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HDFC NEWS



Flying Scholarship Winners

Lineup of Aircraft at SW Rocks Fly-in 5 May 2007

Last year the Club offered two scholarships to encourage and foster aviation to students 15-18 years and thanks to Vern Polley's vision to encourage young people to learn to fly. Vern's \$1,000 scholarships were awarded to **Natalie McKenzie** and **Jimi Ludriks** who have been outstanding ambassadors for this program. The Club has enjoyed seeing two junior members gain skills and confidence with flying and become very active Club members.

This year there are another two scholarships on offer; one Vern Polley Flying Scholarship, and one Sue Faulkner "Girls Can do Anything" Scholarship. Vern's vision still lives on and Sue's aim is to encourage a young woman to experience learning to fly.

On Saturday 21 April Rod Davison, Sue Faulkner, Adam Booker and George Northey met the scholarship applicants and their families. Each applicant had the experience of a trial instruction flight with Adam or George in the Foxbat. It was a very impressive group of applicants and picking two successful scholarship winners was very difficult.

Congratulations go to **Megan Fricke, winner of the Sue Faulkner Flying Scholarship** and **Bonny Stutsel winner of the Vern Polley Flying Scholarship**. The Club wishes them every success and encouragement with obtaining their recreational certificate through this coming year.
– Sue F.

South West Rocks Fly-in

On Saturday 5 May about 37 HDFC members and friends gathered at the grass strip at South West Rocks. Many flew there, in the 8 aircraft to make the trip, and others drove. We then packed the cars to drive to the restaurant at Trial Bay Gaol for a very pleasant luncheon.

Weather remained perfect for the return trip to Port, and some of us flying found it a perfect excuse for a 500 foot run down the beaches. What a sensational part of the world we are lucky enough to be able to enjoy – and flying is definitely the way to see it at its best.

From the Editor's Desk...

 Hi, and welcome to the April 2007 edition of Propwash. I'm delighted to take up the editor role, and I'll try to at least maintain the high standard established by my predecessors.

I guess it would be fair to describe my wife, Sue, and me (despite the grey hair) as some of "the new blood" of the Club. When we first visited HDFC some years ago, we found a sleepy little club inhabited by a small group of very long-time members who liked to get together on a Friday evening to talk about how good things used to be. There didn't appear to be a lot of flying happening, and the single club aircraft was having a fairly quiet time of it.

Now I have some pretty fixed ideas about flying clubs. I reckon they are principally about flying, and since joining the Club I've been disturbing the peace a bit by pushing (sometimes not so subtly) for some basic changes to get more flying happening and thus attracting new members.

I was delighted when the club took the step, with the help of Don Pitkin, of acquiring a recreational aircraft – the Aeroprakt Foxbat. I was sure that this would be the start of a new era for the club, and I was right. Since its arrival, the Foxbat has clocked up more than 700 hours of service, and it has opened up the world of flying to an ever increasing number of new club members.

It's a great start. Our new HDFC members are a diverse group in age, style and background, but we all share the love of flying. Suddenly we are seeing lots of new faces at our functions – and we're holding more functions. We have a strong and growing group of junior members, and young women learning to fly. Some not so young ones, too (ouch!). Even our GA pilots are starting to drift over to the Recreational scene. We'll know we've really made the grade when Davo gets his RA-Aus Certificate.

If I can have any influence, by the end of the year the Club will own two or three recreational aircraft, offering members a variety of flying experience from basic trainer to performance cross-country aircraft. And they'll all be paying their way, with growing membership and increased aircraft usage. I really believe we are at the start of a new era for HDFC, and the sky's the limit for all of us.

Gregg Faulkner - Editor.

From the President

Avalon Airshow adventure. Lasting memories were forged by Damian Buchtman, George Northey, Adam Booker, Jack Terp and myself on our recent trip to Avalon Air Show via western NSW, Victoria and Tasmania. The competitive but fun part of the trip saw Jack and myself win the Northern Link of the Great Air Rally while Damian, George and Adam won the Avalon Air Tour. Apart from the Air Traffic Controller in Hobart the hospitality was superb with many new friendships formed. Typical of the aero club mentality. Damian writes more specifically of our memories elsewhere in the newsletter.

Gloucester Aero Club rolled out the welcome mat when we visited for the February competition and sleepover. About 20 members travelled by plane, car, caravan and campervan with a large number of spouses in attendance. Thanks to Rod Farley for the organisation of not only this event but also the hugely successful Restaurant Night at North Haven.

Next month will be the **Vern Polley Competition** conducted in Kempsey. Prize money will be provided from Vern's trust account. Kempsey Flying Club will provide lunch. The ultra light competition will be held in conjunction with the GA activities and all RA-Aus pilots are most welcome to participate.

