

August 2017  
Newsletter No. 163

# 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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The next Newsletter will be published in November 2017. Contributions and or advertisements are to be with JOH by 15 October 2017.

Advertisements are free for current members.

### Editorial

I'm beginning to wonder if Jan and I will ever get to fly to our gatherings again. After the challenges of regaining my medical earlier this year we was hoping to fly to the Convention at Broken Hill. Unfortunately the Airtourer was not ready but I was confident that I'd meet the next commitment, a trip to Tocumwal to scan the drawings. After multiple delays, including a new fuel tank, AD/VAT/28, new rudder cables and my LAME taking a couple of weeks off for his instrument rating, we finally got to the engine run stage. While sorting out a magneto drop, a "minor" oil leak was noted. Well, not so minor! While it was a small leak the source was a crack in the crankcase. The Airtourer is now looking sad without an engine and, the budget for the IFR upgrade is most likely blown. Ah well! Maybe it will be ready by the President's Fly-in, I really don't want to drive from the Sunshine Coast to Renmark.

The Association holds two major fly-ins each year, but there are other opportunities to get together and fly our Airtourers. John Hilton in Queensland has been active in showing off RQH and Andrew Clement in Shepparton would like to see more members join in the pancake breakfasts each month at the GVAC. Why not keep an eye out for aviation events near you, arrange with your Airtourer friends to join in and show off our great little aeroplane. (Then let the editor know with some photos.)

Safe Airtouring,

*John O'Halloran*

*Cover Photo:* No, it's not a photo from the '60s and the hey days of the Airtourer being used in flying training. This was taken on 5<sup>th</sup> August 2017 at Gympie in Queensland. Sunshine Coast Flight Training now has two Airtourers at the school, see "Heard at the Hangar Door" in this issue. The Airtourer at centre front is RQH from Caboolture and was flown in for the day by John Hilton.

### 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.17

Broken Hill and the AGM seem like such a very long time ago, considering the weather was so hot compared to now. Regardless, it was still a memorable event which everyone enjoyed and as usual was over all too soon. I always find Broken Hill a very engaging place, that city in the desert. Suffice to say that the event was reported on very well in the last newsletter. Members should be reminded that John and Jan O'Halloran drove a 3400km round trip from southern Queensland to Broken Hill for the AGM. This a good reason to get back into the air if ever there was one.



While I had every intention of flying to Broken Hill in the Airtourer, a persistent and unresolved engine issue saw a need to crank up the model B at short notice. I can report that the Airtourer is now running better than ever and will be flying to Renmark, the location of this year's Presidents Fly-in.

I am possibly unique being the Airtourer Association President who has never organized a Presidents Fly-in! As usual, VP John Day has a very entertaining and attractive program worked out for us for the weekend of 22-24 September.

Details are on the website so start planning for good flying weather.

### **Our next AGM is the 40th .**

This is a significant milestone by any measure so your events committee is working with its usual diligence to make this a top event. After all, we will all have to wait 10 years until the 50<sup>th</sup> year, so take advantage of what is coming next year and mark your calendar now for 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> March 2018.

No excuse is acceptable for missing this one; if you are climbing Mount Everest put it off, the mountain will be there next year. The launching of North Korean missiles will only be a short term distraction in the circuit and it's reported that any GPS can find Griffith.

The emphasis of this event will be flying YOUR AIRTOURER, so we have flying activities planned for every day.

I do miss Warren Truss, since his retirement little has been heard from the great man, although he was sighted at the recent Boogaloo Invitational in the area of the mounting yards in earnest conversation with the member for Swampy Downs.

The man that took over the position of Transport Minister, Daryl Chestnut has

big boots to fill but it appears that Daryl has not been idle.

Just when you may have thought going through the ridiculous and expensive process of obtaining an ASIC was bearable, “new” requirements have been invented by the Canberra mob to make it just a little more difficult and with more costs attached.

From 1<sup>st</sup> August 2017, there will be new requirements to verify your identity when applying for an ASIC. Government information includes:

### **Face-to-face identity verification requirements**

- All ASIC applicants must present to their issuing body (or the issuing body’s representative) in person with their original identification documents to be able to be issued with a card.
- Issuing bodies (or their representatives) will be responsible for examining original documents for authenticity and confirming the applicant is the same individual on any photographic identification.
- Contact your issuing body for more details on these changes.

The advice I have received, in reply to my complaint to the Minister, is to change your issuing body - like changing banks or supermarkets if you don’t like being robbed.

So what are our options for changing an issuing body?

1. The CASA contractor based at Merimbula is well behind this change with agents so far only at major airports. Of little use if you live any distance from a capital city.
2. VERITAS already have an arrangement with Australia Post for the distribution and collection of cards. Australia Post will be providing the service for a cost of \$44 at selected post offices, but not agent post offices.
3. SECURITY ID are encouraging people to apply as agents to issue cards.

From 1 August 2017, Agents will be named persons, not broad classes of persons such as JPs.

- Must have an agreement with the Issuing Body and hold a current ASIC
- Must conduct an in-person check with the applicant to verify identification
- Must confirm sighting original identification documents.

New Categories of Identification Documents: A, B, C, and D - the new national standard

- A: Australian Birth Certificate or Citizenship Certificate, or the current Visa presented with foreign Passport (may be expired passport). Or passport and sufficient information for us to conduct immigration check.

- Note - Australian Passport is not a Category A document. Australian citizens will need to ensure they have their Australian Birth Certificate or Citizenship Certificate. Some long-term residents may need to obtain an immigration card.
- B: Government issued document with photo and signature, e.g. Passport, Drivers Licence, Photo ID Card. May be a foreign government issued document.
- C: Evidence of activity in the community, e.g. Medicare Card. Includes activity in overseas community if just arrived or about to arrive in Australia.
- D: Document showing current residential address, if not included above, e.g. rates notice, utilities bill, rent agreement, bank letter or statement. May be overseas document if current address is outside Australia.
- Linking documents if the name varies in any way on any ID, e.g. marriage certificate, change of name certificate.

Well done Daryl!

# **The 40th Anniversary Fly-Away**

## **The Beginning - Friday March 16<sup>th</sup> 2018**

The Victorian contingent have made Shepparton airport the rallying point for aircraft originating from southern locations on their way to Griffith.

Members are invited to converge on SHT for a group lunch at 1300, either at the Aero Club or a conveniently located eatery. Final details will be in the programme.

After lunch the assembled group will be able to fly in loose company to GTH.

For arrival over GTH we hope that the formation endorsed pilots in the group will announce the beginning of the Airtourer Association's 40th AGM.

