



September 2025
Number 191

Airtourer
Association



Newsletter

Dedicated to the preservation and continued airworthiness of
Vicia and AESL Airtourer and derivative series aircraft

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Articles for inclusion in the Newsletter should be submitted directly to the Editor at the contacts listed above. Contributions and or advertisements for the next issue need to be received by 21 October 2025. Advertisements are free for Association members.			

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.

Cover: Stunning photo of Aerotec's CT-4E VH-CTZ (216) leading Matt Denning's CT-4A VH-CTQ (062) at the Brass Monkeys formation clinic over Toowoomba in July.

Photo: Lenn Bayliss



From the President

by **Deb Evans** (Vieta 115, VH-IOF)

Another of our wonderful members turned 90, Bonnie Tilley. I have been well informed Bonnie had a wonderful day and very much enjoyed the flowers we sent. Remember Bonnie: "Count your life by smiles, not tears. Count your age by friends, not years. Happy birthday!"



It is approximately 45 days until the President's Fly-in – a celebration of Cliff Tait delivering the first CT-4A Airtrainer to the Royal Australian Air Force in 1975. Fifty years later, the CT-4 remains a fixture in Australian skies. Registrations are now open and this is a wonderful opportunity for all us to come together and celebrate.

Registration can be found at: www.airtourerflyin.com

Rick and I have recently renewed our aircraft insurance with Agile. The benefits we found were:

- ✈ Special savings for members
- ✈ Cost savings
- ✈ Improved coverage
- ✈ Better service
- ✈ Tailored policy
- ✈ Understanding our requirements
- ✈ Approachable and efficient

It is not only Rick and I that have benefited from changing insurance companies or brokers. Multiple members have switched to Agile with considerable cost savings. Once logged in to our website using your member details, you will be able to click on the banner to obtain a quote from Agile.

A big thank you for renewing your membership! I genuinely value your loyalty and commitment to the Airtourer Association. I hope you have been able to take advantage of the value your membership provides, such as major fly-ins, virtual social gatherings via Zoom, insurance benefits and of course, our excellent newsletter on alternate months (my thanks go to Tony Self for his dedication to providing an exceptional newsletter). Your committee is always working to enhance your experience and look forward to supporting you in the year ahead. Do not hesitate to contact myself or one of the committee members if you have any questions or feedback.

Blue skies and tail winds.
Deb



THE LATEST NEWS



Movements

VH-LVU (advertised in the last Newsletter) has changed hands, with the new custodian being Andrew Hausar. Welcome to the Airtourer world Andrew!

Rumour has it that VH-MUZ is going to Whyalla or Cooper Pedy.

Membership Renewals!

Annual membership subscriptions are due, and existing members will have received an invoice from the Treasurer via e-mail. The AGM decided to increase the dues to A\$80 for this 2025/2026 financial year. When paying, don't forget to include your invoice number and surname in the reference box of your bank transfer!

Navigation Trophy

In years gone by, the Airtourer Association awarded a navigation perpetual trophy to the winner of a navigation trial at Association fly-ins. This fell away over time, and navigation trials faded from events.

Two things have recently changed: the trophy has been found, and a navigation trial (the cryptic NavEx) was re-introduced at the 2025 Convention in Mildura. The winners were Marty Moore and Kerry Klein in VH-CRK (an AESL Super 150 Airtourer). The Secretary is arranging the engraving of the 2025 winner!

New (NOS) Members

Welcome back Chris and Sheri Wilson from Caboolture. Chris first joined the Association when a shareholder in Airtourer 150 VH-RQH. His membership lapsed after RQH was written off in a landing accident and he went on to fly an RV6A. Nevertheless, Chris and Sheri joined some of our fly-ins and have decided to rejoin the association and will attend the President's Fly-in at Tamworth. Chris was a RAAF pilot, having completed his initial training on the CT-4 in 1979.



Royal Brunei Air Force sticks with CT-4

Six Royal Brunei Air Force (RBAirF) Student Pilots undergoing Basic and Intermediate Fixed Wing Pilot Training Course-61 have completed their first solo flight at Air Combat Australia between 09 July 2025 and 14 August 2025.



The student pilots accumulated around 19 flying hours covering Basic Flying Skills, Effects of Controls, Circuit Procedures, and Emergency Procedures before being cleared for their first solo flight. This milestone serves as a key benchmark, reinforcing their understanding of the fundamentals of flying. They will continue to persevere and stay focused on completing the course, progressing to more advanced technical skills such as air navigation, night flying, and instrument flying.

RBAF is not a big air force, so doesn't have a large throughput of student pilots. Earlier pilot courses were conducted at the BAe Systems Tamworth facility. RBAF CFIs were also trained on CT-4Bs in Tamworth, the first completing their training back in 2009.



