

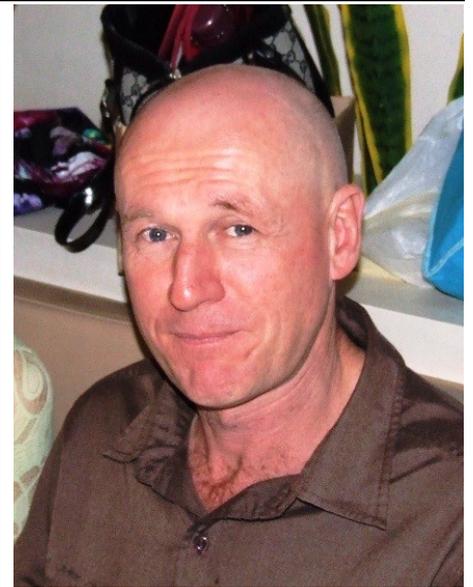


The N.S.W. Sport Aircraft Club Newsletter

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2015

YWBN CTAF	122.55MHz
Area Frequency	124.55MHz
Latitude	34 11.2S
Longitude	150 48.3E

ABN	57784 250667	ACN	Y2094624
Address	PO Box 450		
	CAMPBELLTOWN NSW 2560		
Phone	(Caretaker) 0425 380 964		



Above: Dave Butler in his Corby Starlet above the South Australian coast on his delivery flight to Bussleton in WA. His full story appears inside.
Above right: Simon Bates died in quite horrible circumstances recently.
Right: Simon's Long EZ in full flight. **Below:** Bill Leighton arrives back at Wedderburn at dusk. **Inset below:** Rachel Lumb regaining some health.



Visit our website:- www.wedderburnairstrip.com.au

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Committee (group email)	committee@wedderburnairstrip.com.au
Rouen Andrews (Caretaker)	0425 380 964 - - -

UPCOMING FLYING AND SOCIAL EVENTS Put 'em in your diary

Social Workday	Sunday, 25th October. Sign in by 9am. Free lunch for members. Contact: Richard Thompson.	Wedderburn
Children's Annual Christmas Party	Sunday, 29th November. Full details are on Page 3 . Contact: Diane Brookes on 0425 380 967.	Clubhouse
ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY	Saturday evening, 5th December. Full details are on Page 3 . Contact: Karen Lalor, 4626 8118.	Clubhouse
General Meeting	Sunday, 13th December, 2pm, in the Clubhouse. Contact: Jock Anderson.	Clubhouse
Australia Day BBQ	Tuesday 26th January, 6pm. BYO everything. Contact: David Rittie.	Clubhouse
LOBO Fly-in	Lancair Owners and Builders Organisation Fly-in. Sat/Sun 20th and 21st February. Contact: Gary Weeks. 0416 055 011.	Wedderburn
Social Workday	Sunday, 28th February. Sign in by 9am. Free lunch for members. Contact: Richard Thompson.	Wedderburn

From your Editor

Welcome to the October/November 2015 edition of your SAC Newsletter.

Unfortunately, we have lost another SAC member. This time it is Simon Bates, who died at a very young age, and after refusing any medical assistance for his sickness. All very sad. You will find a story about him on **Page 7**.

Rachel Lumb is continuing to battle her injuries in order to regain much of her health. A report from her on the

progress of her recovery is on **Page 8**.

Our Club Secretary has sent in a very detailed account of important matters concerning the club which appears on **Page 4**. I suggest you read it, as there is some important information in it.

Phil Ayrton, Errol Pillemer and Rouen Andrews (caretaker) have all written



articles containing important matters, and Bill Leighton has sent in some very nice pictures. Thank you all. However, the big story is of Dave Butler delivering his Corby Starlet to Busselton in WA. It is the largest story ever published in the SAC Newsletter and one of the best. Thanks very much Dave. It is a great flying feat and a good yarn.

Unfortunately, our president, Bret, has been called away for a family funeral, and apologises as he is not able to write his message to us this time around.

Have fun!

David Rittie

You can contact your Newsletter Editor at david.rittie@bigpond.com



*New South Wales
Sport Aircraft Club's*



ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY

and AWARDS PRESENTATION

Saturday, 5th December at Wedderburn

The Christmas party will be held in a marquee in the Clubhouse forecourt.

- ◆ **5pm: nibbles and drinks. BYO grog and wine glasses.**
- ◆ **6pm: fully catered meal, cooked on the premises.**
- ◆ **Annual Awards Presentations** after the main course, then **dessert.**
- ◆ **Dance the Night Away** on the dance floor with top class entertainment.

ENTRY IS BY TICKET ONLY . . . \$40 per person

Tickets are available up until 22nd November. There will be no more tickets issued after this date.

HOW DO I GET A TICKET?

Tickets are available from the SAC Treasurer, Diane (0425 380 967) or from the caretaker at \$40 per head.

The closing date for ticket sales is Sunday 22nd November.

To obtain a ticket you will need to pay \$40.00 per person, adult or child, in one of the following ways:

- Give your \$40.00 (in cash or cheque) to the SAC Treasurer, Diane Brookes, who will then hand you your tickets personally. Diane can be found in hangar W1A.
- Give your \$40.00 (in cash or cheque) to the caretaker (Rou) who will give you a receipt. You will then receive your ticket in the mail from the SAC Treasurer.
- EFT the money into the club account - BSB 082057, Account Number 69860 7516 stating "Christmas" as a comment, and email the payment slip and a short note to the Treasurer at nswsac@gmail.com.
- Send a cheque to the **NSW Sport Aircraft Club, PO Box 450, Campbelltown, 2560** with your name and the number of tickets you require and we will send you your tickets in the mail.

DO NOT LOSE YOUR TICKETS.

Each table will seat 10 people so if you would like to organise a table of 10 or any other number, feel free. It would be ideal if you could nominate a "Key Person" to arrange money and payment etc. Let us know when you pay how many are in your party.



CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

SUNDAY, 29th NOVEMBER, midday till 3

Happily organised by Lisa Laybutt & Diane Brookes

**Free sausage sizzle, lollies, visit from Santa, jumping castle, lolly bomber, Jeep rides.
Bring sons, daughters, grand children, nephews, nieces, neighbours and friends.**

For catering purposes please contact Diane on **0425 380 967** or by email at nswsac@gmail.com before 22nd November, and let her know how many children you will be bringing.



From the Secretary's Desk

Goings on at Wedderburn

Up to date there have been seven ordinary and one ad hoc committee meetings of NSW SAC since March 2013. Three a year are required under the constitution but there generally is one about every five weeks. Apart from the President, Treasurer and Secretary whose functions are obvious, committee members are not given specific functions and usually volunteer for tasks as required but, in addition, Phil Ayrton provides specialist architectural or compliance advice, Don Harvie is the Membership Coordinator, Richard Thompson is the General Factotum (i.e., gets things done), Matthew Grey provides wise counsel, Errol Pillemer stirs us up and David Rittie guides us with his encyclopaedic knowledge and broad experience.

Matters on hand

Hangar Licence Agreements

Our original 40 year Lease with the Department of Lands (head lease) expired next year and a new 20 year head lease was granted by the department in 2014. All Hangar Licence Agreements (HLA's) were tied to the original lease and so will expire next year. Peter Scott has been working hard on revising the HLA as the terms are now somewhat archaic in places. Things have changed since the good old days when we begged people to build hangars. Now people beg us for a lease. Once Peter has finalised this task all hangar owners will be issued with the new agreement which will be coordinated with the new head lease and will therefore expire in 2034. These will be signed formally with the Club as lessee and the member as lessor and filed in the usual way with the club. It is not a task to which we look forward with relish.

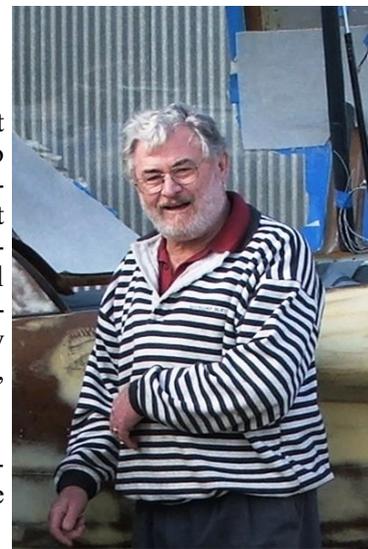
Relevant Other Matters

There is a letter from South32 (BHP) re mining in Longwall Panel 38. Until recently the mine had extracted 1,452 metres of coal from this panel with a total of 1,061 metres remaining. This is a letter of courtesy from the mine to update landholders in the area. Should any member notice that their hangar has disappeared into a sinkhole they should stand well clear and write a letter to the secretary. Longwall 38 is generally north – south and progressing to the south and is not directly under the club's lease. At its closest point it will be at least 390 meters from the field to its west and the risk of subsidence is assessed as LOW. It is my understanding that the Longwall 38 is about 650 metres underground but don't quote me. It is possible, but unlikely, that some secondary movement could occur due to the presence of earlier Longwall extractions which are below or closer to the field. It is expected that mining of this Longwall 38 will be complete in May 2016. In the meantime, amongst other things, therefore, the mine is monitoring any subsidence by placing ground survey pegs at 20 m intervals along the western side of the northern end of the strip nominally 20-30 metres from the edge of the strip. These pegs look like stainless steel spikes with a red button on top. They measure tiny movement vertically and laterally. Please make sure that you do not disturb them.

In the meantime can I remind members that we use the road from the Appin Road to the Southern (Mine) gate with permission from the mine and please ensure that you drive courteously and adhere to the road rules in particular the speed limit (60km), the stop signs and use headlights at all times.

Since I am talking about courteous driving, can I also remind members that sensible flying also applies at NSW SAC. Formation departures and any form of illegal flying are NOT PERMITTED anytime or under any circumstances at NSW SAC, even if you are Tom Cruise.

