

AIRTOURER ASSOCIATION

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Newsletter No. 86



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



NEWSLETTER

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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 August 1998. Contributions and or advertisements are to be with JOH by 15 July 1998.

Small advertisement (3 to 4 lines) \$10.00

Large advertisement \$20.00

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EDITORIAL

Unfortunately I was unable to make it to Griffith for the AGM. Despite my best efforts the rostering section insisted I go to Taipei instead. My spies tell me it was an enjoyable weekend and a report is included. A special thanks must go to Doug Stott who supplied the photos via the internet after a last minute plea from me yesterday. Other committee reports are included. Barry Gray, who stood in for me taking the Minutes of the AGM, unfortunately has been busy and the Minutes were not ready in time for publication.

I received a letter from Chris Scholfield our UK representative. The Association is alive and well over there and they have had a couple of Fly-Ins in the last year. As they move into the northern summer no doubt there will be more gatherings this year. We look forward to reports and photographs.

We are all probably aware of the different concepts of distance between Europe and Australia. It might help our overseas readers if we include some mention of distance in some of our articles. I hope to include a map in some future issue to help all of us who are unfamiliar with names like, Urisino and Tibooburra!

Safe Airtouring.

John O'Halloran

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.



Letters to the Editor

The Editor - Dear John,

The following is a little anecdote to complement Jane's article on carby ice to make the point that it can **also** happen at **full** power. It is a personal, practical, serious, it can happen to anyone, example of carby ice with pictures worth a thousand words!!! ***Dear Jane, why did you not tell me this 28 years ago in 1970?***

The aircraft was a Turbulent built over 4 years. It is a wooden aircraft powered by a VW horizontal engine that is very subject to carby ice. Most road service attendants, VACC etc. will tell of many winter or wet days with high humidity and call outs from drivers with VW engines cut out. When the service man

arrives he gets in the car, turns the key and it starts. The problem was carby ice, that's why we have a heater flap on the manifold of cars. To open the flap, like carby heat, a spring is operated. When the spring is heated the flap is not closed.

The scene is Grovedale Airport, Bill Miller takes off on the East-West runway where you must make a left hand turn away from the built up area. The left turn places me over Mt. Duneed of 400 ft., the only hill in the whole area. The date was the 13th. At 700 ft the engine quits instantly on a left climbing turn. The pilot was 300 ft above the hill, not much time to make a decision. Later the DCA investigators say 30 seconds to decide and maybe a half a mile radius to land.

Training taught me to land straight



ahead, unfortunately this was all trees but a left turn means down the hill, the same with the right turn. A 180 degree turn would be bad news with the chance of stalling and then down the hill again. I then sight a pocket handkerchief clearing. Having had quite a few motor bike and cycling accidents and already been in one aircraft crash (I was not the pilot) I said to myself, "Not again, no more hospital", so I maintained an approach straight ahead and looked like making it. But I was level with half the trees and not game to pull the stick back and stall so I think, the branch may bend over. Not so, one wing hits the top of a tree before the other one, surprise surprise the wing breaks off and pivots me around when the other side of the wing hits another tree. Now I cannot give a clear account for the next few seconds but I did land in the little clearing but not in the proper configuration. Left and right wings torn off, the fuselage broken off in front of the cockpit area where I was sitting and rear of fuselage was upside down. The engine was torn out and Bill Miller was sitting in rubble. See the photos, the one with three people in it was the direction I came from and those are the trees I hit on approach. One person was Chas Lambeth DCA surveyor, myself in the centre, and

Conrad Hanay killed later in an aircraft accident. This photo was taken the next day and as you can see I walked away from this accident with no injuries. Yes I do believe in a God and his son Jesus.

The fence the aircraft is up against is on the edge of an old quarry with a 200 ft drop awaiting me if I had missed the clearing or gone through the fence.

A bit of humour. The engine was taken away by DCA to be checked and tested and no fault was found. I had said carby icy right from the start. DCA said let's check that out. They had no test rig, I did, ...could they use it? The engine was mounted on the test rig and the DCA arranged a day to come to my workshop for the test. Three DCA officials arrived, nice drive from Morrabbinn all the way to Geelong armed with a CO₂ bottle to induce carby ice. I started the engine and an officious DCA official took the CO₂ to squirt into the carby intake, nothing! The bottle was empty, no one had checked before coming. Three very demure DCA officials head back to Morrabbinn and nothing more of any sort is ever heard again. That was a good day, three red faces!

