



South Australian Aviation Museum

Aircraft Profile

DE HAVILLAND DH-60G GIPSY MOTH VH-ULJ

Single engine civil and military trainer

History of VH-ULJ

First registered in 1929, the aircraft went to Holden's Air Transport Services Ltd in 1933 and was flown to Papua New Guinea, where it was used in the development of the Bulolo goldfields (a very rich goldmine located in the middle of the rugged Owen Stanley Range). It was based initially at Salamaua on the New Guinea coast and used to transport miners and their supplies over the New Guinea mountains. A flight of less than an hour replaced what was once a five-day walk through very steep mountains.



In 1937 it was sold to Guinea Airways Ltd and based at Lae, where it operated until September 1941. The aircraft flew from Wau, New Guinea, to Parafield, SA, in February 1942 via Daru, Horn Island and Townsville to escape the Japanese invasion of New Guinea.

It was then sold to the SA Education Department for instructional purposes. Its total flying time was 4,300 hours. It was put on display in the SA Museum of Applied Science, North Terrace, Adelaide, from November 1942 until 1961 when it went into storage. In 1965 it was transported to the Birdwood Mill Museum. The DH-60G came to SAAM on 1 June 1991.



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VH-ULJ is noteworthy for its wooden frame fuselage, as well as being the last remaining aircraft that took part in one of the world's most famous pioneering use of aircraft for the carriage of freight.



One wing of the Gipsy Moth has been uncovered so visitors can see the wooden construction close up.



The Gipsy Moth's engine has sections cut away showing visitors some of the inner workings.





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History of Type

The prototype De Havilland DH-60 G-EBKT first flew on 22 February 1925 at Stag Lane, UK, piloted by Geoffrey de Havilland (later Sir Geoffrey). Its simple lines and outstanding performance on low power set an instantly popular fashion in light aircraft configuration, which lasted for several decades.

This two-seat basic trainer was an instant success around the world with the first of the type being imported into Australia in 1926. They were initially used by Aero Clubs and the RAAF. The latter used them until replaced by the DH-82 Tiger Moth. The DH-60 type was also used by charter operators, for news reporting, aero medical services, mineral exploration, by private owners, and for aerial photography (most notably by Adelaide photographer D Darian Smith).

Technical Specifications

Engine: De Havilland Gipsy I of 100 hp

Maximum take-off weight: 750 kg

Length: 7.20 m

Wing span: 9.09 m

Height: 2.70 m

Cruising speed: 75 kt (142 kph)

Range: 533 km (295 nm)

Capacity: 1 pilot and 1 passenger