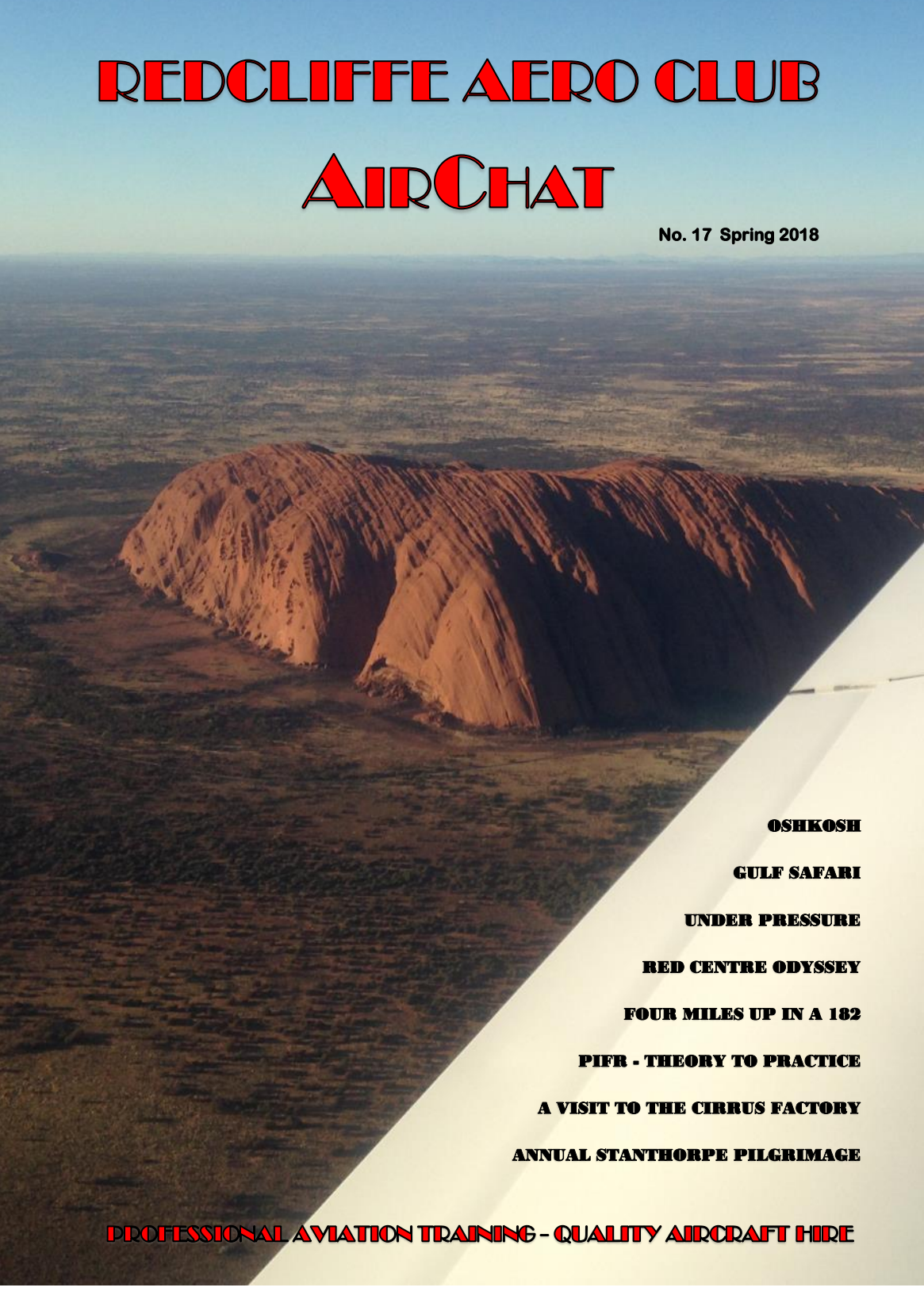
REDCLIFFE AERO CLUB

AirChat

No. 17 Spring 2018



OSHKOSH

GULF SAFARI

UNDER PRESSURE

RED CENTRE ODYSSEY

FOUR MILES UP IN A 182

PIFR - THEORY TO PRACTICE

A VISIT TO THE CIRRUS FACTORY

ANNUAL STANTHORPE PILGRIMAGE

PROFESSIONAL AVIATION TRAINING - QUALITY AIRCRAFT HIRE

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Inside

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Front cover: Uluru
Rear cover: King's Canyon

From the club president

Hello Everyone

It's mid year at the Club - what's new to report?

I think the Club is pumping. There are many things happening as a result of a lot of hard work by many people within the Club. As with all clubs, and this one is no different, the Directors are heavily involved in making decisions and setting directions and strategic goals for the long term benefit of the Club and all our members. Our VET Student Loans part of flight training is presently at capacity. It seems like our Club is the focus of students from all over Australia, which is very satisfying and a credit to the hard work of many people over many years. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you all. The charter side of the Club is also very buoyant, utilising both of our C310's. It has been so busy in fact that we have had to employ two line pilots, Jack and Mitchell, to take pressure off our instructors.

One of my favourite parts of our Club is seeing the social activities grow and increased involvement from a wide range of members. This year we have seen a sizeable increase in social activities and in numbers joining in these activities. One example is our monthly barbecues where attendance has increased significantly with a great deal of positive feedback from members. Recently we hosted our annual group of enthusiastic flyers from Hong Kong. This group of aviators never seem to disappoint. This year we had some extra achievers with solo flights. Well done to you all. We had almost 70 members and friends attend the social evening and BBQ to say farewell (until next year) to the Hong Kong group.

Flyaways have also been high on the Club's agenda in recent months. In addition to our annual Stanthorpe pilgrimage, in July the Club conducted a flyaway to Ayers Rock. Five aircraft departing YRED with 13 people. Over 9 days we visited the following places: Roma, Longreach, Boulia, Alice Springs, Ayers Rock, Coober Pedy, Arkaroola, Broken Hill, Dubbo, Tamworth and home. It was simply amazing! The joint experience formed special bonds and friendships that won't be erased. You can read all about it in this edition of AirChat. If you haven't been on a Club flyaway then it's time you asked how to get involved. They vary from one day outings to overnight ones to the longer trips such as the recent one to Ayers Rock. If you haven't been on one you are missing out on a really fantastic experience. We all love aviation and love to share and help each other get more out of it. Flyaways are a great way to do so, so get involved.

Happy Landings

Mike Cahill
President 2018

CEO update

Dear Members

As I reported earlier this year the Club has been challenged maintaining instructor resources and capability due to there being significant progression within the industry, particularly in the last 12 to 18 months. In addition to the employment of line pilots to assist with survey operations, freeing up instructors, we have also employed a new Grade 3 instructor, John Michael (JM) O'Dougherty. JM is a graduate of the Club's instructor school and as such has smoothly slotted into the instructor ranks. A short description of his background appears in this AirChat. Please welcome him when you are next at the club.

With the loss of some senior instructors, who received their ratings before Part 61 became law, we are now seeing the impacts and limitations of CASR Part 61 on instructor privileges. Post Part 61, instructors do not automatically get NVFR, design feature (e.g. manual propeller pitch control and retractable undercarriage) and basic instrument instructor privileges. Also, our ability to instruct multi-engine class ratings and instrument ratings has been diminished with the movement within the instructor ranks. Your Board and Management are addressing these limitations by investing in the capability of its instructors through bonding agreements.

Also, as previously reported, Lauree Skene-Gordon has joined our administrative staff as our Registered Training Organisation Co-ordinator. Lauree has added much appreciated expertise in RTO administration and compliance. She has been very busy screening and inducting our first intake of VET Student Loans students into our AVI50215 Diploma of Aviation – (Commercial Pilot Licence) and AVI50415 Diploma of Aviation – (Instrument Rating). These students will start in September. Other cohorts will start as resources allow, including students in the AVI50516 Diploma of Aviation (Instructor Rating) course, likely to be offered early next year.

The Club continues to be a vibrant and diverse training and private flying hub and I encourage you all to visit and make use of your Club's facilities, aircraft and simulators and to participate in the flyaway and social program.

Best regards,

Stephen White
CEO

Hong Kong student farewell

Chief pilot report

Welcome to another edition of AirChat. I would like to take this opportunity to raise with you the many ways we as pilots can meet our regular flight review obligations. Now some of you may be rolling your eyes at the mere thought of a flight review, but please bear with me.

Most of us who fly have some form of Flight Crew Licence that comes with a Category Rating, for example Private Pilot Licence Aeroplane (PPL(A)) or Commercial Pilot Licence Aeroplane (CPL(A)). The Flight Crew Licence is the PPL bit and the (A) is the category bit. We also have a Class Rating for Single Engine Aeroplane (SEA).

Those of us who have PPL(A) or CPL(A) may have an additional Class Rating for Multi-Engine Aeroplane (MEA). We could also have one or more Operational Ratings, such as an Instrument Rating (IR), Private Instrument Rating (PIR) or Night VFR Rating (NVFR).

With the exception of the IR, which requires an annual proficiency check, all the above ratings require an Aeroplane Flight Review (AFR), sometimes referred to as a Biennial Flight Review (BFR), conducted by a qualified instructor, by the last day of the 24th month after the most recent flight review. In other words, you can exercise the privileges of your licence for two years since your last flight review. However, it's important to know that you don't need to undergo multiple flight reviews for multiple ratings. This is where it becomes a bit complicated so let's use a couple of examples to illustrate what's necessary and possible.

Let's say Mr. Bloggs has a PPL(A), SEA class rating and Night VFR rating. All these aspects of his licence require a flight review, but with planning we can design a single flight review exercise that will cover all of them. The key here is to understand that Bloggs needs have all his ratings reviewed and he needs to make the reviewing instructor aware of the situation beforehand. It is no good if Bloggs realizes that he needs to review his NVFR rating but neglects to tell the reviewer and then expects him to "sign off on it" after the fact, without having satisfied the requirements of a specific flight review component.

Back to Bloggs, who has approached a qualified instructor in good time for his BFR and has highlighted that he needs a review of his licence including the NVFR rating. Rather than planning two separate reviews (which he could do if necessary) Bloggs and his reviewer arrange for the review to include components that include NVFR elements to satisfy the flight review requirements of Bloggs's NVFR rating. Keep in mind that a flight review completed totally at night in a single engine aeroplane will cover Bloggs for day time operations but a day time flight review will not satisfy the requirements for NVFR. If Bloggs did a flight review that was designed around day operations, then he would have reviewed his SEA class rating for day operations only and could no longer fly on his NVFR rating until he had his NVFR rating reviewed also. So, Bloggs and his reviewer decide to have one part of the flight before last light and the second part after last light. Bloggs passes with flying colours, everyone is happy and the instructor signs off Bloggs for another two years.

Now what if Bloggs decides at some time before his

next BFR is due to obtain a Multi-Engine Class Rating? He undergoes training and passes a flight test to obtain this rating. This flight test removes the need for Bloggs to do a flight review, but only of his class ratings (SEA and MEA) but not his operational rating (NVFR). It means that Bloggs can fly only on day time operations until he completes a flight review for his NVFR rating since his NVFR rating is single-engine only.

