



NEWSLETTER

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An Update on early flight in Altona



The Herald - Tuesday 28th February 1911



The Society has recently had several visits from Melbourne resident and Journalist, Kate Baillieu who is researching some early history in regard to family members, in particular her Grandfather Bill Knox, and M.H (Jac) Baillieu, the latter being acknowledged as the first

commercial paying passenger taken aloft in a flight from Altona, and the former also a passenger on in a later flight on the same day undertaken with New Zealand pilot J. J. Hammond, employed by the British and Colonial Aeroplane Co. (Bristol).

Of particular historical relevance is the handwritten letter retained by Ms Baillieu from Mr. Knox to his sweetheart "Mim", written on the

evening of the flight 2nd March 1911, indicating how he had enjoyed it.

Also of interest is a copy of a newspaper article from the Herald dated 28 Th. February 1911 in which an interview with Mrs. J J Hammond was published in a section known as "Women's World".

Mrs. Hammond indicated that she had made a number of flights with her husband the first being in Stonehenge, Wiltshire and that the "novelty of flying has worn off a bit".

When interviewed in WA, J. J. Hammond was thought to be "telling a terrible fib" when he said his wife often went up with him "but now they know it was true".

Fashions of the Day - The Aerial Costume

From the same article - To Mrs. Hammond

Question - "Do you wear any special costume for the flight."

"No I could go up just as I am now, but it would be rather cold." (She was wearing a summer frock of tussore silk and a small bonnet shaped hat).

"I would not have any ribbons or veils flying or a flowing skirt that would catch in the wind, but this idea of wearing knicker costume is only affectation aping the man.

It is a fad and not a necessity, I generally wear an ordinary skirt, not a full one and a guernsey or a jacket, it is very cold in the air.

Then I wear a woollen cap'.

The significance of early Aviation from a Military aspect.

In the early years of Aviation it was realised by Governments and Military advisors around the World that the ability to overfly territory had a potential benefit for military use.

The web site of the Australian National Aviation Museum contains much information in regard to Aviation that is of interest to those seeking information regarding past and present history on all aspects of Aviation.

They advise that from around 1906, military interest arose in "Flying Machines" which offered mobility and range in order to observe troop and gun movements.

In 1909 the Aerial League of Australia was formed in Sydney and Branches followed in Victoria and Queensland.

They lobbied the Government for a "competition" for military aircraft, and its aim was to get the Government to establish an aviation school, and aviation corps under the Defence Department.

In 1909 Frenchman Louis Bleriot had flown across the English Channel, making Britons realise that they were open to attack, other than by sea.

Australia

In Australia in September 1909, Senator (Sir) George Pearce, Minister for Defence approved requirements for a competition for the best and most suitable aeroplane for Military

purposes with a prize of 500 pounds offered.

In 1910 two manufacturers despatched aircraft crews to Australia, for demonstration purposes.

It was from this early beginnings that planes from the Bleriot and Bristol companies were attracted to Australia, and this eventually led to the establishment of the facility at Point Cook in 1912 and subsequently the Australian Flying Corps, and air force that is now the Royal Australian Air Force.



Sir George Pearce



Altona Fire Station is 50 years old

The Altona Fire Station, which is the Metropolitan Fire Service Station Number 46 located at 7 Akuna Street Altona is about to turn 50 years old since the original building was constructed.

The Station Officer has approached the Altona Laverton Historical Society seeking any photos or information that may be available to give them information regarding the opening or the early history of the Altona Fire Station.

At this time we do not seem to have any particular information that would assist them and we request any members who may have images or information regarding the early history of the site to contact the Society so that we may pass information along if available.

It is advised that shortly construction will begin on a new building at the site, and this in itself will be worthy of recording for future historical reference.

As well as attending to fires and similar emergencies, Fire Service members now also respond to medical emergencies, so it is possible if you dial Triple Zero in an emergency, it may not be an Ambulance which arrives, but a fully manned Fire Tender with crew.

The Fire Service - History from the Past

The development of Metropolitan Fire Service in Australia followed in the main the procedures that were adopted in the United Kingdom.

