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Airtourer Association



Newsletter

Dedicated to the preservation and continued airworthiness of
Victa 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 9 July 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: Alan Flett has been photographing aeroplanes for half a century. The cover photo is a recent shot of VH-RQL with Robin Hilliard at the tiller. His photo of the same aircraft back in 1972 is on [page 6](#).



From the President

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

Negotiations with Agile Underwriting Services Pty Ltd (AGILE) Insurance have been finalised and we now have very competitive rates; when your aircraft insurance is due for renewal please either login into our website (just finalising the link) or via <https://airtourerau.poweredbyagile.com.au/>. Those that have renewed have been pleasantly surprised.



A huge thank you to our members who represented the Airtourer Association at the Avalon International Airshow:

- John O'Halloran – who arrived via RPT,
- John Wynn – VH-EQG,
- Julian Szaters – VH-PGH,
- Angela Stevenson and Tony Self – VH-FVV, and
- Monique Gillett and Jon Pels VH-MVR

It was wonderful to see Jon and Mon rewarded for the challenging work they put into MVR to get her up and flying, with recognition by winning the Contemporary Aircraft category at the Avalon International Airshow.

As the end of the financial year is fast approaching, please do not forget to visit our website and login into the RFDS to make a donation; the donation will be put against the Airtourer Association and you will receive a tax invoice that will allow you to claim a tax deduction.

Angela Stevenson and Tony Self have created a wonderful program for the 2025 Convention, consisting of fun flying activities and places of interest. The registration form has been uploaded to our website. Phil Goard from Brumby Aircraft speaking “All things Brumby & Aircruiser” at the Saturday night dinner will be fascinating.

I look forward to seeing you at our Convention and AGM.

Blue skies and tail winds.

Deb



THE LATEST NEWS



Movements

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 this link:

<https://airtourerau.poweredbyagile.com.au/>

 Airtourer Association Inc.Home How to Claim Contact Sign In

Cover your Airtourer Aircraft

Simple affordable hull and liability cover for your Airtourer Aircraft.

[Get a quote](#)

Look out for more information arriving in your email inbox! (This offer from Agile is only available to Airtourer Association members. If you're not a member, join up today and enjoy the benefits!)



VH-GBS Changes Hands

Claude Meunier's gorgeous Victa 100, VH-GBS, has found a new owner in Mick Conroy. GBS will stay in Western Australia, and will join VH-MUN and VH-MFN at Murray Field (near Mandurah). GBS ("Georgie Girl") has been with Claude since the 1970s.

Avalon Airtourer Family in Numbers!

The Airtourer family of aircraft were well represented at Avalon Airshow 2025. The count was:

- PAC CT-4E VH-KQG and VH-KQW (Milskil)
- PAC CT-4B VH-PGH (Jules Szaters, Airtourer Association)
- Victa Aircruiser VH-MVR (Mon Gillett, Airtourer Association)
- AESL Airtourer VH-FVV (Angela Stevenson, Airtourer Association)
- AESL Airtourer VH-EQG (John Wynn)
- NZAI CT-4A A19-077 - now A100-077 (RAAF 100 Squadron)

In addition, NZ Aero were displaying their wares on the trade days, including a preview of the midlife panel upgrade proposal for the large Royal Thai Air Force CT-4E fleet.

Aeroplane 50th and 60th Birthdays

A lot of Victas are turning 60 over the next few years. And a few CT-4s will be turning 50! Here's a selection of aircraft that were first registered around this time 50 years ago, or delivered to the RTAF or RAAF in mid 1975, along with their current owners.

Airtourers

- VH-BNV (Member Mike Fisher) - 10 May 1965
- VH-KHP (Member John Sheehan) - 10 May 1965
- VH-RSJ (Member Ivan Porteus) - 22 June 1965
- VH-MQL (Member Robin McAdam) - 30 June 1965

Airtrainers

- N7083Z 035 (Richard Stanley, USA) - 15 May 1975
- VH-DMI 037 (Graylach Pty Ltd) - 23 May 1975
- VH-DPG 038 (Joshua Spano) - 4 June 1975
- VH-WCT 039 (John Gallagher) - 12 June 1975
- VH-CTK 040 (Murray Wallace) - 25 June 1975



Airtourer Association Winter Luncheon (14 June)

Trentham (Macedon Ranges), Victoria, 14 June 2025

Winter is not the best season for flying in Victoria, but it is a good season for lunch!

Experience the true essence of an iconic country pub at the Pig 'n Whistle Hotel, located in the scenic Trentham East, Victoria. Since opening its doors in 1887, The Clare Morris Hotel, a name resonating with the echoes of County Clare, Ireland, symbolized a home away from home for the Irish settlers in the area. As time marched on, the hotel embraced its evolving identity, transitioning to the East Trentham Hotel in 1950. The final transformation to the Pig and Whistle Hotel after 1960 marked a new chapter, blending the old world's charm with the vibrancy of modern Australia.

Come along and talk Airtourers (and weather!).

12.00 for 12.30

**14 June at Pig 'n Whistle Hotel
705 James Ln, Trentham East**

If flying in, either Kyneton or Riddells Creek are the closest options. You'll need a lift, so give Mike Fisher a call (0429869134) if you land at Kyneton, or Jon Pels (0418 174 199) if you land at Riddells.

RSVP by 2 June 2025 to Mike Fisher ktnlndry2@bigpond.com

Cover Photo - Back in Time

Alan Flett took the cover photo of Robin Hilliard's "Raquel" on 8 February 2025 at Cessnock. As they say, this wasn't his first rodeo! The photo below was taken by a much younger Alan way back on 27 August 1972 at Bankstown. VH-RQL was looking fine back in 1972, and is looking just as fine 46 and a half years later! Thank you Alan for your massive contribution to aviation history in Australia!



Convention and AGM 2025 - Sunraysia

Fri 16th - Sun 18th May
(Wentworth/Mildura)

Have you booked?

It's almost upon us!