Now let's consider another situation, that of Ms Bloggs who obtains a bare PPL(A). 24 months after her flight test Ms Bloggs understands that a BFR is due, however she would like to add to her qualification at the same time and kill two birds with one stone so to speak. Ms Bloggs could train for and pass a flight test for an operational rating such as a Private Instrument Rating, but the cost is out of reach for her for now. Instead she relies on the fact that if she completes training for a design feature endorsement such as a Manual Propeller Pitch Control or Retractable Undercarriage it will act as a substitute for a flight review. Once she passes her test for the endorsement she can continue to fly on her PPL(A) for another 24 months.

Now Blogg's son Junior has a CPL(A) with a Private Instrument Rating (PIR) with RNAV approach endorsement that he obtained some time ago. Normally PIRs require a flight review every two years. Approaching BFR time Junior decides that he would like to add a further Private Instrument Endorsement (PIE) to his PIR, as this will require a flight test and cover his flight review requirements. Junior would like to be able to fly ILS instrument approaches and chooses this endorsement as the PIE he will train for and be tested on. Once Junior has trained for and passed the flight test to add the ILS PIE to his PIR, he has satisfied the flight review requirements for his PIR.

But what about Junior's SEA category rating? Despite having passed the PIE flight test Junior will still not have satisfied the SEA flight review requirements, so it still needs to be sorted out. The opportunity does exist to carry out some extra exercises during the PIE flight test and satisfy the requirements for the SEA flight review as well as the test. Junior discusses his requirements and arranges all this with his flight examiner prior to the flight, and in this way avoids the need to complete a separate flight review.

So, in summary, just as there are many ways to skin the proverbial cat, there are many ways to satisfy the requirements of your biennial flight review. It is important to realize however that not only does your category rating require a flight review, but any operational ratings you have need to be reviewed every 24 months as well. We are here and ready to help you to complete your flight reviews in the most efficient manner. Therefore, please discuss your individual requirements with your instructor in plenty of time and we will gladly tailor your flight review to your requirements.

Fly safe and fly often

Mal McAdam
Chief Pilot and Head of Operations

P.S. Any similarity of the above characters to any person either living or dead is purely coincidental and in no way meant to offend anyone.

Editorial

Dear Reader

Welcome to the spring 2018 edition of AirChat. It contains a variety of articles and stories that I hope you find interesting.

Winter has come to an end and although the ongoing dry conditions across eastern Australia may be a curse for our farmers they are a bonus for those of us who like to take to the air and explore our great country. Now is a good time to fly out west and stay in some of our remote communities and see for yourselves the difficulties that they are experiencing while bringing some much needed income and moral support to them. A fleet of RAC aircraft did just that recently, spending nine days on a flyaway to the red centre, including stops in western Queensland, NT, northern SA and western NSW. It opened our eyes to the devastation the drought is bringing out there. Despite the drought conditions it was a great trip as you'll read about later in this edition.

Graham Pukallus also took advantage of the winter conditions to head north with his Pilots and Partners group in May and had a great time exploring the outback, the gulf country and some coastal parts of north Queensland.

Bob Tait is best known in Queensland and Australian aviation circles for his excellent series of aviation training publications and the training courses he holds at his school located at Redcliffe Airport. Less well known is that he achieved an altitude record in a Cessna 182 in the 1970s. He describes how it came about.

Did you even wonder whether you really need to do a weight and balance calculation for that next flight? Phil Ware recounts how one RAC pilot didn't some years ago and the potentially dire consequences that resulted.

In the second of two parts I relate my experiences tackling and obtaining my Private Instrument Flight Rating (PIFR). This edition I explain how the practical part of the training unfolded and describe the hurdles I had to jump to be in a position to fly cross country in Instrument Meteorological Conditions and carry out instrument approaches into airports.

Mike Cahill joined a group of Club members to visit the Oshkosh air show in the USA this year. He summarises the highlights of the air show, as well as a side trip he made to Duluth, where Cirrus aircraft are manufactured.

Our instructor pool has recently been increased with the addition of J M O'Dougherty. J M provides us with a brief introduction to his background and career aims.

What would you do if your aircraft suddenly lost oil pressure while flying over Moreton Bay? It happened to one of our students recently while on a nav with instructor Nick Pratt. Read about their experience and how they dealt with a potentially dangerous situation.

And Lucas Gozzard sums up his first flyaway experience, joining the Club's annual pilgrimage to Stanthorpe for some wine, beer and cheese tasting.

Thanks one and all for your great contributions.

I hope you enjoy the edition and the stories inspire you to head out into blue skies (or even not so blue ones) in the months ahead.

Philip Arthur
Editor

Recent achievers

It's been a busy few months since our last edition in April, with many achievements for our students. Congratulations to everyone who recently completed a milestone in their training at RAC. We wish you all well for your future endeavours in aviation.

Gerardo Angarita

Dylan Morris

First Solo

Daniel Esparon

Gurung Bimal

Ian Nye

Jakeb Thorogood

Michael Gillott

Brent Wilkinson

RPL

Gabriela McLaughlin

James Vella

Roy Campbell

Kunchana Meregngnage

Hoi Bond (Patrick) Tang

Michael Gillot

Gaby McLaughlin

CPL

Loick Bel

Dylan Morris

Murray Norris

PPL

Bryce O'Brien

Gerardo Angarita

Lucas Gozzard

Gurung Bimal

Multi Engine Aircraft Instrument Rating

Ashleigh Hodge

Dylan Morris

Juan Sperling

Lucas Gozzard

Patrick Tang

Ashleigh Hodge

Jakeb Thorogood

Bryce O'Brien

Daniel Esparon

Roy Campbell

Ian Nye

James Vella

Juan Sperling

Loick Bel

Upcoming events

Our flyaways have been very successful this year. We're continuing to organise more events during spring and summer so keep yourself informed as to what's coming up. Go to our Flyaways Facebook group to keep up to date and tell us where you'd like to go and when. Click on the link below:

https://www.facebook.com/67groups/678739008989427

Meanwhile, put these events in your diary:

9 September: Club open day

16-17 September: Chinchilla "One Long Table" flyaway

20 September: Piot info night - Air Traffic Control HQ, Brisbane Centre

20-23 September: AirVenture - Cessnock, Hunter Valley

22 September: OzRunways Workshop, Toowoomba

12-13 October: Warbirds Downunder Airshow - Temora, NSW

28 October: Club flyaway to Yamba for lunch

24 November: Club wings dinner

The Club's open day is on Sunday 9th September from 10am to 3pm. It should be another great day with $50 joy flights and adventure flights in historic aircraft.

Our annual wings celebration dinner will be on Saturday November 24th. Come along and enjoy an evening in the hangar and celebrate the diverse achievements of our members.

And don't forget our happy hour and barbecue at the Club every first Friday of the month from 5pm.

All members, friends and family welcome.

Check the Club website or Facebook page for details.

Weight and balance

by Phil (Curly) Ware

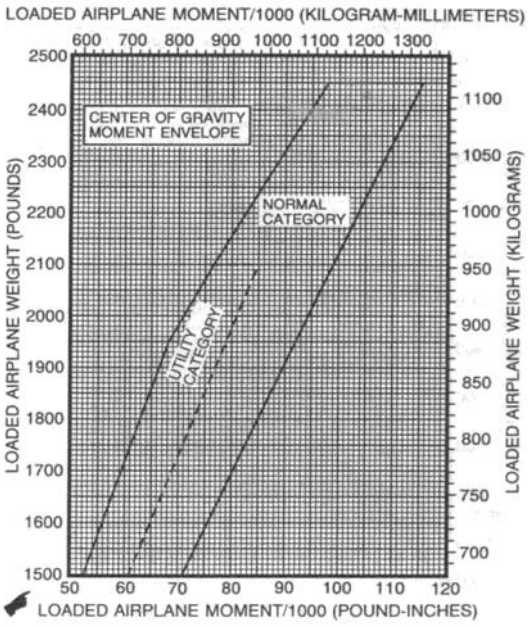
Years ago, the main training aircraft at the Club was the Cessna 152, with three in use: BUE, BUQ and IVW. IVW was eventually consigned to the scrap metal yard and a new C172 bearing that call sign was subsequently purchased by the Club.

Even though all trainee pilots studied and passed their weight and balance theory, they were allowed to use a "standard weight" of 77kg per adult instead of actual weights. This approach proved problematic at times.

One day a newly qualified private pilot received a phone call from the Club, letting him know that a new C152 had been added to the fleet and asking him whether he would come out and fly it. The pilot duly arrived, dipped the tanks and found it needed refuelling. The Cessna 152 had a total capacity of 92 litres and a fuel flow rate of 27 litres per hour so it always seemed a good idea to fill the tanks, which was done.

While the refuelling was underway, a man of massive proportions wandered over to observe. He was a Detective Sergeant from the then Woolloongabba CIB, and was indeed a b-i-i-i-i-g man. He'd always wanted to be a pilot and asked whether there was any chance of him going for a ride.

Approval was given, the passenger was strapped in, given his safety briefing and the C152 started up and taxied to the holding point for Runway 07.



The pilot had made many flights in C152s so he made a quick mental calculation of the W&B: 2 adults at 77 kg each plus 92 litres of fuel - weight within limits - fine.

It was a hot day, and the QNH was relatively low. The take off roll commenced, and about three quarters of the way down the runway, noticing the acceleration was not quite as expected, the pilot began to have misgivings about the aircraft weight and conditions. Nevertheless the take-off continued and the aircraft became airborne and climbed away. It was a very low climb rate however - similar to how the toilet block near the helicopter hanger would climb, if it had wings!

Speed was held at the "Best Rate Of Climb Speed" as the aircraft skimmed over the coastline and the pilot commenced a 5 degree left turn, so as not to lose altitude in the turn. Suddenly he noticed a placard on the instrument panel that he hadn't seen before. It read:

CAUTION - This aircraft is fitted with long range fuel tanks
Do not fill above 92 litres with 2 POB

It was common knowledge that a C152 normally held 92 litres but this wasn't a normal C152. With long range tanks this particular aircraft had taxied out with 160 litres on board, making it way over the maximum take-off weight. Moreover, the pilot suddenly realised that it was also way over the maximum landing weight! What to do? He quickly calculated that he had about three hours of flight time before he'd burned enough fuel for the aircraft to be back below legal landing weight. So he said to his passenger "How would you like a run up to Hervey Bay and back?" The passenger was delighted and so the flight proceeded over water to Hervey and back with mixture full rich to use as much fuel as possible and, on return to Redcliffe, calculation confirmed that the aircraft was finally below its legal landing weight.

It was a "greaser" of a landing. The plane taxied in and parked and the passenger was ecstatic. Never in his life had he flown with such a competent pilot - and with that he fished some notes out of his wallet, stuffed them into the pilot's shirt pocket and said that the best part of the flight was the low level departure from Redcliffe, where he had such a good close look at his properties. He didn't realise just how close he came to arriving prematurely in the back yard of one of those properties!

