

**The**  
**AUSTRALIAN**  
**SOCIETY of**  
**WORLD WAR I**  
**AERO**  
**HISTORIANS**



**NEWSLETTER**  
**MAY 2009**



**FEATURES**

- MEMBERSHIP MATTERS ... 2.**
- Plastic Kit News & Quiz ... 3.**
- Bill Renfrew's Reviews ... 4-5.**
- Peter Chapman's Reviews 6-7.**
- FEEDBACK ... 8-9.**
- "Kaisar-I-Hind"... 10.**
- Leighterton 90 years ago... 11.**
- BACKPAGE... 12.**



*This new Plaque, recently on display at our Society's February Meeting, represents both a fitting tribute to the memory those Australians who served in the A.F.C during WWI and a timely reminder of the selfless sacrifice of those who volunteered to serve our country on the other side of the world.*

Development, production, sponsorship and delivery of the plaque to Leighterton is due solely to the initiative of G.F. Weingarth (Jerry to his mates and members of the ASWWIAH).

Against the odds, Jerry has been successful in gaining practical support from P&O (UK) who readily agreed to meet all costs associated with production of the plaque and arrangements for subsequent transportation to the UK aboard the liner *ARCADIA* (IV).

The plaque is to be mounted on the long low stone wall opposite the 24 AFC War Graves in the Leighterton Cemetery where an annual ANZAC Service & Parade is held on the Sunday nearest ANZAC Day.

*- Well done Jerry and thanks to P&O for timely interest and support.-*



**EDITOR :-**  
David Perkins  
damper@hunterlink.net.au

*The ASWWIAH NEWSLETTER is posted free to all financial members of the Society and is published quarterly in Feb., May, Aug. & Nov. each year. Contributions are welcomed.*

- MEMBERSHIP -

*New Members-*

Two new members have joined the Society since our last Newsletter in February.

Andrew SMITH  
215 Banks Drive  
St. CLAIR NSW 2759  
Phone:- (02) 9834 3268

*and*

Stephen Andrew JOHNSON  
26 Patterson Street  
HINTON NSW 2316  
Phone:- (02) 4930 5732

*Details on both of these new members can be found in your new 2009 MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY enclosed with this Newsletter. - Ed.*

- FEBRUARY 2009 MEETING -

The Society's November Annual General Meeting was held at our new venue - Victoria Barracks in Oxford Street Sydney with a good roll-up of 22 members plus 2 guests.

Secretary Gareth MORGAN advised the meeting that Norfolk Island RSL has acknowledged receipt of the *Roy Bell Memorial Plaque* and it is planned to attach the plaque to a new bench now under construction there.

Mark LAX announced to the Meeting that John GRECH was to receive the **ASWWIAH President's Literary Excellence Award for 2008**. John, a Society member resident in the UK, is well known to many of our members as the author of the "RECCE - Sources & Pointers for further Research" column in *Cross & Cockade International*. John's article, published in our 2008 Journal, "*Gone But Not Forgotten - 2nd Lieutenant Patrick Alva O'Brien MC., 66 Squadron RFC*".

Congratulations John, your article well illustrates both the cosmopolitan nature of aviation and the aviators in the Great War and some of the insurmountable postwar problems that were to manifest themselves years after the guns were silenced. These days we know it as '*collateral damage*'.

The February Meeting Raffle Draw 1, "The Airship VC" was won by Mike MIRKOVIC from Western Australia, whilst Draw 2, "Germany's First Air Force" was won by David ELLISON from Victoria.

Members at the Meeting were given a brief presentation on the current digital development of a database containing biographical material on all Australians who served in the aviation-related services in WWI.

The material originated with research by the late Barry VIDEON with some support from a number of like minded individual researchers. It is hoped that the Society may be in a position to make the final digital product available on our website as an aid for future research. There's still much to be done, but we are getting there, slowly but surely.

Mention of the website brings us to the second presentation at the Meeting. Andrew SMITH, a new member of our Society demonstrated a proposed make-over of our website. The proposed changes were very well received by those present and it was agreed that Andrew should continue with his development. Changes will be examined by the Committee and a report on progress will be available for discussion at the May meeting.

Members are invited to visit our registered domain: [www.1aero.org.au](http://www.1aero.org.au) -be advised that it's still under development (work-in-progress), but I'm sure you'll agree we're on the right track. Thanks Andrew for your expertise and time freely given! Well done.

- ASWWIAH Library Additions -

*New Library Accessions -*

*Windsock Worldwide Vol.25 No.1 2009*

*Windsock Worldwide Vol.25 No.2 2009*

*Windsock Datafile No.133 -*

*"Curtiss Jenny" Vol.2 by Colin Owers.*

*Windsock Datafile No.134 -*

*"RAF FE2d" by Paul R. Hare.*

*See Peter Chapman's Reviews on these publications on pages 6 & 7.*

*Over the Front Vol.23 No.4 Winter 2008*

*Cross & Cockade Intl. Vol.40 No.1 Spring 2009*

*World War One Aero Issue 200*

*See Bill Renfrew's Reviews on these pubs. on pages 4 & 5.*



Please direct all correspondence relating to the Australian Society of WWI Aero Historians Newsletter to:-

The Editor,  
David Perkins PO Box 5  
BELMONT NSW 2280 Australia.  
Phone:- (02) 4947 4828 or  
Email:- [damper@hunterlink.net.au](mailto:damper@hunterlink.net.au)

## - PLASTIC KIT NEWS -

From Peter Williams...

