

CPA FLIGHT LINES

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Australian aviatrix Lores Bonney pictured at Croydon Aerodrome, London, following her flight from Australia to England in 1933. See articles on her adventure and life beginning on page 8.



COLORADO PILOTS ASSOCIATION, INC.
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Bill Marshall

About four years ago Don Welsh wrote an article for FLIGHT LINES about AirLife-Line. There are now 25 Colorado pilots flying missions for AirLifeLine and more pilots are always needed for these very important flights. The coordinator of the flights in Colorado is Betsy Luce. Sometimes Betsy spends a day or two organizing a flight for just one patient. One of the reasons it takes so much time is that she does not have enough pilots that can leave on fairly short notice. A few more Colorado Pilots are needed (or a lot more).

AirLifeLine is a non-profit charitable organization of private pilots nationwide who donate their time, skills, fuel and aircraft to fly medical missions. The AirLifeLine staff and state coordinators arrange one or two missions each day in the 48 states for the approximately 540 volunteer pilots. These missions can

include the transportation of time-critical medical cargo, such as whole blood platelet, mother's milk, eye corneas, and human tissue and organs. The missions are also set up to provide medical air travel for patients whose illnesses have drained their financial resources. (The last mission that I flew, the family could not bring their daughter to Children's Hospital for treatment of leukemia because their car "just quit.")

There is never a cost to patient or hospital for AirLifeLine's services. The medical and financial needs of the patient are verified through the referring medical agency prior to accepting the mission.

AirLifeLine is in its 13th year. California businessman Tom Goodwin began the organization in 1978 with 25 pilots who believed their training and aircraft could be used for beneficial medical service. The idea grew until today it is national in scope. Every day AirLifeLine flies missions for children and adults suffering from cancer, kidney problems, liver conditions, heart ailments, skin disorder, birth defects, and accidental injuries.

Since its inception, this humanitarian program has flown over 6,000 missions of mercy and logged almost two and a half million miles in service to the medically/financially needy. AirLifeLine possesses a

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Publication Notice

The CPA Flight Lines is published once each month. Articles for the CPA Flight Lines are sought from members and other persons or organizations. Stories and articles can include flying tips, rebuilding and restoration experiences, special trips, activities, etc.

All articles should be sent to:

CPA FLIGHT LINES editor

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**Copy Deadline for
FLIGHT LINES**

20th of the Month

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MEETING REPORT

The August Board meeting was held in the Boardroom of the Denver jetCenter at Centennial Airport. The Board meets the first Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. and any CPA member is most welcome to attend. You are also welcome to join those members who come at 6:00 and have dinner at Pour la France across the hall from the Boardroom.

President Bill Marshall welcomed 18 people to the August meeting. Bill announced that an airport influence zone has been proposed at the Boulder Airport. A letter supporting the creation of this influence zone will be sent to the Boulder authorities in behalf of CPA.

Another Student Air Lift is being planned for Saturday, November 9. This will be the second in what Education Chairman **Peter Paul Luce** expects to be an ongoing annual addition to CPA activities. It will be held at Downtown Fort Collins Airport and volunteers are needed, both pilots and aircraft, and people to help manage ground operations. Peter prepared a manual covering all aspects of conducting a Student Airlift, so this second attempt should fly effortlessly. Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find a coupon to fill out if you would like to help. It's a lot of fun and a very exciting time for the students, their family members who come out, AND the volunteers.

One came from Chicago and another from Panama to participate in the CPA Maintenance Seminar on August 17, according to **Vice President Bill Standerfer**. There was a total of 16 people in the class which was conducted by **Sonny Elgin**, who also happens to be a past CPA president and who provides this service annually, it seems.

Fly-In Chairman Ben Kramer has made arrangements for a joint fly-in with the Colorado High Country 99's for Saturday, October 26. The destination will be the

Rifle Airport. And just in case the "Fall Colors" are on the wane, there will be a box lunch auction to liven things up and in the process raise funds for both organizations.

The need to have a suitable vehicle for transporting the CPA booth and our supply of merchandise for sale to the various air shows was raised by **Membership Chairman Tony Bilello**. It was decided to also explore the possibility of purchasing a small trailer instead for this purpose to reduce problems of insurance and repairs. A trailer could also be towed by a member's vehicle very easily.