There is a Letter of Appreciation from Legacy to the Club for a donation of \$500.



There is a Letter of Appreciation from CareFlight for a donation of \$2000. On this occasion we posted it to them rather than ask them to spend \$2000 in fuel to come and get it.

A couple of folk have written to ask about the **Open Day**. The Committee considered whether to hold this again or not. You will remember that the last one was interrupted by a sudden sharp windstorm which blew over much of the tentage and made flying difficult. Under the circumstances we thought that November is not such a good time. Instead the committee has decided to encourage more fly-in, fly-out activities in the meantime so no date for another Open Day has been set.

A group of **Sy Allsep's friends** led by Peter Reardon have approval from the Committee to forge a metal plate in his memory. In due course this will be attached to Sy's Hangar in a prominent place for all to see. I have seen the pattern and regard it as a fine piece of art that will mark a fond memory.

NSW Office of Environment & Heritage

We have received an advisory communication on 3 September 2015 from the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH). This office is responsible for administering the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* and the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*. Aerial photography (imagery supplied) shows that some areas to the north, south and west of our property were extensively cleared in 2007 or beforehand. However vegetation has regrown since that clearing and some regrowth has occurred. Further aerial imagery carried out in January and June this year shows that areas of vegetation to the west, north and south of property were cleared again between those dates, in some cases even outside our lease. NSW Wildlife has records of the threatened plant species *Grevillea paraflora* and *Acacia bynoeana* (Bynoe's Wattle) which are likely to exist on this property. It is an offence under the NPW Act for an incorporated body (or anyone else) to clear or slash these or other threatened plant species. The maximum penalties for offences against this act are so great (\$500,000 and/or 12 months imprisonment) that, if found guilty, the NSW SAC itself would become a threatened species. Please, under any circumstances, DO NOT clear any land on our lease. If you think that clearing is required contact a member of the committee who will consult the OEH if in doubt.

The club's present **tractor** is underpowered to be driven with the slasher in an elevated position. It was decided therefore that it is only to be used with the slasher in a safe

position. Richard Thompson has offered to source another, more powerful tractor suitable for other uses on the field.

Richard Thompson also offered to acquire a **chain saw**. As there is no such thing as a minor injury from the use of a chainsaw (no matter what Greg Norman says) the only members permitted to use it will be those who have been endorsed by an approved operator such as Mark Booth if he is agreeable. Richard Thompson will advise.

It has been reported that too many pens have been taken from the **Fuel Bowser** ledger. This results in inaccurate logging of fuel usage. It was resolved to attach the pen to a brick by a chain. If you get home and find a brick in your pocket please post it back with the pen ASAP.

Flying on Work Days

It has been decided that there will be no flying on work days from 8.00 am until 1.00 pm. This is a safety issue. It will be promulgated in the Bye – Laws.

Children's Christmas Party etc Fire Engine

This year's Children's Christmas Party is on Sunday 29th November starting at midday and the Wedderburn Rural Fire Brigade has again agreed to provide a Fire Tender. I have a letter from Santa assuring us that he has NSW SAC on his visiting list. He goes on to say "Can you bring carrots and lettuce for my reindeer."

Christmas Party

The grown-ups Christmas Party will be on Saturday 5th December 2015.

There will be no Fire Tender unfortunately. Details are seen elsewhere in this issue.

Rou's Birthday

Kindly note that Rou turns 125 years of age on October 31st 2015.

Wish him Many Happy's if you see him around the field.

Next General Meeting

The next General Meeting will be in December 2015. Any member wishing to add something to the Agenda should advise me in writing before the end of November.

Gate Keys

On a day in late August Don Harvie (committee member) serendipitously met a man fiddling with the lock at the Northern Gate. When Don asked him what he was doing he replied he worked for [REDACTED] Council and that he was changing the locks because there were too many keys out there providing unauthorized access. Apparently the new locks that he proposed would allow access to the Northern gate and maybe the Middle gate but not the South (Mine) gate. Council had apparently asked the mine (now called South32) if they wanted to allow us access through to the Appin Road to the South gate and the mine's lawyers had an issue with it on liability grounds in spite of the fact that it has been in use for 37 years without incident. I find this behaviour on the part of [REDACTED] Council offensive and inconsiderate. They did not have the courtesy to communicate formally with this club that they were going

to change the locks and it is entirely possible that, except for the chance meeting between Don Harvie and [REDACTED] (as it turns out from council) the locks would have been changed on our gates without notice and those approaching from the South gate would have found it locked from 31st October 2015 without warning. [REDACTED] said that the lock on the North Gate and (maybe) the Middle Gate would be opened by the club's present keys or any new keys but the lock on the South (mine) gate would not be openable with any keys presently in the club's hands nor any new keys issued to the club by council. The loss of access to the field from the south would be a disaster if not great inconvenience for many of our members. Furthermore, [REDACTED] Council approached South32 and asked whether they wanted us to have access from the Appin Road when it was none of their business. The Council did not approach us to ask whether we wanted to give the mine access through the Southern gate, the Middle gate or the North gate. We built and paid for all of those gates. Furthermore, the South Gate is in the [REDACTED] Shire Council not [REDACTED] Council.

Committee has ordered 330 of the new keys but is still negotiating which locks they will open.

Don Harvie is communicating with [REDACTED] Council and Bret Cavanagh and David Rittie with South32 in an attempt to find a satisfactory solution.

New members

John Carr of Vacluse
Malcolm Smith of Roseville
Clive Flax of Maroubra

Please make them welcome.

Finally, someone, seeing the photograph heading this article, asked whether I had had a stroke. I am glad to report that I have not. I have had a problem with my knee however, because a couple of torsion buckles came out after my knee re-



placement causing a fatigue fracture and a fluid leak. They spliced in a couple of angle irons and a corrugated strainer with some blind rivets and Loctite so I should be right soon. Unfortunately it is my right knee so I cannot drive, which is why you have not seen much of me around the field.

In the meantime I am most grateful to David Rittie for Pickin' me Up and Puttin' me Down (as they say at Crown).

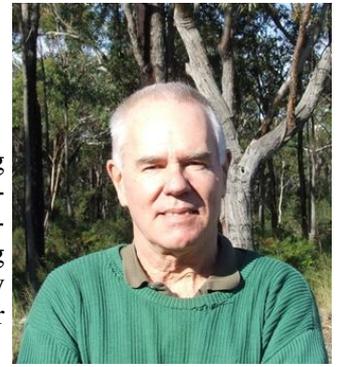
Fly Safe!

It is with great sadness that the Club notes the passing of Bruce Cunningham.
It is with great sadness that the Club notes the passing of Jim Lumb.
It is with great sadness that the Club notes the passing of Colleen Keen.
It is with great sadness that the Club notes the passing of Sy Allsep.
It is with great sadness that the Club notes the passing of Bob Peak.
It is with great sadness that the Club notes the passing of Simon Alexander Bates.

Don Anderson
Jock Anderson

Some important Southern Road guidelines

from Phil Ayrton



SOUTHERN AIRFIELD ACCESS

Anyone accessing our wonderful facility from the south will be aware that after leaving Appin Road we utilise the private bitumen road owned and maintained by Westcliff Colliery before we reach the first locked gate. It's not a right that we have but rather a privilege that they allow us. You should also be aware that the colliery management take safety very seriously, in that drivers need to complete an induction course before they can work there, they cannot leave their vehicle without long trousers and long sleeve heavy cotton shirts, and anyone found on top of their truck are immediately dismissed, so there are a number of protocols we should also adopt to bring our behaviour into line with the management expectations for their staff. The ones that come to mind include these:

- **Mandatory use of headlights.** All their vehicles use headlights while on-site so we should turn our headlights on when using their road, they are expecting big trucks so our small sedan

cars can often be difficult to see,
- **Observe the speed limit.** After travelling from southern Sydney at 110kph on the expressway, and even after the Appin Road limit has been reduced from 100 to 90kph, the mine access road speed limit of 60kph can feel quite slow, and even though you will be keen to get to Wedderburn we need to comply with the limits imposed for everyone's safety,

- **Mandatory stop sign.** The exit point for loaded trucks has a stop sign in both directions and we need to also fully comply with this. From the south it can be quite hard to see trucks since the rock and grass garden on the corner can partially obscure vision in a lowset sedan car, so it is important to keep your wits about you particularly in that area, and if there are trucks exiting, or approaching the exit point it can also be courteous to stop early and well short of the sign to allow the driver a better turning radius, and this will also confirm to him that you have seen him and are responding, he's going uphill

with a big load so stopping or taking avoiding action is very difficult for him, and

- **Don't stop or leave your vehicle, unless it is vital that you do.** A flat tyre would necessitate you stopping and getting out but maybe turning into a carpark or similar would be a safer option than trying to change a tyre on the side of the road with B-Double trucks passing close by.

The main point for us all to remember here is that we are being allowed to use this road by colliery management so we should try to behave with the same level of safety and common sense expected of the colliery employees, so we are perceived as a low risk addition to the mine road traffic.

Phil Ayrton

Errol Pillemer, has some more to say!

About Skip Bins and a Logo Design Competition

Hi everyone

SKIP BIN

I have a simple request: Please do not overfill the skip bin. The hiring of the bin is expensive, and it is likely to cost a whole lot more if the bin is overfilled.

**DO THE RIGHT THING
and don't fill it above the top edge!**

NEW LOGO

On a completely different matter, we have a few SAC logos or badges that we use from time to time. These are pictured below.

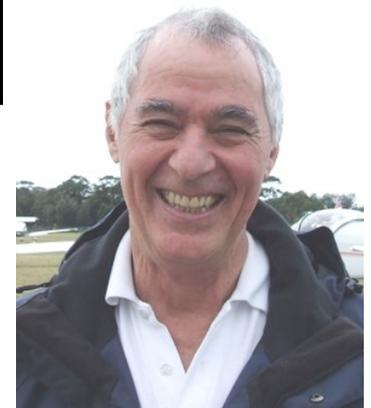
I think it is about time we reviewed the logo, or gain your approval to continue to use the old existing ones.