# Keith Meggs Airtourer history - Part 5

*This is the 5<sup>th</sup> in a series of articles written by Keith Meggs on the history of the Airtourer. Published here with the kind permission of the author.*

*These are part of Keith's encyclopaedic, four-volume work on every aircraft type proposed, designed or manufactured in Australia from 1884 to the mid 1980s.*

*Previous instalments were published in Newsletters 155, 156, 157 and 159. Part 5 concluded with Victa ceasing production in early 1967 but holding the possibility of recommencing depending on the result of an application to the Tariff Board for a restriction on the growth in the number of imported aircraft. The closure of production caused significant discussion within the aviation community.*

Another point of view was presented by Macarthur Job in Australian Aviation and Defence Review for December 1979. Mac Job had collaborated with Henry Millicer and had full access to Henry's papers. He cited treason within the Victa Boardroom as a major factor leading to the demise, with increasing impatience by some members about the lack of profitability of the Aviation Division. After Mervyn Richardson's retirement the enthusiasm for aviation waned and the Board wanted to divest itself of the Division. The time taken to complete the Tariff Board Inquiry gave the Victa Board the opportunity to do this. This was in spite of a firm order for 72 Airtourers

from Glos-Air in England on the eve of the announcement. Gary Richardson, under pressure by the Board, reluctantly turned down the order.

Mac Job's article advised that the break-even point had in fact been reached at the 160th aircraft and from then on, there would have been a gradual climb back to profitability, and perhaps even a reduction in price to enable further competition with the imports. Having made the point that the Aircraft Division had made a loss for four years, it is unfortunate that the Victa Board ignored the fact that five other Victa Divisions had also been unprofitable.

An initial telephone approach to Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation (CAC) was made by Gary Richardson two days after the announcement, offering all of the Victa aviation assets and designs. The call was followed by a letter to CAC Board member Robert Law-Smith, pointing out that investigations made prior to the close-down indicated that there would still be a strong demand for the Airtourer in Australia and overseas if production was recommenced. Negotiations with the RAAF for the supply of between 40 and 60, from January 1968, had been under way for some time. Meanwhile a separate team progressed the Aircruiser towards Type Approval later in the year.

Capital limitations had prevented Victa from producing more than nine

aircraft per month, despite an extensive export market being available. Nevertheless, after the Aircruiser reached production status, Victa hoped to reach a combined production rate of 250 aircraft per year, and even 500 per year eventually.

On 22nd February, the CAC Board met to discuss the proposal, and Harold Flett, a Victorian Director of the P&O shipping line interests, stated that his company was of the opinion that nothing should be done unless it was profitable, while Law-Smith recommended that it should be looked at closely as a national gesture. CAC General Manager Herb Knight visited Sydney to further discuss the proposition on 2nd March while CAC Sales Superintendent Geoff Richardson was commissioned to carry out a sales assessment. He reported that sales in Australia had been surprisingly high and had exceeded the expectations of both the aviation industry and Victa with 164 Airtourers delivered, including 40 exports. In three successive years it had taken 42%, 72%, and 67% of the two seat-market.

A parallel financial examination at CAC showed that a capital outlay of £890,000 would be required to acquire and to set up facilities to produce three Airtourers per week, but that there would be a loss of £314 on each one built, if sold for £4,500. Production cost alone would be £3,000 each with other overheads exceeding a £4,500 sale price. If the Aircruiser was also produced, an £833 profit could be made by selling them at £9,159 each. However, even if sold at £9,500, it would still take two years to break even. In the light of these figures the Board decided not to proceed.

An offer to buy production rights

for the Philippines was made by industrialist Colonel Reno Barretto (Philippines Airlines President in 1962-63), within a few days of the close-down. He was then in Australia, but his offer was not financially acceptable to Victa.

Other such overseas offers were presented, with the same result, and discussions with HdeH and GAF were also held, without any positive result.

From across the country, the West Australian Aero magazine for February-March 1966 carried a column by Ron Tutt, Manger of Winterbottom Airsales in Perth, and a regular contributor to the magazine. He suggested that the column should be edged in black for the demise of the Airtourer. He observed that our country was in a sorry state when a company, which was willing and able to manufacture a saleable and exportable aircraft, was forced to abandon the idea without one bit of help from the Government. The Government had at last shown its true regard for private enterprise. Consequently all aircraft would then be bought from overseas, or overseas finance from would be needed to keep the Australian industry going, as there was obviously no Australian able or interested.

The Dept of Trade and Industry was then engaged in a study of the situation, and a Tariff Board Inquiry was subsequently held on 9 and 10 June 1966 in Canberra, and on 19 and 20 July in Sydney. On consideration, the appellants had decided to seek bounty payments in lieu of import restrictions. Victa's requirement had been for \$994,136 spread over five years, and over a planned production of 96 Aircruisers, (with it is presumed, an unspecified number of Airtourers in

parallel).

Strong support for the Victa case was given by the Royal Federation of Aero Clubs, by individual clubs, and by many aviation writers. It was stated that 23 Australian aero clubs had re-equipped with the Airtourer, and they risked heavy financial loss if Victa went out of business, forcing them to change their fleets again, earlier than otherwise necessary.

The LVAC President, Des Kelly, reported, as a supporter and user, that the first production Airtourer had made over 10,000 take-offs and landings in 3,200 hours with his club before it was sold, and low maintenance costs had been proven, with a ready availability of affordable spares.

The inability of the imported two-seaters to be used for aerobatic training was a strong point in the Airtourers favour, as was the ready availability of spares, not always the case with overseas aircraft. The local aircraft's lower initial price suited the clubs of course, as well as the ability to deal directly with the manufacturer regarding modifications and development requirements.

Australia's general-aviation growth rate, maintained at 18% over the previous seven years, and higher than that of any other industry, was quoted to support the sales potential. *(I might be dumb, but wasn't there a message in there somewhere for politicians and bureaucrats? -KRM)*

In 1954, Millicer had delivered a lecture to RAeS meetings in Melbourne and Sydney, predicting that Australia's 600 light aircraft (252 Tiger Moths) would eventually increase to 3,500. It did so in 1970, having averaged 13% growth per annum until that year. By 1979 it had

reached 5,200, flying over 1.25 million hours in the year. Growth rate had fallen since 1970 with imported C152s and Piper Tomahawks selling for \$25,000, having increased in price at 12% per annum since the Victa close-down.

