



AS IT HAPPENED

BY

KEN NICHOLSON M.I.D.

LIFE GOES ON

Following my discharge from the RAF in 1947 I was repatriated to Fiji where I was employed by the New Zealand Government as an Air Traffic Control Officer at the Flying Boat Base at Lacula Bay, Suva. In 1950 I was offered employment by Qantas as a pilot based in Sydney.

During my thirty years with Qantas, I served primarily as a Supervisory Captain. As Flight Captain, I flew Sandringham Flying Boats, DC4s, Lockheed Electras, Boeing 707s and 747s, spending two periods as Flight Captain, London. In those times I flew on trans-Atlantic return flights between London and New York as well as flights to many airports throughout Europe. On another occasion I was based in San Francisco, engaged in flying round trips from San Francisco to New York.

Some highlights of my career involved being 'In Command' of VIP charter flights on several occasions, carrying such personages as the Duke of Edinburgh, Princess Marina and the late Queen Mother.

Another highlight was operating 'In Command' of the first commercial Return Charter Flight over Antarctica. Other interesting flights took me to Tahiti, to Mexico, as well as one of particular interest to me, Perth to Johannesburg.

Flying and being involved with aeroplanes has been my life since I earned my wings under the Empire Air Training Scheme (EATS) during World War 2. Due to life's circumstances, the World has been my oyster and my love of flying has never diminished. In the area of commercial flying, I am proud to have been issued with a Master Air Pilot's certificate by the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators and whilst based in London, I had occasion to sit on the court of the Guild.

Two other events important to me occurred during that period. I became a 'Member' of the Royal Aeronautical Society and I was granted 'Freedom of the City of London'.

At the time of my retirement from Qantas, I held the position of 'Flight Superintendent Line Operations'.