Aeroplane 50th and 60th Birthdays

Airtourers

- VH-MFP (Clayton Crutch) - 3 Sep 1965
- VH-CHP (Susan Craven) - 17 Sep 1965
- VH-PUR (Marcus Skinner) - 23 Sep 1965
- VH-MUY (Tymon Dyer) - 22 Sep 1965
- VH-WHO (Mel Hupfeld) - 7 Oct 1965
- VH-TWG (Wes Madycki) - 21 Oct 1965

Airtrainers

- VH-AQP 048 (Geoffrey Partridge) - 1 Sep 1975
- VH-PTM 049 (Michele Schiffer) - 18 Sep 1975
- VH-YBD 050 (David Dunn) - 19 Sep 1975
- VH-SCT 051 (Peter Scott) - 19 Sep 1975
- VH-XAF 052 (Paul Hemler) - 13 Oct 1975
- VH-CTN 054 (Margot Rayner) - 13 Oct 1975
- VH-SZK 055 (Steve Guilmartin) - 13 Oct 1975

Aircraft Insurance for Members

Agile Insurance have put together a special package for Airtourer, Aircruiser and CT-4 Airtrainer owners. This arrangement is for current Airtourer Association members only. There is a good chance you can reduce your insurance costs with this offer, and there's absolutely no obligation. To get a quote, use your member details to log in to <https://airtourer.asn.au/> and then click the Agile link on the home page.

 Airtourer Association Inc.HomeHow to ClaimContactSign In

Cover your Airtourer Aircraft

Simple affordable hull and liability cover for your Airtourer Aircraft.

[Get a quote](#)

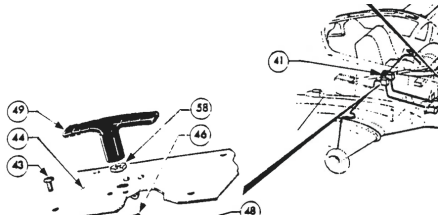
(This offer from Agile is only available to Airtourer Association members. If you're not a member, join up today and enjoy the benefits!)



Bumper Quiz

How well do you know CT-4s? Answers provided at Tamworth Fly-in, and in the November Newsletter.

1. What was the proposed CT-4G variant from a few years ago?
2. The ICAO type code for an Airtourer is TOUR. For an Airtrainer it's CT-4. What is it for an Aircruiser?
3. What is the origin of the CT-4 park brake handle?



4. How many CT-4 prototypes were there (not including the Aircruiser)?
5. What year did a CT-4 first touch down on Australian soil?
6. What was the name of the RNZAF Formation Team that operated CT-4s?
7. Name the three Airtourer and Airtrainer variants operated by the RNZAF?
8. True or False? The CT-4's wingspan is exactly the same as an Airtourer's.
9. What is the fuel flow (litres per hour) in cruise of a CT-4E?
10. Which company manufactured the first CT-4: Victa, AESL, NZAI, PAC, PAL or NZAero?
11. Which company manufactured the last (to date) complete CT-4: Victa, AESL, NZAI, PAC, PAL or NZAero?
12. Why was the Swiss company Breco's order for CT-4s not fulfilled?
13. What colour were Singapore's CT-4Es?
14. What has the fastest cruise speed... Winjeel or CT-4E?
15. What is the connection between the GAF Jindivik and the CT-4?
16. What was the last piston-engined aircraft operated by the RAAF?
17. The RAAF Museum owns the first of the RAAF's CT-4s, 027. Who owns the last of them?
18. The CT-4E is the Royal Thailand Air Force Type _____?
19. True or False? The Airtourer has a wing fence like the CT-4.
20. What is the CT-4B fuel capacity in litres?
21. True or False? CT-4s replaced Winjeels in the Forward Air Controller role.
22. True or False? Santa was injured in a CT-4 accident.
23. True or False? Ansett operated CT-4s.
24. Fake or fact?



The meaning of life: CT-4A 042

by **Murray Joel** (NZAI CT-4A VH-LAH)

*The Answer To The "Ultimate Question of Life, the Universe, and Everything" = 042
(A19, that is!)*

Apologies to Douglas Adams

Editor's Note: It's quite rare for someone to own the individual aeroplane they first soloed in. And there's a special bond between pilots and their first solo aircraft. It's even rarer for pilots who learned to fly in the military to end up owning their first solo military trainer! But Murray has managed it!



This is the potted history of my personal association with CT-4 number 42.

11AUG75	A19-042 (ZK-EAE) delivered to RAAF. First trans-Tasman journey.
24MAY78	Fresh-faced would-be aviator Cadet Joel casts off the surly bonds of earth for his first Air Force solo in A19-042, logging a massive 0.5 hours in the PIC column...



