



**Tasmanian Aviation
Historical Society**

Preserving Tasmania's aviation history



“ROARING FORTIES”

***OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE TASMANIAN
AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY INCORPORATED***

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WEBSITE: WWW.TAHS.ORG.AU

EMAIL: info@tahs.org.au

TASMANIAN AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Welcome to the 22nd edition of our quarterly Newsletter “Roaring Forties”.

TAHS OFFICE BEARERS 2025

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In this issue:

Every two months, we hold a Guest Speaker evening in Launceston and by Zoom. In April, Jean Hackman talked about her experiences at the Tasmanian Aero Club in Launceston in the 1950s and 1960s. After the talk, a lively discussion ensued, with more memories being shared by those present. Jean has summarised her talk in our first article.

Lindsay Millar describes the pedal radio and its huge impact on the AMS and RFDS. Then in the “Snippets” column, Peter Manktelow reminisces on his helicopter flying days.

TAHS has a collection of historical items, some of which were part of our *Flying by the Seat of their Pants* exhibition. In this collection, the family and descendants of Tasmanian Aviator Basil Jones have generously loaned personal and flying items. Basil was a Flying Instructor at the 7 EFTS at Western Junction during World War 2 and was killed in a flying accident. Through the newspaper reports of the time, we tell his story and the crash, as well as present some of the items in the collection.

Ray Mudway continues his series on Air Crashes in Tasmania. In this edition, in his second article, the focus is on the crashes in the late 1930s and the war years.

This newsletter was prepared by the Executive Committee. If you have any ideas for articles for future newsletters, please contact us.

MEMORIES OF THE TASMANIAN AERO CLUB 1950s & 1960s

By Jean Hackman

Editors Introduction: At our bi-monthly Guest Speaker meeting on 8th April 2025, Jean attended with her sister Marg Oliver. Marg was an excellent Master of Ceremonies and Interviewer, prompting Jean to tell her very interesting story and recall the Aero Club days.



Marg (left) and Jean (right)

I don't really remember when the desire to fly became my one and only ambition, but perhaps growing up on a Yorkshire farm beside a WW2 bomber base planted the seed. No-one told me it was a hopeless dream but in the 1950s Mum and Dad treated me to a ten-shilling joy ride in a DH Dragon Rapide at a Battle of Britain commemoration at Dishforth RAF station. I suspect they hoped that would be the end of it, instead it was just the beginning.

In early 1957 we migrated to Tasmania and in August 1958 I had my trial flight with Dave Nobes. My Student Licence was issued in December of that year and my log book shows Dave had the dubious honour of taking me through the first six hours in the Auster 12 Arrow. I've often wondered if his nerves were shattered by the experience because he only appeared once more in the log book.

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Reg Munro sent me solo. As I turned to taxi and lined up on the grass strip, the stick shook violently – Reg was shaking the elevators. I thought he had changed his mind, but he had forgotten his cigarettes. After completing a circuit, I taxied in to find most of the Aero Club lined up outside the hangar, obviously waiting for the inevitable catastrophe. Incidentally, at this stage there was no radio communication and we operated by signals from the Aldis lamp.

In 1962 I won one of the first Commonwealth Government Scholarships which paid for the bulk of the flying necessary to get a commercial licence and instructor's rating. The Commercial Licence was issued in September 1964 and the "C" instructor's rating two months later.

Freddie Fox was the legendary pilot from the Department of Civil Aviation's Flying Ops. He checked out pilots for various licences and ratings and he took me for the instructor's rating. The test was done in a Chipmunk (DHC1), where the instructor sits in the rear cockpit. Freddie was a big man. He settled himself in the front cockpit totally blocking my view of everything ahead. Seeing my look of desperation, Neil Beattie, the CFI, wandered over and said "Freddie, I'll take one of those cushions." No problem said Freddie. "I like to sit high." It was the only time I was glad of a crosswind.

Of the aircraft I flew, to me the Chipmunk will always be the most beautiful. I loved it and the freedom you felt when it took to the sky. It was my Spitfire. The Saab Safir beat me. Lovely to fly but I couldn't raise the undercarriage. Perhaps a few weight lifting exercises might have helped. We tried all sorts – pulling negative G, extending the lever - all to no avail. The only way I could lock it in place was to undo my straps, kneel on the seat and with two hands put all my weight on the lever and hold it in place long enough to twist and lock. As this had to be done on climb out after take-off, I don't think any passengers would have been too happy. The Club was prepared to give me an endorsement to fly with the wheels down, but I declined.

So many great memories remain from those days but one does stand out. Landing on the beautiful pink quartz beach of the original Lake Pedder. It was a great landing strip and it was truly magical to spend time there surrounded by the mountains and the utter peace of the wilderness.