Also below is what I consider to be a more modern version which we could use instead, cleaner lines and more "wedge tailed".

I know that we have many talented members in this club who may be able to create a much better logo than any of these.

Yes! We are having a "New Logo" competition"

If you have a better idea please create a picture and send it to me, to



errol@pillemer.net

so that it can be judged. You never know. Your design may become our future ensign.

Cheers

Errol Pillemer



This one is used on letters and other black and white documents.



This is the one that appears on the front page of the SAC Newsletter.



This one is a more modern version that appears on the back wall of the clubhouse.



This is my attempt at a more modern logo. **What can you do?**

Vale: SIMON BATES

Aged 52. Much too young to go

Simon Bates was a professional helicopter pilot with many endorsements, and part of his professional flying career involved doing powerline inspections and piloting media personnel above parts of Sydney so that they could deliver their live traffic reports.

Many years ago, one of our SAC founding members (and life member) Jack McSparron, decided to build a Bert Rutan designed canard Long EZ. Unfortunately, Jack died before the job could be completed. Simon eventually took over the project and completed the build and test flight, at about the same time as he joined our club in 2007.

Simon flew the Long EZ very well, demonstrating his considerable flying ability. In more recent times he fitted a more powerful engine and improved the streamlining of the aircraft. They were very promising modifications, but the aircraft has not been flown since they were incorporated.

About 18 months ago Simon contracted a disease, which appears to be some form of cancer with a growth showing on his jaw/neck region. For some reason it seems that he neither had the growth diagnosed, nor sought any treatment for it. Many of his friends tried to help him in this situation but he was steadfast in his refusal of help. Finally, three days before he died, Richard Thompson (who was overseas at the time) arranged to have Simon taken to hospital.



I visited Simon on his last day, whilst he was in hospital soon after Rou had left. It was a very confronting sight to see a human body wasted away to skin and bone. This was not the person I knew. In fact there was not a single feature of his being that allowed me to fully believe that it was my friend. Catharyn (his dance partner) was there with him, and she encouraged me to speak to him, as she assured me that he could hear and understand, even though it seemed to me that he was not conscious.

He died at 1:30pm, Thursday 17th September, about half an hour after I left.

To many of us his passing is a great loss. He was one of the nicest, kindest people I ever knew. On a few occasions he had sent me very complimentary, supportive and encouraging messages during my term as Club President. He clearly liked to dance, and was obviously a very accomplished aviator.

Aged only 52, he was much too young to go.

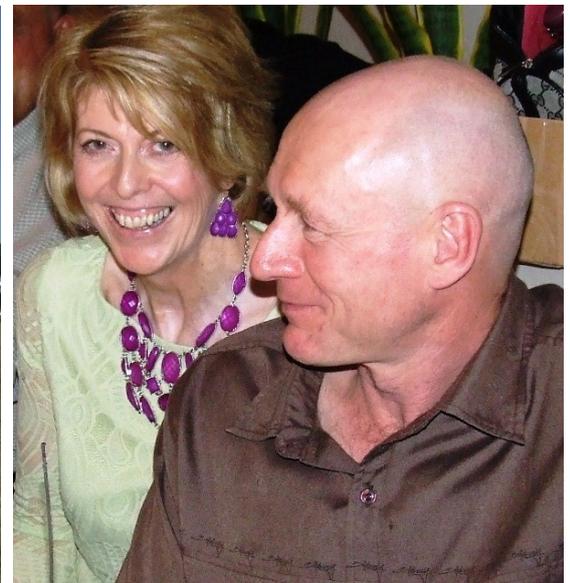
Rest in Peace, dear Simon.

David Rittie

At Right: Simon flying the Rutan Long EZ in 2010.

Below left: Simon's beautifully built Long EZ, pictured at Moruya in May 2010.

Below right: Simon with dance partner, Catharyn, at his 50th birthday party in June, 2013.



Rachel Lumb - on the Road to Recovery

After receiving all those severe injuries in that horrible crash a couple of months ago, Rachel Lumb kindly sent in the following report on her condition. The text of her message has been edited somewhat.

“Currently I am able to use my arms that were broken to push myself on to a commode. I have to go bottom first or else I get into trouble with the bone doctors as I am not allowed to put any weight on my right foot.

The right foot is still in a big mess inside and I will undergo a big tidy up of the bones which are missing entirely (from a very nasty infection that got in there) or are in bits and pieces and pointing in all the wrong directions. Then the doctors will fuse the ankle so that it can't move. Impossible to return it to a normally working ankle but I should be able to hobble/walk on that foot in about three months. Meanwhile the break just under the knee is healing well, but the knee now doesn't want to bend having been locked straight for nine weeks. I battle with ferocity every day to try to get it back to normal. Then I will be up on crutches.

The hip and pelvis will be tested when I do get to finally put weight on that right leg. Doctors fully expect a hip replacement will be required. It had 25% scraped off the ball top of the thigh bone. So, there is no nice smooth surface there any more to move around in the cup.

The pelvis on the other side should be okay.

The ruddy rib cage! All but one of the ribs in my right



side where broken (and punctured lung and collapsed diaphragm). My God, I am lucky to be alive! Thank God for everyone's swift response and superlative care. What amazing skill the paramedics practised on me! Anyway, the ribs give me curry when I try to sit in a chair but they are getting steadily better.

My voice is almost back to normal after inhaling all the fuel fumes, and the chemical burns on my legs and buttocks itch like crazy, so they are on the mend!

*Best Regards
Rachel”*

* * * *

Thank you, Rachel, for that extensive report, which answers many questions.

Rachel expects to be in hospital for some time yet. We wish her all the best in her battle for health. She is a very brave lady.

David Rittie

Inez and Frank Luke (pictured at right) celebrated their 64th wedding anniversary on 6th October.

Our congratulations go to both of these former SAC Committee members. **Ed**



WEDDERBURN
Bridge project very gradually taking shape

WEDDERBURN residents are calling on Campbelltown Council to proceed with the plan of the construction of the Blackburn Rd extension and bridge.

The council started investigating the cost and concept design for the bridge over the Georges River at Blackburn Rd to

Blackburn Road extension onto Appin Road. The plan is in process.
This article below is from a local newspaper, indicating that plans are progressing for an alternate access to Appin Road. The picture below shows the location for the Blackburn Rd bridge. **Ed**

Appin Rd several years ago. Residents have long raised concerns they could be cut off in a bushfire or flood emergency with only one access route.

Acting general manager Lindy Deitz (pictured) assured residents the project was continuing – just at a slower pace.

“Although the concepts



have been completed, council is still seeking advice from the State Government as to the purchase of privately owned land from the Georges River through to Appin Rd,” Ms Deitz said.

“The council is also seeking RMS approval for any new road connection to Appin Rd.”

The project is estimated to cost about \$7.5 million.



Need some exotic plants? You can choose from a wide selection near the airfield, just around the corner at #7 Blackburn Road.

HARLAND'S Nursery and Landscaping
Phone 4634 1234 or 0402 086 032, or drop by and see Charles or Clayton.

****The Harlands also do hangar concrete slabs, at very reasonable prices****

A few words from our caretakers, Dawn and Rouen Andrews

We start this Newsletter with heavy hearts, the passing of our friend and Club Member SIMON BATES has really been a blow to us.

Simon was a very good friend to us from when we arrived here, a couple of new chums. He was always cheerful and helpful to us and orchestrated the purchases of our cleaning materials from Joe, his friend at A+ Cleaning supplies in Campbelltown, at a discounted rate. Simon was also a great supporter of Club Social workdays and I can see him now carrying bags of fertiliser and laying fresh turf along the main taxiway. When Simon went on an overseas trip 18 months ago, we were given the privilege of caring for his beloved Dizzy the kelpie, which he rescued from a litter at Hoxton Park airfield where he and his mates were flying out of at that time. Simon had a lot of friends here at Wedderburn and he will be sorely missed flying his Long EZ. We were fortunate in being alerted to Simon being hospitalised in the Oncology Ward at Campbelltown Hospital and being allowed in to visit him on the morning of his passing. Our happier memories are of being invited to Simon's 50th birthday at Rashay's in Campbelltown. Simon will always be in our hearts and thoughts.



With Simon at his 50th birthday party

AVGAS BOWSER

On 13th September Aviation Components carried out the annual service and re-calibration of the meters on our bowser so members can rest assured that all is well and the measurements of Avgas are correct.

Also please be aware that the Biro Pen on a chain is attached to the Fuel Book so that members do not have to hunt for a pen to record their purchase! Please do not remove this pen and please treat the Fuel Book with CARE!

CLUBHOUSE IMPROVEMENTS

Our caterers Karen and Steve have arranged the purchase (with assistance from committee and Diane Brookes, OUR BELOVED TREASURER) of two new gas stoves. These are been installed with great care and expertise by our members Jason and Val Camilleri, with Tim Causer supplying the electrical expertise. These will be in operation for the approaching work day on Sunday, 25th October.

A Zip Constant boil Hot water boiler has also been installed, for use on work days and functions ONLY as

Dawn and Rouen



power usage is very high.

NORTHERN GATE ENTRANCE

Some weeks ago the gate closure bolt was vandalised. This was accomplished with a battery operated angle grinder and made a repair job extremely difficult. The repair was carried out by Tim Causer and Steve Cohen with great skill and was welded under difficult circumstances. Tim and Steve gave up their flying time on a Sunday to carry out this repair. It is becoming increasingly difficult to keep vandals out of the airstrip. In the above instance this gate was vandalised from the IN-SIDE, when a stolen car was abandoned in the Rural Fire Service area on Wedderburn Fire Trail, also damaging the wire cable along our road, to enable access to the Northern Gate.