Accommodation - **LAST DAYS** **FOR MILDURA GRAND SPECIAL RATE**

A variety of rooms have been reserved for two nights at Mildura's iconic Hotel Mildura Grand at discounted rates under 'Airtourer Association' (from \$126-\$198 per night). To secure one of the discounted rooms, please call (03) 5023 0511 **by 4 May** and request a room at the 'Airtourer Group Booking Rate'.

Accessibility room required? We have reserved two accessibility rooms, please do **not** book these rooms unless you **do** require them.

PLEASE NOTE: A number of other accommodation options are close by (including a Holiday Park), however, the official accommodation venue is Hotel Mildura Grande - all organised transport will be departing and arriving at the Hotel Mildura Grand. If you require a different accommodation option, for your convenience, please ensure it is within walking (if flying) or driving distance of the Hotel Mildura Grand.

Draft Event Program (Full details will be provided to registrants prior)

- Friday: Arrivals Wentworth Aerodrome (or Mildura).
- Friday evening: **BBQ dinner and catch-up at Mildura Aero Club.**
- Saturday: Flying Activities at Wentworth and flights to Pooncarie for lunch (or for those without wings - a local bus tour with some aviation- and non-aviation-themed points of interest.)
- Saturday evening: Convention Official Dinner
- **the speaker is Phil Goard, someone you won't want to miss!**
- Sunday: Education Session and AGM (afterwards will be some formation practice if enough members and enough time!).
- Sunday afternoon: Departures.

Don't delay...register today!

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



RFDS Fund Raising

At this year's Convention and AGM in Sunraysia, The Sheriff, Beryl Marshall, is likely to be imposing random fines and otherwise raising money for the RFDS.

This year, it will be a little different, because we have a cashless option! That's right, you can no longer use the excuse, "but I haven't got any cash on me".

(The cashless method also means you can claim your "fine" as a tax deduction, which makes playing up a little more worthwhile!)

So if The Sheriff shows you this QR code, you know what you have to do!

<https://rfdcommunity-fundraising.raisely.com/airtourer-association>



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: VH-LVU

1963 Victa Airtourer -
160hp

- Serial number 12
- 4242 TTAF /
1327 Engine TSO /
10 Prop TSO
- Famous Blue Panel
- Icom IC-A200 radio,
new Garmin
GMA340 Audio
Panel
- Garmin Aera500 GPS hard-wired to Avionics Master
- Fuel Scan 450



Sold with a fresh 100 hourly.
All ADs up to date. Good glass.
Always hangared. First time
offered for sale in 20 years.

Call Jon for more info on 0418
174 199

\$85,000 ONO



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



For Sale in NZ: Stripey

"STRIPEY" T3A Airtourer.

Upated to T4 spec, with O320 150hp engine. Annual completed in January. +6G/-3G aerobatic capable.

Lovely plane to fly.

NZD60,000 ono.

Phone Pete +64 021 572901 for more details.



Wanted: Chrome Spinner for Piper Archer

I know, I know, why would someone be asking for a Piper part in the Airtourer Newsletter! There is a reason! The Aircruiser needs a new spinner, and apparently an Archer's spinner is a good match. If you can help, please get in touch with Jon Pels on 0418 174 199.

Convention and AGM



The venue for this year's Airtourer Association AGM is Sunraysia Sport Aircraft Club in Wentworth, NSW. Have you [registered](#)?



Flying in: Avalon Airshow 2025

by **Julian Szaters** (PAC CT-4B Airtrainer, VH-PGH)

Formation flying always begins with an idea, and Tony Self (FVV) is not short of those. *[Editor's Note: usually starts with a stupid idea, to which the typical response is "I'm in!"]*

Shortly thereafter begins the planning, and with a 30+ page supplement to absorb for Avalon Airshow arrivals, there was no shortage of reading, thinking and fiddling with AvPlan required.

As some of you may know, landing / departing at the Avalon Airshow requires a booking, however the booking system doesn't accommodate a formation arrival. This is an airshow, right? After months of reaching out via e-mail and phone calls, Tony (FVV) landed confirmation for our planned Sunday formation arrival, naturally owing to his persistence and keen negotiation skills.

The big day for arrival is upon us, with kind weather and a carefully crafted plan. It was time to brief the plan for Papa Formation, with the ADS-B In equipped PGH leading and FVV in left echelon. Knowing the generous runway proportions at Avalon, our plan was to maintain left echelon all the way from the Lilydale grass to the Avalon runway taxiway exit. Our briefing had particular focus on actions should we not be cleared into the Avalon Airshow Restricted airspace, and a leg by leg radio plan covering all of the expected frequency changes so that FVV wouldn't ever be left in the dark. As with all good briefings, there were some minor pen amendments required, followed by submitting our formation flight plan to NAIPS.



Preparing for departure at Lilydale.

Departure from Lilydale through to Avalon's reporting point all went off without a hitch. Overflying downtown Melbourne, Albert Park Lake and the beaches of Port



Melbourne and Williamstown on the way to the Werribee South reporting point. In fact, Papa Formation arrived early at the reporting point.

Entry to the restricted airspace on arrival was declined in favour of a procession of arrival aircraft that were arriving via "other means" (straight in for Rwy 18). So as briefed, Papa Formation conducted three orbits before being granted clearance. From that point communications with the tower kept the formation lead very busy indeed, while Tony (monitoring) was no doubt having a good chuckle and enjoying the formation manoeuvring.

It was unclear whether the tower controller was familiar or unfamiliar with the configuration and performance of the CT-4 and Airtourer formation or was simply enjoying the sport.

We had a further holding orbit while inside restricted airspace, then cleared for the approach and requested to "make best speed" west to the runway 18 final approach point.

Shortly thereafter Papa Formation was directed on heading 090 (away from Avalon). Presumably, best speed of our formation wasn't as expected by the Tower.

