

August 2006  
Newsletter No. 119

# AIRTOURER ASSOCIATION



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



# NEWSLETTER

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

<b>Editor,</b> John O'Halloran	Mobile:	0411 968901
P.O. Box 778,	FAX:	(07) 54425180
Tewantin QLD 4565	Phone:	(07) 54476604
	Email	John_OH@Bigpond.com

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 November 2006. Contributions and or advertisements are to be with JOH by 15 October 2006.

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**

Once again the Newsletter has suffered from inflation. After the last one at 36 pages I intended to keep this one down to 12 or at the most 16, partly for cost but also to make it easier for myself. However, 12 crept up to 16 and then 20! Any increase must be in multiples of 4 so it's with some trepidation that I add pages for fear of not being able to fill them all. Thanks to the likes of the 'ZOE group, Stan Tilley and the Sheriff there always seems to be something to fill the space. Even though the last Newsletter was the largest I've published there was still news from the Echuca AGM that didn't make it in and has been carried over to this issue. Thanks Beryl.

Most people are reluctant to commit pen to paper for an article. However, I know there is a lot of Airtouring going on and of interest to the membership. A

*Continued on page 3*

*Cover Photo:* Airtourer 115, 'ZOE' flown by Barry Edmondson and John Smithson at the Kirkbride Airshow. See page 10 for the report from Bill Beavis.

### **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.



# Letter to the Editor

Dear JOH & Jan,

Could you please include a thank you in the next Newsletter to all the Airtourers who sent flowers, cards or telephoned after Tony passed away. The expressions of sympathy were conveyed to us in so many ways. We appreciate everyone's thoughtfulness and thank you most sincerely.

Lots of love and see you at Narromine.

*Lizzie*

*Continued from page 2*

full article is not required, just a paragraph and a photo or two. Even a quick email and leave it up to me to edit into a short article.

We often joke about the weather in the UK or for that matter in Melbourne. However, the Victorians seem to be particularly active with their Sunday lunches and Christmas Fly-Ins. Similarly, the 'ZOE group from Newcastle in the UK have been touring again. Many thanks for the article from Bill Beavis, it's good to hear from the UK members.

Association membership subscriptions are due and most members have renewed. However it's easy to overlook, (see last page), so if we haven't received your renewal a reminder will be included with this issue.

Safe Airtouring and we'll see you at Narromine,

*John O'Halloran*

# President's Pen



*Hi Everybody,*

We've just completed the annual on XVV and are ready to head for Narromine. In response to numerous requests we have scheduled for some flying on Saturday afternoon, details will be in your program on arrival. The mini bus will be available for those who wish to explore further afield.

Our weekend is centered around Narromine Aero Club who will be our hosts for dinner, and for arrivals on Friday and Saturday.

Hope to see you soon.

Good weather and good flying.

*Bill*

# Finale of Echuca AGM

*Beryl Marshall*

Deep Creek Marina for lunch was enjoyed and time allowed to wander around and dream of which houseboat would be the one to own. It's not what you know, but who you know - Beryl and Lindsay were spotted by a local, Beresford Ralph, who happened to be cleaning a houseboat with his wife, Jenny. The not so shy member of the Marshall's asked the Ralph's if the Airtourer visitors could go on board to inspect and further dream and were made most welcome. Bob Peak showed his appreciation by offering Beresford a joy flight, (perhaps Beresford had moaned to him that Lindsay had taken his mother, Joy, flying earlier this year), which was gratefully accepted. "Beryl, is there room on the

bus for Beresford to travel back to Echuca with us?" "Yes, providing we can call in to see the Ralph's "Chiplands" B&B" replied Beryl. (Now that's bribery!) "Chiplands" was a lovely retreat with the guest rooms on the 1st floor overlooking the salt water swimming pool and river. Back to Echuca and later 29 members met in the Bistro of the Echuca Workers and Services Club for meals of our choice, lots more chatter, and some farewells. Monday morning saw the departure of the majority, but we still had more than a quorum, 16 in fact, to meet for lunch at Beechworth Bakery overlooking the Campaspe River. Then it really was good-bye and thanks to everyone for coming and making it a great week-end."



