

# AIRTOURER ASSOCIATION

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



# NEWSLETTER

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

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## Editorial

Safe Airtouring,  
*John O'Halloran*

*Cover Photo:* Dusk Patrol. COI flying past Mt Cooroy as the sun sets in the background. Photo courtesy of Ian Ross, taken from a Piper Cub. Hidden from view is the full flap required to fly slow enough to formate on the Cub!

## Disclaimer

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# President's Pen



6 November 2006

*Hi everyone,*

Hope you all enjoyed Narromine (apart from the wind on Sunday!)

We were recompensed on Monday, showing a steady 142 knots over the ground for most of the way to Brisbane. Must have done something right -tailwind both ways to a fly in!

After much deliberation, and considerable regret, I advised the Committee at Narromine that I would step down from the President's position at the next AGM.

Many of you already know that I have finally been diagnosed with myositis, which is an incurable complaint, causing selective wastage of the muscles of the legs and fingers, and will eventually lead to a wheelchair.

This is already having an effect on my mobility, requiring day long heavy concentration on any walking and climbing required, which is a hard pill to swallow after having lead a totally active life for all my 73 years.

Reminds me of a sailor known as "spring heeled Jack", who often tripped over a Smith's crisp at the bottom of the gangway!

I therefore feel that I am no longer able to give the president's position the energy and direction that is needed, and that it is time to hand over to someone who will keep the Association alive in these difficult times for G.A.

Hopefully, I can continue to fly, and attend meetings for a long time to come.

I thank all of you for the friendship and assistance I have received during my time with you, and hope it will continue for the foreseeable future.

Yours,

*Bill Pennell.*

# Narromine Report

*John O'Halloran*

Each year your committee is faced with the dilemma of selecting a suitable location for the two fly-ins. Narromine had been suggested a number of times however requirements such as accommodation had been limiting. In recent years Narromine has developed itself into a recreational aviation centre and the committee decided to try it for the President's Fly-In this year.

Narromine lies 40km west of Dubbo on the NSW western plains. The shire is supported by agriculture with crops such as wheat, corn, barley, oats and sorghum as well as livestock such as cattle and sheep.

Narromine has a rich aviation heritage commencing as far back as 1919 and boasts Australia's oldest regional aero club which has been running since 1929. In 1920 Ross and Keith Smith, winners of the first England Australia air race, visited in their Vickers Vimy bomber. The Centenary Air Race of 1934 also visited Narromine.

1940 saw the aerodrome taken over by the RAAF for No. 5 Elementary Flying Training School. Over the next four years the school graduated more than 2,800 pilots. Towards

the end of the war the RAF located No. 618 Mosquito Squadron there. You may recall that No. 617 SQN was the famous "Dam Busters" squadron. 618 SQN was developing the use of a smaller Barnes Wallis designed spherical bouncing bomb for use against the Japanese shipping. However, the war ended before it could be tested in action.

Mosquito bombers remained at Narromine after the war until they were auctioned in 1947. Many found their way to local farms where the parts, particularly the engines, were put to agricultural use.

The aerodrome remained active post war being established as an international alternate for Sydney. It was also used by QANTAS as a training base.

Even today, as people leave the country towns for the city, and GA is in general decline, Narromine remains active in aviation. Each Easter around 700 recreational aircraft converge for the Recreational Aircraft Association annual gathering called NATFLY. While many of these visitors camp by their aircraft your Committee felt that there should be enough accommodation for an Airtourer Fly-In.





*The Airtourer lineup secured against the wind.*

No matter where or when we plan a fly-in some of our members encounter weather problems. I suppose this is a consequence of the size of the country. As the weekend approached a front passed over the southern part of Australia leaving strong winds and clouds on the ranges. Stan Tilley, already handicapped by CASA (see separate article), had to abandon his trip due to the headwind being a significant proportion of his TAS. So also Doug Dow who had to return after battling the headwind for some time to then run into poor visibility and cloud. From the north it was a pleasant trip not requiring my normal IFR to traverse the ranges. Narromine's well

established aerodrome and sealed runways stands out from the well irrigated surrounding crops. One side of the airfield has a winding perimeter taxiway with a number of adjoining houses being developed in 'airpark' style. There are still signs of the old RAAF base including the fully functional airfield beacon rarely seen at country airstrips these days.

