



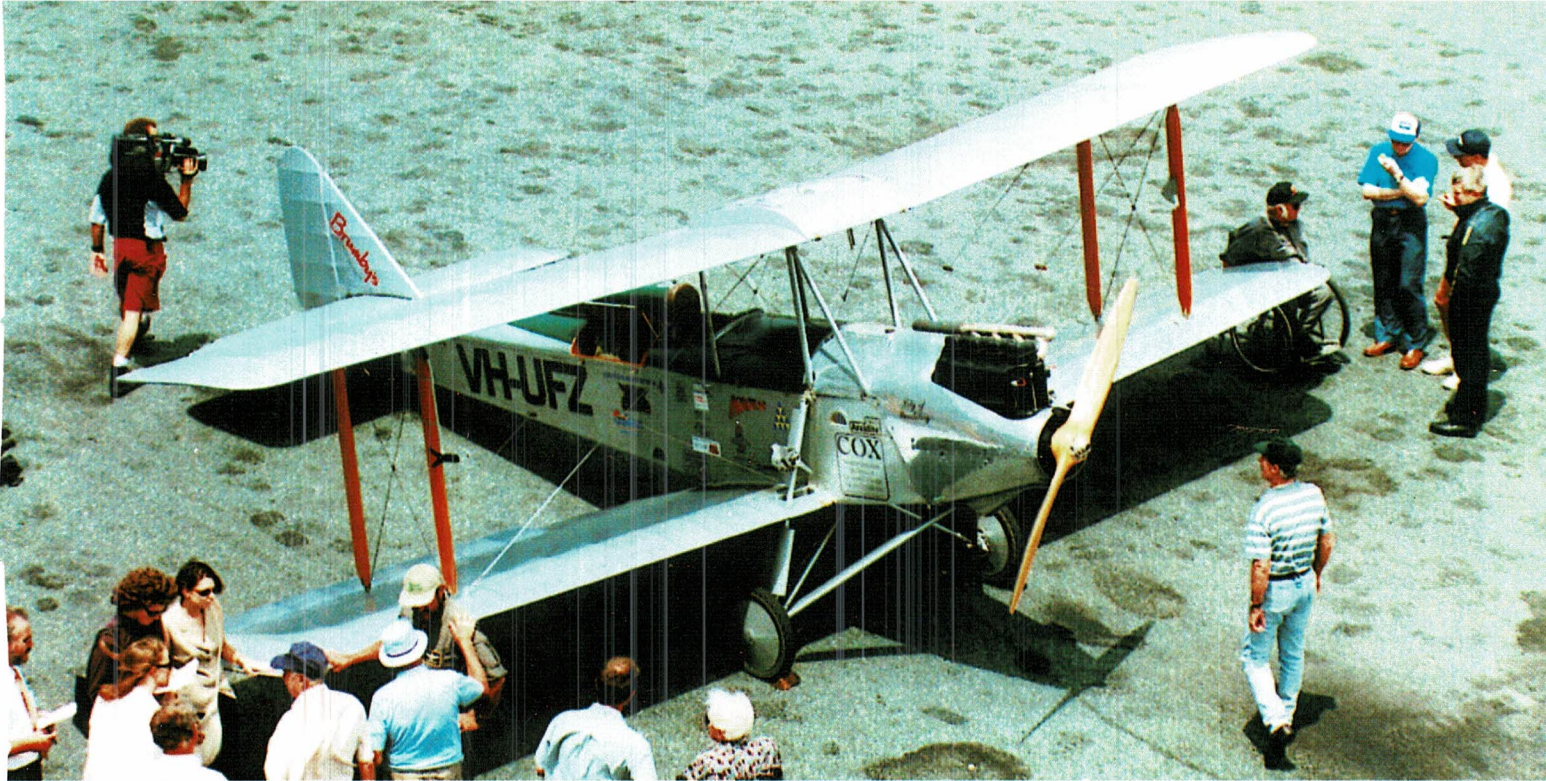
Rediscovering a Legend

In 2001, pilot Dr. Carlene Mendieta, pictured beside the 1927 Avro Avian, 7083 (G-EBUG), followed exactly in Amelia Earhart's footsteps; recreating the record-setting flight across America and back, culminating with a landing at White Plains. The flight replicated Earhart's historic 5,500-mile round-trip crossing of America in a rare, vintage 1927 aircraft, the only flying airplane of its kind in North America.

Mendieta, flew at an average speed of 82 mph, and landed in the same 23 cities as Earhart, as she made her way from Westchester County, N.Y. to Glendale, Calif. and back. The flight was sponsored by HistoricAviation.com.

For more information visit www.ameliaflight.com
(Photos HistoricAviation.com, by Walter Bowe)





The 1930's Will's Cigarette card celebrating Hinkler's flight. Leaving London on 7th February, 1928, he arrived in Darwin, Australia, 16 days later. In 128 hours flying time, Hinkler covered 11,005 miles; averaging a speed of 86 mph



called Charter Wings Ltd with Avians VH-UIK and -AIL.

Two more Avians, Avro 581Bs, were built before production switched to the Avian II. Three examples, G-AUFY, -UFZ and -UGA, came to Australia. The first Avian III, G-EBTU, also had a strong connection with Australia. It was purchased by Captain W. N. Lancaster and named 'Red Rose'. With Mrs Keith ('Chubby') Miller as a passenger the Avian left the United Kingdom on 14th October 1927 and was flown via Europe, the Middle East, India, South East Asia and the Netherlands East Indies to arrive at Darwin on 19th March 1928. They had met up with Bert Hinkler at Singapore and were to do so again at Launceston, Tasmania. The aircraft was sold and registered VH-UTU and finally destroyed in a hangar fire in 1936. One example of an Avian IV, VH-UKD, was impressed by the RAAF in World War II.

The Avian II through to the IV were basically similar aircraft with a wooden airframe. The fuselage was of wood, the engine mount of tube steel. A welded tubular steel centre section

accommodated the 24 gallon fuel tank. However with the introduction of the Avro 616 Avian IVM the fuselage was constructed of welded round-section steel tubing with wire bracing where necessary and this provided a safer airframe which only crumpled in an accident and did not disintegrate as the wooden one did. A variety of engines could be fitted to these later marks ranging from 105 to 135hp. The fuselage was draughtproof, the seats comfortable and easy to access, while a locker had space for two suitable cases. The fabric coverings were silver overall with red, green, Oxford Blue or turquoise blue.

The firm exported many of the 382 Avians built and with practice it could ship a complete, partially dismantled aircraft, in a crate just 23 feet long, 4.75 feet by 5.33 feet weighing around 1 ton. An American firm acquired a license to build some 2000 Avians a year, however production eventually only amounted to less than ten aircraft.

The most recent Avian activity of note involved VH-UFZ, one of the earliest imports, which was totally rebuilt by Lang

TOP VH-UFZ one of the first three Avians to be imported in Australia, which made a UK to Australia flight in 1998 (©Ted Fletcher) **ABOVE** VH-UFZ at Jandakot Airfield, Perth Western Australia (©Ted Fletcher) **OPPOSITE TOP** An Avian IVM fuselage made of tubular steel **BOTTOM** G-CANQ a Canadian floatplane Avian III