*Jan O'Halloran, Lindsay and Beryl Marshall aboard one of the houseboats at the Deep Creek Marina.*

## Echuca Attendees:

Hector & Wendy Blemings,	YVV	Frank & Jean Murray	CKE
Phillip Cooper & Sylva	MOI	Jack & Colleen Murray	Car
Ian Donovan	MKL	John & Jan O'Halloran	COI
Doug Dow	BQK	Scott & Nicole Patterson	ECI
Frank & Gwen Fankhauser	Car	Bob & Pat Peak	EQG
Mike Fisher & Dot Ross	BNV	Jon Pels & Monique Gillett	LVU
Lee & Rhonda Gordon- Brown	JVV	George Penfound	MWR
Barry Gray	Car,	Bill Pennell & Lorraine Howsen	Car
(Great that Barry made the effort from WA).		Fenton Phillips	Car
Des & Val Heffernan, and		Ian & Lyn Poyitt	Cessna XPR
Bryan McWhae,	MVR	Margot Rayner & Ben Salmon	CTN
Mel Hupfeld, &		Roy & Judy Riddel	Car
Frank D'Alterio,	MTP	Andrew Ronald &	
Niel & Kathy Jensen	CND	Bernice Martin	LVW
Pat & Cath Kelly	Car	John Sheehan	KHP
Kirkup, Warren & Betty	Car	Doug Stott & Sue White	Car
Stuart Krichauff	MVI	Stan & Bonnie Tilley	Car
Gerry Lawson	MTI	John & Doreen Treble	CRK
Lindsay & Beryl Marshall	MRF & Car	Murray & Andrea Wallace	CTK
Liz Matthews	Car	David Wearne	WAU
Bill Miller	Car	Alan & Merle Wood	POB
Andy & Jane Morris	FVV	Graham Wood &	
		Peter Bons	Bonanza
			MGM

### Committee News

Your Committee is currently considering the next AGM. Regarding the date, some of the considerations are the Avalon Airshow, the Great Australian Air Race and Easter. If you have any particular desires or limitations please let the Committee know.

We are always looking for venue options. We need a city that can accommodate over 100 visitors without spreading them over a large area, an airfield not too far from town with fuel and preferably an active Aeroclub. Since not all are totally committed to a full weekend of Airtouring (I can't understand why) there should be other activities and points of interest. Suggestions welcome.

CASA is gradually accepting the concept of self administration for GA. The Committee reported at the last AGM of a request by Leisure Flight Australia, a self administration lobby group, to join them. There has been much discussion in the aviation press and the Committee is watching with interest without making any commitment as yet.

# Co-Op News

## Jigs and Tooling

*Lee Gordon-Brown*

We again control many tooling and jiggging treasures. Most obviously haven't been used for decades, and many have arcane and mysterious functions.

Each jig appears to have been given a tool number, and also a part number by Victa. We have about 2,200 jigs with both tool and part numbers for which we know the purpose. There are another few hundred with only a tool number, and a further few hundred items with no identification. Even the wise and oft-bearded LAMEs have been reluctant to suggest a meaning for many items.

An example of a very important looking jig with only a tool number follows. We have no idea what it does yet, or even if it has anything to do with Airtourers. Further progress will be made on the orphan lost items by referring to the drawings which usually include details of the jigs.



The later vintage items from AESL for the T6 for example, are not well identified. Sadly this is consistent with the Parts Manual which best describes Airtourer 100 and 115 parts. The Parts Manual

itself only tells a portion of the story – for example the elevator is shown as only one item with a few attaching parts, but a new elevator requires fabrication and assembly of a couple of dozen items. The most untidy tooling is associated with the Airtourer T3 which possibly reflects the small number made, and AESL's (lack of?) experience with production and design management.

All of the jiggging has been listed on a database, cross-referenced to a plane part number, and stored under cover. The only exception is the huge wing jig which will soon move under cover when I have reorganised a little more space. The database listing has been distributed to interested people. The tooling has been racked in a fairly sensible order so that I've been able to locate an item within mere minutes of being asked.



There are interesting historical trends in the tool number sequences where a bigger number indicates a later date. The

database listing suggests the order in which tooling was made. Wing jiggging was made initially, and the fuselage tooling didn't start until tool number 329. The T6 (my favourite) tooling started after tool number 2000.

There is a large number, and many kilograms of tooling to make 100HP mufflers. I understand there is no shortage of those in stock at Hoxton Park. Similarly, I doubt that we'll get much use from the tooling for 100HP spinners or backing plates.

There are a couple of items that really surprised me because commercial equivalents are available, at least now. These include jigs for cross-drilling bolts. A similar reinvention of the wheel, is a jig to make the navigation light socket.