There is quite a few technical things one could write about carby ice. I believe there are many unexplained accidents

that could be attributed to carby ice.

Yours
Sincerely,

Bill Miller



GRIFFITH REVISITED

A.G.M. - 27-30 MARCH 1998

Judy Riddel

This eventful, happy weekend sparked varied memories and impressions, an unexpected “diversion” in Roy and Judy Riddel’s plans.

Determined to fly to Griffith, (having missed Sept. President’s Fly-In due weather and flu), and with coastal weather conditions deteriorating rapidly with cyclonic development on Thursday we made a hasty departure ex Coffs Harbour.

Up through a hole and over the top to Armidale, (first sight of ground), thereafter the desperate drought conditions were sadly evident. Remembering the walks/drinks program at Parkes Aero Club, on Thursday nights,

our destination was determined.

Tony provided transport, Liz (already suffering with her damaged leg) was represented by Tassy, lots of licks of welcome. Roy drew his own winning raffle ticket, the prize bowl and bulbs being too bulky for OVV, were replaced by bottle of wine which helped quench later thirst.

Parkes L.A.M.E. quickly assessed and fixed a large mag drop allowing Oscar Victa Victa to depart for and be the first arrival at Griffith on Friday.

The friendly, helpful welcome by C.F.I. was evident and duplicated by all the Aero Club members during the whole weekend.





Women pilots at GTH with VH-DAM
Back row: Judy Riddel, Elaine Sage,
 Susie White, Lyn Butler
Front row: Fran Beckwith, Janette
 Roberts, Colleen Murray, Jane
 Morris.

VH-OVV parked alongside a broken down C 150, next arrivals were Jack and Colleen Murray (fresh from Tassy Adventure), they tied down in a prominent position in front of the Club House and their immaculate Airtourer obviously caught the Judge's eye!

The arriving aircraft and excited crews made an impact on the Aero Club and later the Gemini Motel, especially at dinner with noise and the seat swapping. Picassos Restaurant staff deserved a medal. Notably

one of the biggest attendances for a Friday night.

Saturday heralded a slow start - more arrivals. Bill Miller's Flying Lettuce showing an ageing grey. Beryl and Lindsay timed their arrival to be at top of the lunch queue. Good to see Pam with Gerry Lawson. Some of us had not met Pam.

Doug and Sue Stott's Airtourer history collection again created much interest, their pictorial record much appreciated.

Lyn and Athol Butler of Gunnedah, long time friends of Rankins, Woods, Stu Hilsberg and Riddels,

were welcomed and happily joined the A/T Association family.

Noticed an increasing number of women pilots, 8 lined up for photos against various airtourers.

Strangely, the usual formation, aeros and general flying, A/C swapping was not evident.

Arriving back by bus at Aero Club for evening session Stan and Bonnie's Airtourer provided a magic setting for outdoor drinks. Indoors Tony's whistle brought ever increasing noise/fun *to order*, for a well provided and served dinner, and the presentations and awards.

Best Presented Aircraft - To deserving and popular recipients, Colleen and Jack Murray.



L to R. Barry Gray, Bill Miller and Stu Hilsberg

serenaded, and liquid and jokes flowed.

Amazingly, there was a majority attendance at 8.30am Sunday at the Gemini for President Tony's brisk meeting. Since Secretary/Editor John O'Halloran was in Hong Kong, Barry Gray deputised and took the minutes. Treasurer, John

Treble's balance sheet was so well presented even the illiterates could understand it.

Longest Distance - Ken Bell from Brisbane

Secret Time of Arrival - Mike Fisher

Those Who Didn't Win - Doug and Fran Beckworth. In CT4 ex Swan Hill

After some whistle blowing and frequent "for against carried", President Tony, and Treasurer, John, gave notice of retirement at the 1999 AGM at Mildura. (Not well received.)

Guests - Simon Ford C076 SQN and Kai Hanson enjoyed recounting flying a CT4 to Griffith AGM 1978.

Bob McGilvray spoke of development and progress by Millicer Aircraft Industries.