Competition Day BBQs. Tania MacKenzie and Sue Faulkner have spiced up our local comps with a delicious BBQ lunch. These are proving very popular being enjoyed by both pilots and spectators. Thanks Tania and Sue. We appreciate your efforts.

Scholarships. Verns memory also lives on through the Vern Polley Scholarship. The 3rd of these \$1000 scholarships is about to be announced enabling the youth of the Hastings to become airborne. This year a second \$1000 scholarship is being provided to a young female pilot courtesy of Sue and Gregg Faulkner.

The generosity and support of club members is never ending and most gratifying. Hans Westphal, the backbone of our RAAus operations is donating \$2000 next year so that our scholarship scheme to young aviators lives on. **Thanks to Hans.** Now George and Adam have gained their instructor ratings, Hans has stepped down from his instructing role. However, he will remain an active pilot and his valued input and expertise will continue to be appreciated. The success of the RAAus operation is largely due to Hans, along with Bob Needham. We are indebted to these gentleman for making it all happen.

Honorary CFI, Bob Needham is now available to perform GA aircraft flight reviews in our Cessna operating under Bill Lane's Pacific Coast Flying School AOC. If you have a flight review coming up, contact Bob.

Furthering our charter of encouraging air-mindedness to the youth of the Hastings, about 20 **Wauchope High School Aviation Studies** students recently inspected our facilities and aircraft. Adam Booker briefed the students on our operations as well as outlining pilot certificate requirements. Students also visited Ollie Hartmann's Australian Aircraft Kits factory in Taree. Ollie is a very talented and dedicated man who enthusiastically opened his doors to the students.

He and his staff must be commended on the highly professional and well organised presentation they provided. Ollie builds the Hornet STOL and Wasp kit aircraft.

He is a club member and I am sure he would welcome any enquiries from members. Whilst in Taree, Bill and Lyndal showcased their Jodel and Gary Morgan hosted a factory visit demonstrating composite aircraft construction.

About 50 members attended the **CASA information evening** on aircraft maintenance and fuel management. The presentations were followed by a BBQ and drinks courtesy of CASA. A successful and enjoyable evening with another planned later in the year.

Improved member access to the **Clubhouse** has been provided by changing the back door lock to accept the hangar key. Pilots can now use clubhouse facilities before and after flight.

The **HDFC 50th anniversary** will occur next year. A year of celebration is envisaged and to help plan activities a sub-committee is being formed. Open to any members, please contact me if you would like to be involved. We have much to celebrate, so lets do it in style.

Peter Pritchard sadly and unexpectedly passed away recently. Peter was a member in the early days around the times of Oxley Airlines and had in recent years returned to us. He was a well liked and most knowledgeable pilot who will be missed. Our condolences go out to his family.

My health is on the improve after having a stent placed in my 90% blocked right coronary artery. GA flying activities will be curtailed for a while but this may be the perfect opportunity to pursue my RAAus pilot certificate. Fellow club member, Bob Barnett has also endured heart surgery and we wish him a speedy recovery.

Events. We have had and continue to have a busy social and flying calendar. To keep up to date please check the website or club noticeboard. Planning has already commenced for Fly and Spy in

September. Organisers, Bill and Lyndal would love to hear of any sponsorship offers or ideas. More immediate is our luncheon at Trial Bay Kiosk on the 5th May. I thoroughly recommend this outing. Also many hands will make light work at our working bee on the 27th May. A BBQ breakfast is available to all workers.

This newsletter represents a changing of the guard. Long time editors, Bill and Lyndal are taking a well earned break following a fantastic job of producing a readable and entertaining newsletter. Gregg and Sue take up the challenge and I am sure will continue with a quality publication. In closing I encourage you to enrich your memories by becoming involved in your club where the friendship is warm, the stories long and the flying fun and affordable.

Rod Davison - President



The Wonderful Foxbat

“What? Me fly an aeroplane?” At my age are you kidding? How could that possibly be? But with the advent of the friendly little ultralight aircraft, the Foxbat - suddenly the impossible becomes probable. Since signing up as a student pilot with the Hastings District Flying Club in Port Macquarie, (accompanied by a forbidding gang of 16 year olds) I have been exposed to the most exciting experience of my life – handling the controls of a cute little aeroplane that allows you to soar high over the picturesque beaches and countryside of the mid-north coast of NSW with ease.

I have been confronted with understanding and mastering lift and drag; sideslip and stall; climbing and descending: attitude and power which have all brought a new understanding of just how complex the phenomenon of powered flight is. But what a rewarding experience it is when things start to fall into place and the Foxbat starts to perform just as you really want it to.

The magic of becoming a pilot is starting to appear to be within reach and the dream of being in control a reality – a dream that every small boy harbours – a dream that I hope to realize soon thanks to the Club’s program of promoting flight as a an achievement for all its members to aspire to and the wonderful Foxbat.

