



Taking Flight with Books

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COVER: Image from the book 'The Fantastic Flying Books of Mr Morris Lessmore' by William Joyce. Flying is now a common way of travelling long distances. Not everyone enjoys flying, but for many the romance and excitement of flight is very much alive, and it is certainly an easier way of travelling around the world. Of course books can take you around the world too, and you don't even have to leave your living room!

Compiled by Jon Adams. E noho ra.

Getting to know your Library staff in ten questions...

What is your name?

Thea Prenzler.



Where were you born?

Beenleigh, Queensland (between Brisbane and the Gold Coast)

Favourite book from your Childhood?

Anything by Enid Blyton.

What is your position at Masterton Library?

Homebound and Interloans Librarian.

Have you had any previous, non-librarian jobs?

Dental Hygienist; Private in the Australian Army.

Name the book and author you are reading at the moment

Dinner with Edward: the story of a remarkable friendship by Isabel Vincent.

Name a book you haven't read but know you should:

Most of the books in our Biography section.

If you had one magazine subscription it would be for...

Green Lifestyle

Favourite place to read...

Stretched out on the sofa.

If you were stranded on a desert island, what one book would you want with you?

The Bible.



From your Library...

Library Manager, Sandy Green

The history of flight is the story of fighting against gravity, Mother Nature, physics, and public perception, to realise a dream. The Chinese started kite flying several hundred years BC. Leonardo Da Vinci was excited by the possibility of people soaring through the air like birds and envisaged a flying machine called an 'ornithopter' in the 15th Century. Powered flight, as we know it, didn't happen until the turn of the 20th century, and has been the subject of many fiction and non-fiction titles since, and featured in numerous films and TV series.

There is a certain romance in the story of flight, particularly the first commercial flights and the magnificent men and their flying machines of the First and Second World Wars. The 'Flyboys' film records the adventures of the Lafayette Escadrille, the young Americans who volunteered for the French Military (the flying corps were then part of the military) before the U.S entered World War I and became the country's first fighter pilots. It is a great watch.

The WAAFs were the glamour girls of the Second World War in the same way as the pilots were often perceived as the most attractive servicemen – not only did they offer the glamour of flight, they had the best looking uniforms. We have 10 titles on the catalogue relating to the WAAFs, including Just one more day by Jessica Blair, the pseudonym for Bill Spence a former Lancaster bomber crewman who flew 36 missions over enemy territory during the Second World War.

Peter Pan teaches the Darling children to fly so they can break free from the restrictive routine of school and office represented by their father Mr. Darling. Magic flying carpets and the wishing chair are other representations of flight in children's literature. Roald Dahl's time in the air force had a huge influence on him and almost every children's story he wrote featured flying in some form.

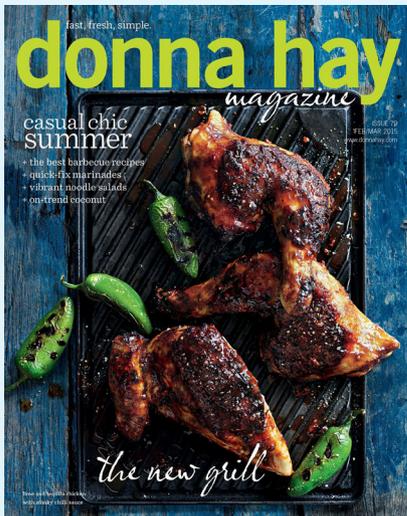
Flight in literature portrays a sense of freedom and a means of escape from circumstance or burdens. How many of us would love to hop on a flight and take off to a different world and experiences, and leave everything behind us? Reading a novel about flight we can share in the sense of freedom and escape, but all reading can take us out of ourselves and into another world, letting our minds take flight.



**Like us on Facebook for the latest
Library news, events, and some
random fun stuff.**

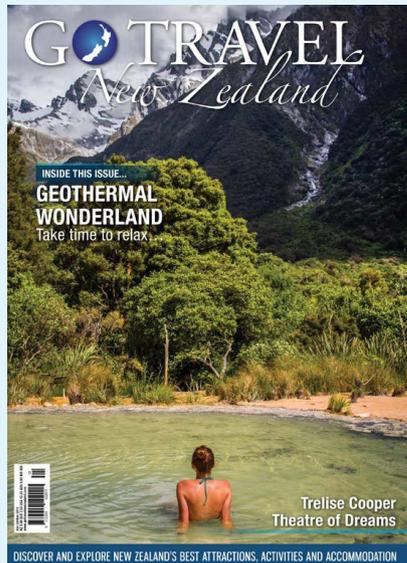
Z zinio for LIBRARIES

Here's two new magazine titles, now available on Zinio through Masterton District Library.