RUBBISH AND VEHICLES - Lysaght Road

We have had a spate of dumped household rubbish and burned out vehicles on Lysaght Road, between Blackburn Road and our northern gate. Would members please be alert to any unfamiliar activity along this stretch. For your information the following phone numbers may be of assistance.

CAMPBELLTOWN POLICE 4620 1199

POLICE ASSISTANCE LINE 131 444

CAMPBELLTOWN CITY COUNCIL - DOB IN A DUMPER 4645 4000.

Do not hesitate to report anybody acting suspiciously and help all members.

FIRES

Be aware of any smoke seen to the south of Hangar Row M - past the middle gate. I have had to call the Fire Brigades to extinguish abandoned cars set on fire in the "wash areas" south of this gate by the weekend "hoons".

MOTORBIKES

We have also been troubled lately with bikes roaring through our road at dusk creating a huge dust cloud, which is dangerous to other motorists on that road, in fact I couldn't see where I was going, so members be alert and do not hesitate to report these vandals to the appropriate authorities as above.

CLUB GATE KEYS

I have recently had cause to apprehend NON -MEMBERS carrying these keys at night. On questioning they said that they were entering the premises to pick up mates. DO NOT LEND YOUR GATE KEYS unless you are going to be accompanying these non members.

Dawn and Rouen Andrews
0425 380 964

Dave Butler's delivery flight to Western Australia

This is David's story of the delivery flight of Corby "Starlet", VH-UOK, from Wedderburn in Sydney to Busselton in WA, in May 2015.



When I advertised my Corby Starlet for sale I stated in the advertisement that I could "deliver anywhere in Australia" and I secretly hoped that someone reasonably far away would buy the aircraft so that I could have one last great trip before handing her over. When Ben from Busselton WA committed to the purchase of the aircraft the reality of what was ahead of me started to sink in.

Wedderburn is in Sydney on the East coast of Australia and Busselton is south of Perth on the West coast, from the Pacific Ocean to the Indian Ocean across a continent 3,700 kilometres or 2,300 miles wide. Given that the Starlet has a 42 litre fuel tank and an effective range of around 2 hours with reserve, I quickly realised there were going to be some serious logistical issues to resolve prior to undertaking this flight. The aircraft cruises most comfortably and economically between 105 and 110 knots (120-125 mph) but flying East to West across Australia one can normally expect to have some considerable head winds, particularly going into winter, so it seemed prudent to be conservative on my actual ground speed so I decided to add a 10-15 knot head wind component to my flight planning giving me an anticipated ground speed of 95 knots (110 mph). It was obvious then that the trip across the country was going to take around 21 hours of flying, which is about as much as I had been historically flying the aircraft normally in a whole year! The 2 hours endurance at 95 knots meant a maximum distance between refueling stops of no more than 190 nautical miles (220 statute miles) with my 40 minute reserve safety margin, so the whole trip was going to take at least 11 stops if I could find refueling stops located conveniently every 2

hours. After many hours of looking at 'Google Earth' maps it became apparent that fuel stops were limited in some areas and I would have to be doing a few of the legs considerably shorter than the 2 hour limit to make my way across the country - more like 14 stops in reality. With available fuel stops really dictating the route I needed to take on the trip another aspect started to become clear to me once I started looking at the map details in Google Earth, I was going to be flying over very remote country on a few of the legs, in some instances at least a hundred kilometres from any kind of civilization at all. I'm a low time VFR only pilot with limited cross country experience and my previous forays away from Wedderburn had been limited to generally 'single leg' trips to places like Temora, overnighing there and then back to Sydney the next day - I was now planning on at least doubling this each day and doing it every day for a week or more. My aircraft (which I built from scratch over an 18 year period) is a wonderful little machine; beautiful to fly but not really designed for extended cross country flights. The cockpit is VERY small with no room to move or stretch out at all and two hours flying is about as much as one can do in this machine before starting to become quite uncomfortable. Also the aircraft needs to be hand flown 100% of the time as there are no 'trim' mechanisms to take the aerodynamic loads off the control stick, when the fuel tank is full some constant back pressure is required on the stick to keep the aircraft level and as the fuel burns off this transitions to some forward pressure on the stick as the fuel load lightens.

Given the requirements for distance between fuel stops the flight plan came together fairly quickly as follows:

Wedderburn - Temora
 Temora - Hay
 Hay - Mildura
 Mildura - Renmark
 Renmark - Port Pirie
 Port Pirie - Wudinna
 Wudinna - Ceduna
 Ceduna - Nullarbor Roadhouse
 Nullarbor Roadhouse - Forrest
 Forrest - Caiguna Roadhouse
 Caiguna Roadhouse - Balladonia Roadhouse
 Balladonia Roadhouse - Esperance
 Esperance - 'The Lily'
 'The Lily' - Busselton.

So the whole trip was going to look something like the route shown on the map of Australia and I'd try and complete two legs a day and overnight at the locations marked in red. Of course I knew that I'd be at the mercy of the weather and that this was a 'plan' and that the reality may end up being something quite different!

After many hours of checking online (how did we ever get anything done before the internet existed?) I could see that Avgas should be available at all but probably three of my stops and that Premium Unleaded automotive fuel would be available at those, as the Jabiru 2200 is certified to use Mogas above 95 RON this looked OK. I couldn't actually book any accommodation for specific dates as I didn't know 'when I'd be where' so I would just have to hope that something would be available each night. A number of years ago I had flown across the country with a mate in his Cessna 402 twin and we overnighted at Forrest in the middle of the Nullarbor and really enjoyed the place, we both vowed to revisit one day if we could. When he heard about my delivery trip he decided to use this as the opportunity to go back and visit, so he and his wife, along with my wife, booked themselves on a flight from Sydney to Adelaide and then on to the Indian Pacific train to Perth, but they would disembark at Forrest and stay there for four days - hopefully coinciding with the period that I would be transiting through there.

I now had my basic route and so I started looking at each leg in detail to create my actual flight plans. One of the great advantages of flying in an aircraft is the ability to go directly 'point to point' and (generally) not be constrained by the topography of the earth's surface, however flight planning this way can lead to flights over country that is not at all conducive to a forced landing and, having already experienced one total engine failure at 4,200 feet and the ensuing 'quiet' glide thereafter, I have become very conscious of the availability of landing opportunities in any type of country I chose to fly over (my 'dead stick' landing worked out just fine as I was flying over some good flat country at the time and neither I or the aircraft were damaged at all). So for each leg of my flight it was back to Google Earth to choose a route that was not the shortest but the safest, generally also following major roads so as to keep me 'in touch' with civilization and to help with visual navigation. I picked my GPS way points accordingly, saved them as 'a path' (.kmz file) in Google Earth and then converted them to a .gdb file to import into my Garmin Aera 500 GPS unit. The Aera was to be my back up GPS, my main navigation would be via an iPad Mini running the Oz Runways EFB application and all of my flight plans were duplicated to run in this App. I don't know how anyone could have done such a flight across Australia in a Star-

let in the days prior to EFB technology, I have previously struggled to use just the paper version of the Sydney VTC chart in the tiny cockpit, yet alone all of the required WAC charts to get right across the country - and definitely no room for that old bulky paper ERSA! I would also carry a backup hand held radio (with head set adapter) and a 406 MHz GPS encoded PLB. Between the very small locker at the back of the cockpit and the space directly under my seat I was somehow able to work out how to store a bottle of Aeroshell oil, some tie downs, a very basic tool kit, a small toilet bag, the canopy cover, four pairs of 'undies', a couple of T shirts, a couple of pairs of socks, a spare pair of jeans, a warm top and a bottle of fresh water.

So all I had to do now was set a departure date and this was to be determined by a couple of factors - Ben the purchaser returning back home to Busselton from work commitments in the Top End of Australia - and my successful recovery from hip replacement surgery. And so Friday 15th of May 2015 became the 'Go' date, which was about 8 weeks after my operation.

Friday 15th May: Wedderburn to Temora.

Temora had been chosen for a couple of reasons; 1) It had me heading in the right direction! 2) It afforded the opportunity to catch up and spend the weekend with my mate Frank Edwards who has a hanger there, also some other guys from 'the Corby Crew' took the opportunity to join us - Stephen Graham from Lake Cargelligo, Bill Tuggnet from Bathurst and Russ Garraway from Colac in Victoria. Another bonus was that it was a 'Flying Weekend' for the Temora Aviation Museum and we would get to see some great aircraft displayed.

My wife and daughter dropped me off at YWBN early around 06:30 but I ended up departing at 10:30 and had a uneventful and pleasant flight that lasted 1 hour and 40 minutes. However I did make note that when I departed YWBN the sky was almost completely clear of cloud but by the time I had just passed Mittagong, which is only about 12minutes flight time, I was under a low cloud base that was holding me at 1,700' AGL to maintain the required 500' separation from the cloud, however I could see it was getting clear again ahead of me and by the time I passed Goulburn it was back to clear blue skies. Some good tailwinds, which were giving me a ground speed of up to 130 knots, ensured a very pleasant remainder of the leg to Temora.



Had a great time with the guys at Temora with perfect weather over the weekend, a few beers and a feed at the 'Terminus Hotel' in town, watched the flying display on

Saturday and I was able to get a very special photograph of myself with VH-UOK and one of the Aviation Museum's Spitfires all together outside their hanger.



Sunday 17th May: **Temora to Hay**

Departed Temora at 10:00 and arrived at Hay at 11:15. Pulled up to the fuel bowser only to find that it wasn't working, so I called the mobile number shown on the pump and was advised that "someone should be there soon". During the wait I discovered that the flies in Hay do not rest up during the winter, there were millions of the little buggers all hell bent on annoying me! A local turned up and pulled his Bonanza out of the hanger and came to fill up alongside me, he wasn't impressed that the pump was unservicable "again" and had a go at fixing it himself - to no avail. After about 20 minutes the technician turned up fix the pump and after about 5 minutes of fiddling declared it working again, however it simply would not accept my credit card. The 'Bonanza man' tried his Carnet card and it did work, so he splashed 20 litres into UOK to top her off for me, I gave him \$50 in cash - and I was on my way again.