Ignorance is indeed bliss and the passenger had enjoyed a very blissful flight while the pilot had learned some valuable lessons. So he counted his lucky stars and contemplated what he'd learned that day.

1. Always check your weights and do thorough weight and balance calculations before every flight, never just rely on "convention" or assurances from others. Using an App like OzRunways or AvPlan makes it simple these days.

2. If there is any doubt about the take off and subsequent flight, do not take off. Wait for conditions to improve and/or adjust the actual weight being carried.

3. As a former RAC CFI said, "When you open the throttle, you must have already asked yourself all the questions and have all the answers that permit you to take off safely and legally."

Happy and Safe Flying :-)

Curly

Instructor intro - J M O'Dougherty

J M O'Dougherty is a recent addition to the Club's instructing team. He gave us some insight to his background and what he hopes to achieve in his aviation career.

How did you become involved in aviation?

My dad was always keen on flying and aviation. We've had every version of flight sim at home since I was born and I attended many air shows while growing up. I decided during high school that I would like to make it my career and enrolled in a Bachelor of Aviation.

Where did you have your first flying lessons?

In 2010 I had my first introduction flight on my 16th Birthday at the Royal QLD Aeroclub at Archerfield in a C152. I then joined the Griffith Uni Soaring Society and flew my first solo in a glider in 2012. It wasn't until 2014 that I started training full time at Archerfield under the Griffith Uni Graduate Diploma.

What type of licence and endorsements did you gain and over what duration? Where did the training take place?

I gained a GFPT, PPL and PIFR within the first year and then completed CPL and MEIR within the next 6 months, all at the Airline Academy at Archerfield. At the end of 2016 I completed a Flight Instructor Rating at Redcliffe Aero Club.

What attracted you to Redcliffe Aero Club?

It's one of the few flight schools left with a true club atmosphere.

What do you love most about flying for a career?
Flying doesn't feel like work. It's the only job I can think of doing where having more work is more exciting than having less work.

What are some of the challenges you've faced over the years?
Preparing for each flight test can be very stressful, and it can be hard to keep yourself motivated while learning. Landing a first job as a pilot was also really tough.

What jobs have you had so far?

This is my first full time flying job. I have worked in the operations department for JETGO Australia and done voluntary ferry flights prior to starting here.

What aspects of aviation are you especially passionate about?
With the global economy expanding, aviation and air transport keeps the world connected. I am passionate about always finding the most efficient way to get things done, and flying is always going to be the fastest way to transport people and goods long distance.

Which aircraft do you like to fly most and why?

I like the Cessna 206. It's the aircraft I did my CPL training and test in. It's loud and is a true work horse!

What would you like to achieve in your future flying career?
Consistent improvement of my skills so that I can develop and move into flying bigger and better aircraft.

What would be your dream job?
Anything flying a large jet aeroplane.

What advice do you have for people wanting to learn to fly?
Be persistent! Study hard and keep working at your goals. It can feel like a long road sometimes, but it will be worth it in the end.

Outback and gulf safari

by Graham Pukallus

This year's Pilots and Partners flying safari encompassed a range of different themes and experiences to cater for a wider range of interests. There were iconic Aussie pubs, dinosaur bones, a gorge oasis, Australia's top fishing and croc town, an outback cattle station and beautiful beaches.

Dingo Fuel Stop

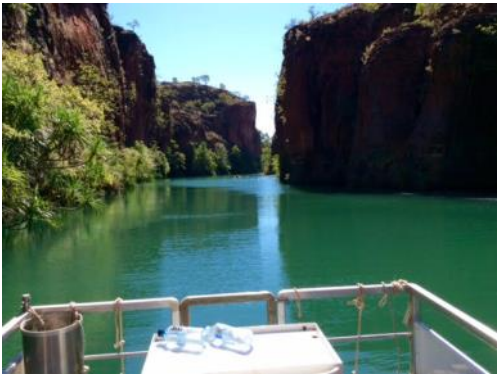
It was a two week trip with eight aircraft and a total of 15 POB. Overnight stops included one night in Dingo, one night in Winton, two nights in Adel's Grove, two nights in Karumba, two nights at Gilberton Station, two nights in Bowen and one night at Emu Park.

We set off on 5th May, with a number of us departing from different home bases. We all met up at our first refuelling stop at Gayndah, where we were welcomed by the councillor for North Burnett Shire Council, John Zahl on behalf of the Mayor, Rachel Chambers. We all enjoyed morning tea put on by the local Men's Shed and council at the airport.

After our morning tea we departed for our first overnight stopover at Dingo, about half way between Emerald and Rockhampton. It's a typical bush strip, 1000m of dirt, just off the Capricorn Highway. It's a short walk to the Dingo Roadhouse with its modern self-contained cabins where we were well catered for and offered the use of a vehicle by Darren (property owner and Mooney pilot). We attended the local Dingo Pub to have dinner and celebrate the birthday of one of our crew. Darren and his staff had a birthday cake for her and made the night a great experience.

Early next morning we left for Winton where we were met by our host Vicki Jones of Red Dirt Tours, who transferred us to the Outback Motel in a 17 seat Isuzu 4WD vehicle/bus. After settling in Vicki escorted us on our tour of Winton. It included a visit to the Australian Age of Dinosaurs Museum followed by a Sunset Tour, with drinks and nibbles. The flies were there in abundance and we all made good use of our fly nets while outside enjoying the sunset. We experienced a few isolated storms passing through, which made for some great sunset shots. Later we witnessed some much needed rain in town while enjoying a great dinner at the famous Tattersall's Hotel.

Dinosaur bones at Winton



Lawn Hill gorge

Lawn Hill

The following day we headed off to Adel's Grove, a resort located only 10km from the Lawn Hill National Park, just south of the Gulf of Carpentaria. This is another bush strip where we were met by the manager and staff who transferred us from the airstrip to the resort 300 metres away. We settled into our accommodation before enjoying a sumptuous lunch and relaxing afternoon with a swim in the stream that runs through the property.

In the morning we were escorted on our organised tours including a guided interpretive walking tour of Boodjamulla National Park followed by a cruise of Lawn Hill Gorge, a truly breathtaking experience for us all. To finish off the day we enjoyed sunset drinks and nibbles on Harry's Hill where the views back towards the escarpment were spectacular! The owner/manager Rod, who is also a pilot, gave a briefing on a preferred track as we departed Adel's Grove to take in all the local escarpments and gorges.

We flew on to Normanton, where we were met by Jake, son of Frog, who is the owner/manager of the Albion Hotel. Jake gave us a tour of the town sites including the local fishing and croc hot spots along with the Normanton historic railway station and Krys the croc. We were treated to a lunch of the famous Barra Burger, a massive treat, enjoyed by all. If you're going that way mention you're another flying group and tell Frog you want to duplicate the tour he did with us for your group. They'll pick you up at the airport in the school bus and give you the tour of Normanton including lunch and transfer you back to your aircraft. You won't be disappointed.

After lunch we all took off for the short hop to Karumba, our final leg north, where we were welcomed by our hosts Mark and Yvonne Tunney of Ash's Motel. The motel is located near the end of the runway (300 metres away) and just down the street from the Karumba Sunset Tavern. We all set off on our first activity with Allison and (skipper) Glenn from Ferryman Sunset Tours who gave us all a running commentary of the waterways and history of Karumba concluding with sunset drinks and nibbles overlooking the gulf and river mouth of Karumba, a truly memorable experience.

In the morning some of us set off on a fishing trip with Karumba Saltwater Fishing Adventures with hosts Leanne and (skipper) Darren Novley. It was a great day of pulling in massive fish that weighed down the boat so much it hardly made it back to shore! Everyone enjoyed dinner and another gulf sunset in the beer garden at the Karumba Hotel. We discovered that if you do the morning fishing trip and take the fish you catch to the Karumba Sunset Tavern by 2 pm they will prepare and cook the fish for your group that night. Needless to say, we did not go hungry!

Normanton

Gilberton strip

The following day we departed for Gilberton Station, located about 300km west of Townsville and approximately 2 hours flying time from Karumba at 100 knots. We were met by our hosts Lyn and Rob who had the billy boiling and a sumptuous smoko waiting. What a surprise welcome! After settling into our comfortable donga style accommodation (or optional luxurious Retreat Villa) we were taken on a tour of what remains of the gold mining town. As the afternoon progressed we relaxed before viewing the outback sunset at nearby Mt Nation. That night we were treated to a sumptuous dinner around the campfire prepared by a local chef, followed by a star gazing tour before retiring for the night.

In the morning we walked up to the homestead for a big country breakfast before heading off on our tour of the prehistoric rock formations and abandoned gold mines. Rob took some of us on a gold fossicking tour and introduced them to a few prospectors who showed them some gold nuggets they'd recently discovered in the area. The afternoon saw us relaxing in the local Gilbert River and enjoying the ambience of this quiet yet fascinating property and the surrounding countryside.

Gilberton Station

Our second night at Gilberton was very special with both Rob and Lyn sharing the property's and family's history over another great dinner at the homestead.

Next morning we loaded up the aircraft and said goodbye to our wonderful hosts with promises that we would be back. We headed south, flying via Charters Towers to Bowen. On arrival our tour host Lynn Smith welcomed us and assisted everyone with transfers to the accommodation where we were met by Jenny and Chris, the owners of the Harbour Lights Tourist Park. Upon request they supplied us with a ute for our personal use during our stay in Bowen. That afternoon everyone had free time checking out the town, especially the local bakery for the best coffee and old-style cakes and exploring the area. Bowen was a base for the flying boats during the battle of the Coral Sea. The Coral Sea Display is located at the Bowen Aerodrome and honours Bowen's association with the World War II Catalina Flying Boats. The display has five dioramas built on 1/72 scale including a model of the USSS Lexington. The Catalina Memorial, located on the foreshore, is an interpretative centre commemorating the Catalinas and honouring those Bowen residents who served Australia during military conflicts.

Horseshoe Bay, Bowen

For our first night we enjoyed a sunset dinner at the famous Cove restaurant overlooking Queen's Bay. It was a very special evening. Next morning we had breakfast at Sails on Main followed by a tour of Bowen and its lookouts and beaches. A couple of us had a swim at Horseshoe Bay before having lunch at the Oasis Gardens with owner and tour guides Lyn and Vince Smith.

Next morning we departed for Emu Park on the coast east of Rockhampton, stopping off for fuel along the way at the Palmyra ALA, a private landing field located just west of Mackay. We had a welcome morning tea hosted by Harry Cheyne and members of the Palmyra Flyers Group.

It was our final night together at Emu Park. After viewing a great sunset at the Singing Sails Lookout overlooking Great Keppel Island, we had dinner at the Emu Park Hotel.

Our final morning arrived. Prior to departure we all said our sad goodbyes before our final take-off to our various home destinations. It was time to start planning our next trip away.