Peter Roach chaired the Co-op Meeting together with Hugh Knox, Hector Blemming, Alan Wood, Bob Peak and Stu Hilsberg keeping members well informed. Peter even better than Tony with the one word "foragainstcarried !!".

George Penfound informed us on a UK - AUS Air Race in Year 2000 and the possibility of an Airtourer entry.

Lindsay Marshall received special acclaim for attending all AGM's.

Thereafter Pat Kelly and Liz

Mid morning some departures, the rest of us on tour guided by Denise, an Australian born Italian, descendent of first fleters - she was given "heaps" by some wits up front, but generally enjoyed and tried hard to please the crowd.

The tour took us to De Bortoli's Winery for tastings/sales. We quickly



Above: Lunch on Sunday
L to R. Bob Peak sampling the
local grape juice..., Pat Peak, Beryl
Marshall, (with mouth closed!), and
Cath Kelly

exited when Liz Mathews spotted
Parkes' Rotarians arriving. After
appreciating the Pioneer Park Museum
buildings, bottles of wine complimented
the picnic lunch. Our thanks to Stu



MOG in a new all over white paint following it's conversion from a 100 to a
115. Long time previous owner Bob Gilmour would never recognise it..!!
In the pilot's seat, the new owner, Greg Wardman from Wagga.

Hilsberg for restoring peace by threatening the Community Service mower boy. Well fortified, it was probably (?) best that Rosettas Winery was closed. We passed the impressive Bartters Chicken Processing and Egg Producing Plant, a giant enterprise starting with an essay about 1 chook and now processing approx. 150,000 chickens a day. Must be a message there!

Then on to the lake and admiration for the vintage Renault. Did interrogator Beryl notice Roy Riddel chatting with “Wally” at the campvan? Sunday night

at services club for human fuel, food, fun, friendship.

Monday saw some early and sleepy pilots at aerodrome for aircraft fuel, flight plans and final farewells. Liz was heard to remark, “the Riddels are *still here!*” (Slow movers?!). Together with Butlers they had detoured to visit “Wally” who had vintage cars.

Flying the last 30 NM in bound to Coffs became quite eventful. It took 60 mins due to ever increasing cloud, orbits at 8500 ft to avoid IFR traffic, trying to find a hole/break and eventually descending at 140 KTS to 800 ft for a clear view of Coffs Coast from 8 NM to the East. (Over water.)

After arrival home the phones rang hot. The Riddels 5 days later were (again) departing Coffs, by road. Overnighting at Gunnedah and accompanied and helped by Athol Butler, the Riddels arrived back in Griffith on Sunday, visited “Wally”, and departed once more for Coffs towing a trailer with a 1923 Rolls Royce now known as RR’s Baby RR. This revisit (2200 KM by road) the most memorable.

Those who attended A.G.M. - (Barry Gray has List).

Judy and Roy Riddel



PRESIDENT'S REPORT - 1998

Another successful year has passed for the Association.

During the year, we lost one of our oldest and best known members with the death of Betty Rankin, the widow of our first, and long-serving President, "Sonny". The Association was represented at her funeral in West Wyalong by a large contingent of members and spouses.

I must thank the Committee for all their work and assistance over the year and particularly to John O'Halloran for his first class Newsletter which he is still producing on time even though he has returned to Hong Kong to live.

As usual, John Treble has kept a close eye on our finances and you will see from his report that we are still in a sound financial state, thanks to John and Doreen.

During the year, I had the good fortune to go to Perth for a few days and had the opportunity to attend a get-together of some of the Western Australian members; thanks to Greg Rutherford for organising a very pleasant evening.

Our membership has remained constant at 144 members in Australasia and 15 in Britain.

You will see from the Secretary's report that Barry Gray reluctantly resigned as Secretary due to his increased workload. I would like to record our thanks for his contributions to the Association whilst acting as your Secretary.

Finally, I would like to thank all members for the support and encouragement given to me over the year. I am confident that the Association will continue to progress, thanks to the dedication of your Committee and the enthusiasm of the members.

Tony Matthews

Secretary's Report

Unfortunately this report must commence with an apology for not being able to attend the Annual General Meeting.

Change of Secretary.