Highlights include tooling to make all parts for; windscreens and canopies, including the canopy lock, most fuselage and empennage parts including skins,

and most wing parts excepting skins. We also have lots of jigs for rudder pedals, instrument panels, seat frames, coamings, glove box, and the waggler.

Control surfaces have been mentioned as a particular shortage. This is a current project. We've started discussions with Wangaratta towards new skins. Press templates and folders are available to make new skins for elevator, flap, aileron and rudder. Currently we're waiting for me to locate the drawings which Wangaratta needs for material specifications. Let Alan know if you're interested in new flap skins.

Most of the recovered tooling has been fairly recently de-rusted and painted. Some items appear to have been modified for Aircruiser, or dual use. I've been concentrating on the jigging for a few parts for VH-DAM. Current projects include sorting out and using the tooling for the front floor pan, firewall nose leg box and







*Above: Floor Pan jig. Opposite page: Some of the larger jigs.*

overwing floor pans.

DAM has a wing with one side about two metres shorter that will need substantial repair. I'm working on levelling and checking the wing spar setup jig, and the wing skinning jig. It looks like not much of the old wing will be reused and hence DAM should get the first "new build" jugged wing in about 30 years. The spar jig allows the front and rear spars with ribs to be set up with correct dihedral and washout.

We've established friendly contact with AirAg Services who purchased the Aircruiser type certificate. I expect to meet David Pyett when he next visits Sale to collect his property. I will be as encouraging and helpful as possible because some Aircruiser items are common.

## **Co-Op Membership**

The membership situation is slowly being resolved. Slowly because the Directors are all voluntary and have to work around other commitments. (like the Newsletter). Some shareholders who requested refunds have been paid and more are in the mail. We've lost contact with the following shareholders, if you know their whereabouts please let John O'Halloran know.

W. Antel  
 C. Diehm  
 P. Golsby  
 G. Gosman  
 H. Gray  
 Earl Johnson  
 K. Noyes  
 V. Robinson  
 S. Siede

# News From Newcastle (Tees-side)

*Bill Beavis*

After Barry's report "Baffled" in the February Newsletter I'm happy to report that 'ZOE's flying well. The engine change that took place last summer is now well sorted out and the remanufactured O-235's going very well. Unfortunately the old Narco VHF has finally succumbed to old age and has been replaced by a modern MX-11, which is crystal-clear. However, during it's installation the transponder seems to have "been disturbed". It too may have to be replaced as in Europe in a year or two we may be forced to install Mode S to retain access to certain airspace. Airspace isn't a great deal of a problem locally, in spite of Newcastle extending its Class D territory in July; they're just as welcoming as before...

Last Sunday I did a 4-leg day to meet up with Barry and John in 'ZOE at the annual Kirkbride Fly-In. We got an easy "direct through the overhead" on the way back to Tees-side, (now afflicted by its commercially-orientated renaming "Durham Tees Valley". In return, I was able to report a small fire on the edge of a sports field about 15nm to the south. GPS position was passed to the fire service in County Durham....

The trip was Tees to Eshott to pick up Ivan Brown, (the policeman who turned up with his colleague on duty when we took John O'Halloran out for the curry in Newcastle some years ago), and his young son Luke. The three of us

then flew across to Kirkbride, and arrived in the overhead to join the circuit just in time to see 'ZOE going around as a result of the flexwing microlight being down to walking-pace after landing... We joined crosswind behind 'ZOE, followed Barry and John round the circuit, and although they got in OK, we ended up orbiting on finals ourselves. Another of those flexwings turned up at low level and decided to sneak in between us.... However, all good fun, and we ended up being marshalled round to the northern apron and parked next to 'ZOE. The afternoon airshow, included a beat up by the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight's Spitfire and Hurricane. They were followed 10 minutes later by a C47 Dakota, in fact their support ship, but nonetheless flying in the guise of one of the hundreds of such craft which deposited the allied paratroopers into Normandy on D-Day and onwards. The Red Arrows had originally been promised, but ducked out with about 2 weeks warning, claiming a change of airshow schedule. To be fair, they had closed the Sunderland Airshow on Saturday afternoon, then opened the Sunday proceedings at lunchtime, before heading off to the Lake District show at Windermere, then down to do another performance at Blackpool before returning to Scampton, where they roost...

