

**In Memory of Gordon Jenkinson
Professional Pilot – Flying Instructor - Flight Testing Officer**



Arrived on this Planet Earth early 1932 - Departed (“Going Home”) March 27th 2008

Details as supplied by Gordon's married partner of 47 years Jean Jenkinson at the Tamborine Mountain property - June 12th 2008

Archerfield's Sunland Aviation with Gordon and Jean Jenkinson – words synonymous with the best of flying training instruction available during the years 1969 – 1999 in South East QLD

If you were a pilot or learnt to fly at Archerfield during this time period you would have known of or were directly involved with Gordon and Jean either in the pilot training or charter operations area

One of the last and longest operating family run flying training schools - Sunland survived against all odds associated with running a small business during a period where new regulations were issued on an almost daily basis and the funds required to survive at the time were scarcer than 'hen's teeth'

Starting out at Archerfield airport in 1969 with nothing more than a licence to instruct – Gordon turned out pilots over the next 30 years who were confident in their ability to handle a flying machine in all types of weather conditions knowing that the training they had received was one of the best available – which also just happened to be at an affordable price

Respected by competitor operators and government officials alike from various aviation departments - Gordon's unique and unflappable style of operation left it's mark within the minds of all those involved in the aviation scene

Quite - reserved - conventional with an unswerving loyalty and integrity to be the best in the business it took a little while in some instances for these attributes to sink in and for pilots to understand that Gordon's approach to flying training was as professional as one could get and that the knowledge he had of his job was unlimited - it was up to you as a trainee pilot to get it right 'Gordon's Way' and to Gordon's satisfaction

Several Qantas pilots - past and present – are by-products of the 'Sunland Way' along with numerous other professional pilots flying for airline companies and an assortment of private pilots - many of them scattered around the world

HISTORY

Gordon started out learning to fly in gliders after the war years in Britain eventually obtaining his commercial pilot's licence in the early 1960's

Gordon married and with a wife to support (as was the custom back then) he was determined to fly for a living – his "real job" was as an Electrical Designer in the Drafting Office of British Aircraft Corporation

Gordon had to fall back to 'drafting' a number of times during his early days in OZ as he struggled to make end's meet in the then unstable commercial flying arena that existed

Australia beckoned and in October 1964 with only 10 pounds to his name along with wife Jean and new family in tow Gordon plunged into the Land Down-Under – two months later he resurfaced and with his newly converted commercial pilots licence Gordon commenced to fly for Bush Pilots

After a short stint with 'Bushies' in Townsville Gordon and tribe moved onto Roma where he flew for Carnarvon Air as a charter pilot – he then moved to QLD's Gold Coast where he started to get serious about flying training and became a junior flying instructor as well as a charter pilot with the then Northern Rivers Aero Club based at Coolangatta airport

Three years later he 'saw-the-light' and signed up to take over the Hawker De Havilland (Australia) owned flying school at Archerfield – Sunland Aviation Services Pty. Ltd - that was for sale at the time

After an initial shaky start Sunland started to grow both in size and influence on the airfield as Gordon's reputation as a skilled trainer of pilots expanded

During the next 30 years Gordon flew a variety of aircraft from instructing in 2-seat puddle-jumpers to piloting corporate jets in all types of weather conditions

In 1999 Gordon and Jean sold Sunland and retired to 'the mountain' – a small self-made avocado farm on Mount Tambourine west of the Gold Coast where they had built their own home over a number of years after previously residing at Rochedale and Sunnybank

In late 2006 Gordon was diagnosed with cancer that eventually claimed his life in March 2008 aged 76

FOOTNOTE

A few months before Gordon died the palliative care people suggested in a phone call to Jean that playing a CD that contained sounds of water falling and birds singing in the bush had been proven to be a soothing remedy for cancer patients – on visiting the Tambourine property a short time later the person apologised to Jean for being so ignorant – Gordon was already living in this type of paradise on the mountain