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Newsletter No. 167

# AIRTOURER ASSOCIATION



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



# NEWSLETTER

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

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Articles for inclusion in the Newsletter should be submitted direct to John O'Halloran at the contacts listed above.

The next Newsletter will be published in November 2018. Contributions and or advertisements are to be with JOH by 15 October 2018.

Advertisements are free for current members.

### Editorial

President Mike Fisher commented that the lone Queenslander at the mid year lunch did not complain once about the Victorian weather. That was probably due to arriving by car, having failed once again, to be able to depart Queensland by Airtourer due to weather.

The trip started as a visit to Wagga Wagga for the General Aviation Summit but having come that far it would be remiss not to go the additional 2 1/2 hours to Tocumwal to see Lee Gordon-Brown. Then it's only about another two hours from TOC to pop down to Nagambie for lunch, and a great lunch it was. It was particularly good to catch up with Wendy Blemings again.

The steady stream of enquiries for support from the Co-op has been quite a learning experience. Having ready access to the drawings allows me to see the development of various parts over the life of the aircraft. There's quite a few gems of information buried within the drawings and in coming newsletters I hope to help keep the 'corporate knowledge' alive amongst the owners and enthusiasts.

Thanks to most of the membership who have renewed their subscription. Monique is busy with a new baby and new job so I'm looking after the renewals this year. My apologies if I have not replied to your emails, I'll try to catch up in the coming weeks.

Safe Airtouring,

*John O'Halloran*

**Cover Photo:** This photo of Henry Millicer (right) and the original wooden Airtourer VH-FMM was recently posted on facebook by Peter Kelly of the Aviation Historical Society of Australia. He scanned it and others from a collection loaned by John Hopton. Can anyone identify the date, location and the other people in the photograph.

### 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.

# From The President

## No. 19

### The Greatest Show On Earth

After a lot of time promising to go I finally did attend the 2018 Airventure, not my first visit, but no less stimulating.

The first thing is getting there; the longest journey may start with a single step, but in this case it involved sitting down for a long time.

Believe me, if you are an aviator, Oshkosh is something that should be done at least once in your lifetime. The late Bob Peak and Pat were serial attendees over many years, in one of our last conversations I recall Bob emphasizing that I should go!

Walking around at this great event those words kept coming back, thanks Bob!

The superlatives go on, the busiest airport in the world for one week, more operating aircraft in one place than anywhere else, 600,000 plus people, and \$170,000,000 into the local economy.



*The Airtourer group at Oshkosh. A very rare sight indeed, President Mike with his arm around someone wearing a CASA hat!*

The best thing I think is that for once you and I are not aliens; everyone is interested in aviation to some degree, that's why we are all here freely sharing our individual and collective experiences.

It's not just an airshow; there is every element of aviation represented in some form. My favourites were attending some of the hundreds of forums and manufacturers' display booths to learn what the latest trends and developments are, and after that there is always something to see or do.

For all the criticism the leftie press throws at the US you just have to admire the American way of doing things, it's not perfect but I just love their practical approach to getting things done. While we are being enslaved to the nanny state they are not. Individuals do have to take some responsibility for their own actions, I actually saw people riding bicycles without crash helmets!

Other Association members attending the event, were Andrew Clement, John and Becky Day. Apparently Becky is a very common name in North America, as are guns. Andrew and I had an enlightening conversation with a young lady, (not named Becky), who revealed as well as owning a Cessna 172 she also had a Glock pistol back in her tent. Perhaps it was our slightly red wine induced joviality but we failed to talk her into letting us have a go with the pistol. On reflection the Oshkosh camp ground may not have been the best place for a little target practice.

Australians were only outnumbered by the Canadians in international visitor numbers, the New Zealanders were also very well represented considering the smaller relative population.

The big items of interest were the latest gizmos. One being EFIS systems, something very attractive to home builders who can do what they want, or for STC supported equipment in American type certified aircraft. It is more problematic to update an Australian type certified aircraft like an Airtourer, disappointingly since the outcome would be much safer than original. I noticed one man selling "old fashioned" round instruments and he looked very lonely indeed.

Another hot topic was ADSB. The FAA has a mandated 2020 date for this equipment fit. Interestingly AOPA (US) state that presently the US General Aviation fleet has a higher percentage of ADSB uptake than the airlines. The FAA were encouraging this by a \$500 cash rebate to install ADSB. Their position is that ADSB is a safety enhancement which should be encouraged for all airspace users. My reading of the Australian situation is that they have imposed the highest technical standard, differing somewhat from the US, with the least possible service to the operating pilot, for example no data uplink, so reducing the full potential of the technology.