The original Fire Services began to develop from private brigades employed by the Insurance Companies established in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, before the establishment of public brigades the insurers established their own, in the interest of self preservation of their insured assets.

For example the Royal Exchange Assurance Company established by Royal Charter in 1720 had by 1721 several (hand propelled) engines and 56 firemen, with 21 porters to remove goods.

Parishes were under a legal obligation to provide brigades but this fell away as insurance brigades were established.

The book "Royal Exchange Assurance 1720-1970" states that "the attraction to serve in the brigades was considerable, and included not merely generous pay (normally in the eighteenth century, a shilling for the first and sixpence for each succeeding hour) and the attractive uniform, but also the immunity from the naval press-gang. There were long waiting lists for vacancies".



A Royal Exchange Fire Engine circa 1800

A Royal Exchange Fire man circa 1830



Fire Marks



Metal plaques bearing the symbols of fire insurance offices in the United Kingdom and known as “Fire Marks” were introduced in the 17 Th. century when the first insurance fire offices commenced business.

Their use continued in the United Kingdom up to the middle of the 19 Th. Century when their original purpose of identifying the insured property gradually disappeared.

It was originally the custom of the insurers to issue with each policy a “mark” which was nailed to a prominent part of the building.

It also became customary for the fire offices to pay rewards to bystanders who gave a prompt warning of fire in an insured building or who assisted the offices fire men in manning the fire pumps, and it was usual for the offices to pay for beer supplied to the firemen and their “assistants” during the thirsty work of fighting a fire, a prominently displayed Mark indicated that the building was insured and rewards for assistance were likely. (an early version of Crime stoppers).

The earliest known mark issued was that of Nicholas Barbon’s Fire Office of 1680, sometimes called the Phoenix because of the figure of a phoenix on the mark, the company went out of business in 1711 and no known marks survive.

Fire Marks are now an antique and collectors items of interest to those in the Insurance profession.

Reproduction Marks of various companies are on display at the Melbourne Fire Museum at Eastern Hill and are available for purchase.

CHERRY LAKE AS A RACING CAR VENUE

President Peter Weaver has recently received a very interesting article from a publication called

“Closed Circuit” from Jim Testa who had a relative who died during an early motor car racing event on what was a racing circuit around “Cherry Lake”.

The opening race meeting was held on March 8th 1954, opportunities were few to hold motor race meetings around Melbourne and a new purpose built track was established at what is now Cherry Lake.

The Circuit was established on a flat parcel of land at a time in which the area was in part swamp land it is quoted that “it had a hard surface once the water evaporated”.

A company was formed to build a circuit to race around the lake and work started on a 3.6 km circuit with a

projected road width of 7.5 metres.

The article states that some low lying areas were traversed with a rock land fill to build up to road level.

At the opening meeting on the 8th March 1954, entries included Stan Jones in a Cooper 1100, Jack Brabham in his Cooper Bristol and Doug Whiteford in a Lago.

However as time progressed very few people turned up to pay at the turnstile.

The track was considered dangerous and included boulders.

A fatality occurred.

Four meetings were held but other venues such as Phillip Island and Albert Park eventually took over.

So for a brief period in time Altona played a part in motor racing history in Victoria.



Two photos in the Society Archives

SOCIETY NEWS

The Lions Club of Altona were pleased to nominate Society member Margaret Rice to receive the Alan J Holding Award for service to the Community.

Margaret was not aware that this presentation was to be made and was most surprised when her name was announced

Pictured below is Lions District Governor David Lowing presenting the award certificate to Margaret during his visit to the Altona Lions Club during August.



Events planned or under consideration

Month	Event	
September	20 th General Meeting	No speaker
October	Seniors Week History week 3 1st Halloween	Halloween will include window decorations and a Ghost tour
November	4th and 18th - Ghost Tours 15th General Meeting	
December	1 1th Carols by Candlelight 6-8 p.m 13th Christmas Nibbles 6.30 -8 p.m.	Includes Storytime with Santa/Christmas Tree Christmas get together in conjunction with Altona Traders Association
January 2012	Australia Day	Various events to be organised

SOCIETY NEWS

Reply from Consumer Affairs Victoria

The minutes of the last general business meeting held in July are included in this Newsletter on the last page.