1993 to 2019	Fast-forward... 042 sold in 1993, to Australian owner, sold again in 1999, to a Kiwi buyer. – Second trans-Tasman journey; this time, east instead of west.
15OCT19	Spotted A19-042 for sale in UnZud, decided to inspect on a trip to Auckland.
20OCT19	Inspect 042 (ZK-LJH) at NZAR (Ardmore) for old times' sake, historical interest (?), no intention to purchase.
29OCT19	Decided to purchase (!), deposit paid. Intention to retain in NZ to explore the Land of the Long White Cloud, including Warbirds Over Wanaka 2020, with pilot son Alex (who had performed at WOW 2018 as part of RNZAF Black Falcons).
17DEC19	Settlement paid.
18DEC19	Annual completed by Pioneer Aero, NZAR.
02MAR20 20MAR20	NZ licence conversion at Auckland Aero Club, NZAR. •
19MAR20	NZ slammed door into the face of keen, not so fresh faced, aviator's face due COVID. 😞.
12MAY21	Rego now VH-LAH, ferried from NZKK (Kerikeri) to YBAF (Archerfield) via YBCG (Coolie) and YLHI (Lord Howe). Third trans-Tasman journey.
14MAY21	Reposition to Aerotec in YTWB (Toowoomba) for maintenance and admin to add to the Australian register.
24JUN21	Ferry YTWB to YGAS (Gatton Airpark) – Finally home! My first flight in 042 for 46 years!
TBA	The saga continues...

Registrations for the President's Fly-in to Tamworth close on 30 September 2025. Don't miss out on this celebration of 50 years of CT-4 operation in Australia!

www.airtourerflyin.com



Buy, Swap and Sell

Don't let your unneeded Airtourer and CT-4 bits and pieces collect dust! Put them up for sale here! Or do you need a particular part or instrument? Ask here! Why not try to swap for something you no longer need? Or is it time to re-home your aircraft, or are you looking to buy? *Buy, Swap and Sell* is your Airtourer and CT-4 marketplace! It's free to advertise... just send your ad to editor@airtourer.asn.au.

For Sale: Victa Airtourer VH-MRJ

Serial number 107. Made in Australia in 1965.

150 HP Lycoming Engine O-320 E1A installed 10/01/2020 @ 2405.5 AFTT (brand new engine, not an overhauled engine). Engine 178.1 TSN.

Constant speed propeller. Propeller 12.6 SMOH.

The numbers on the prop and engine are at the last M/R issue Dec 24.

Total time on airframe 2595.5 hours as of 19/08/2025.

Always hangered. Never used by flying school. Brand new paint done in September 2022.

History

150 HP Lycoming engine installed in 2004 when aircraft was registered VH-LVW.

Instruments and avionics

1 x 430 Garmin GPS, 1 x GTX 327 Garmin Transponder, 1 x PS Engineering audio panel, Fuel scan FS-450



Contact Sandra Cabot, 0416 170 946, doctorcabot@liverdoctor.com



For Sale: VH-RQH Airtourer 150 Fixed Pitch

The rebuild project is almost complete and will be sold with maintenance release. Reluctant sale due to health and hangarage challenges.

Contact Rod Swallow 0427 521 803



Victa Airtourer 115 VH-MVF

We are selling MVF! Aussie built 115, serial number 19. MVF was a demonstrator for Victa and was on static display at Sydney Royal Easter Show in 1963. Call or text Mark Barnett for details Ph: 0400 051 528



Share in TPY

A syndicate share of TPY is up for sale, \$6500. Near new Lycoming, recently overhauled, and new paint and tyres.

Located Gympie, Queensland. This share is only being sold due to not being flown regularly by the owner.

Contact Michael Smith via Facebook or [Plane Sales](#).



Advertise here!

Buy, Swap and Sell advertisements for Association members are free!



*Atmospheric photo of a CT-4A at Hunter Valley Airshow in 2020.
Photo: Angela Stevenson*



Saddle up for Tamworth!

by **Tony Self** (AESL Airtourer T6, VH-FVV)

A big weekend of aviation activities are all set for the President's Fly-in to Tamworth from 17 to 19 October 2025. This year's fly-in celebrates 50 years of CT-4 operations in Australia, and we're expecting more CT-4s than Airtourers for a change!

In 1975, Cliff Tait delivered the first CT-4A Airtrainer to the Royal Australian Air Force. Fifty years later, the CT-4 remains a fixture in Australian skies.

The Airtourer is, of course, the progenitor of the Airtrainer, and along with the Aircruiser, completes the Airtourer family of aircraft.

The Association holds two major events every year: the Airtourer Convention and AGM, and the President's Fly-in. Early President's Fly-ins were held at the long-time President Sonny Rankin's property at Yarrandale in NSW, and at its peak, attracted scores of Airtourers and a few RAAF CT-4s (and even Army Porters and Nomads).



Flashback to President's Fly-in, September 1979, at Yarrandale, attended by four CT-4s (029, 036, 044 and 052) from 1 FTS at Point Cook. Photo: Peter Kelly



Program of Activities

The Fly-In programme includes:

- A Gala Dinner featuring guest speakers, including Don 'McZero' McNaught
- An 'Elephant Walk' for all attending Airtourer family aircraft
- Lunch with the living legend Cliff Tait (via Zoom from New Zealand).
- Formation fly-past of Tamworth
- Plaque commemoration with the Mayor of Tamworth
- A CT-4 Film Night
- Walk-throughs of the old Flight College, and the East-West hangar (TBC)
- Pilot Proficiency Session - 'Pilot Approved Maintenance'
- Education session with NZAero - find out about midlife upgrade and the CT-4G
- Aircruiser Discovery session with John O'Halloran
- Airtourer vs Airtrainer Armchair "Dogfight"

There will also be a highly desirable special souvenir pack for full registrants!