Trip notes

Dingo Roadhouse

Darren Bauman – 04 2835 9232

darren.bauman@dingogroup.com.au

Winton

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Under pressure

by Bryce O'Brien

I was recently flying VH-IVW on my PPL Nav 5 (YRED-YDUN-YBCG-YBAF-YRED) with RAC instructor Nick Pratt. We headed over to Bribie, crossed the bay to Tangalooma and tracked down the west coast of Moreton Island. At the northern end of North Stradbroke Island, Nick was first to notice the "Oil Pressure" annunciator light had lit up. Upon checking the oil pressure gauge we were shocked to see it was reading at the bottom of the red arc and was flashing red.

After about 3 seconds the annunciator disappeared and the oil pressure gauge stabilised and was back in the green arc. Immediately Nick made the decision to terminate the flight and head home.

We decided against Dunwich on North Stradbroke as a potential landing area for various reasons. We were not confident of the engine run time and were potentially going to end up in the "drink" regardless. Also we had not planned on landing at YDUN before the flight due to heavy rain that morning that would have made the grass strip soft and also due to the predicted strong winds that can make landing there challenging. Nick also said the last 5 out of 6 times he had been to YDUN, he'd been unable to land due to kangaroos on the strip.

We decided I would maintain control while Nick manned the radios.

Nick contacted Brisbane Centre who cleared us direct to YRED at 4500ft. Centre also offered Brisbane International (YBBN), but as our oil pressure had stabilised, we felt confident in the engine's condition and, having enough height to glide to various locations, we maintained our heading for YRED.

Approximately 10 minutes later, when we were approximately 7nm east of YBBN, the annunciator light came back on and the oil pressure gauge dropped to zero again. At this point we noticed a slight loss of engine power and some vibrations so Nick took control and elected to divert to YBBN as we were within gliding range at 4000ft. We were cleared to make a straight in approach on RWY19 and landed safely.

After kissing the ground I thanked Nick for such an outstanding display of an imperturbable attitude and assertive decision making. The situation impressed on me how important it is to maintain a continuous scan and to be proficient in emergency procedures.

During the subsequent days engineers from AMS examined the engine. Their conclusion was that a steel obstruction had blocked the oil pressure relief valve, jamming it in the open position, resulting in the pump being unable to build up pressure in the system.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Brisbane Centre air traffic controllers for making everything flow so smoothly in such a stressful predicament. It really is extremely reassuring knowing you have such competent people only a click away.

Oshkosh 2018

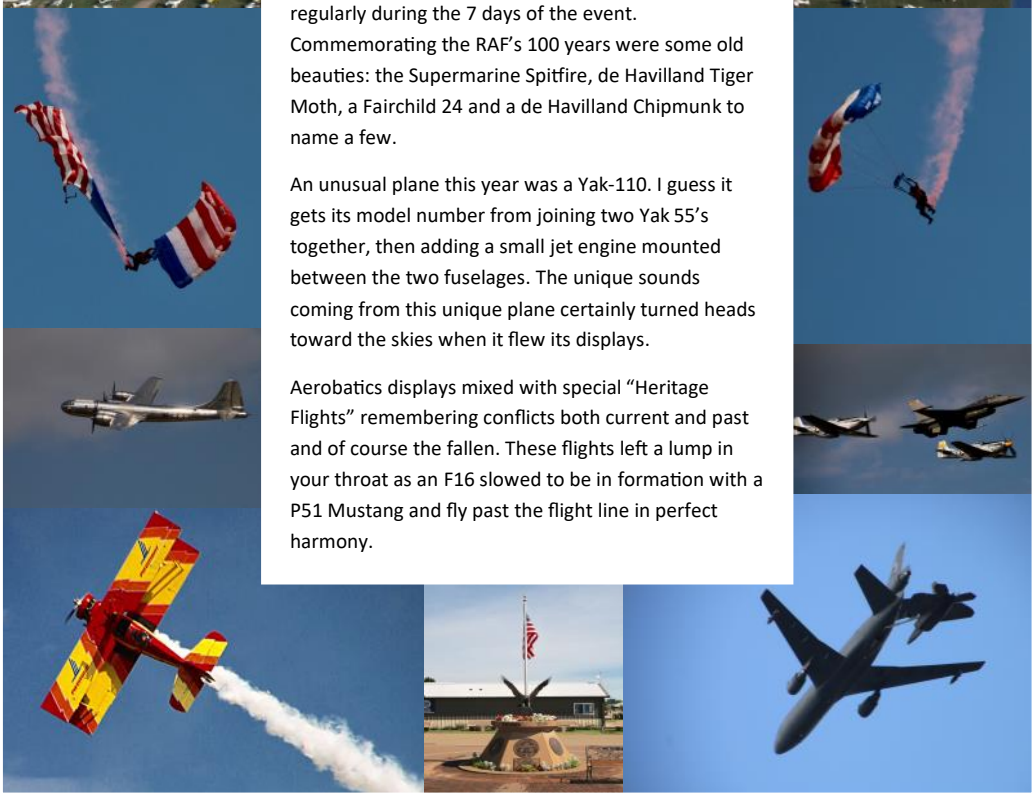
by Mike Cahill

If anything can fly then it was at AirVenture EAA. That's how I sum up EAA Oshkosh, the world's largest airshow of its kind. The annual event is sponsored by the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA), an international organization based in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, USA. The variety of aircraft is endless, covering home builts, ultralights, recreational, aircraft of early flight, warbirds, commercials old and new and the always very popular heavy metal.

Fine tuning that list, this year there were some pretty special aircraft both on static display and flying regularly during the 7 days of the event. Commemorating the RAF's 100 years were some old beauties: the Supermarine Spitfire, de Havilland Tiger Moth, a Fairchild 24 and a de Havilland Chipmunk to name a few.

An unusual plane this year was a Yak-110. I guess it gets its model number from joining two Yak 55's together, then adding a small jet engine mounted between the two fuselages. The unique sounds coming from this unique plane certainly turned heads toward the skies when it flew its displays.

Aerobatics displays mixed with special "Heritage Flights" remembering conflicts both current and past and of course the fallen. These flights left a lump in your throat as an F16 slowed to be in formation with a P51 Mustang and fly past the flight line in perfect harmony.



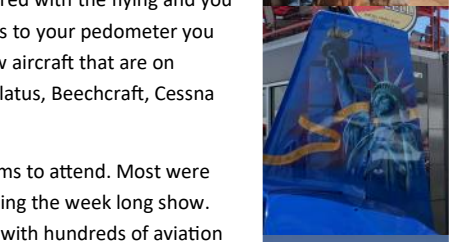
If you became remotely bored with the flying and you wanted to add 20,000 steps to your pedometer you could walk and see the new aircraft that are on display like Cirrus, Piper, Pilatus, Beechcraft, Cessna and many more.

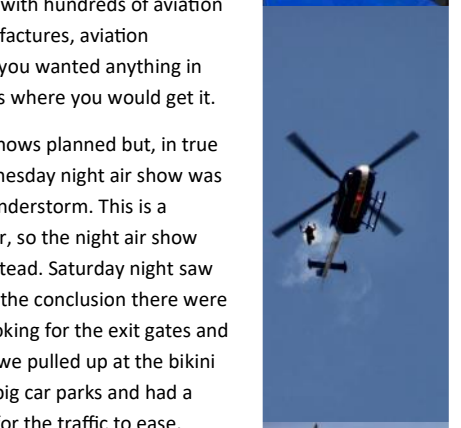
There were dozens of forums to attend. Most were repeated several times during the week long show. Four huge halls were filled with hundreds of aviation vendors such as tyre manufactures, aviation upholstery, avionics etc. If you wanted anything in relation to an aircraft this is where you would get it.

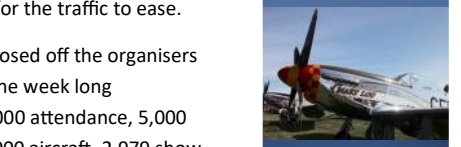
There were two night air shows planned but, in true Oshkosh fashion, the Wednesday night air show was cancelled because of a thunderstorm. This is a professional outfit however, so the night air show was run Thursday night instead. Saturday night saw the final night air show. At the conclusion there were about 80,000 people all looking for the exit gates and patience was required. So we pulled up at the bikini bar that's near one of the big car parks and had a beer or two while waiting for the traffic to ease.

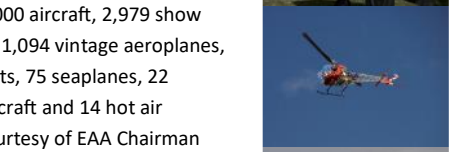
As this year's AirVenture closed off the organisers released the statistics for the week long show. Approximately 601,000 attendance, 5,000 volunteers, more than 10,000 aircraft, 2,979 show planes, 1,160 home-builts, 1,094 vintage aeroplanes, 377 warbirds, 185 ultralights, 75 seaplanes, 22 rotorcraft, 52 aerobatic aircraft and 14 hot air balloons. (Numbers are courtesy of EAA Chairman Jack Pelton).

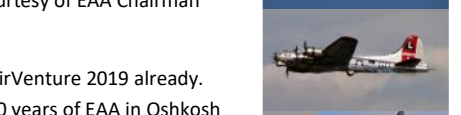
Planning is underway for AirVenture 2019 already. Next year they celebrate 50 years of EAA in Oshkosh so it should be a great show.











Private instrument rating

Putting theory into practice

by Philip Arthur

First, some background. Last AirChat I wrote of how after passing my PPL I wanted to gain a qualification to fly under the Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) in order to be more flexible with cross country flights. Having grown up with an RAF navigator as a father, who'd flown by instruments over Germany during WWII, it seemed to me that instrument flying is just an essential part of learning to fly. Rather than being stuck by a change in weather conditions I wanted to be able to depart and fly through cloud to reach clear air and blue skies elsewhere. Being able to extend a flight at the end of a long day and land after last light was another attraction. The amount of work and cost involved for a full instrument rating was prohibitive so the club instructors suggested I do a private instrument rating instead. It'd take about half the hours and could be tailored to the particular types of instrument flying I wanted to use. That seemed to me a good compromise. Not wanting to be a commercial pilot I could learn those aspects of instrument flying that would be beneficial for private flying and allow me to fly safely around Australia at any time of year. I wouldn't need to learn ILS approaches and the like that I will probably never have the opportunity to use anyway.

Before embarking on any practical training, I attended a course at Bob Tait's school to learn IFR theory. On completion of the course I passed the "IREX" exam and so with the theory under my belt it was time to start the practical training. The instructors suggested that I could compress the training program and reduce costs further by doing Night VFR training in parallel with IFR. I had no idea at that stage of what was involved so I took their advice.

Practical Training

The training kicked off in early 2016 with lessons in the club's old SIM. I learned how to scan the instruments and follow a flight path, maintaining tight horizontal and vertical tolerances while turning, climbing and descending. I also learned how to track towards and away from a VOR (VHF Omnidirectional Radar) navigational aid. The simulator training was followed by initial flights in VH-ROC, the club's G1000 glass cockpit Cessna 182. At this stage I was introduced to the "hood". This cunning fashion item allows you to simulate Instrument Meteorological Conditions (IMC = cloud). It's basically an oversized peaked cap that restricts your field of vision to the level below the windscreen, so the student can't see outside the aircraft. You can only see the instruments. The instructor acts as your eyes outside for the duration of your instrument time during a training session. The flight would begin with a normal visual take-off and flight out to the training area over Bribie Island. Once over Bribie it was time to don the hood. My field of view was limited to the instruments while the instructor assumed responsibility for what was happening outside.

