

Harry Hawker MBE AFC

Harry Hawker

Pioneer Aviator

1889—1921



Aviator engineer, Test Pilot, Aircraft Designer

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Daily Mail 1913 Circuit of Britain Race

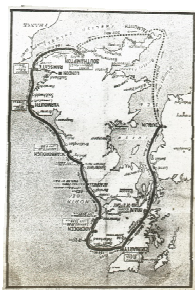
By 1913, Harry Hawker was holding all of Britain's and most of the world's aviation records. With a zest for flying, Harry, along with his friend Harry Kauper as mechanic, set out to win the *Daily Mail* 1913 Circuit of Britain prize of £5,000 for completing a course of 1,540 miles. The event was conducted by the Royal Aero club and although four teams (pilot and passenger for each seaplane) nominated, Hawker and Kauper were the only team to start. To win the event they had to complete the course of 1540 miles in 72 hours.



Hawker chose to fly the re-designed tractor type biplane (propeller at the front) fitted with floats and with 100 hp green engine rather than the standard 80 hp. They took off from Southampton water on 25 August he made remarkable time for over two parts of the journey.

During this flight they became the first men to fly over 1000 miles of sea and at the same time create a new British long-distance record of 1043 miles which they covered in 21 hours 44 min flying time. Unfortunately a mishap ended their attempt at Loughshinny, near Dublin. While carrying out routine adjustments, Harry's foot slipped off the controls and they crashed.

However the *Daily Mail*, acknowledging that their Sopwith Seaplane had flown 1,043 miles (1678 km) in 21 hours 44 minutes flying time, awarded Hawker a special prize of £1,000 as this was the first time that 1,000 miles (1609 km) had been flown over an outwards course,



One hundred years later to commemorate Harry Hawker's heroic flight, the oldest airworthy amphibian still flying in the UK, the IWM Duxford based Catalina G-PBYA completed the same circuit. The Catalina and crew followed the 1913 route as closely as possible over a five day historic flight. The 2013 Circuit of Britain challenge was mounted by Catalina Pilot Jeff Boyling who, like Harry Hawker, was born in Australia, shares a passion for aeronautical adventure.

Jeff hopes his historic flight will inspire younger generations to pursue the wonders of flying and keep "the golden era of aviation" alive.