After some moments, the Tower asked if I had the arriving aircraft sighted ... the arriving aircraft at this point was at our 12 o'clock. We are heading away from Avalon as directed remember. Now, it is true, I did take a glance and did see the aircraft (A330) owing to the glorious tinted bubble canopy of the CT-4. *[Editor's Note: glorious tinted **non-sliding** bubble canopy.]*

The tower then asked us to make another turn to heading of 270, before once again being cleared for the final approach. Upon turning to final to runway 18, I then observed the runway occupied with a back-tracking A330. We continued the approach down to 500ft, but knew where this was going (and I am sure Tony did also). Then the tower requested we go around, followed by an abbreviated then cancelled request to make a right circuit, followed a minute later by the same request.

Our echelon formation on approach, final and landing worked out nicely, as evidenced by plane spotters, touching down long either side of the centreline to enable an easy exit without occupying the runway for too long.





But that wasn't the end of the formation Papa Formation continued throughout most days of the airshow. However, on the ground we were right line abreast rather than left echelon.



Papa Formation in line abreast. No flight suit yet, but custom "Fly CT-4" t-shirt and Airtourer Formation Camp caps.



Friday was students / STEM day, but sadly it was fairly quiet owing to student buses apparently being blocked by protesters.

Saturday was steady in terms of people walking by the static Papa Formation (by then joined by John Wynn's Super 150 EQG), taking photos, asking questions, some taking a seat in PGH, and generally enjoying the display aircraft, and the calm and lack of crowds in the GA area.

On the ground, Papa Formation consisted of the pilots of PGH and FVV trading barbs for the visitors about the history and relative virtues of a CT-4 vs Victa Airtourer. At times this descended into red vs blue, sliding canopy vs clamshell, modern vs traditional avionics, fuel injection vs carburettor debates for entertainment. The trump card for the pilot of PGH was the adornment of a flight suit littered with CT-4 and Airtourer Association patches. The visiting public simply knew who to speak to, to learn the truth. Dare I say that at future airshows you may see Tony decked out in a flight suit. *[Editor's note: Consensus is always red is best.]*



Julian chatting with some other dude in a flight suit. Note (a) the glorious tinted non-sliding clamshell canopy, and (b) the red Airtourer in the background.

Sunday, departure day, the day the formation aircraft were to go their separate ways, brought with it some new surprises. A cross wind of 19 knots gusting 25 knots. While a number of aircraft departed (including a tailwheel Piper Supercub across the runway), Papa Formation remained tied down on the ground rescheduling for a Monday departure. John Wynn, having flown in every condition the BOM has ever invented, casually departed without even noticing the gale.





John Wynn casually departing in VH-EQG

Arriving Monday morning to prepare for the departure, Papa Formation was pleasantly surprised to be joined by our victorious Aircruiser. An un-briefed overnight formation join, but on the ground this was perfectly acceptable.



The flight home was an uneventful end to a very memorable Avalon 2025.



Avalon Photo Album

Photos by **John O'Halloran, Tony Self, Doug Stott**



The Victa Aircruiser, owned by Mon Gillett and Jon Pels, was the centrepiece of the Association's display at Avalon 2025.



Early arrivals at the GA static display parking apron.





Mon Gillett being awarded the “Best Contemporary Aircraft” trophy by AMDA Board Member Adrienne Fleming. (Yes, an Aircruiser is still “contemporary”, which is defined as post-1960!)



One of two ex-RNZAF Milskil CT-4Es (VH-KQD), on the taxiway display.





The other CT-4E, VH-KQW, on display at Miliskil's booth.



John Wynn in EQG joins the bunfight to depart Avalon on the Sunday after the show.



The Misadventures of Mike Tango

November

by **Mike Hetherington** (with fond memories of Victa Airtourer 115, VH-MTN)

(Can be sung to *The Adventures of Barry McKenzie*)

Having been given the go ahead to put a couple of yarns of my few hours in Victa 115 VH-MTN to paper, I do my best in two parts. Early and later. I wouldn't say newbie and more professional. I was never that good. As with a lot of things in life, I know some very good people, and that is my reward.



MTN at Bundaberg Aero Club, circa 1972. Photo: Andy Anderson

My teenage student pilot story started when I had saved enough to start training with the Bundaberg Aero Club. I was painfully shy and underconfident. My trial flight was undertaken by Allan, in a Cessna 172. Allan didn't say much.

"You hop in that side."

I was totally at a loss, but felt very safe. Allan looked very much like all the old cane cockies I worked for. Sunburnt, narrow eyes from outdoor work, and very good with machinery.

"We'll climb up a bit and then I'll show you how it works."



So, I sat meekly in the right seat in awe of all this stuff in front of me. Many more dials than even the newest Massey Ferguson my eldest brother had just brought onto his farm to stand proudly just inside the gate for a couple of days. Maybe he was a little bit in need of a bigger hat. I was thinking very rapidly and not surprisingly, a silly thought whipped through my head. Without warning, my head began to sag and all my vision was just a mass of dials all tilting and spinning, about a handspan in front of my nose. I was feeling a solid weight all over and it was not at all like a heavy bundle on my shoulders like farm labouring, it was all over, legs, hands, eyes... everything. Turning my sagging head to the left to see if my pilot was somehow out of control, I was totally surprised and embarrassed to see Allan sitting up straight and head thrust forward looking outside for who knows what. I don't know how long that went on, but now I know it was about 30 seconds, not the lifetime at all that I thought.

“Be Jit, is this the first test to see if I can take to this flying business, well I'd better man up and look too.”

I saw nothing, just clouds.

After a few minutes of straight and level, Allan, showed me roll and pitch, and power up and power down, then turning and there must have been something else. I was done. We were back over town in the circuit and I heard about why a circuit and then a touch down and taxi. All quiet. Walk back to the Clubhouse. Pay my way and stand slightly perplexed at the counter. Summoning enormous courage in case I got the wrong answer I asked timidly, “Ah, so would I be able to come back for a lesson, I didn't get all that happened.”

Allan replied, “Uh, what, oh yes you're all right for next week aren't you? I'll put you down. You can start with Andy.”

Myself: “So do I have to manoeuvre and turn like you did?”

“Oh, that. I knew one of our students was out there somewhere a bit off course so we went to find him and he turned up right on our nose.”

So I carried on being a jumpy young novice and spent half my earnings on Cessna love affairs.

