

Australian Air League

By Delia Jones Photos by Adrienne Fleming

I am sure we all know a daughter/grand-daughter/ neighbour's child, friend etc. who has expressed interest in flying, once they know that YOU fly.

How, therefore, do we encourage this spark of interest? And at a young age.

I was talking recently with Adrienne Fleming, who is the Victorian Air League Group Executive Commissioner and absolutely passionate about aviation and encouraging young people in their quest for a flying career.

Below is some information that you may find encouraging to pass onto these interested girls to further the spark of interest in aviation.

History

In 1933 Mr. George Robey (Keith Robey's father) and Captain W. Beale formed the Air Mindedness Development League, later re-named The Australian Air League. This followed a concern with the lack of worthwhile activities for youths and the world-wide interest in aviation with historical flights by Charles Kingsford Smith and Amelia Earhart.



Adrienne Fleming.

The first squadron was formed in Manly in 1935 with 30 cadets aged between 14 and 23. This was followed shortly after by other squadrons opening in other parts of NSW and Australia. Initially the squadrons were formed with boys but a keen interest from girls prevailed so in 1944 a girls' section was also introduced.

Over the ensuing years the Australian Air League has become known as the "primary school of aviation".

About the Air League

This is a civilian operated youth organisation. Its prime aim is to foster an interest in aviation. It offers leadership training, drill training, flight training, aviation theory classes, special interest



Girls section ready to compete.



Cadets with trophy.



Moorabbin Air Museum Squadron.

educational training classes as well as sports and recreational activities.

Its membership covers the following categories:

- Junior cadet 8 – 12 years
- Cadet 12 -16 years
- Senior cadet 16 – 18 years
- Officer 18+ years.

The Air League operates in Victoria, NSW, Queensland, TAS and SA, and squadrons are based in many and various city and country locations.

Yes, you get to fly. The air activities section assists in practical flight training, flight theory training, glider training and joy flights. Members can enjoy discounted rates and experienced professional instruction to help gain the student pilot's licence, private pilot's licence and commercial pilots' licence.

Throughout the year the Air Activities section conducts joy flights for members.

There are many badge classes conducted for flying and non-flying members throughout the year.

Camps, hikes and outings are regularly organised for members.

Drill in the Australian Air League is designed to promote self-discipline and leadership skills.

There are various award programmes introduced to encourage and motivate members over the age of 14.

Model building is an important activity at the Australian Air League which is intended to perfect practical techniques and improve fine motor skills and learning the history of the aircraft they are building.

There are physical activities organised through the Australian Air League including ball games, athletics carnivals, swimming carnivals and sports.

Cadets usually meet once a week and some weekends throughout the school year. A cadet must participate regularly in activities to remain in good standing at the squadron.

Apart from an annual membership to assist in running the organisation, cadets are required to purchase their own uniform.

What do cadets do at the weekly meetings?

Some of the activities include ceremonial drill, first aid, education and modelling, sports and events that support your community.

For more information, visit www.airleague.com.au on the web.

Now it's up to you to pass on this information to that young girl or boy who has expressed an interest in aviation.