Delegates to the Aero Club Federation conference at Newcastle, from 1 to 3 April 1966, had been unanimous in their urging to the executive to press for the retention of Victa's facilities. President Peter Lloyd suggested that the Commonwealth Government should buy Victa shares as an act of faith. In the President's Annual Report, he stated that-

*'I am profoundly sad at what has happened with Victa Aviation. I think that we are all unlucky that the main Victa business must have inevitably suffered severely from the drought conditions and the water restrictions imposed widely in New South Wales and Queensland. On this subject, I applaud the courage of the Victa group in having started this project and for having progressed so far with it, and I hope it will become again one of great national significance. We can thank Victa because of their superb service and part support to their aircraft for raising the level generally of service to tight aircraft owners, be they clubs, schools, or private people, to a high level never before seen in this country. I sincerely trust that the remaining importers and vendors of aircraft continue to maintain the level that has now been reached.'*

The conference had been opened by Governor-General Lord Casey, who also spoke out strongly in favour of an



Australian light-aircraft industry. He saw it as an essential part of development, with aircraft having reached the stage of practical necessity for many people, as did the car to the previous generation.

Naturally there were denials, counter-claims, and justifications, put forward by the importers and their agents, (some of whom could have profitably learnt from Victa as to the meaning of the words 'friendly service'). One of their objections was that Victa manufactured only a two-seat sports aircraft of limited application, while they considered that the research and development (R&D) facilities in Australia could not possibly match the resources and facilities of the large American manufacturers.

Victa believed it had managed to produce an aircraft which was far superior technically and performance-wise to any of its competitors overseas aircraft, even with its 'limited' design facilities. Although Aeronautical Research Laboratories (ARL) facilities were also available to Victa, if the Commonwealth Government accepted the argument of limited R&D facilities surely it should be appropriate to develop those capabilities rather than simply allow funds to go overseas.

The three agents for the major United States manufacturers had applied to import a total of over 100 two-seat aircraft during 1966, for which period Victa's estimate of the total Australian market was only 80 aircraft. As an example of the competition from just one large American manufacturer, Cessna laid down a requirement for each Australian dealer to take at least five C150's during the year, and also reduced the price by 7.9% for 1966 (but quoted as 25% by Mac Job in Australian

Aviation & Defence Review for December 1979), and a further reduction for 1967, to enable it to undercut the Airtourer price. Piper and Beech reduced prices by 12½ % on their four-seat Cherokee and Musketeer models (again, a Mac Job figure).

Even in February 1969, the Sydney-based Alpha Flying Group decided to take advantage of what it called the glut of very low-priced C150's on the market. Based on their initial experience they recommended other groups study the then current C150 market.

Sales of the dumped aircraft in fact did not meet the importers requirements, and eventually many of them were returned to the USA after sitting for long periods at airports like Bankstown. A wonderful result from the Tariff Board enquiry!

It is easily overlooked that the forthcoming Aircruiser was the thing that really had the overseas distributors worried. It could cause them some trouble if it was as successful as the Airtourer, something which nobody doubted. In mentioning the two-seat sport aircraft, the objectors completely ignored the considerable work and expenditure which had been incurred in the development and tooling for the Aircruiser.

It is important to note that Victa and Transavia also received support, from the following organisations, during the Tariff Board hearings.

- The Chamber of Manufacturers of New South Wales
- Aerial Agriculture Pty Ltd
- Australian Aerial Agricultural Association
- National Farmer's Union of Australia

- Australian Woolgrowers and Graziers Council
- Riley & Company Pty Ltd

The latter gave conditional support, with the consideration that local production would have to be confined to models designed and already in production overseas, suggesting a progressive increase in bounty after local content reached 40%.

Those opposing the application were Rex Aviation Ltd, for Cessna, Ansett General Aviation Pty Ltd, for Piper Aircraft Corporation, Hawker De Havilland Australia Pty Ltd, for Beechcraft, Hazelton Air Services, Association of Commercial Flying Organisations of Australia, and the Australian Tariff Council.

Victa's case was concluded with a reference to the free trade in aircraft from the United States to Australia, as compared to a 10% tariff imposed on those travelling the other way. Overseas distributors were advised to be sincerely grateful for the liberties that they possessed and the market which they enjoyed. They would be well advised to move over graciously to allow the local manufacturing industry to develop and progress.

In a lecture to the Canberra Branch of the RAeS on 25 July 1966, and summarised in two issues of *The Australian* on 26 and 27 July, Prof. Graeme Bird, Professor of Aeronautical Engineering at Sydney University, accused Australian industry and the Government of lack of initiative and inefficiency. Dealing with the Victa situation, he disagreed with the Rex sales manager, who had stated that the local market was not big enough to support an industry. Agreeing that direct competition with imported types was foolish, the Professor pointed out that there were

specialist markets, which could be supported adequately with Australian and export sales, naming the Airtourer as an example. Its aerobatic capability made it more acceptable than the generally stereotyped United States machines. Had the firm been given Government support in the form of military orders or a subsidy of the kind enjoyed by the shipbuilding industry, the light-aircraft industry may well have become established on a sound basis.

Having failed to obtain any information in the six months since the conclusion of the Inquiry, a direct request was made by Victa to Trade and Industry Minister McEwan for news as to its outcome. No information was forthcoming. Accordingly, following a statement on 7 December by Marketing Director Carnegie Richmond Fieldhouse, to the effect that Victa had not been able to get any indication of the outcome of the company's application for a bounty, Victa closed its Aviation Division completely on 20 January 1967. Seven people were retained to complete the Aircruiser's certification and to clean up and pack away in the plant. Victa announced that on no account whatsoever would it have anything further to do with aviation (*this perhaps had its personal effects as well, as Mervyn Richardson failed to forward further information on his 1914 aircraft for this book, after having written beforehand*). During the six-month period, further enquiry was received from England regarding the single order of 70 Airtourers, but the company stated that it was not in a position to accept such a proposition.

Considerable disappointment was felt throughout most of the aircraft indus-

try at the news, particularly in view of the high reputation which had been achieved by both the firm and its product. It was most disconcerting to read, just a few days later, that tariff protection was to be given to the local car industry against Japanese importations - a car industry which could then measure annual profits in tens of millions, and which had a growth rate far beyond what was healthy and practical for the country to absorb.

Following the close-down, it was advised that all Airtourer rights, tooling, jigs, and design material, had been sold to an unnamed New Zealand company which was going to set up a production facility at Rukuhia aerodrome, Hamilton.

It was felt in some quarters that the move by Victa was intended to force the bounty issue. However, the 22-page Tariff Board Report was dated 21 December 1966, but not made public by Mr. McEwan until 14 February 1967 so such a move would have been rather late. It was recorded that the Board had '*not reported on aeroplanes since 1930*'. On that occasion (Report dated 14 November 1930), LAS-Co, GAC, and AMSCo, had jointly put up a case for protection against imports, and, having been refused, subsequently went out of business because of Government stupidity and apathy. (Obviously nothing had been learnt in 36 years).

