

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN AVIATION MUSEUM SIGNIFICANT AVIATOR PROFILES

MATULICH, LAWRENCE CLAUDE



Laurie Matulich was born in Petersburg SA (now known as Peterborough) on 1 March 1898.

He died on 5 October 1961 at his home at 3 Ruthven Avenue, Glandore West. *The Advertiser* death notice on 6 October noted he was *Dearly beloved husband of Dorothy*.

His father was Charles Matulich, who fought with the AIF on the Western Front in WW1 and by February 1930 was Station Master at Loxton.

His mother was Adeline Beatrice Mary Thomas, and he had a brother, Charles Decourcey

Matulich, who was a pilot in 1 Sqn AFC WW1.

Laurie Matulich working on the engine of a No.1 AFC Bristol Fighter in Palestine.

Enlistment Record

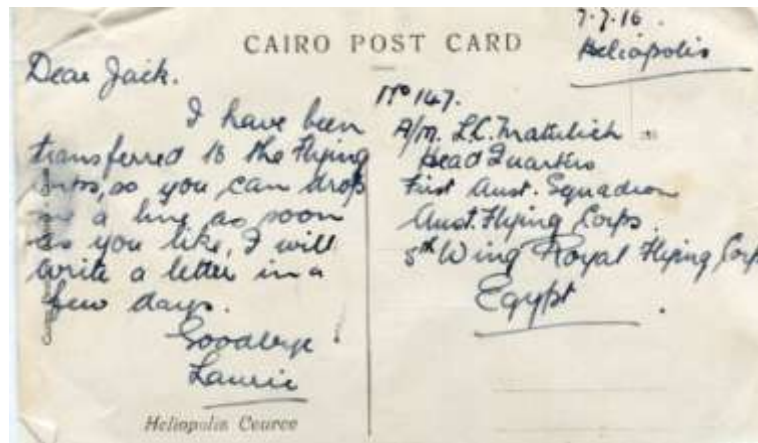
Laurie Matulich's WW1 enlistment details were as follows:

- Address (at time of enlisting in WWI) – Lyndoch Street, Hyde Park SA
- Apprentice – 3 years with Thomas & (partner not clear)
- Serving in cadets – Rank of Corporal
- Joined AIF – 10 January 1916
- Aged 18 years
- Height – 5 feet 3 ¼ inches
- Weight – 121 lbs
- Complexion – fresh
- Eyes – brown
- Hair – light brown
- Religion – Church of England

Service Number - 14129

Service Record

- Base Engineers Mitcham from 11 January 1916 to 29 February 1916
- Third Military District Melbourne from 29 February 1916
- Embarked as Sapper with 3rd Rfts 13th FCE in HMAT A20 Hororata from Sydney 2 May 1916, and on 29 June 1916 joined his unit at Tel-el-Kebir in Egypt.
- No. 1 AFC Sqn 2nd Class Air Mechanic 8 August 1916 to 31 December 1916
- No. 6 Sqn AFC 1st Class Air Mechanic 1 January 1917
- Cpl on 1 March 1918
- Cpl Mechanic on 13 December 1918.
- During his time in the Middle East he was one of a number of AFC members Mentioned in Despatches by General E.H.H. Allenby, GCMG, KCB, GOC-in-C EEF in his communication of 3 April 1918.
- After the armistice Matulich embarked at Kantara on 5 March 1919 in HT Port Sydney to return to Australia, where he landed at Adelaide on 5 April and was discharged on 28 May 1919.
- On 27 February 1920 he received 'One Certificate for Mention in Despatches, London Gazette 30746/45 – Ex No 14129 Cpl Mech L.C. Matulich, AFC.'



Post War

Matulich was married on 25 April 1925 to Dorothy Mangan Lovick and had two sons: Ross Noel Matulich, who was born on 18 December 1925 and died on 19 May 1981. *The Advertiser* death notice of 21 May 1981 stated he was *husband of Mary and father of Mark and his funeral service was in W.A. Norman Memorial Chapel, Centennial Park Cemetery*; and Stephen Matulich, who was born in 1932 and died in 1984.