I believe that on past performance the we know best crowd in Canberra will ultimately mandate ADSB for all airspace users in Australia with the usual spurious justifications. An example is the mandated installation of transponders, which then had to be mode C, and now mode S. An additional burden was having to maintained and test them every two years because VFR aircraft operate, at times, in the same air as IFR. Another poorly thought out mandate was the ELT, which then had to be thrown

out because someone found a better version.

## Winter Lunch

This year's winter lunch back in July was a very successful gathering of grounded southern eagles, who cannot fly in the southern winter.

Le Penelope's at Kirwans Bridge Estate located in the Nagambie Lakes Wine Region, on the banks of the Goulburn River was a very busk and stunning venue. Even though we were seated in what would normally be the entrance it was comfortable and the staff just made it all work. And we also had a Queenslander make a guest appearance who did not once complain about the weather.

## Presidents Fly-In

Once again the Presidents Fly-In will be organized by the Vice-President. This year we are again going to South Australia, that's the bit between the self-important east coast and Western Australia.

Long overlooked as a destination for Airtourer events SA has a wealth of attractions that we intend to exploit over coming events.

This year we will concentrate on one of the great wine regions, The Coonawarra, and also Narracorte where the Aero Club will be hosting us for lunch followed by an underground adventure.

Details are now posted on the website so please read and make your plans. We will be in the middle of the Coonawarra Cabernet Celebrations which runs for most of October, booking your accommodation early is strongly advised.

With the return of good flying weather I hope to see you there.



## Mid Year Gathering

This year's mid year gathering was held at Kirwans Bridge Estate on the banks of the Goulburn River near Nagambie. The venue, Penelope's Restaurant, has floor to ceiling windows providing extensive views over the surrounding wetlands associated with the river. It's very popular, particularly on a Sunday, with at least one other function. We were allocated the very spacious foyer including a wooden sculpture made from the original vineyard. Kirwan's Bridge Estate is close to Warring airfield and the local school bus driver, airtourer owner and committee member Andrew Clement was available to shuttle anyone who chose to fly in. However, Victoria in the winter can be challenging for flying and this weekend was subject to a passing front with associated low cloud and rain forcing everyone to drive.

Thanks to the Events Committee for a very successful 'long lunch'.

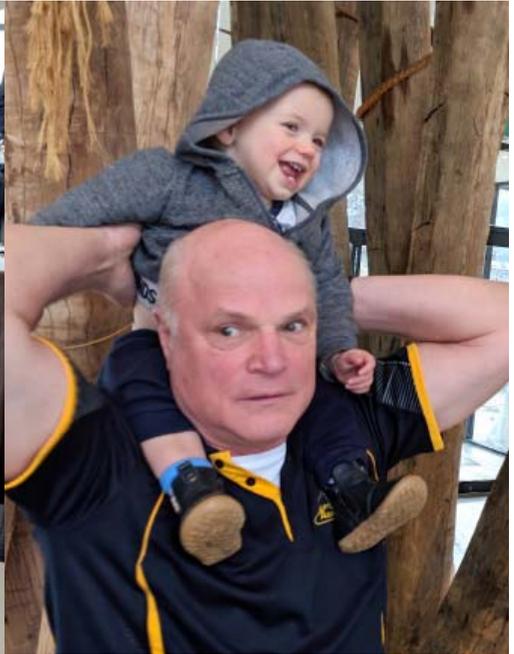
*Opposite page top Left: It was great to see Wendy Blemings again.*

*Top Right: "Uncle" Gerry Pels looking a little pensive while Atticus is enjoying the ride.*



*Above: Jane Morris, Monique Gillett with son Atticus and Sharon Clement.*

*Opposite Page Lower: L to R, Iavn Porteus, Beryl Marshall, Nola Porteus, Jane and Andy Morris.*





*Above: Sue Harris and Ian Close.  
Below: Murray and Andrea Wallace*





*Above Left: Jon Pels being taught to colour inside the lines by son Atticus. Top Right: David Wearne taking a big breath ready to blow out the candle on his 70th birthday cake encouraged by Dot Ross. Below: A committee quorum, L to R Monique Gillett, Andrew Clement and Niels Jensen.*



# General Aviation Summit

## Wagga Wagga, 9th & 10th July 2018

*John O'Halloran*

It is generally accepted that General Aviation (GA) in Australia has been in decline for many years. This is indicated by the reduction in activity at our GA airports, the demise of local aero clubs and the scarcity of licenced maintenance engineers. Some counter with statistics showing aviation activity has remained approximately constant over many years but this actually confirms a decline relative to other economic activity which is growing.