I then came to stalls and incipient spins. No spinning 172s. I floundered on. One day, I saw a small, low-wing, red, orange and white baby plane sitting down a bit further on the parking lot. There was a Cherokee nearby. I soon found out the baby was a VICTA 115. The Cherokee 180 looked enormous and powerful beside it. I battled on with Cessna handling and one day I had to do a check flight with Allan, the CFI. I had only flown a couple of times with him and thought oh well, I'll just do my best. Whatever he asks. After an hour or so, I was sweating and thinking, this bloke makes you work.

Walking back to the Clubhouse he said, “Well, mmm, yeah. You'll do that, I'll send your application next week.”



I wondered what application, but kept quiet. Once inside the Clubhouse, Andy, the young instructor who I trusted like a good boss in a paddock, burst out laughing, stuck out his hand and said.

“I knew you’d pass ya mug. Congratulations, you are our newest PPL.” They had set me up. Being such a nervous nelly they didn’t let on it was my flight test and Allan actually enjoyed the flight seeing it done so well.

And I’m still walking past that VICTA.



Another fine shot of MTN at Bundaberg. Photo: Andy Anderson

So next time I walk past the VICTA I keep walking to the other flight school shop and ask, “Seeing as so many mishaps are spins and I have never seen a full spin, could I get an instructional flight to see a spin? Because I believe Victas are able to do spins.”

Then I had to suck in a huge lungful of air and the assembled crew fell about laughing. One of the blokes said, “Gees, we thought you had something serious to do!”

I was indeed puzzled. Someone said spins and everyone lost it.

Neil (Rutherford), the Instructor I was about to get to know said “So, young fella, when should we avail ourselves to a spin”.

As usual I thought of next week or something like to plan my venture into this unknown arena in the clouds. Neil flips his wristwatch around. “Plenty of time before dark. Let’s go have a look.”



So we're in. A funny little seat and nothing in front of me. Here's a garden spade handle and a left hand throttle. Don't get too excited. It's just like a fighter plane. It starts and jiggles around like a billy cart on the splotchy old 1940's half gone asphalt. Not at all Cessnaish. And the visibility. Who cares about what's under there I can see. No big fat wing in my vision. After take off I am given control and am amazed at how I manage to fly the other way round, hand wise. And it just does what you tell it. This was 50 years ago, but I'll do my best.



MTN's cockpit, circa 1972. Note the AWA radio! Photo: Andy Anderson

Neil's coaching, no hands on to follow through. Just do it. All spoken through the headphones just like sitting in a lounge chair.

"So, enough height, roll into a good medium level turn and LOOK OUT. Don't look at your hands, let your eyes do the flying. 360 degrees, roll out and through keeping the nose on the horizon as you roll through level. Hold that turn and LOOK OUT. Well, I made it through that. So light. Now, stalling power off and bring the nose up and hold that view and use your feet, keep it straight and wait, feel it jiggle and there we go and back pressure off and nose coming up through the horizon, apply power smoothly and regain height and we're all happy. We'll work up the power going into the stall and you'll get to see what you're looking for."

And I did. The whole point of it was to make a low hour pilot learn and learn very well. It wasn't much power or very violent, just a bit slow on the rudder I think, or not enough at the right time. Flippo. I don't know maybe a bit over the vertical axis or whatever. It was the first time I'd ever seen the fields of sugar cane through the



roof. And the spin settled down to nose down and turning fields. We did some more, getting the power off surely did make things come right much better. Now they do it on purpose. And over the years spin training in gliders has become standard and the gyrations are expected.



Thank you Andy Anderson for having the foresight to capture these early colourised pictures of VH-MTN

I started out with Allan on a trial flight and I had no idea he had 4000 hours instructing in Tiger Moths. He was reluctant about things as he had seen too much of broken airframes and bodies. The other guy at Bundaberg, John, was a man to be reckoned with. When he wasn't flying, he was jumping out of the damn things. He taught Aviate, Navigate, Communicate. I once answered a radio call on mid-final. "Well, you just can't trust passengers," he said, after I had recovered from a 90 degree bank, 90 degree heading excursion off the runway at about 500 ft AGL. Neil and the Victa taught me to take the bad bits of flight head on and beat them.

Hopefully, I will take off in a Victa again one day.

Victa Airtourer 115, number 133, was delivered in August 1965 as VH-MTN. It has changed registrations over the years, first to PHR (15 Jan 1993), then CGA (25 Sep 2000), and KGR (1 July 2002). Along the way it was refitted with an O-320 engine.
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Robe Runners

by **Mike Fisher** (Victa Airtourer 160, VH-BNV)

I think we can all agree that weather has of recent months not been the greatest for flying, so everyone was delighted when the weather was perfect for a brief South Australian fly away.

Was this an Airtourer event? Well yes.

The company was made up of three real Airtourers, a Bonanza (the model B) that shares flying time and common ownership with an Airtourer (the model A) and a Piper that wants to be an Airtourer!

The promotions call Robe the South Australians chic holiday hotspot.

Chic or not, Robe is just a very pleasant place to visit. This picturesque coastal town transforms from a local's seaside village to a bustling and holiday hotspot come summer, so visiting in early Autumn is the best.

An essential element is an airfield, two short grass runways and most importantly, friendly to private flyers. No fluoro jackets here, just the airport dog giving everyone a sniff.

On arrival, once identifying the airfield and traffic, we chose to fly towards the ocean and position for a view of the town from the coastal side which was just a picture, with the untouched curving Long Beach stretching out to the north of the village – a very good visual start to a most enjoyable weekend.



Also unusual, looking out to the left: nothing but ocean to infinity. Look to the right: the comfort of terra firma from where we came.



Robe has a long history dating back to when Governor of South Australia, Major Frederick Robe, chose the site as a port in 1845. The town was proclaimed as a port in 1847. It became South Australia's second-busiest international port, after Port Adelaide, in the 1850s. Robe's trade was drawn from a large hinterland that extended into western Victoria, and many roadside inns were built to cater for the bullock teamsters bringing down the wool, including the Bush Inn still standing on the outskirts of Robe. Exports included horses, sheep skins and wool. A stone obelisk was built on Cape Dombey in 1852 to help ships navigate safely into the bay. Even so, there have been a number of shipwrecks along the coast in the area.