Putting the history of CPA down on paper was given support by the Board. Though it may sound like a monumental job, it should not be that difficult as we still have a number of members who have been around since the founding of the organization about 16-17 years ago. They should be invaluable in helping with this undertaking and they will probably be hearing from **Publicity Chairman Tony Miller** who will get this started in the near future.

The Board voted to contribute the sum of \$250.00 to the Greeley-Weld County Airport towards the construction of a picnic pavilion at the airport. This pavilion will be made available to all individuals/organizations for their functions at no charge.

Another significant action taken was to pay \$100.00 per month to Terry Barbo to cover computer lease time for the membership services she provides for CPA.

Four new Area Reps have been added: **Jim Fahnestock, Downtown Fort Collins; Ken Carter, Boulder; Gordon Scott, Blanca; and Kent Eckhart, Colorado Springs.** And the Flight School Directory will be updated by **Neil Stein** of Englewood.

HEARD ALONG THE FLIGHTLINE

■ The board of directors of the SILVER WINGS FRATERNITY met in an emergency session in Denver on September 7 to set up an interim board and operating procedures. Interim officers include Bernie Geier (VA), President; Kay Brick (CA), Vice President; Don Fairbanks (OH), Secretary; and Tom Wood (WA), Treasurer. Tom Wood will also chair a publications committee and be responsible for the SLIPSTREAM, the association newsletter. Russ Brinkley, founder, and president of the organization for the 33 years of its existence, was removed from office. Stressful transition prompted by months of internal conflict.

■ The UNITED STATES PILOTS ASSOCIATION is in the second year of a program to recognize member states with the highest percentage of pilots participating in the FAA Wings Program. USPA Safety Chairman NEIL FIALA of St. Louis, Missouri is coordinating the effort. Neil is also a CPA member and a past participant in our CPA Mountain Flying Program.

■ The FAA has slipped the start date on annual flight review (AFR) requirement for non-instrument rated pilots with less than 400 hours of total flight time until August 31, 1993. AOPA is arguing for elimination of the requirement based on its findings that pilots with fewer than 400 hours of total flight time have the same accident profile as other pilots . . . and are not a group which deserve special regulatory attention.

■ We hear that FRONT RANGE AIRPORT officials were caught a little off guard in September when UPS made a firm commitment to relocate its air freight service to the airport coincident with the scheduled closing of Stapleton in October 1993. Front Range had been working with Federal Express for a similar commitment.

It is easy to see why the cargo carriers would have an interest in relocation to Front Range. Ground access is better than access proposed for the new Denver airport. It is convenient to I-70 and rail. Also, airport fees would probably be less, particularly if Denver runs into cost overrun problems.

It is not yet a done deal. Adams County, which owns Front Range Airport, would have to do some creative financing to fund an air cargo terminal complex. It is uncertain how helpful the FAA would be in providing development funds for this purpose. From recent history, it appears the agency is in bed with Denver and would have no stomach to support a competing facility.

And Denver can be expected to intervene in any way it can to prevent loss of the cargo carriers from its new airport. Has some of the flavor of a "mini" United Airlines maintenance facility site selection process. Worth watching! And hoping the little guy wins!

■ Participants in the FAA ACE Program at the Fort Collins-Loveland Airport on August 24 were welcomed by a group of 5 FSDO operations inspectors and a similar number of maintenance inspectors . . . all wearing WHITE HATS. ACE is the new FAA Aviation Courtesy Evaluation Program which offers an aircraft inspection and flight check without threat of violation against the pilot/owner of participants. It was conducted under the direction of MICK WILSON, Manager of the Denver FSDO Accident Prevention Program.

One of our CPA members (flies a T210), who participated, tells us that the aircraft inspection was very superficial. FAA interest seemed to focus primarily on aircraft paperwork and log books. In his case, the only significant discrepancy found was that certification of the

encoder was out of currency.

The flight check, however, proved to be a very useful exercise . . . and a little different from most check rides. In his case the ops inspector left it entirely to the pilot as to how the flight would be conducted. Take your choice. Air work. Instruments. Takeoffs and landings. Your option. Constructive comments were offered to questions. When desired, demonstrations were given on suggested ways to improve techniques and procedures. Positive experience! Good program!