There was quite an active social life in the 1950s/60s with fly-ins, sometimes in conjunction with the Aero Club of Southern Tasmania. Woodbury was a popular meeting spot for competitions between the two clubs and I remember a footy contest where the players dressed in drag. Around that time there was an active gliding club at Woodbury and on one occasion we flew in to try our hands at gliding. My lasting memory is a perfect silence, but for the soft hiss of the wind over the canopy. It was a great experience.

Christmas fly-ins to Bridport were a regular feature and I have more fond memories of us all sitting under the wing of an aircraft talking flying. I certainly learned a lot that way. There was also night flying using a flare path.

Rushy Lagoon in the far NE was, I think, owned by Ernest Mills at one time. A fly-in for a weekend was good fun and we stayed in the shearers' quarters. Ernest's property at "Panshanger" was another popular destination and after flying there would be a barbeque, water skiing on the river and even a tree climbing contest up the old pine trees.

Social club meetings were often held at Pierre LeComte's coffee shop in George Street – the first in Launceston I believe. Pierre was learning to fly and after the meeting we sometimes adjourned to the cinema across the road.

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Regular socials would also be held in one of the old airport buildings left over from the war and in the wee small hours, the tail-enders would gather round the log fire and, of course, talk flying. I think for many of us, flying was in every aspect of our lives.

Until the early 1960s the airport control tower was a yellow and black box perched on iron legs and accessed by an outside stair. Eventually it was replaced by the tower you see today and it featured prominently in my working life. In April 1968 I was accepted by the Department of Civil Aviation as the third Australian female air traffic controller and for the next 25 years was lucky enough to work in the Launceston tower, except for a break of twelve months on loan to ATC Fiji, where we trained the local people.

I've been incredibly lucky and flying – and all those involved in it – has given me a wonderful life.

AIRCRAFT FLOWN		INSTRUCTORS
Auster J2 Arrow	Piper PA28 140	Dave Nobes
Auster J5B	Piper PA28 180	Jasper Maskelyne
Cessna 172D	Piper PA32 260	Neil Beattie
Cessna 175	Piper PA32 300	Vern Pennyfather
Cessna 182	Saab Safir 91C	Reg Munro
DH Beaver (one circuit!)	Stinson Reliant	N. Williams
DHC1 Chipmunk	Stinson 108/3 Voyager	Norbert Schmitt
Percival EP9	Victa Air Tourer 100	George Smith
Piper PA24 180		Walter Gowans



Post meeting discussion, Lindsay Millar OAM (bottom right) sharing his recollections

FROM THE ARCHIVES – THE PEDAL RADIO, THE AMS AND RFDS

By Lindsay Millar OAM

The aerial medical service for remote and isolated areas of Australia planned by the Rev John Flynn with the Presbyterian Church in 1928, required availability of a suitable aircraft and pilot, a doctor and some form of reliable communication.

WW1 saw the rapid development of aircraft able to carry a doctor and patient over long distances. Medical doctors and nurses were available, but communication between potential patients in the outback of Australia was either non-existent or had only limited telegraph and telephone services.

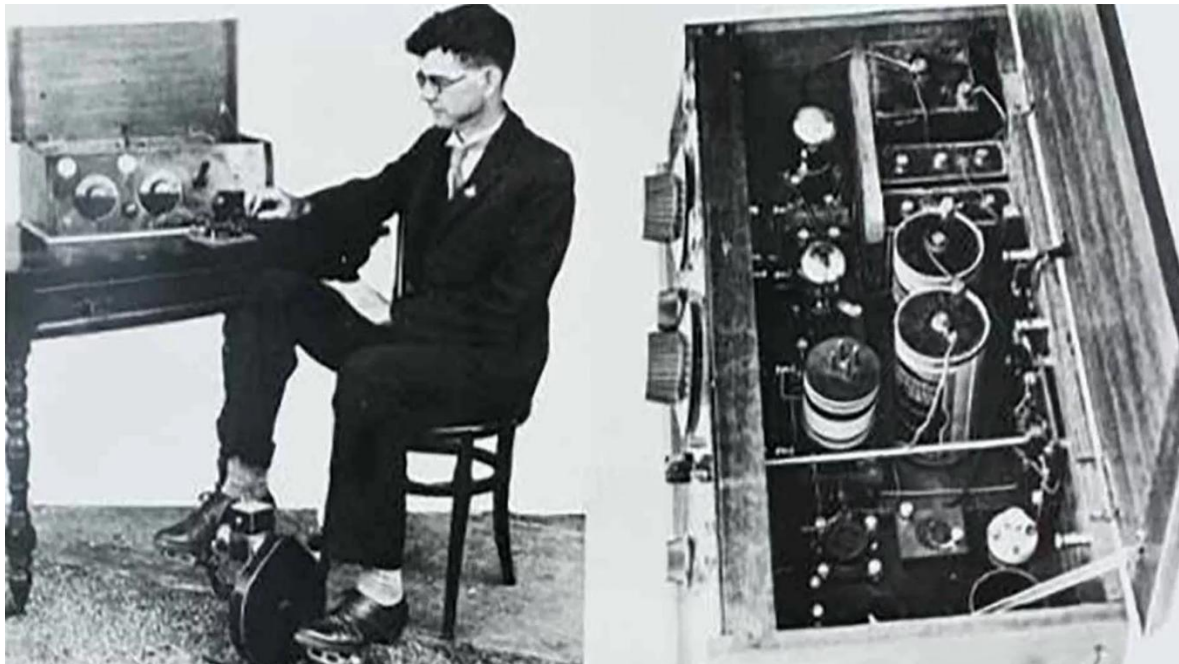
By 1928 Flynn had finances from the church and a donation from the HV McKay farm machinery manufacturer. His friend, Tasmanian born Hudson Fysh, co-founder of Qantas, agreed to provide a suitable DH.50 aircraft able to carry a patient and doctor in an enclosed cabin, for two shillings a mile. Flynn then appointed Arthur Affleck as pilot and Sydney doctor, Kenyon St. Vincent Welsh, for the 12-month trial service.