The aeroclub has excellent catering facilities so the Airtourer arrivals enjoyed a relaxed meal that night. Accommodation was close, with a caravan park on the airfield providing motel rooms and recreation facilities. The town itself was only 2km away and one motel was within 10 minutes walk.



*Piper Arrow of Jon Pels and Monique Gillett, Des Haffernan's Aircruiser MVR and Drew Done's Falco.*



*Eric Hayden explaining the many small but critical design changes that went into the Wright Flyer Model A to enable it to meet modern safety standards. In particular the drive train contains a number of modern materials and designs. The wing warping control system was significantly improved lowering the control forces and utilising a conventional control stick.*





*Above: Roger Russell and Mike Fisher examining a sample rib used on the Wright Flyer.  
Below: Peter Ashley's Thorp 18 and Margot Rayners CT4.*





*Lorraine Howson, Drew Done and Lindsay Marshall sheltering behind a building to cook the Sunday BBQ lunch.*

Saturday saw a number of members, some of whom made wise decisions the day before, finally arrive. It's good to see the number of members driving the significant distance to the Fly-In. The Knox's, with their latest Bristol acquisition, an early '90s model recently imported from the UK, were accompanied by Marjorie Roche. It was good to catch up with Liz Matthews as it was the first time many have seen her since Tony's death.

Also present but without their Airtourers were Roger Russell and Andrew Clement. Roger's VRT has completed its restoration but awaits CASA paperwork. Andrew's aeroplane still has some way to go and he took the opportunity to discuss the many options for the rebuild.

Saturday afternoon was planned for briefings and flying with a requirement that we had to be out of the aeroclub by 4pm due

to a wedding.

Andy Morris had originally planned a briefing on pilot approved maintenance however this was postponed as CASA are reconsidering the rules. Nevertheless, Andy did provide what he thought would be a 10 minute talk on the Maintenance Release. Not surprisingly the questions extended this much longer.

Earlier in the day JOH was seen purchasing a dozen toilet rolls from the local supermarket. The reason became clear as Andy's talk was followed by a briefing on streamer cutting. Unfortunately, as the winds strengthened only a couple of streamer cutting sorties were flown but all returned with smiles on their faces.

Since Narromine has such a rich aviation history it's appropriate that this is preserved and displayed. The Narromine Aviation Museum adjoins the aeroclub building and provides a comprehensive and well presented

history of the area's rich aviation history.

The historical theme continued with a visit to the Wright Brothers Aircraft Project. This is the brainchild of Eric and Keith Hayden who have built a replica of a Wright Model A aircraft called the "Spirit of Flight" and registered as VH-SOF. Eric kept us enthralled detailing the challenges of not only designing the replica, incorporating necessary improvements without detracting from the authenticity but also dealing with CASA. The project reached a milestone in October 2005 when astronaut Buzz Aldrin launched it on it's first flight piloted by Col Pay.

Saturday night's dinner was held in a private function room of the local RSL.

Sunday was intended to be another flying day with a BBQ lunch at the airfield. Unfortunately the winds had increased over night and some members took the opportunity to depart ahead of the frontal weather. You

know the wind is strong when it registers on the ASI of a parked aircraft. A walk around the line checking tie down security generated some discussion on tie down technique and in particular the amount of looseness in the tie down. Maybe a topic for a future article.

The BBQ lunch had to be held in the shelter of the accommodation cabins on the airfield. While there was no flying there was much flying talk. Visits were also arranged to local attractions such as the Iris Farm and the Lime Grove, Australia's largest lime orchard.

By Monday morning most of the weather cleared for the homeward journey.