Mick Wilson tells us that there is no plan to offer the program again this year in Colorado. But he hopes to sponsor it 2-3 times next year and expand it to include safety seminars for mechanics in addition to pilots.

■ As a followup to that encoder problem, \$349 of instrument work and a week later our T210 pilot had an aircraft in currency again. No instrument problem found. By his observation, the FAA didn't get him but the repair station did. Another example of how regulatory compliance adds to the high cost of flying. Must be a less expensive way to determine if instruments are in compliance.

■ Hard to believe that relocation of Denver Stapleton would have an adverse effect on CPA. Because of the relocation, however, the Airport Post Office where we maintained our post office box is scheduled to be closed (consistent with Denver's relocation to the new airport). Since we were about to print additional membership cards and stationary, we elected to take the leap now and relocate our box to a more permanent location. We are now at the new Montclair Post Office on the north side of Lowry AFB. Hope closing of Lowry in the future won't have a similar impact.

■ CPA member JON GALLO is running for Aurora City Council for an "at large" position. Jon's recent experience includes 4 years on the Citizens Advisory Budget

Committee and several years in various management positions at Front Range Airport. Would be nice to have someone with aviation experience on the City Council . . . and one who is a CPA member.

■ From WALT BELL on EPA proposals to remove lead from aviation gasoline, "Since lead stains provide a warning of exhaust leaks in manifold systems, it will be a lot more difficult to identify leaks." Of course, that impact could be partially offset by reduced effort to clean exhaust stains from painted surfaces of aircraft.

■ The FLYING PHYSICIANS ASSOCIATION noted in its last newsletter that to date there has been no request for a recital examination under the new aviation medical examination procedures which went into effect on July 1. New procedures no longer require such exams unless clinically indicated or requested.□

RENEWALS

Ralph Hanson, Arvada
Bruce Pett, Louisville
James Saint John, Golden
Judith McFarland, Littleton
Bob Charleston, Watkins
Jim Fahnstock, Ft. Collins
Ben Kramer, Hotchkiss
R. D. Sealock, Brighton
Perk Odell, Akron
Vince Jehlik, Aurora
Martin Watz, Ft. Collins
Paul Danyew, Brighton
Lyle Muir, Hudson
Delene Dougherty, Longmont
Gordon Warren, Gunnison
Beverly Green, Aurora
Roger MacDonald, Westcliffe
Edward Dauer, Denver
Lenard Adler, Denver
Gary Peyton, Littleton
William Wyckoff, Arvada
Robert Billings, Lafayette
Roger Crawford, Arvada

AREA REPRESENTATIVE ACTIVITIES

In August, Membership Chairman TONY BILLELLO queried our CPA Area Representatives on a number of issues relating to their role as representatives. The action was part of a program to better define their role and to develop a program for more effective use of their positions. The responses were thought to be of significant interest to members and are therefore summarized below.

1) *What do you feel should be the duties and responsibilities of an Area Representative?* Be knowledgeable on local aviation matters. Represent and be spokesman for CPA in local area. Bring local problems to attention of Board. Report news of interest to CPA members (via FLIGHTLINES). Assist in membership functions. Promote aviation.

2) *How should an "Area" be defined?* As Area Representatives desire, but avoid overlap. Can include a number of airports where closely located.

3) *How should the CPA Board interact with Area Representatives?* Support on local aviation issues. Reserve a section in FLIGHTLINES for information on area topics. Local visits. Keep Area Representatives informed.

4) *Should Area Representatives be on the CPA Board?* Some should be so as to encourage greater CPA statewide membership. Definitely. Not necessary. No, Area Reps are busy enough with local issues. Having occasional Board meetings in area would stimulate local interest and support.

5) *Would you like to continue being an Area Representative?* Each of 8 responders to the questionnaire expressed an interest in continuing. No information on remaining.

6) *At which airport(s) would you like to represent CPA?* Answers ranged from one to several airports.

7) *What is the political climate towards aviation in your area?* Good relations with cities and counties of eastern Colorado. Generally ignored, considered a pastime of the

wealthy, airport expected to be source of municipal revenue without burden to the community. Neutral to tolerant with little if any effort to support general aviation. FBOs and airport management unaware of area representative program. Very good.