The first lesson involved some basic instrument flying, becoming accustomed to turning, climbing and descending while only looking at the instruments. The idea is to adjust to flying without an external horizon as reference. Part of it is to experience the "leans", when the instruments may tell you that you're flying straight and level but your body feels as if you're in a turn and you have to force yourself to believe the instruments. That was a bit unsettling at first but an essential part of that initial training. I was told: IN IMC YOU MUST BELIEVE YOUR INSTRUMENTS. THEY WILL SAVE YOUR LIFE.

In subsequent lessons we started working with navigational aids, first tracking away from and towards the VOR nav aid at Maleny (which unfortunately has been decommissioned since) and then to and from the Sunshine Coast VOR.

More SIM lessons followed with an introduction to RNAV/LNAV approaches using the GNSS/GPS system. To clarify, the generic term is GNSS (for Global Navigation Satellite System) while the GPS (Global Positioning System) is the United States based system that is commonly used in Australia. Although they have been used for less than 10 years, RNAV (area navigation) approaches are now commonplace across the country. They allow you to use the GNSS to fly towards an aerodrome and approach it at a safe altitude then descend through cloud on a tightly controlled, approved glide path to a relatively low level while avoiding "obstacles" (mountains, hills, towers etc). RNAV approaches are replacing approaches that use terrestrial navaids like NDB or VOR. The terrestrial equipment is expensive to maintain while the GNSS/RNAV approaches are significantly easier to fly and need no equipment on the ground. As a result, NDBs and VORs are being closed down across the country.

Finally it was time to try some cross country instrument flying with RNAV approaches. First we did some day time flights to Kingaroy and the Sunshine Coast in ROC to allow me to practise staying on track and within tolerance on longer distances while dealing with radio calls to Air Traffic Control. Under IFR you need to keep in radio contact with ATC from when you taxi out to the runway at your point of departure until you taxi to the parking area at your destination. They monitor your progress at every step. There's a set of procedures of how and when you need to communicate with ATC to advise them where you are and what your intentions are. Learning these procedures was difficult at first but with practice started to make sense.

The day flights were followed by some night circuits and night cross country flights to Wondai, Kingaroy, Sunshine Coast and Toowoomba with RNAV approaches in the dark.

The Hood

At this point I realised the power (and complexity) of the Garmin G1000 navigational system. It can do an impressive range of tasks but it takes time to master, a bit like the first VCR that we had to program! (for those of you who remember what VCRs were). Suffice it to say, it would have been much better to learn how to use the Garmin on the ground in a quiet and relaxed environment where you could refer to the instruction manual and try out different features at your leisure. I found it just too difficult to learn while simultaneously flying the plane in simulated IMC (or the dark). One of my biggest challenges of instrument flying was increasing my scan rate to a speed where I could keep the plane flying within tolerance while thinking ahead of what would happen next. This is one of the most important skills to master. You need to pre-empt what is going to happen and be ready for it before it happens. It was difficult enough while cruising enroute but I found it especially challenging during the approaches. What with the demands of mastering the G1000 system, which was different from the Garmin 430 system installed in the old SIM, I found it too demanding to maintain a high enough scan rate. Needless to say, I became somewhat frustrated and couldn't get my head around how to deal with everything that was going on.

In hindsight I should have spent time on the ground learning how to use the G1000 until I understood how to program it properly, rather than trying to combine learning it while simultaneously dealing with the challenges of flying the plane. The new SIM that the club bought last year (see previous AirChat) is now available for familiarising new students with both G1000 and 430 systems so I would recommend that future PIFR students first gain experience using the systems on the SIM prior to starting practical instruction in the aircraft. Regardless of whether you're using VOR or GNSS you'll only learn through a great deal of practice. You don't want to waste a lot of money trying to learn it as you actually fly a plane and concentrate on all the other things going on at the same time. You can learn it very well on the ground. In fact, you can learn even better on the ground, as the SIM can be set up with winds and turbulence that provide a challenge to even the most experienced pilot. I recently tried out the new sim in G1000 mode and can vouch for the fact that it's just like flying the real thing (but much cheaper to practise on).

After a couple of months of weekly practical training sessions I decided I'd bitten off more than I could chew. Night VFR has some different rules from IFR so trying to learn both at once can be very confusing to the novice. My only reason for obtaining a night rating was to do the occasional night scenic flight over the city and to provide more flexibility for timing when flying cross country. It'd allow me to land after last light. I decided after a few night time cross country flights that I'd shelve that component for a while. In addition many NDBs were being phased out at the time, and GNSS was being introduced at many airports. New GNSS approach plates were being designed and released every month and it was clear that it was the way of the future. So I decided to focus my attention on the enroute component and GNSS (RNAV)

New sim in G1000 mode

approaches and continued the training in ROC with flights to Agnes Water via Bundaberg, Warwick and Toowoomba in addition to numerous trips to Kingaroy and the Sunshine Coast. For me it was all about practice, practice, practice.

About this time my wife and I did a VFR flight in ROC to Lawn Hill to the north of Mt Isa. On the return journey we encountered some weather that forced us to divert to Winton. We also had to delay our return to Redcliffe and stay overnight at Kingaroy, 40 minutes from home, just because of clouds over the ranges. This was the final confirmation that I really needed to finalise my PIFR as soon as possible.

Flight Tests

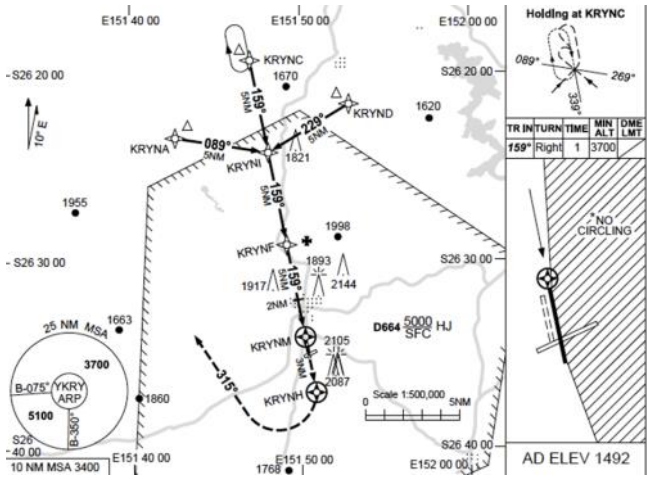
Eventually a kindly and maybe somewhat over optimistic instructor decided I was ready for my PIFR test. It would comprise two parts – enroute and GNSS approach. I hadn't met the examiner before but I was pre-warned. He would "take no prisoners". So, with some trepidation I planned the flight that he described, with a departure from YRED then tracking via the VOR just west of Maleny and then direct to Wondai. After landing at Wondai and a short rest we'd attempt a couple of RNAV approaches at Kingaroy then return to Redcliffe.

The big day arrived and we climbed into ROC and headed off to Wondai for the enroute part of the test. Of course no auto pilot was allowed for the test. It was all manual flying. I did a successful holding pattern at the VOR near Maleny and then headed for Wondai. On the way to Wondai I maintained the selected altitude and tracked within tolerance and my radio work was satisfactory. We descended into Wondai, I cancelled Sarwatch in the circuit, landed nicely and shut down for a break. The examiner said "Well done, you've passed the enroute part." He wasn't so bad after all it appeared. Next was the approach however. This was the part I was unsure of. I really didn't feel up to it yet but at least I'd passed the first part. That was a relief.

I planned exactly how I was going to carry out the approach. A holding pattern at waypoint KRYND would be followed by the approach routing via KRYNI and descent via KRYNF to KRYNM. At this point we'd abort the landing, apply full power and carry out a missed approach, climb out to KRYNH and track to KRYNA for a second approach with a touch and go then direct to YRED.

After about 30 minutes on the ground we taxied out and took off. I knew that the waypoint KRYND was only a couple of miles away from Wondai and I had to climb to 3700ft to start the approach. We climbed ok, we headed for KRYND, I hit the OBS button (to pause the GNSS system while in the holding pattern), zeroed the timer and then set the wrong heading on the heading bug. I started flying the holding pattern on the wrong heading. I lost my situational awareness and had no idea what to do next. The examiner was cool as a cucumber. He told me to gather my thoughts and work out what was next but I had no idea. I had a brain freeze. So game over, we agreed that there was no point in carrying on. I had some work to do and we'd head back to YRED without completing the RNAV approaches. It was disappointing but I rationalised it. I needed more practice, no doubt about it. I wasn't ready yet. The enroute flight back to YRED went without a hitch.

RNav Plate for Kingaroy



So, it was back for some more training flights. I also spent hour after hour improving my competency with the RNAV approaches on my home flight simulator. After a few more weeks and a few more flights I finally felt ready and obtained a slot with the examiner. He said we'd go to YBSU this time. With ATC involved it'd be a bit more challenging than at YKRY but it was closer so would be quicker and cheaper.

Off we flew on a perfect day, tracking via the IFR waypoint HOLIS to the SU VOR then out to the northern approaches around Noosa. This time there were no mistakes. I did a standard holding pattern at BSUNC then carried out a missed approach via BSUNI, BSUNF and BSUNM, then climbed out to BSUNH. From there I headed back to BSUNA and carried out a circling approach followed by touch and go. The examiner was satisfied. I was happy. We flew back to Redcliffe. I'd passed. As he left, the examiner stressed to me that passing the test was only the start of my instrument flying and my job from that point in time was to practise as much as possible to improve my skills further so that when the day came and I really, REALLY needed to do an approach in IMC it would be second nature.

IFR Experiences

Recency is an important factor and a legal requirement for IFR flight. Private pilots must do an IFR flight at least once every 6 months and carry out an approach at least once every 6 months. This is the minimum required and some IFR flying should really occur every 2 months if possible.

I've taken the examiner's advice on board and have been flying as much IFR and as many GNSS approaches as possible in both VMC and IMC. During the past 2 years I've used the PIFR to fly in IMC via the RNAV approach into Wellcamp and to depart YRED on the way to Mudgee last year and to depart Mudgee to fly to Wagga (see December 2017 AirChat). However, the vast majority of my IFR flying has been in VMC including flights to Agnes Water/1770, Evans Head, Coffs Harbour, Gladstone, Longreach, Alice Springs, Mildura, Lightning Ridge and Mackay. I've practised RNAV approaches into a range of airports including Kingaroy, Lismore, Dubbo, Chinchilla and Charleville. It's added another (fourth?) dimension to my flying experience, made me much more confident dealing with ATC and I believe more professional in my approach to flying. I use the autopilot mostly when flying IFR as it's simply a safer way to fly. It allows me to focus on other tasks while the auto pilot keeps the aircraft on track and at the required level. When I'm alone and fly into IMC I occasionally fly manually just to keep my IMC piloting skills up to scratch.

