

February 2008  
Newsletter No. 125

# AIRTOURER ASSOCIATION



Dedicated to the preservation and continued airworthiness of VICTA and AESL Airtourer Series Aircraft



# NEWSLETTER

<http://www.Airtourer.asn.au>

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Articles for inclusion in the Newsletter should be submitted direct to John O'Halloran at the contacts listed above. Please enclose payment for any advertisement. The next Newsletter will be published in May 2008. Contributions and or advertisements are to be with JOH by 15 April 2008.

Small advertisement (3 to 4 lines)                      \$20.00

Large advertisement    \$40.00

Cheque to be made payable to the Airtourer Association. Post with copy direct to the publisher.

### **Editorial**

The February Newsletter is always a little thin. Everyone is still getting over the Christmas / New Year season and articles are scarce. This issue was a greater challenge because of the proximity of the last, late issue. Thanks to Doug Stott for his historical piece on the original AGM at Griffith.

John Treble has put a lot of work into making this Fly-In a memorable event and we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible. John has been able to book us all into the one motel so please follow up with the registration forms etc. It is not necessary to cut up the Newsletter, just ensure the necessary information is included on any forms that are required. Alternatively, all the notifications, registration form and proxy / nominations will be on the web site. Just download complete and return.

Finally, and very importantly, please consider what you can do for your Association or the Co-op, in particular consider standing for a Committee / Directors position.

Safe Airtouring,

*John O'Halloran*

*Cover Photo:* As we approach the 30th Anniversary of the Association it is appropriate to publish a photo from the original AGM Fly-In. Here we see the Airtourer designer Henry Millicer with the offspring of his talents. Thanks to Historian Doug Stott for the photo.

### **Disclaimer**

The views expressed are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Publishers, the Airtourer Association or the Airtourer Co-Operative Ltd.

# THE AIRTOURER ASSOCIATION IS 30!

*Doug Stott*

In 1977, Sydney based Bob Page and Harry Couzin were co-owners of a 115hp Airtourer and they had been having trouble sourcing parts from NZ where Airtourer production had moved in 1967 after the closure of Victa Aviation at Bankstown NSW. In his frustration Bob penned a letter to the AOPA Magazine in May 1977 seeking interest in the formation of an owners club to help give some strength with the NZ supplier for what at that time was over 100 Airtourers located in Australia.

Little did they know that there were many other Airtourer owners having similar frustrations and the response to their call for help was significant. One of the first to respond to the letter was Airtourer owner Doug Stott (your scribe) who at that time was modifying his Airtourer from a 100hp to a 160hp and was also having similar problems with the supply of parts from NZ. Bob penned a further letter to AOPA in August 1977 advising the formation of an Association and that Henry Millicer had agreed to be Patron.

Over the following months many phone calls and letters to all the registered owners in Australia saw the first meeting of the Association held at the RACNSW in late 1977 where an interim committee was elected pending a formal first meeting. Harry Couzin was elected interim President and Doug Stott Interim Secretary. The hard yards followed and the first official Airtourer Convention and General meeting was held at Griffith NSW on the Australia Day long weekend (as it was back then) in

January 1978.

The first Convention saw 23 Airtourers and a RAAF CT4A attend.

Airtourer designer Dr H.K. (Henry) Millicer was kindly flown there courtesy of Kendal Airlines and enjoyed many flights with keen owners where he demonstrated his flying ability showing infinite faith in his design. Henry was formally appointed Patron at that first Convention, a position he held with pride until his passing in 1996. A classic photo was taken of Henry in front of a fleet of Airtourers at that first Convention and later graced the cover of the AOPA magazine in 1978. Long time Airtourer owner and enthusiast Bill Miller from Geelong was one of many that drove to Griffith with a collection of fibreglass spares in his car. The CT4A (A19-047) from 1FTS RAAF Point Cook flown by Instructors Simon Ford and Ky Hansen made it to the first Convention. This was to form the beginning of a sound relationship with the RAAF and the flying school at Point Cook for so long as the RAAF operated the type.