Doug Jones (age... 50+)
Student Pilot





A word from the CFI - Possible Simultaneous Occupation Of The Same Airspace

Out at the airport the other day I was talking with another CFI, as CFI's are prone to do, on such weighty matters as circuit discipline. In the course of the conversation he mentioned having had two recent near misses with the Foxbat in the circuit. Both incidents occurred just after he had completed his turn onto the downwind leg with the Foxbat approaching from his left on a potential collision course. Being on the Foxbat's right he expected it's crew to give way to him; but they didn't. He felt that they may not have seen him. This is quite possible since they could have been focusing their attention to the left to judge the spacing for the turn downwind. I feel certain that these two incidents are not isolated.

No doubt a contributory factor to this type of incident is the superior climb performance of the Foxbat. Even if you climb the Foxbat at 70 kts. instead of 61 kts. plus conduct the first climbing turn at 700 ft. A.G.L., as now recommended; this will still place you inside of the normal General Aviation circuit profile. This can be problematical when you are in the circuit together with G.A. aeroplanes.

All is not lost however. If you obey the old, but sometimes forgotten, rule of **FOLLOW THE OTHER AEROPLANE AROUND** then this problem disappears. This may mean, depending on spacing, that when you are number two to an aeroplane with a lesser climb performance than yours, that you may have to continue your climb straight ahead, level off at 1000 ft. A.G.L. and then turn onto the crosswind leg. Simple.

"Surely I can do circuits at 500 ft. A.G.L"? You may well ask. The answer to that is; "yes you can". "Wouldn't 500 ft. circuits fix the problem then"? Well, the issue here is that for safety reasons low level circuits are usually flown closer to the runway so the problem is not so much as fixed but merely transferred to the other end of the circuit. To the base leg and turn onto final in fact.

Fortunately the solution to the problem is the same as before. When on the down wind leg, regardless of height, you are required to FOLLOW THE OTHER AEROPLANE AROUND. Emergencies accepted - being at low level does not give you the right to cut inside another aeroplane that is ahead of you in the circuit. It's potentially dangerous, poor airmanship, breaks air law and not to mention probably nullifies your insurance in the event of an accident.

In the circuit, as elsewhere, we all need to remember that THE AEROPLANE ON THE RIGHT IS RIGHT. In other words you must give way to aeroplanes on your right hand side. So it doesn't make sense to deliberately put yourself in a position where you will have another aeroplane approaching yours from the right if you can avoid it.

Having said all that don't forget that Port Macquarie is an uncontrolled aerodrome, so before moving away from the parking area remember to switch on your transponder and your Traffic Collision Avoidance System (TCAS). At our end of town this is known as "The Mark One Eyeball"

Have fun but fly neighbourly.

C.F.I. Bob Needham

"My favourite scientific theory
is that the rings of Saturn

Q1 2007 Flying Competitions



Ray Lind's Club Captain Report

Our February competition was held at the beautiful Gloucester airstrip and 11 pilots as well as three pilots from Taree enjoyed the magnificent flying over this rural area. Gloucester is a fantastic venue for competition flying as there is no other traffic of any degree to concern us and it also gives us the invaluable experience of flying at a different airstrip which just happens to be grass. The day was very exciting and especially challenging towards the end of the day with quite strong crosswinds and unfortunate tailwinds at times.

Two events were conducted, firstly the very exacting **River Bash** activity which involved flying up the very quaint Avon River at 600' from the little town of Stratford and back to Gloucester. The Avon River has many sharp twists and turns so the pilot's challenge was to fly the aircraft in a coordinated and smooth fashion as much as possible. There were some queasy stomachs by the end of the day.

The River Bash winners were 1st George Northey (80); 2nd Adam Booker, Bruce Dunlop (60); 3rd Mike Coulter, Mark Watson (50).

The second event was an exacting **Spot Landing** on the crest of the grass strip and very close to the end. Super fine judgement was required to land on the spot especially with the tailwinds and crosswinds. The winners were 1st Mike Coulter (70); 2nd Mark Watson (60); 3rd George Northey (55).

Overall February winners - 1st George Northey (135); 2nd Mike Coulter (120); 3rd Bruce Dunlop, Rod Davison, Mark Watson (120).

The March competition involved 10 pilots and the magnificent Port Macquarie flying conditions were turned on yet again. A slight tailwind did pick up towards the end but mostly it was a great day. The events were: Stuck Throttle (1400 RPM downwind) – winners were 1st Bruce Dunlop (50), 2nd Mark Watson (40); 3rd Bill Coote (30). For the Instrument Climb, winners are 1st George Northey, Rod Farley (81); 2nd Rod Davison (78); Mike Coulter (77). The Forced Landing winners were 1st Ray Lind (100) 2nd Bill Coote (82) 3rd Mike Coulter (80).