And recently I undertook both VFR and IFR night training and passed my night IFR endorsement meaning that I can now fly through weather and land after last light if necessary. This added flexibility should make future trips that much more enjoyable and safer.

IFR at night over Brisbane

So what did I learn from all this?

1. While VFR is great for local, scenic flights, IFR is better for flying cross country from A to B.
2. A PIFR is a great alternative to a full-blown instrument rating. You can limit the endorsements to your actual requirements without learning things that may be essential for a commercial pilot but are not necessary for a private one, saving you time and money.
3. A PIFR should be considered seriously by any holder of a PPL who wants to fly regularly away from the local area. It's a safer, more enjoyable way to fly long distance.
4. There are really sophisticated systems in place to keep IFR traffic safe.
5. GA aircraft can be fitted with the equipment that use these systems.
6. The GNSS navaids that are being introduced are easier to use than the traditional ground-based ones.
7. The GNSS approaches require concentration to be flown safely. Autopilot helps but it is essential that you can fly them manually within tolerance as well.
8. The club was not ideally set up to train students for a PIFR at the time I did my training. The new SIM should solve many of the problems I encountered.
9. I wouldn't recommend combining day IFR with Night VFR/IFR. Focus on one first and then do the other.
10. A home simulator is an invaluable tool to improve your IFR flying skills and general situational awareness. It helps me keep my scan rate at an acceptable level. By investing in a high end gaming computer with some additional hardware like a yoke, throttle quadrant and pedals, plus software like XPlane that costs less than $100, you can have a quality system at home that allows you to spend the necessary hours to get your skill level up without wasting unnecessary amounts of cash. I now use it prior to flying any real RNAV approach. I also use it each time I'm planning to fly into a new location or even ones I've been to before but not so frequently, to get a feel for the approach, the topography and the layout of the aerodrome. It makes it much easier when I fly in reality.
11. Recency is really important in IFR to retain your skill level. You need to fly frequently to keep up with it. Although it's not legally approved by CASA for recency, a home simulator is a great alternative to actual flying that goes a long way to helping you maintain and improve your skills while not breaking the bank.
12. The avionics that are in modern GA aircraft are awesome. They can do so much to help you fly precisely and more safely. They are complex however and you need to spend time on the ground playing with them before you fly to get to know their full potential. It also helps to read the manuals!
13. You still need to practise traditional navigational methods using dead reckoning from time to time just in case the GNSS fails.
14. Clouds are great to fly through as long as they aren't too dark or stormy.
15. There's nothing like bursting out of cloud at 6000 ft and seeing a brand new panorama open up in front of you.

And just in case you haven't got the gist by now, I strongly recommend that every holder of a PPL who wants to fly cross country on a regular basis invest in an instrument rating. You won't regret it.

Red Centre Odyssey

by "The Rockers"

It was to be the trip of a lifetime. From YRED to Ayers Rock via overnight stops at Longreach and Alice Springs. Five aircraft containing 13 very fortunate individuals recently embarked on an odyssey to central Australia. After three nights at Yulara resort to explore Uluru and the Olgas we'd return via overnight stops at Arkaroola in South Australia's Flinders Ranges, Broken Hill and Dubbo. Branded "the Rockers", the whole group had a great time with each having a different view of the nine day adventure. Mike Cahill flew his Cirrus MSF with Philip Arthur as co-pilot. Stephen White piloted his C182 TRE with 1st officer Maureen and 2nd officer Madeline. Sam Keenan was in command of his Piper BHN supported ably by Tania, and their two girls Ava and Georgie, while Andrew Pearson and Mick Gardner shared pilot duties in ROC and Ashleigh Hodge flew FRF with Margot Logan as navigator. We've pooled resources to bring you an article composed of contributions from various members of the contingent describing what for them were highlights of the trip.

Sunset flight over the Olgas

FRF arrives at Longreach

Redcliffe to Alice Springs: Ashleigh Hodge - FRF

It was an intense first couple of days on our fly away to Uluru for Margot and me in the club's Piper Archer VH-FRF. Day 1 was a Saturday and our plan was to fly initially from Redcliffe to Roma, where we would refuel, and then head to Longreach for the night. The departure morning was not ideal. We were caught by significant cloud cover and, after making an attempt to get through to Roma, spent 4 hours on the ground in Kingaroy waiting for it to clear. Eventually the weather improved and we made it to Roma, by which time the other four aircraft had long departed and it was too late to continue to Longreach. So we decided to stay the night in Roma. On arrival in Roma we were fortunate enough to meet Col, a local instructor and motel owner, who helped find us a room for the night and gave us a lift into town. We kept the rest of the group, who all managed to make it to Longreach that day, up to date by Messenger, a handy little app for such situations.

We planned to leave at first light the next day to meet up with everyone in Longreach and then continue onto Boulia to refuel before flying the next leg to Alice Springs to spend the night. We were up at the crack of dawn and headed out to the airport. Unfortunately we couldn't get the plane started in the cold wee hours of the morning and ended up needing to jump start the battery. Thankfully our new friend Col from the previous day came to our assistance. I gave him a call to see if he could help us start the engine. To our delight he was shortly out at the airfield helping us get the plane started.

We eventually got up in the air and headed for Longreach, where we made a quick stop to refuel. Mike and Phil were waiting for us in MSF, having used our delay to check out the Qantas museum. We then headed on to meet up with the rest of the Rockers at Boulia where we had another refuel stop and from there flew on to Alice Springs, our destination for the night. It had been a long day. After over 7 hours of flying it was safe to say I was knackered by the end of it all. But it had been a great learning experience.

Being a Sunday night there were only a few restaurants open in the Alice and a lot of visitors looking for somewhere to eat. Luckily we were tipped off about a BYO Italian place over the other side of the Todd River. After a stop for a predinner drink at a pub on the way we had a great Italian meal there before getting an early night so we'd be fit for the flight to Ayers Rock.


Refuelling at Boulia

Alice Springs to Ayers Rock: Sam Keenan - BHN

On the Monday morning we convened for breakfast in the heart of Alice Springs, and with the excitement of our trip still building, everyone was in great spirits. Stephen White even managed to arrange a catch up with Mick O'Brien, an ex YRED pilot now flying for the RFDS out of Alice Springs.

After returning to the hotel to collect our bags and ordering two taxis to the airport, most of the group loaded into the first maxi taxi, whilst Tania, Ava, Georgie and I awaited the second taxi which never came. Unfortunately we missed out on a drive up to Anzac Hill for a view over the city, which we were quite looking forward to. By the time a taxi on a fresh booking finally arrived, we rushed to catch up with the others at the Alice Springs sign on the way to the airport for a group photo.

At the airport, the flying conditions were again looking perfect (CAVOK, CAVOK, CAVOK…), and we scurried around releasing tie downs, checking fluids and loading bags. Following a short taxi, we shot into the crisp air for The Rock. Some flew via Kings Canyon and some direct. Fortunately, we all avoided Pine Gap (the highly secretive US/ Australian joint military facility and prohibited area).

After a (relatively) short flight, we were able to spot Uluru on the horizon. It really was impressive, and I suppose it is also a pretty reliable positive fix? Semi-convenient free coaches run between the airport and the township, and we jumped aboard, ready for a few days of relaxing!

Ayers Rock: Mike Cahill - MSF

We arrived at the red centre early afternoon after a pleasant flight. On our way out of Alice Phil flew us over Simpson's Gap, and then set course on a flight route that took us over the old Lutheran mission at Hermannsburg and Kings Canyon, where we carried out an orbit to gain a good view of this amazing formation. We spotted Uluru and Kata Tjuta (the Olgas) on the horizon soon after leaving Kings Canyon. As we passed over Lake Amadeus we were cleared inbound by Ayers Rock Radio. All aircraft were secured and we took the bus to our accommodation for the next few days, The Lost Camel. It was school holidays and Yulara village was packed to the rafters with people.

Several of us walked around the rock on Tuesday. It was a 10km walk that put the size of Uluru into perspective. Unfortunately, the rock climb was closed due to high winds at the summit so those who were eager to climb it were disappointed. We decided to fly a dusk scenic around Uluru and Kata Tjuta. There was a burn off out to the east that evening and the resultant smoke made visibility pretty poor so that we couldn't get any good photos of the rock. We decided to do a sunrise scenic the next morning and luckily the smoke was gone by then. After scraping some ice off the wings we flew the second scenic with great results.

Wednesday was spent in different ways with some people doing camel rides and other activities while

Passing the southern end of Lake Eyre

Ice on MSF wing at Ayers Rock

others chilled out, did the laundry or caught up on some work. We all enjoyed the activities at Uluru and the down time.

Arkaroola: Tania Keenan - BHN

By Thursday our time at the Red Centre had come to an end and we headed to Coober Pedy to refuel, and then tracked to the southern end of Lake Eyre. We were on our way to Arkaroola, a hidden gem in the Flinders Ranges of South Australia. The Arkaroola airstrip is a little hard to spot. We descended over some breathtaking rocky scenery until it suddenly popped into view as we passed over a ridge at 1500 feet only 1 mile out. The gravel runway is 750 metres in length, with a creek either end, and a rise at the southern end, followed by a gradual decline towards the creek at the northern end. Needless to say, the landing required focus. The aptly named "international airport" was dry, flat and desolate. You could easily think you were standing in a crater on Mars; unlike Mars however it would be quite hot in summer! Compared with the tourist hot spot of Uluru, we felt like we were really staying in the outback this time.

Our host Doug was expecting us, having been listening on his VHF hand held radio. While we waited for him to arrive we unloaded and poked around the couple of planes on site while keeping a close look out for local wild animals.

We loaded our gear into Doug's bus and he drove us from the airstrip to the Arkaroola Village (a motel, restaurant, shop and camping area) along a gravel road that wound through the surrounding hills. As he did he provided a running commentary of the nature reserve he has called home for over 40 years. Doug pointed out and named the flora and fauna and pointed to caves, animals and a former bat "guano" mine as well as numerous historical points of interest. I realised we had been oblivious to how special this place is and its historical significance.

Arkaroola arrival

According to Australian Geographic:

"The Flinders Ranges span 430 km and rose up about 800 million years ago out of an inland sea. At this time, great forces of nature lifted the entire east coast of Australia clear out of the sea creating a deep inland hollow. Over several million years, the sea flooded in, depositing huge amounts of rock and debris, and leaving behind a fractured, furrowed landscape characterised by deep valleys, rippled sea floors and the fossils of countless sea creatures. So unique are the fossils found in this landscape, that geologists had to revise the geologic time-line of the Earth's history, identifying a new era called the Ediacaran period. It's no surprise why this environment, one of the oldest surviving on Earth, has been nominated as one of Australia's National Landscapes."

Doug's family, "The Spriggs" were pioneers of the geological history of Australia. It was Doug's father Reg who discovered fossils from the Ediacaran period! And geologists travel from all over the world just to study there. Reg and his wife fought long and hard to lease and then purchase the land from the South Australian government, and to protect it from uranium mining. It has been a wilderness sanctuary run by the family since the 1970s.