The aircraft, named Victory the pilot and doctor made the first flight for the new service on 18 May 1928. The flight was from Cloncurry to Julia Creek.

The outback Queensland town of Cloncurry was selected for the trial as it had a telephone and telegraph service reaching small settlements and stations within an approximate 400-mile radius.

While this was adequate for the trial, Flynn realised that to be able to service the remaining vast areas of remote Australia, he would need many base radio stations that would service the remote towns and stations that would be provided with portable but low cost radios. Flynn passed the problem of designing such a system to south Australian radio engineer, Alf Traeger.

During WW1 the German army had developed a portable radio powered by a pedal driven generator. Traeger used this system to develop his famous Traeger pedal radio.



Alf Traeger operating his pedal radio (RFDS)

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The Treager radio was portable and simple to use and base stations were established in all states except Tasmania and Victoria. Victoria actually funded various sections in the Kimberly region of West Australia to assist the WA. section. The Tasmanian section was not formed until 1960 and used existing ambulance and marine and police radio services.

Initially transmissions were made using morse code. This proved both difficult to learn and slow to use. Realising the problem, Traeger developed a machine that allowed operators to type the messages which were then transmitted in morse code, shortly after this voice transmission was available.

As people of the outback became aware of this new service, the demand for the pedal radio networks was massive. In Flynn's own words 'The pedal radio had solved the tyranny of distance for those living in the outback'.

In 1934 at a meeting in Melbourne, a decision was made to sever the connection with the church, Flynn remaining on the board in a non-voting advisory position. The name changed to the Australian Aero Medical Service until 1942, when it became the Australian Flying Doctor Service

The next change to the pedal radio was a smaller version that could be powered using a normal car type battery.

While the primary role of the radio was to provide remote community members access to medical aid, they very quickly realised that the social benefit to communities, families and individuals was often overlooked. People that lived often hundreds of miles apart and probably only met once or twice a year, if at all, could now use the radio to share news of problems such as fires and floods, order supplies and spare parts and contact government dept's or banks. After the normal contacts for medical or emergency calls, the radios were left open for general contact between network members. These sessions became known as "galah sessions" and very popular with the female callers.

The AMS also were contracted by the PMG to transmit telegrams over the network. This gave the sections a good income stream. Given that the telegrams were read out over the base network, the main problem was lack of privacy, no doubt a great source of gossip for the community.

WW2 saw massive advances in aviation radio.

The AFDS obtained war surplus radio equipment for bases giving improved range and reliability. This allowed the establishment of the FDS school of the air. Thought to be a world first and a great help to the families of the outback. The service started in Alice Springs on 8 June 1951.

The famous RFDS medical chest program has direct links to the use of the pedal radio from the 1930's to today using IT. The medical chest is basically a pharmacy in a box. The metal chest contains over 100 items of regularly used medications, health aids and prescription items. Every item in the chest is numbered.

When a patient calls in to the Doctor with a problem, the Doctor, using the body chart if necessary, makes a diagnosis and will perhaps advise the caller to go to the chest find tablets no 5, take one tonight and call in again in the morning.

Using numbers reduces any risk of miss hearing a complex name for the medication, A RFDS story about using the medical chest, is as follows. Station Owner calls Doctor and provides symptoms for his wife. Doctor advises Station Owner to give his wife one tablet of no.11 that night and another next

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morning and callback next evening. Station Owner calls the next day. Doctor. “How is your wife getting on?” Station Owner. “just fine thanks Doctor, but I did have a problem. I couldn’t find any tablets no.11, so I gave her 7’s. and 4s. Just checking your math’s”.

