

CONTENTS Issue No 13



3 EDITOR'S LETTER

6 AIR CORRESPONDENCE

12 THE SINGAPORE EXPRESS

In 1935 Qantas Empire Airways opened Australia's first international passenger route, between Brisbane and Singapore, with the new de Havilland D.H.86. David Crotty describes the troubled birth of the QEA Express service

22 TO AFRICA IN A BARREL

Swedish aviation historian Leif Hellström provides a full account of the operations undertaken by a cadre of Saab J 29 "Flying Barrels" sent by Sweden to support United Nations forces during the Congo Crisis in the early 1960s

36 ANJOS UM CINCO!

José Matos explains how Portuguese Air Force Hawker Hurricanes came to be used in the film *Angels One Five*, and details the career of the ageing fighter in Portugal

44 ECHOES FROM DAWN SKIES: AIR-ITIS

In the final instalment of our eight-part series based on British pioneer F.W. Merriam's long-lost manuscript of memories from his contemporaries, Merriam himself revisits his early years as one of Britain's first flying instructors

54 NINETY SECONDS OVER TOBRUK

75 years after the death of Italo Balbo, Italy's most famous airman, Gregory Alegi tells the full story of the tragic events surrounding the demise of one of Mussolini's closest allies

66 THE SOUTH BANK SHOW

Our series based on newly-discovered rolls of film taken by aviation journalist John Stroud continues with a visit to London's South Bank to watch BEA's whirlybirds at work

74 AN EYE FOR DETAIL: RIDING THE STORM

Juanita Franz's series on lesser-known airframes and their markings continues with a look at a rare civilian Martin B-57A used by the US Weather Bureau as a hurricane-hunter

76 A HARD RAIN

Digging deep into the archives, Edward M. Young takes a detailed look at the US Navy's operations over the Central Pacific archipelago of Truk in February 1944, and explains why it was a breakthrough in naval aerial warfare

90 THE MIRACLE OF FLIGHT 843

50 years ago the superb airmanship of a Pan Am pilot and his crew averted a major catastrophe when the No 4 engine of their Boeing 707 exploded and tore away half the starboard wing after take-off, as Melvyn Hiscock relates

100 RUM PUNCH

Nick Stroud chronicles the development of one of France's most unusual pre-war military types — the bizarre twin-engined twin-finned SNCASE SE.100 fighter-bomber

110 THE LIGHT BRIGADE

Famous as a lighting and electronics company, Philips was one of the first organisations to understand the advantages of a corporate aircraft fleet, as Tom Singfield explains

118 ARMCHAIR AVIATION

123 LOST & FOUND

124 RUSSIA'S REAL FLYING TANKS

Vladimir Kotelnikov reveals previously unpublished details of the Soviet Union's 1930s attempts to develop genuine "flying tanks" — armoured tracked vehicles with wings

130 OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