Donna Hay magazine is as beautiful as it is practical. The ingredients are accessible and the techniques easy to follow; the outcome is fresh and modern and always beautifully presented.

+ 10 super-simple weeknight meals for easy summer evenings
plus frosty lamington ice-cream bars, popsicles and our new travel guide



Go Travel New Zealand - full of genuine NZ travel stories, Go Travel New Zealand provides an insiders view of all you need to know about travelling NZ in a regionalized and easy to reference magazine. Remember - "don't leave home 'till you've seen the country'".



This month sees the return of the Wairarapa Balloon Festival with events scheduled to take place from the 13th to the 17th of April. Highlights of the festival will be 'High Kitty', a big pink cat all the way from the USA, and 'The Alien Rocket' from Canada, which is as tall as a 10 storey building. Masterton Library has a number of books on hot air ballooning for anyone wanting to learn more about this incredible air sport, and the Story-Go-Round preschool programme will be having a balloon-themed morning on the 5th of April.

Jean Batten - the Garbo of the Skies

Jean Gardner Batten was born in Rotorua on the 15th of September 1909. During the 1930's her exploits in the skies made her internationally famous and this along with her glamorous looks, earned her the nickname 'the Garbo of the Skies'. Batten made numerous record breaking flights and perhaps her greatest achievement was recording the first-ever solo flight from England to New Zealand in 1936. On returning to her birthplace of Rotorua after completing the flight, Batten was presented with a chief's feather cloak and given the title Hine o te Rangi, Daughter of the Skies.



Jean Batten's interest in flying developed in the late 1920s and solidified in 1929 when Charles Kingsford Smith took her for a flight in his Southern Cross airplane. She took flying lessons, made her first solo flight in 1930, and gained her private and commercial licences in 1932. Throughout the remainder of the 1930s Batten undertook a number of aeronautical adventures around the world, becoming a darling of the skies and a widely recognised media figure. The advent of the Second World War curtailed her flying career, and after the war's conclusion she gradually disappeared from public life. Batten made occasional public appearances but became more and more reclusive and died alone in a hotel in Majorca in 1983, the world only learning of her death in 1987.

Masterton and the other SMART Libraries have several biographies of Jean Batten and she is featured in numerous books on aviation and famous New Zealanders. There are also three books written by Jean herself, *Solo Flight* written in 1934, *My Life* written in 1938, and *Alone in the Sky*, written in 1979. The alluring, yet mysterious, life of Jean Batten also provided inspiration for one of New Zealand's most respected writers Dame Fiona Kidman in her 2013 novel *The Infinite Air*. Kidman explores the life of the enigmatic Batten from her beginnings in Rotorua and the highs of her aviation exploits in the 1930s, to her disappearance into obscurity. Reviewing the book for the NZ Herald in 2013, David Hill wrote "It's a given that Kidman couldn't produce a poor paragraph if she tried to and this is a narrative that - I have to say it - takes wing."

War in the Skies



It was during the Second World War that aviation was established as a critical component of modern warfare: Adolf Hitler utilised the air power of the Luftwaffe to achieve his Blitzkrieg invasions of European countries; Britain was dependent upon the R.A.F. to keep the Luftwaffe at bay and stave off a German invasion; the war in the Pacific, particularly the Battles of Midway and the Coral Sea made use of the extended strike capacity of aircraft carriers; and the war ended with the dropping of atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki from American B-29 bombers. Air warfare was a major component of all theatres of conflict in WWII and has been a feature of much writing based on the war, both fiction and non-fiction.

Masterton Library has an extensive collection books on the Second World War and many of these relate to aerial combat, covering a range of different conflicts. ***Spitfire Summer: The People's Eye View of the Battle of Britain*** by Peter Haining collects accounts from pilots, soldiers and the general public to describe life in Britain at this time. ***Battle for the Skies***, edited by Michael Paterson collects accounts from flying aces from both sides of the conflict, and from all theatres of the war. ***Jimmy Stewart: Bomber Pilot*** by Starr Smith traces the military service of the Hollywood actor who at the height of his fame enlisted in the army and went on to become a bomber pilot with the U.S. Eighth Air Force. ***Dambusters: a landmark oral history*** by Max Arthur (with a foreword by Stephen Fry) describes one of the most famous aerial operations of the war, the RAF attacks on the dams that powered Germany's industrial heartland. ***Waiting for the All Clear*** by Ben Wicks collects first hand accounts from those who were on the receiving end of aerial bombardment, survivors of the Blitz.

