

AMY JOHNSON, C.B.E.

An Appreciation

by Caroline Haslett, C.B.E., President, Women's Engineering Society.

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All the world knows of the Amy Johnson who at the age of 22 flew solo to Australia ten years ago, but it is perhaps those who knew her more closely who were able to appreciate her gifts and abilities, the generosity of her mind, her modesty over real achievement, her unquenchable spirit which, with her keen wit and boundless humour, must have carried her through times of tedium as well as of horrific experience.

Whatever Amy did she did it with zest and relish. The sparkle and vigour of her personality communicated itself to all who came into contact with her, and the Women's Engineering Society enjoyed it in full measure during her four years as its President. She was no nominal President but someone who imparted her own verve and enterprise to this Society, to whose pioneering spirit her own was akin. She was always ready to give of her time and talent, and the latter certainly was not limited. As a public speaker and as a writer she had a clear incisive style, and the ability to infect others with her own enthusiasm.

Amy Johnson was intensely alive to the beauty and strangeness of form and colour which her flying experience presented to her in a very vivid manner. Her book "Sky Roads of the World" is full of many word pictures seen from the cockpit of her aeroplane, and she infused into them the emotions she must have felt when enchanted by the vagaries of sea, sky and cloud, or awe-struck by the cruel and relentless manifestations of nature in adverse mood.

The elan which characterised Amy's activities either in word or deed was tempered by a shrewd common sense; the vision which inspired and the ardour which led her to attempt her feats of aviation were accompanied by a capacity for endurance which is not always appreciated by those who read of the triumphal conclusion to a well-nigh impossible venture.

Only this week the "Woman Engineer" received from her an article telling of the pleasure she found in her work in the Air Transport Auxiliary and of her delight at the opportunities it gave her-

an article which, while recording the satisfaction in a job well done, exults in the unexpected turns encountered in the performance, and in the camaraderie to be met on every hand - its author was truly Amy.