As you know Barry Gray has served as Secretary for many years. The Secretary's role includes managing the membership information although it is the Newsletter editor who uses the information the most. Unfortunately Barry's work commitments had sometimes delayed the timely delivery of the address labels for the Newsletter. It was therefore decided that the Newsletter editor would manage the membership renewals and publishing of the membership list in 1997. During subsequent discussions with Barry he pointed out that as the membership information was the major part of the Secretary's task then it might be more appropriate if I took over the position of Secretary. This was discussed at the Committee Meeting held at Parkes in September 1997 where it was decided that I would take over the position of Secretary until the AGM and that Barry Gray would remain on the Committee effectively taking over the Committee position that I held.

Although unable to attend the AGM I am willing to stand for the Committee and

the position of Secretary if nominated.

Membership Information.

Membership details are being managed on a new computer database. Although some teething problems were encountered it is now working fine and makes the task of addressing envelopes for the Newsletter relatively easy.

Long Membership Memento.

At the last AGM a suggestion was made to present a memento for long membership of the Association, eg. a 10 year membership pin. Unfortunately the old membership database did not include date of joining information. In order to collect this information the old membership lists would have to be examined to determine eligibility. At present no further work has been done on this matter.

John O'Halloran

Statement of Receipts and Expenditure 1 March 1997 to 28 February 1998

Receipts		Expenditure	
Credit Balance	5,239.27	Newsletter	1578.95
President's Fly-In	1,640.00	President's Fly-In	1,840.00
Membership Fees	3,529.49	Insurance	247.62
AGM	2,818.50	Stationery	46.00
Adverts	50.00	Co-Op	200.00
		AGM	2,843.50
		AOPA	260.00
		Florist	25.00
		Dept. of Fair Trading	40.00
		Term Deposit	2,720.18
		Trophies	70.00
		Bank Fees	65.70
		Credit Balance	3,340.31
	\$13,277.26		\$13,277.26
Reconciliation		Assets At Cost	
Credit Balance	3,340.31	Typewriter	400.00
Term Deposit (2/11/97)	15,387.99	Label Printer	761.00
T/Shirts etc	2,080.50	Filing Cabinet	267.00
1 A/D VAT 28	120.00		
	\$20,896.80		\$1,428.00

John Treble

Treasurer

BURKE & WILLS SHOULD HAVE FLOWN

Anecdotes from a flying trip — April, 1998

The crew were similar to previous meanderings (*Newsletter No. 80, The Curse of Hitchcock and Anderson...ed.*), Hector & Wendy Blemings in CT4 YVV and Dot Ross & Mike Fisher in Airtourer 150 CND.

The GPS range to Tibooburra kept decreasing steadily. It was moving, we were not.

Charles Sturt made a similar observation in 1844; 'Nothing but bleak, empty and immense plains were before us'.

Unlike travelling up the centre of Australia where you know you are in the middle of a huge land mass, this trip is only on the edge of the interior. Mind you, it all looks the same. Possibly one difference is, initially at least, within this wide brown expanse there are signs of population, remote Stations, buildings, bore tanks and tracks. There are substantial rivers and numerous creeks meandering through the flat terrain, but they are *dry* creeks.

On the ground at Tibooburra the terrain is in fact more interesting than viewed from the air with majestic dark blue ranges in the distance capped by rugged granite outcrops. Tibooburra is the gateway to the Sturt National Park and as a service centre to the surrounding area and outback properties, but at Tibooburra our organisational skills became

somewhat tarnished. The airstrip is some distance from the town and how were we to phone for a pickup? Airport facilities were a locked fuel shed, a derelict Kombi-van, a broken down shed and a most interesting bush toilet with very specific instructions that the lid must be lowered gently at all times. A small plastic handle was provided for the user's convenience. The solution to the pickup was obvious — we would fly the CT4 around the town to attract attention, so I earned 30 minutes of CT4 time and completely failed to attract anyone's attention. In the meantime, Wendy found a phone in the derelict shed.

A few days earlier at the Airtourer

AGM at Griffith, I won the prestigious "best presented flight plan" or Secret Time of Arrival Award consisting of a trophy and a weight and balance nightmare which is some sort of shield contained in its own

crashworthy 10G wooden box. At any rate we were going on this trip and couldn't carry the coveted Airtourer artifact so it was necessary to jettison the artifact over the Strzelecki desert.