Narromine Ultralights provided fuel to Airtourers at a discounted rate so if you are passing that way consider supporting someone who supported us. Overall the facilities of both the airfield, aeroclub and convenience of accommodation make Narromine an attractive location for a fly-in. The only downside was the shortage of other activities to occupy those



*Bill Penell presenting an Airtourer Association plaque to the President of the Narromine Aero Club to express our thanks for their support over the weekend.*

# Do not sell your Airtourer

*Stan Tilley*

Following my little 'Dizzy' spell last November and despite a 100% medical check early this year I was shocked when CASA put a rider on the medical certificate requiring a safety pilot for a period of 12 months. Basically this meant that I could only fly a VH registered aeroplane if I had another pilot in the right-hand seat.

Having booked and paid for the trip to Narromine and beyond, something had to be done. Such a restriction does not apply to my RAA certificate to fly so the Ultralight scene was investigated.

The result was that I arranged to hire a very attractive little 'plastic fantastic'. Two seats, 105 knot cruise, 17 litres per hour, five hour endurance, full instrumentation including A/H, DG and an Autopilot, plus a moving map EFIS 'glass' box, together with three bladed prop and electric trim and flaps. I also arranged for a Transponder to be fitted.

The gadget arrived after a three and a

half hour trip at 9500ft, from Victoria. Things were looking really good.

After a few hours of local flying I decided that the worst feature about the aircraft was the flap limiting speed of 60 knots. Sure the aircraft was very light and bounced around excessively and with a maximum luggage capacity of 12 kg and limited space, it was going to be either 'turn undies inside out every second day or wash daily'.

Bonnie and I did a trial flight of about an hour and a half to Tasman Peninsula. The aircraft was 'lively' in even minor air currents which made it very difficult to achieve and maintain the 105 cruising speed. Her comment "Isn't it slow and bumpy". Best to plan at 100. Vision was great but internal space was decidedly limited.

Another session the next day was used to set up the aeroplane for longer distance travel. My clear perspex 'boxes' that velcro on to the dash were placed in position for the ERSA and maps, life jackets were worn, everything was



What about the raft? It would fit behind the seat but could we ever get it if required?

Luggage bags were tried and discarded but finally a couple of sloppy sports bags and plastic bags seemed the 'best bet'. Even so we seemed already overweight and what about the Airtourer Co-op files of 'bits and pieces'?

Then the weather took charge. Our departure day forecast 35 knot winds 'on the nose' at 2000ft. Even with a five hour endurance it was a "NO NO", so it was back to the normal daily routine.

About lunchtime the wind appeared to drop. I rushed home, collected Bonnie and the gear, and we set off. At least we would get started on the trip with a stop at Launceston to refuel and re-examine the conditions.

The wind was returning. The takeoff was very slow. Just how heavy were we? Then just above the ground, "WHAM" the turbulence struck. Up on one wing, down and over, up and around, like an autumn leaf we tossed around. Eventually we settled down a bit and at 2500 ft battled our way around the mountain over Hobart and headed for Launceston.

Then we sat and tossed and sat and bounced some more. It was 86 miles to Lton and it took us one and a half hours. The average ground speed was under 60knots. I asked Bonnie if she wanted to cross Bass Strait at that speed and she said "No". (Actually we could not have continued anyway as the aircraft is not certified for night flight and daylight would have beaten us.)

So we spent two very pleasant days with my brother Ray and his wife Yvonne. This was great as Ray is struggling a bit health-wise and had just come out of hospital. I had thought that a couple of unexpected visitors would be just too much but judging by the laughs we had, I think it might have been a good idea.

The weather just got worse so despite

tears from Bonnie we just had to do it. There was no alternative. The embarrassment (and cost) of having to tell the aircraft owner that a fifty hour usage of his aeroplane was not going to happen, was nothing compared to missing out on seeing our Airtourer mates.

It was no consolation that we were not the only ones to have weather problems. Doug had carefully checked the weather so that he was behind a front, then battled 100 miles out into Bass Strait, a trip that took him a couple of hours, only to find that the front had 'hooked back' and was preparing to 'swallow' him up – so he did the sensible 180 and went home.