During the Victorian gold rushes about 1857, the Victorian government introduced a landing tax of £10 per person to deter Chinese immigrants – more than the cost of their voyage. To bypass the tax, more than 16,000 Chinese people landed at Robe to walk overland for 320 kilometres to the goldfields, mainly at Ballarat and Bendigo.

There are 31 points of interest listed on the official walking tour of the old town area, not that we saw them all. But a common theme, if you look carefully, is the original two-room cottage built of local stone, followed by various additions as wealth increased.

I arranged the main accommodation in a four bedroom house which was most convenient. Walking out the front door and turning left takes you 100 metres to the town beach or turn right for the corner café for breakfast each day. Also as Martin and Kerry were in a motel, we could all gather for before dinner drinks and after dinner drinks in space and comfort.



Everyone said after an all too early end to the weekend that we should come back... and we will.



Robe Roll Call

Mike Fisher and Jacqui Brown	Bonanza ("Model B")	
Gerry and Denise Pels	Arrow	VH-DWT
Andrew and Sharon Clement	Airtourer	VH-KGR
Marty and Kerry Moore	Airtourer	VH-CRK
Ross and Junko McBride	Airtourer	VH-CNO



Curious?

Register for the Airtourer Association Convention and AGM in Sunraysia, and find out what Brumby Aircraft are doing or not doing with the rights to build the Aircruiser.



<https://www.airtourer.asn.au/index.php/upcoming-events/convention-2025-sunraysia.html>



AusFly 2025 Airtourer Aeros

by **Andrew Temby** (normally an Extra 300L, but secretly wishes it was an Airtourer)



Photo: Andrew Hutchison

FVV and I are reunited after 28 years! Now Captain Scarlett? Well, I flew her back then, and after such a long time she was like putting on a good pair of boots!

Tony flew Captain Scarlett to Latrobe Valley Airport for me to practice my aerobatics a week or so before my big display at Wentworth, NSW AusFly. On the day itself, the weather was scorching hot, with the temperature already climbing through 40 degrees by 9 am. The wind was from the north-northwest at a steady 6 knots, almost making it hard to breathe on the hot tarmac.

The spectators and participants at AusFly were clearly struggling with the rising temperature. Angela, who is the only female commentator in Australia, was standing in the direct sun, looking a bit heat-overwhelmed. But somehow, she managed to complete the program before rehydrating in an air-conditioned room.

Tony was a lifesaver! First, he had Captain Scarlett's fuel tank with just the right amount, and then he set up my flight diagram sequence on the cockpit panel. Once I was all settled in and securely harnessed up, the Airboss gave me a call on the radio to let me know that the display area was clear. Captain Scarlett took off like a shot,

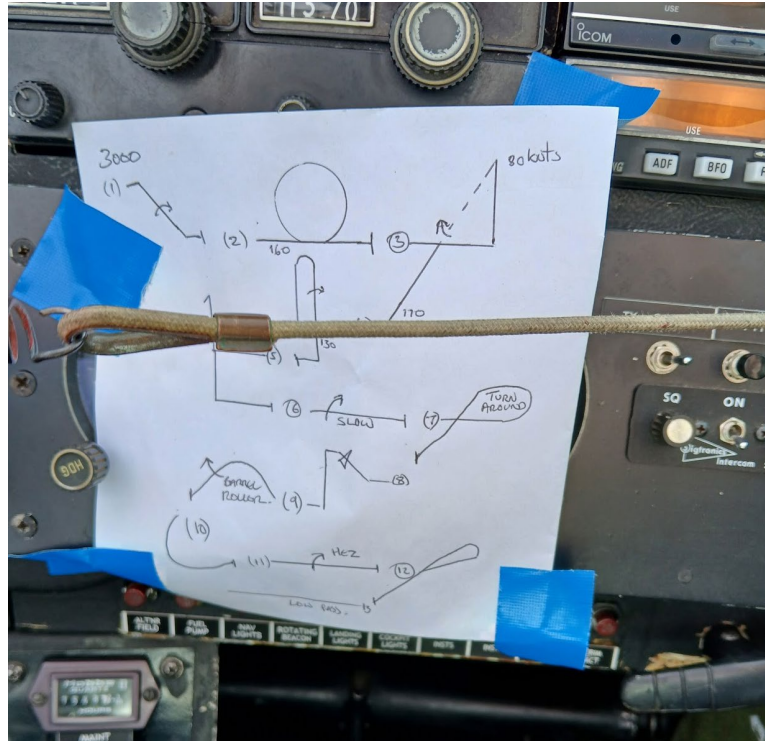


accelerating down the runway and soaring into the thin-aired sky - without even needing the whole long runway!

I climbed out at a moderate rate, as expected, and due to the heat, I added 500 feet to the start height for the display, which became 3500 feet AGL.

The first figure was a snap roll left off a 45-degree up line, followed by a one-turn spin and a vertical dive to include loops, a stall turn, rolls, and roll combinations, a Cuban eight, and many other turn-around figures. I ended with a base run at 100 feet.

Captain Scarlett looks absolutely stunning in her livery colours and flies just as well as she looks! It was an incredible experience, and I'm so glad I got to fly her again.



This was an amazing day for Airtourers! The participants and spectators were thrilled to see Captain Scarlett, and many had never seen an Airtourer fly a display before. I'm so grateful to have had such a wonderful experience. Thank you Angela and Tony. Happy Airtouring!



Calendar of Events

16-18 May	Airtourer Association Convention and AGM, Wentworth NSW	If you haven't registered and booked accommodation, do so now! https://www.airtourer.asn.au/index.php/upcoming-events/convention-2025-sunrasia.html
18 May	Mudgee Wings, Wheels and Wine	
19 May	David Hack Classic Fly-in at Toowoomba	Interested in attending on your way home from the Convention? Let the committee know!
23-25 May	Old Station Fly-in, Raglan	Interested in attending? Let the committee know!
14 June	Winter Luncheon, Trentham (Victoria)	Anyone wanting a lift from Kyneton, call Mike Fisher. Anyone wanting a lift from Riddells Creek, contact Jon Pels.
21-27 July	EAA AirVenture, Oshkosh	
15-17 August	Pacific Airshow Gold Coast	
21 September	Tocumwal Airshow	Interested in attending? Let the committee know!
17-19 October	President's Fly-in, Tamworth	Save the date!