At that first convention, long time Airtourer (VH-FMA) owner from West Wyalong, Sonny Rankin was elected President, Doug Stott (VH-CTM) from Essendon, Secretary and Bill Kelly (VH-TWE) from Banockburn, Treasurer. Latrobe Valley Aero Club instructor Alex Hood (now with the ATSB) came up with the logo design and some of the legal eagles that are in every group wrote an initial constitution. Sonny, a farmer with a property named Yar-

randale to the west of Wyalong, instigated an annual fly-in to his property six months removed from the Annual Convention and usually held around September each year. This fly-in known then as the Yarrandale Fly-In continued until his passing in 1998. In subsequent years it became the Presidents Fly-in and has traditionally been held where the President lived, initially at Parkes NSW when the late Tony Matthews (VH-EQA) was President. Subsequently Hugh Knox (VH-MWR) from Sydney became President and because of the difficulties of holding a fly-in type gathering in the Sydney basin, the Presidents Fly-In then moved to a location of the President's choice. This tradition has been continued with subsequent Presidents which have seen an increased variety of locations visited by the members of the Association.

Membership of the Association has consistently represented over 90% of the Australian owners and many from overseas, mainly NZ and the UK. The UK members in fact have their own section and get together whenever the weather permits! At last count the world wide fleet was in the vicinity of 110 to 120, which is often difficult to count as there always seem to be a few off the register for various reasons and there are always rebuilds in progress. Many Association members are those that learnt to fly in or have an affinity for the little two-seater from their training day.

2008 will see the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Airtourer Association and the Annual Convention will return to Griffith (where it has been held every ten years since 1978) in March.

These day's owner groups such as the Airtourer Association are commonly known as "breed groups" and include the

Bonanza Society, the Mooney Association, Cessna 182 Association, and many others. The value of 'strength in numbers' is not only a means of speaking with a single voice on matters such as parts and airworthiness and exchanging views of operating techniques, including aerobatics and formation flying, but also a social base for interaction and the making of friends with a common interest. In fact many long term members and their families have formed sound friendships that go well beyond a common interest in a little aeroplane. Such relationships help make the Association as strong as it is today. On many occasions, new owners have attended Association gatherings, often with a conservative outlook, wondering what they are getting involved in, only to find a group of enthusiastic owners and pilots, new friends and the creation of a desire to return again and again.

Since those first days in 1978, the Airtourer Association has grown in strength and the value of the aircraft has as a result being well and truly maintained.

The most significant part of the history of the Association was the formation of the Airtourer Cooperative Ltd, a cooperative society formed in NSW to negotiate the purchase back from then owners New Zealand Aerospace Industries (previously Aero Engine Services Ltd (AESL)). With this task in mind a small group lead by Airtourer prototype test pilot Randy Green with Andrew Ronald (VH-MRJ/LVW) and Doug Stott, visited Hamilton NZ in 1978 in order to progress the possibility of a sale of what was to be known as the "Airtourer Project". A price was negotiated and with the groups return to Australia funds were raised by share holding in the cooperative. With initially 38 members, sufficient funds

were in place to make the deal. A short time later a further team lead by Sonny Rankin and others visited Hamilton and packed the “project’ into containers for return to Sydney.

Without a doubt the long term stalwart of the Association has been Alan Wood (VH-MUL/POB), who many would know from Victa days where he held the position of Service Manager. Alan has owned an Airtourer for many years and has enthusiastically flown to many parts of the country. His long established small workshop at Hoxton Park could always be identified by an Airtourer or two parked outside awaiting a service. Alan with the help of other volunteer members of the Cooperative has maintained the Project and the supply of spare parts since around 1980. He designed and obtained approval for a long range fuel tank (which is nice

to have on those Airtourers with the large engines) and was responsible for installing about 20 or so tanks, which for Alan was not always an easy task. Now in his 80’s Alan and wife Merle still fly to Association events. With the approaching demise of Hoxton Park arrangements are now well in hand to move the Project elsewhere and again a number of enthusiastic members have stepped forward to assist.