The solid news this month is that *Roden* have released the second version of their *Junkers D.I* in 1/48 scale, this time the early (long fuselage) version. I don't suppose that the markings options will be very colourful, but it could provide a canvas (albeit a corrugated aluminium one) for flights of fancy in the "what if" genre. *Roden* have also announced their *SPAD VII C.1* and *De Havilland DH 2* in 1/32 scale as "coming soon" and have started to put out the engines from their 1/32 scale kits as subjects on their own, complete with stand to display them on, so far we have *Gnome Monosoupape 100hp*, *Mercedes D.III 160hp* and *Hispano Suiza 8A 150hp*.

*Eduard* have released a limited edition *Fokker D.VII (OAW)* in "Sieben Schwaben" markings (very colourful) and a weekend edition of the *SPAD XIII* and *Fokker Dr.I*, cheaper kits with no etched brass and only one set of decals. Announced for later are an *Albatros D.III (OEF)* in 153 and 253 series versions and an Austro-Hungarian *MAG* built *Fokker D.VII*, also a special limited edition of the *SPAD XIII* (late) with figurines (1/48 I presume?) of *Eddie Rickenbacker* and *Frank Luke*, all in 1/48 scale.

*Special Hobby* have released a 1/48 scale *Nieuport 10*, which should be out now. Makes a change from the more "glamorous" scout types. For fans of smaller scales I have very little to offer, *Airfix* are re-re-re-re-releasing their old and somewhat tired old 1/72 scale WWI kits, though I seem to recall the *DH 4* as being rather good.

### Decal News:-

*Pheon Models* (no I've never heard of them either) have released a set of decals for *Sopwith Pups*, in both 1/48 and 1/72, 10 choices on the sheet, half and half RFC and RNAS. Available direct from [Pheon.models@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:Pheon.models@hotmail.co.uk)

*Superscale* now owned by *Squadron Hobbies* in the US have decals for *Roden's* 1/32 scale and 1/48 scale *Nieuport 28 C.1*, three choices in both scales. A welcome release as *Roden* only had one release of their 1/48 scale kit, with a choice of one squadron only.

Has anyone started their *Eduard SPAD*? I have just finished my (first?) and found a problem with the fit of the upper and lower fuselage pieces which overhung the centre piece at each side, so I had to resort to some serious trimming and consequent loss of detail, next time I will widen the basic fuselage by inserting a sliver of plastic card between the halves, this may cause a problem with the fit of

the lower wing, so that will probably incur a little surgery too. Be warned and dry-fit before resorting to glue or solvent. Ω

[see more Plastic Kit News on page 9.]

## - ASWWIAH Quiz No.8 -

**Great News!** - No, not a **HUGE** response, but correct answers did come in for Quiz No. 8 from *Adrian Hellwig* (Qld.), *Chas. Schaedel* (SA) and *Bill Vandersteen* (UK). *Chas. & Bill* provided comprehensive answers to both questions, whilst *Adrian* offered a brief, correct answer to Question 2. [Adrian has been busy preparing his 1/5 scale *BE2c* for the 1st flight - see full details and a photograph of 4395 on the **BACKPAGE**].

You will find the questions and answers for Quiz No. 8 repeated below:-

**QUESTION 1.** "Who was the man famous in aviation who died on 8th March 1917?"

**A.** (from *Bill Vandersteen*) - "The aviation pioneer who died on 8th March 1917 was Cavalry-General Count *Ferdinand von Zeppelin* in his 79th year from pneumonia at *Charlottenburg*."

**QUESTION 2.** "An aeroplane, that in service became known for its structural strength, broke up in the air during testing of the prototype on 28th January 1917. The pilot was killed. Name the plane and the pilot."

**A.** (from *Chas. Schaedel*) - "On 28 January 1917 Major *Frank Goodden* was killed when the second prototype *SE5 A4562* he was testing at *Farnborough* broke up in the air. An investigation by *Dr. A.P. Thurston* found that the wings failed in downward torsion, with indications that another of the prototypes showed possibility of similar wing failure. The addition of plywood webs to the compression ribs plus improved interplane strut to spar fittings ensured that the production aircraft achieved a reputation for structural strength."

Now - moving on to the next quiz - I'm still hoping for that **HUGE** response from our member/readers. **C'mon guys** get cracking - see if you can get the brain into gear & get the old thought processes up and running...

## - ASWWIAH Quiz No.9 -

Again, Quizmaster *DEREK WHITE* has provided us with a question, this time, relating to airships:-

**Q.** "What was the greatest altitude ever attained by an airship? Which ship, when, where, why and under whose command?"

Many answers, but in finding one you find all! Ω

- The ARMCHAIR AIRFIGHTER REVIEWS -

from Bill Renfrew...



**Vol 23 No 4 Winter 2008**

This issue has quite an Italian flavour with the front cover (inside and out) and the rear cover (outside) devoted to the Italian ace of aces Francesco Baracca. The articles in this issue are:

**Manchester of the Foggiani.** This article examines the career of Harry S Manchester including his training at Foggia in Italy and his service on the *Caproni Ca3* bomber. It is well illustrated by many photographs of aircraft, personnel and locations from his own collection.