Three of us had an excellent weekend away in mid July: it could have been four

or five, but ZOE's transponder had just shown sick. Myself, John Smithson and David Dallow commenced the journey by being ferried down to Teesside by Marian the crew taxi-driver. We did EGNV-LFAC Calais in 2hrs 25mins, paid £7 landing, refuelled, lunched, briefed, then LFAC-EDDR Saarbruecken in 2hrs 5 mins. After another £6 landing fee, we refuelled, got coffee, briefed, and took off again. Destination EDMT, Tannheim was reached after about 90mins, overflying KRRH, LBU (Karlsruhe and Ludwigsburg to the locals), and round the north-east corner of the Stuttgart CTA, then south over Ulm. Joining the Tannheim circuit, our first R/T call was made as briefed when on finals, with reg. and type. We landed about 50 minutes before sunset and parked after 10 mins. taxiing along the hundreds already there for the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary "Tannkosh" Fly-In.

The weather had been CAVOK

almost all the way, with some layers of SC between those VOR's mentioned above; the headwinds never amounted to more than about 10kt. After that welcome 10 minutes walk along the flightline, we found that Control were packing up for the night, and securing their laptops used for registering; well we just HAD to go back the next day....! A Saab shuttle-taxi was found to get us into the main local town Memmingen and our hotel where we checked in just after 10pm. Across the road was another hotel which fortunately served meals until 11pm.

After breakfast on Saturday, we strolled around a busy pedestrianised town centre, noting many original features... and the excellent produce on sale in the Town Hall Square's fruit and vegetable market. However, we knew that to buy a couple of kilos of cherries would have suffered on the return flight (so would the Diamond's seat covers!!!) so we all wisely desisted.

Out at the airfield we noted still more



*ZOE, in the background at Kirkbride airfield with the diesel powered Diamond Star owned by Bill Beavis. Part of the ZOE team, L to R, Ivan Brown, his son Luke, Barry Edmondson and John Smithson.*

aircraft arriving more or less continuously. I split and went off to prepare the Diamond for its ferry flight across town. Last year, I sat in a queue of taxiing aircraft for about 30 minutes before my turn came to fly so this year I arranged to lobb across Memmingen to the former Luftwaffe base at EDJA, Memmingen- Allgaeu. Both the landing fee and overnight parking in the former Starfighter hangar was at a very attractive price. I could also get more Jet A-1 there, unlike Tannheim. Both fields are about 2000ft amsl, so takeoff and climb performance was also a primary consideration. If a westerly wind had prevailed we would have had to depart Tannheim heading for a wooded ridge barely one mile to the west. The 2500m hard runway at EDJA clinched it; no queues on the Sunday morning and we were away without any bother.

Downwind at circuit height an old BA friend of mine from Stuttgart called his presence on freq.! He and his wife had just landed from STR in a Cessna twin (whose owner wanted to avoid the grassy bumps of Tannheim for the sake of his landing gear). Needless to say, the circuit height proved suitable for a quick return landing and a 20 minute chat! Once definitively en route, we went back to EDDR via the south and west sides of Stuttgart this time, then back home via Calais, arriving at base at the appointed hour of 7pm. We even had time for another culinary delight of Plat du Jour for about £4.50 on the last fuelling stop.

Over the 1385nm covered, the Diesel drank consistently just 20 litres per hour, and cruising at FL55 out, FL65 back, returned just on 120kt TAS at 75% power. After computing the fuel uplifts, this represented 34 statute miles per (Imp.)

gallon, or about 11.7 km. per litre, which most modest four seater cars can only manage if you're gentle with the gas pedal, and certainly not at 135mph (215Km/hr)!!

As for "Tannkosh" itself? Absolutely wonderful!! About four rows of aircraft the full length of the 1000m field, plus the overflow fields such as the one we parked in. Standing in the queue for more beer on Saturday afternoon during the flying display, I overheard two local ground crew conversing; by then they knew they had over a thousand aircraft attending. The website has since declared a final figure of 1300. Aircraft, not humans! The shows by Extras, a Pilatus P3 formation and the Sukhoi 26 towing an aerobatic glider, (the tug doing fast rolls around the axis of the towrope during the tow), were exhilarating. The B-25 Mitchell and Percival Pembroke put in spirited flypasts, as did the T-6 and F-8 Corsair. Could I get my hands on an ex Armee de l'Air French or Belgian Mirage III (maybe via e-bay...), to entice you there?

