

MAGNIFICENT WOMEN:

Amy Johnson

Amy Johnson was a dynamic and tenacious record-breaking English aviator. Johnson's talents and determination extended beyond flying, as the first woman in the UK to be awarded the Air Ministry's ground-engineer's licence. Celebrated internationally during her career, her remarkable legacy continues today.



1 July 1903 – 5 January 1941



Early career

Johnson stood out from the crowd during her school days, and continued to do so when gaining a degree in Economics from Sheffield University. Johnson discovered her passion for flying at London Aeroplane Club, Stag Lane Aerodrome achieving her full pilot's licence in July 1929. It was to be 10 months of rapid achievement:

- **December 1929** – First female in the UK to gain an Air Ministry's ground-engineer's licence.
- **5th May 1930** – Embarked on a solo flight from England to Australia.
- **10th May 1930** – Arrived in Karachi, India; beating the previous record by two days.
- **24th May 1930** – Arrived in Darwin, Australia. First female to fly solo from England to Australia.

There was an explosion of interest in Johnson from the moment she touched down in Karachi, which only heightened when she reached Australia.

Records and Recognition

The record breaking flights continued including the first solo flight from London to Moscow in a single day, immediately followed by Moscow to Tokyo in 10 days. The next year in 1932 Johnson flew solo in record time from London to Cape Town. The record was subsequently lost and then regained by Johnson in 1936.

Johnson received numerous awards throughout her distinguished career including the women's trophy of the International League of Aviators (1930), the President's gold medal of the Society of Engineers (1931) and the gold medal of the Royal Aero Club (1936).

Johnson also served as president of the Women's Engineering Society from 1935-1937.

During the Second World War Johnson joined the Air Transport Auxiliary (ATA). She crashed and died whilst on a routine flight over the Thames en route from Blackpool to Kidlington, Oxfordshire.

'A groundbreaking female from her university education and engineering qualifications to her world records. Goal-orientated and driven, Amy Johnson achieved success and recognition internationally for aviation excellence irrespective of gender'.

Further information

- en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amy_Johnson
- www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/onlinestuff/stories/amy_johnson.aspx

The passing of a pioneer

The circumstances of Johnson's death are shrouded in mystery, including reports of a third person in the water when she crashed and drowned. The Lieutenant Commander of HMS Haslemere valiantly tried to save her but lost his own life.