



Rivalry and Mateship at Archerfield

The Dutch connection at Archerfield started with rivalry and ended in mateship. When KLM added a Melbourne service stopping at Archerfield to its Amsterdam-Batavia route in 1931, the threat of competition prompted (British) Imperial Airways to commence regular London-Australia flights. KLM didn't secure landing permits until 1938, by which time the British services were well established. Despite this, the Dutch DC-2 'Uiver' caused a sensation when it touched down at Archerfield during the 1934 London-Melbourne air race, with pilot Koene Parmentier commenting that "all of Brisbane" had come to admire the aircraft.

Everything changed in 1942 when the Japanese invaded the Netherlands East Indies (NEI) and the NEI Air Force, Netherlands Naval Aircraft Service and civil aviation retreated to join Australian, British and American forces at Archerfield. Dutch aircraft provided crucial transport and intelligence support to Allied forces in Australia and New Guinea and services for Brisbane-based General Douglas MacArthur, and later assisted in the liberation of NEI.



Archerfield's History Room has been the catalyst for a series of seminars exploring, variously, the airport's largely forgotten Dutch link and other WWII history, presented by the Secretary of the Aviation Historical Society of Australia (Qld) Inc (AHSA), Peter Dunn OAM, and the Dutch-Australia Cultural Centre's Paul Budde.

The AHSA meets on the last Friday evening of each month in Archerfield's historic Terminal Building which houses the History Room. Previous events have included a talk by Ian Campbell, author of *Thinks He's a Bird*, the biography of postal-clerk-turned-Pathfinder pilot Keith Watson who flew for RAF Bomber Command; and the history of the revolutionary CAC Wackett and Yeoman Cropmaster by Mark Pilkington. Meetings and events are live-streamed via Zoom for interstate and regional members.

To find out more, visit www.ahsaqld.org.au or email Peter Dunn OAM at ahsaqld@gmail.com.

Above: The Dutch contingent farewells Archerfield in 1947.

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