In the 1950’s, prime minister Robert Menzies said of the Royal Flying Doctor Service and radio network, “perhaps one of the 3 greatest contributions to the effective settlement of the far distant country that we have seen in our lifetime.”

The days of ‘the Traeger pedal radio’ are now long gone, but will never be forgotten. In 1962, the Tasmanian section provided the King family, who were tin mining at Port Davey in the remote south west,, with a RFDS medical chest. At the same time, we were able to link the two King daughters to the school of the air, transmitting from Port Augusta base in South Australia.

SNIPPETS

By Peter Manktelow

Every photograph has a story!



The helicopter is a Sikorsky S76 (an A model) in the Gulf of Thailand supporting an offshore oil and gas company (Unocal). I logged over 2,000 hours on this helicopter type. It carried 12 passengers and 2 pilots and was quite “zippy”. Its maximum take off weight was 10,500 lbs and it was all weather capable i.e. IFR. Normal cruise speed was around 130 knots. In the mid eighties, a couple of S76’s were based out of Strahan, again supporting exploration for oil and gas.

The vessel is a drill ship named the SEACREST. These types of drilling rigs were mainly used for deep water drilling and often drilled in over a thousand feet of water, then through another 2 or 3 thousand feet down from the seabed. This meant a total of 4 or 5 thousand feet of 40 foot lengths of drilling rod joined together.

These drilling rods were often stacked separately inside the vertical derrick. This was the case when a typhoon snuck over Cambodia and re-invigorated itself in the Gulf of Thailand. It hit the SEACREST, which immediately rolled over. Only one survivor, who just had enough time to stuff a couple of empty plastic bottles inside his shirt to act as a crude life jacket. I think there were over a hundred casualties.

TASMANIAN AVIATOR – BASIL JONES



Basil Jones was 35 years old when he was killed in a flying accident at the 7EFTS at Western Junction in 1941. He accomplished so much in his short life, that you wonder what contribution to Tasmania he might have made if he had survived the war.

Photograph:

Basil Jones in the RAAF Officer's uniform. The family understand that this photograph contains the face of Basil, but the body of someone else. (TAHS.0733)

Basil was the second son of Sir Henry and Lady Alice Jones, born on 12 June 1905. Sir Henry Jones is remembered today through his IXL Jam manufacture on the Hobart Wharf. Today it's part of the Henry Jones Art Hotel, which acknowledges his wife's support of the arts in Hobart.

Basil Jones was a leading proponent of aviation in Southern Tasmania in the 1930s.

With the development of RAAF flying trainings schools in the Second World War, he enlists as an instructor, being posted to the 7th Elementary Flying Training School at Western Junction in September 1940. Tragically, eight months later he was killed in a flying accident while providing instruction to a pupil in a Tiger Moth. This was the first loss of life at No. 7 EFTS.

The newspaper reports of the accident and his obituary tell his story.

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The *Launceston Examiner* reported on 31 May 1941:

KILLED IN CRASH

Two Planes Collide at Western Junction

When two training planes collided as they were leaving Western Junction aerodrome yesterday, Flying Officer Basil Goodwin Jones, formerly of Hobart, was killed. His passenger, Leading Aircraftsman D. S. Brown, of Melbourne, had an arm fractured. The Air Board in a statement yesterday announced the death of Flying Officer Jones as the result of an aircraft accident at No. 7 Elementary Flying Training School, Western Junction.

The statement reveals that two planes collided as they were leaving the aerodrome on training flights. Mr. Basil Goodwin Jones was the son of the late Sir Henry and Lady Jones, of Campbell Street, Hobart. He was born on June 12, 1905, and was educated at the Friends' School, Hobart, and the University of Tasmania. He entered the legal profession and was articled to the late Mr. M. W. Simmons. He was admitted to the Bar on March 18, 1931. He remained with the legal firm of Simmons, Wolfhagen, Simmons and Walch, and became a partner on January 1, 1937.

Civil Aviation Pioneer

Mr. Jones was probably the outstanding pioneer of civil aviation in Tasmania and was the first flying member of the Tasmanian Aero Club. He learned flying under the tuition of the first instructor, Captain J. Francis, at Western Junction.

He was one of the first Tasmanians to secure a commercial pilot's licence. He made a trip to England some years ago, and gained further experience in flying, particularly in autogyros, and was the first Tasmanian to have his licence endorsed for an autogyro. Before the Aero Club was instituted, he was a keen supporter of the Gliding Club, which originated in Launceston. He used to travel from Hobart to Western Junction at intervals of a few days to receive instruction, as at that time there were no facilities in the south.

Aero Club Officer

He was later chairman of the southern section of the Aero Club, and on a number of occasions took a leading part in organising deputations to the Commonwealth authorities to obtain improved facilities for flying in Tasmania.