Previous attempts by GA groups to encourage reform, particularly regulatory reform, have been hampered by differing agendas. In January 2018 the Australian General Aviation Alliance (AGAA) was formed by three of the largest GA groups, Australian Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), Sport Aircraft Association of Australia (SAAA) and Aviation Maintenance Repair and Overhaul Business Association (AMROBA). It's aims are to promote GA, improve safety and provide advocacy. The first major activity was bringing the many diverse GA groups together in a summit held at Wagga Wagga over 9 & 10 July 2018. Both the Airtourer Association and Co-operative were represented by the author. Additionally, Association members Matt Henderson attended representing the Antique Aircraft Association of Australia and Marilyn Anderson attended as personal assistant to Dick Smith who

could not attend.

The summit ran over two days and included presentations by politicians, major industry figures and delegates from individual GA groups. The individual group presentations had the potential to become long winded until Lawrence Paratz spoke on behalf of a number of type groups. This presentation was so well done that others, including ourselves, elected to be covered by Lawrence.

The type groups are now a loosely affiliated group of clubs/associations with similar interests speaking with one voice. The Association is now part of this group.

One of the more interesting presentations was from Mike Smith. Mike's experience includes time with CASA as well as holding CASA and FAA, pilot, instructional and maintenance licences. He gave graphic and practical examples contrasting the ease of working within the FAA system compared with the Australian system.

Local Federal member, Deputy Prime Minister, Leader of the Nationals and Minister for Infrastructure and Transport spoke on the first day about his support for regional airlines and services to regional centres such as Wagga Wagga. When pressed on issues important to the summit he supported a bipartisan approach to the proposed changes in the Civil Aviation Act. As the responsible

minister he acknowledged there were many concerns and suggested the summit present a short list of issues that could be addressed easily.

The deputy leader of the Opposition Mr. Anthony Albanese is also shadow minister for Infrastructure and Transport and addressed the summit on the second day. Mr. Albanese came across as a polished and professional politician saying little to address the concerns of GA other than to commit to a bipartisan approach to reviewing the Act. During one lighter moment, a delegate raised concerns about the costs of operating at airports the Federal Government gave to local councils some time ago. Mr. Albanese replied, "That's the difference between capitalism and socialism", to which the delegate replied, "Yes comrade!"

Overall, both politicians, while supportive, gave the impression that they had higher priorities in the short term. Nevertheless, they both supported a bipartisan approach.

One of primary aims of the summit was to propose a change to the Civil Aviation Act to require CASA to consider cost and viability of the industry as well as safety in discharging its obligations. The summit was very clear that it did not support any changes that would reduce safety.

The second day included breakout groups to consider the issues to be addressed and priorities. This of course generated a wide range of views and some 'robust' discussion. Nevertheless, there was broad agreement and both the short list of immediate concerns and the longer term list were agreed upon and published on the AGAA website.

CASA has committed to simplifying the rules and developing 'outcome based' rather than prescriptive regulations. This was clearly stated in Director of Aviation Safety (DAS) Directive 01/2015, ([www.casa.gov.au](http://www.casa.gov.au)>Home>Publications and resources>Guidance materials>Directives and policies), and in CASA's published Regulatory Philosophy, ([www.casa.gov.au](http://www.casa.gov.au)>About Us>Who We Are>Our Regulatory Philosophy).

Reading CASA's announcements suggests they believe the current regulatory changes satisfy these goals. The industry would disagree. While it's easy to criticise CASA as being bureaucrats out of touch with the activity they regulate it is more likely they honestly believe the proposed changes satisfy the published philosophy. There appears to be differing understandings on the philosophy between the industry and the regulator, in particular the meaning of 'outcome based'. This deserves closer examination.

Mike Smith provided an example of prescriptive verses outcome based rules. In driving to the summit he passed through school zones where speed was limited to 40 kph during certain times. The desired outcome is obviously to make it safer for children. How often have you driven through a school zone during these times without a child in sight? In my experience, often, since the time period must be made sufficiently long enough to cover the likelihood of children being present. The result is a disruption in traffic flow when no threat to the children exists. However, it doesn't mitigate the threat for the kids coming in early for swimming training or late after footy training. An outcome based rule would be to limit the

speed when children were present. This directly addressed the desired outcome. However, it does make prosecution more difficult.

