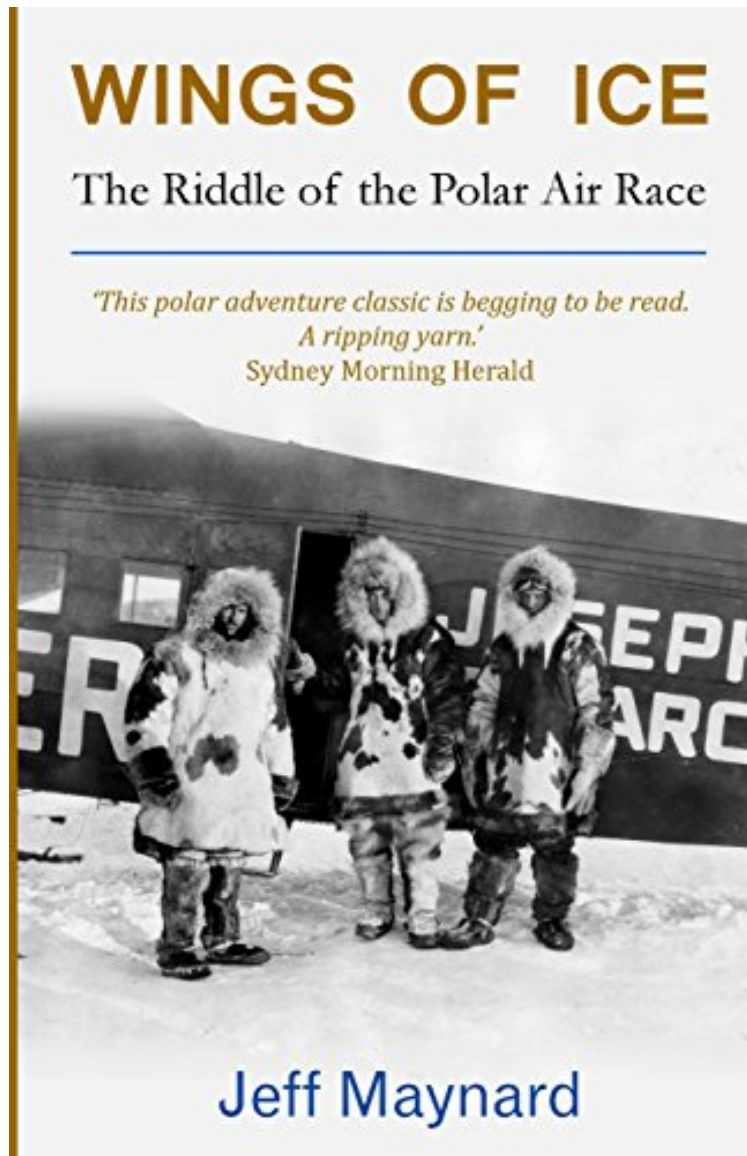


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Wings of Ice: The Riddle of the Polar Air Race

Jeff Maynard

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Jeff Maynard : Wings of Ice: The Riddle of the Polar Air Race before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Wings of Ice: The Riddle of the Polar Air Race:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The Ice Cheat exposed!By AJ GrantAn extraordinary true story about the last great polar race and the scandal that unfolded years later when the 'winner' was accused of fabricating his expedition.Whereas the competition to reach the North Pole in 1926 has been well documented (it didn't end well for Roald Amunsen), the battle for supremacy at the South Pole two years later, was much more intriguing. Two men,