I know some of you have fitted MT propellers. I hope you'll have by now noticed an improvement in fuel efficiency. I haven't got a bad word against them, except being prudent how much I avoid any significant power over small loose stones, and avoiding altogether the airfields I know to have a stony or gravel surfaced runway...

We're all well and enjoying the summer; Marian and I spent 11 days in Switzerland in June and really enjoyed it... except that the temperatures just went up and up, exceeding 31degrees by the time we left.... We were a bit performance limited for the mountainside walks around Interlaken...

All the best for the President's Fly-In at Narromine.



Call Customs and help protect Australia's borders

Another case of the Government missing the point! Given the load in the ute' the Airtourer was clearly overloaded and since it is at Atherton with density altitude considerations the 115 would never have got airborne.

Actually; an extract of a Customs ad using Rick and Deb Evan's IOF. Photo was taken at Atherton airfield.

Speaking of Customs, the following was seen on the internet:

"I was returning to the US with my niece. The week before, a friend had flown the plane into a local grass strip and there was still mud and residue on the fuselage. As customs agents inspected the plane, one officer asked about the dirt and commented, "I gotta say, that's the first time I've seen grass on the outside of the airplane." Naturally dense (and focused on the inspection) I puzzled as my teenage niece began to choke down laughter.

...She had to explain it to me as we taxied away."

Speaking of Atherton.....photo below is Sunday lunch Atherton style. BBQ lunch in front of Doug Stott & Sue White's new hangar. L to R, Sue White, Kathryn, Jan & Mitchell O'Halloran. Doug is doing man's work around the corner at the BBQ.



# Dilemma!

*Stan Tilley.*

The problem was that in November, having just returned from an extended flying trip across the nation, there was a lot of work waiting for me at home. Foolishly I decided to fix some loose roofing iron on one of the rental properties as it was a danger to life and property. It was a howling gale and very high temperatures and I had neglected to stop for lunch or drinks.

The roof was fixed but at a cost. I had persisted although feeling very uncomfortable – so was more than pleased to be finished – but in fact something had not ‘finished’ with me.

During that night I awoke to find the world spinning. Being used to the sight of the world going around I was able to identify a clockwise ‘spin to the right’ but I was not happy as this spin was not one that I had initiated.

Needless to say Bonnie was a bit concerned so called the doctor. What doctor? Well being lucky enough to enjoy excellent health I did not have a GP. The only doctor we knew was the DAME (Designated Aviation Medical Examiner) **BIG MISTAKE.**

A few tablets stopped the spinning quick-smart but I was left with double vision. Now that might be fine when you are enjoying the local sights on the beach but hell if you are a passenger in a moving vehicle.

So it was **NO DRIVING** and **NO FLYING** for a few weeks whilst the vision returned to normal which it did.

However they were not idle weeks. What caused the double vision? It could not be blamed on too many reds so the

DAME decided to find out. He threw the ‘book’ at me. CAT scans, blood tests, echo cardiogram, blood pressure, optician, ophthalmologist and even a neurologist. The good news was that no problems could be found.

At a ‘new’ medical test on the 4<sup>th</sup> April, I was declared 100% fit but the bad news was about to begin. The examining doctor ‘forgot’, despite several reminders, to send the report to CASA for over 11 weeks.

The bad news continued. When CASA eventually received the report they decided I should only fly with a safety pilot for 12 months from November. The restriction would then be reviewed after another report from the neurologist.

In the meantime I had renewed my Command Instrument rating, completed an endorsement on the Cirrus S20, enjoyed a few aerobatics and with another pilot in MTL I had flown to Queensland and competed in the Australian Light Aircraft Championships. Our Aero Club is now teaching RAA flying on a new ultralight Jabiru so I have also completed my AUF/RAA flying certificate.

The situation was now ridiculous. If I flew MTL or any VH registered aircraft I needed a safety pilot. (extremely difficult if you have a two seat aircraft and a non pilot wife who wishes to come with you).

However I can fly a Recreational aircraft (ultralight) without a safety pilot. The Recreational aircraft may be an open fabric covered model with a cruise speed of 60 knots but it can also be a 120HP sophisticated aeroplane with retractable

wheels, constant speed propeller and a cruise of 130knots; an aeroplane which is far more complicated and faster than many VH registered aircraft.

We have several commitments over the next few months which require us to be at various country centres well away from the regular public airline routes, so a browse through the Internet was made to check out the possibilities of a temporary replacement aircraft.