Puzzle Time!

What is the type and variant of this aircraft?

Hint: It's very rare. Only two of this model were built.

Generous second hint: It's not dual control.



Fitting the AV30

by Ric Davies (Victa Airtourer 115, VH-RIC)

There was much discussion about whether to convert to the tail beacon and AV-30, but since the government usually want half of our income and were offering to pay for half of the hardware ... the existing transponder and encoder were second hand when purchased in 1998... and our engineer was keen...the decision was made, and then became a rush job to do over seeding and get the claim in before the end of May.

Installing the hardware, while reasonably straightforward, does require quite some time in

positions that were much more uncomfortable than when I was twenty. While I'm not a big fella, I'm no contortionist. The wiring isn't difficult either and we used the existing breaker from the old transponder as the power source. We also used the existing power and earth wires from the tail light, changing the positive wire from the light switch to the breaker.

After the install was complete the real work began trying to learn how many things can be changed with just three buttons. Once we discovered a vital step was missing from the instruction manual we achieved the goal. Sadly the Garmin 100 exports the wrong type of signal to autocorrect in the DG mode.

Then it was a case of flying to Jandakot with the breaker pulled out for the approval of installation and inspection of the instruments and system. It took about half a day for testing and paperwork to sign the system off.

On the return voyage to Tandara I called Perth Radar and they read me twenty feet higher than my altitude, so all is good.

In rough weather I find making changes on the instrument difficult and often end up with something on the screen I didn't mean to change, then can't find what I had!

Lodging the paperwork was a bit tricky as our Victa is partially business and partially private with

no option for on the form this. We received the reimbursement seven months after the claim was lodged.

All in all, the panel still looks like it has steam gauges and that is how I like it.





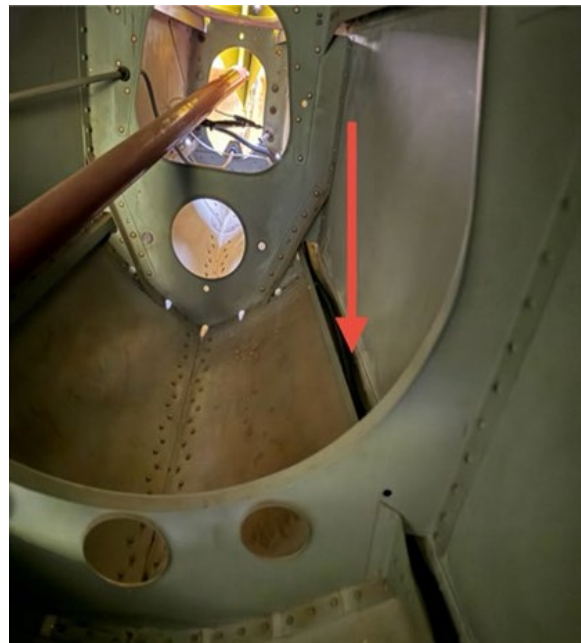
first you get the kit and everything looks pretty easy



then you dig out some tools you haven't seen for a while

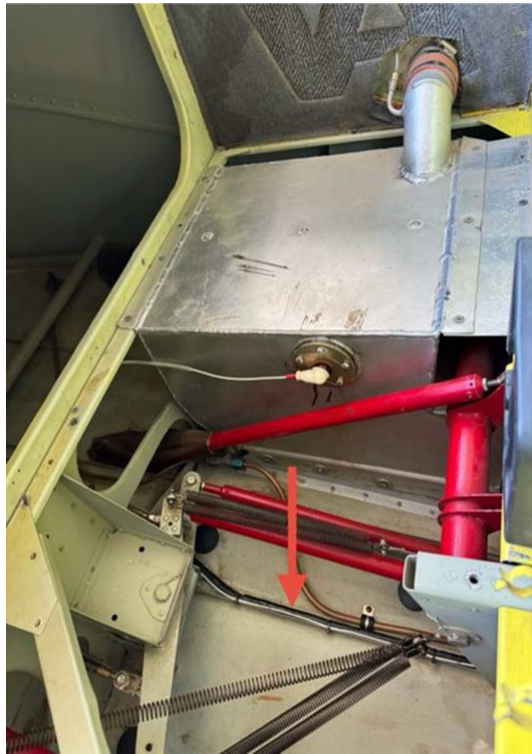


Then you spend lots of time getting in and out of this position



Eventually you get to this neat black conduit in the longeron





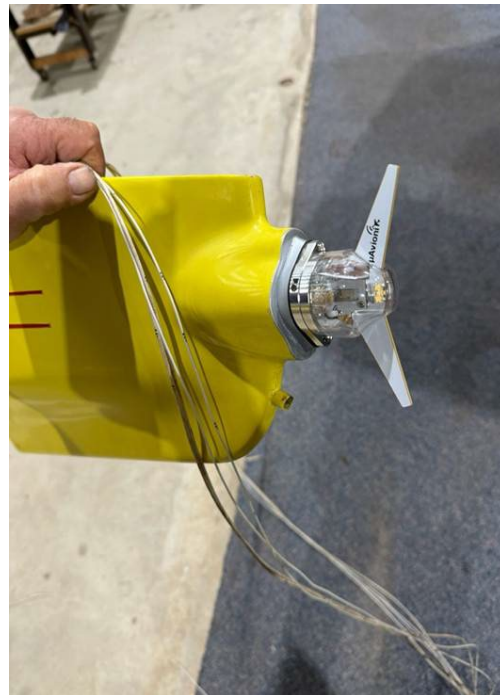
And up through the middle and on to the panel



Then you start on this and it doesn't fit. So you get to work with the fiberglass and plate nuts (plus sticky fingers) refinishing the tail cone.