In 1933 SA Airways Ltd was formed to takeover Engine Supply Company, with directors F.P. Roberts, H.L. Bastin, L.C. Matulich, L. Newman and J.A.S Mitchell. The venture, however, did not proceed.

Matulich operated a radio business in Unley SA

His civil flying career evolved as follows:

Flying Training

Laurie Matulich was living at Kimba SA when his flying lessons started, but all his training was undertaken at Parafield.

His medical examination took place on 12 November 1928 and training commenced the following day as follows:

- First flying lesson was on 13 November 1928 in DH60 VH-UAR at Parafield for 25 minutes with an instructor.
- Other flying lessons were in DH60 VH-UAM, UIB, ULL, ULO and UNE.
- His first solo was on 13 November 1929 for 10 minutes in VH-UIB DH60.
- He passed a test for "A" Licence on 31 December 1929 in VH-ULO DH60, then having total flying time of 21 hours 35 minutes, which was made up of Dual Instruction to "A" Licence of 16 hours 55 minutes and Solo 4 hours 40 minutes. His Log Book was signed off by J. Churchill-Smith, Secretary, Aero Club of South Australia Limited.

Subsequent flying activity



He purchased DH60X VH-UGS from H.R. Grosvenor, according to his Log Book on 16 November 1929, but the Civil Register states it was in December 1929.

His first flight in UGS was a 40 minute solo

flight from Parafield on 1 January 1930; and his first flight to Kimba on 3 January 1930, which took 3 hours 5 minutes. Thereafter:

VH-UGS DH60X at Kimba c1930s – L Matulich centre

- During January 1930 landed at Cowell, Darke Peak, Kingscote, Karoonda, Loxton, Morgan.
- On 8 March 1930 he visited Kyancutta as Eyre Peninsula Airways' Junkers had force-landed there due to loss of the propeller.
- On 21 March 1930 he flew in an air race at Parafield in DH60 VH-UNE; on 22 March 1930 in an aerial derby handicap race in which he and came third and won £24; and on 31 May 1930 he competed in the Grosvenor Cup at Parafield.
- On 26 January 1931 he competed in an air race from Parafield to Bute for the Bute airfield opening.
- On 6 April 1931 he competed in an air race at Mount Gambier in which he came first, A. Lawson second and Captain Miller third.
- On 9 May 1931 he competed in aerial derby at Essendon Vic.

- On 17 October 1931 he competed in the third aerial derby handicap at Parafield, and won £10.
- On 30 April 1932 he competed in the Grosvenor Cup at Parafield, and won first place in 14min 19 sec.
- On 18 January 1935 he flew G. Parsons from Kimba to Adelaide to hospital.
- On 19 December 1936 he competed in the aerial derby at Parafield, winning second place and £40.
- His last recorded flight in DH60 VH-UGS was on 15 April 1937. His total pilot time was then 567 hours and 35 minutes.
- He sold VH-UGS to Gertrude McKenzie in Melbourne.

Business Career

The first advertisement for the Kimba Hotel (L.C. Matulich, Proprietor) was in the *Kimba Despatch* of Friday, 2 September 1927, which stated the hotel provided *'The Best of Meals and Accommodation obtainable. First Class Cuisine. Phone 7 Box 1.'*

The *Kimba Despatch* of Friday 14 October 1927 ran the same advertisement.

He was appointed Patron of the Kimba Golf club at its annual general meeting in March 1930.

The *Kimba Despatch* of 26 June 1936 reported *"The Kimba Hotel has hot water service installed, and in the bathroom hot water is available at any hour during the day. The bathroom has been attractively fitted out; the hot and cold water taps are plainly marked and even a novice could operate them with ease. The boiler is the latest type approved for this kind of installation, and is so arranged to give a maximum heating effect with the minimum usage of fuel. The pipes throughout the service are of solid copper, which though expensive, cannot be surpassed for this class of work. Mr Matulich has always been progressive, and we congratulate him on this addition to an already well-equipped hotel."*



Matulich sold the Kimba Hotel probably in November 1936 and C.L. Oliver was reported as its Proprietor in the *Kimba Despatch* of 21 May 1937.