Tamworth was chosen as an appropriate venue for the 2025 Fly-in, as the home of a large fleet of CT-4B aircraft for almost three decades.



Photo: Angela Stevenson



Gala Dinner

A Gala Dinner will be held on Saturday evening of 18 October at Rydges Powerhouse, in the Guy Kable Room.

The Official Dinner Guest Speaker is **Don ‘McZero’ McNaught**, and his talk is entitled “60 great years of flying Airtourers, Aircruiser, and CT-4s”.

Born and raised in rural Victoria, Don’s aviation adventures began with a private pilot’s license and being called up for National Service at age 20. Don served in Singapore, Malaysia and as an Infantry Platoon Commander in Vietnam before a twenty-year military career took flight - including at No. 1 Flight Training School, Point Cook, and as an instructor at East Sale. Don has flown just about everything cool, from Airtourers to CT-4’s, Winjeels, helicopters, jets, hang-gliders, gliders, ultralights and the one and only Aircruiser. After a seven-year stint as a senior instructor in Saudi Arabia, he returned to a unique triple life: a flight screening instructor, an operational Army pilot, and a commercial helicopter pilot for SeaWorld. Now retired on the Gold Coast, he enjoys flying recreational aircraft.



Elephant Walk and Formation Flypast

One of the events at the Tamworth Fly-in is an “Elephant Walk”. This is something that is not uncommon for groups of military aircraft, but is rare in civil aviation. An Elephant Walk is a formation of aircraft taxiing in close succession. It is expected that every Airtourer family aircraft will be able to participate in this spectacle, and no special endorsement is required. (The aircraft will not leave the ground, but will taxi in a line down the runway and past the terminal building.) *Photo: Royal Thai Air Force*



Commemoration

To commemorate the 50 year milestone, the Mayor of Tamworth, Russell Webb, will be unveiling a plaque. In addition, some very collectible memorabilia will be included in a souvenir pack, including a limited print artwork by aviation artist Graeme Molineaux (only available to full registrants).

To add to the festivity, there will be a fun debate (“The Airtourer vs Airtrainer Dogfight”), and a CT-4 film night featuring footage of CT-4s from 50 years ago to the present.



Photo: Michael Jorgensen

Cliff Tait Lunch

One of the most famous names in Airtourer tradition is Cliff Tait. Although Cliff can't join us in person, he will be talking to us via Zoom from his home in New Zealand for the Saturday lunch. Cliff not only flew an Airtourer around the world, but also delivered the majority of CT-4s across the Tasman, and a number of AESL Airtourers. (See Cliff visiting “Miss Jacy” on page 28.)

NZAero

Not only are NZAero (the current owners of what used to be Pacific Aerospace) attending, but they are sharing the latest on the proposed CT-4G initiative, and on the CT-4E midlife upgrade prospect. The Fly-in is a great opportunity to meet the NZAero team!



Flypast

For formation-endorsed Airtourer, Aircruiser and Airtrainer pilots, a flyover of Tamworth is planned for the Sunday, with practice on the previous day. As with any formation activity, this will be thoroughly briefed.

International Flight Training Tamworth

For 27 years, BAe-Ansett and later BAe Systems operated CT-4Bs as part of ADF flight screening and training from a huge facility at Tamworth. That facility is now known as International Flight Training Tamworth (IFTT). Many CT-4B owners will have photos of their aircraft parked under the huge shadecloth bays at Tamworth.

In peak nostalgia, registrants will be able to tie-down their Airtourer family aircraft under the same shadecloth. And for those pilots who trained at Tamworth, the Friday night welcome drinks and dinner at the old BFTS Bar (now the Tamworth Aero Club bar) will be a special treat.

Sydney Flight College (SFC) Tamworth and Singapore Flying College now operate from IFTT, and SFC will not only be hosting a BBQ lunch on the Sunday, but will be helping out in many other ways. There will be a tour of the old BAe facilities, and we hope, a walkthrough of the East-West Airlines hangar where it was once planned that Airtourers would be manufactured in 1958!

Aircruiser

The equal rarest aircraft in the world is the Victa Aircruiser VH-MVR, serial number 07-01. Members Monique Gillett and Jon Pels will be bringing MVR to the event, to give people the chance to see this influential and iconic aircraft. An Aircruiser Discovery talk will present the developmental history of the Aircruiser and its evolution into the Airtrainer.



We also hope to have the specific Airtourer that the RAAF evaluated prior to ordering the CT-4A off the plans!

See full details at www.airtourerflyin.com!



Accommodation

Primary Accommodation with a group discount has been arranged at the Best Western Sanctuary Inn.

A variety of rooms have been reserved under 'Airtourer Association' (see How to book below).

- Standard Room \$159pn
- Queen Bed Room \$179pn
- King Bed Room \$199pn

Other room types are available, even a pet-friendly room.

How to book:

Please email the Hotel Manager, Jack Dalton using the subject line: 'Airtourer Association Booking'

hotel.manager@sanctuaryinn.com.au

Limited time to book: Airtourer Association Special Rates only apply until September 30.