Until you have this



And then you get to an easy bit, actually clipping the beacon on.





Then you get to sit with an elevator on your head while sniffing resin core solder, burning your fingertips, and crimping miniature terminals you can't see!



But doesn't it look smart



But that is just a warm up for getting in and out of this position many, many times.



Until you achieve this little hotty and the pain dulls





Then you push the breaker in and this happens. WOO HOO!



And this



Or this. Gee I really need to redo some labels don't I?!!

AIRTOURER
Association
Convention
& **AGM**



REGISTER TODAY!
Don't leave it too late!



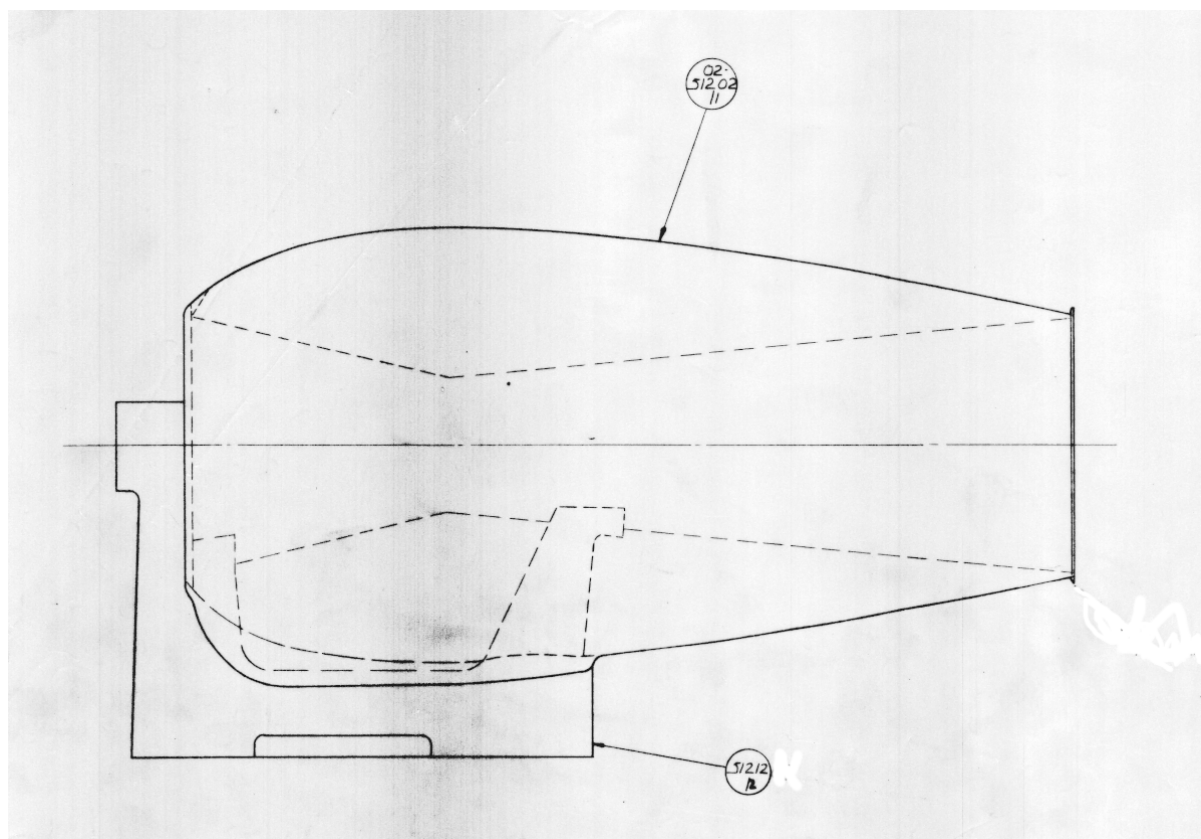
Correspondence In and Out

*The last newsletter had a question about the venturi used on the Victa 100s. **John O'Halloran** has supplied some extra information, below.*

Terry Green observed a RAAF logo on the venturi, and the part number G6A-600 was traced to the Avro Anson. However, the Anson part's shape differed from that of Terry's Airtourer.

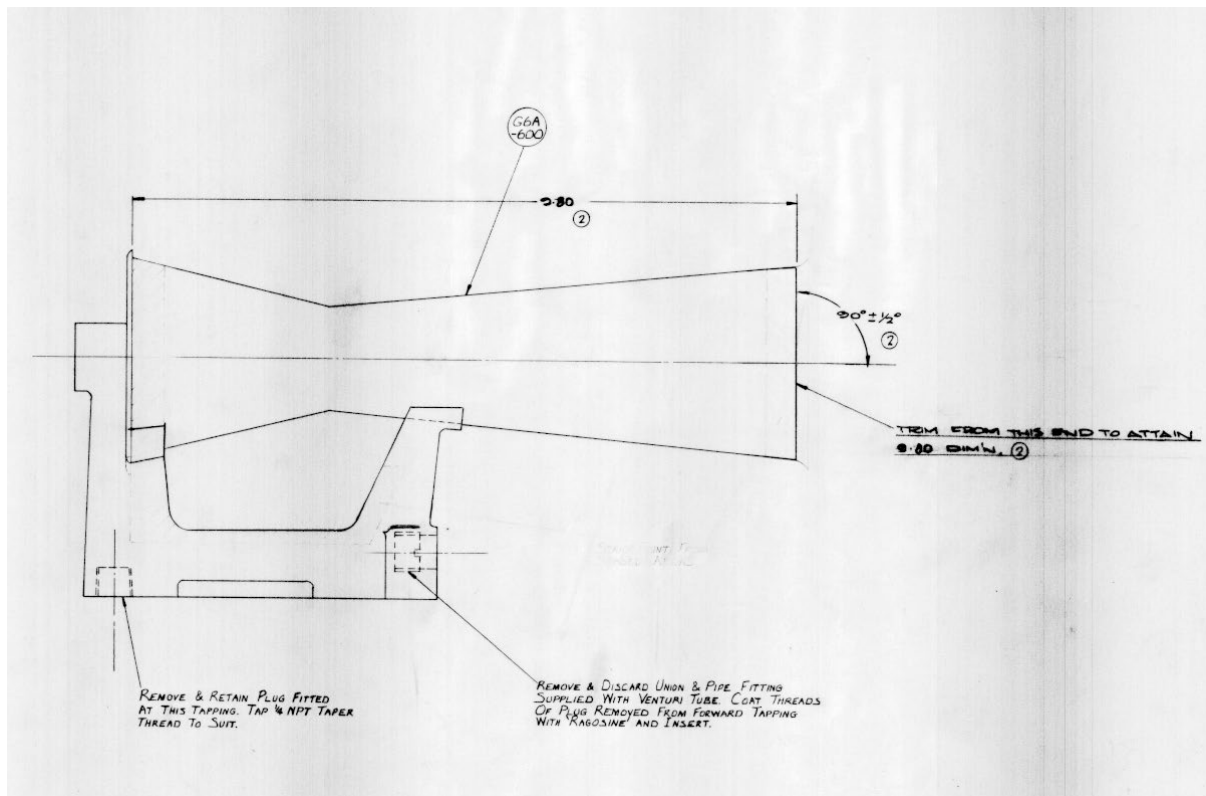
The IPC lists the Airtourer 100 venturi assembly as part number 02-51213/1. Digging a bit deeper, this assembly comprises two parts, the venturi P/N 02-51212/2, and a fibreglass fairing P/N 02-51202/1.