**Francesco Baracca, The Italian 'Ace Among Aces'.** This substantial article considers the life and career of Italy's premier WWI ace. This article runs for 25 pages and is well illustrated with many photographs including several of his funeral. As stated above, the front cover is devoted to paintings of Baracca while outside the rear cover carries three profiles of aircraft that he flew.

**Rare Birds – AEG N.1 (CIVn)** This aircraft was a two seater, single engined night bomber built by both AEG and Slabatinig. It was generally employed in ones and twos for short-range work by bomber units. Production orders for this machine were given during 1916 and 1917. Later in the war they were used as trainers. Photographs, scale drawings and a coloured two view (inside the back cover) illustrate the article.

**Aviation Institute of Maintenance Students Build WWI Replica Aircraft** - This is a short news article.

**The Writing of 'THE STAND'** This is an interview with Stephen Skinner who has had "*THE STAND: The Final Flight of Lt. Frank Luke Jr.*" published by Schiffer in 2008.

The usual departments *Mentioned in Despatches* and *Between the Bookends* complete the issue.Ω



**Vol. 40/1 Spring 2009**

This issue's cover carries a painting by Robert Taylor entitled "Dawn Patrol". It depicts three SE5a machines of 85 Squadron against an illuminated cloud background and probably depicts a patrol by the squadron early in the summer of 1918. The articles in this issue are:

**Unchecked Ego: Major A.D. Carter, DSO, 19 Squadron RFC Part 1.** This article chronicles this officer's career early in the war with the New Brunswick Regiment, his transfer to the RFC and his service with 19 Sqn until the beginning of 1918 when the squadron exchanged its SPADs for Sopwith Dolphins. It is illustrated by photographs and supplemented by colour profiles inside the front cover.

**RAF Experimental Station Isle of Grain.** This is a memorandum about this station shortly after the Armistice. It was written by J.L. Callan, an American naval aviator, and is somewhat critical of the RAF's attitude towards matters concerning the navy. Photographs, maps and a coloured centre spread illustrate this article.

**More on Care and Maintenance of Machines.** Continues the notes of Capt E. A. McKay OC "C" Flight 104 Squadron RFC/RAF

**A Fear of Snipes.** This article is a photographic essay on South African ace A. F. W. Beauchamp Proctor VC and contains the last letter that he wrote prior to his death in a flying accident in June 1921.

**HP 0/100 Early Flights.** Taken from the logbook of Richard G Gardner, this article recounts his conversion to the type in August 1916 and several flights he made after that time. It is illustrated by a number of photographs.

The regular departments of *Fabric*, *Recce* and *Bookshelf* complete the issue.

The rear cover carries two (untitled) CG artworks by Russell Smith "*Wolff's Requiem*" and "*Lowenhardt*". The former depicts the death of Kurt Wolff while flying Fokker F1 102/17 and the latter Lowenhardt's yellow Fokker DVII.Ω

**- Armchair Airfighter Reviews -**



**WWI Aero Issue 200**

This is the 200<sup>th</sup> issue of this journal and as such is presented as a commemorative work. The cover is a montage of all earlier covers and after a short editorial all articles are reprinted from earlier issues. I will simply list the articles and the issue of their earlier publication. They are:

- Antique Airplane Association (WWI Club) (June 1961, #1)
- Wants and Disposals (WWI Club)(December 1961, #1)
- WWI Aeroplanes Editors column (#33)
- Turnbuckles (#40)
- Bruning-Forseman (sic) R Dreidecker (Poll) Giant (#56)
- Bristol Scout D 3-view (#58)
- Cole Palen's Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome (#62)
- Fokker DVIII Wing and Airfoils (#79) (6 articles)
- Santos-Dumont Demoiselle 3-view (#81)
- A Mercedes... but which one? (#92)
- A big bag of Instruments (#92)
- Editors Column (#100)(Reprinted from #35)
- That Fokker's an Albatros (#102)
- RAF BE1 (#119)
- Historiography (#121)
- Archiv: exhaust stacks (#129)
- Archiv: MvR gives Tony Fokker the facts of fighter life, exhaust stacks Part II (#130)
- The Bruning-Forstmann (Poll) Giant Triplane cont'd (#167)
- Coanda 1910 Drawings (#177)
- Extant Wright Types (#179)

An article "Leo Opdycke – Delving Into the Past", reprinted from Airport Journal December 2005, completes this issue. Ω

**- THE VOISIN PROJECT Contd. -**

From Gary Sutherland...

"As can be seen from the enclosed photograph, [ see **BACKPAGE**] my model **VOISIN** is completed, almost ready for the first engine runs. The structure proved to be relatively light and strong and generally follows the full size original, except that the elevator (forward plane) spar of steel tube is a glassfibre rod in my model.

The most difficult part proved to be working out how the complex undercarriage on the original **VOISIN** worked and converting this to a model structure. It seems that the gear was fully floating and pivoted about a point on the forward nacelle. The springs are very long and must have been stabilized internally at a number of points to prevent them buckling sideways. At model scale the springs are seven inches long overall, and are made up from 1/16 inch wire 1/2 inch diameter, 2 1/2 inch long compression springs. These are wired together with hardwood dowel joiners to make the length. The dowels are drilled to run on the central rods from 3/32 inch piano wire to stabilize them under load.