The Library also has numerous books covering the efforts of NZ pilots and crew during the Second World War. ***Night After Night*** by Max Lambert tells the story of the New Zealanders who served in Bomber Command. A companion book, ***Day After Day*** relates the experiences of New Zealanders who flew in Europe with Fighter Command and the Second Tactical Air Force. ***Johnny Checketts: the road to Biggin Hill*** by Vincent Orange tells the story of the Invercargill-born fighter pilot who was credited with destroying 14 enemy aircraft, and damaging 11. ***Ketchill: a New Zealand pilot's war in Asia and the Pacific*** was written by Neil Frances who until recently worked at the Wairarapa Archive. The book recounts the military career of Kahutara man Charles Victor Bargh (known as Vic), a fighter pilot who served in the RAF and RNZAF during the Second World War. Bargh flew almost 200 operations in the Far East and the Pacific and in 1944 was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

The Romance of Flight

Although the reality may involve lost luggage, a lot of waiting around in airports, and occasionally dodgy airline food, for many of us there is still a great romance to air travel. The golden age of travel may be over, but it is still a wonder that airlines can take us from a remote corner of the South West Pacific to hundreds of destinations around the world. Here is a small selection of Non-Fiction books, available from the SMART Libraries that celebrate the history and experience of air travel.

Tasman Echo Alpha: an account of the NZ airline industry in the 1960's when flying was dangerous and sex was safe / Guy Clapshaw

Anecdotes about working for TEAL and Air New Zealand, in the days when people dressed up to travel, the alcohol was free and luggage was included in your ticket price!

The Wild Blue Yonder: the Picador book of aviation / edited by Graham Coster

This collection of writing about flying spans the 20th century, featuring poems and prose by pioneer aviators, war pilots, amateurs and writers from Julian Barnes to Nicholson Baker.

Skyfaring / Mark Vanhoenacker

The 21st century has relegated airplane flight to the realm of the mundane. 747 pilot Mark Vanhoenacker has written a poetic and nuanced exploration of the human experience of flight that reminds us of the full imaginative weight of our most ordinary journeys - and reawakens our capacity to be amazed.

Vintage Champagne on the Edge of Space: the supersonic world of a Concorde stewardess / Sally Armstrong

Flying at the edge of space, jetting off to exotic locations, mixing with the rich and famous were all just part of the job for Concorde employees. This book commemorates a unique era of flying with all the adventure, glamour and glitz that it entailed.

Cockpit Confidential / Patrick Smith

For millions of people, travel by air is a confounding, uncomfortable, and even fearful experience. Patrick Smith, airline pilot and author of the web's popular Ask the Pilot feature, separates the fact from fallacy and tells you everything you need to know.

Jet Age: the Comet, the 707, and the race to shrink the world / Sam Howe Verhovek

The fascinating story of the titans of industry, engineers, and pilots who raced to design a safe and lucrative passenger jet, permanently changing our conception of distance and time.



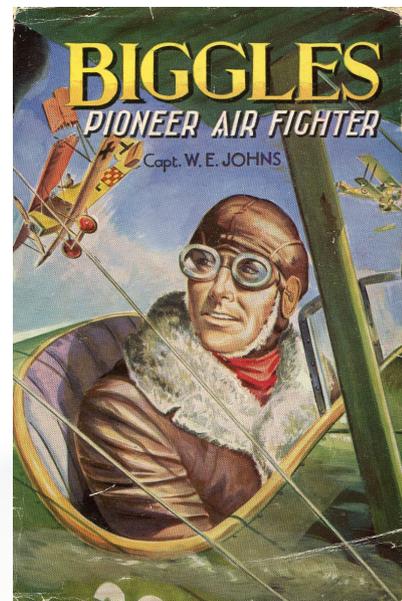
Biggles takes to the air

The name Biggles is synonymous with books and flying. It is the nickname of fictional ace pilot and adventurer James Bigglesworth, who made his first appearance in a 1932 short story called *The White Fokker*, which was included in the magazine *Popular Flying*. The author was William Earl Johns (1893 - 1968) who wrote under the pen name Captain W.E. Johns. Johns himself was a pilot during the First World War, serving as a flying instructor and then bomber pilot before being shot down in September 1918, and spending the remaining weeks of the war as a POW. Johns remained in the airforce until 1931 when his writing career took over. He was a prolific author writing over 160 books, including nearly 100 adventures involving Biggles.