Only joking !

The awards were placed in Bill Miller's 172, not as some sort of bad joke but with Bill's agreement to carry them home. Picking my way back through the tie-downs, Stan Tilley's aeroplane was parked on the grass in front of the Aero Club under spot lights. The closer I came to the club, the louder were the sounds

The GPS range to Tibooburra kept decreasing steadily. It was moving, we were not.

to the club, the louder were the sounds from within as if in one voice, everyone was thanking the little aeroplane for bringing them together that night

The mental picture we had of Birdsville was of a runway and an adjacent hotel in isolated magnificence where once a year they ran the horses around the hotel. Nothing can be further from the truth. There is a substantial (for these parts) town and a very good runway. The pub is a focus providing good motel-style accommodation and first class meals. Food and other supplies are actually trucked up from Adelaide rather than from the Queensland Coast.

Our state borders are rather meaningless out here — the flight plan up from Tibooburra starting in NSW, entering Queensland, leaving Queensland and entering South Australia, leaving South Australia and re-entering Queensland.

Birdsville is isolated. A notice board outside the Police Station advises travellers leaving in any direction by road must report their Intentions. Further warnings advise that ground temperatures on the Simpson Track to the West, which is further into the interior, can reach 50°C. “Heroes’ were advised to take their own shovel to dig their own grave. Some 4-wheel drivers who had driven from Mt. Isa to Birdsville had taken 17 hours (over 2 days) of driving over rough tracks and we thought a 3 hour flight was going to be hard.

Outback Queensland is where the people are genuinely friendly. An exotic meal out is ‘Chinese’ or when in Longreach, dinner at the RSL. Allow your mind to imagine these sensations: sausages with gravy, rissoles with gravy,

chops with gravy, steaks with gravy, We had dinner at a pub, but they apologised for running out of gravy. I think a tanker was on its way from Brisbane with emergency supplies.

In outback Queensland men don’t wear ear-rings and they keep their hats on the right way round.

Longreach has many points of interest in addition to the excellent Stockman’s Hall of Fame and the recently opened Qantas Founders Outback Museum. For example, the Longreach Motors Co. Ltd. building. Longreach Motors celebrated it’s Silver Jubilee in 1935 when it opened a magnificent art deco showroom.

In outback Queensland men don’t wear ear-rings and they keep their hats on the right

Although added to and changed and now a Toyota dealer, if you press your nose against the glass doors taking care not to mark the now loose chrome LMC in the door handles, you

can see a showroom like none other with ornate ceiling cornices that had to be over 1 ft. wide. A stately wooden staircase leads to upstairs offices where once no doubt the successful land-holders of the district discussed the purchase of new vehicles, paying on the spot with large Station Owner’s cheque books.

Yvonne Solley had come up from Brisbane to run her mother’s shop while her mother holidayed in Melbourne. The Solley shop is another echo of the past and even though it was a Sunday and it wasn’t barely open, we were invited to inspect. Large stock shelves on both walls lined the complete length of the shop. Although the lines today are clothing and household goods, it once sold groceries at the rear of the shop, ladies wear upstairs, and toys in the basement. Being a former

(Continued on page 16)

THE SHERIFF OF LOCKINGTON INTERROGATES.....



WILLIAM HARRY MILLER, (known as Bill)

(Interrogated at Yarrawonga's A.G.M., March, 1997).

Named after H.R.H's. Princes William and Harry!

When did you become involved with the Airtourer Association? I'm an original member, and was involved with Victas before the Association began.

Your occupations? Pattern Maker/Tool Maker, learning the trade at International Harvester, and Ford. I've had more jobs than fingers and toes, including Motor Mechanic and Salesman. All jobs based on engine themes.

Where were you born? In Geelong.

Where have you, and do you live? Geelong mostly, United Kingdom, and now Brim.

Aircraft Type & Registration? Cessna 172 - CMG.

Have you owned any other aircraft? Austers, Turbulent - home built. I flew it for 4 hours and crashed it - not to fly again. Stits Flutter Bug (home built), Airtourer 100's - MUJ, MRZ, & PVS.