There are quite a few. MTL was cranked up and with my friend Don Prairie in the left hand seat we set off for Victoria to check out a couple. Don was the pilot in command but then he wasn't IFR and I had submitted an IFR plan. Why IFR? Well as Don says "It is the only way to go" and besides it costs me a fortune to keep the GPS data card and all the approach plates and maps and things up to date, so I sat and as a passenger let Don do all the work.

It was at times serious IFR, even a touch of ice. Don did extremely well and the bonus is that the 'powers that be' give you lovely clearances to fly direct tracks over Melbourne or whatever you want. Result three and a half hours later we were on the ground at Lethbridge.

Lethbridge is a delightful little grass strip and the home of the Pioneer series of aircraft. The Pioneer is made in Italy and is a mixture of wood, fabric and composite construction. It can be purchased as a factory built or in a series of kits which vary as to the amount of local input required.

The 200 is a fixed gear two seater with a Rotax 912 100 HP engine and a constant speed prop. It flies very well and cruises at 118 knots on about 17 litres of fuel per hour. Both Don and I had a fly. A very pleasant well balanced little aeroplane with conventional joy stick, electric trim,

electric flaps, electric constant speed unit and docile stalling characteristics.

The 300s on show were privately owned. The differences were that they had retractable undercarriage, were powered by Jabiru six cylinder engines, with fixed pitch propellers and had a different wing section and rudder. The 300's cruised at 130 knots and used about 22 litres of fuel. Don was impressed. With the different wing and a sliding canopy the 300 is a beautiful sleek little aeroplane with lines very similar to the wonderful Falco, especially the all red model that Don flew. Recently a 300 flew from New Zealand and back. On the return trip there was no fuel at Norfolk Island so it flew from Lord Howe direct to NZ.

Again we were lucky. Not only did the owners of the 300's let us fly them but one gave us accommodation for the night and 'a good time was had by all'.

Again the Pioneer was a delight to fly. Fast manoeuvrable and economical. The wind unfortunately was blowing at about 40 knots and it was noticeable that the lightweight aircraft were bounced around quite easily which, coupled with a surprisingly low VNE, required constant monitoring. Certainly 'food-for-thought'. The one major and it is a major disadvantage was the cost. The aircraft are worth well over the \$120,000. There was also an 'as new' Sportstar available for sale there but with only 65 litres of fuel and a usage of around 20 per hour it was a "No No".

We had another type of recreational aircraft to look at, at Penfield just 40 miles away so we launched out into horrific winds. Immediately it was noticeable that the Victa was much more stable in the extremely gusty wind. It bounced and bucked but took the conditions in its stride. There was a bit of a delay at Bacchus Marsh



to refuel and then to Penfield to look at a Texan, again by courtesy of a local owner.

The Texan is a fully composite aeroplane with a Rotax engine, also from Italy. It was beautifully finished but I think that both Don and I were disappointed. It did not quite seem to live up to the pictures I had seen and when told that the cruise speed was 105 knots, and with undercarriage legs that had a 300 hour life, we quickly lost interest. With the wind now gusting to probably 35 to 40 knots on the ground, it was hopeless to try and fly the Texan.

Not so the Victa though. We had to get home. We removed the chocks that had prevented MTL from blowing away and once more Don launched us IFR into the blue. Immediately Melbourne Radar took over and after getting us to 3000 over the field, climbed us to 7000 and vectored us around the Tullarmarine traffic.

It soon smoothed out and before long we were covering the ground at around 160 to 170 knots. At one stage the ground speed was up to 193 knots which made us feel great as the airliners were being asked to reduce speed to 220 knots because of the conditions.

But MTL loved it and in only two hours and twenty minutes had us on the ground at Sandfly. We delayed our descent as long as possible as there was not a bump at 7000, but the circuit area at Leewave certainly made up for it.

The Victa handled the conditions superbly but because the weight is about 150 KG over the recreational aircraft limit I am not supposed to fly without a safety pilot. Would the Pioneer been able to do that trip? The answer is definitely "Yes", but would it have been as safe and comfortable?

Dilemma is right.

### Heard at the Hangar Door.

**Bill Miller** is a bit of a ladies man. He rang the editor recently and hearing a female voice assumed it was the editor's wife and spoke to her in a very "familiar" manner. Eventually the editor's *mother* pointed out he wasn't speaking to Jan!