He was one of the organisers of early Aero Club pageants in this state, and won many trophies at these events. He was also an enthusiastic motor cyclist and owned for a period one of the fastest machines ever brought to Tasmania. He was a keen yachtsman, and one of the early owners of sharpie, when this class of racing vessel was introduced in the Derwent. He was a member of the Royal Yacht Club. His sporting activities included rowing, and he was a prominent member of the Derwent Rowing Club. He was one of the foundation members of the Apex Club and was one of the early presidents of that body. About two years ago he was made a life member.

Shortly after the declaration of war he enlisted in the R.A.A.F., and for a time was stationed at Parafield, South Australia. He was transferred to Tasmania when the R.A.A.F. Training School was established at Western Junction.

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Interest in Politics

Mr. Jones took a keen interest in politics and was looked upon as a coming member of the legislature. He married Miss Betty Viney, daughter of Mrs. L. S. Viney, of Earle-street, Sandy Bay, and leaves two young children, Cynthia and Richard.

In a tribute to the fine services Mr. Jones rendered as a member of the Aero Club, Mr. M. Roche, secretary of the Southern Section, writes: "Basil Jones was always an inspiration to members of the Aero Club, inasmuch as his experience and enthusiasm in flying, his jovial disposition and his clear-cut and Christian outlook on life and its problems and his intense loyalty and patriotism to his native land made him a citizen the nation could not afford to lose."

His Obituary in *The Launceston Examiner* (03 Jun 1941):

The high esteem in which Flying Officer Basil Goodwin Jones was held by all sections of the community was indicated yesterday by the large and representative attendance at his funeral at Cornelian Bay. It was one of the largest gatherings at the cemetery for many years.

From the cemetery gates to the graveside the hearse was preceded by members of the 1934 Derwent rowing crew, which in that year, when Mr. Jones was a member, represented Tasmania in the Australian championship. During his association with the Derwent Club Mr Jones was a member of the-Tasmanian champion eight crew in 1934, 1935, 1936 and 1937. In 1934 he also was a member of the champion fours crew.

At the funeral there were representatives from the Tasmanian Aero Club, the Australian Flying Corps Association, R.A.A.F., Apex Club, Tasmanian Rowing Association, Derwent, Buckingham, Lindisfarne and Mercantile Rowing Clubs, and the legal fraternity.

And in *The Hobart Mercury* (03 Jun 1941):

MANY hundreds of mourners attended the funeral at Cornelian Bay yesterday of Flying-Officer Basil G Jones who was killed in a flying accident at Western Junction on Friday. Flying Officer Jones married Miss Beatrice Viney, daughter of Mr and Mrs L. S. Viney and leaves a wife and two children.

The mourners included members of many sections of the community-Government professions and commercial-as well as representatives of clubs and organisations with which Flying Officer Jones had been associated.

Canon W R Barrett who conducted a service at the graveside said that they all deplored the death of Flying-Officer Jones who had taken a leading part in the professional and commercial life of the city and also in sport. But they honoured him chiefly because of his knowledge and interest in aviation and in this regard he had done sterling work as a flying officer at Western Junction for the past 18 months. It was sad to see a life cut off in its prime, but it was one of the tragedies of the war brought home to them day after day. They prayed that they might be worthy of the sacrifices made by brave men so that they might put more effort, more earnestness and energy into the struggle and ultimately drive out the tyranny and tragedy of war and restore peace to the world. Such sacrifices would earn their own reward.

Those attending his funeral included the Tasmanian Premier, Mr Cosgrove; the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Baker; the Mayor of Hobart Mr Soundy and Chief Justice Morris.

At the opening of the Inquest: (*The Launceston Examiner* 24 Jun 1941):

Keith Abraham Baxter, pilot of the second plane involved in the collision, stated that while approaching the landing field he saw Jones' plane coming from above and to the left of his own. To avoid a collision, he did a level turn, which caused his right wing tip to rise and strike same part of the other machine. He could not follow the movement of Jones' plane being occupied in righting his own machine and making a forced landing.

The Coroner's verdict six weeks later (*The Launceston Examiner* 02 Jul 1941):

INSTRUCTOR'S DEATH IN PLANE CRASH

A verdict of accidental death was given by the City Coroner (Mr. F. N. Stops) yesterday at an enquiry into the death of Flying Officer Basil Goodwin Jones, who was killed as the result of a collision between two aircraft on May 30.