By Saturday the wind had moderated a little. It was time to return to Hobart. Bonnie really scared me.

"I would like to go home in the bus"

"What? Does this mean our flying together days are finished?"

"No. Just give me a few days and MTL will be OK."

So Bonnie returned to Hobart by bus and I flew and yes! It was rough and uncomfortable to the extent that one bump crunched me into the full harness so solidly that I developed a headache.

The question to be asked of course is

"Would the Victa have been able to complete the trip?"

The answer is definitely yes. We have had some very slow and very rough trips in MTL but the weight and design of the aircraft is such that it maintains speed and certainly penetrates turbulence much better.

Sure we would have bounced along at 80 to 90 knot

***BUT WE WOULD HAVE GOT THERE!***

So do not swap your Airtourer for what Alan calls a "powered feather".

# Self Administration for General Aviation

*John O'Halloran*

Members will have seen in the aviation press that the discussion on self administration of general aviation is hotting up. The subject is not as simple as it may first appear and there are many varying views from within the GA sector. The following is a synopsis of some of the issues involved.

Firstly, it should be made clear that self administration is not self regulation. The regulations derive from the ICAO Convention on Civil Aviation which itself has no authority. The Convention is given authority by sovereign states, in Australia's case by an Act of Parliament. The Act also gives authority to the Regulations etc. that CASA uses to regulate the industry. Adherence to the international standard is desirable as aviation is an activity that readily crosses national borders, although the relevance to GA is questionable. However, setting the regulations is the responsibility that any Government is unlikely to give up. That leaves the implementation of those regulations which is the topic of concern.

Self Administration is likely to cover the following areas:

- Registration of aircraft,
- Issuing of Certificates of Airworthiness,
- Issuing of qualifications to Pilots and Maintenance Personnel, including Class 2 Medicals.
- Surveillance to ensure compliance with the regulations, and
- Corrective action, and where necessary,

discipline for non-compliance.

A successful self administration system would need to achieve the following:

- At least the same level of safety as currently achieved.
- Be financially viable, i.e. self funding. Some would argue this should include Government funding from fuel levies.
- Be legally secure, i.e. the liability of the administering body would need to be established as would the cost of legal challenges to decisions. This could have a severe impact on costs.
- The compliance system would need to be transparent and effective to gain the confidence of the Government and community.

There is no easy solution for GA due to its diversity ranging from our members who generally fly their Airtourers for private and pleasure to commercial operations such as flying schools and charter operators.

On the pleasure end of the spectrum there are activities such as parachuting, gliding and Recreational Aviation that are self administered. On the other hand the agricultural aviation industry investigated and rejected self administration for themselves.

The Recreational Aviation Australia (RAA), developed from the Australian Ultralight Federation, currently self administers aircraft up to 600kg. There are moves to increase this to 750kg or 1,000kg which could

include Airtourers. While the current RAA is very successful would a system that works for light weight aircraft adapt and yet maintain the same efficiencies when administering complex high performance aircraft such as Lancairs.

AOPA is probably the broadest based GA organization in Australia. AOPA strongly supports self administration yet is not interested in taking on the administrator role. This is understandable considering the diversity of it's membership. Nevertheless, it has an important role in the discussion and the continued membership by the Airtourer Association is appropriate.

CASA has accepted that the subject is open for discussion and convened a summit in Brisbane in September. Some of the presentations from this summit are available on the CASA website. Acceptance by the regulator

is a critical step towards finally achieving self administration.

There are many interested parties to the discussions ranging from type groups like ourselves, through umbrella groups like AOPA to organizations like the RAA and Leisure Flight Australia (LFA) who see themselves having an active role in any self administration solution. Not surprisingly there are some conflicting views within these groups and there is unlikely to be a quick solution. We will watch the debate with interest.

LFA has requested the Airtourer Association join them, at a cost of \$1 per member. This was put to the AGM who in turn left it to the Committee. The Committee has not yet decided to join LFA but are still considering and would welcome input from the members.