Overall March winners - 1st Bruce Dunlop (205) 2nd Ray Lind (174) 3rd Rod Davison (168).

The April competition was held on a beautiful Port Macquarie day and flying conditions could not have been better. We had twelve pilots compete in an attempt to win the April trophy. The first event was a blind circuit (non instrument) where the panel is covered completely and the pilot has to fly a perfect circuit simulating a complete instrument failure and finish with a spot landing on the strip.

The blind circuit/spot landing winners were 1st Ray Lind (118), 2nd Lyndal Coote (108); 3rd George Northey and Bruce Dunlop (102). The instrument climb (2000') where pilot s where foggles and all flying is done by reference to instruments only, winners were 1st Rod Farley and Mike Coulter (81) 2nd Bruce Dunlop (78) 3rd Jack Terp, George Northey (77).

The Forced Landing flying exercise is where a pilot experiences a simulated engine failure and has to manoeuvre the aircraft into a position where not only does the aircraft touch down safely on the airstrip but has to land within allocated point score boxes which are only 10 metres long. Winners were 1st Bill Coote, Ray Lind (90), 2nd Bruce Dunlop (78) 3rd George Northey (83).

Overall April winners 1st Ray Lind (270), 2nd Bruce Dunlop (257) 3rd George Northey (254) 4th Lyndal Coote (250). A very close scoring day indeed.

Next Flying Competition will be held on 20 May at Kempsey Airport. This will be our special Vern Polley Memorial Day where pilots will compete for prize money and a trophy thanks to the trust account that Vern set up to encourage competition flying. First prize will be \$100; 2nd \$60 and 3rd \$40 – a wonderful incentive.

Ray Lind – Captain



Highlights of our Port Macquarie to Avalon via Tasmania Air Tour

Written by Damian Buchtman

Several months ago I was offered the chance to tag along with Adam Booker and George Northey on a flying trip that would eventually take us to the Avalon International Air show. Rod Davison and Jack Terp would be flying in convoy with us in the clubs Cessna 172 VH-FPT, and after some enquiries Adam and George decided to hire the Grumman Tiger VH-FXO for the three of us. We planned our trip to include joining two air rallies organised by Shepparton Aero Club, a flight across Bass Strait to Tasmania and then back to Avalon for the air show.

We met with perfect weather at 08.00 on Friday 16-3-07 at the clubhouse and although the weather report indicated possible bad weather to the south we loaded up the two aircraft and headed south-west toward Scone. We made good progress until we approached Orange, where the weather was not too good, and we landed in minimal VMC for fuel.

It was cold and raining on the ground and after re-fuelling and waiting a short time for the rain to ease, we departed for Wagga. We continued on to our destination for that first day – a small town on the NSW / Victoria border called Tocumwal, where we approached a huge ex-military airfield, landed, re-fuelled and then tied down for the night.

We got transport to a local motel with the motel owner, and after checking in, headed for the local pub. We arrived at The Farmers Arms hotel where Jack Terp recognised the owners were Richard and Gary Bloomfield who used to live in the Wauchope area. We had a beer on the house (thanks Jack) and then bought some tickets in their raffle. Several prizes were drawn and then on the last draw Adam was asked to draw the ticket for a six-pack of beers. He drew ticket 47 orange which Jack had and we all enjoyed another beer (thanks Adam). After dinner and a few more beers we headed back and got some rest for the first air rally the next day.

We awoke to beautiful weather on Saturday, and were taken on a bus tour by Jack's friend along the Murray River camping areas. He then dropped us back to Tocumwal airfield where we had a briefing with many others for the first leg of the air rally which would take us to Bendigo for lunch and then on to Shepparton. We gradually all left Tocumwal and completed a questionnaire en-route to Bendigo. We arrived in Bendigo, refuelled, had lunch, and then left for the second leg to Shepparton.

In my limited flying experience I had heard pilots comment about scraping their butts on the top of trees and I realized what they meant during our departure from Bendigo with very hot conditions and a reasonably short runway we seemed to take forever to get off the ground but we made it and then continued with our questionnaire on to Shepparton. When we arrived at Shepparton there were many aircraft already there and we tied down and headed to the terminal. Our accommodation was a fair way away, and the local bus company owner Keith Ford kindly took us there. We booked ourselves in and then got a taxi back to Shepparton Civic Centre for the rally dinner and presentation. There were guest speakers and presentation of awards for the rally, and Rod and Jack were awarded winners of the northern link of the 10th annual Great Air Rally. We later returned to our motel.