Venturi P/N 02-51212/2 is a G6A-600 with some minor modifications. Add the fibreglass fairing and the modified G6A-600 becomes the Victa part.



Drawing of the Airtourer Venturi assembly with the modified G6A-600 drawn mostly in dashed lines.





Original G6A-600 venturi as originally fitted to the Avro Anson with minor modifications for the Airtourer.

Send your questions, answers and thoughts to the Editor at editor@airtourer.asn.au

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Around the Grounds

What's happening on social media?

It's been a busy couple of months in the Airtourer Association's Facebook Group.

Robin Hilliard shared some photos of RQL's restored upholstery, with some tips and recommendations.

Marcus Skinner has been out and about in Tasmania-based PUR, and shared some spectacular photos from his trip to Kangaroo Island.

Murray Barker asked some questions about Airtourer fuel senders, and the replies provided some good information.

Gerry Pels shared some photos of the fly-away to Robe (see the [report](#) elsewhere in this Newsletter).



Avalon Airshow was another source of good photos of Airtourers and CT-4s... and the Aircruiser!

Doug Stott has been digging around in a big box of photos, and shared some great old photos of the Victa R2. Doug Gould shared an update on VH-CTM's refurbishment; it's inching closer to completion!

Ric Davies shared a few enigmatic photos of a very Airtourer-like aeroplane mounted upside-down on a pole!

Max Lincoln spotted an Airtourer in an old photo of Casey Field. And Mark Thoresen shared some personal and sad memories of his father Dale, and VH-CNE.



Adrian Pfoeffler was on hand at Corowa to photo Airtourers at the AAAA ("Antiquers") Convention. And Marilyn Anderson shared an update of her advertisement to sell VH-MVF, involving a rejected buyer who wanted to convert Marilyn's fabulous aeroplane to a speedboat! Yikes!



Don't forget the Association also has a YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/@AirtourerAssociation>. We only have four videos at the moment, but we're going to add more. Do you have some Airtourer videos you'd like to publish? Send a note to editor@airtourer.asn.au and we'll organise the upload!

Video - NZAero's CT-4 Promotion

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AYbbmBfH9lU>



The Treasury

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

The last two months have been very busy, with AusFly and Avalon commitments, as well as putting together the Sunraysia AGM and Convention programme. *If you haven't registered and booked your accommodation, please do so straight away!*

Bank

As you might expect, once the annual membership dues have been received and processed, there's a bit of a lull in financial activity on the accounts. In this calendar year, we've received two deposits for membership fees, and made accounting software payments, as well as the Hangar Keeper insurance payment.

Current Financial Position (in a nutshell)

As at EOB 31 March, the cash account balance is \$13,123.72.

Term Deposits: a total of \$70,000.

Co-op liability is \$400, and other liabilities \$405.90.

Draft 2024 Financials

The financials for 2024 have been completed, and we are in the process of getting the accounts reviewed in preparation for the AGM.

Sunraysia Convention

Hope to see lots of members at the Convention... 16-18 May, Sunraysia.

Happy Airtourer-ing everyone!

Angela Stevenson
VH-FVV



Co-op News

From **John O'Halloran** (Airtourer Co-operative Chair)



6.00-5 Tyres

The standard tyres for the Airtourer are 5.00-5, although the parts catalogue also lists 6.00-5 as an alternative for the main wheels. The 6.00-5 have been difficult to source, as the major suppliers no longer carry them. We have sourced a supply and now have the 6.00-5, with tubes, for \$780 (one tyre and tube). Postage will be additional.



Navigation Light Covers

The Co-op has been struggling with sourcing navigation light covers, as reported in the September 2024 Newsletter.

The Avalon Airshow provided the opportunity to meet with the Head of Engineering and the General Manager of Safety and Compliance at NZAero. This company, formerly known as Pacific Aerospace, had its origins in AESL which manufactured the Airtourer in NZ. The discussion was helpful and clarified some misunderstandings. The supplied parts have been returned, along with covers removed from an aircraft. We hope to have some feedback from NZAero soon.

Puzzle answer: The aircraft is an AESL CT-4. Not a CT-4A, B or E. It is the second prototype, delivered to the King of Thailand as a single-control aircraft, apparently to be used for cloud-seeding! The canopy latch configuration is very different from production CT-4s, with two locking handles. It had the strangest of histories, and had numerous odd paint schemes while resident at an Army Disposals store, including the imaginary US Navy scheme. It has thankfully been secured and preserved at the Royal Thai Air Force theme park (albeit in another weird scheme).



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