8) *What local issues can the CPA Board help resolve?* Airport could use lobby support in securing funding for needed airport development. Inform local governments of CPA programs and services available. Support on airspace and hazard proposals.

9) *Do you receive ample supplies (i.e., membership brochures/applications)?* Scattering of responses from yes to a need for additional materials. Most recognized a need to display membership information at FBQs.

10) *Would you be interested in sponsoring a "student airlift," safety seminar, Mountain Flying Course stopover?* Yes (with appropriate guidelines) to all of the above. Good mountain flying airports at Creede, Del Norte and Saugache. Answers revealed that several of our Area Representatives are FAA designated Accident Prevention Counselors and currently conduct aviation safety seminars and workshops. At least two representatives currently conduct mountain flying training programs.

11) *Do you have suggestions on interesting events in your area which would encourage aircraft visits?* Responses included a wide range of activities of pilot interest. Expect these to be incorporated into future CPA Calendars of Aviation Events and a brochure of Colorado Recreational Fly-In Activities.

12) *Are there individuals in your area who deserve recognition for their contributions to aviation?* Several names provided. Board thinking is to implement an awards program and give special recognition to select individuals from those recommended.

Tony Bilello also invites suggestions on the area representative program from other members. He can be reached at 303/986-9745.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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FROM THE EDITOR

Last June I read an article which appeared in the June/July 1991 issue of *AIR & SPACE SMITHSONIAN*, a bimonthly magazine of the Smithsonian Institution. The article, entitled *TO ENGLAND, THE LONG WAY*, detailed the adventures of a lady pilot, Lores Bonney, who flew from Australia to England in 1933. I found her story to be quite fascinating and decided it might be of interest to the CPA membership also. I immediately wrote to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. to obtain permission to reprint the article. Weeks passed without a response. Finally, I received a reply from the writer himself. Following are excerpts from his letter of August 8:

We would be delighted for you to include the Lores Bonney piece in CPA's FLIGHT LINES.

As a former military pilot and Civil Aviation Authority Flight Inspector I am aware of the invaluable role in flying safety played by pilot associations and wish you and your organization well.

I would appreciate a copy of the newsletter with Lores Bonney's story and will make sure to pass it on to her. As you have noted, recognition of her heroic feats came very late. Sadly she flew in the shadow of our two greatest male aviators Charles Kingsford Smith and Bert Hinkler and, until recently, Australians could not believe that a woman could have been as heroic and adventurous as their male heroes.

I know Lores will be delighted to hear of your interest. She is now nearly 94, a little deaf and frail. Yet her sense of humor and incredible memory remain.

I include a copy of an article I have recently written on Lores for Australia's leading women's magazine ITA. It will help give you and your members a more complete picture of her remarkable life.

*Terry Gwynn-Jones
Brisbane, Australia*

TO ENGLAND, THE LONG WAY

I decided to fly from Australia to England because in 1933 it was considered the ultimate test for the men. Amy Johnson had made headlines flying from England to Australia, and I wanted to be the first woman to fly the more difficult reverse route and beat Amy's time in the bargain.

I adored my husband Harry, but I wasn't cut out to be a doting housewife. While he spent his weekends on the golf course I secretly took flying lessons at a nearby airfield. I kept it from him for over a year. I was afraid he'd make things difficult—he'd already stopped me from

learning to drive a car, saying it was too dangerous for a woman.

Harry was remarkable. He never tried to stop me even though I know deep down he didn't approve. But when he eventually found out about the flying, he bought me an airplane. Because my husband was wealthy and helped finance me, Australian journalists treated my flights more like social events. They nicknamed me "the airwoman of style" and paid more attention to my appearance than to my performance. I hated that.

Before the flight to England, I did

everything possible to ensure I was fully prepared. I learned instrument and night flying, and on the weekends I studied navigation with an old sea captain. I spent months working in the Qantas maintenance hangar at Archerfield so that I could learn to service my Moth, which I named *My Little Ship*, and its Gipsy engine. I can still smell the boiling phenol we used to clean the carbon off the pistons. It turned my stomach inside out.