Good weather again on Sunday and we made our way back to the Shepparton airfield for the opportunity to test fly several ultralight aircraft in the first Trial Flight Field day. Shepparton Aero Club had arranged for light aircraft manufacturers to provide aircraft for pilots and clubs to test fly. Rod, Adam, George and myself were able to fly several different aircraft, and to see how they performed. There was also an airshow for the public with some old aircraft flying in. The Shepparton Club was very hospitable and later that evening we all had dinner and another briefing for the next air rally the following day. The club's president, Paul, lent us his car to get back to our motel and have transport back to the airport the next day.

Monday morning we returned Paul's car, loaded up, and headed off early to Ballarat where we had arranged another aircraft to hire for our trip across Bass Strait. We landed in Ballarat, changed planes into a Cessna 172 SP, and then joined the air rally to a small grass strip at Moonambal. We landed on the grass strip and were taken by bus to a local vineyard and working winery. We had an excellent lunch inside the winery and then watched some grapes being pressed and processed. We returned to the grass runway by bus and gradually all flew out again with short field take-offs and headed a short distance to Maryborough. We approached Maryborough in a procession one after the other as we had left Moonambal, landed, tied down and went by bus to our accommodation. All five of us boys were booked into one room, We checked in, went to dinner at the local pub and returned later for some sleep.

Tuesday we awoke to pouring rain and it was decided by the organisers to not attempt to fly out that day. We had to move across the road to another motel for an extra night's accommodation, and then all rally participants boarded a bus and went on a bus tour to a small town called Maldon. It was a sleepy old ex-gold mining town with many old buildings and shops. We had lunch there, and then returned on the bus to Maryborough.

That evening we all met again for dinner and the presentation of prizes for the second air rally from Shepparton to Maryborough. An extra questionnaire was given out at dinner, and suddenly everyone was on their mobile phones ringing friends or family with computers to answer some of the more difficult questions. Later that evening Adam, George and I won first place in the Destination Avalon Air Tour and were presented with Air BP prizes and two tickets to next years Wanaka Air Show in New Zealand. After a great night we returned to our accommodation and hoped the weather would clear in the morning.

Wednesday morning the weather was still not very good, but clearing, and gradually everyone started to leave Maryborough. The rally participants were heading to Avalon but we had planned to visit Tasmania first, so Rod, Jack, Adam, George and myself headed to Warrnambool to then go on to Tassie. We landed at Warrnambool, refuelled, put on life jackets and then took off and headed along the southern coast of Victoria past the Twelve Apostles to Cape Otway, where we made a sharp right into the wild blue yonder across Bass Strait.

We arranged 15 minute scheduled calls to Melbourne ATC and climbed to 7500 feet. Due to the perfect weather that day it was only about 10 minutes before we could see the land of King Island way ahead in the distance and we were over water for about 50 minutes and then landed on King Island. It was not a very busy place and we had pies for lunch from the shop, heated up in the microwave. We decided not to try and bring back any King Island cheese which we had heard so much about, so we refueled and departed over water again. We re-established scheduled calls to ATC and proceeded a shorter distance to land this time and made our way to Wynyard airport.

We landed at Wynyard and while re-fueling met an air Ambulance Pilot who we told that we were heading for Launceston. He advised us that we should go via Cradle Mountain as the weather was so good and we would see some spectacular scenery. He was right and we saw some beautiful views of Cradle Mountain and its surrounding lakes and countryside. We then arrived at Launceston (Lonnie) got clearance, landed, re-fueled and tied down for the night.

We had a beer at the local aero club and a club member arranged a taxi for us and said that we should stay at O'Keefe's Hotel in town as they had very good meals and accommodation was only \$15 per head per night.(sounds good - not) The taxi arrived and a very large and cheeky lady taxi driver took us about ten minutes to the city reaching 130 km/hr on the way. We went into the hotel and booked in and were led upstairs, where there were holes punched in the walls and a tiny room with two bunk beds and two single beds, you could hardly move in the bathroom and the beds weren't made. We hoped the bit about the food being good was correct, and it was. We had a good meal a few drinks and then some sleep after a long day.

On Thursday we woke early, had breaky in the city and got a taxi back to the airport. We made plans to fly south to Lake Gordon and then across to Hobart and local pilots told us to beware of the controller at Hobart. We departed Launceston and headed south to Lake Gordon again in perfect weather. As we approached Lake Gordon in great conditions, with a tail wind and still plenty of fuel, we decided to continue to the coastline which we could see ahead. We passed the South West Cape of Tasmania and then followed the coast along the bottom of Tasmania to the South East Cape and up to Hobart. ATC at Hobart weren't very helpful but we landed, refueled, had lunch, arranged fuel ahead at Flinders Island and then departed. We traveled for a while up the East coast and then again arranged our scheduled calls and headed back across Bass Strait via Flinders Island.