Gabriel Voisin was an old fashioned engineer and seems to have built structures to see how they worked and if they bent he added another couple of bracing wires to stiffen things up! I'm not sure what all the wires are for, but the gear seems to work, at this stage anyway!

Since the photo was taken, an **ENYA 60** 4-stroke engine has been installed, driving a 13x6 plastic pusher prop. The plastic "spoked" main wheels have also been exchanged for more substantial plywood disc wheels which will be used, at least for the initial tests. A model tank has also been fitted and, after the engine runs, the nose will be ballasted with lead to balance the model on the main wheels which are at about 50% chord.

The intention is to 'hop' the model into the air to see how things work, much as John Moore-Brabazon (later Lord Brabazon of Tara) did way back in May 1909 to become the first Briton to fly in Britain. Hopefully the model will do as well in 2009, 100 years later." Ω

Gary then adds a postscript;

"You have to get up very early to get ahead of Peter Williams. Peter very kindly sent me a photocopy of the Voisin flight instructions as soon as he had finished reading them. They were very simple as the Voisin of 1909 only had rudder and elevator controls and Gabriel V. declared that anyone could learn to fly after half an hours instruction!"

These details on 'How to Fly a VOISIN' were taken from "THE AERO MANUAL" previously donated to the Society Library by Gordon LASSLETT and not HASSLETT as listed in the February Newsletter - Please accept my apologies for the typo, Gordon. - Ed.



- PETER CHAPMAN'S\* REVIEWS 1 -

**Windsock Worldwide Vol.25 No.1, January / February 2009, Albatros Productions Ltd, 10 Long View, Chiltern Park Estate, Berkhamsted, Herts, HP4 1BY, 32 pages plus soft covers, illustrated, available from the publisher, £6.80 including postage and packaging.**

The first issue of *Windsock Worldwide* in 2009 contains another good mix of articles and features, with enough variety to please everyone. Beginning with a two-page colour spread of readers' models, the most unusual of which is a 1/32 scale Mosca-Bistriski MB bis, there are a number of modelling articles included. The best of these is a new series by Lance Krieg, Modelling Master Class, complete with many colour as well as black-and-white photographs, which promises to be an interesting read for those serious modellers keen to make a lasting impression. Chapter 1 in this series covers Tools and References. Stephen Lawson contributes an interesting illustrated article on converting various Nieuport model kits into different variants and this issue's *Rara Avis* covered is the **Short Bomber**, complete with two photographs and a double page spread of 1/72 scale drawings by the late Ian Stair.

Part 17 of George Haddow's Guide to WW1 Austro-Hungarian Naval Aeroplanes is a brief but colourful look at one of the rarer flying boats, the **Lohner Type P**. Not much is known about this aircraft but George has more than made up for this by including his usual 1/72 scale drawings and a colour page of profiles by Bob Pearson, as well as four photographs. Jan Forsgren has written another short but informative article about the restoration of the NAB 9, a licence built Albatros B.II, in Sweden, and a few close up photographs of the fuselage are included. The final article is a look at a new World War One aviation computer simulator, complete with colour images of some of the aircraft, which are pretty realistic. There is also a page of Curtiss Jenny photographs from Colin Owers and the rear cover contains no fewer than 12 colourful profiles of Jenny's in Canadian RFC service, the latter by Bob Pearson.

Throw in Logbook Entries and Kitbag, and you have a thoroughly absorbing read, not to mention it's value as a reference. **Highly recommended.**

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**Windsock Worldwide Vol.25 No.2, March / February 2009, Albatros Productions Ltd, 10 Long View, Chiltern Park Estate, Berkhamsted, Herts, HP4 1BY, 40 pages plus soft covers, illustrated, available from the publisher, £6.80 including postage and packaging.**

It is with much joy and not a little pride that this reviewer received the latest issue of *Windsock Worldwide*, as the entire contents are dedicated to a new range of New Zealand manufactured 1/32 scale models.

The new kids on the block are none other than *Wingnut Wings* of Miramar in Wellington, and this extended issue of 40 pages covers builds of their first four releases in great detail, and in colour throughout. As a modeller of old, I was blown away by the sheer detail included in these magnificent aircraft - the **Junkers J.I**, **LVG C.VI**, **SE5a** and **Bristol F2b**. To give but one example, the article on the **Junkers J.I** consists of two pages of colour photographs showing some of the close-up detail of the surviving example in Berlin, plus seven pages covering the build of this model, illustrated with a further 49 colour photographs! All of the other aircraft receive similar treatment, and a rare treat they are too.

The magazine also includes a four page advertising spread from *Wingnut Wings* which contains details of these releases plus some mouth-watering future releases, which include the **RE8**, **Sopwith Pup**, **Pfalz D.IIIa**, **Fokker D.VII** and even a **Gotha G.IV**. For the discerning modeller they also make and sell a high quality range of figures in the same scale. Details can be obtained at their web site, [www.wingnutwings.com](http://www.wingnutwings.com), as well as from *Wingnut Wings Ltd.*, P.O. Box 15-319 Miramar, Wellington 6243, New Zealand.