Leading Aircraftman David Stuart Brown, of the Western Junction Flying School, said that on the date of the fatality he was detailed to be given dual instruction in steep turns and forced landings by Jones. They took off from the aerodrome about 10.30 a.m. and after about 20 minutes flying during which they were doing steep turns at about 2000 feet they flew in the direction of Pine Tree Paddock. the machine was then above the clouds, the "ceiling" being a low one. Jones, then said that he would show witness how to "get down" into a small paddock. He took the controls, which witness had had up to that time. There did not appear to be any planes in the vicinity. Jones elected a right-hand gliding turn across the wing, then a left-hand side-slip turn. At that time the plane would have been at an altitude of from 150 to 250 feet. During the last manoeuvre the plane was tilted at about 45 degrees, and it would have been impossible to see any aircraft on the right-hand side. The turn was almost completed when something hit the right-hand wing and it broke away. In about three seconds the plane hit the ground nose first. Witness found himself upside down and when he extricated himself could see that the force of the impact had driven the engine and fuselage in on Jones. At no time had he lost consciousness. Visibility was poor below the cloud ceiling although it was good above. Both planes were camouflaged. He had done many hours flying with Jones, whom he regarded as the best Instructor. He had no criticism to make of Jones' control of the aircraft.

Before closing the enquiry the coroner made the comment that the deceased was a very capable flying officer and that the fatality was purely accidental. No blame was attachable to anyone.

As a side note, the two pilots involved: David Brown was lost, presumed killed over Lae, New Guinea in late 1942. Keith Baxter became a bomber pilot in Europe, was shot down and was held as a Prisoner of War in Germany till the end of the war.

The Plane R-5186

De Havilland DH.82 Tiger Moth, was built in the UK, with the manufacturers serial number 83048. The plane was assigned the RAF serial of R-5186. It retained this serial when it served in the RAAF.

The plane was not rebuilt after the crash.

The Basil Jones Collection

Basil Jones was survived by his wife Betty and his daughter Cynthis aged 3 and Richard who was just 4 months old.

The family have retained a number of personal items and items salvaged from his crashed plane, which they have generously loaned to the TAHS. Included in the collection are the serial, the roundel and joystick from the Tiger Moth.



The Joystick from the crashed Tiger Moth (TAHS.0729)



The Serial of the on the Irish Linen fuselage of the crashed Tiger Moth. (TAHS.0730)



The roundel cut from the fuselage of the crashed Tiger Moth. (TAHS.0731)



Wooden plaque from his Flight Locker at 7EFTS (TAHS.0734)

Tasmanian Crash Reports – Part 2 - 1938 - 1945

By Ray Mudway

Flying in the early days was dangerous – so it is not surprising just how many flights failed to make their destination. Aircraft were fairly crude and unreliable; they did not have the benefit of later design experience and pilots too did not usually have extensive experience. Of course, weather plays some part, but it is surprising how many accidents happened in good weather.

This is the second article in a series compiling major crashes in Tasmania of both civilian and military aircraft. This covers the period up to the end of the Second World War, which includes numerous crashes of RAAF aircraft that were undertaking pilot training.

The articles have been compiled from various sources, and, where known, the causes of them.

I have used a loose definition of a “crash” to include both those with and without fatalities. If there are other crashes you know about and we could detail in future newsletters, please contact me.

RAAF Bases

No. 1 Operational Training Unit (No. 1 OTU) was an operational conversion unit of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) during World War II. Formed in December 1941 at Nhill in Victoria, it relocated to Bairnsdale in mid-1942 and then to East Sale the following year. No. 1 OTU's primary role was to train aircrew for multi-engined aircraft operations. At its peak of activity in August 1944, it was operating over 130 aircraft, the most numerous being Bristol Beauforts. (Wikipedia)

No 7 Elementary Flying Training School (7 EFTS) operated at Western Junction from August 1940 to August 1945. Tiger Moths were used extensively here. Ten servicemen lost their lives at the 7EFTS. In 2010 the Evandale Historical Society and the RAAF Association of Northern Tasmania erected a memorial to these servicemen in Evandale (which is located near Western Junction / Launceston Airport).



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11 Sept 1938, RAAF, Avro Anson Mk.1, A4-15 (K8794)

Dropped into a ditch during forced landing at Currie on King Island, destroyed by ensuing fire. The pilot and three passengers were not hurt.

20 Dec 1939, RAAF, Avro Anson, A4-17

Navigation exercise, Pat's River, Flinders Island

En route, the pilot encountered a difficult situation and was forced to make an emergency landing near the Whitemark Airfield. While all four occupants were uninjured, the aircraft was damaged beyond repair.

30 May 1941, RAAF, Tiger Moths, R5186 & R 5185

(7 EFTS Western Junction)

At 11.20am at Symonds Plains, five miles south east of Western Junction.

Aircraft collided during forced landing instruction practice.

In R 5186, Flying Officer Basil Goodwin Jones serial no. 425, Instructor Pilot, serial no.425, was killed and LAC D. S. Brown, Pupil Pilot, serial no. 401489, injured.