We landed on Flinders Island on time but there was no sign of the fuel operator. We enquired at the terminal and were told that the fuel operator had come earlier and left. Time was getting on and we were trying to get back to Avalon as the weather was supposed to be severe in the morning and we did not want to get stuck on the island and miss the air show. Eventually the fuel operator returned and we departed for Avalon via Phillip Island. We crossed the last leg of Bass Strait and flew over the coastline of Victoria. We then made our way to a designated holding pattern set up for Avalon East Airfield, where we made the necessary approach calls but received no answer.

After completing a circuit of the holding pattern with no answer and no other aircraft around we called Avalon tower and were told the Avalon East was operating as a CTAF/R and so we made our way in carefully and landed. We unpacked all our gear, tied down and caught a bus about 10 minutes to the Lara Sports Ground where we would camp for the next three nights. We arrived at Lara where some fellow Air Rally Participants had set up our tents for us, it was very hot there and we had dinner at the Sports Club attached to the sports ground and then camped for the night.

Friday we had breaky at the sports club and then made our way back across to Avalon by bus. We enjoyed a full day of an amazing display of everything to do with light aircraft, general aviation aircraft, military aircraft, commercial aircraft, historical aircraft and everything in between. There was ground displays, air displays and at the end of a stinking hot, windy day there was an amazing

simulated bombing raid by an F-18 military aircraft that had to be seen to be believed. We returned to the camp sight late that night as a southerly blew in and dramatically changed the temperature.

Jack was nervous about the weather as he and Rod were sharing Davo's antique tent, which was pretty ordinary as far as tents go, and we all went to sleep dreading the expected rain. This was real Melbourne weather.

It rained all night and Jack woke up soaked on his Yoga mat/mattress in a pool of water, Davo had an air mattress that actually floated on the water so he was OK. To top matters off, the power had failed to the sports club, so there was no hot showers and the sports club was cooking breakfasts on a BBQ outside. We eventually got ready and headed back for our second day at the show where we enjoyed another fantastic day of amazing aircraft displays. We returned to Lara that afternoon, had dinner at the club and fortunately had no more rain that night.

Sunday we got up early, packed up, caught the bus to Avalon East airfield where the planes were parked, loaded up the planes and began taxiing out. There were two runways operating and we fortunately got out between hundreds of planes arriving for the final day of the show. We were in the air for about 15 minutes and we could hear Rod and Jack on the radio still holding on the ground waiting for a break in the incoming traffic to be cleared to take off. We eventually heard them leave Avalon as we headed to Ballarat to return the hired Cessna 172 and pick up the Grumman Tiger to fly home.

We left Ballarat with another slow climb out and headed north until we landed in Temora for fuel. We refueled and headed off again hoping to contact the other boys in the air. We reached Rod and Jack by radio in the air and found that they had unfortunately been waiting a while for us in Wagga which we had by-passed and so were a fair way behind. We agreed to meet in Mudgee where we arrived and waited for Rod and Jack. Fortunately, as it turned out the next day, we ran out of light and decided to stay in Mudgee for the night. We caught a taxi to town and as we headed in the taxi driver told us

Mudgee races had been on that day. We found a motel with a pub across the road, booked in and headed out for dinner. While in the pub we met the owner who knew some Port Macquarie people, and also an old mate of Jack's who was a local Mudgee police sergeant. Jack rang his mate and he came to the pub and had a beer with us. He also offered us a lift to the airport the next day.

Monday we were given a lift to the airport in an unmarked police car, loaded up and departed towards Scone. The weather was no good, so we diverted to Maitland hoping to return home via Gloucester. We landed at Maitland for fuel and after leaving, found bad weather again towards Gloucester. We again diverted, this time to Newcastle where we called Williamtown ATC for clearance for a coastal track north toward home. Clearance was given and we headed along the coast at 500 feet past Williamtown, Nelson Bay and towards Foster.

About 20 miles south of Foster the tiger suddenly had a very rough running engine. We were sure it was going to soon fail and after George carried out all his checks we were preparing to land on the beach. We called Williamtown who cleared us to try and climb to 3000 feet which we were able to do very slowly and then George and Adam discussed trying to reach an abandoned airfield at Wallis Island near Foster. The engine continued to run rough and although getting to Wallis Island was a short distance across rough terrain and water it was our best option. We were advised by Brisbane Centre that Wallis Island was still useable but to be very cautious due to the recent rain and possible slippery conditions.

Once we reached gliding distance from the airfield we were very relieved and George got us on the ground very safely. We parked and tied down the Tiger and made arrangements with Rod to drop

off Jack and their gear at Port and then return to pick us up. We checked out Wallis Island for a while until Rod came and picked us up and we finally returned home to Port Macquarie.

And so ended a fantastic adventure.

Damian Buchtman – HDFC graduate pilot



PUSHING THE COMFORT ZONE

By David Cooke

“Bahrain radio, we have a hydraulic problem. We may not be able to lower the undercarriage.”