- Cancellations before 8 October at 10am - full refund.
- Cancellation between 10am on 8 October and 10am 15 October - 80% refund.
- Cancellations between 10am 15 October and 10am 17 October - one-nights' fee.

How to Register for the Fly-in

Registrations are open until 30 September 2025, or until sold out. Don't straggle! Every person attending has to be registered through www.airtourerflyin.com.

Full registration (\$325) includes: potential participation in all events and sessions, Friday night welcome drink, CT-4 Film Night, the Armchair Dogfight, Gala Dinner, Saturday and Sunday lunches and morning/afternoon teas, scheduled bus transport, and the Official Souvenir Pack (only available to full registrants - you will not want to miss out on one of these!).

For non-aviating partners, a Partial Registration (\$120) is available for the Gala Dinner on Saturday night and bonus inclusion in the Friday night festivities! (An optional 'Walking Bus Tour' of Tamworth is also available at participant's own expense - please email treasurer@airtourer.asn.au if you wish to partake in this activity).

Register online now at www.airtourerflyin.com



Partners - Airtourer Association President's Fly-in

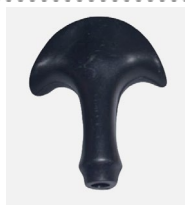


Calendar of Events

6 September	Youth in Aviation Day, Temora	Hosted by Temora Flyers. Temora Flyers Inc- Youth in Aviation Discovery Day
21 September	Tocumwal Airshow	Interested in attending? Let the committee know!
17-19 October	President's Fly-in, Tamworth	50 Years of CT-4 in Australia. Don't miss this one!
7-9 November	Formation Camp, Yarrawonga	Contact Tony Self tony.self@hyperwrite.com
13-15 March 2026	Airshows Downunder Shellharbour	Interested in attending? Let the committee know!
28-29 March 2026	Warbirds Over Scone	Interested in attending? Let the committee know!
May 2026	Airtourer Convention and AGM	Temora

Puzzle

What is this?



Solution on page 30.



Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon

The Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon Rule says that every actor in Hollywood can be connected to prolific actor Kevin Bacon through having worked together. It's easier to explain with an example: Michael Caton (The Castle) was in *Never Tell Me Never* with Joel Edgerton who was in *Black Mass* with Kevin Bacon. This gives a Bacon Number of 2.

There is a Web site that you can use to find the Kevin number.

<https://www.oracleofbacon.org/index.php>

This is an extension of the Six Degrees of Separation theory, which says that everyone in the world is connected to every other person in the world by having met someone in common.

Can this rule be applied to the Airtourer family? Let's try with an unrelated aircraft at random. A Twin Otter.

Twin Otter was operated by TAA
TAA also operated Fokker Friendship
Friendship also operated by Department of Civil Aviation
Department of Civil Aviation operated an Airtourer.

Let's try another. MiG-25 Foxbat.

MiG-25 was operated by the Indian Air Force.
Indian Air Force also operated the BAe Hawk.
The Hawk was operated by the RAAF.
The RAAF operated the CT-4A Airtrainer.

Your turn. The aircraft is the **Edgley Optica**.



Photo: Nigel Ish



Brass Monkeys Formation Clinic

by **Annamaria Zuccoli** (PAC CT-4E Airtrainer, VH-CTZ)

Brass Monkeys started as a fun way to bring together a group of like-minded CT-4 owners to share in both the excitement and the challenge of formation flying. Why “Brass Monkeys”? Well, it’s held in Toowoomba—in the middle of winter—so you can probably work the rest out for yourself!

Our inaugural Brass Monkeys event kicked off in 2020 with just five aircraft. This year, we welcomed 11 in total. Pilots arrive on the Friday, and we usually manage a quick ‘warm-up’ flight that afternoon. It’s a great way to set the tone for the weekend—and to give the locals a bit of a heads-up about what’s coming!

Each year, we’ve seen growing community interest on social media, with videos and photos capturing the aircraft overhead. More importantly, especially in aviation, we’ve seen just how much the public enjoys seeing the formations flying over the town and surrounding areas. We use this as an opportunity to promote our local aerodrome and foster a positive attitude toward our industry. There’s nothing more gratifying than seeing future pilots looking skyward, watching our little Parrots fly by.



Photo: Lenn Bayliss

We also welcome CA-25 Winjeels into the formation clinic. This allows us to involve our local group of Winjeel owners. The CT-4s and Winjeels complement each other beautifully, and the resulting imagery is spectacular.