In R5185, LAC K. A. Baxter, Pupil Pilot, serial no. 401483 – uninjured.

F.O. Jones is buried in the Hobart (Cornelian Bay) Public Cemetery, Tasmania.

3 Feb 1942, RAAF, Tiger Moths, T5486 & T5463

Aircraft Crash - Three Killed at Cressy

At approx 10am, the two aircraft from 7 EFTS at Western Junction collided in full flight and crashed one mile west of Cressy during practice flights. Both machines were totally destroyed. The cause of the accident is obscure.

The crew of T5486, Sgt R. H. Dean, Instructor Pilot, serial no. 408038 and Sgt J. H. Rust, Instructor Pilot, serial no. 408097 were carrying out Instructors practice flying. Both were killed.

The crew of T5463, Flying-Officer James Edgar Scascighini (28) serial no. 2350, Instructor Pilot was giving instruction to trainee LAC Frank Louis Hurley (28) serial no. 412965.

F.O. J. Scascighini was killed while LAC Hurley parachuted to safety, slightly injured.

Sgt Dean was cremated in the Carr Villa Crematorium, Launceston, Tasmania. F.O. Scascighini is buried in the Burwood Cemetery, Melbourne, Victoria. LAC Hurley is buried in the Carr Villa Cemetery.

29 May 1942, ANA, DH.89A Dragon Rapide, VH-UXZ, *Marika*

Scheduled flight, Melbourne-Flinders Island.

While cruising over the Strait, an engine failed. The pilot attempted to ditch the aircraft. Search and rescue operations were suspended after a few days as no trace of the aircraft nor the pilots or the 3 passengers was found. The aircraft was later salvaged (without engines) from the sea; one engine was found fifty years later.

July 1942, RAAF, Lockheed Hudson Mk.Iva, A16-105.

Lockheed c-n. 6034. ex-USAAC serial No.4123175.

crashed Western Junction, Launceston, Tasmania - repaired.

Dec 1942 – seconded to RAAF Special Transport Flight, New Guinea.

1947 - 1971 – sold to various people for civil charter & aerial survey use.

1976 - purchased with A16-112 & restored to airworthiness by Malcolm Long.

1987 - Last Flight.

2001 - sold to the Australian War Memorial.

12 Sept 1942, RAAF, Bristol Beaufort Mk.V, A9-28 (ex-RAF T9567)

1OTU

Training night bombing exercise (DR9), crashed Bass Strait near King Island.

Information from Mercury Newspaper, 23 Apr 2017& ABC Radio Hobart, 26 Jul 2023.

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Expert divers on behalf of "Fallen Diggers" association about to resume search.

("Fallen Diggers" is a volunteer group finding missing Aust military personnel)

Mark Ryan of Southern Ocean Exploration has appealed to commercial and recreational fishers for information that could help find the wreck.

Mr Ryan is hoping for favorable weather conditions next weekend.

In October '23, we received a call telling us that Scallop Fishermen had pulled up some 'aircraft looking' items in their dredge. We decided to send a team to Stanley Tasmania, to meet up with the fisherman and to discuss where the parts were found. It was thought that there was a small possibility that the aircraft parts could be from the Beaufort Bomber we are searching for off the coast of King Island.

It was obvious from where the parts were found, just north of Three Hummock Island, that they were not from our Beaufort Bomber. The fisherman were kind enough to allow us to bring the parts home with us.

We were able to work out that the parts were not from a Beaufort Bomber, however we did not want to waste the effort so far of all concerned, so it was decided that we would follow through with trying to identify what aircraft the parts were from. Working together with the plane aficionados from Fallen Diggers, Jason Stagg, SOE's Martin Tozer & Darren Cook were able to establish that the parts concerned were in fact from a Gruman TBM Avenger.

MIA group has been looking for WW2 crashed aircraft to ID the crew, several aircraft found.

Report written by Martin Tozer to be sent to Heritage Tasmania.



RAAF Avro Anson's at Whitemark Aerodrome, Flinders Island (Furneaux Historical Society)

11 Oct 1942, RAAF, Lockheed Hudson, A16-18

Navigation exercise, Bairnsdale, Vic - Whitemark, Flinders Island.

The 1 OTU aircraft crashed into the sea in unknown circumstances. SAR mission was conducted but eventually suspended after few days as no trace of the aircraft nor the crew was found. Eighteen RAAF aircraft took part in the SAR operation.

15 Dec 1942, RAAF, Bristol Beaufort, A9-100

1 OTU

Navigation exercise. Starboard engine failed during landing at Pat's River, Flinders Island, aircraft struck fence. converted to components Jan 1943.

26 April 1943, RAAF, Bristol Beaufort, A9-304

Training night bombing exercise (DR9). With Beaufort A9-166 as leader, took off in formation from No.1 OTU, East Sale, at approximately 6.30pm.