In describing the rest of the Australian industry, reference was made only to DH activities in the late 1930's and early 1940s, but gave incorrect figures for production of Moth Minors, Tiger Moths, and Mosquitoes. There was no mention of Tugan, CAC, or DAP/GAF as having been part of the industry in the same period.

Two of the concluding paragraphs

in the summing up by the Board read as follows:-

*'1) The local market has been supplied mainly from the United States of America. In the circumstances outlined above the Board believes it is in the national interest for requirements to continue to be supplied by imported models. Already, some imported models are partly assembled in Australia and local content is likely to be increased as the local market grows.'*

*2) According to the evidence, very little use of the aeroplanes under reference could be described as "pleasure flying". Apart from flight training, the aeroplanes are used extensively for business purposes such as transport of passengers or cargo in remote areas, aerial surveys, aerial ambulance work and in a variety of agricultural and pastoral operations. The Board understands that aeroplanes of the type under reference are no longer available from Britain--'*

The Tariff Board misunderstood local assembly of imported aircraft as this simply was taking them out of the case and basically bolting the wings on, without significant input from local sources. The reference to local content was in regard to locally supplied equipment which was being installed, apparently including things like radio, tyres and tubes, batteries, and seat harnesses etc. It is hard to see the source of the expected growth in this local content.

The earlier "unnamed" New Zealand company was Aero Engine Services Ltd of Hamilton, New Zealand. The price

was reported as \$200,000, and the hardware was shipped over during February 1967. The former Victa production manager, Don Ellis, joined the New Zealand company with the same post. AESL had been formed in 1954 by Alf Coleman, who had served as a fitter (it is thought) in the RNZAF in WWII, spent seven years with TEAL and, in the 12 years of AESL operation, developed it into what was described as the best-equipped engine workshop in the Southern Hemisphere.

Included in the Victa sale to AESL was the almost-complete aircraft s/n 168, and two others much less complete, plus components and forward-ordered items like main undercarriage legs, which had been made in batches of 30. The first New Zealand production task was the completion of No 168, and it was delivered to the Waikato Aero Club in June 1967, with eight other orders then in hand. The other two sets were assembled in July, and the first completely manufactured aircraft was also off the line in that month. Engine availability prompted AESL to concentrate on the 115hp model and, with a number of modifications, renamed the aircraft the AESL Airtourer. (*Ed. Note: The NZ 100 Type Certificate was issued but no serial numbers were allocated, i.e. no 100s were produced in NZ.*)

In July also, the RAC of SA, as a major user of Airtourers, announced that it was investigating the possibility of buying from AESL in kit form. Assembly in the club's workshop at Parafield would make them cheaper than when supplied by Victa.

Victa disclosed that it had lost approximately £3,000,000 through its Aviation Division. There was a school of

thought that a major contributing cause was too many diverse tasks being undertaken before the Division was on a sound footing. Additionally, the initial provision of factory space was far beyond foreseeable Airtourer needs. Apart from the R2, which had been discarded at the test-flight stage to concentrate on the Airtourer, other projects included the Victa 67/A Gyroplane, a hovercraft prototype, a design proposal for a military ground-attack aircraft and of course the Aircruiser. These all took a considerable amount of time, effort, and money from straight Airtourer production and promotion.

Aircruiser development was included in this criticism, as being initiated while Airtourer production was still in the formative and troublesome stage. Millicer's personal opinion was that the boot should have been on the other foot, in that the Aircruiser should have been the first project undertaken, with the Airtourer to follow after the former was established. The potential market for the four-seater was considerably in excess of that which the two-seater could expect, and Henry felt that a more substantial organisation could be built on that basis. (*Ed. Note: It is interesting to note that in the 1990s, Millicer Aircraft Industries (not connected with Henry Millicer) was formed to produce the four seat Aircruiser but then switched plans to manufacture the two seat Airtourer first. MAI failed having not produced any of either models.*)

Three years later, in June 1969, Millicer addressed an RVAC symposium on general aviation, and made his first public statement regarding the closure and those responsible, with justifiable criticism. He named the Government's attitude, the

lack of sympathy from DCA, the lack of support from many aero clubs and flying schools, and the Victa company itself. He also said that it was significant that those clubs and schools still then using the Airtourer were in good shape financially. It was unfortunate that other, temporarily more attractive offers to other clubs, had been accepted and had helped to force the Australian aircraft out of production. Profitably built New Zealand examples were then being brought into Australia at a price comparable to other imported aircraft.

Regarding the Victa action, his opinion was that it could have continued for another year without a subsidy, on the basis of projected orders, including the rejected one from England for 72 aircraft, advised on the eve of the close-down. Sufficient interest was also being shown by the RAAF at that time to make it probable that there would be another two years of production.

The Millicer attitude was reinforced by that of James Warrington, publisher of Australian Flying, who had written a comment for the January 1966 issue, castigating the Victa Board, but excluding Garry Richardson. Gary had reportedly been having a continuing battle with the other Directors to prevent the Aviation Division from being closed down.

Warrington sarcastically congratulated the Victa Board for its action, which had ensured that no other light aircraft would be built in Australia, as a commercial venture, for years to come. In the same vein, he offered congratulations to the Australian Government for allowing a vital aircraft production facility to close down when we were at war in

Vietnam, and with Indonesia and other northern neighbours looking down on us. All that was required was a subsidy to keep the production unit intact, while finance was being sourced, most likely from overseas.

The change of policy within the USAF in regard to primary training was also brought into the post-mortems. The USAF was returning to using piston powered aircraft for the initial flight training after extensive use of jet aircraft. The USAF and Army ended up using the Cessna 172 derivative (the T41) and were followed eventually by six other countries, including Singapore; to a total of 730 aircraft. The RAAF was then still planning an "all through jet" training program for introduction in late 1968. They did trial this approach but returned to a combination of piston (Winjeel) and jet (Macchi) after a small number of courses. If the RAAF had not attempted the "all through jet" scheme the Winjeel would have been replaced earlier with the Airtourer being one of the obvious contenders.

A major protagonist in the move to adopt the Victa aircraft for the RAAF was Air Cdre Brian Eaton, then in the post of Director of Operational Requirements at RAAF HQ in Canberra and supported by Ian Fleming, as Controller, Aircraft and Guided Weapons in Department of Defence Production. As a senior design and development engineer with flight-test responsibilities at CAC during WWII, Fleming had been involved with the Wirraway, the CA-4, the CA-10A dive bomber, the Boomerang, the CA-14 and CA-11, the CA-11A, and the CA-15, before moving to GAF as chief Designer on the Jindivik and the F-2 trainer proposal.