Thirty miles from this Gulf island my son Michael is flying inbound from Luxor; I am handling communications. This big ten-seat Cessna 404 is bouncing in the heat turbulence of Saudi Arabia.

“Are you declaring an emergency, sir?”

“Negative.” (“Yet,” adds Mike on the intercom.)

“We have had a hydraulic failure and would like priority to land, please.”

“You cannot land for one hour, the airport is having repairs. Please hold at thirty miles.”

Suddenly the quiet, relatively unstressful life of a GP in Port Macquarie seems very attractive to me as we circle in the holding pattern. There is little to do but anticipate the outcome of the flight.

Michael, who ferries for a living, rang me a week prior to this moment. He was to pick up the aeroplane in Scotland and bring it to Australia.

“It hasn't flown for two years but has been thoroughly checked out,” says Mike, “but it would be great to have another pilot.”

It takes me half a minute to agree and he leaves four days ahead to test fly the small airliner and prepare it for the long trip.

Over three days of flying in Scotland he finds a few problems - one fuel pump has seized, a hydraulic line has fractured, the heater keeps blowing its circuit breaker, the autopilot turns itself off in turbulence and the second transponder, second ADF and DME do not work. There is, also, persistent muddy water in one fuel tank which no doubt caused the pump to seize. Despite repeated draining, every morning there are brown bubbles in the fuel drain. The delightful Scottish engineers drain this tank, repair the hydraulic line and replace the pump.

On the morning I am to arrive Mike takes delivery of the aeroplane.

“All OK?” he asks.

“Aye.”

“Is it OK?”

“Och, Aye.”

Pause. He opens his mouth to repeat himself and then twigs to the vernacular.

“Are you saying 'yes'?”

“Aye, laddie.”

I tumble out of the airliner in Glasgow and, kept awake by adrenalin, I help Mike preflight for our first leg to Southampton. The engines are sweet and we take off, tracking via the Isle of Man to Wales, then south to our destination.

I am fascinated by the continual frequency changes and minor adjustments to our flight plan as we proceed the length of England. Coming back over the coast of Wales we become aware that the right engine is rough. The EGT rises and the CHT slumps. We diagnose a Magneto failure on this right engine but all is otherwise well and we continue to Southampton, landing on a beautiful spring afternoon. The magneto is checked out and fixed (a loose wire) and we are ready for our leg to Italy the next morning. It is comforting to me to ring a friend in Tamworth NSW, a magneto expert who tells me it should be fine to continue the flight.

We climb out over the channel and cross the French coast at Le Havre, all going well, as I ponder on the American B17s cruising over to France in the Forties to be mauled by waiting Messerschmitts. The sea sparkles in the sunlight and I wonder how many fallen aircraft lie on the sea bed beneath us. We sail on over France and turn to cruise along the Riviera towards Genoa.

We have descended to 7000 feet when the Italian controller says,

“Climb to flight level 110.”

“Negative,” says Mike.

There is a pause.

“Did you say, 'negative'?”

“Yeah, mate, we want to come down, not up.”

We stand by until a resigned Italian gives us permission to descend to the beautiful little city and we land after four and a half hours.



5 minutes when everything was going right

The locals are charming and helpful and early next day we climb over the snow-capped Apennine mountains via Florence to Brindisi on Italy's heel.

A quick fuel stop and we depart for the seven hour flight to Egypt. As we track beside the many Greek isles, the heater fails again and we try to rug up with extra clothes, looking like two people in a nursing home.

Mike leaves me to do his exercises in the aisle - part of a get-fit campaign, but comes back shortly, puffing.

“Boy, I must be unfit. I could barely do them,” he gaps.

“Mikey, we are at 11,000 feet, of course you will be puffed!”



Freezing over the French Alps when the heater failed

We munch on our salami and cheese sandwiches and marvel at how big the Mediterranean is, until the coast of Egypt slips by and we plunge into sand and dust haze reaching well above us. Cairo control routes us to Luxor via a place in the Libyan desert, adding a hundred miles to our flight.

"G'day mate," the Oz accent is laid on, "can we track direct to Luxor, please?"

"Stay on the route," comes the terse reply.

Five miles from the River Nile the desert abruptly becomes green as we descend over the Valley of the Kings to this exciting city, a great tourist destination.

Another early start and we drain all the muddy water out of the left tank and climb into the sunrise crossing the Red Sea and the dramatic mountains of western Saudi Arabia.

The hydraulic flow lights flick and come on indicating a failure.

Mike and I stare at them and realise that gear and flaps on landing will be a problem. He talks to our engineer in Australia via a satellite phone and we discuss the causes. We can land without flaps on the long runway at Bahrein and we can always blow the gear down with the nitrogen bottle. We continue in relative calm.