### Heard at the Hangar Door

When in Narromine, whilst waiting for their lunch, **Lindsay and Beryl** just happened to look through the local paper which was available for customers to read, and saw an article titled, "Journey with motoring history", and the larger than life photo depicted John and Vi Smith of Dubbo with their restored 1912 "T" Model Ford. Those who were on the Gulf Safari in 1990 may remember them at Lorraine Station, near Winton on August 6 and their 1912 "T" Model towing a canvas covered home made trailer, then on August 11 when we were refuelling at Normanton, who should drive in but John and Vi. Unfortunately Vi had badly broken her arm and was to fly to Cairns to have it attended to. The newspaper article mentions their ages at 84 and 76 and they were heading to Warwick with fellow Outback Model "T" Club members, camping along the way. Good luck to them.

**Robert Zweck** reports hearing of sightings of "Aircruiser" MVR in a hangar at Bankstown. The aircraft was described as having a "T" tail which would most likely make it the Victa R2 designed by Luigi Pellarini. The R2 was at one stage registered as MVR. The reports suggested that the aircraft was under restoration and currently without wings. For further stories about the R2 and Luigi buy Alan Wood a beer at the next Fly-In.

# FLIGHT OF FANCY

*Stan Tilley*

Little did I know that a fancy I had taken in the early 1950's when I was still interested in model aeroplanes, would finally bear fruit over 50 years later. The JET PROVOST was one of the last models I built and at that time was an example of the new, jet, military aircraft.

For some reason the straight wing rather stubby little craft was a favourite. Again, at the time I did not know that an expatriate Polish Airforce Officer, who had served in the RAF after escaping from Poland in 39/40, was attached to Percival Aircraft Company, and had helped design the Provost radial engine trainer which developed into the Provost Jet.

That officer was Henry Millicer who later came to Australia and was the designer of the highly successful and brilliant little Airtourer, an aircraft which has taken my wife and me thousands of miles throughout Aus-

tralia and has given myself and others hours of enjoyable aerobatics. Through those years we met Henry and flew with him and enjoyed his company.

So I always had a 'soft spot' for the Jet Provost. I had missed out by not joining a group which raced one at Skyrace in 1994 so when local owner David Warren suggested that I stop procrastinating, plus the fact that the Aero Club would 'love' to have the jet take part in the 2006 'Battle of Britain' celebrations, well how could a young fellow like me resist.

Dan Duggan, a retired Major from the US Marines and a former Harrier jockey was the pilot and I was just 'the boy'.

Basically the Provost is a fairly simple two seat side by side training aircraft. No fancy boosted controls although the 1969 MK five





model is pressurized, originally was fitted with ejection seats and went on further to become the counter insurgency Strikemaster, which is still in service with a few small air forces. It is still quite an aeroplane with a top speed of around 400 knots and a ceiling of about 32,000 feet.

My original 'stubby' impressions were somewhat dispelled on getting up close as the fuselage accommodates a massive Rolls Royce Viper pure jet engine of 2500 lbs thrust, so it is a moderate climb to access the comfortable cabin.

Dan goes through a comprehensive safety routine, which includes how to get out in the event of an emergency. Basically the canopy is blown off, the full harness is released and then the aircraft is rolled on its back and you are bunted out on a parachute fixed to a static line. (Not really necessary though as the aircraft has an excellent glide ratio.)

Feeling a bit like a trussed Christmas turkey, with flying suit, parachute, full harness, bone dome and oxygen mask I was finally on board. Dan was fine with me 'following through' on the controls and we were away.

**AND WHAT A BUZZ!**

There was a very smooth, powerful thrust in the back and a surprising lack of internal vibration and noise. (Not so outside of course with a pure jet, and amazingly different to the ride I once had in a Mustang which vibrated madly from the power of the massive 1500 HP piston engine)

Excellent control response, nicely balanced, no torque – this was an aeroplane I could love to fly.