The evening was 'BBQ night' with open fires, great food and the opportunity to meet other campers, pilots and guests. At 8pm we were driven up to the Dodwell Observatory to do

some stargazing with our host Joe. Joe arrived in Arkaroola back in the late 70's to deliver a parcel and never left. Although it was a really cold night the star gazing was really informative. We saw Mars, Jupiter, twin stars, a dying cluster of stars, new baby stars and many more. We could have stayed there all night if it hadn't been for the imminent threat of frostbite!

Friday dawned clear and crisp. Breakfast was relaxed and hearty, with a bit of flight planning mixed in. We headed out to the strip and after a quick pack and the standard pre-flight we were up in the air for another CAVOK flight to Broken Hill.

Departing Arkaroola

Arkaroola has so much to offer that we didn't get to experience in just one night. They offer a range of eco tours such as a spectacular four wheel drive ridge top tour (you would have seen this on a few car ads) and waterhole tours, wallaby tours, geology tours etc. If you are interested in seeing what it has to offer over a few nights we will be organising another trip to enjoy some of these experiences in 2019.

Broken Hill: Maureen Hollyoak - TRE

Leaving Arkaroola we were off to the east heading across Lake Frome, a large salt lake, towards the New South Wales border. The dry, parched land that had been a very constant feature since we had left Brisbane continued as we flew towards Broken Hill. The big feature of Broken Hill, the mullock heap, appeared on the horizon after about an hour.

In 1844 explorer Charles Sturt identified a broken hill in the otherwise fairly flat country and gave the place its name. In 1883 a boundary rider named Charles Rasp noted mineral deposits that he thought was tin. He and six mates formed the Broken Hill Proprietary Company (BHP) to raise capital to start mining. The ore deposit formed 1,800 million years ago and is the world's largest silver, lead and zinc mine - hence the nickname Silver City. More than 800 men have lost their lives in the mine over the last century and the miners' memorial is a solemn reminder perched on top of the mullock heap. The town always had a strong union movement. The so-called Barrier Industrial Council was formed to protect the workers' welfare rather than the company profits. There are still environmental issues related to heavy metals in the dust with many children in the town still having higher lead levels than is considered acceptable by health authorities.

Our local tour guide met us at the airport and took us for a 6 hour tour around the town. After a quick lunch the first stop was the mine area itself. There are currently two mines operating on the lease with 2 million tonnes being taken out annually. The huge timber beams used in the old shafts are Canadian oregon that was imported over a century ago. They apparently still look as good today as when they were laid. Can you imagine the enormous task of importing these timbers all that way? Apparently this oregon is the strongest timber that exists. Based on the number of rings much of this timber looks to be over 1000 years old.

No longer just a mining town, Broken Hill is home to the world's largest acrylic painting. The 12m high x 100m long canvas was painted by local artist Ando. The "Big Picture" details a wide variety of local scenes around Broken Hill and is a great achievement for the artist and the community.

Broken Hill has a great history, including the only shots fired in anger on Australian soil during World War 1. The Battle of Broken Hill was a fatal incident which took place in 1915. Two men shot dead four people and wounded seven more who were heading to a New Year's Day picnic on a special train to nearby Silverton, before being killed by police and military officers. We were shown where the battle took place and the two men were defeated.

It seemed a good spot for the obligatory group photo.

Another artistic feature of "the Hill" is the "Living Desert Sculptures", our last stop for the day. Some local councillors managed to arrange for 12 sculptors from all over the world to descend on the town to chisel 12 sandstone blocks into interesting sculptures. We viewed them from the top of a hill overlooking town as the sun sank in the west.

Our tour over, we all descended on the Palace Hotel, our accommodation for the night and we were in for a real treat. The hotel was built in 1889 with a vision of providing fine dining and coffee to the community. By 1892 the owners realised that fine dining and coffee didn't provide enough income to keep them in business, so they joined the scores of other licensed hotels selling alcoholic beverages.

The hotel gained new popularity and notoriety when the cast and crew of the film Priscilla Queen of the Desert came to town in 1994 and filmed scenes in and around the hotel and the town. Many of the characters stayed at the hotel and it is still possible to visit (and even stay in) the Priscilla Room - which is gorgeous. The Palace has been associated with the film ever since and still contains some of the props used including an enormous high heel shoe. It's the reason why the town celebrates a "Broken Heel Festival" in September each year, with performances from the nation's best cultural personalities plus showgirls, Bio Queens, Drag Queens & Drag Kings. It's a far cry from the mining culture that originally made the town wealthy. To top it off, the day we were in town was Friday 13th July, so all the waiters were dressed up appropriately, adding to the great atmosphere of the place which was certainly the centre of town that night and I suspect every weekend.

After a great sleep in our palatial rooms of basic (some might say retro) hotel style we were up ready for the next adventure. After breakfast we were off to the Royal Flying Doctor Service base. We were shown though the centre and gained an understanding of how the work comes and goes. The Broken Hill base covers a "mere" 640,000km^2 area. They have four Beechcraft King Airs worth $12,000,000 each. One was on a retrieval while we were there. It was clear how the costs mount up with just one retrieval over the minimal retrieval distance costing $10,000. The government provides significant funding however a large proportion is still raised from mums and dads fundraising all over the country.

It's a humble reminder how all of us might need their service one day. We all need to think how we can contribute to this amazing service. They are always looking for pilots so anyone who is sick of their day job and has a commercial license could go join them for a rewarding and adventurous time. I had to keep reminding Biggles (Stephen White aka CEO) that he had an important job to do presently and not to put his hand up quite yet.

With the RFDS behind us it was off to the refuelled planes ready for our next air adventure enroute to Dubbo over more dry, parched country – a stark reminder that 90% of New South Wales is in drought.

Dubbo to Redcliffe: Mick Gardner - ROC

We spent a chilly night in Dubbo prior to our final leg home to YRED. Sunday morning started off freezing cold at -5 degrees, so we knew we didn't have to hurry out to the airport. The planes would be hard to start if we got there too early. We walked two blocks to a cafe only to find out they were fully booked. We found another cafe around the corner that was also full but they at least offered us seats outside. Outside? Did we hear right? In sub zero temperatures? But by this stage we were hungry and desperate for coffees so we sat outside under some gas heaters that sort of worked for a while which wasn't too bad. Andrew asked the waitress for the biggest coffee they had and to all our surprise they didn't disappoint. A few minutes later the waitress walked out with a "Bucket of Coffee" (supersize mug) so the morning started off with a few laughs and nice food. After packing our bags most of us headed off to Dubbo airport in a Maxi Taxi while Sam, Tania and the girls stayed in Dubbo to visit the Western Plains Zoo.

With clear blue skies we were eager to get home but decided to stop in Tamworth to stretch our legs and have a toilet break. TRE was the first to depart followed by ROC, FRF and MSF. With only a 60 minute flight time we arrived in Tamworth, home to the Australian Defence Force flight school. It's a D Class aerodrome so we had the tower to contend with.

Ready for our next coffee we discovered that the Tamworth Airport Terminal is being upgraded so the coffee shop was closed. The pop up café that's meant to be its replacement during the upgrade was also closed for the weekend so we were out of luck. TRE didn't muck around and departed pretty well straight away while the rest of us had a chat deciding what was the best way to plan into Redcliffe as we had Brisbane airspace to consider.

After a while we also headed back to the planes and departed on Runway 30R as Tamworth has parallel runways. It was about a 2 hour leg over some high terrain and we noticed a few bushfires along the way. Our track took us over the top of Amberley RAAF base which was not active and from there we requested clearance through Brisbane airspace which we were granted, much to our surprise. One by one we all arrived safely back at Redcliffe. After unpacking the planes we ended up debriefing over a drink or two at the club on what really was a trip of a lifetime.

All of us would like to thank Sam Keenan for the work he put into arranging the trip. It was a very professional effort and all went smoothly because of it. The camaraderie that built over the trip was exceptional and it was great to share a week of fun and adventure with such a great group of people. We all learned a lot along the way but mostly shared some great times and places in a way that not many people have the opportunity to do. It highlights how fortunate we are to be members of such a great club that promotes trips like this, allowing less experienced aviators to mix with, and learn from, those who've been around and flying for longer.

Four miles up in a 182

by Bob Tait

It was August 1976 when the idea was first put to the committee of the Ingham Aero Club in far North Queensland. Planning was underway for a major air show in October of that year. The discussion had got around to the means of drumming up publicity for the event and apart from the usual posters, newspaper articles and street banners, someone had suggested TV advertising. However, the cost of TV advertising was beyond the means of a small country aero club.

Then the light-bulb moment dawned. Why not attempt some kind of record to catch the eye of the TV news producers? TV news seems to find record attempts irresistible. Pie-eating record attempts, staying-awake record attempts, climbing Castle Hill record attempts, all seemed to find a spot somewhere in the local TV news bulletin. So, what kind of record attempt would relate to aviation?

The Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI) is an organisation that administers sport aviation events around the world and to make any aviation record attempt official we would have to approach the FAI. We started sifting through the existing records and the one that seemed most cost effective was the Australian Altitude Record. The rules were simple. Aircraft used for the attempt were organised into categories based on the take-off weight for the attempt. The aircraft had to be powered by a single normally aspirated piston engine with no modifications to engine or airframe. The category that met these criteria was Category C1, group B and the aircraft that best fitted that description was the Cessna 182.

It so happened that Peter Taylor, a good friend of mine, was the manager of Rex Aviation, the Cessna dealers for Queensland, who had been supplying my company with Cessna aircraft for a number of years. I phoned Peter and put it to him that if Rex Aviation could provide a new Cessna 182 for the attempt, it would be a worthwhile promotion for the company. He agreed, providing I wore a Rex Aviation T-shirt on the flight. So now a brand new Cessna 182 would be delivered to Ingham for the attempt.

Next, the FAI had to provide an invigilator to make sure the rules were complied with. Another good friend of mine, Geoff Brown, the Australian distributor of Jeppesen Manuals, was appointed. Geoff was to ensure that the aircraft, with me and the fuel on board, was within the weight limit for the category. He was also required to record the QNH and temperature at the field at take-off. Not surprisingly, no one was going to take my word for the altitude achieved, so I was to carry a barograph with me on the flight. This instrument would record the ambient pressure during the climb. Before the flight, I had to send the barograph to the National Instrument Company in Brisbane to have it calibrated and returned to me with a seal to prevent any tampering. The instrument then had to be returned to the National Instrument Company after the event to be interpreted so that the recorded pressure could be converted to a true altitude.

To guard against hypoxia, Ansett Airlines agreed to lend me an emergency portable oxygen kit and the Ingham Ambulance Service gave me a briefing on the symptoms and effects of lack of oxygen.

The next consideration was the fact that an altitude record attempt would never be a spectacle since no one on the ground would be able to see the aircraft. To overcome this hurdle we arranged for radio station 4TO Townsville to set up a live link so that I could be interviewed during their breakfast session as the flight progressed.