Like most other “Breed Groups” the Airtourer Association is something special to its members and to those owners that treasure their little aeroplane, safe flying and the friends resulting from a common interest.

Author Doug Stott has been an Airtourer owner since 1975. Doug now serves as the Association Historian and as Webmaster.



**President John Treble and Henry Millicer**

## **NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

### **Airtourer Co-Operative Ltd**

The Annual General Meeting of the Airtourer Co-Operative will be held at the Griffith Motor Inn at 0915 on 9th March 2008.

#### **Agenda:**

- Presentation of Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting.
- Business Arising from the Minutes.
- Chairman's Report
- Presentation of Accounts
- Determination of Annual Subscription
- Election for retiring Board Members
- Other Business

**Note:** Only active members may vote at an AGM.

#### **Heard at the Hangar Door.**

While touring and making preparations for the AGM, John Treble has been learning of the problems facing aeroclubs. With a worldwide shortage of pilots it's difficult for clubs such as Griffith to retain instructors and in particular a CFI. Someone ventured the opinion that "...if you could drive a truck you can get a job with a regional airline." As an example, the Association's own Monique Gillet, a Grade 1 instructor, has moved from long hours of IFR and twin instruction in Melbourne earning a pittance to the right seat of a Metro with Pearl Aviation in Darwin. Congratulations Monique! Jon is flying their Airtourer to Darwin, and the editor looks forward to an article on the journey.

Treasurer Colleen Murray has been off the internet for a long time with telephone problems. Colleen and Jack now advise they are back on-line at the new email address of: [cjmurray@ripper.com.au](mailto:cjmurray@ripper.com.au) .

# SPECIAL

## 30th CONVENTION SHIRTS



65% Polyester 35% Cotton Structure Weave  
Sizes: Small, Medium, Large, Extra Large  
Colour Blue, Short Sleeves, Button Down collar.

Details at: [www.bisleyworkwear.com.au](http://www.bisleyworkwear.com.au)

Go to Casual Wear Style BS1410

See size chart to check your size

Price \$45 each

Delivery at Griffith Convention

Orders ASAP direct to Doug Stott

email: [mail@dougstott.com](mailto:mail@dougstott.com)

Fax: 07-4057 9771

Tel: 07 4057 9770

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**AIRTOURER ASSOCIATION**  
**Annual Convention and Annual General Meeting**  
**Griffith, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2008**

Accommodation has been arranged with the Griffith Motor Inn, 96 Banna Avenue  
 Phone: 02 6962 1800 Email: griffithmotorinn@bigpond.com  
 Double Room \$90 per Night, Twin/Share \$95 per Night  
 The Motel will only hold the Group Booking until the 29<sup>th</sup> February  
 When booking Accommodation don't forget to mention Airtourer Association

As we are all accommodated in the same Motel, room service is available for breakfast if required, but for the numbers anticipated, it is the Motel management preference that we have breakfast in the Motel Dining Room.

I/We will be attending the Annual Convention at Griffith in March 2008

Captain's Name.....

Flight Attendant's Name.....

Arrival Day.....Departure day and ETD.....

I/We will / will not be going on the optional Saturday afternoon Coach tour.  
 \*(See Program, opposite page)

I/We will / will not be going on the secret Sunday Coach and Lunch tour.

For Accommodation Catering and Transport arrangements, it is a must for everybody to have their Accommodation confirmed and Registration Form (including your Deposit) with John Treble by 29th February. Make Cheque payable to the Airtourer Association then with your Registration form post to: -  
**John Treble, P.O. Box 57, Keilor, 3036**

A deposit of \$50 per person required. Number of people.....X \$50 = \$.....

As costs are still to be finalised, the approximate cost will be \$80 per person which includes Transport, Saturday Lunch, optional afternoon Coach Tour and Convention Dinner. Secret Sunday Coach and Lunch Tour before returning to the GTH aerodrome by 2.30pm for those that are leaving us today.