Poor Harry. He was so worried the morning I left. I told him not to panic if I was reported missing. "Tell them to search along the coastline," I said. "Whenever possible I'll be following the shore, and I'll get down safely."

I was ahead of schedule until I landed in Singapore and overnighted at the Raffles Hotel. To this day, I'm sure I would have beat Amy's record if I hadn't gotten food poisoning. Stupid me—I should never have eaten the fish.

The next day, with the weather perfect right through Malaya, I spent the entire time in bed. When I was fit enough to fly the following afternoon, I took off—straight into the granddaddy of monsoon storms. It was the most unnerving moment of my flying career.

I had been cruising below 1,000 feet to stay clear of some ugly black clouds that had been building for two hours. I was so close to Victoria Point and Ranong, Thailand, that I was sure I'd get through. All of a sudden I was engulfed in torrential rain. It seemed to fall in a solid mass. Visibility dropped to zero. rain lashed my goggles, and I had to raise them to see my instruments. The Moth's tiny windscreen provided no protection, and the rain stung my eyes and face like driving sand. The airplane bucked and rolled, and a sudden downdraft flung me toward the water. Even with full power I couldn't stop the descent. When I finally broke into the clear I was down to 50 feet.

For the first time in my life I was really scared. It was as though the gods

had turned on scores of celestial taps. I was surrounded by jets of rain, some only a few hundred feet across, others miles wide. I had to get down. I said a quick prayer to my "copilot" and turned back toward a small island I'd flown over a few minutes earlier—I'd noticed huts and an open beach. In those days we always kept an eye out for emergency landing areas.

Luckily I arrived over the beach shortly before an approaching storm. The tide had gone out, leaving a strip of hard sand. The only sign of life was a few buffalo grazing on the grassy fringe. I circled once to check the wind, then made a long, straight-in, powered approach. I can still remember how my tires kissed the sand as I touched down. I was often accused of landing like a kangaroo—a series of hops—but this one was a beauty.

The tail hadn't even settled when one of those blessed buffalo lumbered out in front of me. All I could do was jam on full rudder and swerve. The left wheel hit the water's edge, and the airplane slewed into the breakers. The Moth flipped over and my head hit the cockpit coaming.

I came to hanging upside down in my harness with my head underwater. I recall thinking: *What an inglorious end—drowning in the cockpit.* I was struggling to undo the harness pin when the water mercifully dropped away. I was only submerged when each wave came in. I released my harness and plopped head-first into the sea. Finally, I dragged myself up onto the beach.

I was not badly hurt, just a slashed hand and a lump on my forehead. The first thing I noticed was the silence. After the constant roar of the engine, the only sound was the surf and the rumble of thunder. I felt terribly alone. Even the buffalo had disappeared into the trees. As I sat there watching the waves pound my poor little airplane, a teeming rain began. I broke into tears.

It was some time before I noticed a large group of islanders watching me

through the trees. They didn't look too friendly, so I felt in my pocket for the revolver Harry had given me. Luckily it had fallen out during the crash, so I had to put on a brave face and walk toward them. They all backed away--I couldn't believe it! I'm less than five feet tall, but they were scared of me.

Eventually, the islanders helped me drag the airplane ashore. I invented a sort of "heave ho" sailor's chant, and using the power of each incoming wave, we hauled it up onto the beach.

Afterwards, they led me to a large communal thatched hut, and we climbed a ladder to enter it. Once inside, I was overpowered by smoke and the smell of rotting fish. Dozens of villagers squatted on the bamboo floor staring at me. I was quite worried until a young woman led me to a small alcove away from the crowd. She'd noticed my bleeding hand, and now she tenderly cradled it to her face. Her eyes expressed such sympathy that I nicknamed her SOS, for Soul of Sympathy. She became my shadow.

I doused the hand with some whiskey an Australian hotel owner had given me. It was his traditional gift to fliers crossing the shark-infested Timor sea. "It'll give you a bit of Dutch courage, love," he'd said. I hadn't touched it until now.

The adults tried to entice me to join their betel nut ceremony. They chewed betel the way we take an evening drink. The spitting was more fascinating than the chewing; they'd shoot long streams of crimson fluid through narrow gaps in the cane floor, and they never missed.