Hay to Mildura.

Departed Hay at around 12:50 and again had great tailwinds as I passed over the incredibly flat landscape of the Hay Plains. I had to be careful of smoke haze in some areas as there were lots of farmers burning off their crop stubble at this time of year. Arrived at Mildura at around 14:20 and



had my first interaction with a regional RPT flight as a Rex aircraft was arriving at the same time. I was looking for

somewhere to tie down the aircraft for the overnight stop when a local 'Shane' came up and said he'd move his C182 further back in his hanger so that I could put UOK in there for the night. Caught a cab into town and checked in at the 'Mildura Grand Hotel', which indeed is still rather grand I thought. There are many options for eating down the main street but I finally decided the local Chinese looked like 'the go'.

Monday 18th May: **Mildura to Renmark.**

This was to be a relatively short leg at 70 nautical miles but it was necessary to facilitate my fuel strategy. I left the hotel in Mildura nice and early at 07:30 and arrived at the airport to another clear and beautiful day, however I knew from the weather forecast that some pretty ordinary weather was coming towards me from the west and that I didn't have much time to mess around if I was going to beat it's arrival to my destination (Port Pirie) later on today. All was going well and I prepped the aircraft and headed to the fuel bowser to fill her up, but - damn - the bowser would only accepted one specific Carnet card, which I didn't have! I was pretty annoyed with myself for not filling up yesterday afternoon as I should have and then I would have given myself some time to have sorted this out without losing time on my schedule. Once again another pilot came to my aid, a guy in a R22 came over to fuel up to begin his days' work, we discussed my dilemma and in what was a bit of 'deja vu' he used his card to fill up UOK, I gave him some cash and once again I was on my way. The great flying weather continued and I was getting some fantastic views of the 'Mighty' Murray River en route. Arriving at Renmark at



about 09:20 I realised that I'd now reached South Australia and I was in the third State along my trip after crossing NSW and passing through Victoria at Mildura. Unbelievably there were more issues when it came to fueling up, I had checked the availability of fuel at all of my scheduled stops during my planning phase but none of the information I had gleaned seemed to be working out for me. I had been given a mobile number to call for instructions on how to get fuel from the bowser at Renmark but after calling it I was unable to get an answer. I saw a sign for the local council and gave them a call, I was put through to someone who said that he was nothing to do with the re-fueling service at the airport and that it was run by the Renmark Flying Club - he did however know the location of the key for the shed and the padlock for the bowser, he gave me this information and told me that it was an 'honesty' system and to fill in all the details in their book and they would send me an invoice.

How great to see that this can still work in some areas, I couldn't help but think about what would happen if this was attempted in Sydney....?

Renmark to Port Pirie.

I departed Renmark at 10:00 and after a short time on this leg I noticed that the wind had shifted almost 180° giving me a slight headwind and a ground speed of about 108 knots, I could also see the beginnings of the anticipated weather change starting to formulate way out in the distance ahead of me. As I neared Port Pirie the weather was definitely 'on the change' and at one stage just prior to landing I picked up a small amount of rain on the windshield from some virga falling from the clouds above, I landed at 11:30 in weather that was still perfectly acceptable - but I was certainly glad that I hadn't been held up any longer along the way. The guys at the airport at Port Pirie were fantastic, the airport manager Steve let me put UOK in the large hanger there and a great character 'Laurence' gave me a lift into town and put me on to a good thing with the 'Travel Way Motel'. On the way however he took me on a side trip to the local RSL Club to see their recent proud acquisition - a decommissioned 'Huey' helicopter that now resides in its own purpose built building. The RSL Club has a great museum which features many interesting military exhibits; the Bell UH-1 however takes pride of place!

Tuesday 19th May:

After waking up and checking the weather it certainly seemed to have deteriorated, I caught a cab back out to the airport but the winds were very strong from the WNW and



there was a prediction of it being worse to the West, time for a layover day I think! Steve Joyce, the Port Pirie Airport Manager, gave me a lift back the motel where I checked back in, he then gave me a bit of a tour around the town including the traffic light controlled bridge they call 'the bridge to nowhere' as it goes to a small island on which there is absolutely nothing but a dirt track, it does however provide a great view of one of the town's main industries - the controversial lead smelting facility which has been really cleaned up over the last couple of years due to environmental pressures. Another great landmark of Port Pirie is the huge grain silo on the wharf which can be seen from many miles away, particularly when flying.

Wednesday 20th May:

Woke up as normal around 05:00 to check the BOM website weather on my iPad but it wasn't looking good, this was confirmed when daylight came around 07:00 and it was obvious I wouldn't be going anywhere with a very low 8/8th's cloud base and rain - so, another day in 'Port'! Steve was heading off on a trip to Perth and was getting a lift

down to Adelaide with a truck driver mate of his to catch his commercial flight; he said if I could drop him off down the road I could use his Prado 4WD for the rest of my stay - very generous and friendly people without a doubt. There looked like the possibility of slightly better weather tomorrow, which I was hopeful for as I had already used up more than my two days contingency if I was to rendezvous with my wife and friends at Forrest. I went out to the airport to fuel and prep UOK to avoid any last minute delays in the hope of a getaway the following morning.

Thursday 21st May:

Port Pirie to Wudinna.

Got out to the airfield at 08:30 and the weather was not looking all that good, the wind had dropped but there was still a fair amount of cloud activity around the place. The initial part of my next leg involved getting across the top of the Spencer Gulf and in my planning I had measured the distance across the Gulf directly from Port Pirie to be an 'over water' flight of about 17 nautical miles, I calculated that if I climbed to something over 6,500' I would be able to make a glide to land if I had an engine failure at any stage during the crossing. It doesn't look like a great distance when you are looking at the map - it looks MUCH farther when you are actually there peering towards the West and can barely see Whyalla in the distance! I decided that there was an opportunity to depart at around 10:20, it wasn't great as there were still patches of considerable cloud moving around the sky but I thought I would get up there and have a look, my flight plan had me going over Whyalla and on to re-fuel at Wudinna then on to Ceduna to overnight - I decided that as long as I always kept a landing opportunity in sight and makeable I would proceed. One thing was clear however, due to the cloud I wasn't going to be able to make my 6,500' height to get across the water with the safety margin I required, so I got into 'Oz Runways' on the iPad and modified my flight plan to take me further to the north to Port Germein and then directly across to Port Lowly which is only about an 8 nautical mile flight over water and I'd only need about 3,500' of altitude to allow for a 'worst case scenario' engine failure. From the time of takeoff from Port Pirie I wasn't particularly happy with the cloud situation, sure I was flying well clear of any cloud in my direct vicinity but looking to each horizon confirmed that this was not a great flying day - I could see (and make) both Port Pirie where I had departed from and Whyalla airport across the Gulf, so I decided it was OK to continue. Crossing the Gulf was uneventful but I can't honestly say I enjoyed the over water flight, my engine failure just over 18 months ago was still quite vivid in my mind - and then I'd been over solid ground! As I passed over Port



Lowly on the Western side of the Gulf I was somewhat relieved that I was once again over land, however this was quickly replaced by some measure of concern at the weather developing to the South West of Whyalla, it looked VERY bad. By the time I was over head Whyalla Airport the wall of weather to the SSW looked quite imposing and there was no question in my mind what to do; get on the ground! A quick call to the Rex Saab 340 RPT which was about to depart to advise him of my intentions was made and I got back down to terra firma just as quickly as I could. I had only flown about 25 minutes from Port Pirie and landed at Whyalla at 10:45, within 15 minutes of my landing it was raining and the sky was black!

Then ensued a long wait, watching the cloud systems come and go, until at around 14:00 I could see far enough to the West to convince me that I had an opportunity to make Wudinna, just over 100 nautical miles away. Just to confirm the decision I phoned the local Hotel there to check on the current weather and to see if accommodation would be available for the night (there was no way I'd be making it all the way to Ceduna today). The call confirmed that all was good on both weather and accommodation and I departed Whyalla at 14:40. My flight plan took me away from the coast and most of the bad weather (coming from a low in the Bight), I did however have to dodge a few isolated squalls along the way and was glad when I reached Wudinna at 15:45. I was aware that there would be no Avgas available here but knew it was only a 15 minute walk from the airfield into Wuddina and I so set off down the Eyre Highway towards the town. I walked into the 'Golden Wattle Roadhouse' and introduced myself to 'Mary' and proceeded to explain my predicament: just landed at the airfield in a small aircraft, need some 95 ULP to fill her up, I don't have any jerry cans and I don't have any transport! No problem - jerry cans were provided, filled with fuel and Mary gave me a lift back out to the airstrip in her 4WD, she then dropped me off at the local hotel to save me the walk back into town - fantastic! That night I reviewed my progress, my unscheduled nights at both Port Pirie and now Wudinna had caused me to fall well behind my plan, my wife and friends would be arriving at Forrest on the Indian Pacific train tomorrow afternoon and, if the weather continued anything like it had been recently, there was a good chance I'd not be catching up with them. It would be great if we could catch up there but I'd made it clear there were certainly no guarantees, I said I wouldn't risk pushing on if I didn't feel comfortable with the weather - and I was going to stick with that policy. The forecast actually was starting to look pretty good for tomorrow so maybe I'd get lucky and catch up on some of my lost time?

Friday 22nd May: Wudinna to Ceduna.