Johns stated that Biggles was a composite character based on a number of real life people. His adventures began as a teen-aged fighter pilot flying with the Royal Flying Corps during the First World War and go on to involve work as a freelance charter pilot between the wars; a return to the (now) Royal Air Force for the duration of the Second World War; and finally engagement with the 'Special Air Police', setting up a flying squad with his wartime comrades, Algie, Ginger and Bertie. Biggles' exploits take him around the world including Borneo, Spain, Australia, Mexico and the Baltic. His last adventure *Biggles Does Some Homework*, which Johns was working on when he died in 1968, shows Biggles at last preparing to retire, though not before embarking on one last adventure.

The Biggles stories have drawn criticism with accusations that they contain negative racial stereotypes and sexism. Some have suggested that the inherent violence of stories set during wartime is not ideal subject material for children's fiction. It has also been observed that time seems to pass unrealistically slowly for Biggles - he appears to be a youngish man in WW2, despite beginning his adventures in WW1. For a while Biggles was highly unpopular, even being banned in some libraries.

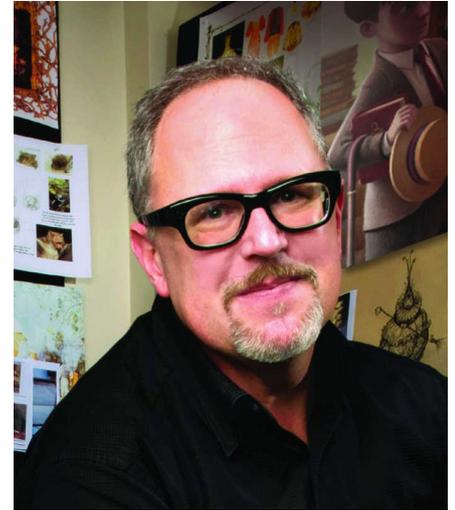
The books are definitely 'of their time' and some of the attitudes displayed in the Biggles stories can be offensive to modern readers. While some have cast Biggles as an exemplar of supposed Anglo-Saxon superiority, the character himself actually says "While men are decent to me I try to be decent to them, regardless of race, colour, politics, creed or anything else". Biggles' adventures and his more noble characteristics such as bravery, selflessness, and determination are thought to have inspired many young men to join the air force in the Second World War. John's matter-of-fact writing style helps make the incredible stories more believable, the adventures rattle along at a great pace, and they remain highly enjoyable and exciting reads.



Tally-ho!

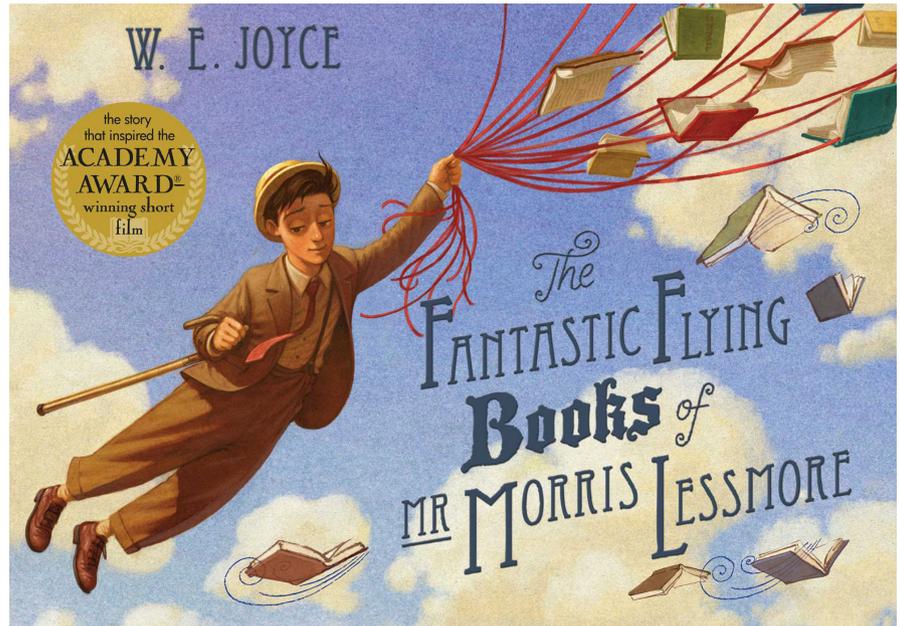
Author Profile: William Joyce

American writer, illustrator and filmmaker William Edward Joyce was born in Shreveport, Louisiana on December 11, 1957. Joyce He began his career as a writer and illustrator of children's books in 1985 and has produced many popular titles including *A Day with Wilbur Robinson* (1990), *The Leaf Men and the Brave Good Bugs* (1996), and *A Bean, a Stalk, and a Boy Named Jack* (2014). He has also enjoyed great success in the field of animation, creating conceptual characters for the films *Toy Story* and *A Bugs Life*, and the films *Robots*, *Meet the Robinsons* and *Epic* are all based on stories he wrote.