This year's lineup included 7 CT-4s and 4 Winjeels:

CT-4 Aircraft

- VH-CTZ (E) – Matt Handley & Murray Joel (who's A/C was unserviceable)
- VH-DAP (B) – Pilot: Ben Blades
- VH-ZCT (B) – Owner/Pilot: Jake Naumann
- VH-APV (A) – Owner/Pilot: Paul McKenna
- VH-CTQ (A) – Owner/Pilot: Matt Denning
- VH-YVV (A) – Owner: Pat Tolhoek; Pilots: Dave Kerr & Paul Brady
- VH-DMI (A) – Owner/Pilot: Philip Munro

CA-25 Winjeels

- VH-WIJ – Pilot: Ed Field
- VH-XXD – Owner/Pilot: Peter Thomson
- VH-NSJ – Owner/Pilot: Stephen Bowtell & Nathan Bowtell
- Unlisted



Photo: Lenn Bayliss

Our group includes a wide mix of experience: flying instructors, examiners, professional and private pilots. Many of us have a strong connection to the CT-4 through early flight training or instructing. It's a diverse and eclectic group, with backgrounds ranging from F-111s, Hercules, to Cathay Pacific airliners, military helicopters, warbirds—even an experimental helicopter test pilot. But what we all share is a deep respect for the CT-4 and its exceptional design as a training aircraft.

Each morning begins in the Aerotec Flight Training briefing room, with hot coffee and sweet treats in hand. We talk through the goals for the flight, check the weather,



plan our formations, and choose which part of the training area we'll use. Emergency procedures and communication plans are always covered, and there's no shortage of good-natured banter. What really sets this group apart is the respect shared between pilots—on the ground and in the air. Egos are left at the door, and the focus is always on safe, enjoyable flying.

Saturdays typically begin with small formation work—groups of three or four aircraft—building up to a mass formation in the afternoon, once everyone's comfortable. We usually repeat this on Sunday morning. And throughout the weekend, we're lucky to have Lenn Bayliss onboard, capturing our efforts with his exceptional aviation photography. His images never fail to impress.



Photo: Lenn Bayliss

Formation flying demands precision, discipline, and constant communication. It's a skill that must be practised regularly to ensure safety and proficiency. Being part of a group like Brass Monkeys—where every pilot shares the same commitment to improvement, professionalism, and mutual respect—elevates the experience beyond just flying. It creates a supportive environment where we push each other to be better, celebrate each other's progress, and uphold the highest standards of airmanship. There's something incredibly rewarding about flying in close formation with a group of pilots who not only understand the responsibility it carries, but also genuinely enjoy the camaraderie it brings.

It's also important to acknowledge the vital role that Aerotec Queensland plays in the ongoing success of the Brass Monkeys clinic. Their support—both in providing facilities and fostering a professional yet welcoming environment—ensures the event runs smoothly and safely. The use of their briefing room, access to resources, and the



presence of experienced personnel all contribute significantly to the standard of training we achieve. Continuation of this clinic under Aerotec's wing is essential not only for maintaining proficiency in formation flying, but also for strengthening the aviation community here in Toowoomba and beyond.

Looking ahead to next year's Brass Monkeys, plans are already underway to make it even bigger and better. In addition, we've extended an invitation to another aircraft to take on the role of designated photo ship—ensuring we capture even more dynamic and professional imagery of the formations. With continued enthusiasm from our regulars and growing interest from new participants, 2026 is shaping up to be another memorable year in the skies over Toowoomba.

Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vtb6ylauI6M>



Know some more/about the CT-4

by **Tony Self** (AESL Airtourer T6/24, VH-FVV)

The Airtourer is very familiar and well-known to the Association membership, and we all know a bit about the CT-4. For a while, civil registered Airtourers were aplenty and ex-RAAF CT-4s were rare, but we now find that there are probably as many CT-4s flying in Australia as there are Airtourers. If you want to know more about the CT-4, read on!

Let's start backwards. The last production model of the Airtrainer was the E model: the CT-4E. This variant is substantially different from the previous A and B production models, the most obvious difference being the stonking great 300 hp six-cylinder Lycoming AEIO-540 engine up front. When you think about it, that's three times the power of the early Victa Airtourers! The bigger, heavier engine meant some fuselage redesign, and a quite different cowling. The last E model was built in 2008, although there's an unfinished hull at NZAero.

Now, back to the beginning. AESL tried to promote the Airtourer T6 as a military trainer in about 1968. Realising that the T6 wasn't a good fit to the requirements, the company started work on the bigger Airtrainer design. This was to be based on the Victa Aircruiser, and AESL bought the rights and the prototype from the remnants of Victa Aviation Division in December 1969. The Aircruiser was disassembled and transported to New Zealand in a Qantas Boeing 707 VH-EBN.

The AESL-owned Aircruiser, registered ZK-DAH, was used as a pattern for the proposed Airtrainer. By 1971, the RAAF had finally decided to abandon the "all-through jet training" plan using Macchi jet trainers, and issued specification ASR AIR/67 for a piston-engined basic trainer. By 1972, AESL had completed the first prototype of the CT/4 Airtrainer, ZK-DGY. The Royal Thai Air Force, with a requirement to replace their DHC Chipmunks, were waiting to see what the RAAF selected. As soon as the RAAF made the decision to buy 37, the RTAF jumped in with their order for 24 aircraft. The production version was designated CT/4A.