The next morning, I removed the shattered wings from *My Little Ship* and got some men to help me roll it right way up. It was repairable; all I needed were good carpenters and the right materials. I drained the petrol tank and used its contents to wash the salt and sand from the engine. I emptied the oil sump and coated the whole engine to prevent corrosion. Finally, I removed the spark

plugs and poured some oil into each cylinder. My Qantas training had paid off.

That night I left the little boudoir I had curtained off for myself and sat around the communal fire. I decided to send a message to the mainland, so I got out my flight map and began reading aloud the names of the Malay islands along the coast. When I read out "Bang Biang," several villagers nodded vigorously. So I wrote a note and waved it about and pointed toward the mainland. Nobody seemed willing to go until I bribed one of the men with my gold watch.

To help pass the time, I played Mrs. Robinson Crusoe. After two days I knew the Malay names of every item in the hut and, in turn, had taught my Fridays the English equivalent. The children would bring me little gifts of fish or fruit, and I rewarded them with pieces of chocolate from my emergency rations. They liked the silver wrappers best of all.

Late on the fifth day two motor launches arrived carrying the first help my messenger could find: a Scot and a New Zealander employed by the Siamese Tin Mine Syndicate. They thought I was quite mad when I said that I intended to rebuild my airplane and carry on to England. One, patronizing me, advised, "I think you'd better talk to your husband first." Naturally, that sort of nonsense just made me more determined than ever.

On my last evening on Bang Biang I gave SOS some silver coins and showed her how to make a necklace with them. She smiled, but she looked sad. The next morning she was nowhere to be seen. Someone said that she had gone into the jungle rather than have me witness her grief at my parting. We never met again, but I can still picture her clearly.

The tin miners' launches transported me and my airplane to Victoria Point, where I caught a steamer to Rangoon. There my poor little ship got new wings and a tailplane. But the repairs took four

weeks, and it was early June before I reached the Middle East.

This part of the flight concerned me most, not because of the torrid heat but because of the problems I'd face if I landed in some out-of-the-way place. I was not sure that my notebook of useful Middle Eastern phrases would help. I knew two by heart: "I always understood your menfolk to be gentlemen" and "Please fetch me a policeman."

Over Iraq I encountered terrible heat, dust storms, and headwinds. One 108-mile leg on the way to Baghdad took three and a half hours. When I landed I was suffering from severe heat exhaustion and unable to complete any formalities. But I will never forget how kind the Iraqis were. I was whisked to a hotel, where the staff applied ice packs to bring my temperature down. I could cry when I read about Baghdad today.

I was arrested in both Turkey and Czechoslovakia after making unscheduled landings due to storms. With no radio and poor ground communications, we faced such problems routinely in those days.

Europe was stormy until I crossed the

English Channel. It was a beautiful summer evening, and the countryside looked green and peaceful, its fields and hedgerows so tidy. I remember thinking that missing Amy Johnson's record didn't matter. After Bang Biang it was enough to have reached England. And as the first woman to fly into the prevailing wind, I'd set a record no one could deny me.

As I landed at Croydon Airport in London I was almost rolled over by the slipstream of a big Handley-Page airliner in front of me. I followed its passengers to the terminal. I wasn't expected, and the customs officer never looked up when he asked where I was from.

"Australia," I replied.

His head jerked back and his eyes popped. I got a real sense of satisfaction out of that.

—Lores Bonney as told to Terry Gwynn-Jones

Four years later, in 1937, Bonney became the first pilot—man or woman—to make the 18,200 mile flight from Australia to South Africa. Only recently, at age 93, was she awarded the Order of Australia.

THE FLYING REBEL

by Terry Gwynn-Jones

She looks like everyone's kindly great-grandmother, a petite silver-haired woman with a quick smile. But appearances can be deceptive. Lores Bonney, 93, is the world's last major survivor of the Golden Age of Aviation — the woman who, 60 years ago, set a long-distance record of flying 1600km in a single day.

In America, her name is engraved on the Famous Flyers Wall, alongside Charles Lindbergh, Charles Kingsford Smith and Amelia Earhart. In Britain, Prince Philip is on the panel which has awarded the Bonney Trophy annually since 1933.