Any interesting stories about previous owners? MUJ was owned by John Wynn. He and Keith Buttrey flew it to England and back in the 1969 London-Sydney Air Race.

- MRZ I had in partnership with Aerobat Dave Pidlington. We bought it for \$2000.

- PVS was the 100th Victa built, and "100th Victa You Beauty" was written inside the fuselage.

- The Stits Flutter Bug was the first home built registered in Australia.

What year did you gain your pilot's licence? 1961. Purchased Auster KBT, and finished training in it.

Total hours flown? 5 - 600.

Longest trip flown? The Queensland Airtourer Safari. Some of the most enjoyable times, that and the Simpson Desert trip.

What was the (or one of the) most memorable flights you have done? I loved flying with Len Day in a Beech "Stagger Wing" - Beautiful big aeroplane. And a Proctor Five - another big, gorgeous aeroplane. Tons of power and room. Comfortable, ran on Mogas in the 1950's.

Who is your favourite Co-Pilot? Len Day, he helped me to learn to fly and was a good friend.

Most humorous moment in flight? As a Student Pilot, taxiing back in an Auster, I

swung around too sharply, the tail knocked flying the Airstrips 'dunny' which unfortunately was occupied at the time! The boy then had a real use for the toilet!
Other interests? Motor Cycle Racing on the Isle of Mann. Making Aircraft parts and building the Turbulent. Dancing.

Favourite Food? Anything that's edible and delicious - not healthy. My Motto is "If it's healthy, don't eat it!"

Favourite Drink? Glenfiddich.

Favourite Music? All types except heavy metal. I love Glen Miller music.

Favourite Sport? Love all sports. Have tried most, but loved racing push bikes and motor bikes.

Do you, or did you, have a nickname, and what is it? Used to be "Milko". Because I liked those white toffee bars of years back.

If you were Prime Minister of Australia for ONE day, what would you change for the betterment of Australia? I'd give every unemployed person in Australia a one way ticket to a third World Country, to show them responsibility and what a good country we live in.

What is/was your greatest extravagance? Buying a brand new Manx Naughton (Motor bike) in 1948 for 450 pounds.

If you had a spare million dollars what would you do with it? Buy an around the World Airline Ticket and not ask the price.

Any further comments you wish to add? In this modern day and age, men and women are no longer compatible, when we were made to be compatible. It amazes me that we no longer appear to get on, and go our separate ways, and are encouraged to do so. We're all responsible for our actions, it's not our God given right to have something given to us for nothing, therefore we should have pride in all we do. The Airtourer Group, and the Antique Aircraft Group are the nicest people you'd ever meet.

Thank you Bill for a very interesting "Interrogation", not only about yourself, but revealing information on some Airtourer's which many may not know about....'The Sheriff'.



(Continued from page 13)

the rear of the shop, ladies wear upstairs, and toys in the basement. Being a former retailer, Hector couldn't contain himself and lent a hand to hose the pavement at the front of the shop. "A clean shop is a happy shop and all breakages will be paid for." says Hector.

Burke & Wills 1860-61 expedition to cross the continent was a well resourced venture that left Melbourne in procession

with brass bands and ended in disaster. They followed a course not dissimilar to ourselves reaching the mud flats of the Gulf of Carpentaria but never finding an inland sea or rolling English pasture as many imagined the outback to be. There were no "plains of promise" then or now.

Both Burke & Wills perished on their return journey to the south. A cairn on the Mt. Isa/Cloncurry road marked where our paths came to cross.

For Sale

Victa 115

1965 S/N 128 TTIS 7961, EHTR 341, PHTR 158
King KY92 VHF, King KT 81 TXP, Bendix ADF with freq. display, Narco VOR,
Intercom, EGT, CHT, ELT
Fresh 100 Hrly with A.D.s up to date, Exterior 8/10
Asking \$28,000 ONO Phone & FAX **02 68464150**

For Sale

Victa 180HP CSU

Low engine and propeller hours
Excellent condition inside and out.
Freshly painted.
\$70,000 ONO
Ph. 0412 572000



Calendar of Events

President's Fly-In

Parkes
17-18 October 1998 (exact date to be confirmed)
Details in next newsletter

Annual General Meeting 1999

Mildura
date to be confirmed