Age is catching up with all of us, not just our aeroplanes. **Jan O'Halloran** celebrated her 50th in April and **Andy Morris** his 60th recently. Congratulations, but you've got some distance to go to catch Alan Wood who turned 84 earlier this month.

**Alan and Merle** have just returned from one of their extended tours, this time from Hoxton to Cairns and back by a circuitous route. Along the way POB was attacked by cattle overnight causing damage, which although not affecting airworthiness, did require about 30 man-hours to rectify. In Charters Towers they caught up with the family of son Graham's partner, Lorraine. By coincidence, there was a family gathering and quite a crowd. In the middle of it all Graham and Lorraine ring to pass on the news that they had just got married! Congratulations to **Graham and Lorraine** from all the Airtourers.

We recently heard from **Chris Johnson** in New Zealand. Chris has just repurchased an Airtourer rebuild project he sold some time ago. The wing has been completely rebuilt and the fuselage is in very tidy order. Currently they are working on the flight controls.



## THE SHERIFF OF LOCKINGTON INTERROGATES.....

### Mike Fisher

(Interrogated, on February 5 2006, at the Sheriff's cells, Lockington, with initial interruptions from Dot Ross until Lindsay took her away.)



*When did you become involved with the Airtourer Association?* Before I bought an Airtourer, I phoned John Treble to make enquiries about Airtourers. At that time I couldn't fly and didn't have a licence, had looked at a beagle Pup, and eventually bought an Airtourer in WA which was CND with a total 4 hours flying experience. After that I joined the Association.

*Your occupation?, a career history please.* Started out in general aviation as an apprentice, that was the time when GA was actually buoyant, nothing like it is today, new models every year, people lining up to learn to fly, then we got the Whitlam Government. I always saw my future being in the airlines, and eventually got an engineering job with TAA. I did different things there, gave up the spanners moving into Engineering Auditing, then I got a stint as Tech Rep USA, at the Boeing factory in Washington State. Came back to Oz and saw how Ansett was seemingly going ahead so I jumped ship and went to their Technical Training department, where I specialised in their infamous BAe 146. That was for engineering and pilot training. That really got me interested in the pilot training aspects. From that I was plucked from Ansett to go to Kendall Airlines Operational Department to set up a pilot training centre which was a requirement of them setting up the CRJ regional jet operation. That went fabulously well for two years and then we got the New Zealanders! Following the Ansett collapse I retreated to my hangar for a while, but now I'm living a totally new life, as a small business man, operating a Laundry and Laundromat in Kyneton.

*Where were you born?* Warragul, where my grandfather was a pioneering farmer, clearing his land in the 1920's with an axe and horse and drays.

*Where have you, and do you live?* First 5 years at Drouin, then my parents decided job opportunities were available in the city for my brother and I so we moved to South Oakleigh, (there is an irony in that, we all eventually left the city and returned to the country). Gisborne for 25 years, where I was an airport commuter. One of the upsides of the collapse was that I was able to move to Kyneton, where the hangar is, and now I'm a "townie", I purchased a delightfully neglected Victorian era house, the renovation of which is a therapy project. From that house I can conveniently walk to work at the laundry. I'm actually now part of the town, not this person that drives up the street and disappears. Out of a disaster comes something better, because I chose to make it better.

*Aircraft Types & Registrations?* CND a 150 fixed pitch was the "first" Airtourer, which

I bought in 1984 in the West Australia as a flying wreck, which I bought back to a presentable condition. That wonderful little aeroplane taught me to fly and has taken me, and others, all over the country. (CND is now owned by Niels and Kath Jensen, and is still at Kyneton.) Then there is BNV. BNV was a project and a challenge I wanted to do when I was working at Ansett because they didn't want you to think, and also to keep my engineering skills alive. After 10 years a trailer load of wreckage is flying. I also established an approved maintenance workshop as part of the process of bringing BNV back to life. *What year did you gain your pilot's licence?* 1984.

*Where did you learn to fly?* At Kyneton, but never stop learning.

*Total hours flown?* Approximately 1300.

*What was the last trip flown in BNV?* The Toowoomba President's fly-in was the last. In CND I did some exceptionally interesting outback trips and reported on them in

previous newsletters. One of the BNV design briefs was to make a better long range travel aeroplane, but up to now it had not gone anywhere, because of the pressures of business etc., so flying to Toowoomba was fantastic because I'd forgotten how much I loved doing long range travel, so I really enjoyed the trip. I was accompanied by David Crotty.