The exercise was carried out and on the return journey bad weather was encountered between Flinders Island and King Island. The aircraft were at a height of 2,000-3,000 feet and the pilot of A9-166 instructed -304 to reduce height. At approximately 9.05pm, when the aircraft were about 5 miles from King Island at a height of 800 feet, the leader decided to turn back on account of the weather. He advised -304 that he was turning to port which he amended almost immediately to turning to starboard. The pilot of -304 commenced a turn to port and on the amended order he took evasive action in a diving turn to starboard. At the reduced height and in poor visibility, the pilot of -304 apparently misjudged the correct moment for the recovery of the turn with the result that the aircraft dived into the water while still banked.

Searches by land parties, by aircraft from No.1 Operations Training Unit and by naval vessels, were unsuccessful.

In December 2015, Southern Ocean Exploration Inc. were contacted by Fallen Diggers Inc for the purpose of running on-water searches, in an attempt to locate the missing aircraft. Several trips have been run to King Island, but they are yet to be successful in locating A9-304.

11 Jun 1943, RAAF, Tiger Moth, A17-560

5 miles south of Western Junction at Wollmera, Longford. Two killed.

During a dual instruction flight, the main-plane appeared to come off in mid-air and the aircraft spun in and hit the ground.

Flying Officer S. Fitton, Instructor Pilot, serial no. 254900.

LAC A. B. Leake, Trainee Pilot, serial no. 419788.

The crew are buried in the Carr Villa General Cemetery, Launceston, Tasmania.

6 July 1943, RAAF, Lockheed Hudson, A16-32

Training night bombing exercise (DR9).

Aircraft took off at 19.44pm, flight from Base-Flinders-Currie-Hogan Group-Base. They were on wireless silence and failed to return. Crashed into Bass Strait. The maximum endurance of the aircraft was 7 hours. All searches have proved negative.

11 July 1943, RAAF, Beaufort, A9-352

From 1 OTU, (Nhill, Bairnsdale & East Sale).

Crashed 1.5 miles east of Currie Aerodrome, King Island, Tasmania with all crew killed, pilot is buried in Currie Public Cemetery, King Island, Tasmania - Row D1. Grave 25.

27 July 1943, RAAF, Tiger Moths, A17-85 & N.6903

Nile Relief Landing Ground, collided mid-air.

18 Aug 1943, ANA, DH.89 Dragon Rapide, VH-UXT, *Mundoora*

Scheduled service, Melbourne-Wynyard. On touchdown at Wynyard Airport, the aircraft went out of control, veered off runway and collided with a ditch before coming to rest. All four occupants were uninjured, the aircraft was damaged beyond repair.

23 Sep 1943, RAAF, Airspeed Oxford, AS-618

The aircraft of No.1 OTU took off from East Sale, Victoria on an operational training mission over Bass Strait. Approaching the island, the pilot decided to descend and fly over a shipwreck near the cliff & lighthouse. He then turned around and tried to climb and fly over the cliff but clipped the top of it at about 9.35am. The aircraft banked around behind the lighthouse & crashed, killing all four on board.

The Lighthouse Keeper at the time, Harry Ford, saw the aircraft crash. The four deceased airmen were initially buried on Deal Island but were then reburied in the military section of Springvale Cemetery in Victoria in 1944.

Thanks to Forty South magazine for information.



Photos of the crash site, taken in more recent times (1990s), supplied by Mr Craig Searle, former Park Ranger on Deal Island.

The big stone (top left) marks the initial grave of the crew before they were reburied on the mainland.

23 Dec 1943, RAAF, Avro Anson, DG827

From GRS

Damaged while landing, Pat's River, Flinders Island.

27 Jan 1944, Tiger Moths, RAAF, T5411 & A17-274

The aircraft collided in full flight during solo flying practices, and crashed at 7.50am, two miles south west of Western Junction. Both trainee pilots were killed.

LAC H. R. Taylor, serial no. 53567 in Moth T5411 - killed.

LAC E. J. Holt, serial no. 431775 in Moth A17-274 – died of injuries.

Both are buried in the Carr Villa General Cemetery, Launceston, Tasmania.

4 May 1945, RAAF, Lockheed Hudson, A16-113

This aircraft was supplied by US Defence Aid on 13 Oct 1941 and after several transfers throughout the war it was received by 1OTU on 7 Feb 1945.

On Friday 4th May 1945, at 7.13 pm, the aircraft took off from East Sale on a training night-operation (OT8) via Paynesville, Pat's River and return to East Sale.

The aircraft crashed into the sea, with only a wheel and undercarriage washing up on a beach near Ocean Grange, Vic. The five Crew posted as missing.

***Remember, if you have any historical articles you would like to share, just send us an email.
Look forward to hearing from you!***

NEXT NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2025

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