

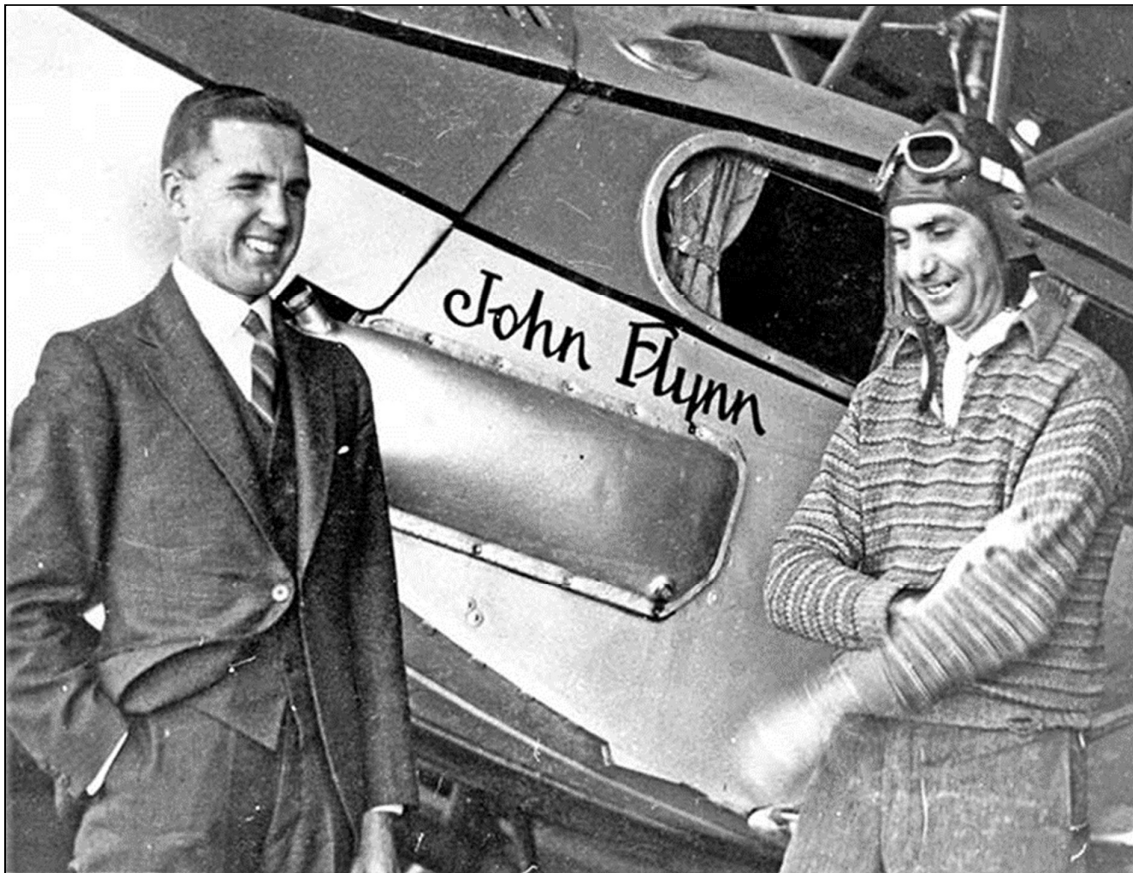
## Albury's Flying Doctors

*Joe Wooding*

Allan Robert Vickers was born near Euroa in 1901. His family moved to Albury in 1910, running the Lavington Store and Post Office for five years. Allan attended Albury High School before graduating from Sydney University (MB, 1926). He suffered severely from asthma.

For a time, Vickers was Resident Medical Officer at Albury Hospital, then a GP at Queanbeyan.

In 1931 he joined the Aerial Medical Service (later Royal Flying Doctor Service) stationed at Cloncurry, Queensland, where in 1934, he married Lilius Witman. They moved to Broome, WA where he became Resident Medical Officer (1934/35). He then established that State's first Flying Doctor Service base at Port Hedland where he was in charge of that hospital as well as the one at Marble Bar.



Dr Allan Vickers and MacRobertson Miller Airlines (Western Australia) pilot Max Campbell at Port Hedland in 1935

Vickers was also appointed Quarantine Officer, Resident Magistrate, Protector of Aborigines, Mining Warden and Inspector of Fisheries.

During World War II, Lieutenant Colonel Vickers was CO (1939-1943) of the Australian General Hospital, Perth.

Recalled to Queensland in 1943, he established a second RFDS base at Charleville.

Among his many accolades, Vickers was appointed OBE in 1951 and CMG in 1955. He retired in 1966 and died in October 1967. His ashes were scattered over Cloncurry. He was survived by his wife and two sons.

Albury's other Flying Doctor was John Grieve Woods, born in Albury in 1900. He completed first year medicine at Melbourne University before enlisting in the AIF in March 1918. He arrived in England at War's end in November 1918, being discharged in Melbourne in March 1919. His father was Albury Physician, Alderman Cleaver Woods

Resuming his studies, he graduated (MB, BS, 1923), and married Lucie Edith Munro in 1925.

Woods practised at Corowa for three years, then at Urana. In June 1939, he entered the RFDS stationed at Broken Hill. He survived one crash and several forced landings.

Dentistry and Veterinarian were often part of his repertoire as was directing surgery by radio.

On resigning from RFDS in 1949, he practised as a GP at Malvern, Victoria, (1949-1963) then at Newcastle until retirement in 1975. He died in April 1980, survived by his wife, son (also a medical practitioner) and daughter.

Musically gifted, Woods liked nothing better than playing at country dances.