Joyce displayed his artistic abilities at a young age but, unfortunately, although his classmates appreciated the talent he displayed in 'Billy's Booger' a story about a young boy who blows a green, gloppy superpower out of his nose, his teacher did not, and he was sent to the principal's office. Joyce reported that he had little access to books at home, but was able to read many classics of children's literature through his local library. "I lived in a small southern town and the only library was way out in the woods in an honest-to-God log cabin. Thankfully, however, there was a very courageous librarian who loved children's books. So I was able to, on occasional visits, see books that changed my life."

In 2011 Joyce wrote and directed the short film *The Fantastic Flying Books of Mr Morris Lessmore*. In 2012 he produced a print version of the story, and in that same year the film received an Academy Award for the Best Animated Short Film. The story was inspired by William Morris, the children's books publisher at HarperCollins, and a mentor to William Joyce. It is a fantastical allegory about the curative power of books and reading in which books repay the favour to those who care for them.



From the Wairarapa Archive...

Wairarapa's legendary flights

In ancient times a chief and tohunga called Raekaumoana was in great danger as his Okahu pa in south Wairarapa was under attack. His spiritual guide Rongomai rescued him, and flew away, carrying him north and away from danger. Rongomai came to rest at Pahiatua (resting place of the god). In later years the chief Nukupewapewa built a large raupo kite in the shape of an eagle and, attaching a man to it, launched him off the edge of a cliff and down into the Maungarake pa beneath, which Nuku was trying to capture. The man was able to open the gates, allowing the assembled warriors to enter and successfully attack the pa.

In the 1890s Masterton was visited by the famed American balloonist and "aerialis" Leila Adair, who announced she would ascend from Masterton Park oval in a hot air balloon. Come the day, a large fire was started to provide the hot air needed, but as the balloon started to inflate, it caught fire, and within seconds was a smouldering mess. It was 1908 before the town saw a successful flight - Noah Ezra Jonasson ascended from the old Show Grounds (now Memorial Park), performed some acrobatic tricks, then returned to the ground nearby. A week later he flew again, catching a light breeze before parachuting to the ground between Cole and Essex streets, while the balloon crossed the river and landed in Oxford Street.

The first aeroplane built in New Zealand to successfully fly was the Fisher monoplane, built from a magazine drawing of a Bleriot model. After trials were conducted near Featherston, the first successful sustained flights took place on the flats opposite the Hurunui-o-rangi marae. One is left to wonder if the spirits of Raekaumoana and Nukupewapewa were watching, thinking about how they had done it first!

Gareth Winter



American balloonist Leila Adair who toured New Zealand in 1894



The Fisher monoplane which flew near Gladstone on 21 June 1913.

What's on in the Library this month...

Clubcraft (Minecraft Club)

Monday 3rd of April

3:30 pm (registration required)

Story-Go-Round Pre-School Programme

Wednesday 5th and 12th of April,

10:30am

Book Bugs Book Club (ages 10 - 13)

Wednesday 5th of April,

5:30pm - 6:30pm

Puanga Kohanga Te Reo Pre-School Programme

Thursday 6th and 13th of April

10:30am

Sit, Knit and Yarn (knitting and craft group)

Friday 7th, 21st, and 28th of April

10:00am - 12:00pm

LEGO Group

Monday 10th of April,

3:30 pm (registration required)

LEGO Stop-Motion Movie Making

Tuesday 18th, Wednesday 19th, and Thursday 20th

of April. Register at EVENTS page.

Seniors Celebrate

Jeremy Scott - the long road from a broken heart.

Tuesday 18th of April, 2:00pm

School Holiday Crafts - Lantern Making

Wednesday 19th of April 10:30am - 11:30am

Book launch:

Tinui - the Last Post by Michelle O'Connell

Saturday 22nd of April, 11:00am

School Holiday Crafts - ANZAC Craft

Monday 24th of April, 10:30am - 11:30am

BookEnds Book Club

Monday 24th of April, 1:00pm

School Holiday Crafts - Garland Craft

Wednesday 26th of April, 10:30am - 11:30am

There are always lots of events and activities happening at the Library. Check them out, and register if required, at our EVENTS page <https://masterton.spydus.co.nz/events> or click on the link from the Library/Archive website.

Check the Library noticeboard by the Queen Street entrance for more Wairarapa events.

Masterton Library and the Wairarapa Archive will be closed on Good Friday (14 April) and Easter Monday (17 April)



They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
We will remember them.



Masterton Library and the Wairarapa Archive will be closed on ANZAC Day, April 25.