But AESL became a victim of its own success. It didn't have the capital to ramp up to satisfy such big orders. After an injection of funds from the New Zealand Government and Air New Zealand, and a merger with Air Parts Ltd, the company became New Zealand Aerospace Industries (variously NZAI, NZAIL, or NZASIL), and production could begin.

The RTAF and RAAF orders completed the A model production in late 1975, with the next 14 aircraft to be produced in military configuration for the Swiss company Breco. Designated CT-4B, these aircraft included underwing hardpoints and a weapons panel. It turns out that Breco was acting as a front for the apartheid



Rhodesian Government, then under international trade sanctions. When this was discovered, the aircraft were impounded and placed in storage.

The next order, with production starting in 1976, was 19 aircraft for the RNZAF. These aircraft were originally designated CT/4D, but ended up with CT/4B data plates. This run was built to an RNZAF specification, not a civil FAR specification.

In 1981, the RAAF acquired all 14 of the stored Breco/Rhodesian aircraft for \$500,000 in a bargain of the century! However, the aircraft had to be reworked back to CT/4A standard before they could be delivered, and deliveries proceeded from April 1981 until April 1982.

With no further CT-4 orders, the company was in trouble. There were still orders for NZAI's Fletcher FU-24. The company was reformed as Pacific Aerospace Corporation (PAC). The CT-4 production line was closed for almost a decade. This changed when an order was received from BAe/Ansett flying college in Australia in 1989. By then, ASTA (the corporatised remnants of Government Aircraft Factories) had bought PAC, reputedly to prevent the CT-4 type being "orphaned".

BAe/Ansett ordered 12 aircraft, and PAC restarted production. This version needed to be FAR-certified, and became the B model. (Of course, the B model had previously been used for both the Breco and the RNZAF order, and this has caused confusion ever since!) Delivery of the civil CT-4B aircraft started with VH-YCA in 1991.

The RTAF had lost a number of CT-4As since 1974, and took advantage of the production line re-opening to order six CT-4Bs.

Part of the reason for BAe/Ansett choosing the CT-4 was that they had won an ADF contract for the privatisation of basic flying training. The RAAF started retiring their CT-4As in 1992 as the Tamworth CT-4Bs came online.

When the last of the CT-4Bs were delivered to the RTAF, it looked again like CT-4 production was finished. It would have been a good run of 18 years on and off, but the CT-4 story wasn't finished.

The RNZAF chose to replace its (military) CT-4Bs with an order for 13 big-engined E models. The changeover, in 1998-1999, coincided with a need for more (civil) CT-4Bs for Tamworth (the college now being called British Aerospace Flight Training). The production line had been changed over to the E model, so PAC decided to convert second-hand Airtainers to civil B standard to fulfil the BAe order for 18 aircraft. Nearly all of the remaining retired RNZAF aircraft (15 of them) were bought back, along with another three ex-RAAF CT-4As on the civil register in Australia (VH-PGH, VH-ZCT, and VH-DAP).

The Royal Thai Air Force took the opportunity to renew its fleet with 24 more CT-4Es, and the Singapore Youth Flyers also bought two E models.

[To be continued...]



BaE Systems CT-4 Fleet

	C/N	Previous	Date	Registration
1	97	New	3/4/91	VH-YCA
2	98	New	11/6/91	VH-YCB
3	99	New	11/6/91	VH-YCC
4	100	New	17/7/91	VH-YCD
5	101	New	17/7/91	VH-YCE
6	102	New	17/7/91	VH-YCF
7	103	New	28/8/91	VH-YCG
8	104	New	29/8/91	VH-YCH
9	105	New	28/8/91	VH-YCI
10	84	NZ1936	12/11/99	VH-YCJ
11	106	New	4/11/91	VH-YCK
12	107	New	4/11/91	VH-YCL
13	108	New	4/11/91	VH-YCM
14	92	NZ1944	11/11/98	VH-YCN
15	87	NZ1939	23/4/99	VH-YCO
16	94	NZ1946	11/99	VH-YCP
17	99	NZ1940	4/1/99	VH-YCQ
18	89	NZ1941	3/2/99	VH-YCR
19	90	NZ1942	1/99	VH-YCS
20	91	NZ1943	19/2/99	VH-YCT
21	79	NZ1931	7/99	VH-YCU
22	93	NZ1945	7/1/99	VH-YCV
23	95	NZ1947	7/5/99	VH-YCW
24	78	NZ1930	16/12/99	VH-YCX
25	80	NZ1932	12/99	VH-YCZ
26	83	NZ1937	12/11/99	VH-YAB
27	81	NZ1933 ZK-JMN VH-CTZ VH-CTQ	1/2/10	VH-YNZ
28	59	A19-059, VH-AGH	10/8/11	VH-PGH
29	58	A19-058	28/6/11	VH-ZCT
30	47	A19-047	4/11/14	VH-DAP



Pacific Flight Services Fleet (2020-current)