To round out the issue, regular feature *Kitbag* has details of new releases from *Roden* and *Eduard*, which include the **Fokker E.II / E.III**, **Roland C.II**, stretched **Junkers D.I** and even a range of 1/32 scale WW1 aircraft engines.

If you have never been interested in modelling World War One aircraft, you will still be impressed by this *Windsock Worldwide* special. **Very highly recommended.**

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\*PETER CHAPMAN is Editor of the "Fourteen-Eighteen Journal" published annually by the Australian Society of World War One Aero Historians.

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- PETER CHAPMAN'S REVIEWS 2 -

**Curtiss Jenny – Volume 2** by Colin Owers, *Windsock Datafile No.133*, Albatros Productions Ltd, 10 Long View, Chiltern Park Estate, Berkhamsted, Herts, HP4 1BY, 36 pages plus covers, illustrated, available from the publisher, £10.85 excluding postage and packaging.

*Datafile No.133* from Albatros Productions brings a welcome return to the versatile Curtiss Jenny, this being Volume Two, by renowned World War One aviation researcher Colin Owers. Readers will be well aware of the primary roles played in World War One by the Jenny, but will be pleasantly surprised by the sheer scope of new information in this latest *Datafile* concerning its use in that conflict, as well as post-war.

Starting with an interesting and informative history, which contains details of the Jenny in British, Australian and Canadian service, this latest issue is jam-packed with photographs and illustrations of just about every Jenny type built, from the JN-3 to the JN-4(Can). The narrative concludes with information on colours and markings used, plus a range of appendices covering USAS Curtiss Jenny aircraft on hand as at December 1919, to Recognition feature of the JN series.

Author Colin Owers provides five pages of drawings, depicting the finest details on the JN-4(Can) aircraft in both 1/48 and 1/72 scales. As a nice touch, he has also included original drawings from the JN-4D Handbook (1917), and a page of control diagrams for the JN-4B and JN-4D. Colour artwork is also not neglected, a fine front cover painting by Robert Karr being ably complemented by rear cover (inside and outside) colour profiles by Ronny Bar, the latter depicting two JN-4 and two JN-4(Can) aircraft.

Once again, the best feature of this particular *Datafile* is the sheer range of photographs. There are 103 photographs in total, seven of which are close-up colour images of a JN-4(Can) aircraft owned by Al Stix in the USA. No matter what your fancy is, there is a photograph of the aircraft you are looking for in this book, many showing the original markings and fine details so loved by modellers particularly.

Another fine addition to Albatros Productions' growing list of *Datafiles*, this latest effort is a fitting conclusion to the coverage of the Curtiss Jenny and together with Volume One, a 'must have' for any World War One aircraft enthusiasts library. **Very highly recommended.**

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**RAF FE2d** by Paul R. Hare, *Windsock Datafile No.134*, Albatros Productions Ltd, 10 Long View, Chiltern Park Estate, Berkhamsted, Herts, HP4 1BY, 32 pages plus covers, illustrated, available from the publisher, £10.85 excluding postage and packaging.

One of this reviewer's favourite World War One aircraft is the RAF FE2b, so it is with much pleasure that this latest *Datafile* was received in the mail. The RAF FE2d was basically the same aircraft, with the more powerful 250 hp Rolls-Royce 'Eagle' IV engine, and was built in an attempt to make the FE2 a faster aircraft, and more able to deal with the superior German scouts coming into service in 1916 and 1917.

For author Paul Hare, a longtime World War One researcher, this is a first foray into the *Datafile* series, and what a welcome one it is. He skims lightly through the development of the FE2 series and straight into the modifications required to create the FE2d. The narrative goes on to cover aircraft armament, which in this aircraft could number as many as four guns, and concludes with interesting tales of FE2d's on operations. The *Datafile* finishes with notes on colours and markings, plus appendices covering Production and Dimensions.

The *Datafile* also includes six pages of 1/48 and 1/72 scales line drawings by the late Ian Stair, unsurpassed in their accuracy today. These show not only the aircraft in great detail, but also engine and radiator details. At the rear of the journal there is also a page of original GA drawings for the Rolls Royce 'Falcon' engine, also used in this aircraft type. Front cover artwork, by Danilo Renzulli, is a fine study of Boulton & Paul built A6516 of 20 Squadron RFC, fighting off an Albatros scout. There are also excellent colour profiles of aircraft serial A5 on both inside covers, and three side profiles on the rear cover, all by Ronny Bar.

42 good photographs have also been included, many depicting aircraft after they had been shot down and captured by the Germans. There are also the well-known series of photographs taken of a 20 Squadron crew, Lts Stevens and Cambray, demonstrating the aircraft in photo-reconnaissance and defensive modes.

Although slightly shorter and thin on information than many *Datafiles* of late, Paul Hare is to be congratulated on a fine first effort, and I have no hesitation in recommending this issue to all our members. Highly recommended.

For details on the four items reviewed above & other Albatros publications, you should visit their website at:-

[www.windsockdatafilespecials.co.uk](http://www.windsockdatafilespecials.co.uk)

- FEEDBACK -

I recently received **FEEDBACK** items from two of our readers, both relating to items submitted by Pete SEAR from Melbourne, Victoria and published in the February Newsletter.