So we did our pass down the river, looking out for the formation of eight Aero Club planes then when all was clear Dan pushed up to 90% power and pulled straight up. WOW! 4000ft plus a minute. With speeds ranging

from 250 to 350 knots at heights up to 9500ft in no time we are out over the Iron Pot and Dan says, "Your aircraft".

I did a couple of wing-overs to get the feel, and then a loop or two. 'Fantastic'. Absolutely no effort, all that magnificent smooth power out the back, just pull to 4g and hold it all the way around. And the g does hold all the way, not like our little gadgets which do pull 4g at the start and finish of a loop but the Provost has so much power it just locks on the g and holds it even in a steep turn.

Aileron rolls, lift the nose a fraction then just roll left or right.

Cuban eight, complete your 5/8 loop, check the 45 degrees down, and roll.

Roll off the top (Immelman) perfect.

A couple of barrel rolls ("No you do not need to hold the nose up as it goes inverted,

keep a bit of positive g all the way around, it is more comfortable for your passenger") Another loop or so but time was getting away as breakfast was waiting at the Club, so Dan does a quick Immelman followed by a 'Split Ass' turn and we are heading for home.

I continued to 'follow through' as we did a beautiful 'carrier' landing and touched on the Numbers at about 100 knots.

My original thoughts were fully justified – a beautiful old girl.

Mind you we did use about 900 litres of fuel in the 25 minute flight but all I can say is

***"JUST DO IT – YOU WILL LOVE EVERY MINUTE"*** Thanks Dan!

## Co-Op News

**Windscreens.** Scott Patterson, who's day job involves working with plastics has remanufactured a windscreen mould. He has produced the first windscreen and while the shape is excellent the heating requires more work.

**Control Surface Skins.** Lee Gordon-Brown has found the moulds for stamping control surface skins and the necessary drawings and specifications amongst the materials recovered from MAI. He is currently discussing with the warbird restoration facility at Wangaratta to have them produce some skins using their 200 ton press. There remains a number of challenges including actual quality of the moulds and the amount of annealing required.

**Subscriptions/Joining Fee.** The current subscription fee of \$200 has been of concern to some members if it was to be levied on an annual basis. The Co-op rules require payment of an annual subscription set by the members at the AGM. The current Directors will be recommending a lower subscription at the next AGM. There is concern of the inequity of some owners who declined to pay the \$200 subscription to help the Co-op through a difficult time reaping the benefits provided by those owners who did pay. The Directors will therefore recommend at the next AGM the adoption of a Joining Fee of \$200 for the first year of membership for new members.

# THE SHERIFF OF LOCKINGTON INTERROGATES.....

**The President: “Bill” - William  
Richard PENNELL**



at

(Interrogated 23 September, 2006  
the President’s windy Fly-in to Narromine. Fancy  
interrogating the “Boss” at his Fly-In!)

*When did you become involved with the Airtourer Association?* 1991, the year we purchased the aircraft from John Salmon.

*What was your first flying meeting?* The President’s Fly-in to Parkes.

*Your occupation?* Marine Engineer.

*What does that involve?* It involves being a ships engineer in my 20’s, and then I served 18 years overseas, and then worked in a dockyard as an Engineer’s Superintendent.

*Sheriff - Now what are you doing* – Consulting job at King Fisher Resort, What I’m looking after is Marine Transport, operating ferries between the main land and Fraser Island.

*Where were you born?* Shanghai, China. My Father was a “Pom” and Mother a White Russian, she escaped out of St. Petersburg in the Revolution and went to Shanghai.

*Have you any siblings?* One sister, she was born there too. When the war started we left to Australia to avoid being interned there. Left with nothing voluntarily, arriving with 2 kids and 2 suitcases.