The usual early wake-up to check the weather and it really was looking promising; the low in the Bight had now moved far enough away to the East that it was not encroaching on my path anymore and it looked potentially like light winds and just a little scattered cloud. The brisk walk out to the field at first light helped wake me up and I checked over UOK and was ready to go. I made my customary 'Flight Watch' call on the mobile to my mate Clem advising him of my intentions - Clem is a 'just' retired air traffic controller with about 30 years' experience behind him and he kindly offered his support for the duration of my trip, he had an exact copy of all the details for every leg of my flight plans and I was calling him just prior to departure and then again immediately on landing for each flight I was

doing. He was also offering valuable advice from the weather observations he was making from the BOM website and other sources, it was certainly very reassuring having someone with his level of knowledge 'watching my back' and knowing that if I did have a problem that the correct process would be initiated very promptly. On this morning he noted that the 'Wet Bulb' and 'Dry Bulb' predictions were very close and that I should consider that there might be fog around early on - how right he was! The aviation weather forecast on my iPad also warned of potential fog in the area and I could see some evidence of this just by looking beyond the field (which was completely clear). It was a beautiful morning as I took off at 08:25 but as soon as I got some altitude I could see that there was indeed quite a bit of fog around the immediate area and off into the distance, I also experienced something that had never happened to me before - my canopy started to fog up quite dramatically. I was used to condensation collecting on the canopy during an early morning taxi but this usually clears on takeoff as soon as some airspeed is built up, however on this morning it was actually increasing as I climbed out! Fortunately it didn't last more than about 30 seconds and then it started to clear, it did however get my full attention for that whole time. I was cautious about the amount of fog around and there was no way I was going to allow myself to fly over any large areas of fog that I knew I wouldn't be able to avoid in the event of an engine failure, so I had to deviate slightly from my GPS course to keep myself in the clear at all times until it had burnt off. I arrived at Ceduna at 09:20 in what was now a sparkling clear morning. Unfortunately I experienced fuel bowser issues once again as the Avgas pump wasn't working as the local fuel guy 'Mick' was attempted to do his daily check and sign off - there was air in the system and he was struggling to clear it. Fortunately it was all fixed within 30 minutes or so and I was fuelled up and on my way again by 10:45.

Ceduna to Nullarbor Road House.

An uneventful flight, but the landscape below was now definitely starting to show signs of just how remote some of the areas that I needed to fly over were going to be. My first 'Road House' landing was interesting - like many remote outback strips they are often not well maintained and can be adversely affected by rain, I had called in the days prior to check on the condition of the strip and indeed they had been having some wet weather in recent days which had caused it to be a bit 'iffy', however it had dried out OK and I just needed to do the customary 'outback low inspection pass' to make sure that there were no animals or any other 'unknowns' on the strip prior to landing. I touched down at 12:10 and gee it was rough, but the little Starlet is great at



soaking up the bumps - I think John Corby designed the landing gear as if he intended it to be used for aircraft carrier operations! There was a long taxi down a dirt track to the back of the Road House to the shed where the fuel bowser is located and she was soon filled up with Avgas. I took the opportunity to stretch my legs and walked around to the front of the Roadhouse to get a pie and a drink, it was really interesting to watch all of the travelers who were crossing the Nullarbor in each direction, many of them 'Grey Nomads' with their massive caravan set-ups, but also truckers and families in 'regular' vehicles. To be honest I was glad I was flying as there are some VERY long stretches of road out there and the scenery doesn't change much from one hour to another.

Nullarbor Road House to Forrest.

With both myself and UOK fueled up and ready to go I fired up the Jabiru engine at 1:25 and was on my way for the final leg of the day. I didn't fancy that long taxi back out to the dirt strip, in fact with an aircraft as small as a Starlet there wasn't any operational difference between the taxi 'track' and the 'strip' - so I just took off from where I was!

I knew there would be some good views on this leg as it would take me mostly along the coast where 'Bunda Cliffs' form the edge of the continent where the Nullarbor Plain literally drops into the ocean of the Great Australian Bight and are part of the longest uninterrupted stretch of sea cliffs in the world - truly spectacular!



When I arrived overhead the 'Border Village Road House' I checked to make sure I had enough fuel (and reserves) for the remaining 66 nautical miles to Forrest and then made my turn to the North West. Once you head North from the Eyre Highway there is absolutely NOTHING man made down there beneath you, sure it looks very flat but any kind of forced landing would result in some 'interesting interaction' with the scrub and rocks that cover the area for thousands of square kilometres. My eyes started to strain into the distance looking for a sign of the Indian Pacific Railway that crosses in an East to West line and stands out as the only distinguishable feature in an otherwise untouched landscape. It also makes a great navigational backup, if you just head North from Border Village and turn left when you reached the railway line you'll be sure to come across Forrest down the track, in fact it used to be called 'The Iron Compass'. However in days gone by when this was actually used as a method of navigation to get to Forrest there are stories of aircraft that somehow missed the railway

(presumably due to low cloud) continued North and on to an unknown fate. Of course I really didn't need to be straining my eyes, I was lucky enough to be flying in an era when all one has to do is look at the iPad and Oz Runways will tell you not only exactly where you are (to within a couple of metres) but also how high you are, how fast you are going, your time to destination and a plethora of other pertinent information. Flying over that kind of terrain certainly gave me enormous respect for the aviation pioneers that first flew across this great country using no more than a dodgy map, a dodgy watch and a dodgy compass - they certainly had more testicular matter than me that's for sure! Just as the iPad was indicating, Forrest appeared over the nose of UOK right on cue. Forrest has two huge sealed runways; one to the North/South at 1,500 metres long and one East/West at 1,350 metres, which is rather more than my requirements for UOK with an average landing distance of around 350 metres. Arriving overhead the field to check the windsock I noticed that it was rather strong and from the North West, so I elected for a landing on 36 and made a successful, but rather ordinary, cross wind landing and using a fair bit more of that runway than I would have expected. It was 1:35 when I touched down and I'd completed just on four hours flying time since departing Wudinna earlier in the day - quite a long time to be confined in a very small cockpit and be 'hand flying' for the whole time, so I was pretty tired. However I had arrived safely and I was about 4 hours ahead of the Indian Pacific train which would be delivering my wife and friends later that afternoon, on reflection I was very thankful for the great weather which had enabled me to make 430 nautical miles in one day and to catch up to my original schedule.

Saturday 23rd May to Monday 25th May - Forrest.

The transcontinental railway was completed in 1917 and Forrest was one of the original settlements set up for the 'fettlers' who maintained the track. In 1929 air services (passengers, freight and mail) commenced between Adelaide and Perth, because Forrest was the half way point on the 16 hour trip it was upgraded to an airport with runways, a hotel and a large hanger - the 1930's hanger still survives today. The hotel has long gone, as have the Meteorological



staff who lived there from the 1950's providing critical weather information right up until 1995 when their facility was replaced by automated equipment. However, the cottages that were built to house the Met office families still survive and have been converted into fantastic accommodation for those that make it to this remote outpost. Forrest today continues to provide an important staging point for general and military aviation crossing the continent and is

in part maintained by commercial airline interests as an ‘alternate’ for RPT traffic. There are two caretakers who live full time at Forrest and provide not only the aviation services but also the accommodation upkeep and sensational meals. We spent two days in and around Forrest with the caretakers looking at wildlife such as eagles, wild camels



and owls as well as exploring wombat burrows and visiting some local ‘blowhole’ geological formations that are formed through erosion to the limestone landscape of the Nullarbor Plain. There are four or five trains that pass through Forrest every day, many of them huge freight trains



that are over a kilometre long and have 40 foot containers stacked two high on some of the wagons, many of them fully refrigerated. The highlight however is when the Indian Pacific passenger train comes through on a Monday from the West bringing the weekly grocery and shopping supplies through for the caretakers, luckily we managed to organise a delivery of wine and beer from the bottle shop in

Kalgoorlie! My first priority was really to continue the delivery flight of UOK if the weather permitted but due to low cloud and even some intermittent rain I ended up staying for the same days that my wife and friends were there - so it ended up being a really good ‘mid-trip’ break from my flying duties.

**Tuesday 26th May:
Forrest to Caiguna.**

Today was the day that my wife and friends were heading back to Sydney, departing around midday in a C182 charter to Ceduna, then on to Adelaide with Rex and Sydney with Qantas. The weather was still pretty ordinary and I wasn't sure whether I might still be spending a few more nights at Forrest after they had gone, however as the morning progressed the weather to the South West was improving and I decided to make my departure. At 11:00 I said my good-byes and blasted off from 36 - using a little less than 10% of the runway length! My scheduled plan from Forrest was to fly down to again intercept the Eyre Highway and then follow it West to Caiguna Road House, refuel there and on to overnight at the Balladonia Road House. The weather was quite good but at 3,500' I was getting shaken to bits from the turbulence underneath the scattered cumulus above me so I elected to climb on top and was immediately rewarded with nice smooth flying conditions (and beautiful views).



As I approached my re-fueling stop at Caiguna it was clear the weather ahead was changing for the worse and, even though the next leg on to Balladonia Road House would be only be a short one at 97 nautical miles, I began thinking that I might have to amend my plan. As I flew low to do my inspection of the dirt strip at the back of Caiguna Road House I could see that the wind sock was horizontal and at exactly 90° to the runway direction, it was to be another particularly interesting cross-wind landing! It was very long taxi down a dirt track to the shed at the back of the road house and as soon as I hopped out of the aircraft I grabbed my mobile phone to make my usual “I've arrived OK” call only to find out that there was no Telstra signal at all - and I knew there should be because I had checked signal availability prior to my departure. Luckily there were two telephone ‘boxes’ outside the roadhouse and I was able to use one of those to cancel my flight watch (first time I think I've used a public phone in about 20 years), it did however give me a reminder of just how much we rely on mobile devices these days. I was then able to fill her up with Avgas ready for the next leg but a glance up to the sky gave me a clear indication that I wouldn't be continuing further on today because plenty of low and dark clouds had now formed in all directions as far as I could see, so I tucked UOK away under as much cover as I could find and secured the wing tie down points with some bricks to stop her from flying away in the night! I then made my way around to the office at the front of the Road House to organ-



ize some overnight accommodation, only to find that none of their Motel rooms were available because a large roadworks gang was repairing the local section of the Eyre Highway and had it all booked out. I kind of knew the answer to my next question 'How far away is the next nearest accommodation?' and the answer was '65 kilometres to the East or 180 kilometres to the West'! However after explaining that I had just arrived in a small aircraft and couldn't proceed on to anywhere else today because of the weather they managed to free up a room and I was right for the night. The office manager also confirmed that they normally had good Telstra mobile reception but for some reason it had been down all day. That evening when I went to check the weather for the following day I discovered that the signal was still down and once again realized how much I had been depending on this 'invisible' service along my trip so far.