One of the matters raised at that meeting was a request by member Bob Hawkins to clarify the position of "Financial members" under the Model Rules of the Associations Incorporation Act.

As agreed at that meeting a written submission was made to the Department of Justice (Consumer Affairs Victoria) with the request of clarification of the intent and application of Rules 4.12 ("The Annual Subscription is payable in advance on or before the 1st July in each year") and Rule 16.4 (A member is not entitled to vote at a general meeting unless all monies due and payable by a member of the Association have been paid other than the amount of the annual subscription payable in respect of the current financial year").

Their written reply is

"Section 14A(1) of the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 (the Act) states that the rules of an incorporated association constitute the terms of the contract between the incorporated association and its members.

If verbal advice has been given by Consumer Affairs Victoria, it should not have been.

As the rules are a contract between the association Consumer Affairs can not give an interpretation of the rules, regardless of whether the rules being followed are the model rules or the incorporated associations own rules.

It is up to the incorporated association to determine what the rules mean to them.

Penny - CAV Registration Enquiries 28th July 2011.

The current Committee of Management intend to follow the method that has been established and used for previous years in respect to voting rights.

Send us your news and reports

Do not forget that a newsletter can not be produced and utilised correctly without the help of members, if you have a report to submit or news to pass along please forward details to the Secretary preferably electronically by e-mail (jimhevey@optusnet.com.au)

or in writing to PO Box 236 Altona 3018.

This will mean that your news gets to more members, or for public dissemination than can be gained if presented only to members attending a general meeting.

Remember also, it is your Society the committee can not do everything, please offer your services as a volunteer whenever you can, especially when major events are on or the Homestead is open to the public.

Your committee with Council and Heritage approval is obtaining quotes to instal a small kitchen area in the building, this will be of great benefit for carrying out some of the necessary activities planned, and will aid in continuing to raise funds that can be used to help the Society grow in the future.

It is hoped that the Council will reimburse these costs if the project proceeds.



Altona Homestead Museum

home **Altona Laverton Historical Society Inc** PO Box 236, Altona Vic 3018

MINUTES

Minutes of ALHS general meeting held 17th July 2011 at the Altona Homestead Museum, 128 Queen Street, Altona commencing 7.45pm, chaired by Peter Weaver.

	Detail	Action
1.	Present P Weaver, J Hevey, O Hyde, A Cassar, B Hawkins, M Rice, E Brogan, R Blair, C Winfield, B Groves, P Chamberlain, J Kirkman	
2.	Apologies J & E Kent .E Muller, B Hanson, S & K Walsh	
3.	Finance The Treasurer reported that the current balance in the trading account was \$10864.53, and the current balance in the Investment account was \$5425.61 and that the only account due for payment was the catering for the evening. Moved A Cassar Seconded Bob Groves that the report be received Carried	
4.	Correspondence Inwards – Advice of National Family History Week, Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme, Information regarding Bendigo bank grants, Advice received that the Association had received a Grant from the Government for the development of a web site. Correspondence by e-mail from R Hawkins – regarding defining voting rights, and a request to add the note that Delegates to Western Region Historical Society Group and TERPS should be added to the AGM Agenda Out- Newsletter, Notice of AGM, Invoices	Acting Secretary Jim undertook to contact CAV in regard to clarification of the Rules In respect of Clauses 10.2 and 16.4
5.	General Business Ann Cassar advised that we hold 157 copies of the Altona Star newspaper which have not yet been digitized Owen Hyde advised that some new books were available for purchase And that a query had been received regarding the historic interest of PM Julia Gillard's house	
6.	Minutes of Previous Meeting The previous meeting was held on the 24 th June 2011 – Speaker Jim Hevey A brief History of Martial Arts in Victoria	

Meeting closed 8.25pm.

Next Meeting AGM 16th August 2011 7.30pm (Tuesday)