*Where have and do you live?* Shanghai, then Sydney during the war. Dad wanted me to go to University – I said “Bugger that, I’m not going to look at another book.” I went and became an apprentice engineer at Port Kembla. Service at sea - some on cruise ships, 7 years on Burns Philp line. Married and lived at Julia Creek it was too far from the sea for me, I got a job at Kangaroo Point Ship Yard, when it closed I was Chief Engineer and they transferred me into the repair section. Left 1978 I became a Marine Surveyor, the next logical step, and started my own company in Classification, like an Aircraft Inspector, you go to a ship and make sure things are being done properly, the maintenance, the safety, and all that sort of thing. What I used to call Detective work which is investigating why things go wrong, and that sort of led on into this.

*How did your interest in flying start?* When I was a boy I decided amongst other things I was going to race motor bikes on the Speedway. That went quite well for a while, however I fell off and went over the top of the safety fence, and my arm was sticking out when I flew over the fence and clipped the top plank and I’d pushed my hand three inches up my arm, and I had a piece of wood stuck through there as well. So maybe this wasn’t a good idea to keep doing, and they were going to amputate the forearm, but I said no, I was lucky there was a Specialist in the hospital who had just worked on a lady with a broken

spine, and they said to him, "Would you come and have a look at this kid", to see if they were doing the right thing by chopping it. This is after I had gone into the theatre, and he said, "No don't chop it, send him to me in Sydney and I'll operate a couple of times and try and rebuild it", which he did. Five operations and a year later I had my arm again, sort of, I can't bend it back that way, and of course was a Toolmaker at that time. I was 22 then; I forgot to say I did National Service in the Navy. In that year I had bugger all to do, I couldn't ride a bike, didn't have any money, all I got was Social Service, I think you used to call it that, which was 12/6 a week, so I was dependant on my parents. I had a friend who was a Pilot at Bankstown in 1952 who said to me, "You're hanging around like a wet week-end, come with me and you can sit in the back of the aircraft while I'm learning to fly, you might be interested." So I went and I got interested, and I signed up and went flying with Keith Robey as Instructor and started off in an Aeronca Champion, a little tiny 2 seater thing, about 1/2 the size of an Airtourer and about 60 h.p. I learnt because it seemed a good idea at the time, and my Mother was threatening to get rid of me if I didn't stop riding bikes, and sort of pitched in. So I went and got a Pilots licence out of Bankstown which was a big grass paddock, when in those days there was no such things as a cross wind, wherever the wind was you went straight into it.

*Aircraft Type and Registration?* XVV a T6, which we bought in 1991 as mentioned before.

*Any interesting stories about the Aircraft's history?* We put a 3 blade prop on 9 years ago on its first service. The Singapore propeller that came with it expired, and it was going to cost \$2-3000, and I got this bright idea as I'd seen an advertisement, and had also flown the 3 bladed one at Port Kembla – MVP, and it was good fun and made a huge difference to the aircraft, so another \$8000 on top and get a new prop and we'll use that one. This Aircraft originated with the Singapore Air Force.

*Have you owned any other Airtourers?* No, and no other aircraft, but did a lot of hiring.

*What year did you gain your pilot's licence?* 1954 I think, it lapsed when I was at sea. I got it at Bankstown. In those days it was a 40 hour job, it was virtually nothing else, no navigation, didn't have a radio, a piece of cake, just followed the railway line.

*Total hours flown?* I lost my first log book, and I recall somewhere around 200 hours in it, so I estimate about 1000 hours currently.

*Longest trip flown?* Probably Lilydale, Vic. to Redcliffe, Qld.

*What was one of the most memorable flights you have done?* No we've been lucky, nothing much really went wrong I caught most things on the ground. The Broken Hill week-end was probably the most enjoyable one I've ever done, everything worked, it was nice.

*Most humorous moment in flight?* We were late leaving so we didn't have any food with us, so Lorraine raced into the service station and got a bag of chocolate smarties, and as we passed through 7,000 ft. it burst in the back. Smarties came raining down on us and went in every hole in the bloody aircraft, and every time we parked it the ants all swarmed on it for the next year, we couldn't get them out, all down the fuselage and everywhere. But the nerves - we nearly leapt out of the plane - "BANG"!