Readers may recall the item **"NO OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY ISSUES HERE!"** which included a picture of Pete's father-in-law perched tail-up on top of the port engine of a Vickers VIMY in 1920. The pilot, obviously anxious to get-up-and-away was none other than Wing Commander A.W. Bigsworth, then the O/C Armament & Gunnery School at Eastchurch.

As luck would have it, another family connection has surfaced, this time with the Wing Commander. Warwick Bigsworth, Secretary of the Aviation Historical Society of Australia (NSW) Inc. writes;

"I was most interested to read Pete Sear's letter regarding his father-in-law in the February 2009 issue of the Newsletter.

He mentioned one W/Cdr A.W. Bigsworth who, apart from being reported as a formidable chap, was a distant relation of mine. Air Cdre. Arthur Wellesley Bigsworth C.M.G., D.S.O., A.F.C. was born on 27<sup>th</sup> March 1885 and died on 24<sup>th</sup> February 1961. Not only was he responsible for attacking the Zeppelin LZ39 in May 1915 and sinking the German submarine near Ostend, Belgium in August that year, but he was also the designer of the Bigsworth board.

• From [www.bbc.co.uk/ww2peopleswar/stories/93/a8108093.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/ww2peopleswar/stories/93/a8108093.shtml), Recollections of a Fleet Air Arm Observer:

*"There was navigation equipment, a chart board, known as the Bigsworth board, which had parallel rulers, a course and speed calculator and a device for calculating wind speed and direction. The chart board was a bit more than 2ft square and the course and speed calculator was a device on which you could set your air speed, the wind speed and direction, and the direction you wished to go. Then by setting all this and twiddling something round, it indicated which course you should fly so the effect of the wind would put you onto the track you wanted to go along."*

• From the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics, Report No. 131 Aeronautic Instruments:

*"The Bigsworth protractor, parallels and chart board. This is one of the most convenient available outfits for plotting and determining courses, finding position, etc. Two sizes are provided, 14 and 17 inches square, depending on the room available. A number of charts can be carried under the celluloid upper surface of the board and held in place by clips with the one desired for use placed uppermost.*

*A parallel motion carrying a celluloid protractor and straightedge can be clamped to the side of the board in any desired position. The parallels are fitted with a hinge, so that the protractor can be lifted off the board if so desired.*

*The protractor can be set with its arrow pointing magnetic north by means of a compass rose or by a convenient meridian and the known variation for the region.*

*For measuring distances, two interchangeable protractors are provided, one graduated in inches and tenths for the standard charts which are drawn to scales 10 nautical miles to the inch for General Charts and 3 nautical miles to the inch for Coastal Charts (these specifications are for the British Air Service), and the other graduated in miles and halves on a scale of 1 in 100,000.*

*A special pencil is used for drawing on the celluloid surface, the marks being easily erased by rubbing with the finger."*

In 1972, I spotted an example of the Bigsworth board in the Shuttleworth Collection at Old Warden Aerodrome, near Biggleswade, and quickly drew it to the attention of the only official on duty. He was totally unimpressed with the connection, no doubt offended that a colonial would dare to interrupt his otherwise uneventful day."

Warwick went on to make yet another connection and provide some additional **FEEDBACK** to the article **"SOME QUERIES FROM YESTERYEAR"** in which Pete Sear raised questions concerning **"THE AIR VCS"** by Captain W.E. Johns, as follows;

"On the following page of the February newsletter, Pete Sear refers to the book **"The Air VCS"** by Capt. W.E. Johns (Yes, the Biggles bloke!). I wonder if Pete realised the connection with the aforementioned Arthur Wellesley Bigsworth, who after World War I actually worked with Capt W.E. Johns in the Air Ministry. Our family historians in Great Britain are now reasonably sure that the character of **"Biggles"** was actually based on, at least in part, that of Arthur. The West End Historical Society from Southampton, also makes this connection



and the International Biggles Association makes reference that Johns' stories were based on the deeds of his friends. I hope your readers find this of interest."

Warwick, we most certainly do, as most of our Society members have more than a passing acquaintance with Captain W.E. Johns' Biggles (& Co.), in fact I understand that John Baker, our immediate past President, is the proud owner of 'an almost complete set of Biggles' Books'. I'm sure it's fair to say that W.E. Johns' stories did much to foster and encourage an abiding interest in aviation matters for readers of all ages.

Thank you Warwick for sharing your connection with the Wing Commander and also for your kind words regarding the Society's Newsletter.

Gary Sunderland, a regular contributor to the Newsletter also wrote a letter which answers Pete Sears' question, "Does anyone know what aircraft this redoubtable pair encountered that day in September 1915?" [see February Newsletter page 10]. Gary then goes on to provide more FEEDBACK on the construction of the Lockheed Altair [see items in previous issues of the Newsletter going back to May 2008], Gary writes;

"...the German 'two tails' machine of 1915 was the AGO C1. Casein glue, also once known as 'Aircraft cement' was invented by the Swiss just before WWI. AGO employed a Swiss engineer named Haepli to design an armed pusher aeroplane without the drag of the usual 'lattice tail' construction of other contemporary pushers. The C1 was the result and featured a central nacelle with two streamlined booms or fuselages either side manufactured from wood veneer shells planked over timber moulds during construction.