**Fuel available with Mobil swipe card.**



# PROGRAM

- Friday 7<sup>th</sup>** Arrivals  
6.30pm Dinner will be at Michelin Restaurant.
- Saturday 8<sup>th</sup>** 11.00am Make our way out to the Aerodrome to meet new arrivals.  
12.30pm Barbeque lunch at GTH Aero Club, followed in the afternoon with Flying activities to suit.  
\*There will be an approximate 2 hour optional Coach tour of local attractions.  
6.30pm Annual Convention Dinner and Presentation  
Night to be held in the Mirrool No.1 Room at the Ex-Servicemen's Club.
- Sunday 9<sup>th</sup>** 8.00am A breakfast Airtourer Association AGM to be in held in the Motel Dining room.  
9.15am Airtourer Co-Operative AGM.  
10.30am Secret Sunday Coach and Lunch Tour.  
2.30pm Returning to the aerodrome for those leaving us today with the others to continue the tour before returning to the Motel.  
6.30pm Dinner will be at La Scala Restaurant.

All of the Dinner venues are within walking distance of the Motel.

**Please remember to bring this Program with you.**

**Airtourer Association Nomination for Election to the Committee**

I nominate \_\_\_\_\_

for the position of: *(mark appropriate position)*

- President**
- Vice President**
- Secretary**
- Treasurer**
- Ordinary Members (three positions)**

Nominated by (Signature) \_\_\_\_\_

(Name) \_\_\_\_\_

Seconded by (Signature) \_\_\_\_\_

(Name) \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to being nominated for the above mentioned position.

Signature of candidate:

**For Sale**  
**Airtourer RSJ**

160 HP with Constant Speed Propeller.  
Lycoming O-320-D1A, Approx 615 HTR,  
Excellent Condition, Attractive Aircraft, Fresh 100 hrl by Allan Wood  
(View on Airtourer Web Site Photo Gallery)

**\$75,000 includes**

amount of spares: 2 wings, 2 fuselages, control surfaces and numerous  
other bits and pieces. As advertised previously in the  
Association Newsletter.

Bill King 02 99723569 Mob 0407 285 641

# NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

## Airtourer Association Inc.

The Annual General Meeting of the Airtourer Association will be held at the Griffith Motor Inn, at 0800 on 9th March 2008.

### Agenda:

- Presentation of Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting (Published in the May 2007 Newsletter.)
- Business Arising from the Minutes.
- Presentation of Reports
- Election of Office Bearers
- Other Business

### APPOINTMENT OF PROXY - AIRTOURER ASSOCIATION

(Use this form or separate sheet with similar wording)

I \_\_\_\_\_ of  
(full name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(address)

being a member of the Airtourer Association hereby appoint:

\_\_\_\_\_ of  
(full name of proxy)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(address)

being a member of the Association, as my proxy to vote for me on my behalf at the Annual General Meeting of the Association to be held on the 9th March 2008 at the Griffith Motor Inn and any adjournment of that meeting.

Signature of member appointing proxy

Date:

**NOTE:** A proxy vote may not be given to a person who is not a member of the Association.

## Calendar of Events

### Annual General Meeting Fly In – 2008

The 30th Annual General Meeting Fly In of the Airtourer Association will be held at Griffith on the 7th, 8th, and 9th March.  
Details pages 8 & 9 of this Newsletter

### President's Fly-In - 2008

The President's Fly-In will be held at Yarrawonga on the 19th, 20th and 21st of September 2008. Details in a later Newsletter.

### Errata

Computers are wonderful machines that make many administrative tasks, such as managing the membership list, easy. Sometimes they even anticipate what you wish to type based on what you have typed previously. Such was the case when I entered the details of new RQH syndicate member, **John Hilton**. We already have a John Hilton-Wood in the Association and hence the computer 'helped' me out by expanding the name to Hilton-Wood. My apologies John and thanks for the nice email pointing out my mistake.

## WANTED

Do you have some favourite pictures from past Association events?

If so and they are digital or you can scan them, they are needed for the Convention please.

Please email any pictures preferably in JPG format to Doug Stott - [mail@dougstott.com](mailto:mail@dougstott.com)