Wednesday 27th May:

Caiguna to Balladonia Road House.

When I awoke at my customary 05:00 the first thing I did was to check my mobile phone and I was very pleased to discover that the signal was back on and I quickly downloaded the weather for the next leg of my journey into the Oz Runways flight plan and, apart from an early morning fog warning once again, it looked OK. However on checking the weather for my anticipated second leg of the day, Balladonia to Esperance, it was not looking good at all due to the Northerly tip of a low pressure area currently moving across the Great Australian Bight which was just managing to impact Esperance and causing significant low cloud for about 50 kilometres inland from the coast in that area. I took off for Balladonia Road House at 08:45 and noted that there was no fog in the immediate vicinity so I continued on. I didn't need to reference either of the GPS systems much on this leg as the road between Caiguna and Balladonia is absolutely gun barrel straight for 146.6 kilometres - the longest straight stretch of road in Australia and the second longest in the whole World! Looking down at the vehicles on the highway below they appeared to be barely moving due to the lack of anything to use as a reference to judge their speed, but it was clear was that I was covering the ground at around twice the rate they were! About twenty minutes into the flight I could see a blanket of fog partially covering the highway (and my track) coming up ahead of me and, even though I could still just make out the highway beneath the foggy area, I decided to climb another 2,000' higher to make absolutely sure that I would be able to glide away from the fog and make it to clearly visible ground in the event of an engine failure. At the end of the

long straight section of the highway is Balladonia Station then it's a slight turn to the North West for about another 20 kilometres or so to get to Balladonia Road House. I did my low visual inspection on arrival and noted that there was considerable vegetation growth across the strip at the Western end; I estimated that this would reduce the effective length by about 25% - but that still left around 1000 metres of useable strip which was far more than I would need and I touched down at 09:45, which had been just on an hour for this leg. Just as with all the other Road Houses that I had visited so far the taxi from the Balladonia strip itself took me to a mass of sheds and buildings all of which form part of the infra structure required to survive 'off grid' in these remote places; generator sheds, diesel tanks, water tanks and all manner of other buildings which obviously have their role, I parked UOK on some level ground out of the way and endeavored to find my way through this maze to the actual Road House itself. In what was a repeat of yesterday's situation I was advised yet again that no motel rooms were available, this time it was due to a large Police operation which was on task out on the highway stopping every vehicle for roadworthy inspections (primarily the huge road trains I would think) and they had booked out most of the rooms for the next few days. Knowing that I wouldn't be able to continue on to Esperance that day due to the weather I told them my same story (with my best 'please help me out' face) and they also were able to find somewhere for me to stay - however this time it wasn't a motel room it was a 'Donga'! For those who aren't familiar with the term a Donga is a portable building which is usually used in remote area mines etc. to house the workers and provides only the most basic of what you need for accommodation, literally a metal box with a door and only enough room for a bed inside. However I was glad to have it as the other op-



tion could only have been sleeping out in one of the old sheds out the back with not even a bed! The Road House Manager helped me out by providing a jerry can and after filling this up with ULP from the normal bowser gave me a lift in his ute back over to UOK out near the strip, which was a fair way away and I was glad not to have had to carry it that far myself. He then showed me a space in an old dis-used hanger which was just big enough to fit UOK and I felt better knowing she was under cover for the night - just like me! With some time to kill for the rest of the day I walked around and soon realized that if it wasn't for the Road House and its' associated buildings there would be absolutely nothing here, just a bitumen road going through virgin scrubland. The main 'claim to fame' for the area stems back to July 12th 1979 when the Skylab Space Station

crashed back to earth after its orbit had finally decayed to the point where it reentered the atmosphere, broke up and the pieces that survived spread themselves across an area of the Nullarbor centered about 150 kilometres around Balladonia. There is a 'Sky Lab' Museum at the Road House which is dedicated to the event (which made worldwide news back in the day) and it is really worth spending some time having a look - they even have some authentic bits of the space station itself on display. Interesting as this was I had seen everything there was to see by early afternoon that day and was pretty keen to be able to make my way onwards the following day. After a dreadful night's sleep in the 'Donga' I checked the weather early the next morning only to discover that the low pressure system was indeed moving very slowly in the Bight and that bad weather persisted in the area just around Esperance. I was keen to not spend another day and night here so I started looking at flight planning a route more to the North via Norseman or even Kalgoorlie but with the limited range of UOK and the vast distances between fuel opportunities I couldn't come up with a plan I was comfortable with. So, another day at Balladonia Road House it was to be - at least someone had vacated one of the 'proper' motel rooms and I was able to move into that and not have to spend a second night in the old Donga!

Friday 29th May: Balladonia Road House to Esperance.

Finally it seemed that the low impacting Esperance's weather had moved far enough East to allow me to get on my way and I departed at 10:20 and headed South towards the coast. From carefully studying Google maps prior to the trip I knew that this was going to be one of the remotest flights I would do on the whole trip - and it was! For around 125 kilometres in any direction there is really nothing at all except scrubland as far as you can see, it's not the kind of country you'd like to be doing a forced landing that's for sure. There is a little used 4WD track that has



been carved out of the scrub connecting Balladonia and the start of the farming land that extends to the North East of Esperance, it's not much but at least it is something to follow and to be able to use as a reference point in case anything might go wrong, I know I was definitely glad to be carrying a satellite PLB that's for sure. After about half an hour of flying over this barren country (it seemed more like an hour and a half to me) I could just begin to see a change in the landscape ahead over the nose, the natural featureless scrub was starting to give way to the recognizable geometric shapes which are synonymous with the likely presence

of other human beings - oh joy! My happiness at having made it through perhaps one of the more challenging legs of the journey then started to give way to some concern about the weather at my destination. The forecast for Esperance had been OK before I departed, some cloud still remaining from the front but nothing that should really cause me any problems. Also I had called the Esperance AWIS just before taking off and the familiar recorded voice was also telling me that cloud was clear "below 12 thousand feet", however what was in front of me with about twenty minutes to go didn't look quite that good and by the time I was setting myself up in the landing pattern at Esperance I was under a 2,500' cloud base and the weather still looked particularly nasty just to the South - I think that low was still moving slower than anticipated. I landed at 11:40, filled UOK up with AVGAS and securely tied her down next to a hanger and, making sure I was wearing my ASIC card around my neck, made my way through the airport boundary and called a cab for the 25 kilometre ride into town (\$40). The cabbie recommended a Motel on the beachfront near to the centre of town and after checking in I spend the rest of the day walking around checking out the waterfront and shopping area of what is really a very nice little town. Back in my motel room that evening I checked the weather forecast for tomorrow (Saturday) and it was looking good, however it was forecast to be deteriorating on Sunday and then for poor weather at my final destination of Busselton on Monday. The next part of the journey had been somewhat difficult to flight plan for due to lack of refueling opportunities, the first obvious choice seemed to be Esperance to Albany and then on to Busselton from there, however it was about 215 nautical miles to Albany by the most direct route but about 230 nautical miles by the shortest route that I'd be happy with, UOK could make it that far on one tank of fuel just, but with literally no reserve left at all - no, we weren't going to be doing that! I then discovered a private property with an airstrip called 'The Lily' located about half way between Esperance and Busselton which looked to be in the perfect location, it's owned by Hennie and Pleun Hitzert who are originally from the Netherlands and now run a thriving accommodation and restaurant business with stunning views of the nearby Sterling Ranges just to the South. Pleun has also built (from the ground up and with his own hands) a full size, five story Dutch windmill which produces whole meal stone-ground Spelt flour which is sold all around the country. They have various types of rooms you can book but I was particularly keen to stay in the converted DC3 that Pleun has restored and modified into unique and luxurious accommodation. I called Pleun before embarking on the trip to query as to whether I could use 'The Lily' as a stopover point on my journey and whether I could refuel there, he said it would be fine and that he would be able to provide me with some Mogas from the supply he keeps to fuel his own Jabiru aircraft. The only real problem was that I couldn't make a firm booking because I didn't know ultimately what day I would be arriving, and as it turned out I was now quite few days behind the schedule I originally thought I might be on. I called Pleun from Esperance and let him know I was going to try to get all the way to Busselton the next day and not stop overnight at 'The Lily' as originally planned - he was fine with this and said I would still be able to refuel to get me on my way again (also the DC3 was booked for the night anyway!)

Saturday 30th May: Esperance to 'The Lily'.

I arranged for a cab to pick me up early at the motel and I was back out at Esperance airport by 08:00 (another \$40), I

had the aircraft and myself prepped and ready to depart by 09:00. A regional RPT called inbound just as I started to taxi out so I advised him that I'd wait on the apron until he landed and once he had cleared the runway I made my departure off into a clear blue sky towards the West at 09:15. The landscape below was now far more 'friendlier' than it had been for my past six or so flights, lots of flat land with plenty of signs of civilization and roads - thoroughly more relaxing to fly over than my recent sectors. There were also some interesting features to observe along the way, particularly the many different coloured salt ponds that passed by -



I had seen these before from the window of commercial airliners when flying between Sydney and Perth, but from this more intimate altitude they looked even more impressive.