Similar methods may have been used by Albatros and Deperdussin in their pre-war racers, but I am not sure of the details. Anyway, the method was subsequently used very effectively by both Roland and Pfalz during the war, and afterwards by many other manufacturers.

I suspect that the Lockheed patent was for a development of this method involving the use of a concrete internal mould allied to an external rubber skin from which air was evacuated to compress the veneers and the adhesive together. This was then loaded into an autoclave, a type of industrial oven, and heat cured (the adhesive was 'Tegofilm', a type of phenolic glue still used in the manufacture of plywood). The resulting shells were produced in a few hours, rather than the days required for the earlier method where thousands of brads had to be hammered in by hand and later laboriously removed.

The Lockheed shells were also lighter, stronger and more durable, thus giving Lockheed the performance lead for a number of years until the advent of metal structures just before WW2. The whole process has now been applied recently with the advent of glass and carbon composite structures with epoxy adhesives used in some of the latest airliners (the Boeing 777 and 787 'Dreamliner' and the Airbus A380). The materials may have changed, but the process remains much as before, utilising heat cure and evacuated moulds to compress the laminate."Ω

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- PLASTIC KIT NEWS (Part 2) -

more from Peter Williams...

A new company, Wingnut Wings of New Zealand, have announced and released the first four of a new series of 1/32 scale injection moulded kits, the four have been reviewed in depth in the latest issue of *Windsock Worldwide*, Vol. 25 No. 2, and they are praised to the skies as possibly the best ever! They are: Junkers J.I, LVG C.VI, RAF SE 5a and Bristol F2B. "Coming soon" are Sopwith Pup, Gotha G.IV (!!!), Pfalz D.IIIa, Albatros D.V, Fokker D.VII and RAF RE8., But wait! There's more! Also in their four page advertisement are a LFG Roland D.VI, Hansa Brandenburg W.29 and RAF FE2b.

Wingnut also do a range of 1/32 scale resin figures and the lozenge decal sheets are also available separately, phew! Windsock think so highly of these new kits that they have devoted almost the entire magazine issue to them. ***I'm jealous, they are not to my chosen (1/48) scale!***

You can see the full details on these great new kits from the Wingnut Wings Company in "PETER CHAPMAN'S REVIEWS 1" on page 6.- Ed.

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The MAY SOCIETY GENERAL MEETING will be held at our new venue:-

THE CONFERENCE ROOM, BUILDING 96, VICTORIA BARRACKS, OXFORD STREET, PADDINGTON.

Don't forget the new (Wintertime) start time of 1300 hrs. There's ample parking inside the Barracks for your car, or

Alternatively, take the No. 378 "BRONTE" Bus from Eddy Avenue at Central Railway.

- A.F.C. REPATRIATION - May/June 1919 -

"... "Kaisar-I-Hind" was launched on 27th June 1914 and sailed on her maiden voyage on 1st October of that year. She was the fastest P&O passenger liner built, up to that time, and easily broke the London-Bombay record. In 1916, her service extended to Australian waters and she escaped her first torpedo attack in the Mediterranean. She saw extensive service as a troopship throughout 1917-18 and, during that period, managed to survive three more torpedo attacks by German submarines. The first two were near-misses, attributed to her speed,



while the third one actually hit her but failed to explode. In commemoration of this miraculous escape, the damaged hull plates were painted green, instead of being retouched with red 'boot-topping'.

Immediately after the Armistice, she was engaged in the repatriation of Australian servicemen... The name - so easily misspelt and misunderstood - simply means "Empress of India". She was to remain in P&O service for a further sixteen years; finally being broken up at Blyth, Northumberland in mid-1938, when another World War was already looming. It is doubtful whether her maximum speed of around 20 knots would have saved her from the new generation of U-boats". [Extracted from an article by Derek White, published in the Society Newsletter, February 1991. Derek served with the P&O Steam Navigation Company from 1952 to 1959.]

The "Kaisar-I-Hind" sailed from Southampton on 6th May 1919 with the majority of personnel\* then serving in Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8 Squadrons AFC. (No. 1 Squadron AFC personnel had been repatriated earlier, sailing on 5th March from Port Said on the "Port Sydney"). Sailing via the Suez canal, 'The Kaisar' disembarked AFC/AIF personnel at Fremantle, Port Adelaide, Melbourne arriving Sydney on 19th June 1919. Most members of the AFC were discharged within a month of their return to Australia. After nearly 5 years the 'Great Adventure' was over - it was now a time for resettlement and readjustment to the postwar civilian way of life. For some, the return to a 'normal' life at home would not be that easy.

\*AFC personnel who remained behind, included those who were still undertaking approved specialised vocational training (mostly in the various branches of engineering with little or no equivalent back in Australia), and many of those servicemen who had married local English gels (contrary to prevailing official policy!) Of course, some of these families would stay in England and not require repatriation, but those who wished to return to Australia to start a new life together would have to wait until suitable transportation was available for married couples.

- LEIGHTERTON - 90 years Ago -



Officer's Mess - Leighterton - Winter 1918/19\*.

\* In 1992 The Aerodrome Cafe and Garage occupied this site...