	C/N	Previous	Date	Registration
1	99	BAe Systems	28/04/2020	VH-YCC
2	100	BAe Systems	29/04/2020	VH-YCD
3	84	BAe Systems	28/04/2020	VH-YCJ
4	92	BAe Systems	28/04/2020	VH-YCN
5	87	BAe Systems	28/04/2020	VH-YCO
6	94	BAe Systems	28/04/2020	VH-YCP
7	99	BAe Systems	28/04/2020	VH-YCQ
8	89	BAe Systems	01/05/2020	VH-YCR
9	91	BAe Systems	28/04/2020	VH-YCT
10	79	BAe Systems	28/04/2020	VH-YCU



Cliff Tait and Joyce Tait making a recent visit to see “Miss Jacy” in MOTAT in Auckland. Cliff circumnavigated the globe in the AESL Airtourer 115 ZK-CXU in 1969. Join us at the President’s Fly-in to Tamworth to hear Cliff recount some of his adventures (via Zoom). Photo: Crissi Tait



Formation Camp 2025

Yarrawonga - Nov 2025

It's on again! Current, rusty or prospective formation pilots with Airtourers or CT-4 Airtrainers are invited to a formation flying weekend hosted by the Airtourer Association at Yarrawonga, 7-9 November 2025.

This is not a general fly-in or a social get-together, but a weekend focussed on formation flying in Airtourer, Aircruiser and Airtrainer (CT-4) types. For non-endorsed prospective formation pilots, instructors will be available to get you started on your training. Likewise, if you are endorsed, but rusty, and would like some refresher training, the instructors can also help out too. And, if you are current with formation flying, but would like to fly with aircraft of the same type, then this will be a great opportunity to do that, while providing a “target” for others to follow.



If you are ready to lock in, [register now](#) to ensure you don't miss out! To find out more, contact Tony Self at tony.self@hyperwrite.com.



Around the Grounds

What's happening on social media?

Michael Smith, a member of the TPY consortium, has succeeded in getting OzRunways to enter Airtourer 115 data from the POH into the app, making it easy for weight and balance and fuel calculations. Thanks for sharing the update on the Airtourer Facebook group, Michael!

Wayne Lee has been asking about seat covering to replace the Airtourer vinyl, and received a good suggestion from Peter Cooney. Chad Summers asked a question about navigation light covers. Doug Gould posted updates on his progress with CTM, which has reached the exciting painting stage.

Poor old Stuart Lee has been pulling his hair out while fitting a new windscreen at Wangaratta.

Julian Szaters has been sharing videos of his aerobatic practice in CT-4B VH-PGH.



A few Association members, including Marcus Skinner and Robin Hiliard, have been lucky enough to attend Oshkosh this year, and have posted some jealousy-inducing photos.



Puzzle Solution:

**Starter Handle for Victa 2 Stroke Mowers From 1953-1985
ST12572A**

Also, pull starter for Victa Airtourer 100.



The Treasury

by **Angela Stevenson** (Airtourer T6/24, VH-FVV)



G'day again fellow Airtourer owners and enthusiasts and Airtourer-ists...

Well, the excitement is building for the 2025 President's Fly-In in Tamworth in October...and I mean, *really* building. Budget has been approved and the Airtourer Association is all in! It's set to be a cracker weekend.

For the event, the Association's Charter... 'the preservation and continued airworthiness of Victa and AESL Airtourer series aircraft'.. is at the forefront of the Committee's decision-making processes.

Term Deposit

Another of the term deposits (\$35,493.39) has been renewed (with interest reinvested) for an 11 month term at 4% - quite a competitive rate.

Subscription Invoices

You will have noticed that Association & Coop Membership Renewal Invoices have been sent out from MYOB again. A little delayed as it took some time to set up a recurring invoicing system. However, this hopefully means that next year there will be less for myself and the membership secretary to do when it comes to renewal time.

Payments are being steadily received and receipts will be issued in due course.

If you have received your invoice and have not yet paid (and you intend renewing!!), can you please attend to that as soon as possible so I can keep the books in order?

Don't forget to include your surname and invoice number in your payment reference field!!

If you haven't received your renewal, please email me pronto!

treasurer@airtourer.asn.au



From the Archive

ANSETT NEWS SEPTEMBER 1989



Work to begin on Training College

WORK ON the site for the new British Aerospace-Ansett Pilot Training College at Tamworth, NSW, will begin late this month.

A joint venture board elected recently has Alan Notley, Executive Director Finance & Administration, ATI, as its chairman and John Bibb, Assistant General Manager-Technical and Cliff Jackson, Regional Director ATI-NSW as the other Ansett members.

Shown at an earlier meeting for consideration of architects' conceptual drawings prior to their presentation to the British Aerospace partners are (from left) Paul Crompton, Building Projects Co-ordinator; Captain Ken Patton, Principal-elect; Ian Mason, Technical Administration Director; Max Hamilton, of Hamilton Hayes Henderson, architects; John Barker of Rider Hunt, quantity surveyors; Lloyd Reeves, Manager, Special Projects and Administration Manager; and Cliff Jackson, Regional Director ATI-NSW and Board Member.

The first CT-4 to come to Australia arrived in 1975, right? No! The first batch of CT-4As were for the Royal Thai Air Force, and they were ferried via Australia. Here's Number 22 at Eagle Farm in November 1974.



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