Once again my onboard navigation devices brought me directly overhead 'The Lily' bang on schedule and the Dutch windmill certainly makes for a landmark that couldn't be confused with anything else in the area. I landed on one of the two grass strips at 11:05 and taxied up towards the



building to be met by some young children and a dog running straight towards me! I immediately shut the engine down as I wasn't sure whether the children (and the dog) understood the implications of a spinning propeller and thought that caution was a good idea. Turned out that the children were with two families staying at the accommodation and they had heard and then seen this little green aircraft and had gotten very excited and wanted to come out and meet it - along with Pleuns dog. They were lovely kids but I did 'diplomatically' mention to their parents that it's a good idea to keep youngsters away when there's a turning propeller in the vicinity. Pleun arrived on the scene and took charge and asked them all (including the dog) to move well away so that I could start the engine again and taxi off the runway and up to the parking area.

A quick fill up with 25 litres of fuel from Pleuns ULP supplies and a stretch of my legs (and a pee) and I was ready to get straight back in and head off on the very last leg of the journey, strapped in and departed at exactly midday.

'The Lily' to Busselton.

For some reason this last leg of the whole trip seemed to pass in a bit of a blur, maybe it was because I was already starting to think about the enormous distances I had just covered in my little homemade aircraft. I'd like to think I was still giving my flying the 100% attention it needed to be safe, but there's probably some statistics out there that indicates that the very last leg on a long series of flights might be the most risky - when you maybe relax a bit and think "well done, you've completed it all OK" - but you haven't actually got there just yet? Anyway I'm sure I was flying just fine on that last leg and I was certainly conscious that my preflight planning had been thorough because the specific GPS tracks that I had chosen many weeks earlier after studying Google Earth maps were now taking me through some quite rugged country East of Busselton but every time I looked down and checked there was always some sort of reasonable landing opportunity I could have taken if I had needed to. I finally cleared the 'tiger country' at Capel River where the coastal plains begin and I got my first view of the Indian Ocean, a turn to the South West and after a short while there was Busselton airfield right where it was supposed to be! Somewhat surprisingly the radio chatter on the local frequency was the busiest I had experienced all trip, it was a lovely day and obviously many people were taking advantage of the good conditions - a couple of aircraft just on local flights, another guy transiting through the area heading off to somewhere else, an instructor with a student doing circuits and a parachute aircraft just departing to do a drop over Busselton Jetty. I managed to fit in with all of this without upsetting anyone and UOK's wheels kissed the Busselton grass at 13:30.

* * * * *

I would be lying if I said I wasn't relieved to have landed safely with both myself and UOK in perfect condition after such a long journey. The trip had taken me 16 days in all and I had hand flown the aircraft 100% of the time for a total of 19.6 hours to complete it. The Starlet was not designed for extensive cross country operations but it completed the job beautifully thanks to the masterful piece of work that is John Corby's creation, producing an aircraft that seems to be able to do pretty much anything you ask of it. I was also a less than ideal candidate for such a journey due to my own very limited cross country experience. This was a trip of epic proportions for me and so preparation and meticulous planning were definitely required to ensure a successful completion - and you've got to love it when a plan works!

Dave Butler



Dave, that is simply a great story. Thanks for putting the time and effort into writing it, and for sending it in for all of us to enjoy.

Ed

The Editor's choice of **PHOTO OF THE MONTH** comes from Bill Leighton

The photo was taken at Wedderburn late one afternoon, looking over the central dam towards the north east. Nice!

Ed



* * **Aircraft and Hangars For Sale** * *

Greg Ackman has two Grumman Tigers for sale



Reg #: VH-AVD
 Total Time Airframe: 5,050 Hours
 Serial #: AA5B1213
 Reg Expiry:
 Lycoming O360 A4K 180HP
 Flat 4 Cylinder
 REQUIRES OVERHAUL

Reg #: VH-IFT
 Total Time Airframe: 5,150 Hours
 Serial #: AA5B0621
 Reg Expiry: 04 / 2016
 Lycoming O360 A4K 180HP
 Flat 4 Cylinder
 50 Hrs Since BULK STRIP and REBUILD with
 NEW CYLINDERS Approx. 900 Hrs TO RUN

For further information contact **Greg Ackman** on **0425 355 500**

Kevin Brodie's Jabiru J230

Jabiru J230-D 24-5490

Factory built 2008, Airframe & engine 94 hours, Maintained every 25hrs, Nil accidents.

Analogue instruments, Icom IC-200 radio, Garmin GTX-320a transponder, Booster seats, Sensenich prop, Garmin 295 GPS.

Always hangared and runs great.

\$85,000

Contact Kevin: 02 4283 2671 or 0408 427 458
 Email: kaybee@exemail.com.au



Aircraft and Hangars For Sale (cont)

Cliff van Praag's Aircraft and other "treasure trove" items are up for sale



Pazmany PL2

Aircraft for sale include:

1. A Pazmany PL2, a 2 place side by side, joy stick, fixed tricycle gear aerobatic sport aircraft. Engine is a Lycoming O320 150hp with fixed pitch aluminium prop. The engine has been repainted with new oil hoses installed and has about 150 hours remaining. The airframe needs some minor work done on one main gear leg and some final assembly before flying. Considering all reasonable offers.
2. Volksplane with VW engine, "Herbi" in flying condition. Considering all reasonable offers.
3. A tube and wire ultralight less engine and sailcloth envelopes. Considering all reasonable offers.
4. A fibreglass ultralight less engine. Considering all reasonable offers.
5. A treasure trove of parts and accessories collected over thirty years including complete VW engines, motor bikes and scooters and various other engines, generators and lots and lots of spare parts. Considering all reasonable offers.

Contact Kevin Haydon on 0408 694 713.

Goods can generally be inspected each weekend or by arrangement.



Volksplane "Herbi"



PA-22

PIPER TRI-PACER 160

s.n. 22.6710

Engine: LYCOMING 0.320.B2A 160hp. TTAF: 2080hrs. Engine: 750hrs to run. Prop: 400 hours since overhaul per Sensenich SPRM 546. Cover: 100% Dacron – Excellent condition. Instruments: VFR only, transponder overhauled, new decoder fitted in 2014 and new battery in 2015. Always hangared - 4 place intercom. Garmin GPSMAP 296.

All AD's are up-to-date including crankshaft corrosion inspection and remediation. New wing struts, of the sealed type, have been installed as well as new sparkplugs. Disc brakes have been installed. The rego has been changed to VH-FTL, brand new Airworthiness Certificate now complete. This aircraft is "as good as new".

PRICE: \$70,000

Contact Hank on 0418 230 102 or at vangasselt@wgib.com.au



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2400 hrs TT. 2 hrs since ground up rebuild.
All logs since new.

New 400hp M-14PF. New MTV9-29 3 blade prop.
Long Range tanks 4.5 hrs total.

Digital Gmeter, Digital Tacho, Colour Garmin GPS.
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wheels & tyres. VHF, AM/FM/CD, DVD player, infrared
headsets in rear. Experimental category.

Reduced to AU\$150,000. No GST.

Genuine enquiries only - NO TYRE KICKERS.

Contact via email: aussiehouseboats@gmail.com



Aircraft and Hangars For Sale (cont)

Clin Ashton Martin's "Texas Taildragger"

Cessna 150G "Texas Taildragger"

ETR 1325. ADF, Transponder.

\$36,000 + GST

Temora NSW

0429 021 097 or 02 6976 4280

Further details on application



Robert Greig's Karasport

Karasport



KARASPORT

RAA Rego No 100411 (registered until 17 Jan 2016).

Engine: Rotax 582 UL. Airframe hours: approx 210.

This aircraft is from Robert Greig's collection.

PRICE: \$10,000 or near offer.

For more information contact:

Chris Greig on (02) 9520 4779 or 0414 193 774

Roy Docherty's TIPSY NIPPER

Slingsby T66 Single Seater.

Reluctantly selling my Jabiru 2200 powered Topsy Nipper.

This fully aerobatic airframe has flown 729 Hrs since rebuild,
Engine 53 hours since new.
Hangared at Wedderburn.

This aircraft is for sale at the newly reduced price of

\$15,500

Call Roy on
0404 756 407 or 02 4294 3900



HANGAR Q1/R1 is FOR SALE



Large (31m x 15m) hangar with easy taxiway access.
1 x 18 metre wide and 2 x 12 metre wide hangar doors.
Extra large mezzanine area covering over half of hangar.
Generator shed with remote control 12 KVA diesel generator.
Workshop equipment included. Too many inclusions to list.
Possible option to purchase either half hangar.

Price \$275,000

Call Bernie on 0414375795

for inspections or expression of half hangar interest.

Aircraft and Hangars For Sale (cont)

Bert Faulkner's Wittman Tailwind

Home-built by Bert Faulkner. First flown 2005.
 O320 A2B Lycoming engine Approx 1000hrs to run.
 Cruise 150Kts, very pleasant at 130Kts.
 ICOM A200 Radio, King KT76 Transponder.
 Garmin 196 GPS, 2 place comms.
 Artificial Horizon, Turn & Bank, Vertical Speed Indicator
 Airspeed, Altimeter, Oil Press & Temp.

\$29,000

Call Bert on (02) 4871 1799, or berjan@ozonline.com.au



Vic Laybutt's Cessna Cardinal 177RG

Comfortable 4 seat cruiser, 138kt on 38lt/hr, 6hr endurance.
 TT 4140hr, eng 1450 htr, prop 535 htr.
 STD Cessna IFR panel, currently downgraded to VFR.
 SIDS due 2016.

Best offer above \$55,000.

Contact Vic: 0414734540 or at vic.laybutt@gmail.com

Glen Frohling's Maggie

Stall speed: 40kts clean, 34kts with full flaps
 Max cruise and VNE 100kts
 Max fuel: 80 litres
 Fuel burn: 15lts/hr at 85kts

\$10,000

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\$1.6m ono.

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Picture is courtesy of Doug Stickland

The area circled in red above is a sensitive area on the southern side of Victoria Road. This area should be avoided wherever possible, to help maintain our good relationship with the local Wedderburn community.