Earlier this year, Australia rewarded this living aviation treasure with the Order of Australia. As journalist Jack Lunn wrote: "A fiercely independent spirit, that Germaine Greer might well envy, catapulted Lores Bonney into a series of flying adventures which make *The Perils of Pauline* look tame stuff indeed. While Pauline faced frequent death on celluloid, Lores' whizz-bang adventures were real adventures."

When Lores flew to England in 1933 the public failed to recognize her achievement — the first woman to fly from Australia to England. She was emulating

England's Amy Johnson but in the other direction and into the prevailing winds. Her tiny de Havilland Gypsy Moth biplane, *My Little Ship*, cruised at barely 110km/h. She had no radio, only sketchy maps, and performed her own maintenance.

Battling tropical storms she crash-landed on a remote Malayan island and, following her rescue, told skeptical pressmen: "If it takes me 10 years, I am determined to reach England."

King George V awarded her an MBE [Member of the British Empire], but Australians remained apathetic. There were two reasons for this: she was a woman and, unlike Kingsford Smith and Bert Hinkler who were always impoverished, Lores was financed by a wealthy husband. People did not understand that, in the cockpit, a silvertail airwoman faced the same dangers and needed as much courage as a penniless airman. During her epic 29,000km flight from Australia to Cape Town in 1937 -- she was the first and only person to fly the route solo -- her Klemm monoplane was damaged while landing in the African bush. Stranded but undeterred, Lores hailed a passing Nile River paddle-steamer and, with her aircraft, hitched a ride to Khartoum, where she talked an RAF detachment into repairing the plane.

Remembering the start of this journey she complains: "The press were out in force but treated my departure more like a society event than the start of a pioneering flight."

We are talking in her garden on Queensland's Gold Coast and Lores is dressed very fashionably. It is easy to see why the 1930s press named her "the airwoman of style." It is less easy to understand why journalists were unable to grasp the significance of her flights. A tiny biplane passes overhead and Lores watches it with nostalgia in her eye. "Oh, how it takes me back," she says. But Lores Bonney is much more than just an aviation pioneer. Her adventurous life

has been crammed with challenge and achievement. She was a budding young concert pianist, she became Australia's first qualified woman teacher of bonsai, she mounted an expedition to the headwaters of the Amazon and, during World War II, helped administer the women's National Voluntary Register.

Born in South Africa in 1897 and christened Maude (which she hated so adopted the names Lores simply because she liked it), her family emigrated to Australia in 1906. As a schoolgirl she defied discipline. "To put it bluntly, I was a rebel," she says. However, because of her remarkable musical talent her father packed he off "to a spit and polish German finishing school" to learn classical piano. This suited the role set out for her: elegant wife of a successful businessman, capable of directing servants, running a home and being a perfect hostess.

Shortly before World War I, after giving a private recital for the Kaiser's sister, Lores made a public appearance before Frankfurt's profligate society. The glittering occasion was too much for the 16-year old. "I neither liked the situation nor the sea of faces, so I feigned a nose-bleed and fled from the stage," she says of her first and last concert.

Lores returned home a graceful and well-travelled product of sophisticated Europe, fluent in German and French and an accomplished pianist. But behind the veneer of conformity there still lurked a rebel, waiting to challenge the traditional role of women long before liberation became a household word.

In 1917, while working for the Red Cross, she married Harry Bonney, a wealthy Brisbane leather goods manufacturer, and they built a home overlooking the river at Bowen Hills. Outwardly, Lores settled into the privileged life of a Brisbane silvertail. Secretly, however, she was bored to distraction.

Her first flight, in 1928, was with Bert Hinkler who, only months earlier, had made the first solo flight from England to Australia in his tiny Avro biplane. "It was the answer to my dreams," she says. "I adored birds and there I was, literally feeling like one."

Fearing Harry's disapproval, she learned to fly in secret. But he turned out to be very supportive and eventually had his factory make her custom-designed leather flying suits. He also bought her plane. Harry's attitude was rare at a time when men, and most women, believed a woman's place was in the home. Male chauvinism was rampant in aviation and Lores had her first taste of it while circumnavigating Australia in 1932 shortly after gaining her commercial license.