*Other interests?* Anything engineering. If I had the time I'd restore old cars, motor bikes. And Steam engines of course, that's why I was interested in Lindsay's collection. The early ships I went to sea on were steam ships.

*Favourite Food?* I was on a ship once with all Pakistani crew and the Captain and I were the only two white men, and because the cooks were Indian or Pakistani, you had curry three times a day, the Pakistani don't know how to fry eggs or bacon, so we had curry for breakfast – 3 meals a day for 2 years. *Sheriff - So is it your favourite food or can't you stand it now?* No, curry, but it's got to be proper curry. *Sheriff – Mike Fisher and you would get on well.*

*Favourite Drink?* Scotch I suppose.

*Favourite Music?* I'm a Mouldy Fig - Trad Jazz. Don't ask me why Traditional Jazz Fans are called Mouldy Figs. The name is something to do with hair colour I think.

*Favourite Sport?* I used to play tennis at school, and golf but couldn't when I went to sea, didn't have time.

*Sheriff – The greens weren't long enough!*

*Do you, or did you, have a nickname, and what is it?* Dozens – not worth repeating.

*If you were Prime Minister of Australia for ONE day, what would you change for the betterment of Australia?* Perhaps shoot all the existing Politicians and start again.

*What is/was your greatest extravagance?* I bought one of the first Austin Healey's that ever came into Australia when I was a lad. At that time I worked in a camera factory where there were 100 girls on the assembly line and I took 99 of them out I think. *Sheriff – So that was more extravagance.* It was a great crowd puller in those days. I sold it for about £200; now it would be worth about \$50,000!

*If you had a spare million dollars what would you do with it?* Now that's a tricky one. I'd probably buy one of the new Diesel Aircraft like a DA40. A theory of mine that all our engines should be diesel, the latest types. Yes I'd buy a Diamond Diesel Twin.

*Have you any Pet Aversions?* I'm pretty easy going, but people who try impose their views on you when you don't really need it.

*Any further comments you wish to add?* If I could start over, I would probably do things different, but no doubt I'd get into just as much trouble some other way! But if I get hit by a bus tomorrow I couldn't complain - I've had a lucky life up until now!!

*'How are you enjoying being President of the Airtourer Association?* Oh I've loved it, yes.

*Sheriff - Thank you Bill for kindly making time for this interrogation when there was so much going on around us, and being willing to be the first to have the interview recorded on tape.*

# Calendar of Events

## **AGM 2007**

16 - 18 March 2007

Venue to be advised.

## **Victorian End of Year Fly-In**

Sunday 3rd December 2006

Kyneton Aerodrome

Details page 19 of Newsletter 119

## **Welcome**

**Derek Wright, Ian Jelley, Paul Haynes, David Dallow and Ivan Brown** of the 607 group who fly G-AZOE from Newcastle in the UK.

**Ian Close** from Port Melbourne who has Airtourer T6, VVZ.

**Peter Ashley** of Wellington Point near Brisbane who flies a Thorp T18.

**Peter Cooney** from Hampton East in Victoria who has Airtourer T6, BVV.

**Dave Brown** from Auckland who is the Chief Pilot for a group that has purchased Airtourer T6, ZK-CPG from Colin Grounsell. Dave is an Airbus driver with Cathay Pacific and also instructs on the group's CT4.

## **Committee News**

You will probably have read by now in Bill's President's Pen that he will not be standing for President at the next AGM. I would ask you all to consider standing for the position or to lobby someone you would consider suitable. I will continue to be available as Secretary, unless someone else wants the job.

Unfortunately we have not been able to confirm the location of the next AGM by the time this issue went to press. The date was chosen and was constrained by a number of factors including Easter and the Avalon Air Show and it's associated events. We were considering Ballarat but other factors have made that impractical. A couple of other options are being evaluated and we will advise by email when the matter is decided.

In the longer term, AGM 2008 will likely be Griffith as this will be the 30th Anniversary of the Association and the first Fly-In was held at Griffith. Additionally 2009 will be the 50th Anniversary of the first flight of FMM.