He was strongly in favour of maintaining a solid Australian industry, and in later years was very critical of Government decisions, particularly in relation to the various trainer designs put forward by the industry over the years, all rejected in favour of foreign designs.

In the latter half of 1968, senior RAAF thinking was redirected to the idea of a new piston-engined primary trainer to replace the Winjeel. Although the RAAF was then committed to some initial training on Macchis some 12-18 months ahead, it issued specification ASR-AIR/67 for industry guidance on (it is thought) 10 October 1968. It called for a tricycle-undercarriage, side-by-side two-seater, to replace the Winjeel, with a cruise speed of at least 115 knots, a maximum-all-up weight of 2,000 pounds, and stressed to plus 6 and minus 4g for aerobatics. Such figures ruled out the use of any of the standard American light planes, and, while the Airtourer 115 met most of the criteria, it was deficient in rate-of-climb, unrestricted spinning, and aerobatics at high weights. The AESL 150hp version was much closer to the requirement, and both the RNZAF and RAAF conducted evaluations. However, consideration of the Airtourer was superseded by a straight military development of the larger Air-cruiser, which in itself met most of the criteria.

The Army's use of Cessna 180s instead of Airtourers for liaison and artillery spotting was also criticised, but a little thought would have shown that the two seats and the available space in the latter provided far less room than the Army required for much of its work. The equipment in the C180 included the Army

liaison radio, and its physical dimensions needed more space than that provided in the Airtourer, which had 12½ cubic feet behind the seats, with a 100 pound limit.

The lamentable lack of specialist knowledge shown by Government members had been highlighted during a debate on defence orders on 5 May 1966, when Patrick Galvin (MHR for Kingston), in being sympathetic to the Victa cause, stated that, in 1965, the Australian Army had decided in favour of the Winjeel instead of the Airtourer. (He quoted a price of \$12,000 per aircraft, compared with the Winjeel's \$120,000. The change from Sterling to Decimal currency had occurred on 16 February 1966.) Winjeels were out of production just four years before the first flight of the Victa Airtourer. It was likely then that he was referring to a 1965 Army proposal for the separate training of Army pilots by civil organisations under contract, and most of which proposed using Airtourers. The plan did not proceed and the RAAF continued to train Army personnel on the Winjeels which it had been using since 1956.

Galvin was joined by George Gray (MHR for Capricornia), who gave an impassioned plea for the retention of Victa facilities so that the company could build 2,000 ground-attack aircraft (repeat 2,000, at \$80,000 each, without armament and navigation aids) with the ability to contour-fly at 20 feet above treetop level, turn 180° in less than five seconds (over Rate 12!!) to take off at maximum all-up weight in 600 feet at 120° Fahrenheit, and with a design factor of 12. In so doing, he was flogging a dead horse, as a preliminary design study for a ground-attack aircraft,

of course without the characteristics quoted, had been undertaken in 1964, but had been dropped.

The English magazine *Aeromodeller*, for November 1966, in dealing with the Airtourer in detail, published its writer's opinion of the situation as follows:-

*'If ever a light plane could be said to have been done less than justice in the hard commercial world, then it would certainly be the Victa Airtourer, the first-ever Australian venture into light plane production. For the simple facts are that, no sooner had its sales prospects reached such proportions that it became a threat to the export field of the big American light plane manufacturers, than it was virtually squeezed into removal from the market.'*

At the end of August in New Zealand, 14 firm orders with deposits were on hand, with first deliveries planned for October. Managing Director Alf Coleman also disclosed late in August that a serious enquiry had been received from overseas for 400, and that he was looking for some way of achieving a rate of production to meet such a requirement - he was certain that export sales, particularly to the United States, would be of most benefit to his company. He was then in Sydney having discussions with Henry Millicer regarding future developments to the aircraft, even to the point of turbine power. Henry was about to visit New Zealand, having been retained by AESL to initiate design work over there. The use of pop rivets in all parts of the structure shell was not acceptable to the US market. Subsequent to a change to standard rivets, further export

markets were opened up.

AESL considered that sales to Australia would be sufficiently large to set up a sales and service organisation at Bankstown and planned to build their own hangar. Originally it would house an engine-exchange workshop and offices, but later an Airtourer sales and service division would be added. Although Victa had made adequate provision for follow-up spares backing for Airtourer owners, this function was handed over to the new firm also, and during 1967, the latter began advertising the availability of spares from its own stocks. By November it was circulating a brochure and price list which quoted NZ£8,350 for the standard aircraft, and sought information from potential customers as to their choice of integral tanks or rubber fuel cells, and regarding the fitment of either a 150, 160, or 200hp Lycoming to a fully-aerobatic Airtourer proposal.

In September, Coleman confirmed that the company had a serious enquiry which led to negotiations with an unnamed Bahamas aircraft company for the manufacture and delivery of 400 airframes, and that further interest had come from Mexico and the Soviet Union. Trade delegates from the latter approached the company in regard to a sales agreement for the whole Warsaw Pact area, late in 1968, in exchange for which AESL was to gain marketing rights for Russian helicopters in the Australasian area. The Mexican Air Force was very interested in its use as a trainer, but it seems that Mexican financial viability did not satisfy the New Zealand Government, which withheld approval.

*(In 1970, the Mexican Air Force*

*bought 20 aerobatic Beech Musketeers, and once again the question comes to mind regarding the way Australian sales might have developed with positive Government assistance in 1967, instead of the disgraceful denial of just a relatively small amount spread over a number of years).*

AESL did not have the capacity to meet large production orders from its own resources, and they lapsed for that reason.

On 27 December 1967, the LVAC had confirmed an order for two 115hp models from AESL, in knocked-down form, the first to be placed from Australia.

A review of general aviation in Australia had been published in the May

1967 issue of Aviation News, wherein the growth rate was described as explosive, and second only to that in the United States. Light plane sales for 1967 were expected to exceed the 1966 record figure by about one third, and privately-owned aircraft numbers had risen from less than 600 to well over 1,000 in something less than five years. The figures did not include company or aero club aircraft, and tremendous expansion and prosperity was forecast for the industry - it's a great pity of course that such was not apparent to the bureaucracy and the Parliament just a few months earlier.

