Entry type: Organisation
Entry ID: AWE1092

Australian Women Pilots’ Association

(1950 -)

Born	19500916, Bankstown New South Wales Australia
Occupation	Membership organisation

Summary

The inaugural meeting of the Australian Women Pilots’ Association (AWPA), was held at the Royal Aero Club of New South Wales at Bankstown on 16 September 1950. Thirty-five women became charter members. Nancy Bird Walton, the catalyst for the formation of the Association was elected founding president, with Maie Casey wife of the Governor-General at the time, R. G. Casey, its patron. The aims of the Association include encouraging women to gain flying licenses of all types, maintaining pilot networks in state and local areas where women in aviation can meet and exchange information, promoting training, employment and careers in aviation and assisting in the future of aviation through public interest, safety and education. Full membership is open to any female pilot who holds or has held a pilot’s licence.

Details

The precursor to the formation of the Australian Women Pilots’ Association was the meeting of women pilots which Nancy Bird Walton had called in 1949 to discuss their work during World War II. As a result of this discussion the women pilots developed an interest in each other, which in turn led to the formation of the Association the following year. Maie Casey’s patronage assisted the Association in its attempts to gain widespread recognition and respect. In the view of Nancy Bird Walton the AWPA initiated the return of many old hands into flying as they wanted to regain their licences after many years on the ground.

The AWPA operates with a national executive and state branches. Association members meet annually for a four day conference and annual general meeting, which is held in a different state each year.
Nancy Bird Walton became patron after Maie Casey’s death in 1981.

Published resources

Book
My God! its a woman : the autobiography of Nancy Bird, Walton, Nancy Bird, 1990

Australian women pilots., Australian Women Pilots' Association, 1995

Journal
Airnews / Australian Women Pilots' Association, 1969

Federal treasurer's report / Australian Women Pilots' Association, 1975/76

Membership list / Australian Women Pilots' Association, 1967?

Minutes of the… Annual General Meeting of the Australian Women Pilots' Association, 1975

Newsletter
Newsletter Australian Women Pilots' Association, 1960

Booklet
Careers for pilots., Australian Women Pilots' Association, 1996?

Australian Women Pilots' Association twenty-one years of history from 16th September, 1950 / researched and compiled by Marie Richardson., Australian Women Pilots' Association, 1971

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Archival resources

National Library of Australia, Manuscript Collection
Papers of Nancy Bird Walton, [1933?]-2005 [manuscript]

Papers of Lady Helen Blackburn, 1944-1990 [manuscript]

Records of the Australian Women Pilots' Association, circa 1950-2005 [manuscript]

Sometimes the pilot wears a skirt 1920-1970 [manuscript]

State Library of New South Wales
Australian Women Pilots' Association scrapbooks, 1926-1980

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