Charles Kingsford Smith, who achieved prominence making the same flight in 1927, saw Lores take off at Brisbane's Archerfield airport. His advice was short and succinct: "You might make it if you have the guts."

Landing in the Northern Territory, Lores recalls being confronted by two farmers. "Complete with grass stalks hanging from their mouths, they slowly looked me up and down. Then one drawled, 'Yer know mate, can't be much to this flying business if a woman can do it'." The flight earned her the Qantas Trophy for meritorious performance.

At the outbreak of World War II, she offered her services to the Australian Government as a flight instructor or ferry pilot. After making one delivery flight to an RAAF flying school, Lores was officially told that Australia had no use for women pilots. So she found another way of contributing to the war effort by becoming Queensland organiser for the Women's National Voluntary Register, mustering women to fill jobs left by the men.

She also learned to drive during the war -- again in secret because Harry "felt it was dangerous for women to drive,"

she chuckles. "One morning I casually said it was a pity I didn't have a car. Jokingly, he tossed me his keys and said if I could drive his car, I could have it. So I started it up and drove off!"

Lores made several trips to Japan between 1959 and 1964 where she studied bonsai and later lectured at Queensland University. She visited the Amazon in 1963, studying the primitive Yagau Indians.

Lores Bonney hung up her flying goggles 50 years ago and remains a lady from a bygone era. To those who know her well she is pearls, afternoon teas, champagne and thank you notes, written in a neat copperplate hand. Her home still has a tradesmen's entrance. She copes well with a changed world but retains the values of the old one. She also has deep religious beliefs and frequently remarks: "My co-pilot still guides me."

Though physically frail she is a mental powerhouse. Her charm, wicked wit and lion-hearted spirit are unbroken; the spirit of the non-conformist is still strong and one feels she longs to break free once more.

Hang-gliders sail out from a nearby headland and Lores looks up once more. "Oh, if I were only 10 years younger," she sighs. "That must be as close as one could ever come to real flying."

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COLORADO AVIATION CALENDAR

- OCT 19 COLORADO PILOTS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING. At Jeppesen Sandersen. Info: Bill Marshall 303/341-4744.
- OCT 26-27 21st ANNUAL GREELEY HALLOWEEN BALLOON RALLY. Info: Joyce Bundgaard 303/759-3907.
- OCT 26 "FALL COLORS" FLY-IN, Rifle, CO. Fly-in of Colorado Pilots Association and Colorado's High-Country 99's. Bring a box lunch per person. Lunches auctioned promptly at 10:30 a.m. Proceeds to CPA and 99's. Please call with head count and/or info: Ben (303) 759-2227 or (303) 699-8212.
- NOV 9 CPA STUDENT AIR LIFT, Downtown Fort Collins Airport. Volunteers needed to provide aircraft and on-ground services. Contact: Peter Paul Luce 303/781-1078(H) or 303/850-0600(O).
- NOV 8-10 UNITED STATES PILOTS ASSOCIATION FALL MEETING. Pensacola, FL hosted by the Florida Aero Club. Headquarters will be the Hampton Inn-University Mall (904/477-3333). Activities include: Blue Angels Homecoming Air Show, tour of National Museum of Naval Aviation and Naval Air Station, Model Fest (national aircraft modeling competition), historic site tours, and social activities. Info: George Rogers, 2304 Inda Avenue, Pensacola, FL 32526 (904/944-1860). In Colorado, contact: Don Vander Ploeg 303/757-1310.
- NOV 21 MONTGOLFIER DAY, 208th ANNIVERSARY OF BALLOONING. Info: Joyce Bundgaard 303/759-3907.
- NOV 23 1991 HALL OF FAME BANQUET, Colorado Aviation Historical Society. US Air Force Academy Officers Club, 1:00 p.m. Info: Bill Madsen 719/596-3811.
- DEC 8 CPA CHRISTMAS DINNER. Clarion Hotel at Centennial Airport. Details later. Info: Terry Barbo 303/367-0670.

President's Message (continued from p. 2)

flawless safety record.

AirLifeLine is a solely non-profit charity organization, and it receives neither state nor federal aid. The efforts are purely humanitarian and rely on private donations to continue this benevolent and compassionate work. The costs of the flights are tax deductible to the owner-pilot.

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