Given the belief that CASA was not following its own published philosophy there were suggestions to create an office within the Dept. of Infrastructure and Transport to monitor CASA's performance in this matter. I found this an interesting reflection on an Australian mind-set, that "...someone ought to..." or "...the Government ought to..." The IAOPA representative advised strongly against inserting another layer of bureaucracy, responsible to the minister not the industry. Rather, we as the GA community must take on the role of monitoring CASA, and using the democratic process if necessary in ensuring simple, outcome based, rules.

The challenge lies in assessing pro-

posed changes against the simplified and outcome based criteria. As a community we need to have a clear and consistent approach to this assessment and provide consistent feedback to CASA in the first instance and, if required, through local MPs and Senate Committees. Personally I believe that AGAA would be an appropriate organisation to develop a clear and consistent approach to evaluating the rules and in particular proposed changes.

The summit concluded with a statement to be forwarded to the minister, a copy of which can be found on the AGAA website. A number of delegates had been in GA for decades and commented that this was the most united the GA community had ever been. Both the Airtourer Association and the Co-operative will remain engaged with AGAA and the type groups.

### Heard at the Hangar Door

Congratulations to **Jack Hopgood** on being awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for decades of service to the community of Mount Gambier. Jack started serving much earlier, enlisting in the RAAF at the age of 19 in 1940. He served with No. 1 SQN in Malaya before being captured and spending the rest of the war as a POW. In spite of the terrible treatment the POWs suffered at the hands of the Japanese he bore no ill feelings towards them setting an example for generations to come. Congratulations also to **David Wearne** who not only celebrated a significant birthday at the mid year gathering but also for being named the Echuca Aero Club's "Club Person of the Year".

### Membership Renewals

Membership renewals were due in July and many of you have responded to the emails, thank you! For those who didn't get the email, the renewal fee is \$50 for the Association and \$100 for the Co-operative. Please pay by internet banking to the Airtourer Association, BSB 033 028 Account No. 460085, or by cheque to: P.O. Box 778, Tewantin Qld 4565.

One final reminder will be sent out before the next newsletter.

# Airtourer Co-op and Airworthiness News.

*John O'Halloran*

## Parts Update.

**Fuel Cells.** The new fuel cells have arrived. We need to order five at a time to make it economically viable for the manufacturer to buy in the materials. The big question is how many of the single hole for the Victa series and how many of the two hole AESL series to order? In the last order I elected for one two holer and the rest single hole. It should be no surprise to hear then that the first order was for the two holer. We still have three of the single holer tanks in stock at a price of \$3,921 ex GST and freight. As we have to pay in advance, any order will eat into our cash reserves so we'll be holding off until at least two of the remaining tanks are sold.

**Undercarriage Bolts.** A new supply of undercarriage bolts is being manufactured and are expected to be in stock soon. See also the item on these bolts under Airworthiness and ADs.

**Cleveland Brake Modifications.** The Coop has provided modification kits to replace the Dunlop brakes with Clevelans. Some members reported difficulty in fitting the kits as supplied. Further investigation revealed three different possible axles, this was complicated by not having the axle drawings, this being a Dunlop part. We've now had a new Engineering Order based on the most common axle and five kits of parts have been ordered. The modification kit plus EO will be available for \$950. Owners will need to purchase the Cleveland hubs, discs and

brakes. A recent check of Aircraft Spruce listed a cost of USD1890 for a pair of assemblies.

**Pirelli Straps.** The seat pan assembly includes for and aft crosswise 'Pirelli' straps. These straps are 1 1/2 inches wide which is no longer a standard size. Cutting down wider straps is not recommended however Pirelli straps can still be found with a bit of shopping around. One source is Padgham Upholstry at Moorabbin. Like anything scarce, or associated with an aircraft, it's not cheap, last quote was about \$11/m and at least 6m are required to replace both seats. (The Co-op has no connection with Padgham Upholstry and this information is pass on from a member.)

**Control Surfaces.** These remain one of our greatest challenges and there's been three enquiries recently. We have the dies to have skins stamped but the original sheet aluminium is no longer available. The closest equivalent material may be prone to cracking when stamped. The Co-op did investigate using skins from the CT4 and have NZ approval for replacement of the flaperon skins. However, the approval cost about \$10,000 and a further \$12,000 was required to purchase sufficient skins to supply three pairs of flaperons. The Board elected not to go ahead with the purchase or further approvals for the ailerons, elevator and rudder. Nevertheless, there is a demand, particularly for left aileron skins and we are investigating other options. The big-

gest challenge is gaining approval to use the alternate materials. This is further complicated by being a control surface which beings in balance and flutter considerations.