"I notice the left fuel pump circuit breaker has popped," says the captain. He resets it. (The pumps are placarded to be used for take off, landing, climb and descent and to keep the engines smooth.) Ten seconds later it pops again.

"OK, Dad, if we get surging in the left engine as we land, be ready to switch the left fuel selector to cross feed. We will use the right fuel pump for both engines. He goes aft to study the operating handbook and takes some photographs of the scenery whilst I handle the brewing thunderstorms surprising us over this desolate moonscape.



Saudi Arabia and the likelihood of no wheels or flaps

The turbulence fails the autopilot and I attempt to keep us as level as possible, singing to myself as a form of relaxation.

Mike appears again.

"I am starting to feel a little insecure about this aeroplane," I state, remembering the many articles in our Crash Comic where accidents seem to be caused by multiple problems developing.

The satellite phone rings. "I have called a couple of times and you didn't answer. I was worried," says the engineer back in Australia.

"Sorry mate," says Mike, "Dad and I had the storm window open taking photos of the countryside."

He recommends a certain engineer in Bahrain and it is soon time to descend over the gulf. Mike puts his hand on the gear lever and hesitates.

"Get it over with Mikey," I say.

There is a slow grinding and after an interminable time three greens appear.

"Try the flaps."

There is more grinding and we achieve a small amount of flap and then no more.

We shut down on the baking tarmac and inspect the Cessna.

The bilge is awash with red fluid which drips on to the tarmac. The partially lowered flaps are immobile but nevertheless we are down.

Engineers crawl over the machine and show us the hydraulic lines which had hidden corrosion causing the blow-out. We agree it is time to leave the aeroplane in Bahrain and come home until repairs can be undertaken.

Three days later I am again sitting in my quiet surgery in Port Macquarie discussing coughs and blood pressure - a different hat on - and yet I am missing the excitement. Mike will return with an engineer and a swag of parts and will proceed on to Australia whilst I must do my real job. My flying too will only consist of medical clinics on the Mid North Coast of NSW in my Bonanza and giving scenic rides in our company Tiger Moth.

Do I have any regrets about this last week? Certainly not

Would I do it again?

I can't wait!

(A week later an engineer from the Australian company that has acquired the aeroplane returned to Bahrain, "fixed" the problems and called Mike to return to the Gulf and continue the ferry. They took off and, climbing out, suffered a complete engine failure. The 404 is back in Bahrain and Mike has told them to do their own ferrying!)

David Cooke – GP and part-time ferry pilot

Feedback



Have your say about the Club

What activities would you like to see happening at the Club?

How can the Club better provide for you?

What changes do we need to make to move the Club into the future?

Email your comments and suggestions to gregg@greggf.com or snail mail to the Club address:

Hastings District Flying Club
PO Box 115
Port Macquarie NSW 2444

"One of the most beautiful things
about flying solo

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Club Bulletin Board Page – for the Fridge Door

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Club Events

20 May 2007 Monthly GA and Ultralight Competition at Kempsey from 9am
 27th May 2007 (Sunday) Club Working Bee
 2 June 2007 Tri-Club Competition

Other events

3-5 August 2007
 Wide Bay International Airshow at Bunderberg, Queensland.
 For information www.widebayairshow.com.au

Change of Contact Details

Most Club information is being sent to members via email. This is a quick and effective use of volunteer time and resources. If you have recently changed your email address please contact Gregg Faulkner gregg@greggf.com to avoid missing out.

Friday Night Bar Roster

MAY

4th Rod Farley
 11th Adam Booker
 18th Eric Elsey
 25th Marcus Ludriks

JUNE

1st David Mitchell
 8th Barry Williams
 15th Bill Coote
 22nd Jon Maguire
 29th Gregg Faulkner

JULY

6th Rod Davison
 13th Jack Terp
 20th Ray Lind
 27th George Northey

AUGUST

3rd Rod Farley
 10th Adam Booker
 17th Eric Elsey
 24th Marcus Ludriks
 31st David Mitchell.

If you are able to help with Friday night or weekend Bar duties and your name is not on the list, please contact Gregg and Sue.

Email addresses worth browsing:

www.recreationalflying.com.au
www.aviationnews.com.au
www.dotars.gov.au/transport/security/aviation/factsheet/fact9.aspx
www.auf.asn.au/clubs/index.html

Scooter marketing Lyndal Coote
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 Simple effective web sites for small businesses
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PROPwash

Hastings District Flying Club NEWSLETTER



Lesson One for Flying Scholarship winners Megan (left) and Bonny (centre) with Club instructor Adam Booker pointing out key features of the Club's A-22 Foxbat aircraft.



Sue and Gregg's Drifter is no longer in Port. It has been sold and replaced in the Club hangar with a gorgeous little SportStar called "Dimples" (seen here on the way to South West Rocks for the Club fly-in last Sunday with Gregg and George aboard.)



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