To be continued ... Part 6

## **Airtourer Co-operative News.**

*John O'Halloran*

Recent sales have been slow but nevertheless there has been ongoing activity with the Co-operative. Another batch of fuel tanks have been ordered, four of the older single hole and one two hole variant. The selling price will be \$4,320 including GST but excluding freight. This represents a modest mark-up of 10% to cover miscellaneous expenses incurred by the Co-op. We had to pay in advance which has consumed much of our cash reserves. Materials needed to be ordered from overseas generating a long lead time but we expect delivery at the end of September.

A number of parts that we can have fabricated require cadmium plating. Currently there is only one facility in Australia approved for aircraft plating and the minimum charge makes small batches expensive. We are investigating having a number of parts such as bushes and bolts fabricated, including plating, to reduce the cost and are open to advice on the components to include.

CASA has been in contact on a couple of matters and have been quite helpful. One call resulted from a maintenance organisation undergoing a CASA audit. They were demonstrating how they managed ADs and used as an example AD/VAT/32 as there was an Airtourer in the hangar. This AD calls for inspection of the riveted joint on the nose gear steering arm for looseness or working rivets on every daily or overnight inspection. The maintenance organisations processes should ensure that this requirement is entered onto the maintenance release as a daily requirement. (Check your maintenance release.)



Since there was an Airtourer in the hangar they decided to conduct the inspection, only to find the rivets had been replaced by bolts. The next problem was determining if this was an approved or unapproved modification, or if the AD itself was out of date.

There is an approved modification that can be carried out under the authority of an Engineering Order. This possibility is mentioned in the Maintenance Manual. If your aircraft does have bolts it might be worthwhile to check if the modification has been correctly recorded in the aircraft log book. The Co-op can supply the EO if required.

CASA suggested that if this requirement was included in the Daily Inspection in the Maintenance Manual they could cancel the AD. Lee Gordon-Brown is currently raising the necessary amendment.

Another point that was highlighted by this exercise related to use of current documents. The Maintenance Manual being used did not include the updates mentioning the possibility of the bolts being fitted under an EO. Since the aircraft owner was a member of the Co-op we were able to help the LAME download the latest version and keep CASA happy. Remember, you can easily check the latest version of the documents on the website under "Airworthiness>Documents>Document Revision Status". You can download some of the documents after logging in.

The major Co-op activity in recent times has been scanning of the drawings. In the last newsletter we reported moving the drawings to Tocumwal. A number of options for scanning were investigated but in the end the most practical and economical was to purchase a large format scanner. While this was expensive, we do hope to recover some funds by selling it on once the task is complete. The main challenge was the size of the drawings, hence the requirement for a large format scanner.

In mid July, Ross McBride and myself converged on Lee Gordon-Brown's hangar in Tocumwal for three days of concentrated scanning. We managed to complete about 1100 of the 2500 to 3000 drawings. This may be misleading, considering we started with the largest drawings I would estimate that we are over 3/4 complete based on area to be scanned. The remaining drawings are in two sizes, one requiring the purchased scanner and the others, (the majority), able to be scanned on an A3 flatbed. Lee continues to work through the larger drawings when in Tocumwal and I have taken a number of small drawings home. Currently we are about the 1400 mark and hope to have the job complete before the President's Fly-in.

The drawings have been scanned at a minimum of 300 dpi and stored as uncompressed TIF files resulting in some of the large drawings producing files in the order of 800Mb. While this may seem excessive, the intent was to save as much detail as possible. The files are stored on a server with four drives that can withstand a failure of any two drives without any loss of data. The server is also backed up. (No, we're not paranoid!) We still have the original drawings as well as the microfilm.

AD/VAT/28 remains one of our action items. A survey will be sent out soon requesting feedback from owners on the results of this inspection. Based on those results we hope to make a case to CASA to ease the burden of this AD.



*The well oiled scanning team. L to R: Ross McBride running the scanner, John O'Halloran saving the files on the computer and Lee Gordon-Brown, the gopher, doing most of the work, collecting and replacing drawings, stoking the fire and supplying coffee and, at night, other beverages.*

## Wanted

**Airtourer 115, 130, or 150 fixed pitch**

Contact Bill & Heather Haynes

0754991699

cabolture-warbirds@bigpond.com



## Heard at the Hangar Door

**Membership Renewals.** This time of year is always busy as the Secretary **Monique Gillett** manages the membership renewals. Email notifications were sent in early July and thank you to those who have already paid. Paper renewal notices will be included with this Newsletter for those who may not have received the email.

Monique has also been investigating new Association shirts. She hopes to have some available for showing at the President's Fly-in in September allowing sufficient time to order for the 40th Convention next year.

Speaking of the 40th, the events sub-committee are well advanced in the planning for this special event. Please mark the dates on your calendar now, **16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> March 2018**. The Victorians are meeting at Shepparton before arriving at GTH together. Members flying from other directions may like to consider something similar.

The Events Sub-Committee are planning to have a slide show of historical photos as a back drop to the convention dinner. Please forward any photos, videos, movies etc. to Vice President John Day. His email is [vp@airtourer.asn.au](mailto:vp@airtourer.asn.au)

Previously we reported that **Airtourer 115 TPY** had been purchased by a syndicate and was being used for instruction by Sunshine Coast Flight Training at Gympie in Queensland. While they love Tippy, it's done over 200 hours so far this year, they have come to the same conclusion as many others, it would be nice to have more power for aerobatics. School owner and CFI, Tim Holland, casually asked the editor if he knew of a 150 for sale. He did know of one that was not being advertised but was unofficially, and reluctantly, on the market due to the high cost of parking at Canberra. **Airtourer Super 150 MWR** has now joined Tippy at Gympie and, not surprisingly, they love it!

During a recent visit to Gympie the editor caught up with another past Association member, **Sibylle Reisch**. Sibylle owned a charter company on the Sunshine Coast with Des Stagg, and ex-RAAF engineer who trained at RMIT under Henry Millicer. They sold the charter business some time ago but Sibylle is back doing some part time instruction at Gympie. Needless to say, she has been strongly encouraged to rejoin the Association.

Speaking of Gympie, while scanning the drawings in Tocumal a large amount of coffee was consumed. The editor could not help but notice the "Roasted

and blended in Gympie Queensland" sign on the top of the can. What's the Airtourer connection? The factory manager at Nestles is **Andrew Younger**, syndicate member of both TPY and MWR.



**Beryl “The Sheriff” Marshall** is always on the lookout for opportunities to issue fines. The latest victim is the editor, apparently for giving her too much coverage in the last newsletter!

**Ross Nunn** has recently moved from Pittsworth on the Darling Downs to the Sunshine Coast. He was in the process of replacing the fuel tank on his Airtourer 115 MTH when his property sold much quicker than expected. MTH had to be dismantled and is now safely in a shipping container. Hopefully we’ll have another Airtourer flying on the Sunshine Coast soon.