Take off was at 6:00am and the Cessna 182 climbed like a home-sick angel with only me and the carefully measured minimum amount of fuel required to keep it within the required weight limit. Passing 10,000 ft I still had almost 800ft per minute on the Vertical Speed Indicator. The previous record of 19,000 ft was passed with still a healthy reading on the VSI. At one stage during the climb, the radio host said:

“Bob, you must be getting closer to God.”

I replied:

"Well I hope he can lend me a jumper, because it's getting bloody cold up here!"

However, the most memorable moment was hearing Townsville Approach (ATC) giving me as traffic to a jet arriving at Townsville from the north:

"Charlie Zulu Alpha, traffic is Romeo Victor Oscar, a Cessna 182, just left Flight Level 230..."

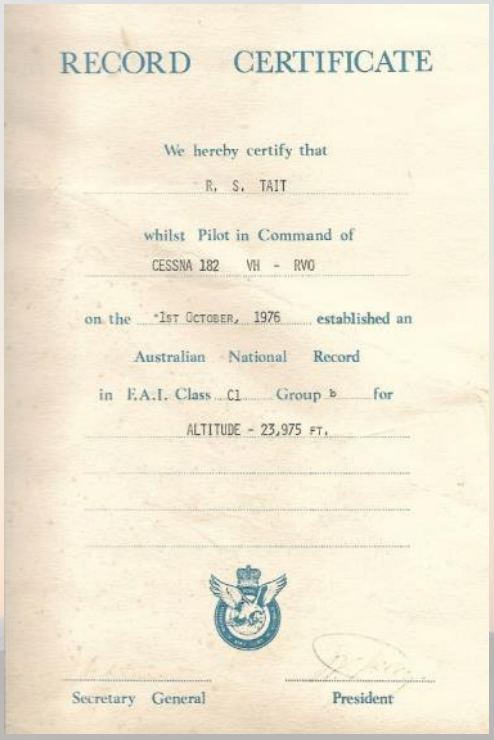
The jet captain replied:

"Charlie Zulu Alpha, copy traffic, say again aircraft type?"

Eventually, with 24,000 ft indicated on the aircraft's altimeter, it became obvious that the 182 could climb no further. With an outside air temperature of -25°C and a manifold pressure indication of 11 inches of mercury and the stall warning buzzing in my ears, the only speed possible in level flight was the stalling IAS.

During the descent, the engine gave a brief splutter and died as the fuel ran out. I'd been expecting that because we had to skimp on fuel to make the weight limit, but I figured that if I couldn't pull off a forced landing from 24,000 ft directly over the aerodrome, I'd give the game away!

It had taken about one hour to climb up there and about half an hour to descend. When the barograph was interpreted, the official altitude was confirmed as 23,975 ft. A successful attempt that provided a great publicity boost for our air show.



RECORD CERTIFICATE

We hereby certify that

R. S. TAIT

whilst Pilot in Command of

CESSNA 182 VH - RVO

on the 1st October, 1976 established an

Australian National Record

in F.A.I. Class C1 Group b for

ALTITUDE - 23,975 FT.

Secretary General

President

Stanthorpe flyaway

by Lucas Gozzard

Despite the cool conditions, the weather gods certainly turned it on with clear skies and plenty of sunshine as we pre-flighted and headed south west for the annual weekend pilgrimage to the Granite Belt. With seven aircraft and 21 people, the good citizens of Stanthorpe had no idea what they were in for.

Some decided to exercise their IFR privileges by flying direct while others took the scenic VFR route by tracking via Esk, Murphy's Creek, over Warwick and then direct to Stanthorpe. Either way, it was a smooth trip down until we met some gusty winds that made for an interesting approach and landing.

We all landed safely and tied down the aircraft while trying to remain upright ourselves in the howling wind that greeted us. Our tour bus was waiting for us so we all jumped on and asked for the heating to be turned up to 40 degrees to thaw us out. Welcome to Brass Monkey country!

Our first stop was the very quaint Ridgemill Winery. Once we'd had a satisfactory session of wine tasting and warmed up again we headed off to lunch at Claudia's Country Restaurant where they put on some delicious food, particularly the pot pie which many of us had. Following lunch, we visited a popular café known for its many varieties of jam and other spreads. A couple of winery visits followed - Mason's Winery and the vintage style Rumbalara Winery, which was voted by many as one of the better attractions of the day. We weren't done yet! Next and final stop for the day was a craft brewery called the Brass Monkey. Some opted for a single drink while others opted for the choice of three. It was all about value for money really. After a big day of quenching our thirst, we arrived at our accommodation for the night and settled in for dinner at the restaurant adjoining the hotel. It was a pleasant evening winding down in front of the fireplace then over dinner.

We awoke to a chilly -2 degrees to kick off our second day. After a hearty breakfast we boarded the bus to head off to the renowned Mt Stirling Olives. This was an opportunity for some to get their morning caffeine hit while others participated in olive tastings. It was a also the perfect opportunity for a group shot. The Stanthorpe Cheese Factory was next on the itinerary for some delicious cheese tastings. Once some completed their purchases, our final stop for the trip was Sutton's Juice Factory. Don't let the name deceive you. This location is also well known for its delicious apple pie. Given that one piece of apple pie could feed a family of four, many of us decided to share while snuggling under a blanket as temperatures with wind chill were struggling to reach double figures.

Sadly, our weekend was drawing to a close and we made our way back to the aerodrome. Some of the ladies were dropped off at the Christmas shop to experience a taste of Christmas in July while the PIC's pre-flighted the aircraft. The gusty winds were still hanging around and had strengthened since our arrival. However, after a considerable analysis of the

weather forecast we all set off, taking advantage of the Granite Belt jet stream and making it back 10-15 minutes quicker than our trip down. One of the 172s, SPP, recorded a ground speed of 165 knots!! Not bad for a plane with a design TAS of 115 knots.

Given that this was the first flyaway by yours truly, it certainly did not disappoint and I would highly recommend this annual event if you are yet to experience it. A huge thanks to Bryan Galvin and the team for organising the trip and I look forward to the next one.

Cirrus factory tour

by Mike Cahill

During my time at EAA Oshkosh in July I was offered the opportunity to visit the Cirrus factory and see how the SR20/22 and SF (Vision Jet) aircraft are manufactured. Naturally I said yes, but this trip had a twist. We were to fly to Duluth on the shores of Lake Superior about 500km north west of Oshkosh, in a Generation 6 Cirrus SR22. On board was Rebecca Penny (Sales & Marketing Manager for Cirrus Aircraft AU/NZ), Kent Neumann and Kenny Martin, a Cirrus instructor.

Flying the new 2018 G6 was interesting especially as I was constantly comparing it to our G1. I guess they both flew pretty much the same, with the same take off and approach speeds, but the G6 had so much more to offer in the way of button pushing and information at call. Kenny was eager to show me everything and I learnt a lot from the experience.

Our flight departed from Appleton International, about 30km north of Oshkosh. Kenny gave me the controls from start-up. We taxied to the holding point for RWY30 and finished the run ups. We were second to a Mustang P51, something you don't get to do every day. After the Mustang departed we were holding for almost 20 minutes as Appleton Airport was very busy. One after another landed and we waited patiently. Finally, we were told by ATC that the delay would be short, only 2 more to land in front of us, one of which was a B17 Flying Fortress. Once again that was something that doesn't happen every day back home!

We were cleared direct to Duluth at 8000 feet and after a few politically incorrect jokes from the second row, the ice was broken and we all relaxed and had fun.

Kenny suggested we carry out a practice RNAV instrument approach into Duluth and he set it up in the Garmin Perspective system, using the autopilot to fly the plane all the way down to the final approach. After passing the final approach fix the auto pilot was switched off and we landed and taxied over to the parking bay in front of the Cirrus factory. After a greeting at reception we signed in and headed off to the manufacturing plant.

The factory is located right at the airport and is split into several buildings that are set up for different manufacturing applications. Cirrus employs approximately 1,300 people between all of its operation bases, of which approximately 600 are workers on the factory floor. The remainder are employed in engineering, research and development, and sales and marketing.

Cirrus factory and main office

The main factory building houses assembly of both the SR and SF. The SR fuselage starts off in two pieces that are paired together with special jigs. Two Pak adhesives are used to join the fuselage together. The factory technicians have approximately 40 minutes to line everything up before the completed fuselage goes into a curing process, making the join solid. The same process is carried out for the wing and spar and the rear stabiliser.

Generation 6 Garmin Perspective screens

After this process is complete the plane is given its serial number and it is taken to another factory, about one mile away, to be painted and for installation of the avionics, engine and undercarriage. Every five hours the assembly line moves to the next phase, allowing eight SR aircraft to be manufactured every week. A similar manufacturing process is used for the SF with the only real difference that, being pressurised, the fuselage arrives at Duluth in one piece. However the build process for the Vision Jet is longer and it takes one month to build three jets.

The factory is very clean, as in you could eat your dinner off the floor. After the plane fabrication is finished it is taken to the run up point where the engine is started and everything is tested. Then it moves to a detail area where the aircraft are thoroughly checked over, making sure that anything special that the customer has requested has been completed. After a test flight the planes to be delivered in the USA are flown to the sales centre for delivery at Knoxville, Tennessee. If, however, you have ordered a Cirrus Aircraft for delivery to Australia, at this point the wings, the horizontal stabiliser and the propeller are removed and they are all securely fitted into a 40 foot container, ready for shipping to Australia, where they are reassembled and test flown again before the Certificate of Acceptance is finalised.

Joined fuselage in the autoclave for curing

After the factory tour we went off to lunch and to kill some time as we couldn't depart Duluth for Oshkosh because Oshkosh air space was closed due to the afternoon air show. We departed Duluth around 5pm for a planned arrival at 6.30pm local with Kent sitting up front with Kenny. On departure we set course direct for Oshkosh at 7000 feet.

As we approached Oshkosh we could clearly hear on the radio how busy the airport was. The air show had just finished and quite a few private aircraft were either arriving or departing. All we had to do was listen out for the joining instructions once we made initial contact with the tower. There was no requirement to read back, something very different to what we are all used to in Australia.

Final inspection point

Everything was explained clearly, and we just had to follow instructions. Easy, right? Until one aircraft had a tyre blow out and was stuck, blocking the arriving runway. We were then diverted to the main 36/18 runway and instructed to land on the "green dot". There are three different coloured dots spaced along the length of the runway, so three aircraft can land at the same time on the same runway, one behind the other. We touched down successfully on the green dot and immediately the ATC controller yelled out on the radio to taxi faster.

After landing at Oshkosh

We did that but were told to taxi faster still, as we had a faster aircraft behind us. As we applied speed our plane momentarily took off again, cruising just above the runway for about a third of its length until final touchdown near an exit that we could take to taxi to the parking area.

Fuselages ready to have landing gear and wings installed

What a day! It was hard to take it all in but we all took something very special out of the day. It's one day I won't forget in a hurry. I'd like to thanks Cirrus for their great hospitality.

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Have you a story that you'd like to share ?

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