*What was one of the most memorable flights you have done?* On one of the outback trips, accompanied by Wendy and Hector Blemings in their CT4, we flew from Darwin to Kunnunurra and then across the Tanami Desert to Tennant Creek. This was one of the most visually spectacular and changing vistas that anyone could experience from the air.

*Most humorous moment in flight?* It wasn't at the time. But I was flying solo from Wagga Wagga back to Kyneton and feeling hungry I knew I had an apple in my cargo space, so I reach behind me to get the apple, unlike most Airtourers I have a cargo net and with my arm behind my back reaching in through a cargo net I couldn't get my hand back! So the answer is, in history there has been very few one arm solo Airtourer pilots! Don't panic. Eventually I untangled myself and ate the apple. (*Ed. The apple has caused a lot of strife since the beginning of time - recall the garden of Eden!*)

*Other interests?* Fixing up old things, we've already mentioned old houses and aero-



planes. Old cars, I've got a 1976 Monaro LE, and I recently swapped a 1940 Buick Straight 8 for a Mercedes 300. Good music and reading. Reading subjects like history, biography, politics and aviation subjects; there is nothing like sitting down immersing yourself in a book, being transported to another place and then looking up and thinking, "is it that time already!"

*Favourite Food?* Indian and Thai.

*Favourite Drink?* Red wine.

*Favourite Music?* Classical, but also some of the more modern composers like Grainger, Raval, Gershwin, Phillip Glass, and other minimalists.

*Do you, or did you, have a nickname, and what is it?* No.

*If you were Prime Minister of Australia for ONE day, what would you change for the betterment of Australia?* I'd convert Parliament House into Australia's central depository for high level nuclear and biological waste.

*What is/was your greatest extravagance?* The aeroplane.

*If you had a spare million dollars what would you do with it?* I wish I did, and terribly boring, but I'd probably invest it. But to answer your question, I'd buy a Yak 52, and with the change I'd be able to refuel it.

*What is the best thing you have ever done?* Bought an Airtourer and joined the Airtourer Association. I'll qualify that. Because on the aeroplane side it's allowed me to do things, go places, to meet people, to just expand my horizons, whether it's a short aerobatic flight, or a month long trip around Australia. Flying is something unique, like listening to good music, it's only while doing it you enjoy it, and when the performance is over and the wheels touch the ground it can only be enjoyed by being repeated. Alan Marshall wrote a book, "These Are My People"; I can say the same about my many friends in the Airtourer Association. You are an exceptional group of people.

*(Thank you Mike. I missed Church because of this, but I consider you worth it. Lindsay and I are getting used to you calling in for afternoon tea and staying 24 hours! The Sheriff).*

## **Victorian Branch Fly-In**

**Sunday 3 December 2006**

End of year get together for a barbecue lunch to be held at Kyneton Aerodrome.

For catering purposes please advise me of your intention to attend by  
26 November 2006.

John Treble (03) 9336 2056

## Calendar of Events

### President's Fly-In 2006

Narromine NSW

22nd to 24th September 2006

Details Newsletter 118 or web page.

### Victorian End of Year Fly-In

Sunday 3rd December 2006

Kyneton Aerodrome

See page 19

### Welcome

**Ross Nunn** of Maroochydore who has Airtourer 115, MTH.

**Maurice Rolfe** of Cheltenham East who has MRE, a 115 and MOE, a 100.

**John Balch** of West Swan who has Airtourer 100, MUP.

We welcome all of you and hope to see you at one of our fly-ins soon.

### Subscriptions

Sometimes I think my subs are due, I just cannot remember,  
Did I pay them early May, or was it last December,  
But here's a line to say I'm well, and not amongst the dead,  
I'm getting more forgetful, and mixed up in my head.

I've got used to my arthritis, to my dentures I'm resigned,  
I can manage my bifocals, but oh, I miss my mind!  
Sometimes I can't remember when standing on the stairs  
Whether I'm going up - or coming down from there.

Before the fridge so often, my head is filled with doubt,  
Did I put the food away? Had I come to take it out?  
And sometimes when it's dark, with my nightcap on my head  
I don't now if I'm retiring, or getting out of bed.

If my subs are not yet due, please forgive me for  
I may have already sent them and don't want to be a bore.  
As I stood before the post-box my face was very red,  
I didn't post this off to you - I OPENED IT INSTEAD.