The Association occasionally receives emails from people who have fond memories of the Airtourer. Recently, a retired British Airways and Emirates Airlines Captain, Alan Dorman, contacted us regarding his first solo in Northern Ireland in **Airtourer 100 G-ASYZ** on 25th August 1967. As it was approaching the 50th anniversary he was enquiring about the fate of the aircraft. As it was not on our current membership list the UK members were contacted. Bill Beavis from Newcastle alerted us to the very good information available from the UK CAA GINFO website. Not only does it give the current ownership details like CASA but also the ownership history. A quick glance at the history brought back a flood of memories. The last listed owner was Neil Grayson of Shrewton, a former member of the Association. I lived in the village of Shrewton while attending the Empire Test Pilots School (ETPS) in 1984. Neil worked at Boscombe Down, the home of ETPS, although I didn’t know him then. He has since visited and flown with us in Australia. He purchased ASYZ in 1988 and it operated with the Boscombe Down Flying Club (Bustard Flying Club). On a trip through France it ran out of light and made a precautionary landing in a field. Unfortunately it was badly damaged, I believe it overturned, and was returned to Boscombe where repairs were carried out by the apprentices. The UK CAA didn’t recognize the repairs and it became uneconomical to return to flying condition again.

Neil originally purchased ASYZ with Ron Rhodes who was the Qualified Flying Instructor (QFI) at ETPS in 1984. Ron conducted a number of my conversions and instrument ratings and was typical of the specialist aircrew instructors in the RAF. He was an excellent instructor with a good feel for when the student was too busy to listen and when it was time to talk. He didn’t need to say much but we learned to listen carefully to what he did have to say. We knew he had extensive experience but were still surprised to learn that his first operational type was Spitfires in 1948!

While still in the UK, we recently heard from **Alan Hart** who owned a Super 150 which he reluctantly sold but remained a member of the Association. Alan is known for the most impressive “con job” he played on his partner Clare and her parents while they were visiting Sydney when the Association was holding a fly-in at Temora. He managed to convince Clare that it would be a quick and pleasant drive from Sydney to Temora and back for the day. Obviously it turned into a very long day as even the planned one hour stop at Temora extended to many hours. The good news is that Alan and Clare are planning to visit us again later in the year. We are looking forward to seeing you again but be careful of the distances.

## Recent Activities and Gatherings

Mid year is generally quiet for the southern states while in Queensland the dry season makes it ideal for flying.

The Victorian Mid Winter gathering saw 26 members and partners gather again at Fowles Winery in the Strathbogie Ranges north of Melbourne.

In Queensland, John Hilton, of the RQH syndicate joined the Brisbane Valley Sport Aviation Club's annual Fun Fly Poker Run. In this game of good fortune, the players find their way to several airfields in the district, selecting a random card in an envelope at each location. The winning poker hand is completed back at Watts Bridge with two cards drawn by the house.

Competition was fierce with nearly 40 aviators (flying no less than 30 aircraft) battling it out for first place. But as always there can only be one winner. John flying RQH took the coveted trophy with an unbeaten hand of AA22J, becoming the BVSAC Fun Fly Poker Champion for 2017.



### Winter Lunch At Fowles Winery

Ian Close and Sue Harris  
 Mike Fisher and Jacki Brown  
 Andy & Jane Morris  
 Stan & Bonny Tilly  
 Gerald & Sue Smith  
 Gerry & Denise Pels  
 John & Janice Wynn  
 Wendy Blemings  
 Neil & Kath Jensen  
 Martin Moore & partner  
 Jon Pels and Monique Gillett  
 Andrew & Sharon Clement  
 Dot Ross  
 Ivan & Nola Porteus

The biennial Opera at Jimbour was another opportunity for the QLD Airtourers to fly into an event. In the end only one could make it, John Hilton again. The following is John's report.

"Opera and flying. What could be better? The Opera part was Franz Lehár's wonderful "The Merry Widow", starring two of my favourite singers, David Hobson and Emily Burke, staged at the amphitheatre of historic Jimbour House on the Western Downs, just north of Dalby. Promoted by the Queensland Music Festival, the biennial event is a major draw-card on the Downs, featuring the Queensland Conservatorium Orchestra and the Toowoomba Community Choir. The Opera, with huge local support, attracts up to 12,000

people. There is also a vast number of stalls, selling everything from ice cream to fur coats.

The flying part also looked good, Jimbour being just 94 nm West of Caoolture, about an hour in RQH. Though not in ERSAs, JOH was kind enough to supply details of the airstrip - 800 metres of good sealed runway, 08/26 at 1240, with approval to fly in already granted. After a smooth flight in perfect Queensland winter weather I joined about fifteen other aircraft already there, although unfortunately no other Airtourers could make it.

Last light at 1739 presented a slight challenge for the return trip. I decided to reluctantly leave the wonderful singing a little early to be airborne at 1545. This got me back to YCAB at 1640, a little on the cautious side perhaps, but on the "old not bold" principle, I was happy with that. A great day"



*Above: A lonely Airtourer parked at Jimbour for the opera.*

*Below: The stars, David Hobson and Emily Burke.*



The latest QLD event was the Gympie Community Open Day over the weekend of 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> August. As reported elsewhere, Gympie now has two resident Airtourers as well as Kerry Pearce's CT4. Tim Holland of Sunshine Coast Flight Training made us welcome and yet again it was John Hilton and RQH that flew in. (See front page photo.) Other visitors by car were Doug Stott, Ross Nunn and the editor.

The next QLD event will be the "Gathering of Eagles" at Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield over the weekend of 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> August. Watts Bridge is the home of Doug Stott's Airtourer Super 150 CTM and details of the fly-in are on the Association website. Doug requests anyone intending to fly in to contact him by email so he can arrange group parking.



*Above: Tim Holland clowning around using Airtourer stubby coolers as epaulettes.  
Below: Andrew Younger with the display board telling the public about the Airtourer for the Gympie Community Open Day.*



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# 2017 President's Fly In

## Renmark SA

### 23-24 September 2017

Renmark is a town of around 7000 people located on the Murray River some 250km NE of Adelaide. The region was first explored by Captain Charles Sturt in 1830 and a settlement started to develop from 1887, the town being proclaimed in 1904. Today the region is best known for the production of citrus, grapes, stone fruit, nuts, wheat and wool but we think we have found some more interesting things to look at.