### **Airworthiness.**

**Airworthiness Directives.** The Cop is in discussions with CASA regarding two ADs.

**AD/VAT/32** requires rivets on the nose gear steering arm to be inspected every Daily Inspection. This has been incorporated into the Maintenance & Repair Manual and CASA were approached with a view to removing the AD. While they are keen to remove ADs and support our request CASA have to account for owners using the Schedule 5 CASA Maintenance Schedule. This schedule is generic and does not include type specific information.

This point came up in the past and at that time CASA pointed out that while Schedule 5 could be used, the inspection must be done to approved data, i.e. to the limits and requirements of the manufacturers manual. Owners should be aware that the Maintenance & Repair Manual may contain data missing from Schedule 5.

In the end CASA must consider the worst case where an owner is not referring to the current version of the manufacturer's manual and so the AD will remain.

**AD/VAT/31 Main Undercarriage Bolts.** Similar to the AD/VAT/32 case the limits on bolt life are included in the Maintenance & Repair Manual. Again CASA cannot justify removing the AD due to the use of Schedule 5.

Lee Gordon-Brown has found a

Victa test report investigating undercarriage bolt failures. This report led to the modified bolts that we now use. The report recommends a life of 500 hours which is the limit on the NZ CAA equivalent AD. However, AD/VAT/31 limits life to 350 hours due to two failures at 435 hours. We are working with CASA to have the limit extended to 500 hours as recommended by the Victa report and proven by aircraft operating under NZ rules.

**Document Updates.** Lee Gordon-Brown has been hard at work on the parts catalogue and Maintenance Manual. Amendments will be published shortly.

**Fuel Calibration.** While on the subject of fuel cells, there is a Maintenance Manual requirement to recheck the tank capacity calibration 6 to 12 months after installation. (Maintenance & Repair Manual para. 14-13 (k) Note., page 14-9) The reason is the fuel cell can slide aft reducing capacity and/or creating a crease that could trap fuel. The accompanying photo shows the underside of a tank with such a crease extending laterally across the tank.



## For Sale

### Airtourer Super 150 (Actually 160 hp)



Built 1970, Total Time Airframe 3836

Has fresh maintenance release current to 26th April 2019

Engine is 160hp TTIS 1737hrs approx, 4 renewed cylinders, overhauled Constant Speed Propeller and magnetos. (All overhauled/renewed items only 69 hours.)

Avionics classic full IFR equipped (currently VFR night rated)

Interior exceptionally well maintained in original condition

Exterior paintwork in generally good condition

130litre main fuel tank and optional extra auxiliary installed fuel tank 30litre (160litre total capacity)

Due to low time overahuled cylinders, magnetos and constant speed propeller the aircraft performs extremely well and passes all maintenance under CASA Maintenance Schedule 5 "with flying colours".

Contact Ray Abernethy 0409411940.

Price \$59,000

Private sale, no GST.



*The fuel tank mould stored and maintained by Australian Fuel Cells on the Gold Coast. This is one of two moulds, one for the Victa single inlet hole tank and the other the later AESL two hole tank.*

## Calendar of Events

### President's Fly In 2018

19-21 October 2018

Come to South Australia and join the Coonawarra Cabernet Celebrations.

### STOP PRESS!

Just when all the arrangements were in place the accommodation has been gazumped by a wedding. The Events Committee is busy making other arrangements which will be published on the website ASAP.

The plan remains to visit the Coonawarra region with a base of Naracoorte.

Starting with a walking tour of wineries in Coonawarra the accommodation will be at nearby Penola. Saturday will include a short flight to Naracoorte and a BBQ lunch hosted by the Naracoorte Aero Club. The afternoon will include an underground adventure in the world heritage listed Naracoorte caves before flying back to Coonawarra.

See the website for more details and registration.

### End of Year Function

2 December 2018

Fly or drive to Lilydale for lunch at Yering Meadows Golf Club adjacent to the Airfield.

### Convention and AGM 2019

29 March - 1 April 2019

Orange NSW.

More details on the website

### Welcome

**Tony Self and Angela Stevenson** from Blackburn in Victoria. Tony flies Airtourer Super 150 ECI at Lilydale and hopes to purchase an Airtourer in about five years to tour around Australia.

### Some Interesting CASA Airworthiness Bulletins

[www.casa.gov.au](http://www.casa.gov.au)>Aircraft>Airworthiness>Continuing Airworthiness>Airworthiness Bulletins.

- AWB 02-001 On-Condition Maintenance
- AWB 20-001 Spark Plug Care
- AWB 24-012 Battery Capacity Tests
- AWB 85-023 Piston Engine Spark Plug Insulator Cracking