2 Avro 504K with a Snipe 7F.1 (No.8 Sqn\* AFC) 1918/19.

\* Both Nos.7 & 8 Squadrons flew Avro 504 J/K machines, but only No.8 Sqn is recorded having received Sopwith Snipes (only 3 machines - perhaps after the Armistice.)

- LEIGHTERTON - 90 years Ago (contd.) -



LEIGHTERTON STATION ORCHESTRA c.1918

No - it wasn't all hard work at Leighterton! Off-duty members of the AFC had ample opportunity to socialise with the local residents of the nearby villages & towns in Gloucestershire. In addition to the obvious football matches and athletics contests between servicemen and the local 'civvies', there were regular concerts and dances scheduled and which were very popular. Naturally, it was not long before the troops at Leighterton had organised a band/orchestra from the ranks, as seen above. So who were the musicians in the picture?

Alas, having signed their names around the outside of the picture we do know who they are, but we can't match names to faces! The signatures are clearly legible, but are signed irregularly around the margins with no spatial connection to the faces in the picture.

The musicians listed alphabetically are:-

- |   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| No.1585 1/AM Edwin John BURGE.          | No.1436 PTE John McIsaac CUNNINGHAM.  |
| No.3259 2/AM Austin Thomas DAINTY.      | No.3395 2/AM Finlay GRANT.            |
| No.1616 A/CPL William Morley MEREDITH.  | No.1481 CPL Cornelius William MULLEN. |
| No.2412 SGT Charles Ernest H. POTTS.    | No.2548 2/AM Arthur ROBBINS.          |
| No.1947 1/AM Charles Arthur STURTEVANT. | No.2582 2/AM Percy Harold WILLIAMS.   |
| No.3340 PTE Percy WRAGGE.               |                                       |

You may have noticed there are 13 heads in the photo, but only 11 signatures - my guess is the 2 lads in the back row in full uniform were **not** musicians and did not sign the picture. Further research may yet disclose the identities of the strong string section, as well as the percussionist, the clarinetist, the brass section and the pianist who played in the Leighterton Station Orchestra (LSO).Ω

- August MODELLING & ART SHOW NOTICE -

Members are reminded that the Society's 2009 **MODELLING & ART SHOW** is to be held in conjunction with the August Meeting on Saturday 15th August next. There will be 4 categories in each Section:-

**ART Section** to include, A. **COLOUR WORKS** in any media: B. **MONOCHROME WORKS**: C. **TECHNICAL WORKS** incl. profile drawings (Mono. or Colour): D. **PHOTOGRAPHS** (Mono. or Colour) which may be be digitally produced/enhanced but must be solely the work of the entrant!

**MODEL Section** to include, A. **SMALL SCALE AIRCRAFT** (1/72 or smaller): B. **LARGE SCALE AIRCRAFT** (1/48 or larger): C. **OPEN NOVICE CATEGORY** (never built a model &/or very inexperienced): D. **OPEN CATEGORY** (figures, ships & vehicles of the WWI period).

Judging of all the entries in both the ART & MODEL Sections will be by **MEMBERS BALLOT** on the day!

The closing date for *'out-of-town'* entrants who are unable to attend the August Meeting, is no later than Friday 7th August.

Entries should be sent to *John Goble 308 Coonawarra Road TERRY HILLS NSW 2084 Ph. (02) 9450 1537 (Email: jgoble@optusnet.com.au)*

# BACKPAGE



ASWWIAH Newsletter  
MAY 2009



Adrian HELLWIG's BE2c

Adrian writes; "She's  $\frac{1}{5}$  scale and weighs about 7kilos. Wingspan is  $88\frac{1}{2}$ " and she comes pre-built from K&W Models in the Philippines (although I got it through:- [www.vintage-aerodrome.com/index.htm](http://www.vintage-aerodrome.com/index.htm)). Though well made it's fairly basic and I've added all the finer scale detail. Garry Sunderland helped me with photos of the bomb release that he made for his Brisfit, (though that was a double and I made a single). The aircraft it was modelled after (S/N 4395) flew in Egypt with No. 14 Sqn RFC.

A photo of the original machine can be found in the Squadron Signal publication on the BE (page 17)".

[Adrian's BE took to the air early in March and you can see it for yourself at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=iazgFLq8LOY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iazgFLq8LOY) Following the flight Adrian announced he would need to change the prop for one of smaller diameter with more pitch. I've not heard if he's had more success with a second propeller. - Ed.]

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John 0411 682 445



Mike CRISP's  
"Spirit of Australia"

Readers may recall the photos of Mike CRISP's Jet engine running on a test bench in the August Newsletter last year. Well, Mike has been toiling away since then and things have progressed nicely to the point where the engine is now bedded down in the hull of "Spirit of Australia" shown above.

To give you some idea of the size of the hydro, the engine is around 22cm long and 10 cm wide installed. I understand the "Spirit" will have her first test-run on water, 'soon'.



VOISIN - Stage 1. From this...

...to this - VOISIN Stage 2....

Gary SUNDERLAND's VOISIN -  
'hopping' into the air in May?



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**REMINDER: The Society's next General Meeting will be held on Saturday 16th MAY 2009 at -  
The Conference Room, Building 96, Victoria Barracks, Oxford Street, PADDINGTON. Starting time - 1300 hrs.**