**Getting to Renmark:** Obviously an Airtourer is the best way to get to Renmark and AVGAS is available at the airfield (credit card swipe bowser). Sadly, you are a bit late to catch a train to Renmark because the line closed in 1983. Mildura is the nearest town with airline services and is well connected to MEL, SYD and ADL. Renmark is around 135km by road from Mildura. Alternatively, Renmark is 260km by road from Adelaide and you will almost certainly find cheaper flights to Adelaide.

**Ground Transport:** We will have a suitable sized bus for the weekend and it will provide transport to and from the airfield and to the various activities for the weekend. The pick-up/drop off point in town will be the Renmark Hotel which is centrally located.

## Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September

**Early Arrivals:** We think this will be worth the effort to arrive early.

**Twenty Third Street Distillery** is the new incarnation of a century-old landmark at Twenty Third Street, Renmark, in South Australia's fertile Riverland. The distillery was built by Barossa firm Chateau Tanunda in 1914 to take advantage of burgeoning Riverland harvests. No expense was spared in the design and construction of this imposing building and its production plant. However, Chateau Tanunda had sunk too much into it and found itself sinking into financial ruin. This could have been disastrous for the local grape growers. They'd quickly become dependent on the distillery buying their fruit. But beneath the gloom was opportunity. Could the growers cut out the middle man and run the distillery themselves? Around 130 fruit growers banded together to form The Renmark Growers' Distillery Company Limited and purchase the facilities. It was the first cooperative of its kind in Australia, a great success and a huge boost to the local Riverland community.

A series of mergers and takeovers unfortunately led to a rapid decline in activ-



ity at Twenty Third Street, until it ceased all production in 2002. But the spirit lingered. In 2016, fuelled by fresh creative passion, the facility reopened as the Twenty Third Street Distillery producing a range of Brandy, Gin, Vodka and Whisky.

**1330:** Bus departs accommodation to the Distillery.

**1400: Twenty Third Street Distillery** tour and tasting \$25. Following the tour, the bus will return you to your accommodation.

**1800:** Meet for dinner at the **Renmark Club**. It is only a short walk from most accommodation options. The Club has been around since 1909 and (according to their own web site) opened as a “Gentlemen’s Club”, that possibly had a different meaning back then... The current facilities are located on the river front in the heart of town and look great.

## **Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> September**

**Morning activities:** TBA but we can go out to the airfield to conduct a short flight to look at the local sights by air and meet today’s arrivals.

**1200:** Bus departure from the airfield if arriving today. The bus will take you to your accommodation to check in quickly and then we have a full afternoon of activities.

**1300:** Bus departure:

**Ruston’s Roses:** This is Australia’s largest rose garden with 50,000 bushes, a café and classic car collection. We will be here for about an hour and a half so a good opportunity to have lunch at the café but save room for our next stop. \$10.

**1430:** Bus departs for a 30 minute trip NE of Renmark to the Woolshed Brewery overlooking the river. We will be taken on a tour of the brewery and have the history of the Wilkandene, a famous sheep and wheat property, explained \$10. There will of course be time to sample some of the fine beers and ciders that are produced on site.

**1700:** Depart for accommodation.

**1900:** Dinner at **Renmark Hotel**

## Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> September

**0930:** Bus pick up from accommodation.

**1000:** Airfield Brunch and departures. The Riverland Sport Aviation Club will be hosting us for brunch prior to setting off.

### Accommodation

**Renmark Hotel:** A historic community owned hotel that had an air spotters tower manned 24/7 in WW2, where “Breaker” Morant rode his horse into the bar and where Sir Charles Kingsford Smith stayed when he flew the Southern Cross to Renmark (currently no rooms available FRI night but check nearer the time).

Murray Ave,  
Renmark SA 5341  
(08) 8586 6755

<http://www.renmarkhotel.com.au>

**Renmark Club:** One and two bedroom apartments.

160 Murray Ave,  
Renmark SA 5341  
(08) 8586 6611  
<http://www.renmarkclub.com.au>

**EconoLodge:** Motel with free continental breakfast.

210 Renmark Ave,  
Renmark SA 5341  
(08) 8586 6717  
<http://www.citrusvalleymotel.com.au>

## For Sale

### 1/10<sup>th</sup> share in Airtourer Queensland Pty Ltd.

VH-TPY Airtourer 115 1963

Airframe 2650 hours.

Based at Gympie Queensland.

\$65 per month insurance & hangarage.

\$110 per hour wet.

Andrew Younger 0403 193 465



Find us on  
**Facebook**

Do you know there is an Airtourer Association Group on Facebook? Doug Stott set this up some time ago and recently it's gained in popularity. If you are a facebook user please come join the group and keep everyone up to date with your Airtouring activities.

## Lycoming Service Bulletin

*Have you had connecting rod work done on your Lycoming engine between November 2015 and February 2017?*

Lycoming has issued a Mandatory Service Bulletin to address connecting rods with non-conforming small end bushings. As this is mandatory it is likely that the FAA will raise an Airworthiness Directive which will apply to affected Australian engines. Details of the SB can be obtained from the Lycoming website at [www.lycoming.com](http://www.lycoming.com) and searching for SB 632.

## Calendar of Events

### Queensland Gathering

#### Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield

19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> August 2017

Details on the website. Contact Doug Stott (djm.s@bigpond.com) so he can arrange group parking.

### 2017 President's Fly In

Renmark South Australia 23rd-24th Sep. 2017.

Updates on the website and on pages 24 to 26 of this Newsletter

### End of Year Function 2017

25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> November 2017

Kyneton-Castlemaine region. Program on the website.

### Shepparton Pancake Fly-in Breakfast

Shepparton local and Association Committee member Andrew Clement welcomes all Airtourers to their monthly Pancake Breakfast on the first Sunday of each month.

### Convention & AGM 2018

16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> March 2018

The 2018 Convention & AGM will be held at Griffith NSW. In keeping with the best traditions of the Airtourer Association, every 10 years we return to GTH. We are planning to make this a major event so please keep watching Association publications for updates.

## Welcome

**Paul Garrahy** of Gympie who is one of the members of the syndicate owning TPY.

Over time some members overlook renewing and drop out off the membership list. It's always nice to welcome them back and this month we have two long lost West Australians, **Rod Swallow** and **Claude Meunier**. Rod is from Busselton south of Perth and owns Airtourer 100, S/N 4, VH-MTE. Claude owns another Airtourer 100, GBS, and comes from Northam to the north east of Perth. He is one of a small group who have flown solo around the world, although not in his Airtourer. Look up his website at [www.soloflights.org](http://www.soloflights.org) to learn not only about his flight but also Cliff Tait's solo Airtourer around the world flight. Welcome back Rod and Claude.