a revised table of registrations which were adopted by ICAN. As Australia did not have a seat on ICAN it was allocated random letters and was arbitrarily allocated VH-, so G-AUEH became VH-UEH with the first letter of its original British Empire code being dropped.

Could the random letters, VH, be more than an arbitrary allocation or were they a deliberate link to Victor Holyman???





DID YOU KNOW?

TASMANIA'S YOUNGEST TASMANIAN AVIATOR

New Norfolk Lad's Performance

Attains "A" Class Certificate

The distinction of being the youngest air pilot in Tasmania, and probably in Australia, rests with John Rollins, son of Mr. and Mrs. E. Rollins, of Burnett Street, New Norfolk, who will celebrate his 18th birthday in October, He gained his pilot certificate on Monday last. He was coached at Brighton by Captain J. Francis, flying instructor for the Tasmanian section of the Australian Aero Club, and was given 6 h 55 m. dual instructional work before being allowed to take up the aeroplane solo. After the short time of 3h. 40m. solo flying, and 2h. 10m. checking dual flying, he was tested for his "A" .class licence, which he obtained without difficulty. He is now on the way towards obtaining a "B" class certificate, which will enable him to take up passengers.

For a considerable time Rollins has been extremely keen on aviation, and a year or so ago constructed a gilder with the assistance of his-brother, Charles at New. Norfolk, but It was never tried out. When the Tasmanian section of the Aero Club was formed in the North, and flying instruction carried on at Western Junction, the lad badly wanted to learn to fly, but his parents persuaded him otherwise on account of his youth. On the establishment of the flying school at Brighton young Rollins immediately became associated with the activities there and obtained the consent of his parents to follow a course of instruction.

Mr. and Mrs. Rollins are naturally proud of the performance of their son and have shared with him in many congratulations.

The Mercury (Hobart, Tas.: 1860 - 1954) Fri 26 Jun 1931 Page 10





In the Air

Aviation Stories and Adventures

Launceston Church Grammar School, 25 June 2022

Speakers: Mac Cottrell, Bill Mattes, Lindsay Millar, Steve Murray, and Stuart Bryce



Stuart Bryce, Mac Cottrell, Doug Chipman and Bill Mattes



Convenor Paul Richards



Mac Cottrell (C)



Lindsay Millar (L)



In the Air

Aviation Stories and Adventures

Launceston Church Grammar School Aviation Centre



LCGS Cameron Rogers (C) showing
Lindsay Millar (L) the Aviation Centre





DO YOU REMEMBER?

ANA DC-5 VH-CXC as a Civil Airliner at Western Junction airport 1944



File photo of the only DC-5 aircraft ever to land at Western Junction airport

The aircraft was initially allotted to ANA in December 1942 for use on DAT (Directorate of Air Transport) services, including the courier service. It was formally returned to USAAC (United States Army Air Corp) in April 1944.

The aircraft was then stored by ANA at Essendon Airport before being chartered by ANA in May 1944 for use on the Bass Strait services. The aircraft was subsequently purchased by ANA in 1945 and re-registered as VH-ARD although the initial registration VH-CXC was never removed from the fuselage and tailplane. The aircraft's Certificate of Airworthiness lapsed in July 1946 and was not renewed by the airline.

In August 1944 the aircraft, whilst on a scheduled Essendon – Hobart service, made a forced landing at Low Head due to bad weather. The crew, Captain Doug Way and First Officer Vern Polley, found no damage to the aircraft and when the weather cleared flew the DC-5 out of Low Head and continued with the scheduled flight.

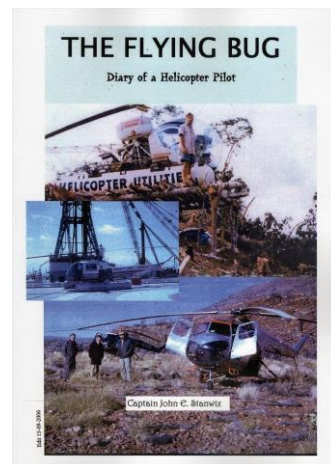
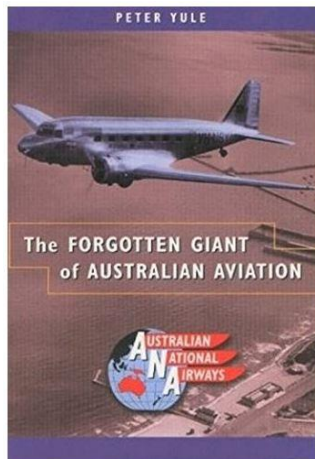


The Classifieds

Individual Articles are Available from our Website

Article	Link
The Tasmanian Glider Club 1929-1939	TAHS2021.031
Hart Aviation Services	TAHS2022.006
Swansea Deamon Tragedy	TAHS2022.009
Tasmanian Aviators: Albert Aubrey Koch	TAHS2022.011
Tasmanian Aviators: Cummings Brothers	TAHS2022.011
Tasmanian Aviators: Lovell Brothers	TAHS2022.012
Tasmanian Aviation Giants: David Warren	TAHS2022.015

Books Available at our Website



Please visit our [Website Shop](#) for more details



Tasmanian Aviation Pioneers Cards Available at our Website

Tasmanian Artist Catherine Shearing has produced a set of six charcoal drawings of these aviation pioneers: Harold Gatty, Ivan Holyman, David Warren, Hudson Fysh, Arthur Long and Fred Huxley our available at our [Website Shop](https://www.tahs.org.au/Website-Shop).

They have been reproduced on 250gsm card with our logo and name on the reverse. Two formats are available, each pioneer on an individual card (150 x 105 mm), or all six on a larger card (210 x 100 mm).



Six Individual Cards above and the Single Card below