1929 when seventeen aircraft reached Kimba from Parafield as participants in the East West Air Contest. Later that day they departed for Ceduna.

General

Other events of general interest from the period are:

The *Southern Cross* was reported by the *Kimba Despatch* of 31 August 1928 as having passed over Kimba on 27 August 1928 en-route Perth to Adelaide.

The opening of Kimba Aerodrome was on 2 October

Kimba Community Hotel 1929 – via Kimba and Gawler Ranges Historical Society

The participants were:

Race Number	Name	Aircraft Type	Registration	Time of Arrival
1	E.W. Leggett	Curtis Ireland Meteor	VH-UFQ	10.15
2	H.F. Parker	Klemm L.25	VH-ULU	11.28.30
7	E.E. Davies	DH60G	VH-UJU	9.53
8	L.C. Lee Murray	DH60G	VH-ULB	9.53.55
9	P. Manifold	DH60G	VH-UKJ	10.11.20
10	P. Knapman	DH60	VH-UKO	10.7
11	F.K. Bardsley	DH60G	VH-UIF	9.53.7
12	C.N. McKay	DH60G	G-AUMV	10.7.30
13	A.T. Cunningham	DH60G	VH-UID	10.6.31
14	C.D. Pratt	DH60G	VH-UKX	9.53.45
16	H.C. Miller	DH9	G-AUHT	9.49
17	A.A.N.D Pentland	DH60G	G-AUJV	10.6.45
19	C. Eaton	DH60M	VH-UKC	10.10.16
20	W.H. Penny	Avro Avian	VH-UKD	11.11
21	K.R. Farmer	Sopwith Gnu	VH-UBY	10.11.28
22	H. DeHavilland	DH60G	VH-UIQ	10.3.30
24	B. Heath	DH50A	VH-UMC	9.49.30

Four RAAF Wapitis were present with pilots Squadron Leader Summers (A5-10), Flt Lts Ryan (A5-9), Chadwick (A5-15) and Gerrand (A5-8). DH50 VH-UAY carried race officials

and was piloted by Major Murray Jones. Other non-competing aircraft were piloted by G.K. Rice-Oxley SA Aero Club Instructor, Mr Hussey was in charge of Captain Miller's aircraft and also Captain Jaques' aircraft was present.

Laurie Matulich was Chairman of the Kimba Aerodrome Committee and also Official Organizer for the Kimba stop during the air-race, which comprised the official opening of the aerodrome. Kimba is 180 miles by air to Adelaide and 310 miles by road.

The *Kimba Despatch* of 18 October 1929 announced that Eyre Peninsula Airways was starting operations that day with a schedule of *"Monday & Friday flights arriving at about 10.45am and returning from Streaky Bay at 10.00am on Tuesdays & Saturdays to Adelaide. The time taken to Adelaide will be a little over two hours, stopping at Cowell and Wallaroo on the way. Bookings via C.H. de la Perrelle authorized Kimba Agent for Eyre Peninsula Airways Limited."*

Eyre Peninsula Airways' Junkers made a forced landing near Waddikee siding on 8 March 1930 due loss of its propeller.

"Christmas Greetings from Kimba Hotel (L.C. Matulich, Proprietor)" (Kimba Despatch & Northern Eyre Advocate, 18 December 1931)

Parachute Descent – Lt Reece jumped from Matulich's DH60 VH-UGS at Kimba on 20 May 1932.

Captain H.C. Miller's Fokker Monoplane VH-UJT visited Kimba on 14 May 1933 to collect sick patient Beryl Grindell, her father J.C. Grindell and Matron Conigrave of Kimba Hospital Aircraft left for Adelaide the following day. (*Kimba Despatch, 19 May 1933*)

Reference Sources: National Archives of Australia, The Advertiser, C A Schaedel, Kimba Despatch September 1927 to May 1941.

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