Byrd and Wilkins, decided to start their search for glory from opposite sides of Antarctica. Byrd declared himself the winner and went down in history. It was only after his death, that doubts started to emerge. Wilkins meanwhile met a far worse fate - having all his records and charts locked away by his wife, thereby possibly denying him his rightful place in the polar history books. This is a rip-roaring, old-fashioned adventure story, told with a panache that fits well with the larger-than-life heroes of the time. Reading it, it's hard to understand why Hollywood hasn't fashioned a blockbuster out of the breathtaking bravery, stupidity and arrogance which defined the protagonists. Thoroughly recommended. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Ruben Agrelo Great book regarding polar explorations. Amundsen Wilkins and Byrd 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Men with an obsession By reader For anyone who has ever been involved in flying aeroplanes or organised expeditions, this book is a gripping. But it's also a fascinating read because the author follows the lives of the protagonists and lives through their tribulations with them. He does this very well, and it gives a great understanding of the sort of people they were, and the problems they had. The main players such as Wilkins, Byrd and Amundsen giants of men in their different ways were obsessives, and through his research and storytelling ability, Maynard paints their characters. The wealth of detail about the players and how the expeditions were organised is impressive, and he has clearly spent years researching his subjects and their often crackpot expeditions. And we should remember that these were the days before Film Stars, Football Stars and TV Celebs, and these men were the heroes of the day. Actually, there is such a lot of detail, that at times one feels rather overcome by it all, but the story would always pick up again soon, and one is carried away again by the derring-do of the exploits and the drama of endless set-backs. (And as is usual in the world of expeditions, our heroes spent most of their time having set-backs!) The action is particularly well described and for those of you who haven't been involved in small plane flying in odd areas of the world, I can tell you that the action is every bit as thrilling/haphazard/scary/dangerous/ as Maynard paints it. One of the most interesting aspects of the book for me is the light that it shines on how difficult it has always been to raise the money for expeditions, even a hundred years ago when discovery was all the rage. It was sad to see that most of the heroes ended their days heavily in debt, but the essence of the book is that these men were the sort who were obsessed with an idea and determined to see it through, no matter what the cost to themselves or those around them. Highly recommended for anyone interested in the subject.

'This polar adventure classic is begging to be read. A ripping yarn.' TIM BOWDEN - SYDNEY MORNING HERALD 'Reads like a fabulous adventure story.' BOOKTOPIA.COM 'Maynard presents the various controversies, along with in-depth documentation. A must-read.' CLIVE CUSSLER 'In a word: thrilling.' TOWNSVILLE BULLETIN 'It has the style of a murder mystery, culminating in the definitive solution to an 80-year-old mystery.' MANLY DAILY 'Gripping reading, turning this factual history into a fast-paced thriller.' GOOD READING MAGAZINE A story that's waited 90 years to be told. Wings of Ice reveals the fierce rivalry between two flawed polar heroes: Sir Hubert Wilkins and Admiral Richard Byrd. It tells the story of their pioneering flights in the 1920s, while laying out clues and challenging the reader to solve an eighty-year-old mystery. On 8 May 1926 three expeditions were locked in a race to fly to the North Pole. Hubert Wilkins was at Barrow, Alaska anxiously waiting for clear weather. Richard Byrd was at Kings Bay, Spitsbergen hurriedly building a runway for his plane. Roald Amundsen was also at Kings Bay repairing his airship. Shortly after midnight Byrd flew north. He returned 15 hours later and claimed he had reached the North Pole. A year later Byrd announced his intention to be the first to fly to the South Pole. Wilkins, who had just completed a record-breaking flight in the Arctic, was hired to beat him. Six months later they unloaded their planes on opposite sides of Antarctica and prepared for the last great race in polar history. Byrd won and became an American icon. During his life no one dared question his claims. It was only after his death in 1957 that he was accused of being the greatest fraud in polar history. Wilkins died in 1958 and disappeared from the history books after his jealous, secretive wife locked away his records and diaries. Factually based and methodically researched, Wings of Ice reveals what really happened on Byrd's polar flights and traces the lost records of Sir Hubert Wilkins. It brings to light an untold story of courage, daring and adventure, while exposing secrets and lies that will rewrite polar history.

About the Author Jeff Maynard is an author and documentary maker. His books include Niagaras Gold, Divers in Time and The Unseen Anzac. He is a former editor of Australian Motorcycle News and retains a keen interest in classic motorcycles. He is a member of the Explorers Club and on the board of the Historical Diving Society. Jeff lives in Melbourne, Australia, with his wife, Zoe, and their family.